



**TUS**

**Technological University of the Shannon:  
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:  
Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

**[www.tus.ie](http://www.tus.ie)**

---

**TUS Digital Badge Policy 2024 – 2029**



## Document Control Record

<b>Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook</b> Volume 4: No 20	
<b>Document Title</b>	TUS Digital Badge Policy
<b>Document Entrust</b>	Academic Council Subcommittee: Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
<b>Document Status</b>	Approved
<b>Revision No</b>	1.0
<b>Pages</b>	Page 2 of 22
<b>Approval Body</b>	Academic Council
<b>Date of Approval</b>	23/02/2024
<b>Next Revision</b>	2029

<b>Revision History</b>	
<b>Revision No</b>	<b>Comments/Summary of Changes</b>
1.0	Approved by Academic Council

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF THE POLICY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>CONTEXT</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>DEFINITIONS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>SCOPE OF THE POLICY</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>TUS DIGITAL BADGE COMMITTEE (DBC)</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT OF TUS DIGITAL BADGES</b> .....	<b>9</b>
7.1	STAGE 1: DEVELOPMENT OF TUS DIGITAL BADGES.....	9
7.2	STAGE 2: APPROVAL OF A TUS DIGITAL BADGE.....	9
7.3	STAGE 3: REPORTING.....	10
<b>8</b>	<b>DIGITAL BADGE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>TUS DIGITAL BADGE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b> .....	<b>11</b>
9.1	DIGITAL BADGE PROPOSER .....	11
9.2	DIGITAL BADGE LOGO DESIGNER .....	12
<b>10</b>	<b>INFORMATION FOR TUS DIGITAL BADGE EARNERS</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>I</b>
12.1	APPENDIX I: DIGITAL BADGE APPLICATION FORM (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PROPOSER) .....	I
12.2	APPENDIX II: TUS DIGITAL BADGE DESIGN, ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND SCORING RUBRIC.....	V
12.3	APPENDIX III: TUS DIGITAL BADGE EARNER APPLICATION AND CONSENT FORM.....	VII

# 1 Introduction

The TUS Digital Badge Policy is intended to provide a strategic and structured approach to the development and approval of Digital Badges in the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS). The policy is informed by the expertise and experience within the university and by models of excellent practice. The policy was developed to meet the needs of a contemporary university, committed to offering opportunities to have different types of non-accredited learning formally recognised by the university.

The TUS Digital Badge serves a wide remit of strategic activity in TUS with the policy aligning with each of the key strategic priorities, as outlined in the TUS Strategic Plan 2023-2026, namely:

- Education: Provide a relevant high-quality education offering, focused on interdisciplinarity, delivered in both traditional and flexible ways to cater to a diverse cohort of students, across multi-campus locations.
- Research: Deliver impactful applied research, growing the research community, engaging in next generation thinking and tackling issues at a regional, national, and global level.
- People and Organisation: Operate as an integrated organisation, where everyone's potential can be realised, and where all individuals are provided with equal opportunities.
- Connecting Communities: Build and enhance relationships and partnerships to drive the sustainable development of our region and make an impact nationally and internationally (TUS, 2023, p.7).

## 2 Purpose of the Policy

This policy provides for the effective and sustainable implementation of TUS Digital Badges underpinned by the university's quality standards. It is developed to meet the demands of both internal and external stakeholders seeking recognition from the university for non-accredited learning.

### **3 Context**

Digital Badges endorsed by TUS and issued using the TUS corporate identity will be developed to offer opportunities for engaging and motivating learners.

Authentic and relevant assessment of achievement will be incorporated into the TUS Digital Badge and will be designed to allow the sharing of accomplishments, as aligned to the mission and strategic vision of the university. Implementation of TUS Digital Badges shall be founded on coherent governance and operational processes and procedures from the development to the issuance of a digital badge. These shall clearly define the requisite roles and responsibilities for the implementation of digital badges in TUS and assign processes to appropriate personnel under an agreed implementation plan.

The TUS Digital Badge will:

- align with the TUS Strategic Plan 2023-2026, in addition to the TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, Educational Philosophy, Graduate Attributes Framework and Curriculum Design Principles. TUS Digital Badges should enhance the educational experience of learners and be delivered in partnership with staff and/or external stakeholders such as civic society, industry collaborators/benefactors, as appropriate.
- provide an evidenced-based approach to non-accredited learning and accomplishments.
- communicate the value of competences and/or accomplishments achieved in addition to accredited learning.

