



# ADAPTATION OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS IN CURRENT WORKFORCE

HUMAN CAPITAL INSIGHTS REPORT

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**HRD**CORP  
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## INTRODUCTION

Development in the digital world has compelled the industry to evolve towards digitalisation, thus increasing the value of 'micro-credentials' to serve the current generation's needs. The workforce does not always have the skills needed to manage digital transformation. In their Future of Jobs Report 2020, the World Economic Forum (WEF) stated that skill gaps remain high, as in-demand skills across jobs change in the next five years. 94% of business leaders also report that they expect employees to pick up new skills on the job.

Micro-credentialing is one of the best ways to help the current workforce adapt to a technology-driven environment. This certification-style qualification is now sought after by many professionals from higher education, vocational training institution and major players in the technology industry. The micro-credentialing technique uses an informal learning style to shape specific skills in the quickest way possible. Employees can personalise their learning to their career goals and responsibilities. Once completed, learners will get digital badges to recognise their skills and as a way to visually document how the skills were obtained.

Other than that, micro-credentials can lead to a competitive environment among workers in an organisation. The courses' flexibility can help employers upskill their staff with the needed skills. With a short-term and cost-effective learning structure, it enables workers to get credentials specific to the selected focus area in an easy way. In order to better suit each employee's role, employers can also tailor training and evaluations that are closely tied to existing work practices. What differentiates micro-credentials from the usual training programme is that it encourages continuous learning and makes recognition of capabilities more accessible. This report will portray the progress of micro-credentials in Malaysia and HRD Corp's initiative towards adapting them for the current workforce.



### QUICK INFO

**Digital badge** is a validated indicator of an accomplishment, skill, quality or interest that can be earned in many learning environments.

*Source: Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC).*

## BASIC PRINCIPLES IN DEVELOPING MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Below are the key elements of micro-credential courses:

### Competency-Based

Micro-credentials allow educators to focus on discrete skills related to their practice and collect the evidence to demonstrate ability in that specific skill.

### Research-Based

Micro-credential skills are thoroughly researched, allowing educators to leverage findings demonstrated to improve their daily practice.

### Personalised

Micro-credentials allow you to pick up where you left off and move toward mastery and the practical application of skills.

### Shareable

Once learners earn micro-credentials, they can display their badges on professional platforms to signal their demonstrated competency.

### Job-Embedded

Micro-credentials focus on skills that are relevant to the daily practices that are demanded of educators.

### Self-Directed

Allow educators to work at their own pace, regardless of their starting point and take the next step towards competency.

*Source: The Friday Institute, "Seven Lesson Learned from Implementing Micro-credentials".*



## HOW MICRO-CREDENTIALS CAN IMPACT EMPLOYABILITY?

As of March 2022, the unemployment rate remains at 4.1%, indicating a continuously high number of unemployed people in Malaysia (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2022). Hence, more initiatives should be introduced to ensure that these groups are able to upskill and reskill to secure job placements. Nowadays, employees are motivated to seek learning that is perceived as practical, performance-based and provides professional advancement opportunities.

Micro-credentials could be a way to meet the demand for lifelong learning as employees nowadays tend to change jobs and only serve their employers for an average of 4.1 years (Economic News Release, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). This means that it is essential for employers to adapt micro-credentials in their organisations to cultivate continuous learning.

The Canadian Council for Aviation and Aerospace take micro-credentialing as a form of development for a resilient and multi-skilled workforce in the post-pandemic economy. The council recognises the movement of multi-skilled employees in the manufacturing, maintenance and repair, automotive and transportation industries. This strategy has increased employability and workers' mobility across Canada as it also facilitates the workforce needs in remote regions.

## MICRO-CREDENTIALS GOVERNANCE IN MALAYSIA

Micro-credential serves as an added value in making candidates the top choice of employers or to remain relevant in their careers by producing knowledgeable, valued and highly skilled workers. The Malaysia Qualification Agency (MQA) has issued the comprehensive Guidelines to Good Practices (GGP): Micro-credentials, which enables the unbundling of accredited programmes of higher education providers (HEPs) — making them accessible to non-traditional learners in line with the national lifelong and life-wide learning agenda. (Guidelines to Good Practices (GGP): Micro-credentials, MQA, July 2020). Higher education institutions as well as private providers have actively implemented this initiative, which is in line with the national agenda to promote flexible education. On the other hand, HRD Corp has initiated an industry-based micro-credential initiative that will assist Malaysians across all backgrounds to obtain stackable certifications through short-term learning.

