



**Final version** for signatures for the purposes of section 452 of the Education and Training Act 2020

NZQA Board: ..... Date:.....

Minister of Education: ..... Date:.....

# Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022

## 1. Authority

1.1 These Rules are made under section 452 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

## 2. Commencement

2.1 These Rules commence on the 28th day after the date of approval by the Minister under section 452(5) of the Education and Training Act 2020.

## 3. Interpretation

3.1 In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

**accreditation** means accreditation to provide an approved micro-credential under section 446A of the Act

**Act** means the Education and Training Act 2020

**approval** means approval of the content of a micro-credential under section 445 of the Act

**consent and moderation requirements** means the standard-setting body requirements listed for standards that relate to the particular skills and knowledge of teachers and assessors, any special resources required for assessing against the standards, learner access to resources, practical experience, and national external moderation

**credit recognition and transfer** means, in relation to a particular micro-credential, a formal process whereby credit for outcomes already achieved by a student in relation to a qualification or another micro-credential is recognised as credit for comparable outcomes in that particular micro-credential

**credit value** means the number of credits, with each credit representing 10 notional learning hours

**Directory** means the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards

**external evaluation and review**, or **EER**, means the quality assurance system known as EER that is set out in quality assurance rules from time to time made under section 452 of the Act

**institution** has the same meaning as in section 10(5) of the Act

**level** means any of levels 1 to 10 on the NZQCF

**level descriptors** means the descriptors used by NZQA to determine levels (*the descriptors are available on NZQA’s website*)

**micro-credential** has the same meaning as in section 10(1) of the Act

**NZQCF** means the Qualifications and Credentials Framework described in section 436 of the Act

**qualification** means a qualification listed on the NZQCF

**recognition of prior learning** means a process that involves formal assessment of a student’s relevant and current knowledge and skills (*gained through prior learning*) to determine achievement of learning outcomes of a micro-credential for the purpose of awarding credit towards that micro-credential; and for the avoidance of doubt it does not include credit recognition and transfer

**skill standard** has the same meaning as in section 10(1) of the Act

**standard-setting body** means an approved standard-setting body as described in section 438(1) of the Act

**Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance** means applying Te Hono o Te Kahurangi whare ako framework and quality assurance tools for micro-credential approval and accreditation, as that framework and those tools are published by NZQA from time to time on its website

**Universities New Zealand** means the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors’ Committee continued by section 311 of the Act

**WDC** means a workforce development council as defined in section 10(1) of the Act.

3.2 For the purpose of applying Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance, unless the context otherwise requires references in these Rules to:

- (a) “educational performance” are to be treated as references to “organisational performance”;
- (b) “self-assessment” are to be treated as references to “self-reflective practice”;
- (c) “Highly Confident” are to be treated as references to “He pounamu kahurangi”;
- (d) “Confident” are to be treated as references to “He pounamu whakairo”.

## Part 1

### Micro-credential content approval criteria and applications

#### 4. Criteria for approval of the content of micro-credentials for institutions under section 445 of the Act

4.1 The following are the criteria for approval of the content of micro-credentials for institutions:

Criterion 1	Title, aims and structure
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The micro-credential has an appropriate title, aim, learning outcomes, level and credit value. Its structure is coherent and the content meets the aim and learning outcomes.

Criterion 2	Standards
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Where suitable skill standards exist, they are included in the micro-credential.

**Criterion 3      Need and acceptability**

There is evidence of the need for the micro-credential. It is supported by stakeholders and, where appropriate, the relevant WDC.

**Criterion 4      Requirements**

Requirements for admission, credit recognition and transfer, recognition of prior learning, length and structure, assessment, reassessment and appeals, and completion are clearly set out.

Admission requirements are to contain the level of language proficiency or literacy needed.

**Criterion 5      Assessment and moderation**

Assessment methodologies are valid and appropriate for the assessment of student achievement, given the stated learning outcomes.

There is an effective system for moderation of assessment materials and decisions.

**Criterion 6      Ongoing review and monitoring**

There is an effective process for regular review of the micro-credential that assesses its currency and content and updates it accordingly.

There is an effective process for monitoring the quality of outcomes for learners and other stakeholders.

**5. Applications for approval of micro-credentials**

- 5.1. Applications by institutions for approval of micro-credentials must contain information that demonstrates the micro-credential meets the criteria specified in rule 4.1.
- 5.2. Applications by universities for micro-credential approval must be made to Universities New Zealand.

