12th International Week

Unlocking Digital Micro and Macro Credentials

An introduction to the importance of embracing both micro and macro digital credentials to future-proof academic and recognition.

Kim Steenkjær Mortensen

Co-founder of Diplomasafe

- Diplomasafe work to help universities unlock and navigate the complex landscape of credentialing standards and future-proof their recognition systems.
- Background in digital identity, national eID systems, cryptography, and privacy infrastructure
- Our mission is to cut through the complexity and provide universities with the tools and expertise to embrace both micro and macro credentials, aligning with global digital credential verification methods and authentication empowering thier students lifelong career and learner journey.

Building the EU Credential Infrastructure

EBSI-VECTOR

Implementing European Blockchain Services Infrastructure (EBSI) at 9 Danish universities

MCEU Hospitality

Pioneering EU micro-credentials in hospitality education via Erasmus+ pilot

EBSI Network Expansion

Expanding validator nodes to strengthen decentralised EBSI ecosystem

Autocredify

Reskilllng & upskilling automotive workers with micro-credentials

Let’s unlock this together!

Institutional Pains!

Why old fashioned paper and pdf credentials are so…….. 1999

Manual verification is hard

Fake diplomas thrive, paper and PDFs pose risks

100,000+ fake diplomas sold every year

Typical price of $1,000 for fake credentials

Real parchment, seals & watermarks used - indistinguishable from real ones

No ID or academic proof required - just ^pay and receive

$5M worth of fake degrees sold by one busted operation

Printing issues

Handwritten signing of diplomas

Slow & Cost Inefficient


Missed branding opportunity - Paper diplomas rarely go viral - digital ones do!
Emily Fung, CPA, CGA (She/Her) · 3rd+
Portfolio Finance Manager, VP External Relations at The University of ...
7mo · Edited ·
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6mo · Edited ·
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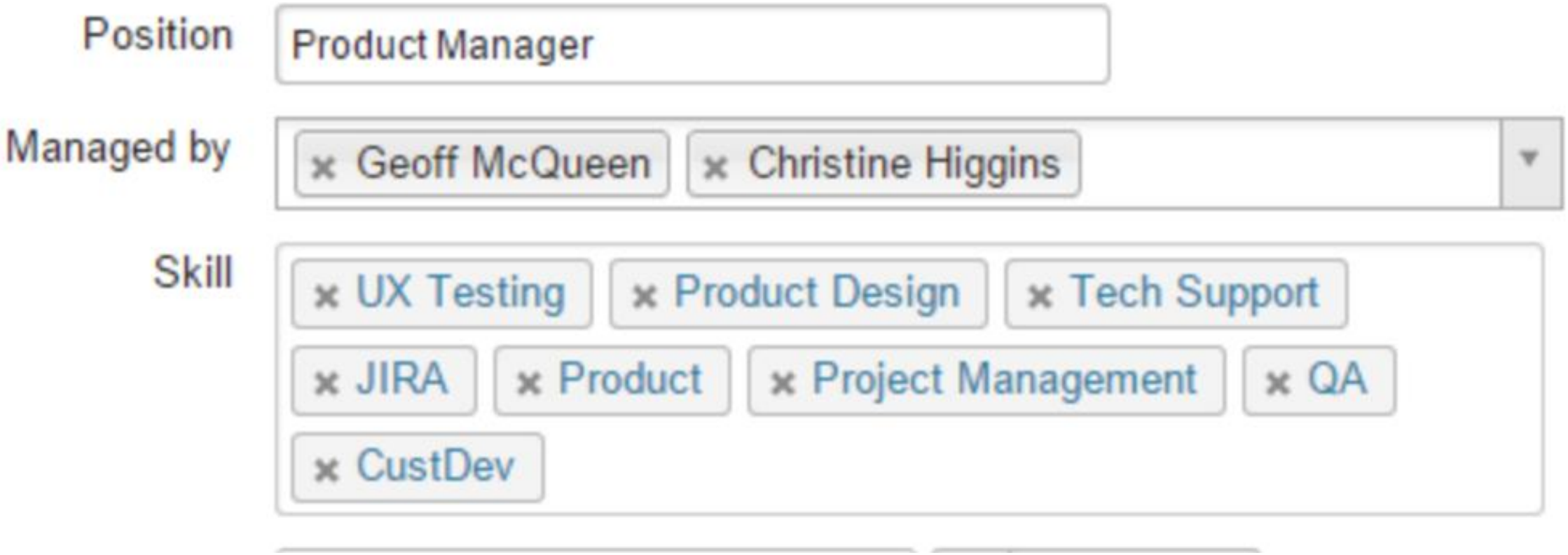
Stackability & Learning Pathways:

