



E-learning Course

Module 1: Microcredential Fundamentals

Part 1. 2. EU Standards for Microcredentials



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Introduction

Duration: app. 110 minutes



Part 1.2 EU Standards for Microcredentials is divided into **3 parts**:

- 1.2.1 Key Principles: The EU Council Recommendation
- 1.2.2 Digital Tools: European Digital Credentials for Learning
- 1.2.3 Structuring Learning: The European Learning Model (v.3)





Focus & Learning outcomes

Main focus of the Part 1.2

- Policy, infrastructure, and data standards supporting microcredentials in Europe

Learning outcomes

After completing of this part you will be able to summarize the core principles and elements of key EU standards related to microcredentials, including:

- the Council Recommendation (2022/C 243/02)
- European Digital Credentials
- European Learning Model v.3



How MCs function within the EU



To understand how MCs function within the EU let's look at the topic from 3 complementary angles:

- policy
- infrastructure, and
- data standards.

These 3 parts reflect **how the EU regulates, enables, and operationalises** MCs.

- **Policy** defines what MCs are and the principles they must follow.
- **Infrastructure** provides the systems and tools that make it possible to issue, store, and verify them across Europe.
- **Data and semantic standards** ensure that all MCs are described consistently and interoperably, so they can be recognised across countries and institutions.

These 3 elements form a coherent European framework that supports quality, transparency, and cross-border use of microcredentials.

Policy framework

Core legal / policy act:

- **Council Recommendation** on a European approach to microcredentials for lifelong learning and employability (**2022/C 243/02**); the central “umbrella” policy and currently the key valid EU reference.

Other EU strategies referencing micro-credentials

- **European Education Area (EEA) 2025**: Promotes MCs as tools to make learning more flexible, mobile, and modular across Europe.
- **European Skills Agenda** (2020): Positions MCs as key instruments for upskilling and reskilling, especially for digital and green transitions.
- **Digital Education Action Plan 2021–2027**: Supports the development of digital systems and tools needed for issuing and verifying digital micro-credentials.
- **European Pillar of Social Rights** – Principle 1: Embeds MCs into the EU’s commitment to inclusive lifelong learning and equal access to skills development.

Funding and experimentation are primarily supported through **Erasmus+ calls** (policy experimentation on micro-credentials, alliances of universities, etc.).

Infrastructure



- **EDCI** - Europass Digital Credentials Infrastructure: The EU's official platform and technical ecosystem for issuing, storing, verifying, and sharing digital micro-credentials.
- **EDC/EDCL** - European Digital Credential for Learning : The verifiable digital credential format (based on eIDAS signatures) used to represent micro-credentials, diplomas, and certificates.
- **Europass Learner Wallet**: A secure personal space where individuals can store and share their digital micro-credentials.
- **Integration with national and institutional systems**: Open-source EDCI components allow ministries, universities, VET providers, and companies to incorporate EU-compatible credential issuance in their own platforms.
- **Interoperability with other student data exchange systems (e.g., EMREX/ELMO)**: Ensures that learning data and credentials can move across borders and education systems using unified protocols.

Data and semantic standards



- **European Learning Model (ELM):** A multilingual, machine-readable data model that defines how learning opportunities, outcomes, qualifications, and micro-credentials must be described.
- **W3C Verifiable Credentials standard:** The technical foundation enabling EDC/EDCL to be digitally signed, tamper-proof, and easily verified.
- **Standard descriptive elements for micro-credentials** (Annex I of the 2022 Recommendation): Defines the required information fields, such as learning outcomes, workload, level, assessment, and quality assurance, that each micro-credential must include.
- **Linking to EQF and NQF levels:** Ensures micro-credentials can be understood and compared across countries using the European Qualifications Framework

What this means in practice

- **Follow the EU definition & standard elements:** Design micro-credentials according to the 2022 Council Recommendation, including clear learning outcomes, workload, assessment, and quality assurance.
- **Use EU-compatible digital credentialing:** Issue micro-credentials as EDC/EDCL through the Europass Digital Credentials Infrastructure (EDCI) or systems integrated with it.
- **Describe your micro-credentials using ELM concepts:** Structure all information (learning outcomes, level, assessment, provider) using the European Learning Model to ensure interoperability
- **Ensure EQF/NQF referencing:** Link each MC to an appropriate European or national qualifications level to enable transparency and comparability.
- **Align with national QA and legal frameworks:** Check your country's rules for recognising of MCs so your design fits existing accreditation and quality assurance requirements.



You have completed
the Introduction
of the Part 1. 2. EU Standards for Microcredentials



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