

“We shape our tools and thereafter
our tools shape us”

Marshall McLuhan

A close-up photograph of a cork stopper lying horizontally on a dark, textured surface. The cork is light brown with a natural, porous texture. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the cork and the surface it rests on.

Micro-credentials Uncorked

Does Quality Assurance Age Well?



Credentials Cartographer

Recognition Technologist

... Food Sniper



CREDENTIALS

CREDENTIALS EVERYWHERE

@james_monaghan

Inclusion

Non-Formal
(Community-centred)

Empowerment

Collective Badges

Dream Badges

Affiliation Badges

Self-Issued Badges

Scout Badges

Peer Issued Badges

Peer Endorsed Badges

Recognition

Traditional
(Static/Past)

Non-Traditional
(Dynamic/Future)

Competency Badges

Conversational Badges

Micro-Credentials

Smart Badges

Nano-Diplomas

Badges as *launchpads*

Diplomas

Conformance

Formal
(Institution-centred)

Enabling



CREDENTIAL CONFUSION: A CALL FOR UNIFORMITY IN PRACTICE AND TERMINOLOGY

Insights from a June,
2023 Survey

"As colleges and universities continue to confront digital transformation, they must ask themselves, 'What does our core product — the educational credential — evolve to look like in a more data-rich, technology-centric world?' Sean Gallagher - August 10, 2023

