

4th ACQF Forum Micro-credentials in the African context

Mauritius the new Micro-Credentials
Framework
A game changer for the country and an
example for Africa

Professor Romeela Mohee
Commissioner
Higher Education Commission,
Mauritius

13 November 2024



Higher Education Commission

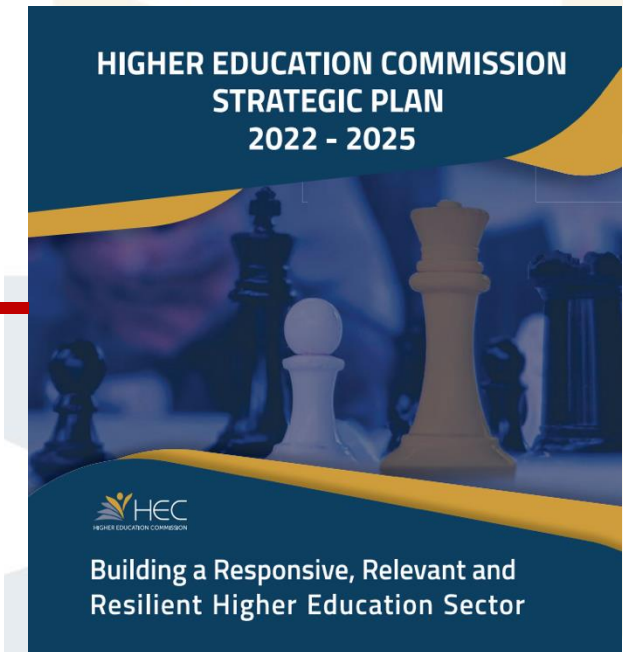
- HEC Apex Regulatory Body for Higher Education, established in 2020
- Oversee 7 public Universities and 40 private Higher Education providers.

OBJECTIVES	KEY ACTIONS	KPIs
Foster Graduate Employability	<p>Approve courses in line with labor market demand (see above)</p> <p>Develop Graduate Employability Guidelines/ Toolkit (absorption in labor market and employability)</p> <p>Support Micro-credential</p> <p>Ensure integrated work placements in FT undergraduate programs</p> <p>Linking new funding mechanism to relevance of programs</p>	<p>No. of students on micro-credential programs</p> <p>No. of Full-Time (FT) undergraduate programs having work placements</p> <p>No. of programs in HEIs in performance indicators</p>

Qualifications

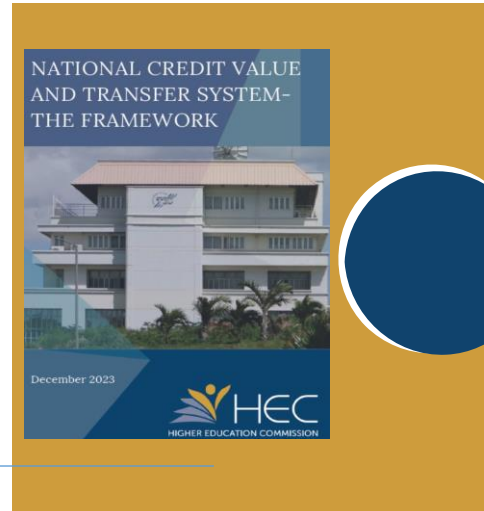
Higher Education Institutions
Public
Code of Conduct
Advise
Formulate
Higher
Periodic
Plans
Framework
Students
Guidelines
Implementation
Register
HEIs
Mechanisms
Private
Policy
Professional
Accreditation
Regulatory
Professional
Periodic Accreditation Audit
Research

Equivalence
Accreditation
Programmes
Funding
National
Purposes
National
HE
Publish
Recognition
Criteria
National credit transfer & value system
Accreditation
Education
Strategy



Higher Education Commission Initiatives

National Credit Value and Transfer System



National Micro Credential Framework

Mauritius Credit Accumulation and Transfer System



Life Long Learning



Recognition of Prior Learning

Defintion of Microcredentials

Micro-credentials are also known as nano degrees, digital badges, mini degrees, micro-credentials, open badges, and web badges

Australian National Micro-Credentials Framework

Micro Credentials are a certification of assessed learning or competency with a minimum volume of learning of one hour and less than an AQF award qualification that is additional alternate, complementary to or a component part of an AQF award qualification.

