



# IMS Question and Test Interoperability Conformance Guide

## Version 2.1 Public Draft Specification

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Document Name: IMS Question and Test Interoperability Conformance Guide

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Date Issued: 8 June 2006

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Please note that supplier's claims as to implementation of QTI v2.1 and conformance to it HAVE NOT BEEN VALIDATED by IMS GLC. While such suppliers are likely well-intentioned, IMS GLC member organizations have not yet put in place the testing process to validate these claims. IMS GLC currently grants a conformance mark to the Common Cartridge profile of QTI v1.2.1. The authoritative source of products and services that meet this conformance is contained in the IMS online product directory

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# 1. Introduction

In order to make meaningful statements about interoperability it is necessary to consider the issue of QTI-conformant data and the associated issue of what a system developer needs to do to ensure that their system conforms.

A system vendor or data publisher makes a conformance statement that can be used by the community to compare the capabilities of their product with others. To facilitate creation of conformance statements [contentProfile](#) and [bankProfile](#) classes are defined that enable a rigorous approach to describing the extent to which the item information and packaging models are supported. The same classes can of course be used to describe a set of requirements. Used in this way they enable smaller communities to express profiles of this specification. For information and advice about setting up and running such communities, readers are referred to the IMS Application Profile Guidelines Whitepaper [\[IMS\\_AP\]](#).

This specification defines two profiles that can be used as the basis for determining interoperability needs in the absence of any more specific profiling requirement. These profiles are called *QTI-Lite Version 2* (which applies only to content) and *QTI-All Version 2* and can be used to interpret statements such as "conforms to all of QTI Version 2".

Communities that define their own profiles are strongly encouraged to ensure that all objects conforming to their profile also conform to the QTI-All Version 2 profile described in this document except with respect to additional media types (see [objectType](#) and [imageType](#)). Profiles that allow (or even require) objects that do not conform to QTI-All Version 2 should describe themselves as *extensions* of QTI.

## 2. References

IMS\_AP

IMS Application Profile Guidelines Whitepaper, Version 1.0

IMS\_MD\_Binding

IMS Learning Resource Meta-Data XML Binding, Version 1.2.1

LOM

IEEE 1484.12.1-2002 Standard for Learning Object Meta-data (LOM)

## 3. Conforming Data

This specification defines several types of data objects that may be exchanged between systems and hence require defined levels of interoperability. For example, a set of item statistics may be described as *QTI Version 2 Conformant*. This section explains what such conformance statements mean.

### 3.1. Assessment Items

Assessment Items must be XML documents that conform to the XML schema for [assessmentItem](#) defined by this specification and to the additional content constraints described in the information model.

### 3.2. Item Packages

Item packages must conform to the IMS Content Packaging specification and contain assessment items packaged in accordance with the requirements described in the [Integration Guide](#).

### 3.3. Item Statistics

Item statistics must be XML documents that conform to the XML schema for [usageData](#) defined by this specification.

### 3.4. Response Processors

Response Processors must be XML documents that conform to the XML schema for [responseProcessing](#) defined by this specification and to the additional content constraints described in the information model.

## 4. Conforming Systems

In addition to defining conformance criteria for the data objects that are exchanged between interoperable systems, this specification also describes requirements on the way those systems interpret the information described by those data objects. Systems that describe themselves as conforming to "QTI Version 2" must make reference to an appropriate profile. The requirements on each type of system are described below.

### 4.1. Publishing System

A conformant publishing system is any system that can export conforming *assessment items* packaged as *item packages* without *requiring* the use of the extension elements [customInteraction](#) and [customOperator](#).

A publishing system may also publish content in a variety of other formats, including some QTI-based formats that make use of the extension elements, but it must be possible to separate this output or the modes of operation that generate it. For example, a publishing system may contain a flag to turn off the use of QTI extensions when publishing content and skip items from the selected data set that would have required them.

