

# ASCILITE 2023

People, Partnerships and Pedagogies

## Collaborative Panel Insights: Designing Learning Experiences for Microcredentials

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The advent and proliferation of digital and online microcredentials present a paradigm shift in the traditional educational landscape. Panelists, including educators, learning designers, and educational technologists, will provide diverse perspectives on digital pedagogical approaches, technology integration, and learner-centered design for microcredentials. Through thought-provoking discussions and debates, we aim to explore effective strategies and principles for designing quality digital learning experiences of microcredentials. By encouraging participant contributions, we will foster a vibrant microcredentials community of practice within Australasia. Join us to gain new insights, exchange knowledge, and shape the future of microcredentials in enhancing learner engagement and overall learning experiences.

Keywords: microcredentials, short courses, learning design, technology enhanced learning, quality

### Introduction

Despite the potential advantages of microcredentials, there is a discernible gap in the global educational sector's response to this emerging space. An international survey revealed that university leaders have expressed concerns over the lack of microcredential standards and perceived issues with quality assurance and trust (Holon IQ, 2021). In Australasia, the microcredential landscape has been largely unregulated, with different maturity levels of adoption across 88% of universities (Selvaratnam & Sankey, 2021). This disparity signals a need for a coordinated, systemic response to integrate microcredentials effectively into the mainstream education system.

Microcredentials, when executed effectively, can offer universities new avenues for industry partnerships, alternate revenue streams, and a platform for innovative educational offerings. For employers, microcredentials provide a vehicle for recognising and encouraging continuous professional development. In some cases, this shorter form of qualifications can hold higher regard than traditional degrees due to their focused nature, providing industry learner professionals with opportunities for immediate, flexible, and just-in-time upskilling and reskilling.

The advent and proliferation of digital and online microcredentials present a paradigm shift in the traditional educational landscape. These compact, flexible, and targeted learning modules offer unique opportunities for learners, universities, and industries alike. However, a lack of universal standardisation, quality assurance, and validation casts a cloud of uncertainty around their adoption and implementation.

### Panel outline

This panel aligns with the conference theme by presenting a contemporary and relevant topic by discussing and recognising the significance of digital learning design in creating impactful microcredentials and ensuring learner engagement. Our panelists will offer diverse perspectives, including educators, learning designers, educational technologists and quality assurance.

The discussion will explore three key topics:

*Topic 1: Digital Pedagogical Approaches:* Exploring effective pedagogical strategies and learning design principles for designing engaging and interactive digital learning experiences in microcredentials.

*Topic 2: Digital Technology Integration:* Discussing the integration of emerging technologies such as virtual reality, gamification, adaptive learning systems, and artificial intelligence to enhance the effectiveness of microcredentials.

*Topic 3: Learner-Centered Design:* Addressing the importance of learner-centered approaches in

microcredential design, including personalisation, self-paced learning, and providing opportunities for learner collaboration and reflection.

## Panel alignment as contemporary and relevant topic

### *1. Presents on a contemporary topic relevant to the conference theme and streams:*

The panel discussion focuses on designing engaging digital learning experiences for microcredentials within the Australasian higher education institution context. This topic is highly relevant to the conference theme as it addresses the advancements and challenges associated with digital learning design and pedagogies in the context of microcredentials.

### *2. Presents different perspectives of the chosen theme:*

The panel discussion will provide diverse perspectives from experts in the field of digital learning design and microcredentials. The panellists will include decision makers, educators, learning designers and educational technologists, and quality assurance, who have experience in designing and delivering engaging digital learning experiences for microcredentials. Their varied perspectives will enrich the discussion and offer insights from different angles.

### *3. Poses questions and/or raises points for participants to debate:*

The panel outline encompasses several pivotal discussion topics: digital pedagogical approaches, technology integration, and learner-centered design. These areas offer a fertile ground for thought-provoking questions and lively debates among the panelists and participants. These discussions can explore the effectiveness of different approaches, tackle the challenges encountered, and identify potential future directions in the realm of designing engaging digital learning experiences for microcredentials.

### *4. With the contributions from the delegates, extends an aspect of knowledge or that new ways of understanding may emerge:*

The panel discussion provides an opportunity for participants to contribute their insights, experiences, and perspectives. By engaging in interactive discussions, delegates can share their own lived experiences, research, case studies, and good practices related to digital learning design and microcredentials. Additionally, an essential aspect to explore is how we can foster a vibrant microcredentials community of practice and establish meaningful partnerships across borders, specifically within Australasia. By examining collaborative practices, knowledge sharing, and cross-institutional cooperation, the panel aims to unveil the potential for collective growth and innovation in the microcredentials landscape.

## Summary

Overall, the proposed panel addresses a relevant topic, presenting diverse perspectives, encouraging debate, and fostering the generation of new knowledge and understanding within the context of designing engaging digital learning experiences for microcredentials. These short, flexible and targeted learning offer unique opportunities for learners, universities, and industries. However, to ensure their successful adoption and implementation, it is imperative to address the challenges of universal standardisation, quality assurance, digital learning design, digital technologies, and learner-centred design considerations. Moreover, fostering collaborative knowledge sharing and cultivating a vibrant community of practices are essential for the growth and advancement of microcredentials. By collectively sharing experiences, insights, and best practices, we can navigate the evolving educational landscape and unlock the full potential of digital and online microcredentials across borders.

## References

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