



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro-credentials:

What, why and for whom?

...from a university perspective 😊

FORTHEM Micro-Credential Task Manager Maria Ranta



Co-funded by
the European Union



JOHANNES GUTENBERG
UNIVERSITÄT MAINZ



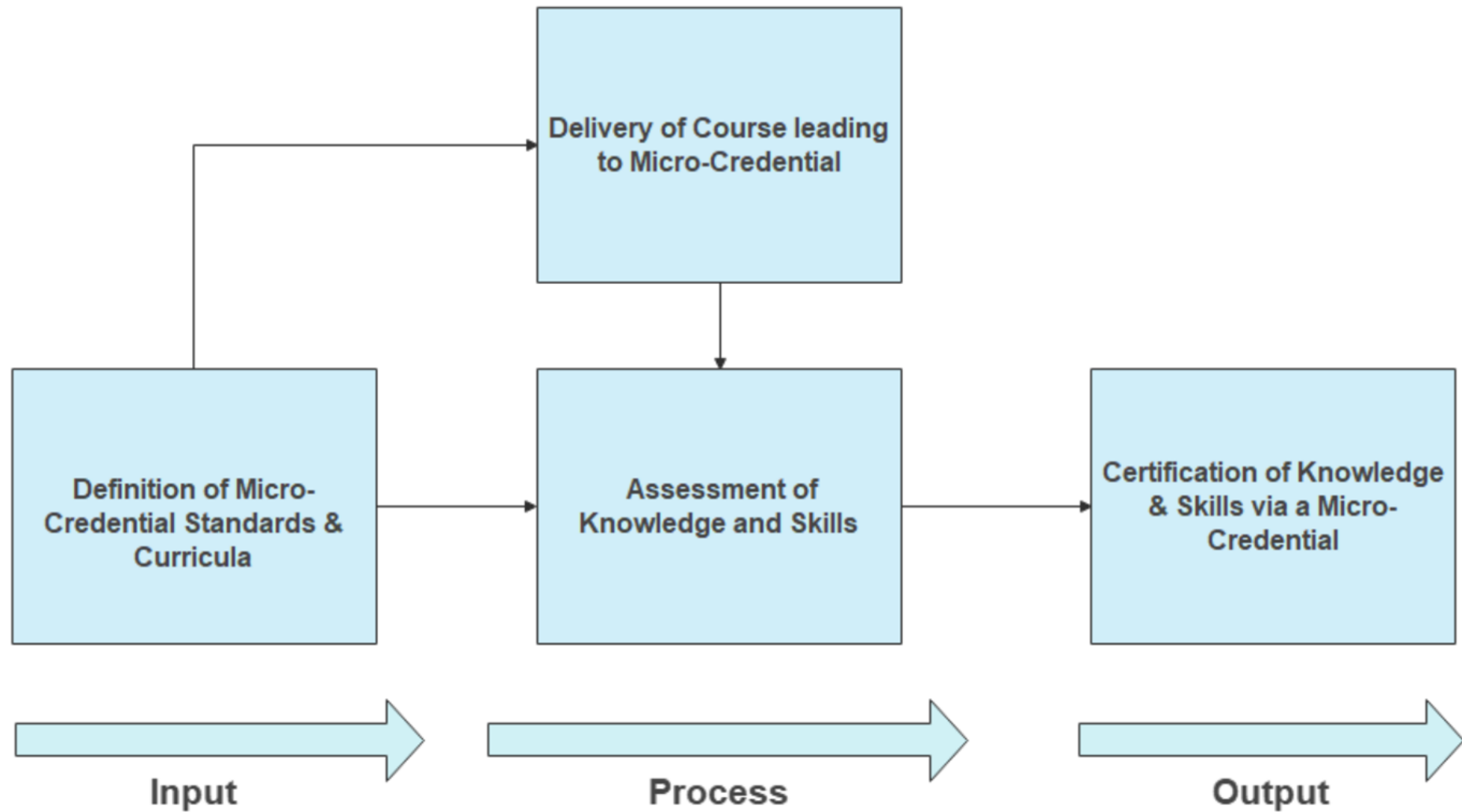


