STRUCTURE YOUR TRAINING PROGRAMS ACCORDING TO YOUR TRAINING GOALS

Courses and Learning Programs: how and when to use them.

ABSTRACT

What are your training goals? What are your time frames? Who is your audience? Keep these and other objectives in mind when planning and creating a Training.

Adobe Captivate Prime Product Management
A 2021 Customer Guide

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How do you decide what kind of Training to create? Do you base it on the subject matter, length, format, user group, convenience? The good news is that all these factors help you decide.

Your Content Library may contain hundreds of training Modules, the smallest units of learning in Adobe Captivate Prime (referred to as Captivate Prime hereon). Therefore, when you start assembling these into Courses, Learning Programs and Certifications, it would help to keep in mind some objectives.

The time factor

If you want to quickly train a group of employees, e.g., on a new safety protocol, it is easy to enroll them in that piece of learning, give them a deadline, conduct the training, and check it off your list once done. In Captivate Prime, we recommend creating Courses to manage such short trainings. A Course in Captivate Prime comprises modules that are of various formats (activity, online learning or eLearning, classroom session, and virtual classroom session).

It is a different training goal when you have, e.g., a new batch of recruits that you must onboard in the organization and who require different kinds of training over a period of several weeks. In situations like this, training includes a variety of learning types, some mandatory, some optional and some sequential. To handle these kinds of requirements, Captivate Prime supports the construct of a Learning Program.

Subject grouping

In Captivate Prime, an independent unit of learning that does not necessarily have to be combined with any other unit of learning is a Course. Courses are made up of basic building blocks or Modules in Captivate Prime. If there are a couple of small modules (e.g., a short video and a piece of eLearning content) that are closely related, together they can form a Course.

Note: Courses can exist in the LMS independent of larger Trainings. Such Courses, when made available to learners, will be available for individual consumption.

The Learning Program, on the other hand, is a great way to combine a series of linked Courses. Further, you can require the learner to take these Courses in sequence too if necessary. E.g., first, you may want them to take an eLearning Course to understand the subject matter. And then follow up with a series of classroom

sessions where they may gain hands-on experience with a product, and then perhaps another Course on something like product marketing, etc.

Skills

All training in Captivate Prime is aligned with [Skills](#). As an overarching umbrella, in Captivate Prime, the goal of all training is to achieve certain Skills. The Skills you incorporate in the LMS will be the Skills to which you align your training components. Therefore, when you create a Course or Learning Program in Captivate Prime, you necessarily align them with certain Skills.

The grouping of Trainings under Skills also helps segregate your Trainings and makes it easier for learners to pick and choose.

Sequencing of Courses

Depending on what you are training learners in, you can choose to have learners take Courses in a given order. Sometimes it is important that there is a sequence to the learning so that people progress in their understanding of the subject matter in the appropriate direction.

Once you add Courses to the Learning Program you can change the order of the Courses in the UI simply by dragging and dropping them.
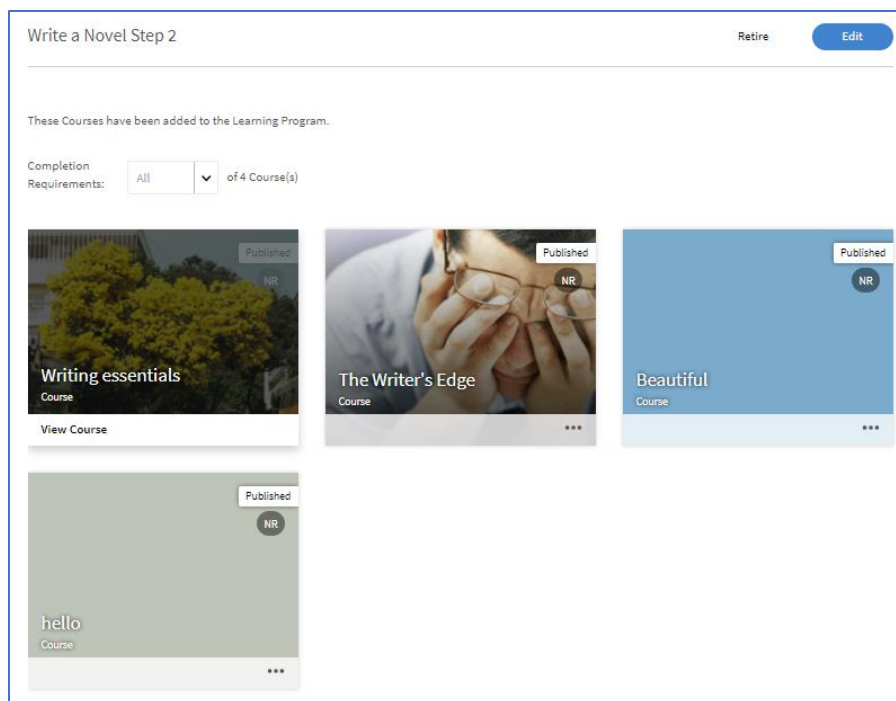
Build Trainings

