Manal et. al. (2016) states that e-learning standards may be categorized by their purpose:

* *Metadata*: learning content and catalogs must be labeled in a consistent way to support the indexing, storage, discovery (search), and retrieval of learning objects by multiple tools across multiple repositories. Several initiatives are creating metadata standards: The Learning Object Metadata, or LOM of IEEE Learning Technology Standards, and the Dublin Core Metadata;
* *Content packaging*: content packaging specifications and standards allow courses to be transported from one learning system to another. The initiatives dealing with content packaging include: The IMS Content Packaging specification, the IMS Simple Sequencing specification, the ADL Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM);
* *Learner profile*: learner profile information can include personal data, learning plans, learning history, accessibility requirements, certifications and degrees, assessments of knowledge and the status of participation in current learning. The most important effort to standardize learner profile information is the IMS Learner Information Package (IMS LIP) specification;
* *Learner registration*: learner registration information allows learning delivery and administration components to know what offerings should be made available to a learner, and provides information about learning participants to the delivery environment. There are two initiatives currently dealing with these requirements: The IMS Enterprise Specification, and the Schools Interoperability Framework which supports the exchange of this type of data in K-9 environment;
* *Content communication*: when content is launched, there is a need to communicate learner data and previous activity information to the content. Work going on is the ADL’s Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) project based on the CMI specification of the Aviation Industry CBT Committee (Manal et. al. 2016).