

# Towards High Quality Micro-credential Programs in Palestine: Design, Implementation, and Recognition

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Sr Researcher  
Unit for Skills Intelligence



# Day 1 Session Objectives

→ Link insight on current EU level policy and practice of micro-credentialing to reform priorities in the Palestinian Higher Education System

- Present overview of current MC landscape at EU level
- Define strategies for integrating microcredentials into existing higher education programs.
- Raise awareness through international case studies and models of MC Leadership & Integration at institutional level
- Identification of challenges and solutions in implementing microcredentials



# Day 1 Session Outline

## 1. Why Micro-credentials? Goals, Foundations, Stakeholders and Target Groups 10:15h-11:30h

- Contextualizing MCs→10 Building Blocks for a High-quality Micro-credential Program + EU Case Studies
- **Small-group exercise:** Building a Micro-credential Team at your institution: Who should lead an Institutional MC Program strategy?

## Break: 1130h-11:45h

## 2. MC Co-design, Stakeholder Engagement and Quality Assurance 11:45h-13:00h

Presentation: Maturity models, QA standards and continuous improvement loops

**Small-group exercise:** Maturity model indicators, Identifying existing QA practices in Palestinian institutions

# Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

1. Understand **European approaches** and good practices in designing and accrediting micro-credentials, and relate these to the Palestinian context.
2. Critically analyze **stakeholder roles** in assuring and improving quality of micro-credentials across the ecosystem.
3. Explore **internal QA practices and feedback mechanisms** to ensure continuous improvement of micro-credentials.
4. Examine **accreditation, certification, and stackability options**, and propose pathways for integration into the Palestinian NQF.
5. Co-develop **concrete recommendations** to strengthen the draft national accreditation guidelines and institutional strategies.



First, a Low-tech survey  
around the room...

How would you rate your own **knowledge** of micro-credentials?  
(1 = low | 5 = high)

1. Micro-credentials Masterclass 2023: Co-organizer ([Barcelona Declaration](#))
2. National Seminar on Micro-credentials
3. Micro-credential Exchange Erasmus +
4. EULEP Erasmus +
5. D-Reskill Erasmus +
6. Agile Continuous Education 4 IS.0
7. Open EU Alliance
8. Researcher/Editor: i. Distance Education S.I.; ii. UOC Book on MC's

## Microcredentials at the UOC

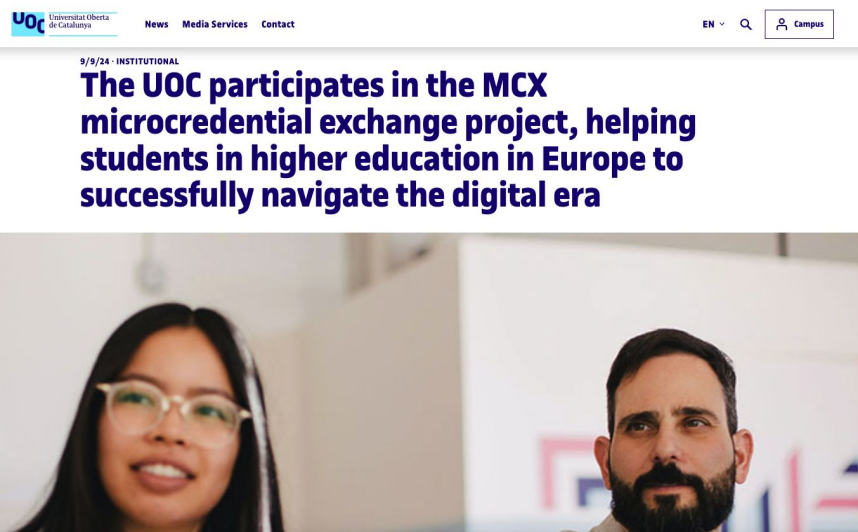
"White Paper"



### Index

- Prologue
- Definition
- Mission, vision and guiding principles
- Types of Micro-credentials
- Characteristics of the accreditation
- Catalog approval and monitoring process
- Action plan
- Teaching methodology
- Examples
- Conclusions
- Glossary
- References

Universitat Oberta  
de Catalunya





Àngels Fitó-Bertran  
Mitchell Peters  
Carles Bruguera Trabal (eds.)

Prólogo de Josep M. Duart

# Microcredenciales

Transformando la educación  
y la empleabilidad con ecosistemas  
de aprendizaje innovadores  
y flexibles



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## Micro-credentials and their implications for lifelong learning – Global insights and critical perspectives

### Editorial



Editorial

### Micro-credentials and their implications for lifelong learning–global insights and critical perspectives >

Mitchell Peters, Elaine Beirne & Mark Brown

Pages: 1-7

Published online: 05 Mar 2025

[First Page Preview](#) | [Full Text](#) | [References](#) | [PDF \(603.6 KB\)](#) | [EPUB](#)

2014  
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FREE ACCESS 

### Research Articles



Article

### Systematic review of digital microcredentials: trends in assessment and delivery >

Robert L. Moore, Sophia Soomin Lee, Amanda Taylor Pate & Amanda J. Wilson

Pages: 8-35

Published online: 27 Jan 2025

[Abstract](#) | [Full Text](#) | [References](#) | [PDF \(1.9 MB\)](#) | [EPUB](#)

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Universitat Oberta  
de Catalunya

**Learning. Transforming.**

About us: a pioneering online  
university

Research and innovation

Open knowledge

Global impact  
#2030Agenda

Course offering

Campus



**Facts & figures**

# About us: a pioneering online university

**Almost 30 years' experience in e-learning**



***Times Higher Education***  
**World University Rankings**

**Ibero-America**

**Number 1**

online  
university

**Worldwide**

**Top 200**

among the world's  
youngest universities

**Spain**

**Top 10**

Spanish  
universities



[\*\*Learn about our history.\*\*](#)

# A global university born in the digital age

Figures from the 2022/2023 academic year.



**87,150**  
students

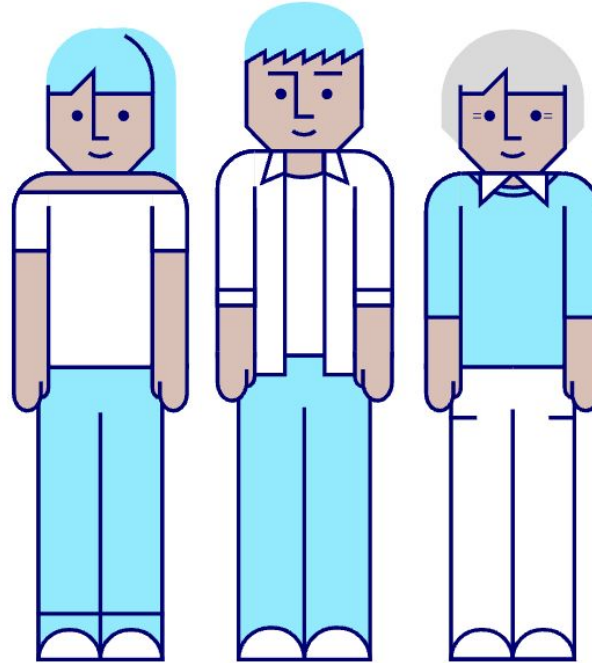


**59 %** identify as women

**41 %** identify as men

**41 %** between 25 and 34 years old

**90 %** study and have a job



**113,500**  
graduates



**57 %** identify as women

**43 %** identify as men

**85 %** would choose the UOC again

**84 %** would choose the same degree again



**We establish alliances and  
focus on lines of research  
that connect the university  
with the labour market**

Contact us



# Problem Context

Why Micro-credentials? Goals, Foundations, Stakeholders and Target Groups

**Day 1. 10:15-1130**

Digital  
Divide/Transformation/ Exclusion

Industrialization  
4.0, 5.0

Climate &  
Sustainability  
Crisis

Rural/Urban Divide

Aging population

‘New’ unstable workforce  
in the digital economy

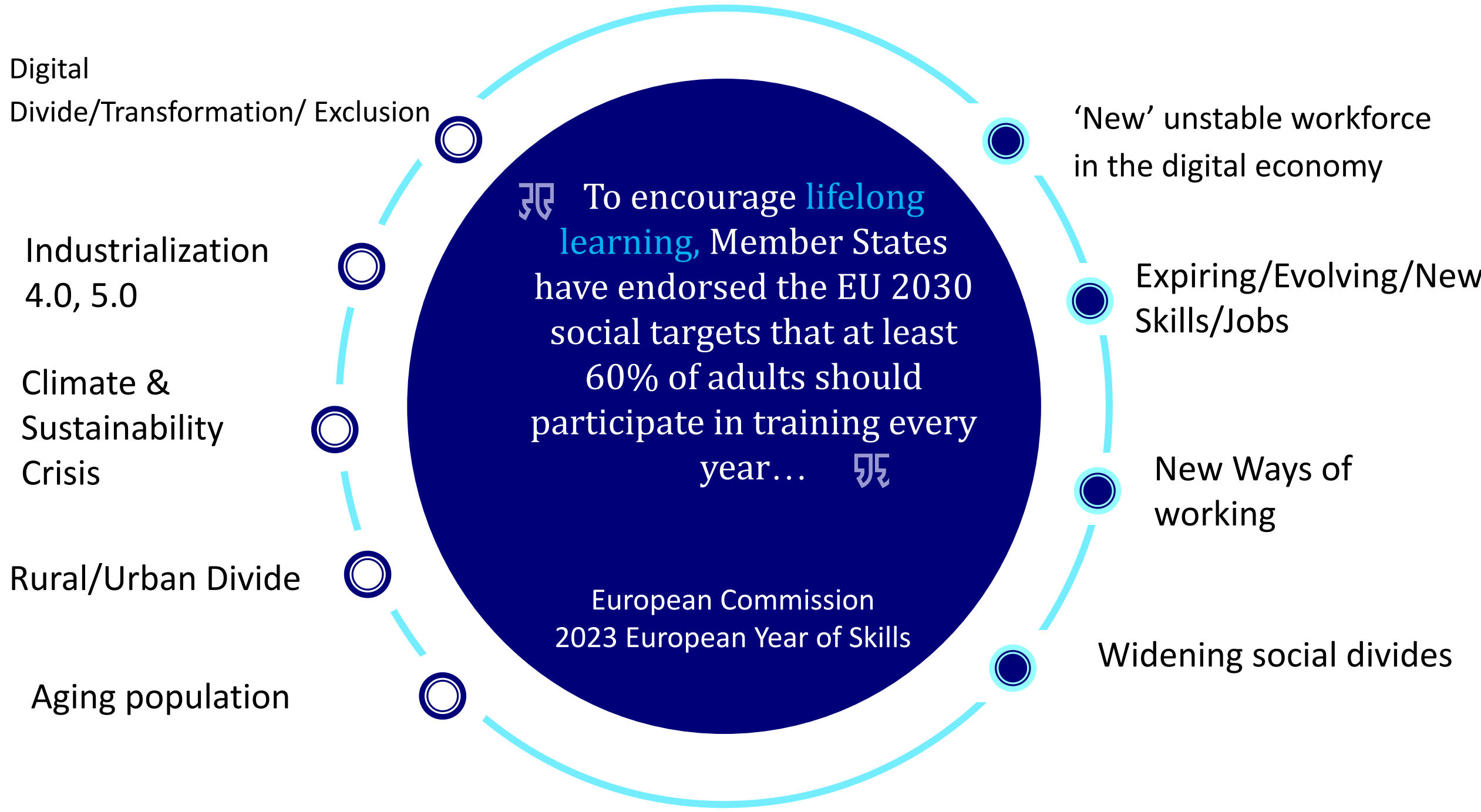
Expiring/Evolving/New  
Skills/Jobs

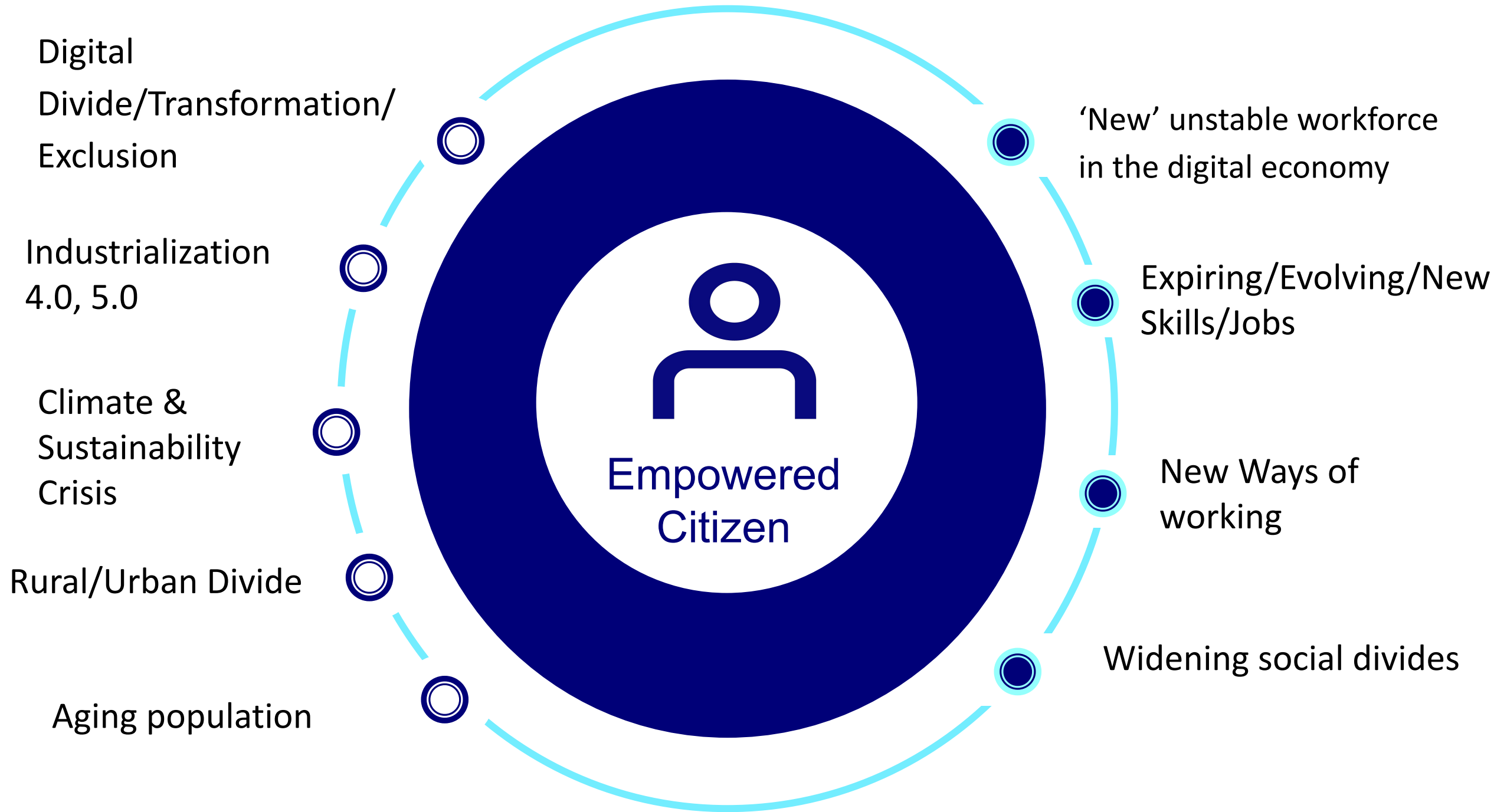
New Ways of  
working

Widening social divides

To encourage **lifelong learning**, Member States have endorsed the EU 2030 social targets that at least 60% of adults should participate in training every year...

European Commission  
2023 European Year of Skills







# Role of the University



## Two Paradigms Happening Simultaneously

Legacy Systems and  
traditional degrees

New Providers and Training Pathways  
For lifelong learners



# The Open Loop University Education Futures

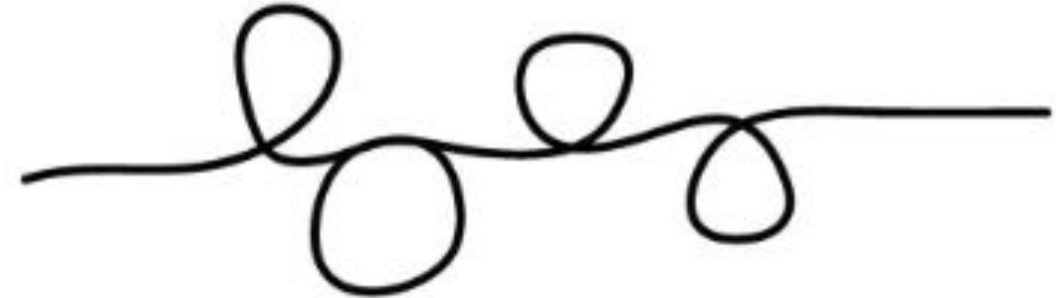
*Stanford 2025*

*From*



4 years during 18-22  
Formal Classroom Learning  
Limited access to higher education settings later in life

*To*



6+ years spread out over the lifespan  
Knowledge was applied in classroom & practical settings  
Acquired learning applied in rapid cycles



**Are traditional degrees the fossil fuels of Higher Education?**

**Are Micro-credentials the electric cars of Higher Education?**





# Rise of the Micro-credential Movement

Are MC's the solution to all of our Educational problems?

