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eLearning Essentials for RTOs:

How to create impactful taining and assessment materials

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Introduction

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are the front line of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system. They are registered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) as providers and assessors of nationally recognised training and qualification. Employers rely on RTOs to provide the necessary knowledge and skills to both recruits and existing workers.

VET offers people real-world skills with technical knowledge and hands-on experience. It is a faster and more cost-effective way to enter the workforce or change careers compared to other education options.

The VET system is constantly evolving, necessitating that RTOs stay up to date with the latest changes, including the review and updating of standards, qualifications, and guidelines. The spread of coronavirus in 2019 has had a particularly transformative impact on education. Many training organisations had to rework their training programs abruptly and transition to online training. And, as we can see, the eLearning trend will remain for a long time, if not forever.

A massive shift to online learning requires a fundamental rethinking of the formats through which training and assessment resources should be delivered to students. In this guide, we'll introduce you to an innovative approach to developing training materials and assessment tools that conform to RTO standards and help maximize learning effectiveness. You'll find out how to create impactful eLearning resources with no tech or design skills.

Compliance with ASQA Requirements

Before going to training resources, we'll take a quick look at the VET system and see how RTOs are regulated.

RTOs are controlled by ASQA. Its primary responsibility is to ensure that the quality and reputation of Australia's VET system is maintained through effective national regulation. Students, employers, the community, and governments need to be confident regarding the integrity and credibility of national qualifications issued by RTOs.

ASQA applies a risk-based approach to its regulation of the VET sector. It allows ASQA to direct its resources towards the areas that pose the greatest threat to quality training outcomes and minimise the regulatory burden on high-quality providers.

This risk-based regulation is supported by ASQA's student-centred audit approach. Audits are organised around the five key phases of the student experience, starting with marketing and recruitment and finishing with the issuance of students' qualifications. At audit, ASQA seeks evidence of student outcomes and RTO practice, rather than just looking at inputs, outputs, and processes.

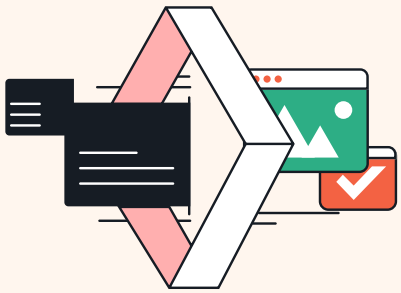
ASQA's key phases of the student journey

01	MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT	The RTO's marketing practices provide accurate information to allow prospective students to make informed decisions.
02	ENROLMENT	The RTO ensures that students have the existing skills, knowledge, and experience required to undertake the course successfully.
03	SUPPORT AND PROGRESSION	Students' needs are assessed by the RTO, which provides appropriate support services to enable the student to progress.
04	TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT	Trainers assigned to deliver training are qualified. The amount of training and mode of delivery is consistent with requirements.
05	COMPLETION	Only those students assessed as having met course or training package requirements are issued with AQF certificates.

To see the standards relevant for each phase, go to the official ASQA website.

In this guide, we'll focus on the training and assessment phase. We'll further break down how to create high-quality eLearning resources that meet ASQA requirements.

Contextualisation of RTO Training Materials



Contextualising learning materials is one of the biggest challenges RTOs face. Contextualisation is the process of modifying existing RTO training and assessment resources to make learning more meaningful for your students and their employers. It's crucial for RTOs to provide their learners with materials and assessments that are tailored to their needs and aligned with the environment in which they work.

Not taking this seriously threatens the RTO's existence. If you don't contextualise your resources, you risk ending up delivering training, losing students, and being marked as non-compliant at your next ASQA audit.

As you can see, you can't just take generic off-the-shelf learning materials and expect them to work with all students and contexts. Quality education requires time to perform research, review existing content, and then contextualise it for your specific learners and situation.

Or you might go another way and start creating training materials and assessment tools on your own.

Creation of Training and Assessment Resources in House

At first, in-house resource development might seem like work that would require additional costs in terms of time, money, and interruptions to core business operations. But this might be a short-sighted approach. Let's see why.

01 It's easier to align your training strategy with your learners' needs

Nobody understands your training needs better than you and the people working for your RTO. By purchasing off-the-shelf resources, you risk getting very generic content that needs to be contextualised. Even worse, you can get the materials that will centre on something that's not relevant to your specific needs. By developing resources in house, you can ensure that your training is relevant and delivers the necessary knowledge and skills required in a specific context and work role.

02 Materials created in house result in a better learning experience and enhanced engagement

Many providers deliver materials in old-school formats like Word documents, PDF files, and PPT presentations.

Studying dozens of Word pages filled with regulations and instructions can be real torture, even for those who realise its importance for their work. But the reality is that even the most boring content can be engaging if you know how to prepare it (and further on we'll explain how).

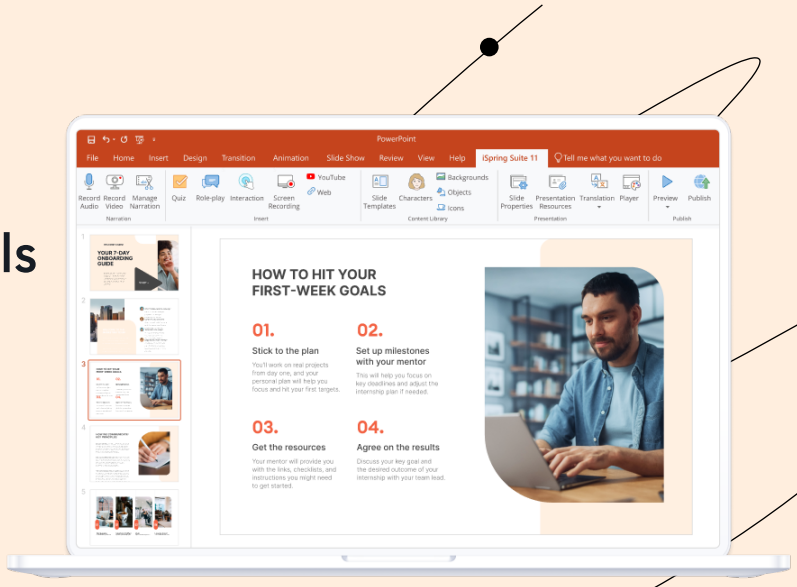
03 With eLearning authoring tools, creating training materials is fast and easy even for non-professionals

Modern authoring tools allow you to create eLearning courses filled with media and interactivity, and the best thing is that you don't need a tech background for this. Of course, some solutions require a particular skill set and are accessible only to experienced course developers. But there are also some easy-to-use yet fully functional tools that anyone can use, such as iSpring Suite.

ispring suite

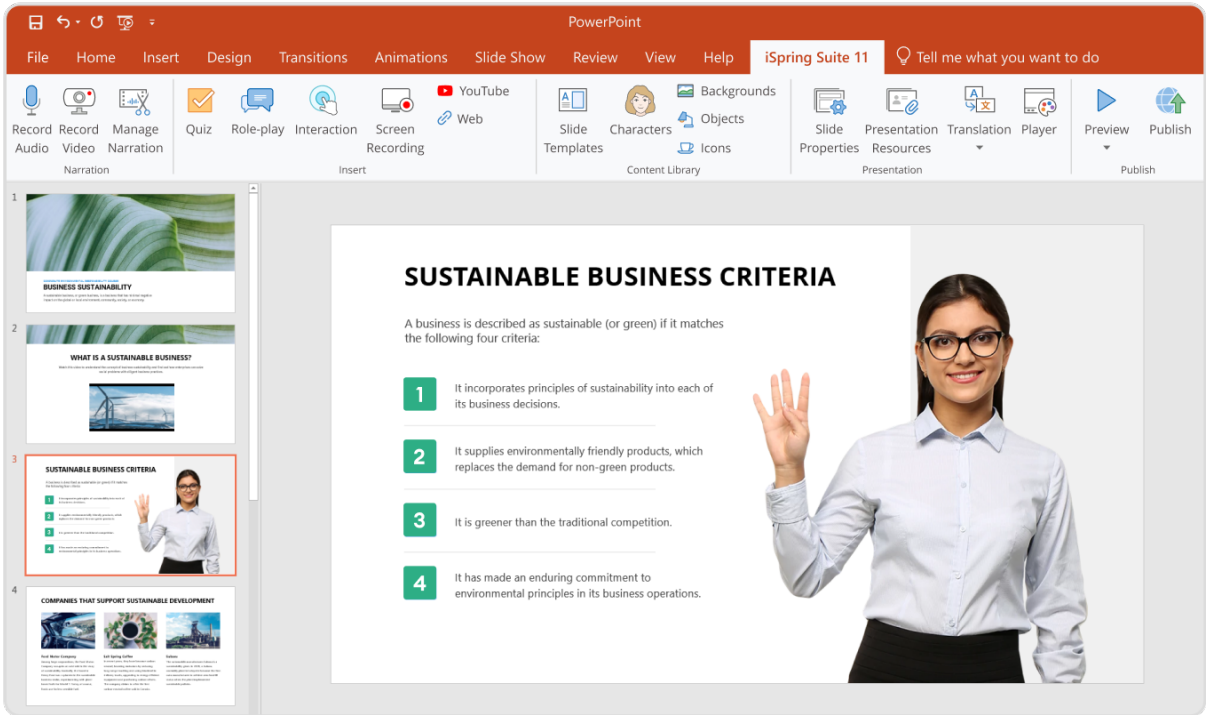
Create training materials and assessment tools in record time.

