



Australian Government
Department of Education,
Skills and Employment



National Microcredentials Framework

November 2021





Executive Summary

The education landscape is changing with growing demand for shorter-form courses that enable workers to rapidly upskill and encourage lifelong learning.

Technological change coupled with rapid transformation brought about by COVID-19, have elevated the potential for microcredentials to rapidly upskill and reskill the workforce. Even so, the microcredentials ecosystem is disparate, lacking even a consistent definition across higher education, vocational education, and industry.

A significant number of Federal and State Government projects are now underway to fund, trial, collate and credentialise microcredentials. These projects define and fund microcredentials differently, and without a clear framework, they risk embedding inconsistency into the future. Simultaneously, many providers have developed their own credit recognition or microcredential policies. Multiple reports have recommended the establishment of guidelines that microcredentials should follow, including the *Australian Qualifications Framework Review 2019*.

A framework can help reduce complications for learners seeking to make a decision on what to learn, for recognising bodies or providers seeking to recognise a microcredential for credit, and for employers or professional bodies seeking to understand the learning outcomes and capabilities of employees.

While a framework is unlikely to address all questions raised by interested parties, a National Microcredentials Framework can bring additional coherence to this ecosystem. It has been the product of broad consultation with over 120 individuals from approximately 70 organisations, an environment scan that included consideration of over 35 different definitions and multiple existing frameworks, and consensus-based discussion among a Microcredentials Working Group with recognised leaders from higher education, vocational education, and industry.

The nature of this discussion is representative of the diversity of views on microcredentials. Consensus on key elements has been challenging, and the strong weight of opinion has been that any framework should err on the side of minimalism to protect the flexibility and dynamism of microcredentials.

This framework seeks to respond to stakeholder inputs, and in doing so:

- sets a national definition for microcredentials.
- agrees on unifying principles for microcredentials
- establishes critical information requirements
- outlines a minimum standard for microcredentials that will sit on the Microcredentials Marketplace.

Announced in June 2020 by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, the Microcredentials Marketplace will be a user-friendly, nationally-consistent platform that allows learners, employers and providers to compare short courses.

Definition

The framework defines microcredentials as a certification of assessed learning or competency, with a minimum volume of learning of one hour and less than an AQF award qualification, that is additional, alternate, complementary to or a component part of an AQF award qualification.

Unifying principles


This definition is supported by a number of unifying principles; that microcredentials should be:

- Outcome-based.
- Responsive to industry-need.
- Tailored to support lifelong learning.
- Transparent and accessible.

Critical information requirements and minimum standards

A number of critical information requirements are stipulated to encourage greater consistency and portability of all microcredentials. These requirements provide users with critical information about microcredentials, enabling them to be better understood as a unit of exchange. They are supported by a series of minimum standards for microcredentials that are anticipated to sit on the Marketplace.

1. Learning outcomes must be clearly stated.
2. When describing foundation or general capabilities, providers will consider the descriptors contained within the Australian Core Skills Framework. Note that additional capability taxonomies will be considered in a future version of this framework.
3. Microcredentials require assessment/s. This assessment/s must assess the attainment of learning outcomes. For transparency reasons, the type of assessment/ assessment method must be clearly stated.
4. Microcredentials are required to stipulate volume of learning and to have a minimum of one hour volume of learning and less than that of an AQF award qualification.
5. Microcredentials will consider signifying the mastery achieved by a microcredential, where the primary purpose of a microcredential is not credit-bearing. This can be a best-fit or estimate.
6. Where applicable, microcredentials will clearly stipulate industry-recognition, where the microcredential is recognised by a professional body, satisfies or aligns to an industry standard or professional development requirement, or constitutes recognition towards an industry or vendor certification.
7. Where applicable, microcredentials will clearly stipulate credit-recognition, where the microcredential is recognised by an education institution for the provision of specified or unspecified credit or advanced standing. This stipulation will outline the nature of the credit and the AQF level/s of the qualifications



that the microcredential leads to (rather than mapping to the AQF level outcomes). Where the microcredential is recognised for credit only when “stacked” with other microcredentials, this should be clearly stipulated.

8. Where an issuing authority has not applied a regulated standard (i.e. the standards and academic integrity processes applied to award courses or components within a training package) to a microcredential, they must provide a statement of assurance of quality - e.g. a profile of the provider/institution, a description of the quality assurance processes undertaken, and the process for review/ updating the microcredential.

