



Technology Training that Works

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – E-LEARNING COURSES

SECTION 1: E-LEARNING OVERVIEW

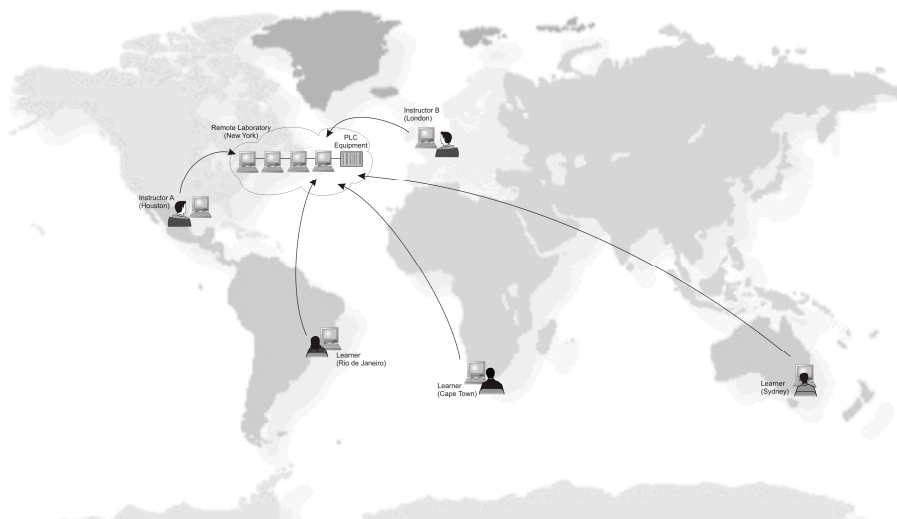
What is e-Learning?

Our e-learning programs are designed for engineers, technicians and electricians who prefer not to be limited by time or distance and need to develop skills and knowledge in a particular subject.

E-learning is a form of distance learning, where some or all of the course components are presented online. In the e-learning environment the presenter of the material and the participants are not physically present in the same room. Instead, they can meet in a "virtual" room. In our courses, the material is shared via the internet in a live 'webcast'.

IDC Technologies' e-learning courses incorporate a live approach, also referred to as the synchronous or video-conferencing approach. This ensures that the training is interactive, which maintains the motivation and discipline necessary for successful completion. The live sessions are supported with reading and assignment work.

Participants log in at a pre-arranged time together with several others from all over the world. The moderator in attendance will be a real instructor/presenter, qualified and experienced in the particular topic. The presentation (or live webcast) may be around 60 minutes long and at any stage the instructor can be signalled if queries on the course material exist. After each presentation there is a question and answer session where participants can talk to the instructor, as well as to other delegates.



Access live online training from throughout the world with real equipment

How does it work?

The course consists of a number of modules (this varies from course to course) over a given time period involving live interactive webcasts. Some modules may involve a practical component or group activity. For each module there is an initial reading assignment along with coursework or problems to be handed in and practical exercises in some cases. Participants have access to ongoing support from their instructor via phone, fax, Skype or e-mail.

