User Manual

Create Online Training Courses
with
SharedTrain

https://www.sharedtrain.com

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SharedTrain   Online Training Software

Introduction

The first course was aimed at users of Chemdata, an information system for chemical incident first responders. That course is used to illustrate this manual.

It aims to take a new trainer through the process of creating a course from beginning to end. Trainees are called students in this manual.

Students can't see individual question scores – only their total on completion.

SharedTrain does not require payment for a course unless it carries a price. Pricing is introduced but not detailed in this manual.

Table of Contents

Section 1 – Overview, groups, steps and design

Courses are developed in the Admin at https://www.sharedtrain.com/**admin** which is a secure website. Logins must have membership in the trainer group.

All new user registrants are automatically made members of the student group which does not include access to the Admin site. Trainers are encouraged to have two logins, one with and one without trainer group membership.

For security reasons trainer group membership is managed by SharedTrain itself.

Published courses are taken by student users on the public-facing website https://www.sharedtrain.com

Courses can be restricted to users with a relationship to a particular organisation.

Stepwise:
1. Create a course and give it a name and target audience
2. Create course content in one or more Instruction records
3. Add questions to Instruction records
4. Decide the answer format:
   ◦ multiple choice with single correct answer
   ◦ single question with yes/no answer
   ◦ multiple possible correct answers
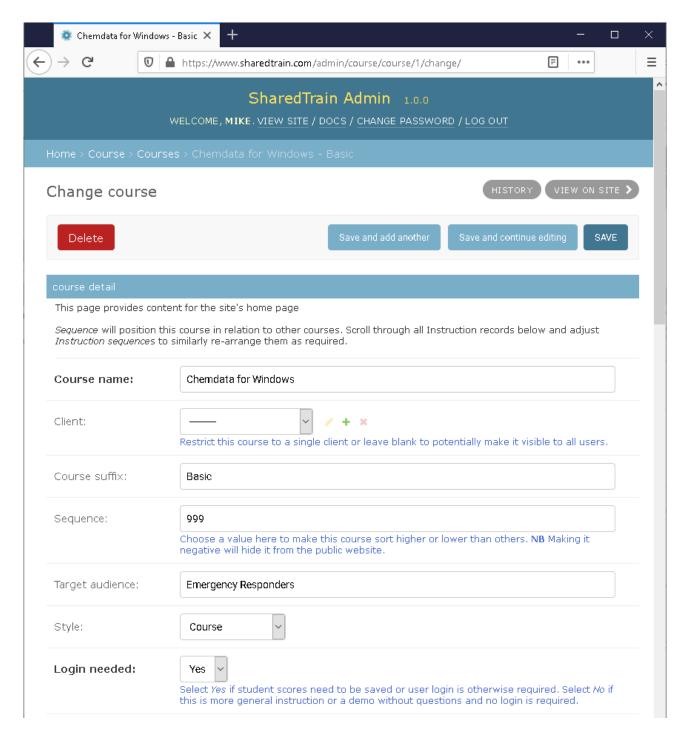   ◦ multiple questions all needing correct answers

An instruction record (2 above) may optionally contain text with embedded images. If a video is uploaded to it that text with images will not be displayed.

This mix of approaches helps in refining course design. The text-with-images version can be road tested before becoming a detailed brief for video production.

On the public-facing website for every course there is a private on-screen note, unique per login. Primarily for students, it is also useful for trainer notes. For simple in-house video production it is intended for writing the voice-over script.

Section 2 – Add a course

At the Admin main menu after login click + Add a course or in Course | Courses click ADD COURSE + and start entering course top-level detail ...

If a client is selected this course will be restricted to users linked to that client. Otherwise it will be public. See next page for continuation of this image.

Add a course (continued)

Course screen image continued ...

The INSTRUCTION holds course content which is revealed by clicking the (SHOW) link. See next section.

On the public website the above detail is displayed like this ...

