

Microcredentials

June 2021

In the light of increased activity and Australian Government policy initiatives, this Spotlight provides links to deeper reading through key publications on the topic of microcredentials in higher education.

From the Learning & Teaching Repository

Higher education standards in a disaggregated learning environment

Christine Ewan

This report outlines priorities and possible future developments for Australia in disaggregated higher education. Based on national consultation, it identifies the challenges they pose to traditional approaches to quality assurance.

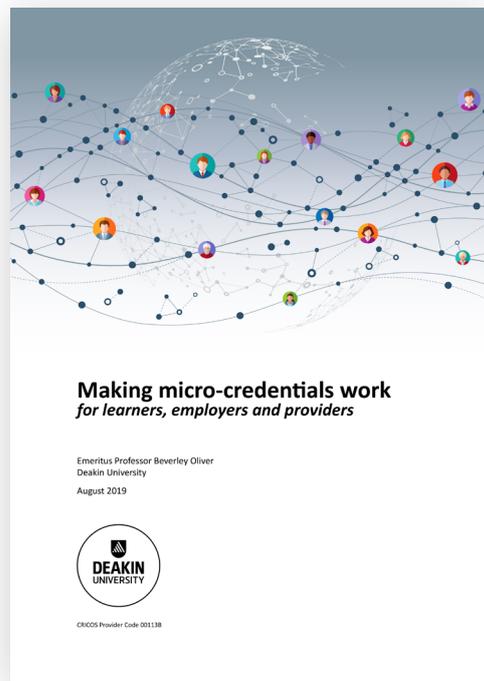
21C credentials: Curate, credential and carry forward digital learning evidence

This seminal project prompted a focus on the affordances and potential pitfalls of microcredentials, networking across the sector nationally and globally to find new, efficient methods to warrant outcomes and standards.

Case studies: Better 21C credentials: Evaluating the promise, perils and disruptive potential of digital credentials

Analysis of 19 case studies against 5 criteria for excellent credentials that:

1. communicate achievement of appropriate outcomes and standards
2. are based on judgments of rich evidence created in response to authentic assessments
3. maximise assessment integrity
4. balance time and money invested by the learner with benefits realised
5. are sustainable



Making micro-credentials work for learners, employers and providers

A report by Emeritus Professor Beverley Oliver defines a micro-credential as:

a certification of assessed learning that is additional, alternative, complementary to or a component part of a formal qualification

It also highlights the potential role for UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) as a classification for mapping education programmes and qualifications.

Policy: Australian Qualifications Framework Review 2019

The AQF Review's final report and supporting research papers discuss recognition of shorter form credentials, including microcredentials, noting that data is currently limited, although most Australian universities are offering or developing some kind of microcredential.

desegov.au/reviews-and-consultations/australian-qualifications-framework-review

What's in a name?

While the Australian Government is settling on microcredentials as the common term, the literature reveals many variations as providers position their own brands.

alternative credentials

badges

career certificates

hallmarks

micro-certifications

credegrees

professional certificates

mini degrees

nano degrees

OpenCreds

digital badges

web badges

micro-pathway

MicroMasters

open badges



Further reading

Special Issue of the *Journal of Teaching and Learning for Graduate Employability: Micro-credentials and qualifications for future work and learning in a disrupted world*

Published February 2021

Foreword by Professor Sally Kift on the future of learning and credentialing and the need for policy coherence.

Articles by Ratna Malar Selvaratnam, Michael Sankey David Boud, Trina Jorre de St Jorre, Michael Healy, Joy Perkins, and Mary Pryor. Does the move to micro-credentials expose the deficiencies of existing credentials?

What are students and employers expecting?

Websites, reports and reviews promote the following features of microcredentials.

personalised

stackable

affordable

portable

career-focussed

on-demand

recognised

online

lifelong learning

short

just-in-time

self-paced

learning for earning

The Universities Australia Learning and Teaching Repository is a collection of higher education learning and teaching research valuable to university academics. It welcomes submissions related to microcredentials from Australian university staff.

Email the Repository: contact@ltr.edu.au