# Breakout session 3
# Articulation

**Johannesburg**

**08-09 May 2023**

**Radisson Blu Hotel, Sandton**
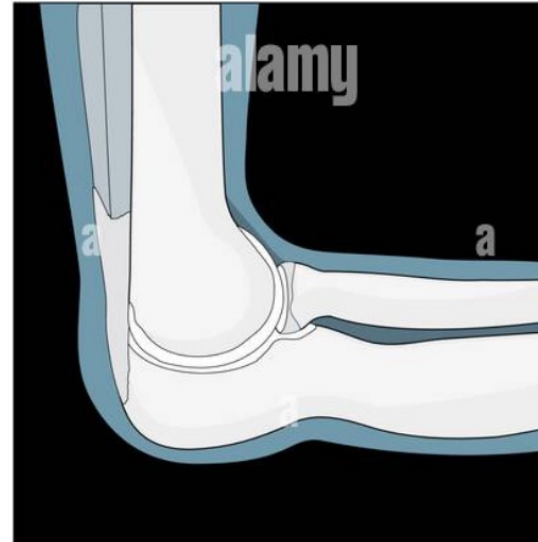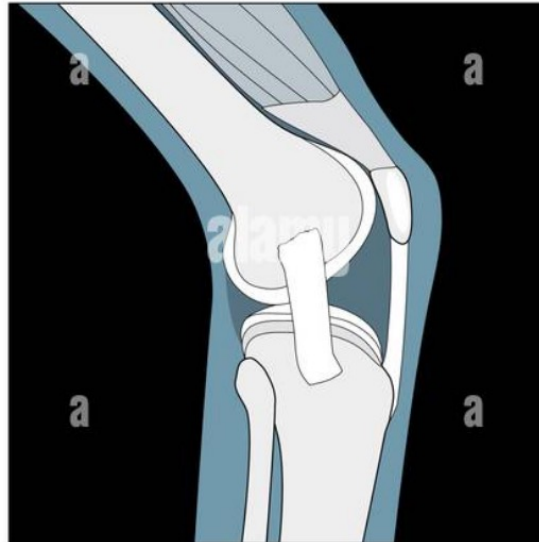
| Day Two: 09 May 2022 | |
|---|---|
| **Technical session continued** | |
| 09.00 - 10.30 | Break-Away Sessions (Continue)<br>• **Articulation**<br>• Skills for Digital and Just Transitions |
| 10.30 – 10.45 | Tea Break |
| 10.45 – 12.15 | Break-Away Sessions (Continue)<br>• Articulation<br>• Skills for Digital and Just Transitions |
| 12.15 – 13.30 | Reports from thematic groups<br>• 4 Rapporteurs |
| 13.30 – 15.00 | Lunch Break |
| **Dialogue Outcome** | |
| 15:00 - 16:00 | Presentation of Key Messages<br>Rapporteur: (Rasool) |
| 16:00 - 16:30 | Take aways and Next steps - |
| 16:30 - 16:45 | Closing |
| **End of Meeting** | |

# Session Articulation

| Time | Activity / sub-theme | Responsible / facilitator |
|---|---|---|
| 09.10-09.20 | Introduction to the session, objectives<br><br>Introduction 2 facilitators and participants. Confirmation of rapporteur | Eduarda |
| 09.20-10.00 | NQF and articulation pathways | Eduarda |
| 10.00-10.30 | RPL | Harris |
| 10.30-10.45 | Break | |
| 10.45-11.00 | RPL (continuation) | Harris |
| 11.00-11.45 | Micro-credentials | Eduarda |
| 11.45-12.00 | Results of all working groups | Eduarda-Harris |
| 12.00-12.15 | Main messages for plenary - rapporteur | |

# Articulation: thematic cluster 3

## Themes of Dialogue

1. TVET policies, governance and M&E in SADC Member States
2. Skills for Jobs - TVET responsiveness to labour market
3. **Articulation**
4. Skills for digital and just transitions and future of work

- **Concept note 3:** printed and can be downloaded (website)

## Sub-themes of this Cluster

1. NQFs
2. Articulation pathways
3. RPL
4. Micro-credentials for education, skilling, LLL and employment

# NQF and articulation

## NQF

A policy and instrument for the development and classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims at integrating and coordinating national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society. (EQF).

