

# "Micro-Credentials in Malta: Driving Lifelong Learning within the EHEA Framework"

## Meeting the Principles of the Rome Communique of 2022



Jon Vercellono – Senior Officer  
(Credential Evaluations)

Malta Qualifications Recognition  
Information (MQRIC)



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Awards vs. Qualifications table: Credits (Awards < min ECTS), Outcomes (MQF-rated), Examples (UM PLAS, MCAST vocational).

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Micro-credentials in Malta are short, focused learning awards with fewer credits than full qualifications, aligned with MQF levels. They are delivered by institutions like UM and MCAST to support flexible upskilling and lifelong learning.

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About 6,000 awards are listed in the Malta Qualifications Database, including exit awards and micro-credentials issued by MFHEA-regulated and self-accrediting institutions. Self-accrediting providers such as the University of Malta, MCAST, and ITS can design and award their own micro-credentials.

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Malta's programme follows the Principles outlined in Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 as well as the Bologna principles.

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“Exit Awards” can also be termed “Qualifications”



# General Information

# References

- COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability (2022/C 243/02)
- Malta Further and Higher Education Authority Referencing Report – October 2024
- Malta National Lifelong Learning Strategy (Fifth Edition) 2023-2030
- “Visioning the Future by Transforming Education” – National Education Strategy 2024-2030
- Malta’s National Strategic Action Plan for Further and Higher Education 2022-2030
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Principles and Practices for Providers PREPARED BY SCQF PARTNERSHIP IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MFHEA (2025)

# Quality Principle 1

- Microcredential programmes are accredited through an independent external review process coordinated by the MFHEA.
- Each programme is evaluated by an expert panel, including a subject specialist, and where relevant, a digital learning expert for blended/online provision.
- Accreditation decisions are based on alignment with the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) level, ECTS workload, and clearly defined learning outcomes.
- Learning outcomes, assessment methods, and workload are triangulated to ensure consistency and academic coherence.
- The evaluation process typically involves several iterative cycles (around three rounds), allowing providers to address recommendations and strengthen programme design.
- This procedure ensures that accredited microcredentials meet national quality standards and are transparent, comparable, and fit for purpose.

# Transparency Principle 2

- Prospective students may find all required information in the Malta Qualifications Database (the MFHEA Register of Licensed and Accredited Courses (Workload, ECTS, etc.) for MFHEA regulated institutions' Microcredentials. Link: <https://qualifications.mfhea.gov.mt/#/dashboard>
- Self-Accrediting institutions – University of Malta, Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) and Malta College of Arts, Sciences and Technology (MCAST) Microcredentials are accessible through their websites (prospectuses) as well as the Malta Qualifications Database.
- Specifics are contained in the Accreditation agreements for the programmes (Learning Outcomes, Workload)
- The National Strategy, the LLL Strategy and the MFHEA Education Strategy all encourage active take up of Microcredentials through communication with stakeholders – this is actively addressed in the National Working Group for the Social Dimension (and participation in TPG D)

# Relevance Principle 3

- Micro-credentials in Malta are standalone, focused achievements addressing evolving learning needs, with regular updates for relevance.
- Aligned to MFHEA's QA Framework, integrating ESG & MQF for stackability and labor market utility.
- University of Malta Microcredentials are specifically designed to be stackable (Faculty of Liberal Arts - <https://www.um.edu.mt/study/micro-credentials/>)

DESIGN PRINCIPLES	COLLABORATION EMPHASIS	IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome-based, MQF Levels 1-7</li> <li>• ECTS workload &amp; robust assessments</li> <li>• Internal QA updates via feedback (learners/industry)</li> <li>• Agile for digital/healthcare upskilling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships: FHEIs, VET, employers (Jobsplus), social partners</li> <li>• Co-design e.g., MCAST/UoM initiatives</li> <li>• Targets gaps: green economy, digital literacy</li> <li>• Boosts employability &amp; RPL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audits verify stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• 2025 updates: RPL/online guidelines</li> <li>• Prior to the lapse of five years from the date of obtaining their licence, or of a change or renewal of their licence, as the case may be, licensees shall apply to the Authority for a review of their provider and programme accreditation, through periodic provider and programme quality audits, in accordance with regulations 37(1)(c) and 38.</li> </ul>

# Valid Assessment Principle 4

- Micro-credential learning outcomes are assessed against transparent, predefined criteria aligned with MFHEA's QA Framework, MQF levels, and ESG standards. Assessments ensure fairness, validity, and reliability for standalone achievements.
- Implementation Note  
University of Malta regulations exemplify this: assessments follow institutional practices, with eligibility for certification only upon meeting all transparent outcomes and requirements.

