NTU Nottingham Trent University

Using the Awards tool in NOW to gamify your Module

Contents

Introduction

The following guidance will provide you with the knowledge and skills to effectively use Open Badges as part of a gamifaication strategy in a Module Learning Room in NOW. Gamification is the use of game-design elements in non-game content. Examples of gamification include collecting points and completing tasks to unlock rewards or progress to the next "level". Using the Awards tool and Open Badges can create a reward system that can enhance and improve student engagement in a Module Learning Room in NOW and motivate learning across a Module.

If you are considering implementing a gamification strategy in your Module, we recommend you first speak with a Learning Designer in the Flex Team. Learning Designers can provide expert guidance and co-design with you the most effective way to implement badges on your Module. To get in touch please contact the Flex Team helpdesk.

What are Open Badges?

Open badges are a digital credential created by IMS Global Learning Consortium. Open Badges:

- include metadata. Metadata is data that contains sets of data. In this case, it contains information about the criteria for the award, who issued the badge, the date it was awarded and the title and description.
- are verifiable. The badge checks that the issuer organisation issued the badge to the recipient.
- are portable. They can be exported, downloaded, shared and printed from a virtual backpack where students can store all of their open badges collected from different issuers.

These images are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#).

How might students use Open Badges?

Badges can be exported to a virtual 'backpack' and then shared on various social media platforms, exported as a certificate and shared as a link. Backpacks (supported by NOW) allow exported badges to be issued alongside badges from other sources.

It allows students to have a verifiable way to showcase skills and achievements that will complement their studies. Awards can be given for student attainment and accomplishment and can help verify accomplishments when listing skills on websites such as LinkedIn.

How do I design a badge?

When creating badges in NOW, there are three different options for badge design:

1. Creating your own Award image
2. Using the existing library
3. Uploading a new icon

We recommend creating a bespoke Award image to ensure that it is meaningful and also presents a professional aesthetic by either creating your own using an online editor or uploading a new icon created by another method e.g. Adobe Illustrator.

1. Creating your own Award image

Using a simple online editor will allow you to create badges without the need to download a third-party application. The *Create your own award image link* on the Award editor in NOW will direct you to an online editor. There are [also alternative online badge creating platforms](#).
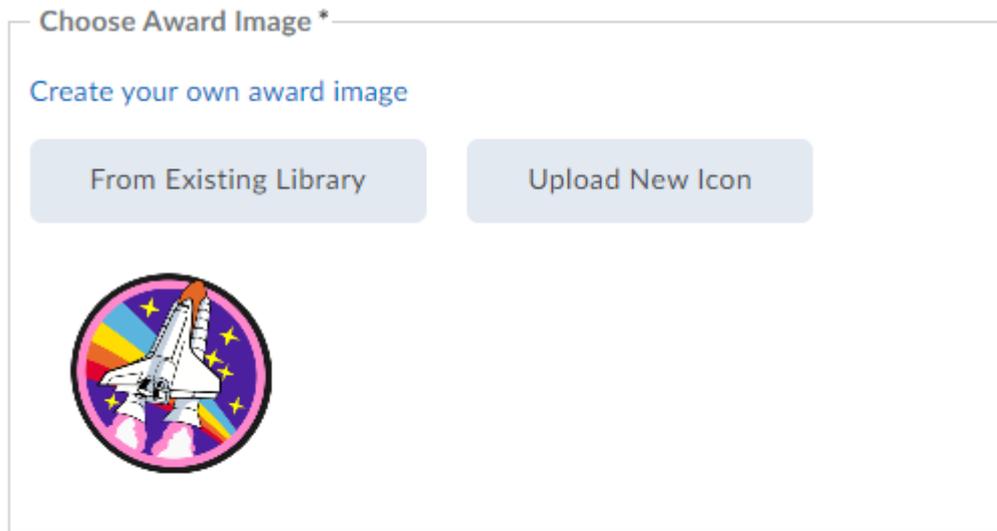
2. Using the existing library

The existing library includes badge designs that have been uploaded by other NOW users as well as default NOW badges you can use.

