

MarineNet Hosting: Frequently Asked Questions January 2023

GENERAL INFORMATION

1) What is a “sponsor” of a MarineNet-hosted product?

CDET requires that every product on MarineNet be “sponsored” by a USMC proponent who accepts responsibility for both content and functionality throughout the product’s lifecycle. Sponsors will review their products annually to validate content/instructional strategy continues to meet the intended training or education requirement; if not, sponsors inform CDET of the issues and discuss potential courses of action.

For high volume products, sponsors may be required to provide a POC for student questions and issues unrelated to MarineNet delivery technology (e.g., enrollment eligibility policy, content questions, product-specific functionality issues).

2) What is a MarineNet Support Agreement?

A MarineNet Support Agreement (MSA) establishes the responsibilities of CDET and the sponsor regarding MarineNet hosting of an electronic training/education (T/E) product.

The product sponsor must sign an MSA before the activation process may begin. CDET will counter sign the agreement after the product is determined to be supportable.

3) What’s the first step in getting an electronic training or education product hosted on MarineNet?

To make a preliminary determination of supportability, CDET needs to fully understand what the sponsor intends to accomplish via MarineNet delivery of your T/E product.

Prospective product sponsors should contact CDET Digital Content Department (DCD)

[Lead Instructional Systems Specialist via](#)

mcu_cdet_digitalcontent@usmcu.edu or submit a content inquiry request via [jira](#)

4) Is there a cost associated with MarineNet hosting?

As of August 2015, but subject to change, MarineNet hosting carries no cost to a sponsor; however, a personnel time commitment is required.

Sponsors must understand that MarineNet testing and activation activities are their responsibility. DCD staff respond as quickly as possible to RFIs and process requests; however, time required to respond and execute may vary widely for the same task.

5) Does CDET evaluate the instructional and/or graphical user interface design of a product submitted for MarineNet hosting?

Not typically. CDET is not resourced to screen all products for effective instructional design or graphical user interface.

Sponsors developing products for large audiences (e.g., training or education to

meet an annual requirement for all Marines) may request CDET's advice regarding instructional design and graphical user interface decisions; however, this should occur early in the product design phase.

6) What if a product developer has questions during product development?

CDET expects developers to collaborate and forward questions to their assigned DCD POC. Questions must be presented in writing.

7) Does CDET maintain a development “sandbox” where third-party developers may test their products prior to delivery?

MarineNet utilizes Rustici Content Controller for content management. Content Controller allows developers to upload, test, troubleshoot and share content with others for review before the content is openly available on MarineNet.

8) What information/documents are required for sponsors to obtain a Content Controller account:

1. Signed MarineNet Support Agreement (if not previously submitted)
2. [Content Controller MN Course](#) Completion Certificate
3. Course Catalog description requirements
4. Product name
5. List of people who need Content Controller accounts

9) What if the sponsor finds problems with the product during Content Controller Review?

Most courseware problems—dysfunctional interface elements, incorrect scoring of assessment items within the course, failure to communicate successfully with MarineNet, etc.—result from faulty programming or development tool configuration. Failure to register and communicate completion status to MarineNet is a non-negotiable show stopper.

CDET will discuss minor functionality deficiencies at the sponsor's request; however, final decision to move forward without correction of minor deficiencies belongs to CDET.

Required functionality corrections must be completed by the sponsor and developer.

10) Is CDET responsible for correcting courseware deficiencies discovered on Content Controller?

No. CDET is not resourced to correct third-party developed courseware. Sponsors and courseware developers are responsible to correct any content uploaded to Content Controller prior to submitting a final product.

11) Who makes the final decision regarding MarineNet hosting of a given product?

To minimize Marines' frustration with courseware that does not function properly, CDET makes the final decision regarding product supportability on MarineNet. CDET will not activate products with known functionality errors that will or may impede learner progress through the instruction to completion.

12) How will MarineNet users find out about a new course?

CDET publicizes newly activated products via a MarineNet Activation Announcement (MAA) created in collaboration with the product sponsor. In addition, new products that require a single enrollment may be featured among the Spotlight Courses on the MarineNet Home page.

13) How will the sponsor know how the product is performing?

