



Element 15

Learning Vitae

In a world where change is constant, the need for new ways to demonstrate learner potential and capacity is essential. A Learning Vitae (LV) tracks a learner's capabilities beyond measured assessment and presents them with relevance to inspire continued lifelong learning.



Learning Vitae & Learning Achievements

The credentialing of learning is one of education's current greatest challenges. Generic global systems continue to make standardised assessments the gold standard for measuring learning and while this trend continues, education systems across the world do a great disservice to its students. Standardised measurements to assess learning do not adequately represent an individual's capacity.

A digital age provides the means by which a new profile for learning can be designed and emerge to capture learning experiences beyond standardised testing. This new profile would have the potential to better reflect the broader individual skills and passions of that person and could capture skills beyond IQ, such as socio-emotional intelligence, or EQ; key skills gaining precedence in the 21st century.

Learnlife proposes the concept of the Learning Vitae (LV); a blockchain platform owned by the user that can be updated and used throughout one's lifetime. This can best capture the uniqueness of the individual and be controlled by the user so that it can communicate how they want their learning portfolio to be perceived by the viewer.

Using the LV, a learner can build a comprehensive profile of their learning achievements or capacities in real time. It can also provide a digital record of learning that is built up over many years. Being owned by the individual, they can tailor the information to suit future needs and target further learning opportunities for themselves. This is strongly suited to the needs that the 21st century places on individuals and the need to be agile and continually upskill.

In various parts of the world, the one-off degree classification is becoming less and less relevant and being replaced by the rise of the micro-credential. The microcredential is suitably aligned to the need for the development of 21st century skills and captures the breadth of learning required for continued success and thriving. Universities and businesses are becoming increasingly aware of this and responding by advocating newly imagined pathways for admissions. This is likely to continue into the future and can accelerate much needed global educational change worldwide while supporting lifelong learning.

A digital age must have a digital profile to support it.

Then	Now
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The measuring of learning was assessed using rote learning and capture methods. • Individuals upskilled in one particular niche area and tended to complete their career without needing to retrain. • A college degree was a secure pathway for a lifetime of success and employability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A digital age provides new opportunities to measure learning beyond content. • Individuals must be prepared for an agile, VUCA world where they might experience an average of seven different career paths. • Lifelong learning is a crucial requirement if individuals are to survive and thrive in the 21st century;; the college degree is no longer enough.

Starting Questions

1. Is your learning community willing to revise the way your students or children are measured on their learning?

2. If your learning community resides within a government system, how might the Learning Vitae supplement traditional credentialing?
3. How relevant do you think the Learning Vitae is in a system where universities require standardised assessments for admission?
4. How might a Learning Vitae offer a more comprehensive portfolio of the students in your learning community?
5. Why is it important for learning communities to encourage its students to control their own portfolios of learning outputs?

Key Initial Actions

1. Create cluster groups in regional and national communities to influence change and promote the need for a new learning portfolio.
2. Initiate and open up continued dialogue with governments and universities on advantages of a Learning Vitae over current, traditional grading systems.
3. Use businesses and employers to lobby, support and strengthen the cause for using a Learning Vitae to catalyse educational change.
4. Authorise the Learning Vitae to cohabit alongside existing credentials and make incremental changes in learning communities that measure using standardised assessment.

On-going Actions

1. Continually evaluate the process of capturing authentic learning with students.
2. Conduct ongoing research and prototyping on measuring and capturing new skills, competencies and socio-emotional skills.
(*For Students)
3. Begin to build up the Learning Vitae portfolio using digital or analog platforms.
4. Use the Learning Vitae as an opportunity to display the broad range of skills that you possess and use it to capture your passions and purpose.

Further Reading

[A New Model](#)

[Will Alternative Credentials Replace College Degrees?](#)

[Rethinking the High School Credential](#)

[How Better Transcripts Will Improve College Admissions, Employment, and Licensing](#)

[Is time up on standardized tests for college admissions?](#)

[How Better Transcripts Will Improve College Admissions, Employment, and Licensing](#)

[Summer Reading: The rise of the microcredential](#)

[Reimagining higher education: How colleges, universities, businesses, and governments can prepare for a new age of lifelong learning](#)

[School Consortium Proposes a Better Transcript](#)

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[Carla's Curriculum](#)

[Imagine a Transcript](#)

Find out More

Learnlife proposes, and is in the iteration and prototype phase, of building a Learning Vitae(LV) as a new credential and alternative to the traditional transcript format. It will capture unique, learner passion and purpose on a dynamic, user-owned digital platform. A Learning Vitae will demonstrate the unique strengths and areas of improvement for each learner by capturing learner design experiences that supports 21st century pedagogy and self-determined, lifelong learning.