# UNION OF SKILLS



## The EU Vision: Union of Skills

**upskilling and reskilling** for lifelong learners will become the norm

# Micro-credential Movement building across Europe



Brussels, 25 May 2022  
(OR. fr, en)

9237/22

LIMITE

EDUC 154  
RECH 252  
SOC 272  
DIGIT 101  
ENV 445

## 'I/A' ITEM NOTE

|          |                                                                                                                                         |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| From:    | General Secretariat of the Council                                                                                                      |
| To:      | Permanent Representatives Committee/Council                                                                                             |
| Subject: | Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability<br>- Adoption |

CEDEFOP | European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

EN

1831-5860

Research paper

## Microcredentials for labour market education and training

First look at mapping microcredentials in European labour-market-related education, training and learning: take-up, characteristics and functions



## EU Political Agenda

The renewed EU agenda for HE adopted in May 2017 identifies four main goals (European Commission, 2017):

1. Tackling future skills mismatches and promoting excellence in skills development.
2. Building inclusive and connected HE systems.
3. Ensuring HEIs contribute to innovation.
4. Supporting effective and efficient HE systems.



# A European approach to micro-credentials

(EU Recommendation, 2022)

## What are Micro-credentials?

Micro-credential' means the **record of the learning outcomes** that a learner has acquired following a **small volume of learning**. These learning outcomes will have been **assessed against transparent and clearly defined criteria**. Learning experiences leading to microcredentials are designed to provide the learner with **specific knowledge, skills and competences** that respond to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs. Microcredentials are **owned by the learner, can be shared and are portable**. They may be **stand-alone or combined into larger credentials**. They are underpinned by **quality assurance following agreed standards** in the relevant sector or area of activity

# What are (digital) Micro-credentials?

## (Digital) Learning Opportunity

- small volume of learning
- assessed against transparent clearly defined criteria
- specific knowledge, skills and competences
- stand-alone or combined into larger credentials
- quality assurance following agreed standards

## (Digital) Credential

- record of the learning outcomes
- owned by the learner
- can be shared
- are portable

# From Policy to Practice

## Spain's Legal Framework

Main Regulation: Royal Decree 822/2021 (28 Sept) – establishes organisation of university studies.

### Key Provisions:

- Universities may offer own programmes < 15 ECTS as microcredentials.
- May or may not require prior qualification.
- Must certify learning outcomes linked to short learning activities.

### Supporting Laws:

- Organic Law 2/2023 (University System) reinforces lifelong learning and microcredentials.
- Must follow internal/external quality assurance norms.

### Constraints:

- <15 ECTS cap (larger = different rules).
- Defined as 'títulos propios', not official degrees.
- Avoid overlap with vocational training.

### Why It Matters:

- Legal foundation for short, flexible credentials.
- Aligns with EU microcredential policy.
- Supports innovation while ensuring quality & transparency.



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# PLAN DE ACCIÓN

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## PARA EL DESARROLLO DE MICROCREDENCIALES UNIVERSITARIAS EN ESPAÑA

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<https://www.universidades.gob.es/plan-microcreds/>

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Financiado por  
la Unión Europea  
NextGenerationEU

# PLAN DE ACCIÓN

**The plan is structured in 5 pillars:**

1. Stimulate lifelong learning among adults and employers
2. Transform universities into training institutions for all ages
3. Offer microcredentials with employment and educational impact
4. Guarantee the right to training for all adults
5. Facilitate personalized educational pathways in adulthood

Home > studies > **UOC microcredentials**

THAT

IS

# What are microcredentials?

Microcredentials are **digital certifications** that provide all the information needed to **demonstrate professional competence and share it** with employers or training centers.

The micro-credentials are obtained from the completion of **short specialized training courses**, of up to 6 credits and with various formats and methodologies, which allow the development of key skills with the aim of improving employability, training or updating in future professional profiles (reskilling and upskilling) or acquire skills in the current and future challenges of our society.

A micro-credential is a certification of the learning results obtained, designed and **aimed at facilitating your professional progress**, employability and the enrichment of your personal profile.



**Support** from the teaching team throughout your academic life.



**University quality** and prestige.



**Modularity** to design your itinerary.



Online **accessibility** and **learning at your own pace**.



**Variety** of courses and subjects.

# What is the microcredential offering?

The UOC's catalogue of university micro-credentials is made up of courses that aim to develop key skills and competencies for the new work environment (improving employability and new professional profiles) or those related to the current and future challenges of our society.

The UOC offers you an initial catalogue of microcredentials, organised into **9 groups of competencies** :

**Data analysis and business intelligence**



**Digital skills and the use of artificial intelligence**



**Communication and Media**



**Personal and Professional Development**



**Education**



**Social intervention and mediation**



**Medicine and health**



**Programming**



**Sustainability and environment**



**Over 1000 people have studied a microcredential in the inaugural academic year.**

**More than 140 people enrolled in the UOC Skills Lab, the new offering of soft skills courses**

The **most requested** Micro-credentials have been :

1. Python Programming
2. Mediation
3. Javascript programming
4. Protection of Children and Adolescents against Violence
5. Generative Artificial Intelligence and its Application in Education
6. Emotional Intelligence, level B1 (intermediate level)



GAME-CHANGING  
CAREER GROWTH  
JUST GOT REAL

EXPLORE MICRO-CREDENTIALS



## OUR PARTNER UNIVERSITIES



LIFE MOVES FAST.  
SO CAN EDUCATION.



# European Universities initiative

Transnational alliances of higher education institutions, paving the way towards the universities of the future.

- A flagship initiative of the European strategy for universities.
- Sets the ambition to expand to 60 European Universities alliances involving more than 500 higher education institutions by mid-2024.



# OpenEU

The Open  
European  
University

01

Establish a learner-centred, inclusive, digital and green open university with a European scope, widening access to quality higher education and lifelong learning to all.

02

Contribute to the digital transformation of Higher Education Institutions, supporting them in the integration of digital technologies for education, resulting in the reinforcement and invigoration of the EHEA's digital dimension



Get  
involved  
[hello@openeu.eu](mailto:hello@openeu.eu)





# Let's talk about Micro-credentials

## Round 1



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code **7843 6482**



# Let's talk about Micro-credentials

- Does the Palestinian Higher Education System have legislation or official frameworks which regulate the provision of Micro-credentials?
- Does your University have a specific micro-credentialing policy?
- If you do not have a micro-credentialing policy, do you intend to develop one within the next 12 months?
- Does your university have these MC standards?
- How mature are the following processes?
- Which units are (or could be) responsible for MC OPERATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION at your institution?
- Who is the intended audience for MC's at your institution?
- What are (or should be) some of the primary goals of MCing at your institution?
- Take a moment to reflect on whether your institution has.....

# Building Blocks of a High-Quality Micro-credential Program

# Building Blocks of a High-Quality Micro-credential Program



# Building Blocks of a High-Quality Micro-credential Program





# Building a team



## Microcredentials

Upskill with a microcredential. These professional development short courses are designed to help you quickly build in-demand career skills and knowledge and get ahead.

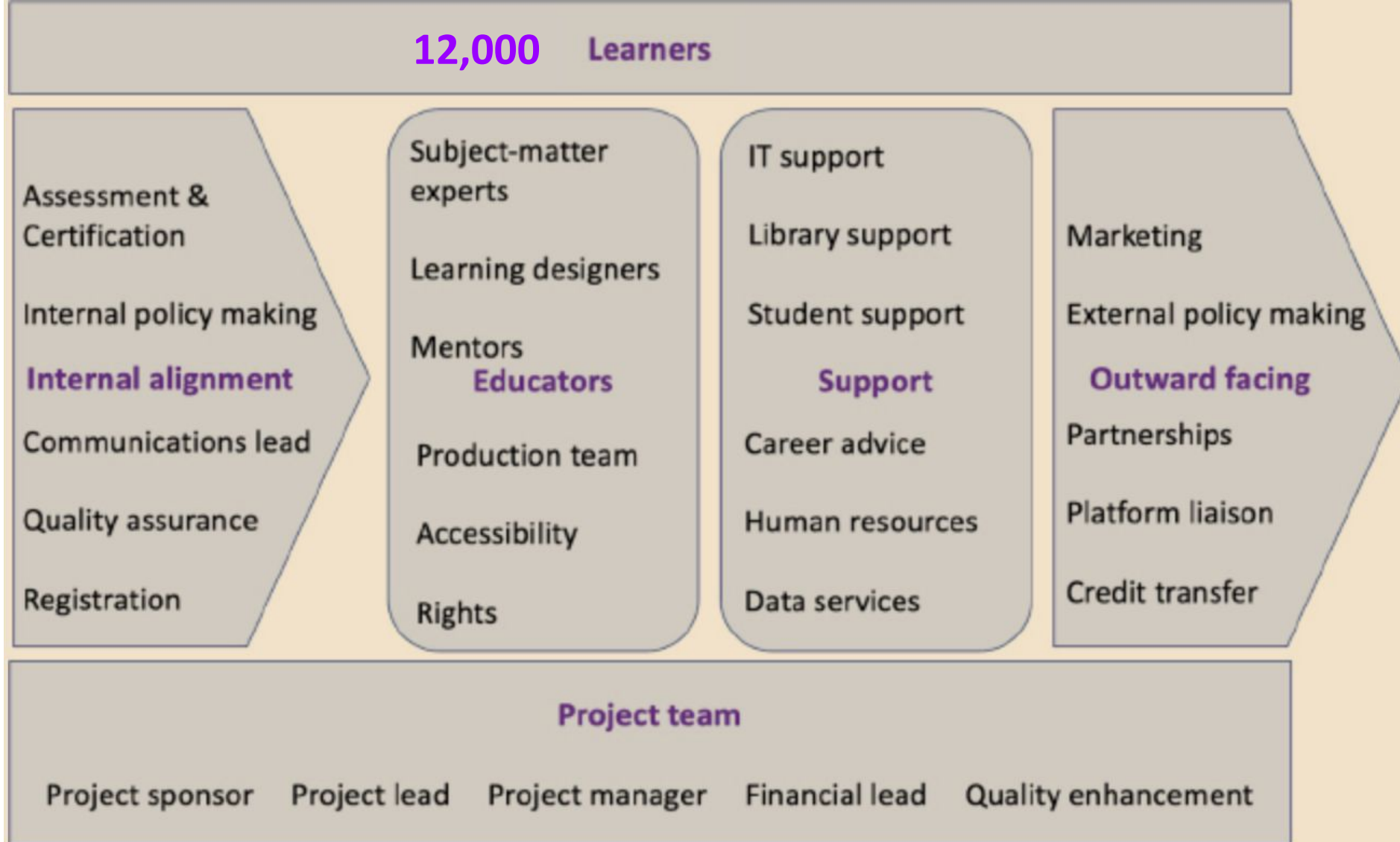
[Find out more](#)

Futureproof your career with a microcredential

By 2023, OU's Micro-credential Unit had developed 29 micro-credentials with over 12,000 learners

You don't get there without a team. But how?

# Institutional MC Roles



**Figure 1:** Key roles on microcredentials.

# Institutional MC Roles

- **Project team roles** drive forward the microcredentials programme, forging links between other roles and developing a long-term strategy.
- **Educators** include the various groups of people responsible for developing and delivering the courses.
- **Support** covers the work of a variety of support teams, including student-focused support such as the library and the careers service, as well as staff-based support from human resources and data services.
- **Internal alignment** is concerned with ensuring that institutional services such as policies and quality assurance are extended to cover microcredentials, and that staff understand this new strategic initiative.
- **Outward-facing roles** make links with external bodies and take responsibility for marketing the courses.
- **Learners** have a role to play in defining what micro credentials become, providing input and feedback, as well as interacting to form a learning community that extends beyond the cohorts on individual microcredentials.



# Roles and Responsibilities



Charles Sturt  
University

Delivering Micro-  
credentials – the e2e  
process

**SPONSOR:** the Sponsor will hold accountability for the Micro-credential throughout its lifecycle – from initiation through to review. The Sponsor will likely be a member of Faculty, and accountable for:

- presenting a compelling proposal that meets all requirements
- ensuring a Project Manager is assigned and takes responsibility for coordinating all parties to deliver the Micro-credential
- ensuring that all quality requirements are met in terms of governance, assessment and reporting
- and overseeing the review and actioning recommendations for continuous improvement.

The Sponsor may appoint a delegate to complete some of the work (e.g. writing the proposal), however the Sponsor holds accountability for the deliverables.

**PROJECT LEAD:** the Project Lead is a critical role, responsible for leading the coordination of all activities required to Design, Develop, Deliver and Review a Micro-credential. This role has oversight of all activities and stakeholders and will manage the schedule accordingly. The Project Lead may come from Faculty, DLT, or another department - the essential skills being that they can manage projects and various stakeholders, and have a good understanding of the work required to develop courses and content. (See Appendix 1 for a full set of activities recommended to be performed by the Project Lead)

**APPROVING BODY:** the Approving Body is a specific role. According to current Charles Sturt delegations this role is the Executive Dean, DVC-A, or VC according to the size (projected cost) and impact of the Micro-credential.

**Micro-credential Ownership:** The Micro-credential owner will be responsible for:

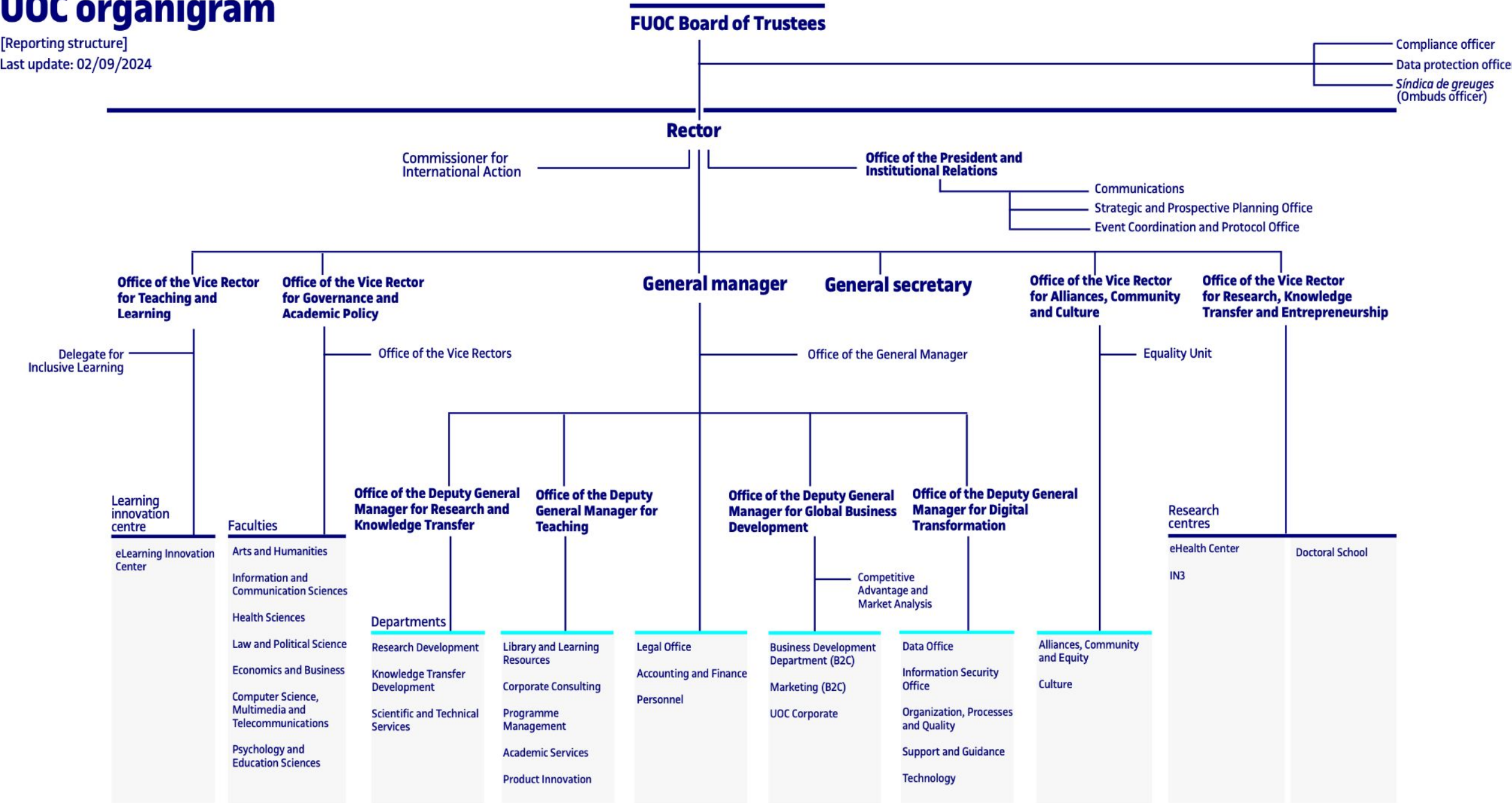
- Governance and ownership of Charles Sturt's Micro-credential policy and the orchestration of e2e process described in this Playbook
- Ensure all stakeholder groups understand and commit to the operating model outlined in the Playbook
- when Charles Sturt's Micro-credential business viably grows, establishes a 'fit-for purpose' capability and function to manage adherence and improvements to the operating model and e2e processes.