It is hoped that the development and implementation of this framework in conjunction with the Marketplace will encourage greater cohesion in the design, development and delivery of microcredentials across both the Australian education system and broader industry.

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1.0 About this Framework

Technological change coupled with rapid transformation brought by Covid-19, has elevated the potential for microcredentials to rapidly upskill and reskill the workforce. Even so, the microcredentials ecosystem is disparate, lacking a consistent definition across higher education, vocational education, and industry.

A significant number of Federal and State Government projects are now underway to fund, trial and collate microcredentials. These projects define and fund microcredentials differently, and without a clear framework, they risk embedding inconsistency into the future. Simultaneously, many providers have developed their own credit recognition or microcredential policies. Multiple reports have recommended the establishment of guidelines that microcredentials should follow (to deliver a more integrated approach to build trust and gain buy-in), including the *Australian Qualifications Framework Review 2019*.

A framework can help reduce complications for learners seeking to make a decision on what to learn, for employers or professional bodies seeking to understand the learning outcomes and capabilities of employees, and for recognising bodies or providers seeking to recognise a microcredential for credit.

In June 2020, the Australian Government announced its intention to build and operate a Microcredentials Marketplace, a one-stop-shop for microcredentials to help students identify educational opportunities. This Marketplace is set to allow learners to compare microcredentials and identify how they can be utilised for additional purposes. A National Microcredentials Framework has been commissioned by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) for inclusion on - and to enable - this Marketplace.

The Framework aims to provide consistency and recognition of microcredentials across Australia by bringing greater national cohesion to microcredentials, set common standards, and serve as a strong reference point for providers, industry and learners involved in the creation, use, monitoring, or application of these credentials.

It is envisaged that the Framework will be reviewed 12 months after its implementation. This review will enable DESE to determine the efficacy and any revisions to the Framework.



2.0 Approach to the Framework

For a National Microcredentials Framework to drive consistency and uptake, it must cater to the diverse ecosystem of users and providers of microcredentials. In encouraging greater consistency of microcredentials, feedback was sought in the development of the Framework from across education sectors and industry. In this way, the Framework has been created for all microcredential users and providers, rather than for the benefit of one education sub-sector.

Since project inception, consultations have been conducted with over 120 individuals from approximately 70 organisations, spanning higher education, vocational education, government, peak bodies, and employers. Multiple consensus-based discussions have also been held with the Microcredentials Working Group (see **Section 6.0**), a group of recognised experts from higher education, vocational education, and broader industry. In this way, the framework is the product of significant consultation.

While stakeholders overwhelmingly agreed on issues to be covered in the framework - the depth and breadth of learning required by microcredentials, evidence of learning and need for minimum requirements - there was significant divergence on how these issues should be resolved. There was broad concern that a framework risks creating over-regulation unless it remains minimalist. The need for minimalism was a consistent thread of feedback from broader stakeholders and the Working Group.

An environment scan has also informed the development of this framework. This scan synthesised government reviews, initiatives, and reports relevant to microcredentials, noting the current work being undertaken to better accommodate microcredentials. It considered microcredential frameworks in other jurisdictions, including New Zealand's Microcredential Framework and the European Common Microcredential Framework, the literature around microcredentials by key subject matter experts (including the UNESCO's *Draft Preliminary Report towards a "common definition of micro-credentials"*), scanned higher education providers to consider additional microcredential credit recognition frameworks and policies, and undertook a comparison of definitions. Where possible, the requirements in this framework have been created with a view to encouraging interoperability with international frameworks.

2.1 Purpose of the Framework

This framework has been created to provide learners, employers, and providers with guiding principles on the development and delivery of microcredentials. Its purpose is to:

1. Enhance lifelong learning, enabling learners to make informed choices to undertake microcredentials at their own pace and place.
2. Establish a consistent national definition for microcredentials that protects the agility and breadth of learners, providers, and employers and encourages harmonisation between the three.
3. Provide specific guidance on critical information requirements for all microcredentials to maximise transparency and consistency, and to further outline the standards required for microcredentials to be on the Microcredentials Marketplace.
4. Set and agree unifying principles for all stakeholders - providers, employers and learners - for the development and delivery of microcredentials in Australia.
5. Ensure microcredentials assist learners in acquiring additional skills by closely relating microcredential knowledge and skills to industry needs, and resulting in further learning and potential future employment opportunities.

