

Digital Badging Glossary

Term	Definition
Accreditation	<i>A type of quality assurance process under which services and operations of educational institutions or programs are evaluated and verified by an external body to determine if applicable and recognized standards are met. The process in which certification of competency, skill, knowledge, or credibility is presented.</i>
Airman's Learning Record	<i>Captures and documents Airmen's knowledge and skills gained throughout the Continuum of Learning (training, education, and experiences), documents progress and achievement, and identifies gaps and opportunities for growth tied to mission accomplishment from an enterprise and individual level.</i>
Assertion	<p><i>A JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) structured representation of the data for a specific badge that has been awarded. An assertion represents a single badge awarded to a single earner – it includes information about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• Who earned the badge?</i><i>• What the badge represents</i><i>• Who issued the badge?</i> <p><i>The assertion for a badge includes various data items required by the Open Badges Specification.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• Required data items in an assertion include: a unique ID; the recipient; the badge URL; verification data; the issue date.</i><i>• Assertions can optionally include: the badge image; an evidence URL; an expiry date.</i><i>• An assertion can be stored in a hosted file or a JSON Web signature.</i>

Auditing or external verification	<i>The process, either internal or external, of auditing and verifying the proper implementation of awarding credit or credentialing.</i>
Backpack	<i>A tool used to collect, share and display earned badges.</i>
Badge	<p><i>A digital representation of a skill, learning achievement or experience. Badges can represent competencies and involvements recognized in online or offline life. Each badge is associated with an image and some metadata. The metadata provides information about what the badge represents and the evidence used to support it.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Earners can display their badges online and can share badge information through social networks.</i> • <i>Issuers define badges and award them to earners.</i>
Badge Ecosystem	<i>Refers to the broader ecosystem (also called ecosphere or badgeosphere) of supervisors, commanders, leadership who are the audience for badges and enable digital badges to function as currency in the community. Contains all of the relevant digital badging components.</i>
Badging (Digital Badging)	<p><i>The process of awarding someone a badge denoting a particular experience, skills or competencies they have obtained for professional or personal development.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital badging enables professional communities to identify new competency areas and recognize mastery or demonstration of those competencies.</i> • <i>A signal to colleagues and to current and prospective employers a professional life of active learning, engagement, and ongoing development.</i>
Badging Platform	<i>The online tool that allows badges to be issued and earned. Examples are Credly, Badgr, Canva Badge, RedCritic etc.</i>

Behavior	<i>An observable activity performed to achieve the objectives of the job. Behaviors may provide evidence of knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics.</i>
Blockchain	<i>A data structure that holds transactional records while ensuring security, transparency, and decentralization. It is a chain of records stored in the forms of blocks which are controlled by no single authority. A distributed ledger that is completely open to any and everyone on the network. Once an information is stored on a blockchain, it is extremely difficult to change or alter it.</i>
Certificate	<p><i>Broadest category. Awarded upon the successful completion of a brief course of study.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sometimes issued for participation or completion, other times for attainment of competencies.</i> • <i>Used at many levels of knowledge and skills, ranging from foundational skills to learning at the post-graduate level.</i>
Certification	<p><i>Indicate mastery of or competency in specific knowledge, skills or processes that can be measured against a set of accepted standards.</i></p> <p><i>Not tied to a specific educational program, but typically awarded through assessment and validation of skills in cooperation with a business, trade association or other industry group.</i></p>
Competency	<i>The combination of Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics that manifest in an observable, measurable pattern of Behaviors.</i>
Competency Assessment	<i>The process of collecting and judging evidence to measure a person’s competency level.</i>
Competency Management System (CMS)	<i>A method of tracking, categorizing, assigning, assessing competencies identified in models.</i>
Competency Model	<i>A collection of competencies that together define successful performance in a particular work setting.</i>

