

Honoris United Universities launches 21st Century Skills Certificate to skill up graduates for the future world of work

Blending the most in-demand soft and digital skills, the 21st Century Skills Certificate will be issued through blockchain technology

Casablanca / Durban / Tunis / Abuja, September 23, 2020 – Honoris United Universities, the first and largest pan-African network of private higher education institutions, today announced the launch of the *Honoris 21st Century Skills Certificate* to further enhance the employability of its students by equipping them with the most in-demand soft and digital skills required to thrive and be competitive in the 21st century world of work.

Based on global researches and engagement with employers across the continent, the *Honoris 21st Century Skills Certificate* has been developed by the Honoris Academic Council, a pan-African team of faculty representatives with exemplary backgrounds and academic experience. Chosen for their unmatched expertise in their fields, including online learning and digital technology, the Council's work is an important investment in the development of world-class human talent: agile, collaborative professionals with an entrepreneurial mindset able to transform and impact Africa.

The *Honoris 21st Century Skills Certificate* delivers skills training in areas highlighted by industry analysts and by the demands of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), ensuring that graduates enter the world of work empowered with high cognitive skills and digital literacy competencies that are necessary to navigate our changing world.

The online program will train students in the eight most in-demand skills by employers and for the future of work: behavioral intelligence, creativity and design thinking, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, coding, data analytics and entrepreneurship. These skills, which serve as a driving force for the 4IR, ensure that Honoris graduates keep up with the dynamics of the labor market. Of note, whilst English is the de facto language of business, coding is the new second language for the 21st century, an area which all students, irrespective of their area of study, will need to understand. This understanding of coding, which is included in the certificate, will contribute to developing a computational thinking approach to problems, allowing for new responses to changes in the digital economy.

The 100-hour program is being deployed to all students across the network. It constitutes a four-module design including personal, social, digital, and entrepreneurship skills which will be embedded in Honoris member institutions' curricula.

This certificate, powered by the Honoris Online Academy, demonstrates the network's ongoing commitment to providing student-centric learning environments, designed by combining academic knowledge with entrepreneurial and workplace skills and credentials, to ensure graduates are equipped with the digital know-how and hybrid skills to meet the needs of the changing job market.

Commenting, **Chief Strategy Officer of Honoris United Universities, Laura Kakon**, said, *“The world of work has entered an era where nothing is guaranteed. Employers are adopting new ideas and technologies at a rapid pace and as a result, students need to keep up with the latest innovations and technologies in order to remain competitive and in high demand. At Honoris United Universities, we believe in future-oriented learning to prepare our students to harness technology and innovation, in order to thrive and compete in automated, data and AI-driven realities. We also believe in empowering our students with an academic and skills experience that leads to cognitive agility and a mobile mindset, two attitudes and behaviors of success. The Honoris 21st Century Skills Certificate will help bridge the skills gap in Africa by preparing our graduates for the future world of work.”*

A “Best of Breed” Unique Program

The Honoris Academic Council designed this unique online certificate program in partnership with two leading digital learning providers, CrossKnowledge – the world’s e-learning pioneer and Le Wagon – world #1 coding bootcamp*, whose mutual areas of expertise in soft and digital skills are highly complementary.

The Honoris Online Academy

The announcement of the new *Honoris 21st Century Skills Certificate* also coincides with the launch of the **Honoris Online Academy** - a best-in-class online platform dedicated to skilling and upskilling programs focused on soft and digital skills that matter for the future of jobs. Adopting the latest cognitive research to maximise skills acquisition, the guided experience offers path journeys with multi-activities and in varied formats to ensure engagement during the online journey.

The Blockchain Diploma

Beginning with the 2021 academic cycles, Honoris graduate diplomas including the *Honoris 21st Century Skills Certificate* will be issued through blockchain technology by virtue of a partnership with BCdiploma. This will provide each graduate with a unique URL that makes it possible to share their verifiable and tamper-proof diplomas digitally. The blockchain technology ensures that students have a life-long shareable access to their verified certificates for employers and professional networks. For the certificate, Honoris will issue one blockchain certification badge per module and a certificate upon full completion. The issuance of digital diplomas provides employers with the guarantee that any certification presented by graduates is 100% authentic.

These digital and skilling initiatives reflect Honoris’ commitment to embracing the digital transformation across the student journey and its strategy to reshape and rethink education to continually improve learning outcomes across the continent.

About Honoris United Universities

Honoris United Universities is the first and largest pan-African private higher education network committed to educating the next generation of African leaders and professionals able to impact regionally in a globalized world. Collaborative intelligence, cultural agility and mobile mind-sets and skills are at the heart of Honoris' vision of higher education. Honoris United Universities joins the expertise of its member institutions to develop world-class African Human capital that is competitive in today's fast-paced, demanding and increasingly digitized labour and start-up markets.

Honoris United Universities gathers a community of **45,000** students on **60** campuses, learning centres and via on-line, in **10** countries and **32** cities. The network counts **11** institutions: multidisciplinary universities, specialized schools, technical and vocational institutes, contact, distance, and online institutions. Students have an opportunity to experience exclusive partnerships and exchange programs in more than **60** universities across Europe and the United States. Over **280** degrees are offered in Medicine, Health Sciences, Engineering, IT, Business, Law, Architecture, Creative Arts and Design, Media, Political Science and Education. www.honoris.net

About Le Wagon

Le Wagon is a coding school that offers short and intensive coding bootcamps. Le Wagon's mission is to enable the greatest number of people to learn technical skills in order to update their skills, change careers, or launch their project. The school offers a web development course, recognized as the best coding bootcamp in the world, as well as a data science course. Launched in 2013, Le Wagon now boasts an international presence in 39 cities around the world, an alumni community of 8,200+ people from all walks of life, a proven teaching method, and a corporate offer for companies to train their employees. www.lewagon.com

** #1 Coding Bootcamp on Switchup (ranked as Best Bootcamp by Switchup for the 3 last years) and #1 Coding Bootcamp on CourseReport.*

About CrossKnowledge

CrossKnowledge provides digital learning solutions that enable the success of individuals, teams and organisations through skills acquisition. It delivers an integrated and personalized learning experience with a digital content library created with world-renowned experts to bridge the gap between academic programs and skills required in the professional world and to develop future young professionals with the right set of skills required by business players. The learning platform is built with human and artificial intelligence, and unmatched accountability with a dedicated Client Success Team. CrossKnowledge helps L&D, managers and learners acquire the skills they need to succeed. Part of Wiley, one of the world's largest research and education providers, CrossKnowledge has 20 years of experience in digital learning, serving over 12 million learners in 130 countries. www.crossknowledge.com

About BCdiploma

Deployed in more than 90 institutions in a dozen countries, BCdiploma offers a turnkey service to create and share blockchain certificates for all academic documents: diplomas, transcripts, acquired skills and more. BCdiploma is the first organization to offer [100% blockchain certified Open Badges](#) for micro-certifications. BCdiploma helps companies become leaders in student experience and save valuable time by dematerializing processes. www.bcdiploma.com

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