

Procedure: Micro-credentials and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) Accreditation

Purpose

To describe the University's requirements regarding the preparation, submission and consideration of requests to establish, modify or disestablish micro-credentials and MOOCs, and the roles of key stakeholders and committees involved in the processing of proposals.

Definitions

Lifelong learning: “Lifelong learning is the term used to describe any learning activities that are undertaken throughout life to acquire knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills within personal, civic, social and/or employment-related contexts” (Australian Qualifications Framework, 2nd ed. (January 2013), p. 97 (<https://www.aqf.edu.au/>; accessed 02/04/2019)).

Massive Open Online Course (MOOC): a model for learning content that is delivered online that is generally free. MOOCs are available to geographically dispersed participants normally without prerequisites or entry qualifications.

Micro-credential: A micro-credential is a short-form credential designed and taught for lifelong learning rather than as part of an ANU program. For clarity, a micro-credential is not a program or a course as defined in ANU policy and procedure.

Micro-credential stack: a cohesive group of micro-credentials designed to achieve an overarching description and set of learning outcomes.

Procedure

Governance

1. The Governance framework reflects that:
 - a. An ANU credential is awarded upon successful completion of an ANU micro-credential.
 - b. A Verified Certificate is awarded upon successful completion of assessment for an ANU MOOC.

Creation

2. A proposal for a micro-credential, a micro-credential stack, or a MOOC may be submitted at any time and is considered on a rolling basis.
3. A proposal for a micro-credential, micro-credential stack, or a MOOC must be made on the [approved form](#); the key content of the form is outlined below.
4. The Head of the proposing AOU (Academic Organisational Unit) or Director of the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) considers the proposal and the resourcing of the teaching and either endorses or does not endorse.
5. If endorsed, the Associate Dean (Education) of the proposing College or, for CLT, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Digital) considers the proposal and whether it is compliant with this policy and procedure and either endorses or does not endorse.
6. If endorsed, a University-level ANU Micro-credentials and MOOCs Governance Committee considers the proposal, especially strategic alignment, consultation, and fees; where an expedited request is made, this consideration is undertaken within ten business days of receipt of the proposal. The Committee is appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (DVCA) and must consist of the Dean (Academic Quality) as the Chair, DVCA; the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Digital) and at least two Deputy or Associate Deans elected by the Associate Deans (Education)/Deputy Deans (Education). All proposals are made available to all Deputy/Associate Deans (Education) and the Director of CLT. The committee may meet virtually. The decision is made by simple majority. If approved, approval is for a period of three years and the micro-credential, micro-credential stack, or MOOC is published.
7. If approved, the proposal documents are to be included in the Agenda of the next Education Committee meeting of the managing College or the CLT Board of Studies as an item approved by Executive Action; and is to be included in the papers of the next Academic Quality Assurance Committee as an item approved by Executive Action.

Amendment

8. Amendments to micro-credentials, micro-credential stacks, or MOOCs, excluding to fees, are considered for approval by the Associate Dean (Education) of the managing College or, for CLT offerings, the Director of CLT; if approved, the amendments are published. The amendments are included in the papers of the next Education Committee meeting of the managing College or the CLT Board of Studies as an item approved by Executive Action; and a list of amended micro-credentials, micro-credential stacks and MOOCs is to be included in the papers of the next Academic Quality Assurance Committee as an item approved by Executive Action.
9. Amendments to fees are considered by the ANU Micro-credentials and MOOCs Governance Committee.

10. The title of a micro-credential, micro-credential stack, or MOOC cannot be amended. If a different name is preferred a new proposal must be made.

Disestablishment

11. A micro-credential, micro-credential stack or MOOC may be disestablished by the Associate Dean (Education) of the managing College, the Director of CLT for CLT offerings or, in rare circumstances, by the ANU Micro-credentials and MOOCs Governance Committee. The disestablishment documents must include details of teachout of current enrolees.