The Micro-credential Owner is not involved in the day to day running or development of a Micro-credential. These activities are performed by the Project Lead, Sponsor and others with designated roles and responsibilities.

**Micro-credential Analyst:** (When Charles Sturt's micro-credential business grows), the Micro-credential Analyst will support the Micro-credential Owner by ensuring including templates, processes artefacts and checklists are available and up to date. This role will continue to operationalize and improve the processes, making sure the Playbook works for Sponsors, Project Leads and other stakeholders performing roles and activities in the e2e process.

# UOC organigram

[Reporting structure]  
Last update: 02/09/2024

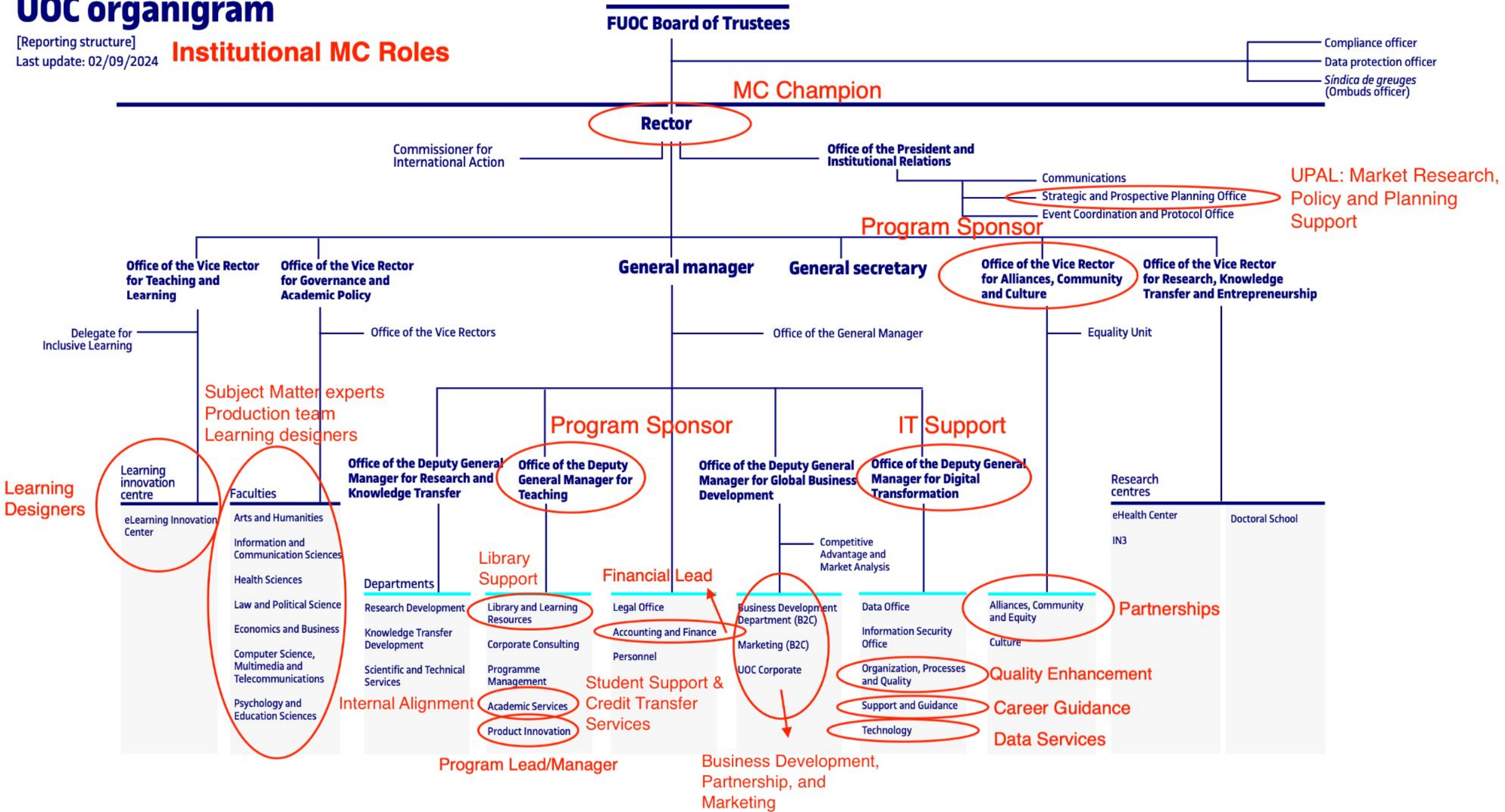




# UOC organigram

[Reporting structure]  
Last update: 02/09/2024

## Institutional MC Roles



## UOC's Micro-credential Strategy Working Group

- **Manel Jiménez** Vice-Rector Alliances, Community, Culture
- **Gemma Carrera** Deputy Manager, Teaching
- **Sandra Sanz** Faculty Information and Communication Studies
- **Lourdes Guàrdia** Vice Dean of Teaching, Faculty of Education
- **Carme Pagès** Director, Unit of Skills Intelligence
- **Mitchell Peters** Senior Researcher, Unit of Skills Intelligence
- **Gemma Xarles** Vice Rectors Office (Alliance, Community, Culture)
- **Cristina Girona** Senior Program Manager, eLinc (Centre for Teaching and Learning)
- **Ricard Hortigüela** Senior Program Manager, eLinc (Centre for Teaching and Learning)
- **Marta Borràs** Senior Program Manager, Unit for Product Innovation
- **Toni Espadas** Director, Unit for Product Innovation



# Leadership & Strategic Planning



Opinión

**Tribuna Abierta**

Zona Crítica Tribuna Abierta Viñetas



# Microcredenciales para los macrorretos globales

Debemos superar la actual concepción del mapa de titulaciones fragmentada en ciclos y proyección lineal -grado, máster, doctorado- y transitar hacia una formación continua, donde oferta oficial y propia interactúan, donde se integra la formación profesional y donde se facilita la confección personalizada de trayectorias abiertas



**Àngels Fitó**



- How do you strategically position them?
- What type of institutional leadership is required?
- What type of internal structures are required?
- What type of business model(s) are required?
- What could possibly go wrong?



## A Strategic Institutional Response to Micro- Credentials: Key Questions for Educational Leaders

MARK BROWN

RORY MCGREAL

MITCHELL PETERS

# What Type of Institutional Leadership is Required?

“Get the **right people** on the bus  
and in the right seats”

(Clayton Christensen, 2015)

CLAYTON M. CHRISTENSEN

HENRY J. EYRING

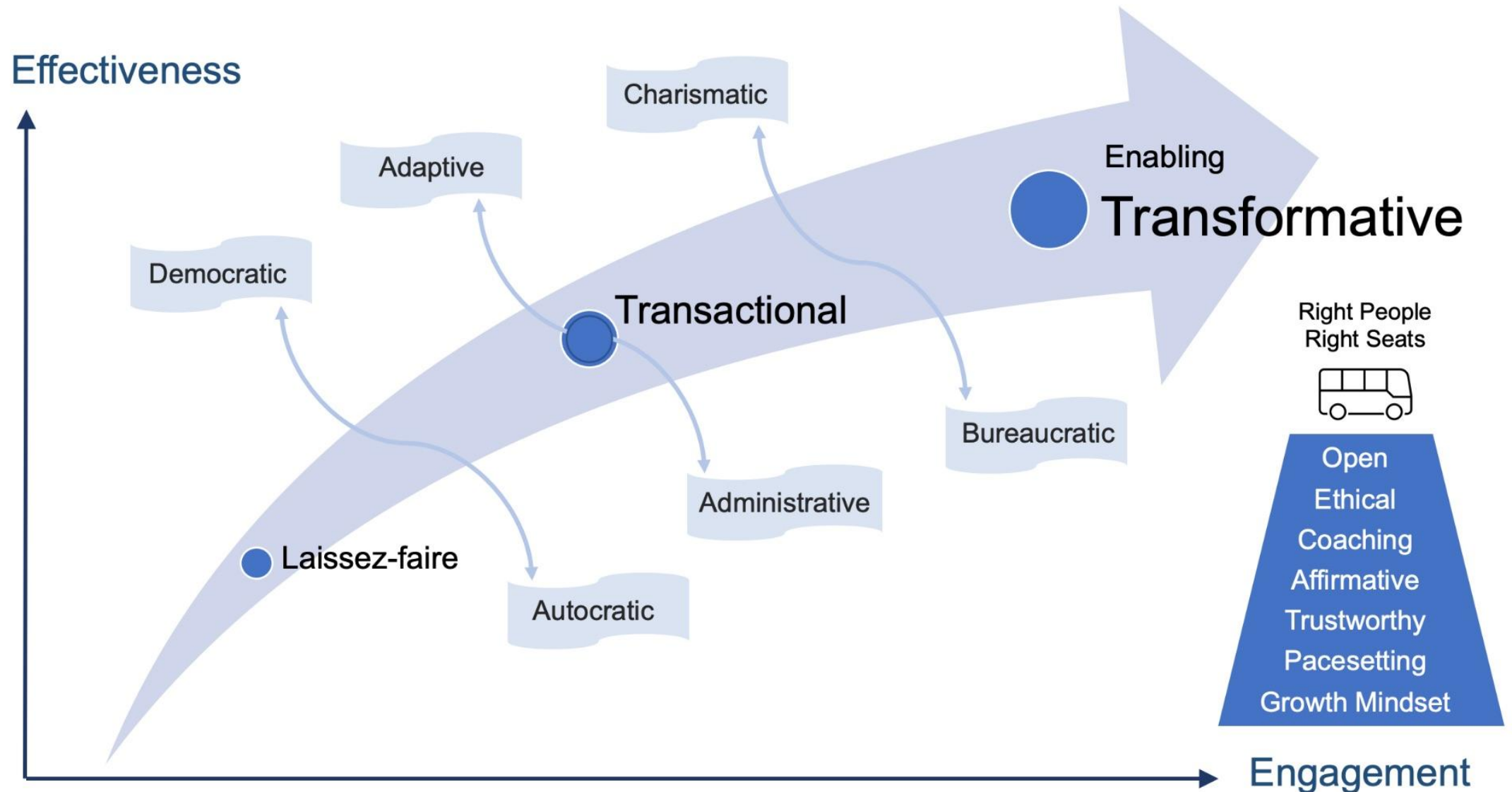
THE  
**INNOVATIVE  
UNIVERSITY**



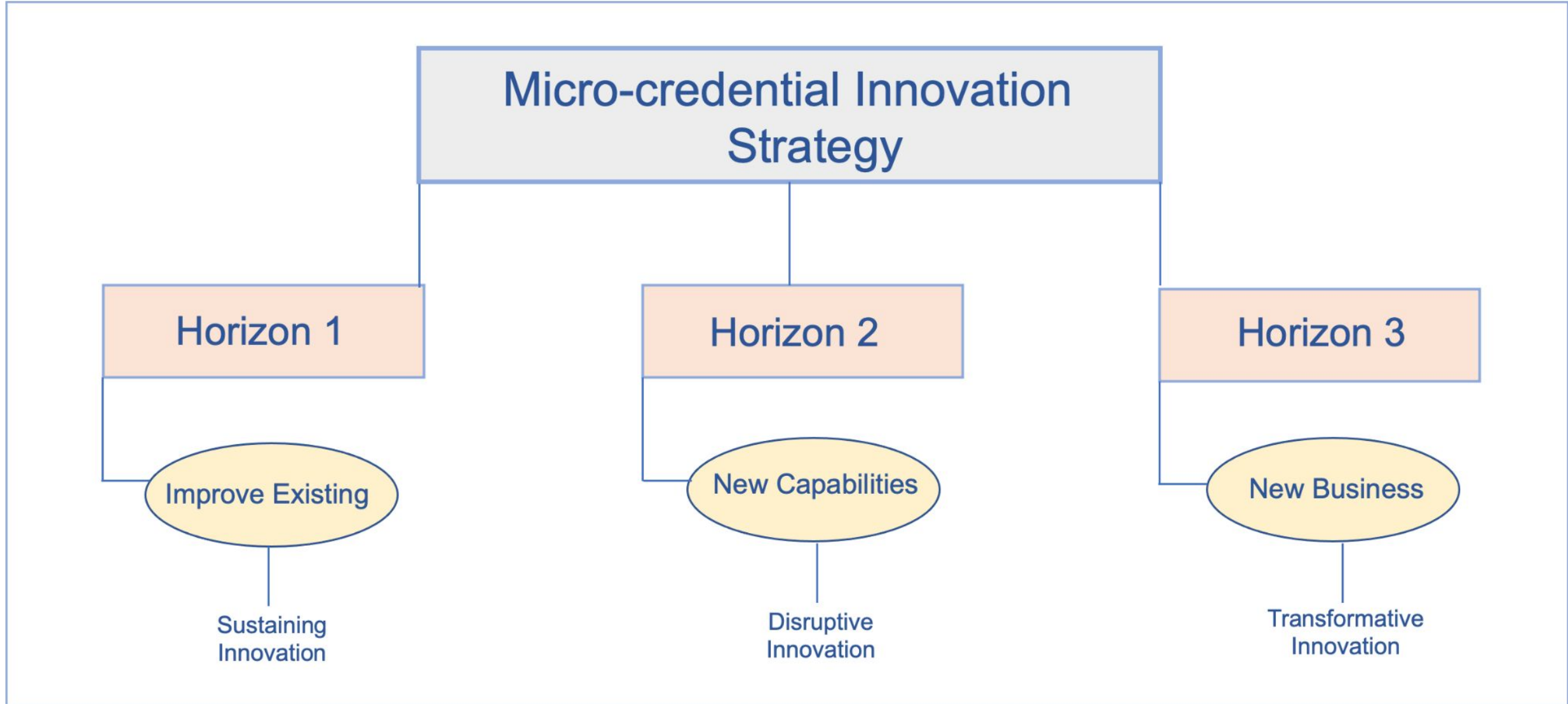
Changing the DNA of Higher Education  
from the Inside Out



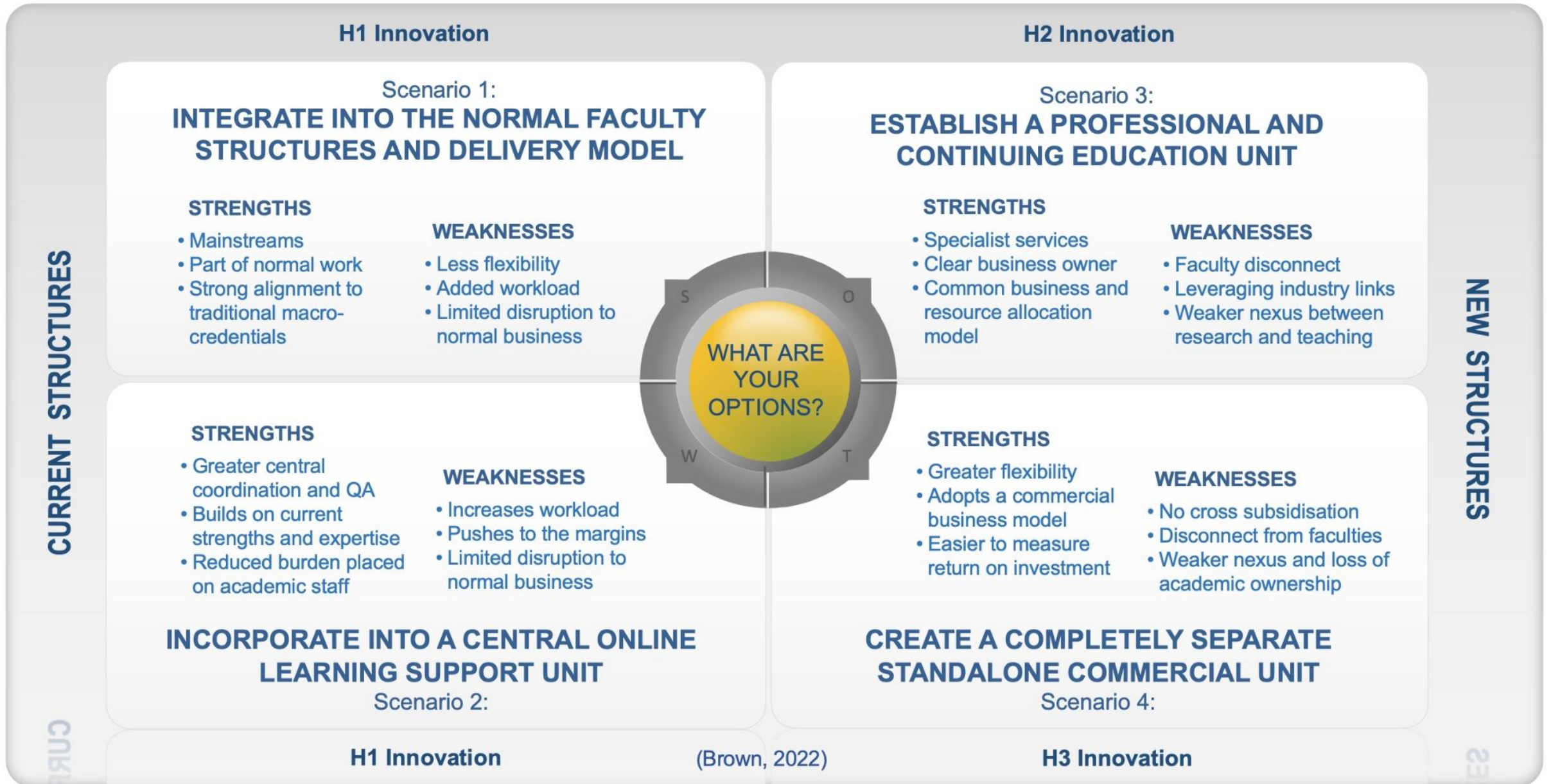
# Institutional Leadership Approaches for Micro-credentials



# Innovation Horizons: Futures Thinking and Innovation Strategy



# Different Internal Structures for Managing Micro-credentials







Charles Sturt  
University

Delivering Micro-  
credentials – the e2e  
process

# Micro-credentials Playbook

1. Translates strategic focus for MC's into an easy to understand processes
2. Provides **end-to-end** outline of the MC process from origination through to review
3. Outlines in a practical guide **the sequence of steps in constructing and delivering MC's**, including the roles and responsibilities and a set of actions to strengthen current operating model.