### **4 Definitions**

The definitions of the key terms used for the purpose of the enabling the TUS Digital Badge Policy are listed below:

### *TUS Digital Badge*

A TUS Digital Badge is a validated means for the university to recognise non-accredited learning. A digital badge is awarded by the university once an earner demonstrates competence against pre-agreed criteria.

### *Digital Badge Proposer*

A nominated person within an academic unit or functional area of TUS with an appropriate level of authority and responsibility, determined by the Dean of Faculty or Head of Department / Function who seeks approval for a TUS Digital Badge.

### *Digital Badge Owner*

The Digital Badge Owner is a named person within the academic unit or functional area who may initially apply for, as the Digital Badge Proposer, and/or thereafter develop, deliver, and enable the recognition of the successful completion of the digital badge by the enrolled learner(s) via the provision of the related TUS Digital Badge.

### *Digital Badge Committee*

The Digital Badge Committee (DBC) in TUS has responsibility for the overall governance and strategic development of TUS Digital Badges issued by the university. The Digital Badge Committee also serves to approve proposals for new TUS Digital Badges to be issued in line with TUS Quality Assurance guidelines.

### *Digital Badge Earner*

The learners who have enrolled, completed, and has received recognition of the learning through an approved digital badge.

## **5 Scope of the Policy**

The policy document provides the guiding principles for developing and awarding all TUS Digital Badges (DB), which are formally recognised by the university and bear TUS branding. This policy outlines TUS statement of intent regarding the relevance and usage of DBs and their implementation procedure, as outlined in this document.

TUS Digital Badges may be awarded in recognition of the knowledge, competences and skills achieved in any aspect of non-accredited learning. Recognised non-accredited learning may include co-curricular and extracurricular activities, in addition to work-orientated competences. Therefore, the scope includes the achievement and recognition of non-accredited learning outside of but complementary to the ECTS credit system completed by students, staff, and external stakeholders.

It does not include formal recognition of learning through the award of credits or ECTS on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The position of digital badges in an outline of accredited and non-accredited forms of recognised learning are outlined in **Table 1**.

**Table 1: TUS Recognised Award Delineation**

Delineation		Level on Credit NFQ	Bearing	ECTS Credits	Type Recognition	of Learner Workload (hours)
Major awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD</li> <li>• Masters</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma</li> <li>• Higher Diploma</li> <li>• Bachelor's Degrees</li> <li>• Higher Certificate</li> </ul>	6-10	Yes	≥ 60	Award on NFQ	≥ 1200
Minor, supplemental, and special purpose awards. See <a href="#">QQI Definitions</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificates</li> <li>• Diplomas</li> </ul>	6-9	Yes	Variable Credits	Award on NFQ	Variable depending on credits
Single module certification	Module	6-9	Yes	Variable Credits	ECT Credits Gained	Variable depending on credits
Micro credential	Micro credential	6-9	Yes	Credits ≥ 1 & ≤ 9	Certificate Completion	of ≥ 20 and ≤ 200
Digital Badge	Non-credit bearing	Not on NFQ	No	0	Digital Badge	Variable (in line with norm hours and there is learning which has been evidenced)
Non-credit-bearing, non-assessed, non-accredited provision	Personal and/or Professional Development Courses	Not on NFQ	No	0	None	N/A (i.e., while learning may have occurred this is not evidenced)



## 6 TUS Digital Badge Committee (DBC)

The TUS Digital Badge Committee (DBC) shall be formally established and will be responsible for the oversight, approval process, and implementation of policies and procedures related to the issuing of TUS Digital Badges, in addition to the assurance of quality, standards, and compliance with relevant data protection legislation.

The purpose of the DBC is to:

- to review and approve applications in line with the TUS Digital Badge Policy
- to oversee the implementation of the policy for TUS Digital Badges.
- to inform the overall strategic development of TUS Digital Badges.

## 7 Management of TUS Digital Badges

A summary outline of the stages in the management of digital badges is outlined in **Figure 1**.

