Awards in Brightspace

Brightspace Awards are a great way to give students instant feedback and to reward them for the work they do in your module/unit/course. The tool lets you set up and issue badges and certificates. Any Award you create can either be released manually by yourself. Alternatively, you can attach release conditions to the Award to help issue it automatically once the student has fulfilled the release condition.

Contents

How and when to use the Awards tool

You can use the Awards toll for a number of things. Here are some examples.

- Issue a badge to reward students for successful engagement with content and activities such as quizzes and assignments.

- Issue badges to create an element of gamification in your module/unit/course which can help keep students engaged. You could for instance use badges or certificates to create a virtual scavenger hunts; students have to complete activities and get issued Awards with further clues once they have done so.

- Issue badges and certificates to create a hands-off method of instant feedback, for instance after students have taken a quiz.

- Use the Awards tool to issue certificates to students.

The Awards tool

Start accessing the Awards tool by navigating to the Course Tools drop-down menu. From the menu, select Awards. (Figure 1)
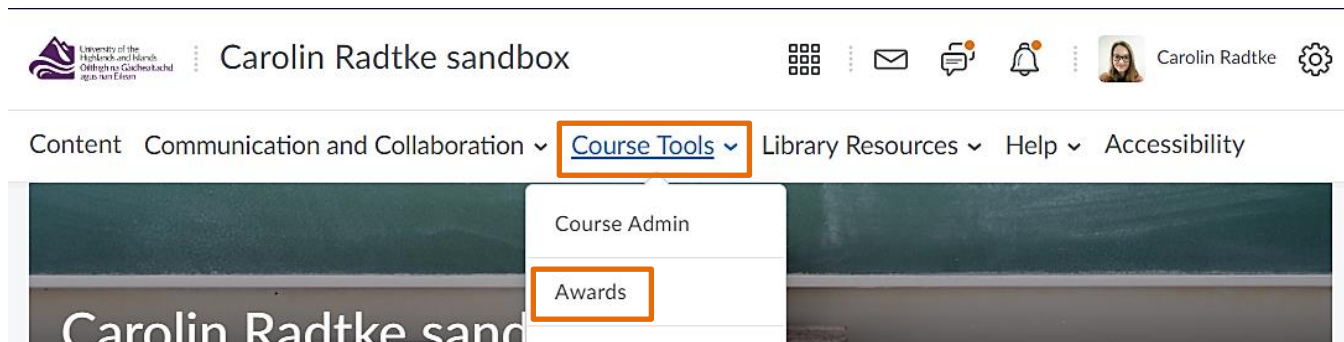

Figure 1: Navbar with the Course Tools drop-down menu and the link to the Awards tool

Once you are in the Awards tool, you will see the Awards tool homepage. At the top of the page you will see two tabs – Classlist Awards and Course Awards. (1) On the Classlist Awards page, you will see two buttons – Issue and Revoke. (2) You can use these buttons to manually Issue or revoke Awards. For more information, please refer to the information in Issuing and award manually. Below these two buttons, you will see your module/unit/course classlist. You will see the names of the students as well as the Awards they have earned. (3) On the right-hand side, you have the option to filter the classlist by viewing all Awards students got, or by badges or certificates. You can also organise the class list – by default the classlist is organised by Awards Leaders Descending. (4) (Figure 2)
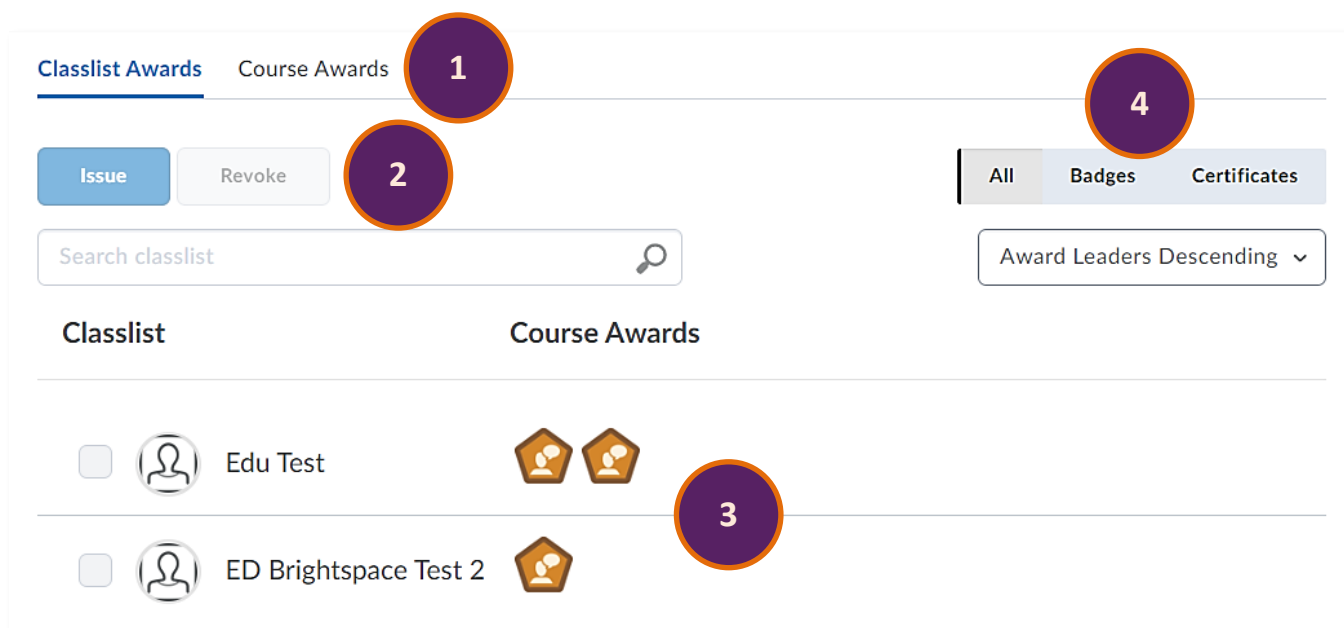

