



COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

TOPIC: MICROCREDENTIALS

Procedure No.	AC-107-PR	Division	Academic
Supersedes	n/a	Board Policy Ref.	GP-RR-904
Related Policies	AC-104 AC-120	Effective Date	December 7, 2021

PROCEDURE

1.0 Definitions

Badge	<p>A digital representation of a microcredential. Badges will contain the name of the issuing institution, the competency achieved, and the level of achievement.</p> <p>Badges contain meta-data on the nature of the competencies verified and their assessment instruments.</p>
Competency	<p>The capacity to draw upon and apply a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform a work role, function, or task.</p>
Credential	<p>An umbrella term that describes a document that attests to the achievement of specific learning outcomes or to a defined level of knowledge or skill relative to a given standard.</p>
Digital Credential	<p>A digital record of achievement in which metadata attached provides information about the source and the value of the award.</p>
Microcredential	<p>A certification of assessed competencies that is additional, alternative, complementary to or a formal component of a formal qualification.</p>

Course topics are in demand in the workplace and are focused on discrete workplace competencies. They may be stackable and transferable to other credentials.

Proficiency	A certain level of achievement.
Portable Credential	A credential that can be used in a variety of environments.
Stackable credential	A sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build qualifications and help individuals move along a pathway toward further education or different job responsibilities.

2.0 Guiding Principles

- 2.1 Microcredentials are a complement to traditional credentials (certificate, diploma or degree).
- 2.2 Microcredentials are subject to a robust and rigorous quality assurance process.
- 2.3 Microcredentials represent competencies identified by employers / industry sectors to meet employer needs.
- 2.4 Microcredentials are stackable, providing clear and seamless pathways across different credentials (both non-credit and credit).
- 2.5 Microcredentials are based on mastery of a competency, not on time spent learning.
- 2.6 Microcredentials are secure, trackable, portable and competency is documented in students' academic records.
- 2.7 Microcredentials are to follow institutional approval processes.

Note: Adapted from *Pan-Canadian College Consortium on Microcredentials*.

3.0 Development

3.1 Phase 1: Concept Document

- 3.1.1 The Dean, upon receiving or generating a program idea, will assign a Program Developer to create a Microcredential Concept

Document using the template provided by the Academic Development Office.

3.1.2 The Program Developer will complete the relevant sections of the Microcredential Concept Document and submit them to the Dean for assessment. The content of Microcredential Concept Document includes:

3.1.2.1 Intent

- a. The Dean states whether they are seeking approval to develop the program concept or have deemed the program concept not feasible and are submitting as a matter of record.

3.1.2.2 Rationale

- a. Brief rationale supporting the intent of the Dean.

3.1.2.3 Microcredential Information Table

- a. Proposed title with the rationale for the naming
- b. Proposed issuer
- c. Statement on whether microcredential was approved in the current Academic Plan, accompanied by the following information:
 - i. Allocated budget approved
 - ii. Allocated developmental FTE
 - iii. Allocated DL budget
 - iv. Allocated instructional design FTE
- d. Credit status
- e. Badge type
- f. Level alignment
- g. Microcredential description

- i. Evidence
- ii. Expiration (if applicable)
- h. List of acquired skills
 - i. Delivery format (face-to-face, online, hybrid)
 - j. Delivery modality (synchronous or asynchronous)
 - k. Enrollment type (scheduled, monthly, continuous)
 - l. Minimum faculty credentials
 - m. Section capacity
 - n. Campus (if applicable)
 - o. Anticipated launch date
- 3.1.2.4 Credential Overview
 - a. Brief description of the proposed credential and the intended learning outcomes, knowledge, and skills that graduates of the module(s) will obtain.
 - b. A list of module(s) or a general overview of the proposed areas of study.
- 3.1.2.5 Evidence of Industry Support
 - a. Evidence on how the School has engaged industry partners in the identification of module(s) and plans on gaining their endorsement of the credential.
- 3.1.3 The Dean will assess the feasibility of the credential, complete the remaining sections of the Microcredential Concept Document, and submit the Microcredential Concept Document to the Senior Director, Academic Development for a quality assurance review, and further approval.
- 3.1.4 The Senior Director, Academic Development will perform a quality assurance review on the Microcredential Concept Document, send the document back to the Dean, and, if the credential was approved in the Academic Plan, issue a letter

to the Dean to proceed with course development or a rationale as to why the credential will not proceed.

