

Building a Bilingual Micro-credential: A Case Study & Checklist

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Executive Summary

This case study describes how eCampusOntario created a bilingual micro-credential called: Teaching with (AI)/ Enseigner avec l'IA. The case study includes the background and objectives set out for the micro-credential and then details the different phases of execution: Discovery and Design, Development and Readiness and Pilot Launch and Operations. It is accompanied by a checklist describing guiding steps so that others can borrow from our experience. The case study and checklist were first written by a Generative AI platform and then edited and validated by the team at eCampusOntario.

At eCampusOntario, we are committed to better understanding generative AI by integrating it into our day-to-day work. We used AI to create this case study and checklist as we perceived aggregating and summarizing the eCampusOntario team's month's long process to define, develop and launch a micro-credential as a low stakes context to experiment with AI technology. For this project, we used the generative AI application Co-Pilot. This case study was created to document our journey, both for our eCampusOntario members, as well as providing an internal artifact to support knowledge sharing for future opportunities.

Methodology

This case study chronicles the creation of a bilingual (English/French) micro-credential by eCampusOntario's Professional Learning team for postsecondary educators. Over six months, the project team moved from environmental scan and competency mapping to vendor procurement, bilingual design, accessible delivery, champion engagement, pilot launch, and data-informed iteration. Five pillars defined success:

1. **User voice** was incorporated at the outset and the program was designed based on learner needs.
2. **Competency-first program design** backed by sector scans and needs assessment
3. **Bilingual-by-Design** including operational integration and Quality Assurance (QA)
4. **Accessible by Design** with accessibility embedded in authoring, assessments, and the learning management system (LMS)
5. **Design Considerations**—iterative build of individual modules that informed by feedback from champions, aggregate reporting, and a vendor agreement that allowed for additional improvements after an initial pilot of the course. Learners were sent a survey and these responses

Outcomes: A three-module program (15 hours) with five facilitated sessions per cohort; authentic assessments with exemplars; bilingual artifacts; champion feedback cadence; and controlled demand through restrained marketing. The pilot launched Oct 27, 2025, with strong attendance, followed by a successful January 2026 cohort.

This case study and checklist were first drafted using CoPilot and then edited and validated by the project team. Copilot is Microsoft's AI Large Language Model (LLM). This prompt was entered into Copilot's message box:

"You are an expert writer. You have been asked to write a 2,000 (approximate) case study describing how to create a micro-credential. Summarize the steps taken to create the micro-credential and lessons learned. This case study will conclude with a checklist of actionable steps others creating micro-credentials can use. Use these meeting notes to create the case study: *[link to folder with transcripts from meetings with team who developed the Teaching with AI Micro-credential went here]*. Do not include reference to individuals. "

This prompt to Copilot was developed by using a format of prompting LLM AI which includes: 1) defining a professional role so the AI can reference expertise of other, similar professionals 2) the desired outcome and 3) where to find the source information. Human editing was then applied to the case study. Language that was specific to internal processes at eCampusOntario was removed. Language and concepts that were unclear were flagged for the project team to review and provide additional information. The clarifying information provided by the team was then added to the case study.

eCampusOntario's has a 'walled garden' version of Copilot, meaning none of none of the data or information stored on eCampusOntario's instance of Microsoft Office 365 (including meeting transcripts) nor any of the data provided to Co-Pilot through the prompt was used for LLM training.

The Copilot version was then edited and reviewed by: Elisa Arnold, Moh Shakourirad, and Marie-Claire Couperier for accuracy and quality.

Case Study: Building a Bilingual Micro-credential

Background & Objectives

Initially, the aim was to help educators explore, evaluate, and integrate AI in teaching—ethically, accessibly, and practically. However, eCampusOntario consulted with postsecondary institutions about this plan and received feedback that some institutions were not ready to integrate AI into their coursework so this aim was revised to **Explore, Evaluate, and Experiment with AI**. Objectives were translated into measurable outcomes and mapped to competencies, skills, and attributes (e.g., digital literacy, critical thinking, deductive reasoning, adaptability).

Guidance from provincial resources and internal tools informed the development lifecycle including, eCampusOntario's [Micro-credential Toolkit](#): which outlines the process from ideation to evaluation, including employer partnerships, assessment design, and QA mechanisms.

Phase 1 – Discovery & Design

1) Needs Assessment & Environmental Scan

A structured scan identified gaps in available AI-related offerings and clarified where a **generalist, pedagogy-forward** credential could add value. From the scan results, the team narrowed consideration to 6 relevant micro-credentials, benchmarked **formats, prices, and durations**, and mapped differentiators such as practicum-style activities and educator community building.

