



VET Micro-credentialing in the tourism sector

# BadgeTour Training Path

## Methodology handbook

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## Disclaimer

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## INTRODUCTION

Micro-credentials provide learners with opportunities to diversify their learning and improve their education by taking shorter courses. These micro-credentials can be linked thematically and be based on the expertise gained. Their alignment to standardised descriptors (e.g., for professional profiles, skills taxonomies, education level, type of evidence, etc.) will ensure that they are equally understood and recognised by employers, educational establishments across sectors, geographic areas and the wider society. Through this, micro-credentials will play a major role in encouraging and realising lifelong learning and a society of learning, which – through critical reflection of societal and business processes – will create better lives and better opportunities for all. VET organisations and VET trainers have a pivotal role in these activities and need to be prepared to phase these changes.

This methodological handbook is a result produced in the frame of the ERASMUS+ project BadgeTour – **VET Micro-credentialing in the tourism sector** with the aim to create a set of digital tools and resources to boost VET providers and trainers’ knowledge and skills on the creation and use of digital badges and micro-credentials for the tourism sector. The handbook purpose is to support the implementation of the BadgeTour training modules and it is addressed at:

- VET providers and trainers of training organisations working in the tourism sector
- Tourism SMEs
- Research centres
- Sector representatives
- Policy makers or public authorities
- Other stakeholders able to bring the idea at a systemic level

This document also supports the framework of other results of the BadgeTour project namely:

- the BadgeTour competence map
- the BadgeTour micro-credentialing guidelines
- the BadgeTour toolkit

It also includes a trainer roadmap consisting in brief guidelines addressed at trainers interested in implementing the BadgeTour training modules, by providing comprehensive answers to the following questions:

- **Who?** Referencing the specific target groups of the modules and how trainers can assess their learning needs
- **Why?** Identifying the module training goals
- **What?** Indicating and explaining what type of materials the trainer must collect to deliver the training
- **When?** Indications for trainers decided when they should deliver the training
- **Where?** Presenting the training delivery options
- **How?** Explaining how trainers can use the training path to conceptualise, deliver and assess training.

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## BADGETOUR KEY-CONCEPTS

### **Badges development process**

Building micro-credentials and open badges is part of the digitalisation process across Europe. Professional development and the digitalisation of vocational education impose new demands on teachers' competences in digital pedagogy and efficient use of ICT.

### **Competence**

Proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.

### **Collaborative whiteboards**

Web-based software that helps individuals to structure, understand, and retain new knowledge and concepts through visual and mnemonic aid. VET managers and trainers to integrate open badges to their training paths because that can give an overview on key concepts, roles and resources needed to successfully design and implement an educational project at systemic level.

### **Digital badges**

Symbols of achievement, accomplishment and mastery and recognise learning experiences that occur in traditional classrooms, online courses and through work-learning experiences. It can be issued by an individual, a company, an academic institution, a non-profit organisation or a government agency.

### **Knowledge**

Outcome of the assimilation of information through learning: the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the EQF context, is described as theoretical and/or factual.

### **Learning outcomes**

Statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

### **Learning Management System (LMS)**

A software application or web-based technology used to plan, implement and assess a specific learning process. It is used for eLearning practices and, in its most common form, consists of two elements: a server that performs the base functionality and a user interface that is operated by instructors, students and administrators.

### **Macro-credential**

Broad based qualifications that can be shown through a degree or a certification.

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## Metadata

A set of data that provides information about other data. The metadata in a badge provides information about the issuer of the badge, including a name, description, URL and contact email address.

## Micro-credential

Record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience.

## Open badges

Type of digital badge that is verifiable, portable, and packed with information about skills and achievements.

## Open badges-driven learning

Competence-based learning process grounded on the badge constellation of competences. The process includes identifying and recognising different competences using digital open badges. The entity of digital open badge-driven learning involves learning materials, badge criterion, instructional badging, scaffolding and peer support. The digital open badge-driven learning process supports the gamification of professional competence development." (Brauer,2019)

## Responsibility and autonomy

The ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility.

## Skills

Ability to apply knowledge and use expertise to complete tasks and solve problems. In the EQF context, they are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and/or practical and technical (manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

## Validation

Validation is the process of identifying, assessing and recognising a wider range of skills and competences which people develop through their lives and in different contexts. The purpose of validation is to make visible the entire scope of knowledge and experience held by an individual, irrespective of the context where the learning originally took place

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## BADGETOUR THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The invitation of European Commission in the 2020 EU skills agenda to work on the development of a shared approach to micro-credentials is at the core of the BadgeTour project. The need for a validation system able to guarantee quality, cross-border comparability, recognition, and transferability is Europe-wide and micro-credentials are the key; they allow us to recognise “the expanded landscape of learning” (Grant,2014).

Being selected by the European Commission under the ERASMUS+ Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills, the tourism sector was chosen as a playground for the BadgeTour micro-credentialing experiment. This was also due to the Covid-19 pandemic which left a deep mark in the sector together with the need for flexible training framework contents emerged among the VET trainers.

Moreover, despite the growing policies in using micro credentialing for different purposes and in a variety of contexts of application, the consortium confirmed the lack of training activities to support organizations and/or individuals’ organisations to implement and improve micro-credentialing practices in the VET sector. (PR1-Task 1-Definition of a process for integrating micro-credentials in related EQF and ECVET standards in the tourism sector in partner countries).

VET organisations and trainers are one of the key groups to fill the gap between conventional education and learning and the developing prerequisites for an approach to show proof of validated, micro-certifications earned. Micro-credentialing is an open and flexible type of validation making training opportunities available to all individuals, but most importantly they are a way to involve more and better prepared workers in the tourism labour market. Recent research reveals that EU employers and in particular SMEs in the tourism sector face challenges in recruiting workers that are highly skilled.

With the BadgeTour micro-credentialing guidelines (R1) and training toolkit (R2) managers of the touristic sector can guarantee the up-skilling of existing employees in order to respond to the emerging new trends in the sector, providing services to new targeted groups of visitors and clients - for example, elderly or people with disabilities or visitors seeking specific experiences such as sustainable/green tourism, cultural tourism, etc.

