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# LEARNING OUTCOMES & STANDARDS

Updating the European Guidelines for Validation: Making validation a reality in Europe. 24/11/2021  
[PANEL D. Complementary routes to certification]

## WHAT I WILL COVER

1. Main points on these aspects in the current European Guidelines
1. Changing context: alternative credentials
1. Updating the European Guidelines: some considerations

Will make reference to some developments and initiatives in the EU, but also Asia and USA

# 1

## Current EUROPEAN GUIDELINES

Main points

### Section 3.4 in particular

#### Same or equivalent standards

As in formal education. Differences in standards can lead to different **esteem** of qualifications obtained through validation and other qualifications (not clear, too weak, outdated, etc.). **Occupational and educational-training** standards are relevant. "Many approaches to validation (...) tend to relate to the second category"

#### Inputs to Outcomes (LOs)

Shift from inputs to outcomes: Learning **outcomes** based standards (what a candidate is expected to know and to do) **facilitate validation**, as the same outcome can be achieved in various ways. Then discusses the **balance** between **narrow and general** and job tasks and generic skills and competences, and the need for updating.

## 2

### Guidelines context: **ALTERNATIVE CREDENTIALS**

Changes in the qualifications landscape in which validation operates (micro-credentials, badges, etc.)

**Microcredentials  
help to validate**

Aided by:

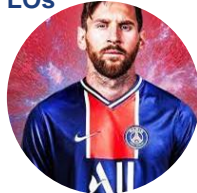
Often no entry requirements

Do not check whether you  
have followed the course

Can get a certification



## On the other hand: is this awkward when talking about non-formal learning and LOs



**Lionel Messi**

Messi playing for PSG



**Michael Jordan**

Playing for the Washington Wizards

" A micro-credential is a proof of the **learning outcomes** that a learner has acquired following a **short learning experience**. These learning outcomes have been assessed against transparent **standards**" (European Commission, 2020, p.10).

But definitions of micro-credentials generally do not say much about those learning outcomes and standards. What identifies them from other credentials above is duration (**inputs**): unlike e.g. the difference between secondary qualifications & BA which is vertical on the outcomes, etc.

Different degrees of **formality**: which ones are formal education and which ones are not?

What is **new** compared to previous, often stackable, forms of micro-credentials?

Predominantly a **HE** phenomenon, with less penetration in other levels of education (including VET).

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## Dual recognition and co-owning the standard

Micro-credentials that are non-formal learning will benefit from links with formal education (**validation**) -see LinkedIn Model- because their value in the labour market is hampered by the fact that they are not well understood by many employers (Gallagher). Otherwise those with currency will be restricted to industry leaders (Google, IBM, LinkedIn itself, etc.)

LinkedIn

Your advantages with LinkedIn

LinkedIn Learning with academic credit

Playbook

### How it works



Find a partner university below and see which Learning Paths they endorse.

Alternatively, browse the list of Learning Paths qualifying for academic credit and select one to start.



Upon completion of your chosen Learning Path, you will receive a certificate of completion from LinkedIn.

You can then share it with a university partner for next steps (check out the respective university's program website for detail).



After successfully completing the university's assessment of your learning, you will receive a confirmation from the university.

You can now use the academic credit for their programs upon enrollment.

LinkedIn

Your advantages

### LinkedIn Learning with academic credit

Get official academic credit for your learning, accepted by universities worldwide.

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## New stakeholders to engage in the debate.

New stakeholders as well (platforms/ private companies like 2u, that has just acquired EdX). Because of reach, name, scalability and their collaboration with both educational institutions and industry they [have a say on standards](#)

Through certification individuals obtain proof from an **authorised body** that they have achieved learning outcomes to a given standard.

Guidelines “Occupational and educational-training standards are relevant: many approaches to validation (...) tend to relate to the second category” Needs to be re-thought, as [companies and brokers](#) increasingly enter the micro-credential space (Google, IBM, etc. are 2u partners) at least in some areas.

[VIEW ALL NEWS](#)

## 2U, Inc. Announces Acquisition of edX Assets

06/29/2021

- Outlines terms and expected financial impact of transaction
- Transaction to be funded with existing cash, including proceeds from new \$475 million senior secured Term Loan B
- Affirms full-year 2021 financial guidance

LANHAM, Md., June 29, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- 2U, Inc. (Nasdaq: TWOU), a global leader in education technology, today announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire substantially all of edX's assets, including the edX brand, website, and marketplace, for \$800 million in cash consideration. A joint release from 2U and edX with details of the transaction's benefits to students, universities, and the future of higher education can be found at: [transformingdigitaleducation.com/press-release](https://transformingdigitaleducation.com/press-release).