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



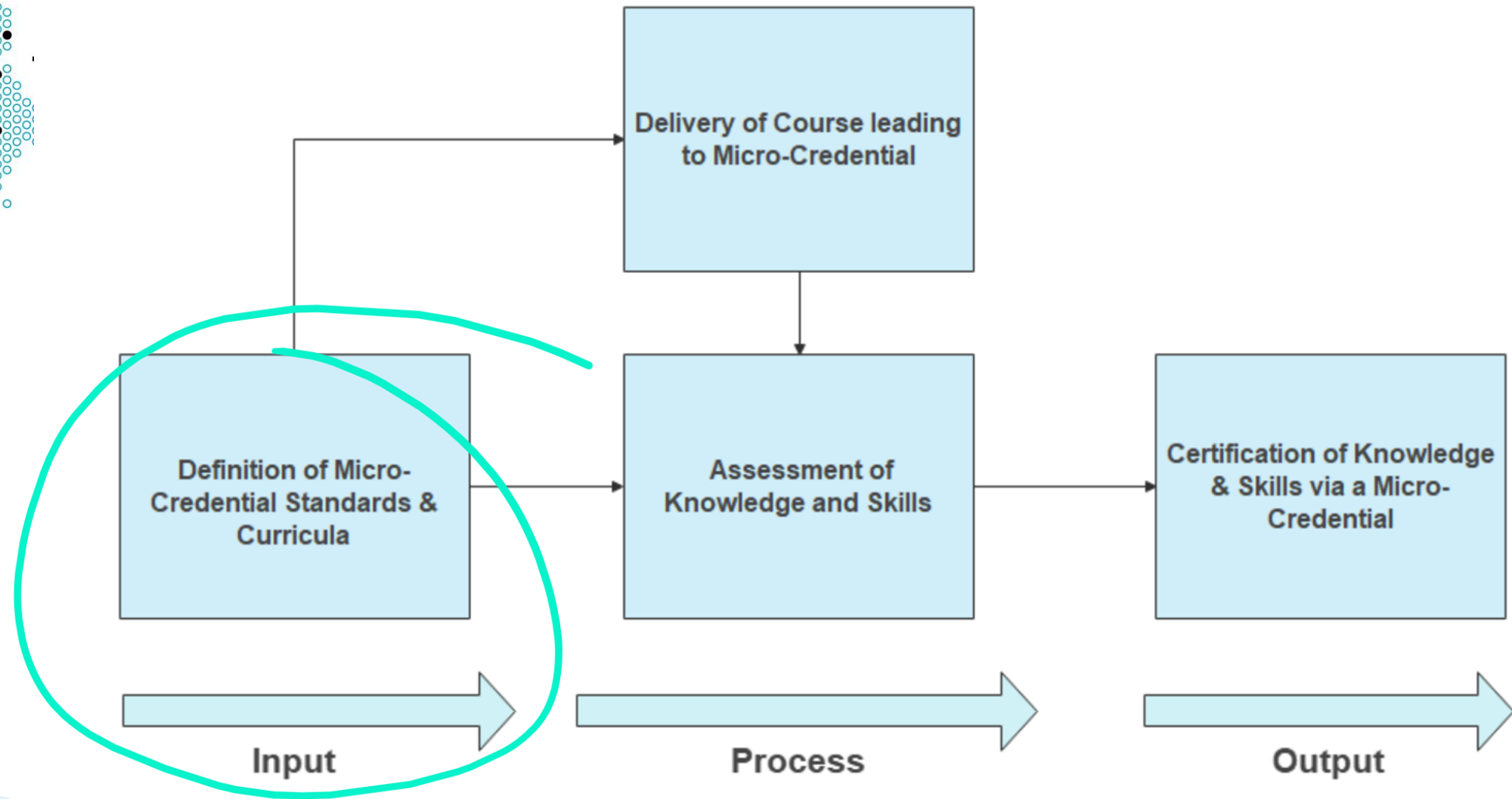


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



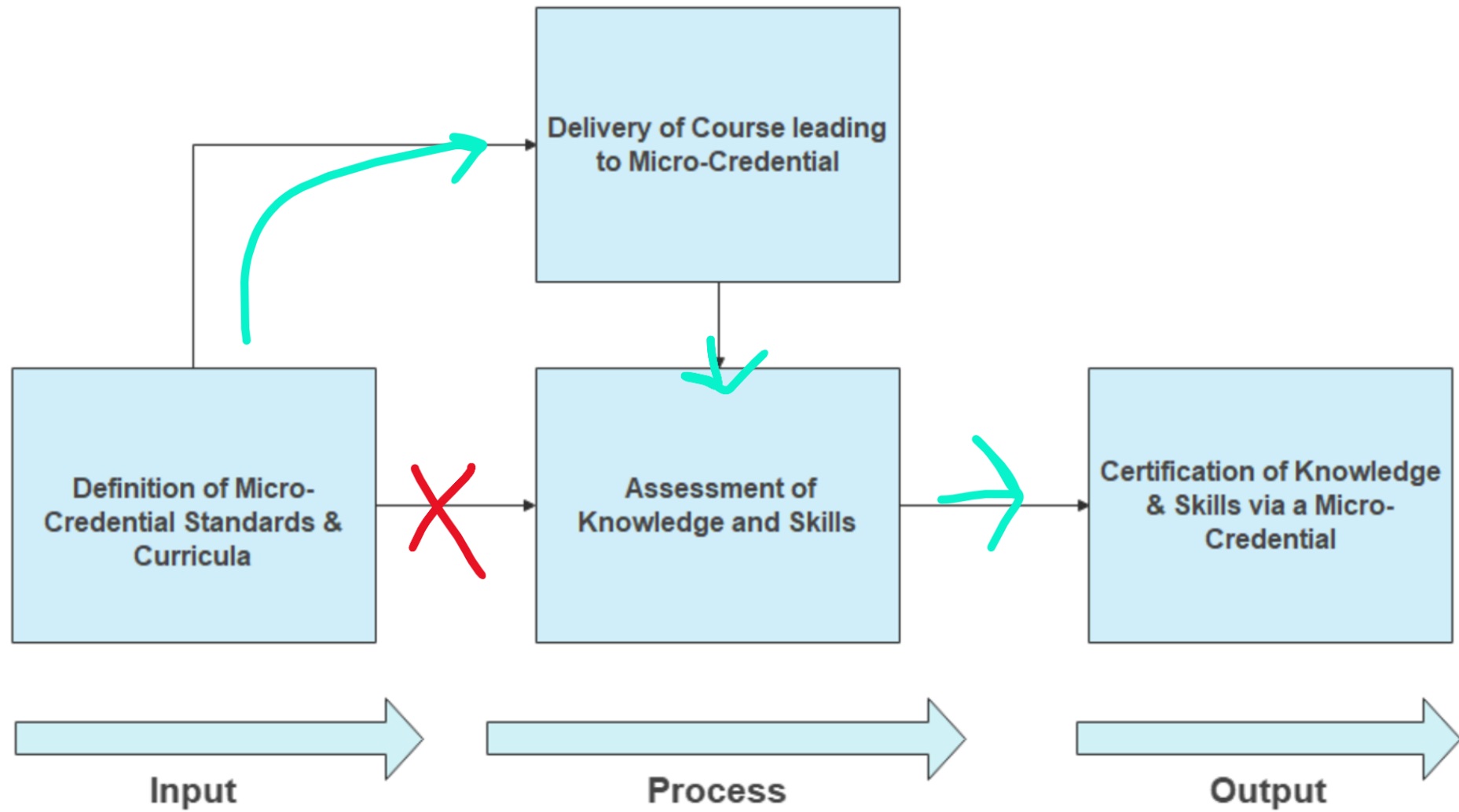


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