3.0 Scope of the Framework

The framework covers all microcredentials designed and delivered by providers within Australia. Issuing authorities may include industry, professional associations, higher education providers, and vocational providers. In doing so, it recognises the diversity and breadth of these offerings, and the varied uses of microcredentials.

For microcredentials that form part of an award course - such as vocational skill sets or modularised higher education curricula - this framework supplements but does not replace existing education policies, including:

- The Australian Qualifications Framework.
- TEQSA's Higher Education Standards in the TEQSA Act, Guidance Note: Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning, and the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.
- The Australian Government's National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011, and the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

It is also noted that each institution is responsible for determining both how it issues, and recognises, microcredentials for the purposes of academic credit and recognition of prior learning. This includes instances where a provider decides not to apply standards to a non-award course. This framework does not seek to abrogate that responsibility.

3.1 Definition

There has been no common definition of microcredentials in Australia. The *Review of the Australian Qualifications Framework* notes the absence of a consistent definition of what a microcredential is in Australia, preferring the term ‘shorter form credentials’ to describe the range of training that is shorter than a qualification and not currently included in the AQF. This ambiguity has created an urgent need to standardise the definition of a microcredential to provide more clarity and certainty to providers, learners and industry.

In drafting a consistent national definition for microcredentials, over 15 international definitions (including one provided by the International Standard Classification of Education [ISCED]), and over 20 domestic education providers and frameworks were reviewed. These definitions vary in a number of meaningful ways - volume of learning, requirement for assessment, minimum standards, and expression - and finding consensus has been challenging.

This framework uses the definition suggested by Emeritus Professor Beverley Oliver and utilised by the AQF Review as a starting basis with additional requirements tested with the Microcredentials Working Group. It creates a clear and consistent, albeit broad, definition for microcredentials.

While this definition includes a requirement of assessment and a minimum volume of learning of one hour, AQF award qualifications (e.g. diplomas, undergraduate certificates) do not constitute a microcredential under this definition.

This framework defines microcredentials as follows:

3.1.1 A microcredential is a certification of assessed learning or competency, with a minimum volume of learning of one hour and less than an AQF award qualification, that is additional, alternate, complementary to or a component part of an AQF award qualification.

Note: this definition should be considered in the context of the critical information requirements and minimum standards in this framework.



What can constitute a microcredential?





- ✓ VET skill sets or units of competency.
- ✓ Modularised, assessed components of existing higher education curriculum or subjects.
- ✓ Industry learning that is assessed (such as vendor certifications, professional learning).
- ✓ Other forms of assessed learning or competencies (e.g. Vocational Education/ Higher Education /Industry courses not currently accredited by a regulatory authority, and those by other providers).

What does not constitute a microcredential?

- ✗ Unassessed learning or courses, including work-integrated learning without an assessment.
- ✗ Badges which are obtained through participation only (i.e. without an assessment).
- ✗ Formal qualifications within the AQF and macro-credentials, including diplomas, certificates and masters degrees.

3.2 Unifying Principles

All microcredentials are encouraged to adhere to the following principles to maximise value for all parties involved (learners, employers, education providers, industry, agencies etc.). These principles will be instrumental in shaping a microcredential and are as follows:

	<p>Outcome-Based</p> <p>Microcredentials highlight the overall learning outcomes a learner is expected to achieve upon completion. Learners will demonstrate that they have achieved these outcomes through a form of assessment. Assessment completed to a sufficient level identified by the provider results in the awarding of the microcredential.</p>
	<p>Driven by Industry Need</p> <p>Microcredentials are designed and implemented with the intent of both being learner-centric and meeting industry standards/ needs. The skills obtained by learners upon completion of a microcredential build on a learner's knowledge, skills or competencies, and target industry needs/ gaps. Microcredentials can also address a more general industry need or skill, e.g. communication, leadership.</p>
	<p>Tailored/ Support Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Microcredentials are created with the purpose of allowing learners to choose courses that are targeted to their needs and future ambitions. Lifelong learning is increasingly important given the growing reskilling and upskilling need caused by industry disruption, but also given the dislocation and mental health challenges that such disruption may cause.</p>
	<p>Transparent and Accessible</p> <p>Providers supply a set amount of information when publishing microcredentials. Aspects such as learning outcomes, mode of delivery, expected effort, content, and modes of assessment will be accessible/ viewable by learners prior to course initiation.</p>

