Working group on QA of micro-credentials

5 DECEMBER 2023

TPG C MEETING

Status of activities

- **Report 'Approaches to Quality Assurance of Micro-credentials'** published in August 2023.
- **'Reflective questions for internal and external QA of micro-credentials'** will be finalised and published by the end of the year.
- **Inclusion of micro-credentials and alternative providers in DEQAR** is being tested and will be publicly launched in early 2024.
- **Data standard for information on micro-credentials** is defined.
- A first discussion about the **feasibility study for a quality label for micro-credentials** was held in September and will be taken forward in 2024.

Next meeting: 17 January 2024 (online)

Reflective questions for internal and external QA of micro-credentials

Overview

- Content informed by the desk research
- Originally conceived as three separate documents – decision of writing group to combine
- Originally conceived as guidance or guidelines – decision of writing group to reformulate as reflective questions
- Sections for HEIs, agencies, and alternative providers
- Each question is followed by explanation of key issues to consider
- Key principles: reflective rather than prescriptive; focus on fitness-for-purpose; short and sweet

→ Working group is currently providing final comments.

→ Publication by the end of the year.

Reflective questions for HEIs

What are the reasons for offering micro-credentials?

How can the special characteristics of micro-credentials be captured in the internal quality assurance approach?

What are the specific considerations for quality assuring micro-credentials that are originally conceived as part of an existing programme?

What are the specific considerations for micro-credentials not part of an existing degree programme?

What are the specific considerations for micro-credentials developed and/or offered in partnership with other organisations and providers?

What other factors might be considered at institutional level?

Reflective questions for QA agencies

What is the role of quality assurance agencies in supporting micro-credentials?

To what extent might existing external quality assurance procedures need to be adjusted to address institutional approaches to quality assurance of micro-credentials?

How can quality assurance agencies support alternative providers that offer micro-credentials?

Reflective questions for alternative providers

What are the reasons for offering micro-credentials?

What connection does the alternative provider have with the higher education sector?

What tools can alternative providers use to quality assure the education or training offer?

What would be the benefits for an alternative provider to engage with higher education external quality assurance processes?

What other factors might be considered by the provider?

Inclusion of micro-credentials and alternative providers in DEQAR

Phase 1: **Series of consultations** with stakeholders on the envisioned data model (WG MC IMINQA, QA agencies, EC, HEIs, ENIC NARICs, individual experts etc.) [January 2023 – May 2023]

Phase 2: **Setting and testing the system** with 4 registered QA agencies (ACQUIN, IAAR, ECTE, ZEvA) [Summer 2023]

Phase 3: **Incorporating final feedback** from WG MC IMINQA and participating agencies [September 2023 – Early 2024]

Phase 4: **Launching the live version** and opening the system for all EQAR registered agencies [Early 2024]

Inclusion of MC and AP in DEQAR

Definition of micro credential

a) Study provision related to **EQF/ISCED level (5), 6, 7 or 8** OR **QF EHEA level short, first, second, third cycle**

b) That **does not** lead to a **full (recognised) degree**

c) Consisted by a **workload expressed in ECTS** in the range of **1 and 59 ECTS credits**

Information on QA of MC collected in DEQAR

a) Name
b) Programme qualification
c) Programme NQF
d) Programme QF EHEA level
e) Degree outcome
f) Workload expressed in ECTS Credits
g) Assessment and certification
h) Learning outcomes
i) Description of LO
k) Field

Inclusion of MC and AP in DEQAR

Definition of an alternative provider

An entity that has provides learning opportunities at HE level, but **does not have full degree awarding powers.**

Information on AP collected in DEQAR

a) Name
b) Location/Legal seat
c) Website
d) Other identifier
e) Identifier source
f) Type of organization (e.g. private company, CSO etc.)
g) Source of information about the provider (the agency that provided the information)

Information on QA of AP collected in DEQAR

a) Agency that uploads the reports
b) Activity
c) Status of decision (obligatory or voluntary)
d) Valid from
e) Valid to
f) Link to the report on agency's website
g) PDF file of the report
h) Report language

Inclusion of MC and AP in DEQAR

www.testzone.eqar.eu/qa-results

Feasibility label on quality label for alternative providers

Produce a feasibility assessment on the establishment of an ESG-based quality label for all providers that operate in alignment with the European Approach for Micro-credentials, in dialogue with alternative providers

1. First consultations with WG on MC in September 2023

2. Areas to explore

Why – Reasons for the Creation of a Label	What – The meaning of the label
Who would benefit and what would be the added value in comparison with the current status quo?	***A label is normally used to provide information about a product or service offered by a company/organisation. Since a label is a form of communication with the end "consumer" the label must be meaningful. A meaningful label is transparent, consistent and trusted***

3. Main work to be performed in 2024 (if you have concrete example of quality label in HE, please share it with EQAR)

Thank you

Questions? Contact us: IMINQAproject@gmail.com

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