



**DUKLAS**  
CORNERSTONE  
CONSULTING INC.

The State of  
**Micro-credentials**  
in Canada



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- Researcher and consultant in Canada through her own firm (10 years; DCC Inc.)
- Honorary member of the Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and the Ontario University Registrars' Association (OURA)
- Executive Lead, ARUCC MyCreds National Network

JOANNE DUKLAS

- This presentation will provide an overview of the Canadian HEI sector and the micro-credentials efforts of various organizations and governments in Canada to ensure quality.

## PURPOSE

## 13 provinces and territories

- 3 million learners studying within approximately 260 colleges, universities, Indigenous, and polytechnic institutions, most of which are publicly funded.
- Education provincially regulated - No national education government regulation or department; Distributed governance scaffolding; More than 20 ministries of education in the various provinces.
- Select private colleges and universities and Indigenous Institutes have been accepted into the provincially supported transfer systems within different provinces.
- Each province and the HEIs within establish the programs and credentials available to learners.

## CANADIAN CONTEXT

## Quality assurance

- For credit bearing, private, and government funded programs, QA is government, sector, and institutionally led.
- Canada ratified the [Lisbon Recognition Convention](#) (June 13, 2018) and the CMEC via CICIC provides the overarching [Pan-Canadian Quality Assurance Framework for the Assessment of International Credentials](#)
- **ENIC-NARIC Representative**
  - CICIC, CMEC (Canada) – Michael Riquette, Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

# CANADIAN CONTEXT

## Sample National Actors

- [Pan-Canadian Association of Admissions and Transfer \(PCCAT\)](#)
- [Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada](#)
- [ARUCC MyCreds National Network](#)
- [ARUCC PCCAT Transcript and Transfer Guide](#)
- [Colleges and Institutes Canada](#)
- [Universities Canada](#)
- [Polytechnics Canada](#)
- [Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie Canadienne](#)

## Provincial examples

- Governments and government funded organizations

CANADIAN  
DIMENSIONS

Communities  
Involved in  
Considering  
Micro-credentials

## CONTEXT

- Diverse
- Offered by industry, by higher education, and in collaboration
- Different frameworks are under discussion or approved/adopted

**Ensuring alignment and quality assurance** are important and recurring themes within many of the government, sector, industry, and institutional discussions.

# CANADIAN MICRO- CREDENTIALS CONTEXT



## GAINING MOMENTUM

- Pre COVID-19 pandemic, micro-credentials were in high demand, and have gained significant traction since.
- Examples
  - Canadians seeking skill enhancement and new employment opportunities
  - Post secondary students keen to equip themselves with ‘workforce-ready skills’
- Traditional educational pathways are considering ways to position graduates with the necessary skills to be considered ‘workforce-ready’, following graduation or during a job transition.





## THE CURRENT STATE

76%

of Canadian post-secondary institutions offered online courses for microcredentials in 2019, and that number continues to grow

(Source: [eCampusOntario](#))

64%

of employers see microcredentials as demonstrating a commitment to lifelong learning – something they value highly

(Source: [Northeastern University](#))

59%

of Canadians employers asked are not yet familiar with microcredentials

(Source: [Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario](#))

## FUTURE INVESTMENTS

In recent years, a number of provinces [have made significant investments](#) in the growth of micro-credentials (at least \$75 million since 2020), and recommendations to further expand microcredentials have come from business groups like the [Business Council of Alberta](#) and the [Future Skills Council](#).



## AUDIENCES SERVED

- Students
  - Current
  - Prospective
- Alumni
- Adult learners
- Business/Industry partners

## MICROCREDENTIAL INITIATIVES – ONTARIO GOVERNMENT

[eCAMPUS ONTARIO](#)

[ARUCC MyCreds Virtual Skills Passport](#)

[Online micro-credentials search portal](#)

Providing financial aid for learners  
pursuing micro-credentials

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training opportunities.**

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SEARCH

or browse all 1617 micro-credentials from institutions across Ontario. >



## MICROCREDENTIAL FRAMEWORK – BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT (2021)

*Micro-credentials recognize stand-alone, short duration learning experiences that are competency-based, align with industry, employer, community and/or Indigenous community needs and can be assessed and recognized for employment or learning purposes.*

## MICRO-CREDENTIAL FRAMEWORK – BC (2021)

- Under 288 hours; delivered in multiple formats; collaboration with industry is emphasized.
- Quality assurance and development will be institutionally led in a manner that aligns with exiting approval policy and practices for credit and non-credit bearing credentials.
- Assessment is required to ensure competency achievement.
- A common registry is being considered for development.
- Design should consider PLAR/RPL; integration with existing transfer system is encouraged.
- Credit bearing should be transcribed; non-credit bearing should recognize the competency obtained.