An instrument for the development, classification and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies along a continuum of agreed levels. It is a way of structuring existing and new qualifications, which are defined by learning outcomes – clear statements of what the learner must know or be able to do, whether learned in a classroom, on the job, or less formally. The qualifications framework indicates the comparability of different qualifications and how one can progress from one level to another, within and across occupations or industrial sectors (and even across vocational and academic fields if the NQF is designed to include both vocational and academic qualifications in a single framework). (ILO)

**Articulation** explicitly mentioned in goals / principles of NQFs in SADC: Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Seychelles, Angola, Zambia, South Africa.

## Articulation

Articulation is the process of forming possibilities of connection between qualifications and/or part-qualifications to allow for vertical, lateral and diagonal movement of learners through the formal education and training system, not neglecting its linkages with the world of work. It is on this basis that qualifications are developed and designed with such articulation options (SAQA).

- Systemic articulation is a 'joined up' system including qualifications, professional designations, policies and various other official elements that support learning and work pathways;

- Specific articulation means aligning qualifications through inter- or intra-institutional agreements such as memoranda of understanding, credit accumulation and transfer and other mechanisms;

- Individual articulation refers to learners being supported in their learning and work pathways through flexible admission, curriculum, learning and teaching, and learner support systems such as the quality of qualifications and learning, career development services, and other mechanisms;

The progression of students from one course to another, or from one education and training sector to another. Articulation arrangements facilitate the movement from a completed qualification to another with admission and/or credit in a defined qualification pathway. (NCVER).

# Articulation session: guiding questions

## NQF and Articulation pathways (1.-2.)

- How functional is the NQF in your country?

- Does the NQF in your country support articulation pathways?

- How is articulation defined in your country?

- What types of articulation arrangements are established in your country (e.g.: systemic, specific, and / or individual)? Any other modalities of articulation in place?

- Are learners, stakeholders and education and training institutions well informed on these arrangements? What advocacy approaches are used?

- What levels of NQF and sub-sectors of education and training are mostly concerned by articulation arrangements?

- Are TVET programmes and qualifications conceived and prepared for effective articulation with HE?

- To what extent are the articulation arrangements functioning and meeting their objectives?

- What have been the benefits of articulation in your country, if any? Could you share some good practice / examples?

- What are the main problems, and barriers affecting articulation and its benefits for learners?

- How can the articulation practice / mechanisms be improved in your country in a consistent and sustained manner?

- How can SADC and the SADCQF help? Would you support a reflection towards a set of common features and approach on articulation in the SADC?

# RPL

- People learn anytime, everywhere. Outcomes of prior learning in all contexts of life often remain invisible, while they can be validated, recognised, certified to give people access to new perspectives and opportunities in education and training, decent employment, entrepreneurship, social inclusion, career progression. Across the world, countries and regional communities increasingly acknowledge the value of non-formal and informal learning and many are establishing systems to make visible people's skills and knowledge gained in all learning contexts.

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL) implies the formal validation and certification of learning outcomes acquired in all learning contexts (formal, non-formal and informal). RPL is learner-centred, and individuals may combine RPL with training modules to complete a full qualification. It is also acknowledged that many countries have initiated steps to establishing a RPL mechanism but are facing challenges for effective implementation. The ILO has developed SADC RPL guidelines to assist better take up and implementation of RPL in all countries.

- RPL, non-formal and informal learning are acknowledged and supported by NQFs.

- SADC countries have been developing and implementing RPL policies, guidelines and programmes:

  - Zambia

  - South Africa

  - Malawi

  - Mozambique

  - Mauritius

  - Seychelles

  - Tanzania

  - Others

# Articulation session: guiding questions (2)

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- Is the RPL system in development or fully implemented in your country? In which sectors is it developing faster? What qualifications can be obtained via RPL?

