



5 March 2014

## **Badges for learning: a review of the formative role of badges in two open online courses**

Simon Cross, Open University, UK

**Please test your audio set up using the wizard:**

**Tools ->Audio -> Audio setup wizard.**

### **Your hosts**

Professor Geoff Crisp,  
Dean Learning and Teaching, RMIT University  
geoffrey.crisp[at]rmit.edu.au

Dr Mathew Hillier,  
Teaching and Educational Development Institute,  
University of Queensland  
mathew.hillie[at]uq.edu.au

#### **Just to let you know:**

By participating in the webinar you acknowledge and agree that:

The session may be recorded, including voice and text chat communications (a recording indicator is shown inside the webinar room when this is the case).

We may release recordings freely to the public which become part of the public record.

We may use session recordings for quality improvement, or as part of further research and publications.

# **Badges for Learning: a review of the formative role of badges in two open online courses**

Dr Simon Cross

Institute of Educational Technology,

The Open University, UK

<http://iet.open.ac.uk/people/s.j.cross>

March 2014



---

---

## Background

- <http://iet.open.ac.uk/people/s.j.cross>
- <http://www.open.ac.uk/iet/main/>

## Overview of presentation

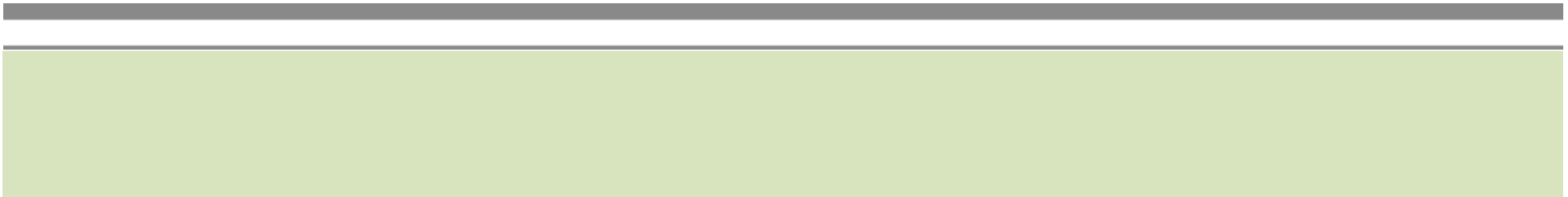
- Function and role of badges
- Open Learning Design (OLDS) MOOC Course
- Open Education (H817) MOOC Course
- Uptake
- Participant views

## Open Learning Design Studio MOOC

- 9 Badges
- Facilitator / Peer approved
- Learning Design and OER

## Open Education MOOC (H817)

- 3 Badges
- Facilitator approved
- MOOCs and OER





---

---

# Context

## ‘High potential’ impact

Foster 2013, Sharples et al. 2012

## Gamification for achievement and reward

- Badges
- Currency or capital
- Privileged information or access
- New material opportunities
- Collectables
- Trophies



RANK AWARDS	RANKING ICONS				
1 to 5	1	2	3	4	5
6 to 10	6	7	8	9	10
11 to 15	11	12	13	14	15
16 to 20	16	17	18	19	20
21 to 25	21	22	23	24	25
26 to 30	26	27	28	29	30
31 to 35	31	32	33	34	35
36 to 40	36	37	38	39	40
41 to 45	41	42	43	44	45
46 to 50	46	47	48	49	50

Red Dead Redemption: [Rockstargames.com](http://Rockstargames.com)  
[Segmentnext.com](http://Segmentnext.com) / [gamefaqs.com](http://gamefaqs.com)  
[www.vericlix.com/images/badge.jpg](http://www.vericlix.com/images/badge.jpg)

---

---

The Duolingo logo, featuring the word "duolingo" in a white, rounded, lowercase font with a light blue outline, set against a light blue background.

- 'Learning, gamified. Advance by **unlocking** bite-sized skills
- 'Finish each lesson without **losing** your **hearts**
- 'Earn achievements to **track** your progress in the language'