Learn more



Have you decided to start creating training materials in house? Or do you have ready-made resources that need to be contextualised? Let's take a look at how you can create an eLearning course with iSpring Suite.

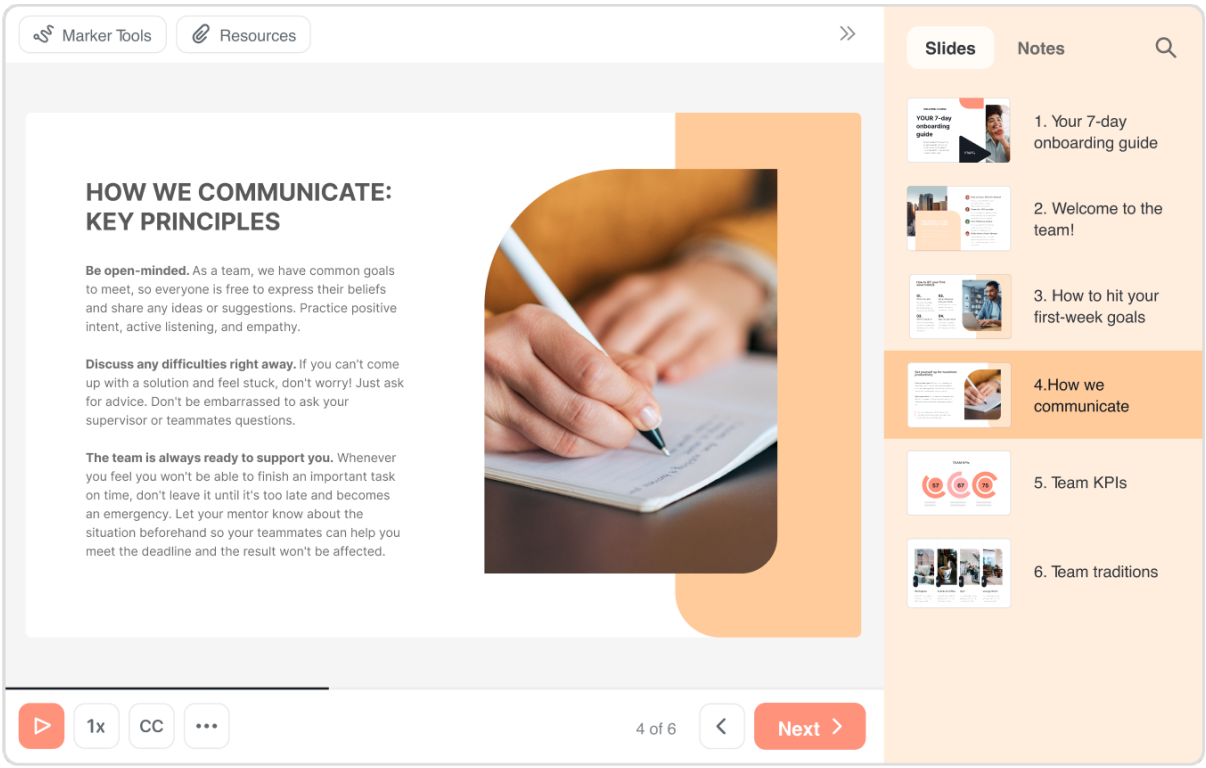
If you've ever used PowerPoint, then you have all the know-how you need to use iSpring, as it works through the PowerPoint interface. But you're not limited to text and images, as in PowerPoint. You can create interactive slides effortlessly with quizzes, screencasts, talking head videos, narration, and even role-play simulations. No course building experience or design knowledge is required.



Now let's look at the different types of training materials you can create with iSpring Suite and what they're best suited for.

Online courses

An online course is a self-paced training program delivered via digital tools. It's usually made up of different training materials that all connect together to train learners on a topic. They can include slides with text, multimedia, interactions, and quizzes.



Use cases

Delivering standardised knowledge, such as safety, security awareness, or compliance training

Quick transformation of training materials, such as PDFs, Word files, and PowerPoint presentations into an online course

Turning existing PPT learner guides, trainer manuals, and assessment workbooks into online courses in a matter of minutes

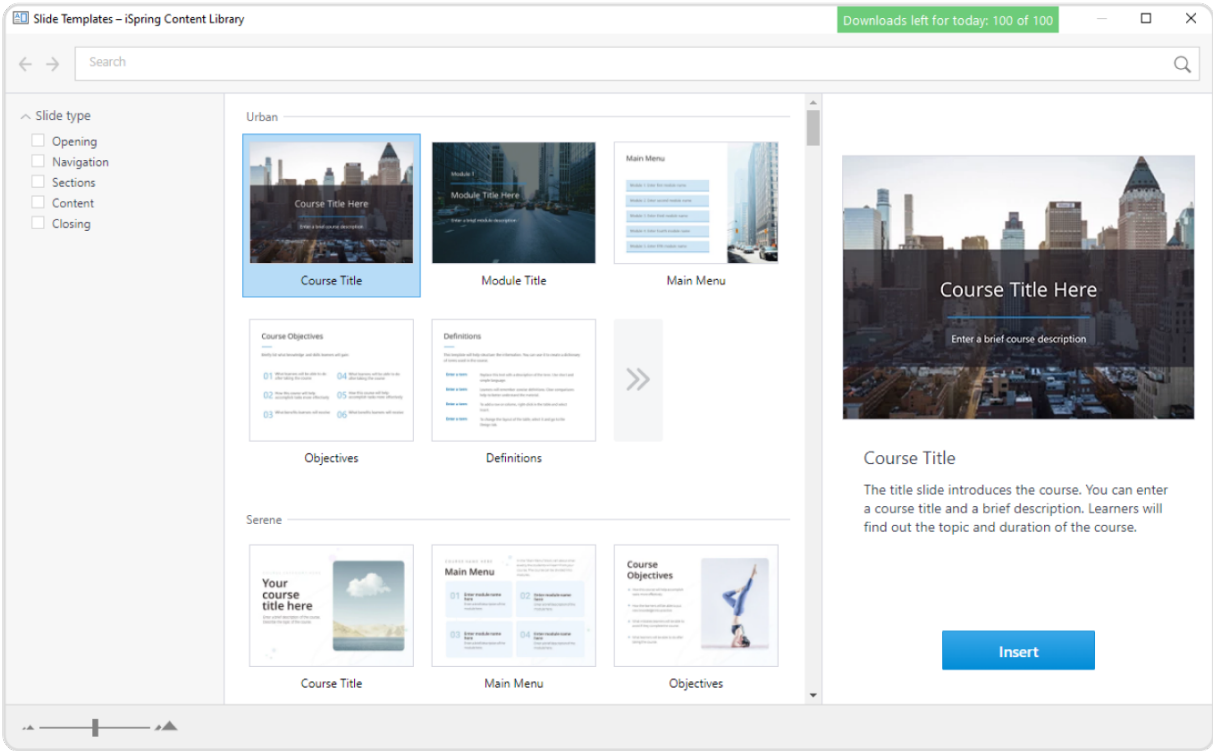
How iSpring can help

There are two things you want to avoid when creating online courses:

