Ontario Micro-Credentials: Harnessing the Potential

A draft proposal for an Ontario
Micro-Credential Quality Assurance Framework

For full details about the proposed Framework, please consult the "Ontario Micro-Credential: Harnessing the Potential" paper published by PEQAB on July 31, 2023, available at www.peqab.ca.

The Problem: Lack of Clarity

- "Jungle of credentials" and "wild west for providers"
- Onus is on the student to presume the value of investment in the educational experience
- Requires after the fact judgement by an employer, industry, or academic institution to determine the relevance of programming for labour market advancement or academic credit
- Need for formal recognition of programming that will provide students with a clarity of options, confidence of recognition, and the validation of their educational investment.

The Solution:
Protected "Ontario Micro-Credential" Term

- Legally protected term applied to *some* micro-credentials

- Signals educational rigour

- Signals duration

- Offered by authorized educational providers

- Is accessible to employers, industry or professional associations

- Is integrated into existing administrative and reporting databases

- Stackability is signalled with OMC+

The Strategy:
The OMC Quality Framework

Qualifications Framework

Provides transparent parameters of credential expectations

Quality Assurance

Monitors programming through External Quality Assurance Processes (EQAP) of Internal Quality Assurance Processes (IQAP)

Recognition

Demonstrates and legitimizes achievments
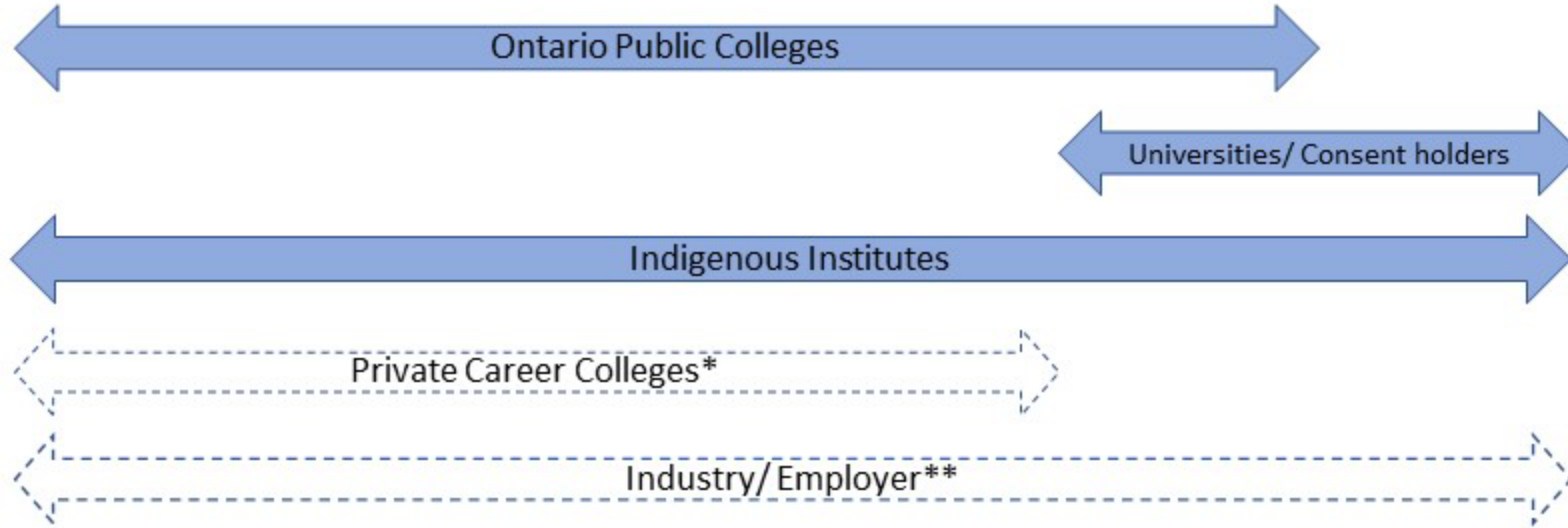
Ontario Micro-Credential Qualifications Framework

Duration	Approximately 12-40 hours

Academic Level	Certificate	Apprentice-ship	Diploma	Post-Diploma (i.e., Ontario College Graduate Certificate)	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree

Ontario Public Colleges

Universities/ Consent holders

Providers

Indigenous Institutes

Private Career Colleges*

Industry/Employer**

*PCCs are currently ineligible to independently offer OMCs

**In partnership with OMC consent holding institutions

Micro-credential Awarded	OMC (Cert)	OMC (App)	OMC (Dip)	OMC (PostDip)	OMC (BA)	OMC (MA)