### 7.1 Stage 1: Development of TUS Digital Badges

- A call for Digital Badge applications will be scheduled twice in the academic year, or at such frequency as required.
- Digital Badge may be defined by a Faculty or Functional Area or the Student Union (the Digital Badge Proposer).
- The proposer submits a Digital Badge application to the DBC.
- Proposals for a new digital badge will be submitted for review to the DBC using the standard Digital Badge Application Form (See: **Appendix I: Digital Badge Application Form**)

### 7.2 Stage 2: Approval of a TUS Digital Badge

Applications are approved based on defined assessment criteria and supported by a scoring rubric. (See **Appendix II: Digital Badge Assessment Criteria and Scoring Rubric**).

The DBC will:

- review Digital Badge applications using the Digital Badge Assessment Criteria (See: **Appendix II**).
- score the application reflective of the above (See: **Appendix II**).

In the context of the review, the DBC will either:

- approve
  - seek further information on or
  - reject the Digital Badge application<sup>1</sup>.
- 
- communicate the outcome to the applicant.
  - record the outcome of the review and report, in a summative report of all digital badge applications reviewed by the DBC in the reporting period, the review outcomes to the relevant Subcommittee of Academic Council.<sup>2</sup>
  - retain the right to revoke a TUS Digital Badge if just cause is established by the university.

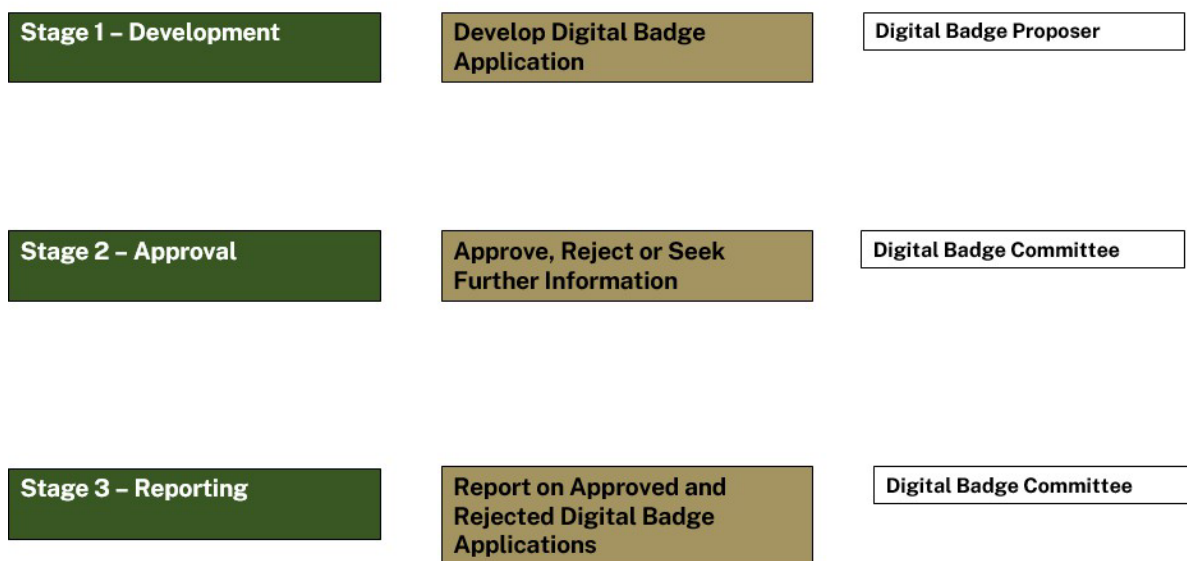
### 7.3 Stage 3: Reporting

- The DBC will report, in a summative report of all digital badge applications reviewed by the DBC in the reporting period, the review outcomes to the relevant Subcommittee of Academic Council.

---

<sup>1</sup> Issues, appeals and complaints will be directed to the Chair of the Digital Badge Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Cognisant of the standing orders of Academic Council and the Terms of Reference of the Academic Council Subcommittees, the Registrar will determine the relevant subcommittee to which the summary review report of the DBS is submitted.



*Figure 1: Management of Digital Badges*

## 8 Digital Badge Committee Membership

Membership of the Digital Badge Committee shall normally consist of:

- Chair
- Nominees from each academic Faculty within TUS
- Nominee from CPID
- Nominee from the Quality Office
- Nominee from the TUS Library.