- What are the main target groups / main applicants for RPL in your country?

- What benefits can be reported from RPL implementation in your country?

- What are the key problems and barriers to RPL?

- To what extent is RPL supporting lifelong learning? Could you share some good practice / examples?

- To what extent is RPL an enabler of articulation (pathways, mechanisms)? Could you share some good practice / examples?

- How can the SADC and SADCQF help moving further with meaningful RPL?
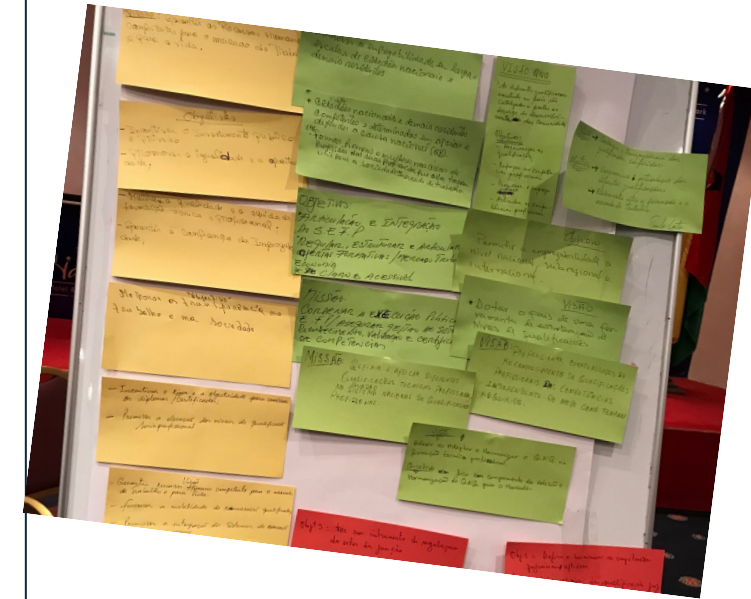
## Micro-credentials

- What is the definition of micro-credentials in your country? Are there proxies of micro-credentials in the education and training system?

- In which sectors of the economy is there growing demand for micro-credentials (or proxies)? Are employers involved?

- In which sub-sectors of education and training is there growing offer and diversity of micro-credentials?

- Are micro-credentials somehow considered / included in the NQF, or in a special register? What are the plans in this respect?

- How can micro-credentials contribute to articulation? Are there examples, good practice to be shared?

- How can SADC / SADCQF help? Would you support a reflection at regional level for a common approach to micro-credentials ?
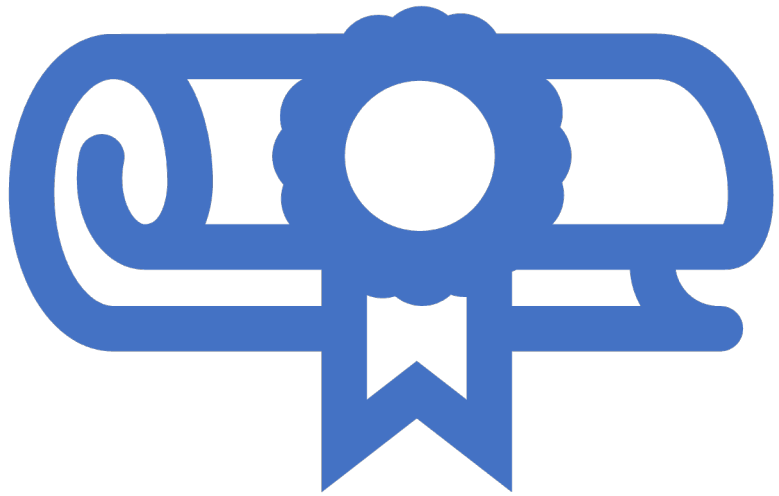
Micro-credentials

# Micro-credentials: elements of a definition

- Existing definitions (from OECD, European Commission, UNESCO, Australian Government) point to key characteristics of micro-credentials:

  - ✓ **Referring to learning over a limited time and/or in a specific area**
  - ✓ **May form part of or add to formal qualifications**
  - ✓ **Potentially 'stackable' over time, adding to individual learning careers**
  - ✓ **Given their limited size and focus, more flexible than traditional qualifications**
  - ✓ **Based on assessed learning**
  - ✓ **Frequently delivered in a digital form**.
  - ✓ Complementary to formal education and training courses and qualifications – in a lifelong learning perspective.