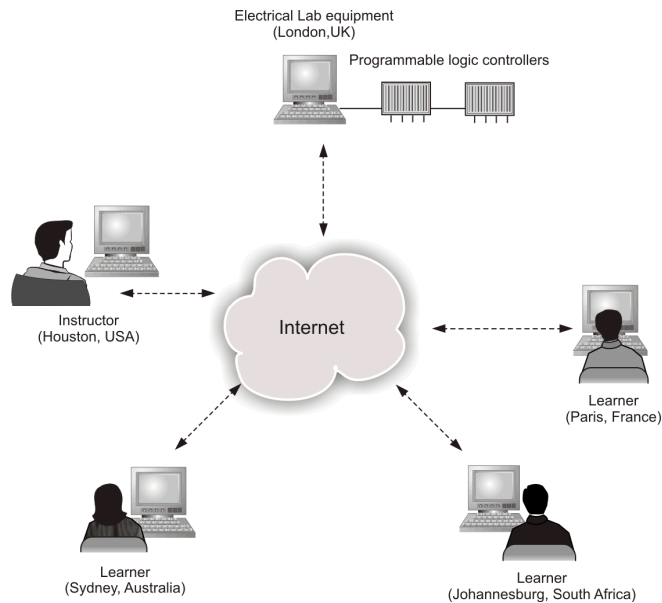
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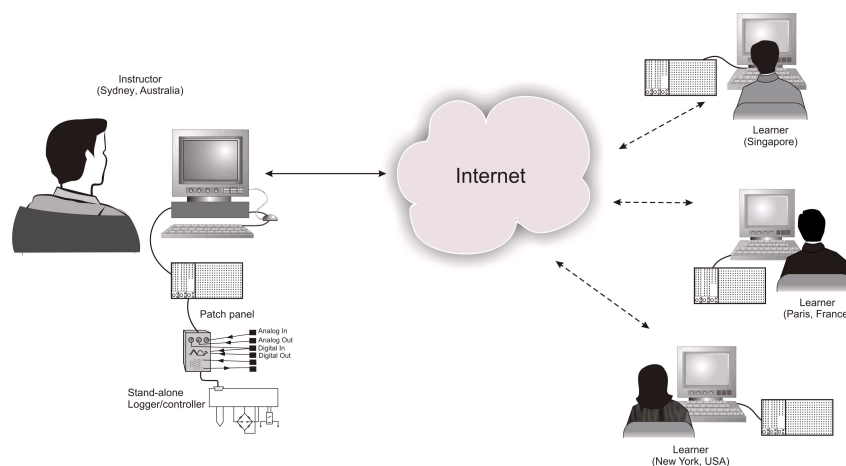
A very simple, flexible and effective layout

Is it a "book on a website"?

No, our e-learning courses are designed to be as interactive as possible. Participants will receive materials by email and participate in live webcasts with instructors and students from around the world.

Doesn't it get boring? How can an e-learning course be interactive?

Boredom can be a real danger, however, we use an interactive approach to our e-learning – with live sessions instead of recordings. The webcast software allows everyone to interact and involves participants in group work; including hands-on exercises with simulation software and remote laboratories where possible. Participants can communicate with text messages, or live VoIP speech, or can even draw on the whiteboard during the sessions.



Use real equipment in your course work

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How long is the course?

The duration of the courses vary. For specific information contact IDC Technologies.

Can I pause my progress and come back to complete the course later?

The webcasts cannot be postponed and are set within a given time frame however, it is possible to discontinue a current course and join the next, at the same point.

Can I complete the course in less time?

IDC's courses actually require "attendance" and participation at the live webcasts. The interaction which takes place is an important part of the learning process. See also "What if I cannot join or I miss a live webcast" in the next section.

The course reading and assignments may consume about 6 hours per week so accelerating the course would be quite onerous for most students.

When will I receive my materials?

Materials are received in electronic format at regular intervals throughout the course, by email. For some courses printed references are supplied in advance.

Will I receive notification that I am enrolled on this course

Students should enrol using the appropriate form for each course. Once this is received confirmation is sent within 7 to 10 days.

SECTION 2: LIVE WEBCASTS

What do live webcasts involve?

These are live interactive sessions throughout the course. Students join the instructor and other participants from around the world. Each webcast is between 60 and 90 minutes in duration and will be scheduled at 2 varying times, so participants can select the session which is most convenient.

Will it be a live session?

Yes the webcasts are live (in real time). All students and the instructor log in to the webcast 'room' simultaneously.

How long will the sessions be?

The sessions are between 60 and 90 minutes, depending on how many questions the participants have.

What if I cannot join or I miss a live webcast?

Webcasts are recorded and available to students upon request, however to receive the certificate of completion a minimum of 70% of live webcasts must be attended. The live webcasts offer the opportunity to interact with the instructor and other participants from around the globe, which is an essential part of the learning process.

We have a few students on the current courses who work on site and therefore cannot always attend webcasts during the scheduled time. For students like this we will negotiate the minimum attendance and usually agree that provided they watch the recordings, attend when they can and do all assignments on time then this may be acceptable.

Where do I download the webcast software?

All the necessary instructions to download and install the webcast software are sent to participants prior to the course.

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When will the sessions take place? When will I receive a webcast schedule?