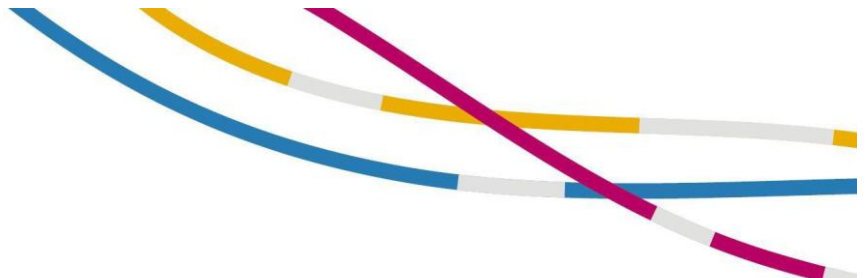
4.0 Critical Information Requirements

Microcredentials are unregulated, which differentiates them from much of the education system. This has led to significant variability in quality and transparency. Learners often compare microcredentials on the basis of incomplete information. By setting minimum standards, this framework can enable learners to make informed decisions when choosing microcredentials. The following tables outline critical information requirements, with an explanation of each requirement and its status, as well as those elements that are merely recommended as good practice. Providers should consider these elements when designing microcredentials. Recommended elements have been outlined as information that may assist a learner in navigating the Microcredentials Marketplace.

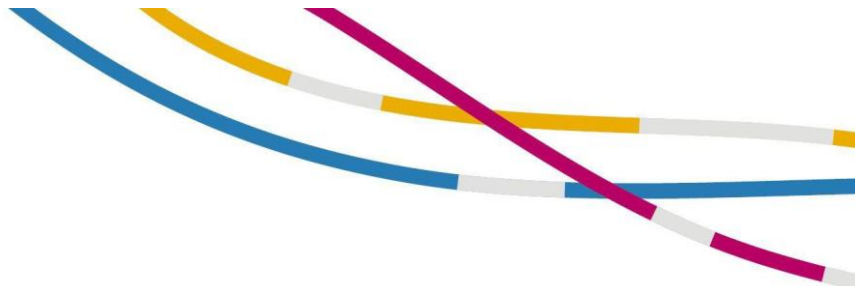
4.1.1 Critical information requirements stipulate the minimum information required for all microcredentials, not just those which will sit on the Marketplace. These requirements will help assist learners, providers and employers in navigating the Marketplace, and understanding the components and key information regarding microcredentials.

Figure 1: Critical Information Requirements

Element	Status	Description
Title	Required	The title of the microcredential, described in plain English.
Provider	Required	The institution delivering the microcredential, and, if relevant, the company that developed the microcredential, i.e. XYZ Vendor microcredential being delivered by ABC University. A provider will also include partner providers, co-branding partnerships and industry endorsers. A provider is any company or institution that provides a microcredential.
Content/ Description	Required	A description of the structure of the microcredential and a summary of the content that will be taught, i.e. key topics.



Learning Outcomes	Required	The knowledge, skills or competencies a student will acquire upon completing a microcredential. Guidance on these learning outcomes is outlined in Section 5.1 .
Language	Required	The language/s of instruction in which a microcredential will be taught in/ assessed. In an attempt to recognise interoperability and global citizenship, microcredentials may be offered in multiple languages.
Delivery Mode	Required	The method of delivery of a microcredential, e.g. onsite, online or a combination of both, and whether the microcredential requires synchronous engagement or is asynchronous. Where delivery is onsite, the location(s) will be stated.
Date of Delivery	Required	The set relevant delivery dates (start/ end) and an outline of the schedule within these dates, or whether a microcredential can be completed at a learner's own pace and commenced on any given date.
Learner Effort	Required	The commitment/ effort (volume of learning) required of learners. This estimate of hours should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Number of hours of in-person face-to-face contact with teaching staff. ii. Number of hours of synchronous online contact with teaching staff. iii. Number of hours of peer-to-peer engagement and its mode. iv. Estimated number of hours of asynchronous online content and reading/viewing of audiovisual material, etc. v. Estimated number of hours spent on assessment.
Inherent Requirements	Required	The resource/s (if any) needed to undertake a specific microcredential, i.e. a laptop, specific software, textbooks etc.
Price and Financial Assistance	Required	The cost of a microcredential to learners, including any GST, discounts stipulated by providers, government funding and accepted payment mechanisms i.e. AfterPay, Paypal, and scholarships. The financial assistance for which a microcredential may qualify for.
Assessment	Required	The assessment element: the method and type of assessment (competency vs proficiency). Where assessment is onsite, the location/s will be stated.
Certification	Required	The proof of learning outcomes being met, i.e. certificate of completion. This proof of learning is issued upon completion of the microcredential.
Credit/ Other Recognition	Required	The type of recognition (credit towards award courses, credit towards vendor/ industry certifications, pathways or other recognition) that can be given upon completion of a microcredential.