The default badges are limited in what they portray in terms of a visual language indicating what they may have been awarded for.

3. Uploading a new icon

Uploading a new icon allows you to upload a design or image from your own computer. NOW accepts JPEG and PNG files (with transparency) for award images. Images are presented underneath in 100 x 100 pixel. [Badgr](#) (external open badge handler) recommend 400 x 400 pixels for the best visual resolution.

How do I create an Award in NOW?

To add a new Award, navigate to the Awards tool in your Module Learning Room through either the link on your Navbar or the link under Edit Room.

Classlist Awards   **Awards**   My Awards   View Available Awards   Award Icon Library   Certificate Templates

✔ Allow users in this learning room to send earned awards to Mozilla Backpack.

Add Award To Learning Room

All   Badges   Certificates

Search awards 🔎

When creating an award in NOW, there are a few different options you will need to consider.

Classlist Awards   **Awards**   My Awards   View Available Awards   Award Icon Library   Certificate Templates

New Award

Name *

Description *

Award Type | Badge ⌄
Select the type of award you want to create. Certificates are similar to badges and additionally include a PDF printout of the actual certification upon award.

Availability
◉ Make this award available to all of my learning rooms.
○ Make this award available to other award creators and their learning rooms.
   ☐ Restrict award to ASQ3CROSBC Sandbox Module and its child learning rooms.
As the award creator, you will always have access to your awards for use in other learning rooms. The settings above will allow others to easily reuse your awards in their learning rooms if you choose to allow it.

Expiry
◉ Never
○ Fixed Date

○ Relative Time Period After Earning The Award
   [   ] Days ⌄

○ Relative Day Of Month
   Relative expiry after the date the award is initially achieved.
   Day: [   ]
   Month: [   ]

   ☐ Notify Before Expiry
   [   ] Days ⌄

Choose Award Image *
Create your own award image
[From Existing Library]   [Upload New Icon]

Issuer Information

Issuer Name *	Nottingham Trent University
Issuer URL *	http://now.ntu.ac.uk
Issuer Contact *	support@ntu.ac.uk

✔ Use this award in ASQ3CROSBC Sandbox Module now.

[**Save and Close**]   [Save]   [Cancel]

Both the name and description are tied to the badge once it is exported from NOW, so you will want to make sure that both the name and description provide enough context for outside viewers to understand the following:

- What the content of the learning was
- What level the of the learning was
- What the student knows/can do as a result of achieving the badge.

Expiry dates can be applied if you would like a badge to only be held by a student for a limited time.

4

Example

Below is an example of an exported badge that is in a Badgr backpack.
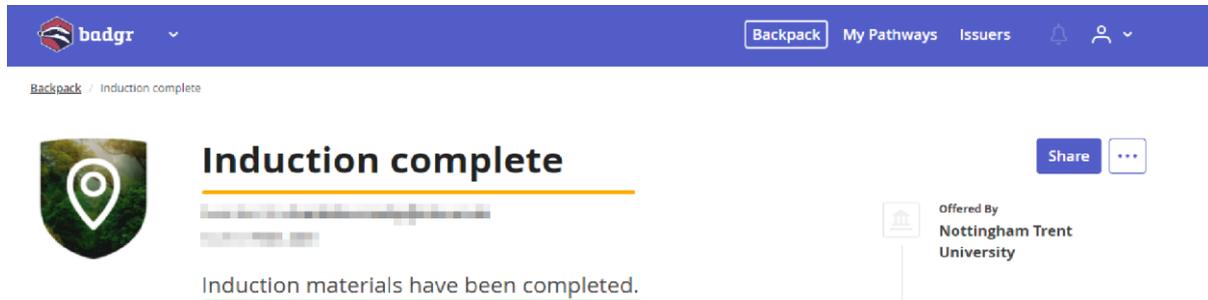
The title, description, image and issuer are all displayed. In the example, the title and description indicate what the student has done to achieve the award. You may wish to consider including your Module Name or Code within either the description or the title of the badge, especially if multiple Modules on a Course are using a (similar) gamification strategy.

