

## GETTING STARTED with SAMS

This document will guide you through the basic steps involved in implementing the SAMS program for your institution. It supplements the information presented in the main documentation source for the SAMS program; namely, the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*. There is an abbreviated version of the manual – the *SAMS Faculty User's Guide* - designed to provide faculty members with step-by-step instructions for carrying out basic program operations. While the *SAMS Faculty User's Guide* will be all that's necessary for learning basic operation of the SAMS program, it is strongly recommended that all of your institution's faculty members review the background information presented in the *SAMS Administrator's Manual* to provide a more thorough understanding of the program's function and operation. Throughout this Getting Started guide specific page references are provided to both manuals for accessing step-by-step instructions.

### 1. – Work through the SAMS Initialization Wizard

The first time an administrator logs into SAMS an Initialization Wizard will open. This wizard will give you an opportunity to set a number of initial default settings for your program's SAMS account.

- **Step 1** in the initialization process involves the input of basic administrative information. This step must initially be completed by the institution's SAMS administrator. This information must be completed before you can begin using SAMS. After inputting the basic administrative information click the 'Next >>' button to move on to step 2.
- **Step 2** involves entering basic information about your program. Most of these values should be self-explanatory. The Default Trackables option allows you to select the built-in trackable items that will be included for each of your students. The four built-in trackable items shown are all enabled by default. You can include an unlimited number of additional trackable items by following the instructions in the **Administrator's Manual**.
- **Step 3** involves decision regarding the use of student accounts with SAMS. SAMS allows for student access account through which students can review their various assessments. However, you must explicitly enable student access before students can review any of their information in SAMS. If do not enable student access information can still be entered and reviewed from Administrator, Faculty or Staff accounts but students will not be able to view any of their information.

SAMS also provides a students' directory function. The directory is an 'opt-in' function and student can decide to release their address, phone numbers or email addresses. Student access must be enabled for the directory to be available. While the directory is accessible only from password protected SAMS accounts, you might want to check with your institution authorities about confidentiality concerns before enabling this function.

Additionally, SAMS provides a mechanism to create an advising checklist for your students. The checklist is created via the 'Trackables' function. Student Access must be enabled for this option to be available.

- **Step 4** involves entering default settings relating to marker creation and editing. In creating markers for classes you will need to provide a performance rubric. If you will be using a rubric repeatedly in creating markers (such as a rubric based on test scores) you can create a so-called 'Standard Rubric'. When creating a new marker you can input a custom rubric or simply select the standard rubric from a menu and have it inserted automatically. You can create as many standard rubrics and you desire. You will need to identify a standard rubric for use in assessing clinical skills. You can create your own clinical skills rubric or use one of the rubrics included with SAMS. Click the 'Add Rubric Set' to create a new standard rubric and follow the on-screen instructions.

Prior to creating markers for your program You must select either a standard rubric set or a generic performance language set as the default value when creating a new marker. If you created one or more standard rubrics you can select one of these rubrics as the default. Alternatively, you can select one of the available performance language sets as your default value. Please contact support@slpasoft.com if you would like to have a custom performance language set entered into SAMS for your program.

You can enter one or more validators or evidence sources for each marker you create. A set of built-in validator sources are available and include Scope of Practice, CCC Standards, Curriculum Committee, Advisory Group, Preferred Practice Doc, and Instructor Discretion. Also, a set of built-in evidence sources are available and include Exam/Quiz, Presentation, Paper, Practicum, and Thesis/Project. You can add additional validators or evidence sources if your program uses other sources not included in this list.

- **Step 5** involves entering default settings relating to tracking clinical activities. SAMS includes a complete set of so-called generic markers linked to the skill-based competencies in the standards. Data entry and report pages along with hard copy assessment forms are available for use in tracking clinical skills. It is recommended that all programs use this capability. If you choose not to use the built-in generic markers for skills tracking your program will need to create an entries set of markers for all skill-based competencies.

Next, select the rubric your program will be using for clinical skills assessment. This is the rubric that will be presented on all skills assessment entry and review pages. You use the back button to return to Step 4 to create a new rubric if none of the listed rubrics are acceptable for your program.

Select the performance level that indicates your program's definition of entry level mastery. SAMS will use this target level in determining if a students has attained entry level mastery for the individual clinical skills.

Finally, indicate if your program will be using SAMS for tracking clinic hours. For tracking SLP hours your program has two hours model options available. The Summary model tracks hours in very general categories (e.g., Speech vs. language, treatment vs. assessment, adult vs. child). The Basic Details model allows for tracking in more specific disorder categories (e.g., fluency, voice, articulation, etc.).