Canada Colleges and Institutes

Micro Credentials is a certification of assessed competencies that is additional, alternate, complementary to or a component of a formal qualification

Malaysian Qualification Agency

Micro-credentials is a certification of assessed learning of a single or a set of courses' which are intended to provide learners with knowledge, skills, values and competencies in a narrow area of study and/or practice

A Micro-Credential is

Record of focused learning achievement

Verifying what learner knows, understand or can do

Includes assessment based on clearly defined standards

Has standalone value

May contribute to complement other micro-credentials

Meets the standards required by relevant QA

Awarded by a trusted provider

Characteristics of Micro Credential

Relevant



Consulted or involved industry/community

Accredited



Recognized or issued by a professional accrediting body

Standardized



Meets a government-set quality standard

Assessed



The learner must demonstrate skills/knowledge to earn the credential

Flexible



The pace and/or structure of learning can be personalized

Stackable



Can be "stacked" or combined toward a larger credential, e.g. a diploma or degree

Global Examples of Micro Credential

European Union



The European MOOC Consortium has developed the Common Micro-Credential Framework (CMF) to support micro credential development.

Australia



Australia :18 universities create up to 28 micro credential courses in fields like IT, engineering, science, health, and education. The MicroCred Seeker platform lists 425 micro credential courses from 56 providers.

United Kingdom



In the UK, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) has issued a Characteristics Statement to guide the development of micro credentials.

New Zealand



New Zealand has been integrating micro credentials into its national frameworks for years, recognizing their importance for lifelong learning

Examples for Skilling, Reskilling and Upskilling

The University of Szeged



The University of Szeged blends for-credit Professional Certificates to support career exploration

At the University of Szeged in Hungary, students can access a wide range of Professional Certificates, with some available for academic credit. For example, by completing seven out of nine courses within a Professional Certificate, such as the IBM Data Science Certificate, students fulfill the Statistics 2 module and earn five European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits.

Wawasan Open University



Wawasan Open University complements its curricula with for-credit micro-credentials

Malaysia's Wawasan Open University (WOU) recently reimagined its curriculum by strategically integrating credit-eligible content from Coursera into nearly 50% of its industry-aligned courses.

Faculty carefully curate offerings that complement WOU's existing materials and support desired learning outcomes.

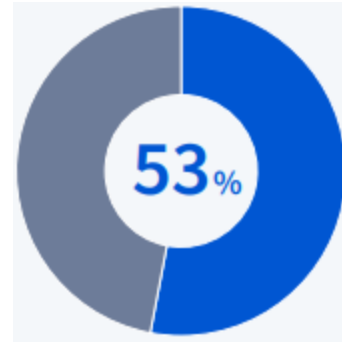


60%

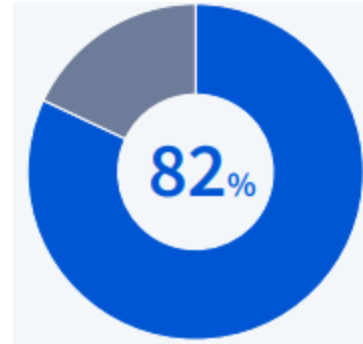
Future of work: According to the World Economic Forum, 60% of workers will require training by 2027, yet only half have access to adequate training opportunities.

Campuses must bridge the skills gap and prepare students for the workforce.

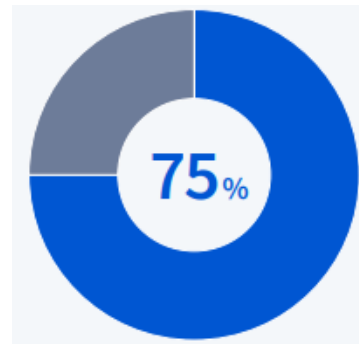
Micro-Credentials in Universities



53% of higher education leaders say their institutions offer credit-bearing options for micro-credentials



82% say their institution plans to integrate or expand for-credit micro-credentials in the next five years



75% say students are more likely to enroll in degree programs that recognize academic credit for micro-credentials

Micro Credential as a Game Changer

Upskilling and Workforce Development	Personalized and Flexible Learning	Cost-Effective and Accessible Education	Alignment with Industry Needs	Support for New Pedagogical Models	Enhanced Recognition and Portability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enable quick acquisition of relevant skills for rapidly changing industries.• Provide pathways for career advancement through specific competencies applicable in the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer tailored learning experiences to fit individual career paths and preferences.• Allow engagement in short, practical courses, accommodating those with other commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Serve as an affordable alternative to traditional degree programs.• Improve access to higher education, democratizing learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed to meet industry demands, ensuring relevant and valuable skills.• Achieved through collaboration with industry partners and integration of recognized credentials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote innovative, project-based, and competency-based education.• Foster the development of 21st-century skills, enhancing learning outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Credentials are transportable and recognized across various markets.• Hold global value, essential in a globalized economy for recognizing skills and qualifications.