Key Ideas

1. Traditional methods to measure learning through standardised assessment is an outdated and inaccurate representation of learner capacity.
2. The current widespread use of learning credentials undermines opportunities for the teaching of 21st century skills that ought to take precedence.
3. A new learning vitae can capture and demonstrate a broad range of learner capacities including skills and socio-emotional intelligence.
4. A digital age should have a digital credential to support it.

Questions

- What if a transcript for learning could profile an individual by accurately capturing and representing their key skills and socio-emotional intelligence?
- What if this transcript offered further and higher learning institutions and potential employers a more informed description of the uniqueness of any learner better than standardised assessments could?
- What if the passion and purpose of an individual could be captured using this transcript?
- What if this transcript was customisable to suit individual contexts across the span of their lifetime?
- What if a learner could access this transcript digitally, where it could be securely owned on a blockchain format?
- Why would this learner profile be a more appropriate format to demonstrate learning than the current grade-based transcript that is widely recognised and used?

1. Traditional methods to measure learning through standardised assessment is an outdated and inaccurate representation of learner capacity.

The digital world is helping reimagine new possibilities for learning. Our daily lives are absorbed by technology which enhances our ability to navigate the world in a way not previously conceived; not long ago our current technological behaviour was only fathomable in science fiction.

Now that content is a finger-click away, the current process for capturing learning is fast-becoming an artefact that should now be used to demonstrate a history of how previous learning was documented. Global, standardised testing and resulting parchment transcripts might do well to illustrate our capacity for rote memorisation, but learners emerging from compulsory education today using this method are largely unprepared for the real world.

As the world continues to change so fast, compulsory education must keep up or risk being left behind by new learning trends that are gaining strength. The transcript used for schooling and university is losing its appeal from employees who recognise key skills such as individual enterprise and character to succeed in the world of work¹. Lifelong skills are being neglected by a system obsessed with the continued churning out of grades as a demonstration of career-readiness. If the skills gap continues to widen, we could well witness a collapse of global education systems comparable to the current collapse of our global biosphere.

'The public is indoctrinated to believe that skills are valuable and reliable only if they are the result of formal schooling'

Ivan Illich

2. The current widespread use of learning credentials undermines opportunities for the teaching of 21st century skills that ought to take precedence.

Under the current regime of standardised testing and subsequent transcripts that communicate learner capacity, we continue to do a huge disservice to our students. It is time to replace the previous system with a new transcript for learning that better profiles individuals. Abounding issues continue to arise stemming from the goalposts set for learning and how we communicate success. The list of issues below is extensive and highlights the complexities that arise from the resulting grades and credentialing system we continue to provide for today's students:

¹Find the link to support

- There is a disconnect between learning systems that measure success through standardised testing and the skills required in the current global employment market, which is set to widen even further.
- The traditional 'degree-route' appeal is weakening because it no longer guarantees future employment opportunities.
- Curricula in current education systems are both too broad and demanding in their focus to enable learners the opportunity to gain mastery of a subject they are interested in.
- A discipline-based system blocks interdisciplinary learning and the unique opportunities to accredit learning through authentic learning experiences linked to the real world.
- The learning market is saturated with individuals and educational stakeholders selling a false narrative that the degree pathway is the best choice for future success, culminating in subject inflation.
- The increase of students wishing to extend their compulsory education to college or university is fuelling a centralised assessment culture which further embeds traditional content based measurement practices.
- Standardised assessment influences teaching and learning styles and educators are, for the most part, coerced into a 'teach-to-the-test' culture.
- Current learner transcripts list course credits and test scores but they don't help students share their unique accomplishments or capabilities.
- Higher education entrance requirements continue to set limitations on the opportunity to design more appropriate learner experiences that can be authentic and better designed to prepare learners for the real world.
- A new 'earn and learn' societal culture is emerging, requiring individuals to embark on lifelong learning pathways. This means that the old system, where a learning transcript was the golden ticket to success, is no longer enough to guarantee a secure future.
- There is a growing mismatch between what learners must know, and what learners actually want to know; this limits opportunities for individuals to pursue their unique passions and purpose.
- The complex economics of further and higher education, specifically government reliance on support from these institutions to increase GDP, obstructs change.
- Content continues to maintain status quo as the sole catalyst for learning even in situations where further or higher education is not the overarching individual goal.

3. A new learning vitae can capture and demonstrate a broad range of learner capacities including skills and socio-emotional intelligence.

