JSON-LD

JSON-LD (JSON Linked Data) is JSON with a `@context`: a list of contexts, named by URL, that define what each field and type means. Verifiable Credentials can be written in JSON-LD.

Why it matters for credentials

Credentials come in two formats:

	JSON-LD (`ldp_vc`)	**JWT (`jwt_vc`)**
Signature covers	The credential after JSON-LD processing	The JWT itself
Every field must be defined in a context	Yes	No
Issuer and verifier need the contexts	Yes, the same ones	No

For a JSON-LD credential, the signature is made over a normalized form of the credential. To make that form, the node expands every field using the contexts. A field or type that no context defines makes issuing or verifying fail.

Example: a HealthcareProviderRoleTypeCredential has the field `roleCodeNL`, which no JSON-LD context defines. Issuing it as `ldp_vc` fails; issuing it as `jwt_vc` works.

For new use cases, JWT credentials are simpler: no contexts to publish, agree on and configure.

Contexts in the Nuts node

A context URL is an identifier: a credential names it in `@context`, but it doesn't have to resolve. The Nuts node maps each URL to a copy it includes, so it never fetches these:

Context URL	**Defines**
`https://www.w3.org/2018/credentials/v1`	W3C Verifiable Credentials
`https://w3c-ccg.github.io/lds-jws2020/contexts/lds-jws2020-v1.json`	JsonWebSignature2020 proofs
`https://w3id.org/vc/status-list/2021/v1`	StatusList2021 revocation
`https://schema.org`	schema.org terms
`https://nuts.nl/credentials/v1`	NutsOrganizationCredential, NutsEmployeeCredential, NutsAuthorizationCredential, DiscoveryRegistrationCredential, NutsSelfSignedPresentation, CredentialRevocation

Context URL	Defines
`https://nuts.nl/credentials/2024`	NutsUraCredential

A use case with its own JSON-LD credential types publishes its own context. Every node in the use case must then be configured with it: either map the context URL to a local file, or allow the node to fetch it from that URL. See Custom credential configuration in the Nuts node documentation.

Revision #1
Created 2026-11-05 07:56:51 UTC by Rein Krul
Updated 2026-11-05 07:57:02 UTC by Rein Krul