Microcredentials
The OU in Wales

QAA Cymru – 24 May 2023

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The Open University Microcredential Offer
The OU has pioneered distance learning for over 50 years, enabling more than 2 million students to realise their ambitions.

We are living in unprecedented times with high levels of uncertainty.

Now, more than ever, there is a rapidly growing requirement for organisations and individuals to retrain or upskill.

Never has our vision been more important:

‘to reach more students with life-changing learning that meets their needs and enriches society.’

Our work on developing microcredentials and short courses at the Open University supports our delivery of that vision.
We offer 26 microcredentials in the following subject areas

- Leadership and Management
- Computing and Digital Technologies
- Environment, Climate Change and Sustainability
- Teacher Development and Inclusive Learning
- Health and Social Care
allows us to:

• broaden our reach by targeting learners looking for professional development

• provide learning opportunities to those looking to reskill or upskill as a result of the pandemic and changes in employment markets

• reach different audiences including vocational and international learners.

• Adopt a distinctive pedagogical approach allows us to explore new ways of delivering learning experiences.
European MOOC Consortium (which includes FutureLearn) have created the Common Microcredential Framework. It sets out microcredentials as:

- 4-6 ECTS = 100–150 study hours per microcredential (10-15 FHEQ* credits)
- Undergraduate or postgraduate
- Includes summative assessment
- ID verification required
- Transcript with full course details to be provided

MICROCREDENTIALS : THE OU MODEL

- 10 credits at undergraduate level or 15 credits at PG level.
- Microcredentials can be at Levels 4, 5, 6 or 7 on the FHEQ (OU levels 1, 2, 3, M).
- Continuous formative assessment to be integrated as part of the design of the microcredential.
- Summative assessment in the form of an end-of-module assessment (EMA).
- OU Study Advisors provide tuition support.
- EMA markers will mark the EMA.
- Grades and grade boundaries are the same as those used on standard OU modules.
- Microcredentials must fit into current standard OU presentation and conflation periods.
The QAA Characteristics Statement launched in May 2022 covers seven main themes:

1) Definition
2) Context and Purpose of Microcredentials
3) Characteristics of the learner
4) Admissions and Access, including RPL
5) Course design, including learning and teaching and assessment
6) Certification
7) Quality management of microcredentials
Context and Purpose
AGILE BUSINESS PATHWAY

Organic content drives traffic

Free Short Course

Agile Fundamentals

Blog posts, social media posts, PR outreach optimised to correspond to portfolio offering and key search terms

ExpertTracks

Business Agility

Agile People

Agile Leadership

Agile Culture

Agile Strategy

Agile Skills & Practices (ASP)

A ‘vuca’ world

Agile Team Structure & dynamics

Agile Frameworks

Running an Agile Project

Microcredentials (UG)

Agile Leadership and Management

Creating an Agile Culture TBC

NB. All Course/Specialisation titles and content may be subject to change following Faculty review
The Venture/OU in Wales Partnership for Graduates

The OU in Wales has partnered with Venture to offer the following microcredentials as part of their Development Accelerator Programme, with graduates able to choose their own ‘learning pathway’:

- Business Management: Project Management
- Business Management: People Management and Leadership
- Climate Change: Transforming your Organisation for Sustainability
- Cyber Security Operations

The learning pathways are complimented by wraparound learning offered by OpenLearn with a bespoke hub focussed on professional development and work-ready skills.
Microcredentials Case Study: Chwarae Teg
Support to women re-skilling post-Covid-19

Support women to break the barriers associated with careers in tech and digital

Enable access to flexible, knowledge and skills based provision

Creation of a bespoke Chwarae Teg OpenLearn hub of resources for digital skill. Choice to study one of two microcredential courses, funded by the pilot.

26 Microcredential places funded

23 Enrolled on Python Programming

29 have explored formal courses post visit to the OpenLearn site

134 Unique visits to OpenLearn Hub (to date)

3 Enrolled on Introduction to Networks

Top courses engaged
Simple Coding
Introduction to ICT
Design Thinking

The Open University
Y Brys很差 Agored
Wales Cymru

Weather Wales
Quality Management
### Academic Principles for Microcredentials –

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Microcredentials follow OU academic governance approval processes and quality assurance requirements in line with all credit-bearing OU curriculum.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Those studying OU microcredentials should be referred to as ‘learners’ to distinguish them from OU students on OU standard modules and qualifications and from apprentices.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>OU microcredentials must align with the latest version of the <a href="#">Common Microcredential Framework</a> (CMF) agreed by the <a href="#">European MOOC Consortium</a>.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Microcredentials should align with a single pre-approved model for assessment and tuition delivery.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>OU microcredential credit is OU credit and may be counted towards an OU qualification and may be used within the qualification classification.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>OU microcredentials can be counted towards an OU qualification provided the established principles, frameworks and policies are followed.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>OU microcredential stackable qualifications will align to specific qualifications in the OU Qualifications Framework.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>The maximum total credits for an OU microcredential stackable qualification is 60 credits.</td>
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Pace and ambition of our programme does not compromise quality.

We are adhering to our internal quality assurance processes for microcredentials.

An Academic Framework of microcredential principles provide guidance and clarity and ensure academic standards are maintained.

Understanding and challenging status-quo in order to ensure policy and processes are rigorous and proportionate.
Course design and learner experience
Learn Agile Leadership techniques to build, lead, and empower teams

This microcredential provides a solid foundation and introduction to Agile Leadership and Management. Designed by The Open University and The Agile Business Consortium, it combines...
THE SOCIAL LEARNING MODEL

OU Microcredentials are designed around social learning with learners sharing knowledge and experience and learning from each other.

Supported by a study advisor or mentor who:
- answers questions
- points to relevant resources
- helps learners to achieve success.
Microcredentials and qualifications
Developing our approach to stackability

**Standalone**
Learners may choose to do one or more microcredentials as standalone courses.

- Microcredential
- Microcredential
- Microcredential
- Microcredential

**Counting towards a qualification**
Learners may choose to undertake microcredentials to count towards a wider qualification up to 1/3.

- Microcredential
- Microcredential
- Microcredential
- Microcredential

**Stackable qualification**
Learners may undertake a suite of microcredentials which make up a stackable qualification.

Certificates and Diplomas, up to a maximum of 60 credits.

- Microcredential
- Microcredential
- Microcredential
- Microcredential

**Pilot with 4 Postgraduate qualifications**
1. F61 Masters of Business Administration
2. F69 Masters of Business Administration
3. F81 MA/MSc Open
4. F98 Masters in Online Teaching

1. Professional Certificate (UG)
2. Graduate Certificate (UG L3)
3. Professional Diploma (PG)
4. PG Cert (PG)
What our learners say

More than 10,000 learners have joined a microcredential in the last two years

91% of our learners rated their overall study experience as excellent or good*

97% of our learners rated the quality of audio and video highly*

96% of our learners said the skills gained were excellent or good*

92% of our learners rated their course as good or excellent value for money*

* End of course survey – August 2022 (collating waves 1-4)

My line manager said that while these courses have greatly enabled my personal and professional development, they have also prepared me for taking on senior management responsibilities, and that the skills I have developed will be invaluable in driving our organisation through a process of digital transformation.

Tommy Breslin
Senior Development Officer – Scottish Union Learning, Scottish Trades Union Congress. Studied Online Teaching microcredentials

"I somehow feel that there is a ‘life before’ and now a ‘life after’ the course!"

"This course is a game changer."

Climate Change: Transforming your Organisation for Sustainability
Thank you

Diolch

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