

Staff Perceptions of Digital Badging Survey

Welcome

The Open University 'perceptions of digital badging' project team would be very grateful for your participation in this survey about digital badging whatever your knowledge and experience of the topic.

As you may know, digital badging is an easy way of sharing detailed information about learning and other achievements via [social media](#) and electronic resumes. If you would like to know more about digital badges here is a [two and a half minute video](#) from Ako Aotearoa a New Zealand education provider that explains them very clearly. Because the video is hosted on YouTube an advertisement may play when you take the link but you should be able to dismiss it after a few seconds.

A number of universities offer digital badges alongside formal qualifications to help students develop and demonstrate skills of interest to employers. At The Open University we use digital badges in a number of different ways, and we are interested in colleagues' views on the value of digital badges, and how they might be used most effectively. This survey has been designed to align with, rather than duplicate, the survey carried out in 2021 by OpenLearn with whom we are sharing analyses to jointly inform Open University digital badging policy.

We are carrying out this study as a student-staff scholarship team which is funded by the University Scholarship Steering Group and Access, Open and Cross Curricular Innovation Team.

Our findings will be published in internal reports, conference presentations and academic papers. If you participate in the project you will be invited to a final webinar in which we will share project findings. All responses in our project outputs will be anonymised and data will be handled according to UK Data Protection Act (2018) requirements.

The questionnaire should take around 10 minutes to complete and will require you to

answer questions about yourself and your attitudes to, knowledge and use, or potential use, of digital badges.

There is an information leaflet about the project which you can [download from this link](#).

Before you decide whether you want to take part, please read the following information:

- The first question of the survey asks for your consent to your data being used as outlined above. If you have any queries you would like addressing before starting the survey, please contact project team member Dr Terry O'Sullivan, Faculty of Business and Law, by email at: terry.osullivan@open.ac.uk.
- If, having started it, you wish to leave this survey without having your data saved, simply close the browser window.
- The final page of the survey will offer you a formal receipt of your submission via print, email or download. If, having completed the survey, you wish to withdraw your data, please email terry.osullivan@open.ac.uk with your receipt number and your data will be deleted. Withdrawing your data in this way will only be possible until 31st March 2022, after which we will have started the combination and analysis of data.
- In keeping with the Open University's data retention policy, all research data from this project will be stored securely and retained for ten years (in case it needs to be revisited for publications or queries) – therefore up to 2031 - after which it will be destroyed. We will be using the Open University's ORDO database to store the anonymised data after the project has completed in September 2022.

if you are an Open University student, here is a link to the [Open University Student Privacy Notice](#) which explains how the Open University uses your personal data.

This project has been reviewed by, and received a favourable opinion from

- The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee, reference HREC/4159FOX
- The Open University Student Research Project Panel, reference SRPP/20212010
- The Open University Staff Survey Project Panel, approval date 01/12/2021
- The Data Protection Team, reference 3306185

If you have any concerns about the way this research project is being conducted please contact Mr Mick McCormick, Academic Lead EECF and advisor to the project, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, UK at: mick.mccormick@open.ac.uk

Your consent to proceed

If you decide to take part please provide your agreement to the following statement:

I have read the information about the study on the Digital Badge Survey Welcome Page and understand what the study involves. I understand that if I decide at any time that I no longer wish to take part in this survey I can withdraw immediately by closing the browser page, whereby my data will not be saved. I also know how I can withdraw data up until 31st March 2022 after I have submitted my responses. I consent to the processing of my responses for the purposes of this research study. I understand that such information will be anonymous and handled in accordance with UK Data Protection Act (2018) requirements. * *Required*

- ☐ I agree to participate
- ☐ I do not wish to participate

About you

Your answers to these questions will help us to align our findings with previous Open University research on digital badges

In which unit or faculty do you work? * *Required*

- ☐ FASS
- ☐ FBL
- ☐ STEM
- ☐ WELS
- ☐ Academic Services
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Where is your OU nation office? * *Required*

- ☐ England
- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Wales

Your experience of digital badges

These questions are about your individual relationship with digital badges to help us understand if this might be a factor in how you feel about them more generally.

What is your current level of knowledge about digital badges? * *Required*

- ☐ Never heard of them before this survey
- ☐ Had heard of digital badges before this survey but don't know very much about them
- ☐ Know a reasonable amount about digital badges

Do you use digital badges in your work with students? * *Required*

- ☐ No, I do not see a relevant use for them in my role
- ☐ No, but I am open to the idea of using them
- ☐ Yes

If you selected Yes, please briefly describe how you are using digital badges in your work:

How many, if any, digital badges do you currently hold yourself? If you are unsure please make the best estimate you can. * *Required*

- ☐ None

- ☐ 1 - 5
- ☐ 6 - 10
- ☐ More than 10

If you hold any digital badges, please briefly indicate what they are for. *Optional*

What might digital badges do best?

Your responses to the next few questions will help us understand how to develop digital badges relevant to your needs.

Here are some potential uses of digital badges. Please indicate how relevant you feel a badge would be in each situation (rather than any other form of recognition such as a certificate). * *Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 7 answer(s).

