



# MICROGUIDE

Project acronym: MICROGUIDE  
Project full title: DEVELOPING GUIDELINES FOR THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION  
Project No. 2021-1-ProjectRS01-KA220-HED-000027585  
Funding Scheme: Erasmus+



Project acronym:	MICROGUIDE
Project full title:	Developing Guidelines for the implementation of micro-credentials in higher education
Project No:	2021-1-RS01-KA220-HED-000027585
Funding scheme:	ERASMUS+
Project start date:	February 1, 2022
Project duration:	24 months

Abstract	Analysis of the micro-credential certification and credit evaluation practice in Project Partner countries is necessary to identify the qualities and weaknesses in certification and credit evaluation practices, and in that sense to give a proposal for the best model of certification and credit evaluation.
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Title of document:	Analysis of the micro-credential certification and credit evaluation practice in Project Partner countries, making a proposal for the best model of certification
Project result:	PR1: Analysis of the micro-credential certification and credit evaluation practice in Project Partner countries, making a proposal for the best model of certification and credit evaluation
Number of pages:	30

#### DISCLAIMER

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# 1 Objectives

The impact of this activity is to identify the qualities and weaknesses of MCs certification and credit evaluation practice in Project Partner countries HE, and in that sense to define a measure for their improvement.

Tasks are defining information sources, gathering information, analysing information, presenting the analysis results, and creating a proposal for the best model of certification and credit evaluation regarding the implementation of MCs in Project partner higher education systems.

Methodological steps in research activity are:

Step 1. To identify information sources regarding topic of the research;

Step 2. To collect relevant information;

Step 3. To analyse collected information;

Step 4. To discuss results obtained by analysis;

Step 5. To produce analysis report;

Step 6. To create a proposal for the best model of the MCs certification and credit evaluation in Project partner countries.

## 2 Analysis of the micro-credential certification and credit evaluation practice in Serbia

### 2.1 Principles of credits system in Serbia HE

The scope of a study programme is expressed through ECTS credits, which define the workload of students while mastering the foreseen learning outcomes. Each subject in a study programme is expressed through the appropriate number of ECTS credits and the scope of the entire programme by their sum. A sum of 60 ECTS credits corresponds to the average total student engagement over a 40-hour workweek during one school year.

Total student engagement consists of active teaching activities (lectures, exercises, practicums, seminars, etc.), individual work, colloquiums, exams, final thesis, student internships, voluntary work in the local community and other forms of engagement. The total number of active teaching hours cannot be less than 600 hours during one school year. The total workload of 30 hours of an averagely successful student equal to 1 ECTS.

ECTS credits can be transferred between different study programmes, within the same cycle and type of studies. The criteria and conditions for transferring ECTS credits and the appropriate knowledge assessment are defined by the general act of an independent HEI, or an agreement between HEIs. For students participating in international mobility programmes, ECTS credits can be transferred between different study programmes within all cycles and types of studies.

#### 2.1.1 Principles of certification system in Serbia HE

The certification of study programs in Serbia is carried out in accordance with the rules prescribed by the Minister. Full details of the Diploma and Diploma Supplement are given below.

## Diploma supplement for acquired qualifications in higher education

Образац бр. 6



РЕПУБЛИКА СРБИЈА

<p>(лицо самосталне високошколске установе)</p>	<p>(назив и организација самосталне високошколске установе)</p> <p>(назив и организација високошколске установе)</p>	<p>(лицо високошколске установе)</p>																														
<h3>ДОДАТАК ДИПЛОМИ</h3> <p>Важи само уз диплому</p> <p>број <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> издату <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> године</p> <p>Додатак дипломи омогућује опис природе, нивоа, повезаности, садржаја и статуса студија које је похађало и успешно завршило лице наведено у дипломи уз коју је овај додатак издат. Информације морају бити наведене у свих осам поглавља, а тамо где нема података треба дати објашњење о разлогу зашто их нема.</p>																																
<p><b>1. ПОДАЦИ О ИМАОЦУ ДИПЛОМЕ</b></p> <p>1.1 Име:</p> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> <p>1.2 Презиме:</p> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> <p>1.3 Датум рођења:</p> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> <p>1.4 Број индекса студента: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> ЈМБГ: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/></p>	<p>3.3 Услови уписа:</p> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> <p><b>4. ПОДАЦИ О САДРЖАЈУ И ПОСТИГНУТИМ РЕЗУЛТАТИМА</b></p> <p>4.1 Начин студирања:</p> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> <p>4.2 Назив и циљеви студијског програма:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p>4.3 Видети следећу страну:</p> <p>4.4 Начин оцењивања:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Оцене</th> <th rowspan="2">Значење оцене</th> <th colspan="2">Број поена</th> </tr> <tr> <th>од</th> <th>до</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>десет</td> <td>91</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>девет</td> <td>81</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>осам</td> <td>71</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>седам</td> <td>61</td> <td>70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>шест</td> <td>51</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>није прелазна</td> <td>0</td> <td>50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>4.5 Просечна оцена:</p> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Оцене	Значење оцене	Број поена		од	до	10	десет	91	100	9	девет	81	90	8	осам	71	80	7	седам	61	70	6	шест	51	60	5	није прелазна	0	50
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THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

(Logo of autonomous higher education institution)

(Logo of HEI)

Title and seat of autonomous HEI  
Title and seat of HEI

DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

Valid only with diploma

Number    Date    Year

The diploma supplement allows the description of the nature, level, connection, contents and status of studies attended and successfully completed by the person listed in the diploma that this supplement was issued with. Information must be given in all eight chapters. When there is no information, an explanation should be given on the reason why the information is missing.

1. INFORMATION ON DIPLOMA HOLDER

- 1.1 Name:
- 1.2 Surname:
- 1.3 Date of birth:
- 1.4 Number of student booklet/unique master citizen number:

2. INFORMATION ON ACQUIRED DIPLOMA

- 2.1 Acquired (professional, academic, scientific) title:
- 2.2 Scientific/artistic/professional area(s) of studying:
- 2.3 Title and status of HEI issuing the diploma
- 2.4 Title and status of HEI organising the studies (if different from 2.3):
- 2.5 Language in which teaching was held:

3. INFORMATION ON TYPE AND LEVEL OF STUDIES

- 3.1 Type and level of studies:

Duration of studies:

- 3.3 Requirements for enrolling:

4. INFORMATION ON CONTENTS AND ACHIEVED RESULTS

- 4.1 Manner of studying:
- 4.2 Title and goals of study programme:
- 4.3 See next page
- 4.4 Manner of assessment

Grade - Interpretation of grading points

- 4.5 Average mark:

4.3 Појединости студијског програма и постигнуте оцене:

Наставни предмети										
Ред. број	Шифра	Назив	Ста-тус	ЕСПБ	Укупан број часова			Година студијског програма	Оцена	Наставник (презиме и име)
					предavanja	вежба	друго			
									*	
									**	
					Укупан број бодова:			Просечна оцена:		
О - обавезан И - изборни										
Наслов завршног рада/дисертације/уметничког пројекта:										
Комисија за одбрану рада:										
Положени предмети/активности, који нису предвиђени студијским програмом:										

