

# QQI NFAQ 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference Presentations



Dearbhú Cáilíochta  
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and  
Qualifications Ireland

# Future opportunities for National Qualification Frameworks

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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

# Purpose Statement

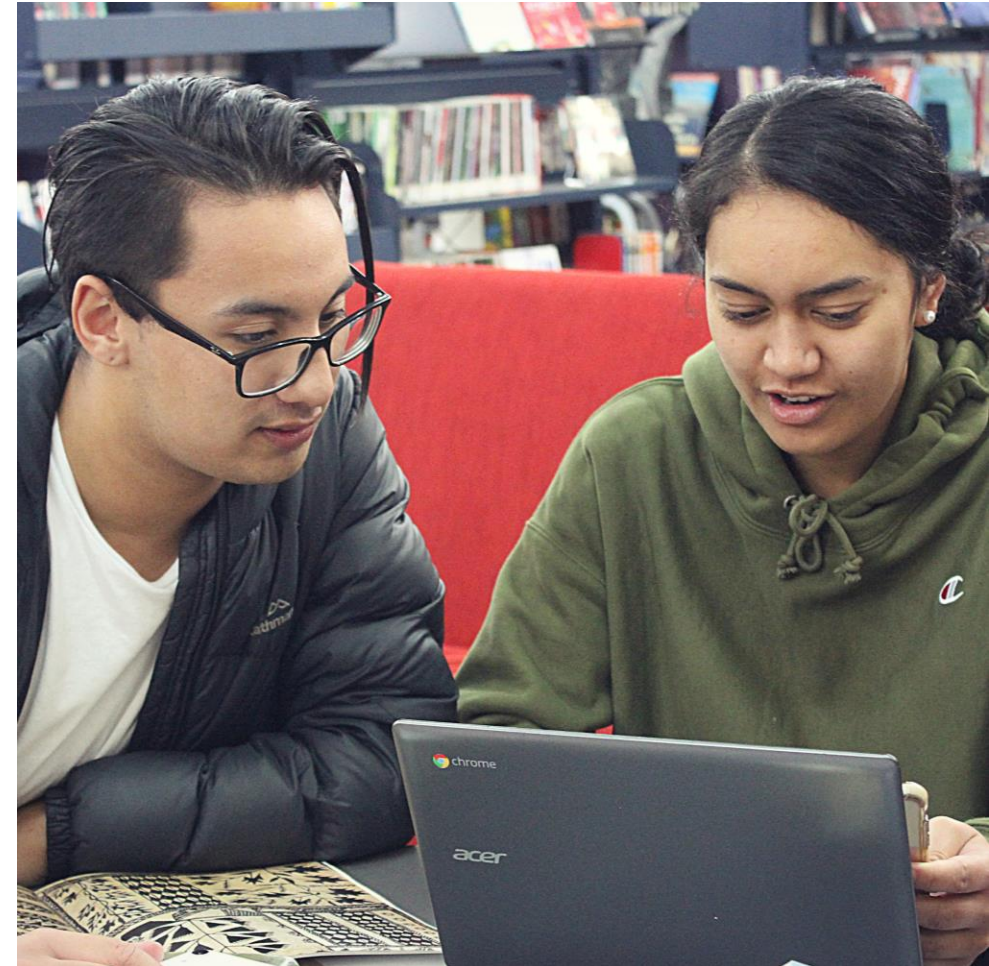
**How might NQFs be improved, leveraged or transformed to better meet current and future stakeholder needs?**



# Improve

**1/ Deepen stakeholder understanding of and support for the contribution an NQF can play in generating valued knowledge, skills and attributes**

**2/ Continue to build on bilateral, regional and global qualification recognition and referencing processes to strengthen NQFs**



# Leverage

**3/ Promote broader social and cultural goals such as the recognition of indigenous knowledge**

**4/ Consider, more explicitly, how an NQF might contribute to the reduction of inequalities in education outcomes**



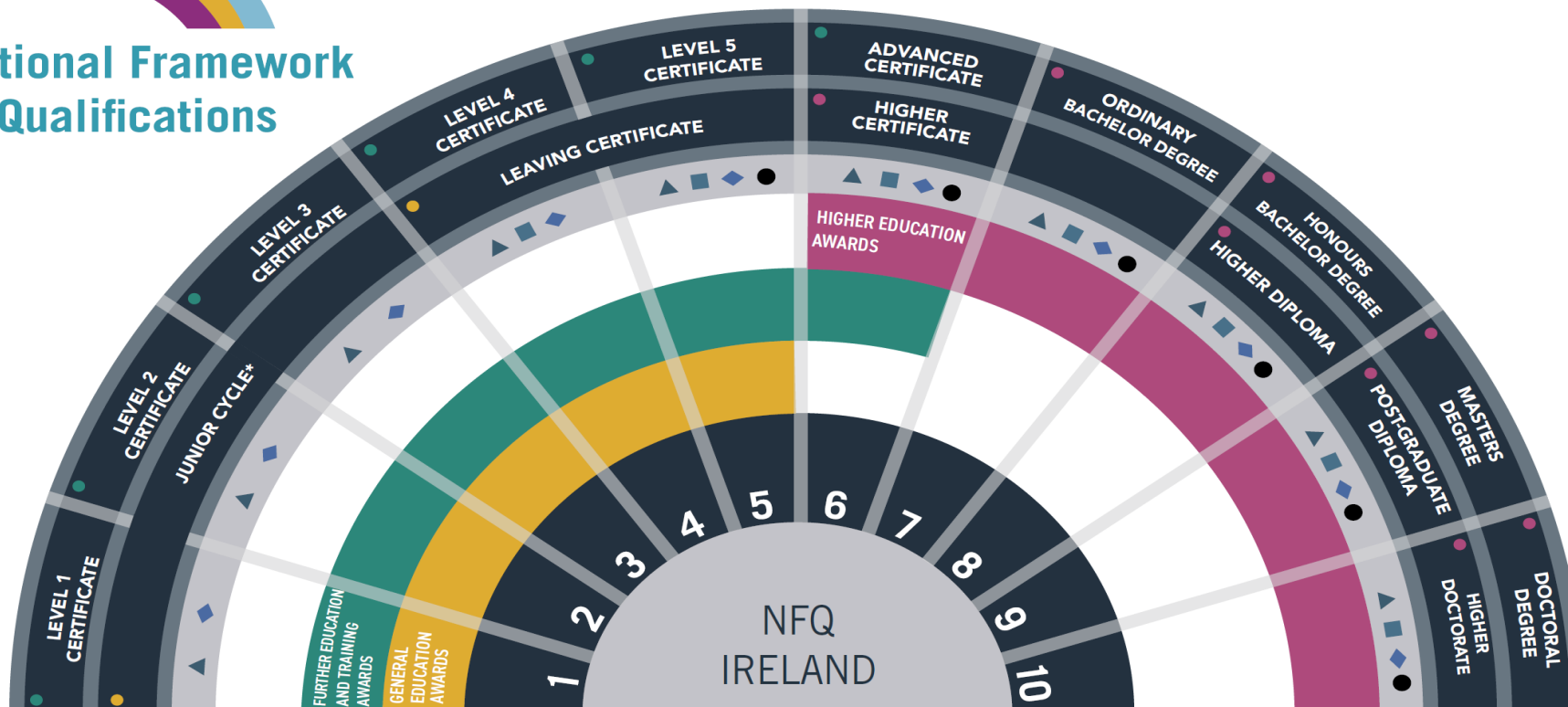
# Transform

**5/ Ensure Frameworks are responsive to the need for new forms of qualifications, credentials and competencies**

**6/ Reimagine levels, domains and level descriptors to accommodate future shifts in graduate knowledge, skills and competencies**



# National Framework of Qualifications



## CLASSES OF AWARD



**Major Awards:** named in the outer rings, are the principal class of awards made at a level



**Minor Awards:** are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award



**Supplemental Awards:** are for learning that is additional to a Major Award



**Special Purpose Awards:** are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement



**Professional Awards:** are for occupation-orientated qualifications including apprenticeships

\*Please refer to NCCA website, [ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/](http://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/)

## IRISH REGISTER OF QUALIFICATIONS

For more information on

- Qualifications
- Providers
- Courses

visit [www.irq.ie](http://www.irq.ie)



Supported by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

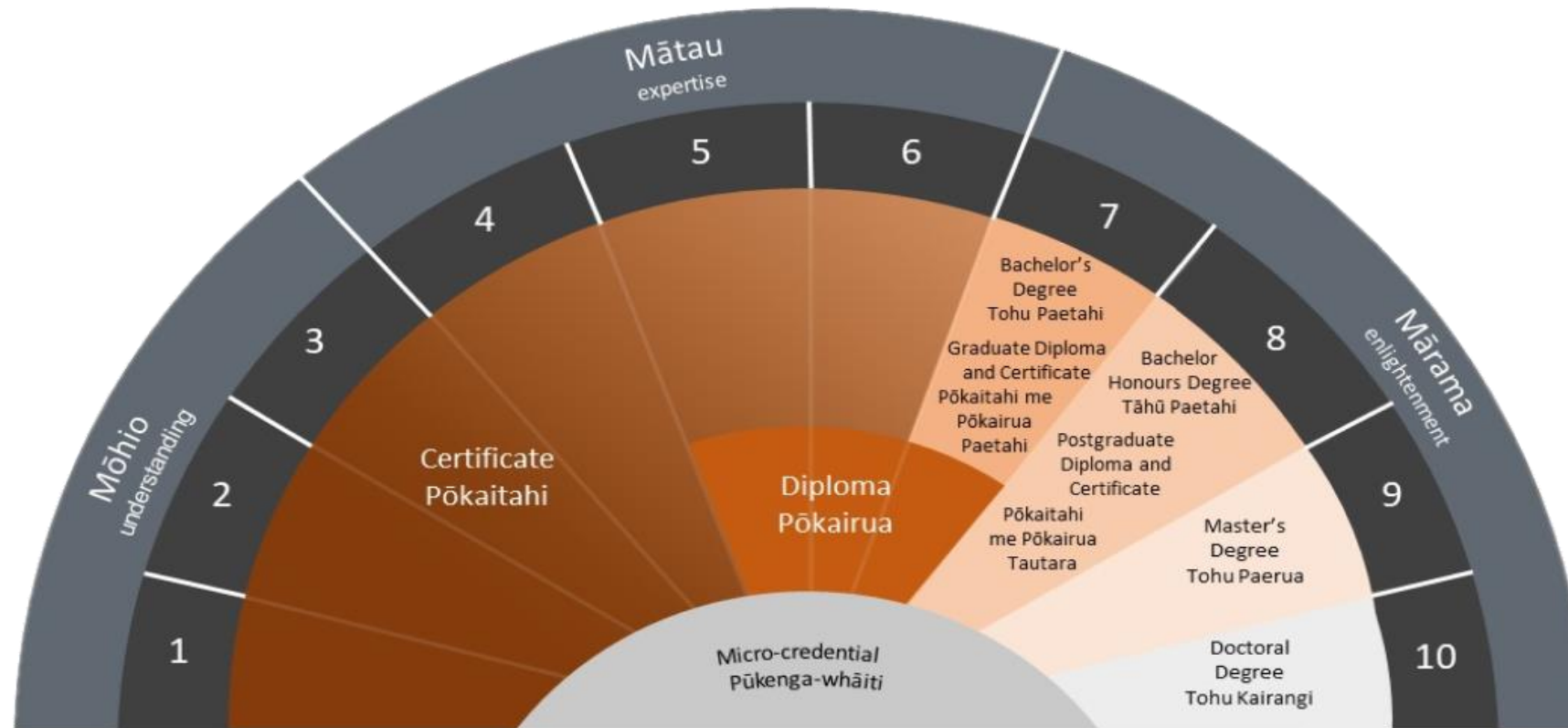
# New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF)

*NZQF structure – levels and qualification types*

LEVEL	QUALIFICATION TYPES
10	Doctoral Degree
9	Master's Degree
8	Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates, Bachelor Honours Degree
7	Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Diplomas and Certificates
6	Diplomas
5	
4	Certificates
3	
2	
1	



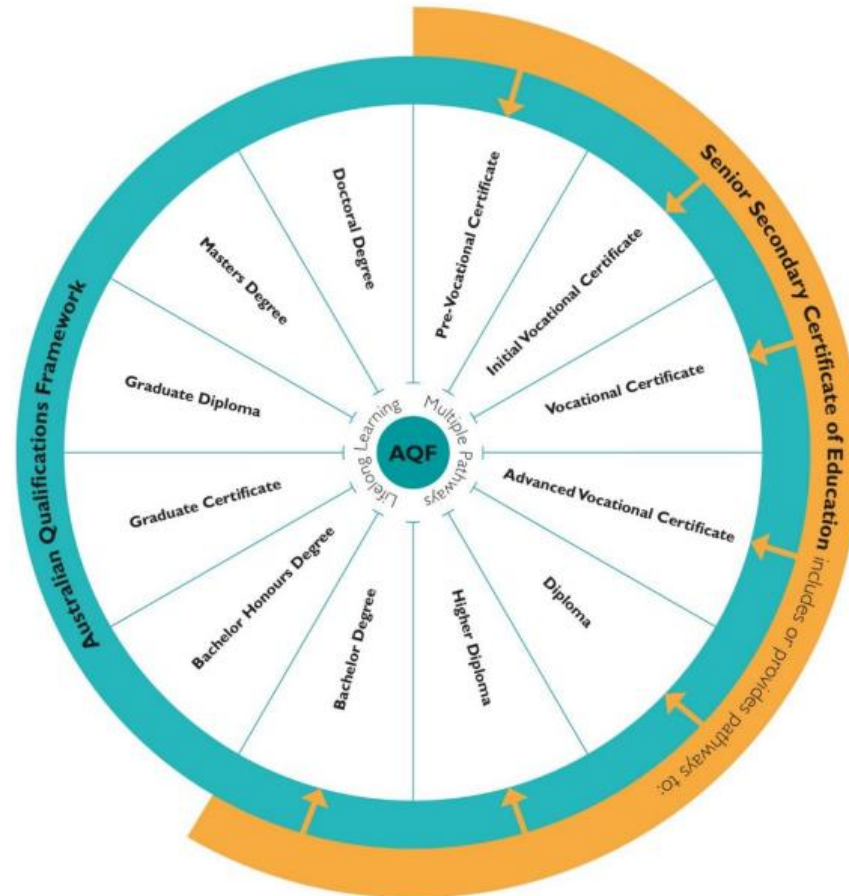
# New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF)



*^Draft diagram, pending consultation.*

# Australian Qualifications Framework

Figure 15. Revised AQF diagram



The Panel considers that the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education should not be aligned to an AQF band (see Chapter 3).

Tautohu Kaupae | Level Descriptors

DOMAIN	Sub-domains	TE TIROHANGA MĀORI TE ARA KI TE AO MĀRAMA	MŌHIO			MĀTAU			MĀRAMA			
			Conscious and competent use of mātauranga Māori skill and knowledge sets at the mōhiotanga level.			Reflective and proficient use of mātauranga Māori skill and knowledge sets at the mātautanga level.			Advanced understanding and dynamic application of mātauranga Māori skill and knowledge sets at the māramatanga level.			
			LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6	LEVEL 7	LEVEL 8	LEVEL 9	LEVEL 10
What graduates know <i>Knowledge</i>	Knowledge	<b>Te Mātauranga</b> He taonga tuku iho te mātauranga nō tua whakarehe, ā, i auaha mai nō, nāianei hei taonga mō te āpōpō.	Has knowledge of some facts and information relevant to a field of study.	Has knowledge of some facts and understands some concepts relevant to a field of work or study.	Has knowledge of some of the key facts and information in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts.	Has knowledge of the key facts and information in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts and key principles.	Has in-depth technical or theoretical knowledge in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts and key principles.	Has specialised technical or theoretical knowledge in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts and key principles.	Has a broad knowledge of a range of technical or theoretical concepts and systematic understanding of an area of professional practice or body of knowledge.	Has advanced, specialised, technical or theoretical knowledge and understanding of an area of professional practice or discipline.	Has highly advanced, specialised, technical or theoretical knowledge and understanding of some of which is at the forefront of an area of professional practice or discipline.	Has expert understanding at forefront of an area of professional practice or discipline and generates new knowledge in a specialist field.
		<b>Ngā Kaupapa</b>										
What graduates can do <i>Skills</i>	Practice and performance	<b>Pūkengatanga</b> E whakatuā ana i te mātauranga me ngā pūkenga e mau tonu ai ngā mātauranga, ngā whakapono, ngā hiahia matua me ngā tūmanako o te iwi.	Performs simple activities.	Performs a range of familiar activities.	Performs some unfamiliar activities.	Performs moderately complex or unfamiliar activities.	Customises approach for completing moderately complex or unfamiliar activities.	Develops new methods for completing moderately complex or unfamiliar activities.	Applies highly developed skills and specialised methods to perform complex activities.	Applies advanced and specialised methods to perform and adapt complex activities or engage in research.	Applies expert skills and methods to create new activities in an area of professional practice or to conduct critical, systematic research.	Designs and conducts or supervises substantial research that drives innovation at the forefront of an area of professional practice or discipline.
	Critical thinking	<b>Whanaungatanga</b> Ka tūia, ka kumanutia hoki ngā whanaungatanga kia mau tonu ai ngā hononga i runga i te kauruanu, i te pono me te māramatanga, hei painga mō te katoa.	Identifies simple problems or goals.	Identifies simple problems or goals and recommends a solution or plan.	Examines familiar problems or goals and recommends a solution or plan.	Examines unfamiliar problems and recommends a solution or plan.	Applies problem solving techniques to generate solutions for moderately complex problems.	Adapts problem solving techniques to generate solutions for moderately complex problems.	Conducts research into an area of professional practice or body of knowledge and generates solutions for complex problems.	Evaluates emerging complex problems in an area of professional practice or body of knowledge and evaluates solutions using sound judgement and integrity.	Conducts rigorous intellectual analysis of theories, concepts and issues in an area of professional practice or body of knowledge and demonstrates well-developed judgement and integrity to solve complex unpredictable problems.	Investigates a body of knowledge or area of professional practice and demonstrates authoritative judgement through original research that challenges established knowledge and practice.
	Collaboration	<b>Manaakitanga</b> Te whakaatu i te hāpaitanga o te mana mā roto i ngā whānonga me ngā mahi manaaki i te ākonga, i te whānau, i te hapū, i te iwi, i te hapori hoki.	Contributes to group or team activities.	Contributes to group or team activities and acknowledges views and experience of others.	Makes a significant contribution to group or team activities and acknowledges views and experience of others.	Helps create a collaborative culture within a group or team by role modelling and encouraging the contributions of others.	Leads the creation of a collaborative group or team culture.	Leads a group or team on moderately complex projects and motivates others.	Leads or collaborates within a group or team on cross-functional projects and motivates others.	Leads or collaborates with groups, teams, or leaders on complex or cross-functional projects and fosters a culture that values and incorporates diverse perspectives and contributions.	Leads or collaborates with groups, teams, or leaders on complex or cross-functional projects and fosters a culture that values and incorporates diverse perspectives and contributions.	Leads or collaborates with specialist and non-specialist leaders, peers, groups or organisations, taking account of social, cultural and ethical considerations.
	Communication	<b>Te Reo Tangata</b> E ora ana, e momoho ana, e matomato ana hoki te tipu o te kākano o te reo Māori.  <b>Rangatiratanga</b> Ka hua te rangatiratanga mā te whakaitiāna i tā te Māori tūtohi ki te ao i te wā e urupareāna ngā tūmanako me ngā whakahiririranga o te ākonga, o te whānau, o te hapū, o te iwi, o te hapori Māori, o te hapori whānui.	Communicates basic information.	Communicates basic information and shares ideas on familiar topics.	Communicates familiar information and shares ideas on some unfamiliar topics.	Communicates familiar information and shares ideas on a range of unfamiliar topics.	Communicates moderately complex information and shares ideas with a known audience using an appropriate communication medium and method.	Communicates moderately complex information and shares ideas with a range of audiences using customised communication media and methods.	Communicates complex information and shares insights with a range of audiences using optimised communication media and methods.	Communicates complex information and shares insights with specialist and non-specialist audiences using a range of media and methods such as a sustained argument, proposition or professional decision.	Communicates highly complex information and shares insights with specialist and non-specialist audiences using a range of media and methods such as a sustained argument, proposition or professional decision.	Communicates highly complex information and shares insights with specialist and non-specialist audiences through a wide range of media, methods and contexts, such as publication, critical dialogue, specialist and community forums.
Where and how graduates operate <i>Context</i>	Context, autonomy, and responsibility		Highly structured environments.	Highly structured environments.	Structured environments.	Structured environments with some unpredictability.	Dynamic environments.	Dynamic environments with some ambiguity.	Dynamic environments with frequent ambiguity.	Dynamic environments with frequent ambiguity and change.	Dynamic environments with frequent issues and change.	Dynamic environments with frequent, complex issues and unpredictable or uncertain situations.
		<b>Kaitiakitanga</b> Te rokirokitanga, te kaitiakitanga, te hāpaitanga hoki o te ao me ōna taonga hei painga mō te katoa.	Works or studies mostly under supervision, with limited responsibility for own learning and performance.	Works or studies under some supervision, with some responsibility for own learning and performance.	Works or studies mostly autonomously, with responsibility for own learning and performance.	Works or studies autonomously, with responsibility for own learning and performance, and some responsibility for others in workplace contexts.	Responsible for managing activities and projects and for managing others in workplace contexts.	Responsible for leading and managing activities and projects and managing one or more teams in workplace contexts.	Responsible for own professional practice and development.	Responsible for contributing to the development of a profession or field of study.	Some responsibility for leadership within a profession or field of study.	Responsible for leading the ongoing development of a profession or field of study or creating substantial organisational or social change.

DOMAIN	Sub-domains	<p>TE TIROHANGA MĀORI TE ARA KI TE AO MĀRAMA</p>
<p>What graduates know <i>Knowledge</i></p>	Knowledge	<p><b>Te Mātauranga</b> He taonga tuku iho te mātauranga nō tua whakarere, ā, i auaha mai nō nāianeī hei taonga mō te āpōpō.</p>
<p>What graduates can do <i>Skills</i></p>	<p>Practice and performance</p> <p>Critical thinking</p>	<p><b>Ngā Kaupapa</b></p> <p><b>Pūkengatanga</b> E whakahua ana i te mātauranga me ngā pūkenga e mau tonu ai ngā mātauranga, ngā whakapono, ngā hiahia matua me ngā tūmanako o te iwi.</p> <p><b>Whanaungatanga</b> Ka tuia, ka kumanutia hoki ngā whanaungatanga kia mau tonu ai ngā hononga i runga i te kauuanu, i te pono me te māramatanga, hei painga mō te katoa.</p>
<p>Where and how graduates operate <i>Context</i></p>	Context, autonomy, and responsibility	<p><b>Manaakitanga</b> Te whakaatu i te hāpaitanga o te mana mā roto i ngā whanonga me ngā mahi manaaki i te ākonganga, i te whānau, i te hapū, i te iwi, i te hapori hoki.</p> <p><b>Te Reo Tangata</b> E ora ana, e momoho ana, e matomato ana hoki te tipu o te kākano o te reo Māori.</p> <p><b>Rangatiratanga</b> Ka hua te rangatiratanga mā te whakatinana i tā te Māori tītiro ki te ao i te wā e uruparetia ana ngā tūmanako me ngā whakahiritanga o te ākonganga, o te whānau, o te hapū, o te iwi, o te hapori Māori, o te hapori whānui.</p> <p><b>Kaitiakitanga</b> Te rokirokitanga, te kaitiakitanga, te hāpaitanga hoki o te ao me ōna taonga hei painga mō te katoa.</p>

**MŌHIO**

Conscious and competent use of mātauranga Māori skill and knowledge sets at the mōhiotanga level.

**MĀTAU**

Reflective and proficient use of mātauranga Māori skill and knowledge sets at the mātautanga level.

**MĀRAMA**

Advanced understanding and dynamic application of mātauranga Māori skill and knowledge sets at the mārāmanga level.

**LEVEL 1****LEVEL 2****LEVEL 3****LEVEL 4****LEVEL 5****LEVEL 6****LEVEL 7****LEVEL 8****LEVEL 9****LEVEL 10**

Has knowledge of some facts and information relevant to a field of study.

Has knowledge of some facts and information and understands some concepts relevant to a field of work or study.

Has knowledge of some of the key facts and information in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts.

Has knowledge of the key facts and information in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts and key principles.

Has in-depth technical or theoretical knowledge in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts and key principles.

Has specialised technical or theoretical knowledge in a field of work or study and understands the underpinning concepts and key principles.

Has a broad knowledge of a range of technical or theoretical concepts and systematic understanding of an area of professional practice or body of knowledge.

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Has highly advanced, specialised, technical or theoretical knowledge and understanding, some of which is at the forefront of an area of professional practice or discipline.