- Boring your learners
- Spending too much time on the creation process

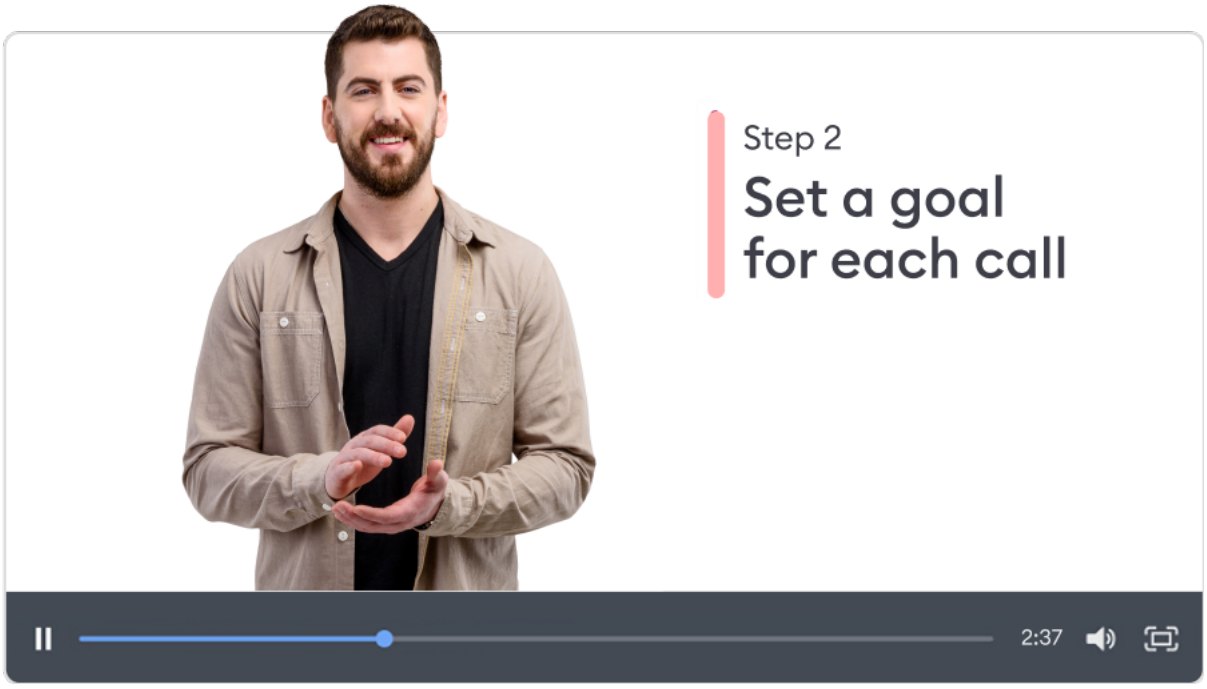
iSpring Suite can help you circumvent both of these pitfalls. Avoid dull online courses by adding interactive elements to your slide content. You simply need to import your existing training materials and inject some life into them with animations, transitions, multimedia, and interactive exercises.

The toolkit comes with ready-made course templates, so you can put together a professional-looking course in a matter of minutes. Each one includes basic course elements such as title slides, a table of contents, chapters, timelines, and info slides. Just drag these blocks to where you need them, add text and images, and your course is ready to go.



Training videos

A video is another great solution for training learners on a topic. It is much more compelling and engaging than texts. Besides, it combines sound and pictures and involves more of our senses, which increases learning retention.



Use cases

Videos can be used as standalone learning content or embedded in online courses. Plus, there are several types of video content to choose from, including:

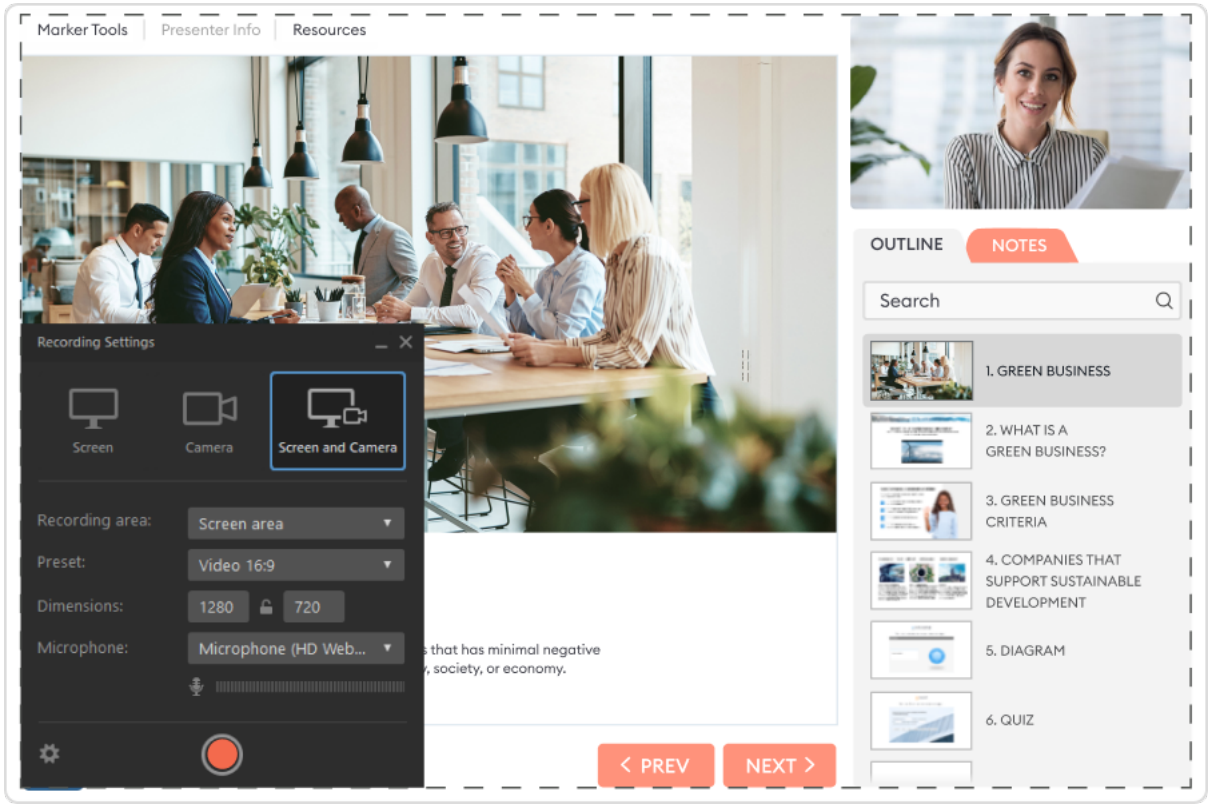
Lecture captures – recordings of live training sessions or presentations

Software tutorials – screencasts that demonstrate how people use software

Talking head videos – usually webcam recordings of an instructor explaining a training topic

How iSpring can help

Most creators of training resources are not video editing professionals. Therefore, they require simple-to-use editing software that won't compromise the quality of the final product. iSpring Suite has a built-in video recording tool that can create a range of professional-grade training videos, even if they're used by those with no experience. You can easily build both talking-head videos and record screencasts. Moreover, there is a wide selection of editing options to polish your videos and add a personal touch.



Role-play simulations

Role-plays put students in real-world scenarios, giving them a chance to practice in a risk-free environment. As such, they can build up their confidence and develop their skills without impacting relations with other people: clients, patients, or colleagues. Most role-plays use branching scenarios to show the consequences of each decision. This shows learners the outcomes of their actions in a safe space, reducing the learning curve.