# Context

The number and diversity of micro-credential offerings has expanded substantially in recent years, accelerated by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A large part of all employees will need reskilling and the urgency of getting people back to work gives new momentum to "micro-credentials", which hold promises and challenges.

The common understanding on the role and potentialities of micro-credentials in the era of digital learning and economy is central to the debate. Countries, regional communities and international organisations globally are deploying initiatives to clarify the state-of-play and develop policies and measures to better contextualise micro-credentials.

# Potentialities of micro-credentials

Micro-credentials are one of the **big movements** in education and training.

The should be at **service of Big Ideas**, rather than being considered the Big Idea...

Micro-credentials can help **certify the outcomes of small, tailored learning experiences**.

They make possible the **targeted, flexible acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences** to meet new and emerging needs in society and the labour market and make it possible for individuals to fill the skill gaps they need to succeed in a fast-changing environment, while not replacing traditional qualifications.

**They can, where appropriate, complement existing qualifications**, providing added value while not undermining the core principle of full degree programmes in initial education and training.

Micro-credentials could be designed and issued by a variety of providers in different **learning settings** (formal, non-formal and informal learning settings)
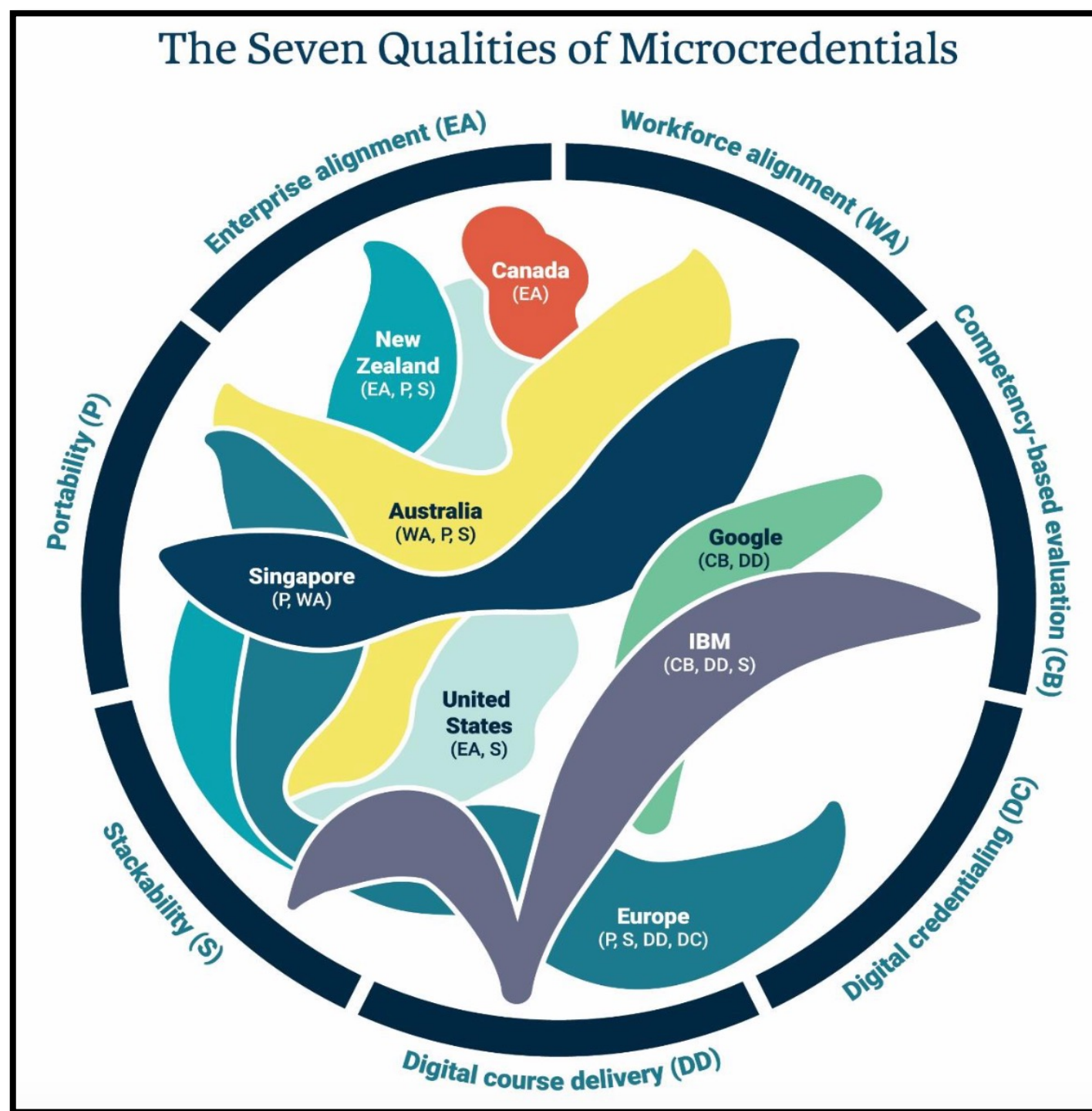
Credential ecology: quadrants
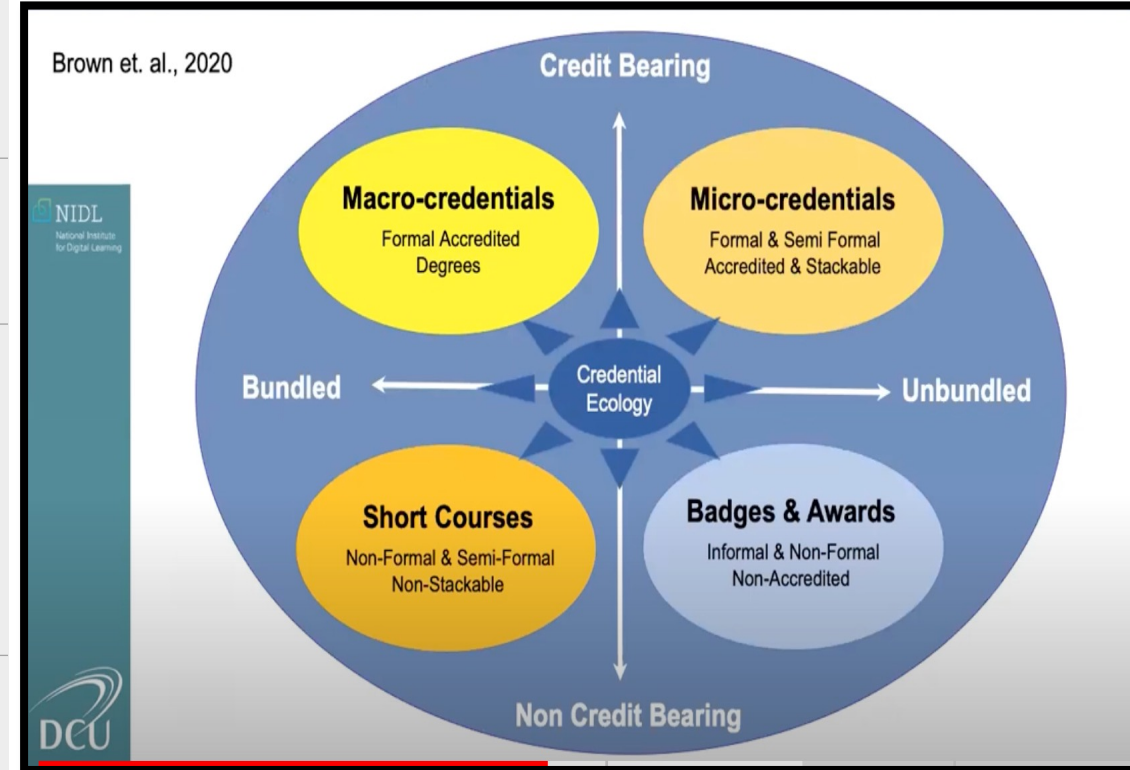