Opportunities for Micro Credentials at all Levels

Learners

- Enhanced employability
- Increased flexibility
- Access to TVET /HE
- **Alternative model to obtain traditional education through flexible learning pathways**

Institutions

- Co-delivery and co-construction of teaching and training with industry
- **Improve quality of current qualifications**

Employers

- Building capacity in key areas
- Reskilling and upskilling opportunities
- Collaboration and partnership academia industry
- Increased productivity
- Closing of real skill gaps
- Recognition and motivation for employees

State

- Meet the needs of labour market
- Continuous improvement culture/ lifelong learning/human capital potentially
- Equity of access

National Microcredentials Framework for TVET and HE

Why Micro Credentials?

2022: COL Skills for Work Scholarships Mauritius

This project, led by HEC, run in collaboration with the Ministry of Education enabled access to 4000 scholarships that led to **14000 courses (Micro Credentials)**

THREE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMMES

COL - GROW WITH GOOGLE
SKILLS FOR WORK CERTIFICATION
PROGRAMME

Grow with 

COL - UDEMY SKILLS FOR WORK
CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME

 **Udemy**

COL - COURSERA SKILLS FOR
WORK CERTIFICATION
PROGRAMME



Top 5 Courses for Cohorts 1 - 4

-  Foundations of Project Management
-  Foundations: Data, Data, Everywhere
-  Providing Social, Emotional, Behavioural, and Special Education Services in School
-  Technical Support Fundamentals
-  Programming for Everybody (Getting Started with Python)

Status of Micro-Credential Framework

A framework to recognise MC in formal learning, also in RPL and in lifelong learning

Implementation

Submission the document to the cabinet for consideration and approval

Training and Capacity Building

Steering Committee for the Development of the Micro-Credential Framework and Mauritian NCVTS; Validation Webinar

Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on a Micro-Credential Framework for TVET and Higher Education in Mauritius

National Survey to inform a Micro-credentials Framework for TVET and Higher Education in Mauritius

Collaboration between IIEP-UNESCO, the Higher Education Commission and the Mauritius Qualifications Authority to establish a national micro-credential framework



National Micro Credential Framework

Micro-credentials in Mauritius: towards a national framework for TVET and higher education



Guideline 1: Objectives for MC framework, coverage, principles, actors



Guideline 2: Definition of MC – information requirements for increased transparency



Guideline 3 : Credit award and stackability



Guideline 4: Inclusion and levelling of MC against NQF, quality assurance



Guideline 5: National register, credit bank and open badge options



Micro-credentials in MAURITIUS:
towards a national framework for TVET
and higher education

Draft V1

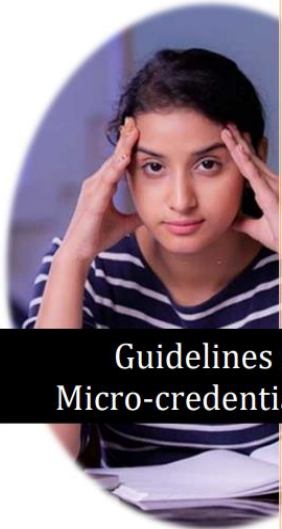
Michaëlle Martin, IEP-UNESCO
Mahéod Nic Cloffe, DCU

Guideline 1

Objectives for MC Framework, Coverage, Principles, Actors



Stakeholder Consultation
Workshop, Mauritius
The Docks, 16 to 18 January
2024



Guidelines for a Mauritian
Micro-credentials Framework

Mairiad Nic Galla-Mhachal, DCU
Michaela MARTIN, IIEP-UNESCO
08/01/2024

Contents

Introduction

- Objective of a National Framework for micro credentials
- Which principles should underpin a national micro-credential framework
- What should be the scope of the framework
- How to define Micro Credential

Existing Definitions

- What do Micro Credential encompass
 - Certification
 - Learning Outcome
 - Workload
 - Assessment