\* Превести наставни предмети и оцена  
 \*\* Оцена у складу са скалом о оцењивању др ступња Закона о високом образовању (Службени гласник РС, бр. 88/17, 37/18 - др закон и 23/18)



4.3 Details about the study programme and marks obtained:								
Teaching subjects								
Ordinal no.	Code	Title	Status	ECTS credits	Total number of lessons: Lectures/ Exercises/ Other	Year of study programme	Mark	Teacher (name and surname)
Total number of credits:				Average mark:				
O – mandatory			E – elective					
Title of final paper/dissertation/art project:								
Commission for the defence of the paper:								
Subjects/activities passed, which have not been encompassed by the study programme:								
* Acknowledged teaching subjects and marks								
** Mark in accordance with the article on assessment of the Law on Higher Education								

<p><b>5. ПОДАЦИ О НАМЕНИ СТЕЧЕНОГ НАЗИВА</b></p> <p>5.1 Приступ даљим студијама:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>5.2 Професионални статус:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p><b>6. ДОДАТНЕ ИНФОРМАЦИЈЕ</b></p> <p>6.1 Додатне информације о студенту:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>6.2 Извори додатних информација о установи:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>												
<p><b>7. ОВЕРА ДОДАТКА ДИПЛОМИ</b></p> <p>7.1 Број: <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> Датум: <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/></p> <p>7.2 Одговорно лице: <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/> Одговорно лице: <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/></p> <p>7.3 Печат и потпис: <input style="width: 80px; height: 60px; border-radius: 50%; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-right: 10px;"/> <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> Печат и потпис: <input style="width: 80px; height: 60px; border-radius: 50%; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-right: 10px;"/> <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/></p>													
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5. INFORMATION ON THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRED TITLE		6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION		
5.1 Access to further studies: 5.2 Professional status:		6.1 Additional information on student: 6.2 Sources of additional information on institution:		
7. VERIFICATION OF DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT				
7.1 Number:            Date:				
7.2 Person responsible:            Person responsible:				
7.3 Seal and signature:            Seal and signature:				
8. INFORMATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SERBIA				
Approximate years of age				
27-28	Third cycle of higher education	DOCTORAL ACADEMIC STUDIES 180 ECTS credits (with previously achieved at least 300 ECTS credits in bachelor and master academic studies)		
24-25	Second cycle of higher education	Master academic studies 60-120 ECTS credits	Specialised academic studies 60 ECTS credits	Master applied studies 120 ECTS credits
		Integrated academic studies 300 or 360 ECTS credits		
22-23	First cycle of higher education	Bachelor academic studies 180-240 ECTS credits	Bachelor applied studies 180 ECTS credits	Specialised applied studies 60 ECTS credits
18-19	<b>CANDIDATES</b> With acquired secondary education and passed entrance exam or aptitude and ability test or with the recognition of general or vocational Matura examination for enrolment in academic or applied studies, or artistic Matura exam for enrolment in study programme in the field of art			

### 6.1 Vrste visokoškolskih ustanova i njihov status

Na osnovu Zakona o visokom obrazovanju delatnost visokog obrazovanja obavljaju sledeće visokoškolske ustanove:

- **Univerziteti** – Univerzitet je samostalna visokoškolska ustanova koja u obavljanju delatnosti objedinjuje obrazovni i naučnoistraživački, stručni, odnosno umetnički rad, kao komponente jedinstvenog procesa visokog obrazovanja. Univerzitet može ostvarivati sve vrste i nivoe studija. Visokoškolska ustanova ima status univerziteta ako ostvaruje akademske studijske programe na svim nivoima studija, u okviru najmanje tri polja (prirodno-matematično, društveno-humanistično, medicinsko, tehničko-tehnološko nauke i umetnost) i tri oblasti. Izuzetno, univerzitet se može osnovati u polju umetnosti ako ima sa tri nivoa studija iz najmanje tri oblasti umetnosti.
- **Fakulteti, odnosno umetnička akademija u sastavu univerziteta** – Fakultet, odnosno umetnička akademija, jeste visokoškolska ustanova, odnosno visokoškolska jedinica u sastavu univerziteta, koja ostvaruje akademske studijske programe i razvija naučnoistraživački, stručni, odnosno umetnički rad u jednoj ili više oblasti. Fakultet, odnosno umetnička akademija, može ostvarivati i stručne studijske programe. Fakultet, odnosno umetnička akademija, u pravnom prometu nastupa pod nazivom univerziteta u čijem je sastavu i pod svojim nazivom, u skladu sa statutom univerziteta.
- **Akademija strukovnih studija** – Akademija strukovnih studija je samostalna visokoškolska ustanova koja u obavljanju delatnosti objedinjuje obrazovni, istraživački, stručni i umetnički rad, kao komponente jedinstvenog procesa visokog obrazovanja. Akademija strukovnih studija može ostvarivati osnovne stručne studije, specijalističke stručne studije i master stručne. Visokoškolska ustanova ima status akademije strukovnih studija ako ostvaruje najmanje pet akademijskih studijskih programa strukovnih studija iz najmanje dve polja.
- **Visoka škola** – Visoka škola je samostalna visokoškolska ustanova koja ostvaruje akademske osnovne, specijalističke i master akademske studije iz jedne ili više oblasti.
- **Visoka škola strukovnih studija** – Visoka škola strukovnih studija je samostalna visokoškolska ustanova koja ostvaruje osnovne stručne, master i specijalističke stručne studije iz jedne ili više oblasti. Navedene ustanove su samostalne visokoškolske ustanove, osim fakulteta i umetničkih akademija.

### 6.2 Vrste, nivoi i organizacija studija

Delatnost visokog obrazovanja ostvaruje se kroz akademski i stručni studij na osnovu odobrenih, odnosno akreditovanih studijskih programa za sticanje visokog obrazovanja.

Na akademskim studijama izlazi se akademski studijski program, koji omogućava studente za razvoj i primenu naučnih, stručnih i umetničkih dostignuća. Postoje tri stepena akademskih studija.

**Akademске studije prvog stepena** su osnovne akademske studije. **Akademске studije drugog stepena** su master akademske studije i specijalističke akademske studije. Integrirane akademske studije su osnovne i master akademske studije organizovane u jednoj celini.

**Akademске studije trećeg stepena** su doktorske akademske studije.

Na **strukovnim studijama** izlazi se stručni studijski program, koji omogućava studente za primenu stručnih znanja i veština potrebnih za uplovanje u radni proces. Postoje dva stepena strukovnih studija. **Strukovne studije prvog stepena** su osnovna strukovna studije i specijalističke strukovne studije.

**Strukovne studije drugog stepena** su master strukovne studije.

#### 8.2.1. Osnovne (akademske ili strukovne) studije

Osnovne studije organizuju sve visokoškolske ustanove predviđene Zakonom o visokom obrazovanju.

Osnovne akademske studije traju tri ili četiri godine sa obimom 180 do 240 EСПБ.

