

Session 2 Multiple Ways of Developing Micro-credentials in Higher Education: Lessons from OECD Countries

Date: Aug, 25, 2022 (9:00-10:20)

Number of Participants: 5 (onsite), 10 (online)

Presenters:

Thomas Weko (Team Leader, Higher Education Policy, OECD)

Shizuka Kato (Analyst, Higher Education Policy, OECD)

Content:

Thomas and Shizuka shared key findings from the OECD's papers on micro-credentials - "[Micro-credential Innovations in Higher Education: Who, What and Why? \(2021\)](#)" and "[Quality and Value of Micro-credentials in Higher Education: Preparing for the Future \(2021\)](#)". Thomas started by sharing key characteristics of micro-credentials and general trends on learners' profiles. He then presented evidence from interviews with European higher education institutions about micro-credentials. Micro-credentials are considered by institutions as complements but not alternatives to traditional degree programs to increase responsiveness and support lifelong learning.

Shizuka shared the examples of higher education institutions providing micro-credential programs. There are generally two ways of developing micro-credential programs, developed on their own by building on existing programs or in partnerships with learning platforms, employers, and other higher education institutions. The cases of development on their own include a micro-degree program delivered by unbundling existing courses and as part of a bachelor's degree in Belgium, combining courses from different degree programs in Estonia, and non-degree continuing education micro-credentials program in Australia. Examples of development by the partnership include partnerships with government-led learning platforms, commercial learning platforms, employers, and higher education institutions within their own country or those in other countries.

Discussion:

"How do higher education institutions develop micro-credentials in your country/institution"?

Masahiro Inoue, Specially Appointed Professor, Keio University, shared the case of

global industry-academic collaboration in which the Japanese Society for Engineering Education (JSEE) and Shibaura Institute of Technology participate. It provides micro-credential of higher and recurrent education based on industry-academic collaboration using blended international mobility.

Alison Dittmer Croad, Principal Policy Analyst, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, also shared the case in New Zealand where the micro-credential serves higher productivity by its relevance to industry needs, contributes to social cohesion by its relevance to community needs, provides more flexible study pathways to improve skills, and increases equity for under-served learners.

Reporter

Yan Deng (Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies, Waseda University)