

## Micro-Credentials

### Information Sheet and Descriptor

#### Definition (working)

**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. The proof is contained in a certified document that lists the name of the holder, the achieved learning outcomes, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the qualifications framework level and the credits gained. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared, are portable and may be combined into larger credentials or qualifications. They are underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards (**working definition approved by HCI Steering, 11 February 2021**).**

Micro-credentials – range of credits from 2.5\* ECTS, 5 ECTS, 10 ECTS.

\*Note: for the 2021/22 academic year micro-credentials will consist of 5 ECTS or 10 ECTS.

#### Micro-credentials:

- Consist of credit offered for continuing/professional development purposes.
- Are specifically designed to upskill the workforce.
- May be stackable.
- Offer flexible delivery to meet the needs of industry, business and employees.

**MC = Micro-Credential**

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### HCI Pillar 3

#### Micro-Credentials: Descriptor

HCI Cluster and Work Package for the proposed micro-credential:	Cluster 1: Work-package 1
To whom will the micro-credential be offered?	Specify the <i>specific industry/profession targeted</i> : Professionals and managers working in human services and human service organisations in the public, private and community and voluntary sectors. Human services include social work, social care work, healthcare and education.
Micro-credential title:	Digital Technologies in Human Services
Is the proposed micro-credential a new or existing module (repurposed)?	New module/MC
<b>(For Existing Modules Only)</b>	
Existing module detail	<p><b><i>If this is an existing module to be repurposed as a micro-credential, please respond to the questions below.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>If not, proceed to the next section.</i></b></p> <p>State the name of the module and programme (<i>and enclose module descriptor if available</i>): Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>Is the module shared with another discipline/School? If so, name the discipline/School: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p><b>Existing Module details:</b> Select UG or PG.</p> <p>State year group.</p> <p>No. of ECTS of module: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>NFQ level: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>



	<p>School (owner and discipline): Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>Module coordinator: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>Code in SITS: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p><i>If changes are required to the existing module so that it can exist coherently as a micro-credential please give details (please also outline how the existing module will meet the criteria of a micro-credential in terms of meeting the needs of industry and, providing flexible delivery):</i></p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	
<b>Micro-credential information</b>		
NFQ level (if applicable)	9	PG
ECTS	<p>Note: 5 ECTS: 100–125 hrs student effort (PG: 1 ECT: 25 hrs student effort)</p> <p>10</p>	
School (owner) and discipline	School of Social Work and Social Policy	
MC Coordinator (name) <i>(Must be academic / teaching staff)</i>	Dr Julie Byrne, Assistant Professor (Part-Time) in Online Education and Development	
State other Schools/external organisations involved in the delivery of the micro-credential (if applicable)	n/a	
Industry/profession	<p><b>Specify the industry/profession targeted by the micro-credential:</b></p> <p>A wide range of professionals and managers involved in the provision of human services and working for public sector, private or civil society employers. Human services include; social work, social care work, healthcare, education. The MC will also be relevant to those aspiring to work or upskilling to work in human services.</p>	



**What market need is addressed by the micro-credential:**

The module is designed to meet the digital skill needs of professionals working in human services such as social work and social care work and those who manage such services. Firstly, the module aims to increase learners' awareness of the use of digital technologies in human services and then to increase their ability to assess the benefits and challenges of implementing technology in human service work. Learners will develop practice skills through the evaluation of technology's impact on professional practice e.g. reach and social presence, privacy, boundaries, risk and relationship management. *The European Commission's European Skills Agenda* highlights digital skills as an essential market need for Europe to reap the benefits of the digital transition outlined in the *European Digital Strategy*. This strategy is part of a broader policy agenda within the European Union to restructure domains of social life around digital communication and media infrastructures (Brennen & Kreiss, 2016). This policy drive towards digitisation outlined in the Commission's *Shaping Europe's Digital Future* (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en>) encompasses social and human services.

