ChatGPT

Course Progress Reset Feature – Feasibility and Market Analysis

Problem & Target Users

Online learners often struggle with unfinished courses and knowledge gaps, yet most platforms lack a simple "reset progress" button. **Target users** include: (1) **Returning learners** who paused a course and want to start over fresh, and (2) **Mastery-driven learners** who completed a course but wish to repeat it for reinforcement. For example, a long-time Udemy user noted, *"I've got a few half-finished courses that I'd wish to start from scratch, but cannot find an option for it"* [1]. This pain point is acute – in one analysis of MIT/Harvard MOOCs, only **~3% of enrollees completed courses** (2017–18) [2], leaving millions with partially completed material that may need revisiting. Learners cite wanting a "fresh perspective" on tough concepts or simply to **repeat a course from the beginning** to solidify understanding [3]. The demand is visible in workarounds: a third-party Udemy progress-reset browser extension has over **3,000 users** [4] and DIY scripts on forums get dozens of upvotes [1] [5]. The problem extends beyond casual consumers – corporate L&D and certification training often require annual refreshers or re-certification, making the **ability to reset course progress "vital" in compliance training** contexts [6]. In summary, a significant minority of users in the **hundreds of millions of online learners** worldwide likely feel this pain, especially those returning to learning after a gap or needing periodic retraining. It's a frequent enough frustration that **community-made solutions have sprung up**, indicating an unmet need for an official, easy reset functionality.

Market Sizing (TAM / SAM / SOM)

TAM (Total Addressable Market): Virtually all online learning participants could benefit from this feature. The global e-learning market is enormous – valued at **~$325 billion by 2025** [7] – encompassing **220+ million MOOC learners** as of 2022 [8] and hundreds of millions more using education apps and corporate LMSs. This feature's TAM is essentially the **entire e-learning user base** that engages in self-paced courses. For instance, Udemy alone serves **79 million learners** with 250,000 courses [9], and Coursera reports **183 million registered learners** as of mid-2025 [10] – any of whom might want to restart a course.

SAM (Serviceable Available Market): A more focused segment is the self-paced online course providers and their active learner communities. The **MOOC platforms segment** (Coursera, edX, Udemy, etc.) is projected at **~$25 billion by 2025** [11], representing those most likely to require a progress-reset feature for re-taking courses. This includes tens of millions of active users on course marketplaces (e.g. **Udemy's 1.1+ billion course enrollments to date** [12]) and specialized learning sites (DataCamp, Codecademy, etc.). Additionally, corporate learning platforms that mandate periodic course retakes (compliance training, certifications) fall into SAM – e.g. **all companies with annual training cycles**. If we consider just the MOOC users: capturing even 1% of the ~220 million MOOC learners is **~2.2 million potential users** of a reset feature [8]. Stepik's own footprint (a tech-focused MOOC platform with **5 million registered users as of 2020** [13]) suggests a substantial reachable audience in its niche.

SOM (Serviceable Obtainable Market): Initially, this feature could roll out to Stepik's existing user base or a subset (e.g. tech courses) to drive engagement. For an independent product idea (e.g. a cross-

platform “progress reset” tool or plugin), SOM might be early adopters from tech and language learning communities who actively seek such solutions. For instance, **DataCamp’s 12+ million learners** [14] (who already have a reset option) validate the use case; a new offering could aim to win a few percent of users on platforms that lack the feature (e.g. Udemy, Coursera). Realistically, an attainable short-term market could be on the order of **hundreds of thousands of users** – for example, converting the ~3,000 Udemy extension users into a broader paid user base, or partnering with a few mid-sized online schools requiring retake functionality.