Figure 2: Awards tool homepage with the Classlist Awards tab open

Opening the Course Awards page, you will see that there is a checkbox at the top of the page allowing users to send the earned Awards of the module/unit/course to the Badgr Backback. (1) For more information about this, please refer to the [Badgr Backpack website](). Below this checkbox, you will see a blue Add Award to Course (course = module/unit/course). (2) Use this button to create new certificates and badges. Below this button, you will see a list of the certificates and badges available in this module/unit/course. (3) Just as on the Classlist Awards tab, you can filter the results by All, Badges and Certificates on the left-hand side of the screen. (4) (Figure 3)
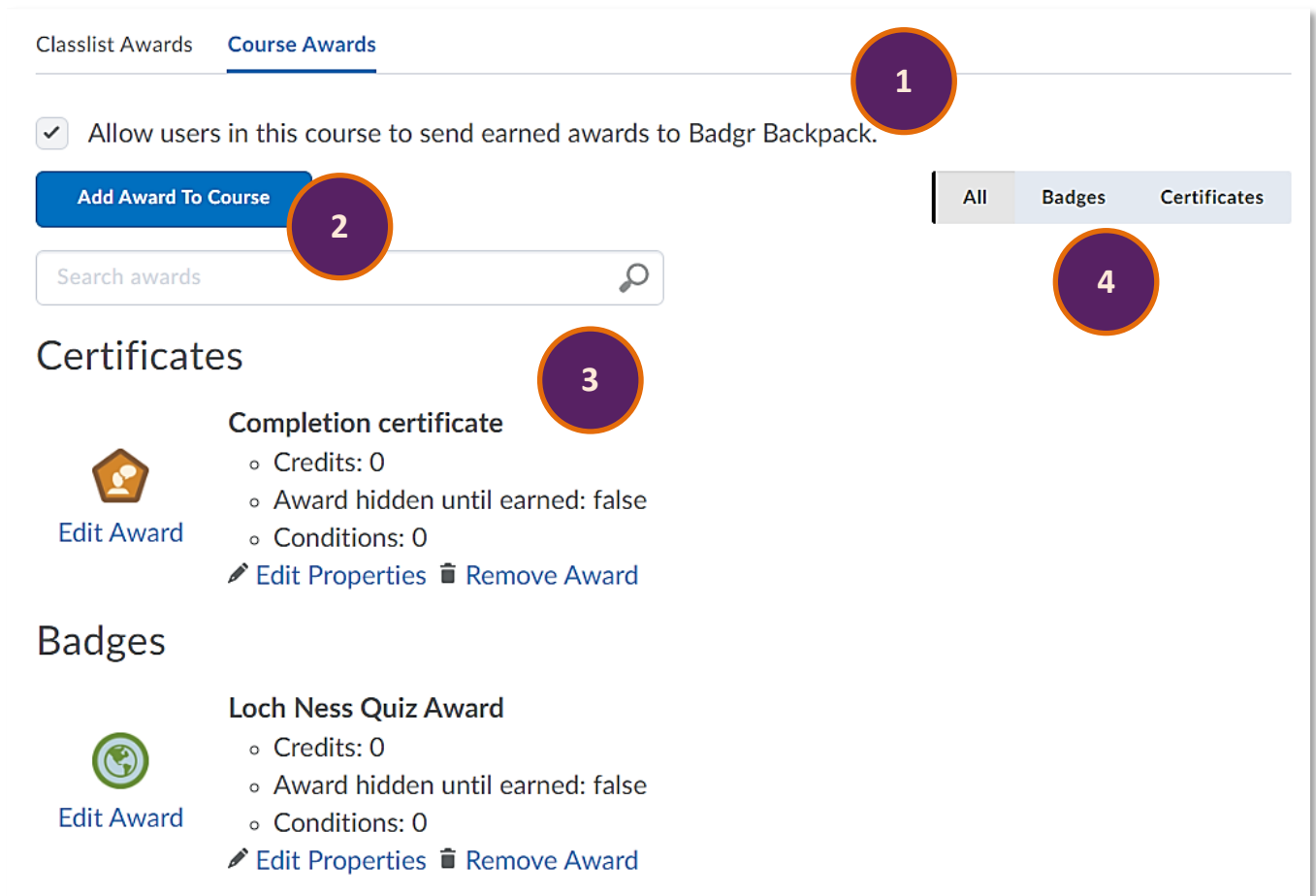