Quality Assurance	Required	The assurance that microcredentials are developed and delivered in an educationally sound manner for learners. This may be a statement of quality assurance processes applied to the microcredential such as provider or CRICOS codes, relevant regulator, and approach to academic integrity and assessment.
Prerequisite/s	Required	The microcredential or level of experience that must be successfully completed prior to attempting to earn or complete the referenced microcredential.

Figure 2: Recommended Elements

Expiration of the Microcredential	Recommended	The date when a microcredential is due for review and resubmission. Microcredentials should be reviewed as required and appropriate, depending on the nature of content and learning outcomes.
Depth of Learning	Recommended	The mastery level of a learner upon achievement of learning outcomes and completion of a microcredential, i.e. a learner has completed X microcredential which sits at novice level.
Jurisdiction	Recommended	The institutions or jurisdictions where the microcredential is applicable or recognised.
Industry Support	Recommended	The assurance that microcredentials meet an industry need and reflect skills sought by employers. For example, a statement of support from industry.
Recommended Prior	Recommended	The microcredential/ course/ professional experience a learner is recommended to complete before attempting to undertake the referenced microcredential.
Stackability	Recommended	Any other microcredentials that a microcredential combines with (stacking) that lead to an overall certification being awarded upon completion, or entry into a further course.
Industry/ Occupation	Recommended	The industry/s that a microcredential sits within, and the occupations/ career pathways a microcredential may lead to.
Industry Alignment	Recommended	Industry competency framework/s that a microcredential may be aligned to, i.e. Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA), CPA.

5.0 Summary of minimum standards on the Marketplace

This section outlines a number of minimum standards for microcredentials on the Microcredentials Marketplace. While these standards apply to the Marketplace, providers are encouraged to apply them to microcredentials more generally. These minimum standards are as follows:

5.1.1 Learning outcomes must be clearly stipulated.

5.1.2 When describing foundation or general capabilities, providers will consider the descriptors contained within the Australian Core Skills Framework. Note that additional capability taxonomies will be considered in a future version of this framework.

5.2.1 Microcredentials require assessment/s. This assessment/s must assess the attainment of learning outcomes. For transparency reasons, the type of assessment/ assessment method must be clearly stated.

5.3.1 Microcredentials are required to stipulate volume of learning and to have a minimum of one hour of volume of learning and less than that of an AQF award qualification.

5.4.1 Microcredentials will consider signifying the mastery achieved by a microcredential, where the primary purpose of a microcredential is not credit-bearing. This can be a best-fit or estimate.

5.5.1. Where applicable, microcredentials will clearly stipulate industry-recognition, where the microcredential is recognised by a professional body, satisfies or aligns to an industry standard or professional development requirement, or constitutes recognition towards an industry or vendor certification.

5.5.2. Where applicable, microcredentials will clearly stipulate credit-recognition, where the microcredential is recognised by an education institution for the provision of specified or unspecified credit or advanced standing. This stipulation should outline the nature of the credit and the AQF level/s of the qualifications that the microcredential leads to (rather than mapping to the AQF level outcomes). Where the microcredential is recognised for credit only when “stacked” with other microcredentials, this should be clearly stipulated.

5.6.1 Where an issuing authority has not applied a regulated standard (i.e. the standards and academic integrity processes applied to award courses or components within a training package) to a microcredential, they must provide a statement of assurance of quality on the marketplace - e.g. a profile of the provider/ institution, a description of the quality assurance processes undertaken, and the process for review/ updating the microcredential.