Current Solutions & Competitive Landscape

Most major e-learning platforms either **lack a built-in reset feature** or implement it in limited ways, but a few have addressed this need. Below is a survey of direct competitors (online course platforms) and adjacent players, with their approach to course resets, differentiators, pricing, and traction:

- **Udemy (Marketplace MOOC):** The largest course marketplace with **79 million users** and 250k courses [9]. Differentiator: huge breadth of user-generated content, one-time purchase model (most courses $12–$199, often discounted; new Personal Plan subscription ~$30/month) [15]. *Progress Reset:* No official reset feature (Udemy removed a prior “reset progress” option [5]). Learners must manually un-check lessons or use unofficial scripts/extensions [1] [16]. Pricing is generally low per course, and traction is high (1+ billion enrollments [12]). Lack of a reset function is a **noted pain point** in the Udemy community, partially mitigated by third-party tools.

- **Coursera (Academic MOOC):** A leading platform with **~183 million learners** globally [10], focused on university and industry-partnered courses and certificates. Differentiator: accredited certificates, structured programs (Specializations, degrees), mix of free audit and paid tiers (Coursera Plus ~$399/year subscription). *Progress Reset:* No one-click reset for on-demand courses; users can re-enroll in a course session or on a new account to start over. This is cumbersome – e.g. users on forums have asked Coursera support to manually reset or resorted to creating second accounts [17]. Coursera’s scale and credibility are strong (168M+ registered by end of 2024 [18]), but its traditional semester-like structure for some courses makes “restarting” non-trivial.

- **edX (MOOC, now 2U Inc.):** edX (part of 2U) hosts courses from universities (similar to Coursera). It connects **over 86 million learners** to online courses as of 2023 [19]. Differentiator: open-source platform heritage (Open edX) and a mix of free and paid certificates. *Progress Reset:* Typically handled by enrolling in a future session or using the audit mode after completion; no universal reset button in the learner UI. edX’s course runs often have fixed schedules, so the concept of “reset” may equate to simply re-taking a course in a new session. Pricing varies (many courses free to audit, certificates ~$50–$300). Traction: high global reach (edX + Open edX platforms claimed **100M learners** by 2024 across all deployments [20]). Lack of an easy reset is mitigated by frequent course reruns.

- **DataCamp (Vertical – Data Science):** A subscription-based interactive learning platform for data science with **12–15 million learners** worldwide [14]. Differentiator: hands-on coding challenges and bite-sized lessons; very practice-oriented. Pricing: ~$25–33/month for full access [21]. *Progress Reset:* **Fully supported.** DataCamp users can reset any course with a built-in *“Reset Progress”* button [22]. This erases all exercise progress and allows a fresh start (all for free, included in subscription) [23] [22]. DataCamp explicitly notes this helps if you want to **“revisit concepts you struggled with, or simply start again from scratch”** [3]. Traction: strong in its niche (used by individuals and many businesses/universities for upskilling). DataCamp’s

approach proves the feasibility and popularity of a reset feature – it's a *differentiator* that likely aids learner retention on their platform.

- **Pluralsight (Tech Skills Platform):** A library of ~7,000 tech and software development courses (curated content). It targets professionals and enterprise teams (Pluralsight has ~1 million+ users, including many enterprise seats, per estimates [24]). Differentiator: rich skill assessments, paths, and certification prep. Pricing: **$29/mo** ($299/yr) standard; **$45/mo** premium for exams & projects [25]. *Progress Reset:* Not provided as a user feature. Learners can replay content freely, but progress tracking (percent complete) isn't easily clearable. Enterprise admins can reassign courses, but the onus is on the user to revisit modules. Pluralsight's traction is solid in B2B (used by 70% of Fortune 500) but in a competitive landscape of IT training. No reset function is standard here, likely because content is video-based and self-paced (users can scrub back without formal progress markers).

- **Skillshare (Creative Skills Platform) – *Adjacent**: *A subscription-based platform for creative skills (design, arts, etc.) with an active community. It has claimed ~12 million members as of 2022 [26]. Differentiator: community projects and short classes, all content via subscription (~$14/month annual).* Progress Reset:* Does not explicitly offer reset; classes consist of video lessons you can rewatch at will, and progress tracking is lightweight. Skillshare prioritizes discovery of new classes over repeating the same one, so this feature isn't a focus. Traction: moderate (not as large as Udemy, but strong in its niche). Adjacent in that it highlights how some platforms simply assume users will jump to a new class rather than restart an old one – a different user behavior model.