12. To ensure that the ANU suite of micro-credentials and MOOCs reflects what is actually taught, any micro-credential or MOOC not taught at least once over the previous three (3) years is disestablished. This is undertaken as part of the annual review process of the policy and procedure.

13. A list of disestablished micro-credentials, micro-credential stacks and MOOCs is included in the papers of the next Education Committee meeting of the managing College/s or the CLT Board of Studies as an item approved by Executive Action; and a list of amended micro-credentials, micro-credential stacks and MOOCs is to be included in the papers of the next Academic Quality Assurance Committee as an item approved by Executive Action.

Review

14. Six months before the end of their accreditation, micro-credentials, micro-credential stacks and MOOCs are submitted for consideration for reaccreditation by the hosting College or CLT using the approved form. Enrolee and any employer survey data must be submitted. Approval is by the College Associate Dean (Education) or, for CLT, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Digital). The review form is included in the papers of the next Education Committee meeting of the managing College/s or the CLT Board of Studies as an item approved by Executive Action; and a list of reviewed micro-credentials, micro-credential stacks and MOOCs including the review outcome is to be included in the papers of the next Academic Quality Assurance Committee as an item approved by Executive Action.

15. The Associate Dean (Education) of the managing College or, for CLT, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Digital) may call a review at any time and for any reason.

Surveying engagement and impact

16. Each iteration of a micro-credential, micro-credential stack or MOOC must implement an enrolee survey to measure engagement and impact. The preferred, but not required, model is to have one pre-credential survey undertaken on enrolment and one

post-credential survey, to measure change in sentiment. Surveys must be conducted according to the Student Surveys and Evaluations [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#).

Content of Proposal

17. A proposal for a micro-credential, micro-credential stack or MOOC should be made on the approved form which will include:

- a. Name and Code;
- b. List of at least five keywords to be used on the website as search terms;
- c. Language of instruction (if not English);
- d. Statement of alignment with the ANU Strategic Plan;
- e. Statement identifying ANU as the developer and deliverer of the micro-credential or MOOC;
- f. Evidence of the outcome of consultation with other AOU/CLT with an academic interest in the discipline/s and/or fields;
- g. Description of content (max. 100 words); for micro-credentials only: if taught as a “special topics” micro-credential, this is stated here and is to be based on the principles in the section “course topics and repeat enrolment” of the [Academic Programs and Courses Accreditation Procedure](#);
- h. Learning outcomes;
- i. For micro-credentials and MOOCs only: assessment of the learning outcomes;
- j. For micro-credential stacks only: list of all micro-credentials that constitute the stack at that time;
- k. Assumed knowledge (there should not be formal prerequisites except that an ANU micro-credential may specify another ANU micro-credential as a formal prerequisite, but there should be a statement that it is taught at graduate level);
- l. Total Workload in hours (see s.18 below)
- m. For micro-credentials only:
 - 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.
- n. For MOOCs only:

- i. Number of hours of online content
- ii. Estimated number of hours spent on assessment
- o. ANU unit value, which may be either specified or unspecified; if specified, any programs to which credit is guaranteed (noting that credit for other programs may be applied for under the [ANU Recognition of Prior and External Learning Policy](#));
- p. The AQF level (7, 8, 9, or 10) or course code level (1000, 7000, 8000, or 9000) at which credit into an ANU program would be given;
- q. Proposed Fees;
- r. Any specific software or equipment that enrollees are expected to supply (other than a computer, Microsoft Office, and a PDF reader),
- s. Any specific materials that the university is expected to provide, such as library databases, virtual desktop access, specialist software, etc., and
- t. Contact details.

Workload and unit value

18. The ANU standard course workload is 130 hours workload = 6 units. Drawing on this, any assigned unit value is based on 21 hours = 1 unit. Micro-credentials and MOOCs that are not primarily designed for credit towards an ANU program are not required to assign a unit value.

19. The unit value of a single micro-credential or MOOC must not exceed 6 units and must be a whole number. There is no maximum unit value for a micro-credential stack.