Version 1 September 2022

Author: Changing Behaviours  
Charles Sturt University

Charles Sturt University - TEQSA Provider Identification: PRV12018 (Australian University). CRICOS Provider: 00005F.

[https://cdn.csu.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/4153473/Charles-Sturt-Micro-credential-Playbook.pdf](https://cdn.csu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/4153473/Charles-Sturt-Micro-credential-Playbook.pdf)



**Small-group exercise:** Building a Micro-credential Team at your institution: Who should lead an Institutional MC Program strategy?

Micro-credentials **don't succeed by accident.**

They require **an institutional team** — leaders, educators, support staff, and external connectors.

Today you'll design a **'dream team' for micro-credentials in your institution**, and decide who should lead the strategy.



## Group Design (15 minutes)

Each group uses their own worksheet to brainstorm the following:

1. **Select a MC Strategy Team Leader:** Who should lead the institutional MC strategy? Why? What type of leadership skills are required? Where do you look to find the best institutional leaders for building a High-Quality MC Program?
2. **Build the Team:** List at least 5–7 roles needed to design, deliver, and assure quality of MCs.
3. **Assign Responsibilities:** For each role, define its main contribution (e.g., QA unit = ensures compliance with national frameworks).
4. **Identify Gaps:** Are there roles missing in your current institution?

# Building a Micro-credential Team at your institution

## Prompting questions:

- Who drives **strategic alignment** with the university's mission?
- Who ensures **pedagogical quality and relevance**?
- Who connects with the **labor market and employers**?
- Who supports learners' **journeys and recognition** of MCs?
- Who guarantees **integration into existing systems** (IT, NQF, QA)?



# Building a Micro-credential Team at your institution

## Part 1 – Team Leader

| Question                                                                    | Notes / Brainstormed Ideas |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Who should lead the institutional MC strategy?                              |                            |
| Why this person/role?                                                       |                            |
| What leadership skills are required?                                        |                            |
| Where can we find the best leaders for this initiative (internal/external)? |                            |

# Building a Micro-credential Team at your institution

## Part 2 – Building the Team

| Role (5–7)       | Responsibilities / Main Contribution        | Current Person/Unit (if applicable) |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Example: QA Unit | Ensures compliance with national frameworks | Internal QA Office                  |
|                  |                                             |                                     |
|                  |                                             |                                     |
|                  |                                             |                                     |
|                  |                                             |                                     |
|                  |                                             |                                     |

## Rapid Reporting (7 minutes)

Select Groups present:

- **Their team leader choice**
- **One critical role they added**

Highlights are recorded in a shared **“Institutional Team Map”** Menti Meter.



Rebecca Ferguson & Denise Whitelock

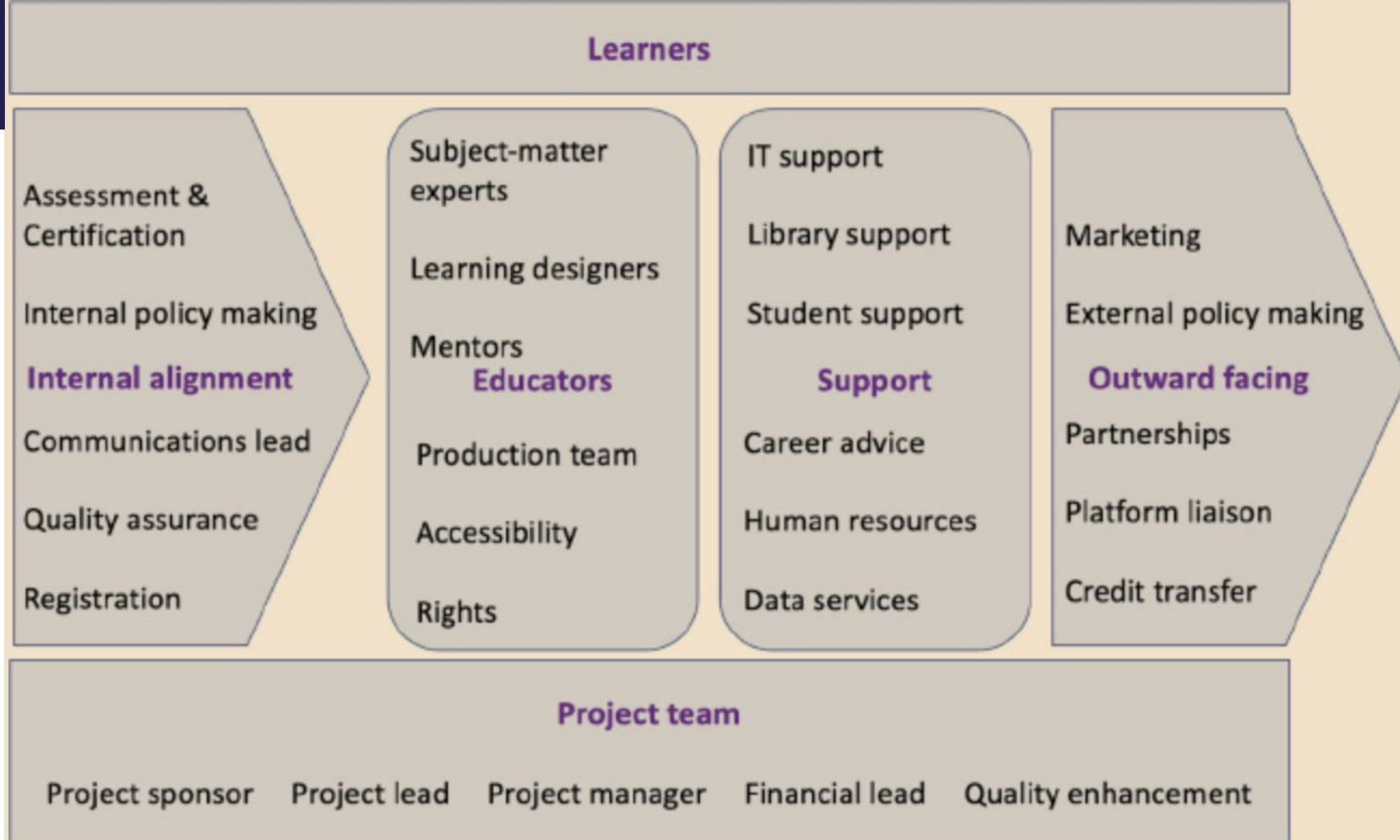
# **MICROCREDENTIALS FOR EXCELLENCE**

**A Practical Guide**

<https://www.ubiquitypress.com/books/m/10.5334/bcz>



# Institutional MC Roles



**Figure 1:** Key roles on microcredentials.

# MC Co-design, Stakeholder Engagement and Quality Assurance

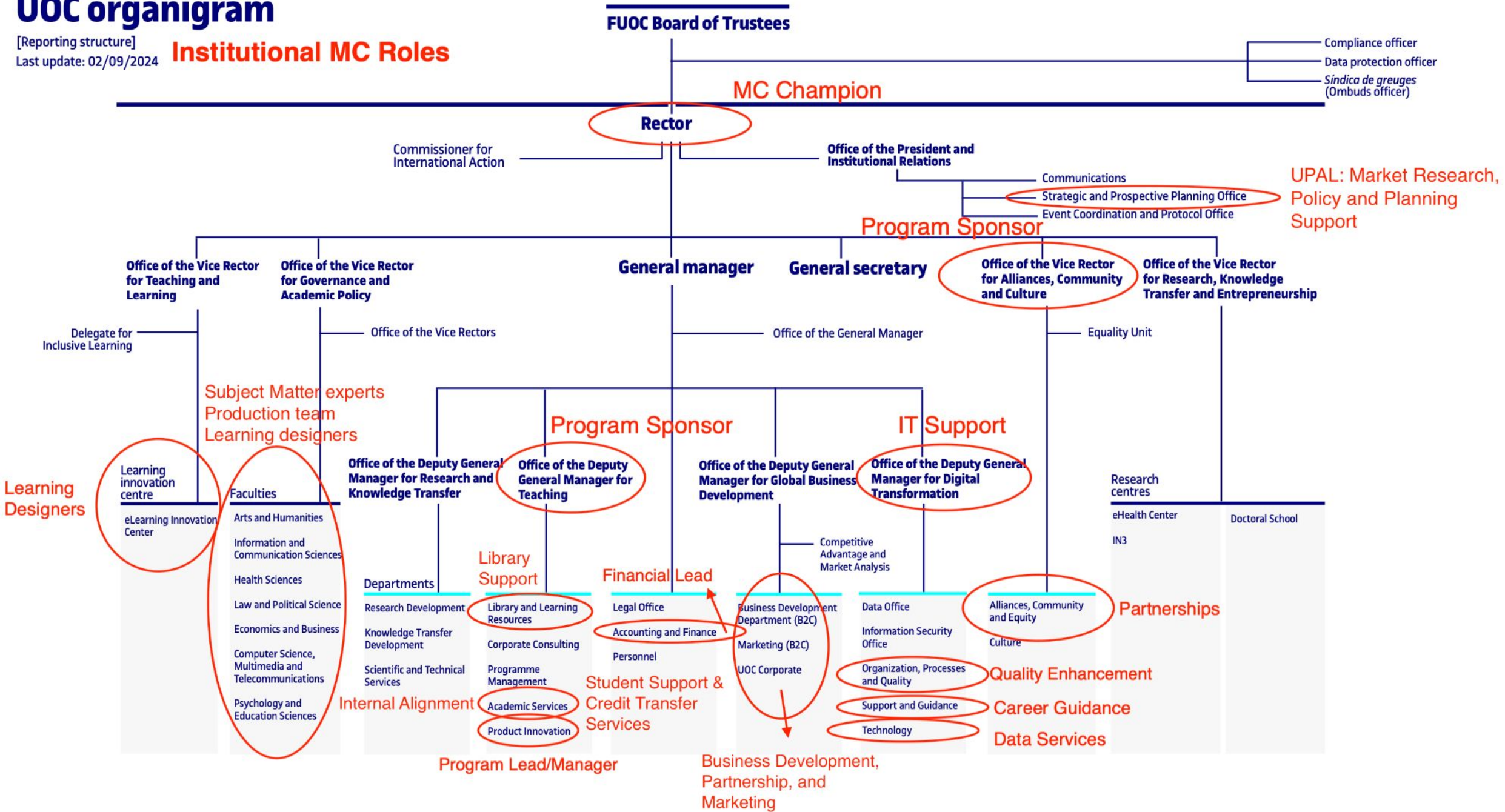
How can we know quality when we see it?

Day 1: 11:45h-13:00h

# UOC organigram

[Reporting structure]  
Last update: 02/09/2024

## Institutional MC Roles



# Introducing UPAL: UOC's Unit for Skills Intelligence

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## Find out about the UOC's Labour Market Research and Analysis Unit

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Two Examples of **MC Co-design, Stakeholder Engagement and QA**

1. EULEP Erasmus + Project
2. Uni-Industry Co-design Workshops

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PR9ojs\\_8SBM&t=5s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PR9ojs_8SBM&t=5s)



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## A UOC Response→UPAL

Create a unit within the university with the mission of providing **scientific knowledge** on:

- **Skills needs** detected in the labour market
- **Lifelong learning training needs** of individuals.
- Providing this knowledge to **students/alumni, program directors and society.**



**Achieve relevant training  
connected to the needs of  
companies and people.**



# Plot your career with GPS Professional

We've launched a pioneering tool to boost your employability: GPS Professional. It's a unique and innovative platform that allows members of the UOC community to identify their skills and knowledge and find out if their professional profiles match current demands in each sector

Give it a try!





# **University-Industry co-creation workshops**

# University-Industry workshops: Conceptualisation

→ Organisation of collaborative workshops with key stakeholders to develop recommendations for UOC educational offerings, including micro-credentials:



1) Companies and professionals → Field expertise



2) Professors and Faculty Directors (UOC) → Participate in the educational offering



3) Guidance professionals (UOC) → Professionals need expertise



4) UPAL → Dynamise the session and present labour market data

# Main objective of the workshops

- With focus on the **twin transition**, the workshop addressed three core areas:
  - Key and emerging **occupations**.
  - Key and emerging **skills**.
  - **Trends** shaping the twin transition.

## To date...

- **Two** participatory co-creation workshops hosted by UOC.
- Involved **30 Catalan organisations** immersed in the **twin transition**.



## Study Significance

| Why?                                                                                                                                                                                        | Initial Input Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A continuous dialogue with the sustainability sector is essential <b>for the development of new programs related to Sustainability Management, Digital Transformation, and Environment.</b> | Early interaction with professional associations and sustainability-focused organisations — especially those impacted by digital challenges — <b>was key in drafting the initial program outline of the degree and microcredentials.</b> |
| Co-creation Tools                                                                                                                                                                           | Maintaining Academic Independence                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Workshops and focus groups <b>help align the program's proposed knowledge and skills with real labor market needs.</b>                                                                      | <b>Collaboration does not compromise academic autonomy</b> —it enriches and informs curriculum design and ongoing program updates.                                                                                                       |



# Challenges and next steps

- Focus on emerging topics (e.g., digital skills, sustainability) aligned with academic needs.
- Work with the different UOC faculties and programs.
- Connect and improve UOC stakeholders network.
- Publish periodic labor-market trend reports.
- Integrate the data collected with other UOC areas (i.e. Faculties, microcredentials, marketing, guidance services...)



# Quality Assurance

How can we know quality when we see it?

# What is Quality Assurance?

---

“Quality assurance refers to **the systematic processes, policies, and procedures that are put in place** to ensure that an institution’s programs **meet or exceed established standards**. It is an evaluative activity that applies to program approval, program review, and even organizational review. It aims to maintain excellence in program offerings.

Quality assurance **protects and maintains the reputation of the institution with learners, other institutions, employers, and other stakeholders** by committing to a set of transparent criteria that all of the institution’s offerings must meet or exceed. The process **is formal, its outcomes are public, and it serves to build trust in the institution’s offerings.** ”

# International Micro-credential Quality Standards

Final Report Micro-credentials Higher Education Consultation Group (EC 2020)

---

- a defined list of critical information elements to describe microcredentials;
- alignment with national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF): defined levels, standards for describing learning outcomes;
- quality assurance standards;
- defined credits: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), defined learning outcomes and notional workload;
- recognition: for further studies and/or employment purposes;
- portability: issuing, storage and sharing of microcredentials;
- platform solutions for the provision and promotion of courses leading to microcredentials;
- incentives to stimulate the uptake of microcredentials.



# Who is Quality Assurance For?

---

## Learners

- Affordable program;
- Short-term (achievable) length of the program;
- Ability to progress in one's career
- Higher wages
- Understanding of how to apply the target skills;
- Relevance of the assessments to work environment

## Employers

- Meet a specific workplace need that directly support industry job roles and job descriptions that are in demand;
- Recruit skilled workforce;
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy for recruitment
- Retain and reskill/upskill current employees;
- Career pathways.