5.1 Learning Outcomes

This section outlines a number of minimum standards for microcredentials on the Microcredentials Marketplace. A learning outcome is a comprehensible statement of what a learner is expected to be able to do or have acquired upon completion of a microcredential. Learning outcomes must be stipulated clearly and kept succinct, as learners need to have a clear understanding of what is required of them upon successful completion of the microcredential, and employers require assurances that a learner is competent and proficient in each learning outcome. Clear and accurate descriptors can also assist recognising authorities to identify whether learning outcomes align to existing courses and may be eligible for credit.

5.1.1 Learning outcomes must be clearly stipulated.

By enabling learners, employers and providers to understand the content of a microcredential, a consistent taxonomy of learning outcomes would encourage greater portability of microcredentials. No taxonomy of sufficient breadth and depth currently exists, and unless such a taxonomy were adaptive and extensive, it would risk constraining the responsiveness and innovation of microcredentials. For this reason this approach was not progressed within this framework.

Even so, certain performance taxonomies - for example, the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) which describes foundation, general or core skills/ capabilities - change less frequently and may be useful in drafting learning outcome descriptors for a microcredential. For example, to achieve Reading Level 1 within the ACSF, a reader would meet Indicator 1.03: "Identifies personally relevant information and ideas from texts on highly familiar topics."

5.1.2 When describing foundation or general capabilities, providers will consider the descriptors contained within the Australian Core Skills Framework. Note that additional capability taxonomies will be considered in a future version of this framework.

5.2 Evidence of achievement

A microcredential requires evidence that learning outcomes have been achieved. This verification builds trust and portability, providing education providers, learners and employers with confidence that a learner has achieved the stipulated knowledge, skills, or competencies.

5.2.1 Microcredentials require assessment/s. This assessment/s must assess the attainment of learning outcomes. For transparency reasons, the type of assessment/ assessment method must be clearly stated.

5.3 Volume of learning

Volume of learning (or ‘workload’) varies across frameworks, and institutions differ on the minimum volume of learning required for credit recognition. Learners are diverse and can complete the same packet of learning over different durations of time, and here volume of learning refers to the average estimated time for a new learner with minimal experience.

Even so, there is broad agreement that estimated volume of learning is an important indicator for learners to understand the effort and time-commitment required to complete a microcredential, and for others to determine the relative depth of learning. The AQF defines volume of learning as “the notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a particular AQF qualification type.”

Volume of learning should be clearly stipulated in hours. This estimate of hours should include:

- I. Number of hours of in-person face-to-face contact with teaching staff.
- II. Number of hours of synchronous online contact with teaching staff.
- III. Number of hours of peer-to-peer engagement and its mode.
- IV. Estimated number of hours of asynchronous online content and reading/ viewing of audiovisual material etc.
- V. Estimated number of hours spent on assessment.

5.3.1 Microcredentials are required to stipulate volume of learning and to have a minimum of one hour of volume of learning and less than that of an AQF award qualification.

5.4 Depth of learning

Microcredentials may certify the attainment of skills, knowledge, and competencies at different levels of mastery or complexity, from the most foundational to the most advanced. A significant volume of stakeholders identified that differentiating between the ‘mastery’ of a microcredential is important for learners and employers. There was strong feedback that the AQF - while particularly useful for educationalists - is relatively unknown by learners and employers, and may not be relevant in the majority of instances, where a learner is not seeking a credit-bearing credential.

The Working Group considered a number of different mastery levels to signify or differentiate the depth of learning of a microcredential. These levels signify the mastery a learner will acquire upon achievement of learning outcomes. No single model received unanimous support, however the five levels *Dreyfus Model of Skills Acquisition* (Novice, Advanced Beginner, Competent, Proficient, Expert) with its broad explanation of acquired skills a learner is expected to be competent in was widely understood.

5.4.1 Microcredentials will consider signifying the mastery achieved by a microcredential, where the primary purpose of a microcredential is not credit-bearing. This can be a best-fit or estimate.

5.5 Currency and recognition

Microcredentials have multiple applications. These range from industry-recognised microcredentials designed to satisfy professional learning requirements, an industry need or industry standards; pathway microcredentials designed to enable entry into a recognised qualification or certification; or credit-bearing microcredentials designed to provide credit towards a recognised qualification listed on the Australian Qualifications Framework. This application may impact the type of recognition sought from a microcredential.

