Educational Achievements Standards Development Proposal

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Goal

As learners progress through the continuum of health professions education, they attain a number of achievements, including successfully passing required exams (including licensure and certification),attaining important competencies, successful completion of training milestones, and successful completion of training phases (e.g. graduation from medical school and completion of residency). The achievements are important, particularly for the learner and the residency program directors reviewing or evaluating learner progress, among others. An Educational Achievement standard would document learner competency and make that data portable. Those considering the learner at transition points on the continuum have an interest in seeing learner achievements in a standardized, easy to comprehend format. In addition, such information would be helpful to learners reviewing their professional development. Currently no standardized format exists, making educational achievement information difficult to access and quickly comprehend.

Technology standards are necessary to enable common ways of expressing and transporting this data between systems. The creation of one or more specifications relevant to educational achievement will increase the ability of organizations to understand and compare individual learners as well as assess trends within or across organizations involved in education across the various phases of the continuum.

Context

MedBiquitous develops information technology standards for healthcare education and competence assessment. Through Working Groups and a Standards Committee, MedBiquitous members are creating a technology blueprint for healthcare education and competence assessment. Based on XML and Web services standards, this blueprint will weave together the many activities, organizations, and resources that support the ongoing education, performance, and assessment of healthcare professionals.

In October 2007, the Association of American Medical Colleges, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, Federation of State Medical Boards, and National Board of Medical Examiners held an invitational conference on "EFolio: A Secure Personal Data Manager Serving Physicians."

The conference outlined a vision for an eFolio framework and delineated steps towards achieving that framework, including the development of technical standards.

Work on standards essential to compiling an eFolio has already begun. In 2009 MedBiquitous convened the Educational Trajectory Working Group, which developed a profile of the LEAP2A specification that allows a learner to present an educational trajectory. Educational Trajectory is the path through one or more programs of study and includes a sequence of formal curricular activities and events, informal professional development activities and events, and breaks in matriculation. In addition, the Efolio Interoperability Initiative (EII) continues to identify areas for further standardization and pilot test interoperability specifications.

In addition, the MedBiquitous Competencies Working group has developed a conceptual whitepaper that outlines how evidence of competency must be linked to individual learners. An Educational Achievement specification would be closely related to the existing Educational Trajectory and Competencies work and would contribute to the growing body of work enabling interoperability of eFolio data.

Standards Environment

The existing e-portfolio specifications focus on two paradigms that document experience and achievement: the paradigm of the e-portfolio as a collection of artifacts such as files, personal reflections, and feedback; and the paradigm of the e-portfolio as a curriculum vitae. The IMS Global Learning Consortium has developed an e-Portfolio specification that addresses the encoding and packaging of the following types of e-Portfolio data:

- Products created by a learner, including documents, graphics, video, and audio files
- Assertions related to the learner's work or competence made by others
- Personal reflections
- Portfolio evaluation rubrics

Europass CV and HR-XML both provide portfolio capability based on the curriculum vitae paradigm. The Europass CV encapsulates name, personal details, contact information, languages spoken, and skills. The HR-XML resume specification provides a common format for the following data:

- Distribution Guidelines
- Executive Summary
- Objective
- Employment History
- Educational History
- Licenses and Certifications
- Military History
- Patent History
- Publication History
- Speaking Events History

- Qualifications (Competencies 1.1)
- Languages
- Achievements
- Associations
- References
- Security Credentials
- Resume Additional Items

The Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council has specifications for Electronic Test Score Reporting as well as for Transcripts.

The 2009-03/Leap2A specification is a specification for e-portfolios supported by CETIS, funded by JISC, and developed by Simon Grant and colleagues. LEAP2A eportfolios may contain:

- digital artifacts, including documents, audio, video, etc, made or jointly made by the portfolio holder
- brief expressions or text entries by the portfolio holder , including learner reflections
- information about the portfolio holder, their abilities, achievements, experiences, activities, goals, plans etc.

It may be useful depending on the specific requirements for charting health professions learners.

In short, none of the existing specifications address all the requirements specific to conveying the educational achievements of ahealth professions learner. These standards, together with other standards in development by MedBiquitous, such as the Professional Profile, could support some aspects of an eFolio for the health professions.

Scope

An important point for the group to consider going forward is whether the data encoded in Educational Achievements is primary source verified or non-verified, self-reported data.

We propose developing requirements and XML data specifications for educational achievements data exchange. The initial focus of the working group will be on undergraduate and graduate medical education, but will be extensible to the practicing physician. North American and International paradigms for medical education should inform the structure of the specification.

Whenever possible, the group will leverage useful specifications developed by other organizations. The MedBiquitous Technical Steering Committee will offer guidance and technical support when needed.

The specifications and services created by this working group may serve as foundation pieces for other specifications designed by MedBiquitous and will be architected to allow for other parts of the MedBiquitous blueprint for healthcare education and competence assessment.

The working group may develop guidelines to provide guidance to healthcare educators wishing to implement the standards. It is expected that the working group will further refine this scope outlined in this charter to best meet their goals.

Work Plan and Accelerated Development

We propose bi-weekly teleconference to accelerate this important work. Face-to-face meetings may be convened upon occasion. Working Group members or staff will perform much of the group's work independently with member comments submitted to a discussion list and documents shared via wiki.

The initial specification will be produced as part of an accelerated standards development project funded by the National Board of Medical Examiners. A draft specification for implementation will be delivered on or about October 15, 2010 and interoperability tests will be conducted in October 2010. It is expected that development on the specification will continue past October 2010 as part of the iterative MedBiquitous Standards Development process.

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