Use cases

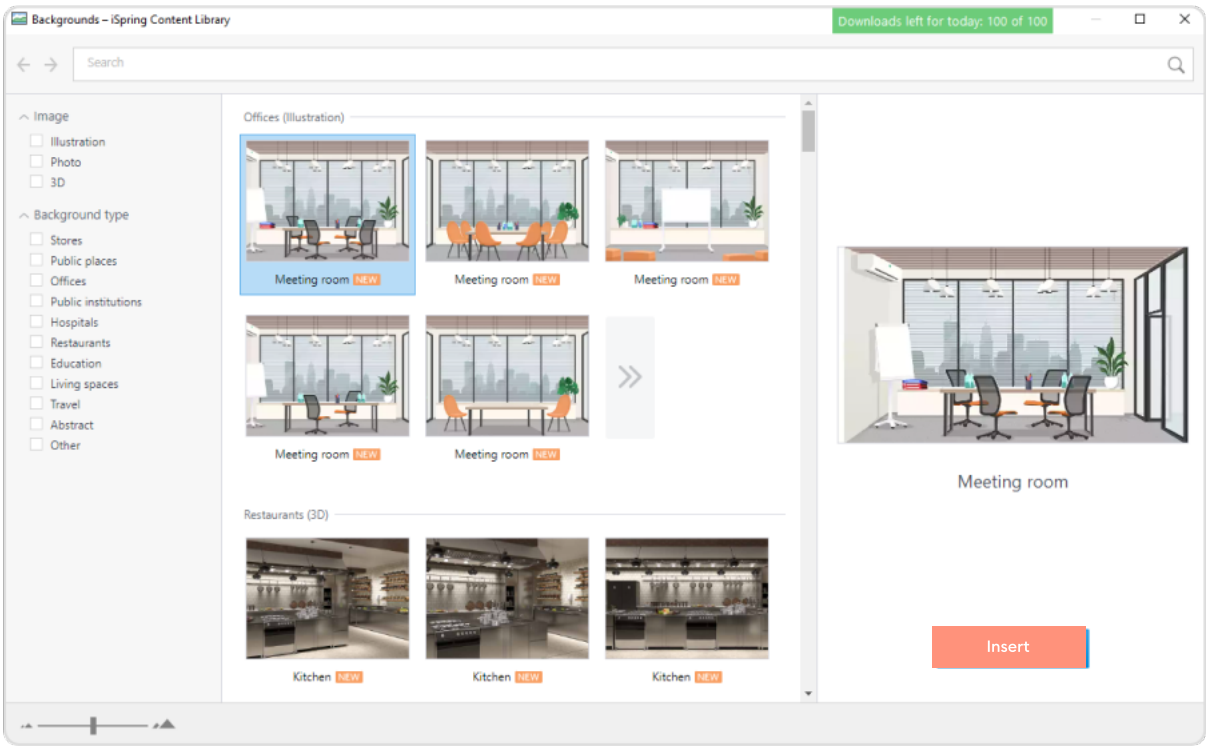
Role-plays are perfect for training on:

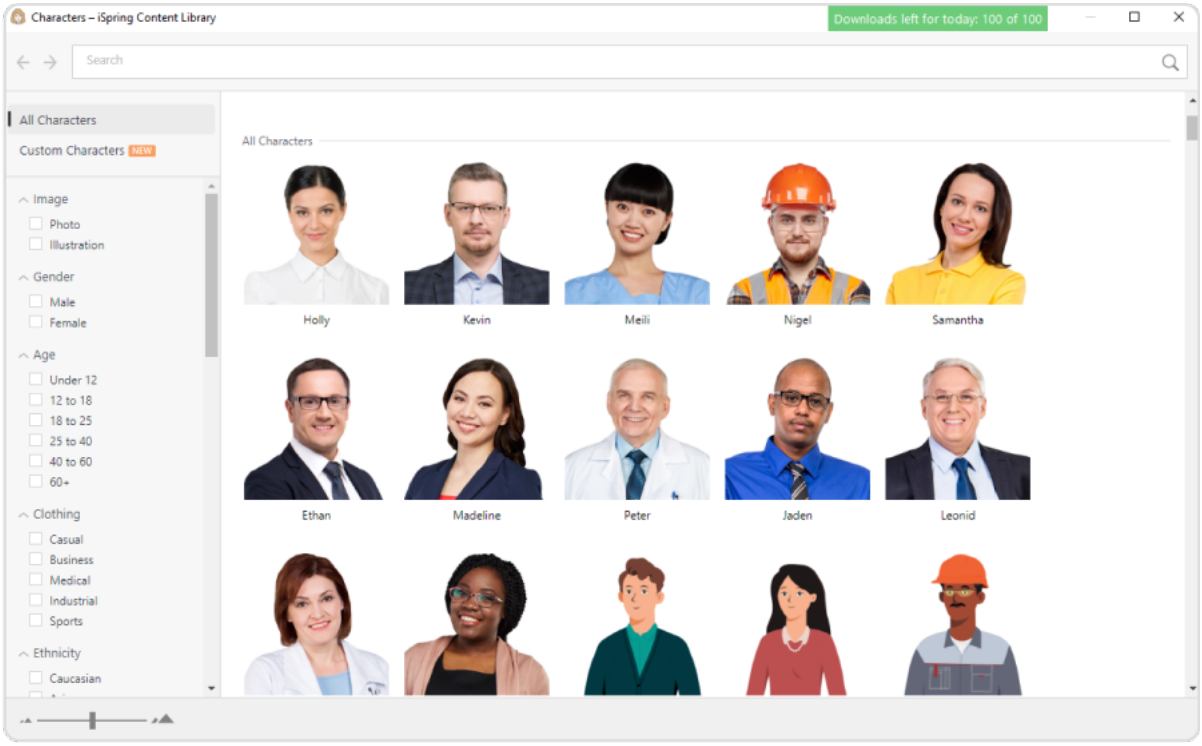
- Sales
- Customer service
- Negotiation
- Other situations that call for a one-to-one interaction

How iSpring can help

Creating training materials such as branching role-plays can be complicated. However, iSpring Suite allows the building of simulations with no technical experience required. You just need to create scenes with dialogues, set up the navigation, add visuals, and insert a voice-over if needed.

Since iSpring Suite comes with hundreds of ready-made characters and locations (including illustrated ones), you don't need to scroll through stock photos in search of the right images. Everything is right at your fingertips, making it easy to create engaging simulations in a snap and fully personalize your training.