A publishing system should create a [contentProfile](#) that describes the range of content it can export. The main purpose of such a profile is to describe the requirements for a system that needs to import the data and does not imply that the publishing system exploits the full range of functionality it describes. For example, a publishing system that exports only single response multi-choice questions as conformant QTI assessment items would still add *choiceInteraction* as an [interactionType](#) to its [contentProfile](#) even though this describes multiple-response multi-choice questions too (these two question types being inseparable in the [contentProfile](#)).

### 4.2. Authoring Systems

A conformant authoring system allows item authors to create new items, to edit existing items imported from conforming item packages, and to export items into new or updated item packages.

Authoring systems must set or adjust the [toolName](#) and [toolVersion](#) appropriately when exporting items (unless no changes have been made). When exporting items, all use of extensions must be consistent with the conventions of the tool referred to by these attributes. The extension mechanisms are:

- The [label](#) attribute on [bodyElement](#).
- The [customInteraction](#) class.
- The [customOperator](#) class.

Authoring systems should ignore information represented by the extension mechanisms when importing an item that was created by an incompatible tool.

Authoring systems should also ensure that data that *can* be represented by the information model defined by this specification *is* represented in that way. In other words, authoring systems should not make use of the extension mechanisms to represent information that could have been represented without them.

This requirement is made to ensure that authoring systems meet the reasonable expectations of authors when exporting assessment items. For example, an author who creates a question containing a simple choice represented by hotspots on a background image can reasonably expect the exported data to contain a [hotspotChoice](#) and not a [customInteraction](#) containing a proprietary applet that implements the same functionality on a limited set of delivery engines.

A system that uses an extension mechanism to represent data that can be represented directly in the information model must not claim conformance for that part of the information model in its conformance profile.

Note that a tool may combine the functions of authoring system and delivery engine, to allow authors to try out their items, but it is not required to do so. Where a tool contains a conformant authoring system and a delivery engine it should ensure that the delivery engine is also conformant to prevent authors being misled.

An authoring system should create a [contentProfile](#) to describe the range of QTI content that it supports.

### 4.3. Item Bank Systems

An item bank system is a tool for managing collections of items, their meta-data, and any associated usage data.

A conformant item bank system allows item bank managers to import and export collections of items from item packages. Item bank systems must not alter the items' [assessmentItem](#) data. Though a given tool may combine the features of an item bank system with an authoring system, to be a *conformant* item bank system it must still be capable of importing, managing, and exporting collections of items without modification of the associated [assessmentItem](#) data.

An item bank system should create a [bankProfile](#) to describe the range of features that it supports. Version 1 of this specification described an information model for *objectbanks*, *assessments*, and *results* which have not been updated by this version but **may** be updated by future versions. Therefore, the conformance of item bank systems with respect to the interoperability of item banks, assessments, and results and the associated [bankProfile](#) class is subject to change.

### 4.4. Delivery Engines

A delivery engine is the component of a system that allows the user or *candidate* to interact with an item, to assign values to response variables and to invoke response processing and provide



feedback as appropriate. A delivery engine may be part of a full-blown assessment system or it may simply be a component of an authoring or editing system.

A conformant delivery engine conforms to the requirements described in the information model with respect to its behavior in delivering the items. For example, it must provide suitable controls that operate in accordance with the requirements of each supported interaction and maintain the data described by the item session.

## 5. Conformance Profiles

### 5.1. Authoring & Delivery Systems

**Class :** `contentProfile`

This class provides a framework for describing the capabilities or requirements of an authoring system or delivery engine. Most of the elements of the profile are booleans that indicate whether or not a specific feature is supported (*true*) or not supported (*false*). When being used in the context of expressing requirements the values correspond to required or optional respectively. This profile class does not support exclusion of features.

**Contains :** `composite` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports composite items.

**Contains :** `adaptive` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports adaptive items.

**Contains :** `timeDependent` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports time dependent items.

**Contains :** `templates` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports item templates.

**Contains :** `textElements` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the XHTML text elements. A profile that supports any of the other XHTML element groups should support this one too.