Figure 3: Awards homepage with the Course Awards tab open

Creating a new badge or certificate

To create a new badge or certificate, click on the blue Add Award to Course button in the Course Awards tab. (Figure 4)
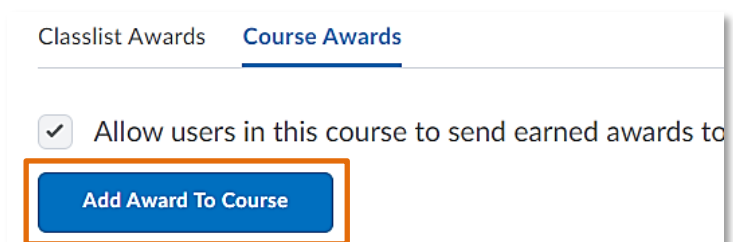

Figure 4: Add Award to Course button in the Course Awards tab

You will be taken to a work area where you could either add Awards you created in other modules/units/courses by selecting them and clicking on the blue Add button (1), or you can create new Awards by clicking on the grey Create button (2). (Figure 5)
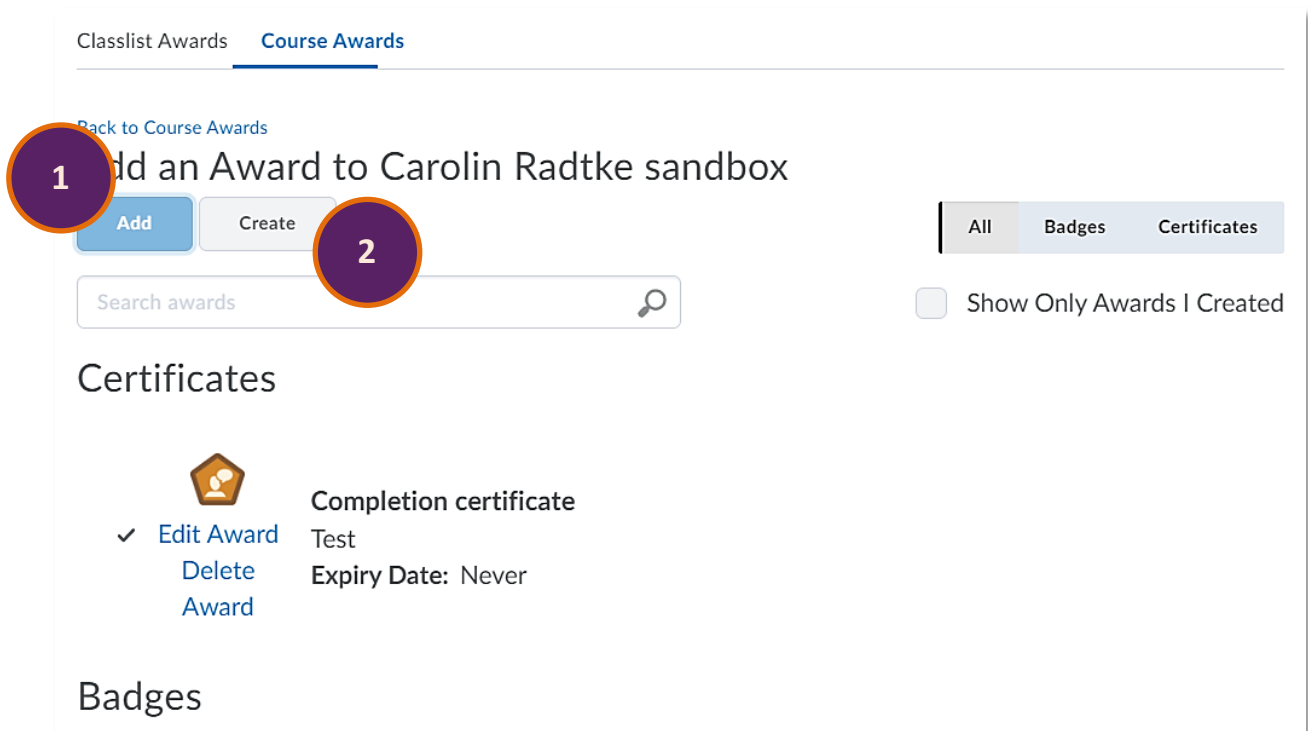