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Meili
Nigel
Samantha
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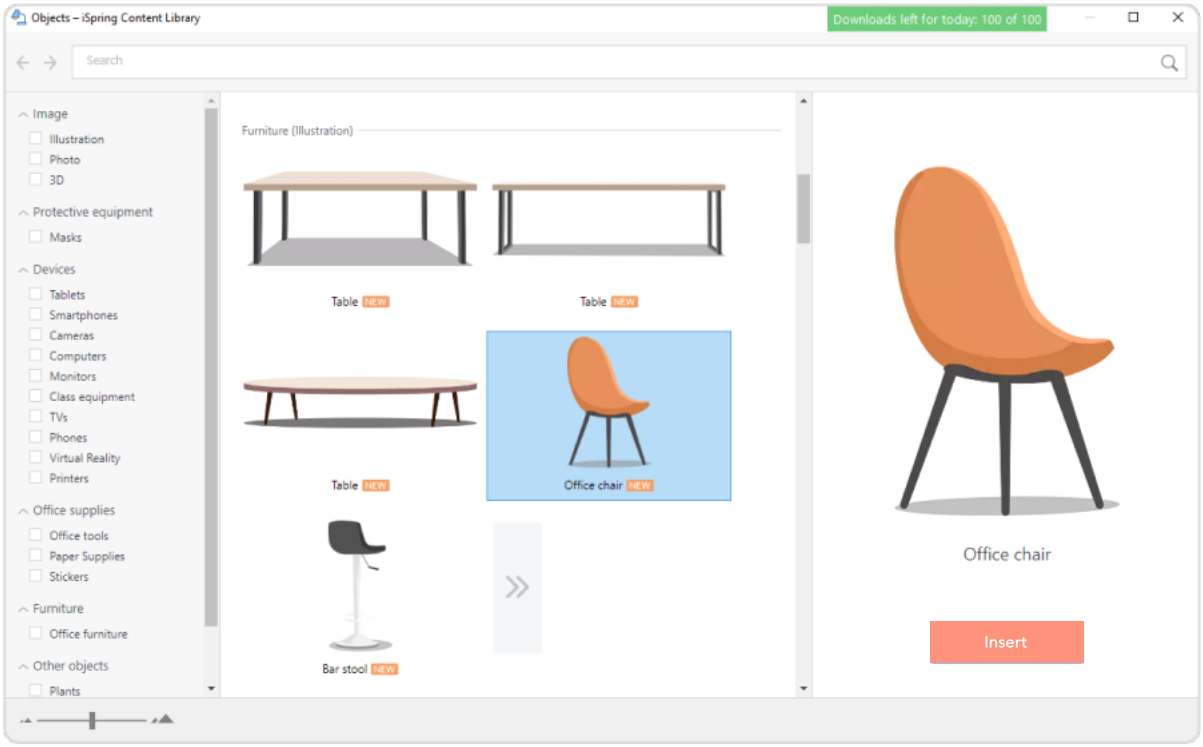
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3D
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Devices
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Smartphones
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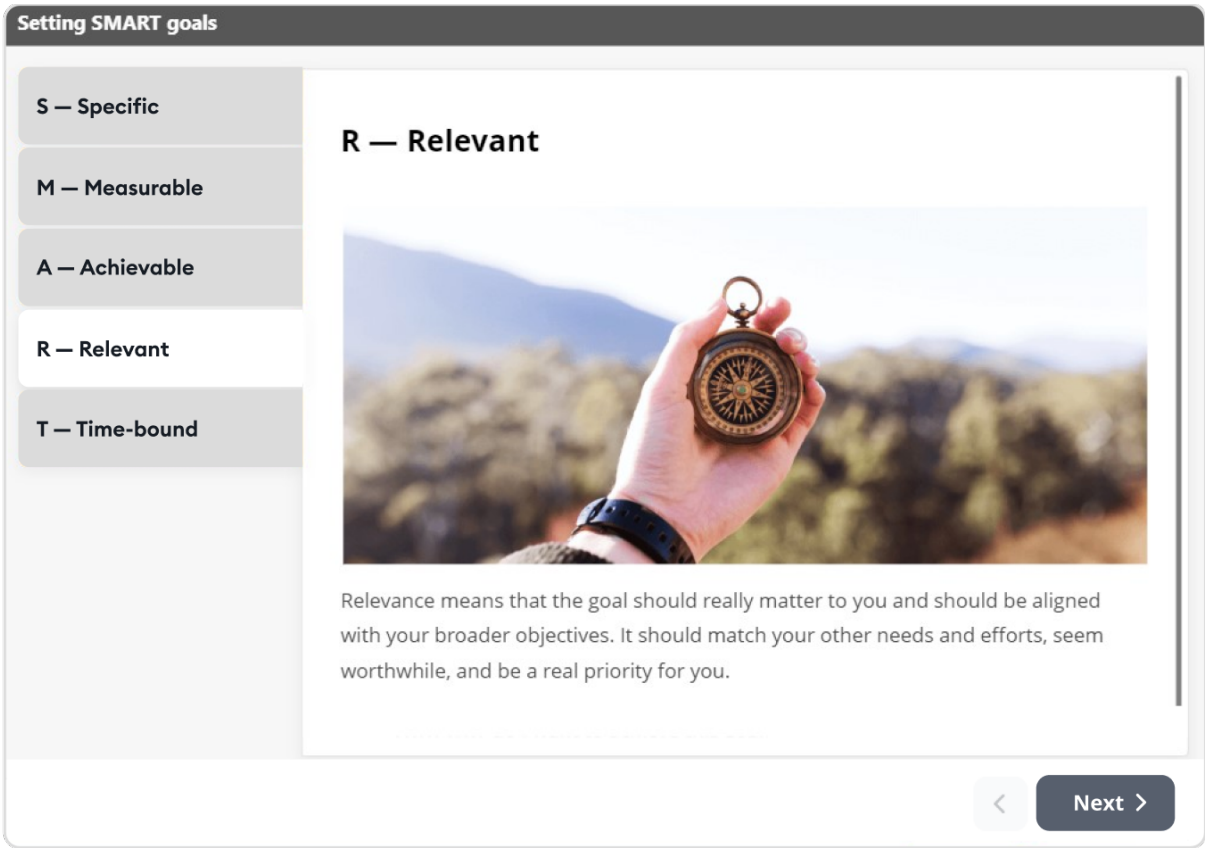
Class equipment
TVs
Phones
Virtual Reality
Printers
Office supplies
Office tools
Paper Supplies
Stickers
Furniture
Office furniture
Other objects
Plants
Furniture (Illustration)
Table NEW
Table NEW
Table NEW
Office chair NEW
Bar stool NEW
Office chair
Insert

eLearning interactions

An interaction is an eLearning activity that the learner interacts with, either by using their mouse or by swiping on a device. It can be a separate short lesson or a component of a longer online course.



Use cases

Creating a standard format for organising and presenting basic information

Generating glossaries, definitions, or other basic facts

Presenting processes and frameworks in a manner that's engaging and easy to remember

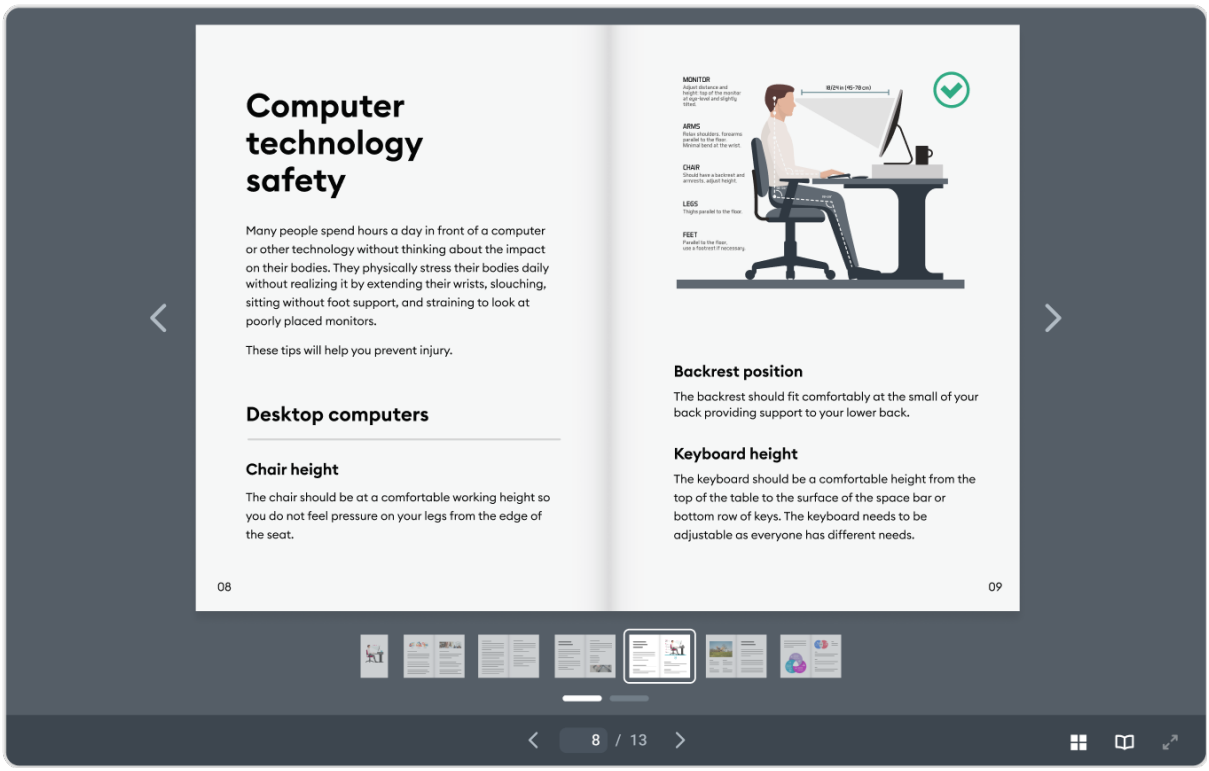
Providing information that is additional to the main content of the course

How iSpring can help

Interactions can be difficult and time-consuming to create manually, but iSpring Suite makes this quick and easy with the help of ready-made templates. You can create interactive diagrams, timelines, media cards, groceries, FAQs, and many other resources. Just choose a suitable template, fill it with your text and images, and your eLearning interaction is ready.