**Part 2**

**Accreditation criteria and applications**

**6. Criteria for accreditation of institutions to provide approved micro-credentials under section 446A of the Act**

- 6.1 The following are the criteria for accreditation of institutions to provide approved micro-credentials:

**Criterion 1      Delivery**

What will be delivered is clearly set out, coherent, appropriate for the level and the needs of intended learners, and supports achievement of the learning outcomes. How it will be delivered is appropriate for type of institution that the applicant is, for the delivery modes, and for the location or situation of the intended learners.

**Criterion 2      Assessment and moderation**

The institution has the capability and capacity to ensure assessment materials and

decisions are fair, valid, consistent and appropriate for the level and the stated learning outcomes.

#### Criterion 3 Resources

The institution has the capability and capacity to deliver of the micro-credential, including suitably qualified or experienced staff, facilities, educational and physical resources, and student support services.

#### Criterion 4 Review

There must be adequate and effective review of the delivery of the micro-credential (*including outcomes for students*) and the institution's capability to provide the micro-credential.

### 7. Applications for accreditation to provide approved micro-credentials

- 7.1 Applications by institutions for accreditation to provide approved micro-credentials must contain information that demonstrates the institution meets the criteria specified in rule 6.1.
- 7.2 Where the micro-credential for which accreditation is sought includes assessment of standards listed on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards, and the applicant is not the holder of a consent to assess against those standards under section 449 of the Act, the applicant must also provide evidence of the applicant's ability to meet the consent and moderation requirements for those standards.
- 7.3 Applications by universities for accreditation to provide an approved micro-credential must be made to Universities New Zealand.

## Part 3

### Granting of micro-credential approval and accreditation

#### 8. Granting of micro-credential approval and granting of accreditation to institutions (*other than universities*)

- 8.1 NZQA will advise applicant institutions (*other than universities*) if any of the details in the application require further work.
- 8.2 NZQA may establish a panel to assess the application.
- 8.3 NZQA may carry out a site visit for accreditation applications.
- 8.4 Where NZQA is satisfied with the details in the relevant application, NZQA will grant, and advise the applicant institution of, accreditation to provide the approved micro-credential.
- 8.5 Where NZQA is not satisfied with the details in the application, NZQA will not approve the application, and will advise the applicant.
- 8.6 NZQA will publish on its website up to date and appropriate details of approved micro-credentials and details of institutions accredited to provide approved micro-credentials.

#### 9. Granting of micro-credential approval and granting of accreditation to universities

- 9.1 Where satisfied with the content of an application, Universities New Zealand will, under section 453 of the Act and in accordance with any procedures set up for inter- university course approval and moderation under section 312(a) of the Act, grant the relevant:
  - (a) micro-credential approval:

- (b) accreditation.

## **Part 4**

### **Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance**

#### **10. Requests for Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance**

- 10.1 When applying for micro-credential approval or accreditation, an applicant may request that Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance is used for assessment of the application.
- 10.2 An applicant making a request under rule 10.1, in addition to providing the relevant information required under Rules 4 to 7, must provide the information that the Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance framework and tools require.
- 10.3 NZQA will evaluate a request made under rule 10.1, together with the information supplied, in accordance with Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance.

## **Part 5**

### **Maintaining micro-credential approval and accreditation**

#### **11. Requirements to be met to maintain micro-credential approval**

- 11.1 To continue to maintain a micro-credential approval, institutions must ensure the criteria specified in rule 4.1 continue to be met:

#### **12. Requirements to be met to maintain accreditation**

- 12.1 To continue to maintain accreditation to provide an approved micro-credential, institutions (*other than universities*) must:
  - (a) ensure the criteria specified in rule 6.1 continue to be met:
  - (b) ensure regular reviews of the provision of the micro-credential are undertaken:
  - (c) participate and cooperate in external evaluation and review.
  - (d) where requested by NZQA, participate and co-operate in micro-credential monitoring, which may include visits to the institution.
- 12.2 To continue to maintain accreditation to provide a micro-credential, universities must:
  - (a) ensure the criteria specified within rule 6.1 continue to be met:
  - (b) ensure regular reviews of the provision of the micro-credential are undertaken.
- 12.3 Where the micro-credential to which the accreditation relates contains standards, institutions must continue to comply with rules made under section 452(1)(c) for the purposes of maintaining the consent to assess for those standards.