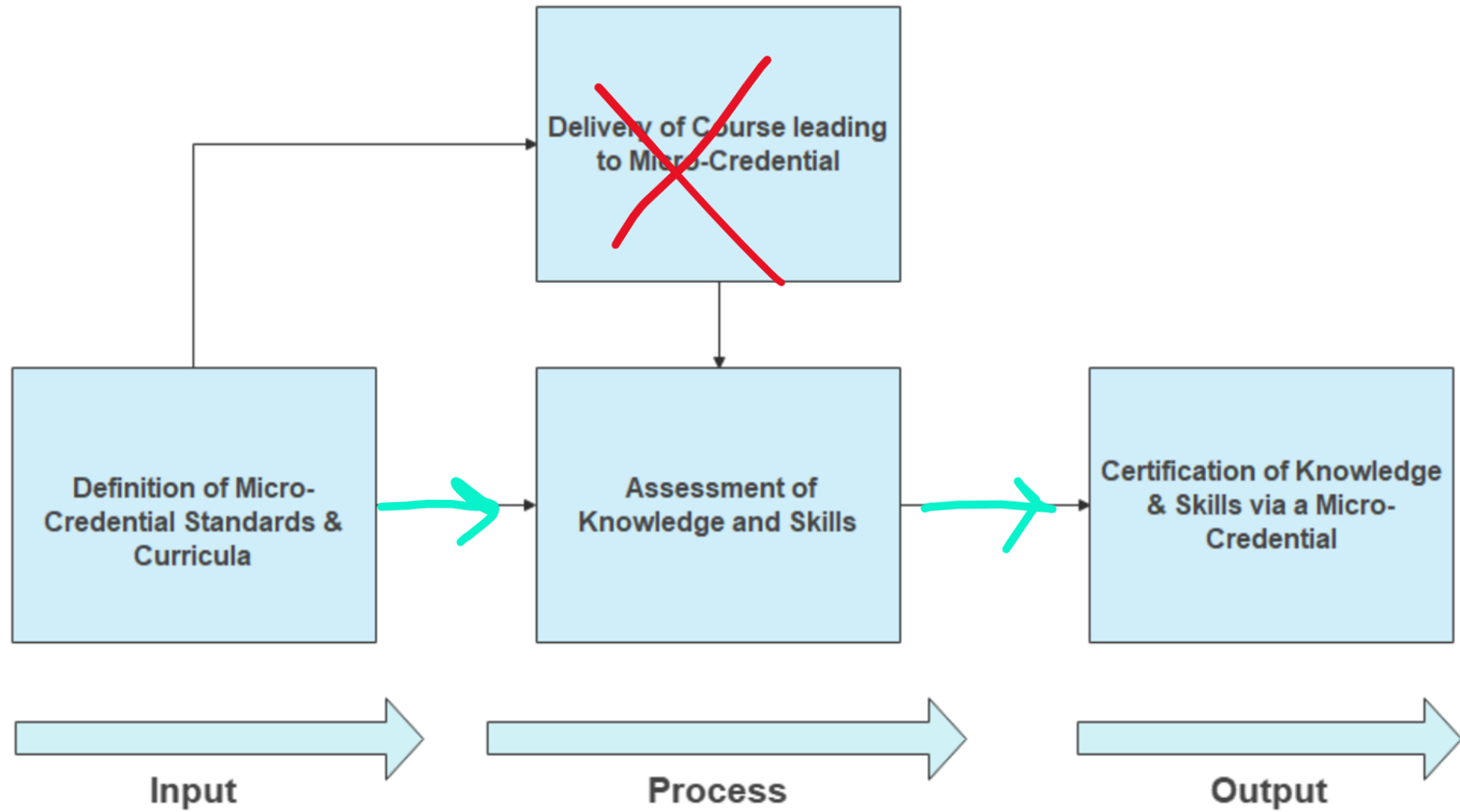


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



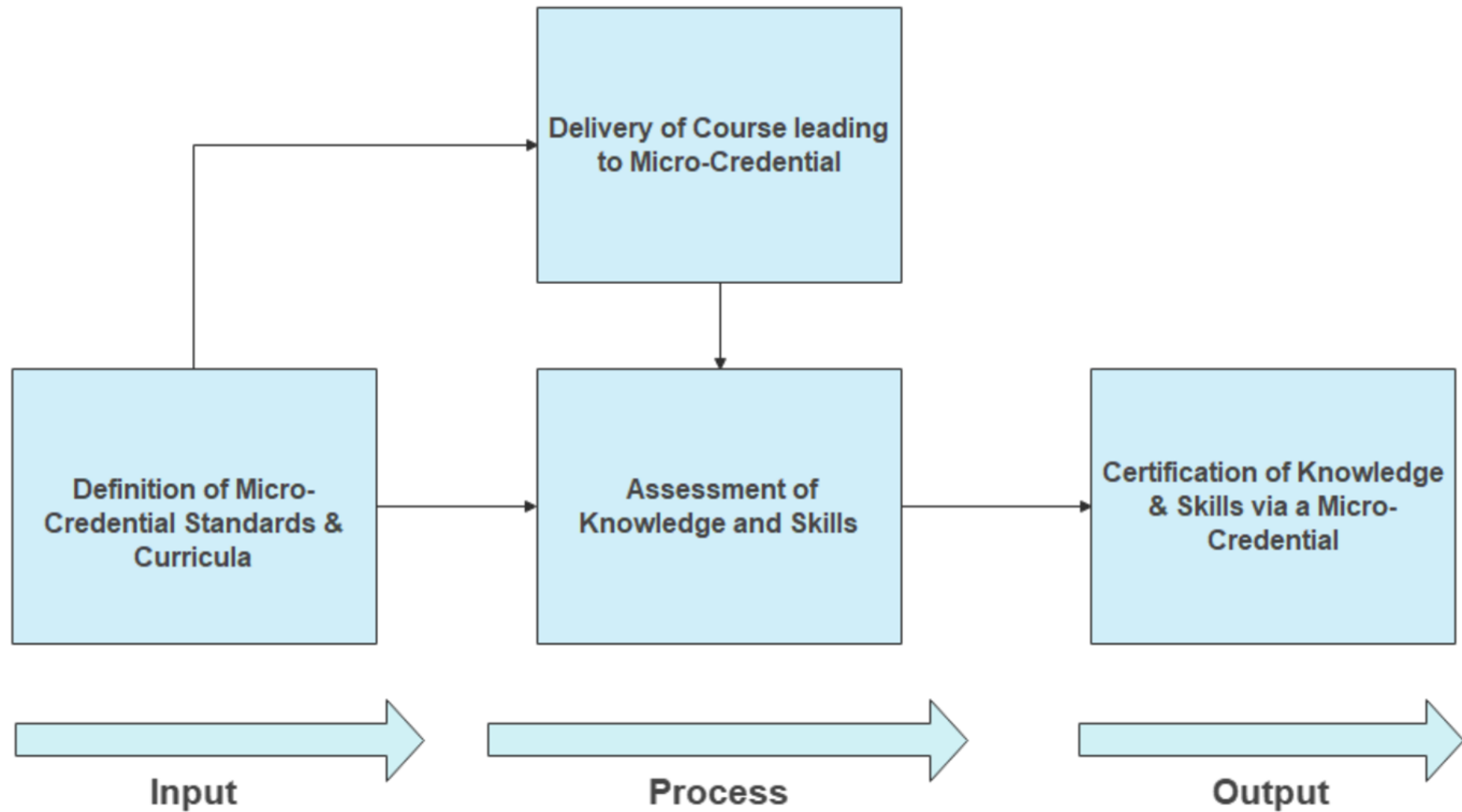


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



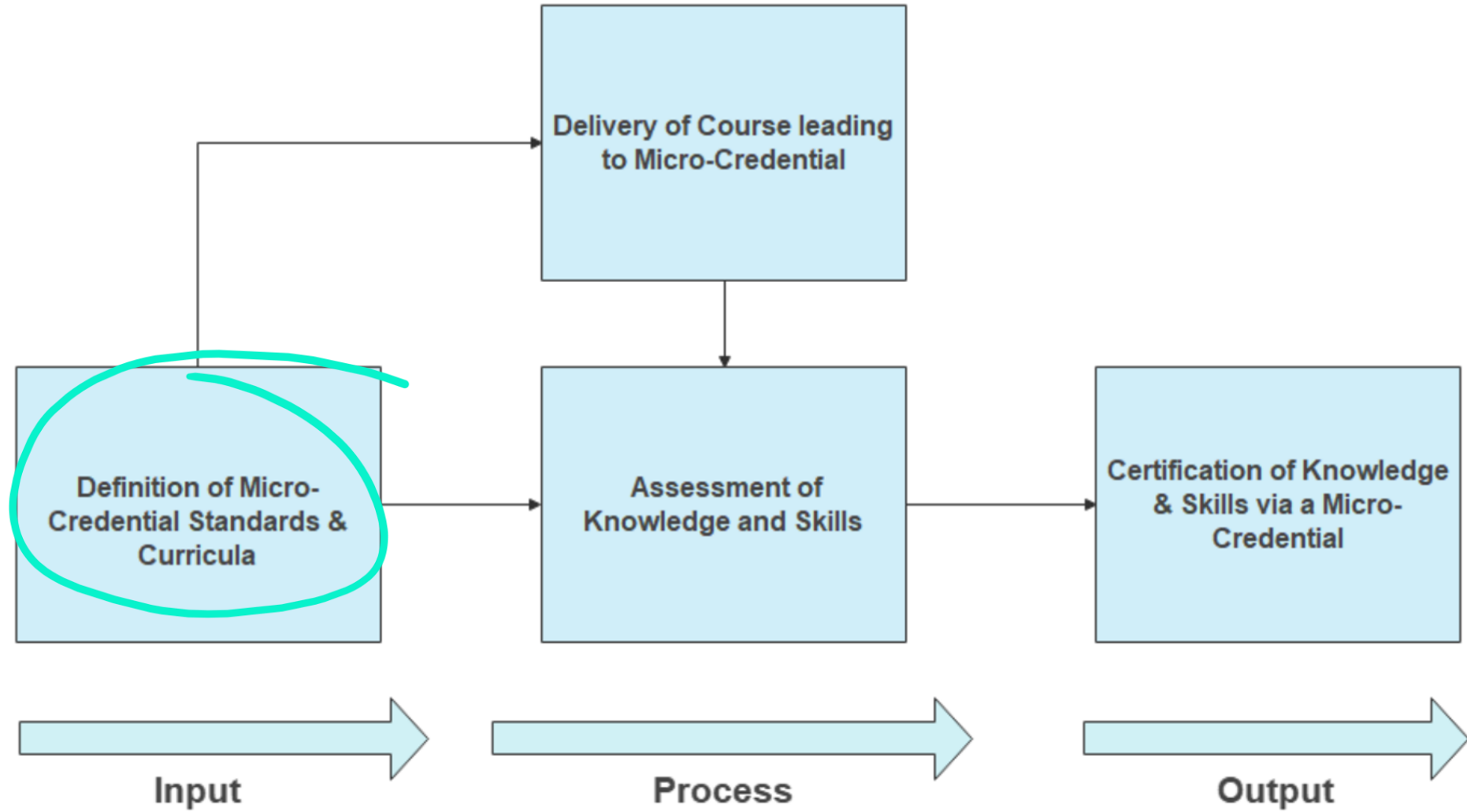


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