- **Duolingo (Language Learning App) – *Adjacent**: *A gamified language learning platform (103 million MAUs in 2024 [27]) known for daily streaks and leveled progression. Differentiator: heavy gamification and bite-sized learning. It allows resetting or removing a course: users can delete a language course and re-start it from scratch [28]. This is essentially a progress reset, often used if someone wants to redo the beginner material. Pricing: free with ads, or ~$7/mo Duolingo Plus to remove ads. Traction: very high usage (34 million DAUs in 2024 [29]). Duolingo shows that in habit-forming learning apps, resets are common** – e.g. a user may restart a language to reinforce fundamentals. This adjacent example underscores a broader behavioral trend toward repeating learning cycles.

- **Corporate LMS (Canvas, Moodle, Adobe Learning Manager, etc.) – *Adjacent**: *In enterprise and education LMSs, progress resets are usually admin-managed rather than user-initiated. For instance, Canvas allows instructors to* "Reset course content" *(wiping a course clean between semesters) [30], and Adobe Learning Manager lets an admin reset a learner's course progress so they can relaunch training from the start [31] [32]. These systems often have features to re-enroll or reset for compliance (only incomplete/expired modules are reset in Adobe's case [32]). Pricing: enterprise SaaS or open-source. Traction: millions of users in workplaces and schools. These platforms highlight the integration and record-keeping considerations** of resets – e.g., preserving a transcript of the first completion while allowing a new attempt [33]. They are adjacent because a progress reset idea might need to satisfy similar requirements (audit trails, bulk resets) if targeting corporate clients.

Summary: Direct competitors like **Udemy, Coursera, edX, Skillshare, Pluralsight** mostly do *not* offer user-controlled resets – which is a gap that affects tens of millions of learners. **DataCamp stands out** for embracing this feature as part of its value proposition, suggesting it can be a competitive differentiator in learner-centric platforms. Adjacent players in languages and enterprise training illustrate both the user demand for repetition and the importance of handling resets carefully (with data retention for compliance, etc.). No major competitor charges extra for a reset feature – when provided,

it's included as a core platform capability. This competitive landscape implies that a well-implemented reset function could differentiate Stepik (or a new product) in user experience, though it's an expected free convenience rather than a standalone product in most cases.

Customer Willingness-to-Pay

Individual Learners: As a standalone offering, learners likely **won't pay directly for a "reset" feature** – they view it as a basic platform utility. All comparable platforms that have it (e.g. DataCamp) include it free in the normal subscription [34], and where it's missing, users resort to free workarounds (community scripts, multiple accounts, etc.). For instance, the Udemy progress reset extension is free, and it gained traction because Udemy didn't natively support resets [4]. This suggests that if a platform tried to charge users solely to reset progress, most would balk, finding manual alternatives. Instead, the value to individuals is indirect: a reset function could increase **platform loyalty and continued usage** (a user might resubscribe or stick around to redo content rather than churn). In other words, willingness-to-pay is reflected in **retention and engagement** metrics more than a line-item purchase. Learners are accustomed to paying for content or certificates, not small features.

Institutions and Enterprises: Organizations are more likely to pay for capabilities that include progress resetting as part of a larger package. In corporate learning, the *budget line item* is usually an LMS or content library subscription. Within that, having the ability to reset or reassign courses is often a required feature for compliance and annual training. Buyers (L&D managers) won't usually pay extra per reset, but they **will choose a platform that supports recurring training cycles** over one that doesn't. This makes the feature a potential **competitive requirement** in B2B sales. For example, companies using WordPress-based LMS have purchased premium plugins like *Uncanny Automator Pro* specifically to enable automated course progress resets for learners [35]. That plugin's existence (and cost) implies organizations assign real value to the reset capability as part of maintaining training records and re-testing employees. Similarly, an enterprise platform that lacked a way to re-enroll learners in previously completed courses could face pushback in procurement.