Not possible

Skills Tagging: Not possible



No support for Skills based hiring

Skills-Based Hiring	Traditional/ Degree-Based Hiring
Prioritizes specific skills and competencies	Emphasizes formal educational qualifications and degrees
Talent pool is broader, includes non-traditional candidates	Limited to candidates with specific academic credentials
High job fit, as candidates are evaluated based on job-relevant skills	Job fit may vary, as academic qualifications don't always reflect job skills
Promotes DEI by removing educational barriers	May unintentionally exclude diverse candidates
Prioritizes learning and adaptability, suitable for dynamic roles	Focuses on established knowledge, may lack emphasis on adaptability

SIEMENS energy

Walmart

OPENCLASSROOMS

J.P.Morgan

So let’s face it, there are to many Limitations of Analog Credentials

- **Costly to produce**
  Printing, paper, and frames add significant costs
- **Expensive to distribute**
  Packaging, postage, and handling drive up distribution costs
- **Resource-intensive**
  Manual labor, office space, and printers require substantial resources
- **Require physical storage**
  Filing systems, archive rooms, and off-site storage needed to manage physical documents
- **Reissuance costs**
  Staff time and material costs to replace lost or damaged credentials
- **Slow to issue**
  Can take weeks post-graduation to receive physical credentials
- **Time-consuming to verify**
  Manual lookup and response to requests for verification
- **No automation**
  Requires full manual workflows, no digital automation
- **Delays impact opportunities**
  Delays in receiving credentials can hinder students' job or study opportunities
- **Vulnerable to fraud**
  Physical documents are susceptible to forgery and fraud
- **Not mobile-friendly**
  Physical credentials are difficult to access and share on digital platforms
- **Lack of interoperability**
  Not compatible with skills-based hiring systems or cross-border recognition
- **Misalignment with initiatives**
  Not aligned with the EU Skills Agenda, EBSI, Europass, or Digital Identity Wallet

The Maze og Standards - what to do?

W3C
for credential data structure

Europass
for EU alignment

EBSI
EU Blockchain for a trusted EU infrastructure

eIDAS
for legal digital signatures

EUDI Wallet
the learner's portable, official store

Blockcerts
Verifiable Blockchain-based Digital Credentials

Micro and Macro Credentials: Two Sides of the Same Strategy

Macro-credentials

Still essential, but must be digital and verifiable

Micro-credentials

Agile, stackable, skill-based, mobile, sharable and digital verifiable

Living on the Same Infrastructure

Both macro and micro credentials should live on the same infrastructure

Why You Should Care?

Your 'customers' have expectations!

Visibility

Want credentials that show skills and achievements to potential employers

Increased Job Prospects

80% of learners believe digital credentials increase their chances of finding a job

Low effort, high impact

95% are motivated to receive digital credentials; **80%** find them easy to use

Career Advantages

96% of learners say digital credentials are valuable for their career development