**Contains :** `listElements` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the XHTML list elements.

**Contains :** `objectElements` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the XHTML object elements.

**Contains :** `objectType` [mimeType](#) [\*]

For systems that support the object element, a list of the types of object supported. For example: image/jpeg, audio/aiff, etc.

**Contains :** `presentationElements` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the XHTML presentation elements.

**Contains :** `tableElements` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the XHTML table elements.

**Contains** : `imageElement` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the XHTML image element.

**Contains** : `imageType` [mimeType](#) [\*]

For systems that support the image element, a list of the types of images supported. For example: image/png, image/jpeg, etc.

**Contains** : `hypertextElement` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the XHTML hypertext element.

**Contains** : `mathElement` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports the MathML <math> element.

**Contains** : `mathVariable` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system support the expansion of template variable names in MathML expressions.

**Contains** : `feedbackIntegrated` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports integrated feedback, i.e., the [feedbackBlock](#) class.

**Contains** : `feedbackModal` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports modal feedback, i.e., the [modalFeedback](#) class.

**Contains** : `rubric` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports rubric blocks, i.e., the [rubricBlock](#) class.

**Contains** : `printedVariables` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system has core support for the [printedVariable](#) element. Note that support for the *r* conversion type specifier is controlled separately [rounding](#).

**Contains** : [interactionType](#) [\*]

The supported interaction type(s). The vocabulary is comprised of the names, as defined in the information model, of the leaf classes derived from [interaction](#) with the exception of [customInteraction](#). See below for interaction-specific conformance notes.

**Contains** : `responseRules` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports response rules in response processing. Systems that set this to true are assumed to be able to process arbitrary templates so need not list these individually. Note that support for the [equalRounded](#) and [patternMatch](#) operators is optional, see [rounding](#) and [regexp](#) respectively.

**Contains** : `rpTemplate` [uri](#) [\*]

For systems that only support response processing templates, a list of the templates supported.

**Contains** : `rounding` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports advanced rounding: if [printedVariables](#) is supported then the *r* conversion type specifier is also supported.

**Contains** : `regex` [boolean](#) [1]

Whether or not the system supports regular expression matching: if the [textEntryInteraction](#) or [extendedTextInteraction](#) then the [patternMask](#) attribute is also supported; if [responseRules](#) is supported then the [patternMatch](#) operator is also supported.

**Contains** : [metadataProfile](#) [1]

The parameters concerning the range of meta-data supported are described by a separate class.

**Class** : `metadataProfile`

Associated classes:

[bankProfile](#), [contentProfile](#)

**Contains** : `imsmd` [boolean](#) [1]

The system supports meta-data described by and bound according to the IMS meta-data specification [\[IMS MD Binding\]](#).

**Contains** : `lomMetadata` [boolean](#) [1]

The system supports meta-data described by [\[LOM\]](#) and bound according to the associated XML binding.

**Contains** : `imsqtimd` [boolean](#) [1]

The system supports meta-data described by and bound according to the [qtiMetadata](#) class defined in the associated [Meta-data and Usage Data](#).

### 5.1.1. Interaction-Specific Conformance Notes

Most of the simple interactions can be supported in isolation. For example, it is possible to define a meaningful profile with the a single value of *choiceInteraction* for [interactionType](#) and no other conforming features.

Some interaction types require the use of XHTML-based elements that are subject to their own flag in the profile. A profile that contains an [interactionType](#) indicating support for one of these types must also set the flags for any required XHTML-based element to be valid. These requirements are listed below.

<b>gapMatchInteraction</b>	Requires <a href="#">textElements</a> . If a system supports <a href="#">gapMatchInteraction</a> and <a href="#">objectElements</a> then it must support use of <a href="#">gapImg</a> with any image <a href="#">objectTypes</a> in the profile. A system that supports <a href="#">gapMatchInteraction</a> but no image <a href="#">objectTypes</a> does not support <a href="#">gapImg</a> .
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<b>inlineChoiceInteraction, textEntryInteraction, hotTextInteraction, endAttemptInteraction</b>	Require <a href="#">textElements</a> .
<b>hotspotInteraction, selectPointInteraction, graphicOrderInteraction, graphicAssociateInteraction, graphicGapMatchInteraction, positionObjectInteraction, drawingInteraction</b>	Require <a href="#">objectElements</a> and at least one suitable <a href="#">objectType</a> .