What mattered most to our design:

- A generalist AI credential focused on **teaching practice** rather than niche tools or programming languages.
- Competency alignment and **authentic assessments** with clear exemplars.
- Bilingual delivery and accessibility at every touchpoint.

2) Program Model & Competency Mapping

The program adopted a **three-module, 15-hour** model:

- **M1 – AI Explorer/Explorateur avec l'IA** (foundations)
- **M2 – AI Evaluator/Évaluer avec l'IA** (assessment)
- **M3 – AI Experimenter/Expérimenter avec l'IA** (confidence)

Each module included **outcomes > objectives > activities > exemplars** and aligned with educator competencies and attributes.

3) Consultation with Users

To ensure alignment before the micro-credential was built, an initial syllabus was created from the environmental scan, and a variety of postsecondary institutions were asked for feedback and input. This feedback consisted of several rounds to ensure the institutions' needs were met. The syllabus became a blueprint for the vendor, helping the team meet the short timeframe.

4) Delivery Strategy & Gating

To reduce overload and improve stickiness, the team gated content: unlocking the next module **after** its live session. Each cohort included **five sessions**: Orientation, three module sessions, and a closing session.

Phase 2 – Development & Readiness

5) Vendor Procurement & Clarifications

An RFQ process secured an instructional design vendor. The instructional designer was also the subject matter expert for the micro-credential. Clarifications ensured shared understanding of:

- **Module duration** (4–6 hours, including assessments),
- **Assessment “example”** meaning a model response shown in Brightspace discussion format,
- **Multimedia standards** and accessibility.

6) Bilingual-by-Design & Accessibility-by-Design

Bilingual and Accessible by Design was operationalized across:

- **Copy and artifacts** (eCommerce site Course Merchant listings, eCampusOntario's Digital Campus Canada website),
- **Module content and surveys** (English/French),
- **Badge design**
- **Marketing communications**

From the first meeting, eCampusOntario's accessibility specialist was included in the project and the vendor also had an accessibility specialist. Accessibility practices were codified in authoring and assessment guidelines (e.g., alt text, flexible submission modalities, consistent information architecture).

7) Technology Stack

- **Brightspace Learning Management System (LMS)**: Brightspace shells (EN/FR) with gated content and discussion-based assessments.
- **Surveys**: Module surveys embedded in Brightspace; **exit survey** via Qualtrics link placed in the LMS to centralize the learner journey
- **Registration**: Course Merchant (ecommerce site) and listings on eCampusOntario Micro-credential Portal listings synchronized and **priced** appropriately; bilingual content aligned across platforms.

8) Champions & Facilitation Readiness

Folks within higher education were recruited to further develop, support and validate the micro-credential and were called 'Champions'. The Champions were tasked with:

- **Completing the program**
- **Providing feedback**, including evaluation of the alignment with learning objectives and outcomes
- Support **discussion boards**,
- Track **assigned participants**,
- Submit **module feedback** on scheduled dates
- Participating in **weekly scrum meetings** to ensure issues are addressed, and course-related questions are answered.
- Dual staffing during sessions (facilitation + technology support) was planned after observing **orientation needs** and resolving early access issues.

9) Marketing & Demand Control

To avoid overwhelming live facilitation capacity, the team limited promotion and aligned communications to capacity. Strategic timing included a **French-first moment** tied to a sector observance, followed by English promotion. Decisions around banners, webinars, and social posts favored clarity over volume.

Phase 3 – Pilot Launch & Operations

10) Launch & Attendance

The pilot launched **October 27, 2025**, with strong demand in both English and French. Live attendance during orientation validated the **dual-staffing** model and surfaced small technical friction points—handled promptly.

11) Learner Experience & Assessments

Assessment activities used **Learning Management System discussions** with exemplars to model quality. Authentic tasks emphasized translation of knowledge to praxis—e.g., adapting an assignment with AI support, or critiquing tool limitations in context.

12) Badging & Recognition

Badges were issued per module, with an overall credential badge upon completion—reinforcing a stepwise pathway and offering **stackable recognition** for work accomplished.

13) Recording & Privacy

To respect learner privacy, only **introductory segments** of sessions were auto-recorded while **breakout discussions** remained unrecorded—aligning facilitation needs with consent and preserving psychological safety.

Phase 4 – Evaluation, Iteration & Governance

14) Data & Reporting Cadence

- **Module surveys** in Brightspace (LMS);
- **Exit survey** via Qualtrics (survey platform) embedded in Brightspace (LMS);
- **Aggregate reporting** only

Aggregate over anecdote: one learner's praise or criticism does not represent the whole cohort; the team adopted a **summary-report** discipline as part of end-of-semester operations.