## Instructors

- Engagement of learners into the program
- Evidence of learning;
- Authentic assessments;
- Retention of learners into the program;
- Completion rate of the program;
- On-ramps to other educational opportunities;
- Off-ramps to employment;
- Stackable educational and career pathways;
- Curricular alignment to employment

## Administrators

- Meeting a specific workforce development need; Learner success, in the program and beyond it
- Enrollment rate
- Retention of learners into the program once they register in it
- Completion rate;
- Revenues generated from the program;
- Whether the marketing is effective -Portability of the credential for learners
- Value to the learner

## Quality Agencies

- Evidence of the quality assurance processes for the program
- Curricular alignment
- Employability of graduates
- Transparency of tuition, fees, and costs to learners
- Return on investment for learners.

**HEQCO's Guiding Principles for  
Developing a Quality Assurance  
Framework for Micro-credentials**

**Relevant**



Consulted or involved  
industry/community

**Accredited**



Recognized or issued  
by a professional  
accrediting body

**Standardized**



Meets a government-  
set quality standard

**Assessed**



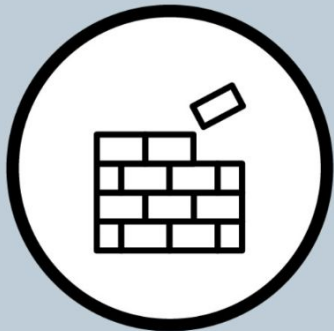
The learner must  
demonstrate  
skills/knowledge to  
earn the credential

**Flexible**



The pace and/or  
structure of learning  
can be personalized

**Stackable**



Can be "stacked" or  
combined toward a  
larger credential, e.g.  
a diploma or degree

# Micro-credential Quality Assurance Checklist



## Program Design

1. Alignment
2. Credential design
3. Course design
4. Learner perspectives
5. Employer perspectives
6. Delivery
7. Recognition of learning

## Processes

13. Transparency of the process
14. Evaluation and continuous improvement”

## Resources

8. Instructor preparedness
9. Technology infrastructure
10. Equipment and facilities
11. Learner support
12. Administrative support

## Outcomes

15. Satisfaction
16. Completion
17. Employment outcomes
18. Pursuit of further education
19. Credibility and reputation

# Mapping Stakeholders for Micro-credentials in Palestine

## Instructions:

- Work in breakout groups for 10 minutes.
- Identify key stakeholders in the Palestinian micro-credential ecosystem.
- Define their responsibilities/contributions.
- Be ready to share one stakeholder + role in plenary.



# Mapping Stakeholders for Micro-credentials in Palestine

## **Guiding questions:**

- Who ensures quality and standards?
- Who defines labor market relevance?
- Who guarantees access and equity?
- Who ensures recognition and portability?

# Mapping Stakeholders for Micro-credentials in Palestine

| Stakeholder                                              | Responsibilities (in developing a high quality micro-credential program)              | Contributions (to developing a high quality micro-credential program) |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. HEI's                                                 | (each has strength, bottom up approach, dialogue between Ministry, knowledge sharing, |                                                                       |
| 2. Centre for Continuous Learning                        |                                                                                       |                                                                       |
| 3. Minister of Higher Ed                                 |                                                                                       |                                                                       |
| 4. International Accreditation                           |                                                                                       |                                                                       |
| 5. Institutional Policy makers                           | Future oriented education, workforce development,                                     | Flexible targeted training pathways,                                  |
| 6. National Policy makers (ministry of higher Education) | legislation                                                                           |                                                                       |
| 7. Labour market (chambers of commerce)                  |                                                                                       |                                                                       |
| 8. Students                                              |                                                                                       |                                                                       |

# Overlaps, Gaps & Next Step

- Overlaps: what did multiple groups comment on?
- Gaps: what voices or stakeholders were missing?)
- Next Steps: how can you use this map for QA & accreditation guidelines?

# Reflections and Closure of Day 1

## Questions, Doubts and Comments Welcome

Day 2: Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Quality, Accreditation, and Road mapping (3 hours)

From: 10:00-13:15h

10:00-11:00 | MC Maturity Model, Internal QA Practices and Feedback Mechanisms

11:00 – 12:00 | Integration and Stackability Options: Accreditation and Certification

12:00 – 12:45 | Focus Group: Recommendations

- Breakout groups to co-develop recommendations on accreditation, QA, and program design templates

12:45-13:15 | Presentation of Recommendations & Closing Discussion

# MC Maturity Model, Internal QA Practices and Feedback Mechanisms

## Indicators of Maturity for Micro- credentials in Higher Education

*Lead Author*

**Kerstin Schoerg**

*Supporting Authors*

**Lieve van den Brande**

**Paul den Hertog**

**Neill Wylie**

**Laura Widger**

*Indicators of Maturity for  
Micro-credentials in Higher Education*  
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Schoerg, K., van den Brande, L., Den Hertog, P.,  
Wylie, N. & Widger, L. (2024). Indicators  
of Maturity for Micro-credentials in Higher  
Education. SFU University Press.

[Open Source PDF of Indicators](#)

Day 2 10-11h



# Day 2 Agenda

## **Quality, Accreditation, and Road mapping (3 hours)**

**From: 10:00-13:15h**

**10:00-11:00 | MC Maturity Model, Internal QA Practices and Feedback Mechanisms**

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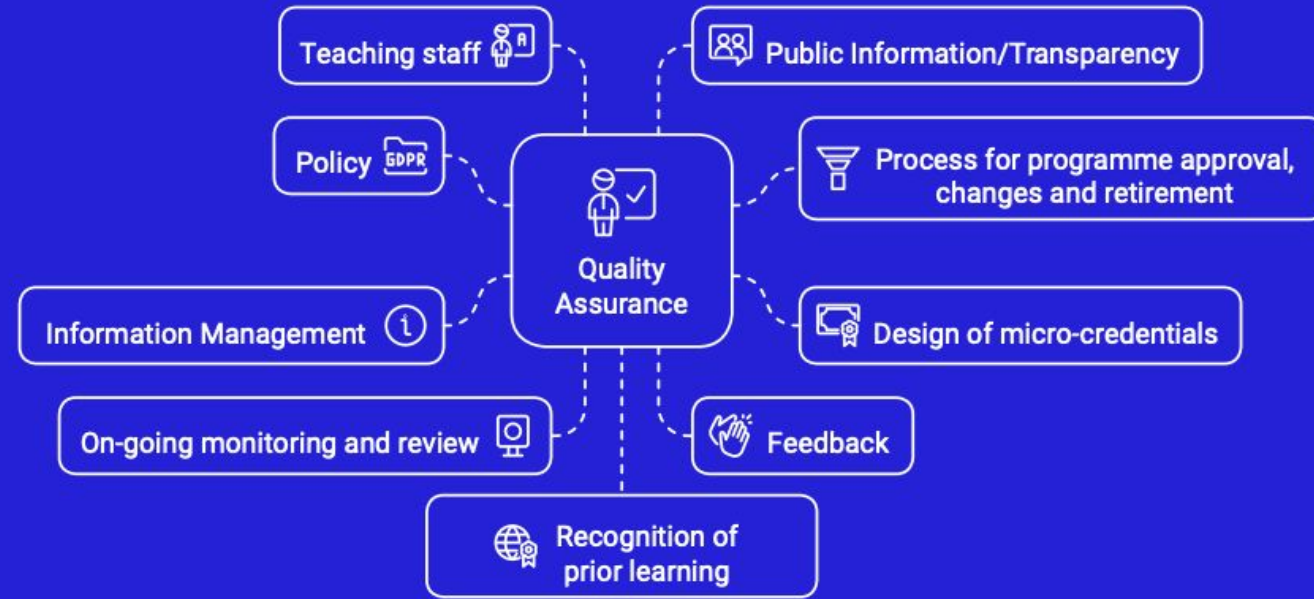
**Laura Widger**

*Indicators of Maturity for  
Micro-credentials in Higher Education*

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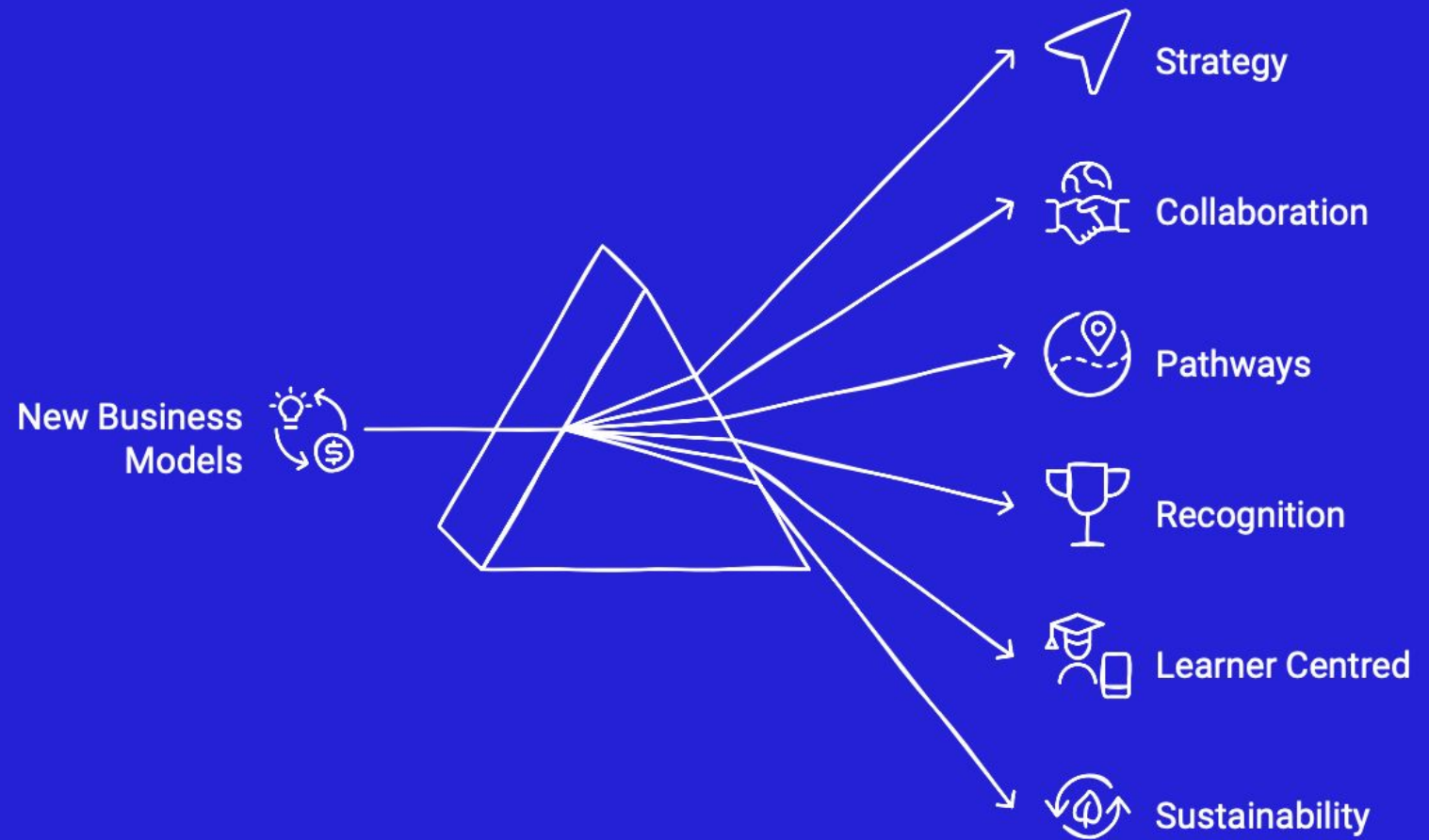
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Wylie, N. & Widger, L. (2024). Indicators  
of Maturity for Micro-credentials in Higher  
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# Quality Assurance



**Figure 6:** Areas covered by the indicators for quality assurance

# New Business Models and Marketing



**Figure 4:** Areas covered by the indicators for new business models and marketing

# Technology and Data for Micro-credentials

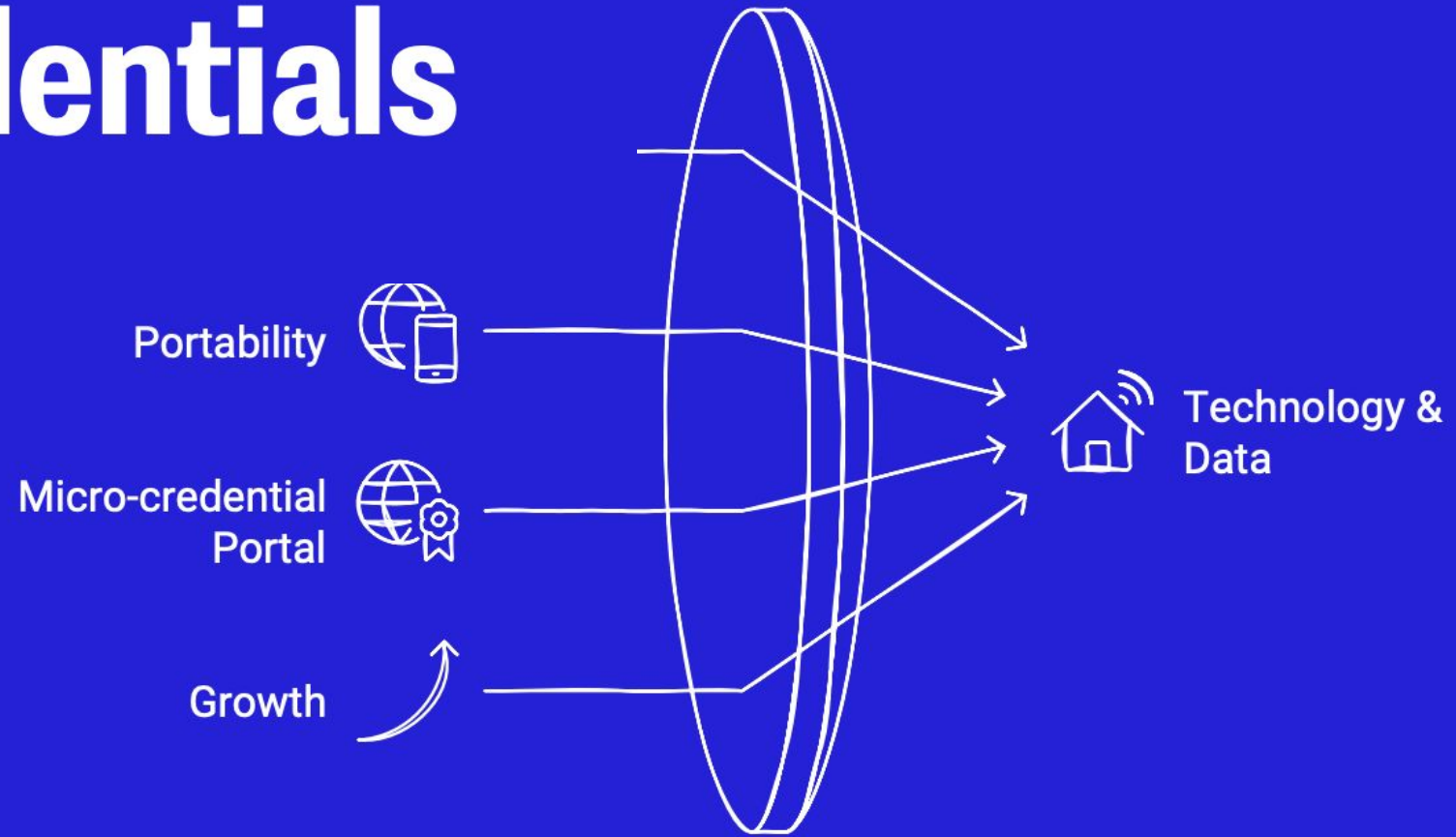


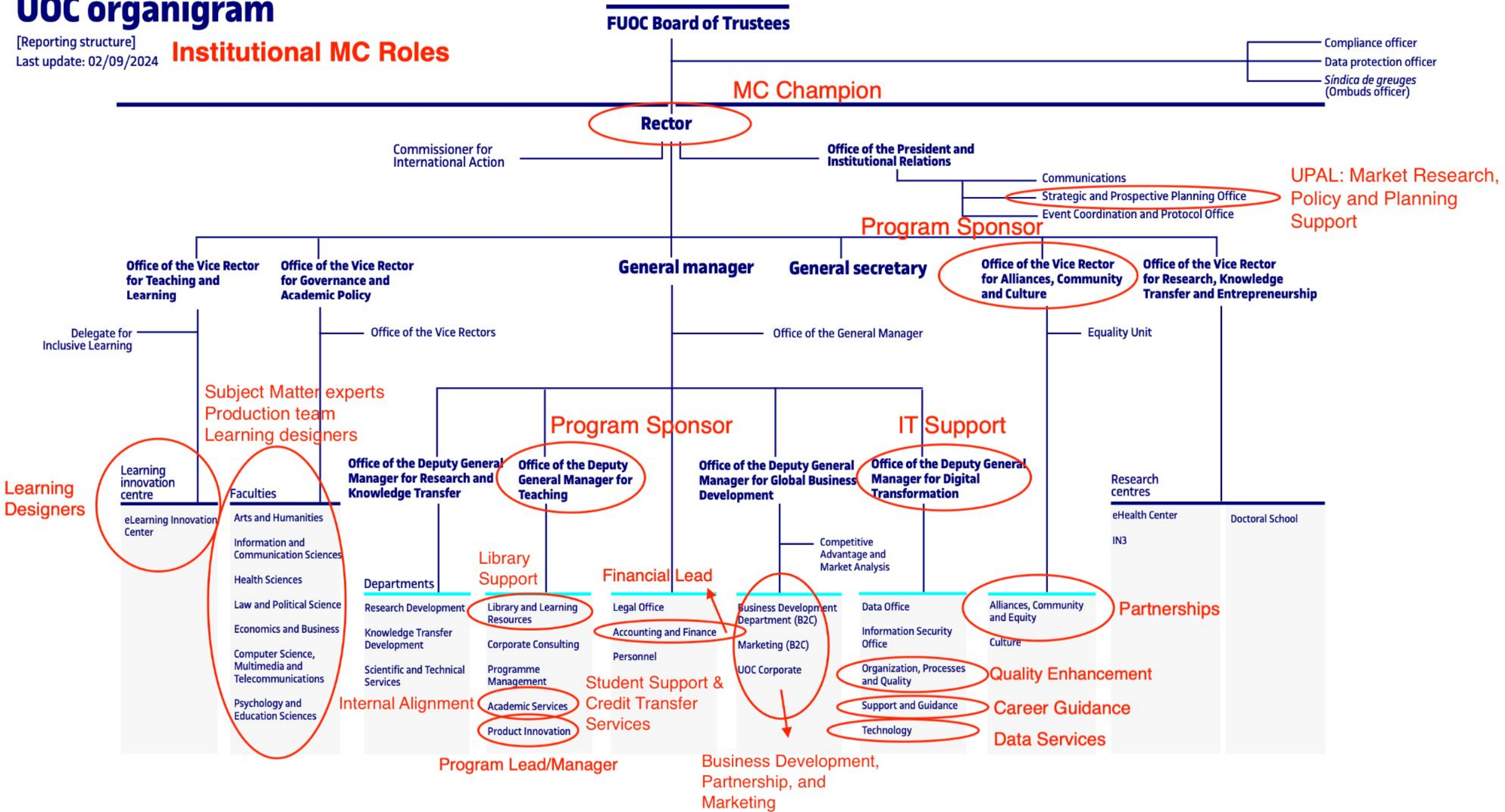
Figure 5: Areas covered by the indicators for technology and data