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## New stakeholders to engage in the debate

### LHUB Learning eXperience Platform (LXP)

*Introducing Singapore's largest subscription-based online learning mobile application*

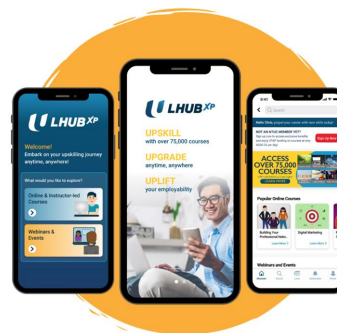
Gain access to our libraries of courses which are specially curated according to NTUC LearningHub's proprietary research on the in-demand skills coveted by employers in Singapore.

Give your employability a booster today!

[Browse Pricing Plans](#)

Not the only ones

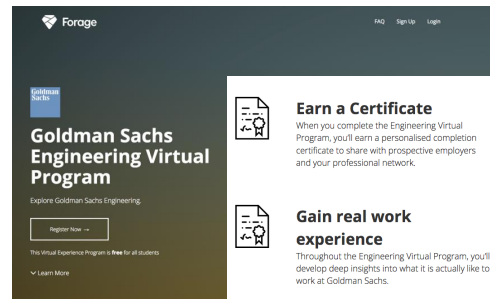
NTUC (National [Trades Union Congress](#) Singapore) LearningHub launched the Learning eXperience Platform app this month with more than 75,000 'bite size' learning experiences.



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## Characteristics & Quality Standards

Virtual work experience programmes  
2-6 hours



Practical skills you will gain from working on this module: > 7, 500 reviews

Cryptography basics Password cracking Password best-practice

Compare your work with real model solutions created by the Goldman Sachs team.

Recommend to give credit for them (Australia)/ consider them as independent qualifications?

At what point/ after meeting what **quality standards** (see NZQA on quality standards for micro-credentials) and requirements, for example in terms of duration?

Should there be a **register** of quality assured micro-credentials or providers? **Who checks this?** Regional/ national authority? EU authority? Decentralised to educational institutions through their partnerships?

There is a need to **link** with and influence developments such as the European Approach to Micro-Credentials.

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# 3

## Updating the EUROPEAN GUIDELINES

Some additional issues for consideration in LOs & standards

## Updating the guidelines

### 3.1

The guidelines have a job in clarifying these issues and enabling links with these stakeholders.

There are other issues too.



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## Updating the guidelines

### 3.2

Occupational standards

Educational standards

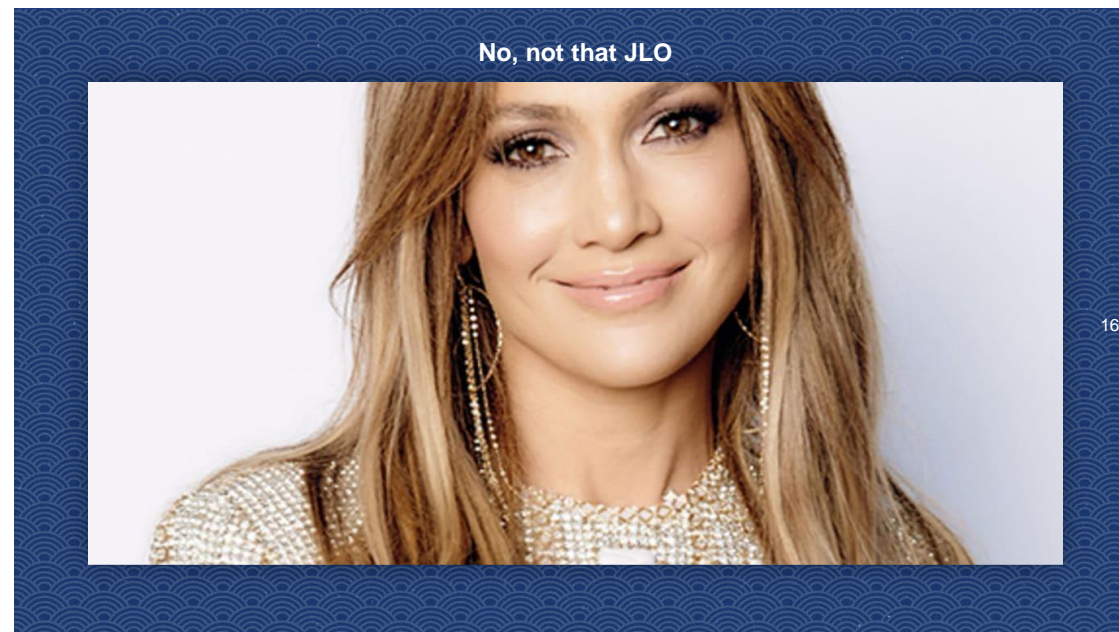
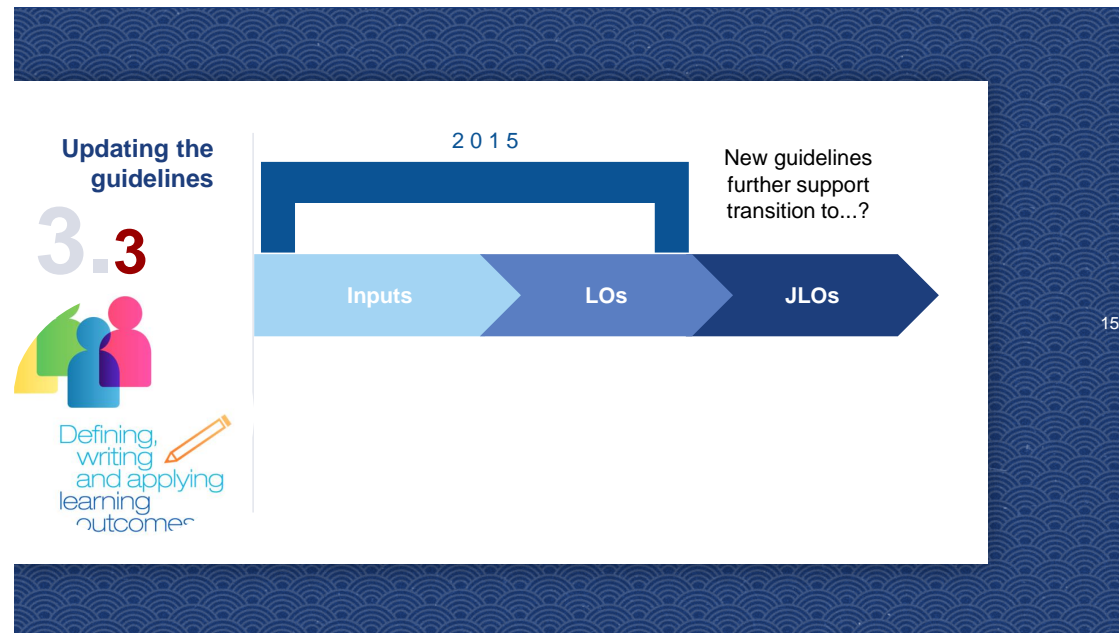
Assessment standards?