Section 3 – Create course content

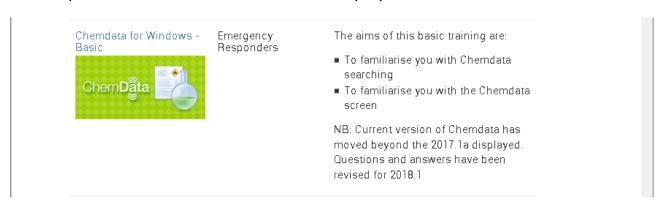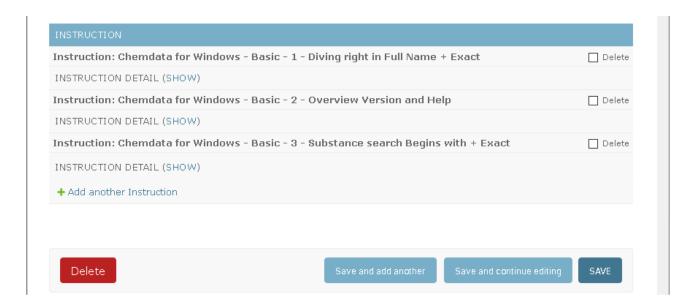At the bottom of the main image on the previous page can be seen the start of that course's instruction records. The image below shows the first three of six intended instruction records for the "Chemdata for Windows – Basic" course.

Instruction records are added as required. They would typically be added one after the other, each given a title, some brief written content and put into the desired sequence for the planned course before expanding or finalising the content.

SharedTrain design assumes each instruction needs a video. In development however, a course normally starts with written instruction and interspersed images. The entire course can be framed and left that way if video is not (yet) available or inappropriate.

In framing a course, use + Add another Instruction to add more topics/sessions.

The (SHOW) link will reveal an instruction record and become a (HIDE) link to provide "concertina" access to **all** course instructional content in the **same** web page.

After adding another instruction (the fourth) the next page shows it individually with text, images and video.

3. Create course content (continued)

After clicking (SHOW), entering some detail and saving, Instruction 4 gains a title …

The text and embedded image here constitutes course content. However, because video has also been uploaded, students will not see *Written instruction*.

For cross-browser compatibility the same video converted into two or three popular formats should be uploaded. The *Currently* links seen above will display the uploaded video for testing.

3. Create course content (continued)

In the image below, all six Instruction topics have been added to the Course. All titles have been automatically constructed from the *Course* name plus *Course suffix* (see page 4) – *Instruction Sequence* number, *Topic* and *Item* (see page 7).

Instruction records may be re-sequenced and content reviewed by showing and hiding individual records and adjusting *Instruction sequence*.

Without questions and answers, the above set of instruction records would be a demonstration or self-paced presentation.

The balance of this manual covers Q&A with scores for training purposes.

Section 4 – Add a question

Questions/answers are added to a single Instruction record selected from the main menu – not from within the course page. See below.

Above at the main menu click Instruction to reveal existing instructions and …

… select one instruction to get started with questions and specified answers

4. Add a question (continued)

The course's fourth Instruction was selected from the listed records on the previous page.

The upper section of this image is omitted. Not shown here is *Written instruction* content which was seen earlier on page 7.

This Instruction already has one question. After clicking + Add another Question, Question #2 appears.

Notice the (SHOW) link to expand the new Question #2 record for data entry.

After expanding it will become a (HIDE) link and thus provide "concertina" access. This keeps **all** questions together for **this** Instruction in the **same** web page.

Question #2 will gain its title after saving.

4. Add a question (continued)

Upon clicking (SHOW) for Question #2 a blank question record appears ...

The missing bottom portion of this image is for answers. Answers are discussed in the next section.

Just like Instruction records, Questions may be renumbered but not duplicated.

Choose the score for this question. The default is one point.

Preamble help-text, repeated here, describes how the software works ...

Considering instruction already seen by students, include here any additional contextual information required for single or multi-choice response below. Ask the actual question here **unless** you want multiple questions below. For multiple questions provide advice here on how you want them considered. See also *Single answer* help-text below.

Next section completes Question 2 with a simple multiple-choice single answer.

Section 5 – Set the correct answers

The previous section showed how to add a fresh question to an existing instruction.

It mentioned that all questions are collected under their respective Instruction records. There can be any number of questions.

This section starts with a simple multi-choice single answer question and continues with a number of examples of different answer styles or formats.

An entire course can be built on simple multiple-choice responses to questions and the first two examples in this section show exactly that.