Consideration

- Final Consideration on Principles, Scope & Definitions
- Key Guideline Questions

Definition of MC – Information Requirements for Increased Transparency

Contents

What are the main criteria and principles being considered with respect to Micro Credential

What are the main trends and recommendations with respect to external quality assurance to Micro Credential

What good practices are being implemented regarding internal quality assurance of Micro Credentials by institutions

- Micro Credential as a sub unit of previously accredited awards/qualifications
- Standalone Micro Credential Provision
- Quality Assurance and RPL



unesco
International Institute for
Educational Planning

[Nom de la société]

Guideline 2 for National Micro-credential Frameworks

Quality Assurance and Micro-Credentials

Guideline 3

Credit Award and Stackability

Contents

Introduction of key concepts like credit awards and stackability

Approaches to aligning or mapping to NQF



unesco
International Institute for
Educational Planning

[Nom de la société]

Guideline 3 for National Micro-credential Frameworks

National Qualifications Frameworks and Micro-Credentials

Guideline 4

Inclusion and Levelling of MC against NQF, Quality Assurance

Contents

What is stacking

What are the benefits of stacking

What are the challenges of stacking

Key questions to be addressed



[Nom de la société]

Guideline 4 for National Micro-credential Framework

FLEXIBLE LEARNING PATHWAYS, STACKING & MICRO-CREDENTIALS

National Register, Credit Bank and Open Badge Options

Contents

Micro Credential Data for Recognition and Portability

Registered of Micro Credentials at National and Regional Levels

- Credit Banks
- Digital Wallets
- Micro Credential Course Catalogues and platforms
- Commercial or Private MOOC Platforms
- Digital Credentialing Platforms
- Future Oriented Questions



[Nom de la société]

Guideline 5. For National Micro-credential Frameworks

Key elements of a Micro-credential Enabling Technical Ecosystem

Operational Implication of Micro Credentials

- Development of criteria for accreditation and quality assurance of micro credentials programs
- Identification of roles of accrediting bodies and quality assurance agency to oversee micro credentials

Quality Assurance Standards

Recognition and Assessment

- Develop and implement Guidelines for determining Credit Value. Taking into consideration Course complexity, Learning outcomes and shelf-life Micro Credentials

- Ensure alignment of credits obtained, learning outcomes, minimum entry requirements, and volume of learning with MNQF level descriptors.

Align MNQF Level Descriptors

OPERATIONAL IMPLICATION

Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration

- Strategies for fostering collaboration among educational institutions, industry stakeholders and government agencies to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of micro credentials

- Proposed policies for recognizing micro-credentials across institutions and for transferring credits between programs.
- Strategies for ensuring that micro-credentials are acknowledged by employers and educational institutions.

Recognition and Transferability

Implementation Strategy, Monitoring, Evaluation

- Roadmap for Implementation
- Training and Capacity Building initiatives
- Evaluation of Metrics

Recognition of Micro Credentials

Volume of learning: workload	Learning outcomes	Align with NQF	Number of Credits	Assessed by

Credit Allocation

Credit allocation for micro-credentials typically follows a structured approach where credits are assigned based on the notional learning hours required to complete a course.

This method aligns with practices observed in institutions like the Open University in the UK, which uses a similar model to convert learning hours into credits for its microcredential offerings.

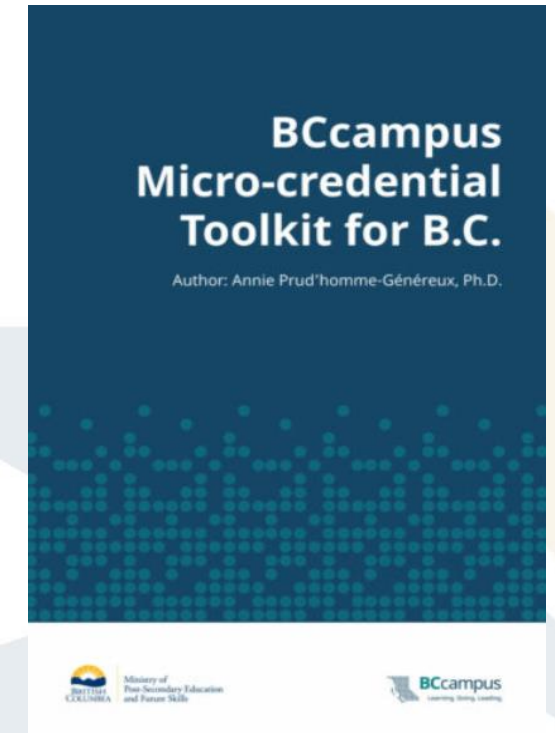
On completing the microcredential you will receive an undergraduate university level qualification worth 10 undergraduate university credits.