The webcast schedule is not put together until after registrations close. The reason for this is that the course is promoted globally and we often have participants from several time zones. Once registrations close participants receive a questionnaire which determines the availability of those registered. When all questionnaires are returned we create a schedule which will meet everyone's requirements. Each webcast will run at 2 varying times and we guarantee at least one session will fall into the requested time frames.

Are the sessions held at the same time of day/day of the week every time?

We do try to keep the schedule as consistent as possible, however this depends on the instructor's availability.

If I experience technical difficulties and am unable to sit in the session, will I be able to arrange for another?

The webcast sessions are recorded for this reason, but depending on the situation it may be possible to reschedule a session for a later date.

Can I talk to my instructor throughout the session or is all the communication one-sided?

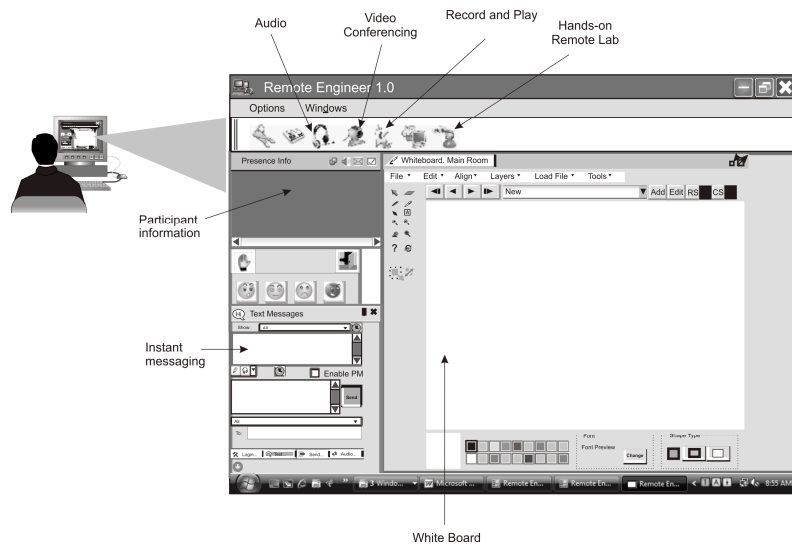
Communication with the instructor is encouraged via microphone, drawing on the whiteboard or by typing in the text tool.

Can I discuss problems with the other people in the session or am I restricted to talking to the instructor?

Interaction with everyone in the room involved in the session is not only possible but encouraged.

What language are the webcasts presented in?

All webcasts are presented in English.



The basic layout and tools available in the webcast software

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SECTION 3: HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

What do I need?

An adequate Internet connection, speakers and a microphone. A headset is recommended. The necessary software and course materials are provided by us.

What hardware and software do I require?

A participant's computer is referred to as the 'client' machine. The following are recommended configurations. Slightly less powerful machines may still work reasonably well, but faster is better.

Windows Client

- Windows 98/ME/2000/XP/Vista
- Pentium III 500 MHz processor
- 128 MB RAM
- 20 MB free disk space
- Soundcard with headset

Mac Client

- Mac OS 9.1/9.2, Mac OS X 10.1/10.2/10.3
- G3 233 MHz
- 64 MB RAM (OS9), 128 MB RAM (OS X)
- 20 MB free disk space
- Soundcard with headset

SPARC Solaris Client

- Solaris 9
- UltraSPARC IIc 300 MHz
- 128 MB RAM
- 20 MB free disk space
- Soundcard with headset

Java Desktop System Client

- Java Desktop System 2
- Pentium III 1 GHz processor
- 256 MB RAM
- 20 MB free disk space
- Soundcard with headset

Do I really need a headset?

Headsets are recommended for sound quality and to avoid feedback through the microphone. Built-in loudspeakers and microphones will work, but are not ideal. Even when microphone problems occur, the presentation can be followed with audio alone. Feedback or questions can be typed using the direct messaging tool.

Do I need any special software?

Yes. The necessary software and set-up instructions are sent to participants prior to the course.

Can I use a dial-up connection?

