

Craig Langston Digital Badges

In 2014, as part of two key accreditation bids, a method for demonstrating the alignment of our degrees with the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide) was needed.

There are ten knowledge areas in Edition 5 of the Guide, although Bond is proposing one more related to the emerging environmental management field.

Digital badges were seen as the answer. They are a contemporary approach to credentialing and well suited to competency assessment strategies and benchmarking. Digital badges are similar in design to past merit badges that are sewn onto clothing, but instead are transferred digitally to various social media outlets such as LinkedIn®, storage repositories such as Mozilla Backpack® and electronic documents such as résumés.

Digital badges are more than just a .png image. They are 'backed' to include verification data identifying the award, its criteria, links to online evidence of performance, details of the certifying institution, and the recipient's ID. Once issued, they become part of the public record.

Successes and Benefits

Digital badging is new to Bond University, and is an emerging area of educational development more generally. A pilot program was approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor of Learning & Teaching in 2014 and rolled out in 2015 to explore potential benefits of this technology and its integration into existing systems.



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The first badges were issued to graduates of the Master of Project Management and Master of Project Management (Professional) degrees timed with Bond's June graduation ceremony.

A third-party provider, Credly.com, was used to manage the distribution process. Each badge relates to a specific PMBOK® Guide knowledge area or level.

The next stage of the pilot is for Bond to offer extracurricular activities to our students that go beyond formal degree structures to embrace deeper learning, engagement and further work-ready skills.

In 2015/16 we are hosting several industry-led programs focused on time, cost and environmental management.

In hindsight this project has proven influential in securing accreditation for our degrees, and it is hoped that over time our badges will be formally recognised by employers as credible proof of graduate competency.

Badge Design

There are eleven unique badge designs across three performance levels (bronze, silver and gold). For example, the Project Integration Management badges have the following criteria:

> Bronze Level:

A pass (P) in Principles of Project Management, plus at least 8 out of 10 in the related online test offered as part of that subject

> Silver Level:

A credit (C) in Principles of Project Management, plus evidence of project integration competence in practice

> Gold Level:

A high distinction (HD) in Principles of Project Management, plus evidence of project integration competence in practice

Other badges apply directly to extra-curricular activities.

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For example, the Project Environmental Management badges are built around the Green Project Management GPM-b Certification, and comprise four days of training on-campus, assessment tasks and a final online exam. This activity explores corporate social responsibility and triple bottom line thinking on projects.

Feedback Received

Digital badge credentialing was considered a key feature of our successful accreditation bids with both the Australian Institute of Project Management (in 2014) and the Project Management Institute (in 2015). Both these professional bodies require evidence of competency across all PMBOK® Guide knowledge areas.

This initiative convinced them of Bond's commitment to the global standard. Graduates have also embraced the introduction of badges by personalising their Credly.com webpage.

"While it is not without significant effort and perseverance, this activity has no direct cost to the university and has become a distinguishing feature of innovative learning practice for us."



Damon Barbaresco

Credly member since May 2015

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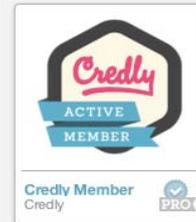
Project Coordinator at Echo Entertainment Group

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Earned (7)

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Impact on Student Learning

The Project & Program Management discipline at Bond is privileged to be leading this new initiative and making digital badges available to graduating students.

While it is not without significant effort and perseverance, this activity has no direct cost to the university and has become a distinguishing feature of innovative learning practice for us.

Badges carry points that are used to calculate eligibility for our new PMI (Queensland Chapter) award for best graduate each semester. Bronze badges are worth 5 points, silver badges are worth 10 points, and gold badges are worth 20 points.

To be eligible for the PMI award, at least 100 points need to be earned. This approach is an example of 'gamification', where students are motivated to strive for excellence during their studies.

Damon Barbaresco won the PMI (Queensland Chapter) award for highest badge score in June 2015.

Advice to colleagues

Digital badges can be used in iLearn subjects as a means of student feedback and reward. But the challenge in our case was to award badges across subjects based on a more holistic assessment that included a range of

activities, some being part of the approved curriculum and others additional to it. This required a different and more sophisticated approach.

Final Thoughts

A number of universities worldwide are leading this area of learning development. In Australia, Deakin University is well advanced and internationally recognised for the work it has done under the brand Deakin Digital (see <https://www.deakindigital.com/>). There is an opportunity for Bond in this space too.

Craig joined Bond University in 2008 as Professor of Construction and Facilities Management. Before that he held the inaugural Chair in Construction Management at Deakin University in Geelong, and pioneered the first fully online courses at the University of Technology, Sydney.

He has made significant contributions to scholarship in the construction industry. His PhD developed a new approach to the calculation of time equivalence in discounting via the inclusion of affordability considerations linked to predicted changes in living standards.

In 2010 Craig was awarded the Bond University Vice-Chancellor's Quality Award for Research Excellence.