Recognition of Micro Credential

BC campus has developed a **Micro-credential Toolkit** that facilitates the recognition of micro-credentials across institutions.

They have implemented a **credit bank** system that allows learners to transfer their micro-credential credits as **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)** credits at other institutions.

This system enhances the portability and recognition of micro-credentials across the educational landscape, enabling learners to leverage their micro-credentials for further education or employment opportunities



Implementation of Micro Credential: *Accreditation and Quality Assurance*

Regulatory support for recognizing innovative micro-credential programs such as industry led ones

Quality Assurance

To ensure the quality and recognition of micro-credentials, institutions must adhere to specific quality assurance standards.

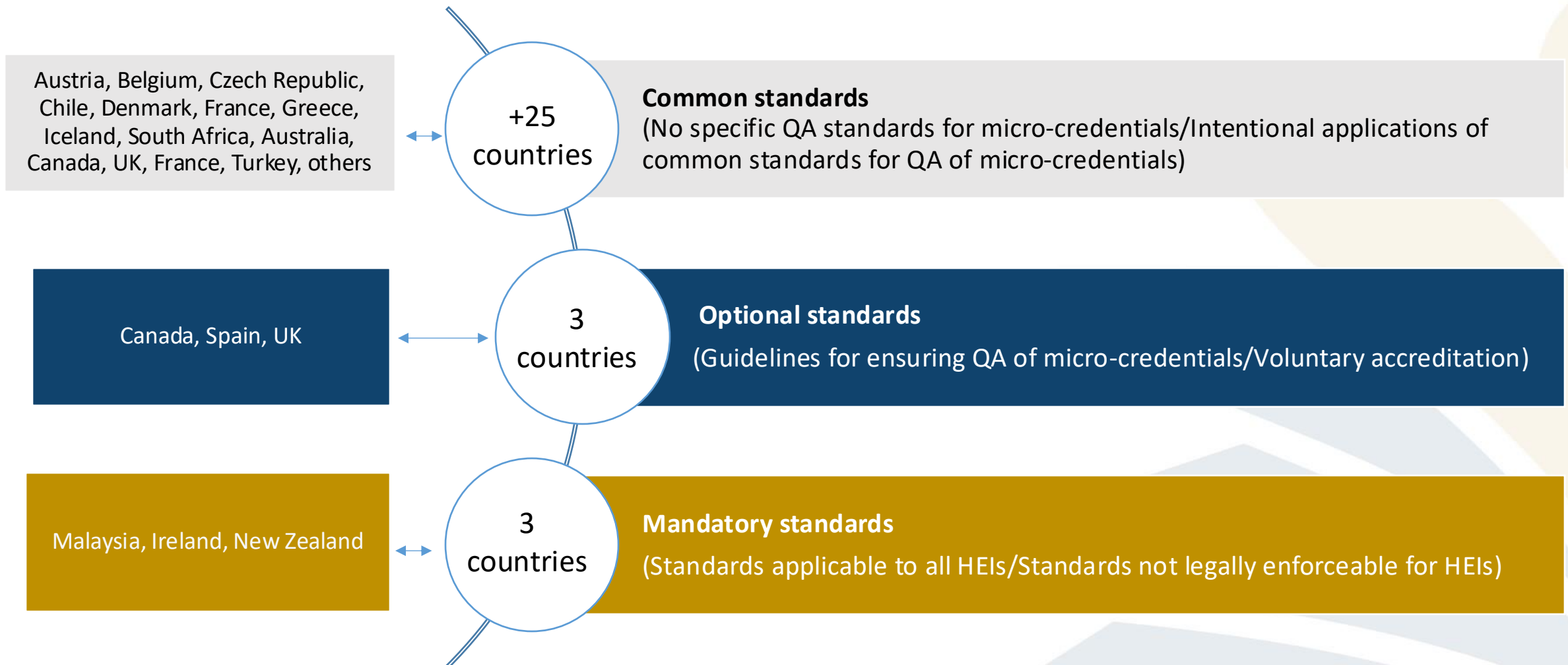
Accreditation by Recognized Bodies

Institutions should seek accreditation from relevant educational authorities or professional organizations to validate their micro-credential offerings.

