

**NOT-FOR-ACADEMIC CREDIT DIGITAL BADGES, MICROCREDENTIALS, AND STACKABLE CREDENTIALS POLICY**

**PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework for the university’s recognition, integration and use of not-for-academic credit digital badges, microcredentials, and stackable credentials branded and/or issued by Ontario Tech University.

**DEFINITIONS**

1. For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions apply:

**“Digital Badge”** refers to the validated digital image and its associated metadata that documents when, where and how an accomplishment, skill, quality, interest, microcredential or other stackable credential was completed.

**“Horizontal Stacking”** refers to the stacking of units of study with little or no explicit hierarchical order. Corequisite learning is the norm but prerequisites may be required in some instances.

**“Microcredential”** is a micro-certificate that includes a suitable evaluation of the acquisition of a competency, skill, or learning outcome through a single learning experience or a collection of learning experiences.

**“Stackable Credential”** is a credential that combines units of study to accurately reflect an accumulated body of knowledge, skills and abilities.

**“Stacking”** refers to the practice of assembling, or stacking, units of study.

**“Value-Added Stacking”** combines the concepts of horizontal and vertical stacking while allowing for additional, non-related units of study to be added.

**“Vertical Stacking”** refers to the stacking of units of study in an explicit hierarchical order guided by prerequisite accomplishments.

**SCOPE AND AUTHORITY**

1. This Policy applies to digital badges and microcredentials issued by Ontario Tech University earned through not-for-academic credit activities.
2. The Provost, or successor thereof, is the Policy Owner and is responsible for overseeing the implementation, administration and interpretation of this Policy.

**POLICY**

1. **Requirements**
   1. Badges, Microcredentials, and Stackable Credentials must be awarded on the basis of the achievement of outcomes appropriate to their level and not just in recognition of participation.
   2. Microcredentials may be standalone or grouped to contribute to a Badge or Stackable Credential.
   3. The Microcredentials being considered herein are only those which are not-for-academic credit in nature.
   4. Stackable Credentials may or may not require prerequisite qualifications. This will be dictated by the approach (i.e., Horizontal, Value-Added, or Vertical Stacking) taken to create the credential.
2. **Delivery**
   1. Microcredentials may be delivered face-to-face, online, by distance, or through a combination of these methods.
3. **Development and Approval for Not-for-Academic Credit Digital Badges, Microcredentials, and Stackable Credentials**
   1. Proposals for new or changes to existing not-for-academic credit microcredentials, badges, or stackable credentials must be reviewed by the Not-For-Academic Credit Microcredentials Committee.
   2. If there is an intention to develop or deliver a not-for-academic credit microcredential, badge, or stackable credential in conjunction with another unit or third-party, the proposal must include details of the respective roles of the parties in the development and delivery of the credential.

**7.3** The Not-for-Academic Credit Microcredentials Committee monitors the ongoing quality assurance of any not-for-credit academic badge, microcredential, or stackable credential developed. Regular reviews should take place every three years so as to ensure the content is current and aligned with ever changing user needs.

**MONITORING AND REVIEW**

1. This Policy will be reviewed as necessary and at least every three years. The Provost, or successor thereof, is responsible to monitor and review this Policy.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

1. University of Ontario Institute of Technology Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, c. 8, Sch. 0

**RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & DOCUMENTS**

1. Program Nomenclature Directives