- **Step 6** involves defining the default setting that will be used in creating new faculty accounts. Each of the settings on this page is used to define the default settings when creating new faculty or staff accounts. You can override each of these settings in the process of creating individual faculty accounts.
- At this point you have completed the initial data entry for SAMS. You can click on the 'SAMS Home' button to return to the SAMS home page. Remember that you can change any of the information you have just entered at any time by accessing the 'Manage Your Institution Default Settings' of the SAMS home page.
- Note that an email-based feedback page is available for reporting bugs, seeking user support, or requesting new features. Clicking on the 'Submit Feedback' button in the page banner area will open a window in which you can enter your comments and your email address (which is required).

## **2 – Create SAMS Faculty, Staff, and Class Accounts**

The following steps must be completed prior to entering any learning markers into the database:

- a. Creation of accounts for faculty who will be involved in the assessment of graduate students. Accounts should be created for all faculty members who will be creating markers for their courses or will be assessing students in either classroom or clinical activities. Instructions for completing this step can be found on page 18 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*.
- b. Creation of accounts for any institution staff members who will have responsibility for maintenance of the institution's account or entry and assessment data. Institutions do not need to establish any staff accounts if

the institution administrator will be responsible for these functions. Instructions for completing this step can be found on page 20 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*.

- c. Input of information for courses in which students will be assessed. An institution need only enter courses in which content directly related to the standards is addressed. In other words, if no markers will be created for a particular course, it does not need to be entered into the database. Instructions for completing this step can be found on page 21 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*.

### **3 – Begin Development of a Learning Marker Inventory**

Once the basic operating information is input, the next step will involve the development of an inventory of learning markers sufficient to encompass the breadth of knowledge and skill areas defined in the standards. These learning marker definitions are input by program faculty via a web page form and stored in the program's database. It is important to understand that these markers are being developed to address the various competency statements spelled out in the standards document. However, each program will develop its own marker inventory and define mastery levels for these markers that best fits the specific characteristics of their program.

This step will be the most involved of the project. However, for programs that have already developed their basic assessment plan, much of the work required for this step (i.e., definition of learning outcomes) has likely been completed. Also, if faculty members have developed learning objectives for their courses (e.g., "The student will demonstrate...") these objectives can serve as the foundation for developing learning markers for their course. A task guide and animated tutorial for creating learning markers is available from the *SAMS Documentation* page. Additionally, a section offering tips and guidelines for developing learning markers is presented on pages 5 – 8 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*. Additionally, sample learning markers are discussed on pages 8 – 12 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*.

Experience suggests that some faculty members will have difficulty translating their learning objectives from their classes into learning markers as defined and developed for the SAMS program. To help address this issue an exercise has been developed that takes a faculty member step-by-step through the marker development process using pencil and paper before entering the data into the SAMS program. This exercise can be found in Appendix A of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual* and online on the *SAMS Documentation* page. Step-by-step instructions for creating and editing learning markers are available on pages 26 – 28 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual* and on pages 6 - 8 of the *SAMS Faculty User's Guide*.

Under ideal circumstances development of the learning marker inventory will involve three steps. Once the initial inventory of learning markers has been developed the second step will involve the program faculty reviewing the entire learning marker inventory. It is likely that there will be some competency standards that are underrepresented in the final inventory. It is equally likely that there will be competency statement that are attached to a fairly large number of markers. Should either or both of these situations occur, the third step will involve the program faculty deciding to edit, add, or remove markers until they achieve an inventory that is optimized for their program.

Under more realistic circumstances, the learning marker inventory will not be completed before a program will need to start assessing students performance. In this scenario, a set of learning markers will likely be completed for each class as it is offered. Thus, the complete inventory of learning markers may not be completed until the SAMS program has been in place for a year or more. It is important to continually review existing learning markers to assure that the evolving inventory is addressing the breadth and depth of the standards competencies.

### **4 – Define Trackable Items**

Next, trackables specific to a particular program's needs are created and entered in the database. Creation of trackable items is an administrative function. Note that a program does not need to utilize the trackables function and can disable any or all of the included trackable items via the administrative control page. A discussion on the use of Trackable items can be found on pages 12 – 13 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual* while instructions for creating and editing a Trackable item can be found on pages 22 – 23 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*.

### **5 – Add Students to the Database**

While it is possible to enter students into the database at any time, it will obviously need to be completed before input of assessments can begin. As students are admitted into the program, accounts will be created for them. and access to this operation is available from the Program Operating Information section of the administrative

control page. When the student account is created a set of learning markers based on the inventory developed in step 2 will be created for each student. Again, this is an administrative function and instructions for entering students into the database can be found on page 20 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual*.

With the completion of the above steps your institution is ready to begin input of assessment data and review of student learning outcomes. Detailed step-by-step instructions for these operations can be found on pages 29 – 33 of the *SAMS Administrator's Manual* and pages 9 - 12 of the *SAMS Faculty User's Guide*.