Alignment With National Qualifications Frameworks:

Micro-credentials should be mapped to national frameworks to facilitate recognition and transferability. This alignment not only enhances credibility but also ensures consistency in educational standards across different institutions.

External Quality Assurance of Micro-credentials Worldwide



POMISA Project: Recognition, QA, and Regulation of Microcredentials



The POMISA project aims to contribute to the advancement of higher education and workforce development in Southern Africa by unlocking the potential of micro-credentials. Through collaborative efforts and strategic initiatives, the project seeks to establish a robust framework for the recognition, quality assurance, and regulation of micro-credentials, ultimately fostering innovation, mobility, and economic growth in the region.

Project Partners



Core Objective

Develop higher education capacity in and through micro-credential policy development in Southern African countries.

Pilot: Integration of Micro credentials in a Formal University Program

Micro Credentials/ Digital Badges on Coursera	No. of Hours to complete
Managing ADHD, Autism, Learning Disabilities, and Concussion in School	9
Diversity and Inclusion in Education	17
Teaching Children with Visual Impairment: Creating Empowering Classrooms	13
Disability Awareness and Support	7
Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability: Circles of Care and Education	15
Disability Inclusion in Education: Building Systems of Support	14

Total Hrs: 75

Two Modules

University of Technology: Certificate in Special and Inclusive Education

Understanding Diversity and Inclusion in Education

Sexuality and Reproductive Health for Inclusive Education

Characteristics of Learners with Diverse Needs

Adapted Physical Education

Leadership in Special and Inclusive Schools

Dietary Requirements for Children with Special Needs

Soft Skills Essential with Proficiency in English Language

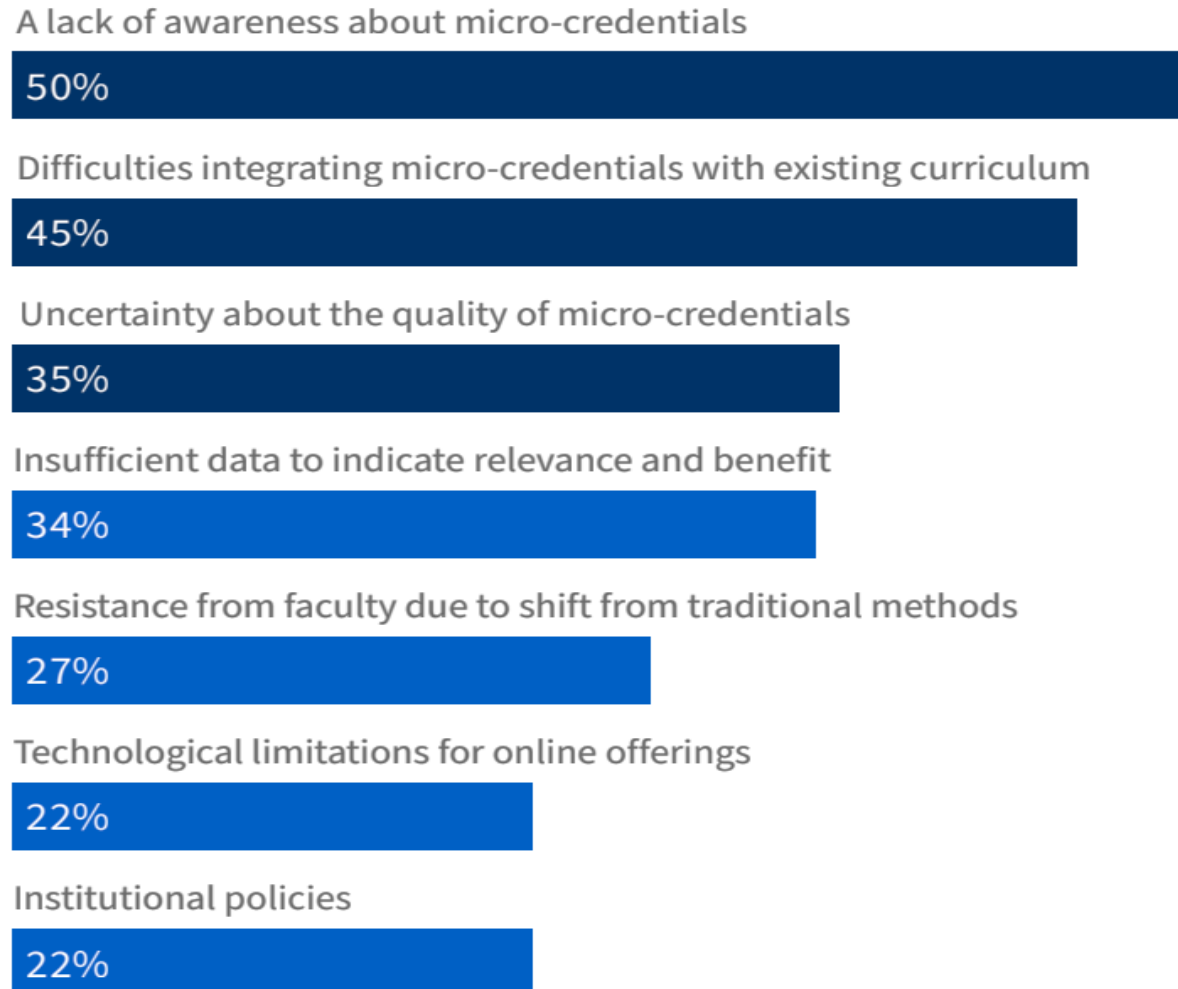
Creative Arts for Special and Inclusive Education

