

Microcredentialing/Digital Badging

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Badges and other forms of microcredentials provide a way to recognize the acquisition of specific skills, as opposed to traditional degrees and other certifications, which cover full programs of academic study. These alternative kinds of credentials typically point to documentation of the specific skills learned. The resources below explore the growing role of badging and microcredentialing in higher education.

How Open E-Credentials Will Transform Higher Education (2017)

This piece from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* argues that e-credentials today are in a similar position that e-commerce was in 20 years ago—foundationally ready to become extremely important, but still experiencing hesitation among the community of users. According to the article, a set of recent developments signals that e-credentials are at the cusp of broad uptake and that higher education should be prepared.

Promising Practices of Open Credentials: Five Years of Progress (2016)

From the Mozilla Foundation, this report chronicles the progress made in the five years since the introduction of the Open Badges Specification. Case studies are provided of successful practices in K–12, higher education, workplace learning, and informal learning, with an eye toward anticipating the future of badges.

Where Open Badges Appear to Work Better: Findings from the Design Principles Documentation Project (2017)

The authors of this report describe the results of an investigation into 30 digital badging projects, looking for “practical wisdom” that came out of these early forays into alternative credentials. The findings range from broad patterns to specific conclusions about various factors that contribute to the success of a badging program.

10 Lessons Learned from an Award-Winning Digital Badging Program (2015)

EDUCAUSE implemented a badging program in 2014, and this blog shares insights gained from the efforts to launch and maintain that program. The advice covers issues such as risks, opportunities, trade-offs, design, and other considerations.

The Potential and Value of Using Digital Badges for Adult Learners (2013)

This report focuses on the particular benefits of badging for adult learners in basic education programs. These learners often need a credential or other evidence of learning in order to obtain employment, and badges can provide the kind of detail about what an individual has learned that employers are looking for.

Developing a Higher Education Badging Initiative (2015)

This resource from ELI discusses the benefits of badging to higher education and outlines a process for undertaking a badging initiative at a college or university. The seven parts of the process include conceptual thinking about the program’s goals, as well as design and technology considerations.

Giving Students a Leg Up with Job Skills a Resume Won’t Show (2016)

This PBS video profiles a badging program at Georgetown University, highlighting the ways in which alternative credentials can provide—particularly to recruiters and prospective employers—evidence of particular skills that students have acquired. Badges often cover skills that aren’t explicitly part of a conventional transcript, such as leadership, collaboration, and problem solving, contributing to what some see as the move in credentials from degrees to competencies.