QA SPECIALIST

PORTFOLIO

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN QA

CASE STUDY

When Good Content Meets Poor Structure:
A QA Specialist's Playbook

How AREL & ADDIE frameworks transform a rough eLearning script into a production-ready course.

80+	6	AREL+ADDIE
Comments submitted	Issue categories	Frameworks applied

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What Was Wrong — and Why It Mattered

A 155-slide eLearning AV script — 10 content sections, one learning objective — arrived with a clear pattern of recurring issues.

01

Structural Mismatch

Thesis-level content was buried in body slides. Evidence appeared before the argument. Learners would receive information in the wrong order, breaking comprehension.

02

Choppy, Unsynthesised Evidence

Studies were listed back-to-back with no connecting argument. Each idea felt isolated — the script read like a bibliography, not a lesson.

03

Inconsistent Learner Address

The script alternated between 'you', 'consumers', 'individuals' and 'people' — creating friction in the learner's experience and breaking the semi-formal register.

04

Slide Text ≠ Voice-Over

Slide text frequently didn't reflect what was being said. Learners would see one thing and hear another — a direct barrier to retention.

05

Content Gaps

Key terms like 'FIFO', 'DIY snacks', and 'meal box service' were used without definition. A whole taxonomy on waste management alternatives was missing entirely.

Pattern Recognition

These weren't random errors. They were systematic gaps in pedagogical structure — the signature of a script that needed a QA framework, not just a proofread.

How I Approached Each Problem

1

READ DEEP

Cross-referenced every slide against the source handover and master guidelines before writing a single comment.

2

DIAGNOSE

Applied AREL as a diagnostic lens — asking: Is this a thesis? A body? Evidence? Is it in the right place?

3

REDIRECT

Flagged structural misplacements with specific suggestions: 'move this to the body slide' + why it belongs there.

4

MODEL

Provided synthesised example text from source material so the writer had a clear, actionable model to follow.

5

AFFIRM

Balanced every critical comment with positive recognition — naming strong slides explicitly to set the benchmark.

BEFORE → AFTER

BEFORE	AFTER
Body slide opened with a statistic — no argument established.	Flagged + restructured: thesis slide added first, statistic moved to evidence position.
'You can do this by planning meals...' — casual second-person tone.	Revised to semi-formal: 'Effective meal planning enables individuals to...'
'FIFO' used without explanation.	Recommended: define FIFO on first use — 'First-In, First-Out (FIFO) is a storage method...'
Two body slides with identical content on imperfect food.	Merged into one synthesised body slide with a clear thesis link.

AREL

The backbone of every lesson slide.

AREL is the four-part slide structure that ensures learners receive ideas in a pedagogically sound sequence — argument first, evidence last.

As QA, my job was to verify every section followed this sequence — and restructure it when it didn't.

A

ARGUMENT

The thesis statement. States the central claim of the section clearly and concisely.

QA check: Does this slide make one clear claim? Is it specific to the learning objective?

R

REASONING

The explanation. Unpacks the argument with logical elaboration — the 'why' and 'how'.

QA check: Does this slide explain the argument before introducing any data?

E

EVIDENCE

The proof. Research findings, statistics, or real-world examples that support the reasoning.

QA check: Is evidence placed after reasoning — not before it?

L

LINK-BACK

The conclusion. Connects the evidence back to the original argument and learning objective.

QA check: Does this slide land the 'so what?' for the learner?

ADDIE — Where QA Lives in Every Phase

ADDIE is the instructional design process model. QA is not a phase — it is a discipline applied across all five phases. Here is how it works.

A — ANALYSIS

QA Role in Analysis

- Verify learning objectives are measurable and aligned to performance gaps.
- Check that audience analysis informs the right language register and complexity.
- In this script: confirmed the LO ('understand the practical approach') was reflected across all 10 sections.

D — DESIGN

QA Role in Design

- Review the instructional strategy — is AREL applied consistently?
- Check section sequencing: Definitions → Concepts → Challenges → Practices is logical.
- In this script: flagged missing taxonomy, restructured misconception flow.

D — DEVELOPMENT

QA Role in Development

- Review AV scripts for structural, tonal, and content accuracy.
- Ensure VO and slide text are aligned — learners shouldn't hear one thing and read another.
- In this script: 80+ targeted comments across 155 development slides.

I — IMPLEMENTATION

QA Role in Implementation

- Verify production-readiness: clean VO, consistent tone, no undefined terms.
- Ensure handover docs are complete so voiceover artists and developers can execute.
- In this script: flagged casual phrasing and pronoun inconsistency before recording.

E — EVALUATION

QA Role in Evaluation

- Track revision patterns to identify recurring ID skill gaps.
- Use comment data to build team training priorities.
- In this script: 6 recurring categories identified — structural, clarity, tone, alignment, content, recognition.

What Structured QA Actually Does

Saves money

Every structural error caught at script stage avoids a re-recording session.

Protects learners

A logically sequenced lesson reduces cognitive load and improves retention.

Builds ID skill

Specific, modelled feedback grows the designer's craft over time.

Core Competencies Demonstrated

Pedagogical Framework Mastery

Applied AREL as both a diagnostic tool and a restructuring guide — not just as a checklist.

Evidence-Based Feedback

Every comment was grounded in the source handover, master guidelines, or academic research.

Constructive Communication

Framed all 80+ comments with a rationale, a model, and an offer of assistance.

Pattern Recognition

Identified 6 systematic issue categories across 155 slides — enabling targeted, efficient revision.

ADDIE Process Alignment

QA applied across all five phases — from LO review in Analysis through readiness checks in Implementation.