3.1.5 The Senior Director, Academic Development will, if the credential was *not* approved in the Academic Plan, submit the Microcredential Concept Document to the Vice President, Academic Programs & Delivery with a recommendation to approve program development.

3.1.6 The Vice President, Academic Programs & Delivery, upon receiving a Microcredential Concept Document, will issue a letter to the Dean to proceed with course development or a rationale as to why the credential will not proceed.

3.2 Phase 2: Microcredential Development and Industry Endorsement

3.2.1 The Dean, upon receiving approval to develop, advises the Program Developer to proceed with development.

3.2.2 The Program Developer will create a Microcredential Course Outline containing the following sections:

- a. Module number.
- b. Microcredential course title.
- c. Module description.
- d. Number of modules within certification.
- e. Prerequisites.
- f. Co-requisites.
- g. Intentional hours.
- h. Level.
- i. Credit value.
- j. Award expiry (if applicable).
- k. Industry endorsement.
- l. Module(s) titles.

m. For each module:

- i. Learn outcomes;
- ii. Standards;
- iii. Criteria; and
- iv. Evidence.

3.2.3 The Program Developer will submit all program documents to the Senior Director, Academic Development no less than six weeks prior to the initial intended offering date.

3.2.4 The Academic Development Office will perform a quality assurance review on the proposal within one week of document submission and work with the School on final edits.

3.2.5 The Senior Director, Academic Development, when all course outlines have been approved, will issue a letter to the Dean to proceed with implementation. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Vice-President Academic Programs & Delivery and to the Academic Planning Office.

4.0 Delivery

4.1 Microcredentials may be delivered face-to-face, online, by distance or through a combination of these methods.

5.0 Academic Quality and Review

5.1 The academic school responsible for delivery of the microcredential is responsible for maintaining the currency and quality of the credential, in conjunction with the Academic Development Office.

5.1.1 All microcredentials must be reviewed every 24 months.

5.1.2 The review will need to address:

- a. Demand for the credential (enrollment statistics and completion history since last review).
- b. Whether the microcredential is meeting its purpose (industry endorsement/student feedback survey).

- c. Any issues raised in student evaluations (action plan from student evaluation data).
 - d. Ongoing appropriateness of teaching and learning methods, activities and assessments (study of course materials by subject matter experts).
 - e. Whether learning outcomes remain appropriate (industry endorsement).
 - f. Whether there is continued support for offering the credential (industry, community, etc.).
- 5.1.3 Reviews are submitted to the Senior Director of Academic Development for approval.
- 5.1.4 Upon approval, schools may continue to offer the credential. Microcredentials not approved upon academic review will be archived and may be used in future if demand warrants.

6.0 Awarding of Microcredentials

- 6.1 Each microcredential will be formally assessed using a pre-defined summative assessment tool.
- 6.2 Upon successfully completing an assessment, the instructor will provide notice to the Registrar's office to award the microcredential.
- 6.3 College microcredentials are recognized by the college and will be recorded as part of the student record.
- 6.4 Microcredentials are awarded using approved digital credentials that include the:
 - a. Insignia of College of the North Atlantic.
 - b. Icon and name of the Microcredential.
 - c. Approved description of the credential.
 - d. Standards and criteria for awarding the credential.
 - e. Name of industry or professional bodies that have endorsed the credential.

- f. Feedback on individual assessment pieces.
- g. A link to the online record.

7.0 Reporting

- 7.1 On an annual basis, the Senior Director, Academic Development will file a report with Academic Council on the:
 - a. number of microcredentials developed since the last report;
 - b. total enrollment per course offering;
 - c. number of microcredentials reviewed and reoffered per year; and,
 - d. number and type of microcredentials to be developed as a part of the upcoming annual academic plan.

Approval History	
Approved by President	August 25, 2020
Revision 1	December 7, 2021