Pilot Framework for Micro-Credentials Development

MS2

D3.2 Development of concept and accreditation for use, of Master's component modules as micro-credentials

WP3: Joint SmUCS Master Programme Development and Micro-Credential Development

Executive summary/abstract:

The specific objective of Work Package 3 is the development of a new Joint SmUCS Master's programme. The new joint SmUCS Master's will incorporate innovative inter-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches to the curricula and integrating student-centred learning approaches and innovative pedagogies as outline in the WP objectives. A key consideration for the EU-CONEXUS consortium is that the Joint SmUCS Master programme provides flexible learning opportunities and alternative learning pathways through the rollout of micro-credentials. By offering micro-credentials, the EU-CONEXUS Universities are providing enhanced and flexible pathways to increase students' opportunity to study learn and research within all nine partner Universities and raise the profile and accessibility of the EU-CONEXUS consortium. Micro-credentials will form an important foundation within the new SmUCS Joint Masters programme and thus prior to identification and selection of the micro-credentials an EU-CONEXUS position framework was required. The EU-CONEXUS position paper on micro-credentials states the context in which micro-credentials will be developed and provides a definite guide to the essential components of the EU-CONEXUS micro-credentials.

Description:

The development of the micro-credentials position paper is a milestone of D3.2 Development of concept and accreditation for use, of Master's component modules as micro-credentials. Therefore, it was necessary to developing an EU-CONEXUS specific framework to guide the selection and curricula development of micro-credentials to support the concept and accessibility of the SmUCS Joint Master Programme.

Work package 3 leaders based in the School of Education and Lifelong Learning in SETU established an EU- CONEXUS began meetings and consultation in November 2022. SETU instigated, as work package leader, a micro-credentials working group. The working group constructed through research, consultation and discussion the first draft of the EU-CONEXUS position paper, which was presented to the EU-CONEXUS Academic Council in early 2023. Feedback was invited from the Academic Council and incorporated the second draft of the micro-credentials position paper. The micro-credentials position paper was fully ratified by the EU-CONEXUS Academic Council in April 2023.

Discussion:

The initial milestone for D3.2 consisted of the development of a pilot framework position paper for micro-credentials. The position paper was due in month 4 (Feb 2023) of the project plan. Developing an EU-CONEXUS position paper on micro-credentials required comprehensive consultation process with all EU-CONEXUS partners. Therefore, the original timeline to complete the position paper was underestimated.

Conclusion:

Presented below is the full EU-CONEXUS position paper on micro-credentials

1.1 Introduction and context

This position paper has been developed as part of EU-CONEXUS work package 3. The purpose of the paper is to propose a framework for the recognition and approval of micro-

credentials across all EU-CONEXUS partners.

This paper proposes a quality framework for the development of micro-credentials across the EU-CONEXUS consortium and offers guiding principles for micro-credentials for EU-CONEXUS. The quality framework will ensure consistency and alignment to the European Quality Framework (EQF) standards, offer a positive engagement experience for both internal and external stakeholders and ensure that quality assurance of micro-credentials is grounded in good practice, informed by appropriate current European policy and is proportionate in terms of the ease of award creation.

Across the educational landscape, micro-credentials are already prevalent and take many different forms (digital badges, e-badges, MOOC's). This Paper will focus on micro-credentials for credit in Higher Education.

The aim of this paper is to outline current EU policy in relation to micro-credentials in Higher Education and propose a framework for micro-credentials for EU-CONEXUS. The paper sets out a number of overarching principles for the development and approval of micro-credentials and refers to other EU University consortia projects that address micro-credential development in European Higher Education Institutions.

The Paper will describe the characteristics of micro-credentials (MC) and the challenges and opportunities present for the higher education sector with a particular focus of accreditation of micro-credentials.

1.2   Introduction to micro-credentials

A micro-credential is a proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience (EC, 2020). In June 2020, the European Commission presented the first European definition and recommended approach to micro-credentials. The EC defines micro-credentials as

'the record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning.

These learning outcomes will have been assessed against transparent and clearly defined criteria. Learning experiences leading to micro-credentials are designed to provide the learner with specific knowledge, skills and competences that respond to societal, personal, and cultural or labour market needs.

Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared and are portable. They may be stand-alone or combined into larger credentials. They are underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards in the relevant sector or area of activity'

(EU, Commission, 2020)

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Micro-credentials can facilitate the requirement of learners to engage with learning at a micro level. As such, they represent an alternative approach to personal and professional development whereby an individual's skills, achievements, and accomplishments can be recognised. They can provide the opportunity to sample a topic or to embrace highly focussed upskilling and, as such lend themselves to reskilling, upskilling, and cross-skilling to manage career pathways. The development of a coherent, robust and innovative framework is important to support the validity, credibility and recognition of micro-credentials.

The recent increase in interest in micro-credentials has been driven by the growth and expansion of online learning, in part due to Covid-19, and the need to upskill rapidly post the pandemic. Micro-credentials are also seen as a means to offer third level students additional relevant learning opportunities that may augment their employability prospects. They can offer lifelong learners an opportunity to access a form of flexible third level provision and they may also assist Universities in responding to accelerated global shifts that require upskilling in specific disciplines and indeed in new fields of learning.

The EU policy underpinning the development of micro-credentials includes the European Council Recommendation on Micro-credentials (2022), A Vision for a European Education Area 2025 (EC,2020), the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 (EC, 2020), the EU Green Deal (EC, 2020) and the European Pillar of Social Rights (2017).

The above policies refer to using micro-credentials as a mechanism for inclusion and continued access to lifelong learning, supporting the complex upskilling required for European and global markets of the future and widen learning opportunities for non-traditional learners in Higher Education.

1.3   European Frameworks and Policy for micro-credentials

Across the policy spectrum within the European Union there is growing support for micro-credentials. The European Pillar of Social Rights (2017) states that everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable people to participate fully in society. The European Pillar of Social Rights specifically addresses micro-credentials as a mechanism, which can support the education, social and economic participation rights of EU citizens by providing 'flexible learning pathways and support workers on their job or during professional transitions'. Furthermore, micro- credentials can support EU's 2030 targets of 60% of all adults participating in training every year and an employment rate of at least 78%. The EU has included micro-credentials in its approach to education, training, skills development and digital education which is represented in the following policy documents:

- The European Skills Agenda: Of its 12 flagship actions, a new initiative on a European approach to micro-credentials. This new initiative aims to support the quality, transparency and uptake of micro-credentials across the EU (COM (2020) 274).
- European Education Area by 2025: Develop a European approach to micro-credentials for higher education institutions and VET institutions (COM (2020) 625).
- The Council Recommendation on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience calls on the Commission to 'explore the concept and use of micro-credentials' (OJ C 417, 2.12.2020, p. 1.).
- European Universities Initiative: micro-credentials could help widen learning opportunities to accommodate non-traditional learners and the demand for new skills in the labour market (J C 221, 10.6.2021, p. 14).
- The Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027: accessible learning opportunities for digital skills and support Commission's '2030 Digital Compass' plan to develop a digitally skilled population 2030 (COM (2020) 624 final).
- European Green Deal: which is Europe's growth strategy aiming to transform its economy and society and put them on a more sustainable path (COM)(2019) 640 final).

Micro-credentials were referenced in the 2020 Communiqué of the Ministers of Education in the EHEA (European Higher Education Area) to respond to learners' needs for upskilling and re-skilling (Ministers for Higher Education, 2020). The Rome Ministerial Communiqué was adopted on 19 November 2020 by the 49 ministers responsible for higher education, in which they identify a potential to democratise knowledge and to sustain lifelong learning through micro-credentials. In 2021, the European Commission launched a public consultation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability. A focus of the consultation was to develop a consensus on a definition for micro-credentials.

The European Commission set up an expert group on the role of Higher Education in a European Approach to micro-credentials. The expert group's recommendations were published in 2020 and adopted by the Commission in Dec 2021 and by member states in 2022.

To strengthen lifelong learning, the Council recommended member states adopt a European approach to micro-credentials and to apply a common EU definition, EU standards and key principles for the design and issuance of micro-credentials. The adoption of a common approach provides member states, stakeholders and providers with a framework in which to develop micro-credentials in a coherent way through standardization of learning outcomes, effort hours required to achieve the learning outcomes and the type of assessment. The adoption of a European definition and common approach to micro-credentials is a considerable step forward in terms of policy and application of micro-credentials in Higher and VET education sectors.