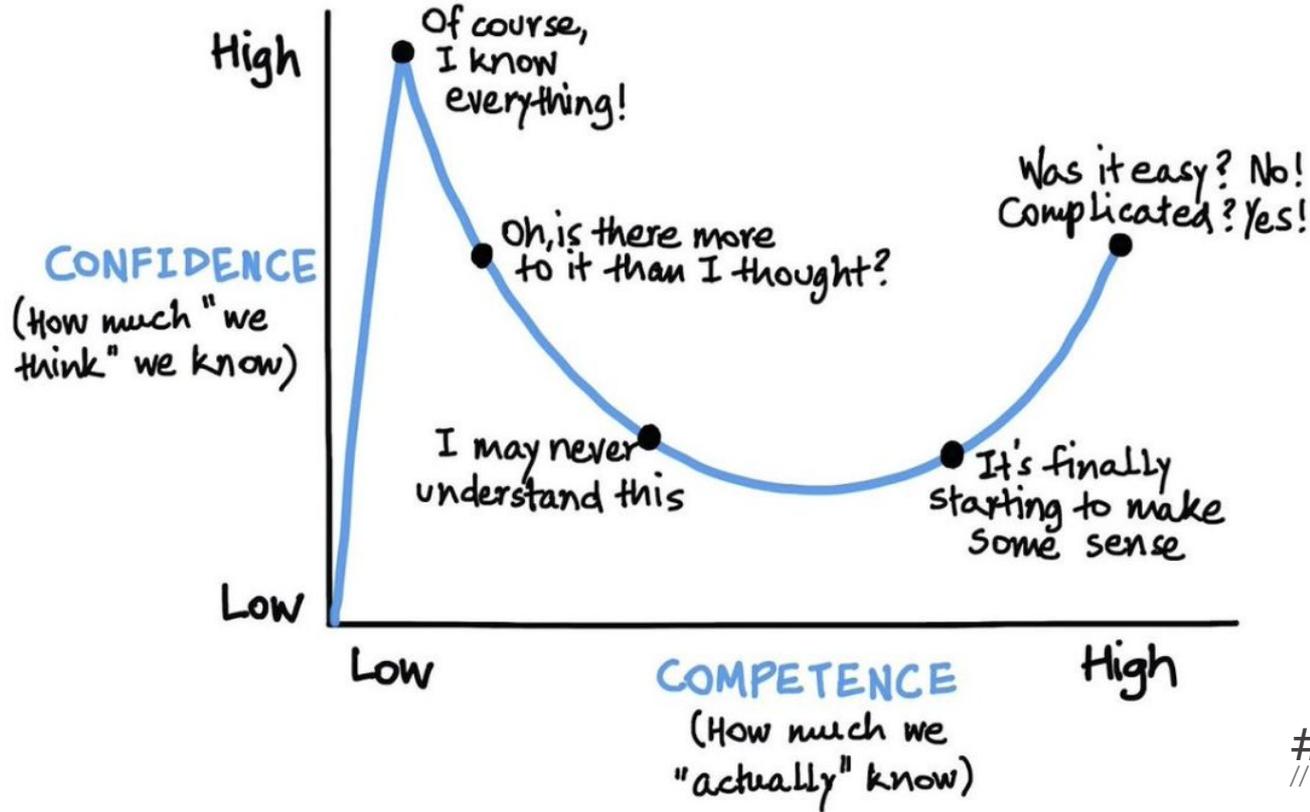
**CREATES AN
ONLINE SHORT COURSE**



**CALLS IT A
'MICROCREDENTIAL'**

imgflip.com

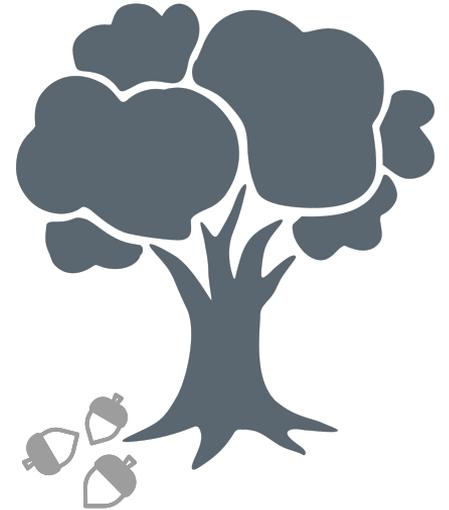
The Hype Cycle of Competence



#Dunning-Kruger Effect
// unskilled and unaware

“the **badge** is to the **microcredential** as the **diploma** is to the **degree**.”

Source: AACRAO

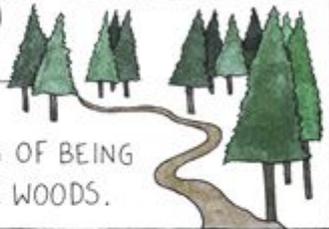


Words have power

And the most powerful tech
today is built on them

Untranslatable words have SUPERpowers

WALDEINSAMKEIT
(german)



THE FEELING OF BEING ALONE IN THE WOODS.

IKTSUARPOK
(inuit)

THE FEELING OF ANTICIPATION THAT LEADS YOU TO KEEP LOOKING OUTSIDE TO SEE IF ANYONE IS COMING.



SOBREMESA
(spanish)

the time spent after lunch or dinner, talking to the people you shared the meal with.



THE ACT OF SCRATCHING YOUR HEAD IN ORDER TO HELP YOU REMEMBER SOMETHING YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN.

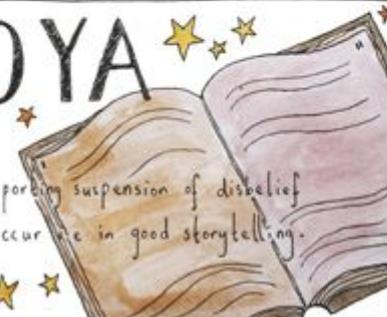
(hawaiian)

PANA PO'ONO



GOYA
(urdu)

the transporting suspension of disbelief that can occur in good storytelling.



JAYUS
(indonesian)

A JOKE TOLD SO POORLY AND SO UNFUNNY THAT ONE CANNOT HELP BUT LAUGH.





unesco

Towards a common definition of micro-credentials



Microcredentials are unregulated, which differentiates them from much of the education system. This has led to significant variability in quality and transparency. Learners often compare microcredentials on the basis of incomplete information. By setting minimum standards, this framework can enable learners to make informed decisions when choosing microcredentials. The following tables outline critical information requirements, with an explanation of each requirement and its status, as well as those elements that are merely recommended as good practice. Providers should consider these elements when designing microcredentials. Recommended elements have been outlined as information that may assist a learner in navigating the Microcredentials Marketplace.

4.1.1 Critical information requirements stipulate the minimum information required for all microcredentials, not just those which will sit on the Marketplace. These requirements will help assist learners, providers and employers in navigating the Marketplace, and understanding the components and key information regarding microcredentials.

Figure 1: Critical Information Requirements

Element	Status	Description
Title	Required	The title of the microcredential, described in plain English.
Provider	Required	The institution delivering the microcredential, and, if relevant, the company that developed the microcredential, i.e. XYZ Vendor microcredential being delivered by ABC University. A provider will also include partner providers, co-branding partnerships and industry endorsers. A provider is any company or institution that provides a microcredential.
Content/Description	Required	A description of the structure of the microcredential and a summary of the content that will be taught, i.e. key topics.
Learning Outcomes	Required	The knowledge, skills or competencies a student will acquire upon completing a microcredential. Guidance on these learning outcomes is outlined in Section 5.1 .
Language	Required	The language/s of instruction in which a microcredential will be taught in/ assessed. In an attempt to recognise interoperability and global citizenship, microcredentials may be offered in multiple languages.
Delivery Mode	Required	The method of delivery of a microcredential, e.g. onsite, online or a combination of both, and whether the microcredential requires synchronous engagement or is asynchronous. Where delivery is onsite, the location(s) will

European standard elements to describe a micro-credential

This annex includes a list of common European standard elements to describe micro-credentials recommended as a resource to support implementation²⁷.