**State the industry/employer-related skills addressed by the micro-**

**credential:** The European Commission's *Digital Education Action Plan* highlights the need for digital skills, at both basic and advanced levels. Although there are numerous supports for digital skill development in business and for professions such as marketing, professionals and managers working in the 'industry' of social or human services do not receive as much support or attention. For example, the report by the British Association for Social Work (2019) on the digital capabilities of social workers found weaknesses in their digital readiness for practice and that awareness of the benefits and impacts of digital technologies on practice was required (<https://www.scie.org.uk/social-work/digital-capabilities/stakeholders/findings>).

Despite these weaknesses in the preparation for practice, regulators recognise the ubiquity of technology, particularly social media, in professional practice. People working in professions such as social work, social care work or medicine must adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics issued by their regulatory authority which requires them to use technology and social media responsibly. This requires enhanced practice skills to manage risk, boundaries and relationships in a way that is cognisant of technology's impact. Managers of human services must attune themselves to the scope of technology use to enhance access, quality and efficiency in services. However, they must also be aware of the impact of technology use so that appropriate supports and guidelines are available for staff.



**How will the delivery of this micro-credential facilitate industry/professional staff participation (flexible delivery – online/blended/face-to-face – evenings/weekends etc)?**

module will be delivered entirely online and draws on the online learning model currently used on the School's fully online programmes and CPD offerings. The learning model allows for a significant portion of independent study to be done each week by learners at a time and place that suits them, i.e.

1. Prepare Task: The learner is given a task to prepare for engagement with the core theory and didactic material presented that week (e.g. paper to read, case to reflect on, video to watch etc). This may involve posting in the Discussion Forum, Blog or Learning Journal.
2. Study Task: The learner engages with animated presentations with audio voice over. These offer an explanation of the core theory and didactic material for the module divided into a series of topics.
3. Apply Task: The learner is given a task designed to link the learning from that week's topic to a human services setting with which the learner is familiar e.g. as a staff member, volunteer, or service user. This may involve posting in the Discussion Forum, Blog or Learning Journal.
4. Reflect Task: The learner is given a task designed to require their reflection on elements of the learning from that week's topic. This may involve posting in the Learning Journal or Blog.
5. Extend Task: The learner is presented with a variety of resources including policy papers, empirical studies, case studies to help extend and develop learning on the topic.

Having completed activities 1-4, each week, learners will come together as a group in a live online class (max. 30) to discuss key topics and exercises, share experiences and perspectives and get feedback on tasks. All materials and learning tasks will be provided in Blackboard (or the College's VLE in place at the time of delivery) and live online sessions will take place in Blackboard Collaborate (or the College VLE equivalent at the time of delivery).

The module will be delivered over a condensed six-week period to facilitate the engagement of professional and managerial learners. There are a number of asynchronous activities each week which learners can complete at a time that suits them. The only fixed time commitment on this module is a two-hour live class each week which will take place online between 7-9pm on Tuesday evenings. Learners need to allocate additional time for the preparation of an assignment. The assignment will build on learning from case studies, readings, application, and reflection exercises completed weekly and discussed, consolidated and extended in class. In this way learners can develop their assignment incrementally over the duration of the module, linking their learning in class to a human service setting with which they are familiar.



Teaching staff & if appropriate institutional/industry affiliation	Name all teaching staff involved and if external, the name of the organisation. Dr Julie Byrne		
Min./max. number of students	Min. number of students: 15 Max. number of students: 60		
Mode of delivery	Online Any further details:		
MC entry & admission requirements/pre-requisites (if applicable)	Honours degree at 2.1 level. Experience of working in a human services setting as a professional or manager e.g. social work, social care work.		
Proposed commencement date	February 2022		
Micro-credential frequency, duration and term	Frequency of delivery during the academic year: 1	Duration of the MC (e.g. 6 weeks). If block delivery applies provide details: 6 weeks	Indicate term(s): Michaelmas <input type="checkbox"/> Hilary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trinity <input type="checkbox"/>
Contact and independent study hours (include total)	(1 ECTS = 25 hrs) Note: contact hours also relate to online delivery. 12 hours of recorded lectures 12 hours of live online classes in groups of 30 (6 weeks x 2hrs) 48 hours of asynchronous learning activities including exercises and readings to supplement learning from recorded lectures and facilitate participation in live online classes 178 hours of independent study incl. assessment preparation		
Micro-credential aims	The use of digital technologies in the provision of human services such as social work, health and education has gained momentum following the 'pivot' in response to Covid-19. Supported by a European and national policy agenda driving digital transformation, human services are increasingly delivered and managed partly or wholly using such technologies. Service provision and user communication frequently draws on technologies such as video conferencing and social media. Forecasting of human service need and monitoring of provision uses so called 'big data'. Looking ahead, the future of many jobs and professions will be influenced by machine learning and artificial intelligence. The professionals who provide human services and those who manage them, must navigate numerous challenges arising from the use of technology. Although technology can extend the reach and social presence of human		



	<p>services and increase access to scarce or centralised services, it can raise concerns regarding privacy, boundary management, relationship development and skills.</p> <p>This module aims to provide learners with an understanding of the policy context and other drivers of digital technology use in human services and the considerable scope for the use of such technologies in human service delivery. The organisations which provide human services display distinctive features such as co-production with service users and they operate in complex contexts subject to statutory regulation and political influence. The module aims to facilitate an assessment of the benefits and challenges associated with technology use given these factors and evaluate the impact of technology use on stakeholders in human services. Learners will engage directly with the benefits and challenges of digital technologies for their own employers through the module.</p>
Micro-credential learning outcomes (approx. 5)	<p>Resources: <a href="#">Academic Practice</a> and <a href="#">QQI</a></p> <p><i>Note: Learning outcomes should stem from and align with the MC aims and start with an explicit and assessable verb.</i></p> <p>On successful completion of this micro-credential, learners will be able to:</p> <p>LO 1 Identify the policy context and other drivers of digital technology use in human services and human service organisations.</p> <p>LO 2 Explain the nature and scope of digital technologies use in human services.</p> <p>LO 3 Assess the benefits and challenges associated with the use of technology in human services mindful of the distinctiveness of human service organisations and their context.</p> <p>LO 4 Evaluate the impact of technology use on key stakeholders such as professionals and service users.</p>
MC content areas. <i>(Bullet points can be used)</i>  If the MC (or components) will be delivered in a blended format, identify the content that will be delivered online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy context and drivers of technology use; digital transformation, innovation; public service efficiency</li><li>• Nature of human services and human service organisations; co-production, relationship importance, unpredictable outcomes, efficiency vs effectiveness</li><li>• Stakeholders in human services; service users, staff, funders</li><li>• Context of human services; regulation, public vs private sector, political influence</li><li>• Nature of digital technologies' use in human services; interventions, communications, record keeping, outcome measurement</li><li>• Benefits and challenges of digital technology use in human services</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of technology use on stakeholders; ethical considerations e.g., privacy, boundaries, risk, surveillance, and skill considerations e.g., competent use</li> </ul>
<p>Teaching and Learning Methods (state pedagogical approach).</p> <p>Include the online environment(s) to deliver the MC e.g. Blackboard/Zoom, if appropriate.</p>	<p>Resources: <a href="#">Academic Practice</a></p> <p>The learning outcomes are supported by asynchronous learning activities including recorded lectures, readings, written exercises, videos and synchronous live online classes where the learners will meet as a group synchronously with the lecturer to discuss exercises, get feedback and consolidate learning.</p> <p>Asynchronous materials will be made available via Blackboard and synchronous live classes will take place in Collaborate Ultra.</p> <p>(See detail provided above in response to question ‘How will the delivery of this micro-credential facilitate industry/professional staff participation’)</p>
<p>MC assessment components</p> <p><i>Please include the following...</i></p> <p><i>How will the MC be assessed?</i></p> <p><i>Indicate the LO assessed for each assessment (e.g. LO1 etc.)</i></p> <p><i>Indicate the % of overall mark each assessment is worth.</i></p> <p><i>Indicate if summative/formative (e.g. essay/research paper)</i></p>	<p>Project -summative assessment (100%)</p> <p>The assessment for the module is an approximately, 2,500 word written proposal regarding the use of a digital technology in a human service. The proposal should be grounded in a review of published literature and applied to a specific human service and its given setting. The service and its setting should be one that is familiar to the learner e.g., as a staff member, volunteer, or service user.</p> <p>The proposal should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the nature of the digital technology proposed, how it would be used in the service and the factors, such as European or national policy, driving the proposal [Weighting 40% -LO1, LO2].</li> <li>Provide a balanced assessment of the anticipated benefits and challenges associated with the implementation of the technology [Weighting 30% -LO3].</li> <li>Evaluate the anticipated impact of the technology on two key stakeholders of the service to include service users, staff or funders [Weighting 30% -LO4].</li> </ul>
<p>State how the MC will be reassessed if failed</p>	<p>Repeat project outlined above in full.</p>
<p>Pass standard &amp; any special requirements for passing the MC</p>	<p>Resources: <a href="#">Calendar II</a> and <a href="#">Calendar III</a></p> <p>40% pass mark</p>
<p>Penalties for late submission</p>	<p>5% of mark awarded per week or part thereof.</p>
<p>Core reading (if applicable)</p>	<p>Byrne, J. &amp; Kirwan, G. (2019) Relationship-Based Social Work and Electronic Communication Technologies: Anticipation, Adaptation and Achievement,</p>