Osnovne strukovne studije traju tri godine sa obimom 180 EСПБ. Studijski programi osnovnih studija mogu biti izdvojeni završni rad. Lice koje završi osnovne akademske studije u obimu od najmanje 180 EСПБ, odnosno u trajanju od najmanje tri godine, stiče stručni naziv sa naznakom znanja prvog stepena akademskih studija iz odgovarajuće oblasti.

Lice koje završi osnovne akademske studije u obimu od najmanje 240 EСПБ, odnosno u trajanju od najmanje četiri godine, stiče stručni naziv "diplomirani" sa naznakom znanja prvog stepena akademskih studija iz odgovarajuće oblasti. Lice koje završi osnovne strukovne studije stiče stručni naziv sa naznakom znanja prvog stepena strukovnih studija iz odgovarajuće oblasti.

#### 8.2.2. Master (akademske ili strukovne) studije

Master akademske studije mogu se organizovati u okviru fakulteta i visoke škole. Master akademske studije traju jednu ili dve godine u zavisnosti od obima prethodnih stepenih akademskih studija tako da u zbiru imaju obim od najmanje 300 EСПБ. Studijski programi master akademskih studija sadrže obavezu izrade završnog rada. Lice koje završi master akademske studije stiče akademijski naziv master, sa naznakom znanja drugog stepena master akademskih studija iz odgovarajuće oblasti.

Master strukovne studije traju dve godine i imaju obim od 120 EСПБ. Studijski programi master strukovnih studija sadrže obavezu izrade završnog rada. Lice koje završi master strukovne studije stiče stručni naziv strukovni master.

#### 8.2.3. Integrirane akademske studije

Akademske studijske programe mogu se organizovati i integrirano u okviru osnovnih i master akademskih studija (integrirane akademske studije) sa ukupnim obimom od najmanje 300 i najmanje 360 EСПБ (akademske studijske programe iz medicinskih nauka).

#### 8.2.4. Specijalističke (akademske ili strukovne) studije

Specijalističke studije traju najmanje jednu godinu sa obimom od najmanje 60 EСПБ i mogu biti akademske ili strukovne. Studijskim programima specijalističkih studija može biti predviđen završni rad. Lice koje završi specijalističke studije stiče stručni naziv specijalista sa naznakom znanja drugog stepena akademskih, odnosno prvog stepena strukovnih studija iz odgovarajuće oblasti.

### 6.2.5. Doktorske akademske studije

Doktorske akademske studije mogu da organizuju univerziteti, fakulteti i umetničke akademije. Doktorske akademske studije traju najmanje tri godine sa obimom od najmanje 180 EСПБ uz prethodno trajanje osnovnih i master akademskih studija od najmanje pet godina i obimom od najmanje 300 EСПБ. Doktorska disertacija je završni deo studijskog programa doktorskih akademskih studija. Osim doktorata umetnosti, koji može biti i umetnički projekat. Izuzetno, doktorat nauka može da stiče lice sa završenim studijama medicine i završenom specijalizacijom, na osnovu odobrene disertacije zasnovane na radovima objavljenim u vrhunskom svetovnim časopisima.

### 6.3 Sistem ocenivanja

Uspesnost studenta u savlađivanju pojedinog predmeta kontinuirano se prati tokom nastave i izražava se ocenama. Ispunjavanjem predviđenih obaveza i polaganjem ispita student može ostvariti najviše 100 poena. Studijskim programom utvrđuje se razmera poena stečenih u predviđenim obavezama i na ispitu, pri čemu predviđene obaveze učestvuju sa najmanje 30, a najviše 70 poena. Uspesnost studenta na ispitu izražava se ocenom od 5 (nije prolazna) do 10 (dobar). Visokoškolska ustanova može propisati i drugi, neumerjeni način ocenivanja, utvrđivanjem odnosa zbirni ocena sa ocenama od 5 do 10. Ovim aktom visokoškolske ustanove bliže se utvrđuje način polaganja ispita i ocenivanja na ispitu.

### 6.4 Uslovi za upis i nastavak visokog obrazovanja

Visokoškolska ustanova, u skladu sa zakonom, utvrđuje kandidate za prijavljivanje opšte, odnosno stručne mature za upis na akademske, odnosno strukovne studije, odnosno umetneke za upis na studijske programe u oblasti umetnosti. Visokoškolska ustanova utvrđuje kriterijume na osnovu kojih se obavlja klasifikacija i izbor kandidata za upis na studije. Da bi se primeni propisa koji utvrđuju opštu, stručnu i umetničku maturu, kandidat za upis na studije prvog stepena polaze prijaviti ispit ili ispit za proveru sposobnosti i sposobnosti u skladu sa opštim aktom samostalne visokoškolske ustanove.

Visokoškolska ustanova sačinjava rang listu prijavljenih kandidata za upis na studije prvog stepena na osnovu opštog uslova postignutog u srednjem obrazovanju u četvorogodišnjem trajanju, uspešna matura, rezultata ispita za proveru znanja, odnosno sposobnosti i sposobnosti i po potrebi na osnovu uspeha na nacionalnim i inter-nacionalnim takmičenjima, u skladu sa opštim aktom visokoškolske ustanove. Pravo upisa na studije prvog stepena stiče kandidat koji je rangiran u okviru broja studenata uvrštenog u skladu sa Zakonom o visokom obrazovanju.

Student studija prvog stepena druge samostalne visokoškolske ustanove, lice koje ima stepeno visoko obrazovanje na studijama prvog stepena i lice koje je prestalo status studenta u skladu sa ovim zakonom, može se upisati na studije prvog stepena, pod uslovima i na način propisan opštim aktom samostalne visokoškolske ustanove, nalazni zalet.

Na studije drugog i trećeg stepena kandidat se upisuje pod uslovima, na način i po postupku utvrđenim opštim aktom i konkursom samostalne visokoškolske ustanove.

### 6.5 Dovolja za rad i akreditacija

Visokoškolska ustanova može početi sa radom po dobijanju dozvole za rad. Dovolja za rad izdaje Ministarstvo, odnosno nadležni organ Autonomne Pokrajine Vojvodina, na zahtev visokoškolske ustanove. Visokoškolska ustanova kojoj je izdata dozvola za rad dužna je da podnese zahtev za akreditaciju visokoškolskim ustanovama i studijskim programima najkasnije godinu dana od dobijanja dozvole za rad.

Visokoškolska ustanova može aršiti upis studenata po dobijanju uverenja o akreditaciji visokoškolske ustanove i studijskog programa.

Zahtev za akreditaciju podnosi se Nacionalnom akreditacionom telu preko ministarstva nadležnog za poslove visokog obrazovanja, a na osnovu čiju sadržinu utvrđuje Nacionalno akreditaciono telo.

Akreditacioni se utvrđuje da visokoškolska ustanova i studijski programi ispunjavaju standarde koje je utvrdilo Nacionalni savet za visoko obrazovanje i da visokoškolska ustanova ima pravo na izdavanje javnih isprava u skladu sa Zakonom o visokom obrazovanju.

