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SOFIA

Service Definition



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Service overview

Sofia is a powerful curriculum tool that maps even the most complex curriculums simply and beautifully. Developed for real-life use by the team at Imperial College School of Medicine it is now in use by nearly 20 institutions worldwide, providing curriculum mapping and management across a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Sofia offers a clear and easy to use graphical user interface for students, educators and administrators, as well as a rich API to support integration with other institutional systems.

For students

Sofia empowers your students. It links curriculum content to learning outcomes - clearly and transparently - so learners can track their progress, access resources and review what they've covered. Smart graphics mean they can explore and understand specialities and domains at a glance. And all this via the simplicity of their existing single sign on.

Browse

Students can:

- Navigate through the entire curriculum hierarchy for past, present and future years
- View details including learning events, resources, tags, lecturers and personal notes and attachments at any level of the curriculum
- See scheduled and personal events for the current day

Calendar

Students can:

- See a week by week calendar view of scheduled activities for the current curriculum year, including placements, practicals, lectures and assessments
- Add personal events to the calendar around their learning commitments

Timeline

The timeline view provides students with a high level scrollable view of taught items for each of their curriculum years, showing each item's name, start week and duration. It also allows them to select an item and navigate to the same item within the Browse view to see additional details

Explore

The explore view provides a highly visual, explorable branch map of the curriculum, laid out by year and topic. Students are able to apply multiple filters across all of the metadata held within the

system that applies highlights to the various pathways through the curriculum, allowing them to see their learning in context and build their own study guides.

Revise

The revise view displays learning outcomes grouped by their parent curriculum item. This allows students to record and view learning outcome progress. Students are able to record and manage their own learning progress using checklists, and are presented with simple bar charts displaying their progress on a per topic basis. As with the other views of the curriculum students are able to search and filter by year, topic and other metadata.

Notes

Students are able to add their own notes and attachments to any node within the curriculum. These are private to the student, and provide a powerful way to support their learning. The notes view gives them one place to view all of their notes and, as with the other views within the system, allows them to filter by curriculum metadata, such as year, topic, domain and so forth.

Search

Powerful simple search is only a click away anywhere in the application. And the powerful advanced search allows students to build complex searches to target exactly the information they need.

For administrators

Administrators have all of the views that students do, augmented by a powerful set of features that provide full control over the curriculum.

Manage the curriculum

- Customise the curriculum map using actions including adding, editing, removing and moving items at any level, all the way down to individual learning outcomes.
- Add metadata such as descriptions, lecturer details, links, attachments and tags
- Add resources for both staff and students, with the ability to show teaching resources only to educators
- Add personal notes at any level
- Tailor the look of the curriculum map for all users by using grouping, item headers and by linking to other curriculum items outside of the current mapping

Tagging and metadata

- Add institution or course specific metadata and tags
- Create as many unique tagging categories as is appropriate for the course and institution, and apply as many tags within each category as you need to any item within the curriculum map
- Add external links to tags (for example to a VLE or assessment management system) to support richer linking of content across the institution's data
- All tags and tag categories become available as search filters

Versioning tools

- Maintain multiple versions of each curriculum, including future years that are yet to be made live to your students
- Sofia's powerful version control tools allow administrators to view all changes that have been made to a curriculum and to see the exact changes that were made (down to single words) in a clear and intuitive interface
- Use this activity view to prepare reports on curriculum changes and support governance
- Compare different versions of a curriculum side by side, where each change is clearly highlighted. Revert those changes if required.

Curriculum portfolio management

Sofia can be used to manage all the curriculums within a department, or even the whole institution. This allows administrators to analyse patterns, gaps and overlaps across a portfolio of curriculums.

Reporting

Sofia produces well formatted PDF reports of the curriculum, supporting paper based governance processes. Slice and dice the curriculum however is needed, and use that report for review boards and other meetings.

Round trip import and export

Sofia allows curriculums to be exported in a standard spreadsheet format, and supports the re-import of those same spreadsheets, allowing for offline processing of the curriculum if required.

Configure and customise

Customise Sofia in a way that's appropriate for your institution - show or hide certain views to your students, add or remove curriculum item types, and control how data is interlinked throughout the system. And control the landing pages, the header and the footer across the site.

API

Sofia provides a rich API that allows other systems across the institution to query the curriculums and track changes made to the curriculum (for example, to ensure that assessment management systems or VLEs are kept in sync with curriculum changes).

APIs are protected by keys, ensuring that only approved systems can access them, giving institutions ultimate control over their data.

SSO integration

Sofia integrates with a wide range of SSO solutions, including Shibboleth, Google, Microsoft AD and any other SAML 2 provider, giving you full control over your access roster.

Cloud hosted

Sofia is a multi-tenant system, hosted at AWS. Management and operation of Sofia comes under our ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials Plus accreditations, ensuring that your data is safe and you are confident of meeting your GDPR and student safeguarding requirements.

And it's highly available and infinitely scalable too, as we make use of all of AWS's tools to ensure redundancy and scalability of each and every component of the system.