How do I automate the allocation of Open Badges?

Release conditions can be applied to Awards in your Module Learning Room enabling the automatic allocation of badges to students upon meeting the applied conditions. Release conditions can be applied to the following Content types and actions:

- Posting to a Discussion Board
- Completing a Checklist
- Completing Content items
- Completing a Survey or Quiz
- Achieving a score on a quiz
- Submitting to a Dropbox.

In addition to this, release conditions can be added to Grade items. This means that output from some H5P activities can trigger a badge. The following H5P activities support writing to the Grade tool in a Learning Room:

- Fill the blanks
- Drag the word
- Drag and drop
- Mark the words
- Summary Questions
- Multiple choice questions
- Single choice questions
- Interactive videos (containing the above activities)

If badge conditions change after they are initially set up and students have already been awarded a badge, badges are not automatically revoked. Best practice would be to ensure that Release Conditions are set correctly before students may trigger a badge. Badges can be revoked manually if needed.

How can students export their badges from NOW?

NOW currently exports badges in the Open Badge 1.0 standard. This is supported by the company Badgr (formally Mozilla backpack). Students will receive both an email and a pop-up message when they are awarded a badge.
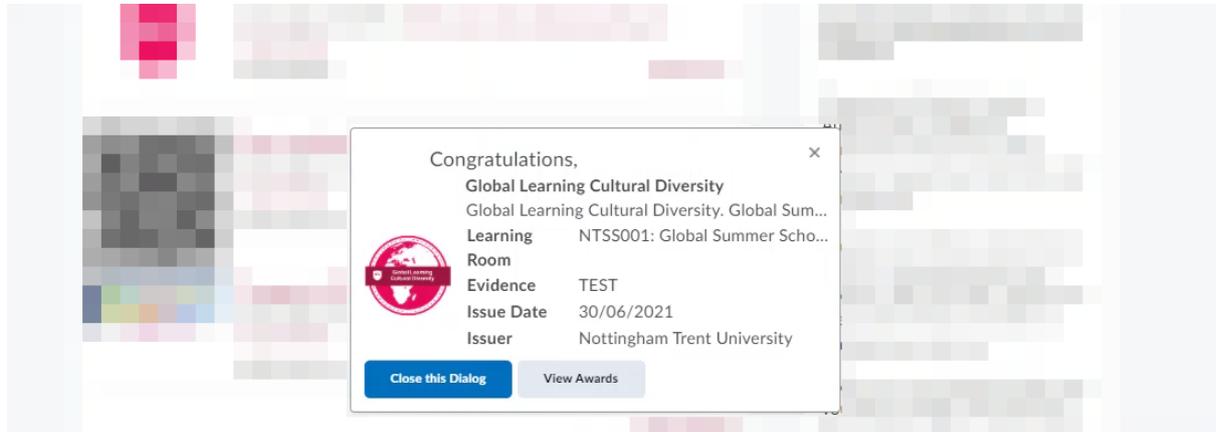
To assist with student navigation, it is recommended to add the link to Awards in your Learning Room Navbar to ensure students can easily access this webpage. Instructions for editing the Navbar can be found in Appendix 1.