Nacionalno akreditaciono telo izdaje uverenje o akreditaciji, odnosno donosi rešenje kojim se odbija zahtev za akreditaciju. Na rešenje Nacionalnog akreditacionog tela kojim se odbija zahtev za akreditaciju, visokoškolska ustanova, može u roku od 15 dana od dana prijema rešenja uložiti žalbu Nacionalnom savetu za visoko obrazovanje, preko Nacionalnog akreditacionog tela. Visokoškolska ustanova ima pravo da ponovo zahtev za akreditaciju po isteku roka od 90 dana od dana donošenja konačnog rešenja kojim se odbija zahtev za akreditaciju.

### 6.6 Nacionalni izvori informacija

- **Ministarstvo prosvete, nauke i tehnološkog razvoja**, Nemaњnja 22-26 11000 Beograd, Srbija; Telefon: +381/11/363 11 07; faks: +381/11/361 64 91; web: [www.mps.gov.rs](http://www.mps.gov.rs)

- **Nacionalni savet za visoko obrazovanje**, Palata Republike Srbije, Bulevar Mihajla Pulinca 2, 11070 Beograd, Srbije; **Nacionalno akreditaciono telo**, Palata Republike Srbije, Bulevar Mihajla Pulinca 2, 11070 Beograd, Srbije

- **Pokrajinski sekretarijat za visoko obrazovanje i naučnoistraživačku delatnost**, Bulevar Mihajla Pulinca 18, 21 000 Novi Sad, Srbija, AP Vojvodina; Telefon: +381/21/487 46 41; faks: +381/21/488 988; web: [www.vvisokobrazovanje.vojvodina.gov.rs](http://www.vvisokobrazovanje.vojvodina.gov.rs)

### 8.1 Types of higher education institutions and their status

Based on the Law on Higher Education, the higher education activity shall be performed by the following higher education institutions:

- **University** – A university shall mean an independent higher education institution that in carrying out its activities combines educational and scientific-research, professional, and/or artistic activity constituting the components of a single higher education process. A university may provide all types and study cycles. An institution of higher education shall have the status of a university if its academic study programmes imply all study cycles, within at least three areas and three fields (natural sciences and mathematics, social studies and the humanities, medical science, technical and technological sciences, and art. Exceptionally, a university may be established in the field of arts if it has all three study cycles in at least three areas of art.
- **Faculty, or Academy of Arts within a university** – A faculty, i.e. academy of arts shall mean a higher education institution or a higher education unit within a university carrying out academic study programmes and developing scientific-research, artistic, i.e. professional work in one or more areas. A faculty, i.e. academy of arts may also carry out applied study programmes as well. In legal matters, a faculty, i.e. an academy of arts shall act under the name of the university whose part it is and under its own name, as stipulated in the Statute of the university.
- **Academy of applied studies** – An academy of applied studies shall mean an independent higher education institution that in carrying out its activities combines educational, research, professional and artistic work as components of a single higher education process. An academy of applied studies may run bachelor applied studies, master applied studies and specialised applied studies. A higher education institution shall have the status of an academy of applied studies if having at least five accredited study programmes for applied studies in at least two fields.
- **College** – A college shall mean an independent higher education institution that has bachelor academic, master academic studies and specialised academic studies, in one or more areas.
- **College of Applied Studies** – A college of applied studies shall mean an independent higher education institution that provides bachelor applied studies, specialised applied studies and master applied studies, in one or more areas.

The aforementioned institutions are independent higher education institutions, except for faculties and academies of art.

### 8.2 Types, Cycles and Organisation of Studies

Higher education activity shall be carried out through academic and applied studies based on the accredited study programmes for acquiring higher education.

An academic study programme shall be conducted at academic studies, making students capable of developing and applying scientific, artistic and professional achievements. There are three cycles of academic studies.

**First cycle academic studies** are bachelor academic studies.

**Second cycle academic studies** are master academic studies and specialised academic studies. Integrated academic studies are bachelor and master academic studies organised as a whole.

**Third cycle academic studies** are doctoral academic studies.

An applied study programme shall be conducted at applied studies, making students capable of applying and developing the professional knowledge and skills required for participation in the work process. There are two cycles of applied studies.

**First cycle applied studies** are basic applied studies and specialist applied studies.

**Second cycle applied studies** are master applied studies.

### **8.2.1 Bachelor (academic or applied) studies**

Bachelor studies are organised by all higher education institutions envisaged by the Law on Higher Education.

Bachelor academic studies last three or four years with between 180 and 240 ECTS credits. Bachelor applied studies last three years with the scope of 180 ECTS credits.

The study programme of the bachelor and specialised studies may provide for writing of a final paper.

A person that has completed bachelor academic studies in the scope of at least 180 ECTS credits, i.e. lasting for at least three years shall acquire a professional title with a designation of the rank of the first cycle of academic studies in the relevant field.

A person that has completed bachelor academic studies in the scope of at least 240 ECTS credits, i.e. lasting for at least four years shall acquire a professional title of a “graduate” with a designation of the rank of the first cycle of academic studies in the relevant field.

A person that has completed bachelor applied studies shall acquire a professional title with a designation of the rank of the first cycle of applied studies in the relevant field.

### **8.2.2. Master (academic or applied) studies**

Master academic studies can be organised by a university, faculty and college. Master academic studies last one or two years depending on the scope of previous bachelor academic studies meaning that the total scope is at least 300 ECTS credits. The study programme of master academic studies implies the writing of a final paper. A person that has completed master academic studies shall acquire the academic title of a master with a designation of the rank of the second degree of the master academic studies in the relevant field.

Master applied studies last two years and have the scope of 120 ECTS credits. The study programme of master applied studies implies the writing of a final paper. A person that has completed master applied studies shall acquire the professional title of an applied master.

### **8.2.3 Integrated (academic) studies**

Academic study programmes can also be organised and integrated within bachelor and master academic studies (integrated academic studies) with a total scope of at least 300 and at most 360 ECTS credits (academic study programmes in medical sciences).

### **8.2.4. Specialised (academic or applied) studies**

Specialised studies last at least one year with the scope of at least 60 ECTS credits and can be academic or applied. The study programme of specialised studies can imply the writing of a final paper. A person that has completed specialised studies shall acquire the professional title of a specialist with a designation of the rank of the second degree of academic studies, i.e. the first degree of applied studies in the relevant field.

### **8.2.5 Doctoral academic studies**

Doctoral academic studies can be organised by universities, faculties and academies of art. Doctoral studies last at least three years with the scope of at least 180 ECTS credits with the previous duration of bachelor and academic master studies of at least five years and scope of at least 300 ECTS credits. A doctoral dissertation shall be the concluding part of the study programme of doctoral studies, except for a doctorate in arts that shall be an artistic project. Exceptionally, a person with completed studies of medicine and completed relevant specialisation, as set forth by the law regulating healthcare, may acquire a doctorate, based on the defended dissertation founded on the papers published in top world magazines.

## **8.3 Grading system**

The success of a student in mastering a subject shall be continually under scrutiny and shall be expressed in points. By complying with the pre-examination obligations and by passing an exam a student may earn 100 points maximum. A study programme shall establish the ratio of points earned through pre-examination obligations and those earned at the exam, whereas the pre-examination obligations shall account for 30 points minimum and 70 points maximum. The success of a student at the exam shall be expressed from grade 5 (not a passing grade) up to grade 10 (ten). A higher education institution may also provide for other, non-numerical manner of grading by establishing a ratio of those grades with the grades from 5 to 10. The general act of a higher education institution shall regulate the precise manner of taking and grading an exam.