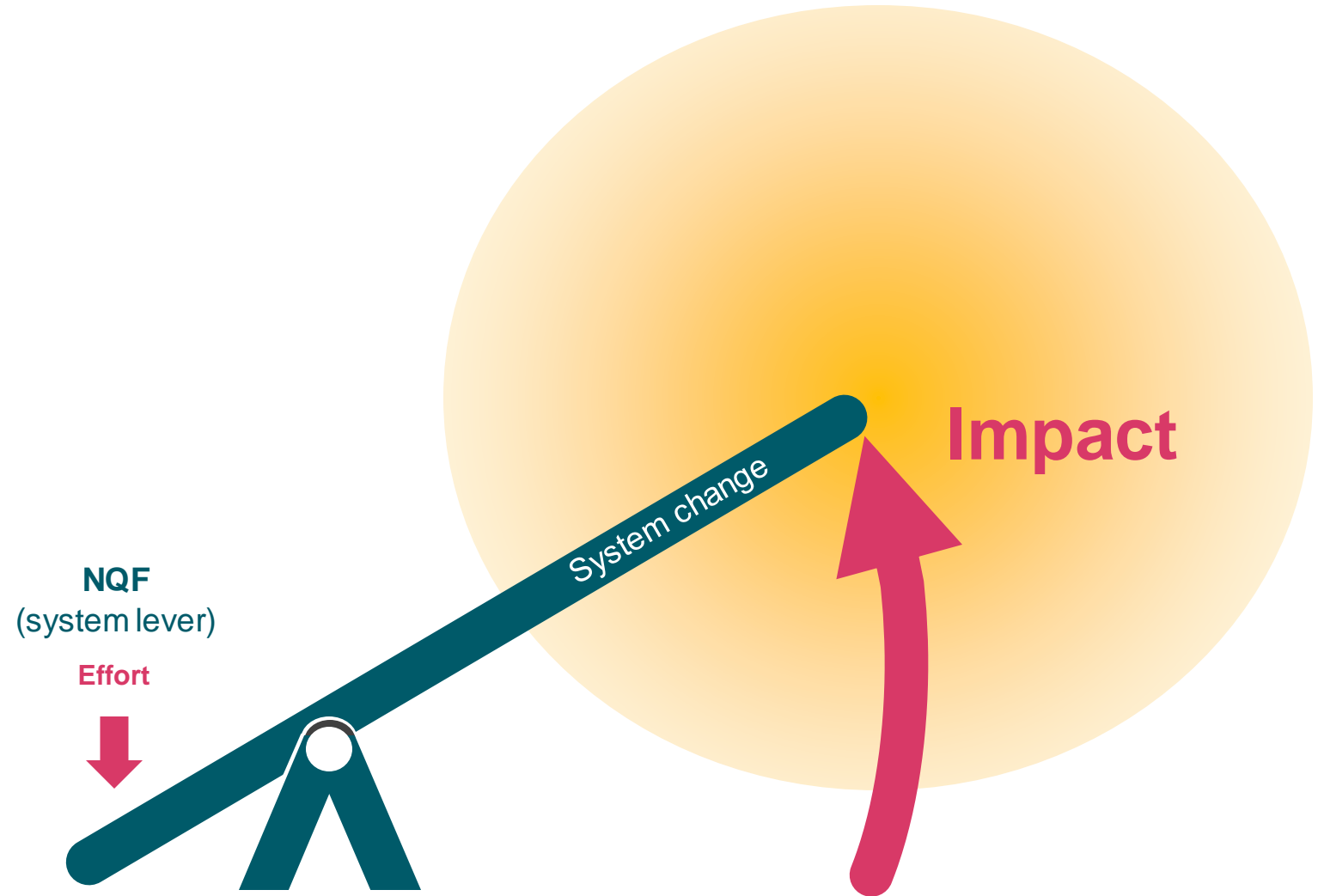
Has expert understanding at forefront of an area of professional practice or discipline and generates new knowledge in a specialist field.



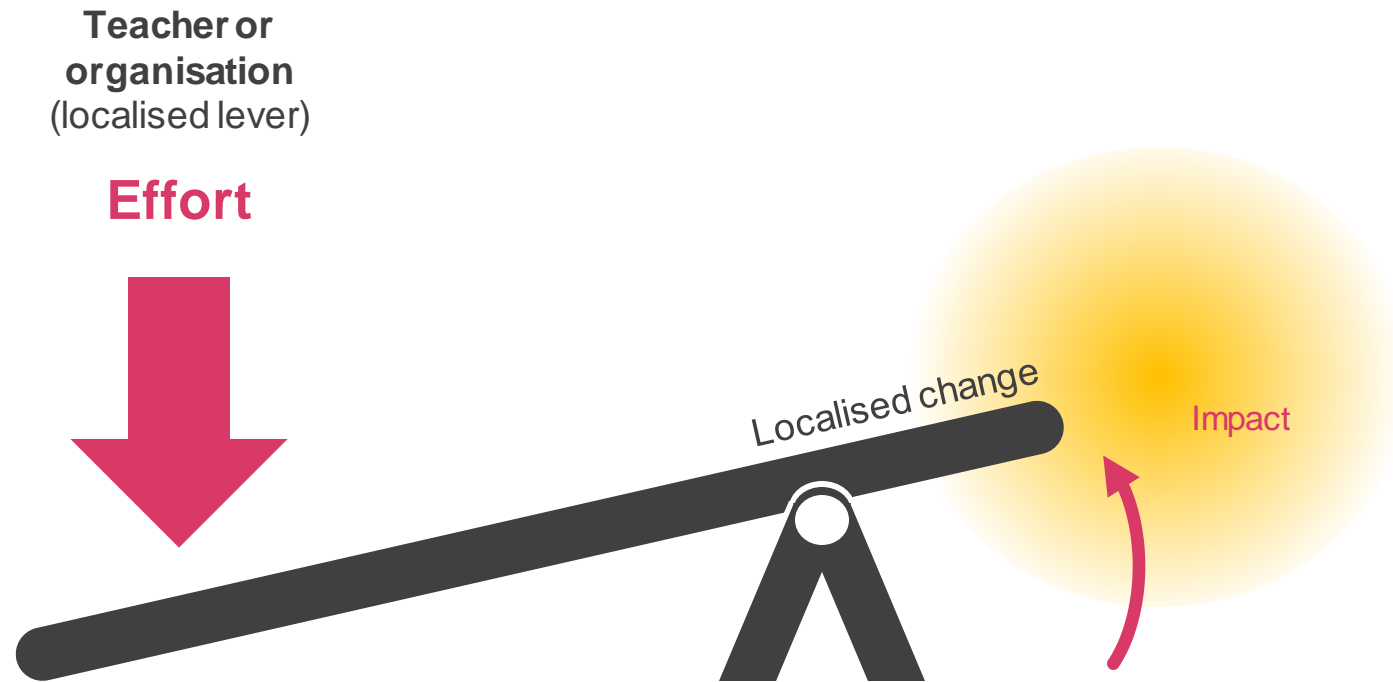
***Ngā kaupapa | Principles embedded within qualifications and credentials***

<b>Pūkengatanga: Skills</b> Duty to learning and development	Skills, knowledge and abilities are valued.
<b>Rangatiratanga: Empowerment</b> Duty to leading	Leadership of self and others is valued.
<b>Whanaungatanga: Belonging</b> Duty to relating	Relationships are valued.
<b>Manaakitanga: Collaboration</b> Duty to supporting and serving	Support and service to others is valued.
<b>Kaitiakitanga: Stewardship</b> Duty of responsibility	Care of the natural world through learning is valued.
<b>Reo Tangata: Expression</b> Duty to Māori and other languages	Diversity of language and culture within learning is valued.

# 'Theory' of Change (1)



# 'Theory' of Change (2)

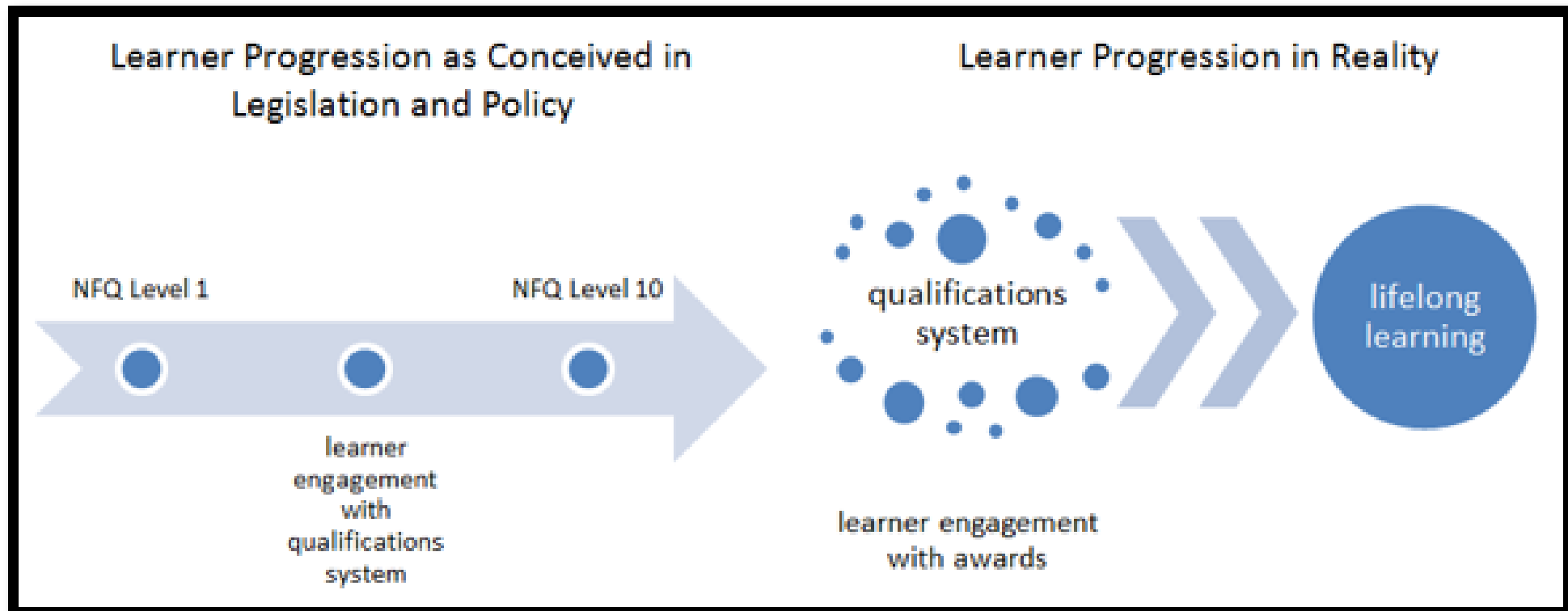






# The NQF Continuum

Communications		Transformational
starts from present system	↔	starts from future system
incremental change	↔	radical transformation
tool for change	↔	driver for change
stakeholder-led	↔	led by central agency
stakeholder include providers	↔	stakeholder exclude providers
voluntary	↔	statutory
'loose'	↔	'tight'



*Figure x Summary of theoretical learner progression versus the reality of learner progression*

**Kia ora**  
**Thank you**

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[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)

**NZQA**

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority



# ATP & RPL as Fundamental Infrastructure of the Framework

Focused Presentations



Dearbhú Cáilíochta  
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and  
Qualifications Ireland



## From Counting to Cultivating Successful Participation

A Review of the Landscape of  
Practice Supporting Access  
Transfer and Progression in  
Irish Education and Training

# QQI INSIGHTS.



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Quality and  
Qualifications Ireland

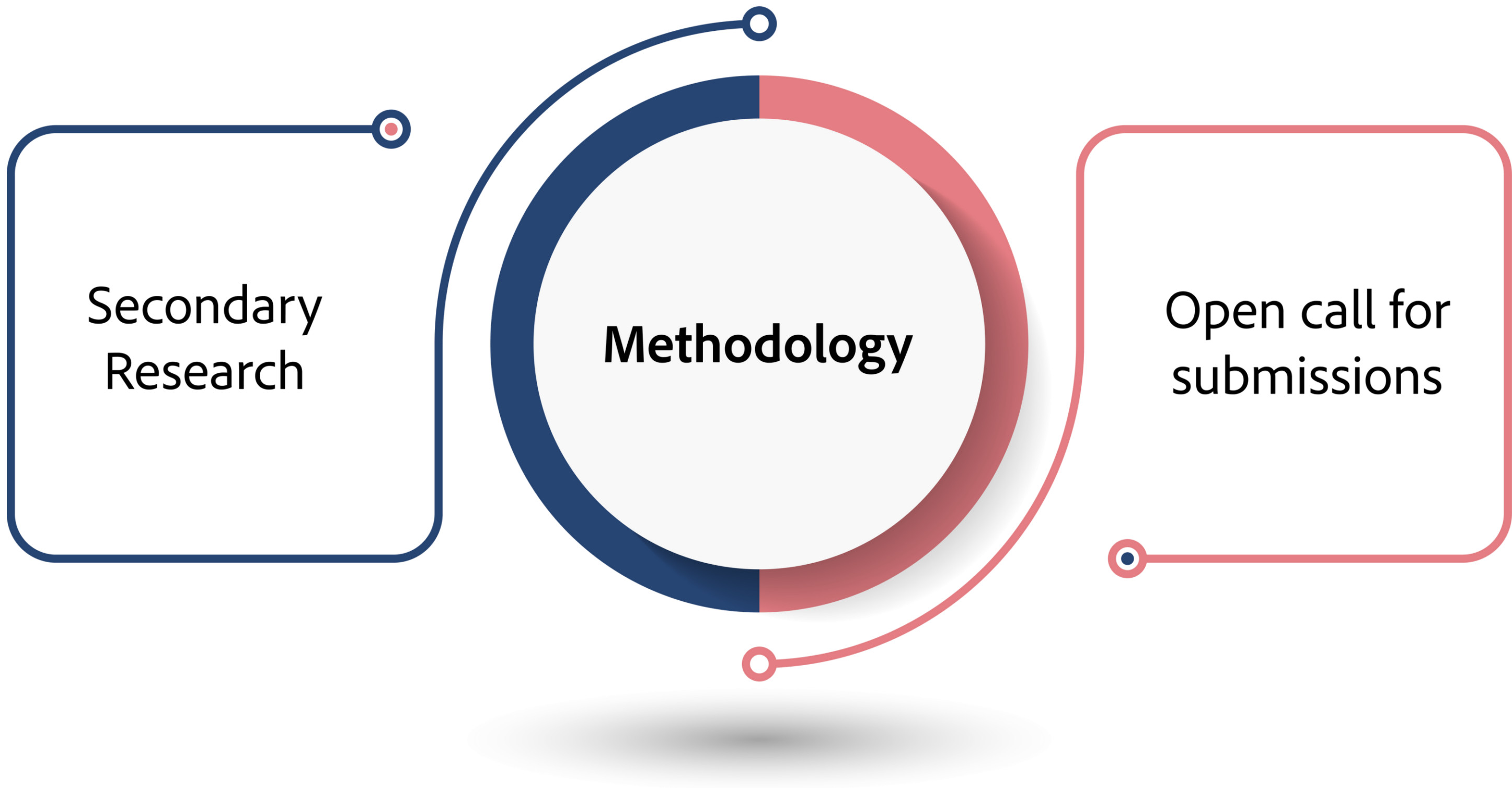
# From Counting to Cultivating Successful Participation

A Review of the Landscape of Practice  
Supporting Access, Transfer and Progression in  
Irish Education and Training

Dr Cathy Peck & Dr Deirdre Stritch

Project Team: Mr David Treacy, Dr Annie Doona  
& Mr Matthew Hurley

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Secondary  
Research

**Methodology**

Open call for  
submissions

# REPORT STRUCTURE



## CHAPTER 1

Legal and Policy Framework



## CHAPTER 2

Learner Pathways



## CHAPTER 3

ATP in Practice



## CHAPTER 4

Learner Experience

## STRENGTHS

ATP policies and procedures

Wide range of initiatives, projects and supports

Programme ATP arrangements

Expanding ATP pathways

## GAPS & VULNERABILITIES

Vision for successful participation

Complexity and opacity

Policy and approach to RPL

## FINDINGS

Strengths, Gaps & Vulnerabilities

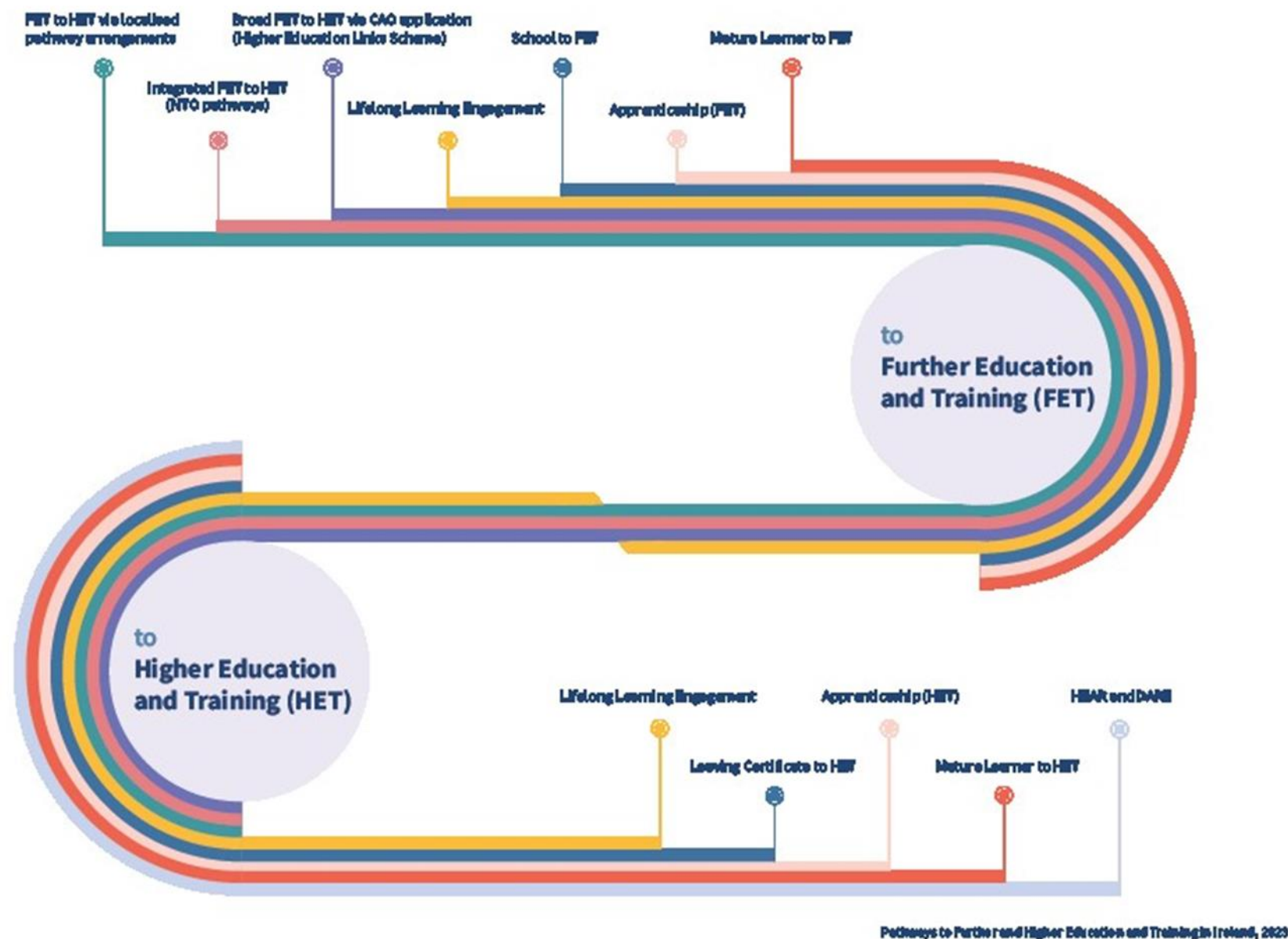


Nine recommendations encompassing the embedding of ATP across polices and QA guidelines; parity of treatment of awards for progression to HET; two-credit system, RPL; definitions of full and part-time, routine monitoring of ATP, data collation and maintenance of ATP on national qualifications agenda.

## **RECOMMENDATION 1**

Restate the original vision or articulate an updated vision and set of objectives for ATP that emphasises enabling successful participation as a core principle.

# VISION FOR ATP



*The original vision and objectives for ATP were published ... in 2003. Much has changed in the education and training landscape since that time... Timely for QQI to articulate a new, ambitious vision and related objectives for ATP, inclusive of measures to ensure successful participation by learners. This vision, and actions derived from it, could become an important element in addressing the current challenges, vulnerabilities and barriers hindering learner engagement with the qualifications system, and the necessary permeability of that system (p. 9).*

# THANK YOU



**Dr Deirdre Stritch**

Deirdre@threesixtyinsights.ie



**Dr Cathy Peck**

Cathy@threesixtyinsights.ie

**QQI NFAQ 20th Anniversary Conference**

# **Stepping Stones and Stable Roots: The Versatile and Enduring Strength of Community Education**

**Conor Thompson  
Policy Officer at AONTAS**



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

**SOLAS**  
learning works



The Voice of  
Adult Learning



# About AONTAS

- **National Adult Learning Organisation**
- **Research & Advocacy** with a Learner Voice focus
- **Our mission** is to advocate for empowering adult learning that drives social equality, justice, and collective action across the island of Ireland.



# AONTAS' Lifelong Learning Research

A focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups

&

# ATP & RPL as Fundamental Infrastructure of the Framework

**SOLAS**  
learning works

**L&W** LEARNING AND  
WORK INSTITUTE

**AONTAS**  
The Voice of  
Adult Learning

# Lifelong Learning Research

**AONTAS' Lifelong Learning Research Project included a total of 1,101 learners**

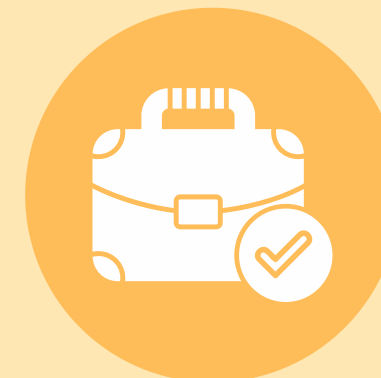
- 1,042 adults aged between 17-64 years participated in a lifelong learning survey in 2022 conducted by the Learning and Works Institute

## Survey Participant Characteristics

**62%**  
Aged 35-64  
years



**55%**  
Lived in Leinster



**75%**  
Employed



**51%**  
Third-level qualification

# Survey Findings

## Key Findings

- **65% of survey respondents participated in learning within the last three years**
- Several factors were found to positively influence lifelong learning participation, including **being employed, living in Dublin, higher educational attainment, higher age when exiting formal education, higher occupation class and younger age**
- University graduates were significantly more likely to have participated in lifelong learning when compared to the sample average, **reaffirming the Matthew Effect in education**

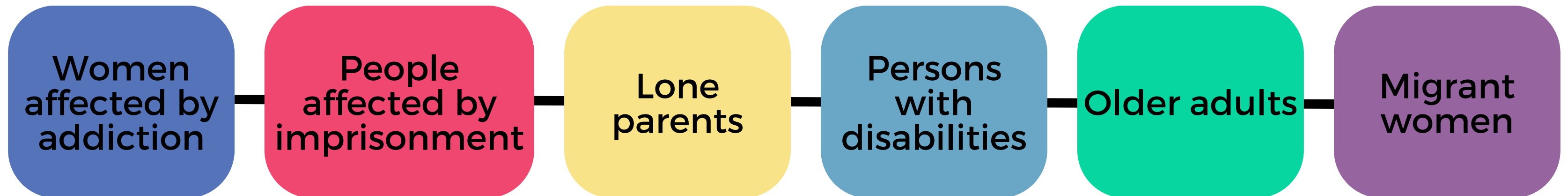




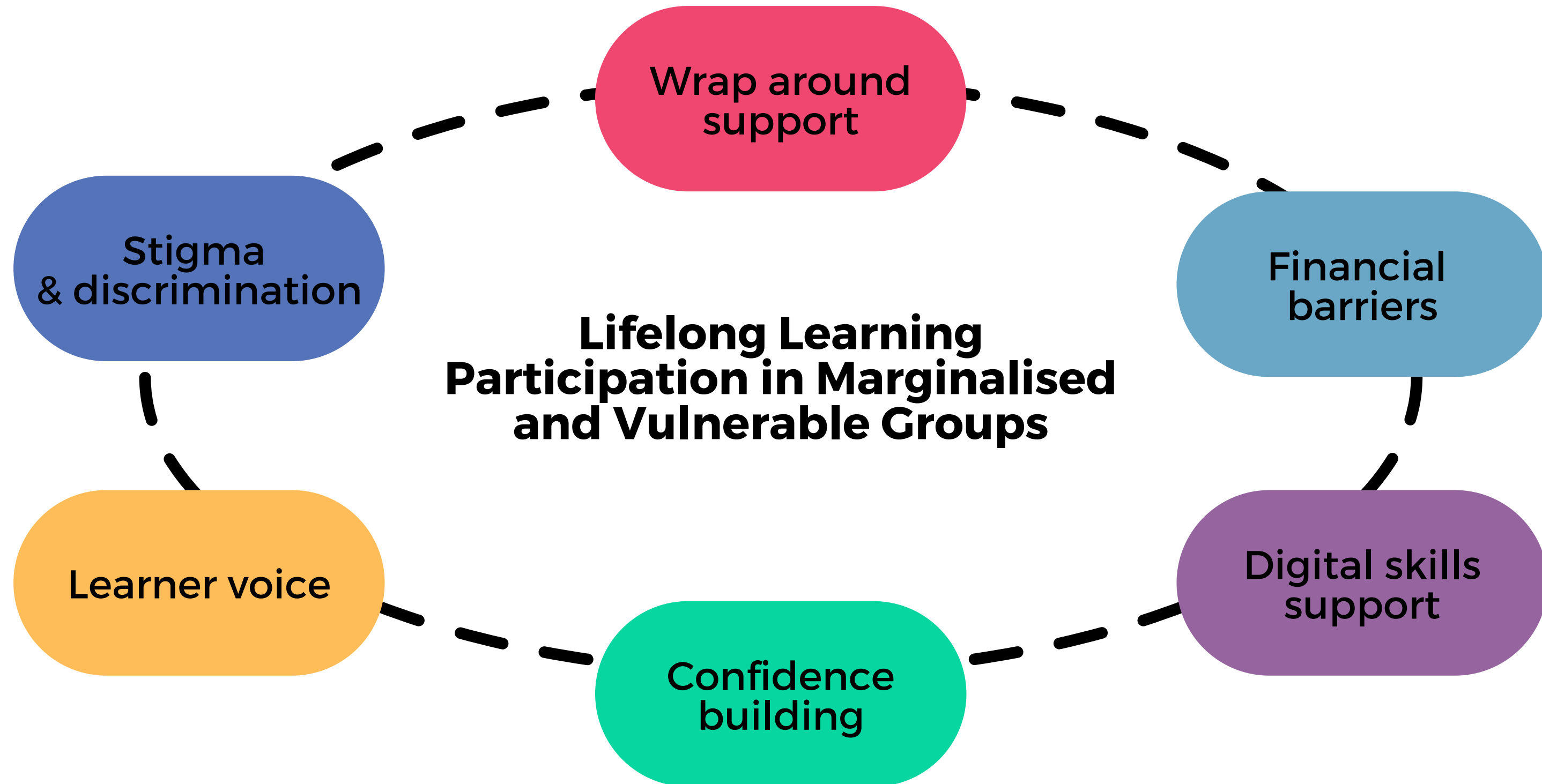


# Lifelong Learning Focus Groups

- 8 consultation sessions were conducted with community education providers and other key stakeholders to inform this research project
- **59 adults** from marginalised and vulnerable groups participated in focus groups



# Key Findings



# Wrap-around Support Childcare

“[The course] was **evening time**, initially I was hoping to get somebody to come here and mind her. I tried everyone I knew. It just didn't work out for me. That was my main thing was the childcare.”