## **Part 6**

### **Changes to approved micro-credentials and accreditation**

#### **13. Changes to approved micro-credentials and accreditation**

- 13.1 NZQA consent is required for changes to the following elements of approved micro-credentials:
  - (a) learning outcomes, level or credit value, or structure approved under Criterion 1 of rule 4.1:
  - (b) standards included under Criterion 2 of rule 4.1:

- (c) requirements for admission, assessment, length, structure or completion approved under Criterion 4 of rule 4.1:
  - (d) assessment or moderation under Criterion 5 of rule 4.1.
- 13.2 NZQA consent is required for changes to the following elements of accreditation to provide micro-credentials:
- (a) the content or delivery modes approved under Criterion 1 of rule 6.1:
  - (b) assessment or moderation under Criterion 2 of rule 6.1.

## Part 7

### Miscellaneous requirements

#### 14. Use of sub-contractors by institutions (*other than universities*) to provide approved micro-credentials

- 14.1 Where an institution (*other than a university*) proposes to use a sub-contractor to provide an approved micro-credential or part of an approved micro-credential on the institution's behalf, and the institution and the sub-contractor are both accredited to provide the micro-credential (*or part*), the institution must notify NZQA of the sub-contracting arrangement prior to the micro-credential (*or part*) being provided, and supply the following information with that notification:
- (a) a copy of the sub-contracting agreement which must outline the responsibilities and obligations of the parties:
  - (b) the duration of the arrangement:
  - (c) the reasons for the arrangement:
  - (d) confirmation that any advertising and other information provided to prospective students clearly shows that the study or training involved is provided under a sub-contracting arrangement.
- 14.2 Where an institution (*other than a university*) proposes to use a sub-contractor to provide an approved micro-credential or part of an approved micro-credential that the institution is accredited to provide, and the sub-contractor does not itself hold accreditation, the institution must apply to NZQA for approval to engage the sub-contractor prior to any provision of the micro-credential (*or part*) by the sub-contractor.
- 14.3 Applications under rule 14.2 for approval to engage the sub-contractor must include the following information:
- (a) the name of the sub-contractor:
  - (b) identification of the micro-credential(s) or part(s) to be provided under the arrangement:
  - (c) the rationale for the proposed sub-contracting arrangement:
  - (d) a copy of the sub-contracting arrangement between the institution and the sub-contractor:
  - (e) evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution.
- 14.4 NZQA will grant approval to an application under rule 14.2 where it is satisfied that:
- (a) the institution remains responsible for the sub-contractor meeting all of the institution's obligations that are relevant for the accreditation:
  - (b) the sub-contractor will meet all relevant obligations in the Act and in rules made under section 452 of the Act in relation to the provision of the micro-credential:
  - (c) there is a formal documented arrangement between the holder and the sub-

contractor that includes provisions to ensure that NZQA is able to exercise its quality assurance and enforcement powers and functions in respect of the acts or omissions of the sub-contractor relating to the provision of the micro-credential:

- (d) the information and advertising for the study or training clearly states that it is provided through a sub-contracting arrangement:
- (e) all student enrolments are through the institution, and the institution maintains all student enrolment and academic information.

14.5 To continue to maintain approval under rule 14.4 an institution must ensure the sub-contracting is conducted at all times in accordance with the requirements set out in paragraphs (a) to (e) of rule 14.4.

14.6 The use of sub-contractors by universities will be governed by decisions of Universities New Zealand under rule 9.1 and under other powers it may exercise under section 453 of the Act.

## 15. Special reviews

15.1 NZQA will give an institution (*other than a university*) reasonable notice of any special review NZQA intends to undertake in relation to a micro-credential approval or an accreditation of the institution to provide an approved micro-credential.

15.2 Notice under rule 15.1 will be given where:

- (a) NZQA from time to time carries out a review of any micro-credentials to which clause 80 of Schedule 1 of the Act applies (*which were formerly training schemes*):
- (b) concerns about the micro-credential approval or accreditation are raised with NZQA:
- (c) concerns otherwise come to the attention of NZQA.

15.3 The institution must provide relevant information and otherwise cooperate with NZQA for the purposes of the special review.

## 16. Revocations

16.1 The Training Scheme Rules 2021 are revoked.

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