#### **8.4 Conditions for admission and continuation of higher education**

The higher education institution shall, in line with the law, enrol students by recognising the General, i.e. Vocational Matura for entry into academic, i.e. applied studies, i.e. Artistic Matura for the enrolment into study programmes in the field of art. The higher education institution shall define the criteria based on which the qualification and the election of candidates for admission to studies is performed.

Before regulations are implemented which define the General, Vocational and Artistic Matura, for the enrolment in first cycle studies, the candidate shall take an entrance exam or an aptitude exam in accordance with the general act of the independent higher education institution.

The higher education institution shall form a ranking list of applied candidates for admission to first cycle studies, based on the overall result achieved in secondary education of a four-year period of duration, the Matura result, the results obtained at placement test, i.e. aptitude test, and when needed, based on the result achieved at national and international competitions, in line with the general act of the higher education institution.

The applicant ranked on the list, ranked within the number of students determined in accordance with the Law on Higher Education, **shall be entitled to enrol to the first cycle studies.**

A student **of the first cycle studies** enrolled in other independent higher education institution, a person that has acquired higher education at the first cycle studies, and a person whose student status has ceased in accordance with this Law, may enrol in the first cycle studies under the conditions and in the manner provided for by the general act of the independent higher education institution concerned upon personal request.

A candidate shall enrol in the studies **of second and third degree** under the same conditions, in the manner and in line with the procedure set forth by the general act and competition of the independent higher education institution.

#### **8.5 Work permit and accreditation**

A higher education institution may begin its activities upon acquiring the work permit. The Ministry or the relevant body of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina shall issue the work permit at the request of a higher education institution. The higher education institution to which the work permit has been issued shall be obliged to file a request for accreditation of the higher education institution and the study programme within one year at the latest upon obtaining the work permit.

The higher education institution may enrol students upon obtaining the certificate of accreditation of a higher education institution and a study programme.

The request for accreditation shall be filed to the National Entity for Accreditation through the Ministry competent for higher education, on a template whose contents shall be defined by the National Entity for Accreditation.

Accreditation shall establish that a given higher education institution and its study programmes comply with the standards as set out by the National Higher Education Council and that the higher education institution is entitled to issue public documents in accordance with the Law on Higher Education.

The National Entity for Accreditation shall issue an accreditation certificate, i.e. shall adopt a decision dismissing the request for accreditation. The higher education institution may file an appeal against the decision of the National Entity for Accreditation rejecting the request for accreditation, within 15 days from the date of receipt of the decision, to the National Council and through the National Entity for Accreditation.

The higher education institution shall be entitled to repeat the request for accreditation upon expiry of 90 days from the date of adoption of the final decision rejecting the request for accreditation.

#### **8.6 National information sources**

- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Nemanjina 22-26, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia; Telephone: +381 11 363 11 07, Fax: +381 11 3616491; web: [www.mpn.gov.rs](http://www.mpn.gov.rs)
- National Council for Higher Education, Palace of the Republic of Serbia, Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 2, 11070 Belgrade, Serbia
- National Entity for Accreditation, Palace of the Republic of Serbia, Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 2, 11070 Belgrade, Serbia
- Provincial Secretariat for Higher Education and Scientific Research, Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 18, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia, AP Vojvodina; Telephone: +381 21 487 46 41, Fax: +381 21 458988; web: [www.apv-visokoobrazovanje.vojvodina.gov.rs](http://www.apv-visokoobrazovanje.vojvodina.gov.rs)

### 3 Analysis of the micro-credential certification and credit evaluation practice in Austria

In Austria, MCs can be provided by a variety of organizations, including universities, colleges, vocational schools, professional associations, industry organizations, and online learning platforms. In recent years, many educational technology companies have also started offering MCs as part of their services.

Some examples of MCs providers include:

1. Universities and Colleges: Many universities and colleges now offer MCs to provide targeted training and education to learners. These institutions often offer MCs in fields such as business, technology, healthcare...;
2. Vocational Schools: Vocational schools and trade associations may offer MCs in specific trades or occupations, such as welding, plumbing, or electrician work;
3. Professional Associations: Many professional associations offer MCs to their members to demonstrate mastery of specific skills or competencies. These MCs may be industry-specific and focused on a particular job role;
4. Industry Organizations: Industry organizations may offer MCs to employees in a particular industry or sector. These MCs may be focused on specific skills or competencies that are in high demand within the industry;
5. Online Learning Platforms: Many online learning platforms offer MCs to provide targeted training and education to learners. These platforms often offer MCs in a variety of fields and topics and may be accessible to learners all over the world.

Overall, the range of MCs providers is diverse, and learners may have many options for finding the right MCs program to meet their needs. Therefore, a common format is necessary for providers to document the micro-credentials and their value.

#### 3.1 Description of MCs content

The mandatory elements for micro-credentials according to the council recommendation are the following:

- 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 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System – ECTS, wherever possible) ;



- Level (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (European Qualifications Framework, Qualifications Frameworks in the European Higher Education Area), if applicable;
- Type of assessment;
- Form of participation in the learning activity;
- Type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential.

At FH JOANNEUM we think that other elements should be integrated to assure the quality of MCs. The constitutive elements for MCs are the following (including the mandatory elements mentioned above):

1. Identification of the learner (name, surname, date of birth);
2. Identification of the provider (company/institution name, address, ..., incl. status of the provider e.g., public institution, private provider, ...);
3. Accreditation status of the provider (institutional accreditation, curriculum acc., course acc., no acc.);
4. Title of the micro-credential;
5. Type of MC (part of accredited curricula, further education, ...);
6. Country/region of the issuer;
7. Awarding body or institution;
8. Date of issuing;
9. Information on the learning experience:
  - Workload to achieve learning outcomes in ECTS-CP (tertiary level)
  - [hours] (further education, industry recognition);
10. Course description;
11. Language of instruction;
12. Learning outcomes;
13. Achieved competences/qualification;
14. Level (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (information on the QF level: NQF level (when possible), QF-EHEA and EQF level (if self-certified/ referenced), ISCED level & subject area code, (if needed));
15. Form of modality of the learning activity (online, onsite, blended, work experience, voluntary);
16. Prerequisites:
  - Admission requirements
  - Prior knowledge
  - Prior experience;
17. Size of group intended number of participants;
18. Type of assessment (testing, application of a skill, portfolio, recognition of prior learning, etc.);

19. Description of the grading scheme (Is there a European standard or shall we develop such??);
20. Supervision and identity verification during assessment (unsupervised with no identity verification, supervised with no identity verification, supervised online or onsite with identity verification);
21. Monitoring and re-evaluation (evaluation, validation, re-accreditation, ...);
22. Costs?

### 3.2 Principles for MCs credit system

In Austria, MCs credit system follows the Council Recommendation (Annex V., 2017) by which HE workload is expressed in ECTS (The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). The ECTS Users' Guide defines the ECTS credits as "the volume of learning based on the defined learning outcomes and their associated workload". Hence, MCs must follow the same principles.