- *Lone Parent Focus  
Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning  
Participation in Ireland, 2023)

"And I've thought many times about doing courses but do you know what, like most of the free stuff or the cheaper courses, they are usually **evening courses**. They are very **very bad timing**. When you have to put your kid to bed, when you have to have dinner... **It can be hard to find someone to mind him at that time**. A lot of times that **has stopped me to do something.**"

- *Lone Parent Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)

# Wrap-around Support

## Financial Supports and Grants

“I was concerned that if I went on a course, any grant that I would get would affect my social and my rent.”

- *Affected by Addiction Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)

“For me the biggest challenge is financing tech, and the financing books or course materials. It's great if the fees are paid, but there's all the other expenses.”

- *Lone Parent Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)

# Wrap-around Support

## Access to trauma-informed therapeutic support

“Meeting people outside of the community and getting education, joining groups, doing short courses... because everybody in Direct Provision is traumatised... you need something else outside of that space.”

*- Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)

# Learner Voice

**“Maybe they kind of suppose courses are still geared for young people, or professionals to kind of upgrade.”**  
*- Lone Parent Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)



# Co-design of Courses

- The findings identified an absence of choice in course options and scheduling, over-subscription of courses and a lack of certified or accredited options

**“Ask us for our ideas in what we might like to do rather than a page up on a wall and none of us are interested in half of it or the teachers are not available”**

*- Impacted by Imprisonment  
Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)



# Co-design of Courses

- Lack of flexibility in course scheduling was a key barrier for focus group participants with additional childcare responsibilities
- Unavailability of hybrid learning options was noted by most groups, specifically participants with disabilities

**“I would have liked hybrid learning  
... but that wasn't an option.”**

*- Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning  
Participation in Ireland, 2023)





# Stigma and Discrimination

“[The tutor] was teaching them the way you would teach primary school children ... I think it was more ageism.”

- *Older Adult Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)

"I did think about courses, but I thought I was too stupid to do it. Because I couldn't write, I couldn't spell and I was deaf. Two hearing aids. So I thought I was too stupid to get a course....

**I would love to be educated."**

- *Older Adult Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)

# Recognition of Prior Learning

- Focus group discussions with migrant women highlighted how their employment and education experience in their countries of origin have gone unrecognised in Ireland

“It wasn't just that the degree wasn't recognised, your work experience was not even recognised. So, it's as if you're starting from rock bottom, like all over, and then, you kind of don't even have the chance to even try because you feel like there is no opportunity to say that you can use your existing skill, or your knowledge.”

*- Migrant Women Focus Group Participant*

(Source: AONTAS Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland, 2023)

# Conclusion

- Ensuring equal opportunities for lifelong learning participation has the potential to sustain social cohesion, promote social integration and support a more equal and equitable society
- This report identified **multi-layered and interrelated barriers** to lifelong learning among marginalised and vulnerable groups
- There is a growing need to embed **tailored supports** to better support lifelong learning participation in Ireland



# Thank you!

**Conor Thompson**  
**Policy Officer at AONTAS**





**MTU**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan  
Munster Technological University

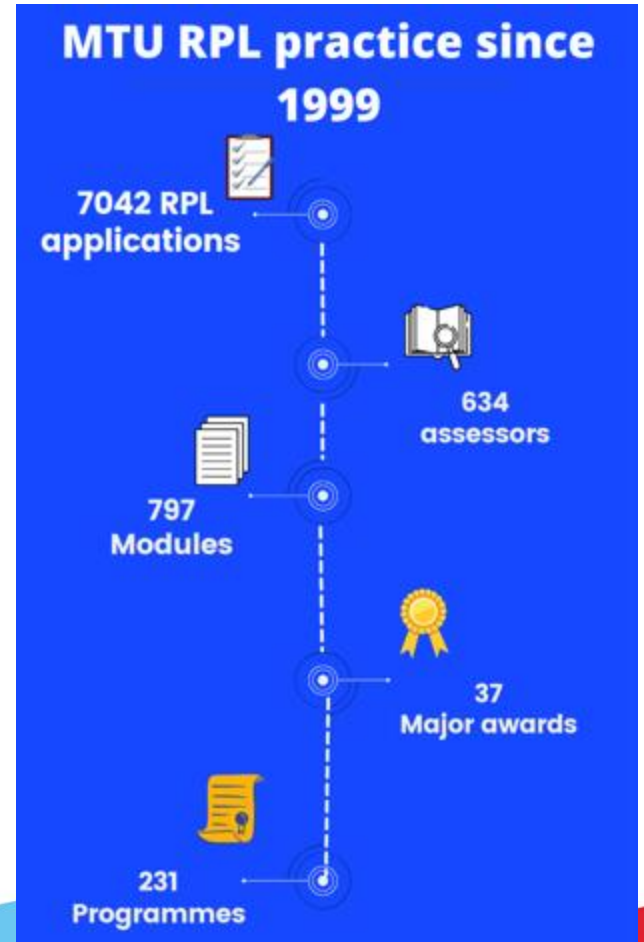
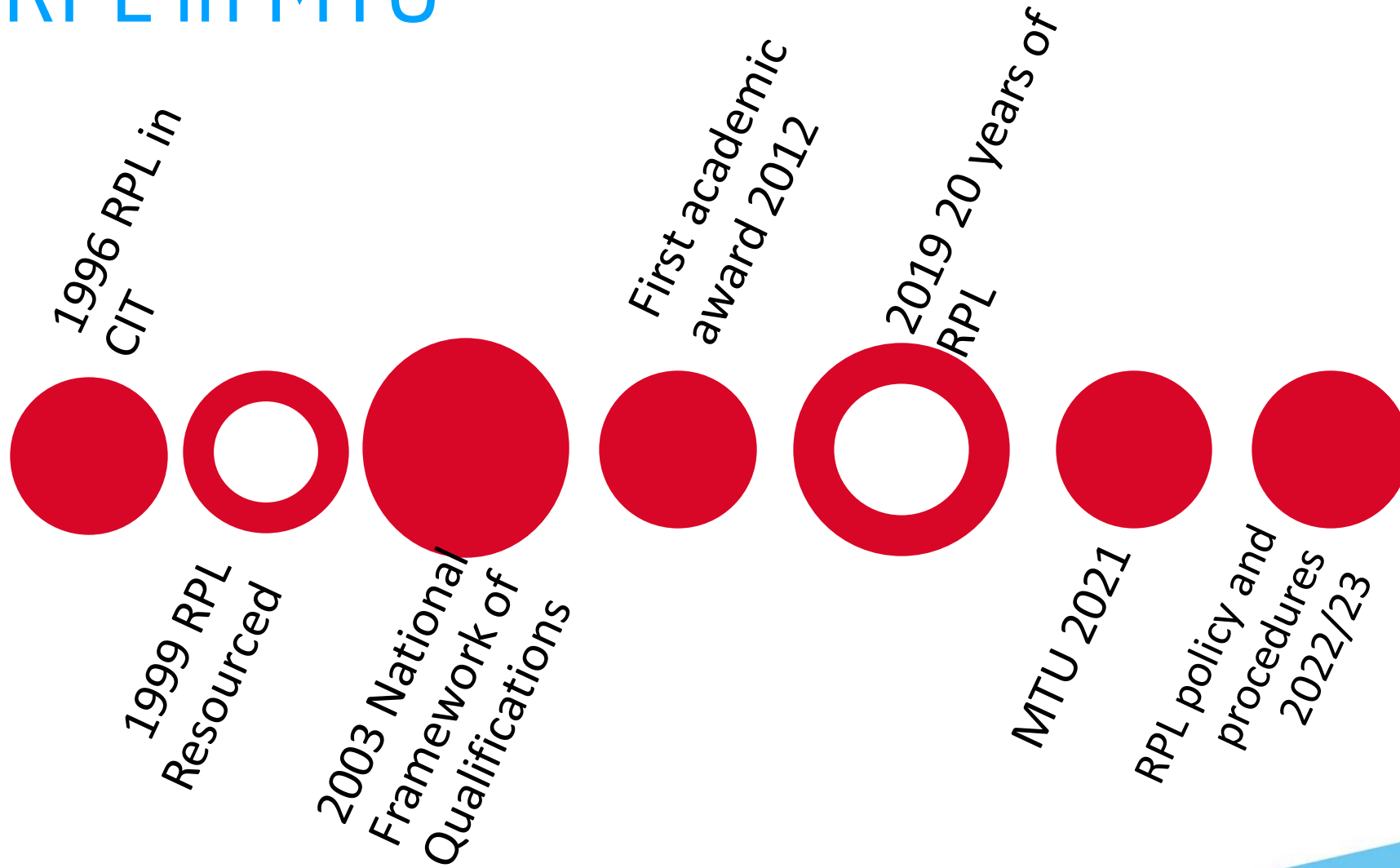
# The National Framework of Qualifications; the foundation for institutional RPL practice

Deirdre Goggin

17<sup>th</sup> November, 2023

[www.mtu.ie](http://www.mtu.ie)

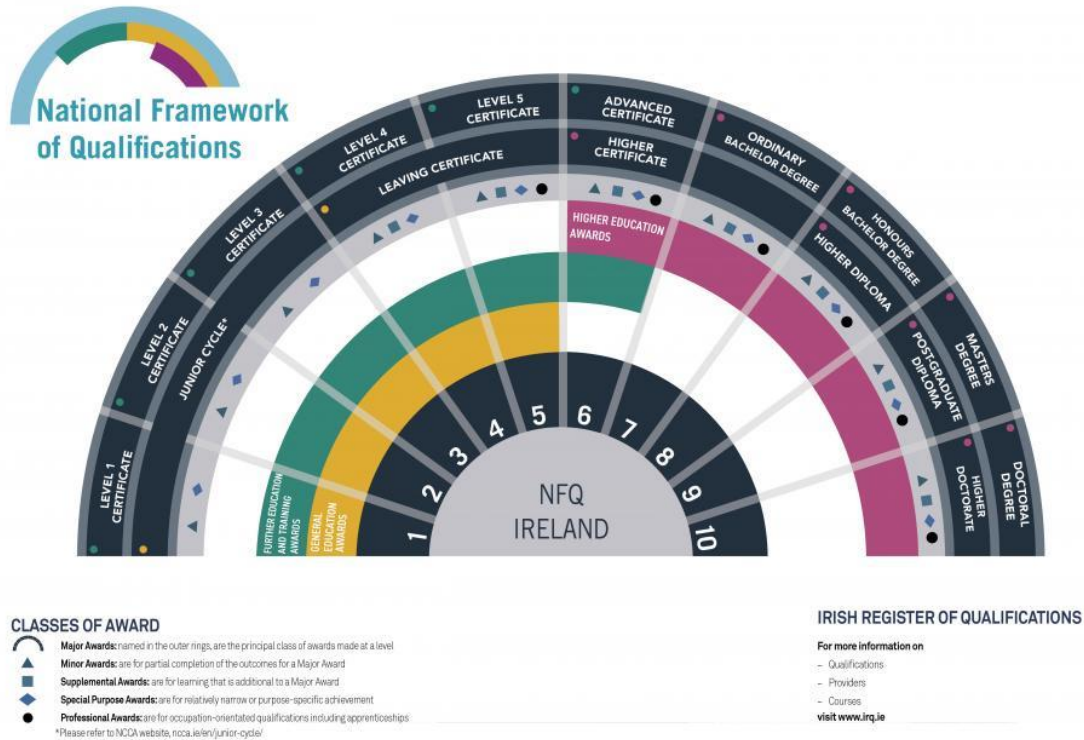
# RPL in MTU



# How RPL can be used

- Access into programmes at a non-standard or advanced entry
- Exemptions within programmes
- Full academic awards
  
- Underpinned by
  - Standards – NFQ , programme, module, generic, discipline specific
  - Quality Assurance
  - Responsiveness and flexibility

# RPL and the National Framework of Qualifications



- Enabler for individual, enterprise and institution collaborations
- Foundation for RPL
- Special purpose awards, micro-credentials - ATP
- Makes the learning acquired within home, work, day to day visible
- Pathways – FE to HE and vice versa, professional body, returning to education, building on previous learning



All of these RPL activities are underpinned by the existence of the National Framework of Qualifications

Staff – curriculum development, mentoring, assessment, new programme development, micro-credentials

Institution- maintaining the standard, providing structure and reassurance, establish the policies and procedures, consistency in practice

Individual-informs on where their learning sits, the opportunities for further and future development

Enterprise – enables meaningful conversations, responsive to changing workplace environment, regulatory requirements, business needs, global marketplace



Staff Training & Development



Learning Clinics



Mentoring



Student & Staff Support



Customised Course Development

# Exemplars

- Industry cohort with non-formal qualification and workplace learning.
- Review of learning acquired to date to determine the most appropriate level on the framework.
- A combination of generic and discipline specific standards were identified and used to structure formal mapping.
- Mapped to standards on the framework to enable assessment which determined equivalence to 120 ECTS credits for entry to a honours degree programme



# MTU

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan  
Munster Technological University

# Thank You!

For more information, please email [Deirdre.goggin@mtu.ie](mailto:Deirdre.goggin@mtu.ie)

Deirdre Goggin

17<sup>th</sup> November 2023

[www.mtu.ie](http://www.mtu.ie)



**kcetb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach  
*Kilkenny and Carlow  
Education and Training Board*

# “How the NFQ supports Recognition of Prior Learning”

Sarah Barron, Adult Education Officer

# Overview of Input

**RPL Context**

**RPL in KCETB**

**Case study of RPL in action**

**Benefits of NFQ for RPL**



# RPL Context

*“Serving around 200,000 unique learners each year, Further Education and Training (FET) provides a continuum of learning opportunities from Level 1 to Level 6 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) focused on both core and specific skills development, accompanied by a range of learner supports to facilitate the active inclusion of all citizens”*

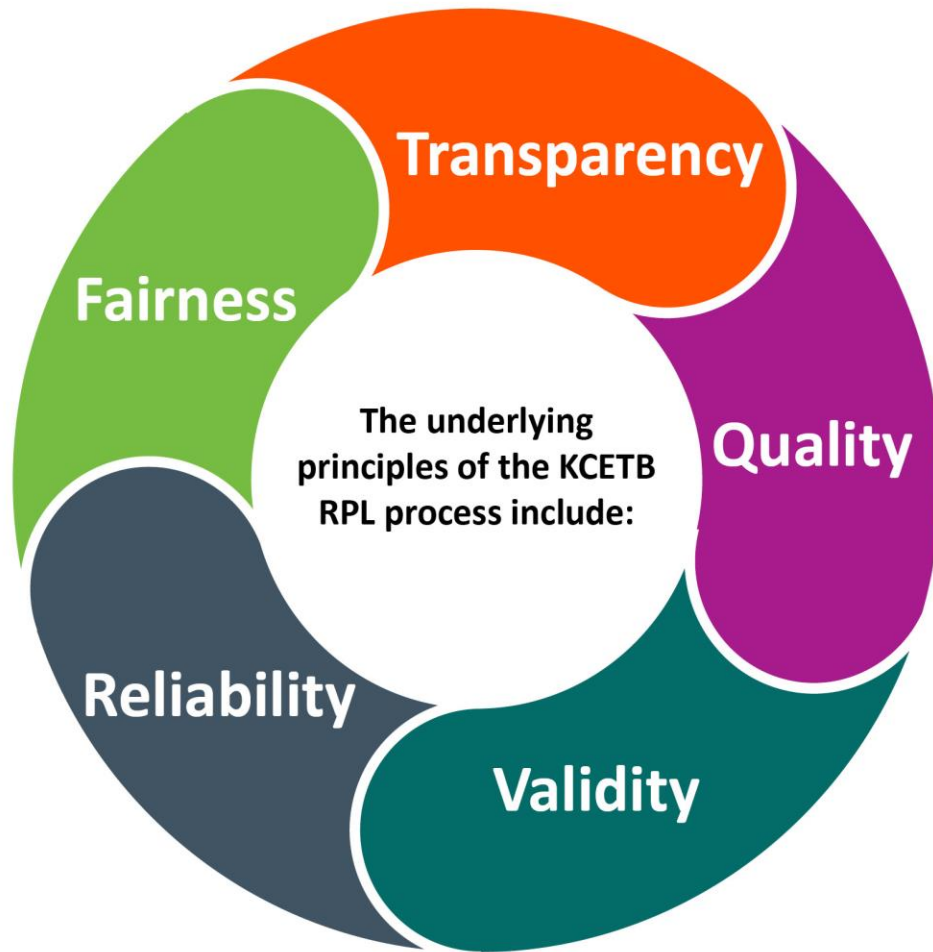
(SOLAS; FET Strategy 2020-2024 p. 21).

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) forms part of this **continuum of learning** opportunities by facilitating lifelong learning pathways for learners.

Cedefop (2023: p.33) states “when **validation** is used for the formal award of a qualification or certificate, mainly the third and fourth phase (of RPL), the role of the **reference point** (the qualification standard, the curricula or programme description) is direct and of crucial importance”.

The presence of the National Framework of Qualification (**NFQ**) is of paramount importance to the **RPL process** as it underpins the integrity of the award thus engendering **confidence** in the process for the applicant.


# RPL in KCETB



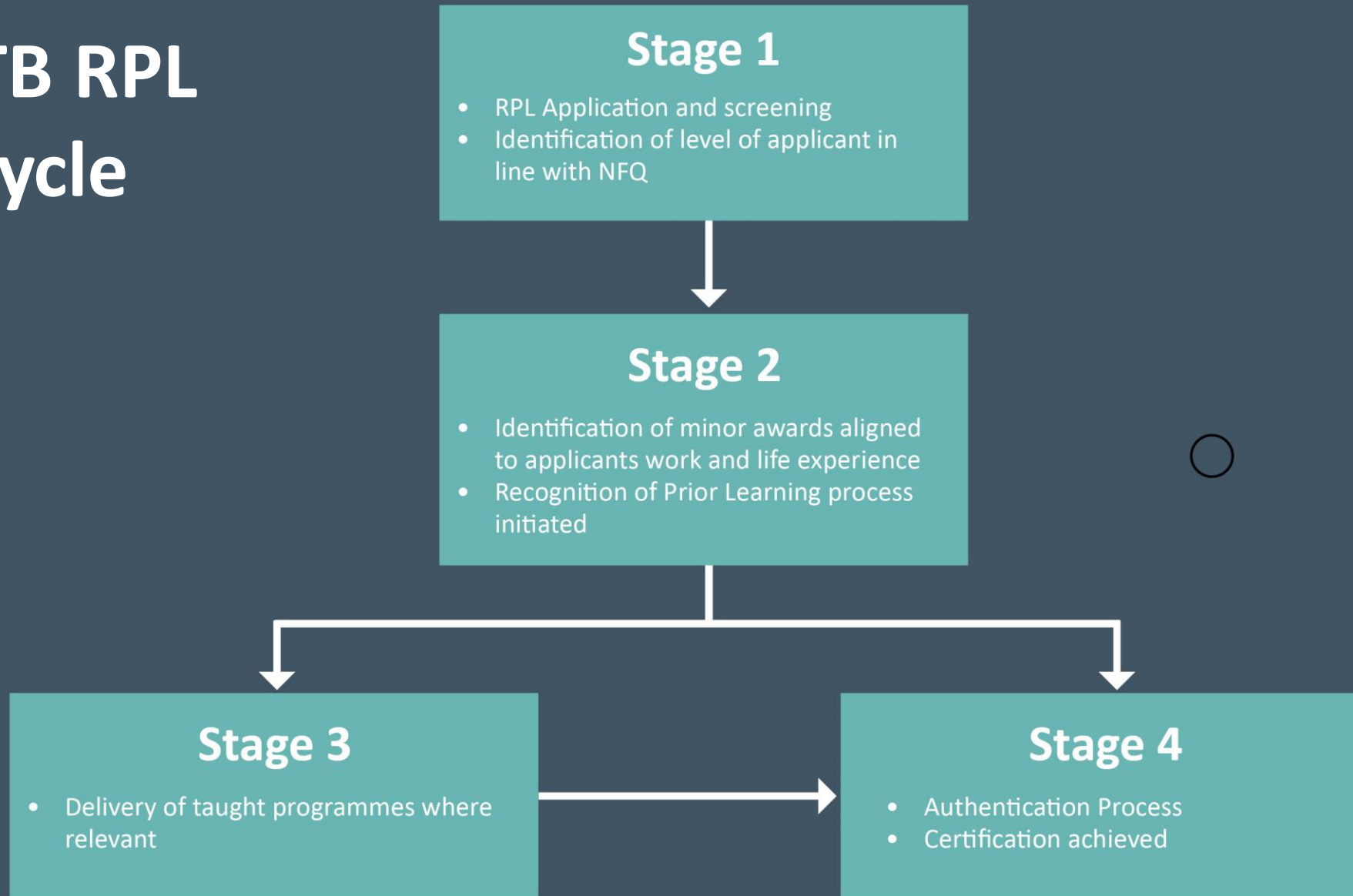
- **Quality** - all RPL applications are **part of the overall KCETB Quality Assurance process**.
- **Validity** - all RPL applications are judged to have achieved the relevant **standard** of knowledge, skill or competence required to achieve an award **in line with the NMQ**.
- **Reliability** - all RPL applications are assessed to ensure they are accurate, valid, and **consistent with national standards**.
- **Fairness** - all RPL applications are assessed in a **fair and consistent manner**.
- **Transparency** - all RPL applications are **processed** in a transparent manner. In turn all assessment is conducted **in line** with the standards of the **relevant level on the NMQ**.