With Captivate Prime there are in effect three different kinds of Trainings, or ways to organize learning: Course, Learning Program and Certification.

Modules → make up a Course, and Courses → make up Learning Programs and/or Certifications.
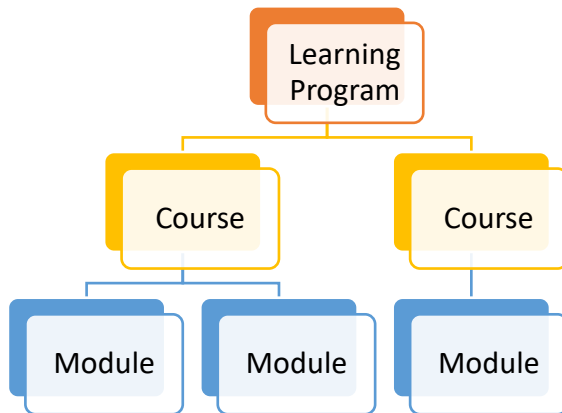
The most frequently created Training in the LMS is the Course. It is easy to create a variety of Courses, align them with Skills, assign them to Catalogs created according to subject matter e.g. Legal, Safety & Security, etc., and enroll learners as you like.

When you create a Course in the LMS it does not have to be an island, an isolated piece of learning. You can create Courses to be grouped together with other Courses, and taken together, in a more holistic learning experience, i.e., Learning Programs.

Benefits of a Learning Program	Benefits of a Course
Add structure to training objectives	An independent unit
Gives learners comprehensive learning	Quick, short learning
Usually spread over weeks/months	Usually takes a few hours/days.
Keeps learners engaged and on track, moving from Course to Course.	Can be used to build larger Trainings
Obviates need to enroll learners in individual Courses that form the Learning Program. A learner enrolled in a Learning Program implies that they are enrolled in all the Courses that are part of it.	If taken in a series of independent units, learners must manually be enrolled in every subsequent Course.
Sequencing of Courses	Sequencing of Modules
Has its own gamification	Part of the overall account gamification initiative
Instances offer flexibility	Instances offer flexibility

Create a Course when...

You want to cover one area succinctly. A Course is typically:

- Short, according to the length of the modules added, generally adding up to a few hours.
- Used in combination with other Courses to form a larger Training like a Learning Program or Certification.

A Course is a unit of Training in Captivate Prime. A Course is made up of Modules which may be of the following kinds:

- Activity
- Self-paced / eLearning
- Classroom
- Virtual Classroom

The combination of modules you use to structure your Course will dictate its format: Activity, Self-Paced, Blended etc. Modules can be sequenced or not, according to how you want learners to consume them.

A note on Certifications

Like Learning Programs, Certifications are also made up of Courses. However, the key difference between the two is that Certifications are usually recurring Trainings. E.g., Safety & Security Certification that employees must take every year. Learners are usually enrolled by the Admin in certification programs and on completion earn a certificate to say they are certified in XYZ training.

Flexible learning

A learner centric LMS, Captivate Prime enables you to offer your learners flexibility when you use "Instances" of Courses and Learning Programs.

Instances and Courses

Course Instances offer flexibility to learners who are spread across different time zones/locations or who for various reasons want to take on the training at a different time/place than what the Default Instance may offer. An Admin can create different Instances to accommodate their needs. The use case for Instances is usually classroom or virtual classroom sessions that occur live in a time zone. To ensure that all learners are presented with the opportunity to attend, an Admin may create more than one Instance of a Course session to accommodate different time zones.