Procurement Realities: If this idea were a separate B2B product (say a "course reset manager" that integrates into various LMSs), selling it would require fitting into existing procurement cycles. Enterprises bundle such needs under larger solutions – e.g., as part of an LMS RFP, they'll ask about "can we reset learner progress or assign repeated learning?" rather than seek a point-solution. Thus, an independent product might need to partner with LMS vendors or offer plugins. **Budget-wise**, companies often have a per-user or per-year license for LMS features, so a reset function would ideally be included in those licenses. A dedicated tool might only find budget if it solves a very specific pain (e.g. a university that wants alumni to be able to retake courses – niche case). In summary, *customers expect this feature as a built-in convenience*, not a separate expense. Willingness-to-pay is indirect: users "pay" by choosing one learning platform over another, or enterprises pay for robust learning systems that include full lifecycle management (of which progress reset is one part).

Ultimately, the monetization angle is about **retention and differentiation** rather than direct revenue. A course platform like Stepik could justify investment in this feature if it boosts learner reuse of content (driving more course completions or upsells). For external validation: DataCamp's inclusion of free resets likely helps justify its subscription value (users know they can safely experiment and restart without extra cost) [23]. Likewise, bridging a feature gap that Udemy and Coursera users have complained about could improve Stepik's perceived value, potentially attracting some power-users from those platforms who desire more control over their learning progress.

Regulatory & Technical Constraints

Implementing a progress reset must consider **data integrity, user privacy, and system integration**:

- **Data Privacy & Records:** A "reset progress" essentially deletes or archives personal learning data. Under data regulations (GDPR, etc.), this is generally fine *if user-initiated*, but the platform should be transparent about what is erased. Users might also expect an *undo* window in case they accidentally reset. For corporate customers or accredited courses, there's a need to **retain a record of completion** even if progress is reset for a new attempt. For example, a compliance course might need to show that John Doe completed it in 2024, even after he resets and does it again in 2025. Solutions exist: some LMS add-ons create a *permanent transcript* of completions while allowing resets for new attempts [33]. Stepik would need to decide if resetting purges certificates/grades entirely or keeps an archived entry. **Certificates and credits** are a particular concern – DataCamp notes that any earned certificates or achievements "will be removed" upon reset [36], which is acceptable in a casual context, but an accredited course might need to prevent or document that.

- **Compliance Requirements:** In certain industries (healthcare, finance), training records are audited. If Stepik ever caters to corporate training, a reset must not violate compliance. An admin-approval step or separate *"re-certification mode"* might be required to satisfy auditors that a prior completion isn't simply overwritten without trace. However, for typical MOOC usage (personal learning), regulatory impact is low – it's more of a user choice. Still, **age of user** could matter: for minors in K-12 platforms, deleting progress might conflict with parental oversight or school tracking policies.

- **Technical Integration:** If the platform integrates with others (e.g., via LTI or API to an employer's LMS or a university system), resetting progress on Stepik might need to send an update. For instance, if Stepik issues an xAPI statement on course completion, a reset might necessitate a new statement or retraction. Most systems aren't built to "un-complete" a course retroactively, so engineering this requires careful handling of state. One constraint is ensuring **reset doesn't break course logic** – e.g., if a user's old answers or code submissions remain stored, should those be wiped? In interactive courses, caches or databases of user submissions might need purging. It's technically feasible (essentially a controlled deletion of rows linked to that user-course), but thorough testing is needed to avoid ghost data. Another edge: courses with limited attempts (some cert exams allow only X attempts) should guard that reset doesn't circumvent attempt limits unless intended.

- **User Experience Risks:** A big constraint is avoiding **accidental resets**. The UI should require confirmation (maybe even typing "RESET" to confirm) because losing progress unintentionally would cause severe frustration. Also, for very large courses (hundreds of lessons), doing a full reset might strain the system if it triggers a lot of updates at once – but this is largely a backend design consideration (could be done asynchronously or in batches). Stepik must ensure that resetting one course doesn't inadvertently affect any cross-course data (like overall skill points, if any).