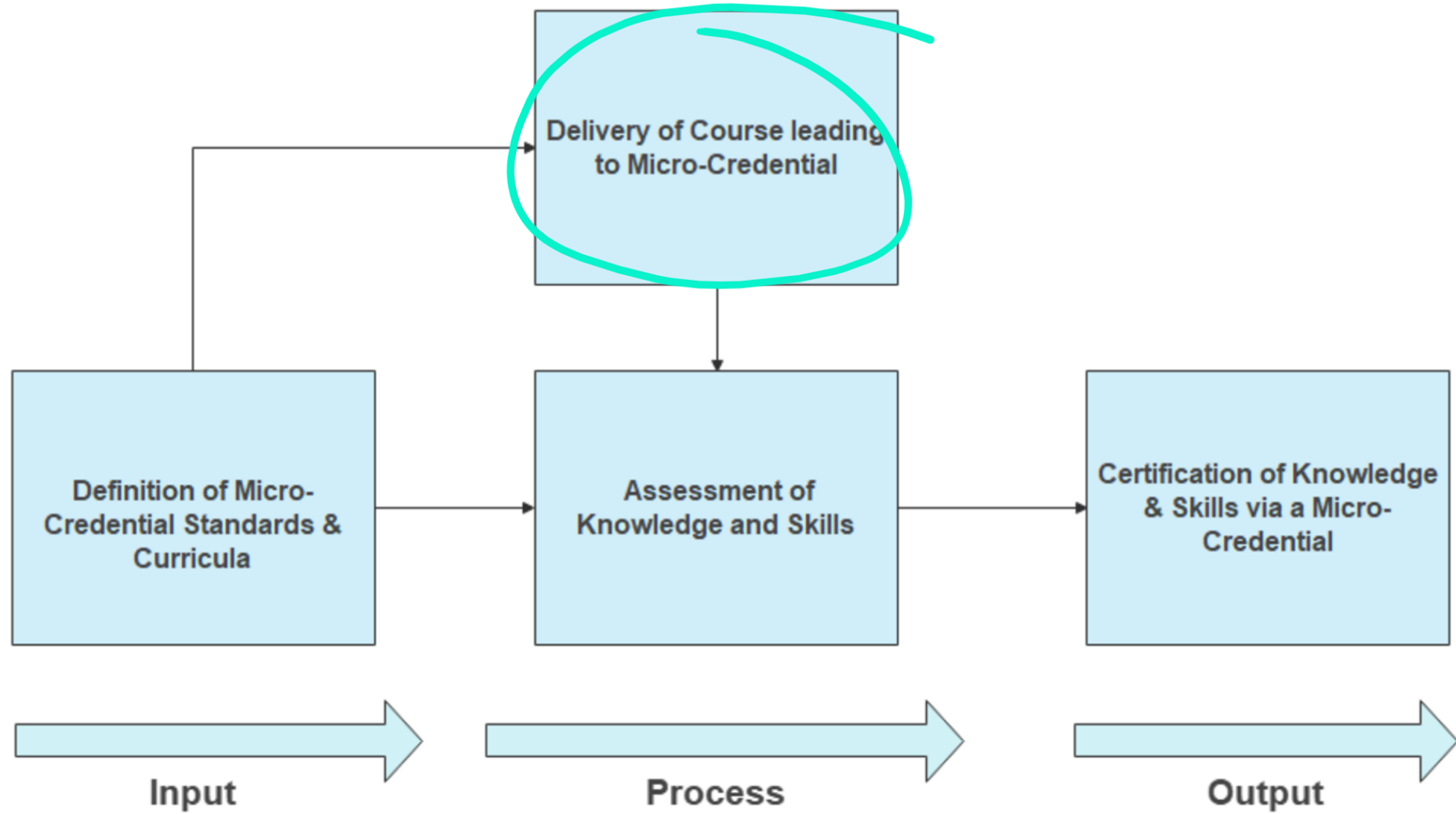


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



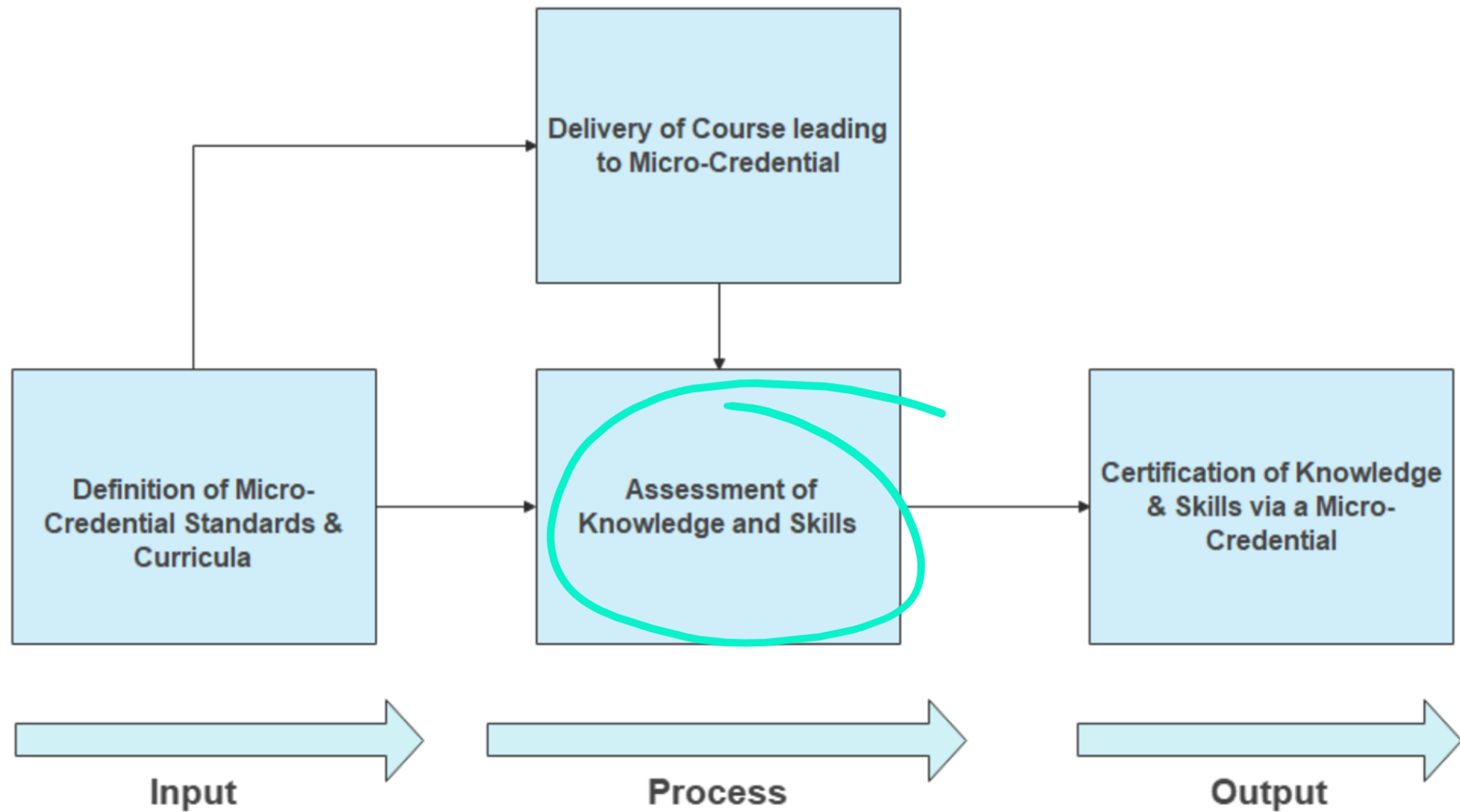


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



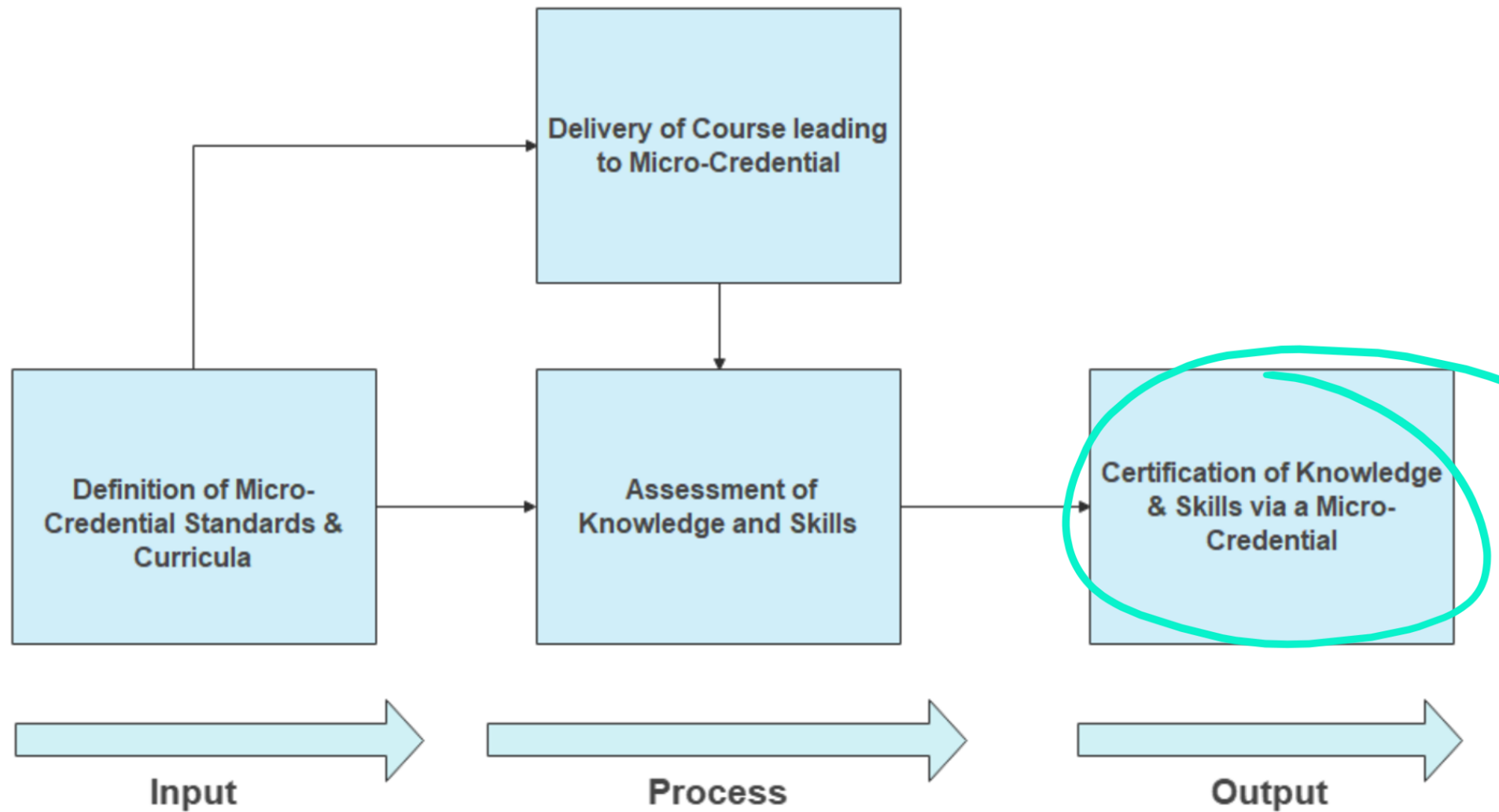
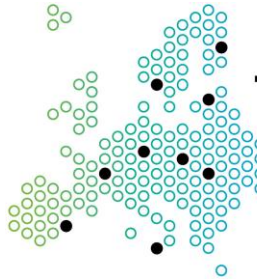