1.4 What are micro-credentials?

While differences exist across emerging definitions of micro-credentials notwithstanding the European Commission's definition, there are also some common factors. In the majority of definitions, the duration of the education programme associated with micro-credentials is described as "short" or the volume of learning associated with the credential as "small".

UNESCO (2021) adds to the above EU definitions suggesting '*a micro-credential is a record of focused learning achievement verifying what the learners knows, understand or can do; includes assessment based on clearly defined standards and is awarded by a trusted provider; has stand-alone value and may also contribute to or complement other micro-credentials or macro-credentials, including through recognition of prior learning; and meets the standards required by quality assurance'.*

Micro-credential programmes are often designed to be more flexible in their delivery, compared to traditional degree programmes. As a result, it has been argued that the term "small" is most appropriate in order to maximise inclusiveness in the definition of micro-credential programmes, to allow for cases where the study load is small but the period of study may be learner-directed or spread over a long period (MICROBOL, 2021).

According to the MICROBOL report (2021), micro-credentials are available in many formats. They can complement degree programmes, act as stand-alone units of learning, or can be stackable and cumulate into a larger credential. Further, they may encompass certificates, whereby a distinction is typically made between:

(1) academic certificates which signal the completion of an organised learning activity and are usually awarded by educational institutions. In some cases, they grant academic credits applicable towards degree programmes,

(2) professional/industrial certificates which are awarded by professional bodies, industries or product vendors,

(3) micro-certifications driven by industries such as IT and cyber Security,

(4) short courses provided online such as MOOCs or Small Private Online Courses (SPOCs) or on-site,

(5) boot camps (short, intensive training programmes on a very specific learning outcome/ qualification),

(6) digital badges, also called web badges or e-badges,

(7) open badges,

(8) nano-degrees

(9) micro-masters.

1.5 Characteristics of micro-credentials

Many definitions mention micro-credentials as being targeted in nature, focusing on the acquisition of specific knowledge on one topic of study, or the accomplishment of one skill. This contrasts with the holistic nature of degree programmes, which are designed to provide learners with a well-rounded and complementary set of knowledge and skills in a particular field of study. Learners may enrol in micro-credential programmes as a stepping stone to achieving a degree, but may also do so for enjoyment, as a means to further an interest or a skill not related to their career, or in order to develop professionally. Moreover, these purposes often overlap, particularly for adult learners who have already been in the workplace for many years or have previously attained higher education.

Characteristics of Micro-credentials may include:

Portable: The Higher Education unit of the European Commission, DG EAC, characterises micro-credentials as 'a recognised proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience. These learning outcomes have been assessed against transparent standards. The proof is contained in a certified document that lists the name of the holder, the achieved learning outcomes, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the qualifications framework level and the credits gained. Micro- credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared, are portable and may be combined into larger credentials or qualifications. They are underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards'.

Stackable credit: Individual credits may be accumulated to meet the outcomes of a higher award.

Recognition of Prior Learning: Micro-credentials offer an excellent opportunity to gain a taster for a topic, which may also be used to bridge an educational deficit in gaining entry to a major award by way of the Recognition of Prior Learning route.

Complementing graduate attributes: Often graduates are expected to have developed qualities outside of or more focussed than their general award. Some of these qualities may be discipline specific, while others may be more related to soft skills, ethics or civic responsibilities. Micro-credentials by virtue of being small, discrete and focussed can help graduates selectively upskill in order to target particular areas of future employment.

2.1 Design

The EC report (European Approach to Micro-credentials, 2020) states that micro-credentials are owned by the learner are portable and may be combined into larger

credentials or qualifications. In addition, the associated certificates or badges earned may be awarded in different formats, though digital and digitally signed credentials can facilitate portability, transparency, reliability of information and verification of authenticity, and thus support a fast and fair recognition process and facilitate stackability.

It is the view of the European Commission that micro-credentials should ideally be provided in digital format, according to linked open data and interoperability best practices, and in line with international standards for privacy and data protection, ensuring that the learner has control over what they wish to share and for how long. Different micro-credentials can be combined into a degree or other type of certification.

2.2 Constituent elements

Within a common European approach to micro-credentials, a common structure is required for providers to document the micro-credentials and their value.