Figure 5: Add Award work area

Once you have clicked on the grey Create button, you will be able to set up your Award. Start by giving your Award's a name (1) and provide a description (2). The description will be visible to students when they receive the Award. Below the description box, you will find a drop-down menu which allows you to determine the Award Type (Badge or Certificate). (3) For this example we will create a Badge. (Figure 6)

Figure 6: New Award set-up area

Next, you will need to determine the Award availability. (1) You can make the Award available for all the modules/units/courses you are enrolled on as a Lecturer or Module Leader or you can make the award available to other Lecturers or Module Leaders creating awards. When choosing this second option, you can also choose to make the Award available for your own module/unit/course only, in this case my sandbox (Carolin Radtke sandbox).

Below the availability options, you can set up expiry options for your Award if that is necessary. (2) In most cases that might not be necessary but if you use awards for gamification, you could make Awards and potential information within the Award available for a limited time only. (Figure 7)

Figure 7: Availability and expiration options within the New Award set-up area

Next, you will be able to customise the award image – you can either add an Award image from the library or can upload your own icon. (Figure 8)

Figure 8: Award image options within the New Award set-up area

If you were setting up a certificate, you could also add a PDF document at this point. You will again be able to choose from the library or to upload your own PDF. (Figure 9)
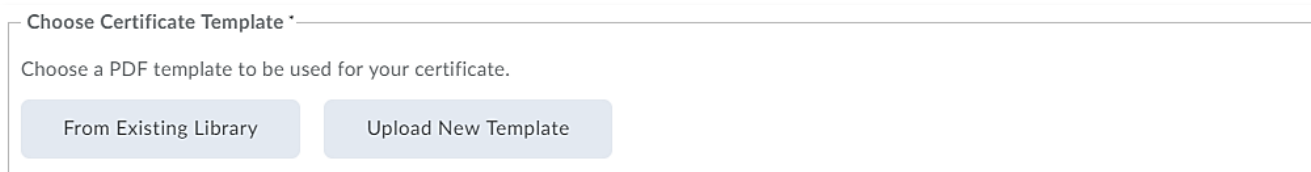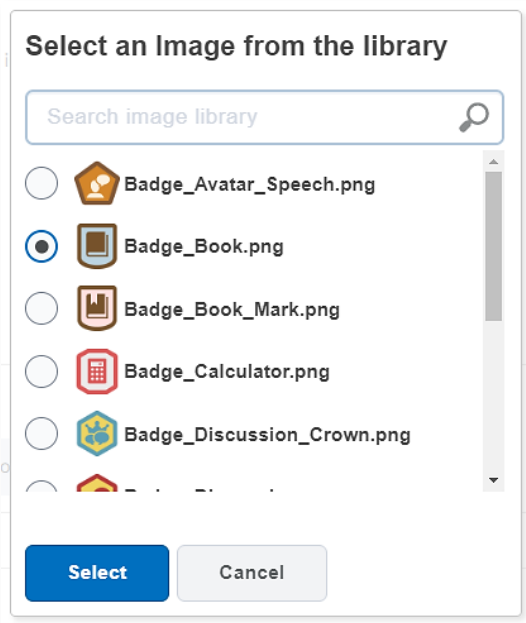

Figure 9: Attachment options for certificates within the New Award set-up area

When you choose an image from the library, a pop-up window will open. Select the Award image you would like to use from the list of images and click on the blue Select button at the bottom of the pop-up window. (Figure 10)