What are the minimum requirements in terms of learner identification, for example for these to enable trusted validation?

What is the role of the assessor and its identity as a professional, when those doing the assessment are algorithms working on hundreds of thousands of learners?

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**“Journeable”  
learning  
outcomes  
(JLOs)**

**LOs are not automatically transparent and enable journeys  
-geographical & sectoral**

### Language

Not easy to translate precisely for individuals to other languages; translations may be available in English but not everyone understands it -although it is the closest we have to a common language

### Sector

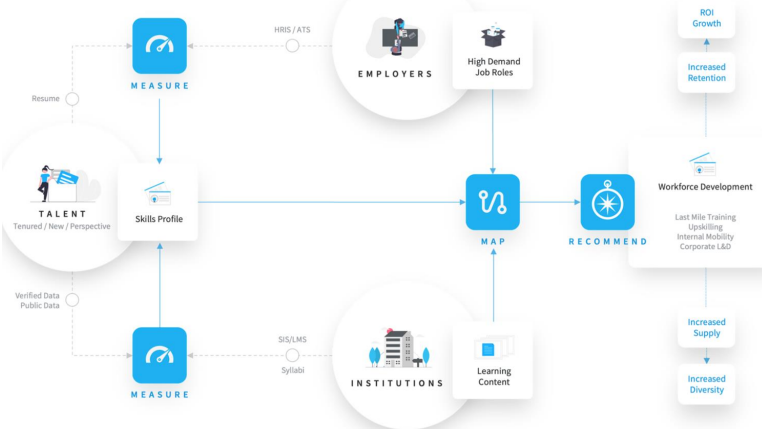
From education to work.  
We need a common language too.  
Can we achieve it?  
How?

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**What is the  
support  
infrastructure  
needed for the  
guidelines?  
How to  
connect them  
with other  
initiatives?**

**3.4**

**AstrumU (USA)**



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## Support infrastructure (II)

### In progress

HeadAI and Tampere Universities' community: Natural Language Processing algorithms analyse [job adverts](#) and extract real time information on [skills demand in the labour market](#).

This is then compared to skills in educational programme descriptions, extracted from [curricula and study programmes](#). Then both are visualised in [competence maps](#), which [can also be used to compare the content of different educational programmes](#) (including macro and micro-credentials)

### European-wide?

Skills OVATE job vacancies database?

Can be integrated with guidelines to support policy-makers and practitioners (education, HR development, etc.)?

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## Support infrastructure (III)

Which ones through validation? What LOs do they cover? To what standard? Linked to the guidelines and [European Inventory on validation](#)

Almost 1 million unique credentials of various types in the USA - including around [10,000](#) microcredentials and [550,000](#) badges, course completion certificates, licenses, certifications, and apprenticeships



I WANT TO: Publish | Understand | Partner

### The Solution

A common description language that allows YOU to search, discover, and compare every type and level of credential

Comprehensive information about content, quality indicators, connections, pathways, outcomes, and value

[Learn more about how we address quality →](#)

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# THANK YOU!

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