A broadband connection such as ADSL is ideal. However, a reliable dial-up connection as slow as 28.8 kbps can work as the system will compensate for it. A slight delay with the sound might be experienced as a result.

Who can assist me if I have technical difficulties with the software?

We ask all participants to install and set up the software well before any webcasts. Due to company firewalls, students often experience initial problems which we will work with you to correct well beforehand. It is recommended that participants approach their company's IT departments to assist with a test connection prior to the course start date.

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What level of computer skills do I need to have?

We recommend that participants have basic computer skills. The webcast software is very user friendly and easy to use. Most problems are experienced during initial setup of the software (usually due to firewalls) so participants with limited computer knowledge should have some technical support nearby.

SECTION 4: CERTIFICATION

What type of certificate will I receive?

For Certificate courses, participants will receive an IDC Certificate of completion. For Advanced Diploma courses, participants will receive an accredited Advanced Diploma on successful completion.

Are the courses accredited?

IDC Technologies' e-learning courses are offered globally and unfortunately no one institution can provide us with global accreditation. To resolve this we have sought accreditation and/ or CPD validation from a number of institutions worldwide:

To date IDC's engineering training and conferences are recognized and/or endorsed and/or validated by the following authorising bodies:

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) in the United Kingdom was formed by the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) and the Institution of Incorporated Engineers (IIE). It has more than 150,000 members worldwide - the largest professional engineering society in Europe and the second largest of its type in the world. It has offices in London, Beijing, Hong Kong, Edison (USA) and Bangalore.

The Project Management Institute (PMI) whose head office is in the USA, has more than 265,000 members in over 170 countries.

The Training Accreditation Council (TAC) in Australia is the national leader in the strategic management of the recognition and quality assurance of training. This includes associated policies, services and standards in the vocational education and training sector. IDC's Advanced Diploma courses are formally accredited by the TAC under the **Australian Qualifications Framework**. This framework is the only national system in Australia and is very rigorous. It is recognised in many countries. Information is at <http://www.aqf.edu.au/internat.htm> .

Engineers Australia is the national peak body for all engineering disciplines. It represents 80,000 members and its chartered engineers are regarded as trusted professionals not only in Australia, but worldwide.

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) has more than 20,000 members.

The South African Institution of Mechanical Engineers (SAIMEchE) covers all fields of application including automobile, energy generation, process engineering, heavy manufacture, design, management, research, mining and education.

Board of Engineers - Malaysia (BEM) facilitates the registration of engineers and regulates the professional conduct and practice of registered engineers in order to safeguard the safety and interest of the public.

Very important to us, at IDC Technologies, is to ensure that our clients can confidently attend our workshops, knowing that the professional development they are receiving is of a creditable standard and will provide them with measurable productivity gains and the opportunity for career advancement.

We have presented courses to over 150,000 engineers and technicians over the past 15 years and our aim of maintaining the highest of standards has endured.

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We have rigorously designed procedures to achieve this end; from the conception of the topics through to the training of the instructors, prior to the workshops' delivery.

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Despite this, and understandably, various authorising bodies exist around the world to ensure that training providers are not extracting money from their clients unscrupulously and without rigorous quality checks in place.

Engineers and technicians are expected to acquire ongoing professional development – with genuine skill enhancement. Training Organisations, endorsed by these authorising bodies, therefore, are often sought after to ensure professional development demands are met.

In order to receive the necessary endorsements IDC Technologies has been through these formal and often exacting application processes with success as outlined above. Apart from these, applications are in progress with the FAS in Ireland (re-accreditation with the new system) and the Engineering Institute of Canada.

If you need more information regarding the status of a particular workshop/distance learning course before enrolling, please do not hesitate to contact Edwina Ross (Accreditation Manager) by phone or via email: edwina@idc-online.com or through your local IDC office.

ACCREDITATION

It is very important to us at IDC Technologies to ensure that our clients can confidently attend our courses knowing that the professional development they are receiving is of a creditable standard and will provide them with personal, measurable, productivity gains and the opportunity for career advancements.

We have presented courses to over 200,000 engineers and technicians over the past 16 years and our aim of maintaining the highest of standards has endured.