Additionally, providers should take care about the MCs transparency, meaning that learning outcomes, workload, and if it is applicable credit value should be coherent with Annex V to the EQF Recommendation, which state that:

- Credit systems should support flexible learning pathways, for the benefit of individual learners;
- When designing and developing "qualifications", the learning outcomes approach should be systematically used to facilitate the transfer of (components of) qualifications and progression in learning;
- Credit systems should facilitate transfer of learning outcomes and progression of learners across institutional and national borders;
- Credit systems should be underpinned by explicit and transparent quality assurance;
- The credit acquired by an individual should be documented, expressing the acquired learning outcomes, the name of the competent credit awarding institution and, where relevant, the related credit value;
- Systems for credit transfer and accumulation should seek synergies with arrangements for validation of prior learning, working together to facilitate and promote transfer and progression;
- Credit systems should be developed and improved through cooperation between stakeholders at the appropriate national and Union levels.

### 3.3 References and links to important regulations, laws, and agreements

1. [Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz \(FHG\) \(Bundesgesetz\)](#)
2. [Hochschülerinnen- und Hochschülerschaftsgesetz 2014 \(HSG 2014\) \(Bundesgesetz\)](#)
3. [Hochschul-Qualitätssicherungsgesetz \(HS-QSG\) \(Bundesgesetz\)](#)
4. [Hochschul-Zulassungsverordnung \(HZV\) \(Verordnung\)](#)

5. Hochschulcurricula-Verordnung (HCV 2013) (Verordnung)
6. Privathochschulgesetz (PrivHG) (Bundesgesetz)
7. Qualitätssicherungsrahmengesetz (QSRG) (Bundesgesetz)
8. Universitätsgesetz 2002 (UG 2002) (Bundesgesetz)

## 4 Analysis of the micro-credential certification and credit evaluation practice in Germany

### 4.1 Description of Diploma and Diploma supplement content

In case of full qualifications offered by Germany HEIs, diploma supplement provides additional information about an individual's academic qualifications [1]. The summary of the elements typically included in diploma supplement practice in Germany is:

#### 1. Personal Information:

The diploma supplement typically begins with personal information, including the name of the student, date of birth, and contact details.

#### 2. Description of the Awarded Degree:

The diploma supplement provides details about the awarded degree, such as the official title of the degree program, the field of study, and the level of the degree (e.g., Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate).

#### 3. Higher Education Institution:

Information about the higher education institution is included in the diploma supplement, including the name and address of the institution.

#### 4. Description of the Study Program:

The diploma supplement outlines the content and structure of the study program, including the curriculum, modules, courses, and any specialization or focus areas.

#### 5. Qualification Profile:

This section describes the competencies, knowledge, and skills acquired during the study program. It highlights the learning outcomes and the relevance of the qualification in the national and international context.

#### 6. Grading System:

The diploma supplement provides information about the grading system used by the higher education institution, including the scale, the passing grade, and an explanation of the student's own achievements in the context of the grading system.

#### 7. Academic Achievements:

A summary of the student's academic achievements is included, such as the total number of credits earned, the overall grade or GPA, and any honours or distinctions received.

#### 8. Certification of the Diploma Supplement:

The diploma supplement is certified by the higher education institution, ensuring its authenticity and reliability.

#### 9. Information about the National Higher Education System:

The diploma supplement may also provide information about the German higher education system, including its structure, quality assurance mechanisms, and recognition of qualifications.

The elements included in a diploma supplement may vary slightly between higher education institutions. However, the overall purpose is to provide comprehensive and transparent information about the awarded degree and the student's academic achievements.

## 4.2 Description of MCs content

Regarding micro-credential certificate practice in Germany, it is still an emerging field and may not be as widespread as in some other countries. However, the concept of micro-credentials is gaining attention and being explored in the German higher education system. While there may not be a standardized practice in place yet, here are some elements that can be associated with micro-credential certificate practice in Germany:

### 1. Targeted Skill Development:

Micro-credentials in Germany typically focus on specific skills or areas of knowledge that are in demand in the job market or specific industries. These credentials aim to provide learners with targeted and practical skills relevant to their professional development.

### 2. Short Duration and Focused Content:

Micro-credentials are characterized by their shorter duration compared to traditional degree programs. They often consist of focused and intensive learning experiences, allowing learners to gain specialized knowledge and skills in a shorter time frame.

### 3. Flexible Delivery Modes:

Micro-credentials in Germany may be delivered through a variety of flexible formats, including online courses, blended learning, or in-person workshops. This flexibility enables learners to fit their studies around their existing commitments and personalize their learning experience.

### 4. Industry Collaboration and Recognition:

Micro-credentials may involve collaboration between higher education institutions and industry partners to ensure the relevance and applicability of the content. Industry recognition and endorsement of micro-credentials can enhance their value and credibility in the job market.

### 5. Stackable Credentials:

Micro-credentials in Germany may be designed to be stackable, allowing learners to accumulate multiple micro-credentials over time to build a more comprehensive skill set or progress toward a larger qualification. This approach provides learners with the flexibility to tailor their learning pathways according to their specific needs and career goals.

However, since the field of micro-credential certificate practice in Germany is evolving, practices may vary across providers and the specific micro-credential program. Speaking on the MCs certification practice in Germany, there is no unified approach. Often participants of micro-credentials in Germany

are given participation simple certificates of attendance that do not show any assessment and merely document the course attendance. In most cases, 50 % to 60 % of the course content must be completed. Increasingly, the providers or their academic cooperation partners are also awarding ECTS for their MCs; in addition, the certificates of attendance can sometimes also be shared in the form of badges via the user profiles on professional online networks (e.g. LinkedIn).

### 4.3 Principles for MCs credit system

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) generally recommends that HEIs "proactively address the issue of MCs and badges — especially in order to anticipate innovative developments in the field of teaching and to remain competitive". In principle, the awarding of ECTS for MCs can facilitate their recognition. Although this criterion is by no means fulfilled by all offerings, most of the large digital learning platforms such as edX, FutureLearn or Coursera each have some MCs or micro-degrees in their portfolio for which ECTS are awarded by the cooperating universities and which can then be credited, for example, to complete MBA programmes or Master's programmes. For example, within the framework of the RWTH Aachen University's cooperation with edX, several micro-degrees can be stacked to form a complete micro-master's degree; and the private AKAD University credits a successfully completed nano-degree on "Digital Transformation" as a module towards a bachelor's degree or one of its more comprehensive continuing education programmes.

Private German universities are already visibly more active in this field, apparently seeking to open up an additional market for themselves with academic MCs and micro-degrees, often addressing the affluent target group of employees and lifelong learners. For example, the private Wilhelm-Büchner-Hochschule in Darmstadt has been offering Nano-credentials for a good year, covering topics such as IT security, app development, e-mobility and entrepreneurship. As is usually the case on the international market, the course content is taken from accredited Bachelor's or Master's degree programmes thus ensuring its ECTS award.