KEY ASSESSMENT FEATURES	MFHEA REQUIREMENTS	TRANSPARENCY MEASURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome-based evaluation (MQF Levels 1-7)</li> <li>• ECTS workload (1-25 credits)</li> <li>• Methods: exams, portfolios, practicals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal QA verification pre-accreditation</li> <li>• Evaluation processes confirm criteria alignment</li> <li>• Compulsory attendance &amp; standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published descriptors &amp; rubrics</li> <li>• Student feedback integration</li> <li>• Certification transcripts with grades/MQF level</li> </ul>

# Learning Pathways Principle 5

- Design
  - Micro-credentials are standalone, but can be also modular, allowing learners to stack them from diverse providers to build larger MQF-aligned certificates or diplomas. This supports lifelong learning via the National Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Malta.
- Stackability Features
  - Modular Build: Combine micro-credentials (e.g., University of Malta's 4 ECTS PLAS units) to accumulate credits toward qualifications.
  - No Automatic Entitlement: Regional/national authorities (e.g. MQRIC, MFHEA) approve final awards per awarding processes.
  - Learner-Centric: Decisions prioritize individual needs, fostering flexible pathways in sectors like healthcare and IT.
- Validation of Learning
  - Earn via formal courses or assessment of non-formal/informal outcomes, enabling RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) under MQF. Malta's framework promotes portability across systems.

# Recognition Principle 6

- Micro-credentials recognition in Malta align with EU standards, referenced to the EQF. This supports broader EU-wide comparability while respecting national procedures.
- EU Framework Applied
  - Recognition of micro-credentials provides signaling value for smaller learning modules, enabling wider EU offers. In Malta, competent authorities like MQRIC recognize them where possible for academic, training, or employment purposes, using Annex I elements and Annex II principles
- Malta-Specific Procedures
  - Formal providers, such as University of Malta, issue micro-credentials (e.g., 1-25 ECTS under 2024 Regulations) recognized via standard foreign qualification processes.

# Portability Principle 7

- Micro-credentials in Malta empower learners as owners, enabling easy storage and sharing via secure digital wallets like Europass, fully compliant with GDPR.
- Micro-credentials issued by providers like the University of Malta or MCAST are designed for portability, stored in learner-controlled digital wallets. This aligns with EU open standards for interoperability, ensuring seamless data exchange across borders.
- Key Features
  - Learner-owned: Credentials belong to the individual, shareable on demand.
  - GDPR compliant: Secure storage protects personal data.
  - Authenticity checks: Open data models enable smooth verification by authorities like MQRIC.

# Learner Centred Principle 8

- **Malta's Framework**
  - Offered at flexible times for full time employees. Learners engage in internal/external QA via surveys and consultative boards, ensuring feedback shapes continuous enhancement per EU standards.
- **MFHEA's Role**
  - Accreditation and licence of 'awards' are designed to be learner-centred through its licensing and QA framework. It requires providers to involve learners in programme validation and annual reviews, integrating feedback for quality improvement aligned with MQF levels.

# Authentic Principle 9

## MFHEA Verification Standards

- MFHEA-licensed providers as well as University of Malta, MCAST and ITS embed these elements in digital/physical formats per MQF Level 5+ requirements. This enables MQRIC recognition and EU interoperability checks without prejudice to document authenticity procedures.
- **Required Elements**
  - Learner Identity: Full name and verification method.
  - Issuer Identity: Licensed entity with legal authority.
  - Date & Place: Specific issuance timestamp and location.

# Information and Guidance Principle 10

## MFHEA Guidance Strategy

- MFHEA guides licensed providers to embed micro-credential advice within lifelong learning platforms like Careers+ and MQF guidance portals. This ensures inclusive reach to diverse groups, aiding education, training, and career pathways per EU standards.
- Key Implementation Features
  - Incorporated in national lifelong learning services (e.g., Careers+).
  - Targets broadest learner groups inclusively.
  - Supports informed choices across education/training/careers.

# Future Developments and Additional Bibliography

- [Survey of stakeholders concerning Take Up of Microcredentials](#)
- [Continued Monitoring through participation in TPG D as well as the national Working Group.](#)
- <https://education.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document-library-docs/towards-european-approach-micro-credentials-analytical-report.pdf>
- [https://aic.lv/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/03\\_Maltese\\_developments\\_Bilyana\\_Boshova.pdf](https://aic.lv/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/03_Maltese_developments_Bilyana_Boshova.pdf)
- <https://www.um.edu.mt/study/micro-credentials/>