Competency Rubric	<i>Presents the definition of a single competency or sub-competency and distributes its observable behaviors in a table that lists multiple proficiency levels along a developmental scale.</i>
Consumer	<i>A person or group who is the intended audience/viewer of a badge Earner's badges. Someone viewing a badge awarded to an earner. Examples could include supervisors, commanders, instructors and potential employers.</i>
Credential	<i>Document, certificate or qualification recognizing attainment of measurable skill. Evidence or proof of qualification, competence, or skill issued to an individual by a third party with a relevant authority or assumed competence to do so.</i>
Criteria	<p><i>Principles or standards by which something may be judged or decided. A definition of the requirements for earning a badge.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A badge may be associated with multiple criteria</i> • <i>Criteria can be required or not</i> • <i>Criteria must be associated with a description and indication of acceptable evidence.</i>
Developer	<i>Groups or organizations that create programs where badges can be designed and issued.</i>
Developmental Special Experiences (DSE)	<i>Immersive competency-based learning activities outside the scope of Air Force formal training that have been validated as a potential means for Airmen to obtain specific institutional, occupational, or joint competencies. Airmen will be provided multi-domain and joint opportunities, external to assignments, to provide the appropriate experiences and exposure to earn competencies.</i>
Displayer	<i>The place where the badge is displayed.</i>
e-Catalog	<i>An electronic catalog that contains all opportunities for training, education, and developmental experiences within the Air Force.</i>
E-Portfolio	<i>A digital collection of electronic evidence created and managed by a user online. Files,</i>

	<i>images, links, and other data are typically stored in the portfolio. E-Portfolios are used to store and display digital badges.</i>
Earner	<i>A person who has met the necessary requirements to earn a badge or micro-credential. Earners can apply for badges through issuing organizations or individuals (also referred to as issuers). Someone who has earned or is seeking to earn a digital badge. The person receiving the digital badge.</i>
Endorsement	<i>Adds a layer of external validation that further supplements a badge's metadata and can help earners to understand which badges might have greater social or professional currency.</i>
Evidence	<i>Submitted proof that an earner meets the criteria for a badge they are applying for. Can be links, text, images, and other media.</i>
Experiential-Learning	<i>A process through which one develops knowledge and skill from direct experience outside a traditional academic setting. This can include internships and other professional work experiences.</i> <i>Well-planned, supervised, and assessed experiential learning programs can promote interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional and intellectual skills.</i>
Foundational Competencies	<i>Competencies that are valued by the Air Force and are universally applicable to all Airmen (Officer, Enlisted, and Civilian).</i>
Issuer	<i>Person or organization who creates /offers badges and issues them to earners. Issuers can be individuals or organizations. The person or organization who awards digital badges once evidence is provided demonstrating the criteria has been met. In some cases, the issuer also serves as the validator. The entity creating the badge (educational institutions, government agencies, private organizations, etc.).</i>

License	<p><i>Legal permission to allow an individual to perform certain regulated tasks or occupations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Based on some pre-determined and standardized criteria, involving educational programs of study, assessments, and/or work experience.</i> • <i>Time-limited and must be renewed periodically and often carry a continuing education requirement.</i>
Metadata	<p><i>Information contained within a badge that defines it. It includes name, description, and links to other important details like the badge’s criteria, evidence and issuer information.</i></p> <p><i>Metadata provides information about what the badge represents and the evidence used to support it. Metadata is structured information that describes, explains, locates, or otherwise makes it easier to retrieve, use, or manage an information resource. Metadata is often called data about data or information about information. (National Information Standards Organization).</i></p>
Micro-credential	<p><i>Collection of recognized competencies that can be displayed as digital badges.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A subset of specific knowledge, skills or competencies that is part of a larger progression of learning. Micro-credentials are digital credentials that are shareable and personalized.</i> • <i>A granular certification that an individual has mastered certain skills or competencies, earned through the completion of short and purposeful skills-based learning experiences.</i>
Occupational Competencies	<p><i>Competencies that are required of all Airmen within a specific workforce category.</i></p>
Proficiency Level	<p><i>The degree to which an individual has mastered a competency.</i></p>
Registrar	<p><i>Responsible for maintaining the e-catalog and validating learning opportunities that are</i></p>

	<i>reviewed for potential inclusion in an Airman's Learning Record.</i>
Rubric	<i>A set of criteria used for assessing a particular kind of work or performance.</i>
Tags	<p><i>Tags are alternate terms or phrases to describe the badge's topics, competencies, or type of achievement.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Intended to help badge consumers and potential badge earners find relevant badges. As such, the tag field should contain as many relevant keywords as will be helpful.</i> • <i>Examples of tags may include but are not limited to: programming, instructional design, learning analytics, assessment development, volunteer work, and many others.</i>
Validator	<i>The person or organization who checks the criteria and evidence for a badge. The validation provided is essential to building trust in the validity digital badges issued.</i>
Viewer	<i>The person viewing/reviewing the earned badges.</i>