## HRD CORP MICROCREDENTIAL

HRD Corp launched the nation's first industry-based micro-credential initiative for Malaysians on the 13th of April 2022. This collaborative effort between the Ministry of Human Resources and the Ministry of Higher Education was jointly launched by the Minister of Human Resources, Datuk Seri M. Saravanan and the Minister of Higher Education, Datuk Seri Dr. Noraini Ahmad.

HRD Corp Microcredential supports the Ministry's vision of enabling Malaysian talents to embrace lifelong learning and continuous professional skills development. The acceleration of digital transformation in Malaysia and around the world has opened up opportunities for anyone to upskill and embrace non-traditional career pathways and trajectories.

HRD Corp has engaged stakeholders such as training providers, industry players, professional bodies and higher learning institutions to create awareness and help them to develop their own micro-credential modules.

The HRD Corp Microcredential framework constitutes the development of modules across 24 skill areas including knowledge, skills, attitude and assessment of competencies that have been set by MQA, Jabatan Pembangunan Kemahiran (JPK) and professional bodies.

### QUICK INFO

#### EMPLOYMENT TREND WITH MICRO-CREDENTIAL



#### Skills-Based Hiring

Micro-credential digital badges make it easy for professionals to show exactly what skills and knowledge they bring to a new position and project.



#### Marketable Candidate

Micro-credentials help unemployed people to advertise their competency for certain job roles and how it will benefit employers to get a holistic view of the candidate for better hiring, training and promotion decision.



✓ HRD Corp Microcredential aims to award 50,000 micro-credentials across 24 skill areas by the end of 2022.

✓ Targeted to all Malaysians.

Source: HRD Corp Portal, News & Articles.



## OVERVIEW OF HRD CORP MICROCREDENTIALIAL

HRD Corp has successfully acknowledged over 11,493 micro-credentialial course applications developed by training providers from various industries within the one-and-a-half-month implementation of the initiative. This achievement indicates that training providers and industry players are aware and have taken prompt actions to develop courses specified to skill areas in order to help employers upskill their workers.

On a side note, based on the HRD Corp internal database tracking from 2020 to May 2022, all trainings related to micro-credentialial development under the HRD Corp Microcredentialial Focus Area were successfully conducted. The top skill areas are; linguistics (66%), followed by digitalisation (15%), sales, marketing, customer service and retail (5%) and quality and productivity (4%).

The development of more micro-credentialial courses will open up more opportunities for new talents and working adults to adopt lifelong learning and take continuous professional development skills through short-term courses.

**11,493**  
Total courses  
acknowledged

**13,224**  
Total course  
applications

more than  
**300**  
Micro-credentialial  
courses application  
rate per day in MiCAS

*Source: HRD Corp Micro-credentialial database (13 April 2022 - 31 May 2022)*

### Micro-credentialial Training Courses by HRD Corp

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advanced Analytical Investigation</li> <li>2. Advanced Digital Photography</li> <li>3. 20th Century Music Analysis</li> <li>4. Plant Pathology</li> <li>5. Action Research in Education</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Academic Writing for Foundation Studies</li> <li>7. Intermediate Biostatistics</li> <li>8. Public Health Data and Biology</li> <li>9. Architectural Documentation</li> <li>10. Maintaining Financial Records</li> </ol> |
|--|---|

## CONCLUSION

Micro-credentialial is a stepping stone for employees' growth as a tool for them to become experts in their field with short learning bite-sized certifications. In this digital era, this learning component of an accredited programme supports the professional, technical, and personal development of the employees. It also creates pathways for employees to achieve formal qualifications. Moreover, it is crucial in making lifelong learning a reality for Malaysians.

## REFERENCES

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