MarineNet's Content Controller application allows sponsors to run various real time reports on courses, accounts and learners. Sponsors can tailor the reports to only display information important to them.

Sponsors who have a demonstrated need for regular performance data may request a MarineNet "Content Owner" role that will enable self-generation of product performance data through a variety of pre-configured reports.

Sponsors are required to validate course requirements, content, performance, configuration, and renew their MSA every two years.

14) Is CDET responsible for lifecycle maintenance once a course is active on MarineNet?

No. Product content and functionality maintenance remain the responsibility of the USMC sponsor. CDET will notify sponsors if a course consistently malfunctions, requires multiple assessment attempts for most students to pass, or otherwise generates a significant number of Help Desk contacts, but sponsors must review the product annually to ensure that the content and instructional objectives are up to date and that the product continues to function as intended.

If deficiencies are noted, the sponsor may apply via application development process to have CDET DCD update the product or may opt to immediately update or outsource the update. If deficiencies are critical, the sponsor should contact DCD to discuss interim actions. CDET reserves the right to discontinue enrollment and/or suspend access for any product with significant technical problems.

15) What if a sponsor has questions or concerns once a course is active on MarineNet?

Upon course activation, CDET's Operations Department becomes the POC for questions/concerns regarding day-to-day courseware operation. The sponsor may contact the MarineNet Help Desk for forwarding to the correct POC. Sponsors considering an update or other revision to active courseware should once again contact the Digital Content Department for advice.

16) Does CDET develop electronic training and education products for MarineNet hosting?

Yes. CDET's Digital Content Department (DCD) maintains a small team of electronic learning production specialists, including instructional designers, multimedia developers, and programmers with expertise and experience in distributed learning analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. On a prioritized basis and as capacity allows, DCD develops SCORM-conformant electronic courseware for MarineNet delivery and tracking, as well as alternative electronic distance learning

solutions such as multimedia training aids, performance support tools, video tutorials, etc.

17) How is DCD's production plan determined?

CDET accepts development applications from sponsors of potential DL products, and subsequently conducts Distance Learning Analysis and Planning (DLAP) to ascertain feasibility and scope for top priority candidates. Ultimately, DCD maps DLAP results to available capacity to determine the production plan.

18) Does CDET DCD offer any "self-help" services?

As capacity allows, DCD provides consultant services for a variety of learning solutions, including but certainly not limited to outsourcing guidance, best practices for instructional and assessment design, and development software considerations. We do not provide training in the use of courseware development software tools, including the Questionmark assessment authoring software available for use via USMC license. Please note that at this time the USMC does not endorse any specific development software and no "rapid courseware development" tool is yet approved for installation on MCEN workstations.

19) May a sponsor independently contract development of electronic T&E products for MarineNet hosting?

Yes. CDET recognizes that our limited development capacity cannot address all existing and emerging electronic training and education requirements. Sponsors with access to an appropriate contract vehicle may outsource the development of electronic T&E products for MarineNet hosting; however, as with all MarineNet products, CDET reserves the final decision on product supportability. See the following question in this section for minimum requirements to be included in a Performance Work Statement.

20) How does CDET support sponsor outsourcing of product development?

As available resources permit, CDET supports third-party product development via the following activities:

- High-level requirements analysis and advice regarding the suitability and feasibility of a MarineNet-delivered T/E product as a whole or partial solution
- Publication of minimum technical requirements via the MarineNet Content Controller User's Guide
- Review and feedback on draft Performance Work Statements and possible participation upon request in source selection activities
- Advice regarding specific instructional design strategies/elements
- Clarification and/or elaboration of specific Content Controller User's Guide requirements as needed throughout the production cycle
- Facilitation of the MarineNet Activation Process
- MarineNet course catalog and delivery configuration (sponsors may be required to assist in the case of large product groups)

21) What requirements should be included in a Performance Work Statement to ensure a product can be hosted on MarineNet?

