

Open Badge Network Name of Output

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Author	Partner
Eric Rousselle	Discendum
Reviewer	Partner
Marta Jacyniuk-Lloyd	CamProf

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Author of the Use Case [name, organisation]		Eric Rousselle					
Use Case Title		Open Badges in schools and higher education					
Date Created:		24.3.2016					
Which role(s) do you play in the context of this Use Case: any specific role							
Earner	X	Issuer	X	Audience	X	Displayer	
Other (please specify)				Badges in formal education setting			

Criteria:	
Context:	Schools and higher education
Users:	Main actors are teachers, trainers, counsellors and the students they work with. The use cases described here are relevant also in any organisation, where badges are used in formal learning. For example, these actors can be trainers working in big companies training centres or in vocational continuing education centres.
Description:	Here we are not describing a single use case, but a collection of use cases related to the utilisation of badges in formal learning contexts. We choose to do so because they take place in the same context and are usually used by the same actors.
User goal / value:	Using badges to make learning visible, to recognise current and prior learning, to set goals and learning pathways and to reward learners.
Environment/platform:	Badges can be issued after course completion from a LMS or in the case or prior recognition of learning badges can be earned from badge applications.
Usage scenarios:	The use cases described here can be grouped in 4 main categories: 1. Using badges to make learning visible



Schools and universities recognise and certify the learning of their students with degrees and different kind of certificates.

Unfortunately, most of school credentials tell about the amount of work, which have been accomplished (hours) to complete some studies or pass some exam, but they hardly ever tell about the things that the students actually learned. It's a problem for employers but also for job applicants, who can't provide clear proof of their learning.

Educational organisations can use badges to make visible learning, which actually happens in their curriculums. Issuing a badge as a digital representation of a credential makes sense if the badge designer puts some effort on developing a comprehensive criteria page that describes the skills and competences that the student actually masters, when he gets the credential related to the badge in question.

During their studies students learn a lot of things, which are not captured by official curriculums. They are for example teamwork related skills or soft skills, which are valuable for employers and students, and can be recognised and made visible with badges. These kind of badges can be created by teachers or counsellors, but why not also by students.

Designing a badge is for headmasters, teachers, counsellors and even for students a great way to reflect on the contents of curriculums and more so from a competence based point of view. From this perspective Open Badges standard is not only a way to make visible what students actually learn but it is also a powerful tool for developing studies and curriculums from a competence based learning perspective.

2. Using badges to recognise prior learning

Recognition of prior formal learning can be tricky, but recognition of prior informal learning is a real challenge for schools and for example for students coming from the work life, because they often have to study things that they already master to get degrees. An open badge can be used to recognise prior learning, because they are validated proof of learning and their criteria page tells about the criteria fulfilled by the badge earner.

- Using badges can ease the evaluation work of teachers and counsellors, but this requires that the Open Badge standard becomes popular and widely used by associations, employers and educational organisations.

- A good start for schools would be to work together on developing badge systems that would express common requirements. These badges could be displayed as badge applications (see the use case “Badge applications”). It would be an easy and time saving way for teachers and counsellors to capture, evaluate, accept or reject the evidences students provide about their prior learning.

3. Badges to recognise teachers’ computer skills

The evolution of the Internet and computer technology is fast and it is very challenging for schools and universities to capture and evaluate the skills of their teachers. A Finnish school network is trying to tackle this problem by developing a badge system for this purpose. A total of 60 badges have been developed using a specific competency framework. Each badge has been designed to capture and recognise a small number of skills and competences (for example “building a basic web page”). Badges express some progression and form learning paths. When a teacher has earned all the small badges contained in a learning path, he or she gets a milestone badge, which tells about the competences recognised in the learning path. In this user case badges are not issued after a course completion; badges are displayed in a web page and teachers can apply for them by filling evidences in application forms. Badges are issued when the applications submitted by teachers are reviewed and accepted. This user case shows how it is possible to capture and recognize teachers’ prior computer skills in several schools with the same criteria using a badge system developed in collaboration by several partners.

4. Using badges to set goals and learning pathways

As we explained in the previous use case, badges can be used to set and visualise learning paths and goals. Milestone Badges can be thought as “big badges”, used to express that the small badges in the pathway have been earned and the final goal has been achieved. Teachers can set different kinds of pathways with badges. For example, the rule can be that all badges contained in the pathway should be earned before the final Milestone Badge is issued. It is also possible to set a Milestone Badge, which will be issued when some of the badges contained in the pathway have been earned. It is also possible to set several alternative pathways leading to the same final goal visualised by a Milestone Badge.



	<p>5. Using badges to reward students for their achievements</p> <p>Badges can be used to reward and motivate learners, and they can be used as elements in some gamification processes. But it is important to understand that the main value of an Open Badge is not in rewarding an earner, but in the fact that it makes it possible for its earner to display to a potential employer, a teacher or any customer validated evidence of skills or achievements. If Open Badges are used only as shining gold stars for rewarding purposes, there is a risk that they affect the intrinsic motivation of students.</p>
Frameworks:	For example in Finland CPD projects for teacher's ICT skills are using a national quality framework named OPE.FI.
Evidence:	Evidences can be completion of learning activities in a LMS or evidences or prior learning (texts, pictures, videos, links to portfolios) submitted in the badge application forms by applicants.
Quality:	Depend on contexts.
Notes and Issues:	