Understanding the business and societal challenges that involve employment levels, thus skill profiles in tourism is necessary for designing and offering relevant and high-quality VET. Accordingly, the new acquired learners’ competences need to be validated through online systems (open badges) in order to respond easily to managers’ selection criteria.

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The BadgeTour project aims at creating a continuous professional development course (CPD) according to the EQF based on a new approach of competences' validation management and common awareness and understanding of the topic. The partners' effort for the project results aims at the following objectives:

- to support EU states as competitive and sustainable touristic destinations.
- to improve the contribution of VET institutions in tourism to innovation by reinforcing education and training.
- to strengthen their role in local and regional environments.
- to make training opportunities available to all individuals to meet the labour market needs.

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## BADGETOUR COMPETENCE MAP

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) helps to compare national qualifications systems and enable communication among them. At the core of the EQF are eight common European reference levels, which are described in learning outcomes: knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy (i.e., attitudes). This makes it clear what a learner with a qualification related to the EQF knows, understands and is able to do. The table below summarises **eight levels descriptors** of EQF.<sup>1</sup>

levels	knowledge	skills	responsibility and autonomy
1	basic general knowledge	basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	performance under direct supervision
2	basic factual knowledge	basic cognitive and practical skills required to use simple rules and tools	performance under supervision with some autonomy
3	knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts	a range of cognitive and practical skills required to use basic methods, tools, materials and information	take responsibility for completion of tasks, adapting behaviour to circumstances
4	factual and theoretical knowledge	a range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems	exercise self-management
5	comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge	a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	exercise management and supervision; review and develop performance of self and others
6	advanced knowledge involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems	manage complex activities or projects; take responsibility for managing professional development of others
7	highly specialised knowledge; critical awareness of knowledge	specialised problem-solving skills required to develop new knowledge and procedures	manage and transform contexts that are complex and unpredictable
8	knowledge at the most advanced	the most advanced and specialised skills and techniques	demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy and scholarly

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: <https://europa.eu/europass/en/description-eight-efq-levels>

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The **BadgeTour competence map** is developed in accordance with the EQF descriptors, having as a basis, the national specifications and contexts of the countries that are part of the project consortium: Italy, Finland, Turkey, Portugal and Spain.

EQF level descriptors elements <sup>2</sup>		
Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Described as theoretical and/or factual	Described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive, and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)	Described as the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility.

### EQF LEVEL

At an early stage of the BadgeTour project development, partners conducted desk research to set the definition of a process for integrating micro-credentials in related EQF and ECVET standards in the tourism sector in each of the five countries that composed the consortium. Additionally, it was included the data related to Switzerland, which is represented in the project through an associated partner.

The comparative analysis conducted has shown that in these countries, VET managers and trainers are not taught how to use micro-credentials in the tourism sector, nor is there any Learning Outcomes approach describing these profiles in their National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs). However, since a few years, in these countries sustainability is generally being integrated as one of the essential principles to be taken into account in training in the tourism sector (also in VET).

In this sense, the BadgeTour will bring a great added value to achieve the use of micro-credentials or badges as accreditation of formal, non-formal and informal competences within VET training in the tourism sector.

The BadgeTour competence map target groups are:

- VET providers and trainers of training organisations working in the tourism sector
- Tourism SMEs
- Research centres
- Sector representatives
- Policy makers or public authorities
- Other stakeholders able to bring the idea at a systemic level.

To guarantee a common starting base for adult learners in different countries, considering the different levels of needs and expectations, it is designed for EQF level 4 established using both the EQF and partnership countries' National Qualification Framework (NQF) descriptors.

<sup>2</sup>Description of the eight EQF levels : <https://europa.eu/europass/en/description-eight-efq-levels> (last access 22/12/2022)

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EQF level 4 descriptors elements <sup>3</sup>		
Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities

## ECVET CREDITS

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is one of the mobility and lifelong learning instruments for learners and workers and it is based on four main principles:

1. Units of learning outcomes
2. Transfer and accumulation of learning outcomes
3. Learning agreement and personal transcript
4. ECVET (credit) points.

ECVET is recognised as a mechanism for the official recognition, accumulation and transfer of individually achieved learning outcomes, thus guaranteeing equity of the different forms of learning (formal education and training; non-formal training and informal learning).

The BadgeTour competence map features the following ECVET principles: 1) Units of learning outcomes; 2) Learning outcomes described in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes; 3) Teaching and learning hours with allocation of respective ECVET points.

Currently, across Europe, it is consensual to commensurate 1 ECVET point to approximately 25 hours of learning (i.e., hands-on, self-study and assessment hours). The BadgeTour Training Path approach adopts this reference to allocate ECVET points to its training programme (i.e., 25 hours of learning = 1 ECVET point).

<sup>3</sup> <https://europa.eu/europass/en/description-eight-efq-levels> (last access 22/12/2022)

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MODULE	LEARNING UNIT	LEARNING OUTCOMES The learner is expected to ...		
		Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
<b>Module 1</b> <b>Understanding digital badges</b>	<b>The basics of micro credentialing</b>	Define micro credentials	Search for best practices of the use of micro credentialing in the tourism sector	Demonstrate the relevance of micro credentialing for the tourism sector
	<b>The basics of digital badges</b>	Describe the specificities and functionalities of digital badges	Apply the concepts of micro credentials, digital badges and open badges accordingly its specific functionalities	Outline the advantages and disadvantages of digital badging eco-systems within VET trainers and VET providers of training organisations working in the tourism sector
	<b>Digital credentialing platforms</b>	List the existing available software and platforms for badge creating and design	Select from the existing available software's and platform for badge creating and design	Assess the most appropriate software's and platforms for badge creating and design to respond the needs of the tourism sector

