

High-level Roundtable for Vice-Chancellors  
and Senior Officials  
October 4, 2023

## *Micro-credentials for ODL*

Dr Jako Olivier & Professor Jane-Frances Agbu  
Advisers: Higher Education  
Commonwealth of Learning, Canada

INNOVATION

# Will Traditional Colleges and Universities Become Obsolete?

Artificial intelligence and automation are bringing changes to higher education that will challenge, and may even threaten, in-person learning

Subhash Kak, *The Conversation*

January 10, 2018



NEWS

## 40% of students in universities are pursuing obsolete courses – Cofek survey shows

Wednesday, July 5th, 2023 13:17 | By Alvin Mwangi



The back image of the graduates wearing a yellow tassel hat. PHOTO/Pexels

## **Warning for young Australians: Six successful entrepreneurs believe university degrees costing up to \$100,000 got them NOWHERE - as a study finds almost half are a waste of time and money**

- Many people believe the path to success is through tertiary education
- A new report from Ernst & Young suggests universities are becoming obsolete
- But not everyone believes their degree was a good investment of their money
- FEMAIL spoke to six graduates who would choose differently next time
- Many of them have since gone on to be successful and launch businesses



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# Unbundling and Rebundling Higher Education in an Age of Inequality

Laura Czerniewicz Monday, October 29, 2018 [In Print](#) [PDF](#)

19 min read

Unbundling and rebundling are happening in different parts of college and university education, through new forms of teaching and learning provision and in different parts of the degree path, in every dimension and aspect—creating a complicated environment in an educational sector that is already in a state of disequilibrium.



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# Unbundling

- Segmenting and even outsourcing university functions
- Pedagogical forces
  - Personalization
  - Employability
- Recognition of prior learning
- Inter-institutional movement



# Are universities still relevant?

- Requirements of the labour market
- Student attendance
- Artificial intelligence
- Convenience
- Cost and value for money



# Micro-credentials



# Micro credential is

- a record of focused learning achievement verifying what the learner knows, understands or can do;
- includes assessment based on clearly defined standards and is awarded by a trusted provider;
- has stand-alone value and may also contribute to or complement other micro-credentials or macro-credentials, including through recognition of prior learning; and
- meets the standards required by relevant quality assurance.

According to Crow (2017:6) a **micro-credential** can be defined according to four features: “competency-based, personalized, on-demand, and shareable”.

**Digital badges** are regarded as a digital visual representation of an obtained micro-credential.

**Open badges** are defined by Openbadges.org (2023) as “visual tokens of achievement, affiliation, authorization, or other trust relationship sharable across the web”



# Why micro-credentials

Ellis et al. (2016:7): “The use of open badges with standardized metadata significantly improves individual mobility across disciplines, companies, governments, and countries as more organizations assume a global posture”.