20. Non-nested assessment should not normally exceed 1500 words per unit value; nested assessment should not normally exceed 1500 words in final version per unit value.

Micro-credentials

21. Contact for ANU micro-credentials is typically at least one third of the total number of hours workload. Contact less than this needs to be justified to the Committee. For clarity, asynchronous online is not regarded as contact.

22. All ANU micro-credentials are required to include face-to-face contact that is preferably in person but may be synchronous online. This may be supplemented by on-line offerings.

23. Face-to-face contact for ANU micro-credentials is normally taught in intensive mode. Any micro-credential of more than three units is required be taught in intensive mode.

24. Face-to-face contact may be on the ANU campus or at any other location in Australia; off-shore teaching of a micro-credential that involves international travel by staff is required to be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

MOOCs

25. MOOCs may deliver their entire content as asynchronous online content. This does not prevent a MOOC from having synchronous online content.

Assessment

26. To receive a micro-credential or, for MOOCs only, verified certificate, an enrollee must demonstrate attainment of the learning outcomes through completion of assessment. Owing to the brief nature of the micro-credential and its assessment, the ANU Student Assessment (Coursework) Policy and Procedure do not apply.

27. Assessment must have the following characteristics:

- a. All written assessment is to be submitted electronically using university-approved text matching software;
- b. Each assessment item is to be marked as pass/fail and written feedback is provided to the enrollee;
- c. Where more than one staff member is involved in marking, moderation processes must be undertaken to ensure consistency of marking;
- d. Supplementary assessment is not available; if an enrollee receives an overall failing mark (less than 50%), the enrollee may request that all assessment be remarked by a marker who was not involved in the teaching of the course and who is appointed by the Head of School or, for CLT, the Director of CLT; if there is disagreement between the markers, the final decision shall rest with an Associate Dean of the managing College or, for CLT, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Digital), whose decision is not subject to further appeal;
- e. For micro-credentials only: The micro-credential outline must state principles for extensions and any penalties for late submission;
- f. Given the level of assumed English language ability required for admission into micro-credentials or enrolment in MOOCs, there are no special assessment arrangements for enrollees from language backgrounds other than English; and
- g. Assessment is subject to the same rules, policies, and procedures regarding Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct as for ANU courses.

Certification

28. Micro-credential certification is managed by the Centre for Learning and Teaching. On successful completion of assessment, a certificate will be awarded in the form of a digital artefact.

29. Certification for MOOCs is managed by the MOOC delivery platform.

Academic Integrity

30. Before commencing the assessment for their first ANU micro-credential or MOOC, all enrollees must declare their commitment to abiding by the University's Academic Integrity Rule. To support enrollees in understanding the University's current standards, training in Academic Integrity is made available. The nature of this training is approved by Academic Board. There is no additional fee for this training.

31. All assessment task submissions require agreement to the following declaration by the enrollee: "I declare that this work:

upholds the principles of academic integrity, as defined in the [Academic Integrity Rule](#);

is original, and is my own work except where collaboration (for example group work) has been authorised in writing by the convener;

is produced for the purposes of this assessment task and has not been submitted for assessment in any other context, except where authorised in writing by the convener;

gives appropriate acknowledgement of the ideas, scholarship and intellectual property of others insofar as these have been used; and

in no part involves copying, cheating, collusion, fabrication, plagiarism or recycling."

Admission requirements for Micro-credentials

32. All ANU micro-credentials have an admission requirement of completion of at least an AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree or equivalent work experience, with no minimum GPA specified.

33. Where the language of instruction is English, all micro-credentials must state the following: the assumed level of English Language competency is equivalent to completion of an undergraduate degree program taught in English.

34. Although it is preferred that prior knowledge is stated as assumed knowledge, an ANU micro-credential may specify another ANU micro-credential as a formal pre-requisite; no other formal pre-requisites may be specified.

35. The following assumed knowledge may be specified where relevant:

- a. A minimum period of work experience may be assumed, which may include particular type/s of work experience.