The Learning Vitae at Learnlife proposes to update the current transcript system and offer a more effective capture of learning aligning with 21st century needs. It is essentially a social media platform for learning, user centric and a crucial support tool and compass for future learning and employment. It will present the unique profile of every learner in a highly visual, transparent, multi-dimensional, bespoke, digital format. The Learning Vitae will offer a demonstration of individual key skills, competencies as well as capturing socio-emotional, 'soft-skills' intelligence. Included is a component on areas for improvement. It will enable learners to attach their learning passion and purpose; a more personal transcript for the potential further learning institutions and employers to experience.

'Education is more than a number, more than a ranking and more than a competition.'

Megan O'Connell, Director: Mitchell Institute at Victoria University

The learning vitae can be continually updated to best support lifelong learning, bridging the gap between compulsory education and what comes next. It is an opportunity for individuals to demonstrate the rich, broad experiences and unique skills they offer. Because it is user owned and agile, it can serve as a transcript throughout one's life; always evolving and easily accessed anytime and anywhere, and shared and amended by the owner when necessary. The learning vitae will transcend national frontiers, making every unique learner profile relevant in whatever jurisdiction they wish. It will be available in physical or virtual formats to suit unique contexts. This is a credential that can truly reflect our digital age.

Current Transcript	Learning Vitae
Flat document on a parchment format	Digital, Interactive & parchment format
Subject and content focused	Trans-disciplinary focus on skills and socio-emotional intelligence
Graded	Credits supported by rubric measures and recognised by educational institutions
Credit given for time spent in study	Credit given for skills achieved

The Learning Vitae unquestionably offers a stronger learner profile, but to increase its relevance it must confront and solve the following limiting factors:

1. Defining skills and behaviours

Defining, measuring and assessing skills and behaviours will provide the necessary weight to support an emerging learning design framework to match a new transcript. By achieving this, the bridge between learner and employer will be narrowed, making the transition from compulsory education to further education or employment much smoother.

2. Quality assurance

The credibility of new credentials remains in question until they become authenticated and authorised by a relevant body. In the case of MOOCs - which generally use microcredentials offered on digital platforms - their qualifications lose integrity if they are not supported by quality assurance, therefore limiting their usage and transferability.

3. Government siloisation

Governments and stakeholders either benefiting from traditional education pathways or unsure of how to amend existing flaws, continue to stifle change measures. This remains a multi-faceted problem with college and higher education institutions controlling decisions. If the skills and behaviours question can be answered, it will go a long way to influencing change at the decision-making level.

4. A digital age should have a digital credential to support it.

Digitization will be disruptive and raise a number of issues including privacy, security, consumer protection, competition, new skills, cross-border and international delivery of education and training, and new forms of credentialing to name a few. This however must happen to bring learning forward to match the current global society that students now function in.

The digital age has succeeded in bridging gaps between learning and employment by creating platforms for upskilling. The missing link in this new age for learning is buy-in from schooling systems that have the potential to yield the most influence, yet remain siloed by governments and university institutions. If the status quo remains, ed tech companies could monopolise learning to become a stronger ally for individuals, and offering better opportunities for employability and life-readiness. There is however evidence that traditional learning credentials are being reimaged by pioneering universities. If this results in a snowball effect of change, a new credential could emerge that becomes universally recognised as the

new, more appropriate measure, securing the position of compulsory education in a digital age.

A new learning system is emerging from the ashes of the previous one, but it is precariously placed outside education systems, being imagined, designed and delivered by thought disruptors who advocate change. The integrity and authority of this new emerging system will be greatly increased if governments, further learning institutions and employer-stakeholders support it. However, with or without support, the new Learning Vitae transcript will still better prepare learners for a world where the degree qualification is gradually becoming the less likely choice for employers, who are beginning to voice their preference for a personal portfolio which offers a broader narrative of the course of a learner's path, in contrast to the impersonal, narrow graded system, which still values numbers and letters over passion and purpose.

"School is the advertising agency which makes you believe that you need the society as it is."

Ivan Illich

Act Now

Implementing a new learning transcript is a complex decision, with implications for all those involved - students, parents and learning communities. The first question to pose and answer is:

- *Are you willing to revise the way that your students or children are measured on their learning?*

If the answer is no, then continue with the current status quo of measuring learning through grading systems. Witnessing the benefits the Learning Vitae may prompt future incremental changes.

If the answer is yes, then it is time to initiate a conversation with all stakeholders in your learning community on why the Learning Vitae is the ideal path, and how it will serve to capture and measure more authentic learning. It is a brave step to take, but under the current regime of graded learning systems which continues to weaken under the emerging culture of cheating worldwide, the Learning Vitae will

offer a truer, more relevant profile of learners. Based on emerging research reports from global think tanks, the LV can help alleviate predictions on future trends and current ailments experienced in education.