Figure 10: Selecting an award image from the library

When you choose to select an image from your own computer, your computer's file explore will open and you will be able to select the image you would like to attach to the award. (Figure 11)
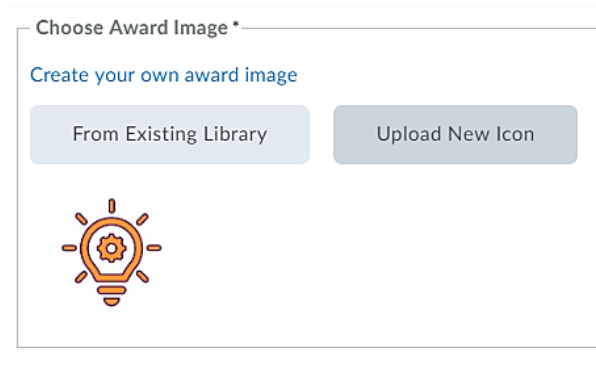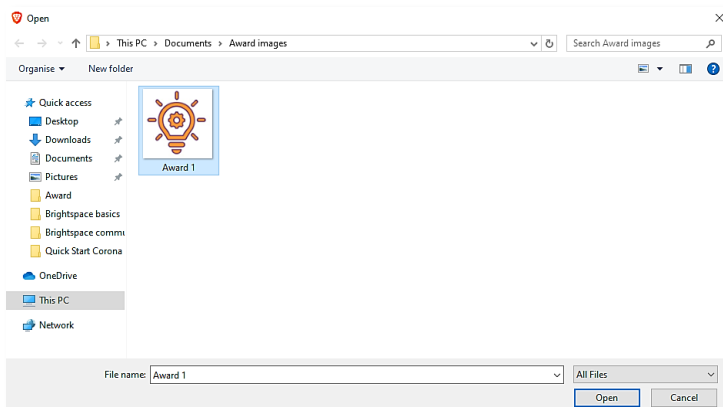

Figure 11: Selecting and award image from your computer

You will now be able to see your newly selected or uploaded award image within the New Award set-up area. (Figure 12)

Note: Have a looks at Tips and Tricks to see how this Award icon was created.

Figure 12: Newly added or uploaded image within the New Award set-up area

Lastly, you will be able to change the Issuer Information. Here, you could add your own name and email-address in case you want students to know the Award came from you. (1) Next, make sure that you have the use of the Award enabled for your module/unit/course (2), and click Save and Close when you are done setting up the Award (3). (Figure 13)

Figure 13: Issuer Information and Save and Close button within the New Award set up area

You will now see that the Award has been added to your list of existing Awards. (Figure 14)

Figure 14: Newly created award in the Course Awards area

Editing the properties of an Award

After you have created your Award, you can either just leave it to be awarded manually later on, or you can edit its properties further, including assigning a release condition to issue the Award automatically later on.

To start editing the properties, click on the Edit Properties link below your award. (Figure 15)
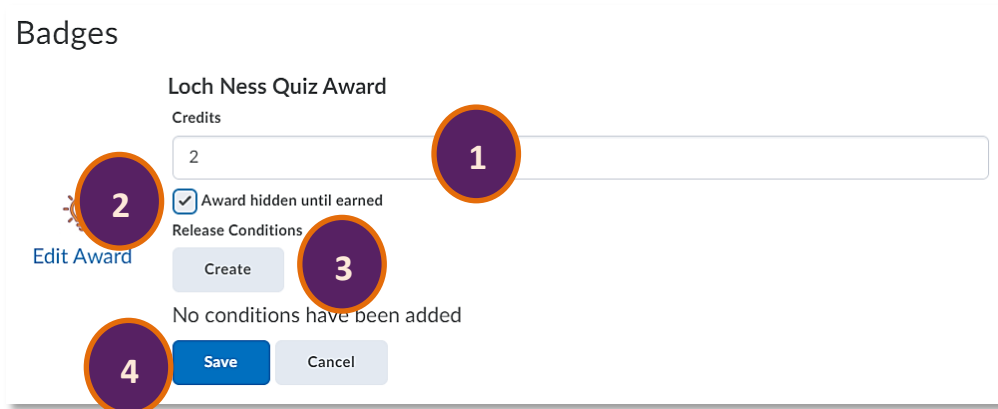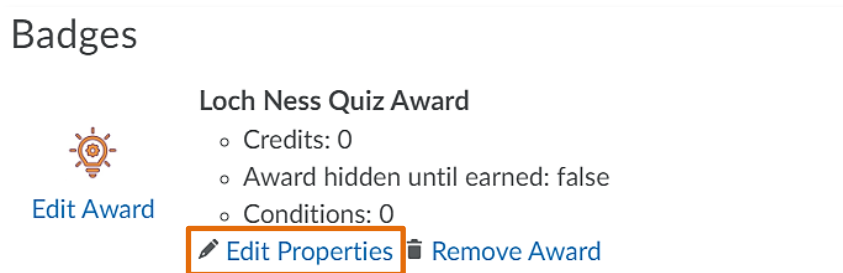
Figure 15: New Award with Edit Properties option