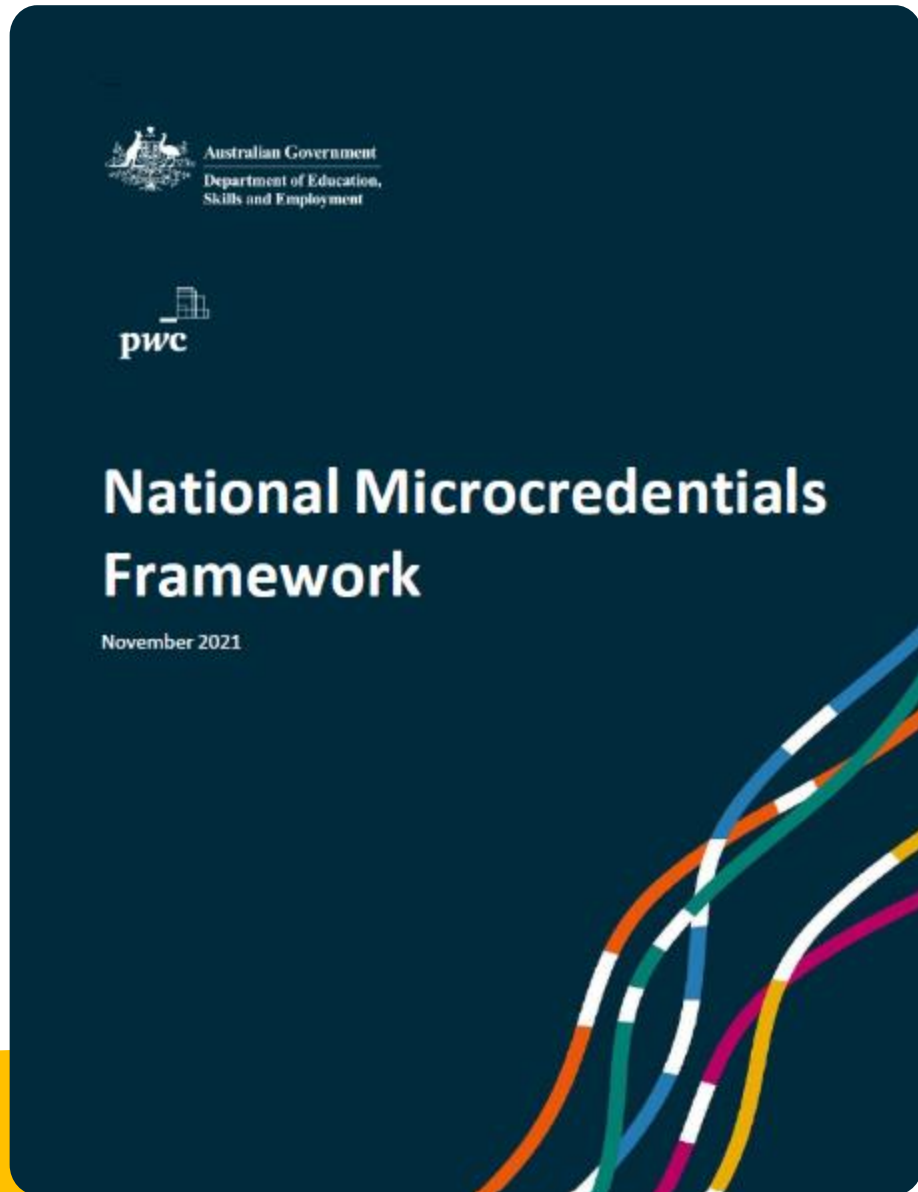
Ideas

# What Are Micro-Credentials, and Can They Help You Land a Better Job?

There's a growing number of micro-credential programs in Canada designed to bring workers up to speed in quickly evolving industries



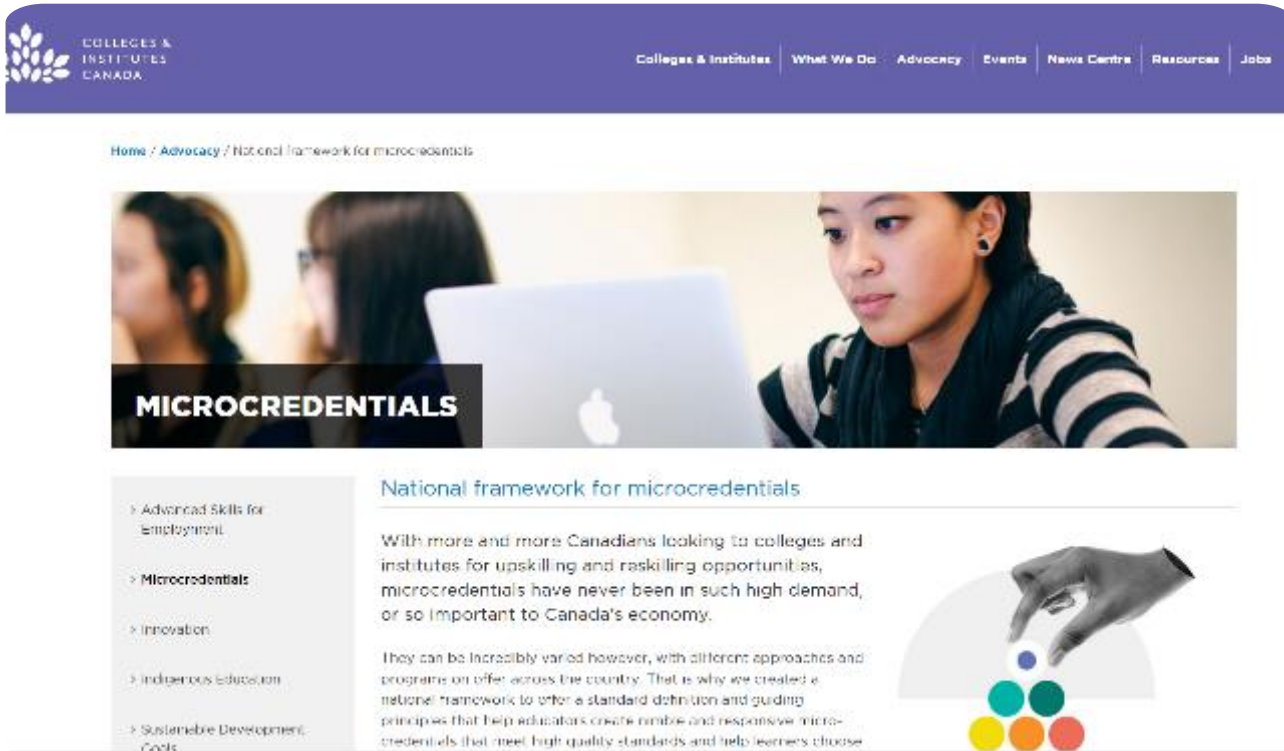
<https://canadianbusiness.com/ideas/micro-credentials-canada/>



# Australia

- Duration of at least one hour and less than an AQF award qualification
- Outcome-based.
- Responsive to industry-need.
- Tailored to support lifelong learning.
- Transparent and accessible.