- **Switching Costs & Vendor Lock-In:** If this idea were a separate product (e.g., a plugin to add reset functionality to third-party platforms), integration hurdles would be high. Every LMS has different data schemas; implementing a universal "reset" tool means custom development per platform API. Many platforms (Udemy, Coursera) are closed systems with no public API to mark lessons incomplete – meaning a third-party solution resorts to browser scripting (as seen with

the Udemy extension) [37] [38]. These hacks can break if the site's HTML changes. So a standalone product targeting multiple platforms faces technical constraints and possibly **Terms of Service** conflicts (platforms might frown on automation). Legally, using scripts to manipulate a site could violate user agreements, which is a risk for a commercial third-party tool.

- **Security:** Allowing users to delete their progress data must be secure against abuse. We'd need to ensure one user cannot reset another's progress (proper auth checks). Also, if an attacker compromised an account, they might maliciously reset progress – not as damaging as stealing data, but still harmful to the user's experience. So account security (2FA, confirmations) indirectly plays a role.

In summary, while **no insurmountable regulatory barriers** exist for a course reset feature, careful design is needed to maintain compliance records (if applicable) and to implement the feature robustly. Following precedents is helpful: for instance, **Adobe's LMS only resets "failed and incomplete modules"** [32], indicating a nuanced approach to preserve passes, whereas **DataCamp wipes everything and requires re-do for a fresh start** [39]. Stepik will need to decide which model fits its use cases. The technical work mainly involves thorough deletion of progress markers and possibly issuing new enrollment instances – conceptually straightforward, but requiring diligence to avoid data corruption.

Emerging Trends & Tailwinds

Multiple macro and tech trends are creating tailwinds that **support the adoption** of a progress reset functionality:

- **Lifetime Learning & Re-skilling:** Learners today increasingly view education as continuous. The average online learner is no longer just a college student; **42% of online students are age 30+** [40], often juggling jobs and returning to learn new skills. This means many learners **take breaks and come back** to courses. The industry is grappling with low completion rates, but also with re-engagement strategies. Platforms are incentivized to help users *restart* and finish what they began. The surge of post-pandemic online learning (with global e-learning usage up dramatically – 220M MOOC learners in 2022 from 40M in 2014 [2] [41]) has created a large pool of partially completed courses waiting for a second chance. Resetting progress aligns with the trend of "second-chance learning" in a world where skills need refreshing.

- **Focus on Mastery and Retention:** Modern learning science emphasizes **repetition and mastery**. Organizations and apps are adopting spaced repetition, refresher modules, and "mastery learning" approaches to combat the *forgetting curve*. Studies show that **repeated exposure can improve long-term knowledge retention by up to 35%** [42]. This is fueling features that encourage re-testing and reviewing content. A reset button is a natural extension – it empowers motivated learners to systematically repeat an entire learning sequence. We see this in Duolingo's design (encouraging users to repeat earlier levels) and in trends like microlearning (small modules that can be redone regularly). As more emphasis is placed on outcomes (skill mastery vs. one-time completion), tools to *restart and practice again* will gain acceptance. In short, the pedagogical shift towards retention and practice creates a tailwind for features enabling easy repetition of content.

- **User Control & Personalization:** There is a broader consumer-tech trend of giving users more control over their experience data. Whether it's the ability to undo actions, reset game progress, or customize app settings, users expect autonomy. In e-learning, personalization is key: AI-

driven tutors and personalized pathways are emerging. A reset feature fits into this as a **user-driven personalization tool** – the learner chooses to reset their path based on their personal self-assessment. This complements other trends like adaptive learning (where content adapts if you're struggling – similarly, a user might adapt by choosing to restart). Moreover, as **gamification** becomes common, features like "restart this challenge" or earning badges on second attempt could become normal. The success of gamified platforms (Duolingo, Codecademy, etc.) with repeatable levels suggests learners are increasingly comfortable with iterative progress rather than linear one-and-done progression.

