


Chapter 9

The Ethical Considerations of Micro–Credentialing: Data Privacy and Security in Micro–Credentialing Platforms

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ABSTRACT

Micro-credentialing has emerged as a prominent trend in education and professional development, revolutionizing how individuals acquire and demonstrate skills. Over the past decade, as industries have become increasingly specialized and technology-driven, traditional degree programs have struggled to keep pace with the rapid changes in the workforce. Micro-credentials, which are short, focused learning experiences designed to certify specific competencies, are seen as a more flexible and targeted alternative to traditional credentials.. In this context, micro-credentialing is gaining traction in both higher education and the professional world as a powerful way to bridge the gap between traditional education and evolving job market demands. In addition to providing flexibility for learners, micro-credentials also cater to the needs of employers. Employers often find it challenging to assess candidates' skills, especially with traditional resumes and academic degrees, which do not always reflect the specific capabilities required for a job.

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INTRODUCTION

Micro-credentialing has emerged as a prominent trend in education and professional development, revolutionizing how individuals acquire and demonstrate skills. Over the past decade, as industries have become increasingly specialized and technology-driven, traditional degree programs have struggled to keep pace with the rapid changes in the workforce. Micro-credentials, which are short, focused learning experiences designed to certify specific competencies, are seen as a more flexible and targeted alternative to traditional credentials. In this context, micro-credentialing is gaining traction in both higher education and the professional world as a powerful way to bridge the gap between traditional education and evolving job market demands. In addition to providing flexibility for learners, micro-credentials also cater to the needs of employers. Employers often find it challenging to assess candidates' skills, especially with traditional resumes and academic degrees, which do not always reflect the specific capabilities required for a job. Micro-credentials allow employers to evaluate candidates based on specific competencies, offering a clearer picture of their qualifications.

This provides a more accurate way to assess job readiness, as these credentials are typically tied to practical skills and competencies that are directly applicable to a job's responsibilities. For example, a job in digital marketing may require proficiency in search engine optimization (SEO) or data analytics, skills that can be certified through micro-credentials and easily verified by employers. From an institutional perspective, the adoption of micro-credentialing requires significant investment in both resources and infrastructure. Higher education institutions and training providers must develop and deliver high-quality, industry-relevant micro-credentials that align with market needs. Additionally, institutions need to implement the necessary technologies to support digital credentialing, including secure platforms for issuing, tracking, and verifying credentials. This shift may require them to rethink how they structure curricula, integrate technology, and collaborate with employers to ensure the credentials meet the evolving needs of the labor market. Many institutions may also face resistance to micro-credentialing from faculty and staff who are accustomed to traditional models of education. Furthermore, the relatively new nature of micro-credentials means that their long-term impact on student outcomes and the labor market remains uncertain. Despite these challenges, the future of micro-credentialing remains promising, particularly as the labor market increasingly values skills over traditional degrees. As technology and globalization continue to drive the need for specialized knowledge, micro-credentials will likely become a vital tool for lifelong learning and career development. The key to success will be ensuring that these credentials are standardized, widely recognized, and accessible to all. The development of industry partnerships, alignment with global labor market

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