International Developments in Micro-Credentialing

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Main Trends and Drivers

What main trends in non-degree credentialing/microcredentialing are you seeing in your nation or other nations with which you are working? What are the top 2-3 drivers for these trends?

Singapore

- SkillsFuture movement (https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/) – comprehensive, national continuing education and training system. Built upon four decades of workforce skills development initiatives
- Workforce Skill Qualifications (WSQ) national micro-credentialing system (https://www.ssg.gov.sg/wsq.html), with statements of attainment (SOAs) issued through training providers
    - Since 2017/8, shifted Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) to move into this space – a new market for IHLs. Today >1/3 market share by IHLs
    - Some IHLs moving to competency-based curriculum design
    - Regular academic programs -- recognizing other micro-credentials (e.g. Coursera, edX) as credits
        - E.g. Nanyang Technological University (https://www.ntu.edu.sg/admissions/matriculation/mooc)

Korea

- National Competency Standards (https://www.hrdkorea.or.kr/ENG/8/1) – align training providers, public funding for training

Main Trends and Drivers

Hong Kong

- University extensions – e.g. Hong Kong University SPACE (https://hkuspace.hku.hk/); TVET through Vocational Training Council (https://www.vtc.edu.hk/html/en/)
    - Provide articulation pathways from advanced diploma, bachelor degree and postgraduate diploma up to master's degree level programmes

Mexico – Tec de Monterrey

- Institute for the Future of Education (https://tec.mx/en/ife) – championing the future of higher education and lifelong learning through research, education, and outreach.
- Acceleration of offerings towards micro and alternative credentials – Coursera, edX, bootcamps.
- Academic policies/regulations, framework, alignment of credit hours and duration – to enable schools to offer and recognize alternative credentials within their curriculum
- Tec21 Model (https://tec.mx/en/tec21) – competency-based, challenge-based education model. Enabler for alternative credentials

Impact on Institutions

Are universities and community and technical institutions being impacted in the same ways by microcredentialing trends? If not, what differences are you seeing?

- Four-year degree institutions / universities – greater impact and change needed. Main areas for transformation:
    - Modularizing curriculum design
    - Responsiveness to industry skills needs
    - Delivering to non-traditional learners
    - Academic governance and administration for a much more fluid customer base

- Community colleges / TVET institutions – relatively more attuned to industry skills needs, greater flexibility in redesigning curriculum for vocational needs
    - Challenges exist, but to a lower extent

Predictions on Developments

What are 2-3 predictions you have for developments in microcredentialing – non-degree credentialing – internationally in the next few years?

- HolonIQ report (https://www.holoniq.com/notes/micro-credentials-global-panel-results/) – 85% of 320 global institutions surveyed indicated that:
  - Alternative and micro-credentials is an important strategy for their future
  - A way to bridge gap between higher education and workforce needs
  - Many view these as addition, rather than replacement to degrees

- Trends Prediction
  - Continued trend – due to rapidly evolving skills needs, and need for some form of trusted certification of skills (by employers, and workers)
  - Continued proliferation of standards and approaches, more startups. Likely to see some consolidation
  - Macro-credentialing will remain the mainstay
    - More institutions will seek a complementary approach
    - Some governments will move to formalize this space
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Research Needed

What type of research is most needed to understand or inform developments in microcredentialing in the venues in which you work?

- To enable broad-based adoption at scale:
  - Need to develop ecosystem level understanding – across multi-stakeholders to make it happen. From technology, business, public policy, and psychology (motivation) perspectives
  - Some critical components are:
    - Shared taxonomies, standards – common language for skills
    - Certification and verification – by trusted bodies
    - Recognition and adoption – by companies, governments

Staying Informed

How are nations getting information about one another's developments ? What do you think is working best to keep stakeholders informed (stakeholders like researchers, policymakers, higher education faculty and administrators, employers)?

- Currently, rely on 1-to-1 exchanges with policymakers, institutions. Some platforms and edtech companies providing market intelligence – e.g. HolonIQ, Faethm, Coursera
- Need international platforms for exchanges – global (trends, technologies, approaches) and local (education regulations, policies, contexts)
- Bodies like NCRN help, but need to involve stakeholders from the broader ecosystem