At a minimum, the PWS must require the following:

- Compliance with the MarineNet Content Controller User's Guide
- Successful MarineNet Integration prior to product acceptance and payment

DCD also recommends inclusion of the following requirements:

- Government ownership of all data rights and prohibition against developer re-use of whole or partial product or assets without specific Government permission
- Prohibition against the use of copyrighted, licensed, or otherwise proprietary materials without lifetime release to the Government
- POA&M/project development schedule should incorporate adequate time to accommodate the MarineNet activation process during the Period of Performance
- Final product delivery to the sponsor should include the following as applicable:

For Interactive Courseware (also called CBT, IMI, WBT) and other Technology Based T&E products as applicable:

- a. Final ICW, LMS Version, three (3) copies delivered on CD- or DVD ROM(s)*, labeled Final Version 1.0 and including any required installation and operation instructions
- b. Final ICW, CD Version, three (3) copies delivered on CD- or DVD ROM(s)*, labeled Final Version 1.0 and including any required installation and operation instructions
- c. Updated storyboards with final file names
- d. List of all programming languages and multimedia technologies used as well as any plug-ins that are required for viewing
- e. List of new templates developed or areas of modifications to existing templates
- f. Instructions for modifying content
- g. Copies of all source code and files
- h. All still imagery files, including the original authoring files
- j. All interactive element files, including the original authoring files and underlying media
- i. All audio and video files (including the original uncompressed media) along with an inventory sheet listing media segment start and stop locations.

*In rare cases, media-heavy final courseware packages may require delivery

on external harddrive. Sponsors will need to follow established security procedures before accessing the content.

For Print-Ready Instructional Materials:

- a. Final PDF Version
- b. Authoring files, including template elements not inherent to the authoring software
- c. Any special instructions for modifying content, including list of software inherent templates used
- d. All image files, including both final and original image authoring files

22) What comprises a standard MarineNet “course”?

A standard MarineNet “course” can comprise a content package, a Qpack or SCORM conformant content package test object, and a Qpack survey object, or some combination of up to one of each type.

23) What comprises a MarineNet “composite course”?

A MarineNet “composite course” accommodates multiple instances of any supported object: content packages, Qpack or SCORM-conformant content package test objects, Qpack survey objects, and reference items (typically but not limited to PDF or other document formats).

24) When is the composite course configuration used?

Composite course configuration will be used if two or more objects of a single object type are needed. Examples include but are not limited to the following: Learner assessment strategy that requires both a knowledge-based test object (Qpack format) and a separate performance-based practical application object (SCORM-conformant content package format)

- Instructional strategy that requires test objects at intervals throughout the course and item analysis data is needed or desired for each
- Modules or lessons that need to be packaged separately for re-combination but do not comprise stand-alone instructional packages
- Requirements specify both pre- and post-tests
- Requirements specify multiple targeted surveys at specific points within the instruction

25) How is a composite course displayed to an enrolled learner?

Upon enrollment, a composite course appears as a single enrollment on the My Active Courses tab. Instead of a LAUNCH button, however, the learner sees a LAUNCH MENU button. The Launch Menu page displays all course objects, references, required sequencing, passing scores, progress, completion status, etc. The learner is returned to this page upon completion of each individual object until all course requirements are fulfilled.

Upon completion, the course is displayed as a single line on the learner’s My Completed Courses page.

26) Can MarineNet enforce a particular sequence of instruction within a composite course?

Yes. Unlike a curriculum that is either rigidly sequenced or not sequenced at all, composite courses offer flexible sequencing. A composite course comprises instructional “blocks” that each include one or more objects. Each block may contain an unlimited number of objects. Within each block, sequencing may or may not be applied to enforce order of completion, as required.

27) How does MarineNet handle multiple test objects within a composite course?

MarineNet offers the option to weight scores according to size or criticality of the assessed objectives. Test objects may be assigned a weight ranging from 0 (e.g., for formative assessment) to 100 (e.g., for a single cumulative exam that determines pass/fail for the course). Regardless of the number of scored test objects, the total weight of all test objects must equal 100.

Failing any Qpack or SCORM-conformant content package test object within the composite course results in course failure and automatic disenrollment. (Note that this does not apply to inline assessments.) Unlike a curriculum comprising individual courses, completion of objects within a composite course does not carry forward to a new enrollment.

28) Can MarineNet accommodate a “test-out” Questionmark format pre-test?