Instances and Learning Programs

An advantage with Learning Programs in the Captivate Prime LMS is the flexibility you can give learners with Instances of the same Learning Program. So, whether it is for a new user group of recruits, or one that is in a different time or geographical zone, you can create a separate instance for them and enroll them accordingly.
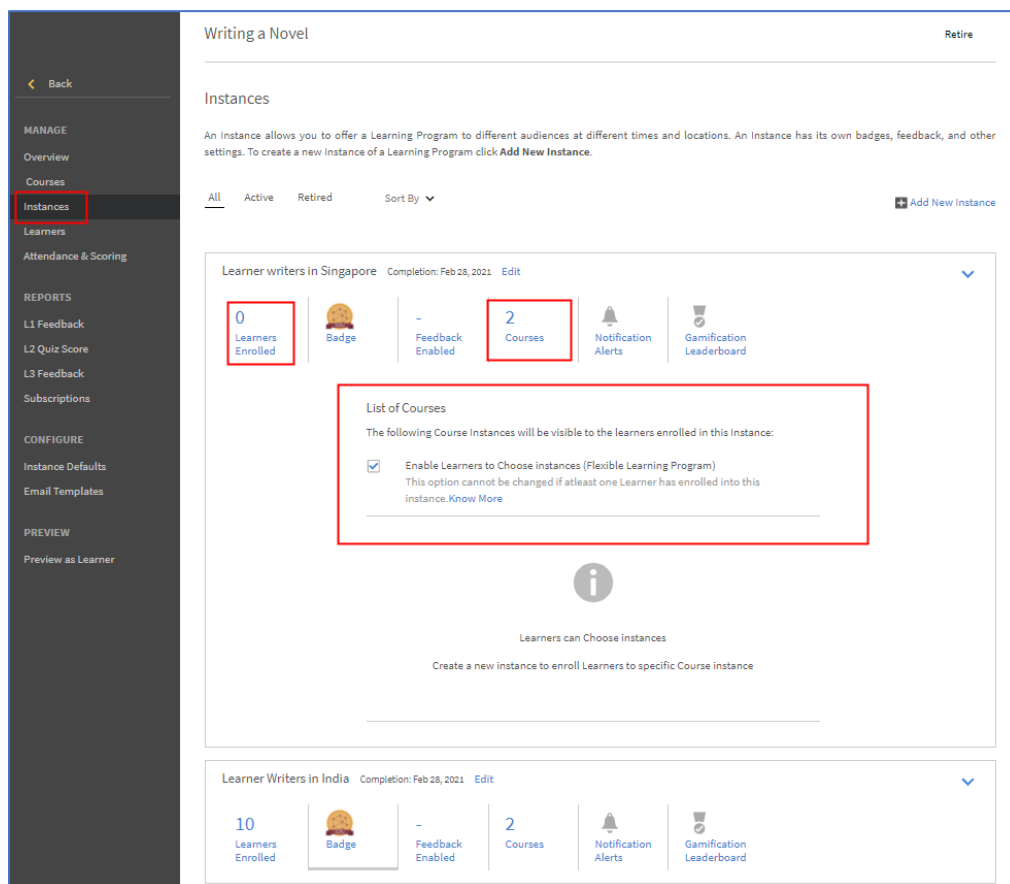
Create a Learning Program when…

You want to cover several related topics in a comprehensive manner. A Learning Program is typically:

- Lengthy, made up of multiple Courses, spread over a period of several weeks.
- Used in conjunction with larger and well-defined training goals.
- Can comprise ordered or unordered Courses.
- Can be assigned to a particular user group.
- Allows for independent gamification.
- Allows for flexibility by offering choices of Instances.

