

Getting started with Open Badges

Open Badges hints and tips #1

Open Badges are a straightforward way to collect, manage and share evidence of learning in today's digital world. You can collect them to evidence your learning and share them in places that matter to you, including offline as printable certificates. When you show your badge to someone, they will be able to see criteria against which the badge was issued and any evidence that you provided to prove you met that criteria.

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and dozens of other social service organisations issue Open Badges to recognise continuous and informal learning that would otherwise go unrecorded.

Can I apply for an Open Badge?

Anyone can earn most of our badges. You don't need to be registered with the SSSC. A small number of badges, specifically related to registration, obviously do require you to be registered and will state this in their prerequisites.

Why should I collect Open Badges?

- You can collect evidence of your continuous learning as you go.
- Recognition for otherwise unrecognised informal learning.
- Badges which include reflective accounts from you can demonstrate your understanding of a subject. They're not just a certificate of completion.
- You can share online, group them together in a portfolio and download printable certificates.
- Badges can provide evidence for and back up what you say on your CV, application form or at a job interview.
- If you are registered with the SSSC badges that include well written reflective accounts can contribute to your post registration training and learning (PRTL).
- You own your badges and they won't disappear if you change jobs.

How do I apply for a badge?

Visit badges.sssc.uk.com and find a badge covering a subject that interests you. You can view badges by category or search for a topic or keyword. Once you've found one, click on it for information about what you need to do to earn it.

On the badge page the criteria will tell you what you need to do, the prerequisites will tell you if you need to earn any other badges before you can get this one and the evidence requirements give you information about what you need to provide in your application for the badge.

Do not apply for the badge until you have completed every one of the tasks listed in the criteria. You don't apply for a badge to do the learning. You do the learning first, complete the criteria, and then apply for the badge. The badge criteria gives you activities and tasks that need to happen in the real world. These are designed to challenge you and make you think about how what you have learned applies in your workplace and practice. Take your time with this and you won't have any difficulty submitting a good reflective account as evidence. We have resources and guides on the website to help you.

Apply for the badge by pasting your reflective account into the evidence box and/or use the button to upload and attach a file. Instead of written evidence, you can also paste a hyperlink to an audio or video file if you prefer.

What happens next?

Applications will be assessed and you will receive your badge or a decision on your application within 28 days. Your application will be declined if you:

- write your evidence in second or third person
- don't complete the tasks or questions set for you in the criteria
- don't provide enough evidence.

To improve your chances of being successful, it's recommended that you achieve the [Writing evidence for Open Badges](#) badge before applying.

How do I show my badge to people?

Nobody will know that you have been awarded a badge until you share it with them. Login to your account at SSSC Open Badges and open the [Your badges](#) page to see a list of your badges. You can download printable certificates or share your unique badge award page by including the link in an email or clicking on the buttons to share it to your social media accounts.

You can also download your badge. This will look just like any other picture on your computer, but you can upload it to a website like [backpack.openbadges.org](#) or [openbadgepassport.com](#) and they will read the unique data stored in the badge and display it for you.

If you have more than one badge, then consider [creating a portfolio](#) of your badges and sharing the link with your manager or tutor.

**Find out more and apply for a badge
today at badges.sssc.uk.com**

