Quality Assuring Micro-Credentials: A Student Centred Approach

Digital Credentials Masterclass
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European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)

**Mission:**
Enhance transparency and trust, promote international recognition

**Role:**
EHEA’s official register of quality assurance agencies that comply with Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG)

- Established by E4 (ENQA, ESU, EUA, ERUASHE), jointly governed with ministries of higher education
- Non-profit and independent
- Acting in the public interest

Governance of the organisation

- Stakeholder organisations
- Governments
- Observers

Register Committee
Independent QA experts, nominated by stakeholders
Decisions on registration of agencies
Articulate micro-credentials to (and recognise as part of) the European higher education framework

“5th cycle of the Bologna Process”
ESG: Micro-credentials?

- “At the same time, an increasing demand for skills and competences requires higher education to respond in new ways.”

- “Higher education institutions themselves also become more diverse in their missions, mode of educational provision and cooperation, including growth of internationalisation, digital learning and new forms of delivery.”

- “The ESG apply to all higher education offered in the EHEA regardless of the mode of study or place of delivery.”

- “In this document the term “programme” refers to higher education in its broadest sense, including that which is not part of a programme leading to a formal degree.”
ESG: Student-centred?

- "Responding to diversity and growing expectations for higher education requires a fundamental shift in its provision; it requires a more student-centred approach to learning and teaching, embracing flexible learning paths and recognising competences gained outside formal curricula. Higher education institutions themselves also become more diverse in their missions, mode of educational provision and cooperation, including growth of internationalisation, digital learning and new forms of delivery."

- "Quality assurance should ensure a learning environment in which the content of programmes, learning opportunities and facilities are fit for purpose."

- Standards 1.2, 1.3, 1.4. & 1.6
1) ESG are clearly student-centred

2) ESG clearly cover micro-credentials

3) Nothing in the ESG that prevents them from being used for micro-credentials
Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESG, linked with ECTS &amp; QF-EHEA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Self-accrediting” HEIs (institutional external QA)</td>
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<td>HEIs in programme accreditation/QA system</td>
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<td>Other providers (e.g. company)</td>
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<td>Micro-credentials covered in internal QA</td>
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<td>Extend to micro-credentials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neither too difficult for the more “utilitarian” dimensions: skills, ECTS, EQF level, ...</td>
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<td>Probably quite often does not yet (fully) cover m-c</td>
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<td>Conceptually not too difficult, plenty out there</td>
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<td>Who is eligible?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutions need to drive this, not QA (agencies)</td>
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<td>Demand-driven or regulatory approach?</td>
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<td>What about other issues, e.g. academic freedom, freedom of research, ...</td>
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<td>More?</td>
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Need for a “European Approach”? Maybe, but practice need come out of HEIs & QAAs
Database of External QA Results (DEQAR)

European one-stop shop for higher education quality assured in line with European standards (ESG)

Open and free API

- link with digital credentials
- easy to embed

DEQAR scope = ESG scope

- includes micro-credentials – as soon as QAAs certify them