## Peltigera polydactya?



By: Ewan Cole 🌱🌱🌱

Location: A90, City of Edinburgh

Observed on: 2nd March 2014

Added to iSpot: 2nd March 2014

Likely ID: *Peltigera polydactylon*

Identifications: 1

Agreements: 0

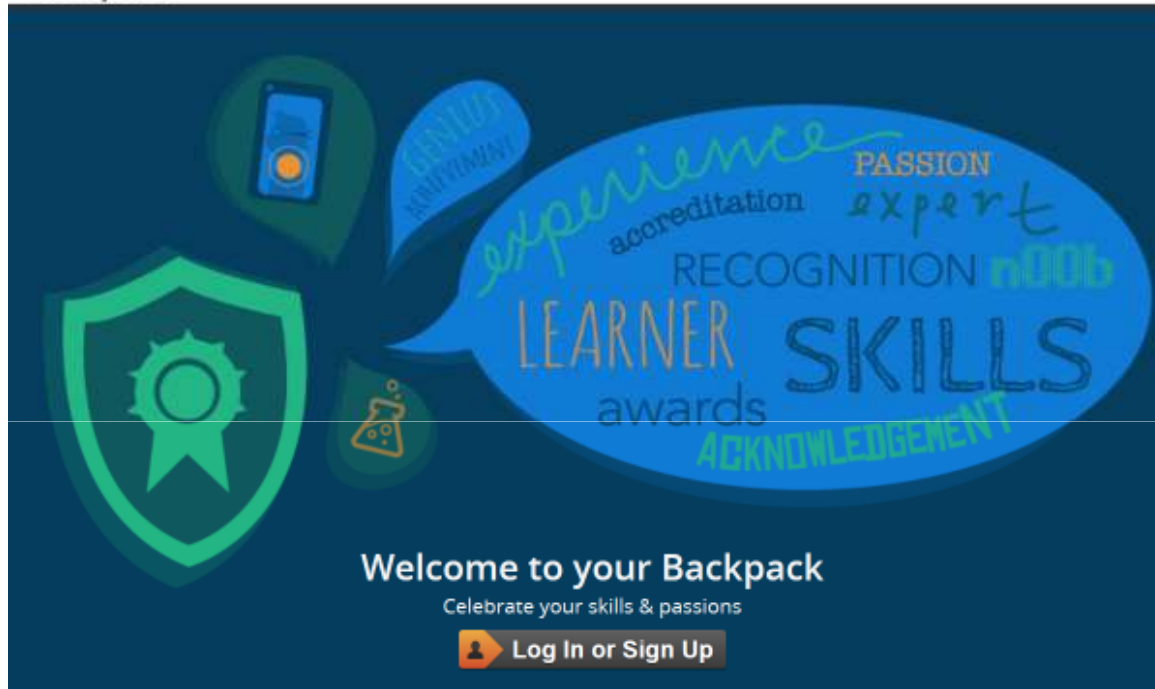
Comments: 0

### Description:

Peligeria lichen, Dark brown matt upper surface, lower more white than creamy with pale brown simple rhizines.

Black/Dark Brown netlike venation. Found above 300m on rocky mossy ground.





<http://backpack.openbadges.org/backpack/login>

<http://wordpress.org/plugins/wpbadger/>

<https://wordpress.org/plugins/badgeos/>



---

---

# Context

## New era for Assessment

Cormier & Siemens 2010, Rodriguez 2012

## Life Long Learning Competition

Goligoski 2012, Hickey 2013

## Emerging HE studies and High School

Abramovich et al. 2013, Randall et al. 2013, Glover 2013



---

---

# Definition

‘Digital credential that represents skills, interests and achievements earned by an individual through specific projects, programmes, courses or other activities’  
(Mozilla 2013)

‘A badge is visual public symbol that communicates to others a particular quality, achievement or affiliation possessed by the owner. It is one of a variety of ways that such recognition can take a material form’



# The Potential of Badges

- Accredited and evidence learning
- Strengthening student motivation
- Promoting deeper learning experiences
- Reaching informal/non-traditional learners
- Helping student better value achievements
- Recognising competency-based learning

# Function of Badges

---

- Recognise learning
- Assessment of learning
- Motivating learning
- Evaluation & tracking of progress

# Function of Badges

---

- Recognise learning
- Assessment of learning
- Motivating learning
- Evaluation & tracking of progress
- Goal setting
- Status
- Instruction to norms
- Reputation
- Group identity

# Function of Badges

---

- Recognise learning
- Assessment of learning
- Motivating learning
- Evaluation & tracking of progress
- Goal setting
- Status
- Instruction to norms
- Reputation
- Group identity
- Tool of resistance or domination
- Symbols of exclusivity
- Souvenirs



# Role of Badges

---

Role of the  
Earner

Role of the  
Issuer

- Solution to motivation issue
- Evidence generator
- Constructive alignment process
- Low cost / low effort option
- Saves time assessing prior learning
- Booster issuer image or profile
- Ties issuer to earner
- Retain authority and status