# RPL in KCETB

- RPL Professional development 2017 MTU (Formally Cork IOT).
  - KCETB was part of the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) TOBAR pilot run with the Defence Forces in 2018.
  - Pilot enabled KCETB to create robust Quality Assurance (QA) procedures for RPEL which supported the ongoing development of the KCETB RPL offering.
- 

# KCETB RPL Lifecycle



# Case study of RPL in Action



## Private Conor Shovlin:

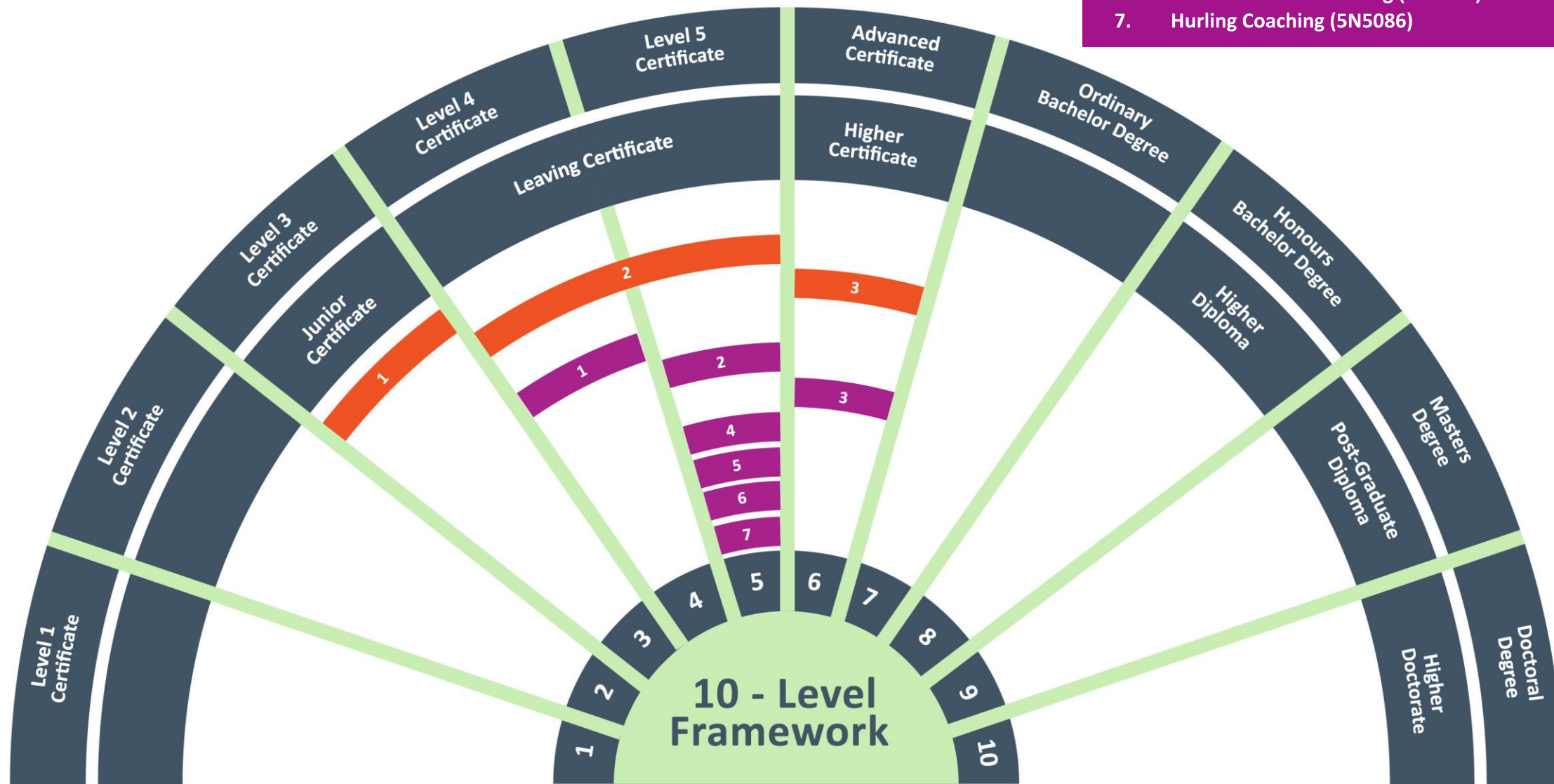
- 10 years as a 3-star Private in the Defence Forces
- Previous education: Leaving Certificate, Defence Forces Training, Level 3 Fitness qualification and NGB Surfing Instruction
- Private fitness business - 3 years
- Coaching and player experience in Football and Hurling

## Previous Experience

1. Health and Fitness (3N0531)
2. Leaving Certificate
3. Defence Forces Training, NGB Surfing Instruction

## Certification Achieved during RPL Process

1. Information Technology (4N1125)
2. Communications (5N0690)
3. Surfing Instruction (6N5350)
4. Work Experience (5N1356)
5. Safety and Health at Work (5N1794)
6. Gaelic Football Coaching (5N5085)
7. Hurling Coaching (5N5086)



# Benefit of NFQ to applicant

**Visibility** for the applicant in terms of continuum of learning opportunities

**Currency** of award transferable and stackable- RPL, RPCL and ability to align to NGB qualifications.

**Assurance** of the value of the award for the applicant

Applicants can **see** where their Knowledge, Skills and Competencies sit on the NFQ

# Thank You

**Sarah Barron**

sarah.barron@kilkennycarlowetb.ie or  
QAinfo@kilkennycarlowetb.ie

## References cited in this presentation

Cedefop (2023). *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning*.

Luxembourg: Publications Office Cedefop reference series; No 124. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/389827> page 13

SOLAS (2020). *Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020-24*. Dublin: SOLAS.



**kcetb**

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*Kilkenny and Carlow*  
Education and Training Board



# Math's for STEM (M<sub>4</sub>STEM) A QQI Pathway

Shirley Ryan

Mature Student Officer  
University of Limerick



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LIMERICK**  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

# M4STEM:

## What is it?

M4STEM is a one-year, part-time programme offered by the University of Limerick in collaboration with the Further Education and Training Division of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. It is designed for learners who wish to improve their competency and knowledge in mathematics particularly as it relates to work or study in the Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

The course is aimed primarily at mature-age learners who wish to improve their mathematical competency. The Maths for STEM Certificate is recognised by UL as equivalent to Higher Level Leaving Certificate Mathematics for the purposes of meeting the minimum entry maths requirement, for mature applicants, to certain degree programmes. It is also a specified component award within a number of QQI major awards which are recognised by UL for entry to some Teacher Education and Science and Engineering degree courses.



# M4STEM:

## Why have it?

Equity of access to higher education is a priority for the HEA that is reflected in the HEA's founding legislation and in developments such as the Higher Education System Performance Framework and successive HEA strategic plans (NAP 2022-28)\*

Ireland's Expert Group on Future Skills Needs has identified a number of occupations that are in high demand, representing emerging skills and/or difficult-to-fill roles, and many of these are in STEM areas. Examples of such occupations include data analysts/scientists, quality control specialists, and process engineers. Undertaking study in any of the STEM disciplines, therefore, can lead to job opportunities in a wide range of areas, as employment in STEM-related sectors is expected to continue to rise for a number of years\*\*

\*\*[https://www.egfsn.ie/all-publications/2022/egfsn-annual-activity-statement-2021\\_.pdf](https://www.egfsn.ie/all-publications/2022/egfsn-annual-activity-statement-2021_.pdf)

\*<https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2022/12/National-Access-Plan-2022-2028-FINAL.pdf>

# M4STEM:

## Students Journey

From 2019-2022, there have been 49 students who have completed the Maths for STEM programme jointly run by LCETB and the University of Limerick. Of those, 29 students are now enrolled full-time at UL in the following programmes

- Science w/ education
- Maths w/ education
- Business
- Physics
- Maths and Accounting
- Industrial Biochemistry
- Engineering
- Nursing

A 2017 study by the BLS reported that 93 out of 100 STEM occupations had wages above the national average, with petroleum engineers, architectural engineers, computer engineers, and physicists on top of the list as the highest wage earners \*

\*Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021), Occupational Outlook Handbook, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

# M4STEM:



## Student Feedback

- Would now feel confident doing a technical degree programme where previously I didn't feel like I would be capable.
- Increased confidence when helping their children with homework
- M4STEM has changed their thoughts about maths after poor experiences when in primary and secondary school



# M4STEM:

## Where to next

Equity of access to higher education is a fundamental principle of Irish education policy and we need to target and support students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, students with disabilities and students from the Irish Traveller community ( Simon Harris Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science of Ireland NAP)\*

While students under the age of 22 can apply for the M4STEM programme traditionally it has not been encouraged, maybe this needs to be reviewed.

\*<https://hea.ie/policy/access-policy/national-access-plan-2022-2028/>

**Thank you**



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[ul.ie](http://ul.ie)

# Building Trust in Qualifications Systems

Lightning Talks



HIBERNIA  
COLLEGE

# Building Trust Through an Academic Integrity Champions Network

Elva Casey,  
Registrar

Robin Flynn,  
Quality, Enhancement &  
Registrations Manager

# Academic Integrity and Trust



**HIBERNIA  
COLLEGE**

Culture of Integrity



Engaged Learners



Peer-Advocates for Best  
Practice





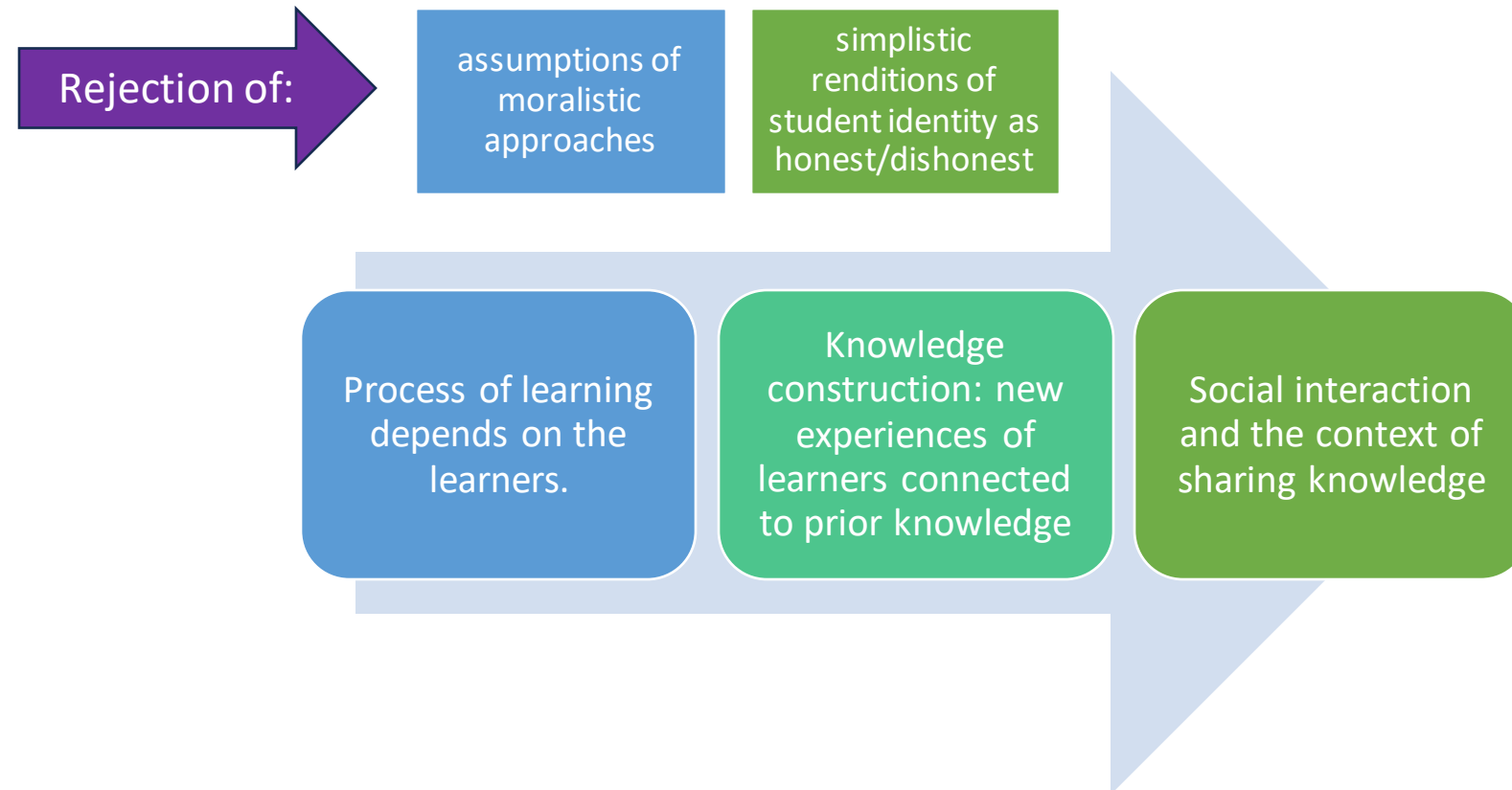
# AICN Conceptual Framework



**HIBERNIA  
COLLEGE**

Kaposi and Dell (2012):

Transitional nature of the HEI sector as focus moves away from penalising academic misconduct



# A Brief Overview of the AICN



HIBERNIA  
COLLEGE

## Rationale:

The network intends to foster and promote a culture of integrity across staff, faculty and the student body while facilitating ongoing student engagement with the establishment of good practices and co-creation of improved pathways to sustainable

## Purpose:

Foster and promote a culture of Academic Integrity at College level and facilitate sharing of resources, learning and good practice at programme level.



Provide one-to-one support for students found to have engaged in academic misconduct and co-plan a pathway to better and sustainable academic practices.



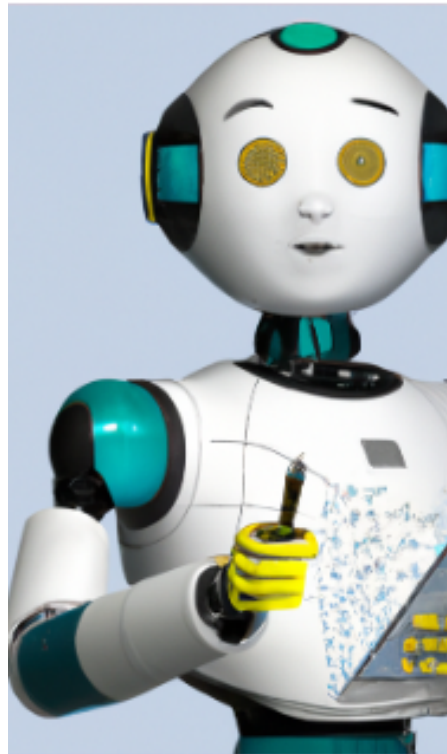
Work with Peer Champions to co-create supports and keep discussions open



# The Role of the Champion



HIBERNIA  
COLLEGE



Individual  
Tutor  
Sessions

Collaborative  
Planning

Identify  
reasons for  
misconduct  
and  
avoidance  
going forward

Courageous  
Conversations

Peer  
Mentors?

Reporting  
back to  
Programme

## PRINCIPLE OF SUPPORT

Mitigate against repeat offences by planning specific supports for students who are found to have engaged in academic misconduct.

LEARNING TOGETHER IN A SAFE SPACE

# The Champions



HIBERNIA  
COLLEGE

- The role of the Academic Integrity Champion is embedded in shared staff student resources.
  - Promoting visibility
  - Removing communication barriers
  - Encouraging student engagement

## Academic Integrity Champions

The network fosters and promotes a culture of integrity across staff, faculty and the student body, while facilitating ongoing student engagement with the establishment of good practices and co-creation of improved pathways to sustainable practices. Each programme has a Champion who will work with students to support best practices. Students can express interest directly with the Champions in becoming a Peer Champion.

All students and staff should take the time to familiarise themselves with the [Academic Integrity and Good Practice Policy](#) which has been updated following a student consultation and review process.

Other invaluable sources of guidance are the [NAIN Academic Integrity Guidelines](#) and [Lexicon](#) and the [Generative Guidelines for Educators](#).

Guidelines for Students considering the risks and potentials of Generative AI can be found [here](#).

Guidelines for Staff considering the risks and potentials of Generative AI can be found [here](#).





**HIBERNIA  
COLLEGE**

Thank you

Questions/Comments/Suggestions



# Institutional culture change for **durable frameworks,** in turbulent times.

Greg O'Brien

# Unstable times for learners

---



# We too are challenged

---





**We have built  
confidence in  
our ability to  
defend our  
assessments**



# The pace and scale of change.



# GenAI: challenges us to change

---

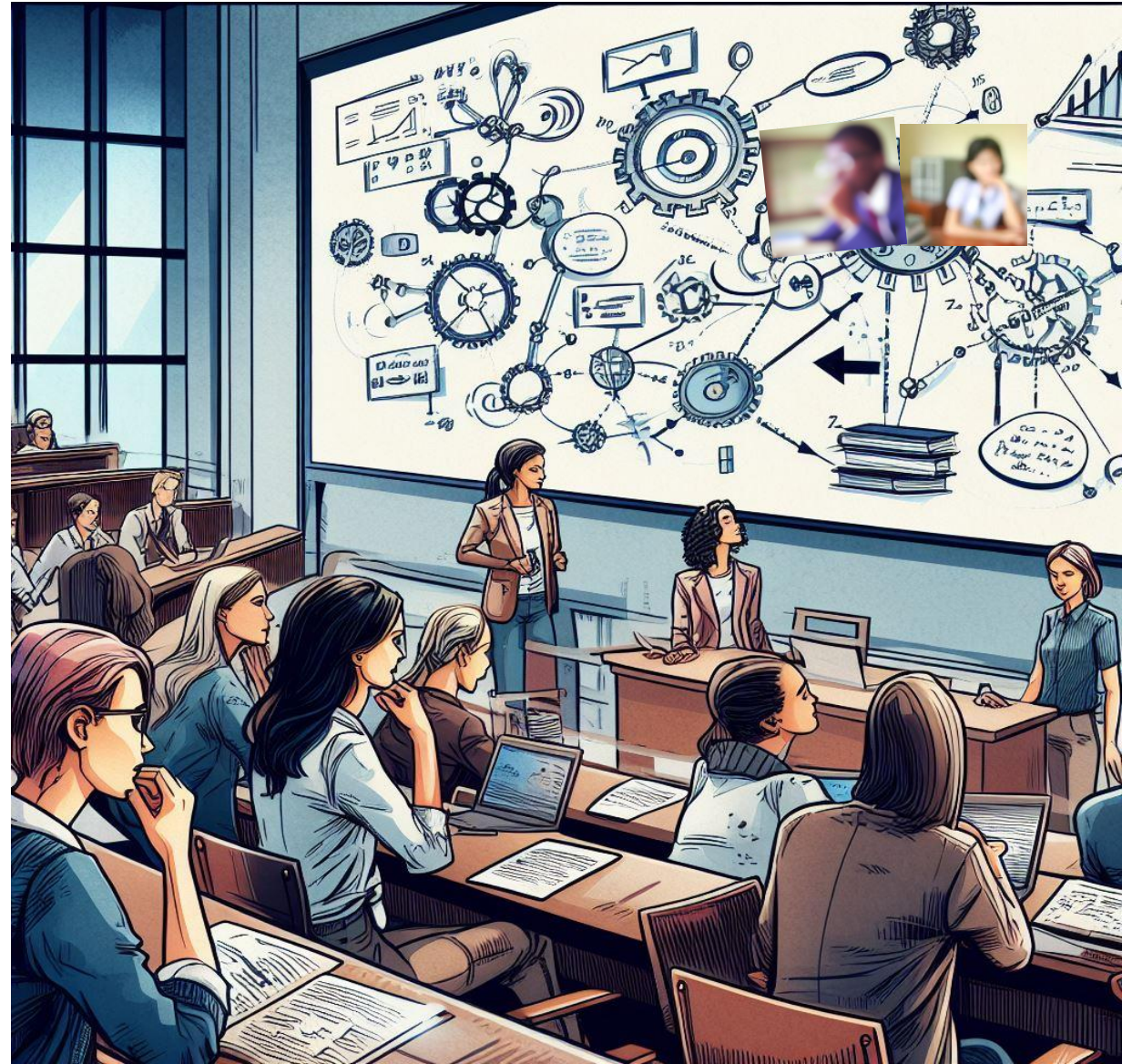


# Pressures





# *A shift from oversight and sameness*



***Iterative.  
Redesign.  
Now.***

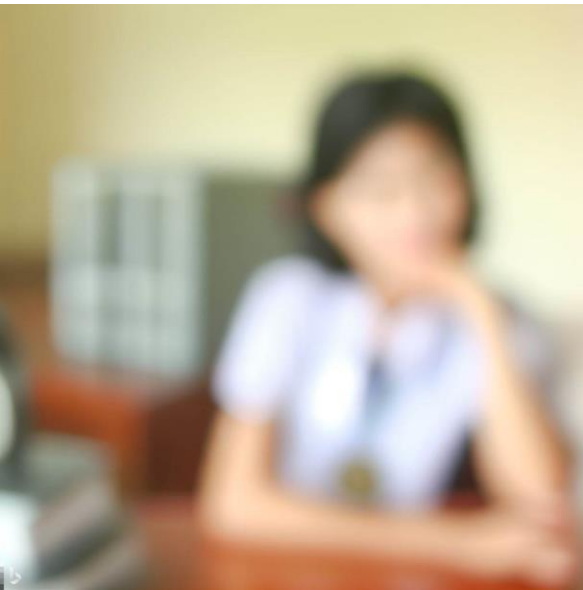


# What to do about assessments if we can't out-design or out-run AI?

Danny Liu – University of Sydney

- They provide the AI completions as an appendix to their submission.

- The AI completion and critique provided as part of the submission.
- The documented process is graded and more heavily weighted than the artefact.



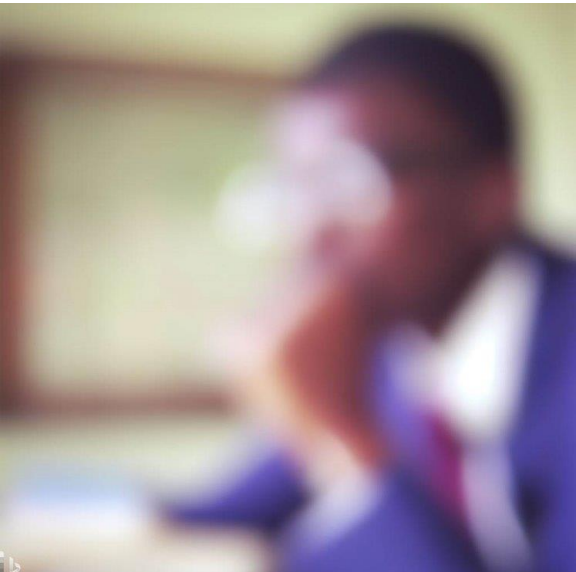
[https://unisyd-my.sharepoint.com/personal/danny\\_liu\\_sydney\\_edu\\_au/\\_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fdanny%5Fu%5Fsydney%5Fedu%5Fau%2FDocuments%2FEI%2F2023%2Fgenerative%20AI%2FAssessments%20for%20semester%202%2C%202023%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fdanny%5Fliu%5Fsydney%5Fedu%5Fau%2FDocuments%2FEI%2F3923%2Fgenerative%20AI&ga=1](https://unisyd-my.sharepoint.com/personal/danny_liu_sydney_edu_au/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fdanny%5Fu%5Fsydney%5Fedu%5Fau%2FDocuments%2FEI%2F2023%2Fgenerative%20AI%2FAssessments%20for%20semester%202%2C%202023%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fdanny%5Fliu%5Fsydney%5Fedu%5Fau%2FDocuments%2FEI%2F3923%2Fgenerative%20AI&ga=1)  
<https://www.hk.edu.com/pulse/responding-generative-ai-assessments-semester-2-2023-danny-liu/>



# Students' voices on generative AI: perceptions, benefits, and challenges in higher education

Cecilia Ka Yuk Chan & Wenjie Hu

- Positive attitude amongst students
  - Students of Education perceived time-back for lecturers
  - Perceptions of more learning achievement, self-efficacy, learning attitude, and learning motivation.



[Cecilia Ka Yuk Chan](#) &  
[Wenjie Hu](#)

International Journal of Educational Technology in higher Education  
<https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-023-00411-8>





*Thank you.*



# Making Sense of Microcredentials

Focused Presentations



# Microcredentials for VET and labour market learning

**Iraklis Pliakis**

**Expert in qualifications and credentials**

QQI NFQ 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, 17 November 2023

#microcredentials



**Microcredentials  
a labour market  
megatrend**



**CEDEFOP**

European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training

# Microcredentials for VET and labour market learning

Three  
key  
objectives

Mapping microcredentials in European LM-related education, training and learning

Microcredentials and evolving qualifications systems

Microcredentials and the added value for end-users

Cedefop's  
Advisory Group  
on the study



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Cedefop has embarked on the global discussion on microcredentials

# Defining microcredentials



# Where were we standing in 2021?

- **Uncertainty** linked to the **naming** and **function**
- **Diverse** landscape across EU countries - wide range of short learning activities
- Microcredentials' is an **umbrella term**
- **Tight 'Vs' loose** definition: balance between fostering trust and flexibility
- Digital transition – Post-pandemic period





# Novelty or old wine with new label?

- MCs are a **phenomenon that is growing**
- MCs do not necessarily present a new form of recognition but a way to **define better** and **standardise** the already existing offers.
- Emerging mostly in areas such as **ICT, engineering, manufacturing, and construction**, but also in sectors such as **hospitality, human health, and social work**

# Main characteristics of microcredentials

- MCs indicate the **title, the date of issue, the identity of the holder, the provider and achieved LOs.**
- **Online learning vs face-to-face** mode of delivery (classroom-based learning)
- More **diverse learners** than full qualifications, e.g. employees, new hires, individual learners, customers of a company
- MCs are mainly used by **adults in employment**, as continuing VET and supplements to full qualifications
- MCs address the limitation of formal QSs to **timely respond to labour market needs**

# Main characteristics of microcredentials in the manufacturing and retail sectors

Sector	Title of microcredential	Location	Workload	Link to ECTS or ECVET specified	Mode of delivery		
Manufacturing	Safety procedures in medical processes	France	12 modules 17 days	NO	In person		
Manufacturing	Quality management system and welding coordination	Denmark	22.5 hours, 3 days	NO	In person		
Manufacturing	International Welding Engineer (IWE)	International (41 countries)	448 hours	ECVET	person/blended		
Manufacturing	International Welding Practitioner (IWP)	International (41 countries)	150 hours	ECVET	person/blended	YES	YES
Manufacturing		Germany, France, Italy, Spain, UK, Portugal and Turkey.	60-70 hours	NO	Online/blended		
Manufacturing		Austria	1 month (fulltime)	NO	In person		
Manufacturing		Malta	125 hours	ECVET	In person	YES	YES
Industrial		Czechia	NS	NO	In person	NO	NS

Highly targeted/specialised types of training that are designed around specific occupational/professional

Focus on new and emerging topics and technologies

Microcredentials often describe learning outcomes. The remaining either do not mention their LOs or present them in the form of content description

Mode of delivery differs; it can be in-person training, online or blended.