Process for acquiring OMC provider status

Post-secondary institution develops a micro-credential IQAP → EQAA reviews/approves the IQAP → Institution attests to MCU that the IQAP has been approved by the EQAA → MCU grants the institution permission to confer OMCs → Institution utilizes IQAP to confer OMC programming
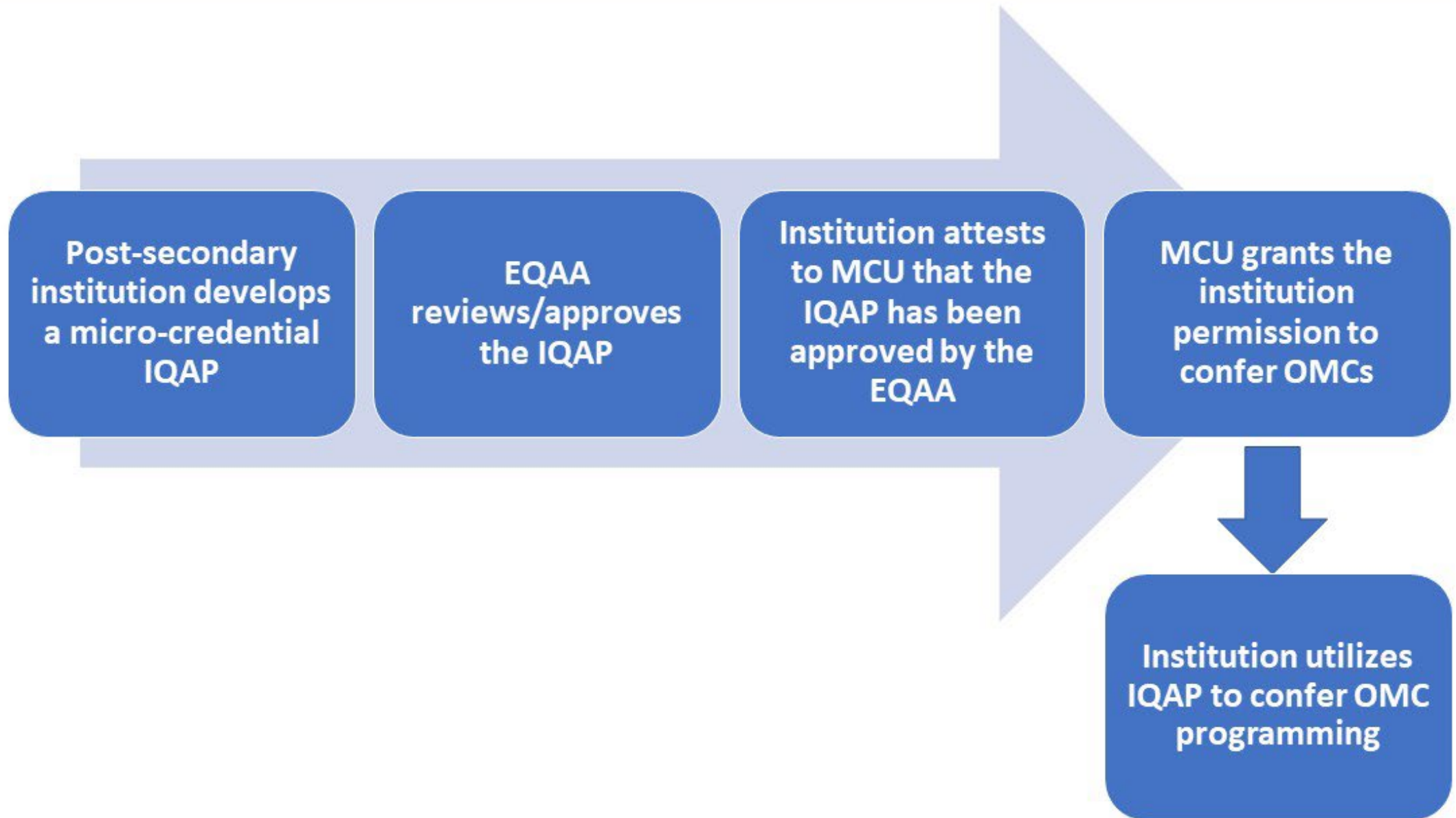
Recognition of Ontario Micro-Credentials

Quality assurance processes legitimize and approve programming which supports recognition from learners, employers, industry and academic institutions

Stackable

- Academic value established in QA process
- Shifts recognition from PLAR to credit transfer
- Credit value towards larger credential determined by program/institution
- OMC+

Validated and portable

- Recognized OMC would be part of registrarial database
- integrated into any digital platform (e.g. MyCreds, common application databases, etc.)

Metadata collected

- Info for existing platforms (e.g. E-Campus and ONCAT)
- Employer endorsement
- Credit transfer pathways
- NOC codes, etc.

Balancing priorities

learner choice <--> learner protection

employer needs <---> educational best practice

simple signalling <---> sophisticated processes

institutional autonomy <---> system coordination

Thank you!

Questions and comments?
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Access the full paper at
www.peqab.ca