



CAULLT

COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIAN UNIVERSITY
LEADERS IN LEARNING AND TEACHING

CAULLT Grant Final Report

1. Project details

Title of project:

Towards A Common, Transferable Australasian Higher Education Microcredentialing Framework for Professional Learning in Teaching, Learning and Leadership.

Amount of funding awarded: \$ 8000

Project leader / team members:

- **Leads:** Gina Saliba, Assoc. Prof. Jo-Anne Chuck and Prof. Simon Bedford (WSU).
- **Team:** Prof. Maree Dinan-Thompson (JCU), Assoc. Prof. Andrea Lynch (JCU), Liz Branigan (LaTrobe), Dr. Shannon Johnston (Murdoch) Dr. Ann Luzeckyj (Flinders).
- **Project support:** Dr. Rosemary Nicolson, Gill Cowden

2. Project Overview

Aims/ objective:

This project built on the CAULLT supported grant: "[Taxonomy for Credentialing Australasian University Educators \(TCAUE\)](#)". It aimed to test the feasibility of current professional learning activities/programs at an institution to deliver the [TCAUE Associate University Educator](#) credential. It is proposed that microcredentials (MC) in the six TCAUE focus areas (*General Capabilities, Learner-centred Learning and Teaching, Technology-enhanced Learning, Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Data and Evaluation, Policy and Governance*) would stack to make the final TCAUE credential. An additional *integrative element* is needed to ensure that educators can engage-apply-evaluate across the MCs, a model to encourage the use of inquiry, connected knowledge and skill development evidenced via scholarship, practice and reflection. It was not the intent of the project to propose additional activities to institutions but to reflect on whether current activities could be aligned with the requirements for MCs.

The project was pivoted during execution due to the release of the [DESE Australian National Framework for Microcredentials](#) and the publishing of the e-book [Taxonomy for Credentialing Australasian University Educators \(TCAUE\)](#) (Dinan-Thompson *et al.*, 2022). National sector discussions on the appetite for transferable credentials including the role of CAULLT in endorsement and oversight occurred in parallel and were taken into consideration.

The project evaluated the focus area of *Learning Outcomes and Assessment* because of its high-risk profile for all institutions. This includes supporting students and their learning, assurance of learning standards, legislative/accreditation requirements and maintaining institutional reputation. Assessment can also drive institutional strategies -e.g. authentic assessment, co-creation strategies with partners

including students, accessibility, equity and transferable skill development. As an area highly impacted during the pandemic, it was also assumed that recent investment in staff professional learning would have included upskilling in contemporary practice and multimodal delivery.

The methodology and resources used in the project also provide a road map for institutional leaders to undertake their own evaluation.

Phases and activities:

Table 1: Phases aligned activities and responsibilities.

Phase	Activity	Project Leads	Project Team	Project Officers
1	Recruitment of Project Support	X		
	Template Development	X	review	X
2	Data Collection			X
	Data Evaluation	X		X
	Institutional Alignment/Considerations, and Impact	X		
3	Writing of Artifact- Book Chapter	X	For review	
All	Presentations	X	X	

Phase 1. Project Establishment and Resource Development

Templates were developed for institutional data collection of the attributes of professional learning activities. Data collected included content, learning outcomes, assessment, Volume of Learning (VoL), AQF level/targeted audience, mode of delivery and the existence of an assessment/completion event. Other templates allowed for benchmarking with the outcomes of two [CAUT MOOC](#) modules; “Assessment” and “Feedback for Learning”. These resources were needed to be altered based on changes to the final TCAUE focus areas and the Australian National MC Framework.

Phase 2: Mapping Outcomes and Implications

The data sources included scanning archived documentation and review of resources associated with activities. The integrity of data collection was confirmed by staff who designed and delivered the activities. Alignment with the MOOC outcomes allowed identification of a core set of activities which on completion, would deliver content and learning outcomes. The aggregated VoL was consistent with that proposed for a focus area MC (approx. 15 h). The proposed integration into an institution wide credentialling project, including being recognised as prior learning into a Graduate Certificate/Diploma was also reviewed.

Phase 3: Dissemination

Presentations and co-presentations with the TCAUE project team (see Section 3, Project Outcomes) promoted discussion on the proposed TCAUE model and institutional capacity. A chapter has been written for inclusion in the TCAUE e-book as a case study.

3. Project Outcomes

Summary of project outcomes and deliverables/outputs

1. A case study on the development of a benchmarked MC in the TCAUE focus area of Learning Outcomes and Assessment fully has been articulated for inclusion in the TCAUE e-book- *Taxonomy for Credentialing Australasian University Educators (TCAUE) (Dinan-Thompson et al., 2022).*

It was determined that medium sized institution (Western Sydney University) with limited resources already provides staff with professional learning to meet the content and learning requirements of the MC. This also included alignment with the VoL and depth of learning expected for stacking to the TCAUE credential. The MC also aligned with institutional MC strategies, credentialing frameworks and policies.

The outcomes from the case study did reveal the need to move some strategic targeted activities to being part of a mainstream calendar of events (e.g., targeted workshops on a new Assessment Policy).

A major impediment to implementation was the assessment of learning within the MC. This would require additional resources for development and marking to ensure learning, scalability and accessibility. Mechanisms for internal data collection will also be needed to be available and visible to staff including supervisors, promotion and award panels, and human resource departments.