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MODULE	LEARNING UNIT	LEARNING OUTCOMES The learner is expected to ...		
		Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
<b>Module 2</b>  <b>Set the digital badge purposes</b>	<b>Uses of digital badges</b>	Give examples of various types of uses of digital badges	Explain and justify the use of digital badges for particular purposes: for what purpose and for whom are they created	Reflect on the potential use of digital badges for formal education
	<b>How and why are digital badges used in VET</b>	Describe the ways badges are supporting identification, recognition, and validation of competences in VET sector	Explain how the 'competence data' in the badges supports the learner	Assess the possibilities of digital badges in the tourism sector
	<b>Competence-based criteria for digital badges</b>	Describe different parts of the criteria: competence objectives, assessment criteria, ways of demonstrating competence	Give examples of competence-set of criteria and create a competence-based set of criteria for a digital badge in VET sector	Assess the advantages and disadvantages of the process of setting the criteria in the tourism sector

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MODULE	LEARNING UNIT	LEARNING OUTCOMES The learner is expected to ...		
		Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
<b>Module 3</b>  <b>Outline a digital badge strategy</b>	<b>Digital badge strategy - General outline</b>	Identify the different options available for designing and implementing a digital badge.	Compare resources on how to design digital badge strategies.	Evaluate which resource is most appropriate for the creation of a badge
	<b>Digital badge strategy design canvas</b>	Select the necessary sections in the design of the badge with the CANVAS methodology.	Identify how to collect data on each of the elements to be included.	Collect qualitative data to justify the creation of your digital badge.
	<b>Key areas of a digital badge strategy</b>	List the key areas to include in the digital badge design strategy.	Explain how to collect key area information for the design of digital badges	Collect the key area data and translate it graphically into the digital badge

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MODULE	LEARNING UNIT	LEARNING OUTCOMES The learner is expected to ...		
		Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
<b>Module 4</b>  <b>Design a badge ecosystem</b>	<b>The badge design principles</b>	Analyse badge design practices and approaches.	Explain the badge design practices and approaches	Provide badge creators and issuers in the tourism sector with badge design practices and approaches
	<b>A pathway to design a badge ecosystem</b>	Provide a pathway in order to design a badge ecosystem.	Explain how to design a badge ecosystem including the main resources, content and recognition process	Verify a pathway for the creation of an effective badge ecosystem for the tourism sector

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MODULE	LEARNING UNIT	LEARNING OUTCOMES The learner is expected to ...		
		Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
<b>Module 5</b>  <b>From pragmatic to systemic change</b>	<b>Open badges in VET: mastering the process</b>	Outline the implementation of an open badges-driven learning offer in VET organisations (managers/staff/trainers), considering needs, roles and objectives in the tourism sector	Implement an open badge driven learning offer in own VET ecosystem by managing open badge platforms, from single badges to constellations, strategically	Support the implementation of an open badge driven learning offer in other VET organizations by guiding managers/staff/ adult educators through core concepts and practices in dedicated open badge platforms
	<b>Changing together: open badge stakeholders in VET</b>	Explain the value of collaboration and endorsement among VET organizations and badge stakeholders to better design market-ready skills for the tourism sector	Manage collaborative tools to optimize different open badge driven offers, also using LMS data in collaboration with fellow open badge stakeholders	Network and share good practices with other VET organizations/managers and badge stakeholders in the tourism sector to spread microcredentials at systemic level in order to stimulate skills match and employability in the tourism sector

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## BADGETOUR TRAINER PATH

The trainer roadmap is designed to support trainers assisting and assessing the learners completing the BadgeTour Training Path, a modular course content, developed for a total of 25 hours learning hours, in a blended learning format.

	Self-study	Assessment	Total learning hours
<b>M1 Basics</b> Understanding digital badges	02h50	00h10	03h00
<b>M2 Purpose</b> Recognising the potential of digital badges	05h50	00h10	06h00
<b>M3 Outline</b> Defining the steps to release digital badges	04h50	00h10	05h00
<b>M4 Design</b> Building an ecosystem of badges	04h50	00h10	05h00
<b>M5 Change</b> Implementing the use of digital badges	05h50	00h10	06h00

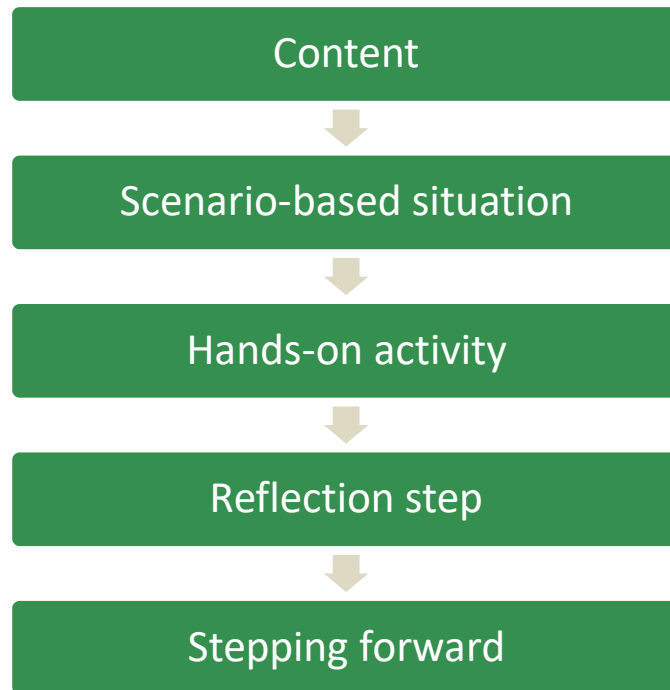
Designed based on a blended learning methodology, the BadgeTour Training Path allows learners to have control over their own learning process. Learners can move from one module to another according to their needs. In that sense, at the end of each learning unit, learners are asked to reflect on what they have learned to then decided the next path on the learning process.