# UOC organigram

[Reporting structure]  
Last update: 02/09/2024

## Institutional MC Roles

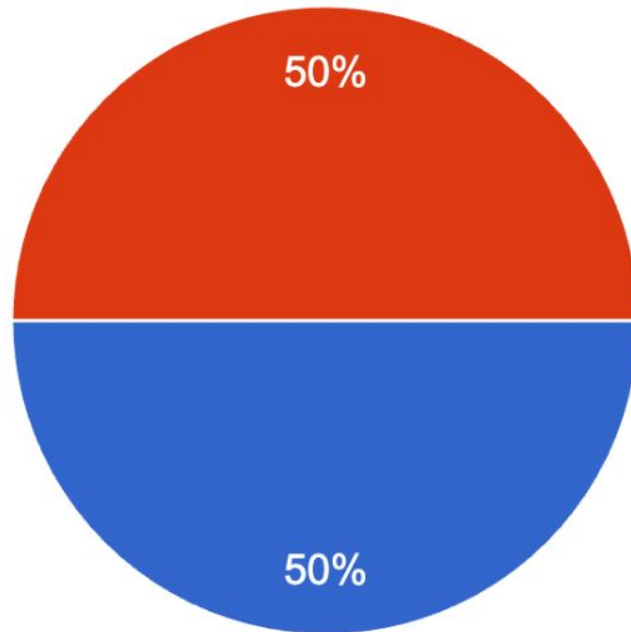


# UOC's Micro-credential Strategy Working Group

- **Marta Borràs** Senior Program Manager, Unit for Product Innovation
- **Ricard Hortigüela** Senior Program Manager, eLinc (Centre for Teaching and Learning)
- **Toni Espadas** Director, Unit for Product Innovation
- **Manel Jiménez** Vice-Rector Alliances, Community, Culture
- **Gemma Carrera** Deputy Manager, Teaching
- **Sandra Sanz** Faculty Information and Communication Studies
- **Lourdes Guàrdia** Vice Dean, Faculty of Education
- **Carme Pagès** Director, Unit of Skills Foresight and Labour Market Analysis
- **Mitchell Peters** Senior Researcher, Unit of Skills Foresight and Labour Market Analysis
- **Gemma Xarles** Vice Rectors Office (Alliance, Community, Culture)
- **Cristina Girona** Senior Program Manager, eLinc (Centre for Teaching and Learning)

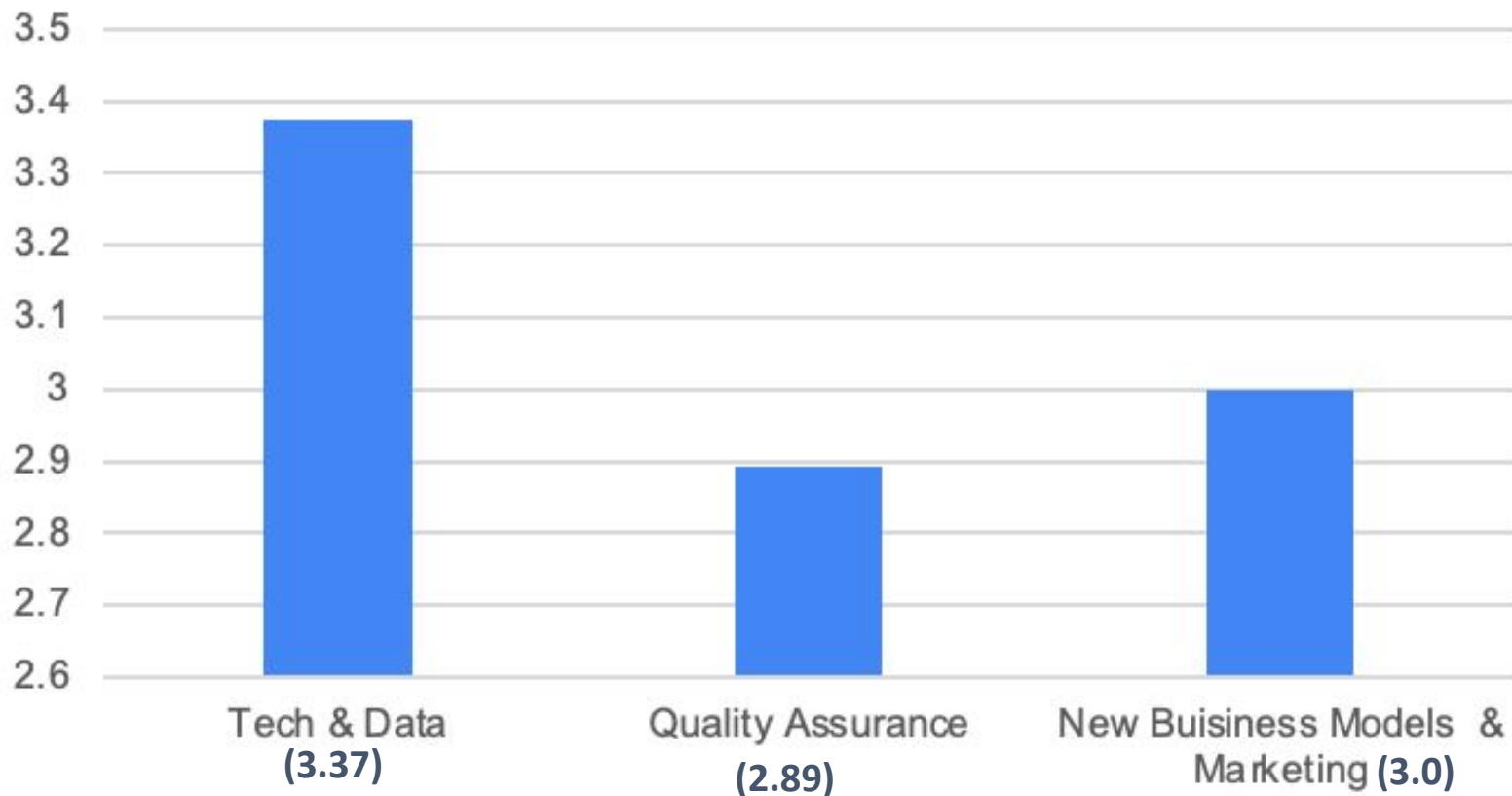
## To what extent are micro-credentials a part of your regular work at the UOC?

8 responses



- Micro-credentials are a core part of my role-- I actively engage with UOC's micro-credentials initiatives as a key r...
- I work with micro-credentials regularly-- They are a significant but not primary part of my job.
- I have some involvement with micro-credentials -- I engage with them occa...
- I have little to no involvement with micro-credentials -- They are not a formal pa...

## Overall Maturity Scores



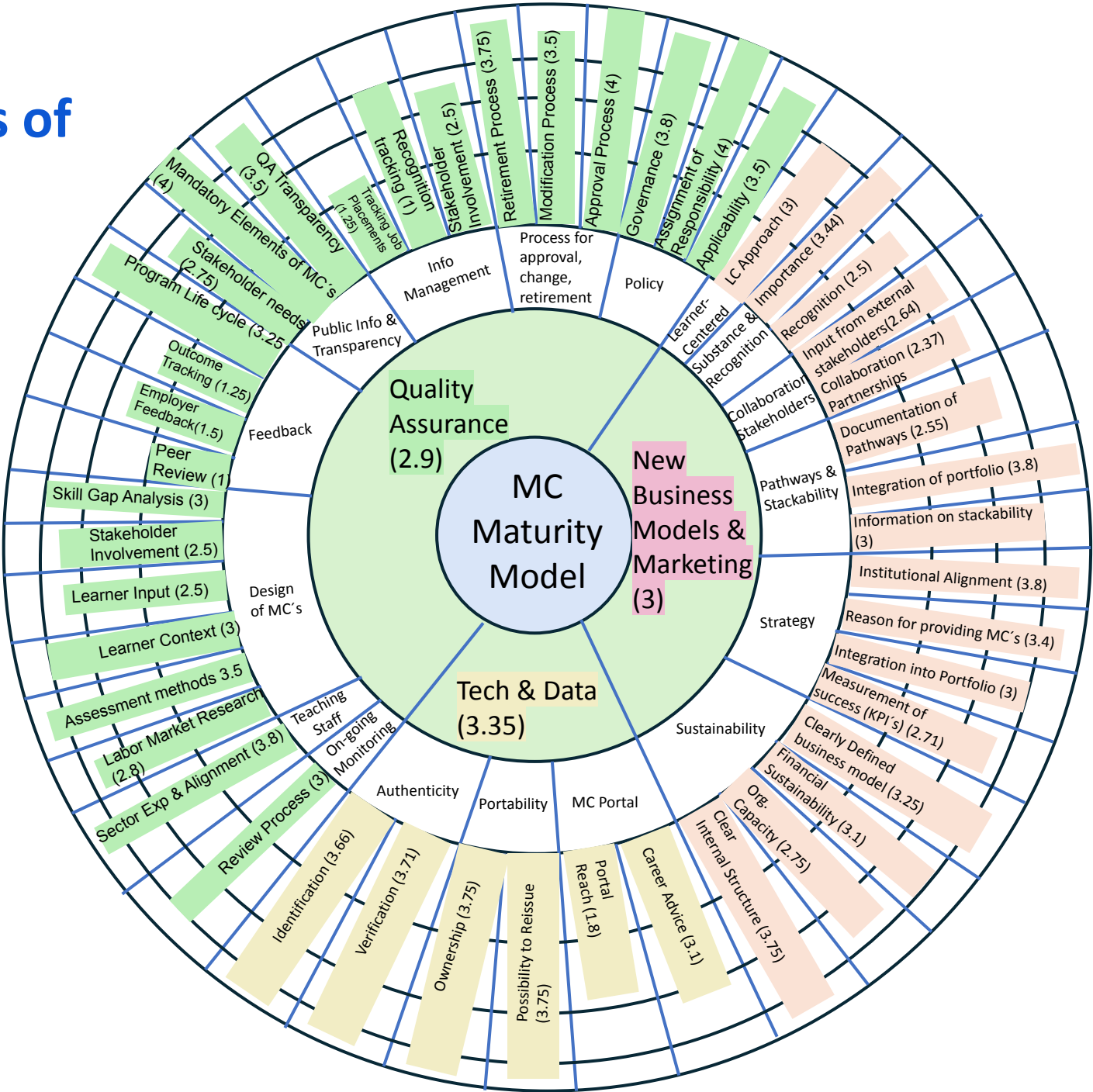
**4 = Fully implemented** – Consistently applied across the institution.