This will take you to the Edit Properties area. If you would like, you can now choose to add an amount of points/credits to this Awards. (1)

Figure 16: Award Edit Properties area

You can also choose if you want students to be able to see the Award before it is issued to them. If you leave the award visible before it is issues, students can access the Awards tool and see all the available Awards for your module/unit/course. If you hide the Award until it is earned, students will not be able to see if before then. Once again, this setting might come in especially handy if you are using Awards for gamification. (2) You will furthermore be able to add a release condition to the Award, i.e. a condition the student must fulfil to automatically trigger the Award. (3) For more information on release conditions, refer to our Release Conditions Guide. When you are done editing your Award, click on the blue Save button. (4) (Figure 16)

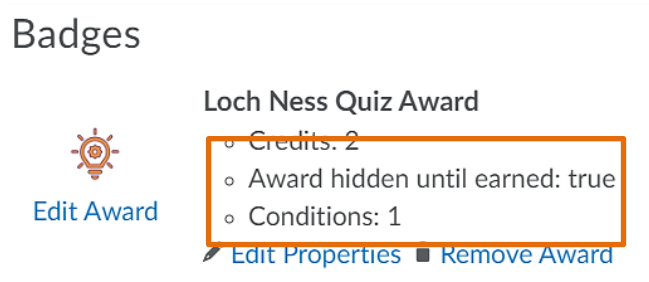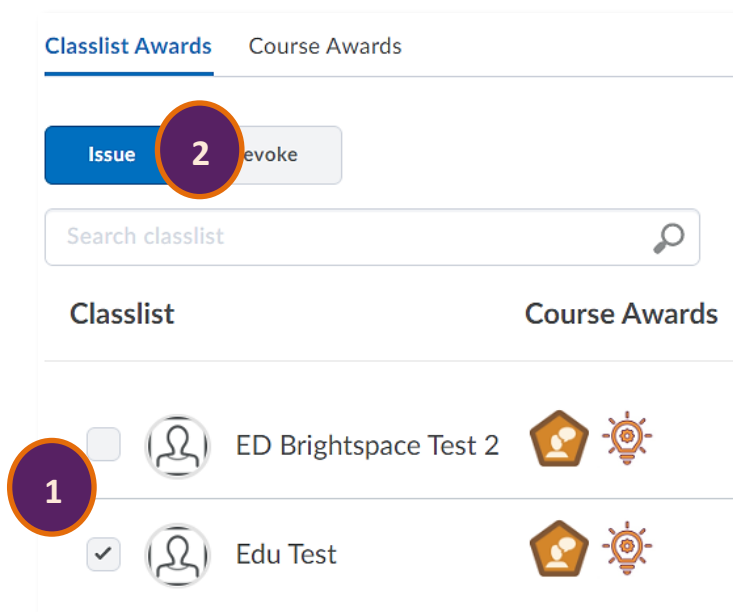You will now see that the Award properties have been updated. (Figure 17)

Figure 17: Updated award properties

Issuing an Award manually

If you would like to issue one of your Awards manually instead of attaching a release conditions, start by going back to the Classlist Awards tab. In the Classlist Awards tab, select the student(s) you would like to issue an Award to (1) and select the blue Issue button at the top of the screen (2). (Figure 18)