The constitutive elements for issuing micro-credentials and the information required for each are depicted in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Constitutive elements for issuing micro-credentials (EC, 2022)

Learner Information	The learner needs to be identified and records kept within the awarding body
Provider Information	Information on the provider, including country; information on the awarding body or institution, including country (if different), including a signature or seal of the provider and/or awarding body or institution
Micro-credential information	Title, date of issuance or date of assessment, verification of authenticity
Learning Experience	Learning outcomes, workload (in ECTS, when possible), assessment and form of quality assurance
QF Level	EQF level, ISCED level & subject area code, SQF level (if needed)
Participation	Form of participation in the learning activities and access requirements

3.1   Quality Assurance

Two different qualifications frameworks coexist at the European level: the **European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)**, which is defined and further

elaborated below, and the **Overarching Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA).** (Bologna Working Group, 2005; Commission, 2012). These frameworks are compatible with each other for higher education qualifications (European Commission, 2020). The European Qualifications Framework allows for the referencing of entities smaller than full qualifications from the national education and training systems. Therefore, it already provides a basis for the inclusion of micro-credentials.

3.2   Recognition

Recognition of micro-credentials, awarded by HEIs and by other providers, is already possible using existing recognition instruments, which can serve to play a key role in enhancing inclusion in higher education. According to MICROBOL (2022), if all the constitutive elements discussed above are accurately included, it is possible for HEIs or external bodies to assess such micro-credentials in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention principles. However, if these elements are not transparently recorded in the micro-credential, i.e. the credential itself does not provide enough information to be a guarantee of the learning outcomes acquired, recognition is still possible, by using a RPL-procedure (recognition of prior learning and validation of non-formal and informal learning). It is also worth noting that digitalization of credentials supports recognition, as it enables portability, transparency and reliability of information and verification of authenticity (MICROBOL, 2022).

3.3 Learning Outcomes and ECTS

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is used by 48 countries within the European Higher Education Area. From the perspective of higher education, the ECTS is a recognised mechanism to make the learning outcomes and the estimated workload of a course visible and part of the Bologna Process. The expression of micro-credentials in ECTS provides a recognisable system – as this is a basic tool of the Bologna Process – which clearly reflects their smaller volume compared to a full degree. To achieve this, however, ECTS needs to be understood and implemented correctly. It is particularly important to clarify that ECTS credits comprise two elements: learning outcomes, which are verifiable descriptions of the competences the learner will be able to demonstrate at the end of a learning experience, and volume of learning, understood as the amount of time in general a learner would employ in order to form those competences.

It is important to note that, the European Commission's recommended definition of micro-credentials does not specify an exact number of ECTS. The table below provides an indication of the range for micro-credentials already established in the EU-CONEXUS states.

Table 2. Current position in EU CONEXUS partners for Micro-credentials

Member state	Range of ECTS
France	TBC
Spain	1 - 15 ECTS
Greece	1 ECTS (no maxmimum)
Lithuania	TBC
Croatia	TBC
Romania	Not recognised in the law
Ireland	1 - 30 ECTS
Germany	Not recognised in the law at national level but some examples at Federal/regional level exist
Cyprus	TBC

3.4 Assessment

The EU Memorandum supporting micro-credentials suggests that assessment should be aligned with learning outcomes, transparent and overseen by a quality assurance framework.

4.1 EU CONEXUS Micro-credentials implementation

The EU-CONEXUS Working Group on Micro-credentials has reviewed the relevant EU policy position and has also explored the current position in each EU CONEXUS partner.

This desk research investigated whether:

   a. There was a national policy/strategy for micro-credentials in the Partner country?
   b. Whether the EU-CONEXUS partner had a framework for the approval of micro- credentials in its University?

Currently three EU-CONEXUS partners have a national framework in place (SETU, UCV, and AUA), others are in development phase.

The question of the recognition of EU-CONEXUS micro-credential in each Partner will need to be addressed.

Both SETU (Ireland) and UCV (Spain) have national policies in place for micro-credentials and both universities have a framework in place to approve micro-credentials from 1 to 15 ECTS (UCV) and 1 to 30 ECTS (SETU).