- **Corporate Compliance & Recurring Training Needs:** On the enterprise side, a strong tailwind is the continued growth of compliance training and certification maintenance. Many industries (healthcare, IT security, finance) require employees to redo training annually or biennially. E-learning providers are capitalizing on this with specialized compliance modules. For example, the LMS market is growing (expected to reach $44.49B by 2028) and much of that is fueled by corporate usage [43] [44]. Those scenarios inherently require resetting progress or enrolling the same learners repeatedly. Having an easy reset mechanism (especially one that can be automated for a cohort) is increasingly a selling point. We see **LearnDash plugins advertising one-click bulk resets for annual training** [45] [46]. This trend means a built-in reset feature isn't just nice-to-have; it could ride the wave of demand from organizations that need to efficiently recycle courses for re-use.

- **AI and Dynamic Content:** One emerging factor is generative AI in e-learning – creating dynamic content and practice questions. If courses become more AI-driven and less static, a "reset" might simply trigger new variations of content for the learner. This could accelerate adoption because the experience of retaking might be richer (not literally the exact same every time). For instance, some platforms might soon say "Redo this course with new examples generated by AI." While still early, this trajectory suggests that repeating courses could lose any stigma and become a norm for skill maintenance, aided by fresh content each round. It's a tailwind in that the concept of "static completion" is evolving; learning programs will likely encourage cycles of learn → apply → relearn.

Potential **headwinds or hindering trends** should also be noted: content shelf-life is short in some fields (tech, for example). Learners might prefer *new updated courses* over retaking an old one from scratch – especially if the field has changed (e.g., a 2019 Python course vs a 2025 Python course). So the reset feature is most attractive when the content remains relevant or is continually updated. Additionally, some platforms are moving toward **subscription models with endless new content** (e.g., LinkedIn Learning) where the mentality is to keep consuming new courses. In such an environment, repeating the same course might be less common – a possible cultural hurdle. However, even in those cases, core foundational courses (like beginner modules) often warrant repetition.

On balance, the tailwinds – growth of re-skilling, emphasis on retention, user autonomy, and compliance needs – all signal that a course progress reset feature is aligned with where digital learning is heading. It positions a platform to benefit from learners' desire to **extract full value from courses they've invested in**, riding the broader wave of lifelong learning.

Risks & Unknowns

Before investing heavily, we must acknowledge the key **go/no-go uncertainties** and risks:

- **1. Actual Usage and Demand Uncertainty:** It's unclear what percentage of users will actually use the reset functionality regularly. While vocal users have requested it (and thousands installed an extension [4]), this could represent a niche power-user segment. **Risk:** We devote significant development effort only to find low adoption, meaning limited impact on retention or revenue. It's unknown whether the *average* learner wants to retake courses – many might prefer to move on to new material. **Mitigation/Test:** Gauge interest through quick surveys or mock UI (e.g., place a non-functional "Restart Course" button to see how many click). Measure what fraction of completed or inactive learners would opt to reset if given the chance. This will validate if the feature solves a widespread problem or a corner case.

- **2. Impact on Learning Outcomes and User Behavior:** If many do use it, how does it affect their learning and satisfaction? It's possible that resetting progress and starting over improves mastery (good) or, conversely, could frustrate users if they lose achievements. **Risk:** Users might reset on impulse and then regret losing their prior record, leading to dissatisfaction or support complaints. Alternatively, if repeating a course without any change still doesn't lead to completion (just redoing the part where they dropped off), they might churn anyway – so the feature alone might not save at-risk learners. There's also a risk of **"gaming" behavior**: e.g., if platform rewards (points, badges) are tied to completions, users might reset and recomplete courses to farm rewards unless prevented. **Unknown:** Does a reset feature improve metrics like course completion rate or subscriber retention meaningfully? We have assumptions but no hard data for Stepik's context. **Mitigation/Test:** Run a pilot where a small group of users get the feature and track their outcomes (do they spend more time on the platform, complete more courses, or conversely drop out mid-repeat?). Also implement confirmations and perhaps an **audit log** (so support can restore progress if someone truly regrets a reset within a short time).

