Quality Assurance Actions Pilot Plan

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Introduction

Organizations that develop standards for and recognize quality share a common mission with Credential Engine: to enhance transparency and credibility in education and credentialing, empowering individuals with reliable information for informed decision-making about their education and career paths. Our combined efforts aim to strengthen the accessibility and trustworthiness of the credentialing landscape.

The Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL) provides a linked open data structure for describing accreditation, approval, certification, recognition, regulation, and other quality assurance actions, as well as describing the entities that are evaluated for quality. “Quality assurance” encompasses different types of recognition concerning processes, standards, and related criteria for assessing the quality of organizations, courses, learning programs, credentials, assessments, and other entities. “Actions” define these types of recognition in quality assurance processes, including “Accredit Action,” “Approve Action,” “Recognize Action,” and “Regulate Action.”

Credential Engine’s QA Actions pilot will demonstrate how CTDL and the Credential Registry can assist organizations in achieving their transparency goals with regard to quality assurance. The pilot serves as a valuable structure for Credential Engine to receive feedback, gain insights from organizations, and implement enhancements based on these valuable lessons.

Example Use Cases Supported

Below are some examples of use cases supported with quality assurance information published as CTDL linked open data.

Enhancing Credibility and Transparency:

- When organizations publish consistent, machine-readable data about their quality assurance actions, it provides stakeholders with a clear understanding of the quality of educational offerings, fostering trust and transparency.

- Credentialing organizations can gain credibility by prominently showcasing the QA issued to their organization, programs, credentials, and/or courses. This serves as tangible evidence of their commitment to quality and enhances their reputation, attracting more learners.

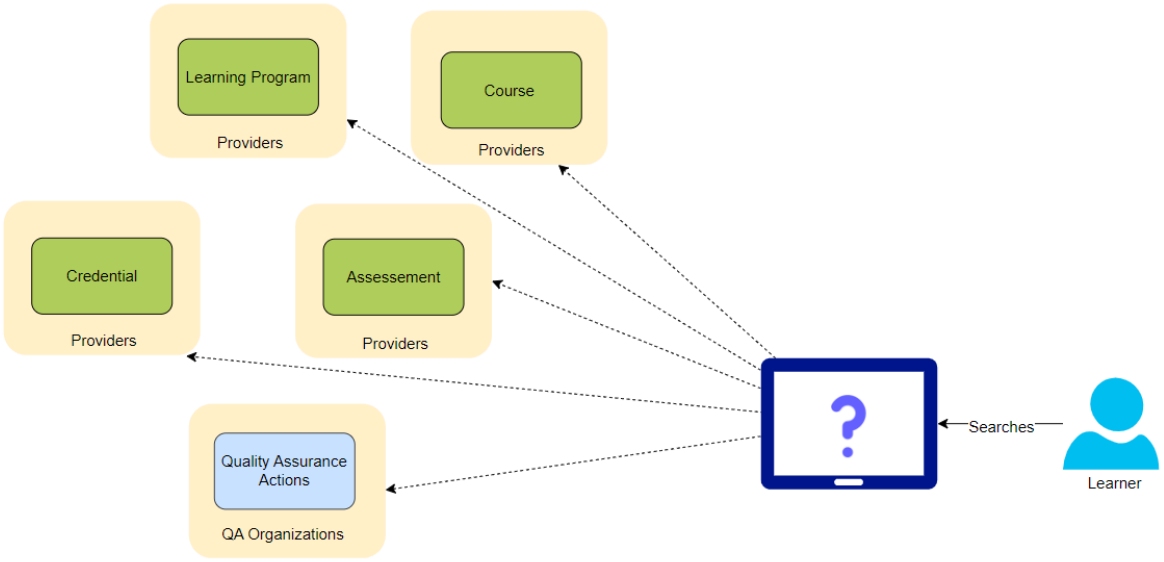
Benefiting Learners:

- Transparent data from organizations empowers learners to make informed decisions about educational opportunities, ensuring they invest in programs that meet their goals and expectations.
- When credentialing organizations publish comprehensive information about their programs, including references to related QA actions, it can simplify the process of transferring credits, which demonstrates a commitment to recognizing prior learning.