Unfortunately, MarineNet cannot accommodate a “test-out” capability using a Questionmark Qpack-format pre-test. If the primary goal of a pre-test is to give the learner full credit for previously acquired knowledge and skills, a test-out capability can be programmed using SCORM sequencing within the content package. As with any inline assessment, however, MarineNet will not store any data beyond the final score.

29) Do technical requirements differ for objects in a composite course? In general, technical requirements do not differ between standard and composite content packages and Qpacks; however, GUI differences do merit consideration. The composite course Launch Menu page displays both the `imsmanifest.xml` `<title>` element in a SCORM-conformant content package and the Assessment Name element in a Qpack assessment. Developers should consider the following when assigning both elements:

- Ensure that both `<title>` and Assessment Name clearly communicate what the object comprises.
- Display space is limited, so keep both elements as short as possible to do without compromising clarity. Consider abbreviation when the object title/name exceeds 60 characters.
- Qpack Assessment Names should include the object type. Specify Exam, Test, or Quiz for a learner assessment; specify Survey when applicable.

Example:

<title> = RCLF Enlisted Block 5 Arabian Peninsula and Gulf Region Introduction
Assessment Name (test) = RCLF EB5 AG Test
Assessment Name (survey) = RCLF EB5 Survey

30) What comprises a MarineNet curriculum?

A MarineNet curriculum comprises two or more “courses.” As currently implemented, most MarineNet curriculums group courses to achieve one of the following goals:

Sequenced instruction – requires learners to complete a series of closely related courses. Each course can stand alone and individual enrollment is often allowed. Individual course completions may or may not earn credit; completion of the entire curriculum is required for the target audience.

Delivery optimization/accommodation – comprises groups of multiple content packages, test objects, and or survey objects that typically cannot stand alone. Given MarineNet’s new “composite course” capability, a curriculum will only be used for this purpose if the composite course configuration cannot meet all requirements.

Enrollment convenience – enables learners to enroll simultaneously in multiple courses whose content may or may not be closely related. Individual course completions earn credit; completion of the entire curriculum affords no additional benefit.

31) Can a sponsor include an existing MarineNet course in a new curriculum?

Typically, yes, a sponsor may opt to include in its curriculum an active MarineNet course that was developed by another agency; however, CDET will carefully coordinate such inclusion to ensure no impact to the primary course sponsor’s content or configuration. For example, the sponsor of a new curriculum may not set a lower passing score or remove an exam proctoring requirement when incorporating an existing MarineNet product. In addition, although CDET will inform the primary course sponsor of any use of its course in other curricula, the primary sponsor ultimately retains control over any decision to update or retire the course.

32) Are there any technical constraints that prevent including an existing course in a curriculum?

Possibly. For example, annual training requirements are typically configured to “expire” at the end of either the fiscal or calendar year. A curriculum cannot include courses on different training cycles. In addition, a curriculum that does not allow individual sub course enrollment cannot include a course that must be open to enrollment for users who do not wish to complete the entire curriculum. Consult your CDET POC for potential options to accommodate such requirements.

33) Can a composite course be included in a curriculum?

Yes. A curriculum handles a composite course no differently than a standard course.

34) How is a curriculum displayed to an enrolled learner?

Upon enrollment, MarineNet displays the curriculum and all sub-courses on the learner's My Active Courses tab. Sub-courses are clearly labeled as such and are sequenced according to course code. Each uncompleted sub-course displays its own Launch button; however, if the curriculum is sequenced to enforce a particular order of study, a Launch button will not be displayed until all prerequisite elements are complete. If a test and/or survey are associated with an individual sub-course, their respective Launch buttons may be configured for immediate availability or hidden pending course content completion.

Once all requirements for a sub-course are complete, the sub-course remains on the My Active Courses tab, marked "Completed," and also appears on the learner's My Completed Courses tab. A learner who wishes to review completed sub-course content may do so from a Review button on the My Active Courses tab or a link on the My Completed Courses listing. Once all curriculum requirements are successfully satisfied, the listings disappear from My Active Courses and appear only on My Completed Courses.

35) What happens if a learner fails a course within a curriculum?

Upon failing a curriculum sub-course, a learner is automatically dis-enrolled from the associated curriculum. Upon re-enrollment, unless significant time has elapsed and the course's certificate has expired, the learner will automatically receive credit for all sub courses successfully completed in any and all previous enrollments.