Digital flipbooks

A digital flipbook is an interactive e-book that looks just like a printed publication, with pages that can be flipped and turned. It preserves the traditional look and feel of a paper book but includes interactive elements like links and navigation.



Use cases

Quick transformation of PDF and Word policies and regulations, standard operating procedures, and step-by-step processes into an online format

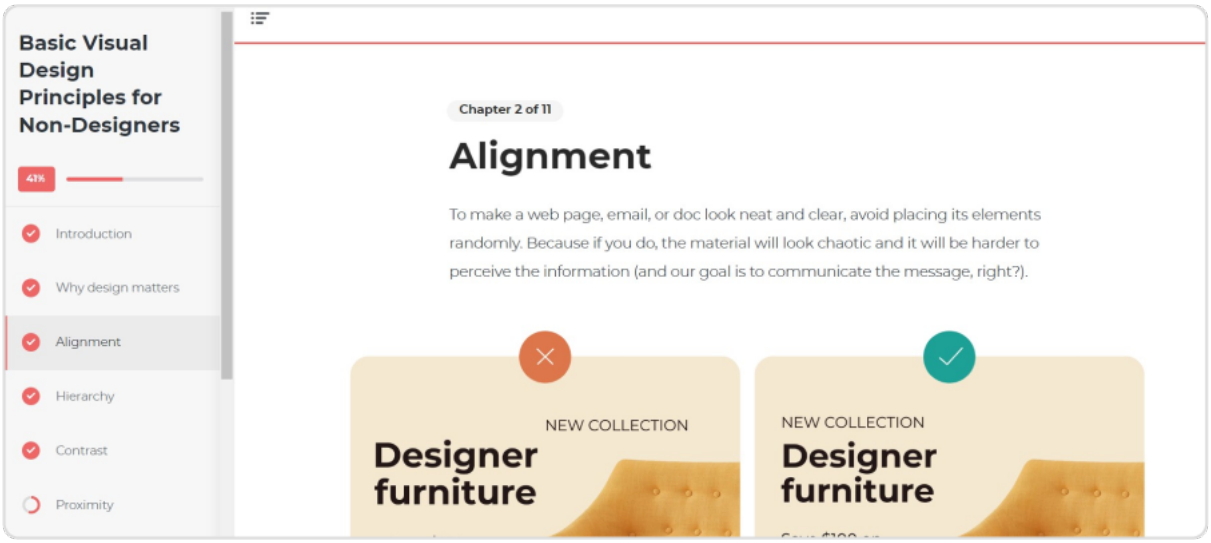
Turning existing PDF and Word learner guides, trainer manuals, and assessment workbooks into flipbooks for an enhanced reading experience

How iSpring can help

iSpring Suite can convert documents into interactive digital flipbooks that are responsive on all devices in a matter of seconds.

Interactive pages

Interactive pages constitute a type of article with illustrations, quotes, videos, and knowledge checks. They look like web pages on the internet but are better organised and offer more interactivity. Interactive pages have chapters to allow your students to navigate the material easily and digest information in sequenced chunks, and may include exercises to let your learners reinforce their knowledge.



Use cases

Delivering standardised knowledge in a well-structured and engaging manner

Turning existing training resources into an online format

Providing learner guides, trainer manuals, and assessment workbooks

How iSpring can help

iSpring Suite has an online counterpart designed for storing and sharing training resources and assessment tools and building interactive pages online. You just need to type in or copy and paste the text in and add images and videos. To make your page more exciting, you can also add eye-catching objects like callouts, flashcards, and exercises.

The best thing about using this tool is that it allows you to create material together with your team. For example, while you're editing the text, your colleague can be adding knowledge checks or polishing course appearance.

How to Create Reliable Assessment Tools

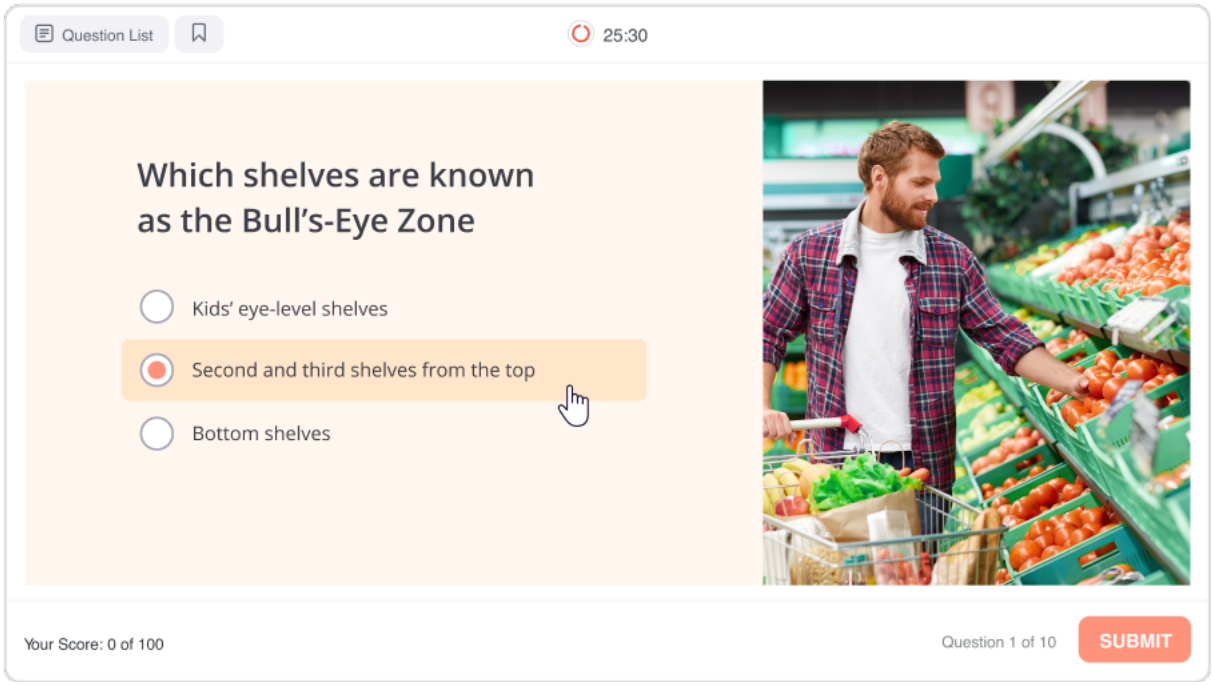
When building eLearning packages for RTOs, it's not enough to create quality training resources. It is equally important to create assessment tools that will allow you to collect evidence and decide if competency has been achieved. Assessment results also serve as confirmation that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace.

An assessment tool can cover an individual competency or a clustered group of competencies such as a skill set. When contextualising or creating assessments from scratch, you should follow the Principles of Assessments, which are fairness, flexibility, validity, and reliability, as well as the Rules of Evidence, which include validity, sufficiency, authenticity, and currency.

Here are two kinds of online assessments you can create with iSpring Suite.

Online quizzes

The main assessment method in eLearning is the online quiz, which might include various question types. Graded quizzes allow you to keep track of your students' results, therefore providing reliable evidence of training completion. With online quizzes, you can see what has been learned and what hasn't, and whether a student has the knowledge that's needed for their job.

