QA OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS
OUTCOMES OF THE ENQA WG AND IMINQA PROJECT

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STARTING POINT

- Micro-credentials are not new – but have gained prominence and new terminology

- Micro-credentials complement and not replace conventional higher education qualifications

- Previous work on QA of micro-credentials in HE has confirmed:
  - Applicability of Bologna Process QA tools to micro-credentials
  - Providers have primary responsibility for quality and QA of micro-credentials
  - External QA should be proportionate

- IMINQA project has further explored the state of play and developed 'reflective questions' for internal and external QA of micro-credentials

STATE OF PLAY

- Wide variety of approaches and stages of implementation

- Preferable to use and adapt existing approaches as far as possible

- Further work needed on recognition (RPL), stackability, portability etc.

- QA agencies expect guidance from regional/national/European level

WHAT DEFINES QUALITY OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS?

Quality is contextual

Defined in relation to fitness for purpose

What is the purpose of micro-credentials?

APPROACHES TO (QA OF) MICRO-CREDENTIALS

- Unbundling existing programmes
  - Developed through the institution's usual curriculum design processes
  - Requires additional reflection on how the micro-credential sits when outside the usual context
  - Usually covered by institution's internal QA processes for programmes

- Micro-credentials developed independently
  - Usually part of institution's life-long learning provision
  - Could also be tailor-made and/or developed in partnership
  - Often covered by institution's QA processes for life-long learning (lighter touch)

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR INTERNAL QA

- What are the reasons for offering micro-credentials?
- How can the special characteristics of micro-credentials be captured in the internal QA approach?
- What are the specific considerations for micro-credentials that are
  - originally conceived as part of an existing programme?
  - developed independently from any existing programme?
- What are the specific considerations for micro-credentials developed and/or offered in partnership with other organisations and providers?

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR EXTERNAL QA

- What is the role of quality assurance agencies in supporting the QA of micro-credentials?
  - Expert body
  - Facilitating dialogue
  - Offering support and guidance
  - Ensuring quality through external QA frameworks
  - Providing information
- To what extent might existing external QA procedures need to be adjusted to address institutional approaches to QA of micro-credentials?
- How can QA agencies support alternative providers that offer micro-credentials?

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Balance between regulation, flexibility and proportionality
- Transparent and consistent system-level definition
- Communication and transparency of information
- Flexible, non-prescriptive and proportionate system-level policies
- Stakeholder engagement and collaboration between stakeholders
- Supporting student success

RESOURCES

- IMINQA Report on approaches to quality assurance of micro-credentials

- IMINQA Reflective questions for internal and external QA of micro-credentials

- ENQA working group report on quality assurance of micro-credentials

THANK
YOU

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