Additional members may be co-opted as required.

## 9 TUS Digital Badge Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities are outlined in the following section.

### 9.1 Digital Badge Owner

The Digital Badge Owner is a named person within the academic unit or functional

area who may initially apply for, as the Digital Badge Nominator, and/or thereafter develop, deliver, and enable the recognition of the successful completion of the digital badge by the enrolled learner(s) via the provision of the related TUS Digital Badge.

The Digital Badge Owner(s) is a staff member who is responsible for:

- completing the TUS Digital Badge Application and having it endorsed by the relevant Dean of Faculty, Head of Department or Functional Area.
- submitting the endorsed application to the DBC.
- overseeing the delivery and administration of the Digital Badge learning content, activity, and evidence that learner criteria have been met.
- ensuring the provision of a TUS Digital Badge to the enrolled learner<sup>3</sup>.

A summary of the core functions completed by the Digital Badge Owner(s) is outlined in **Figure 2**.

## **9.2 Digital Badge Logo Designer**

TUS Marketing and Communications will be responsible for the design of the TUS Digital Badges logos in accordance with the University's Corporate Identity Guidelines.

---

<sup>3</sup> All administrative arrangements that support the recording and issuing of the TUS Digital Badges will be confirmed through the other work designated under the agreed TOR of the Digital Badge Policy working group. This work will be outlined through an additional operational addendum to this policy when the systems and other administrative arrangements to manage such administration of digital badges is fully reviewed and documented. This addendum will be included in the policy and notified for approval to the Quality Sub-Committee of Academic Council once completed.

# TUS TUS DIGITAL BADGE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

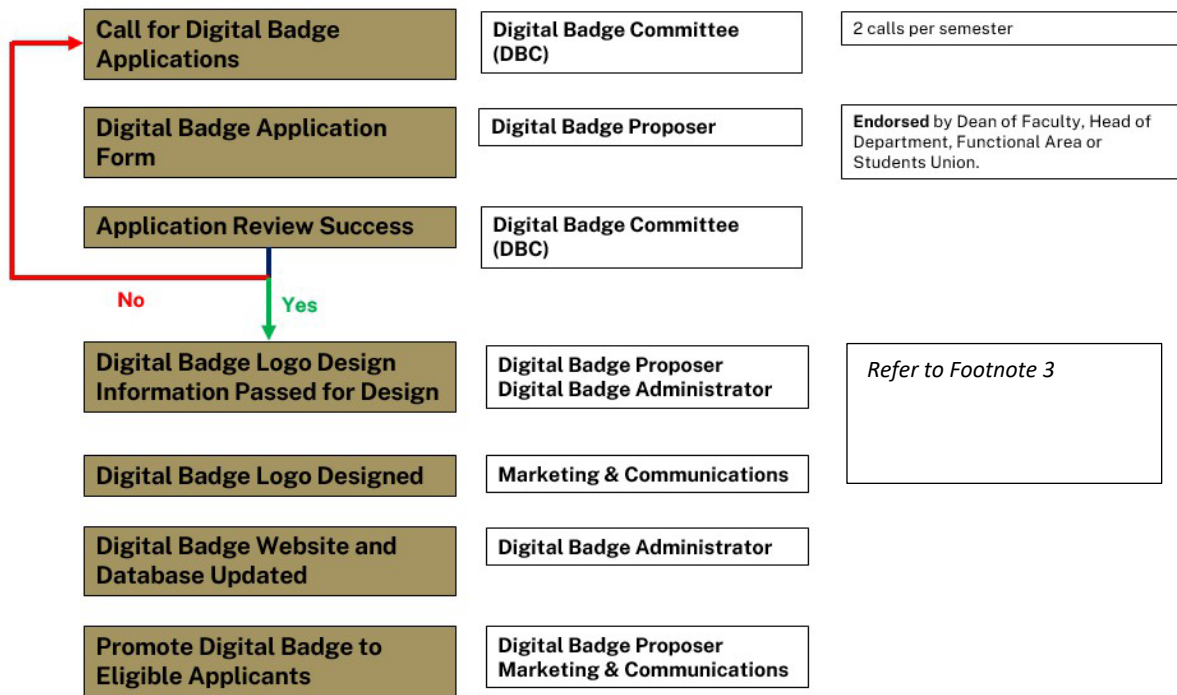


Figure 2: TUS Digital Badge Development Process

## 10 Information for TUS Digital Badge Earners

TUS Digital Badge Earners are required to complete an application form for validation to be issued their digital badge via a nominated platform (Refer to Appendix III). A Badge Earner's email address is required to accept and validate their digital badge. Badge Earners personal data will be stored and used in accordance with the relevant TUS policies<sup>4</sup>.

