

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS A GUIDE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF REGARDING MICRO-CREDENTIALS

What are micro-credentials?

Micro-credentials are:

- Evidence of learning achieved through a short, assessed learning experience;
 - Stackable, portable or transferable; and
 - Recognised awards.
-

What are the benefits of micro-credentials?

Increase flexibility and access to learning:

- Micro-credentials can enable flexible access to higher education.
- Allow students to study smaller and area focused study-units.

Respond quickly to workforce and industry needs:

- Micro-credentials may be designed specifically to address skills gaps.
- Reskill or upskill the workforce with industry relevant content.

Provide stackable pathways to degrees:

- Micro-credentials may be stackable and transferred toward Certificates, Diplomas or degrees.

Recognise specific competencies and achievements:

- Micro-credentials focus on specific learning outcomes and clearly signal what a student can do.
 - Expand UM's reach and relevance:
 - Serving new learners promoting equity and inclusion.
 - Strengthening industry partnerships.
-

What is the purpose of offering study-units as micro-credentials?

The purpose of micro-credentials is to make UM's offerings more flexible, responsive, inclusive, and skills-focused, while still maintaining academic quality and providing pathways into formal qualifications.

What types of micro-credentials exist?

The University of Malta offers several types of micro-credentials which are offered against a fee:

Existing Study-Units:

Offered to visiting students without enrolling in a full degree programme, either alongside regular students or to targeted audiences

Stand-Alone Study-Units:

Can be existing or newly designed study-units:

- Offered separately to the public or third parties; or
- Created for specific groups on request (bespoke)

Short Course Awards:

A number of thematic study-units (not exceeding 25 ECTS credits in total) with clear overarching learning outcomes.

PLAS (Programme in the Liberal Arts and Sciences):

Independent stand-alone study-units offered by the Centre for Liberal Arts & Sciences in a wide range of areas.

What is the approval process for new micro-credentials (new study-units) to be offered?**Step 1:**

Single study-units: Submit an approval [form](#).

Short course (multiple study-units): Submit a proposal [form](#) + approval [forms](#) for each study-unit.

Forms are to be submitted by FICS to apgru@um.edu.mt.

Step 2:

Once approved, the FICS administrator is to request the study-unit availability of this new micro-credential by sending an email to studyunits.sims@um.edu.mt.

Step3:

A request to offer the study-unit as a micro-credential can be submitted by the FICS administrator / academic either through the [eSIMS](#) portal or in the case of bespoke study-units by contacting the Admissions & Records Office at microcredentials@um.edu.mt.

What is the approval process for micro-credentials (existing taught study-units)?

If the study-unit already exists, the FICS administrator / academic is required to submit a request via the eSIMS portal to offer it as a micro-credential. If the study-unit is not available, the FICS administrator is to request the study-unit availability by sending an email to studyunits.sims@um.edu.mt

Can any study-unit be offered as a micro-credential?

While the majority of our taught study-units can be offered as micro-credentials, it is not recommended to offer all study-units within a programme as micro-credentials at the same time. FICS should ideally enter into discussions with potential stakeholders to identify the learning needs of learners from outside the University, and focus on determining which study-units are likely to attract interest and meet the specific learning needs of such individuals/industries.

When existing study-units are offered to specific target groups (e.g. working professionals), a separate occurrence of the study-unit should be created by sending a request to studyunits.sims@um.edu.mt. Once the study-unit availability is created, the FICS administrator / academic shall submit the request to offer the micro-credential through the eSIMS portal.

Micro-credential study-units are not available as auditing study-units.

Where can one find the list of micro-credentials?

The list of micro-credentials is available [here](#)

Who can apply for are micro-credentials?

Anyone looking to upskill or reskill in bite sized pieces that have value at the workplace or to further studies through a flexible learning pathway. The eligibility is indicated in the respective description of the [micro-credential](#).

How can one apply for a micro-credential?

Applications for registration can be submitted through the [micro-credentials](#) tab on the Course Finder. However, when a micro-credential is offered to a specific target audience, the link to the online application is provided by ARO to the FICS / entity requesting the service.

Do students pay to follow a micro-credential?

Yes, registration for lectures and assessment of a micro-credential is subject to a registration fee as established by the University through the Finance Office, which is either paid by the applicant upon submission of the online application or through their respective sponsor. The fee is indicated in the respective description of the [micro-credential](#).

When should an assessment of a micro-credential be scheduled?