Access the video
*Mike Brown, MC Observatory*

# Micro-credentials

Stylized version: how different micro-credential regimes aim to incorporate varying sub-sets of the **seven qualities.**

Approaches to Stackability of Micro-credentials Options for Ontario, Prepared for Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer, March 2023
https://www.oncat.ca/sites/default/files/media-files/r2246_micro-credentials_final_report_21-3-23.pdf



The Seven Qualities of Microcredentials

Enterprise alignment (EA)
Workforce alignment (WA)
Competency-based evaluation (CB)
Portability (P)
Stackability (S)
Digital course delivery (DD)
Digital credentialing (DC)

Canada (EA)
New Zealand (EA, P, S)
Australia (WA, P, S)
Google (CB, DD)
Singapore (P, WA)
IBM (CB, DD, S)
United States (EA, S)
Europe (P, S, DD, DC)

# "Seven qualities" (continued) and Findings OECD Study

- To be clear: there is nothing suggesting that any of these other jurisdictions or micro-credential providers have the "right" mix of qualities in their systems. Every jurisdiction will design its micro-credential policies to suit local conditions. However, certain attributes of micro-credential are essentially unobtainable in the absence of certain framework policies.

- A system of portability requires that individual credentials carry both credit values and an indication of the skill level of the instruction, the latter of which in turn requires an accepted qualifications framework like those in Europe or New Zealand (…**what about Africa**?)

- Micro-credentials **do not deliver on their potential automatically**.

  - For micro-credentials to play a role in enhancing learners' employability, facilitating access to higher education, improving degree completion, and promoting social inclusion, policymakers need to make interventions to steer and support learners and providers.

# Contexts in which Micro-credentials are expected to play a role

- Upskilling and reskilling
- Employability
- Lifelong Learning
- More flexible, learner-centred education
- Access to and completion of education and training
- Student international mobility
- Social inclusion
- Active citizenship and well-being

OECD, 2023. Micro-credentials for Lifelong Learning and Employability: Uses and Possibilities: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9c4b7b68-en.pdf?expires=1683402111&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=EC532C674B9D2AB9D69D7DB18202E488

# EU: Recommendation on European approach to micro-credentials for LLL and employability: 10 principles

**"Use micro-credentials, where appropriate, as a tool to <u>strengthen and complement</u> existing learning opportunities, increase participation in lifelong learning"**

1. Quality
2. Transparency
3. Relevance
4. Valid assessment
5. Learning pathways

6. Recognition
7. Portability
8. Learner-centred
9. Authentic
10. Information and guidance

Adopted 16/06/2022: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022H0627%2802%29

# Websites, resources on Micro-credentials

- Australia – National Micro-credentials market place: https://www.microcredseeker.edu.au/
  - ➢ **Microcred Seeker: "The new way to get ahead"**
  - ➢ Goal: Seek, explore and compare courses (tertiary education and training providers)
- **In NQF registers:**
  - New Zealand (NZQA): https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/approval-accreditation-and-registration/micro-credentials/
    - Register of micro-credentials NZQA: https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf/search/microcredentials.do
    - Up to 40 credits – levels 3 to 8 of NQF

  - Portugal: National Qualifications Catalogue: https://catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/
    - 8663 courses of short duration (75-350 hours of learning)


- **Toolkits: Ontario Micro-credentials Toolkit:** https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/microcredentialtoolkit/
- **Micro-credential Observatory (research)**: https://www.dcu.ie/nidl/micro-credential-observatory

# Thank you

Harris
Eduarda