	Learning units
<b>M1 Basics</b> Understanding digital badges	1.1. The basics of micro credentialing 1.2. The basics of digital badges 1.3. Digital credentialing platforms
<b>M2 Purpose</b> Recognising the potential of digital badges	2.1. Uses of digital badges 2.2. How and why are digital badges used in VET 2.3. Competence-based criteria for digital badges
<b>M3 Outline</b> Defining the steps to release digital badges	3.1. Digital badge strategy - general outline 3.2. Digital badge strategy design canvas 3.3. Key areas of a digital badge strategy
<b>M4 Design</b> Building an ecosystem of badges	4.1. The badge design principles 4.2. A pathway to design a badge ecosystem
<b>M5 Change</b> Implementing the use of digital badges	5.1. Open badges in VET: mastering the process 5.2. Changing together: open badge stakeholders in VET

Each learning unit, of the BadgeTour training path, is designed under the following structure:

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**Content**

Covering the learning outcomes, the “Knowledge domain” and describing the content related to the main topic of each learning unit.

**Scenario-based situation**

Designed to help learners to develop their attitude toward the competences defined in the “Skills” and “Responsibility and autonomy” domain. Also, with the aim to support the learners to develop the suggested activities.

**Hand-on activity**

Step by step and action-oriented activities based on the scenario-based situations, including list of resources to develop it.

**Reflection step**

Providing a summary of the skills developed by the learner in each learning unit.

**Stepping forward**

Space reserved for learners to register their remarks after completing the activity, where the learner is asked to list the conclusion of their learning path to then determine other training needs.

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All training activities are designed to be implemented both online and offline. The learning is preferentially self-directed, and the trainer is requested to provide assistance also online and on-site. In this model, the trainer assumed the role of a tutor, meaning that he/she will have to help and guidance to the learners with the aim to support him/her to become an independent learner. In this context the role of the trainer is to:

- Provide relevant content to complement the knowledge learners will acquire when going through the activities.
- Clarify learners doubts in the process of delivering the activities.
- Reinforce learning messages to maintain learners progress and engagement in the programme.
- Assess learners' performance at the end of each learning unit.

Following it is presented a scheme of how the trainer can organise and conduct the tutoring sessions:

	<b>Action</b>
<b>Introduction session(s)</b>	Present the aim and objectives of the learning unit Make an overview of the contents covered by the Provide additional material do conduct the learning unit
<b>Follow up session(s)</b>	Clarify any doubts that the learner might have during the learning process
<b>Evaluation session(s)</b>	Record the learners' conclusions Assess learners' performance

Regarding evaluation, the BadgeTour training path includes:

- a prior knowledge self-assessment, to assess learners' competences before undertaking each learning unit.
- a post knowledge self-assessment to assess the learner's knowledge after completing each learning unit.

To complement this, trainers are called to record the learner's conclusions, after competing each learning unit, and then decide on the type of assessment to conduct. This might vary between the different levels, also depending on the level of engagement of the learner and also learning style. This characterises the assessment as a being competence-based. Trainers are advised to use the learning outcomes to create a matrix to assess and verify if the learners have achieved the desired outcome in each of the learning unit. The assessment methods can include:

<b>Product based</b>	Structured assessment activities, results can include the assessment of reports, presentations, role-plays, work samples
<b>Portfolio</b>	Collection of work samples produced by the learner (written documents, videos, photographs, etc.)
<b>Questioning</b>	Quiz, questionnaires and oral questioning

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## MODULE 1 Understanding digital badges

An introduction module on digital badges functionalities

### Who? Understanding learners' needs

Module one is addressed at VET providers and trainers of training organisations working in the tourism sector, with the aim to provide these specific target groups with the basic knowledge and skills related to the topic of micro-credentialing and digital badges. Since this is an introductory module to the BadgeTour training programme, this module is also a micro-credential to anyone who has no background or previous information about the topics. Trainers can also use this module as a diagnostic of the level of knowledge of the learners about these topics before moving forward to the other modules of the BadgeTour Training Path.

### Why? Identifying the module training objectives

Module one training objectives are to:

- Explain what micro-credentials are and how it differs from traditional credentials.
- Provide learners with examples of the use of micro-credentials in the tourism sector.
- Justify why micro-credentials are relevant for the tourism sector and industry.
- Explain the benefits of using digital badges in VET sector in general and in specific by VET providers and trainers of training organisations working in the tourism sector.
- Identify examples of different types of digital badges and their general characteristics.
- Present different software's and platforms for creating and issuing digital badges.
- Discuss the relevance and challenges of micro-credentialing in the tourism sector.
- Justify the use of micro-credentialing and its impact on learners' motivation and engagement.

### What? Choosing the materials to deliver the module

Trainers and facilitators are advised to prepare their training contents following the EU frameworks and approach do micro-credentials, namely:

- A European approach to micro-credentials  
<https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/micro-credentials>
- Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0770>

Other suggested publications studies are:

- An analysis of 'micro-credentials' in VET: <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/an-analysis-of-micro-credentials-in-vet>
- Micro-credentials for labour market education and training:  
<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/5587>
- The role of micro-credentials in VET: <https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv:90628>

Since the topic is in content evolution, trainers and facilitators can update their resources following the CEDEFOP publications and reports on the topic.

### When? Deciding when training should be delivered

Module one learning units are suitable for those who have no knowledge about what micro-credentials are and are starting to get acquainted with the micro-credentialing topics for the first time. The learning units can also be used to make a diagnosis of what learners know about the topics. In such

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case, the trainer can explore the topics included in the BadgeTour Training Platform:  
<https://www.badgetour.eu/training/> .

### **Where?** Training delivery options

Trainers can opt to follow the suggestion indicated previously at the beginning of the guide and conduct their training as tutors providing support when requested by the trainer. For beginners it is advised to prepare at least:

- One face-to-face introductory session to present the module objectives and respective learning units, plus indications to complete the online sessions.
- Two follow up session to support learners with doubts and questions that they might have. This can be online sessions.
- One face-to-face session to provide guidelines for assessment.
- One face to face session to close the course and present the assessment results.

### **How?** Using the BadgeTour training path

The module is designed for self-directed learning; but as it is built the trainers can use it and adapt it contents and activities for formal training, using the scheme presented previously. The definition of a time for each session will depend on the training needs of the learners in different contexts.