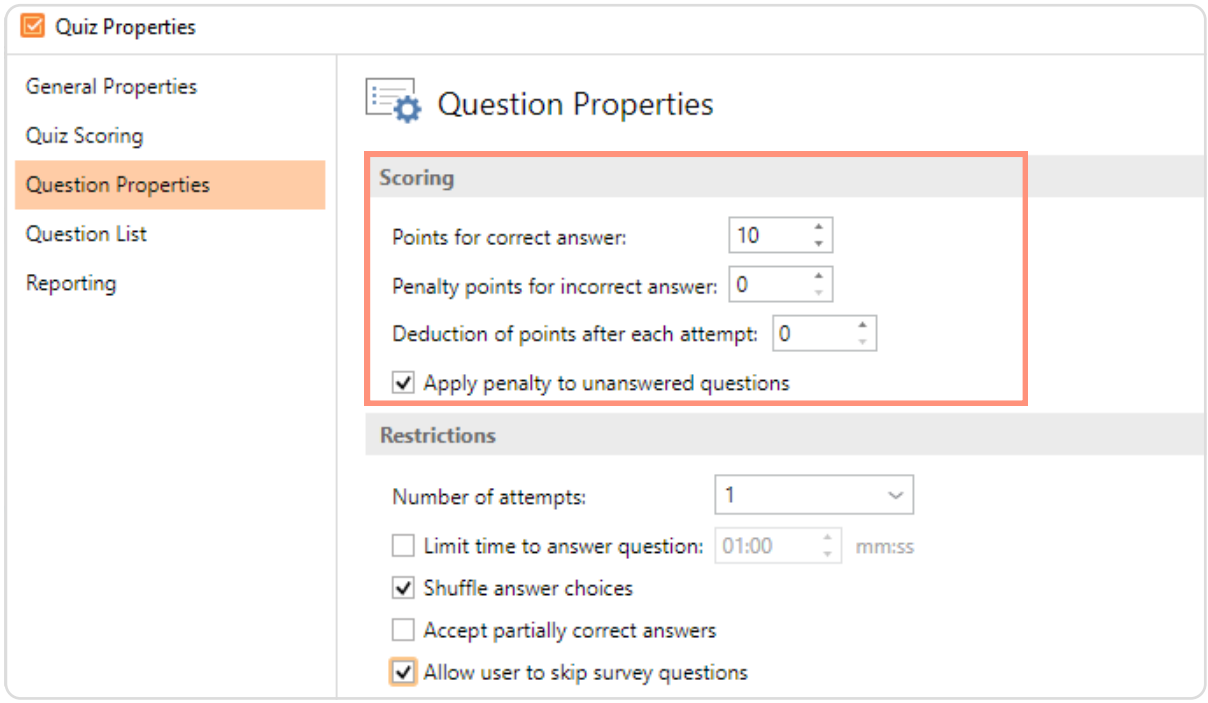


How iSpring can help

In order for a quiz to be effective, it needs to ask the right questions. Many professionals make the mistake of building a quiz with hundreds of multiple-choice questions. While there's absolutely nothing wrong with multiple-choice, quiz questions should be varied to keep learners' interest.

iSpring Suite has a rich in-built quiz maker with 14 different question templates, allowing you to pick the best question type for each training scenario, such as fill-in-the-blanks, sorting items, and hotspot questions. The powerful quiz feature ensures that you really challenge learners and put them in real-life situations throughout the assessment.

In iSpring Suite, you can set different scoring parameters. By default, the software assigns the same score for correct answers to all the questions. But you can set customise scoring for each quiz question, according to their difficulty or importance, for example, or set up points for correct answers and penalties for incorrect answers, and also reduce points after each unsuccessful attempt in questions that allow multiple attempts.



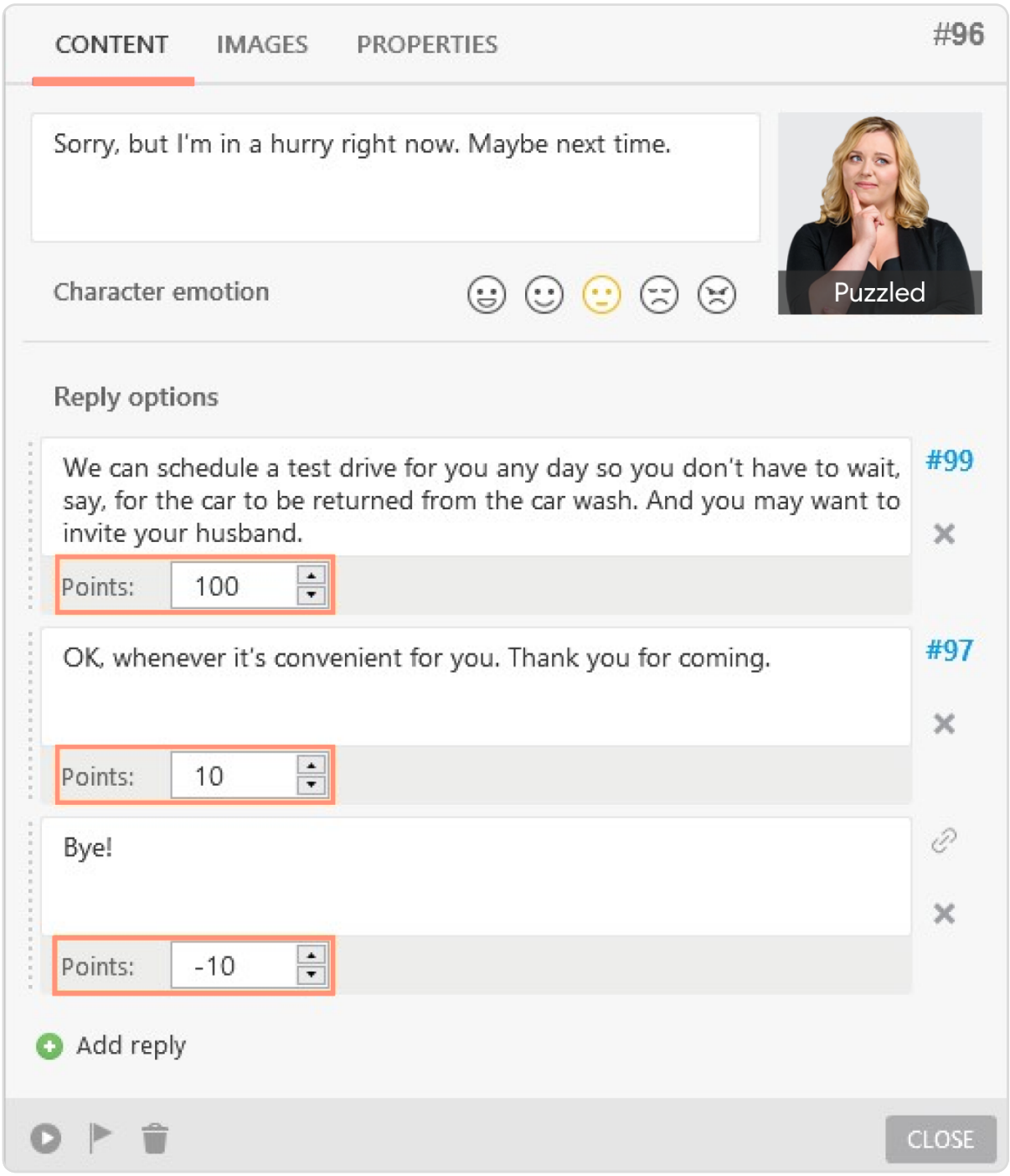
You can also set the required score for passing the quiz and establish that it will be scored either by percentages or points.

Role-play simulations

We've already mentioned scenarios when talking about creating effective training resources. But role-plays can also be a great assessment tool, especially when you need to check students' behaviours and communication skills in a simulated workplace environment.

How iSpring can help

iSpring Suite allows you to assign points for final scenes only, or for each reply choice. If it only matters whether students pass or fail an assessment, awarding points for final scenes will work fine. But to receive a reliable outcome that will establish that a learner has sufficient competency, it's better to opt for a cumulative score. With a cumulative score, your learners collect points on each scene or get penalty points for incorrect replies.



It's also practical to have contrasting scores for different final scenes. For example, students who choose the best path through a role-play can earn from 70 to 100 points. Those who don't perform so well and sometimes give incorrect replies can earn from 40 to 70 points. And if a student is unable to perform a task, they'll receive a score between 0 and 40 points.

5 tips to ensure compliance with the ASQA's principles of assessment

Here's what you need to consider to ensure that you're providing a reliable, fair, flexible, and valid assessment:

01

Define assessment criteria clearly

Your assessment tool should clearly define the criteria for assessing the learner's competency. This includes the broad range of skills and knowledge required for adequate performance.

02

Provide guidance for assessors

Assessors should have clear instructions and guidance on how to assess each criterion. This ensures consistent and reliable outcomes.

03

Use realistic scenarios

Your assessment scenarios should be aligned with the situations your students will encounter. Assessments should mimic real-life scenarios to help reflect industry and workplace standards.