- **3. Technical Complexity and Integration Hurdles:** While conceptually simple, the feature may uncover hidden complexities in Stepik's architecture. **Risk:** Resetting progress could inadvertently delete more data than intended or conflict with how progress is tracked (especially if the system wasn't built with multiple attempts in mind). There might be unknown challenges in preserving certificate data or handling linked content (like projects or discussion posts) when progress is wiped. If Stepik integrates with external systems (for example, issuing completion data to a university), resetting might cause data mismatches. Additionally, if multiple devices or offline access is allowed, ensuring a reset propagates correctly is essential. **Unknown:** How much development and QA time will a robust implementation require? If the platform's code is older or not modular around progress tracking, adding this safely might be non-trivial. **Mitigation:** Do a technical spike or prototype on a test course to identify pitfalls (essentially an internal experiment to "manually" reset progress via database and see what breaks). Also, roll out gradually (maybe text-only courses first, then those with coding challenges, etc.) to contain any tech issues.

- **4. Market Perception Risk:** Introducing a reset feature could send various signals – mostly positive (platform cares about learner success), but there's a slight chance of negative interpretation. For instance, course authors might worry that allowing resets means **their course stats** (completion rate, reviews) could be affected by people doing multiple passes. Or new learners might question why such a feature is needed (does it imply courses are hard to complete the first time?). These are minor image risks, but worth noting. **Unknown:** Will

instructors and partners fully support this? Udemy once had a reset and removed it [5] – possibly due to low use or author concerns. We should verify those reasons to avoid repeating a mistake. **Mitigation:** Engage a few key instructors early to get buy-in, and perhaps allow authors an opt-out if they have a specific reason (though generally it should be platform-wide). Emphasize in messaging that the feature is about **learner empowerment**, not course failure.

- **5. Opportunity Cost:** If this idea soaks up development resources, what do we forego? Is solving this problem more valuable than other features we could build in the same time? The unknown here is the *ROI relative to other investments*. If, for example, only 5% of users use it, perhaps a different feature (like improved mobile support or a new content area) could have benefited 50%. **Mitigation:** Frame this feature as an experiment or incremental rollout such that we can pivot if the data doesn't show strong uptake.

Each of these uncertainties can be addressed (or at least de-risked) with quick tests or research before a full launch, as described next. None appear to be total show-stoppers – they are manageable if validated – but they remind us to proceed based on evidence, not assumptions.

Suggested Validation Experiments

To de-risk the idea before fully building it, we propose **three low-cost experiments**:

Experiment 1: "Fake Door" Landing Page or UI Button – *Gauge interest and intent.*
Goal: Measure how many users express interest in resetting progress when given an easy option.
Method: Add a prominent but non-functional "Reset this course" button or link on the course page for a subset of users (or create a simple landing page announcing a "Course Restart" feature with a signup or early access request form). If using the live UI approach, when clicked, it could either show a message "Coming soon – if you'd like to restart this course, let us know!" or log the click. Alternatively, send an email to users who haven't completed a course: "Would you like to start over? – click here".
Metrics: Track the click-through rate or sign-up rate. For instance, if out of 1,000 targeted users, 200 click the reset button, that's a strong 20% interest. Segment by user type: are these mostly those who had long inactivity or even some who finished (indicating desire to redo)? A conversion form could also capture *why* they want to reset (via a quick poll).
Rationale: This "fake door" test directly answers whether a significant share of users cares enough to take action. It's cheap because we don't need to implement the feature yet – just the interface tease. If almost no one clicks, that's a signal the demand might be lower than the vocal few suggest (and we might reconsider investment). If many click, we have justification and possibly a pool of interested beta testers. This experiment addresses Risk #1 (demand uncertainty) quantitatively.