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## MODULE 2 Recognising the potential of digital badges

Potential of digital badges in supporting identification, recognition, and validation of competences in the VET sector

### 1. Who? – Understanding learners' needs

The process of identification and evaluation of learner's needs is the first step that should be taken in order to successfully develop an effective training program. Define the needs of the tourism sector for digital badges in sustainable tourism. Apply the needs analysis process in mapping the relevant needs. The goal is to support the employment and recognition and validation of the sustainability skills of those trained in the tourism industry and working in the field.

### 2. Why? – Identifying the module training goals

Give examples of various types of uses and functions of digital badges. Explain and justify the use of digital badges for particular purposes: for what purpose and for whom are they created. Reflect the potential use of digital badges in formal education. Introduce the most important functions of digital badges. Describe the ways badges are supporting identification, recognition and validation of competences in VET sector. Assess the possibilities of digital badges in sustainable tourism.

### 3. What? – Choosing the materials to deliver the course

There is not necessarily so much material on the subject yet, but it is accumulating all the time. The material must be selected from relevant documents and online sources as close to the tourism sector as possible. In addition to the Moodle course presented material may include examples from e.g. RISToVET project, the learning pathways of aTingi eAcademy of Tourism and Hospitality as well as open Badges for Sustainable Tourism by Oulu University of Applied Sciences. Taking a look at the sustainability badges for the hotels and touristic attractions can also be useful.

### 4. When? – Deciding when training should be delivered

Reflect the advantages and disadvantages of digital badges in formal education. What is their role in this particular case and how much resources and planning does creating a badge system require. Deciding when the training is needed, e.g., when the micro-credential earned can have an essential impact on the employability of students. Deciding when to create your own badge system or co-operate with other training providers in the field. Deciding when the formal vocational training system does not have enough options.

### 5. Where? – Training delivery options

Studies can be done independently online, but better results are likely to be achieved if teachers from the same school study together while thinking about solutions in their own field. Cooperation can also be established with other training providers and training contract places.

### 6. How? – Using the BadgeTour training path

The learning unit roadmap at the beginning of each H5p presentation helps learners to navigate through the topics and activities Module 2 is divided into 3 Units. It is recommended to follow the order and start from 2.1. Defining uses of digital badges. The main steps to use this module are:

- Read the first interactive presentation (2.1) and completing the embedded activities (prior knowledge self-assessment, hands-on activity, self-reflection activity).
- Test your knowledge on the learning unit with the quiz and earn your micro-badge

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- Read the second interactive presentation (2.2) and completing the embedded activities (prior knowledge self-assessment, hands-on activity, self-reflection activity).
- Test your knowledge on the learning unit with the quiz and earn your micro-badge
- Read the third interactive presentation (2.3) and completing the embedded activities (prior knowledge self-assessment, hands-on activity, self-reflection activity).
- Test your knowledge on the learning unit with the quiz and earn your micro-badge
- Complete the final quiz to earn your Module 2 Badge – Change.
- Receive the mail and accept the Module 2 Badge earned. You can either decide to create an account on the Open badge passport or keep the badge in your Moodle Badge section.
- Display your Module 2 Badge in your passport/ portfolio/ backpack and share on your social media channel.

Note that this process can be similar to the other training modules.

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## MODULE 3 Outline a digital badge strategy

Defining the steps for the release of digital badges

### Who? – Understanding learners’ needs

Learners would need to know about the different steps involved in outlining a digital badge strategy and the release of digital badges. They should be familiar with the purpose and target audience of the digital badges, and how to collect key area data to ensure the badges are relevant and meaningful.

Learners should understand how to translate the key area data into graphic design elements, determine the badge criteria and develop a badge description. They should also be aware of the importance of developing a badge creation plan that includes details on the badge design, criteria, timeline, and necessary resources and support.

In addition, learners should be familiar with the different types of digital badges, such as skill-based, knowledge-based, and competency-based badges, and the evidence required to demonstrate achievement. They should know how to effectively evaluate the badge criteria and provide feedback to improve the badge's effectiveness and value over time.

### Why? – Identifying the module training goals

Module three objectives are to:

- Understand the concept of digital badges and their importance in the VET and tourism sector.
- Identify the key areas of digital badge strategy and their relevance to the target audience.
- Collect and analyse key area data to create effective digital badges.
- Translate key area data into graphic design elements for digital badges.
- Define badge criteria and learning outcomes.
- Develop a badge creation plan, including the timeline, resources, and support needed.
- Describe the steps involved in releasing digital badges and how to communicate their value to learners, employers, and other stakeholders.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of digital badge strategy and make improvements over time.
- Discuss the ethical considerations around digital badges, such as data privacy, security, and accessibility.

### What? – Choosing the materials to deliver the course

- Intra-structure such as a classroom with computers or tablets.
- Digital whiteboard and projector
- Tables and chairs
- Paper, pens, etc

### When? – Deciding when training should be delivered

When the students already have some knowledge of Module 1 and 2 and are familiar with the subject matter. Before starting the module in question, a discussion can be held to let the teacher know the level of knowledge so that the students can understand Module 3 well.

### 5. Where? – Training delivery options

Preferably, the training will be face-to-face, but it can also be hybrid or online.

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## 6. How? – Using the BadgeTour training path

Module 3 is primarily designed for self-directed learning, following the same structure as in the previous modules: first see to have a self-assessment questionnaire, then see read the training content, followed by practical activities. However, it can also be adapted for formal training. The estimated time of each session will be flexible and adapted to the specific needs of each group.

The step-by-step for module 3 is:

- Self-assessment on each of the three units
- Training of the contents by means of the presentation available.
- Presentation and subsequent reflection on the success scenario.
- Practical activity.
- Final questionnaire.

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## MODULE 4 Building an ecosystem of badges

Build an ecosystem of badges where trainers and managers can release badges

**Who?** – Understanding learners' needs:

To build an ecosystem of badges, it is essential to understand the needs of the learners. This involves identifying the target audience for the badges and gaining insights into their preferences, skill levels, and learning styles. By understanding the learners' needs, trainers and managers can tailor the badges to align with their interests and motivations, making the badge ecosystem more effective and engaging. Learners may have varying requirements in this regard, however the following are some possibilities.