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



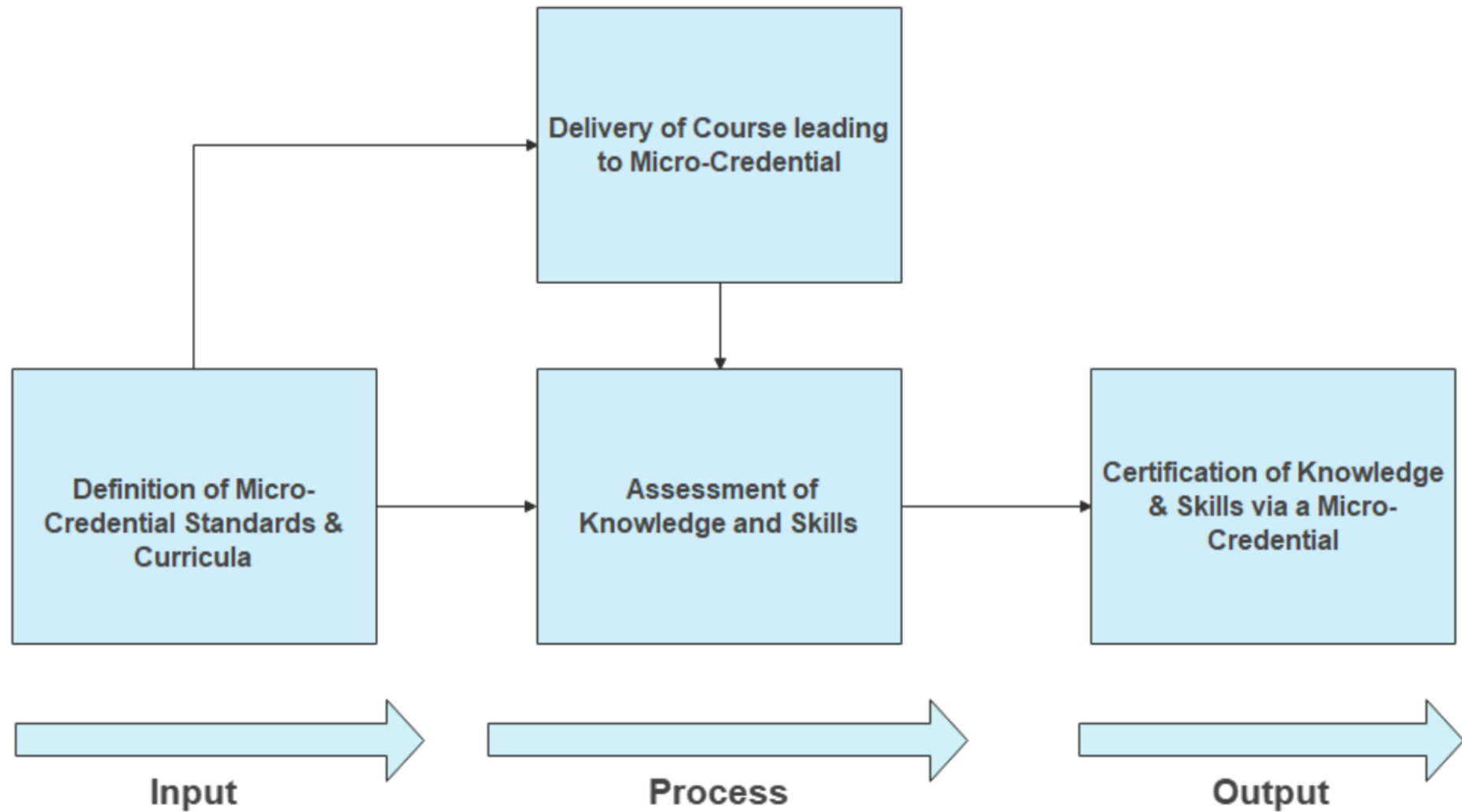


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



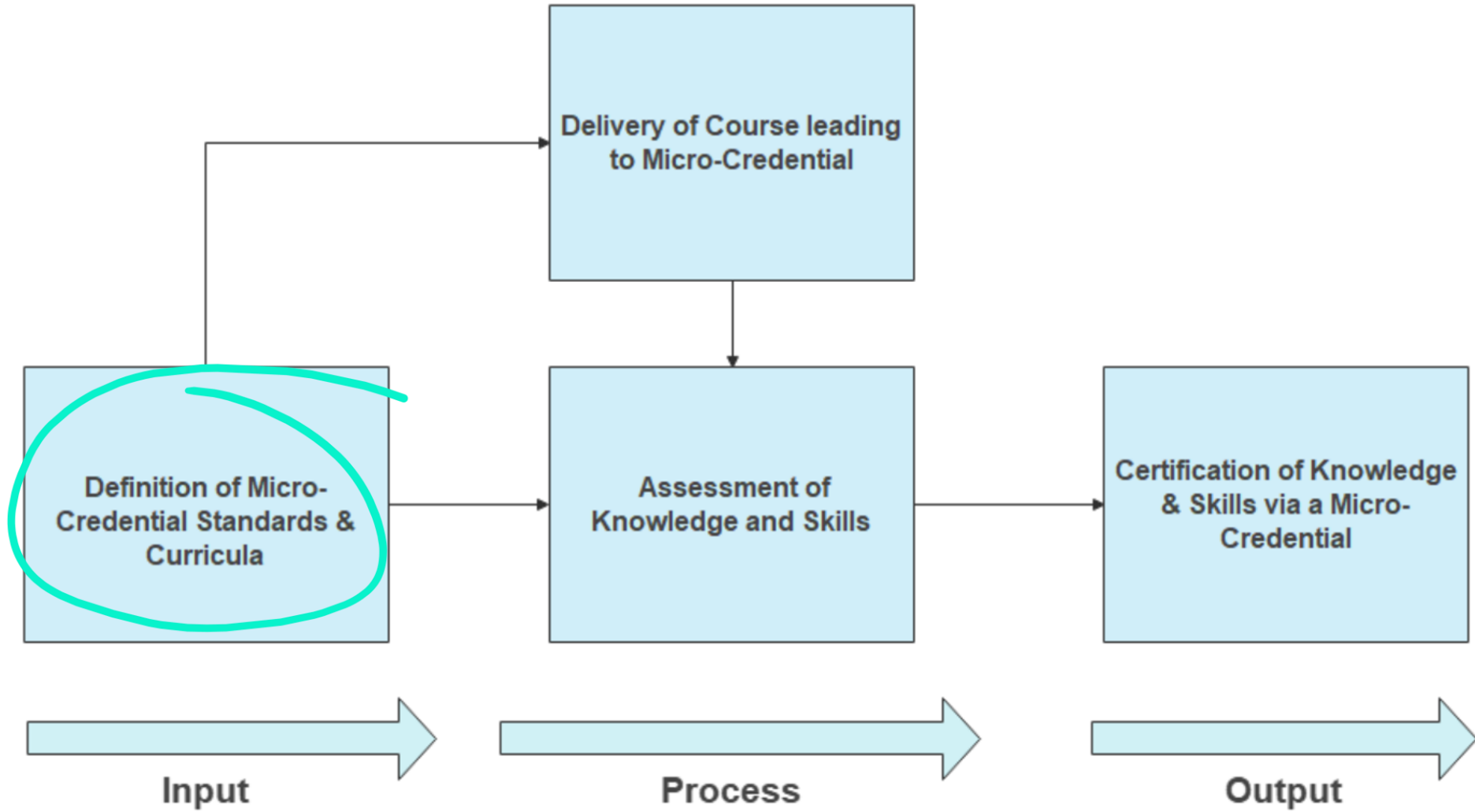


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.



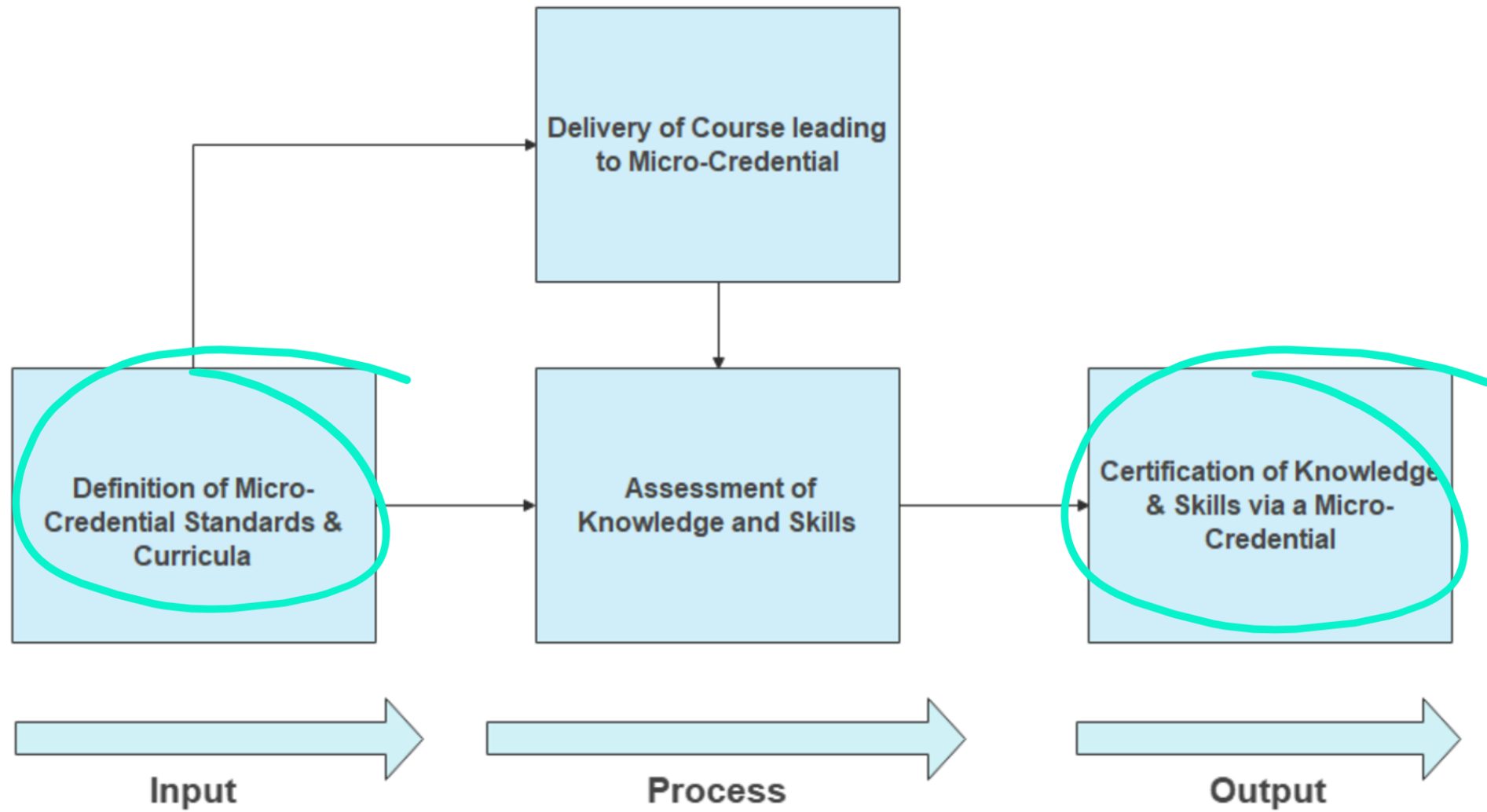


Figure 2: Processes encompassed by the EU micro-credential definition.





forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

“Micro-credentials **certify** the learning outcomes of short-term **learning experiences**, for example a short course or training. They offer a flexible, targeted way to help people develop the knowledge, skills and competences for their personal and professional development.” (The European Union, 2022)

“ - - a form of **credential** that individuals can earn upon the completion of organised **learning activities** that are smaller, more targeted, and more flexible than traditional education and training programmes” (OECD 2023)

“- - focused on a specific **set of learning outcomes** in a narrow field of learning and achieved over a shorter period of time.” (UNESCO 2022)



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning

Portable

Stackable

Owned by the learner



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning

Mikromeriter (SE)

Micro-merits

Pienet osaamiskokonaisuudet (FI)

Små læringsenheter
Small learning entities

Mikrobevis?

Micro-proof
DK

Mikroemner?

Micro-course
NO

Minikvalifikasjon?

Mini-qualification
NO

Mikrograd?