**3= Partially implemented** – Applied in some areas but incomplete.

**2 = Minimally implemented** – Limited, informal or ad hoc application.

**1 = Not implemented at all** – No process or policy exists.

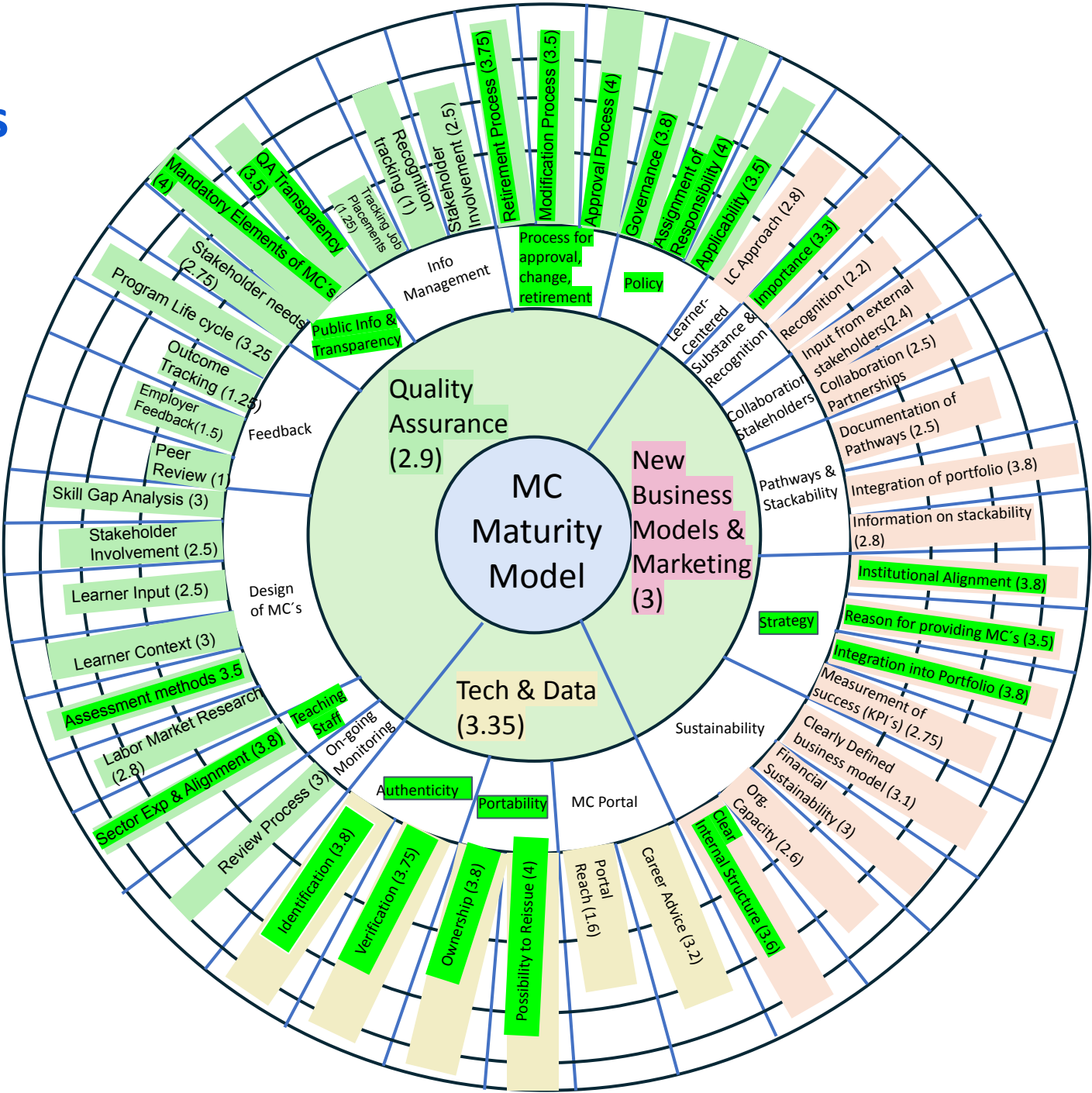
# UOC's Indicators of Maturity





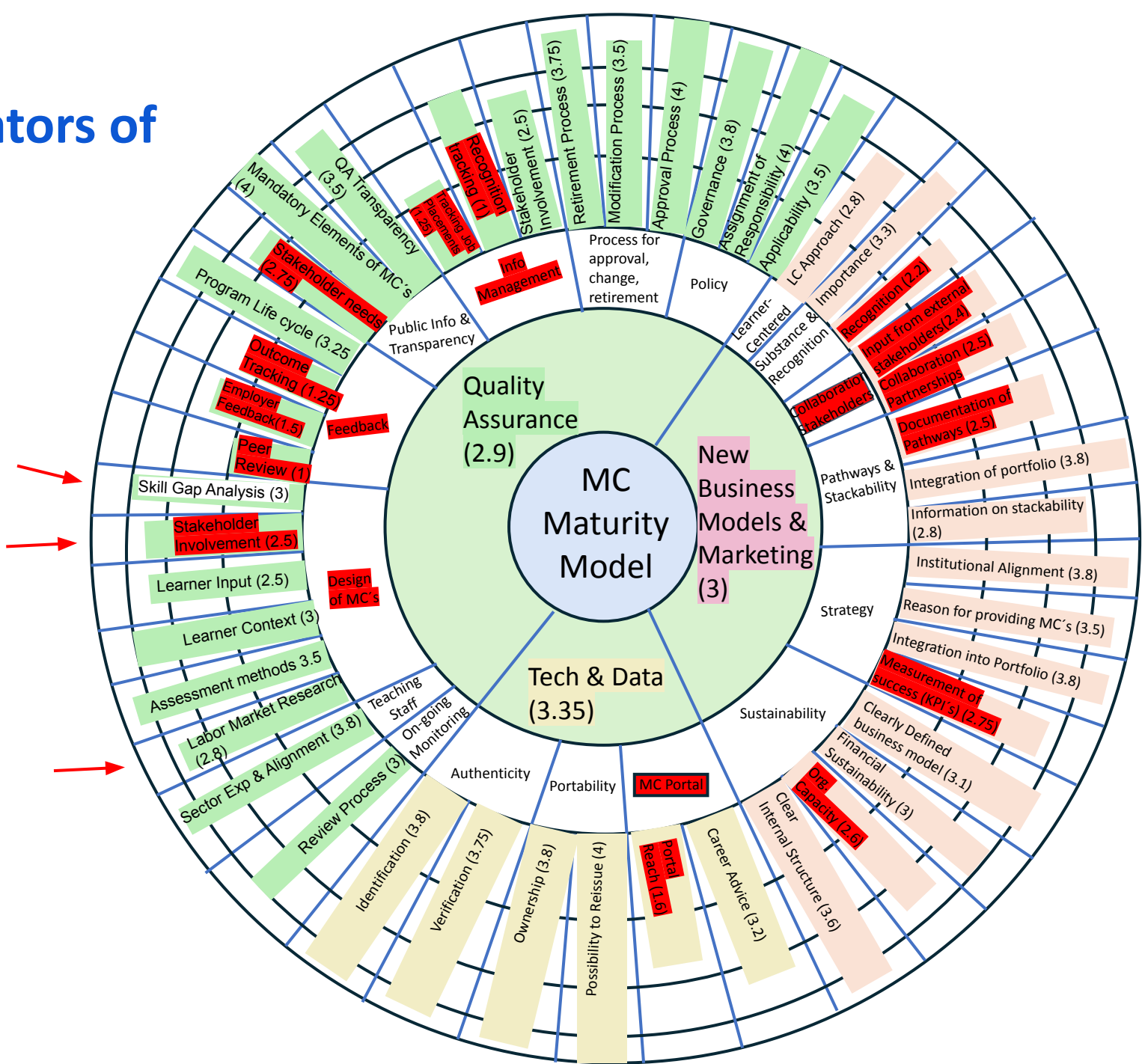
# UOC's Indicators of Maturity

Strengths/Established Practices



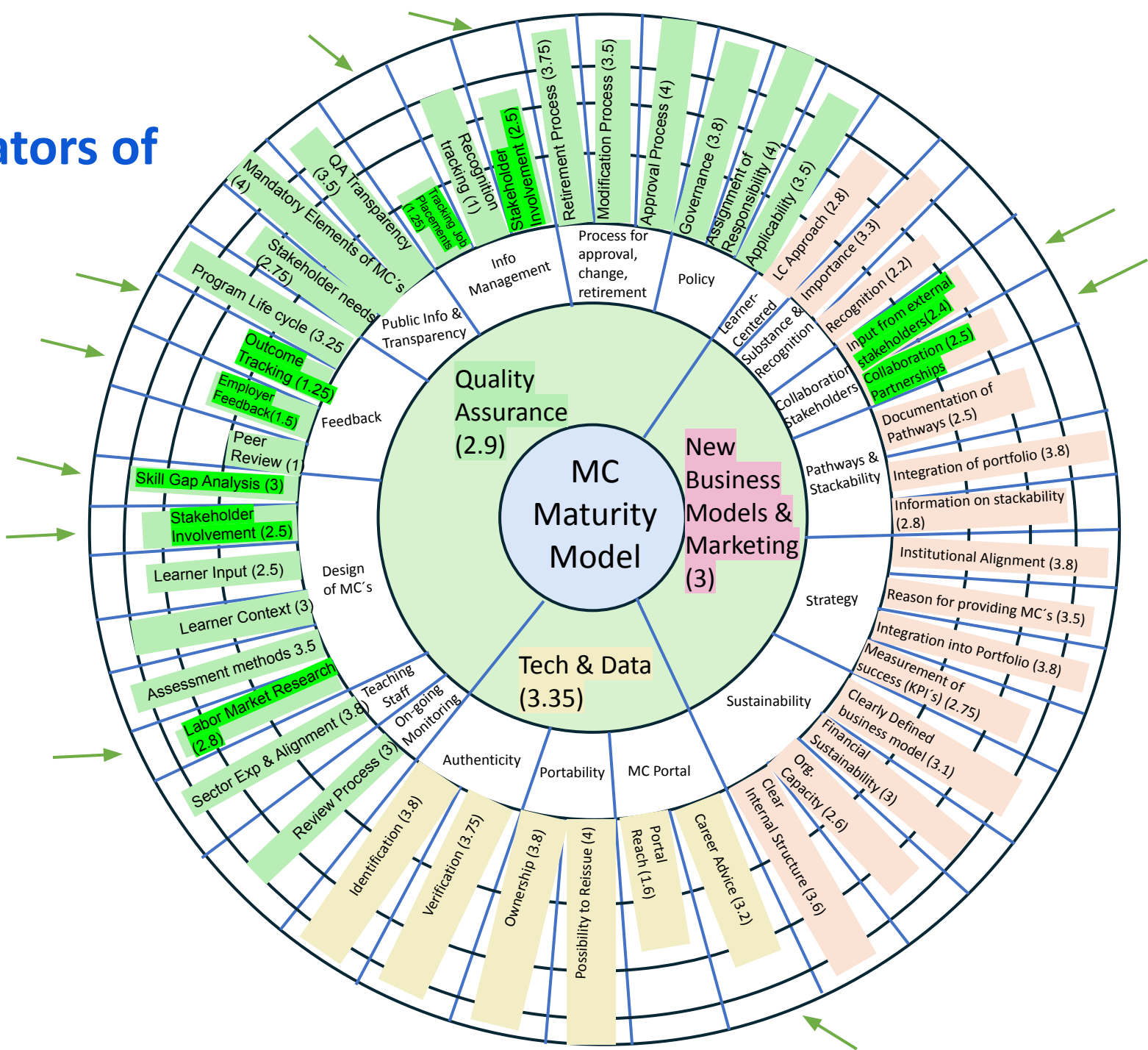
# UOC's Indicators of Maturity

Weakness/Gaps

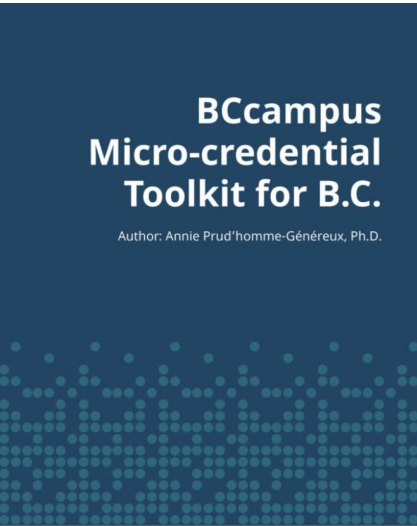


# UOC's Indicators of Maturity

UPAL: Areas for coordination, integration, and alignment



# HEQCO's Guiding Principles for Developing a Quality Assurance Framework for Micro-credentials



## Relevant



Consulted or involved industry/community

## Accredited



Recognized or issued by a professional accrediting body

## Standardized



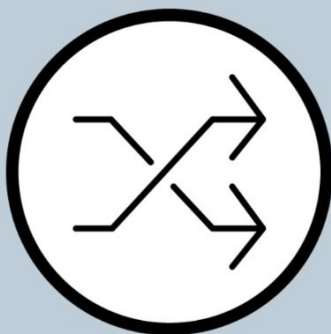
Meets a government-set quality standard

## Assessed



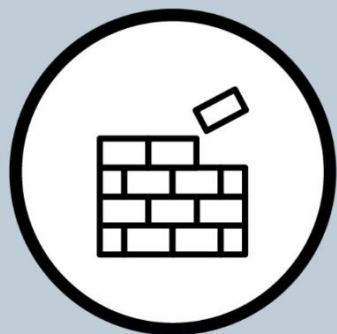
The learner must demonstrate skills/knowledge to earn the credential

## Flexible



The pace and/or structure of learning can be personalized

## Stackable



Can be "stacked" or combined toward a larger credential, e.g. a diploma or degree



# GUIDE TO DESIGN, ISSUE AND RECOGNISE MICRO-CREDENTIALS

[Link to Guide here.](#)



### 4.1.1 Describe Micro-Credentials in a Standardised Format

Annex I of the EU Council Recommendation (2022) suggests a list of mandatory and optional elements which should be used to describe micro-credentials. These are listed in Table 5.

**Table 5: Mandatory and Optional Elements to describe a micro-credential.**

| Mandatory elements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Optional elements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Identification of the learner</li><li>■ Title of the micro-credential</li><li>■ Country(ies)/Region(s) of the issuer</li><li>■ Awarding body(ies)</li><li>■ Date of issuing</li><li>■ Learning outcomes</li><li>■ Notional workload needed to achieve the learning outcomes (in ECTS credits, where possible)</li><li>■ Level (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (EQF, QF-EHEA), if applicable</li><li>■ Type of assessment</li><li>■ Form of participation in the learning activity</li><li>■ Type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Prerequisites needed to enrol in the learning activity</li><li>■ Supervision and identity verification during assessment (unsupervised with no identity verification, supervised with no identity verification, supervised online, or onsite with identity verification)</li><li>■ Grade achieved</li><li>■ Integration/stackability options (stand-alone, independent microcredential/integrated, stackable towards another credential)</li><li>■ Further information</li></ul> |

Source: Council of the EU (2022).

# Fast Asset Mapping– Micro-credentials in Palestine

We will **use asset mapping** to spot **the strengths already present in Palestinian institutions** and the broader education, training and workforce ecosystem **that can support micro-credential development.**

[Focus Group Worksheet Link](#)

# Integration and Stackability Options: Accreditation and Certification

Day 2: 11:00h-12:00h

# Questions from Day 1

1. What are the **main policy recommendations** from the European Union to governments for the successful integration of micro-credentials into national education frameworks?
2. How can Palestinian institutions ensure that the content and learning outcomes of micro-credentials are **aligned with both European standards and the specific needs of the Palestinian labor market**?
3. What are the **criteria and mechanisms for the recognition of micro-credentials** within the European Education Area, and how can a similar framework be established in Palestine?
4. What is the **EU's long-term vision for micro-credentials**, and how will it influence the future of traditional higher education?

# Questions from Day 1

## 1) EU policy recommendations for governments (successful national integration)

- **Adopt the EU definition & minimum info set** for every micro-credential: clear learning outcomes, assessment, workload (ECTS or hours), level (EQF/NQF), QA reference, provider identity, issuance format. This standardizes transparency and portability.
- **Embed MCs in national frameworks:** reference the **EQF/QF-EHEA** and align with **ESG** [\(European Standards & Guidelines\)](#) for QA; enable **ECTS** use so modules can stack into larger awards.
- **Enable recognition & portability:** use Bologna tools (ECTS, Transcript/Diploma Supplements) and verifiable **digital credentials** (Europass-compatible) so learners can carry MCs across borders.
- **Link to skills strategies:** connect MC policy to adult-learning, employability, and sectoral skills priorities; coordinate ministries, QA agencies, HEIs, employers, and learner groups.



# Questions from Day 1

## 2) Dual alignment for Palestine: EU standards and local labour-market needs

- **Design to the EU “minimum information set”** (above) and publish it with each MC; convert workload to an **ECTS-equivalent** for comparability.
- **Map each MC to the Palestinian NQF level** and state stackability (stand-alone vs. pathway to a larger credential).
- **Co-design with employers:** use sector advisory input up front to define outcomes, authenticity of assessment, and workplace relevance; this directly addresses the local gaps identified by NEO/quality bodies.
- **Integrate Skills Intelligence:** use secondary sources (ETF, CEDEFOP, Ministry of Labour Statistics), and try to align MC’s with skills/occupational demands in the Palestinian labour market
- **Issue verifiable digital records** so Palestinian learners can present MCs to EU HEIs/employers with confidence.

# Questions from Day 1

## 3) Recognition criteria & mechanisms in the European Education Area—and a Palestine blueprint

What Europe checks for (recognition criteria):

- Transparent **learning outcomes** and **reliable assessment**; explicit **workload/ECTS**; **level** (EQF/QF-EHEA); provider identity; **QA** in line with ESG; and declared **stackability/recognition routes**.

How recognition happens (mechanisms):

- Institutional rules anchored in national frameworks; use of **ECTS** and Supplements; and **digital credentialing** for verification/portability.

Palestine—build a similar framework in 5 moves:

1. **National definition & data schema** (copy the EU minimum fields).
2. **NQF mapping + ECTS-equivalency guidance** based on total workload.
3. **QA requirement** for MCs (institutional ESG-aligned processes; external review where appropriate).
4. **Institutional recognition policies** (crediting MCs into degrees; publish criteria).
5. **Digital credentials** compatible with Europass for verification abroad.

# Questions from Day 1

## 4) EU long-term vision & impact on traditional higher education

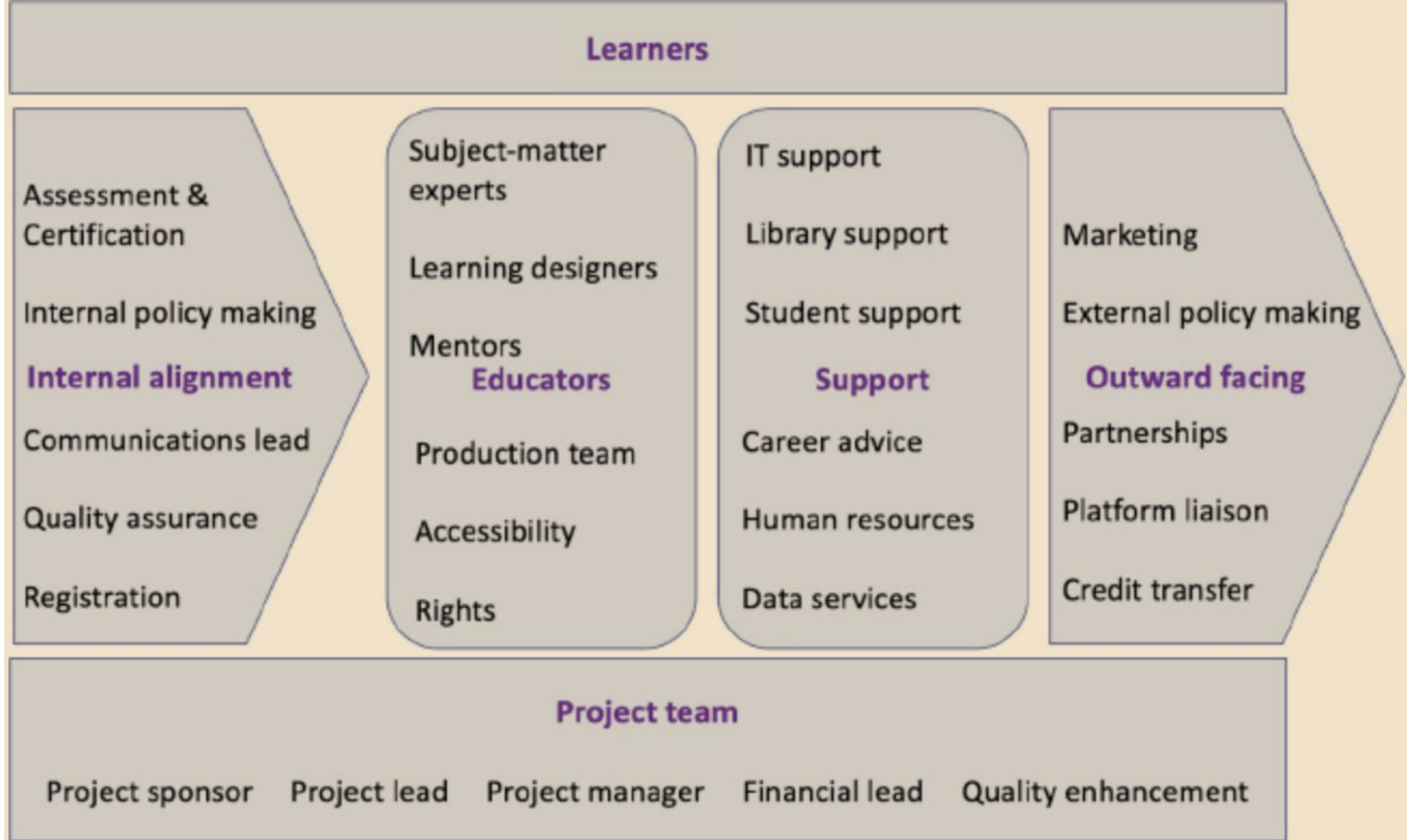
- **Vision:** normalise **lifelong, modular learning**—quality-assured, portable, and stackable—so learners upskill/reskill across a career while institutions stay responsive to labour-market change.
- **Impact on HEIs:** more **modular curricula**, systematic **learning-outcomes** design, stronger **RPL** (recognition of prior learning), tighter **employer partnerships**, and wide adoption of **digital credentials**—MCs complement degrees and open new on-/off-ramps.
- **For Palestine:** start small (priority sectors), prove value (QA + employability outcomes), and scale via NQF/QA alignment—exactly what your TAM aims to catalyse.