In addition to the few university providers, private German educational institutions and tech companies are increasingly entering the micro-learning market. Google, for example, offers an internal qualification in the form of new certificates ("Google Career Certificates"), which it claims are comparable to university degrees: Within six months, Google employees qualify interested colleagues as UX designers or data analysts<sup>1</sup>.

To summarize, principles for MCs credit system in Germany are very different, ranging from the statement that "micro-credentials do not necessarily have to be credit bearing", to the recommendation by some universities that a total workload of 100 to 150 hours should be awarded with 1 ECTS.

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<sup>1</sup> Seele, 2020; Sonnabend, 2021.

#### 4.4 References and links to important regulations, laws, and agreements

1. [https://www.gew.de/fileadmin/media/sonstige\\_downloads/hv/Hochschule\\_und\\_Forschung/read-me/Micro-Credentials-Bolognese.pdf](https://www.gew.de/fileadmin/media/sonstige_downloads/hv/Hochschule_und_Forschung/read-me/Micro-Credentials-Bolognese.pdf)
2. <https://www.hrk-modus.de/projekt/zukunftswerkstaetten/microcredentials/>
3. <https://www.iit-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/03-Kurzstudie-Digital-Credentials.pdf>
4. <https://www.fh-bielefeld.de/digitalmobil/microcredentials>
5. [https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/Eurydice/Bildungswesen-dt-pdfs/dossier\\_de\\_ebook.pdf](https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/Eurydice/Bildungswesen-dt-pdfs/dossier_de_ebook.pdf)
6. <https://www.hrk.de/resolutions-publications/resolutions/beschluss/detail/micro-degrees-and-badges-as-formats-of-supplementary-digital-credentials/>
7. European Commission, <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/micro-credentials#:~:text=Micro%2Dcredentials%20certify%20the%20learning,their%20personal%20and%20professional%20development>
8. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9237-2022-INIT/en/pdf>
9. <https://www.taotesting.com/blog/5-reasons-why-micro-credentials-matter/>
10. <https://www.fzs.de/2021/09/22/statement-lebenslanges-lernen-massive-online-courses-und-micro-credentials/>
11. <https://www.iit-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/03-Kurzstudie-Digital-Credentials.pdf>
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13. <https://de.linkedin.com/pulse/sind-micro-credentials-die-l%C3%B6sung-f%C3%BCr-den-und-wandel-alice-greschkow>
14. NA DAAD survey, [https://static.daad.de/media/daad\\_de/der-daad/kommunikation-publicationen/presse/eu04\\_infosheet\\_auswertung\\_mc-survey\\_final.pdf](https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/der-daad/kommunikation-publicationen/presse/eu04_infosheet_auswertung_mc-survey_final.pdf)
15. [https://static.daad.de/media/daad\\_de/der-daad/kommunikation-publicationen/presse/auswertung\\_micro-credentials\\_eun\\_final.pdf](https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/der-daad/kommunikation-publicationen/presse/auswertung_micro-credentials_eun_final.pdf)
16. <https://www.fzs.de/2021/09/22/statement-lebenslanges-lernen-massive-online-courses-und-micro-credentials/>

## 5 Analysis of the micro-credential certification and credit evaluation practice in Spain

Micro-credential certification practices in Spain align with the broader European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability. The Council of the European Union adopted a Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials on June 16, 2022, aiming to support the development, implementation, and recognition of micro-credentials across institutions, businesses, sectors, and borders.

Micro-credentials in Spain, as in other European countries, certify the learning outcomes of short-term learning experiences, such as short courses or training programs.

**However,** The concept of MCs among the universities that are currently offering them varies enormously from one to another. Both in the terminology used (micro-title, challenge and micro-module, own title, etc.), as well as in the MECES level in which they are framed (Degree, Master), in the dedication they imply (formulated in terms of minimum and maximum number of ECTS that integrates it) or in the methods of evaluation of the learning results (systems specific to the official titles in which they are integrated, or specific modalities such as carrying out projects, reality evaluation or design methodologies thinking). In this sense, it should be noted that they cover different types of learning: short learning programs that allow students to acquire new skills that help them respond to the rapid social and technological changes of our time; University Master's or Senior University modules, challenges or micro-modules.

In general, it can be seen that currently the MCs offered are aimed primarily at Bachelor's and Master's students, requiring the same access requirements as for admission to an official Spanish degree.

The recognition of the learning experience to the supervisors is also different, since in some cases their participation is recognized based on the dedication (the ECTS imparted), in others a short-term economic remuneration is conferred, if its inclusion in the teaching assignment is expected in the medium term, and in the long term its inclusion in the metrics aimed at its evaluation as a teaching activity susceptible to teaching recognition.

Given the different learning modalities that they cover, depending on the universities that teach them, different forms of recognition are foreseen within the training programs offered in each institution: either in official titles, or in own titles or by referring to the new possibilities (methodological strategies for teaching innovation, specific curricular structures) that are opened in the recently approved regulations (Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28, which establishes the organization of university teaching and the quality assurance procedures. In any case, in a majority percentage it is considered that the MCs offered by the universities that have already implemented this formative modality include sufficiently detailed information so that they can be recognized as part of a training program by another institution, although for a part of it there is still no record of such recognition.



For their part, the universities that currently offer MCs have developed policies for the recognition of MCs granted by HE providers external to the corresponding institution, either when those providers are other universities or when they are partners of the university in the offer of MCs.

Regarding the current consideration of MCs within the university's training offer, it focuses on permanent training courses and activities subject to recognition of credits within official titles under the formats, mainly, of non-university teaching, official, university activities of the student body and mobility programs; and to a lesser extent as a transfer of credits or non-curricular external practices. To these formulas that contemplated the regulations prior to the implementation of Royal Decree 822/2021, is added the possibility of considering MCs, as a format of own teachings (specifically, MCs or micro-modules are a specific concept within the permanent training teaching) or as an integrated element in official teaching, through specific curricular structures and methodological strategies for teaching innovation that lead to the globality of an official university degree.

A new Organic Law for the University System<sup>2</sup> has been published in march 2023 and its article 7.5 it mention the micro-credentials as a modality of developing life-long learning:

*Art. 7.1 Lifelong learning may be developed through different teaching modalities, including micro-credentials, micro-modules or other short-term programs.*

The royal decree 822/2021<sup>3</sup>, mentions also micro-credentials as part of the development of life-long learning:

*Art 37.8. Likewise, universities may provide their own courses of less than 15 ECTS that require or do not require a previous university degree, in the form of micro-credentials or micro-modules, which allow certifying learning results linked to short-term training activities. In no case can these teachings be confused with the qualifications offered by the Vocational Training centers of Intermediate Level or Higher Level.*

Any new project on micro-credentials at higher education level, would have to be according this new framework, stablished by these two legal publications.

## 5.1 Study Case in Catalonia

The only complete experience for implementing MCs in Spain has been done in Catalonia, conducted in collaboration with the Autonomous Government of Catalonia, the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU Catalunya), and the 12 universities (public and privates) in the Catalan university system<sup>4</sup>. This experience was developed before the publication of the royal decree 822/2021 and the organic law 2/2023 for the University System.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2023-7500](https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2023-7500)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2021-15781>

<sup>4</sup> Casadesus, M., Huertas, E., & Edo, C. (2022). A European perspective on accrediting short learning programs: First experiences are out. Industry and Higher Education, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/09504222221132129>

The Government of Catalonia participated in the project through the Secretariat for Universities and Research, the Catalan Public Employment Service, and the Catalan Continuous Training Consortium. Consequently, all government actors responsible for HEIs, the promotion of work, and lifelong training of workers were involved in a pioneering way in the region.

