Case study: Digital recording of English and maths (DREAM)

# Outstanding teaching, learning and assessment attainment, retention and progression South Central programme (2017/19)

## Which organisations were involved?

Eastleigh College and Sussex Downs College working with [City & Guilds Group digital credentialing business, Digitalme](https://www.cityandguilds.com/news/June-2016/city-and-guilds-group-sets-up-new%20digital-credentialing-business-digitalme#.XMYTTC3Mx1M).

Note: Sussex Downs College is now part of East Sussex College, and this is how we refer to it in this case study.

## What was the purpose?

Digital badges offer a way of accrediting skills that often go unrecognised by formal qualifications; skills that are essential to success at college and beyond. The aim of the DREAM project was to see if using digital badges to record progress and achievement towards Functional Skills and GCSE qualifications in maths and English improves learners’ motivation, achievement, and employability.

### What did the project do?

DREAM piloted the use of digital badges with apprentices, work-based and classroom-based learners. This involved:

* Initial assessment of the potential for using digital badges
* Drawing upon East Sussex College’s existing ‘Digital Badges Employability Passport’, which captures sixteen employer identified skills
* Discussing with Digitalme how digital badges could be implemented for Functional Skills and GCSE maths and English
* Creating associated tasks and assessment criteria for each badge, including a bespoke set of badges for supported learners
* Enabling learners to upload evidence in order to achieve badges
* Encouraging learners to link badge portfolios to their CVs and share their badges online via social media and professional networking sites.

### What helped the project succeed?

Strong collaboration between the colleges was crucial to DREAM’s success. Collaboration was strengthened and shaped by the use of the [Digitalme Open Badge Academy framework](https://www.openbadgeacademy.com/digitalme), which allowed us to develop customisable content with input from local employers. The project was also a good fit with an existing employability agenda at Eastleigh, which in turn, supported delivery of DREAM.

### What challenges did the project face?

Eastleigh College plans to expand digital badging to our apprenticeship provision and we must now continue to grow our engagement with local employers in order to create bespoke badges for specific curriculum areas linking to employer-based qualifications.

## What difference did the project make?

* By the end of the project nearly 400 learners across the colleges enrolled with the Open Badge Academy
* Eastleigh College awarded more than 60 badges
* East Sussex College awarded over 160 badges
* The colleges are expecting a 1 to 2 % rise in overall in maths and English GCSE and Functional Skills results
* Some curriculum areas have made digital badges compulsory
* Eastleigh College is looking to create bespoke badges for subject specific qualifications in association with local employers.
* Staff and student survey responses showed high levels of satisfaction with digital badges, with staff stating that the learners benefited from digital badging and that they were likely, or very likely, to recommend digital badging to colleagues.

### Where can I find more information?

You can find out more about this project:

* In the ETF [Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment 3: South Central. Final Report](https://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/content/etf3023) (undated).
* By contacting Bob Tipping, International/Projects Consultant, FE Sussex, Alice Copp, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Eastleigh College, Harriet Hadley-King, Learning Technologist, East Sussex College

Comments from learners and staff at Eastleigh College:

“Digital badging is a good way to show skills I would not normally be able to show.”

“I hope they will increase the chance of me being chosen for future jobs.”

“[A] great independent learning activity.”

“Learners have engaged well in the employability activities and we are using it as a stretch opportunity throughout core units.”