**Remember**

**Micro-credentialing is a team Game**

**It requires organizational innovation,  
coordination, and collaboration**

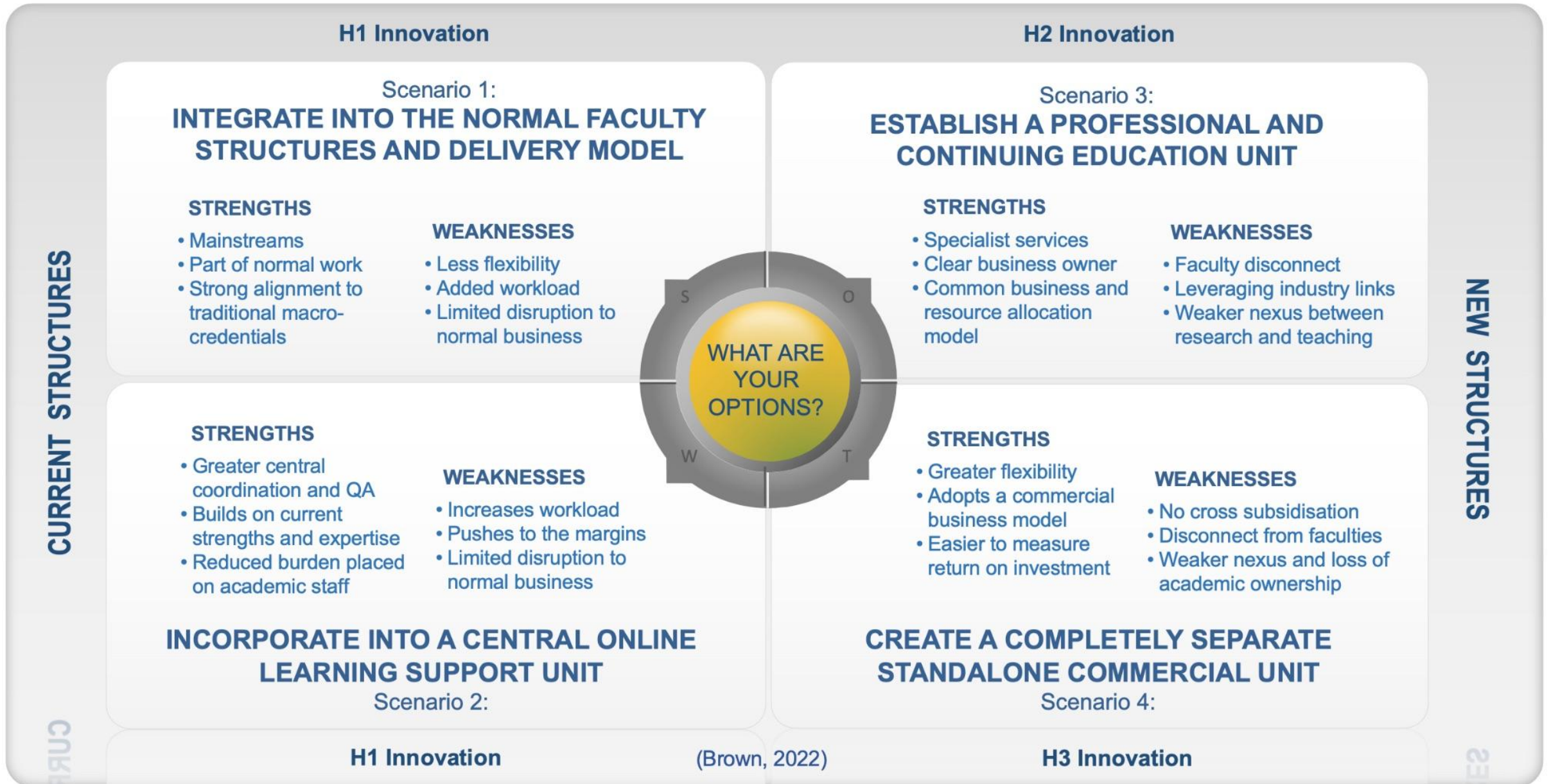
# Institutional MC Roles



**Figure 1:** Key roles on microcredentials.



# Different Internal Structures for Managing Micro-credentials



## Members of a micro-credential design team

(Bigelow, et al., 2022)

**Initiative lead:** The lead is the lynchpin of the micro-credential development (is this you?). This person should be engaged about the initiative and be a good problem solver, able to navigate the internal processes.

**Employer engagement lead:** Getting employers on board early is critical. This person should have a track record of successful employer engagement and be able to talk their language and get calls returned.

**Subject matter expert (SME):** The SME co-creates content and advises on delivery in collaboration with industry or employer partners.

**Pedagogical and edTech support:** This is an instructional designer or educational developer who can help shape the learning plan and content, possibly in partnership with your institution's teaching and learning centre.

**Visual design support:** That first glance is crucial to respect and understanding. This person should be able to go beyond making the design attractive and correctly branded. The job is about how visual design can support the meaning of your micro-credentials.

**Leadership champion:** Sooner or later you're going to need this person—someone at the director, dean, or vice-president level who believes in what you're doing and can advocate at high levels.

## Key interfaces



- Faculty Staff
- Finance Office
- LMS/VLE Support Unit
- Teaching Support Unit
- Learning Support Unit
- Library Support Unit
- IT Support Unit
- Quality Office
- Marketing Office
- Recruitment Office
- Admissions Office
- International Office
- Alumni Office
- Graduation Office
- Student Union
- Employers

# Program Design



# Micro-credentials

a new type of qualification



distinctive characteristics



certain approaches to teaching and learning  
certain pedagogies



are more appropriate than others



Photo by [Kimberly Farmer](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## No standardised definition

Common to Micro-credentials is the need for a distinctive approach to pedagogy, rather than a replication of the approaches used for other forms of qualification.

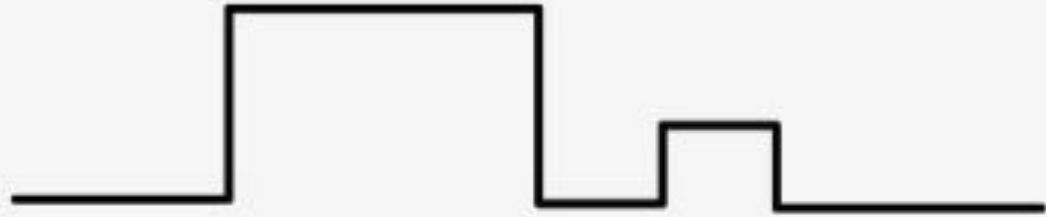
\*Focus on career, workplace and professional skills.

\*Most are offered online → pedagogy must be appropriate for “new” online learners

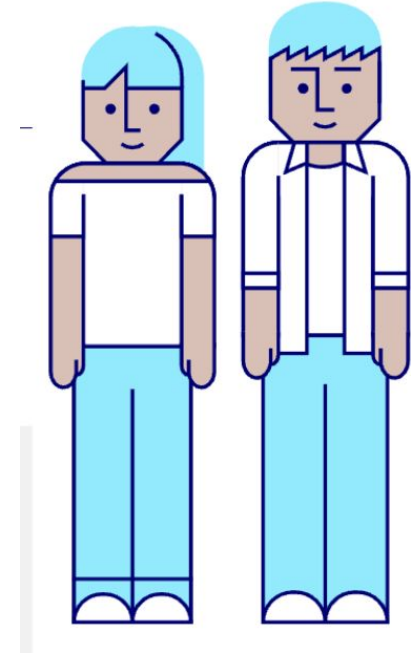
\*Microcredentials can open opportunities for new groups of learners, so any cohort of learners is likely to be significantly different in its demographics from a cohort engaged in other forms of education or training.



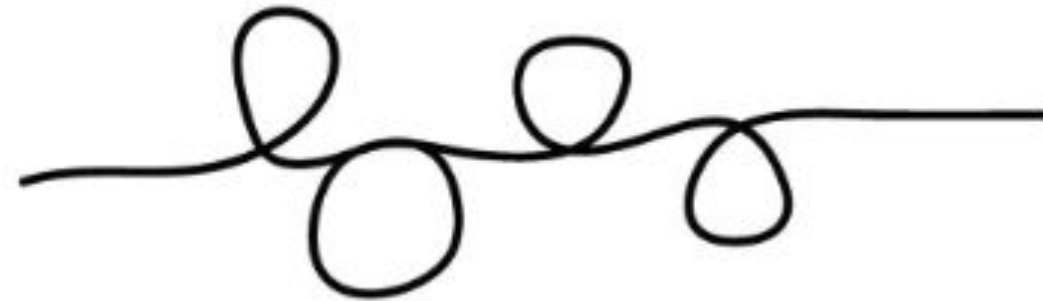
# Traditional HE Student vs. MC Earner/Learner



Traditional  
Undergraduate/Graduate  
Learner, 18-25 years



- Combines work/study and other life responsibilities
- Between 24-64
- Interested in career advancement



Micro-credential Earner/Learner

**Any successful microcredential pedagogy will need to take into account that:**

- cohorts are likely to be large
- educator-learner ratios may be low
- focus is on career, workplace and professional skills
- learners are likely to have work and care commitments that take precedence over study
- learners may be new to online learning
- learners may have substantial relevant work experience
- learners may want to stack microcredentials to form larger qualifications
- learners require opportunities to interact with others
- learners require skills in self-regulation
- learners will be based in many countries
- many learners will have disabilities that influence how and when they study
- study is likely to be asynchronous



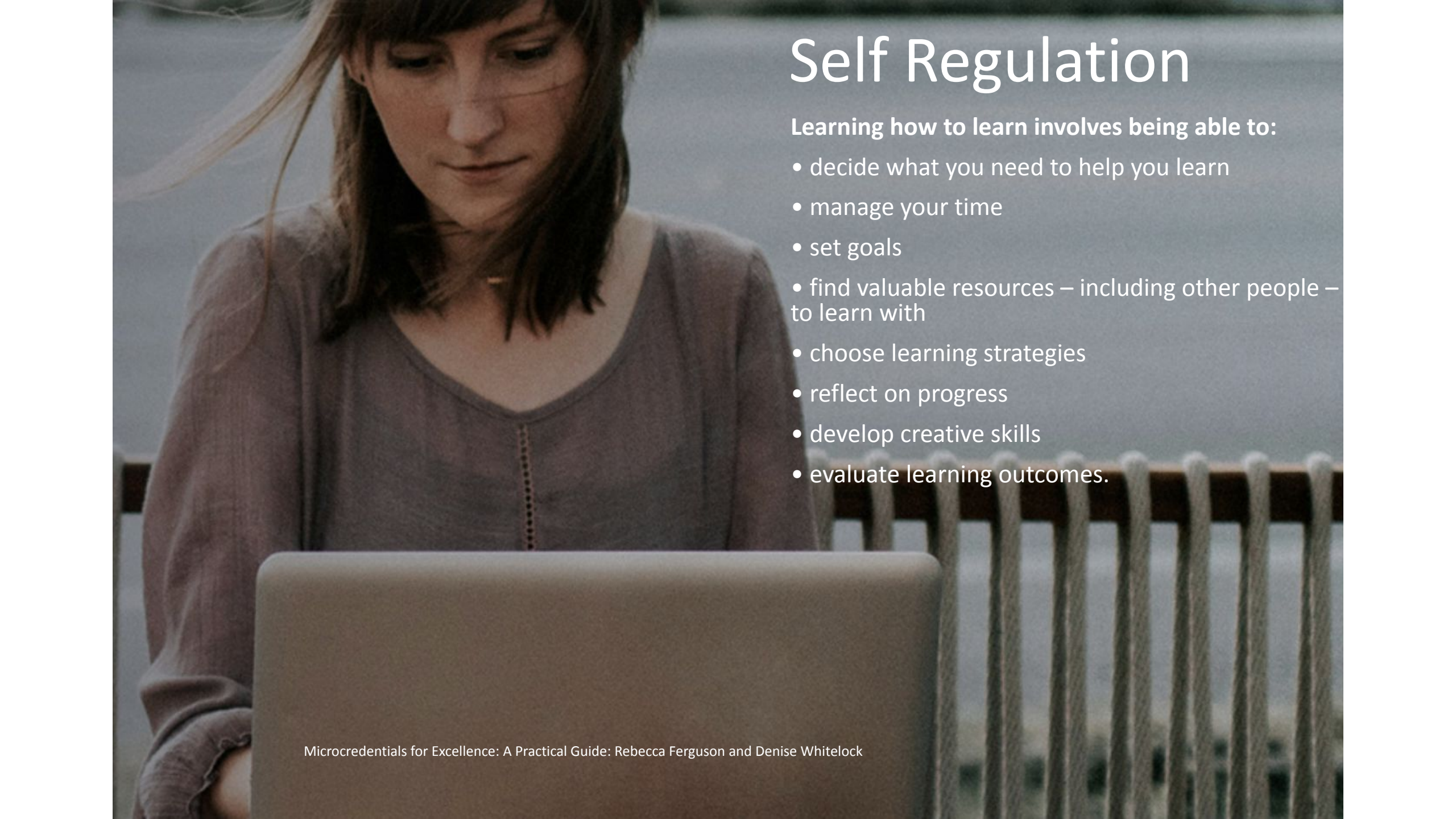
# Pedagogies for the workplace

Pedagogies that are well suited to learners developing job-related skills include **competency-based learning, case-based learning and conversational learning**

**Competency-based learning** → focuses on learners mastering a set of measurable outcomes.

Progress is evaluated based on whether learners demonstrate they have acquired explicit and measurable competencies that have been communicated to them clearly





# Self Regulation

**Learning how to learn involves being able to:**

- decide what you need to help you learn
- manage your time
- set goals
- find valuable resources – including other people – to learn with
- choose learning strategies
- reflect on progress
- develop creative skills
- evaluate learning outcomes.



# Stackability



Core component of EU standard

Central Aim→coordinate comprehensive offering for learners to gain more substantial qualification

MC roadmapping should be part of credential design as a more agile, flexible and stackable approach to training and professional development

Implies that credits from one institution should be recognised by others→ potential for joint programming



Home > studies > **UOC microcredentials**

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# What are microcredentials?

Microcredentials are **digital certifications** that provide all the information needed to **demonstrate professional competence and share it** with employers or training centers.

The micro-credentials are obtained from the completion of **short specialized training courses**, of up to 6 credits and with various formats and methodologies, which allow the development of key skills with the aim of improving employability, training or updating in future professional profiles (reskilling and upskilling) or acquire skills in the current and future challenges of our society.

A micro-credential is a certification of the learning results obtained, designed and **aimed at facilitating your professional progress**, employability and the enrichment of your personal profile.



**Support** from the teaching team throughout your academic life.



**University quality** and prestige.



**Modularity** to design your itinerary.



Online **accessibility** and **learning at your own pace**.



**Variety** of courses and subjects.

[Link here](#)

# Focus Group: Recommendations on Accreditation, QA and Program Design

Throughout the workshop, we have explored **European approaches, Palestinian challenges, and first steps towards MC development.**

Looking forward, the task is to **turn this into a set of recommendations for the Palestinian context.**

[Focus Group Worksheet Link](#)

# References

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Thanks for your attention.

Questions and Feedback Welcome

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