In Greece, micro-credentials, while not formally recognized and included in the national qualification system, have been endorsed in continuing professional development as a strategy for upskilling and reskilling. The Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) is part of Greece's efforts to improve lifelong learning policies and practices, aid transparency and comparability of qualifications, and enhance mobility. It has become a main instrument for reforming the Greek education system, and a new law adopted in 2020 is reshaping the institutional framework of vocational education and training (VET) and lifelong learning policies in Greece. A regulatory framework has been established to govern the functioning of lifelong learning centers (Centers for Education and Lifelong Learning) which provide ongoing vocational training, adult education, career guidance, and continuous counseling. Greek Universities have all implemented this framework and created numerous curricula to promote education and training. The Center for Education and Lifelong Learning (KE.DI.VI.M.) of the Agricultural University of Athens (established in 2018) is currently providing 13 curricula of varying educational forms of learning, outcomes and topics.

4.2 EU-CONEXUS DRAFT FRAMEWORK

Proposed Principles supporting Micro-credentials across EU-CONEXUS

1. Micro-credentials are short learning experiences, credit based and aligned to the ECTS and EQF quality standards.

2. Micro-credentials are subject to a robust and rigorous quality assurance process.

3. Micro-credentials should represent competencies identified by employers/stakeholders to meet employability/access to higher education or professional development needs.

4. Micro-credentials should be informed by interests of stakeholders, as well as the EU- CONEXUS overarching goals and objectives.

5. Micro-credentials may provide clear and seamless pathways across different credentials and may be stackable.

6. Micro-credentials are based on assessed proficiency of a competency, not on time-spent learning.

7. Micro-credentials are secure, trackable, portable and competency is documented in students' academic records.

8. Micro-credentials should follow an agreed quality approval processes*.

9. Micro-credential policy in the EU-CONEXUS consortium should follow the emerging European policy framework and the national context in each CONEXUS partner country. Guidelines should be cognisant and mindful of international practice,

bearing in mind how Micro-credentials can be a complement to traditional credentials (certificate, diploma, bachelor, degree or Master) or stand alone.

*   *Micro-credentials should be measured; performance should be monitored and measurement data be collected through metrics including student retention figures for a micro-credential award; student engagement and satisfaction with the operation of and outcomes from a micro-credential award; periodic evaluation of the awards portfolio, feedback from employers and international benchmarks.*

4.3 Proposed Framework for Micro-credentials for EU CONEXUS

The EU-CONEXUS consortium recognises the emerging EU policy framework for the development of micro-credentials in Higher Education. The proposed framework includes a working definition of a micro-credential, the supporting principles and characteristics of micro-credentials, the potential use of micro-credentials for enhanced access, upskilling and re-skilling and augmenting graduate employability and the academic approval process for micro-credentials within the EU-CONEXUS consortium.

4.4 Definition of a Micro-credential

EU-CONEXUS draws the European Commission recommendation adopted by the Council of the European Union (EU) on 16 June 2022.

Micro-credentials are defined as **'a recognised proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience**

These learning outcomes have been assessed against transparent standards. The proof is contained in a certified document that lists the name of the holder, the achieved learning outcomes, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the qualifications framework level and the credits gained. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared, are portable and may be combined into larger credentials or qualifications. They are underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards.

The EU-CONEXUS framework for micro-credentials recognises that micro-credentials are credit bearing and aligned to ECTS credits and the European Qualification Framework.

The EU-CONEXUS framework for micro-credentials recognises a micro-credential with an ECTS credit value up to **30 ECTS**. There is no minimum number of ECTS credits i.e. the credit value can be from 1 ECTS to **30 ECTS**.

The number of effort hours for 1ECTS differs across EU-CONEXUS partners. It is typically between 20 and 27 effort hours. This paper proposes 25 effort hours per 1 ECTS.

The number of contact hours is flexible and may depend on the nature of the micro-credential. This paper would advise a combination of live contact hours (online or in-

person), asynchronous hours (not live but maybe based on directed activities) and self-directed learning hours.

The contact hours may differ and decisions on how many contact hours will be sufficient needs a full discussion across all partners.

Micro-credentials developed within the EU-CONEXUS framework may be used to:

- Provide opportunities for upskilling or reskilling in defined, evidence based, areas of skill or competence need.
- Offer enhanced access to non-traditional learners (for example lifelong learners) to access short learning opportunities in higher education.
- Augment an existing Bachelor or Master programme by offering students additional opportunities to access multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary learning such as a new skill or competence (not necessarily linked to their programme of study).