	<p><i>Journal of Social Work Practice</i>, 33(2), 217-232. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2019.1604499">https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2019.1604499</a></p> <p>Byrne, J., Kirwan, G. &amp; McGuckin, C. (2019) Social Media Surveillance in Social Work: Practice Realities and Ethical Implications, <i>Journal of Technology in Human Services</i>, 37(2-3), 142-158. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/15228835.2019.1584598">https://doi.org/10.1080/15228835.2019.1584598</a></p> <p><i>European Commission (2018) Communication on enabling the digital transformation of health and care in the Digital Single Market; empowering citizens and building a healthier society, COM (2018) 233 final, Brussels.</i></p> <p>Fenwick, T. and Edwards, R. (2006) Exploring the impact of digital technologies on professional responsibilities and education, <i>European Educational Research Journal</i>, 15(1), 117–131.</p> <p>Gardner, F. (2016) Working with human service organisations: creating connections for practice, Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Lember, V., Brandsen, T &amp; Tönurist. P. (2019) The potential impacts of digital technologies on co-production and co-creation, <i>Public Management Review</i>, 21(11), 1665-1686. DOI: <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2019.1619807">10.1080/14719037.2019.1619807</a></p> <p><i>Journal of Technology in Human Services.</i></p> <p>Reamer, F.G, (2017) Evolving Ethical Standards in the Digital Age, <i>Australian Social Work</i>, 70(2),148-159. DOI: <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2016.1146314">10.1080/0312407X.2016.1146314</a></p> <p>Susskind,R. &amp;Susskind, D. (2015) <i>The Future of the Professions: How Technology will Transform the Work of Human Experts</i>, Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p>
Are there subject experts in other Schools/disciplines?	No If yes, name of School and discipline <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a> Has the MC been discussed with the School/discipline and DUTL/DTLP? Choose Yes/No
Proposed student fee	External student fee €895



Trinity College Dublin  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

**Faculty Dean and School Executive Approval:**

Date of approval of the proposed micro-credential by the School Executive:

Date of approval of financial information by Faculty Dean:

Signed by Head of School:

Faculty Dean:

*Stephen Holt*

*Gail McEvoy.*

Date: 12.5.2021

Date: 12.5.2021 |