Micro-degrees
NO



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning

Learning outcomes

Assessment



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning

Learning outcomes

Assessment

Targeted, specific



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning

Learning outcomes

Assessment

Targeted, specific

Flexible

Learning experience

Learning pathway

Credential



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning

Learning outcomes

Assessment

Targeted, specific

Flexible

Support life-long learning

Subject:

Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

Lifelong Learning

(In the context of higher education)

Before higher
education



During higher
education



After higher
education



Micro-credentials as supplements to (higher) qualifications:

Before:

- Exploring studies in HE
- Pathways to further studies
- Re- and upskilling

During:

- Added work-life relevance
- Flexibility in studies
- Virtual mobility
- Building of transinstitutional and national learning pathways
- Competence profiles as support for employment

After:

- Re- and upskilling
- Pathways to further studies
- Increasing employment perspectives (when unemployed)



Credits

Stackable to other digital credentials

Flexible studying

Stackable to formal qualifications

Access

Individual competence profiles



Credits

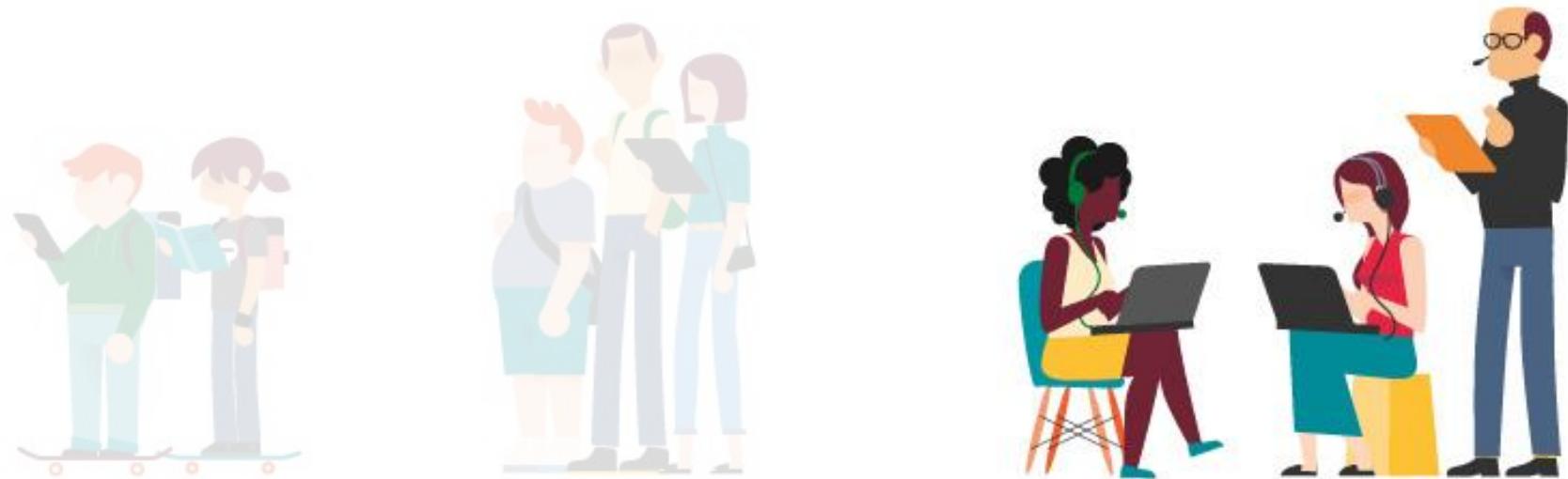
Stackable to other digital credentials

Flexible studying

Stackable to formal qualifications

Access

Individual competence
profiles



Credits

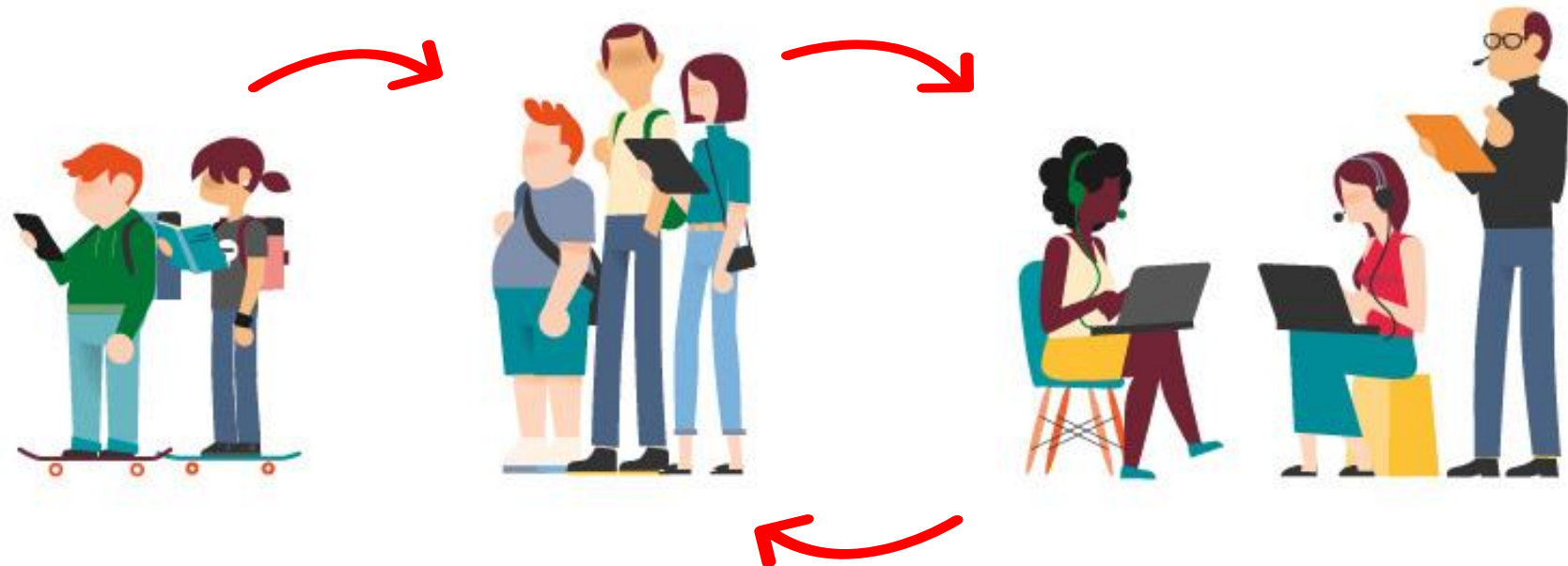
Stackable to other digital credentials

Flexible studying

Stackable to formal qualifications

Access

Individual competence profiles





forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro-credentials

Make education more
attainable for learners in
different life situations

Flexible

Micro = small or short

Flexible learning
experience

Portable, digital
credentials

Standards for
formal (higher)
education

High work-life
relevance

MOOCs Digital courses



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro-credentials

Enable different uses for
the obtained credentials
– learner ownership

Credential = record of learning

Flexible learning
experience

Portable, digital
credentials

Standards for
formal (higher)
education

High work-life
relevance

MOOCs Digital courses Badges Digital certificates



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro-credentials

Ensure the learning
achievement can be utilized
as parts of formal
qualifications

Assessment

Credential = record of learning Learning outcomes



MOOCs Digital courses Badges Digital certificates Credit points Degrees



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro-credentials

Targeted, specific
contents as response to
known competence gaps

Targeted, specific

Support life-long learning

Flexible learning
experience

Portable, digital
credentials

Standards for
formal (higher)
education

High work-life
relevance

MOOCs Digital courses Badges Digital certificates Credit points Degrees LLL-offers



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Micro-credentials

Make education more
attainable for learners
in different life situations

Enable different uses for
the obtained credentials
– learner ownership

Ensure the learning
achievement can be utilized
as parts of formal
qualifications

