



**GHENT
UNIVERSITY**

WEBINAR SERIES
Towards the Bologna
Process Ministerial
Meeting

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ASSOCIATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE

MICRO-CREDENTIALS AND
UNIVERSITIES:
BIG OPPORTUNITIES FOR
SMALL VOLUMES OF LEARNING

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DEFINITION / REFERENCE FRAMEWORK

A micro-credential is a small volume of learning certified by a credential. In the EHEA context, it can be offered by higher education institutions or recognised by them using recognition procedures in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention or recognition of prior learning, where applicable. A micro-credential is designed to provide the learner with specific knowledge, skills or competences that respond to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs. Micro-credentials have explicitly defined learning outcomes at a QF-EHEA/NQF level, an indication of associated workload in ECTS credits, assessment methods and criteria, and are subject to quality assurance in line with the ESG.



European project MICROBOL

Micro-credentials linked to the Bologna Key Commitments

Draft publication
Desk research report

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EXAMPLE OF FLANDERS (BE)

- *“Offered by higher education institutions”*: Credit certificates
- *“Recognised by higher education institutions”*:
 - Formal learning (HE) “Recognition of Prior Qualifications” (incl. these credit certificates) (“EVK”)
 - Non-formal/informal learning “Recognition of Prior Competences” (“EVC”)

CREDIT CERTIFICATE (CREDITBEWIJS)

- Definition (legal): *an acknowledgement that, after an evaluation, a student has proven to master the competences* of a particular course unit. This acknowledgement is recorded in a document or is established by means of an electronic registration.*
- Use: exemption of parts of another study programme when shifting to another programme → RPL

** Remark: in the Flemish context competenc(i)es and learning outcomes are often used interchangeably...*

EXAMPLE RECOGNITION OF PRIOR QUALIFICATIONS

Programme Ba in Economical Sciences at Ghent University

Course	ECTS	Result
Accounting 1	6	Credit cert.
Economic English	3	Credit cert.
Mathematics	5	No
...		
Total	60	20

Programme Ba in Business Management at HoGent UAS

Course	ECTS	
Basic accounting	5	exempted
Business English	3	exempted
Statistics	4	not
...		
Total	46	



Basis of recognition = defined learning outcomes, QF level & ECTS credits

EXAMPLE RECOGNITION OF PRIOR COMPETENCES

- Procedure of Ghent University Association (= univ. + 3 UAS)
- Assessment of an applicant's competences based on a portfolio + one or more of the following methods: reflection file, competence-based interview or capability test
- Possible result:
 - “Certificate of Competency”
 - Can be used to get exemptions of courses (see above)



POSSIBILITIES OF THIS LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Create microdegrees (see examples of HoGent UAS)

Bundled
together as a
microdegree



A number of courses
→ successful
completion = credit
certificates

EXAMPLES OF HOGENT UAS

bachelors

graduaten

bachelor na bachelor

academische bachelors en masters

master na master

postgraduaten

educatieve opleidingen

afstandsonderwijs

verkorte trajecten

navormingen en studiedagen

gereguleerde vormingen

micro degrees

**HO
GENT**

opleidingen

studeer aan HOGENT

partners

dit is HOGENT

nieuws en info



bachelors

graduaten

bachelor na bachelor

academische bachelors en masters

master na master

postgraduaten

D

Duurzaamheid

Dit deeltraject stelt je in staat om vanuit je initiële bachelor- of masteropleiding mee te werken

M

Meertalige communicatie-training voor de zorgprofessional

Wil je je relatie met patiënten

P

Preventieadviseur niveau 2

Wil je gestalte geven aan een preventiebeleid (arbeidsveiligheid,

Opleidingsonderdeel	semester	studiepunten
Beleid en regelgeving klimaat en milieu	1	5
Duurzame ontwikkeling	1	3
Strategisch management	2	3
Duurzaam ondernemen	2	5
Mondiale milieuproblematiek	2	3
Mobiliteit	2	3
Ruimtelijke ordening	1	4
Natuur		6
- Partim Ecologie	1	3
- Partim Wetgeving natuur	1	1
- Partim Case natuur	1 & 2	2
Energie	1	3
Duurzame innovatie	1 & 2	3
Project duurzaamheidsassessment	1 (& 2)	7
Communicatie en sensibilisering	1 & 2	3
(Zorgsystemen - optioneel)	(1)	(3)



POSSIBILITIES OF THIS LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Create microdegrees (see examples of HoGent UAS)
- Ghent University is setting up a system to support and validate students' societal engagement through:
 - “Certificates of Competency”
 - “Badges” (= an online standard to recognize and verify learning, e.g. Open badges, Badger,...)



ADVANTAGES OF SUCH A LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- For different stakeholders
 - HEI's: fits with existing practices e.g. ECTS, especially the concept of “credit transfer” (portability / stackability) as we know it from international student mobility
 - End users: increased ownership
 - Potential employers: increased trust

ADVANTAGES OF THIS LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Opportunities to increase the potential use of the existing learning offer, encompassing all types of learning (related to HE), i.e. beyond lifelong learning, MOOCs etc.
- Enhances flexibility (although this has its limits...)
- Openness towards
 - more diverse learners - but also beneficial for ‘regular students’: working together with mature students, students from different backgrounds,
 - more diverse ways of learning (e.g. also non-formal, online)

POTENTIAL FOR THE FUTURE

- Investigate links with the European Student Card Initiative (= integration of Erasmus Without Paper, EMREX and the European Student Card → focus on student data portability) → give ownership of the microcredential to the end-user
- Use the potential of all the attention for microcredentials in European Universities (EUn's) → huge leverage

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