2. *A roadmap providing a method and templates to apply or modify allowing institutional self-assessment of their capacity to deliver microcredentials aligned to the TCAUE focus areas.*
3. *Fostering the on-going discussions on the development of a transportable professional development credential which may be overseen and endorsed by CAULLT via co-presentations with the leads of the Taxonomy for Credentialing Australasian University Educators (TCAUE) project (CAULLT executive, group, and national communities of practices (e.g., HES).*
4. *A set of recommendations for further work including for the future progression of the TCAUE credential.*

List of project dissemination to date (include the CAULLT conference at which the project was presented)

- CAULLT executive presentation: Aug 2021.
- CAULLT grant project group presentation: June 2022.
- HES Quality Forum presentation: Oct 2022.
- CAULLT Executive presentation: Oct 2022.
- CAULLT Conference webinar: 16 June 2023.

Plans for ongoing dissemination

1. The incorporation of the attached draft artifact into a chapter of the e-book *Taxonomy for Credentialing Australasian University Educators* (TCAUE) (Dinan-Thompson *et al.*, 2022).
2. Based on the decision on the future of TCAUE credential, the project outcomes will be included in presentations, including the proposed new Directors of T&L community of practice.

Outline of benefits to CAULLT members

The TCAUE credentialing model of professional learning covers the six key teaching and learning focus areas within 120-150 h Volume of Learning: a significant commitment for delivery and staff engagement. The project allows members to reflect on a granular investigation into the institutional impact of breaking this down into MCs within an environment where the sector and intuitions are using MCs to strategically to support learner engagement.

The project allows CAULLT members and Teaching and Learning Leaders to use the outcomes, methods and resources provided as a road map to evaluate the impact for their own University.

The project also further informs the narrative on the role of CAULLT in the future of the TCAUE credential. By having additional models of institutional impact, highlighting flexibility and assurance of learning through completion of MCs gives members more insight into the strengths of the proposed credential.

Impact of the project to date –

See above, and ongoing dissemination and uptake.

4. Budget

Expenditure tabled against original budget.

- *Original Budget:* HEWL 7.1/ Research Assistant (Doctoral Qual Rate T) x 0.5FTE (3.5hrs/day x 1 day per week x 32 weeks x \$62.58/h). **\$8,124.00**

Expanded project budget – funded by Western Sydney

- HEWL 7.4/ Research Assistant: casual \$73.39/h x 27 h **\$1,982.00**

TOTAL = \$8,124.00 + \$1,982 = \$10,105.00

Recommendations emerging or Key Learnings

- The project successfully demonstrated that a medium sized institution like Western Sydney University with limited resources, already provides staff with professional learning to meet the content and learning requirements of a MC in *Learning Outcomes and Assessment* using the CAUT MOOC for benchmarking. This also included alignment with the VoL and depth of learning expected for aggregation towards the TCAUE credential.
- The major impediment to implementation is the assessment of learning within the MC and the credential. This is mandatory for all credentialed /badged professional learning. Additional resources and staff workload will be needed including new tools for development of assessment tasks including feedback. This is to ensure scalability and accessibility as it becomes mainstream as a professional development strategy.
- Assessment tasks should be authentic based on skill demonstration. This is supported by Carey and Stefaniak, 2018 indicating that staff value credentials awarded for participation as less meaningful compared to those which are skill-based with evidence of mastery and an evaluation criterion.
- Mechanisms for internal data collection of completed MCs would need to be developed and visible to staff including supervisors, promotion and award panels, and human resource departments.
- This project did not consider whether there should be any threshold MC completions before engagement with more nuanced MCs (e.g., Technology-enhanced Learning). A recommendation for discussion is whether completion of the *General Capabilities* MC should precede completion of other MCs. This may need contextualisation based on onboarding activities and other programs at institutions.

- A deliberation throughout this project was the complementary, but different role that fellowships such as Advance HE, SEDA and HERDSA provide. The fellowships typically recognise scholarship and impact through reflective and evidence-based evaluation. The completion of professional learning incentivised through MCs (and ultimately the TCAUE credential) supports fellowship applications rather than replacing them, including encouraging scaffolded learning and engagement as applicants move through fellowship categories.

Recommendations:


1. That a set of agreed learning outcomes are developed for the TCAUE credential, and subsequent MCs. This would require benchmarking and consultation across the sector including other professional bodies (e.g., ASCILITE, AAIN, others).
2. CAULLT alone or in conjunction with other professional organizations (e.g., HERDSA) endorse the TCAUE credential and subsequently the MC framework. This would require resources and an operational model for oversight, peer evaluation and record keeping.
3. That institutions use the outcome of this project to reflect on the status of their professional learning across the six TCAUE focus areas, identifying alignment or gaps. This provides the impetus to develop new activities or direct staff to appropriate resources (e.g., CAUT MOOC). It also allows staff to recognize the scope of intended professional development.
4. That the institution that delivers and assesses the integrative project completion task issues the TCAUE credential, based on internal records of MC completions and/or recognition of prior learning.
5. That consideration be given to the scaffolding of the MCs within the credential. This may be institution specific given on-boarding and orientation programs.
6. Though intended as a proof of concept, the methodology and provided templates should be used and modified for institutional level evaluation of capacity and capability to deliver the MCs.

6. References

Carey, K. L., & Stefaniak, J. E. (2018). An exploration of the utility of digital badging in higher education settings. *Education Tech Research Dev*, **66**, 1211–1229. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-018-9602-1>

Dinan-Thompson, M., Lynch, A., Cowden, G., Bedford, S., Branigan, L., Cary, L., Johnston, S., Luzeckyj, A., & Saliba, G. (2022). Taxonomy for credentialing Australasian university educators: Certified professional learning in higher education. James Cook University. <https://jcu.pressbooks.pub/tcaue>

Project Leader

Name	Jo-Anne Chuck
Signature	
Date	31/03/2024