Professional and personal development can necessitate the acquisition or refinement of specialised abilities. Through the badge ecosystem, they may look for ways to learn something new, polish up on abilities they already have, or achieve a certain level of competency. Learners frequently require acknowledgement and encouragement. They might want to be recognized for the things they have learned and accomplished. Badges are a method of public acknowledgment that has been shown to increase students' intrinsic motivation, retention, and confidence in their learning. Career or work enhancements may be among the motivations for taking a course. The badge ecosystem can provide a means through which they can earn respectable qualifications or display their knowledge of specific topics, boosting their careers and expanding their options.

Some learners may benefit from working with others on projects or making connections with experts in their subject. Learners who have similar interests or aspirations can find one other through the badge ecosystem, which can lead to increased opportunities for group work, information exchange, and peer review. Personalised instruction acknowledges that each student has individual needs and learning preferences. They might benefit from lessons tailored to their own interests and learning style. The badge ecosystem has the potential to provide variety and adaptability, letting students choose among badges that most interest them. Learners may have legitimate demands for educational opportunities that meet their needs for accessibility and convenience. They may need to be able to access training materials and engage in learning activities whenever and whenever they find it convenient. It is important that the badge ecosystem be created with a range of learning modalities in mind, so that students can access the material and earn badges in a number of different ways.

**Why?** – Identifying the module training goals

Establishing the purpose and goals of the badge ecosystem is facilitated by the process of determining the training goals for Module 4. It is the responsibility of the trainers and supervisors to establish what it is they hope to accomplish with the badges. This could involve fostering teamwork, rewarding achievements, developing specialised talents, acquiring new knowledge, or supporting professional development. When the training goals are defined more specifically, the ecosystem for badges may be created to better support and correlate with these goals. By having clearly defined training goals, trainers and managers will be better able to satisfy the demands of their learners. They will be able to recognize and respond to these challenges, thereby building an ecosystem for badges that is engaging, helpful, and motivational.

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### **What?** – Choosing the materials to deliver the course

Trainers and managers need to select the relevant resources to give training in order to develop an ecosystem of badges. This involves compiling or generating content, tools, and activities that will make it easier to acquire the knowledge or skills that are being targeted. The resources should be interesting to the learners, pertinent to their learning, and easy to access. This will help the learners along their learning path and ensure that they get the information and direction they need to achieve the badges. In addition to the following intra-structure, which may include a classroom equipped with laptops or tablets. It is possible that you will need a digital whiteboard and projector in addition to the more conventional tools.

### **When?** – Deciding when training should be delivered

When it comes to the delivery of training, timing is a critical component. Trainers and managers alike are responsible for determining the optimal timing of when training should be delivered to participants. This may involve taking into consideration aspects such as the learners' availability, their work schedules, or any other responsibilities they have. In order to meet the varied requirements of the students and guarantee the highest possible level of participation and engagement, it is possible that it will be essential to provide flexible training alternatives or staged delivery.

### **Where?** – Training delivery options

The choice of training delivery options is crucial in building an ecosystem of badges. Trainers and managers should consider various platforms and mediums through which the training can be accessed. This could include online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, in-person workshops, or a blend of different approaches. By offering diverse training delivery options, the badge ecosystem becomes more inclusive and accessible to a wider range of learners.

### **How?** – Using the BadgeTour training path

The BadgeTour training path refers to the specific pathway or progression that learners follow to earn badges. Trainers and managers need to design a clear and well-structured training path that outlines the requirements, expectations, and criteria for earning each badge. This may involve defining learning objectives, specifying activities or assessments, and establishing the criteria for badge attainment. By providing a structured training path, learners can navigate through the badge ecosystem and understand the steps required to earn badges in a meaningful and organised manner.

Learners are helped to navigate through the many subjects and activities by the learning unit roadmap that is presented at the beginning of each H5p presentation. There are two separate units that make up Module 4. It is strongly advised that you proceed through the interactive presentations in the sequence in which they are given. The following are the primary stages involved in using this module:

After reading the first interactive presentation (4.1) and completing the prior knowledge self-assessment, hands-on activity, and self-reflection activity, you will go on to the next step. Take the quiz to test your knowledge of the learning module, and if you do well, you will win a micro-badge. Reading the second interactive presentation (4.2) and completing the prior knowledge self-assessment as well as the hands-on exercise and the self-reflection activity; Take the quiz to test your knowledge of the learning module, and if you do well, you will win a micro-badge. To obtain your Module 4 Badge, you will need to finish the final quiz. You will check your mail and be asked to accept the Module 4 Badge that you have earned. You have the option of either creating an account on the Open badge passport or continuing to store the badge in the Badges area of your Moodle account.

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## MODULE 5 Implementing the use of digital badges

Create an integrated organisational implementation of digital badges. Use of digital badges to implement a change in the organisation.

### Who? – Understanding learners’ needs

This module is for VET managers, trainers and human resources of the Tourism sector searching for a step-by-step approach for implementing Open Badges in their own organisations with practical tips for collaborating with other badge stakeholders. This Module represents the final step of a levelling-up approach in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude on micro-credentials able to allow learners to strategically implement an Open badge-driven learning approach to their training offer.

### Why? – Identifying the module training goals

The training goal of this module is guiding VET managers/staff/ adult educators in the implementation of an open badge driven learning offer using Open Badge platforms according to their needs, from single badges to constellations. This also entails the interiorization of roles, responsibilities, and operational aspects (technical aspect on Open Badge platforms, integration in LMS) behind the collaboration with other badge stakeholders of the VET Tourism sector. After raising the awareness on micro-credentials potentialities, this final module illustrates the actual implementation of Open Badges in own organization and among stakeholders for future collaboration.