04

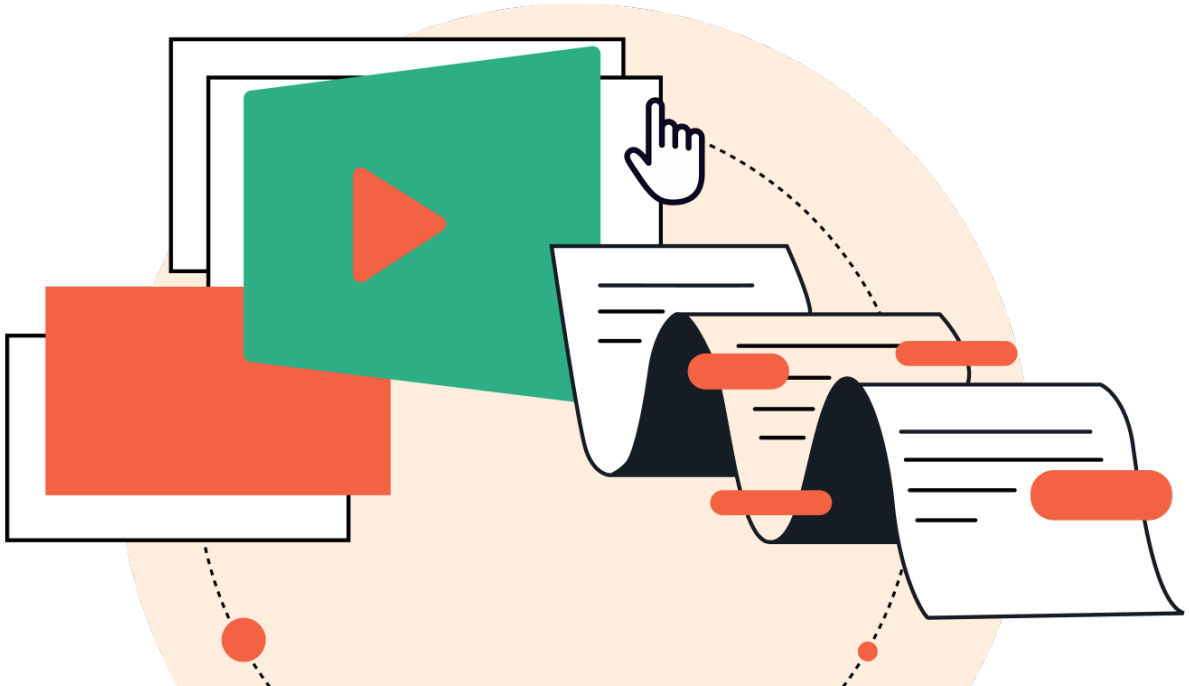
Provide feedback

By providing feedback to the student on their performance, you will help them understand where they need to improve. If you create an online quiz with iSpring Suite, you can give brief feedback that explains why the learner is mistaken and then send them to the info slide that will provide some extra information on that topic.

05

Create cheat-proof assessments

Build assessment tools that will let you collect accurate results. When creating quizzes with iSpring Suite, you can randomize questions, shuffle answer options, and set a time limit for answering each question, so no cheater will pass.



How to Deliver eLearning Resources Online

According to Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards, RTOs have to use a Student Management System (SMS) to deliver training and assessment materials and track students' results. Some of the key features of an SMS include:

SMS

- Managing enquiries from prospective students
- Processing student admissions
- Enrolling new students
- Handling assessments, grades, and academic progression
- Maintaining a record of attendance
- Tracking awards, qualifications, and graduations

However, if you're going to focus on eLearning resources, it might be more relevant to also use a Learning Management System (LMS), since it offers many more capabilities for online learning.

An LMS allows you to streamline the training process by providing a centralised location for all training materials, smart content and user management, and training automation at different levels – from course enrollment to performance analytics. Some of the key features of an LMS include:

- Storing all training and assessment materials under one roof
- Combining various training resources in structured training programs
- Collecting thorough training analytics and generating reports
- Delivering virtual training sessions and keeping track of learner attendance
- Automating routines like enrolling students in courses, reminding them of deadlines, and sending out invitations to upcoming virtual trainings
- Mobile apps for learning on the go, even when offline

The iSpring Suite authoring toolkit is fully integrated with the iSpring Learn LMS, so you can publish all your training and assessment materials to the LMS right from the iSpring Suite interface in a couple of clicks. The integration also ensures that all your resources will be well-displayed in the LMS and properly tracked.

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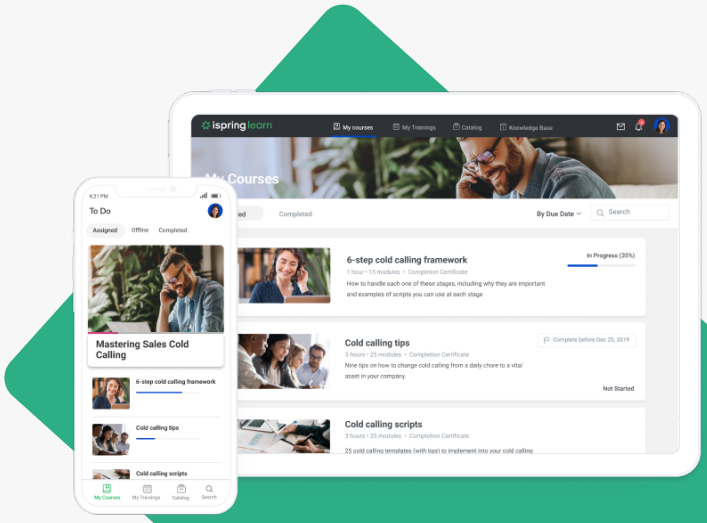
Streamline your
training delivery
and result evaluation.

Learn more →



Bottom Line

Online training is an agile solution that meets the current needs of RTOs. It offers a flexible training method for students that can be accessed anytime, anywhere.

Contextualisation of existing training and assessment materials and turning them into interactive eLearning content or creating such resources from scratch is a win-win for students and RTOs. These resources make learning engaging for students and let them learn at their own pace, while allowing training organisations to establish themselves as RTOs that support innovative approaches to learning.

About iSpring

iSpring is a global leader in creating award-winning software for eLearning. For over 20 years, it has developed more than 10 stand-alone eLearning tools, such as iSpring QuizMaker, iSpring Converter Pro, and iSpring Cam Pro. These tools are extremely popular with eLearning professionals both separately and together – in iSpring Suite, an all-in-one authoring tool.

The release of iSpring Learn, a cloud-based LMS, in 2014 enabled companies to accomplish their online learning needs entirely with iSpring's solutions. The vendor constantly updates its products to always stay ahead of the curve and introduces new features based on user requests.

iSpring is recognised for its beautifully engineered products and exceptional customer service. More than 59,000 customers in over 170 countries choose iSpring for its high level of performance and reliability. The customer list includes thousands of freelance instructional designers and teachers, almost 200 of the Fortune 500 companies, government agencies, and educational institutions worldwide, some clients being Microsoft, SAP, Boeing, Dell, Adidas, Procter & Gamble, University of California at Berkeley, Harvard University, and Stanford University.

About iSpring Suite

iSpring Suite is a fully packed eLearning authoring solution that allows you to create versatile learning content fast, with no previous experience. Its core tool works as a PowerPoint add-in, which makes for a familiar interface that is easy to use. You turn existing PPT slides into engaging training modules with interactive quizzes, video lectures, screencasts, role-plays, and interactions.

iSpring Suite Max comes with a content library that allows you to make the creation process even faster. It includes over 89,000 high-quality templates, images of characters, locations, icons, and controls, so you don't have to look for visuals elsewhere.

There's also an online service for content sharing and collaboration available for Max users. It's a secure place where users can store training materials and gather stakeholders' feedback on them. The online service also includes an in-built authoring tool for making interactive pages right in a browser.

Other important features of iSpring Suite are:

- Mobile-ready content
- SCORM (1.2 and 2004), AICC, xAPI (Tin Can), and cmi5 compliance
- PPT, PDF, Word to flipbook converter
- Section 508 and WCAG compliant courses for those with disabilities
- A text-to-speech function
- Guaranteed compatibility with LMSs

Would you like to see iSpring Suite in action? Test-drive the authoring toolkit for 14 days with a free trial.

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Create training materials and assessment tools in record time.

Get a free trial