In this Project, SLPs have been defined according to the following key features<sup>5</sup>:

- Provider: universities
- At level 6 or 7 under the European Qualifications Framework
- Credit load: between 4 and 30 ECTS
- ECTS credits earned are recognisable in accredited programmes
- They meet labour market needs
- Target public: non-traditional students

It is important to point out that, until now, throughout Spain training for employment has been established at levels 1 to 4 in the EQF, organised according to levels 1 to 3 in the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP, from its acronym in Spanish). The real nature of the labour market, however, means that given the skills required in many cases lifelong learning needs to be at CNCP levels 4 and 5, which correspond to levels 6 and 7 of the EQF. These are unexplored training levels for the Catalan Public Employment Service where, at most, managed training was delivered corresponding to the EQF level 4, specifically the “advanced technician in vocational training”. Accordingly, the project became a new challenge, but also an excellent opportunity to continue to reduce the gap between HE and vocational training system in Spain.

Bearing in mind that legislation in Spain does not provide for the consideration of SLPs within institutional accreditation, a methodology for programme-by-programme accreditation has been developed. In order to prepare this ex-ante evaluation process, the main references considered are the ESGs<sup>6</sup> and the Guide to ex-ante accreditation of official university degrees<sup>7</sup>. Alignment with the ESGs ensures the future recognition of programmes accredited by the various European HEIs, as well as the possibility that they will later be registered in the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) compiled by the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). With these conditions, a guide<sup>8</sup> was designed for (ex-ante) accreditation of SLPs and was later approved by the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee (CAIP, from its acronym in Catalan) of AQU Catalunya.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.aqu.cat/en/Universities/Programmes-Assessment/Short-learning-programmes-Micro-credentials>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG\\_2015.pdf](https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.aqu.cat/en/doc/Universitats/Metodologia/Guia-d-acreditacio-GM-EN>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.aqu.cat/en/doc/Universitats/Metodologia/Ex-ante-accreditation-of-short-learning-programmes>

In particular, the dimensions to be added for the purposes of accreditation of a new SLP proposal – noting the European Standards and Guidelines (ESGs, 2015) to which reference is made – are the following eight:

**1. Description of the programme (linked to ESG 1.2.: “Design and approval of programmes”).**

The following must be provided: the details of the applicant institution, the name of the SLP, the link of the programme to the vocational specialty (professional group and sphere according to a regulatory classification), the total duration of the programme in ECTS, and the teaching format (face-to-face, blended, or distance learning).

**2. Justification (linked to ESG 1.2.: “Design and approval of programmes”):**

Only programmes that are needed by the labour market are accepted. It is necessary to describe the identified training needs, the target population justifying the need, the analysis carried out, and the expected short- and medium-term employment prospects for the students trained.

**3. Aim and learning outcomes (linked to ESG 1.2.: “Design and approval of programmes”):**

The proposal must include the correctly defined training goal according to the National Qualifications Framework, linked to the European Qualifications Framework.

**4. Student access, admission, and student support (linked to ESG 1.4.: “Student admission, progression, recognition and certification”):**

Access pathways are determined according to the National Qualifications Framework level applicable to the training activity. To access degree-level training study programmes, students must hold an official Bachelor’s degree (EQF 6), Master’s degree (EQF 7), or an advanced technician diploma (EQF 5) or equivalent. To access Master’s level training study programmes, candidates must hold an official Bachelor’s degree (EQF 6) or a university Master’s degree (EQF 7) or equivalent.

**5. Planning (linked to ESG 1.3.: “Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment”):**

The institution must define the structure of the programme curriculum. The scheduling and distribution of the programme modules in relation to the ECTS involved must enable students to achieve the training goal set.

**6. Teaching and support staff (linked to ESG 1.5.: “Teaching staff”):**

The study programme must have sufficient and appropriate teaching and support staff in line with the nature of the study programme and the number of students. They must have the experience and training needed to achieve the goals of the training activity, and be sufficient in number and time dedicated to cover the main academic tasks of module delivery and assessment, student-teacher interaction, management of the training activity, etc.

**7. Material resources and services (linked to ESG 1.6.: “Learning resources and student support”):**

The material resources and services available for the training activity must be suitable for the training goals and the teaching/learning methods envisaged. The following must be specified: the training positions available on each module, the equipment for each training area, and the resources for the distance or blended format, if necessary. The infrastructure available at the training centre and business premises must ensure universal accessibility for people with disabilities and consider the gender perspective.

#### **8. Internal quality assurance system (linked to ESG 1.1.: “Policy for quality assurance”):**

Consistent with the trust placed by society in autonomous management of institutions and transparency demanded within the framework of the EHEA, institutions must ensure their actions are appropriately steered to achieve the objectives associated with the programmes and courses they deliver. Institutions consequently need policies and internal quality assurance systems that have a formal status and are publicly available.

### **5.2 Strengths of external assessment of SLPs.**

- It is accepted that an external assessment agency registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) should be involved in the process which guarantees the quality received by students. However, it is also the case that the SLPs are published in the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR), thereby broadening their recognition and confidence in them. Thus, the role those external agencies can play as a facilitator in the HEI’s responsiveness to the labour market is even more relevant. This case clearly demonstrates this.
- The proposed assessment methodology has been well rated by all the actors involved: the Government of Catalonia, the universities, and AQU Catalunya. It is structured around the assessment of eight standards (namely: 1. Description of the programme / 2. Justification / 3. Aim and learning outcomes / 4. Student access, admission, and student support / 5. Planning / 6. Teaching and support staff / 7. Material resources and services / 8. Internal quality assurance system. They all operate within the framework of a specific assessment guide and strictly following the ESGs (2015). Thus, it is considered that the assessment criteria, established by AQU Catalunya (2021), cover all the requirements set by the ESGs while adapting to the specific needs of very short-lived programmes with a very direct focus on employability.

Speaking on the future of MCs in Spain, there are three major challenges: 1) the need to devise a more scalable procedure that allows for the accreditation of programmes in a more aggregated way, avoiding the external assessment of each programme individually; 2) the challenge of adapting criteria and standards initially designed for highly regulated programmes and full- time students to new programmes that focus on employability and on students with a completely different profile; and 3)

the need to design systems where other higher education providers already operating on the market, and not necessarily universities, may also participate.

## Proposal for a best credit evaluation and certification model

It is not surprising that all Partner countries share a lot of similarities regarding credit evaluation and certification practices, having in mind that they all belong to the QF-EHEA, sharing the same ESG principles. Hence, the already existing certification and credit evaluation practices may be kept in case of MCs also, together with the already existing certification practices.

In case of Serbia, in which MCs currently do not exist, it is necessary to develop procedures similar to those which apply for three-cycle study system, and to add ISCED and ISCO codes into MCs certificates.