



ASPIRE2CREATE Validation and Certification options appraisal/position statement

The Euro-Aspire Framework is a competency-based Framework for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. Currently, it has been applied to 2 job roles within the Creative and Cultural industries: Cultural Learning Practitioner and Creative Entrepreneur Adviser.

There are key critical requirements for certification and working with a certifying authority that need to be aligned with the values of the Euro-Aspire Framework and the practitioners, workforce and contexts of the creative and cultural industries.

These requirements are:

A. Non-formal values

1. Good fit with values and contexts of non-formal and informal learning;
2. Practice-based;
3. Holistic Approach;
4. Not overly formal in approach and used to a broad range of assessment practices;
5. Flexibility to work with non-formal processes that can be mapped to required outcomes;

B. Practice-based

6. Outcome-based;
7. Transferability of certain skillsets across roles and qualifications;
8. Based on achievement of Industry and practice standards without adding 'academic' or formal requirements;

9. Comfortable with scalable practice-based qualifications using a generic framework;

C. International Facing

10. Promoting mobility and social inclusion within one or more National Qualifications Frameworks in the EU;

11. Levels driven by common EU industry requirements and protocols but indexed to European Qualifications Framework;

12. Global operations to extend the reach of the qualification and assist engagement with local VET authorities;

D. Industry, Sector and Workforce aligned including Continuing Professional Development

13. Professional Development Awards with sufficient credit weighting at Higher Levels;

14. Experience with certification in the Creative and Cultural Industries;

15. Practice, Sector and Industry specific;

Several options for certification were initially explored as well as the use of Open Badges, and then one key contender was identified and the potential for collaboration was pursued within the UK. These options were:

Youthpass - (A, C) very good with informal and non-formal learning and international facing;

Europass - (A, C) very good with informal and non-formal learning and international facing;

OCR – (C) limited understanding of practice in the Creative and Cultural Sector

EdExcel/Pearson - (B, C, D) Technical education, international, practice-based with some apprenticeships in Creative Roles;

AIM – (A, B, D); subgroup from an Open College Network with strong non-formal adult education values and some creative industry programmes;

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) – (A, B,C, D); global awarding authority, engaged by the Cultural and Creative Sector Skills Council in the UK to validate and Certificate Apprenticeship programme and other craft qualifications; Long history of working with transferable skills and the recognition of non-formal and informal learning; experience of similar professional group awards e.g.in play-leadership; experience of generic templates and scalable awards

Follow-up discussions were had with SQA staff together with the qualifications staff of the UK Sector Skills Council, Creative and Cultural Skills, who brokered the relationship.

SQA were knowledgeable and supportive and could provide a structure that wouldn't negatively impact the non-formal and practice-based learning at the heart of the proposed validation. The certification process would add a level of external moderation and support the quality assurance of the validation process and outcomes. AIM was also approached for preliminary exploratory discussions and these have been scheduled for later in 2015.

The suite of qualifications went through the SQA validation process in August 2015 and will be available from January 2016.

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Lifelong
Learning
Programme