Some Resources

- Fung, M. (2020, September 9). *Laying the foundations for Asia's digital workforce*. The Business Times. https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/opinion/laying-the-foundations-for-asias-digital-workforce
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- Casanova, A. M., Caballero, A., Kandri, S. E., Kerr, T., & Sterlin, E. (2019). Breaking paradigms to develop leaders for the 21st century. Tec de Monterrey: How a Top University in Mexico Radically Overhauled its Educational Model. *International Finance Corporation. https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/06d96e58-6aa1-4317-8ce3-87fb60b86cd1/IFC-TechMontereyCaseStudy-final-3.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=m-x1B1Z*
- Gratton, L., & Scott, A. J. (2016). *The 100-year life: Living and working in an age of longevity*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
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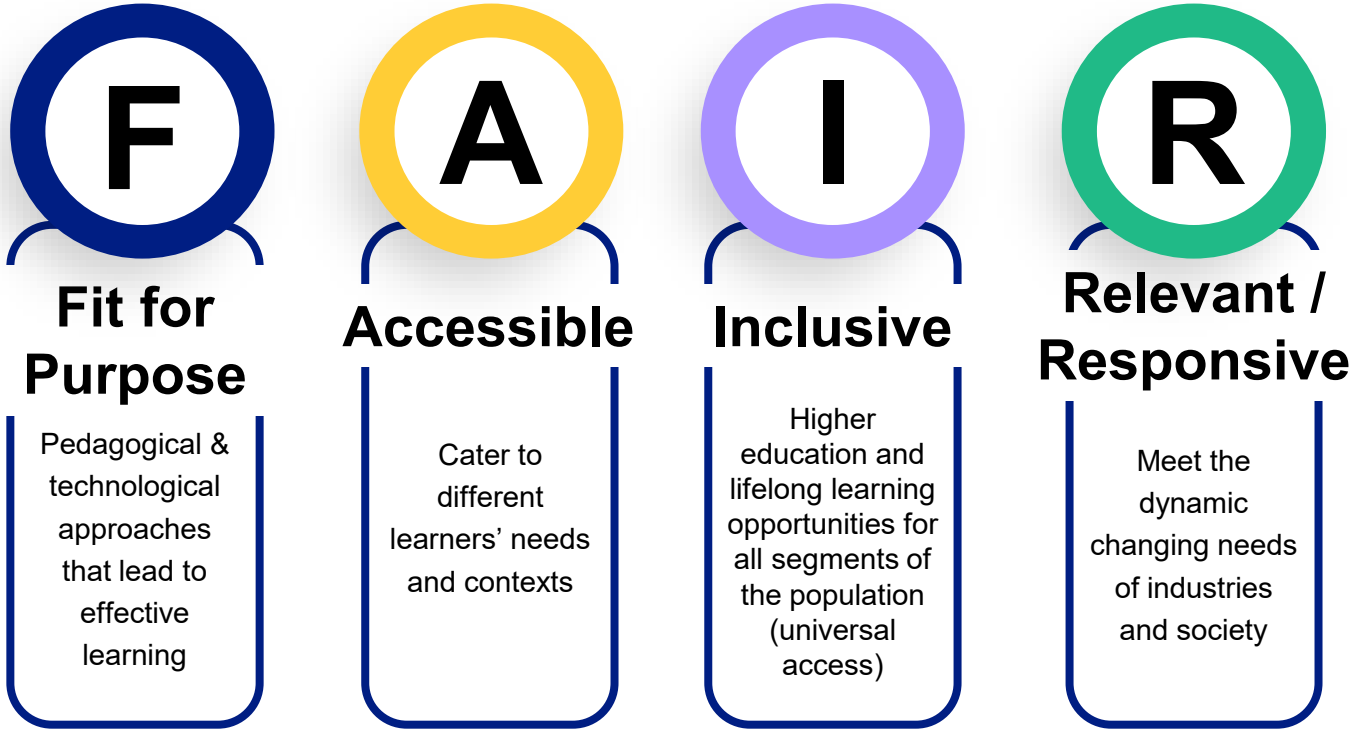
OUR DREAM

Create the future of education to improve the lives of millions of people around the world.

OUR PURPOSE

We generate, transfer and disseminate applicable knowledge on educational innovation in an experimental, interdisciplinary, open, and world-class way, connecting, inspiring, and accompanying those who seek disruptive solutions for the future of higher education and lifelong learning.

Key Themes for the Future of Education



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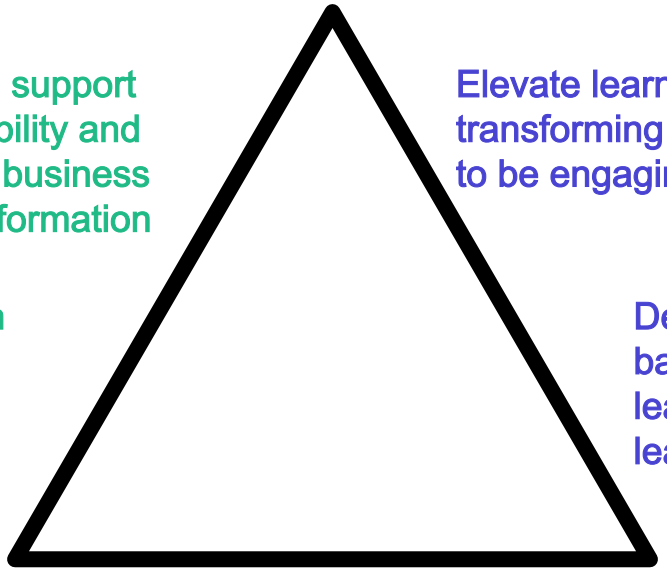
5 Grand Challenges



+ QUALITY & RELEVANCE

Skills development to support worker job mobility and companies' business transformation

Elevate learning outcomes by transforming teaching & learning to be engaging and motivating

Scale up quality higher education and lifelong learning opportunities for all segments of the population

Design effective competency - based education and lifelong learning systems to elevate learning outcomes

+ ACCESS & INCLUSION

+ EFFICIENCY

Make education affordable and convenient to different learner segments

The Future of Education

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