

## Could micro-credentials compete with traditional degrees

As the cost of a university education continues to balloon, many wonder whether the return on the investment is worth it and if there might be alternative paths to job success.

Enter micro-credentials. While higher education and human resources experts all have slightly different interpretations of what they are, many agree that the concept has emerged in response to the skills gap caused by new technologies. Essentially, micro-credentials are bite-sized chunks of education, whether an online course, bootcamp certificate or online learning platform like Coursera, edX or Udacity.

Many individuals already use micro-credentials to broaden their skillsets. Still, some have suggested that in the future, a **prospective** employee might be able to ‘stack’ these credentials together in place of a university degree. The idea is that it would be more accessible and provide a more affordable — perhaps more targeted — path into employment.

prospective 未来的; 预期的

perceive 察觉; 感觉

Some micro-credentials, such as coding bootcamps, might have been developed to fill the gaps that universities can't, and in turn might be **perceived** in relevant sectors as good alternatives to traditional degrees. But according to research that Sean Gallagher and his colleagues conducted in 2018, that doesn't mean university degrees don't have significant value.

When he surveyed 750 human resource leaders in US companies across various industries, Gallagher found that many of the applicants were degree-holders who had obtained micro-credentials to supplement their core qualification, rather than accumulating certificates and bootcamps as an alternative.

For employers to buy into micro-credentials as an alternative, there needs to be data that proves employees with micro-credentials can perform better, or at least just as well, as those with university degrees. “That type of data doesn't exist quite yet,” says Gallagher.