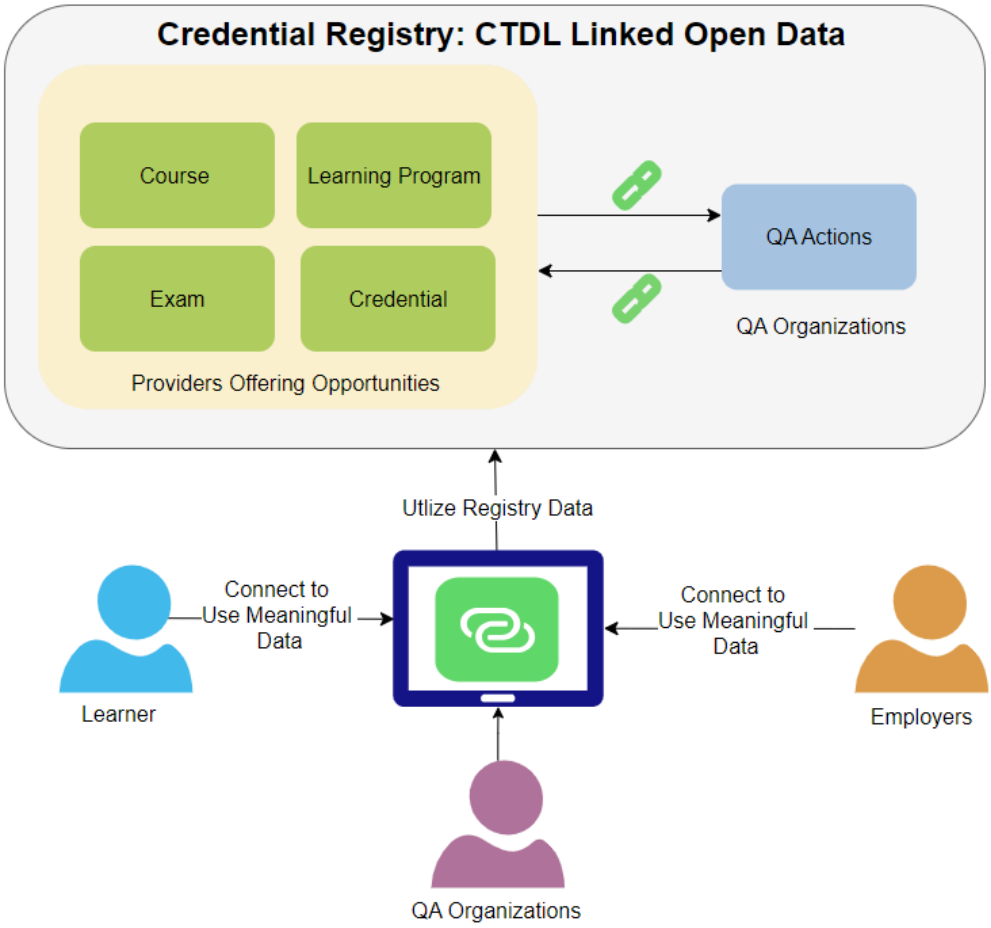
Benefiting Employers:

- When organizations publish transparent, machine-readable data about quality assurance, employers gain access to reliable information about the qualifications of job candidates. This enables them to make more informed hiring decisions based on the credentials a person holds.
- Credentialing organizations that promote QA credentials that they have received demonstrate a commitment to producing highly qualified graduates. Employers can use these quality indicators to reduce hiring risks.

This image depicts the current state for many people who search for information about education and career pathway opportunities. People have to do a lot of searching to find and understand connections between opportunities and the processes, standards and criteria that may or may not be met for meeting quality requirements.



The image below depicts the benefits of CTDL linked open data for connecting meaningful information that is valuable to everyone.



Who Should Participate in the QA Actions Pilot

The QA Actions pilot invites participation from a diverse range of quality assurance organizations, including:

- **Accreditation Organizations:** Entities responsible for accrediting educational institutions and programs.
- **Certification and Recognition Organizations:** Organizations offering certification, approval, recognition, or similar services to education and credentialing entities for organizations, courses, programs, assessments, and/or credentials.
- **Government Agencies:** Regulatory organizations that approve and oversee education and credentialing organizations, programs, and/or credentials.

- **Organizations that review Organizations**: Organizations that assert that organizations are qualified to provide QA processes.

These organizations provide:

- Transparent information on the process, standards, and criteria used to determine if qualifications are met for issuing quality assurance instruments, which can include credentials, certifications, and/ or formal letters.
- Public listings of quality assurance instrument recipients, including the quality criteria met.