# Microcredentials as part of qualifications systems

QUALIFICATION

# MCs and qualifications systems

- A wide variety of microcredentials can **fall outside of the formal qualifications system** and operate solely in the labour market.
- Strong indications that microcredentials **will not diminish the labour market value** of recognised qualifications in the near future
- Microcredentials can push qualifications systems to become more **flexible, adaptable** and **responsive** to labour market needs
- Can microcredentials lead to **fragmentation** of knowledge?
- Too much modularity encourages **early exits from training**



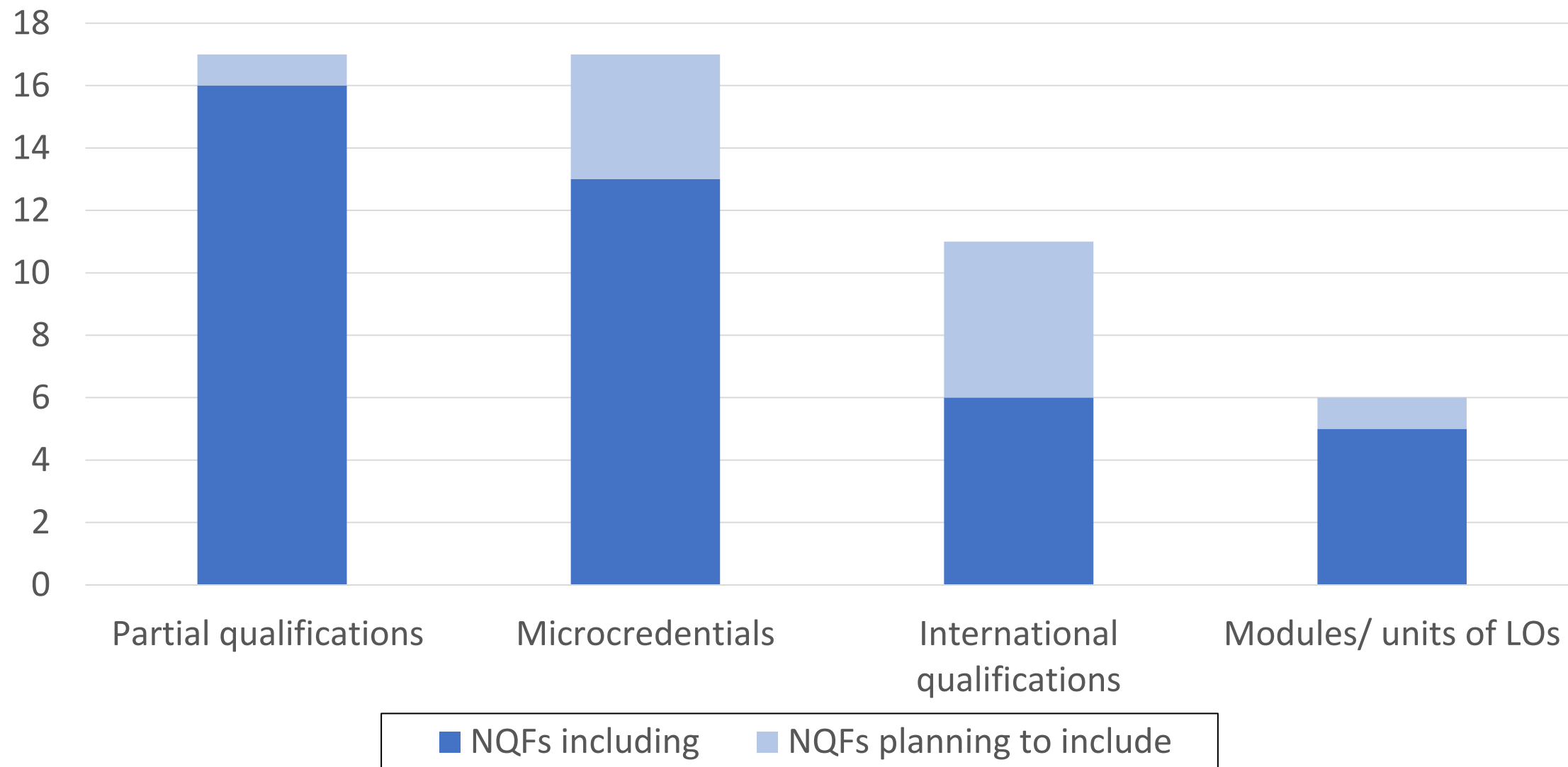
© Cedefop/Sakis Gioumpasis

# Linking modularisation to microcredentials

Modularisation is very common in **adult learning**; modules are often considered similar to microcredentials. Indicative examples: BE-FL, BE-FR, CZ, DK, HU,

In HR, the term '**micro-qualification**' (*'mikrokvifikacija'*) was introduced in the 2021 Adult Education Act. Compiled units of learning outcomes (micro-qualifications) lead to short training programmes and/or qualifications at EQF/NQF levels 2-4.

# Alternative types of NQF qualifications



# Microcredentials and recognition of prior learning

Microcredentials as outcomes of the RPL process

Microcredentials, as a tool of RPL, can be used to

- obtain a partial qualification;
- obtain a full formal qualification (this also relates to accumulation/stackability of MCs);
- gain access to an education programme, including making the transition from VET to higher education;
- gain exemption from part(s) of an education programme and/or shorten its duration;
- gain exemption from part(s) of a professional qualification;





# Microcredentials and end-users

# Microcredentials and added value for



<b>Learners and employees</b>	<b>Employers</b>	<b>VET providers</b>
<b>Standing out in a recruitment situation.</b>	More responsive training offer	Expanding the outreach of VET providers.
<b>Labour market mobility through vertical and horizontal skills pathways.</b>	Faster and more efficient upskilling and reskilling of the workforce.	Consolidate strategies for VET excellence.
<b>Improved labour market outcomes in the form of income and career development.</b>	Improve employee retention through improved job and career pathways in the company.	Allowing for new services and engagements with new targets groups.
<b>Career shifts.</b>	Expanding the recruitment base (hidden workforce).	Involvement in local, regional and sectoral skills ecosystems building skills intelligence.
<b>Access to continuing and further learning on a flexible basis.</b>	Reducing induction costs of new employees by providing more individualised and affordable training opportunities.	Building institutional capacity to innovate by e.g., co-designing new forms of provision to reach underprivileged target groups.
<b>Recognition of prior learning.</b>	Renewed competitiveness and innovation performance through concurrent strategies for upskilling and reskilling.	Improving quality of provision by engaging actively with stakeholders in local labour markets.

Source: Cedefop (2023, forthcoming)

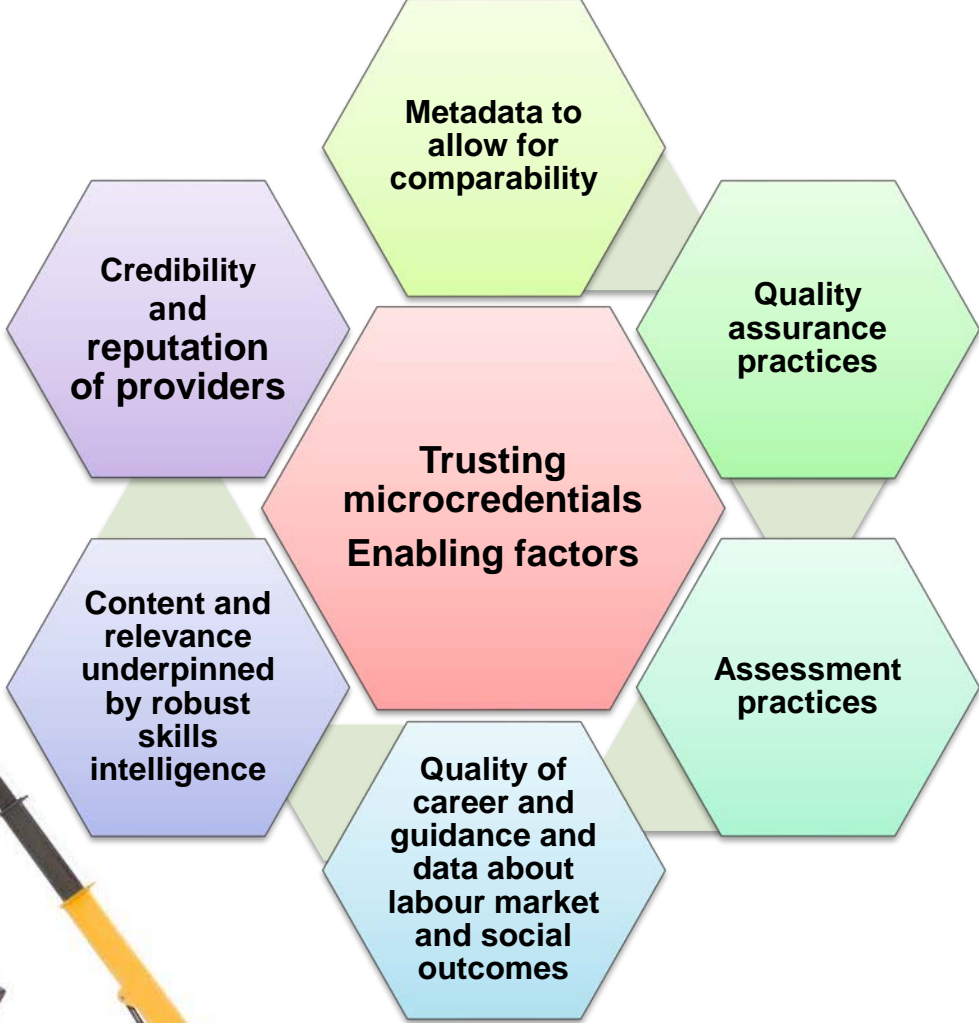
# Have you experienced in practice that microcredentials helped you get promoted?

46% No

30% Yes

24% Do not know/  
cannot answer

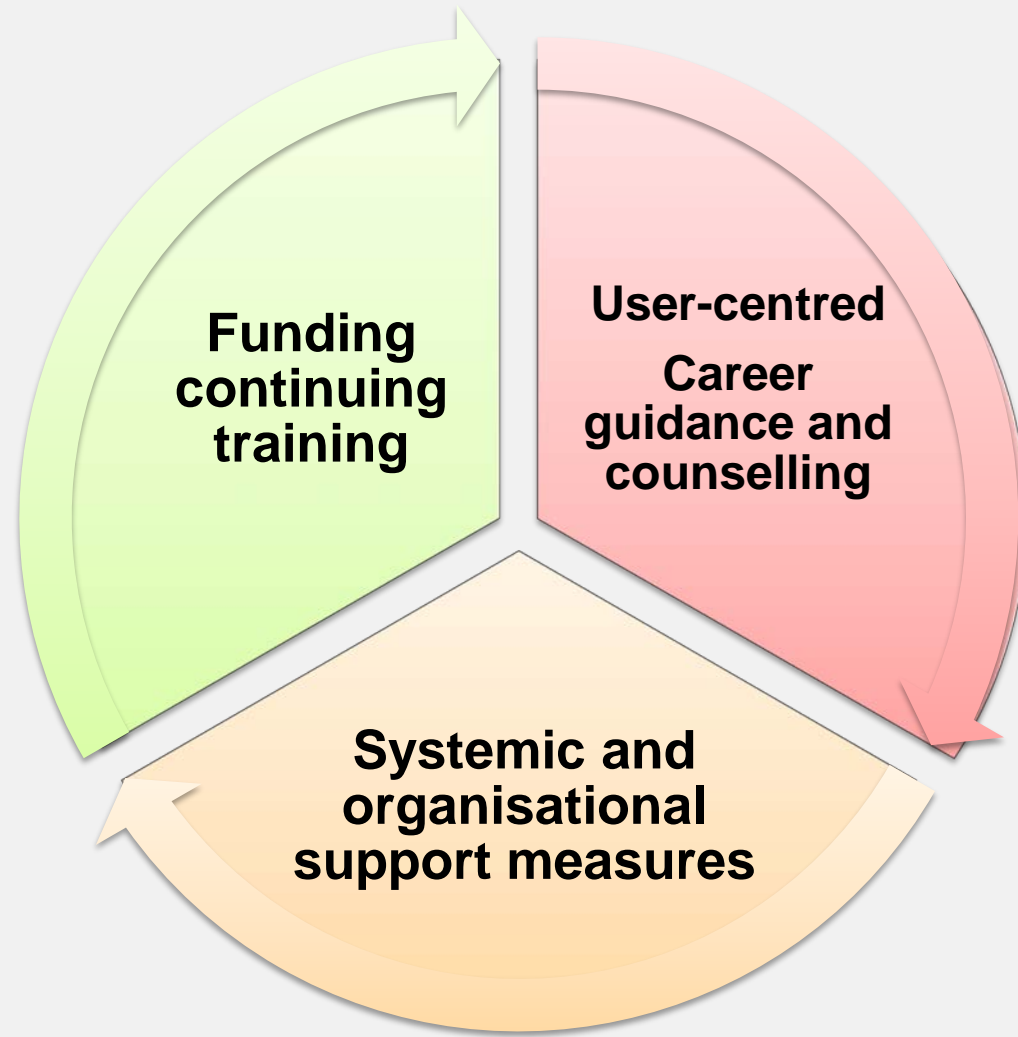
# Conditions for building trust



© stock.adobe.com

Source: Cedefop, (2023, forthcoming)

# Ways to support engagement with microcredentials



Source: Cedefop, (2023, forthcoming)

# Barriers to a wider uptake of microcredentials

The background features a 3D illustration of a brick wall in the lower half, with several large, colorful arrows (blue, yellow, and red) pointing upwards and to the right, symbolizing progress and growth.

- Lack of **adequate and transparent QA standards**
- **Uncertainties** about nature of microcredentials
- The way **learning outcomes are assessed and documented**
- Lack of **formal recognition** of by national authorities
- **Incompatibility** of some microcredentials with NQ systems
- **Limited opportunities** for the accumulation and **combination** of microcredentials



# Thank you

For further information:

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Project page

[www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/microcredentials-labour-market-education-and-training](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/microcredentials-labour-market-education-and-training)

Podcast

[www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/podcasts/episode-6-microcredentials-are-they-here-stay](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/podcasts/episode-6-microcredentials-are-they-here-stay)

[www.cedefop.europa.eu](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu)

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**CEDEFOP**

European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training

# MICROCREDS

## MICRO-CREDENTIALS FAD OR OPPORTUNITY?

*Tony Donohoe, Chair, MicroCreds Enterprise  
Advisory Group*





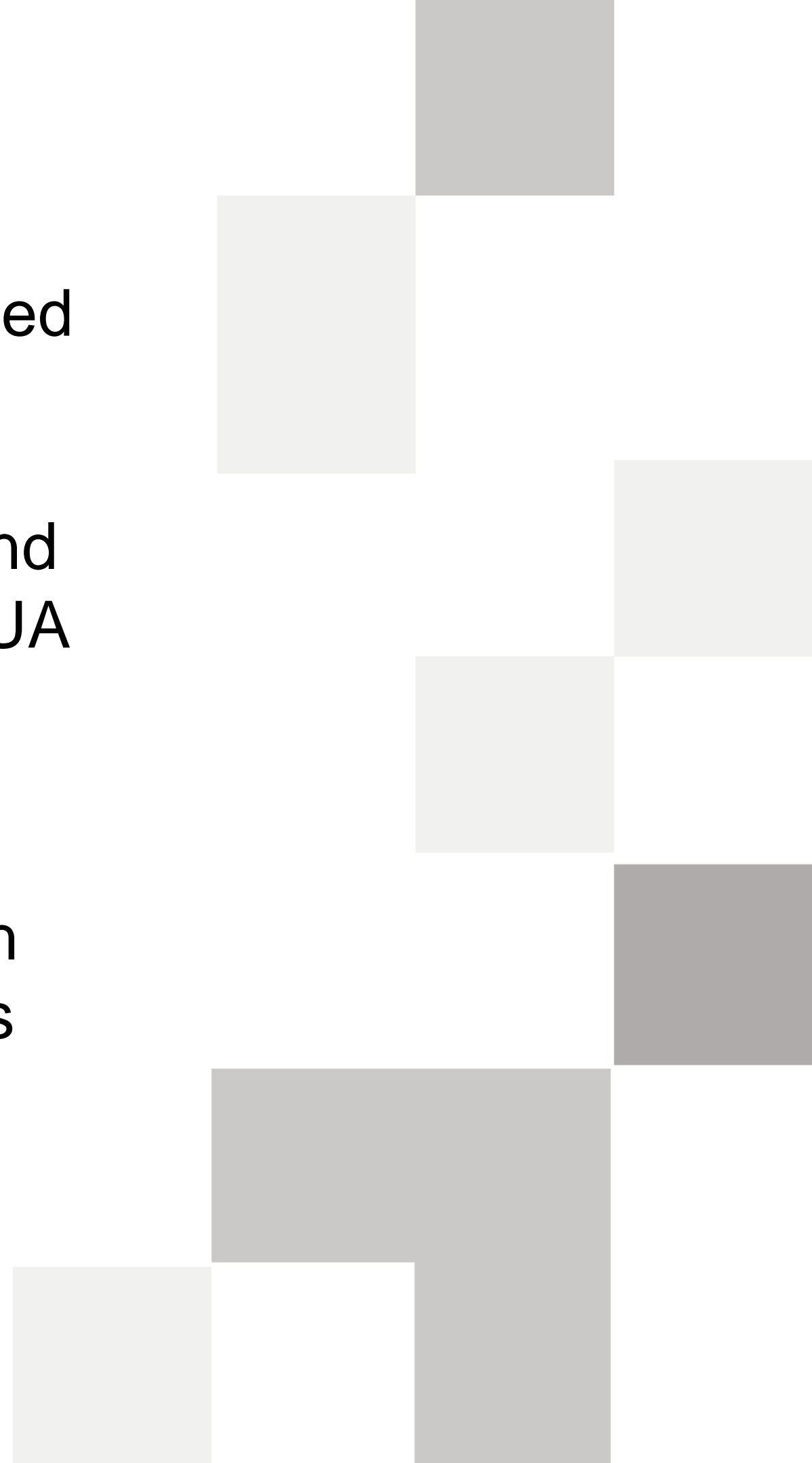
# OVERVIEW OF MICROCREDS

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MicroCreds is a 5-Year €12.3 million national project, funded through HCI Pillar 3.

The project is led by Irish Universities Association (IUA) and delivered in partnership with each of the seven founding IUA universities.

Its vision is to **empower lifelong learning in Ireland by re-imagining the learner's relationship with education** through agile, accessible and bite-sized courses: micro-credentials



# 4 STRANDS OF MICROCREDS

---

STRAND 1: **National Framework** for micro-credentials

STRAND 2: **MicroCreds Innovate** sustainable model of data informed university – enterprise collaboration

STRAND 3: **National Platform** linked to a digital credentialing solution (Europass early adopter)

STRAND 4: Agilely developed & flexibly delivered **suite of micro-credentials** across partner universities



MICRO  
CREDS

# WHAT IS A MICRO-CREDENTIAL?

---

- Small, focused courses
- Range from Undergraduate to Masters Level (levels 6-9 in Ireland's NMQ)
- Credit Size 1-30 ECTS (1 ECT = 25 Learning Hours)
- University Quality Assured
- Standalone credentials, some may stack towards a larger award
- Developed in response to identified skills need
- Developed on a national framework for micro-credentials that recognises variance across the universities, enabling each to develop a portfolio consistent with its own strengths and missions and within its own enterprise eco-system and regional context



**MICRO  
CREDS**

# EXAMPLES OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS

---

## Food Regulation

(University College Dublin)

## Driving Digital Innovation

(University College Cork)

## Data Analysis and Visualisation

(University of Galway)

## Data Science for Finance

(Dublin City University)

## Mentoring for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

(Maynooth University)

## Enhancing Critical and Innovative Thinking and Problem Solving

(University of Limerick)

## Digital Technologies in Human Services

(Trinity College Dublin)

# THE OPPORTUNITIES

---

- Reputation and quality assurance of Irish universities
- Provides mechanism to acknowledge and invest in staff
- Tailored CPD pathways for organisation and individuals
- Flexes as needed: allows for changing needs in skills within industry, in specific roles, or as people progress to different positions
- Allows for time to be spread rather than invested in large learning chunks
- Possibilities offered by blended delivery
- Cost: ability to spend as suits business
- New way of choosing and curating course content
- Potential for co-design and delivery

## •KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

---

- The real business case for L&D is still to be made and understood
- Common language and understanding between universities and enterprise
- Link programmes to productivity and business needs
- Alignment with national enterprise policy strategies and skills architecture
- Ability of firms to differentiate in a very noisy education/training space
- Clearly differentiated value proposition that stands up to commercial scrutiny
- Culture of agility and innovation demonstrated in delivery and experience
- Drive awareness, develop understanding and make it clear and appealing
- **TRUST**

Stay Connected with the project



[www.microcreds.ie](http://www.microcreds.ie)



@MicroCreds #MicroCredsIE



MicroCreds #MicroCredsIE



# Micro Credentials aligned to the NMQ: Forging Educational Pathways

Pauline Flusk

Program Lead – AMTCE Short Courses & Micro Credential Programmes

Innopharma Education

Nov 2023



• • • • •

# Agenda

- Understand the National Objective
- Innopharma Education & LMETB Partnership
- Sustainable Path from FE to HE
- Micro Credential Options to Meet Industry Needs

# A National Strategic Objective

A Public Private Partnership model to develop pathways for learners through lifelong learning



An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,  
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta  
Department of Further and Higher Education,  
Research, Innovation and Science



Innopharma  
education

• • • • •

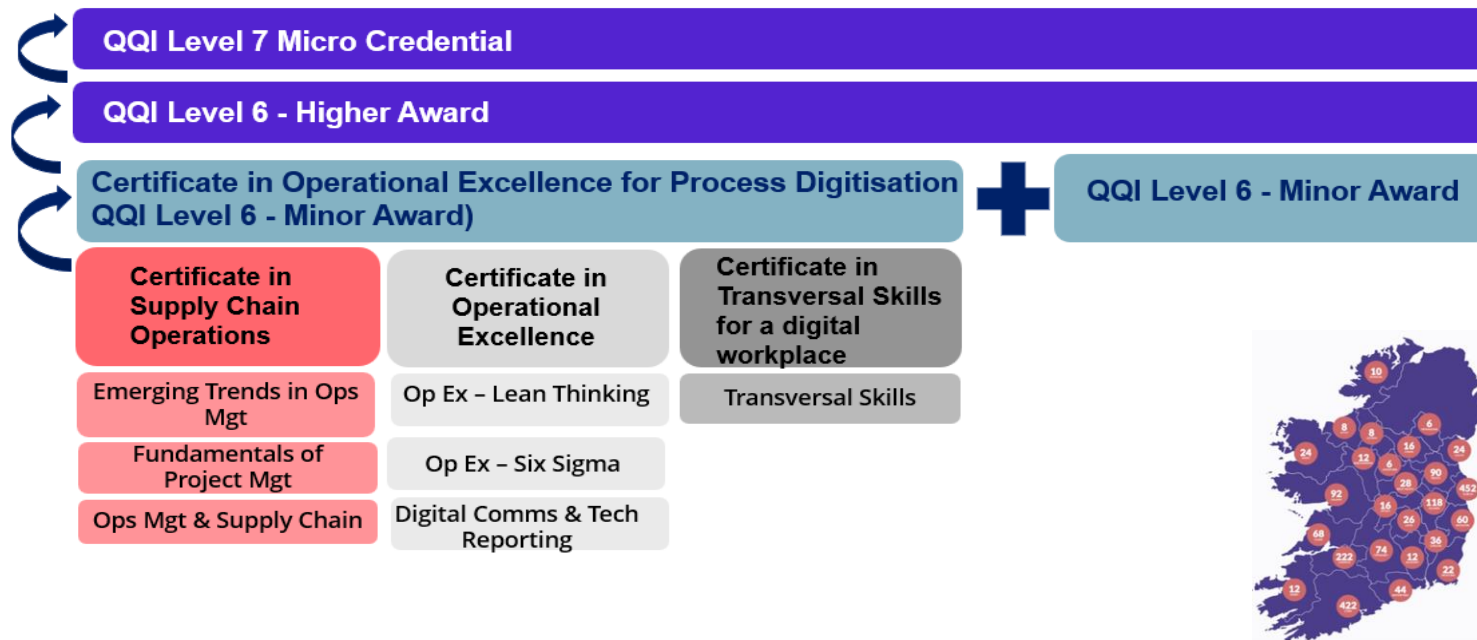
# Inclusive Pathways

Bridge the gap from Further Education to Higher Education



# Stackable Qualifications

A scalable approach to support a unified territory education system across the country





# Enterprise Focused Key Skills

Designed to meet current and future skills needs



# Learner Lifelong Learning

Upskilling and reskilling individuals to develop skills for the future needs of high-tech manufacturing sectors



# Key Messages

- Upskilling and reskilling individuals for the future needs of high-tech manufacturing sectors is essential
- Provide Micro Credentials aligned with the NFQ which are stackable and developed to meet industry and learner demands
- Develop pathways for learners & make it easy to dream!