All stakeholders recognised that while some learners undertake microcredentials in order to obtain credit towards a formal qualification, this is not the only - or even the main - use of microcredentials. Microcredentials can be undertaken for industry recognition, including their alignment to industry standards or frameworks. Where this occurs, learners need clear information about the relationship between a microcredential and this industry-recognition.

Where a microcredential is recognised for credit, it should specify which (if any) qualifications it may constitute credit for with the provider, and should specify which (if any) qualifications it may constitute guaranteed credit at other providers (specified, unspecified, basis for admission) towards. Providers would be able to add their recognition of microcredentials onto the Marketplace. It is at the discretion of providers to award credit for microcredentials where learning outcomes are consistent with learning outcomes for units within university degrees or other forms of education.

5.5.1. Where applicable, microcredentials will stipulate industry-recognition, where the microcredential is recognised by a professional body, satisfies or aligns to an industry standard or professional development requirement, or constitutes recognition towards an industry or vendor certification.

5.5.2. Where applicable, microcredentials will stipulate credit-recognition, where the microcredential is recognised by an education institution for the provision of specified or unspecified credit or advanced standing. This stipulation should outline the nature of the credit and the AQF level/s of the qualifications that the microcredential leads to (rather than mapping to the AQF level outcomes). Where the microcredential is recognised for credit only when “stacked” with other microcredentials, this should be clearly stipulated.

5.6 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance protects the integrity of the microcredentials ecosystem, by giving employers and recognising bodies confidence in the microcredentials being delivered by an issuing authority, and by protecting learners. While most microcredentials are unaccredited, a strong feature of stakeholder consultations is the need to ensure this framework is minimalist.

Quality assurance measures are important and have been captured in various parts of this framework - the requirement for clearly stipulated learning outcomes in **5.1**, evidence of attainment in **5.2**, and critical information requirements (such as issuing institution, provider or CRICOS codes, relevant regulator, and approach to academic integrity and assessment) in **Section 4**.

Microcredentials should be reviewed regularly (and as appropriate) by providers to ensure that microcredentials remain relevant and updated. Providers are encouraged to stipulate quality assurance processes on the Marketplace.

5.6.1. Where an issuing authority has not applied a regulated standard (i.e. the standards and academic integrity processes applied to award courses or components within a training package) to a microcredential, they must provide a statement of assurance of quality on the Marketplace - e.g. a profile of the provider/ institution, a description of the quality assurance processes undertaken, and the process for review/ updating the microcredential.

6.0 Members of the Working Group

In developing this framework, the project team has undertaken a broad range of consultations with over 120 individuals from approximately 70 organisations.

A Microcredentials Working Group instigated by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) and chaired by Emeritus Professor Beverley Oliver convened periodically between July and October 2021 to discuss and agree key elements of this framework.

This Microcredentials Working Group operated on the base of broad consensus, and key discussions were held across this framework. Members of the Microcredentials Working Group were:

- **Emeritus Prof. Beverley Oliver:** Principal Consultant - Edubrief (Working Group Chair).
- **Dr. Peter Beven:** Director QUTeX Open Professional Education - Queensland University of Technology.
- **Ms. Jenny Dodd:** Interim CEO - TAFE Directors Australia.
- **Ms. Danielle Donegan:** Assistant Secretary - Department of Education, Skills and Employment.
- **Ms. Julie Healy:** Director Vocational Education and RTO Manager - TAFE QLD.
- **Ms. Megan Lilly:** Head Education and Training - Australian Industry Group.
- **Prof. Sandra Milligan:** Director of the Assessment Research Centre and Enterprise Professor - University of Melbourne.
- **Prof. Philippa Pattison:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education - *University of Sydney*.
- **Mr. Mike Pope:** Senior Policy Advisor - *Business Council of Australia*.
- **Ms. Bethany Pridmore:** Deputy Director, Strategic Projects - *Curtin University*.
- **Mr. Craig Robertson:** CEO - *Victorian Skills Authority*.
- **Prof. Michael Sankey:** Director Learning Futures and Lead Education Architect - *Charles Darwin University*.
- **Dr. Ratna Selvaratnam:** Manager, Learning Technologies and Innovation - *Edith Cowan University*.
- **Prof. Belinda Tynan:** Provost and DVCA - *Australian Catholic University*.
- **Mr. Troy Williams:** CEO - *Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia*.
- **Prof. Sherman Young:** Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education - *RMIT University*.