# Roles

Formative

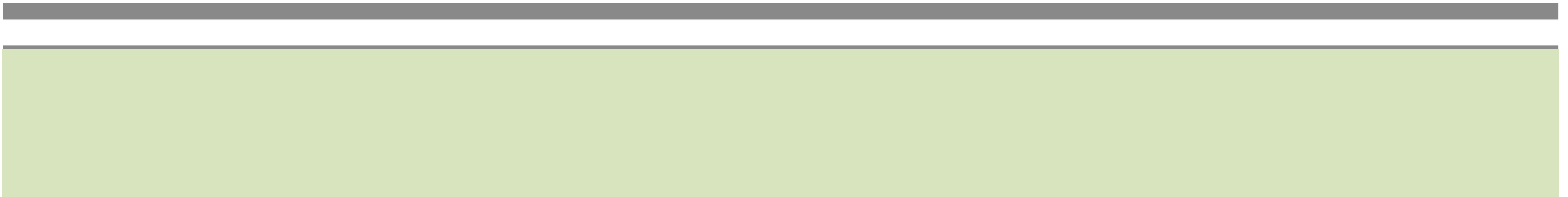
Summative

Badge  
Attainment

Badge  
Display

Intrinsic  
Motivation

Extrinsic  
Motivation



## Open Learning Design Studio MOOC

- 9 Badges
- Facilitator / Peer approved
- Learning Design and OER

## Open Education MOOC (H817)

- 3 Badges
- Facilitator approved
- MOOCs and OER





— Achievement

— Endeavour and Progress

— Practice

<http://www.olds.ac.uk/blog/olds-moocbadgingstrategy>



## Create a Badge

Name (required):

Description (required):

Image File (required):











- ▶ Must be square - 90 x 90 pixels
- ▶ Maximum file-size of 256 KB
- ▶ PNG image format only
- ▶ You must ensure that you either own the copyright or have copyright clearance for the image.

Criteria (required):

Paragraph **B** *I* | | | | | | | |

[Create Badge](#)



	Attendance at event	Thanks for coming along to efest
	Badge: Education in a complex world Summer School	Education in a complex world Summer School - Intermediate level at evaluations.
	Cloudquester	This activity is a variant on the idea of a webquest, it provides a fun ways of exploring the cloudworks site.
	Collaborator	For working effectively in a learning design team or study group
	Education in a complex world Summer School - Active Participation	Education in a complex world Summer School - Active Participation
	Education in a complex world Summer School - Proficiency level	Education in a complex world Summer School - Proficiency level at evaluations.
	H818 Conference: Participation Star	For active participation and peer support in the H818 conference cloudworks activities
	H818 Conference: Presentation Star	For a particularly effective and engaging presentation within the H818 online conference
	Hotshot trophy badge	For being awarded all 8 badges from the OLDS-MOOC
	INTENT	Integrating Telecollaborative Networks Into Foreign Language Higher Education

[http://cloudworks.ac.uk/badge/badge\\_list](http://cloudworks.ac.uk/badge/badge_list)



Name

→ FOLLOW

Reputation: 26

The University of Strathclyde



Institution: [The University of Strathclyde](#)

## Clouds

- Activity: WebCollage, pattern based design of units of learning with embedded assessment
- Building Educommons sustainability through

## Cloudscapes

- Design Bash 2010
- Design Bash 2011

Search

Log in Sign up







Favourites

## Open Learning Design Studio MOOC

66 Pre-course Surveys  
22 Post-course Surveys  
500+ Twitter Posts  
31 Feedback Forms

## Open Education MOOC (H817)




128 Pre-course Surveys  
65 Post-course Surveys

Badge image	Name	Criteria	Badges awarded	Approver
	1 week Badge	Completing any one week of the MOOC. A badge to show effort /engagement	69	Course Team
	3 Week Badge	Completing any three weeks of the MOOC. A badge to show effort /engagement	21	Course Team
	6 Week Badge	Completing any six weeks of the MOOC. A badge to show effort /engagement	9	Course Team
	Resource Gatherer Badge	Contributing three or more items to the Learning Design toolbox / MOOC webpages. A community/ practical badge	12	Course Team
	Course Collaborator Badge	Working effectively in a learning design team or study group. A community/ practical badge	4	Peers (3 other users)
	Reviewer Badge	Reviewed and critiqued two or more learning or curriculum designs	2	Peers (3 other users)