Experiment 2: Concierge MVP with Manual Reset Support – *Test the process and user reaction on a small scale.*
Goal: Observe how users use a reset in practice and gather qualitative feedback, without full automation.
Method: Identify a small group of users who would likely benefit: e.g. users who completed <50% of a course 6+ months ago, or those who explicitly indicated interest (from Experiment 1 or via support tickets). Personally reach out offering a "course restart concierge service." For say 50 users, if they agree, manually simulate the reset: an admin or developer can duplicate the course for that user or enroll them in a fresh instance, and mark their old progress archived. (If Stepik's backend allows deleting progress data for a specific user-course, do that on the back end for these users with proper backups.) Essentially, do the reset *by hand* for them. Then track what they do: Do they actually go through the course again? How far do they get on the second attempt? Follow up with a brief interview

or survey: “Was restarting useful? What did you feel about losing your previous progress and achievements? Any issues encountered?”
Metrics: Completion rate or progress of those who reset vs. similar users who did not reset (control group). Also, qualitative satisfaction: e.g. on a scale of 1-5, how happy are they with the feature and would they use it again? Did anyone regret resetting? Also monitor if they needed any support (e.g. “I lost my certificate, can I get it back?”).
Rationale: This hands-on approach lets us validate *behavioral impact* (Risk #2) and *technical feasibility on a micro scale* (Risk #3) without building full UI. We might discover unforeseen problems – for example, maybe users want an **option to keep their certificate even if progress resets**. Or maybe none of the test users actually stick with the retrial, which would be insightful. The concierge MVP also helps fine-tune requirements: if manual resets are too cumbersome because of system limitations, we’ll learn what needs automation. Essentially, it’s a pilot to gather real user stories and any edge cases. If results are positive (users successfully re-engage and express gratitude), that’s a green light to proceed, armed with testimonials and clear understanding of user expectations.

Experiment 3: A/B Test with Soft Launch on Select Courses or Users – *Measure broader engagement effects and detect any negative signals.*
Goal: Quantitatively assess the feature’s impact on engagement and completion, while monitoring for any unintended consequences.
Method: Develop a minimal viable version of the reset feature but roll it out quietly. For example, enable it for a random 10% slice of users or for a specific course category (say, programming courses). In the A/B test, the “A” (control) group has no reset option, “B” group does. Over a few weeks, compare metrics: course re-engagement (do dormant users come back?), completion rates (does the presence of reset lead to higher eventual completion or just repeated dropouts?), and user retention (are B users more likely to stay active on Stepik or subscribe longer?). Also watch support tickets and forum posts: do B users report confusion or issues? We’ll also specifically track usage of the feature within the B group – what percentage actually click reset, and of those, how many complete the course on the second try.
Metrics: Key metrics include **completion rate lift** (if any) in B vs A for previously inactive learners, the number of courses per user completed, and possibly **subscription renewal rate** if we have a paid model (do users with the feature stick around longer?). We should also measure if any B users had to contact support about accidental resets or lost progress, indicating UX problems.
Rationale: This experiment directly tests the core hypothesis: that a reset feature improves user outcomes (or at least usage) without harming anything. It addresses several risks: if we see negligible usage or no difference in completions, perhaps the value isn’t as high (revisit go/no-go). If we see a positive uptick – e.g. 15% of dormant learners in group B reactivated and finished a course vs 5% in control – that’s strong evidence of value. The controlled rollout also helps catch any technical bugs in a limited arena. For example, if we inadvertently wipe data in group B and something breaks, we contain the blast radius. The A/B test provides statistically grounded insights to convince stakeholders with data rather than anecdote. It’s a slightly longer experiment (requires building a basic reset function behind a flag), but it’s the most rigorous way to forecast the feature’s broader impact.

By executing these experiments in sequence, we keep investment low while systematically validating the idea: from interest, to user satisfaction, to platform-wide effect. If results are promising, we can proceed with confidence to a full feature launch (and if not, we can pivot or scrap before incurring large costs). This lean approach ensures that further investment in the course progress reset functionality is grounded in real user data and aligns with both user needs and business goals.

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