

Workforce Mobility Roundtable Summary Report

Exploring Assessment and Credentialling in an Era of International Workforces

Hosted by the eAssessment Association (eAA) and the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB)

Chair: Steve Smith, SIAS

Date: 9 June 2025



Introduction

On 9 June 2025, the eAssessment Association and the Federation of Awarding Bodies convened a high-level round table to address one of the most pressing challenges in global training and employment: how to assure skills and certify talent in a world where employers, learners, and educators increasingly operate across borders.

The session, “Workforce Mobility: Exploring Assessment and Credentialling in an Era of International Workforces,” brought together senior representatives from government agencies, assessment technology providers, qualifications bodies, and leading employers to share insights and begin shaping a response.

The discussion was chaired by Steve Smith, Non-Executive Director of the Federation of Awarding Bodies and Managing Director of SIAS (Science Industry Assessment Service), the UK’s awarding organisation for the science and technology sectors. Given the global footprint of many industries and the increasingly restrictive political climate around migration, employers are responding not only by seeking to bring skills to where the work is, but also by shifting work to where the skills are. As a result, they, and the organisations supporting their recruitment and training, must work across borders to develop high-quality, portable qualifications that enable workforce readiness, regardless of location.



The Challenge: Certifying Skills Across Borders



The heart of the discussion centred on how to build trusted, credible, and scalable systems of assessment and credentialling that meet the needs of global labour markets.

Unlike traditional domestic systems, these models must:

- Be grounded in real employer needs, not just national frameworks.
- Enable the verification of credentials digitally, using tools like blockchain and AI.
- Operate across languages, cultures, and jurisdictions.
- Work with job-matching platforms to connect qualified individuals with actual vacancies.
- Offer assessments based on applied performance, not just theory.
- Enable collaboration across education, government, and employers.

The shift from qualifications as proxies for skill to qualifications as proof of competence will define the next phase of workforce development worldwide.

Eight Themes for Action and Case Study Development

- 1** **Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning:** Making people's skills visible, especially those gained outside of formal education, so they can be recognised across borders.
- 2** **Integration of Formal VET Systems with Industry-Led Skill Development:** Ensuring that employer-designed models do not run counter to national goals like inclusivity, upskilling, and support for green industrial transitions.
- 3** **Holistic Competence Assessment:** Moving beyond 'soft skills' to assess broader employability attributes—language, teamwork, adaptability, and cultural fluency.
- 4** **Including Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs):** In sectors without dominant employers, how can SMEs collectively define and validate skill requirements?
- 5** **From Gateways to Pathways:** Rethinking single, high-stakes assessments in favour of more formative, supportive models that build capability over time and work better in a wider range of educational contexts.
- 6** **Accessible Digital Solutions:** While digital assessment technologies are powerful, they can exacerbate inequalities if they are applied without an understanding of context.
- 7** **Modular Learning and Skills Profiling:** Lifelong learning needs flexible systems—digital profiles that record micro-credentials, training history, and experience.
- 8** **Codifying Employer Needs in Fragmented Industries:** how do we define what employers truly require, especially in sectors without dominant players or shared standards, and test which of these requirements must be in a credential.

Next Steps: Building the Knowledge Base

This Roundtable was not a one-off. It launches a wider programme of webinars, case study curation, and collaborative research led by the eAssessment Association and FAB. Over the coming year, this programme will:

- Highlight real-world solutions and innovations.
- Bring together practitioners and policymakers.
- Build shared understanding of what "good" looks like in global assessment.
- Support members of both associations as they respond to global workforce shifts.

In an era where credentials must work across borders, and often without shared cultural or regulatory contexts, building trust in skills has never been more important. This is not just a technical challenge, but a global opportunity for innovation and partnership.





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