220

30



	Learning Designer Badge	Completing and sharing a learning or curriculum design. An achievement badge	8	Peers (3 other users)
	OER Developer Badge	Creating or remixing an OER and openly sharing it. An achievement badge	4	Peers (3 other users)
	Completed Course Badge	Achieving all 8 other OLDS MOOC Badges. An achievement badge	2	Course Team

OLDS MOOC evaluation Report:  
<http://oro.open.ac.uk/37836/>

Badge image	Name	Criteria	Badges awarded	Approver
	OER Understanding Badge	Complete Activity 7: (Exploring OER issues) in the course and blog your solution including a link / evidence	57	Course Team
	MOOC Understanding Badge	Complete Activity 14: Comparing MOOCs in Week 4 and blog your solution including a link / evidence	47	Course Team
	Open Education 2013 Completed Badge	Acquire both other badges and display on your public profile. Then complete Activity 25: Reflecting on Openness in Week 7 and blog and link to the solution to the activity	25	Course Team

~130

## *Badges gained*

	<i>0</i>	<i>1-3</i>	
OU group:	18	22	(2/15/5)
Non-OU group:	10	20	(2/8/10)

### Demographics:

29 Female / 12 Male

Ages: 11 (35-44), 17 (45-54), 10 (55-64), 1 (64+)

**Did you find the badges a positive addition to the course?**

Non-OU

19 Yes

7 No

2 Not sure

OU

5 Yes

5 No



---

# Recognition of learning

42% (16) talked about the badge providing 'evidence' or 'recognition' of effort, or achievement, or importance of having something to 'show'

'I can put them on my profile to show I have done this learning. It's good for my PLN and good for my learners to see'



---

---

## A sense of fun

‘They make me smile! Which is a good thing – learning should be fun and I think this was a fun element of the course’

‘Earned my Week 1 Badge from #oldsmooc! Unexpectedly pleased to have a reward for effort! What fun and motivates



---

---

# Guiding progress

Judging progress as a 'Learning Outcome type guide'

'I did not have the time or motivation to do every activity, but wanted to set specific action goals for myself and I liked the idea of badges. They were new for me and a way to motivate myself through the completion of the course.'



---

---

# Personal Achievement

'It's a symbolic and personal reward of my efforts... even I don't show the badges to anybody (I haven't so far), I feel satisfied to have gained them. It's my auto-congratulation...'





---

---

# Communal learning

Peer validation 'was great [idea]... I got as much out of validating others badge applications as getting my own badges'

'Hi Folks, Just applied 4 my #oldsmooc collaborator badge, Could you do the honours?'



---

---

# Identity

'It's like being in a club'

'I am proud of them because I liked the course'



---

---

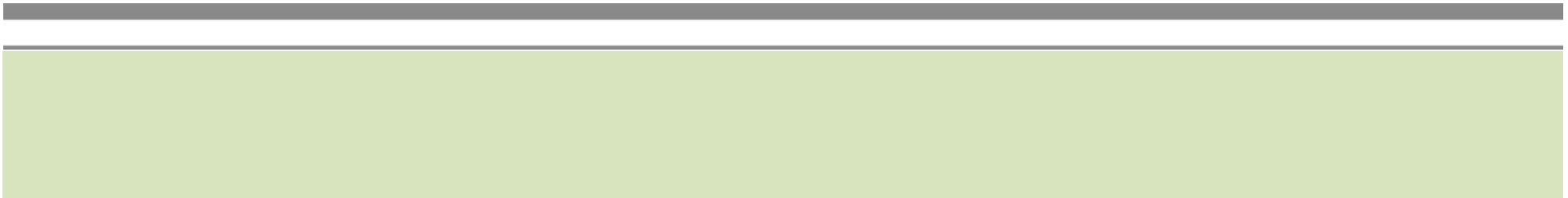
## Relative Value

‘I’m not sure yet if I’ll really use them [externally]’

‘I debated whether or not to do the activities to get them, and then whether or not to apply... I decided that they might be useful as evidence of professional development ... I don’t know if anyone in my institution will care, but in case they do, I have the badges.’

# Issues

- Recognise value: 'misleading impression of knowledge'
- Pressure to Participate: feeling 'inadequate' for not applying for them
- Validation process: abuse of system
- Professional interest: wanting to 'experience it for myself'
- Patronising: I don't need someone else's approval
- Time and technical challenge to applying



# Conclusion

‘I still don’t understand well why,  
but badges were a good motivator  
for me’

## Contact

Dr Simon Cross

Institute of Educational Technology

The Open University

[simon.j.cross@open.ac.uk](mailto:simon.j.cross@open.ac.uk)

