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Introduction to SAM

SAM (Skills Assessment Manager) is a web-based application that measures student proficiency in Microsoft Office software and technology-related topics. SAM teaches Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, Windows and Internet Explorer, in addition to Foundational Computer Concepts. SAM uses skill-based assessments, interactive training, real-world projects and just-in-time remediation to help students master essential computing skills. Visit SAM Central at www.cengage.com/samcentral for more information.

Cengage Learning created this SAM Brief Instructor User Guide to serve as an introduction for new SAM instructors. It provides directions for instructors who need to create courses and configure assignments (Exams, Training, Projects and SAM Paths).

This guide summarizes the detailed information found in the Instructor User Manual.

You can also reference the SAM Lab Administrators Guide for information about setting up the SAM environment.

For details about student activities, your students can reference the SAM Student User Manual.

For details about browser and computer settings, you and your students can reference the SAM System Requirements Guide.

Audience

This SAM Brief Instructor User Guide is a resource for SAM instructors who are new to teaching with SAM and the Cengage support teams who assist them.

Objectives

Instructors can use this guide to learn about SAM functionality in these areas:

- Working with courses (Creating a Section)
- Adding Assignments (Exams, Training, Projects and SAM Path)
- Setting up Gradebook

Engagement Services

Cengage Learning's Engagement Services offers a full portfolio of services designed to support instructors and institutions in fostering learner engagement and improving outcomes. Digital Course Support services provide you and your students with an unparalleled, ongoing user experience with SAM. For more information, contact your Cengage Learning Consultant or visit http://www.cengage.com/services.
Logging into SAM

Use the following procedure to log into SAM:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | In your browser, enter [http://sam.cengage.com](http://sam.cengage.com) in the Address field and press the Enter key.  
Result: The **SAM Login** page displays. |
| 2    | Enter the **username** and **password** you received.  
**NOTE:** CengageBrain checks the username you enter. If it finds it, a prompt directs you to enter your CengageBrain password to login. |
| 3    | Click **Login**.  
Result: If this is your first login, the **SAM Terms and Conditions** page displays. (The SAM home page displays on subsequent logins.) |

If this is your first time logging into SAM, follow these steps:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>When the <strong>SAM Terms and Conditions</strong> page displays, click <strong>I Agree</strong> to accept the terms and conditions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Terms & Conditions**

This is a legal document between Course Technology Cengage Learning ("Course Technology") and you. Course Technology is willing to license the Software to you only upon the condition that you accept all of the terms contained in this license agreement. If you agree to all of the terms contained in this license agreement, please so indicate by selecting the "I AGREE" option below. If you do not agree to the terms of this license agreement, please select the "I DISAGREE" option below. If you elect to decline and have purchased your User Manual for the Software (User Manual), you may return it to Course Technology to the address noted below, along with all packaging, proof of purchase and a letter from the institution or whose system the Software is installed certifying that no user profile has been created for you. If Course Technology receives these materials within 30 days of your purchase of the User Manual, Course Technology will issue a refund to you for any fee paid by you for the returned User Manual.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I Agree</th>
<th>I Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 5      | **Enter and Confirm your secret question and secret answer.** |

- Please select a secret question and answer to complete your user registration. In the event you forget your password, the secret question and answer will be used to reset your password.

  **Required Fields**

  - **secret question:** 
    - Select a secret question
  - **secret answer:**

- When finished, click **Submit**.
Enter and confirm your **New Password**.

`New Password:`

`Confirm Password:`

Click **Submit**.

Result: The SAM Home Page displays.

### NOTES:

SAM requires that you use an email address as your account’s username. If your account also has a communication email address, it displays by default. You can enter another email address if you wish. You need to do this only once.

SAM also supports single sign-on (SSO) with Cengage Brain ([http://www.cengagebrain.com](http://www.cengagebrain.com)) enabling you to use the same username and password for both systems. If you are a returning SAM user, the first time you log into the SAM environment, SAM checks Cengage Brain for an existing account. If you have an account, a prompt displays enabling you to enter your Cengage Brain password instead of your SAM password. If you forget your Cengage Brain password, click the **Forgot your password?** link to retrieve it.

### Grace Periods

Students may have Grace Periods in certain Key Code institutions. The Cengage SAM Admin Superuser sets the default Grace Period length based on institution type. Grace Periods allow students to access SAM without purchasing Key Codes until the Grace Period expires. Example: Students waiting for financial aid.

Students can enter their Key Codes at any time during the Grace Period. View students whose Grace Period expired in the Users tab or Edit Sections, Students tab. If a student’s Grace Period expires,
neither you nor the student can view reports and scores. For additional information on changing the default Grace Period duration, contact your Cengage Learning Consultant.

Sections

Creating a Section

You can create new sections from the SAM website. