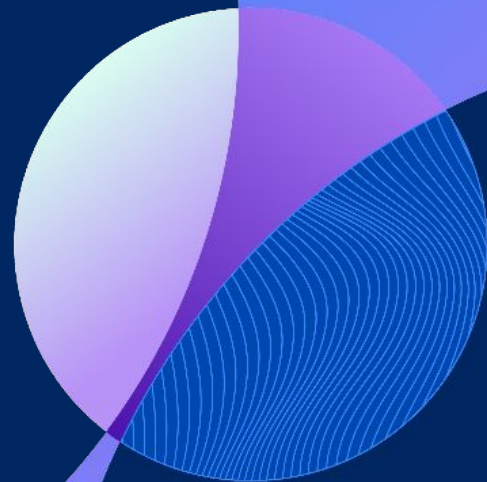


Plan Your Program

A five-step framework to guide your micro-credentials strategy



Learn how micro-credentials can enhance your curriculum

Successfully integrating micro-credentials into your existing courses requires a clear, structured approach.

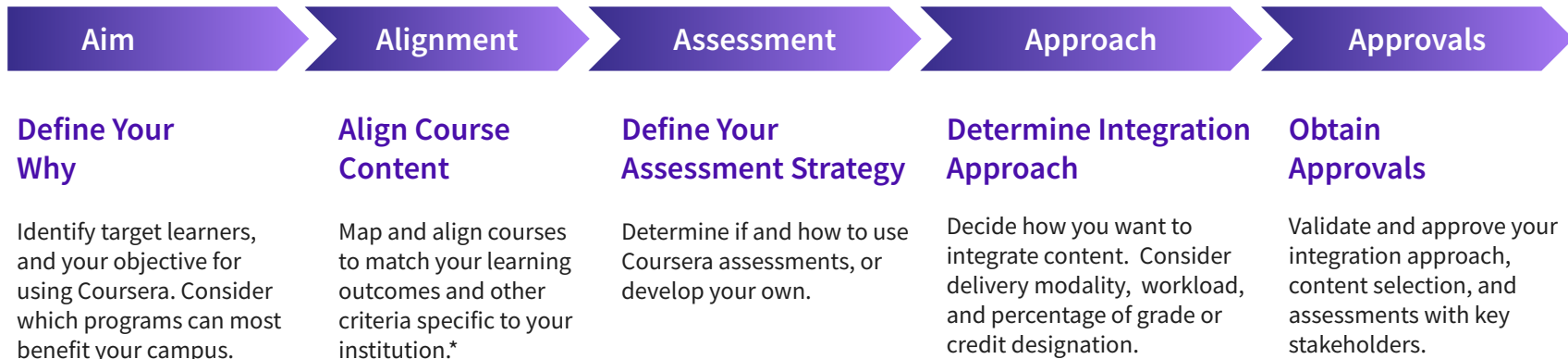
Use our five-step framework ahead to seamlessly enhance your curriculum with the industry-aligned content.

Each step ensures the content you select not only complements your current teaching, but also meaningfully improves learning outcomes.

01. Five-step framework

02. The anatomy of a trusted micro-credential

The 5 A's of curriculum integration



*Content Mapping support is available for specific types of partnerships.

Aim

Alignment

Assessment

Approach

Approvals

Aim: Why are you launching this program? What is the value for your institution? What challenges are you trying to solve for?

For ex. To increase student employability based on feedback from employers, to update curricula faster due to labor market shifts or technological change, etc.

Learners:

Who are your target learners?

For ex. 5,000+ university applicants, 1,000 first year undergraduate students, 150 master's students, etc.

Program Focus:

What programs do you want to focus on?

For ex. Business Administration, Software Development

Skill Focus: What skills do you want to target for each learner group?

For ex. Python programming, introduction to AI & generative AI, key soft skills aligned with university values

Aim

Alignment

Assessment

Approach

Approvals

The alignment process ensures that micro-credential content is effectively integrated into your existing courses, aligning specific competencies with course outcomes and assessments.

Decision points

1. Identify key components of your course(s)/curriculum

- The alignment process begins with **selecting the courses &/or programs** and understanding the **structure and key elements** of your course.
- Think about the **learning objectives**, major **topics**, and the **skills** your course/program is designed to develop. This step helps you evaluate **gaps** or **areas of overlap** when you later consider integrating micro-credential content.
- For example, in a business course, you might already cover **project management basics**, but a micro-credential could introduce advanced tools or real-world applications.

2. Evaluate and select your content

- Once you've defined your course's key components, the next step is to **select the right course/micro-credential** from Coursera's catalog.
- To select the right content, consider the core components of the micro-credential, including its **difficulty level** (beginner, intermediate, advanced), **number of hours**, **translation** (if non-English language content is needed) and how it aligns to the **skills and competencies** it offers.
- Again, look for **gaps and overlaps**. Where does the micro-credential complement or enhance your course? Where might it duplicate content?

3. Consider pacing and determine credit or % of grade

- Finally, **determine pacing**, or how you'll move through lesson plans with this new content, and define your expectations around how students will move through it independently, if applicable.
- Determine **how much credit can be awarded** for completing the micro-credential. This might be 1 or more full credits in a curriculum, or a % of the grade within a syllabus (e.g., 30% of the grade for the semester).

Aim

Alignment

Assessment

Approach

Approvals

The alignment process ensures that micro-credential content is effectively integrated into your existing courses, aligning specific competencies with course outcomes and assessments.

Criteria for choosing content/courses

1. Relevance to curriculum	Ensure that the micro-credentials align with course objectives and enhance the existing curriculum, providing valuable skills and knowledge.
2. Industry demand	Assess market demand locally/ globally for the skills associated with the micro-credentials to prioritize those that are recognized and sought after by employers.
3. Learning outcomes	Evaluate whether the micro-credentials have clear learning outcomes that can be measured and assessed within the course framework.
4. Integration feasibility	Consider the practicality of integrating the micro-credentials into the existing course structure, including time constraints and resource availability.

Aim

Alignment

Assessment

Approach

Approvals & Eval.

Determining your assessment strategy is another key step in curriculum integration.

Decision Points

Determine assessment criteria	- How will you measure student mastery of the new material? - What strategies will you employ to ensure that the integration of micro-credential content enriches the overall learning experience?
Determine your assessment strategy	- Evaluate the rigor of the assessments in the microcredentials you've selected. How do these align with your own assessment requirements? - If needed, develop your own assessment. Consider Coursera-based tools like Course Builder (an AI-based assessment generation tool), Coach Dialogues, and more.
Ensure continuous improvement	- Consider how you will monitor student progress - how are they progressing through the content and performing on assessments? - What adjustments can you make in real time or in the next iteration of the course based on these learnings? - Consider how you can use tools like Coursera's gradebook or other academic integrity features on the platform to monitor student progress and performance, where applicable.

Aim

Alignment

Assessment

Approach

Approvals & Eval.

Determine your integration approach. You can choose different levels of integration and different modalities, but consider how they impact student and faculty workload and contact/teaching hours.

Decision points

Determine your content integration approach

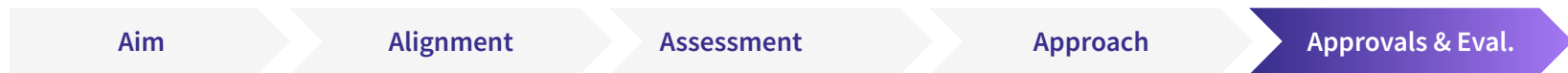
- Determine what modules and/or courses you want to incorporate.
- Add just a few videos or resources to introduce new perspectives or concepts.
- Incorporate full modules or courses if your goal is to equip students with new, in-depth skills (e.g., data analytics or UX design).

Consider modality for delivery

- How much will you need to shift your course design based on your integration approach?
- Will you reduce face-to-face time? Will you transition your course to hybrid or even online format?
- Consider how the modality will impact both the teaching experience and student engagement.