Social and Emotional wellness

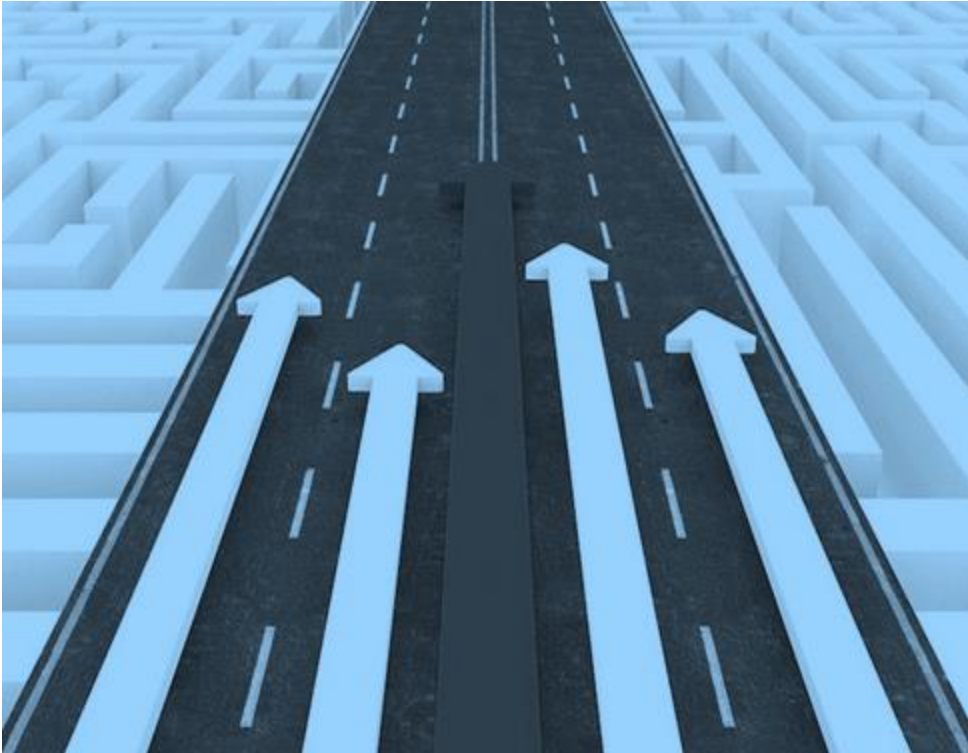
Teaching Approaches in Inclusive Schools (Work Placement)

Total Credits: 150 NCVTS/ 60 ECTS

Main barriers at institutions to integrate micro credentials



Way forward: Questions



- Policy ?
- Recognition process ?
- Alignment with ACQF , SADC , NCVTS, NQF?
- External QA mechanism ?
- Funding?
- Regional framework???



Thank you

Acknowledgment: A. Roopchand, V. Maghoo, N. Baguant and M. Buntoo