When students navigate to Awards, there is an option to share the badge.
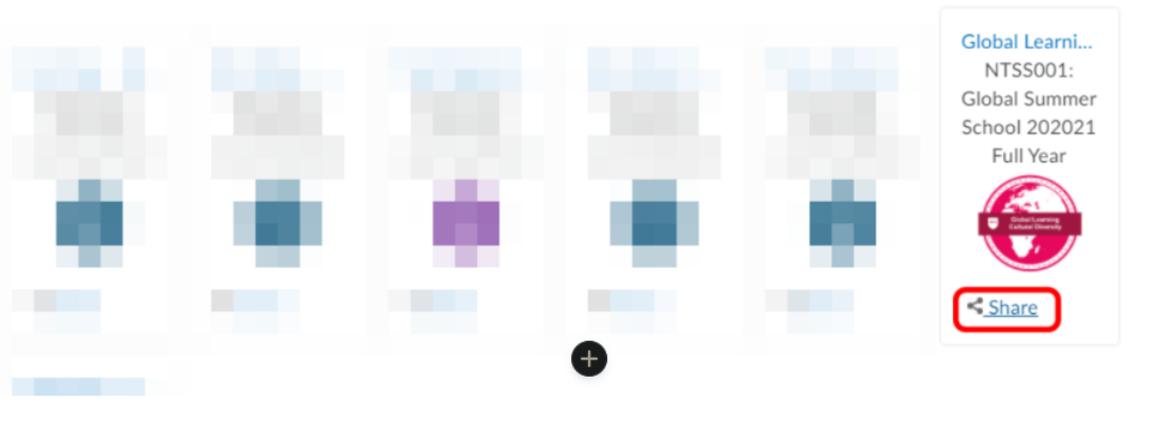
Once the share button on the badge is clicked, the option to share to a backpack is shown.
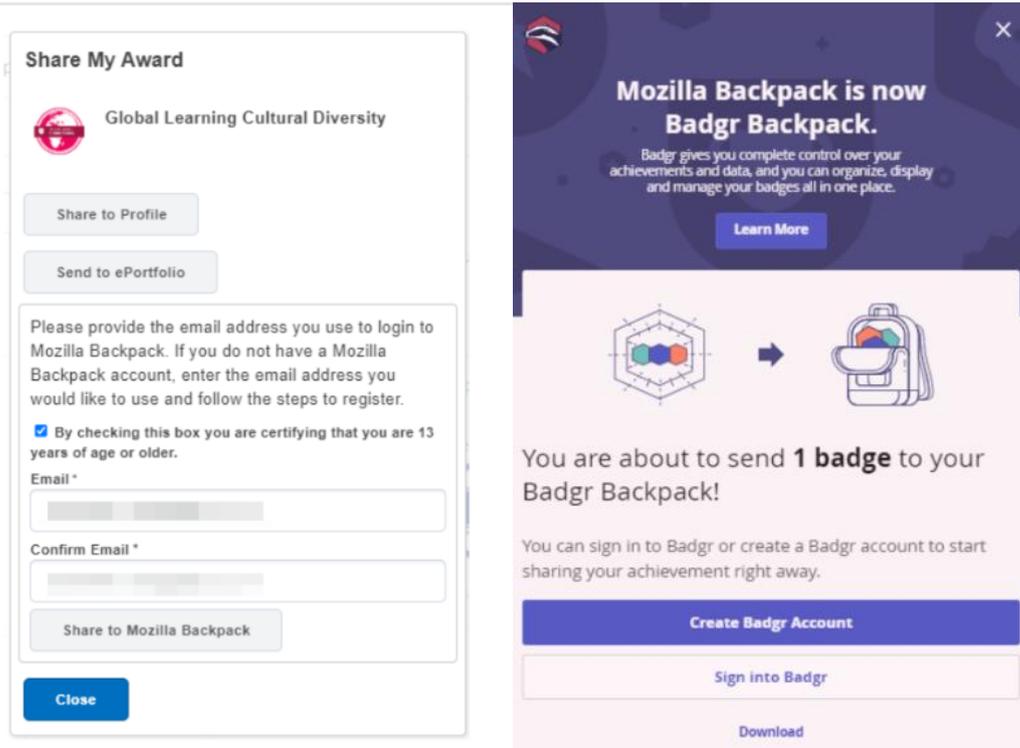
To export to the third party platform Badgr for sharing on social media, students will need an account (this can be linked to other accounts such a Google and Microsoft accounts).