Additionally, not only can you choose an Instance of a Learning Program, but Captivate Prime also lets you map your Learning Program Instance to a Course Instance of your choice.
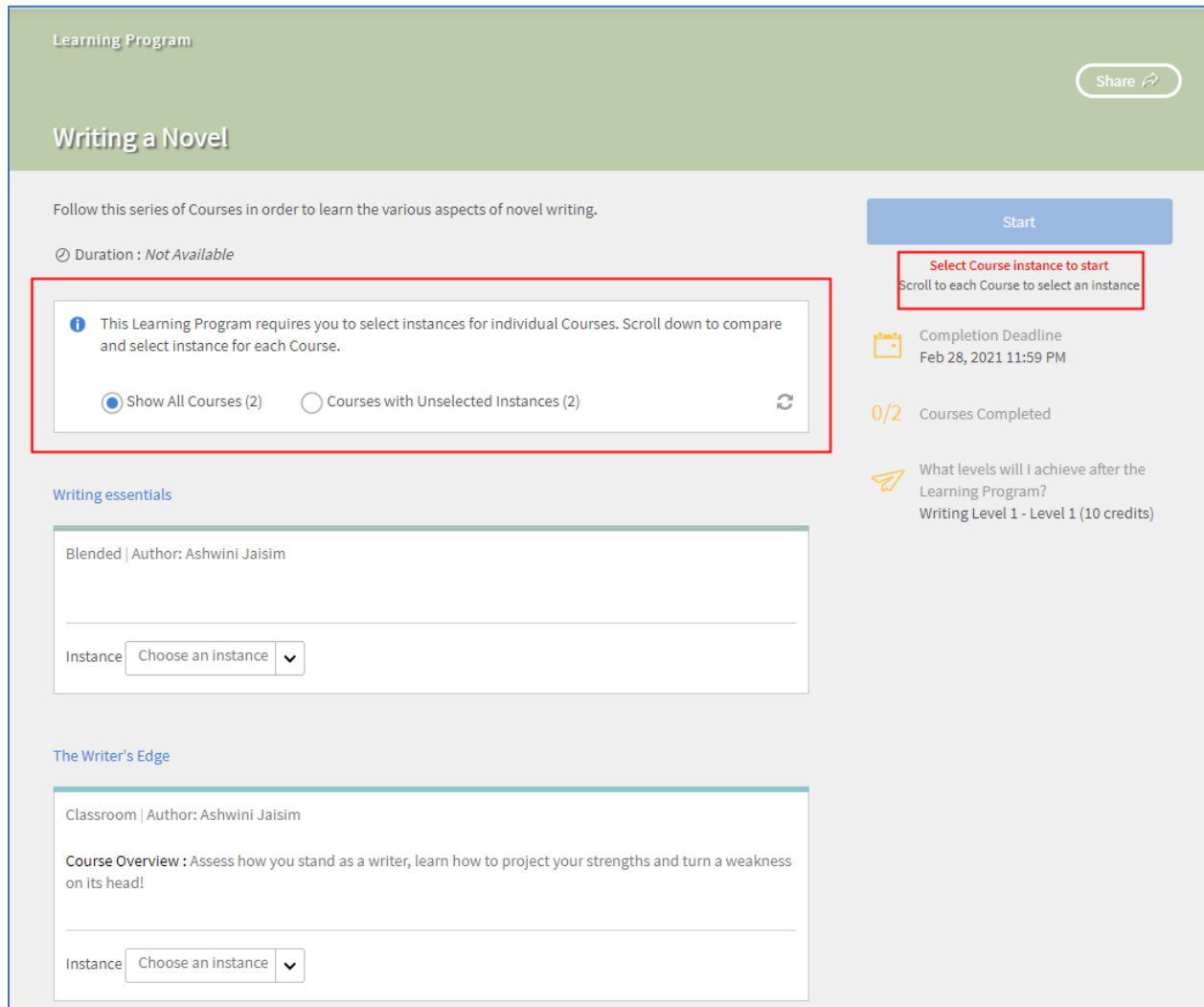
The permutations and combinations can be several depending on how many instances you create of Courses and Learning Programs. Therefore, the default setting is whatever the Admin decides is the appropriate Course Instance for a Learning Program Instance. However, should you want to enable the flexible option, here is a quick look at the workflow:

1. Create Courses with multiple instances.

2. Create Learning Program and add Courses.

3. Create Instances of Learning Program.

4. Select the Instance for which you want to offer flexibility, and then click on "X Courses" (X is the number of Courses in the Learning Program) to view the flexibility option. Check the box if you want your learners to choose Course Instances for themselves. If you do not want learners to have a choice, leave the box unchecked.

5. Enroll learners only after Step 4 above. Once you have enrolled learners you will not be able to enable flexibility for this Learning Program (you will have to unenroll learners and go back to Step 4.)

6. When learners are enrolled in a flexible Learning Program and navigate to said Learning Program in the platform, they are instructed to select an Instance before they can begin training.