### What? – Choosing the materials to deliver the course

This module focuses on two main topics: mastering the Open badges creation process in VET (5.1) and being able to collaborate with other badge stakeholders to start the change within the sector (5.2). Both interactive presentations draw from theories and practices of micro-credentials and open badges at international level. Regarding the hands-on activities, the Open Badge Design Canva used for practising the design of potential tourism badges can be found at the following link <https://ia800901.us.archive.org/10/items/DigitalMeBadgeDe>, but there are many other options for this purpose. Similarly, there are plenty of collaborative whiteboards and workspaces that can be used for collaborating with Open Badge stakeholders. All the training material can be reused according to the CC-BY-SA license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

### When? – Deciding when training should be delivered

Trainers and solo learners should focus on Module 5 after reading all the material of the previous training module and having completed all the activities, especially the hands-on activities foreseen in said modules. This also means that trainers should check if the trainee have earned and collected the Module badges (meta-badge) on their Moodle profile or external portfolio/backpack.

### Where? – Training delivery options

The training can be carried out either physically present (trainer-led teaching) or online as blended learning.

### How? – Using the BadgeTour training path

The learning unit roadmap at the beginning of each H5p presentation helps learners to navigate through the topics and activities. Module 5 is divided into 2 Units. It is recommended to follow the order in which the interactive presentations are presented, namely by starting with 5.1 - Open badges

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in VET: mastering the process, 5.2 - Changing together: collaboration between badge stakeholders. The main steps to use this module are:

- Reading the first interactive presentation (5.1) and completing the embedded activities (prior knowledge self-assessment, hands-on activity, self-reflection activity).
- Test your knowledge on the learning unit with the quiz and earn your micro-badge
- Reading the second interactive presentation (5.2) and completing the embedded activities (prior knowledge self-assessment, hands-on activity, self-reflection activity).
- Test your knowledge on the learning unit with the quiz and earn your micro-badge
- Complete the final quiz to earn your Module 5 Badge - Change
- Receive the mail and accept the Module 5 Badge earned. You can either decide to create an account on the Open badge passport or keep the badge in your Moodle Badge section.
- Display your Module 5 Badge in your passport/ portfolio/ backpack and share on your social media channel.

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## **BAGDGETOUR MICRO-CREDENTIALING GUIDELINES**

The BadgeTour micro-credentialing guidelines are a collection of recommendations to set and define a standard process for describing competences in a process-oriented way, taking into consideration different recognition systems (EQF, ECVET, etc.) and considering data needed for micro-credentialing in educational institutions.

The guidelines can be used as a handbook for creating and using digital badges especially in the VET sector. It includes instructions for trainers and managers on how to define relevant competences (proficiency goals and competence-based assessment criteria) and how to provide appropriate evidence required in a digital badge (metadata, properties to use, etc.).

The guidelines describe the entire micro-credentialing process from designing the badges to awarding and sharing them. With the help of the guidelines VET trainers and managers can learn how digital badges support recognition and validation of competence-based learning.

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## BAGDGETOUR TOOLKIT

The BadgeTour Training Toolkit (PR2) foresees the creation of open educational resources (OERs) for VET managers and trainers of the tourism sector on how to implement micro-credentialing and digital badges in an adult's learning path in VET in the form of a continuous professional development course (CPD). The main goal of this project result is enhancing the target group capabilities and readiness, especially after the pandemic disruption of the tourism industry, to use online tools to acknowledge competences and validate learning of learners (see European Skills Agenda and DigCompEdu).

The OERs consist of five training modules (see previous sections) including multimedia resources and instructional material, concerning areas and topics identified in the "European approach to micro-credentials" and in line with the UNESCO Recommendation on OERs. Practical tips and examples from the different education and training sectors on the use of digital badges are also part of the BadgeTour Toolkit.

Inspired by the digital open badge-driven learning theoretical framework, the training modules follow a levelling-up approach (Basics, Purpose, Outline, Design, Change) that enables VET managers and trainers to familiarise with the creation of more flexible and modular learning opportunities in the tourism sector.

The developed OER-based modules, from a technical point of view, are freely accessible on the BadgeTour Moodle™ Learning Management System (LMS). The BadgeTour Training platform (<https://www.badgetour.eu/training/>) hosts the five OER-based training modules in English and all partners' languages.

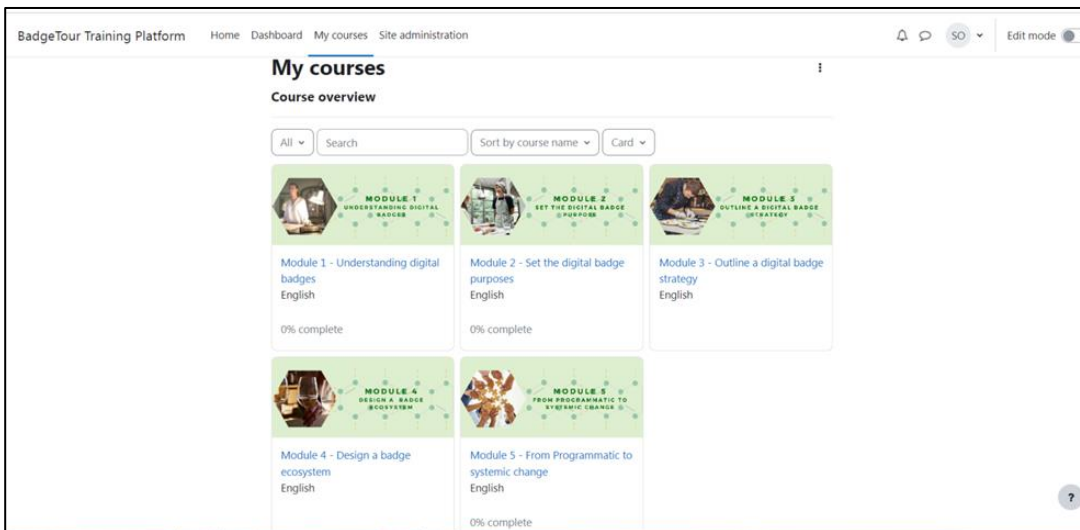
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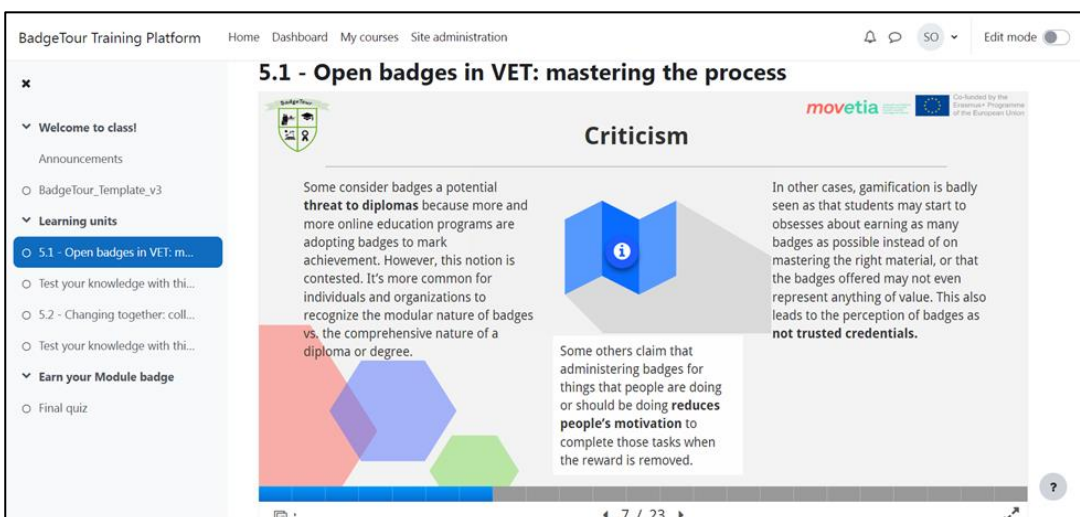