It is also possible and perhaps desirable to get students responding to varying advice rather than just clicking selection after selection in every question.

The last two examples show such different approaches to course design.

5.1 - Simple multiple-choice

The only correct answer here is C. However, if *Single answer* above had "B or C" then either would score correctly and only A would score zero.

5.2 – Simple multiple–choice student display

Wording changes in the question can be saved in the Admin site and refreshed in a separate browser tab on the student side as shown below ...

As set in the Admin on the previous page, the correct answer is 'C'.

Here, the wrong choice was selected (ie., 'B') and saved for a zero score.

Where there is more than one possible correct answer, and always according to the trainer's taste, *Preamble* wording might include *Select a correct answer* rather than *Select **the** correct answer*.

Notice that A, B, C etc are multiple-choice labels **just for the Admin** and do not appear on the student side.

The balance of this manual will demonstrate different answer styles in the Admin each followed by an image of what the student would see.

5.3 – Simple Yes/No

A yes or no response is a multiple-choice single answer with just two options.

Next page shows what the student will see. There can only be one correct answer.

5.4 – Simple Yes/No student display

This is what the student/trainer sees. Only a trainer can see the score.

The key point of simple multiple-choice is having a single answer and entering the words from which the student must choose.

Equally important is the advice (in the question *Preamble*) to "Select the correct answer". In the above example, use was made of the text formatting tools seen in the heading of the *Preamble* field in the Admin.

Yes/No above could easily be True/False or any other double choice eg., Green/Ripe or even 75 / 42.

5.5 – Single answer

This is also a simple single-answer question but it has multiple correct answers.

Any one of many answers separated by the special word "or" will evaluate as correct. In this case the student might be using any of the three versions.

If there was only one correct answer then it would be even simpler to leave it as such in *Single answer*.

Note that any value can be used. Answers are not case sensitive.

The six pairs of Q&A fields below *Single answer* are all left blank in this case and therefore omitted from the above image.

5.6 - Single answer student display

This is what the student sees - except, of course, not the score!

In this case, the Preamble field is used directly for the question and an admonition to conduct proper research for the answer.

Glimpsed here at the bottom of the above image is the heading for the student's private course note. It is visible read-only while answering questions.

The private course note may be edited by the student during instruction sessions.

The design theory is that students are encouraged in competency based learning to write notes during instruction. Showing the note read-only while answering questions prevents them documenting their answers and thereby makes it slightly more difficult to 'game' the system.

Writing notes in any case is likely to help them to remember course content and afterwards may be kept for future reference.

5.7 – Complex question

Question: Chemdata for Windows - Basic - 6 - Substance search Summary Q1 ☐ Delete

QUESTION DETAIL (HIDE)

It is essential to increment the *Question number* field for EACH additional question

Question number: 1

Score: 10
Value earned for a correct answer to this question

Preamble:

You are responding to a leaking container. The label is damaged but on the outside you can see 'copper' and a symbol as shown below. There is an orange/brown liquid paste leaking from the container.

How would you search Chemdata to find this substance?

Think about this before looking at the specific questions below. Ten points on offer!

1. *Answer question **A** with the number of names found when the witness is colour-blind.*
2. *Answer questions **B, C** and **D** only after carefully examining the document numbers displayed.*
3. *Finally, answer question **E** with the document number you select.*

POWERED BY TINY

Considering instruction already seen by students, include here any additional contextual information required for single or multi-choice response below. Ask the actual question here **unless** you want multiple questions below. For multiple questions provide advice here on how you want them considered. See also *Single answer* help-text below.

Single answer:

For any question requiring a single response, put the correct answer in this field. It can be any value such as a number or word or the letter corresponding to a correct option (*Question-A, Question-B* etc) below. Multiple correct answers can be separated here with the keyword '**or**'.

Students must select the choice corresponding to the answer in this field to score.

For multiple-questions leave this field blank. Put all questions **with** their answers below. Use the *Preamble* field above to advise how to respond. All answers must be correct to score.

The balance of this image is on the next page and shows five questions indicated by the identifying letters A, B, C, D and E mentioned in the *Preamble* above.

Note that *Single answer* is always left blank **for multiple questions**.