Partner/Customer Training

Learning Programs are also very useful for training a group of external users. E.g. you want to train a retail partner's sales team in the use of your product. You can add them as external users in the platform, enroll them in a Learning Program and have them interact with the LMS without interfering in the logistics of training your internal workforce.

Motivating user groups – Gamification

Gamification rewards learners for various kinds of learning behaviors such as timely completion, number of Trainings completed and more. A leaderboard lets you see where you stand compared to your peers.

With Captivate Prime you can choose to gamify individual instances of a Learning Program. A Learning Program can be used to provide training to an external group of learners, for example, the sales team of a partner company. Both for reasons of organizational privacy as well as for reasons of relevance, it makes sense not to include the external group in ongoing gamification endeavors in your organization's internal LMS account.
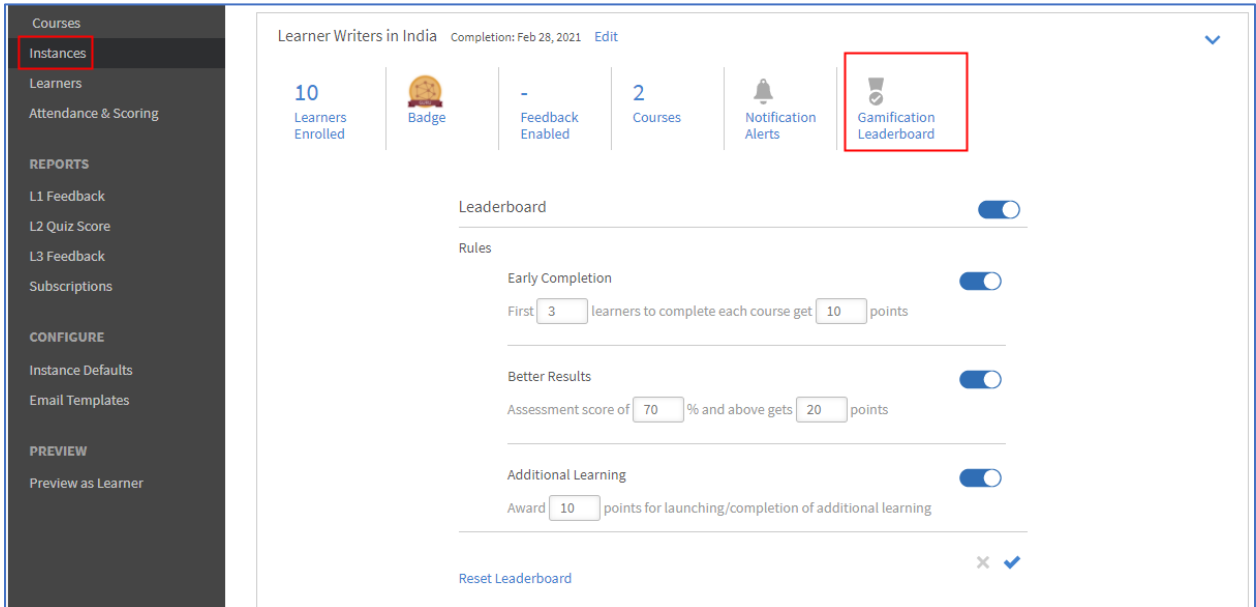
Therefore, for example, all sales personnel of your partner 'Reseller A' can be enrolled in one Instance of your Learning Program about your products and services, and you can add gamification to this instance so that they can compete with one another, therefore motivating and challenging each other within the familiarity of a peer group.

You can set up gamification to have rewards for high achievers and even turn the points into something more concrete.

Conclusion

When you support your learners to take their training in bits and pieces, spread out over time according to requirements and convenience, then you drive learning in an organic manner in your organization. As a rule of thumb, it is easier to consume education of any kind, when broken into "chunks". It is a well-established fact that human beings have limited attention spans. Captivate Prime takes this into consideration in the structuring of all Trainings on the platform.

While modules form the smallest building block and are combined into Courses and so on, it is also important to remember that just adding modules in Courses can render a Course quite unwieldy. While a Course is a great short term training program, its compatibility with grouping according to subject matter makes it the standard component in building larger and longer training initiatives. Learning Programs are ideal when your training objective goes beyond the individual learner to focus on larger groups and lengthier training timelines. Features such as Gamification and Instances with flexibility in mapping Course Instances, make this a well-crafted Training in the achievement of organizational skills and goals.