## 5.2. Item Bank Systems

**Class :** bankProfile

This class provides a framework for describing the capabilities or requirements of an item bank system. It has a similar dual use for specifying capabilities and requirements as the [contentProfile](#) class.

Note that item bank systems must be able to import *and* export items from content packages and must be able to operate in a mode whereby all imported usage data and meta-data from a vocabulary or scheme to which conformance is claimed can be exported again with the same set of items.

**Contains :** usageDataVocabulary [uri](#) [\*]

The URI of a vocabulary file (or files) describing the vocabulary of supported usage data. Reference to a vocabulary indicates that a system supports usage-data files packaged according to the method described in [Integration Guide](#).

**Contains :** [metadataProfile](#) [1]

The flags describing the range of meta-data supported are the same as those used in the [contentProfile](#).

## 5.3. QTI-Lite

QTI-Lite is presented as the entry-level profile to the full QTI specification and only concerns content, its creation, modification, and delivery. In other words, it does not concern item bank systems. QTI-Lite does not support all of the features of the full specification but it is a proper profile, in other words an assessment item that conforms to the QTI-Lite profile also conforms to the default "QTI-All" profile defined below.

### QTI-Lite Profile Definition

[conformance/imsqti\\_lite\\_profile.xml](#)

The key differences between the QTI-Lite and the QTI-All profile are:

- Only one interaction per item.

- The only interaction type to be supported by QTI-Lite is the [choiceInteraction](#), suitable for use with simple multi-choice questions like one choice from many (e.g., "Yes/No", "True/false" and "Likert scale") and also with multiple response questions like one or more choice from many (e.g., select all that apply).
- Simple response processing using the [Match Correct](#) template enabling only a single right answer (or an exact matching group for multiple response).
- No support for integrated feedback.
- Limited image types and structural formatting.
- No support for advanced features like adaptive items, templates or time based scoring.

Note that the inclusion of multiple-response questions represents an expansion of the scope of QTI-Lite since version 1 of this specification but that the restrictions on response processing, in particular the *lack* of support for the [Map Response](#) template, should not present a significant burden to implementors.

## 5.4. QTI All

The content profile that describes conformance to the full QTI Version 2 specification includes a complete list of features and a minimal set of media types.

### **QTI-All Content Profile Definition**

[conformance/imsqticontent\\_all\\_profile.xml](#)

### **QTI-All Bank Profile Definition**

[conformance/imsqtibank\\_all\\_profile.xml](#)

# About This Document

<b>Title</b>	IMS Question and Test Interoperability Conformance Guide
<b>Editors</b>	Steve Lay (Cambridge Assessment), Pierre Gorissen (SURF)
<b>Version</b>	Public Draft v2.1
<b>Version Date</b>	8 June 2006
<b>Status</b>	<b>Public Draft Specification</b>
<b>Summary</b>	This document describes the QTI Conformance Guide specification.
<b>Revision Information</b>	8 June 2006
<b>Purpose</b>	This document has been approved by the IMS Technical Board and is made available for public review and comment.
<b>Document Location</b>	
To register any comments or questions about this specification please visit: <a href="http://www.imsglobal.org/community/forum/categories.cfm?catid=21&amp;entercat=y">http://www.imsglobal.org/community/forum/categories.cfm?catid=21&amp;entercat=y</a>	

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## Revision History

Version No.	Release Date	Comments
Base Document 2.1	14 October 2005	The first version of the QTI v2.1 specification.
Public Draft 2.1	9 January 2006	The Public Draft v2.1 of the QTI specification.
Public Draft 2.1 (revision 2)	8 June 2006	The Public Draft v2.1 (revision 2) of the QTI specification.

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Revision: 8 June 2006*

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