If a micro-credential is a study-unit which features in one of our programmes, the assessment session is to be the same as that for the "regular" courses.

For micro-credentials offered on an exclusive basis (e.g., for a specific client), assessments may be scheduled outside the assessment session provided that there is agreement from all relevant parties and subject to the approval of the Academic Registrar and Rector.

How many assessment opportunities/attempts does a micro-credential have?

Students are entitled to two assessment opportunities/attempts in order to achieve a pass mark in a micro-credential study-unit, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

- *First Assessment*: Held at the end of the semester in which the study-unit is offered or in some cases, when the study-unit is completed. For bespoke study-units the assessment can be held outside of our regular assessment periods.

- *Second Assessment*: If the student is absent or fails the first assessment, a second assessment is normally offered during the September assessment session, or at the next available session. For bespoke study-units the re-assessment can be held outside of our regular assessment periods.

What happens if students do not achieve a pass mark at both assessment opportunities/attempts?

In such cases, students may re-register against payment for the study-unit in the following academic year (or when it is next offered) and will be entitled to two new assessment opportunities/attempts.

What happens if a student misses the assessment of a micro-credential?

The [Regulations for Micro-credentials, 2024](#) do not specifically address absences from assessments or non-submission of assignments. In such cases:

- For undergraduate micro-credentials, the [General Regulations for Undergraduate Awards](#) apply;
 - For postgraduate micro-credentials, [General Regulations for Postgraduate Awards](#) and the [Assessment Regulations](#) apply.
-

Can a student be barred from an assessment because of non-attendance to lectures?

Yes, students can be barred from assessments of a micro-credential if they do not attend lectures regularly, since attendance is compulsory. This may be applied provided that the lecturer concerned has a valid justification for doing so and records of the attendance sheets are kept regularly.

Can students follow again a micro-credential that they have already passed?

As a general rule, students should not be allowed to register for a micro-credential which they have already successfully completed. However, depending on the nature of the micro-credential, if applicants wish to update their knowledge with evolving content, subject to approval, they may be allowed to follow lectures as auditing students but will be precluded from taking the assessment.

If, on the other hand, 7 years would have elapsed from the award of the credit, then, students can be allowed to follow the micro-credential once again and sit for the assessment. The period of 7 years reflects the academic applicability and relevance.

Can students transfer micro-credentials to programmes?

Yes. Successfully completed micro-credential study-units can be transferred to a programme upon approval by the respective FICS Board, provided that it is comparable in level and content to the study-unit that it will be replacing.

Can a student defer a micro-credential?

Deferrals may be granted at the discretion of the Academic Registrar only in cases deemed duly justified, such as cases of hospitalisation and serious illness, and only when the micro-credential is offered on a regular basis. In such cases, the tuition fees applicable at the time that the study-unit is next offered will apply. The University will retain the original fees paid, and students will be required to pay any due difference in fees. FICS will determine whether continuous assessment marks may be carried forward.

What kind of certification is provided upon completion?

Upon successful completion of any type of micro-credential, students will receive a document certifying their achievement. To facilitate this process, the following documents in hard copy should be forwarded by the manager / officer in charge to the Office of the Registrar for the Academic Registrar's consideration:

- A copy of the signed agreed result sheet, as signed by all the appointed members of the Board of Examiners,
- A result sheet for the signature of the Academic Registrar

This process is essential to initiate the issuance of completion documents. Once finalised, these documents will be sent to the respective FICS for distribution to students.

Do Short Course Awards carry a postnominal?

No, there are no postnominals for Short Course Awards.

Can a sponsor receive a student's result or certificate?

Yes, in cases where the applicant's fees are covered by a sponsor, a copy of the result may be provided to the sponsor, provided that the student is fully aware of such dissemination of information. Additionally, the sponsor is permitted to distribute the certificate of achievement to the respective applicants.

If the external entity does not sponsor/pay the applicant's fees, a copy of the result is not normally provided, unless with the approval of the students.

What if a student does not complete all the study-units in a short course?

In this case, a transcript will be issued showing the completed study-units, with a note stating that the short course award was not obtained.

Where can I obtain further information about micro-credentials?

For further information, one can refer to the [Regulations for Micro-Credentials](#) and to the [Guidelines for the Offering of Micro-credentials](#) or send an email to: microcredentials@um.edu.mt

13th February, 2026.

*Romina Sammut
Office of the Registrar.*