How can I use Open Badges in my practice?

The following will provide some ideas for how you may use Open Badges in your pratice to gamify elements of your Module. Badges can be used to recognise and reward the following:

Attainment

Release conditions can be attached to Quizzes in Learning Rooms. It is also possible to set up a minimum attainment on assessments for the releasing of badges.

Participation

Badges could be created to reward participation through attempting activities, submitting to Dropbox and contributing to discussions. Badges could also be manually awarded to students (using the Awards tool) for face to face participation in activities.

Engagement

Badges can have multiple release conditions attached to them. This could mean that a badge could be created for each week of content, with the release condition being to view all the content items within a week.

Completion

It is possible to create an overarching badge that is awarded on achieving all other badges in a Learning Room. This can allow a more complex use of badges in a Learning Room.

Further Reading

- [Brightspace Community article on Game Mechanics](#)
- [JISC Open Badge Design Toolkit](#)
- [What are Open Badges?](#)

Appendix 1: How to customise the Navbar in your Learning Room

The easiest way to view the Awards tool for both you and your students is to add Awards to the Navbar of your Learning Room.

Hover over the Navbar and the three ellipsis will appear on the right.
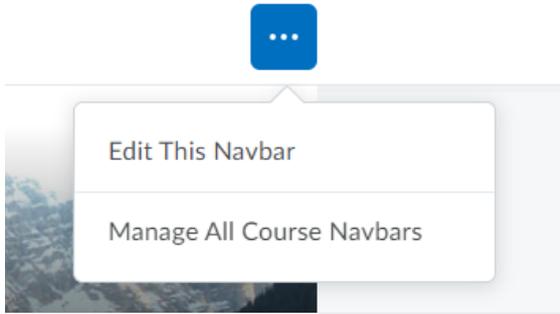
Click on 'Edit This Navbar'. You will then see a 'Links' section for the Navbar.
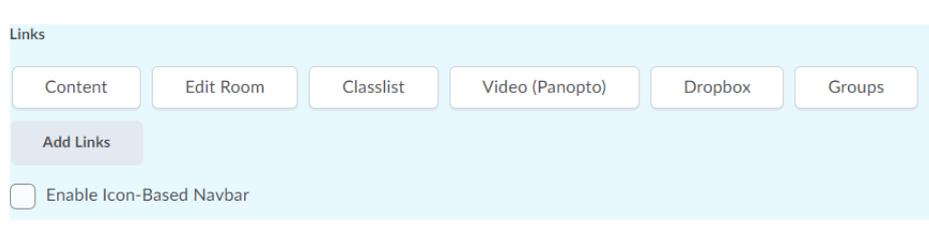
Click on the 'Add Links' button.
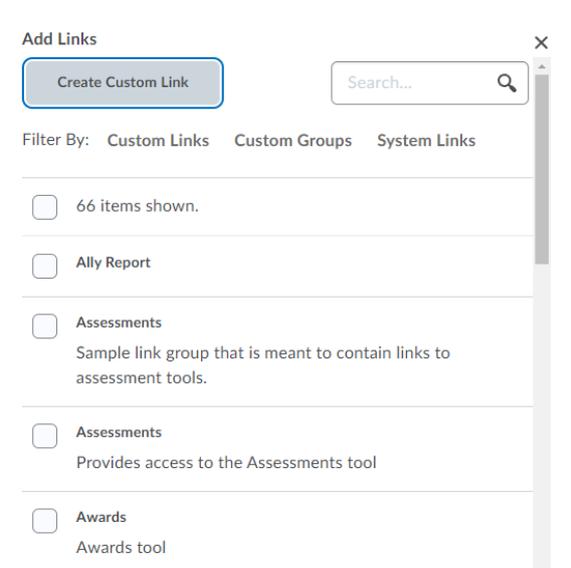
Navigate to Awards and select the check box. Click on 'Add'. Awards will now appear of the Navbar.

9