5.7 Complex question (continued)

Please relate each question here with context in *Preamble* on the previous page

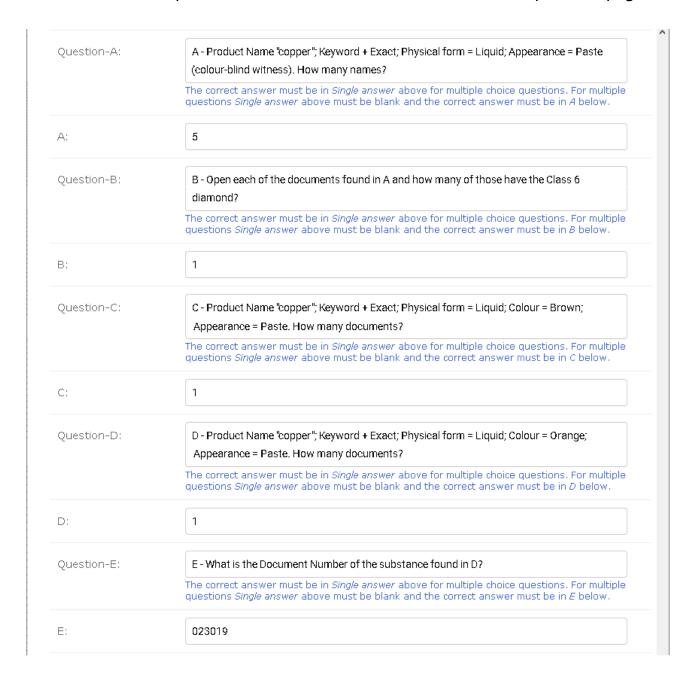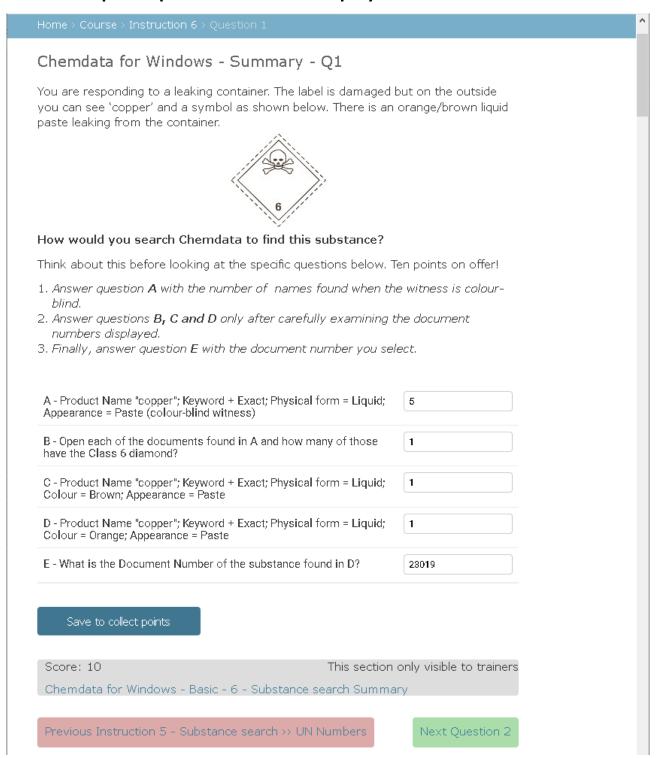| Question-A: | A - Product Name "copper"; Keyword + Exact; Physical form = Liquid; Appearance = Paste (colour-blind witness). How many names? |
	The correct answer must be in Single answer above for multiple choice questions. For multiple questions Single answer above must be blank and the correct answer must be in A below.
A:	5
Question-B:	B - Open each of the documents found in A and how many of those have the Class 6 diamond?
	The correct answer must be in Single answer above for multiple choice questions. For multiple questions Single answer above must be blank and the correct answer must be in B below.
B:	1
Question-C:	C - Product Name "copper"; Keyword + Exact; Physical form = Liquid; Colour = Brown; Appearance = Paste. How many documents?
	The correct answer must be in Single answer above for multiple choice questions. For multiple questions Single answer above must be blank and the correct answer must be in C below.
C:	1
Question-D:	D - Product Name "copper"; Keyword + Exact; Physical form = Liquid; Colour = Orange; Appearance = Paste. How many documents?
	The correct answer must be in Single answer above for multiple choice questions. For multiple questions Single answer above must be blank and the correct answer must be in D below.
D:	1
Question-E:	E - What is the Document Number of the substance found in D?
	The correct answer must be in Single answer above for multiple choice questions. For multiple questions Single answer above must be blank and the correct answer must be in E below.
E:	023019