Figure 18: Classlist Awards tab with the option to issue an award

This will open a pop-up window. Select the Award you would like to issue (1) and enter a brief message in the Award Criteria box (2). When you are done, click on the blue Issue button at the bottom of the pop-up window. (Figure 19)
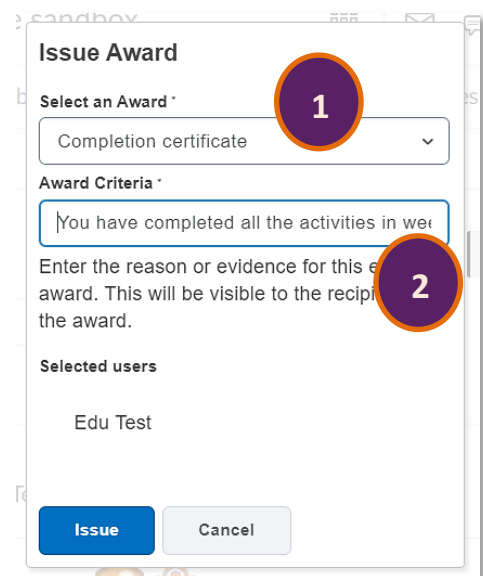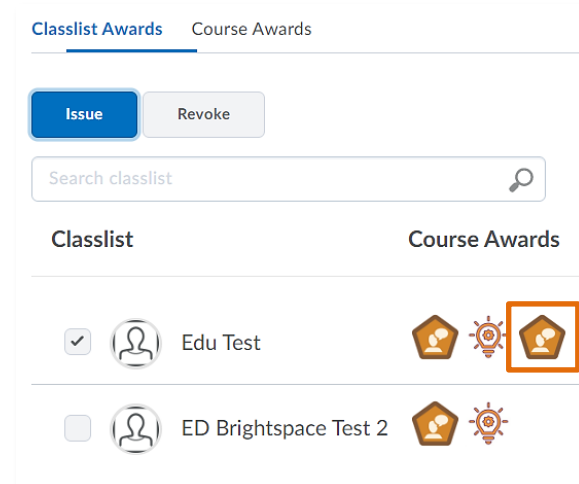

Figure 19: Issue Award Pop-up window

You will now see that the Award has been added to the student's Award record. (Figure 20)

Figure 20: Newly added award in the student's award record

What students will see

No matter how Awards are issued to students, whether automatically via release conditions or manually, students will get an email notification and will be able to see the following in Brightspace.

If students are logged into Brightspace, they will get a notification at the bottom of the screen. (Figure 21) They can either close this dialogue or click on the grey View Awards button which will take them straight into the Awards tool.

Figure 21: Pop-up award notification
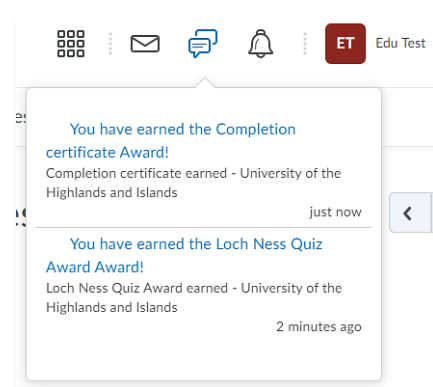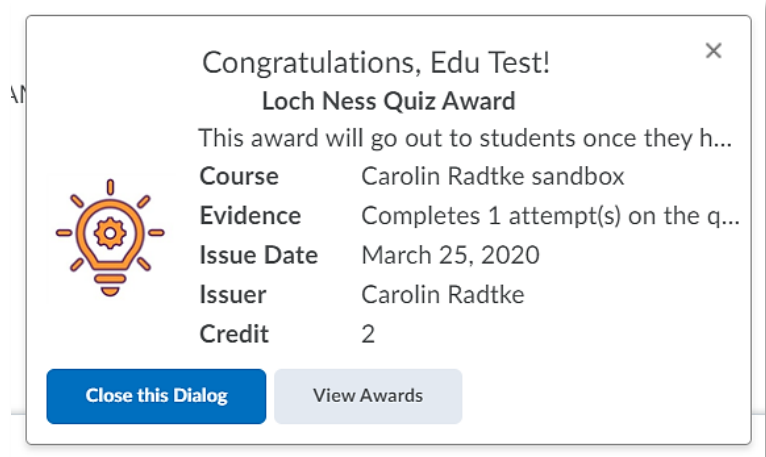
Students will also see their newly issued Awards in the notification area in the Brightspace Minibar. (Figure 22)

Figure 22: Award notification in the minibar

In addition, students can access the awards tool via the Course Tools drop-down menu and can see all of their Awards listed there. (Figure 23)
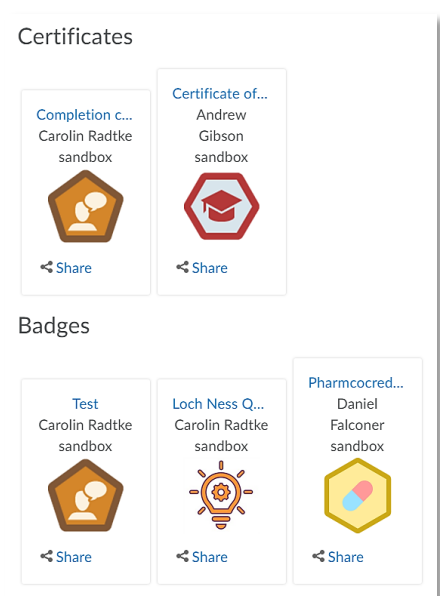