# Thank You

Pauline Flusk

Program Lead – AMTCE Short Courses & Micro Credential Programmes

Innopharma Education

Nov 2023



# Lightning Talks



Dearbhú Cáilíochta  
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and  
Qualifications Ireland



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LIMERICK**  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

# QQI Lightning Talk

## From MicroCreds to Masters: A Curated Learning Pathway

Prof Ann Ledwith,  
Dr Sinead Burke,  
Prof Martin Hayes,  
UL@Work, University of Limerick

**#StayCurious**



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LIMERICK**  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

# Competing Requirements

On Demand Learning  
Flexible Pathways  
Transversal Skills  
Personalised Learning  
Stackable Microcredentials  
Progression Routes



Accreditation  
Well Designed Programmes  
Quality Assurance  
Learning Outcomes  
Economies of Scale  
Defined Pathways

**#StayCurious**



**UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK**  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

# Step 1: UL@Work Professional Diplomas

Each PD must contain at least one MicroCred



## Automation / AI / Technology

Operational Technology Security - Professional Diploma

Artificial Intelligence for Computer Vision - Professional Diploma

Natural Language Processing - Professional Diploma

Law and Technology - Professional Diploma

## Future Skills

Sustainable Work - Professional Diploma

Transferrable Skills for the 21st Century Workplace - Professional Diploma

Strategic Leadership - Professional Diploma

Communications and Digital PR for Enterprise - Professional Diploma

Digital Content Development - Professional Diploma

Climate Adaption and Sustainability - Professional Diploma

## Data Analysis

Data Communications - Professional Diploma

Digitisation of Business & Industry Processes - Professional Diploma

Data Analytics - Professional Diploma

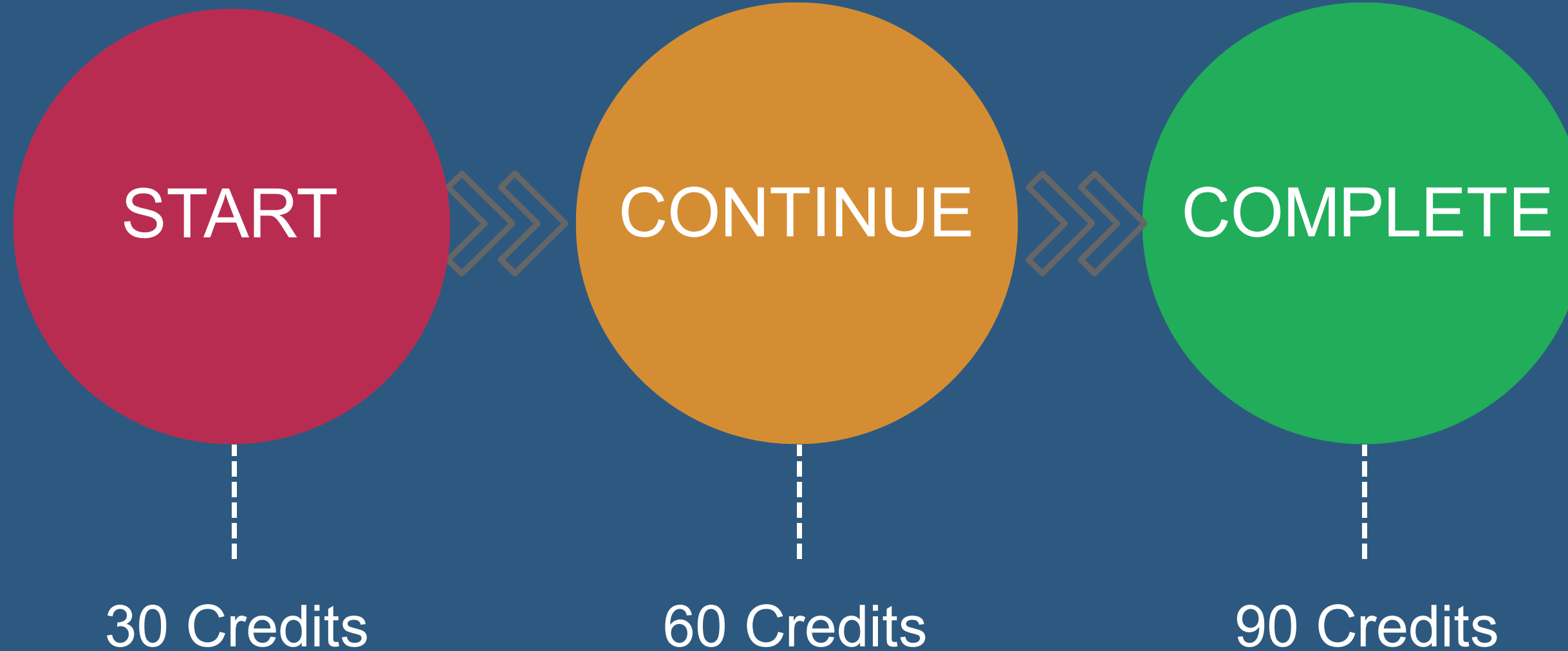
**#StayCurious**



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**LIMERICK**  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

# Step 2: Build Your Master Plan

Stack Your Way To Success - 3 Professional Diplomas



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Step 3: Master of Professional Practice

# Master of Professional Practice



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LIMERICK**  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

# Lessons to Date

Listen to  
Learners – but  
interpret what  
you hear

The system  
will always  
try to get  
you!!!

Work hard to  
build social  
capital

Don't give  
up.....

Start small and  
don't expect to  
get things right  
first time

Respect the  
academic  
voice – but  
also question

Good  
enough can  
be a good  
start

**#StayCurious**



**Thank you!**

**Contact [ULatWork@ul.ie](mailto:ULatWork@ul.ie) for more  
information**





**kcetb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach  
*Kilkenny and Carlow  
Education and Training Board*

# How Robust Change Management Systems Support Award Standards

Amanda Butler  
KCETB QA Coordinator

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023

# What is Change Management?



**‘A systematic approach to proposing, evaluating, approving, implementing and reviewing changes’\***

- ‘Change Management’ comprehends introduction of new programmes and documents in addition to updating those that are current
- The controlled management of change is a key component of a robust Quality Management System

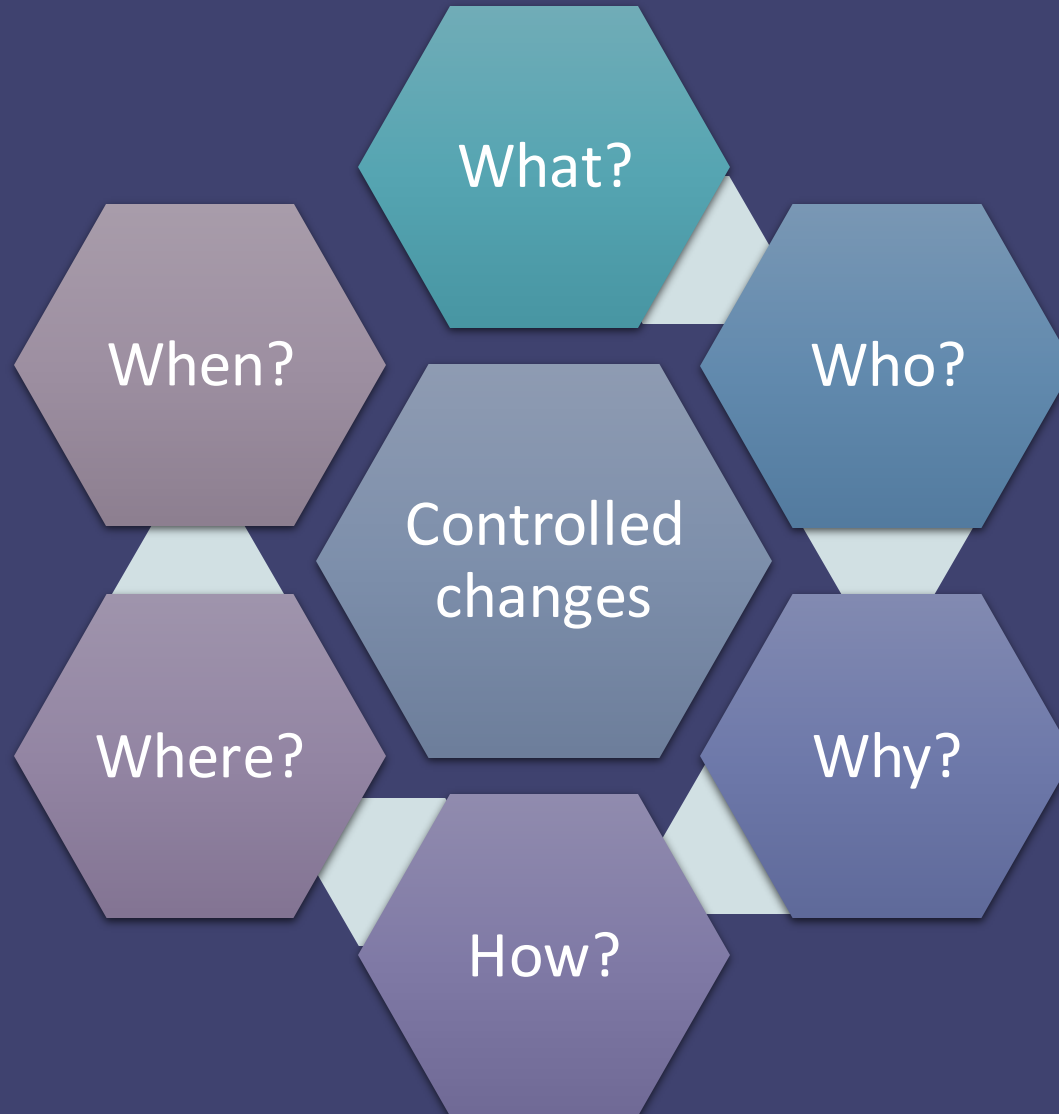
\*European Medicines Agency - Committee for Human Medicinal Products

ICH guideline Q10 on pharmaceutical quality system; Page 16;

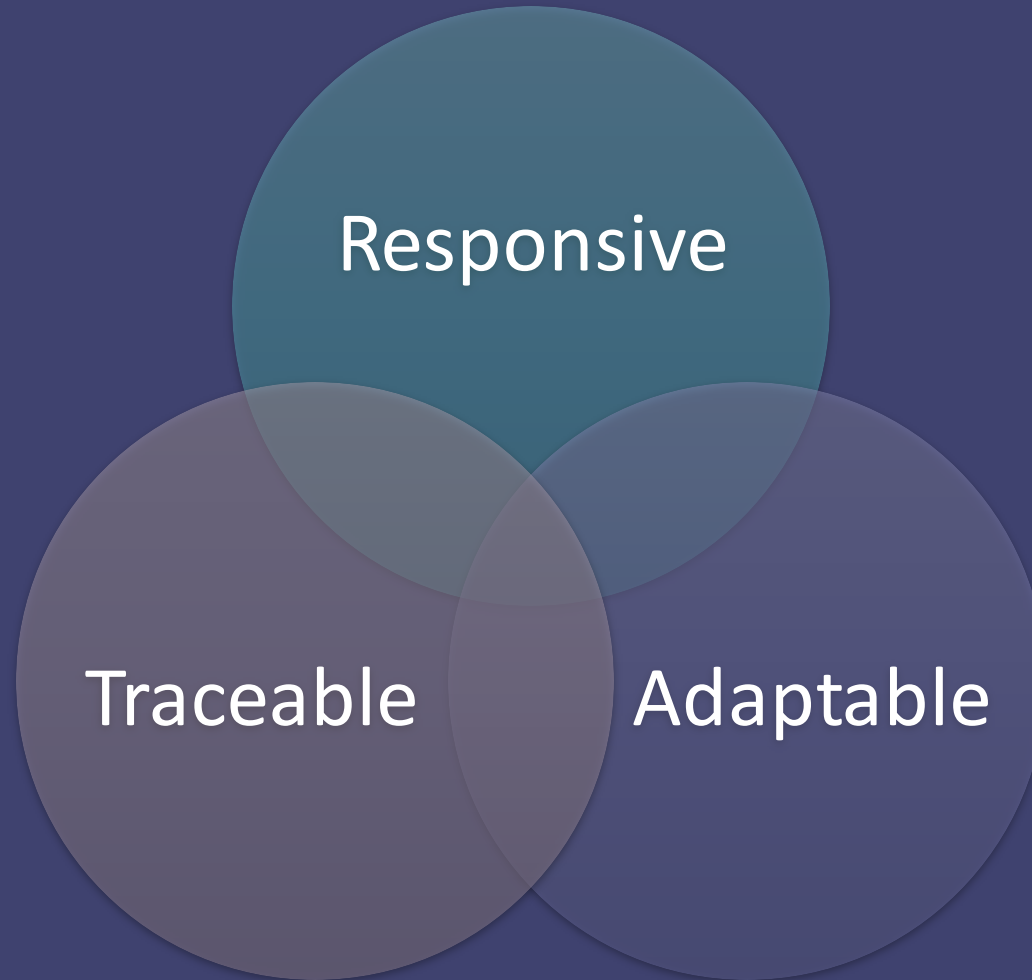
September 2015

EMA/CHMP/ICH/214732/2007

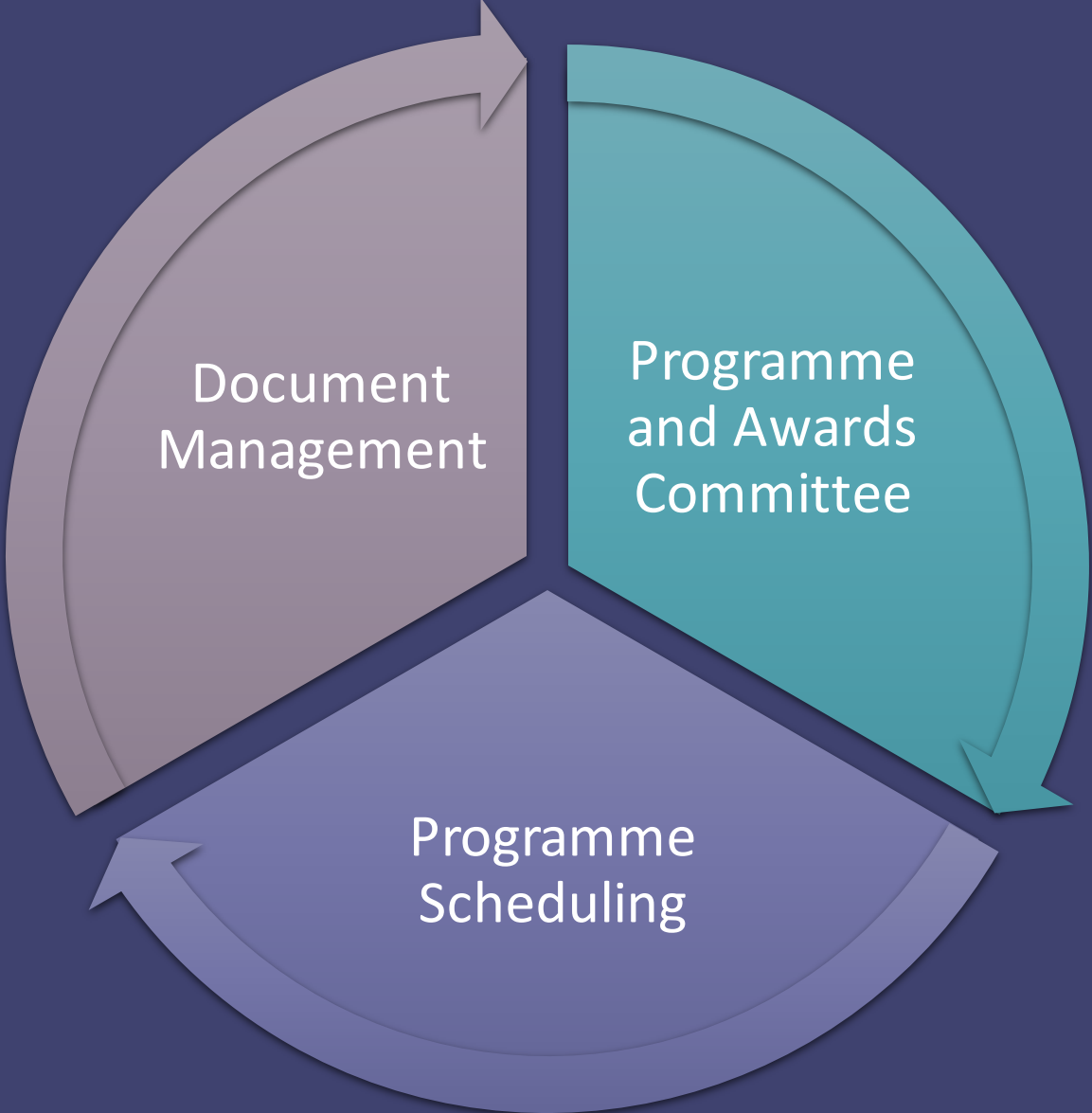
# Key Factors in Quality Assurance Change Management at KCETB



# Why change?



# Programme Management - KCETB



# Document Management

Master List – 723 Documents

15

Quality Policies

18

Quality Reports

QAOC  
Approval

QA Team  
Approval

567  
Descriptors

68  
Forms

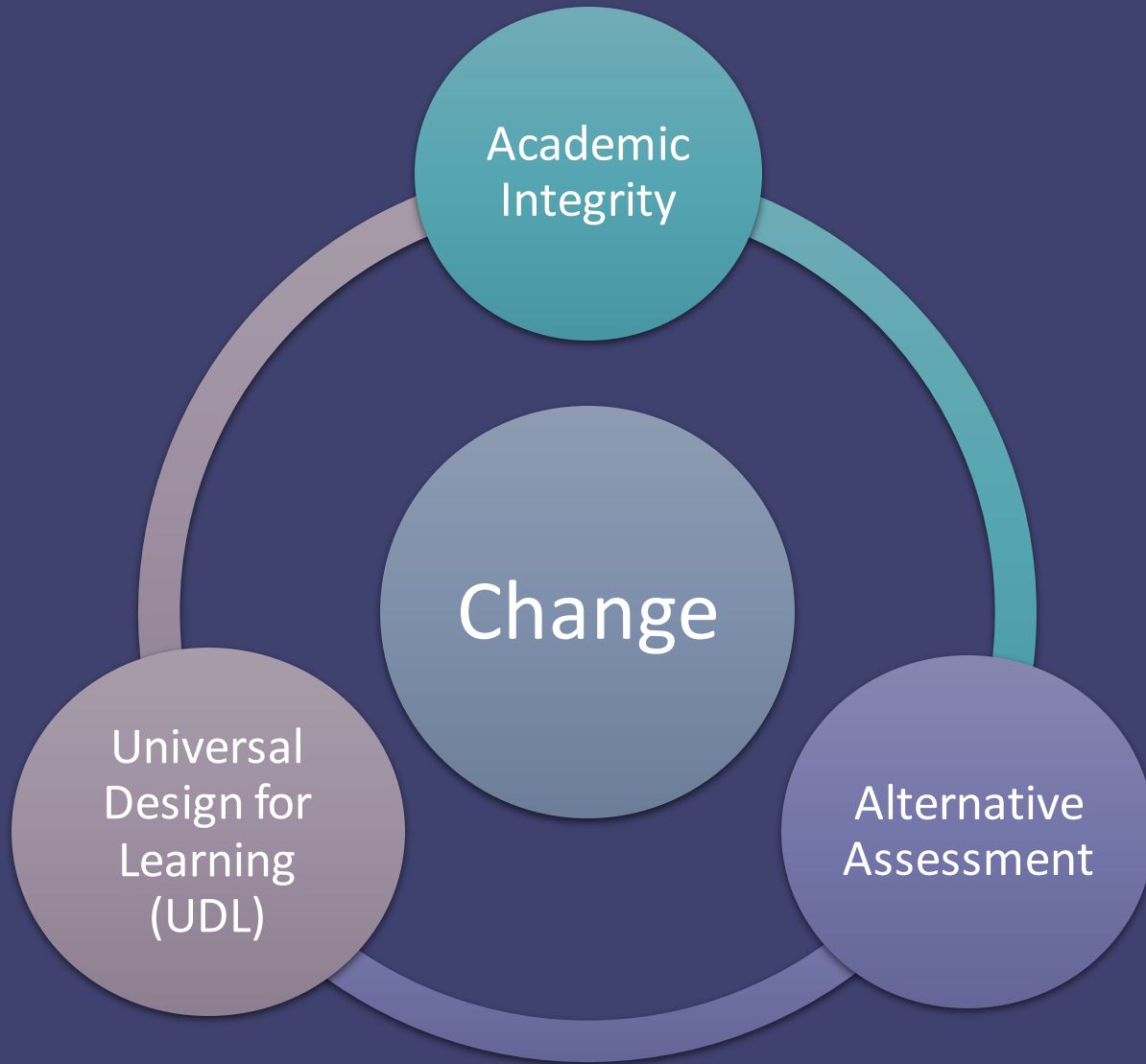
21  
Guidance  
Documents

14  
Newsletters

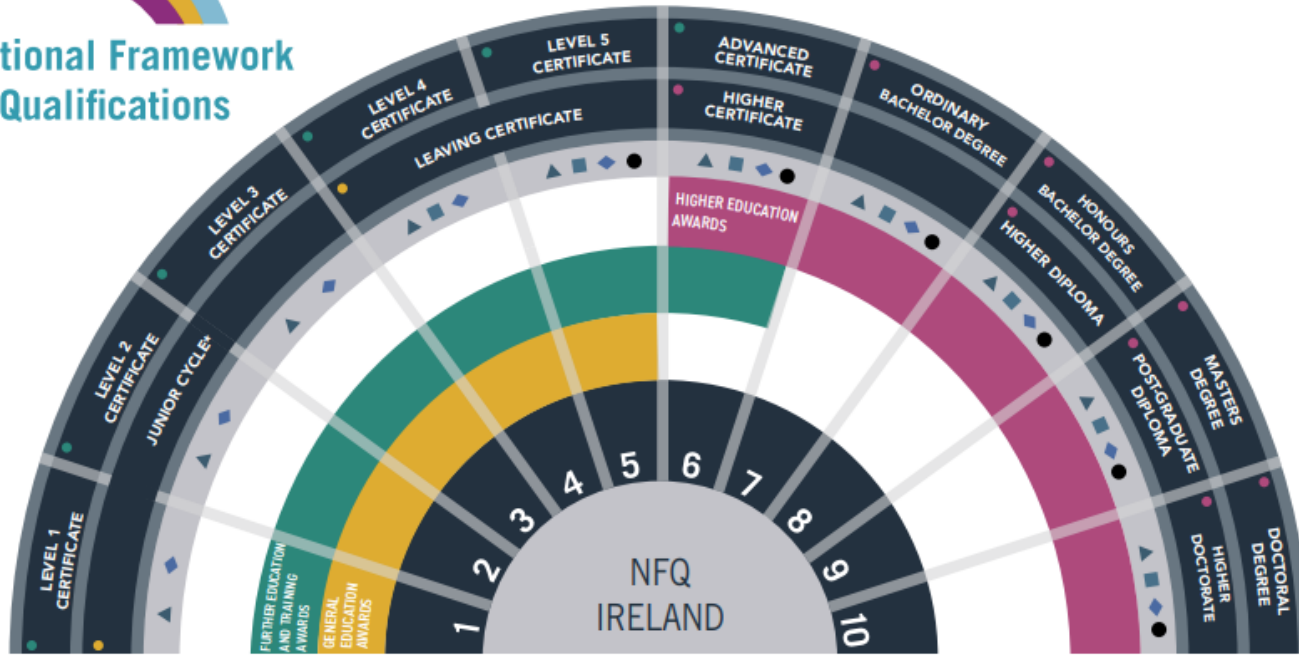
6  
Leaflets

14  
Data files /  
Trackers

# Opportunities from Change Management:



# National Framework of Qualifications



## CLASSES OF AWARD

- Major Awards:** named in the outer rings, are the principal class of awards made at a level
  - Minor Awards:** are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award
  - Supplemental Awards:** are for learning that is additional to a Major Award
  - Special Purpose Awards:** are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement
  - Professional Awards:** are for occupation-orientated qualifications including apprenticeships
- \*Please refer to NCCA website, [ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/](http://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/)

## IRISH REGISTER OF QUALIFICATIONS

- For more information on
- Qualifications
  - Providers
  - Courses
- visit [www.irqi.ie](http://www.irqi.ie)

# NFQ and Award Standards

- NFQ - reference point for awards
- Integrity of Awards – Awards must meet the standard
- Quality Systems – Changes are made referencing the Award Standards



# Final thoughts....

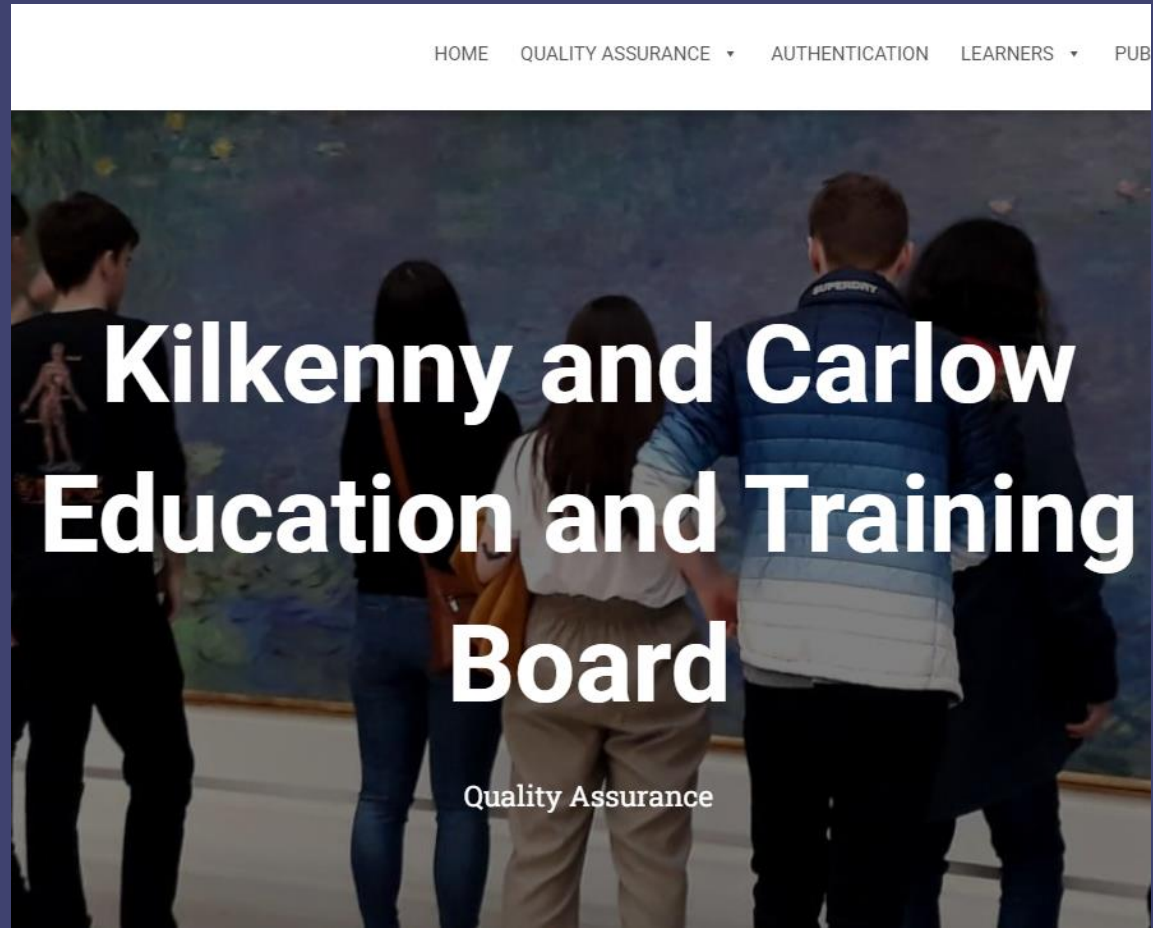
- *‘Effective vocational education and training policies are essential in order to achieve the goal of promoting a skilled, trained and adaptable workforce and labour markets responsive to economic change’\**
- Having robust Change Management Systems embedded in Quality Assurance promotes confidence in the integrity of awards and allows us to be responsive in a controlled way

\* EU COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION 24 November 2020 on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience (2020/C 417/01)



# Thank you!

- [www.kcetbqa.ie](http://www.kcetbqa.ie)
- Please visit!