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/micro-credentials/mc\\_framework.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/micro-credentials/mc_framework.pdf)

## ONTARIO MICRO-CREDENTIAL EXAMPLE – eCAMPUS ONTARIO

*A micro-credential is a certification of assessed learning associated with a specific and relevant skill or competency. Micro-credentials enable rapid retraining and augment traditional education through pathways into regular postsecondary programming – eCampusOntario*



## eCAMPUS ONTARIO: PRINCIPLES OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS

- Relevance** Issuing of Micro-credentials will be based on relevancy to the labour market
- Verifiability** To maintain integrity, Micro-credentials will to be verifiable
- Ownership** The earner possesses ownership of the micro-credential and affiliated data after issue
- Extensibility** Micro-credentials will be created to support continuous learning, when possible

## eCampus Ontario - FRAMEWORK



### Issuing Body

Micro-credentials will be issued by an established agency, organization, institution, or employer.



### Competency/skills targeted

Micro-credentials will adhere to harmonized skills and competency language and will be aligned with a common competency framework such as ESCO<sup>1</sup>.



### Outcomes

Micro-credentials will recognize performance competencies explicitly aligned to underlying knowledge, attitudes and skills.



### Summative assessment

Micro-credentials will require evidence of achievement of outcomes. Evidence will be embedded and visible to employers.



### Transcriptable

Micro-credentials will be compatible with traditional transcripts, where possible.



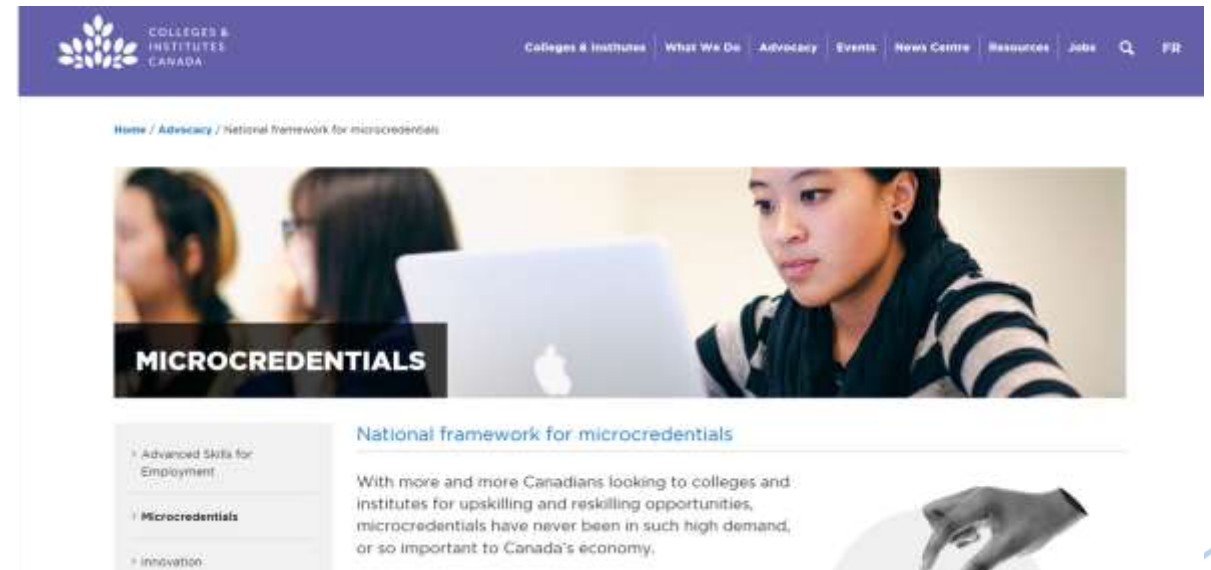
### Partner endorsement

Micro-credentials will be validated by industry partners/external bodies, where possible. This validation will confirm 1) the competency is in demand by industry and; 2) the established assessment is reflective of job performance in that industry.

# NATIONAL EXAMPLE

## – Colleges and Institutes Canada

Denise Amyot presenting in the afternoon



<https://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/policyfocus/micro-credentials/>

## MICRO-CREDENTIAL FRAMEWORKS/RESEARCH – ADDITIONAL SAMPLES

- [Government of Alberta](#)
- [Government of Nova Scotia](#)

### *Sample Canadian research*

- [Micro-credentials: Trends in Credit Transfer and Credentialing](#), Duklas, 2020
  - [The Status of Microcredentials in Canadian Colleges and Institutes](#), Colleges and Institutes Canada
  - [Research and Toolkit](#), eCampus Ontario
  - [Making Sense of Micro-credentials](#), Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario
  - [National micro-credential training system](#), Canadian Council for Aviation and Aerospace
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# THANK YOU

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