- IDC Technologies is an Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) Endorsed Training Provider
- IDC Technologies training courses are recognized by Engineers Australia for CPD purposes



SECTION 5: MISCELLANEOUS

What does it cost?

IDC Technologies courses are offered globally, so it is impractical in a document like this to list all prices for various countries. For course costs, simply contact your nearest office or email us for a prompt reply. Payment (instalment) plans for longer courses are offered as options.

If I do another e-learning course is there a discount available?

Yes, on completion of one e-Learning course with IDC Technologies a 5% discount on future e-Learning courses is given.

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Why is there a difference in costs between your Advanced Diploma course and a similar course offered at my nearby government technical institution?

The reason why our advanced diplomas are so successful and highly regarded by industry are for some of the following reasons:

- Our instructors are selected and recruited from amongst the top engineers/instructors in their field - worldwide. We require them to present well and get outstanding materials across to you.
- If you read the detailed course prospectus you will see the courses are aimed at practising professionals giving hard hitting practical know-how relevant to today's market and aimed at someone who is working in industry. We design and select the examples and practical exercises in the course based upon real-world business requirements including feedback from the tens of thousands of students we have trained over many years.
- We have experience in training over 150,000 engineers and technicians throughout the world and have built up a library of (what we believe are) outstanding reference materials which focus on what engineers and technicians need in their work today in industry and mining. The value of these references is considerable and included in the cost of the course.
- The course content is challenging and designed for engineers and technicians already working in industry. We assume a general understanding of the demands of the workplace. A student without practical experience would be unsuited to the course.

For the Advanced Diploma courses, is recognition of prior learning available?

Yes. Please see the detailed course prospectus for more information on this subject, or contact us for details.

How are we assessed?

A series of assignments are completed during the course. These demonstrate understanding of the materials.

What do the assignments involve?

The assignments are usually a set of questions, problems or calculations which are based on the material provided. They are not designed to trick, merely to determine if the materials have been understood. These vary in length and level of difficulty and are supplied after the live sessions on that topic have finished. Usually around 2 weeks is allowed for completion. The assignments are graded by the instructor and returned by email.

Are there exams?

There are no exams as such since exams are generally not effective with distance learning. However, the coursework and grading system are at least equally "testing" and rigorous.

My employer is helping to pay the course costs. How can they monitor my performance?

For most courses, including the Advanced Diploma courses, progress can be monitored via the grading system. Some employers have asked to be "cc'd" when marked assignments are returned by email so that they can monitor the student's progress.

How much time do I need to spend on the course every week?

This depends on the participants' existing knowledge, but we estimate between 3 and 6 hours per week. This includes the live 1-hour webcast, set reading materials and assignment.

If I am struggling to keep up with the workload can I get any extra help or tuition?

Certainly. The instructor is available to help via email, phone or Skype, and depending on the situation extensions are available for assignments if need be. An additional one-on-one webcast with the instructor is possible, although an additional cost may be incurred.

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Do I need to have any qualifications to understand it?

This varies from course to course and is usually essential for the Advanced Diploma courses. Please contact IDC Technologies office for the requirements for specific courses.

Are there a maximum number of participants allowed per course?

Yes. In order to maximise the benefit you receive from the course, and to provide you with as much interaction as possible with the instructor and other participants we do limit the number of students per course. The maximum number varies from course to course. We also do keep webcast numbers at a set level in order to encourage interaction. If we do receive a high number of registrations for a course we ensure that we have enough webcast sessions to cater for everyone.

Do I have to start on the designated commencement date?

The commencement date is merely the date that registrations close. On this day the information packs and first set of course materials are sent. The first webcast usually occurs about 10 days after this, once all participants have returned their pre-course questionnaires.

Can I have the contacts of the other participants in the course?

Yes, with their permission.

If I don't understand something am I able to 'approach' the instructor 'after class'?

Yes, the instructor will always stay behind 'after class' for questions. Participants can also contact the instructor via phone, Skype or email.

If there are hands-on aspects to the session are all the delegates able to be involved?

The hands-on sessions are performed using application sharing tools or simulation software. Only one student can do this at a time, but we ensure all students have the opportunity to use these tools.

If you have any other queries, please contact your nearest IDC Technologies office. Locations and contact details can be found on our website.

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