[amanda.butler@kilkennycarlowetb.ie](mailto:amanda.butler@kilkennycarlowetb.ie)  
[qa.info@kilkennycarlowetb.ie](mailto:qa.info@kilkennycarlowetb.ie)

# The Role of Digital Career Learning Pathways in Supporting Access to HE at ATU

Bridie Killoran, Dr Carina Ginty & Gavin Clinch



# AGENDA



1. ATU Higher Ed 4.0 (2020-2024) HCI Pillar 3



2. Value of Embedding career guidance



3. Prioritising User Experience



4. Engaging with Local Partners



5. Looking forward: Capturing value



6. 1 minute video demo



**1.**

---

**ATU Higher Ed 4.0  
(2020-2024)  
HCI Pillar 3**

Career Pathways



Recognition of Prior Learning



## Pathways into and through Higher Education

WP1 – Regional RPL Service

WP2 – Learning & Career Pathways

## Employer / employee needs

WP3 – Lean content development

WP4 - Innovative flexible /online learning

WP5 – Sandbox– online innovation unit



Rapid Course Development



Innovative Learning Models



Approval Policies and Processes

## Project Enablement

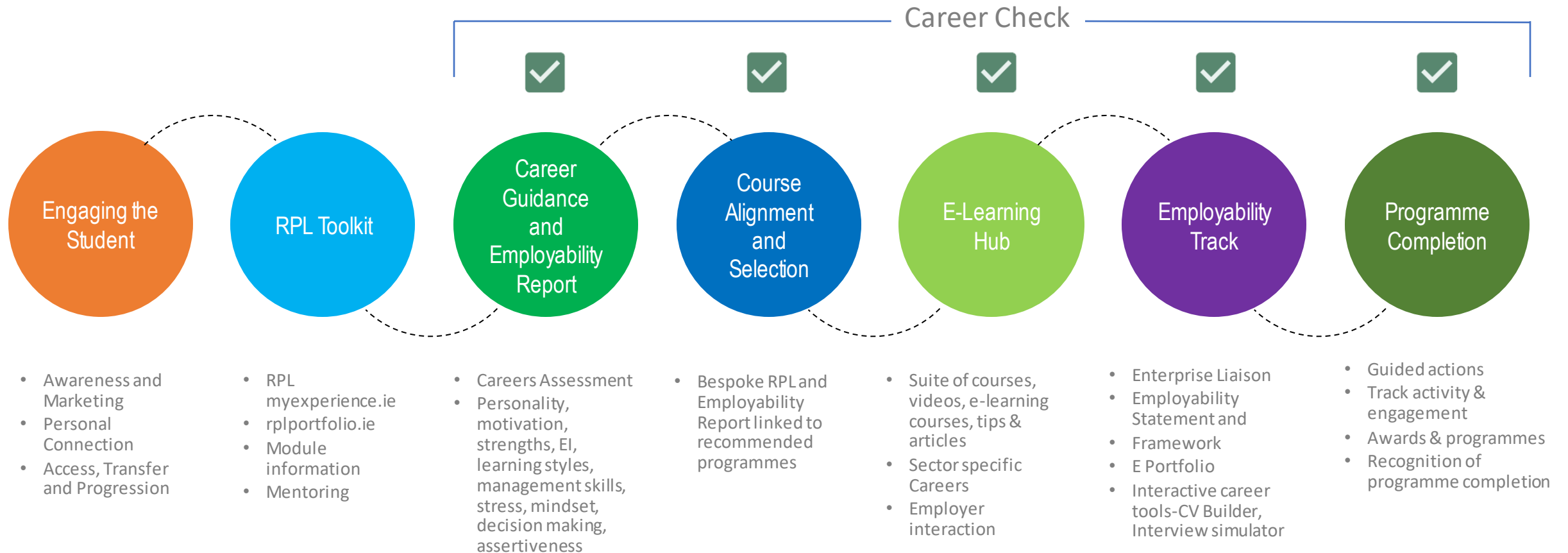
WP6 – Policies and processes to support innovation

WP7 – Enablement & management



**UNDERPINNED BY INNOVATION DEMONSTRATION SUB-PROJECTS  
IN COLLABORATION WITH ENTERPRISE PARTNERS**

# STUDENT PATHWAYS





# 2.

---

## Value of Embedding career guidance





### Career Assessments

Personality, motivation, strengths, learning styles, management skills, mindset, employability



### Employee Mentoring

Qualified professional support and guidance



### Learning Pathways

eLearning platform with suite of training videos, online courses, tips & articles and Employer Engagement

# Our Assessments & AI Enabled Tools

## CareerEdge+ – Employability Review

The Career Edge report measures employees performance on the 5 main areas of employability and provides feedback on areas for improvement.



## Transversal Skills Identification & Development

Rate your level of professional competency in transversal skills and complete a personalised auto-generated action plan for development.

- Adaptability & Flexibility
- Commercial Awareness
- Communication & Interpersonal Skills
- Creativity & Innovation
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- IT Skills & Digital Literacy
- Planning & Organising
- Self-management & Initiative
- Teamworking & Collaboration

## Strengths Assessment

The Strengths and Motivation assessments help employees understand their key driving forces and how to leverage them to maximum effect.



## 2. Value of Embedding career guidance

**Don't have clear career goals** – and maybe not aware of how education can help them



**Many people aren't aware of Recognition of Prior Learning or what it means**



**University intimidating places**  
**Difficulty of navigating the choices of courses available**



### **Combination of digital resources and supports with human interaction**

- People are social learners, & benefit from accountability
- Access to 1-to-1 guidance sessions
- Online career development platform with eLearning and Career exploration resources
  - AI powered tools – CV review, Cover Letter writing tool, Interview preparation



3.

---

## Prioritising User Experience

### 5 STEPS TO REDUCING YOUR STRESS LEVELS

This week during Stress Awareness Week, it's important to recognise that stress is one of the most important factors affecting career well-being. Working life can be stressful: in fact, a recent survey revealed that a staggering 44% of employees are...

LAUNCH



### Welcome Bridie

Search e-learning topics: try networking, strengths, interview...

SEARCH

#### CAREER LEARNING PATHWAYS



Map out your career goals and the steps you need to take to achieve them.

#### YOUR SKILLS & PREFERENCES



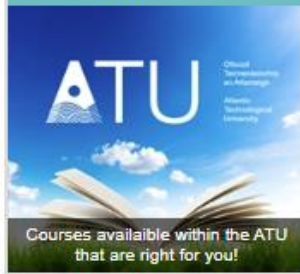
Your strengths & preferences & the behaviours employers look for

#### CAREER POSSIBILITIES



Career options, self-employment & how to build experience

#### CHOOSING AN ATU COURSE



Courses available within the ATU that are right for you!

#### RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEAR...



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

#### PREPARING TO STUDY



Important steps to follow when returning to study

#### CAREER WELL-BEING



Work-life balance, mental health, mindset & resilience

#### WORKPLACE SKILLS



Core workplace skills & how to develop them

#### CVs & APPLICATIONS

#### INTERVIEWS & OFFERS

#### PREPARING FOR WORK

#### ABOUT US

June 2022 - November 2023



1,105  
Users



14,742  
Logins



65,465  
Activities

mycareerpath.ie

Dashboard Career Pathways Tools/Assessments RPL Advice ATU Courses Employers

LATEST GRAD & STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES – APPLY NO...

If you're searching for a grad scheme with a multinational firm, then look no further. Tata Steel, DS Smith and PriceWaterhouseCoopers all have prestigious programmes on offer, which span a wide range of disciplines. Alternatively, check out Lidl's ...

LAUNCH

Welcome Bridie

Search e-learning topics: try networking, strengths, interview... SEARCH

CAREER LEARNING PATHWAYS

Supported series of connected steps and programmes to enable further education

YOUR SKILLS & PREFERENCES

Your strengths & preferences & the behaviours employers look for

CAREER POSSIBILITIES

Career options, self-employment & how to build experience

CHOOSING AN ATU COURSE

Courses available within the ATU that are right for you!

### Getting Started

Welcome to your e-learning hub. Discover and develop new career and business skills with expert-advice videos, interactive e-learning courses, tips and articles. Use the navigation on the left to guide you through your career learning, search using the box above or browse the latest resources below.

**Creating a coaching climate**

Leadership, Management, Culture, Coaching

**Microaggressions at work**

Culture & Diversity

By Chichi Eruchalu

**Contributing to an equitable workplace**

Attitude & Mindset, Transferable skills, Culture & Diversity

By Chichi Eruchalu

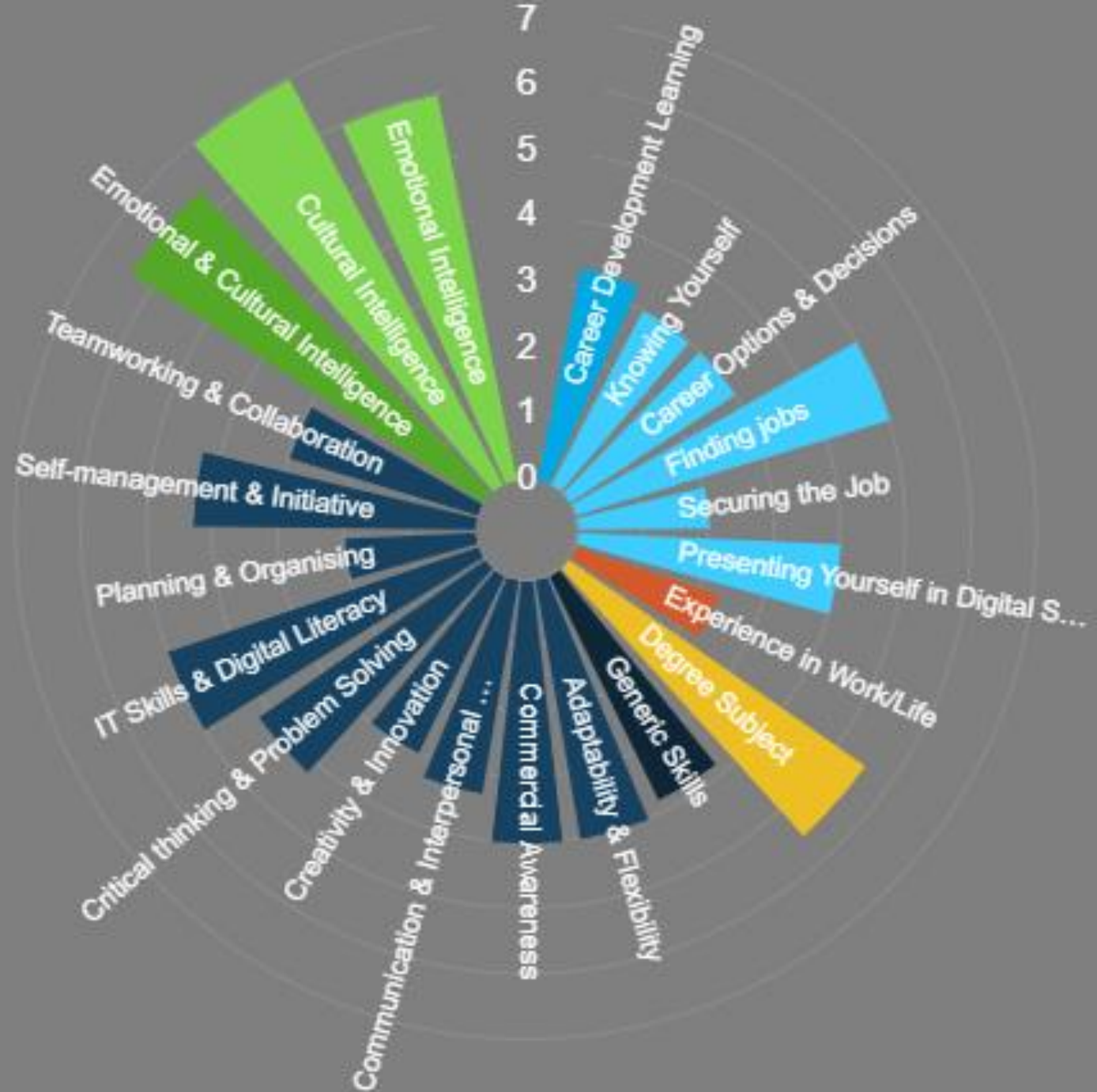
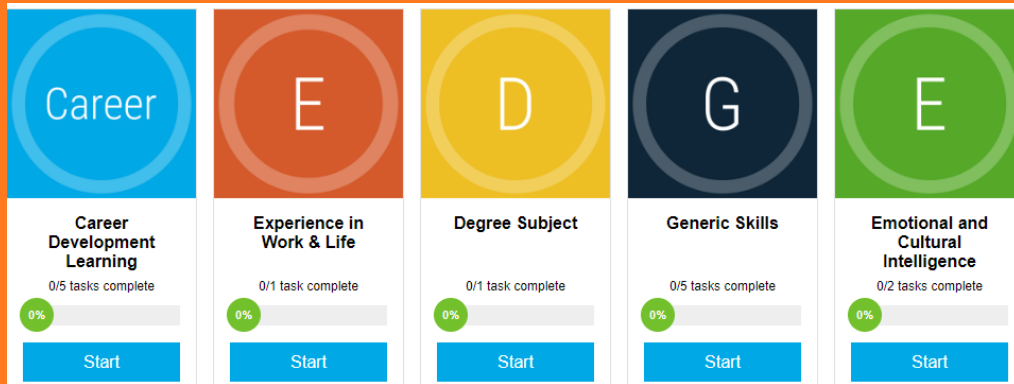
mycareerpath.ie



Ollscoil  
Teicneolaíochta  
an Atlantaigh  
  
Atlantic  
Technological  
University

- Interactive Tools
- Career Assessments
- E-learning Courses
- RPL
- ATU Courses
- Mentoring

# MEASURING EMPLOYABILITY USING AI





4.

---

## Engaging with Local Partners



# Case Studies Completed

**Medtronic**

**REGENERON**

**MERITMEDICAL**

**SIRO**

**MEISSNER**

**abbvie**

**Abbott**

**forward emphasis international**

**coffey**



An Roinn Fiontar,  
Trádála agus Fostaíochta  
Department of Enterprise,  
Trade and Employment



**msletb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma  
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim  
Education and Training Board

# 4. Engaging with Local Partners



<b>504 Industry Learners from 32 Organisations</b>	<b>Outreach 261</b>
<b>148 Meetings with industry</b>	<b>11 Industry Case Studies</b>
<b>65+ Industry events attended</b>	<b>Strengths PATH Programme – 180 Learners</b>
<b>65 Site visits</b>	<b>7 Publications</b>

## Partnership with ETB

mycareerpath.ie pilot programme with Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim Education and Training Board and Galway & Roscommon Education and Training Board.



## Workshops





**5.**

---

**Looking forward:  
Capturing value**

## 5. Looking forward: Capturing value

**Need to demonstrate value for money**

**Will integrate tracking into system** (e.g. pre-registration student number) so can see how people coming through the career guidance service are flowing into RPL system and ultimately student enrolments and progression.

**Difficult to date, some institutions still using paper based RPL systems for instance**

### *Some statistics so far:*

- **504 Industry Learners & 601 Undergraduates**
  - 45% of our learners are from industry from 32 organisations
  - 2% through ETB partnerships
- **79 people have linked to RPL**
- **178 learners went onto successful enrolment at ATU**
- **35% Conversion Rate**
- **28% Level 6, 30% Level 7, 25% Level 8 and 17% Level 9**



6.

1 Min Demo





# Supporting Learners to Understand National Framework Equivalences - Ireland, UK and Bologna

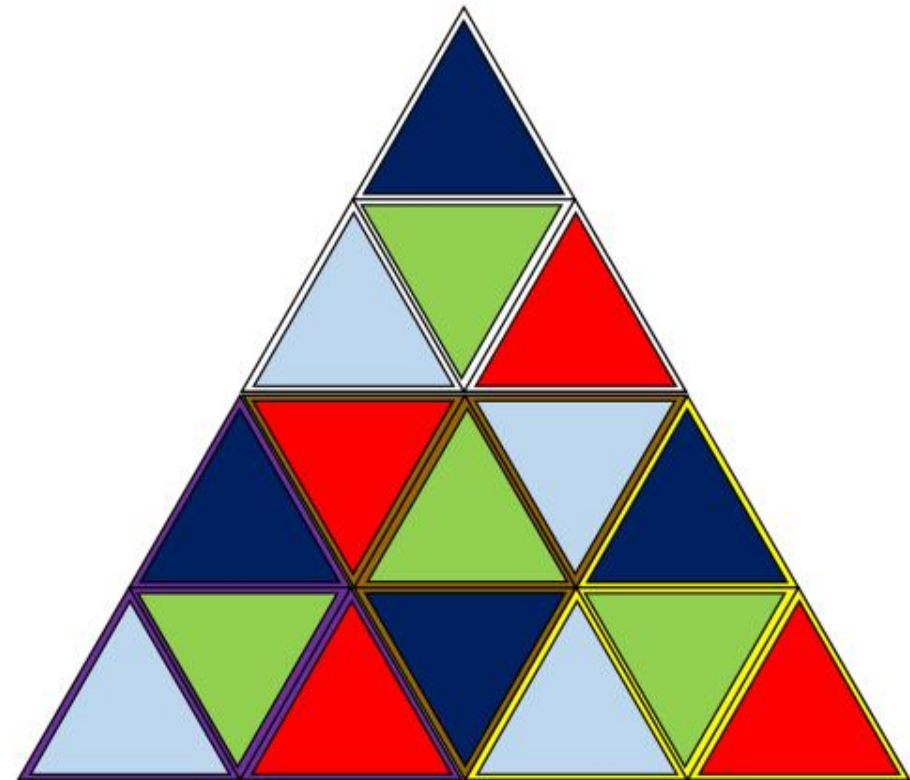
Mary Beare Aust  
[mary.aust@setu.ie](mailto:mary.aust@setu.ie)

## Qualifications can cross boundaries

A rough guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and Ireland

### How to use this leaflet:

- This leaflet provides information that allows you to look at the ways qualifications are organised in the UK and Ireland.
- It shows which qualifications in other countries are broadly comparable to your qualifications (or those that you are interested in taking).
- On the left side of the principal table you will find the main stages of education or employment - you can find where you are in these stages.
- The next column shows the qualifications framework for your country.
- To the right of this you can see the nearest levels and similar kinds of qualifications that are used in the other countries.
- This makes it possible to draw broad comparisons, rather than direct equivalences, between qualifications and their levels for each country.
- The back page indicates how UK and Irish qualifications frameworks relate to qualifications frameworks in Europe.
- The leaflet is updated periodically. Check one of the websites for the most up-to-date version.



Early Childhood –  
Let's play a game! | 2

This knowledge is important

-seeking career experience in the UK

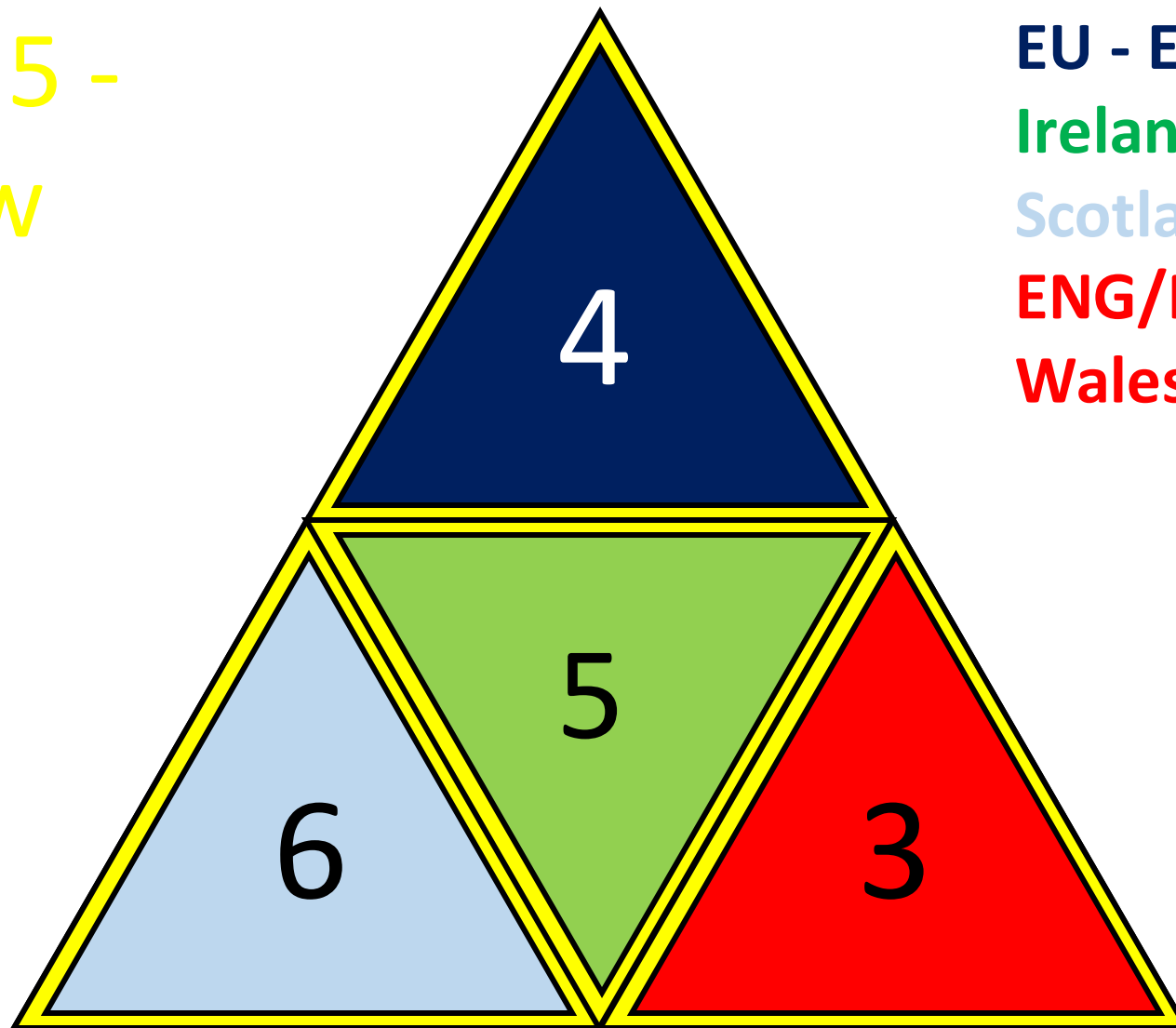
-undertaking UK qualifications

-engaging in Erasmus opportunities.