- b. Specific knowledge or skills may be assumed (e.g. a specific software package or a specific research technique)
36. Micro-credentials, or specific iterations of micro-credentials, may be available only to nominated members of specific organisations.
37. If cohort size for particular offerings is capped, a transparent selection mechanism must be specified.

Credit into ANU Programs

38. Enrolees who have attained a micro-credential or micro-credential stack, or completed a MOOC and received a verified certificate may apply under the [ANU Recognition of Prior and External Learning Policy](#) and [Credit and Exemptions Procedure](#) for consideration for credit towards an ANU AQF qualification; ANU micro-credentials and MOOCs are regarded as [formal learning](#).
39. ANU micro-credentialed offerings designed primarily as pathways to a graduate Award are required to specify an ANU unit value.
40. Just because an enrolee is eligible for or receives credit into an ANU program does not mean that the credit is able to be counted towards completion of the ANU program: enrolees must complete the approved program requirements and there may be no space in the program for the credit to be used.

Fees

41. Fees are approved by the ANU Micro-credentials and MOOCs Governance Committee. Standard fees for micro-credentials must be at least the pro rata amount for an equivalent non-award course. Offerings tailored to and taught to particular closed cohorts may have their fees set in the contract.

Teaching

42. A member of the teaching team who is an ANU academic staff member or, for CLT, a professional staff member of CLT, must be present at all teaching events.
43. Convening and teaching must not be contracted out to third-party organisations; this does not preclude the payment of guest teaching staff.
44. There is no requirement that any part of the content is recorded or that a written record of the content is made available.

Publication of Micro-credentialed offerings and MOOCs

45. A single consolidated website is to be created to allow publication and searching of micro-credentialed offerings and MOOCs.

46. To avoid potential confusion with ANU AQF qualifications, ANU micro-credentialed offerings and MOOCs will not be published on programsandcourses and are not available for enrolment through ISIS.
47. Information to be published is:
- a. Name and Code;
 - b. Language of instruction (if not English);
 - c. Description of content (max. 100 words);
 - d. Learning outcomes;
 - e. Assessment of the learning outcomes (for micro-credentials only);
 - f. For micro-credential stacks only: list of all micro-credentials that constitute the stack at that time;
 - g. Assumed knowledge;
 - h. Workload in hours including hours of contact;
 - i. ANU unit value, which may be either specified or unspecified; if specified, any programs to which credit is guaranteed (noting that credit for other programs may be applied for under the [ANU Recognition of Prior and External Learning policy](#));
 - j. The AQF level (7, 8, 9, or 10) or course code level (1000, 7000, 8000, or 9000) at which credit into an ANU program would be given;
 - k. Admission requirements (for micro-credentials only);
 - l. Depth of learning: if taught at graduate level, the content of the micro-credential or MOOC is introductory or intermediate or advanced.
 - m. Fees (if available for individual enrolment);
 - n. Any specific software or equipment that enrolees are expected to supply (other than a computer, Microsoft Office, and a PDF reader), and
 - o. Contact details.
48. Optional information
- a. It should be stated in the proposal where, in the development of a micro-credential, there is or has been:
 - I. Industry support that the micro-credential meets an industry need and reflects skills sought by employers;
 - II. Evidence that a micro-credential sits within an industry or profession, and the occupations / career pathways to which the micro-credential is aligned;

- III. An Industry competency framework/s that the micro-credential may be aligned to;
 - IV. Jurisdictions where the micro-credential is applicable or recognised;
 - V. Consideration of Industry competency framework/s that the micro-credential may be aligned to;
 - VI. Industry-recognition, where the micro-credential 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.
- b. Offerings (for example, offerings only available to members of a particular organisation are not required to have the offering advertised).

49. Standard statements:

- a. Academic integrity;
- b. Micro-credentials are taught at graduate level/MOOCs are taught at either undergraduate or graduate levels;
- c. Micro-credentials and MOOCs are not AQF Qualifications;
- d. Feedback mechanisms.

Document information

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