

eXchanging Course-Related Information (XCRI)

Who gives you XCRI? ... Who? Who? Who?

Dr Mark Stubbs of Manchester Metropolitan University is coordinating the efforts of a team of interested parties from: UCAS, CETIS, Reid Kerr, Thames Valley, University of Oslo, University of Manchester, Liverpool John Moore's, Oxford, NIIMLE, Fife, Leeds, Brockenhurst, Staffordshire and London Metropolitan.

What in e-F is XCRI trying to do?

Initially, XCRI hopes to define a (Domain Specific, e-Admin) Curriculum Service that can support typical FEC and HEI course marketing, quality assurance, enrolment and reporting requirements. Through liaison with FECs, HEIs and related projects, such as pathways (eg Pathways4Progression) and validation (eg COVARM), XCRI hopes to contribute to the development of Reference Models that can utilise its Curriculum Service.

What has XCRI achieved so far?

The XCRI partners have reviewed the suitability for UK need of the national curriculum metadata standard developed in Norway (CDM) and identified development priorities for an XML that would be a closer fit. Work is now underway on a draft XML schema that responds to those priorities.

Three archetypal solutions have been identified for handling curriculum information within institutions: a relational database populated through online forms; a relational database populated with data extracted from word processed course documentation; and the use of Microsoft InfoPath to enter and validate XML curriculum content directly. Case studies of each and useful tools have been collated.

What is XCRI working on at the moment?

XCRI's research assistant, Julie Hardman, is currently reviewing all online prospectus entries to confirm that the emerging XML schema can express all the curriculum content necessary to support course marketing requirements. This review will be followed up with telephone interviews of sites that represent a spectrum of integration from underlying systems.

Work continues on an XML schema to support a Curriculum Service with expert input from partners, CETIS and UKOLN, close liaison with the Pathways4Progression Regional Pilot project and regular visits to institutions that are grappling with the challenges of definitive course information for multiple audiences.

How far does XCRI think it will get before the money runs out?

XCRI still intends to deliver a v1.0 Curriculum XML schema that meets identified quality assurance and course marketing needs (particularly UCAS Entry Profiles), and a prototype Curriculum web service that can further understanding of related Reference Models.

How do I find out more about XCRI?

The project is using its presence within the ELF website as its primary communication tool. At <http://www.elframework.org/projects/xcri> you will find outputs from the project and the project manager's frequently-updated 'blog' detailing progress, direction and decisions. You can also contact the project manager directly by emailing m.stubbs@mmu.ac.uk