Targeted, specific
credentials as response to
own competence gaps

Flexible

Assessment

Targeted, specific

Micro = small or short

Credential = record of learning

Learning outcomes

Support life-long learning

Flexible learning
experience

Portable, digital
credentials

Standards for
formal (higher)
education

High work-life
relevance

MOOCs

Digital courses

Badges

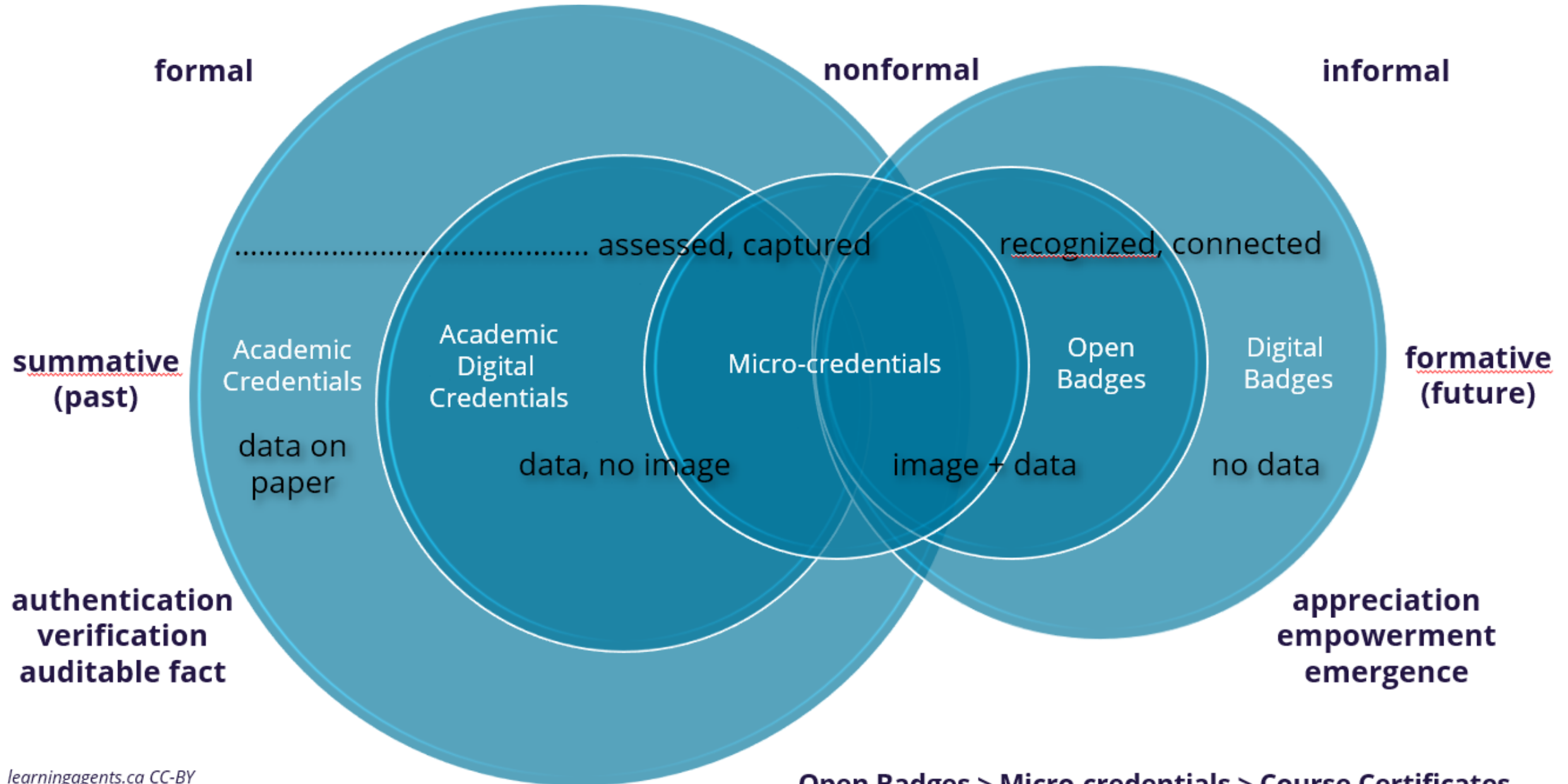
Digital certificates

Credit points

Degrees

LLL-offers

Spectrum of formality





forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Formal requirements of academic credentials

- Quality assurance
- Transparency (workload, NQF level)
- Learning outcomes and assessment
- Authenticity of both learner and the credential
- Recognition (vertical stacking)

Currency: credits

+

Features of digital credentials

- Portability
- User-centeredness
- Horizontal stacking
- Information and guidance (for individual pathways)
- High work-life relevance

Currency: digital credential with a skill & competence label

=

Micro-credential

- Quality assured
- Aligned with NQF's
- Learning outcomes and assessment
- Authentic
- Portable
- Flexible, user-centered
- Stackable horizontally and vertically
- Enable individual and flexible learning pathways
- High work-life relevance

Leads into credits and to a digital, portable credential



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Formal requirements of academic credentials

- Quality assurance
- Transparency (workload, NQF level)
- Learning outcomes and assessment
- Authenticity of both learner and the credential
- Recognition (vertical stacking)

Currency: credits

+

Features of digital credentials

- Portability
- User-centeredness
- Horizontal stacking
- Information and guidance (for individual pathways)
- High work-life relevance

Currency: digital credential with a skill & competence label

=

Micro-credential

- Quality assured
- Aligned with NQF's
- Learning outcomes and assessment
- Authentic
- Portable
- Flexible, user-centered
- Stackable horizontally and vertically
- Enable individual and flexible learning pathways
- High work-life relevance

Leads into credits and to a digital, portable credential



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Formal requirements of academic credentials

- Quality assurance
- Transparency (workload, NQF level)
- Learning outcomes and assessment
- Authenticity of both learner and the credential
- Recognition (vertical stacking)

Currency: credits

+

Features of digital credentials

- Portability
- User-centeredness
- Horizontal stacking
- Information and guidance (for individual pathways)
- High work-life relevance

Currency: digital credential with a skill & competence label

=

Micro-credential

- Quality assured
- Aligned with NQF's
- Learning outcomes and assessment
- Authentic
- Portable
- Flexible, user-centered
- Stackable horizontally and vertically
- Enable individual and flexible learning pathways
- High work-life relevance

Leads into credits and to a digital, portable credential



Co-funded by
the European Union



forthem.

Bundled, large volume

Macro-credentials >60 ects

- Quality assured studies and degrees
 - Recognized in NQF's
- Designed by accredited providers
- Award: diploma/certificate

(Flexible) learning pathways <60 ects

- Designed either by formal providers (=rigid, elective) or by learners themselves (=open stacking)
- Typically not recognized in NQF's
- Award: certificate (if any)

Formal

Non-formal

Standalone academic courses ca. 5-15 ects

- Fulfill the requirements of formal education
- Award: credits/study points

Micro-credentials 1-5 ects

- Fulfill the requirements of formal education
- Award: credits & digital credential

Nano-credentials <1 ects

- Informal & non-formal learning, such as open lectures and talks
- Do not fulfill the requirements of formal education
- Award: digital credential (if any)

Unbundled, small volume



Co-funded by the European Union



Issued by Cineca

Microservices, Spring Framework...

7 ISSUED



Open digital badges

Open badges are flexible: you can use them to recognize and validate skills, achievements, assets, goals, and experiences, going well beyond formal diplomas or certifications.

OPEN BADGE



PDF badge certificates

PDF badges are verifiable certificates that contain the same metadata as Open Badges and can be customized layout and branding. As standalone portable files, they can be easily downloaded, printed, and shared. They combine the best of both PDF and Open Badge worlds!

CERTIFICATE



Micro-portfolios

Micro-credentials don't have to be limited to static certificates; they can evolve into dynamic micro-portfolios! Empower your recipients to share what they know and can

PORTFOLIO

CHOOSE YOUR OPTIMAL CREDENTIALING TOOL

Canvas Badges vs. Canvas Credentials

MICROSOFT LEARN

Microsoft Credentials

Lea

APPLIED SKILLS

Administer Active Directory Domain Services

Windows • Administrator • Intermediate



EXAM

Exam AZ-800: Administering Windows Server Hybrid Core Infrastructure

Microsoft Entra • Administrator • Intermediate



+ Add

European Digital Credentials for learning

European Digital Credentials for learning are statements issued by an organisation to a learner, documenting their learning.



Co-funded by the European Union



Goal: micro-credentials provided within alliances are interoperable and compatible, across institutions and countries (represented in the alliance).

...but are these micro-credentials compatible and interoperable also nationally?

What kind of structures there are ensuring that finding, taking and stacking micro-credentials runs smoothly also from a national viewpoint?



forthem.

Fostering Outreach
within European Regions,
Transnational Higher Education
and Mobility

Thank you for listening!

Questions, comments?

Maria Ranta, maria.k.ranta@uia.no



Co-funded by
the European Union