Consider workload for faculty and students

- As an instructor, consider how much you want/need to restructure face-to-face time, and the implications for your workload and teaching hours.
- For students, think about how you can space out assignments and projects to provide students with opportunities to apply and reflect on what they're learning without feeling rushed or overloaded



Decision points

Validate your content selection, assessments, and approach with key decision makers

- Review your internal processes and determine whether you will require any approvals to implement selected changes to your course/program. Consider what implementation will involve, who you need to engage, how long will it take, what resources/materials you need to prepare, etc. and incorporate these considerations into your plan of action.

Establish a process for evaluation and feedback

- Consider planning in advance to incorporate opportunities for collecting feedback from students at the end of the semester about the new learning experience. This will help you refine and improve the model to best fit the teaching and learning needs, and improve learning outcomes.

02

The Anatomy of a Trusted Micro-Credential



Across employers, students, and graduates, the highest-performing micro-credentials share three core features



1. Academic credit integration

Micro-credentials should carry weight in both academic and employer decisions. Credit recommendation helps formalize the skills that micro-credentials signal.

Proof: Over **4 times as many students** (75%) say they're likely to pursue micro-credentials with a formal credit recommendation, compared with just 18% without one.*



2. Industry alignment

Institutions should build or select micro-credentials with industry partners to ensure the skills map to real roles and current tech stacks.

Proof: Employers place **significantly greater value on micro-credentials developed with industry partners (82%)** compared to those developed solely by academic institutions.*



3. Applied assessment

Projects and performance tasks should have clear standards so completion reflects demonstrated capability—not participation.

Proof: **82%** of students and **88%** of graduates prefer project- or industry-based micro-credentials over content-only credentials because they provide stronger job alignment.*

The 3-step micro-credential evaluation framework

When selecting micro-credentials, quality is the key differentiator.



About Coursera

Founded in 2012 by Stanford Computer Science professors Andrew Ng and Daphne Koller, Coursera was created to provide universal access to world-class learning. Today, it is one of the world's largest online learning platforms, with more than 205 million registered learners. Coursera works with more than 375 leading university and industry partners to offer courses, Professional Certificates, Specializations, Guided Projects, and bachelor's and master's degrees.

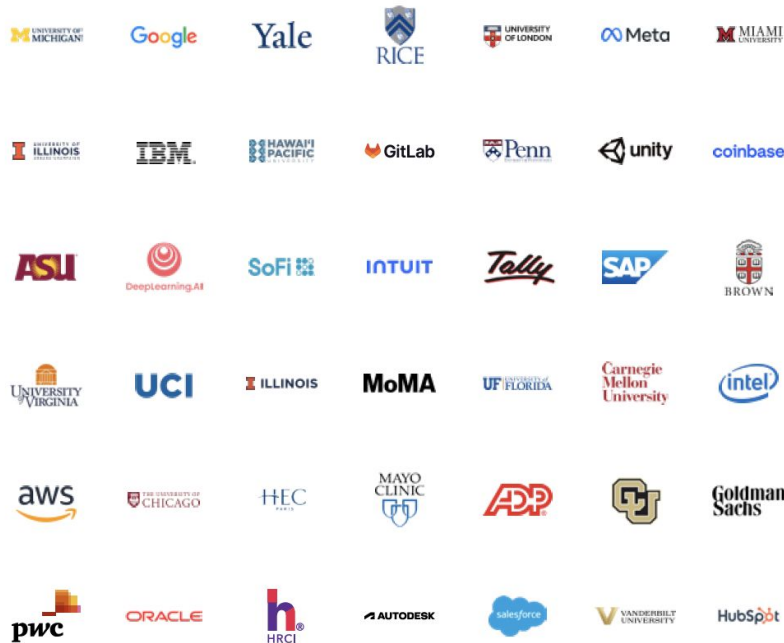
Through Coursera for Campus, universities use Coursera to complement degree programs with career-aligned learning that responds to evolving workforce and artificial intelligence demands. Institutions can use Coursera to strengthen learning outcomes, modernize curriculum at scale, and support graduate success while maintaining academic rigor and faculty governance.

Coursera became a Delaware public benefit corporation and a Certified B Corporation in February 2021.

Get your students job-ready with Professional Certificates on Coursera.

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