Involving different types of quality assurance organizations aims to facilitate collaboration and gather insights from key stakeholders, ensuring the successful implementation of Credential Engine's transparency initiatives in the quality assurance domain. This collective effort will contribute to improving the data infrastructure for the credibility of and trust in different types of QA actions.

Pilot Participant Activities and Time

The Credential Engine pilot support team will:

- **Provide a Safe Space:** Offer a secure environment for experimenting and conducting research on publishing CTDL data through the Credential Registry Publishing System sandbox.
- **Guidance and Instructions:** Furnish comprehensive instructions and guidance on utilizing the CTDL and Credential Registry Publishing System effectively.
- **Meeting Coordination:** Organize all scheduled meetings and provide relevant materials in a timely manner.
- **One-on-One Support:** Be available for one-on-one sessions as required by pilot participants throughout the pilot duration.
- **Account Approval Workflow:** Facilitate discussion and document a workflow for authorizing the publishing of Quality Assurance Actions to the Credential Registry that is appropriate to each quality assurance organization. This can include identification of organizations that authorize a quality qssurance organization to operate.
- **Publishing Assistance:** Collaborate with pilot participants to assist in publishing quality assurance information in our sandbox environment.
- **Feedback Review:** Review and provide constructive feedback on the information published by pilot participants.
- **Feedback Gathering:** Facilitate a format for participants to provide information and feedback, ensuring that the CTDL and Credential Registry Publishing System become indispensable tools for quality assurance organizations.

Pilot participants will spend about ~10 hours total over a 6 week period as follows:

- **1 -3 Team Members:** Identify 1 or 2 team members who have expertise in the organization's QA data and 1 or 2 team members who have expertise in the organization's QA processes and purpose.
- **Meeting Participation:** Engage in 3 scheduled meetings to discuss progress and address any questions or concerns.
- **Data Publication:** Utilize existing publishing tools to submit a sample set of quality assurance information to the Sandbox Registry.
- **Direct Communication:** Establish direct communication with the Credential Engine support team to seek clarification or address issues promptly.
- **One-on-One Support:** Access the Credential Engine support team for personalized one-on-one sessions as needed.
- **Feedback Contribution:** Provide actionable feedback, encompassing suggestions for improving instructions, enhancing functionality, and shaping the messaging highlighting the value of using the CTDL and Credential Registry.

By collaborating closely and adhering to these responsibilities, both the Credential Engine pilot support team and pilot participants aim to ensure the successful execution of the QA Actions pilot, fostering the adoption of the CTDL and Credential Registry as indispensable tools within the quality assurance domain.

Pilot Period and Meeting Schedule

The pilot is scheduled to commence on May 2, 2024, and will span six weeks, allowing participants ample time to publish a sample set of quality assurance data to the Credential Registry Sandbox Publishing System and provide valuable feedback. Meetings will be conducted via Zoom and are scheduled as follows at 10:00 am Eastern Time (ET).

- **Meeting 1:** Pilot Kickoff on 2-May-2024
- **Meeting 2:** Check-In (Show and Tell and Workflow) on 23-May-2024
- **Meeting 3:** Wrap-Up on 13-June-2024

During this pilot period, participants will have the opportunity to engage in collaborative efforts, publish data, and offer feedback, ensuring a comprehensive and productive evaluation of the CTDL and Credential Registry tools for quality assurance organizations.

Credential Engine Pilot Support Team

Outside the scheduled meetings and any one-on-one sessions, Credential Engine will have team members available who can answer questions and provide assistance with the publishing process.

Name	Role
Jeanne Kitchens, CTSO jkitchens@credentialengine.org	Pilot lead. Contact for any questions or issues.
Sneha Edula, Solutions Developer sedula@credentialengine.org	Lead developer of the QA Action Class publishing tool. Primary contact for any technical issues.
Nate Argo, Associate Solutions Architect nargo@credentialengine.org	Co-lead with the CTDL development team.
Ariel Bly, Operations Coordinator ably@credentialengine.org	Scheduling and related logistics
Rachel Vilsack, Chief Operating Officer rvilsack@credentialengine.org	Assist with guidance and instructions for using the Credential Registry Publishing System
Deb Everhart, Chief Strategy Officer deverhart@credentialengine.org	Primary contact for strategy and positioning with broader ecosystems needs.
Partner Success Team publishing@credentialengine.org	Account set up and publishing support.