

Digital credentials brought recognition to the students' efforts

Why did you choose City & Guilds Group?

Allen & Overy launched the Smart Start Experience in 2009 with the aim of giving young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds access to high quality work experience in the world of business.

We were looking for a way to recognise the students' efforts and differentiate our programme from other businesses'. We turned to City & Guilds because we knew they had a long history of skills development and vocational education.

What impact has the digital credentials had on your business?

We believe business has an important role to play in helping young people reach their full potential by overcoming barriers created by society and personal circumstances.

Around the world our offices partner with schools, colleges, community groups and universities to open up opportunities for young people and to broaden their horizons. We also develop our own programmes, such as the Smart Start Experience, to show young people new opportunities and build confidence and skills.

The Smart Start Experience is the only work experience scheme in the UK legal sector to have its programme assured by City & Guilds. It's an important quality mark for the programme, enabling students to share their achievements with potential employers in a clear way. The introduction of digital credentials makes it even easier for students to showcase their skills on popular social and professional media platforms.

What do you think the future is for your learners?

Studies have shown that the pandemic is disproportionately affecting the education of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds over their wealthier peers. It's more important than ever to support students through this period, and we've adapted many of our programmes to provide extra support at this time.

We know that the Smart Start Experience gives students skills that are sought after by employers. We hope that by having these skills independently assured by City & Guilds, students will be able to make the best start to their careers possible.

What would you say to someone thinking about adopting digital credentials?

The credentials add weight and external verification to the programme, helping students to quickly prove the skills they have gained. It's a valuable addition to the work we do.



"Students can demonstrate that they have participated in a range of workshops and team challenges, building confidence as well as developing the eight essential skills: listening, presenting, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, leadership and teamwork."

Sue Wisbey
Allen & Overy