Figure 23: Issued awards in the Awards tool

Tips, Tricks and Use cases

Where to get icons for the Award image from

As mentioned in [Creating a new badge or certificate](#), you can upload your own icons which will display with the badge or certificate you created.
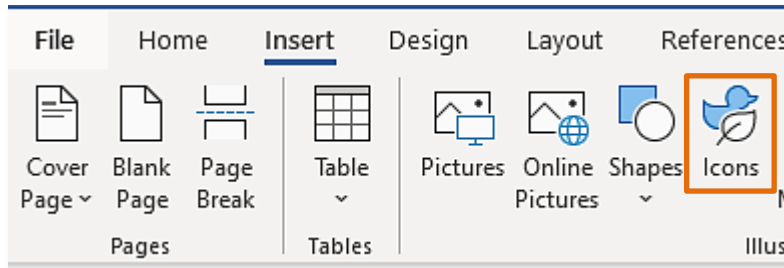
Figure 24: Insert tab in Microsoft Word

You can use Microsoft Word and the Snipping Tool on your computer to create new icons quickly and easily. To start, simply open a new Word document and locate Icons in the Insert tab. (Figure 24)

A pop-up window will open. Browse for an icon to use, select it and click on Insert in the bottom right-hand side corner of the pop-up. (Figure 25)

Figure 25: Icon pop-up window

Once you have your icon, you can edit the graphic fill and outline to make it more colourful. (Figure 26)
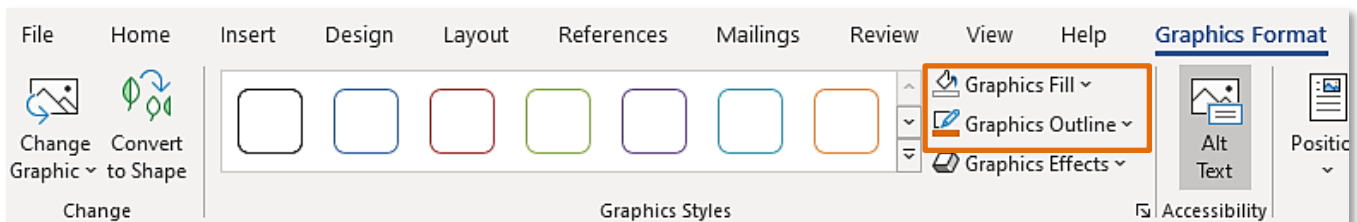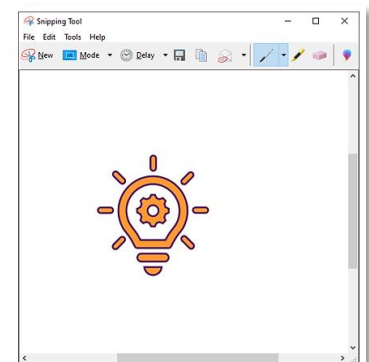
Figure 26: Graphics Format editor

When you are happy with your graphic, open the Snipping tool on your computer (Snipping tool or Snip & Sketch) and take a snip of your image (Figure 27) and save it.

Figure 27: Snip of the icon in the Snipping Tool

Alternatively, think about using icons from Pixabay vectors which are copy-right free icons you can download and use as an Award image.

Tip and use cases from an experienced Award user at Argyll College

Key tip from the Argyll college user

The key is not to do too much, and to keep an element of surprise. If badges are only awarded for outcome completion, for example, there is limited motivation. However, knowing a badge can pop up out of the blue is where real gamification and motivation kicks in.

Use cases from Argyll College

I use…

- … Awards to engage new learners (a badge for putting their profile picture up, uploading their first assessment/discussion, etc.)

- … Awards to congratulate learner on the successful completing of Learning Outcomes and then the unit (or module).

- … badges for signing in regularly and a badge for NOT signing in!

- … badges for accessing the Library and having investigated all areas of the course, etc.

I also did special badges for signing in on specific days, i.e. Halloween, last day before Christmas, Chinese New Year, etc. Not all the same on all my courses as you don't want to replicate or deluge them.

I also manually issue badges if someone has done something notable, i.e. great references, improvement in writing/layout, persevered through tough times etc.