

Tracking Clinical Skills With SAMS

The organization of the learning outcomes in the SLP certification standards is quite different for the knowledge-based outcomes (Standard III-B, C, and D) vs. the skill based outcomes (Standard IV-G). The statements addressing the knowledge competencies are relatively general whereas the skills competency statements are much more specific.

The AuD certification standards do not clearly differentiate between knowledge and skill competencies as is seen in the SLP standards. However, AuD standards IV C, D, and E specifically address competencies that have well-defined skill and knowledge domains.

In tracking clinical skills with SAMS, training programs have three options:

1. The first option involves creating a full inventory of learning markers for the skill competencies. This option would involve the same process involved in developing knowledge-based markers for classes. These clinical skill markers would most likely, then, be bound to clinical practicum courses. Assessing these markers would proceed in the same manner as for knowledge markers; class lists would be created for practicum courses and practicum instructors would enter assessment results for each of the developed skill markers.
2. The second options derives from two observations related to assessment of clinic skills relative to the standards. First, the skill competencies enumerated in the standards (particularly in the SLP standards) provide a fairly detailed inventory of skills involved in basic clinical practice. Second, nearly all programs will evaluate students clinical skills within a clinical practicum experience using an assessment form that can be used across multiple (or all) practical experiences. Given these observations, a decision was made in the development of the SAMS to include an option for programs to use specific skill competency statements from the standards document as actual learning markers for practicum experiences. Within the SAMS program, these types of markers are referred to as *generic* markers. (In contrast, markers that are created by individual faculty members for use in their classes to address a specific competency are referred to as *custom* markers.) In using generic markers, the faculty will not need to develop custom skill markers to be used in assessing students in clinical practica.
3. The third option is a combination of the first two. A program can choose to use generic markers and then supplement these generic markers with custom markers. These custom markers can be designed to address areas that the program feels are not adequately represented in the standards or areas that they want to assess to a more detailed level.

The remainder of this document will address the use of generic markers in assessing clinical experiences. The specific steps are delineated below.

1. Before using generic markers the program administrator will need to enable this capability for their program. Enabling generic markers simply involves clicking the “Enable generic skill marker entry” button under the Institution Defaults section of the SAMS Home Page.

2. The second step involves the development of a standard clinic rubric. This rubric will be used to define the performance levels for students in their clinical activities. As an example, the following rubric will be used at the University of Cincinnati for assessing our student’s clinical skills

Performance Levels	Performance Criteria
1. Not Evident	Competency/ skill not evident; Requires constant supervisory modeling/ intervention
2. Emerging	Competency/skill emerging; Requires frequent supervisory instruction
3. Developing	Competency/skill present but needs further development; Requires frequent supervisory monitoring
4. Refining	Competency/skill developed but needs refinement and/or consistency; Requires infrequent supervisory monitoring
5. Independent	Competency/skill well-developed and consistent; Requires guidance and/or consultation only

To create a standard clinic rubric for your program:

- a. Go to the Administrator’s home page and click on the "Add New Rubric Set" button under the "Standard Rubric Sets" section of the Institutional Defaults controls.
- b. Enter a name for the rubric (e.g., "Clinic Rubric").
- c. Select a performance language set from the options presented. (Contact Doug Martin via the bug report mechanism if you’d like to add a new language set for your program.) Click the "Next >>" button to move on.
- d. Enter the performance criteria for each performance level.
- e. Click on the "Save Rubric" button.

3. Once you’ve created a standard rubric you will need to identify it as the rubric to use for generic skill assessment entry. Select the Rubric you just created from the “Use Selected Rubric Set As Clinical Skill Default” menu under the “Generic Skill Performance Rubric Set” section of the Institutional Defaults controls.

4. As a final step you’ll need to identify the target performance level for your students. This level will define the performance level students will need to meet in order to satisfy your program’s definition of ‘entry level mastery’. As an example, at the University of Cincinnati we have decided that our students will need to perform to level 4 (‘Refining’) in order to demonstrate entry-level mastery. Select the desired performance level from the “Current Clinic Skills Target” menu and then click the “Set Selected Level as Clinic Target” button

Assessment and Entry of Clinical Performance

There are clinical skills assessment forms that have been developed to be used for clinical skills assessment and data entry with SAMS. These forms are available from the SAMS documentation page under the Generic Assessment Grids section. There are two forms for use with Speech-Language pathology students and one form for Audiology students.

The two different forms for SLP allow for assessment using either a skills-oriented approach or a disorder-oriented approach. With the skills-oriented approach, performance levels are determined for each of the specific clinic skills defined in the standards (7 Evaluation skills, 7 Treatment skills, and 4 Professional Skills) and an indication is made of the specific disorder categories experienced for each skill. The disorder-oriented form provides for assessment of each of clinical skills for each of the 9 disorder categories. Review of the clinic skills assessment entry forms referred to above should make the two orientations clearer

The forms can be used by clinical supervisors to assess student performance during practicum experiences. To enter the assessments into the SAMS program:

1. Click on the "Enter SLP Student Evaluations" or "Enter AuD Student Evaluations" button. Assessment entry is available from the Administrator's home page and from the Faculty home pages if the "Skills Assessment" permission has been enabled for the individuals faculty member's account.
2. Select the student from the "Generic Practicum Grid" menu, select either the Skills or Disorder format (if SLP student) and click the "Next" button.
3. Select the assessor from the "Assessed by" menu or type the name into the field if the individual is not listed in the faculty menu. Enter the practicum facility names and the term and year for the practicum experience. Indicate the ages of clients covered in the practicum experience by selecting the Child or Adult button. Both can be selected if the experience involves clients of all ages. Enter the assessment results including any desired comments. Click the 'Show Rubric' button to see the standard clinic rubric while entering the assessments.
4. Once all information is entered, click the "Save Assessments" button. After the assessment data is saved you can click on the "Enter Additional Assessments" button to continuing entering assessments for other students.

Reviewing and Editing Saved Assessments

1. Click the "Review SLP Student Assessments" or "Review AuD Student Assessments" button from the home page. Assessment review is available from the Administrator's home page and from the Faculty home pages if the "Skills Review" permission has been enabled for the individuals faculty member's account.
2. Select the student to be reviewed from the "Student" menu. Select on the "Clinical Skills Assessment" button and click the "Next >>" button.

3. Select the date and facility option from the menu. The assessment sets are editable by the program administrator and the faculty member who entered the original data. From the faculty account, menu items marked with an asterisk (*) are assessment sets that can be edited. Select the review format (Skills or Disorders) if reviewing for an SLP student.

4. The “Output to:” gives you the option of downloading the assessment results as a Microsoft Word document. If you select the “Word” option, the assessment document will download to your computer. You can set your browser preferences to automatically open Word with the assessment document to enable editing and printing of the assessment results. See your browser help “Helper Applications” help topic for instructions.

5. If editing is enabled for the record, it can be edited and the changes saved by clicking the “Update Assessments” button. The set of assessments can be deleted by clicking the “Delete This Assessment Set” button. Proceed with caution as deleting an assessment set cannot be undone.