

Understanding micro-credentials and small qualifications in Scotland

Case study: 'Fundamentals of Cyber Security' – 10-credit micro-credential at SCQF Level 7

Edinburgh Napier University

This case study describes a standalone micro-credential that was developed at Edinburgh Napier University from a short course run as part of a Scottish Government initiative to encourage neuro-divergent learners to consider future study and/or a career in cyber security. The aim was to take a bespoke course and turn it into a standalone 10 credit micro-credential to offer it as part of the SFC Upskilling funding initiative.

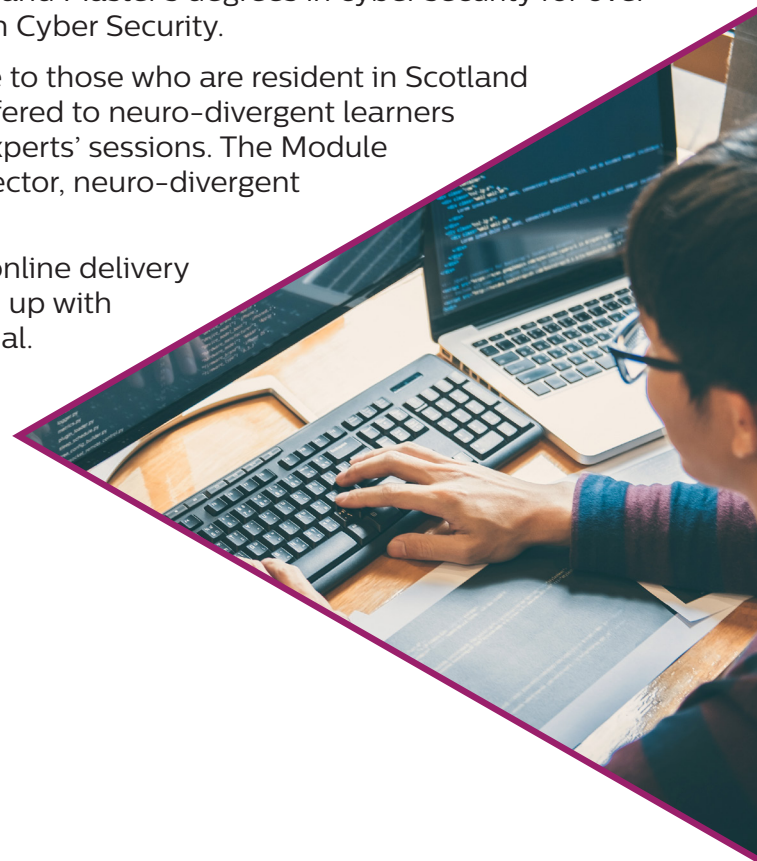
Edinburgh Napier developed a new 10-credit standalone short course covering the 'Fundamentals of Cyber Security'. The Level 7 micro-credential introduces learners to cyber security data analysis and protection, network security and open-source intelligence. Learners were drawn from individuals wanting to reskill in cyber security, staff in organisations increasingly concerned about cyber threats (including ransomware), and school and college students wanting to enhance their skills and knowledge or determine whether they wanted to pursue a career in cyber security.

The University has been running accredited Honours and Master's degrees in cyber security for over 10 years and for some this was a taster for a degree in Cyber Security.

The micro-credential has been offered free of charge to those who are resident in Scotland via the SFC Upskilling fund. It has been previously offered to neuro-divergent learners together with some career coaching and 'meet the experts' sessions. The Module Leader took part in training organised by two third-sector, neuro-divergent support organisations.

The course has been offered face-to-face and fully online delivery - in 6 weeks of 2-hour synchronous sessions, backed up with online lab work, assessments and background material.

The micro-credential was approved through the University's standard quality and module approvals processes. Learners who successfully complete the assessment are awarded 10 credits at SCQF Level 7.

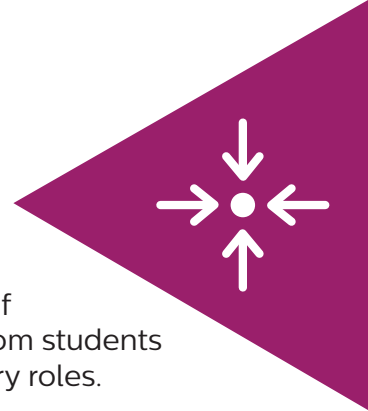


Impact

'Fundamentals of Cyber Security' has run 5 times, to over 100 learners. Impact includes upskilling teachers and college lecturers, springboard to an undergraduate degree, and introducing cyber skills into organisations.

Each instance of this course has been fully subscribed – evidence of high levels of demand. All learners are invited to take part in a module evaluation. Feedback from students led to enhanced structuring of resources and establishing closer links with industry roles.

Following the successful launch of this micro-credential, a similar 10-credit micro-credential at Level 7 was developed – 'Fundamentals of Python for Data Science' – and is part of Edinburgh Napier University's expanding micro-credential/short course portfolio.



More information

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Find out more

This case study is one of a series published as part of the 'Understanding micro-credentials and small qualifications in Scotland' project from the Resilient Learning Communities Enhancement Theme.

Following from the establishment of the Scottish Tertiary Education Micro-credentials Network and the production of the Scottish Tertiary Education Micro-credentials Glossary in 2021-22, the project continues to explore micro-credential practice in Scotland in 2022-23 and the development of a good practice guide.

You can find further case studies and resources on the [project website](#).

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