

## MICROCREDENTIALS

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<b>Approval Authority</b>	President
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Provost and Vice-President Academic
<b>Related Policies / Legislation</b>	(64) Credentials (21) Undergraduate Course and Program Approval (209) Graduate Course and Program Approval (105) Course Credits

### PURPOSE

This policy establishes principles and procedures for the development and approval of short, non-credit, competency-based education and training at UFV.

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### SCOPE

This policy applies to educational offerings which fall outside of the Undergraduate Course and Program Approval Policy (21), the Graduate Course and Program Approval Policy (209), and the Credentials Policy (64).

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### DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Competency/Competency-based:** A competency is a specific unit of knowledge, skill, or ability that can be assessed and applied in a setting such as work. Competency-based learning is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and abilities that learners demonstrate in a range of specific contexts to certain standards.

**Credit:** A numeric value assigned to a course, based on both the hours of direct instruction and the coursework done outside of the classroom, which indicates the course's weight relative to courses across the university.

**Non-Credit:** A course or unit of learning for skill upgrading, professional development, certification, or personal enrichment that does not apply toward an undergraduate or graduate certificate, diploma, or degree.

**Digital Badge:** A type of digital credential that is an electronic record and means of recognizing successful completion of a smaller unit of learning, such as a micro-credential. It typically follows the open badge standard, composed of an image and accompanying structured information (metadata) to make it readily verifiable and shareable.

**Stacking:** Stacking refers to the ability to combine two or more micro-credentials into a larger program or component of learning.

**Micro-credential:** A micro-credential program is a short, non-credit, competency-based education and training experience that aligns with labour market and community needs and is recognized for employment or further learning.

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## **POLICY**

This policy provides statements in the form of principles and criteria that inform and regulate the design, structure, delivery, and value of micro-credentials at UFV.

### **A) Principles for the Establishment of a Micro-Credential:**

#### **1. Relevance**

Micro-credentials provide opportunities to quickly acquire in-demand skills and competencies that have stand-alone value for employment or further learning. To ensure relevance, market demand, and financial sustainability, appropriate labour market partners (employers, industry associations, regulatory authorities), First Nations and other Indigenous partners, and other community partners will be engaged in the identification, development, validation, and ongoing refinements of micro-credentials.

#### **2. Access**

Micro-credentials expand post-secondary access, support life-long learning, and increase opportunities for employment by providing affordable and flexible offerings that seek to reduce a range of potential barriers for diverse learners.

#### **3. Quality**

Micro-credentials are developed and assessed through a quality-driven process that assures learners of their value and facilitates recognition of learning by employers and post-secondary institutions.

#### **4. Clarity & Transparency**

Learners are informed of a) purpose; b) benefits; c) delivery; d) target competencies; e) prerequisite knowledge and skills; f) assessment and recognition of competencies in the context of employment and/or future learning pathways.

### **B) Criteria for the Establishment of a Micro-Credential:**

Micro-credentials meet all of the following criteria:

1. Have clearly defined goals, and associated competencies and learning outcomes.
2. Are relevant to specific labour market, industry, community, and/or Indigenous community needs.
3. Are 210 hours of instruction or less.
4. Include access requirements commensurate with the micro-credential's target competencies.
5. Are regularly reviewed through an institutional process using recognized program quality and financial viability standards.
6. Approved Microcredentials align with established UFV financial aid, budgetary, enrolment, and access procedures.

**C) Responsibilities:**

The Provost or designate is responsible for overseeing the development and approval of micro-credentials under this policy.

**PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS**

The following details procedures relevant to micro-credentials:

- A) The Provost or designate approves the initial proposals for the micro-credential.
- B) The Proponent/Working Group completes the following components of the MC Proposal Template with guidance and review by the office of the PDQA:
  1. **Micro-credential Overview**  
Description and purpose of the micro-credential.
  2. **Competencies and Learning Outcomes**  
Core competencies, alignment with institutional outcomes, and how it supports progression (stacking).
  3. **Access and Benefits for Learners**  
How the program improves access, lowers barriers, and contributes to learner or professional growth.
  4. **Consultation with Appropriate Audience and Labour Market Alignment**  
Intended learners, sectors/industries, labour market needs, and evidence of demand and financial viability (student and employer).

## 5. **Quality and Distinctiveness**

Confirmation that it meets competency-based micro-credential criteria and does not duplicate existing UFV offerings.

## 6. **Program Delivery and Resources**

Delivery format, instructor qualifications, required resources, and budget assessments are considerations.

- C) The Proponent/Working Group submits the completed MC Proposal Template for review and approval by the Dean or equivalent.
- D) Final approval rests with the Provost or designate.

## **DIGITAL BADGES**

- A) Digital badges, using the approved platform, may be offered by any UFV unit. The technology and tools used to create digital badges can also be used to maintain digital archives for participation in retreats, workshops, or conferences, such digital records are not digital badges as defined by this document. They are, instead, digital participation awards and are outside the scope of this policy governing the official UFV digital badge and its associated imagery.
- B) All costs associated with the design and development of digital badges and related metadata are the responsibility of the delivering department and must meet current UFV standards, policies, and agreements for digital badging.
- C) Digital badges are associated with learning demonstrated through participation in UFV learning activities and assessed according to UFV guidelines.
- D) Digital badges may be offered for a stand-alone competency, for a competency embedded in a micro-credential, or for completion of a micro-credential.
- E) Digital badges cannot be earned through assessment only (e.g., PLAR); they must be earned through a formal or informal UFV learning experience.
- F) Digital badges offered by UFV do not lead to the conferral of a degree as defined by UFV and will not be reflected on the UFV official transcript. All promotional materials and communications regarding UFV digital badges must clearly state this limitation.
- G) While elements of credit courses may relate to meeting digital badge requirements, badge completion is not a substitute for or component of course-credit coursework, nor are badges recorded on the University official transcript.
- H) A non-credit micro-credential is recognized with a digital badge or other record of achievement.