# Level 5 - Yellow



**EU - EQF**

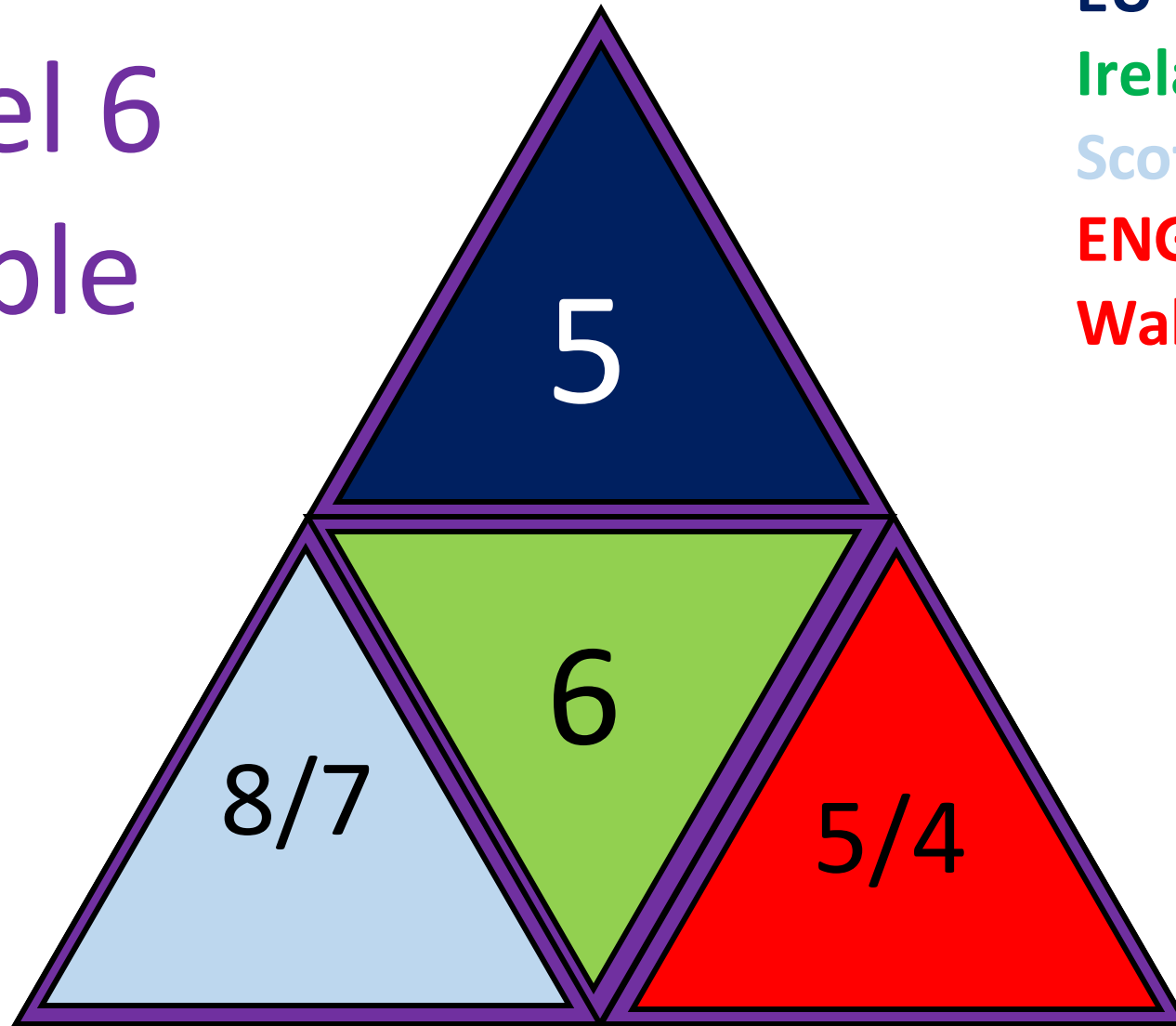
**Ireland – NFQ - QQI**

**Scotland – SCQF**

**ENG/NI – FHEQ**

**Wales - CFWW**

# Level 6 Purple



EU - EQF

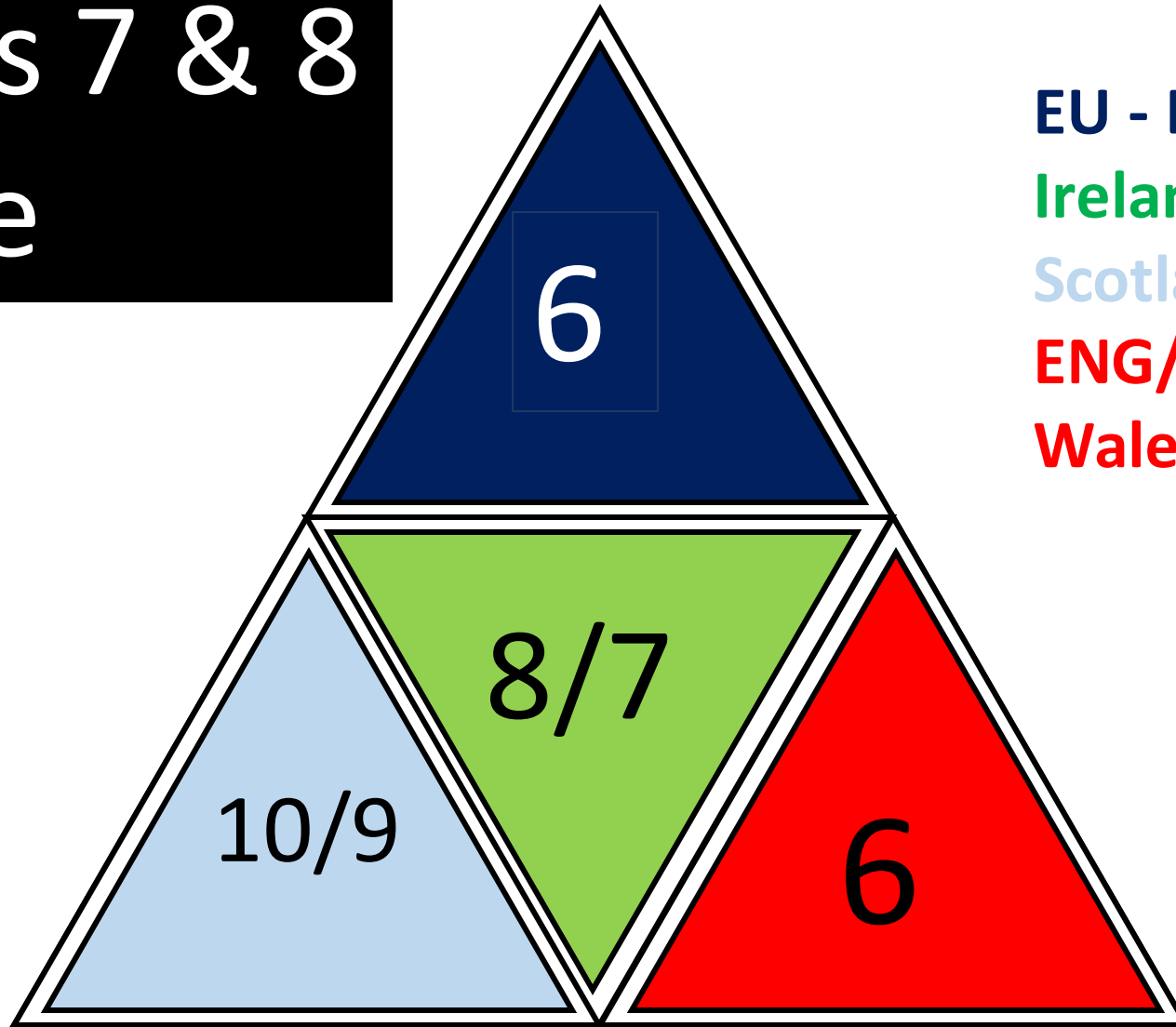
Ireland – NFQ - QQI

Scotland – SCQF

ENG/NI – FHEQ

Wales - CWFW

# Levels 7 & 8 White



EU - EQF

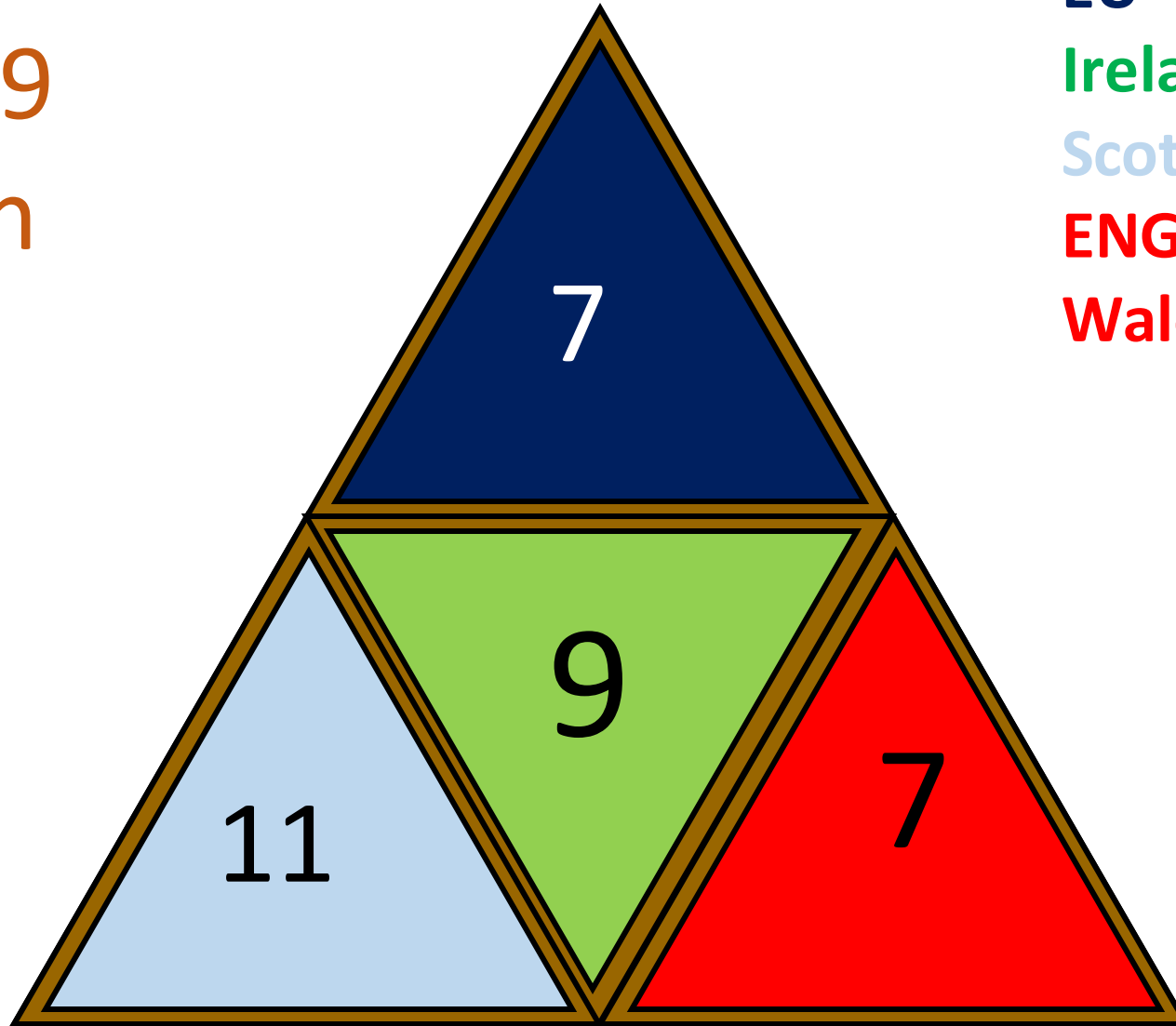
Ireland – NFQ - QQI

Scotland – SCQF

ENG/NI – FHEQ

Wales - CWFW

Level 9  
Brown



EU - EQF

Ireland – NFQ - QQI

Scotland – SCQF

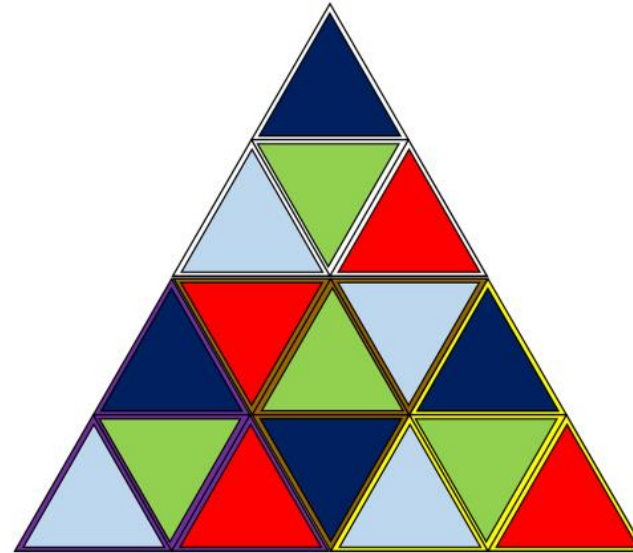
ENG/NI – FHEQ

Wales - CWFW

## References:

European Commission (2015) *ECTS Users' Guide*.  
Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European  
Union

QQI (2019) *Qualifications can Cross Boundaries - a  
guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and  
Ireland*, 7th Ed. Dublin QQI



Thank you

# Digital Skills Pathway

*Creating A Qualification Path For Various Career Stages*

Robert Farrell  
Program Lead – Digital Transformation  
Innopharma Education  
Nov 17<sup>th</sup> 2023



# Innopharma Education



Innopharma  
education

An award-winning education, research & technology institute for industry-led education and training programmes in the Pharmaceutical, Medtech, Food Science and Digital Transformation Industries



In conjunction with



Microsoft







# Agenda

- Introduction to Innopharma Education
- Digital Skills In Context
- Digital Skills Pathway
- Key Messages

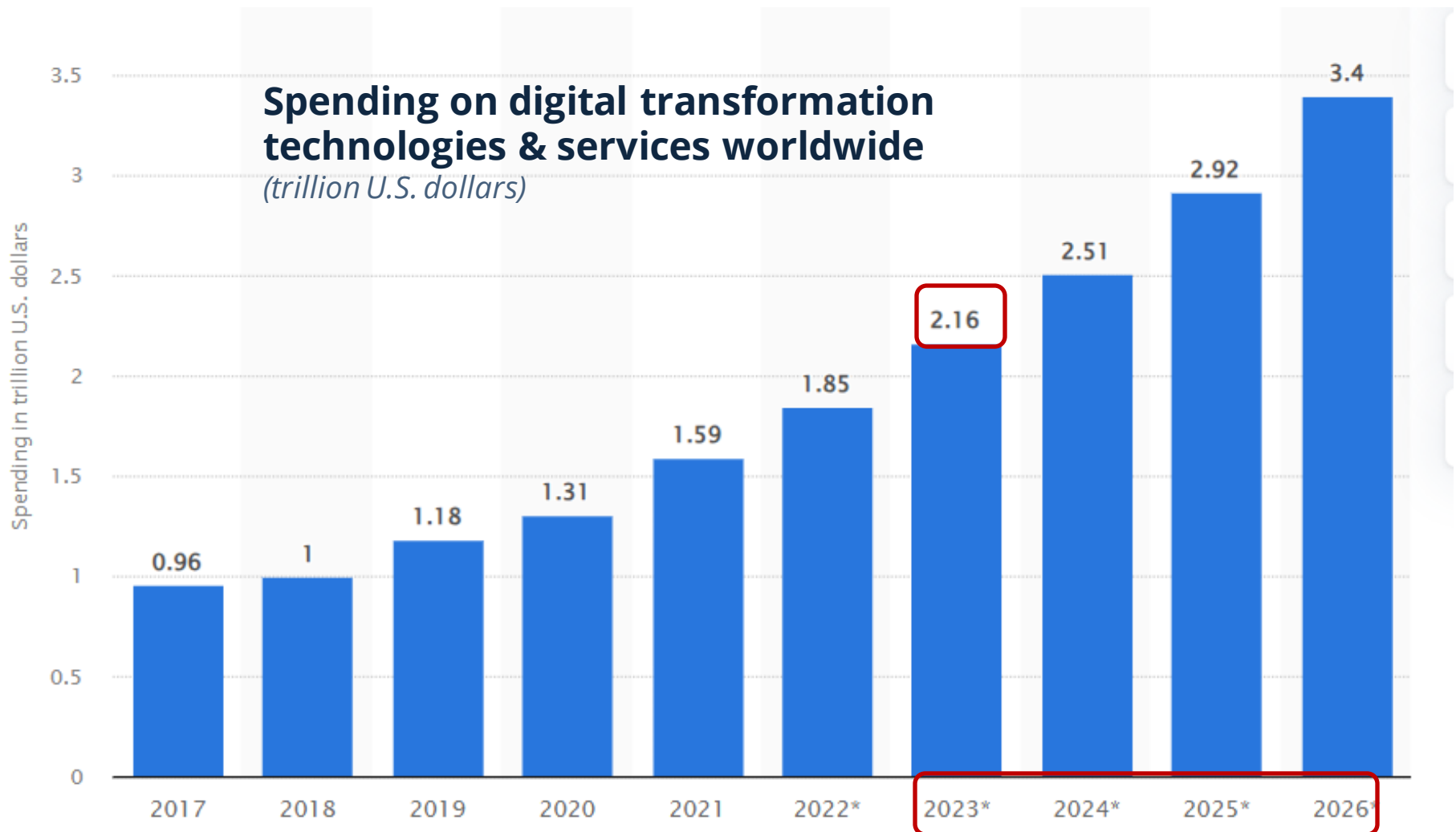
A black pen, a blue pencil, and a grey notebook are arranged on a light-colored wooden surface. The pen is at the top left, the pencil is below it, and the notebook is on the right side. The text 'Class Test' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

## **Class Test**

***How much \$ is spent annually on digital transformation technologies & services worldwide?***



# Digital Skills In Context



• • • • •

# Digital Skills In Context

**41%** of organisations say they lack the right digital skills

**30%** say they know which technologies to adopt

**70%** of Digital Transformation projects fail to achieve their goals

# Mapped to Organizations Transformation Journey





**Digitisation**

The process of making information available and accessible in a digital format.

**Digitalisation**

The process of considering how best to apply digitized information to simplify specific operations.

**Digital Transformation**

The process of devising new business applications that integrate all the digitized data and digitalized applications.




**Operator / Technician**



**Engineer / Project Manager /  
Data Scientists**

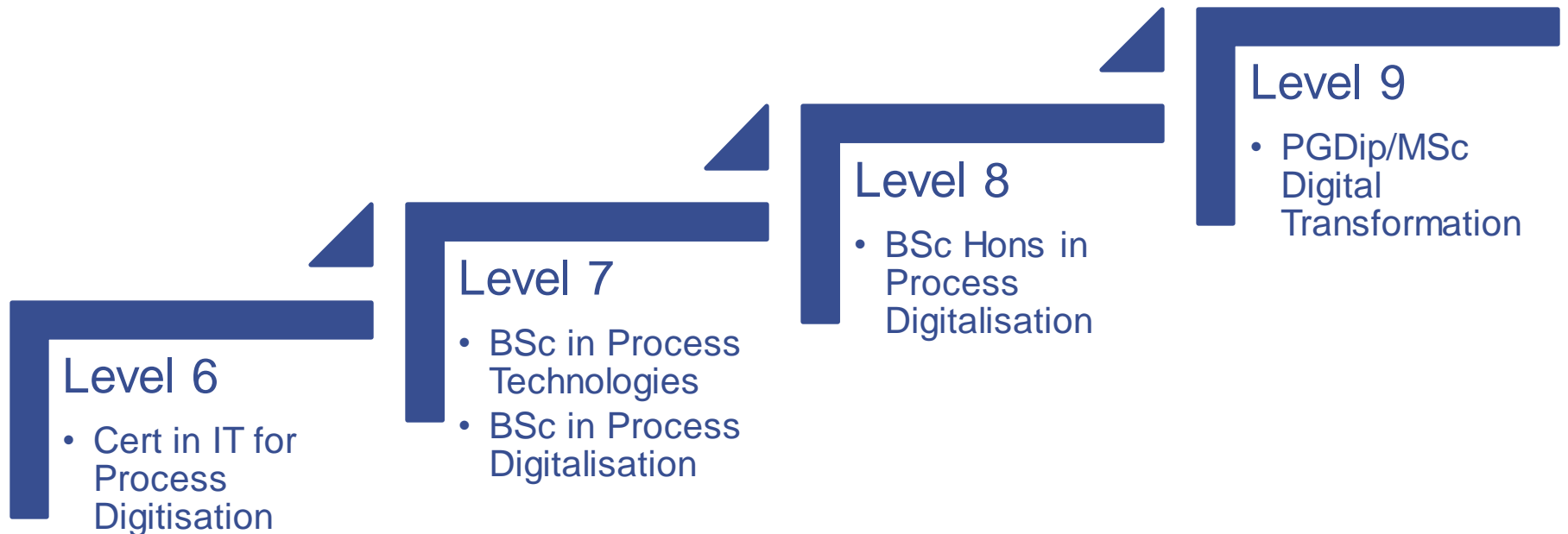


**Business Leaders /  
Transformation Agents**



# Digital Skills Pathway

***Aim:*** Create a ***pathway*** providing digital skills demanded by industry, that also ***aligns to learner career progression***





# Digital Skills Pathway

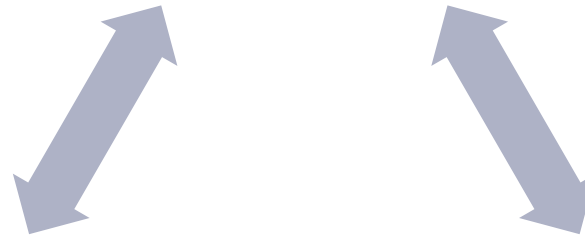
Program	Audience	Knowledge/Skills Developed
<b><u>L6 Certificate</u> Information Technology for Process Digitisation</b>	Operators & Technicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programming</li><li>• Computer Architecture</li><li>• Data Management &amp; Visualisation</li><li>• Information Technology and Automation</li></ul>
<b><u>L7 BSc</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process Technologies</li><li>• Process Digitalisation</li></ul>	QA & Process Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Technical Writing</li><li>• Operational Excellence/Lean</li><li>• Validation &amp; Quality Assurance</li><li>• Data Management &amp; Analysis</li></ul>
<b><u>L8 BSc (Hons)</u> Process Digitalisation</b>	Engineers & Business Improvement Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advanced Manufacturing &amp; Supply Chain</li><li>• Regulatory Affairs &amp; Validation</li><li>• Operational Excellence - Lean Sigma</li><li>• Control Systems and Real-Time Analytics</li></ul>
<b><u>L9 PGDip &amp; MSc</u> Digital Transformation</b>	Digital Transformation Managers & Data Scientists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advanced Manufacturing</li><li>• Business Case Development</li><li>• Strategy</li><li>• Big Data Management</li></ul>



# Balancing Stakeholder Needs

## Learner

- Programs align to entry, middle, senior roles
- Multiple entry & exit points



## Innopharma

- Facilitates learner retention & progression



## Industry

- Gain digital skills
- Aligns to org digital maturity



# Key Messages

1. Scaffolded programs **provide entry, exit and progression opportunities** for learners at various career stages
2. Programs can be aligned to the **needs of industry, learners** and along the NFQ
3. In addition to digital skills, programs must develop **broad learner skills** around business, transversal skills and CPD



# Thank You

Robert Farrell  
Program Lead – Digital Transformation  
Innopharma Education  
Nov 2023

SETU



# Leading in Adult Literacy and Education

Literacy Development Centre (LDC), South East Technological University

LDC



Meet the team at the  
**Literacy Development Centre**  
Department of Education  
SETU  
<https://www.wit.ie/schools/education/LDC>





## Innovative Programmes

Learner-centred  
teaching  
strategies

Remove and  
reduce barriers  
to learning

Reflection built  
into the  
assessment  
process



Collaboration

Communication

Creativity

Critical  
Thinking

**The 4'C's**

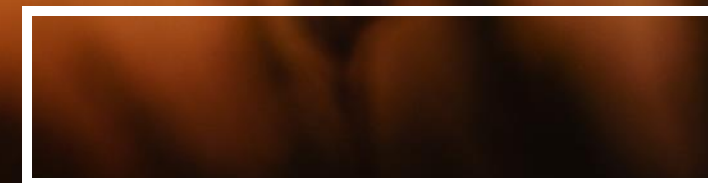
Dede (2010)

Practice-based research

Micro-  
credentials

EBSN Basic  
Skills Network

LDC Practice  
Based  
Research  
Symposium





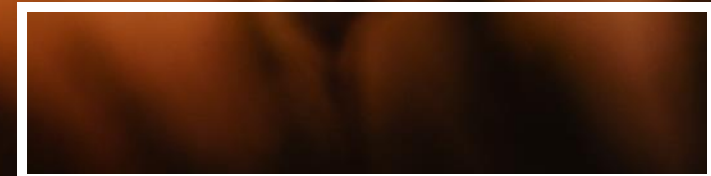
# LDC Stakeholders

SOLAS

All Strategy  
Office

FET Sector

ETBI



Literacy is still  
a challenge for  
our society

Basic Skills  
education and  
support is still a  
challenge for  
our society

LDC effective  
practice in  
facilitating the  
education of  
Tutors