Structured learning

96% expect clear pathways to develop skills - yet most institutions fall short

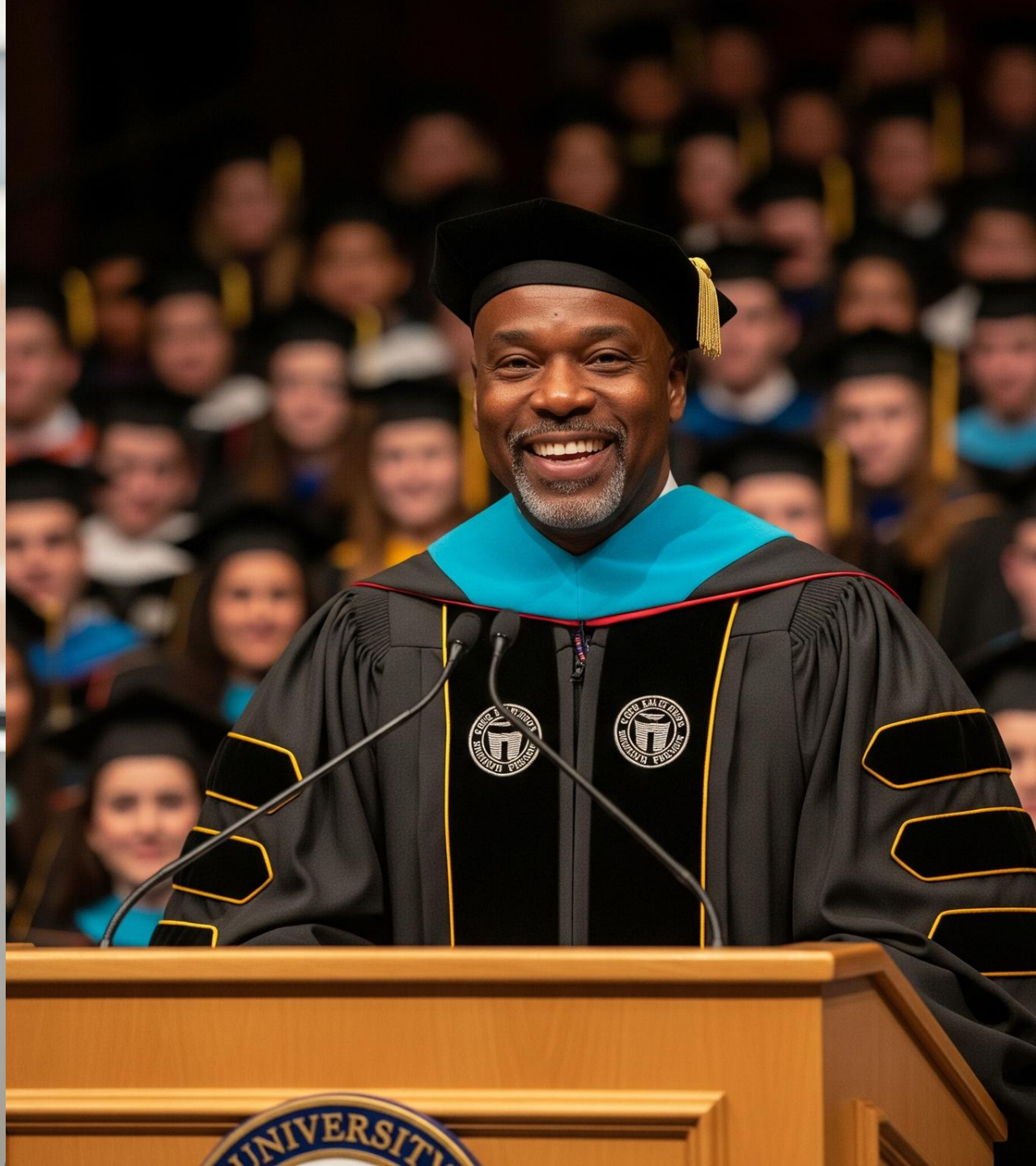
Empowerment

84% of learners want their digital credentials to be shareable and accessible via directories, LinkedIn etc.

The Impact of Adopting Digital Credentials in Higher Education


UNIVERSITY


VERSITY




A Happy Eco-System

University

Students

Employers

Financial and Strategic Impact for Universities

Automated issuing, reissuing, and verification

90% reduction in admin time, freeing up staff and lowering operational costs

Elimination of physical printing, postage, and packaging

€25 - €100 saved per credential, leading to significant savings for institutions issuing thousands of credentials annually

Instant online verification

Streamlining the verification process, **saving staff up to 30 minutes per request and reducing annual costs by up to €50,000** for universities handling thousands of inquiries, with response times slashed from days to seconds.

No long-term physical storage

Eliminate physical credential storage and time to retrieve documents manually **saving Universities up to €15,000 per year**

Improved student experience and brand value

+20 - 50 point Net Promoter Score (NPS) improvement among graduates, 25% of graduates sharing their credentials online, generating ~500 views each - **equivalent to 125,000 brand impressions** per 1,000 students

Faster credential delivery

Digital credentialing enables **instant credential delivery**, in as little as seconds after graduation, compared to the many days and often months it requires for traditional paper-based processes

WHAT DO WE DO?

“Digital transformation doesn't have to be complicated.”

KIM STEENKJÆR MORTENSEN

Where should You Start?

- **Start small**

  Start small by focusing on a specific program type, such as a micro-credentials, short courses, executive training, to build experience and gather feedback.

- **Align academic, legal, and IT**

  Ensure key stakeholders across your institution, including academic, legal, and IT teams, are aligned on the goals and process for implementing digital credentials.

- **One platform policy**

  Invest in one platform only for all your credential types and ensure your digital credentials align with the relevant standards and will be future compatible with the evolving credential standards, reducing the noise and ensuring a seamless student experience.

- **Ensure Compatibility**

  Issue truly digital (data), at that will keep you future proof and enable adoption of any digital credential standard in the future. And if in the EU, make sure to choose a setup that is or will be EUDI Wallet compatible, as this will be the learner's official digital briefcase and the key to maintaining relevance across Europe & Globally.

- **An ISO certified partner is a must**

  Work with **ISO 27001 certified** platforms only! Without this certification, institutions risk data breaches, loss of student trust, non-compliance with privacy regulations, and reputational damage. Consequences that can be far more costly than investing in a secure, certified provider from the start.

KISS

Keep It Simple, Smart.

Because simplicity, done right, scales; And that's exactly what digital credentialing needs right now!

Kim Steenkjær Mortensen

Co-Founder at Diplomasafe - I help universities digitise for the future of credent...

Digital Micro and Macro Credentials unlocked

The presentation emphasises the importance of universities embracing digital micro and macro credentials to future-proof their credentialing strategies. By aligning with EU-wide developments like the EUDI Wallet, universities can reduce administrative workloads, improve fraud resistance, and increase learner satisfaction and international visibility.