Labelling these questions A, B, C, D and E (or 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) is helpful in referring to them in context in the *Preamble*

Without such labels the advice would be unnecessarily difficult to express and awkward for the student to relate particular questions to parts of the advice.
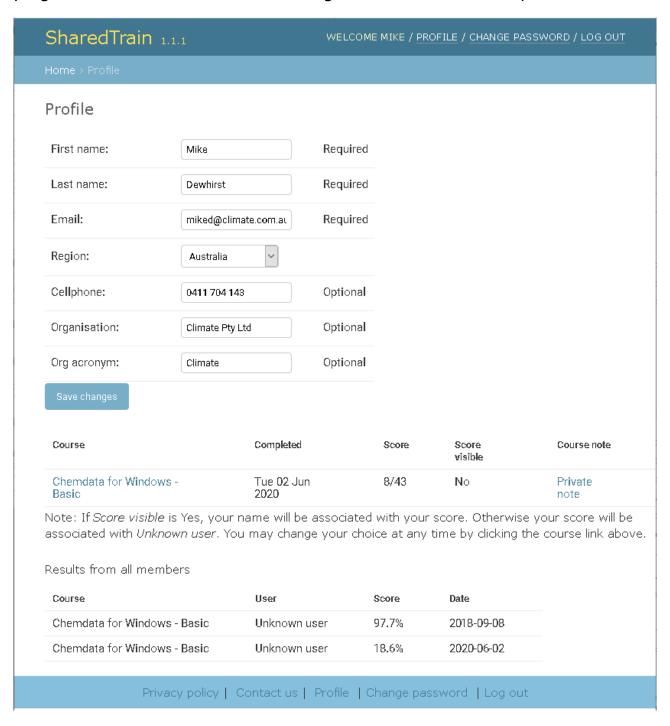
5.8 – Complex question student display

All answers must be correct to score any points.

Section 6 − Trainer profile page

Results info at the bottom of this image is shown only to trainers. They can see progress of all members of their own organisation who have completed a course.

Simple arithmetic shows 8/43 is 18.6% and the trainer seems to have not performed well here. *Score visible = No* hides student identity.

Section 7 – Pricing a course

This section merely introduces pricing. It is not intended to describe how to use the billing software.

Users in the *owner* group have the necessary permissions and authority to price their own courses.

Membership of the *owner* group is by request to a member of the sharedtrain group and with approval from the user's organisation.

The receipting system allows for revenue splitting by pre-agreed percentages and accepts payment in most of the popular currencies.

Automatic revenue splitting facilitates development of courses by syndicates of independent contributors. Such might include subject matter experts, training experts, video production houses, marketers, hosting providers and SharedTrain itself.

Courses without a price are (obviously) free and have no need for an *owner*.

Section 8 – Change SharedTrain Software

Any change can be requested including changes to the manual or on-screen help text adjustments. The better specified, the easier to accomplish.

Please follow these guidelines to specify a change:

- Name the requested change so it can be differentiated from other change requests in conversation and communication channels
- Provide contact detail of the expert who will answer developer questions
- Name the person who will accept or reject the change on having it demonstrated
- Business case or reason for the change* in fewer than 50 words
- Actual change requested (or defect) in sufficient** detail
- Success test(s) for developers to work with and which will be used to assist in acceptance/rejection of working software
- User priority*** or target date for rollout

* Business case or reason is for users to assess and adjust business priorities when there are many change requests in the backlog.

** "Sufficient" varies. A distant future change needs very little detail beyond a name and business case overview. Only when scheduled for development by users is real detail is needed. It might be noted that defects require the most exquisite detail including copies of error messages if any.

*** Priority is assigned by users. It is the sequencing of one change before or after another in the backlog. Developers do not assess a user's business case and simply take their next task from the head of the list. Defects usually take priority.

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