36) Can MarineNet accommodate a curriculum within a curriculum?

Yes, MarineNet can accommodate one or more sub-curricula, along with individual courses, within an overarching curriculum.

37) What happens if a curriculum generates multiple scores? Can MarineNet roll them up to a single curriculum score?

Yes. MarineNet also offers the option to weight scores according to size or criticality of the assessed objectives.

38) Can MarineNet enforce a particular sequence of instruction for individual courses within a curriculum?

Yes. MarineNet can enforce sequencing at all levels of the curriculum hierarchy for both individual sub-courses and sub-curricula.

39) What if a learner is already enrolled in a sub-course and then attempts to enroll in a curriculum?

A learner who is currently enrolled in one or more sub-courses **and then** attempts to enroll in a curriculum is offered two options: complete the sub-course prior to enrollment or self dis-enroll from the sub-course prior to enrollment. MarineNet will not allow curriculum enrollment until one or the other option is exercised.

If the learner chooses to dis-enroll rather than complete a sub-course prior to curriculum enrollment, he will lose all progress in the course and be required to start over. A message informs the learner of this fact.

40) What if a learner has already completed one or more of the sub-courses when they enroll in a curriculum?

In most instances upon enrollment in a curriculum, the learner automatically receives credit for previously completed sub-courses with the same course code.

Rarely, and only if the course was activated with a course certificate expiration date, the course completion does not transfer to the curriculum.

Please note that this does not apply to content that has been offered for enrollment under a different course code. In such cases, the sponsor will determine whether equivalency should be granted.

41) How should a sponsor determine whether to use a composite course or curriculum configuration?

Each configuration has advantages and disadvantages relative to T&E content, goals, and target audiences. Sponsors should contact CDET Digital Content Department (DCD) to discuss the advantages and disadvantages.

42) What learning assessment constructs does MarineNet support?

MarineNet supports a variety of scored assessment and evaluation instruments, including but not limited to the following:

Formative assessment types:

- In-line pre-assessment
- In-line quiz, practice exercise, or practical application assessment
- In-line practice exam or practical evaluation preparation

Summative assessment types:

- In-line end-of-Course (EOC) exam or practical evaluation
- Standalone content package EOC exam or practical evaluation
- Questionmark™ EOC exam
- Questionmark™ survey

43) What is a Qpack?

A Qpack is a file produced by a Questionmark authoring tool to deliver a group of assessment items (usually for review or sharing) or an assessment instrument like a test or survey, complete with directions, scoring and feedback.

Qpack configuration supports robust data collection and item analysis that is currently unavailable for any other MarineNet assessment type.

44) Which MarineNet assessment delivery options/capabilities apply per assessment type?

End-of-Course (EOC)/Summative Assessment Delivery and Data Collection Capabilities	Inline	Standalone Content Package	Questionmark™ Qpack
Proctoring requirement	No	Yes	Yes
Time-out remediation requirement	No	Yes	Yes
Re-enrollment delay requirement	Yes	Yes	Yes
Item analysis data collection and reporting	No	No	Yes

45) How does a sponsor or developer gain access to Questionmark™ development tools?

The USMC maintains an enterprise license that can be used by a sponsoring agency (or its designee upon specific request) to develop assessment instruments for delivery via the MarineNet instance of Questionmark™ OnPrem. Some restrictions apply, and the sponsoring agency/development contractor is responsible to ensure developers receive all training necessary to effectively use the authoring software. CDET DCD can facilitate connecting sponsors with a best-practice guide and communities page to assist developers.

Sponsors may not “authorize” a contractor (internal support or external developer) to submit requests or to otherwise interact with CDET on the sponsor’s behalf. We regret any inconvenience, but this constraint is necessary to avoid potential contract issues.

46) What is a “proctoring requirement”?

A MarineNet proctor is an authorized individual tasked with monitoring one or more students during an examination to ensure proper and fair examination procedures are enforced, including checking identification to ensure the student completing the assessment is indeed the student logged in to MarineNet.

MarineNet has the capability to prevent a student from launching a standalone or Questionmark EOC assessment until an authorized proctor inputs a specific access code.

Proctoring is not available for in-line assessments.