A summary of this application process is outlined in **Figure 3**.

<sup>4</sup> This outline information is subject to revision as per the outline in Note 3.



# TUSTUS DIGITAL BADGE EARNER APPLICATION PROCESS

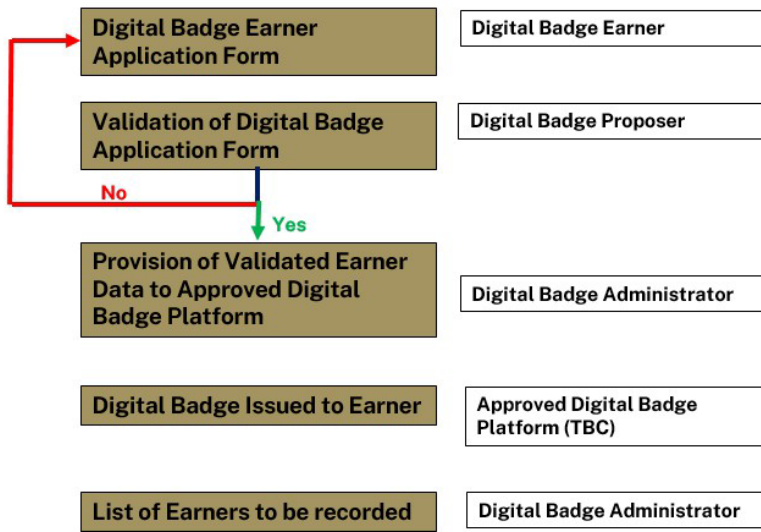


Figure 3: TUS Digital Badge Earner Application Process

# 11 References

Athlone Institute of Technology (2020). A Guideline Framework Document for AIT Digital Badges.

TU Dublin. (2022). Digital Badges Policy. Available at: <https://www.tudublin.ie/media/website/explore/about-the-university/academic-affairs/documents/Digital-Badges-Policy-V1.pdf> [Accessed 25 Jan 2024].

TUS. (2023). TUS Strategic Plan 2023-2026. Available at [https://tus.ie/strategicplan/assets/TUS-Strategic-Plan-23-26\\_Eng.pdf](https://tus.ie/strategicplan/assets/TUS-Strategic-Plan-23-26_Eng.pdf) [Accessed 25 Jan 2024].

TUS. (2022). Putting Learning First: TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. Available at: [https://tus.ie/app/uploads/AcademicServices/Quality/Handbook/VOL3/2\\_Putting-Learning-First-TUS-Learning-Teaching-and-Assessment-Strategy-2022-2025.pdf](https://tus.ie/app/uploads/AcademicServices/Quality/Handbook/VOL3/2_Putting-Learning-First-TUS-Learning-Teaching-and-Assessment-Strategy-2022-2025.pdf) [Accessed 22 Jan 2024].

TUS. (2022). TUS Graduate Attributes Framework 2022 – 2025. Available at: [https://tus.ie/app/uploads/AcademicServices/Quality/Handbook/VOL4/5\\_TUS-Graduate-Attributes-Framework-2022-2025.pdf](https://tus.ie/app/uploads/AcademicServices/Quality/Handbook/VOL4/5_TUS-Graduate-Attributes-Framework-2022-2025.pdf) [Accessed 22 Jan 2024].

UCC. (2020). UCC Policy Framework for Digital Badges. Available at: [https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/academicsecretariat/policies/academicstandards/UCCPolicyFrameworkforDigitalBadges\\_V1.6.pdf](https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/academicsecretariat/policies/academicstandards/UCCPolicyFrameworkforDigitalBadges_V1.6.pdf) [Accessed 25 Jan 2024].