4.5 Proposed Academic Approval process for Micro-credentials in the EU-CONEXUS consortium

All proposed micro-credentials must complete the designated application form (Appendix 1) which details the rationale, credit value, assessment and delivery of the proposed micro-credential.

- The Micro-credential application form should be submitted from to the Office for Development of Study Offers - ODSO (led by UNIZD). All applications require an internal sign off within each Partner institution (details are on the application form).
- The ODSO will convene a panel of academic and stakeholder representatives
- A representative of ODSO should be a panel member for all reviews.
- Associate partners (where appropriate) may also be invited to review applications.
- This Micro-credential review panel will consist of a minimum of 5 members, one member from SETU, one from UNIZD and 3 other nominees from the EU-CONEXUS consortium.

The ODSO will seek nominees from the EU-CONEXUS Academic Council.

The Micro-credential review panel will meet as and when required.

- The review panels' recommendations for approval of applications for micro-credentials will be brought to the EU-CONEXUS Academic Council for approval. In the case of non-approval, the review panel will make recommendations to the proposer and the proposer will be invited to re-submit

to the ODSO.The EU-CONEXUS Academic Council will formally approve the micro-credentials and communicate this approval to the proposer.

- This is a proposed approval process and the suggestion at this point is to pilot this process for one year (May 2023 to May 2024) to assess its effectiveness. This is a new process for all members of the EU-CONEXUS consortium and may require adaptation and change following implementation.

The proposed date for implementation is May, 2023.

Appendix 1: EU-CONEXUS Micro-credential Application Form

Name of Proposing Institutions: **Name of Academic** **Lead/Coordinator:**	
Proposed Name for micro-credential	
Applicant(s) Home Institution(s)	
Micro-credential Proposer(s)	
Micro-credential Proposer(s) Email(s)	
Stakeholders involved	
Target learners **(upgrading, reskilling and similar)**	
Micro-credential Description (include rationale and target learners)	To include: - Indicative content - Number of synchronous and asynchronous contact hours - Rationale - Target learners - Mode of delivery
Learning Outcome(s) / Achievement(s)	
Description of the Learning Process	

ECTS credit amount	
Entry Requirements	
Assessment / Evaluation (how assessed & link to the learning outcome)	• How it the assessment linked to the learning outcome (s) • Type of assessment • Verification of learner identity
Assessment **Evidence**	
Micro-credential Tags * (key words (skill, context, etc.))	
Head of School/Faculty or Academic Unit/Institution (signature)	Confirmation from the Partner (s) proposing the micro-credential that they have approval to do so from their Institution (We will require a nominee from each Partner for sign off on the application)

Appendix 2 : European funded projects for Micro-Credentials

MICROBOL (Home - MicroBol (microcredentials.eu) is an Erasmus+ project. The project is linked to the aims of the new Erasmus+ Programme and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) to increase access to continuous learning for all learners, regardless of age or experience. These learners include regular higher education students, but also all those who want to improve their knowledge, skills and competences. The Microbol project has produced a framework based on a review of European policy and the work of the partners.

MicroCreds (MicroCreds | Irish Universities Association (iua.ie) is an Irish project funded by national funding (Human Capital Initiative) and is a 5-year (2020-2025), multi-campus micro- credentials project led by the Irish Universities Association (IUA) in partnership with University College Dublin, University College Cork, University of Limerick, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, University of Galway and Maynooth University. The MicroCreds project aims to deliver a national framework for quality assurance and accreditation on micro- credentials. The framework will provide all learners with a pathway from bite-size micro- credentials to larger awards, while providing flexibility for the learner and their changing needs as they progress through their career path. As part of the project MicroCreds partners are collaborating to develop, pilot and evaluate the building blocks required for a transformation in lifelong and life-wide learning through micro-credentials.

MicroHE (Home - MicroHE (microcredentials.eu) is an Erasmus+ funded project. The MicroHE project started in 2018, with the aim to provide a comprehensive policy analysis conducted of the impact of modularisation, unbundling and micro-credentialing in European Higher Education. Its expected impact was to increase the quality and quantity of micro- credentials on offer within the European Higher Education Area, as well as enable recognition of those same credentials by different educational organizations and employers.

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