	Completely irrelevant	Largely irrelevant	Neither relevant nor irrelevant	Largely relevant	Completely relevant	Don't know
Indicating competence in a technical skill (e.g. data analytics)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indicating competence in a 'soft' skill (e.g. communication)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Denoting membership of a professional body (e.g. Chartered Institute of Marketing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflecting an extra curricular achievement at university (e.g. volunteering)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reflecting an extra-curricular skill developed at university (e.g. peer mentoring)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reflecting a specific skill developed while studying for academic credit (e.g. online collaboration in study counting towards a degree)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrating success in a university course not counting towards a degree (e.g. a badged open course or other microcredential)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any other ideas on what we should award digital badges for please share them here *Optional*

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Using digital badges

Here are some things which people do with digital badges they have earned. Please rate each one as to its (potential) usefulness to you personally. * *Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 6 answer(s).

	Not at all useful	Not very useful	Neutral	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Don't know
Print out the badge and add it to a physical portfolio with other certificates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Link to the badge from my LinkedIn page (or other social media platform)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Share my badge in applications for jobs or for promotion at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the badge as evidence in appraisals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify and keep track of opportunities for learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Use it to help me in my business networking activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Potential benefits of digital badges

By rating each of the statements in this question and the next, you will help us develop better digital badges and communicate more effectively about them.

Here are some things people have said about the benefits of digital badges in higher education. Please rate each on how much you agree it is a benefit. * *Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 12 answer(s).

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Badges allow students to develop and demonstrate employability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badges recognise specific skills achievements not revealed though formal transcripts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marks out the badge holder as someone who has made an extra effort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badges are easy to share	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Badges are more visible than a certificate or other student record	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It encourages healthy competition to see who can win badges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing our digital badges increases brand awareness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seeing a student's badges is (would be) helpful when writing references	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Earning badges helps students become independent learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badges enhance student engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Badges are an opportunity to escape the limitations of standardised qualification frameworks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is clear student demand for digital badges as part of Open University programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there are other advantages of digital badges which are attractive to you, please list them:

Potential downsides of digital badges

Here are some things people have said about the potential disadvantages of digital badges. Please rate each one as to how much you agree it is a disadvantage. *

Required

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 11 answer(s).

	Completely disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neutral	Agree somewhat	Completely agree	Don't know
Badges have got a childish image	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employers and other stakeholders may not recognise what a badge means	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Too many badges are too easily available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students should not need badges to motivate them to learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Students may have difficulty managing privacy as to who can see digital badges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only badges from big-name universities and organisations are worth having	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A badge is less prestigious than a certificate for the same achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gaining badges might distract students from their main study priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badges are too narrowly focused to recognise attainment in higher education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Offering badges within credit-bearing programmes dilutes the University's brand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badges only make sense within a consistent University-wide qualifications framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fraudulent use of badges is a serious issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badging creates unnecessary assessment pressure for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you perceive there to be other disadvantages of digital badges, please list them:

What next for you and digital badges?

Your answers to this question will help us understand potential trends in the market for digital badges.

Please indicate your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements.

** Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 4 answer(s).

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly	Don't know
I would like to incorporate badges in my work supporting formal qualifications (e.g. to reward participation or progress in credit bearing modules)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to develop and offer badges for other achievements (such as volunteering relevant to a programme or information search skills)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I would like to incorporate badges from OpenLearn Badged Open Courses in my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to incorporate badges from other institutions in my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please share any other thoughts or suggestions you have for how digital badges can be used at The Open University

Placing a value on a digital badge

We are **not** aware of any plans to introduce digital badges for a fee, but the following questions invite you to put a **hypothetical** value on them in terms of time and money. This data will help us in our thinking about how digital badges might best be positioned to students.

If you were offered the opportunity of studying and earning a badge for a fee, how much would you be prepared to pay? * *Required*

If you selected Other, please specify:

A single academic credit in the UK equates to 10 hours study time - so a 30 credit module involves 300 hours of learning, doing assessments, and all the admin associated with being a student. How many hours do you think it should take to earn a digital badge? * *Required*

If you selected Other, please specify:

Would you be willing to take part in an online discussion on digital badges?

We are planning to hold two online discussion events in March and April 2022 bringing together employers, Open University staff and students to talk about emerging knowledge on digital badges for employability and what would increase their value to all involved. These will take place during twilight sessions on optional dates and participants will be provided with refreshments (by mail) as a token of thanks for the time taken to contribute. If you are interested in participating **please enter your name and an email address in the box below**. We undertake to use this information only for this research and for no other purpose. Providing your email will not compromise the anonymity with which your data will be treated in this survey. We will store this information securely, in line with the Open University's data security policies, and delete it at the end of the project (31/07/2022).

If you would like to be kept in touch with the project by

- receiving a copy of the report from the project and
- being invited to a final project webinar

please email us at BEAUPEEP@open.ac.uk with 'add to mailing list' in the subject line

Final page

Thank you on behalf of the project team for your participation. We are very grateful for your responses.

Best wishes

Terry O'Sullivan

Senior Lecturer in Management

The Open University Business School

Terry.OSullivan@open.ac.uk

Key for selection options

14 - If you were offered the opportunity of studying and earning a badge for a fee, how much would you be prepared to pay?

Not interested even if free

Would only do it if free

up to £30

up to £50

up to £70

more than £70

Don't know

Other

15 - A single academic credit in the UK equates to 10 hours study time - so a 30 credit module involves 300 hours of learning, doing assessments, and all the admin associated with being a student. How many hours do you think it should take to earn a digital badge?

Up to 10 hours

11 - 20 hours

21 - 30 hours

Don't know

Other

