DiCentra FAQs – 13

27th October 2020

Static and Dynamic Sequences

Question: I have been using sequences in DiCentra for a while, but I do not understand how Dynamic Sequences differ from them. Are Static Sequences the same as the old Sequences?

Answer: Static Sequences are the same as the earlier DiCentra sequences. The term is used to distinguish them from the newer Dynamic Sequences. I explain below the features of both types and how to create and use them.

Static Sequences

Since its early days DiCentra has had 'sequences'. These consist of an ordered list of image numbers and may also include captions. They are 'static' because unless you edit them, they always produce the same presentation on the screen or in printed results. The term 'Static Sequence' is just a way of emphasising this type is meant instead of the newer 'Dynamic Sequences' - see below.

Static sequences can be **created** in several ways:

a. Using the sequence editor - Competition > Edit Sequence > (New Sequence). You can select images to add to the new sequence, sort them by image number, image title, author name, best guess surname or image mark. You can also add captions, such as "Winner" or "Certificates" to precede appropriate images.
b. Using the Navigator. After you make a selection in the Navigator just click on the Save … button and give your new static sequence a name.
c. Using the old lightbox. (The new lightbox does not support creating sequences at present.) By right-clicking on an image and selecting Exclude you can prune the images displayed to produce your selection. You can also add captions by right-clicking between two thumbnails. Finally, you can right-click and Save the selection as a sequence.

You can **edit** these sequences in one of two ways:

a. Use the sequence editor - Competition > Edit Sequence > <Sequence Name>.
b. Use the Navigator to combine sequences. For example, to create a sequence of all images scoring between 15 to 18 inclusive, you would first use the Navigator to create a sequence of all images scoring 15 or above – let us call it 'Score 15 to 18'. Then use the Navigator to select all images scoring 19 or above and click on Save … Select Remove from sequence and select 'Score 15 to 18' then Save.

You can **use** these sequences in several ways:

a. When starting a competition after it has been marked, to show the high-ranking images as a slide show, individually or on the lightbox. You would probably create the sequence with the Navigator sorting by 'Worst score first' and then you might use the sequence editor to

add any captions. The sequence would be selected when you start to run the competition or from the Navigator's Sequence selector.

b. When printing results or producing a spreadsheet of results to limit the reporting to specific images.

c. When extracting images (Competition > Extract Images).

Limitations:

a. Static sequences relating to marking or awards can (obviously) only be made once the competition has been marked.

b. A static sequence applies to a single competition only.

Dynamic Sequences

Dynamic sequences were introduced in DiCentra in version 4.16. Essentially, they overcome the two limitations of static sequences:

a. They can specify marking-related conditions (e.g. "Mark is 17 or greater", "Unmarked images", etc.). The condition is evaluated when you run the sequence, so you can prepare a dynamic sequence in advance and run it during the competition.

b. They apply to all competitions having the same type (e.g. club competition), the same marks scheme (e.g. marks) and the same maximum marks. So, if you use the same kind of competition repeatedly you would only need to define a dynamic sequence to show the top-scoring images once, for example.

Dynamic sequences can be **created** as follows:

1. Make your competition in the usual way (or you can create a dummy competition of the same type and marking parameters). Run the competition.

2. Type 'n' to open the Navigator.

3. Select the criteria you want to use for the dynamic sequence, e.g. to show the top images you might choose marks of 17 or better, worst score first, and show authors. Note: You cannot choose entrant names, portfolio names or 'resume at'.

4. Click on Save … then select New Dynamic Sequence and enter a name for it, e.g. 'Top Images'.

You can **edit** a sequence as follows:

1. Select the competition you used to make the dynamic sequence (or one of the same kind) and run it.

2. Type 'n' to open the Navigator.

3. Click on the Sequence radio button and select the dynamic sequence to be edited. In the selector, dynamic sequences are flagged with "(Dyn)" before their name. The fields in the navigator dialogue will change to those in the selected sequence and the sequence radio button will be de-selected.

4. Make any changes to the earlier criteria and click Save …

5. Select New Dynamic Sequence and type in the new sequence name and click Save … (If you type in the original name you will need to confirm you want to update it.)

You can **run** a dynamic sequence as follows:

1. Select the competition and run it.

2. Type 'n' to open the Navigator.

3. Click on the Sequence radio button and select the dynamic sequence to be edited. In the selector, dynamic sequences are flagged with "(Dyn)" before their name. The fields in the navigator dialogue will change to those in the selected sequence and the sequence radio button will be de-selected.
4. Click on the View, Slide Show or Lightbox button.

Limitations of dynamic sequences are:

a. You can only execute dynamic sequences from the Navigator. You cannot directly use them to limit reports or for extracting images as with static sequences. To overcome this, you can select a dynamic sequence in the Navigator and then save it as a static sequence once the competition has been marked.
b. You cannot combine dynamic sequences. However, to speed up producing static sequences like 'Score 15 to 18' above, you could create two <u>dynamic</u> sequences 'Score 15 to 20' and 'Score 18 to 20'. Once the competition is marked, open 'Score 15 to 20' in the Navigator and save it as a static sequence called 'Score 15 to 18', then open 'Score 18 to 20' and remove it from the static sequence 'Score 15 to 18'.
c. You cannot add captions to dynamic sequences.

Other Points

Show Authors

a. This works when either static or dynamic sequences are run from the Navigator (View, Slide Show or Lightbox (Mk 2)).
b. Static sequences will not show authors when started from the RUN COMPETITION dialogue. You will need to use the context menu (right-click) to select Show Authors.
c. If you use the old lightbox you will need to select an image and then type '#' to display the author name.

Deleting Sequences

1. On the DiCentra main form select the correct competition for static sequences or one of appropriate type for dynamic sequences.
2. Use the Competition > Delete Sequence … command to delete either kind of sequence. If you do not see the required dynamic sequence listed, check that the selected competition is the right kind.

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