Sponsors who believe a proctoring requirement may be appropriate for their EOC assessment should discuss with their CDET POC.

47) What is “timeout remediation”?

Timeout remediation can be applied when a student fails any standalone or Questionmark EOC assessment attempt other than the final allowed attempt. Upon failure, MarineNet prevents the student from re-launching the EOC assessment for a predetermined time period, specified in hours within the MarineNet administrative system. Ideally, the student will use that time to review course material before re-attempting the assessment.

Timeout remediation cannot be applied to an in-line assessment.

Sponsors who believe timeout remediation may be appropriate for their assessment should discuss with their CDET POC.

48) What is a passing test score on MarineNet?

Most MarineNet EOC assessments are programmed to match the standard USMC Formal Learning Center mastery score of 80%. Technically, MarineNet will “pass” a student at whatever score is set for the assessment. The desired passing score should be programmed into the assessment.

49) How many times may a student fail a MarineNet-delivered assessment before failing the course?

For standalone assessments, MarineNet’s default configuration allows two assessment attempts. A student who fails both first and second attempts will fail the course and be automatically dis-enrolled.

The number of allowed test attempts is completely configurable and can range from one to unlimited attempts. However, statistics indicate that a high number of allowed test attempts encourages some students to rush through the instruction and simply take and re-take the assessment until they eventually pass.

Sponsors should discuss test attempts with their CDET POC.

50) What is “re-enrollment delay”?

Re-enrollment delay can be applied to prevent a student from immediately re-enrolling after failing a course. Upon any course failure, MarineNet automatically dis-enrolls the student. Re-enrollment delay prevents the student from re-enrolling in the applicable course or curriculum for a predetermined time period, ranging from 1 day to 3 months.

This delay allows a student to seek remediation assistance and to launch the course for review as often as desired. Once the re-enrollment delay has expired the student must re-enroll and complete course requirements again prior to re-attempting any assessment. The primary benefit of re-enrollment delay may be as an incentive to spend the necessary time to master learning objectives the first time.

Sponsors who believe re-enrollment delay may be appropriate for their course or curriculum should discuss with their CDET POC.

51) Does MarineNet generate printable completion certificates?

Yes. By default, MarineNet can generate a unique completion certificate for any completed course or curriculum. In addition to the course code, name, and brief description, MarineNet automatically populates the certificate with logged-in student’s name, course completion date, and a unique certificate identification number. Sponsors may also elect to tailor the certificate’s appearance for their own courses. At any time

after course or curriculum completion, a student may access and print or save a PDF version of the associated completion certificate via a "View Certificate" link located in the "More" menu on his/her MarineNet "My Completed Courses" tab.

52) What if the courseware already includes a printable completion certificate?

Ideally, sponsors will specify that developers should not include a completion certificate within the courseware. Such certificates require the student to input their own name and often the date of completion. In addition, these certificates are often easily reproducible. Both characteristics make it easy to falsify a completion certificate for the training. If the sponsor is concerned that a student will struggle to find the MarineNet certificate, DCD can provide the developer with a description of the MarineNet certificate for inclusion on the course summary screen.

53) Can MarineNet automatically report student completions?

Yes. MarineNet currently reports all Marine course completions to MCTIMS and all Marine Civilian completions to TWMS via DCPDS. Selected Marine completions are further transmitted from MCTIMS to MCTFS.

All members of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible for MarineNet accounts; however, MarineNet does not currently maintain data exchange interfaces with sister services' learning management systems so cannot automatically report completions for sister service members. To receive credit, sister service members must print MarineNet completion certificates and present them to their units for manual entry into electronic training or HR records.

54) Are all MarineNet course completions eligible for MCTFS reporting?

Yes

55) What MarineNet courses are eligible to award Continuing Education Units?

Selected MarineNet courses award CEUs. To award CEUs, a distance learning course needs to be of sufficient length and rigor as determined by EDCOM.

56) What MarineNet courses are eligible to report a Training Event code?

Training Events are designated by Manpower and Reserve Affairs MIF. CDET does not broker assignment of Training Event codes; the USMC sponsor must obtain and provide the code to CDET. CDET can provide HQMC DC M&RA MIF points of contact to the sponsor.