Mandatory elements:	Identification of the learner
	Title of the micro-credential
	Country(ies)/Region(s) of the issuer
	Awarding body(ies)
	Date of issuing
	Learning outcomes
	Notional workload needed to achieve the learning outcomes (in ECTS credits, where possible)
	Level (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (EQF, QF-EHEA), if applicable
	Type of assessment
	Form of participation in the learning activity
	Type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential
Optional elements, where relevant (non-exhaustive list)	Prerequisites needed to enrol in the learning activity
	Supervision and identity verification during assessment (unsupervised with no identity verification, supervised with no identity verification, supervised online, or onsite with identity verification)
	Grade achieved
	Integration/stackability options (stand-alone, independent micro-credential/integrated, stackable towards another credential)
	Further information

²⁷ The use of the European standard elements to describe micro-credentials does not, in itself, imply official validation or recognition, but is a key enabler for it.



A EUROPEAN APPROACH TO MICRO-CREDENTIALS

[Home](#) > [Blog](#)

February 26, 2024

Navigating The Micro-Credential Landscape: A Global Mapping Initiative

Micro-credentials are innovative, stackable credentials that incrementally document what a person knows and can do. Flexibility and shorter time commitments are typical advantages of micro-credentials. But there are many different definitions of micro-credentials, making it harder to understand their meaning and value, and consequently people lose out on opportunities. Credential Engine's [Credential Transparency Description Language \(CTDL\) Advisory Group](#) has initiated a schema mapping project that aligns different micro-credential definitions from around the world in order to facilitate understanding and comparison. This mapping and the Advisory Group are open to everyone, and we thank those who are already participating. Others are welcome to contribute to the mapping, the dialogue about the comparisons, and the many uses of rich data about micro-credentials.

More Updates

February 28, 2024

New Case Study From The Bush Center Highlights Texas Tri-Agency Work On Transformation And Transparency

February 27, 2024

We're Hiring! Credential Engine Is Hiring For

POMISA Country Reports The State of Play of Microcredentials



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Micro-credentials

Tension... is Flow.

Tension #1

New
&
Not New

Tension #2

Quality
&
Value

Tension #3

Stackability
&
Stackability

Tension #4

Frameworks
&
Innovation

#1 New & Not new

“Shape-shifters”

Sharper, Shorter, Skills-based

#2 Quality & Value

Quality is documented “at rest”

Value is demonstrated “in motion”

#3 Stackability & Stackability

... toward a degree (Horizontal)

... on top of a degree (Vertical)

#4 Frameworks & Innovation

*“NQF are **contestable artifacts** of modern society and can become **bondage** if we anchor the future of learning to tools designed for the past”*

- Naledi Pandor (SAQA 30th Anniversary)

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Digital Credentials

Credentials Intelligence

=

Radical Transparency

+

Generative Recognition

"What will **recognition and credentialing** look like in a future in which we are all recognized and credentialed for things that we may have done **in collaboration with AI?**"



Noah Geisel, Head of Story, Badge Summit

The Genesis Block

In the early days of digital transformation, digital credentials promised to combat diploma fraud and ensure trust.

Today, the line between human achievement and technological assistance blurred, AI is challenging the credibility of these credentials once again.

Out of this crisis come two transformative concepts set to redefine credentialing in the AI era and usher in a new age of **Credential Intelligence**:

Radical Transparency and **Generative Recognition**

“Open Badges are the most fit credentialing technology to support any **microcredentialing strategy**”

Why: Usable, Useful, Used

OPEN BADGES

Data & Information **Inside**

Alignment	Expiration Date
Badge Criteria	Issued Date
Badge Description	Issuer
Badge Name	JSON-LD
Digital Signature	Recipient
Evidence	Verification



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Quality Assurance

How might QA Shape-shift forward ?

What are your own tensions ?

Who / What is coming for you ?

What will the QA profession look like in the age of Credentials Intelligence ?

Quality Sommeliers



Microcredentials:
the **Natural Wines** of a
Learning Renaissance





Cheers !