The following key factors should be considered at various levels of engagement:

For educators

- Use the Learning Vitae as proof of successful learning in action.
- Continually evaluate the process of capturing authentic learning with students.
- Conduct ongoing research and prototyping on measuring and capturing new skills, competencies and socio-emotional skills.

For leaders

- Create cluster groups in regional and national communities to influence change.
- Initiate and open continued dialogue with governments and universities on advantages of the Learning Vitae over current, traditional grading systems.
- Use businesses and employers to lobby, support and strengthen the cause for using the Learning Vitae to catalyse educational change.
- Authorise the Learning Vitae to cohabit alongside existing credentials and make incremental changes.

For students

- Begin to build up your Learning Vitae portfolio using digital or analog platforms.
- Use the Learning Vitae to capture authentic learning experiences.
- Use the Learning Vitae as an opportunity to display the broad range of skills that you possess.
- Use the Learning Vitae to capture and demonstrate your passion and purpose.
- Think of your audience - would you be happy with how you present yourself to potential employers or university administrators?

Once a suitable number of learning communities are using the Learning Vitae and can demonstrate the impact it has on learning, it will be a useful way to demonstrate to other interested parties how it better attaches formal learning to the next stage of a person's life. Furthermore, it is an agile platform, owned by the learner that can be continually updated.

The Learning Vitae is owned exclusively by Learnlife, who can offer training and growth programme opportunities for the learning community on its use. The iteration and prototype phases continue to raise some key challenges and questions under the current regime of global learning systems:

1. Will the Learning Vitae become a profile that only those in privileged circumstances will get to use?
2. Will it be relevant in a world where universities continue to require standardised scores to procure students?
3. Will businesses and employees recognise it as beneficial if it is not embraced by universities?
4. How will the Learning Vitae help learners get to where they want to go if universities do not recognise it?
5. Is the Learning Vitae suitable in different nations with varying learning and employment cultures?

These are all questions that Learnlife are currently working through, with answers and solutions continuing to emerge. But in any new paradigm shift, it requires bravery and fortitude to succeed.

Examples in Action

New credentials for learning are being designed by stakeholders outside the jurisdictions of compulsory education. The main driving force for change is the integrity of new learning pathways that are fast becoming supported by further learning institutions and employers the world over. The examples below include MOOCs, universities and employers who are reimagining credentials in their own way.

[Mastery Transcript Consortium](#)

MTC schools are creating a high school transcript that reflects the unique skills, strengths, and interests of each learner. They are inventing how students prepare for college, career, and life.

[Degreed](#)

Degreed's mission is to 'Jailbreak the Degree.' It provides a better, smarter, faster way to develop and measure a team's skills, so businesses using it can always stay ready for the future.

[Parchment](#)

Parchment is the most widely adopted digital credential service, allowing learners, academic institutions, and employers to request, verify, and share credentials in simple and secure ways. The platform has helped millions of people and thousands of schools and universities exchange more than 30 million transcripts and other credentials globally.

[TechHire](#)

TechHire is a national network of communities, educators and employers who believe if you can do the job, you should get the job.

[The University of Chicago](#)

One of the universities pioneering the 'test optional' movement, which now has over 1000 4-year institutions on board.

[New Zealand Universities](#)

The New Zealand government website admission requirements states, 'Domestic students over 20 don't need formal qualifications to apply for entry.'

[European digital passport e-qualification](#)

A free personal tool for learning and working in Europe, this is a platform that users can access to curate their own CV to present to learning institutions and potential employers.

Further reading

[How the Value of Educational Credentials Is and Isn't Changing](#)

[Digital Credentialing: Implications for the recognition of learning across borders](#)

[Will Alternative Credentials Replace College Degrees?](#)

[What Do Digital Credentials Mean for Education?](#)

[ATARS losing relevance for university admissions but students are still hooked](#)

[Rethinking the High School Credential](#)

[How Better Transcripts Will Improve College Admissions, Employment, and Licensing](#)

[Is time up on standardized tests for college admissions?](#)

[Education assessment in the 21st century: New skillsets for a new millennium](#)

[How Better Transcripts Will Improve College Admissions, Employment, and Licensing](#)

[Summer Reading: The rise of the microcredential](#)

[Reimagining higher education: How colleges, universities, businesses, and govern-](#)

[ments can prepare for a new age of lifelong learning](#)

[21st Century Education: Why We Need To Completely Reimagine Education](#)

[School Consortium Proposes a Better Transcript](#)

[It's Time to Blow Up The Public School System](#)

[Business at OECD \(BIAC\) Position Paper for the *proposed* International Symposium on Employability and the Learner Profile](#)

[A New Model](#)

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[Carla's Curriculum](#)

[Imagine a Transcript](#)