The BadgeTour training toolkit has been developed with HTML5 features and simple interface through H5P (<https://h5p.org/>) as a main tool for delivering training contents in the form of interactive presentations. This software allowed the BadgeTour partners to create dynamic digital learning content directly on Moodle™ with different visual elements, from hotspot graphics to interactive videos and quizzes.



The possibility of embedding the learning content in other training material and environments (from website to other LMS) allows future BadgeTour users to broaden the training and learning experience to implement the aforementioned change in VET (see Reuse H5P content guide - <https://h5p.org/node/442225>).



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Each interactive presentation reflects a learning unit and has a structure that includes learning outcomes from the BadgeTour competence map, a prior knowledge self-assessment, the content itself with hands-on activities and a final “post-knowledge” assessment test. The [Moodle Quiz activity](https://docs.moodle.org/401/en/Quiz_activity) ([https://docs.moodle.org/401/en/Quiz\\_activity](https://docs.moodle.org/401/en/Quiz_activity)) (which results can be downloaded in a variety of formats) is used by trainers to assess the learners newly acquired knowledge about micro-credentials and badges and by learners to pass levels and earn a micro-badge that will help them reach the final Module badge (meta-badge). The BadgeTour Badges were designed by the partners in compliance with the [IIEP- UNESCO policy paper \(2023\)](https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/publication/short-courses-micro-credentials-and-flexible-learning-pathways-blueprint-policy) (<https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/publication/short-courses-micro-credentials-and-flexible-learning-pathways-blueprint-policy>). The BadgeTour badges are created and released directly in Moodle, following the [integrated badging system](#). The BadgeTour training path relies on two types of badges available on Moodle:

**Course badges** - available to users enrolled in the course and related to the activities that happen inside the course. The BadgeTour trainee receives a “unit badge” after completing and successfully passing (80%) all the activities and quizzes foreseen in the units. The same applies for each unit within a module (i.e. for Module 5 there are 2 units, 5.1 and 5.2).

**Site badges** - available to users’ site-wide and related to the activities carried out in the site, such as finishing a set of courses. The BadgeTour trainee will receive a Module badge (meta-badge) after collecting all the badges related to each unit. In the same way, trainees will receive a **BadgeTour Expert** badge after collecting all the Module badges.

As mentioned, this levelling-up approach was applied to each of the 5 training modules. Each related badge emphasises a key verb/concept of the training path (Basics, Purpose, Outline, Design, Change). The Moodle platform has an integrated “Badges” section to create badges and also gives learners the possibility to highlight the badges earned in his/her user profile or on other e-portfolio/backpacks (these are systems where badge earners can import, curate, and share their badges).

The Canva Badges Backpack (<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Badges/Using-the-Canvas-Badges-Backpack/ta-p/528683>) is provided by default on Moodle but site administrators can add additional backpacks by establishing the connection through the API URL (<https://backpack.openbadges.org/>). After the backpack connection is successfully established, badges earned by learners can be managed in the chosen system. Some examples are Open Badge Passport, Canva Badges Backpack, Europass Digital Credentials wallet, Accredible Public Wallet. This personal space/page can include all types of digital credentials received for activities (e.g., classes attended), assessments (e.g. projects), achievements (e.g. skills developed), professional entitlements (e.g. registration as doctor, engineer, etc.) and qualifications. Badge earners will be able to strategically build a portfolio with career-ready skills and learning experiences that will enhance their employability within the tourism sector.

When choosing one of many digital credential platforms available on the market ( Canva Badges, Open Badge Factory, and many others more.), it is important to focus on the compliance with the Open Badges version 3.0 specifications (<https://www.imsglobal.org/activity/openbadges>) - core element of the digital credentials ecosystem - originally developed by Mozilla Foundation and now managed by the 1EdTech Consortium (<https://www.1edtech.org/>). The 1EdTech certification for Open Badges ensures interoperable implementations of badging systems that generate and issue digital badges.

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Overall, the BadgeTour Toolkit not only aims at supporting the acquisition of skills and competences for VET trainers and managers in the creation of digital credentials, but also at motivating them to transfer the results to other VET trainers, organisations and human resources involved in supporting learners in their learning pathways and showcase their competences and achievements. The ultimate goal is to pave the way to a systemic change within VET by focusing first on the tourism sector.

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