

MSU Badge Standards

Quick Reference Guide

All MSU micro-credentials must meet these standards before a badge can be issued through Credly.

Quality Standards

- **Validated achievement:** must be an assessed, demonstrated outcome, such as a skill, competency, or knowledge area.
- **Specific, externally meaningful title:** a hiring manager should understand the recipient's capability without additional context.
- **Defined earning criteria:** activity, assessment method, performance benchmark, and duration. Embedded in the badge metadata.
- **Explicit skills and competencies:** list what the recipient can do. This is what employers use to evaluate the badge.
- **Industry alignment where possible:** credentials co-designed with employers carry the most weight.
- **Annual review required:** ADI recommends review of badges each year to confirm criteria remain current (update, renew, or retire).

Brand and Design

- **Shield shape:** all MSU badges use the institutional shield following MSU brand guidelines.
- **ADI can provide approved templates and guidance** to help units create consistent badge designs.
- **Color:** MSU green (#18453B) and white. Flat, two-dimensional only no gradients, shadows, or bevels.
- **Minimum size:** 600 × 600 px PNG for Credly.
- **Badge graphics:** produced with ADI in Canva. Example below:



Credential Levels

Levels are relative to the domain and are not comparable across disciplines.

Level	Description
Foundational	Entry-level knowledge or skill recognition
Developing	Building competency, applied in structured contexts
Intermediate	Independent application in real-world contexts
Advanced	Deep expertise in complex or novel situations
Expert	Mastery-level, field-defining competency

Approval Process

- **Step 1 Internal approval:** your Digital Badging Council or unit leadership approves before submission to ADI.
- **Step 2 ADI review:** ADI onboards and reviews against quality standards, taxonomy, and brand guidelines.
- **Step 3 Configuration:** ADI configures the badge in Credly and coordinates D2L and registration system setup.
- **Step 4 Unit responsibilities:** Your unit will be responsible for issuing, maintenance, and supporting learners.

Required Badge Metadata

Field	What to provide
Badge name	Specific and externally meaningful. Example: “Applied Data Visualization for Public Health”.
Description	2–3 sentences summarizing what the badge represents.
Earning criteria	Activity completed, assessment method, performance benchmark, and duration of the learning experience.
Skills demonstrated	The specific competencies the recipient can demonstrate is critical. This is what employers evaluate.
Audience and level	Intended audience and credential level (Foundational through Expert).
Expiration policy	Include whether the badge expires or if time-sensitive credentials may require renewal. Note: foundational achievements typically do not expire.

Questions? Contact ADI before beginning the design process. Opdm.adi@msu.edu