# Canada



The screenshot shows the website for Colleges & Institutes Canada. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Colleges & Institutes, What We Do, Advocacy, Events, News Centre, Resources, and Jobs. The main content area features a large image of students working on a laptop with the word "MICROCREDENTIALS" overlaid. Below this is a section titled "National framework for microcredentials" with a sub-header "National framework for microcredentials". The text describes the importance of microcredentials in Canada's economy and mentions a national framework to provide standard definitions and guiding principles. To the right of the text is an illustration of a hand placing a small blue ball on top of a stack of four colored balls (green, yellow, orange, red). A sidebar on the left lists various topics: Advanced Skills for Employment, Microcredentials, Innovation, Indigenous Education, and Sustainable Development Goals.

COLLEGES & INSTITUTES CANADA

Colleges & Institutes | What We Do | Advocacy | Events | News Centre | Resources | Jobs

Home / Advocacy / National framework for microcredentials

**MICROCREDENTIALS**

**National framework for microcredentials**

With more and more Canadians looking to colleges and institutes for upskilling and reskilling opportunities, microcredentials have never been in such high demand, or so important to Canada's economy.

They can be incredibly varied however, with different approaches and programs on offer across the country. That is why we created a national framework to offer a standard definition and guiding principles that help educators create nimble and responsive micro-credentials that meet high-quality standards and help learners choose

Advanced Skills for Employment

**Microcredentials**

Innovation

Indigenous Education

Sustainable Development Goals

- No limit to duration (in British Columbia, it is recommended below 288 hours)
- Relevant
- Accredited
- Standardized
- Assessed
- Flexible
- Stackable

# New Zealand



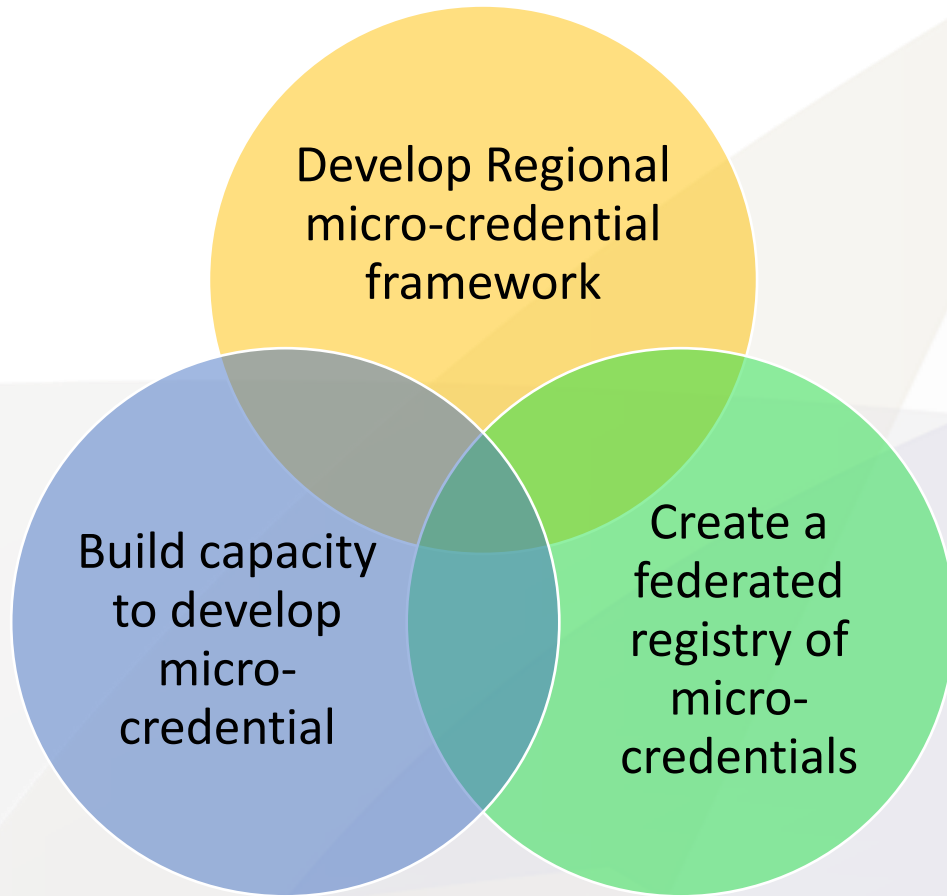
Insights Paper  
September 2022

Improving relevance and responsiveness:

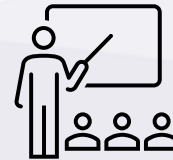
## Aotearoa New Zealand's early micro-credentials journey

- NZQF micro-credential equivalency register
- 5-40 credit courses/training (where 1 credit is 10 hours of student learning time)
- Focus on
  - skills related to new technology
  - updating existing competencies to maintain currency
  - skill gaps
  - continuing professional development.
- Industry oriented

# Micro-credential for Flexible Learning



**Learners**



**QA micro-courses**



**Providers**

## What needs to be done?

- National Qualifications Framework for recognition and transfer of qualifications
- QA Agencies
- Institutional Policy frameworks
- Capacity of teachers
- Affordable badging platforms



# Thank you



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