15) Vendor Improvement Window

The calendar aligned survey closure with a **Dec 15–Jan 15** modification window, ensuring the vendor received **clear, aggregated instructions** for content updates before the January cohort.

16) Licensing & OER Considerations

Where third-party materials informed rubrics or exemplars, licensing diligence (e.g., CC BY vs. SA) was treated as an operational step: if adaptation constraints conflicted with program IP, the fallback was **create an internal equivalent** with comparable pedagogical value.

17) Attrition: Embedding vs. Standalone

A cross-program lessons-learned review noted that standalone micro-credentials may face **module-three attrition** if misaligned with learners' academic calendars. Embedding the micro-credential in a **credit-bearing course** with participation marks increases completion.

Risks & Mitigations

- **Over-enrolment vs. facilitation capacity** > Mitigation: restrained marketing communications and registration close aligned to orientation.
- **Accessibility consistency** > Mitigation: authoring templates, checklists, and QA sweeps.
- **Licensing ambiguity** > Mitigation: early OER license review; permission or internal replacement.
- **Data fragmentation** > Mitigation: aggregate reporting protocols; consistent dashboards.
- **Calendar conflicts** > Mitigation: orient learners early; consider embedding in for-credit contexts,

Lessons Learned

1. **Competency-first beats content-first.** Reverse-design from outcomes and competencies yields clearer assessments and better learner transfer.
2. **Bilingual-by-Design requires operational discipline.** Translation is not a late stage activity; it shapes artifact structure, accessibility claims, and copy consistency.
3. **Accessibility is a design choice, not a retrofit.** Templates, media standards, and alternative modalities must exist at authoring time.
4. **Aggregate reporting enables decisive iteration.** Summaries focused on enrolment, completion, and survey completion reduce noise and bias.
5. **Gating content improves engagement.** Module unlocks post-session maintain focus and reduce cognitive overload.
6. **Champion programs multiply impact.** Champions increase community energy, identify friction points, and provide actionable content feedback on a reliable schedule.
7. **Restrained marketing protects facilitation.** Demand control supports quality and reduces tech-support spike.
8. **Licensing diligence prevents rework.** Where Creative Commons (CC) terms conflict with program IP, replace with internal equivalents.
9. **Embed when possible.** Standalone micro-credentials may face calendar attrition; embedding into for-credit courses improves completion and relevance.
10. **Prioritize communication.** Clear expectations and conflict resolution key within the team and with the vendor's team.

Checklist: Actionable Steps for Creating Bilingual Micro-credentials

A. Strategy & Governance

- **Define purpose & success metrics** (outcomes, competencies, registrations, completion; badge criteria).
- **Adopt a framework** such as eCampusOntario's [Micro-credential Toolkit](#) to standardize design and QA.
- **Secure leadership alignment** on scope, calendar, and demand management.

B. Research & Design

- **Conduct an environmental scan** (format, price, duration, niche vs. generalist).
- **Collect feedback** on structure early from the stakeholders.
- **Write competency statements** > map to module outcomes > objectives > assessments.
- **Plan bilingual & accessible authoring** (templates, glossary, style guide, alt text).

C. Development & Procurement

- **Run RFQ** with clear scope: hours, assessment exemplars, multimedia, accessibility.
- **Create Learning Management System (LMS) shells** (EN/FR), information architecture, gated release schedule.
- **Design authentic assessments** in discussion or project formats; attach exemplars.
- **Build surveys** and test logic/branching.

D. Operations & Delivery

- **Recruit champions**; define cadence (e.g., M1/M2/M3 feedback dates).
- **Staff dual facilitation** (pedagogy lead + tech triage) for live sessions.
- **Control demand**: time marketing communications to operational capacity
- **Respect privacy**: record intros only; avoid recording breakouts without consent.
- **Issue badges** per module + final badge on completion; validate criteria pathways.

E. Evaluation & Iteration

- **Collect aggregate data** (enrolled, completed, survey completed) and publish summaries.
- **Align survey closure** with a **vendor improvement window**; issue a single change log.
- **Review OER licensing**; secure permission or replace with internal equivalents.
- **Plan calendar-aware improvements** (e.g., embedding MC into for-credit courses).

F. Documentation & Reuse

- **Maintain a playbook** (templates, QA checklists, exemplar library).
- **Standardize artefacts** (portal listings, e-commerce listing, badges, communications copy).
- **Archive lessons learned** and update governance documents for new cohorts.



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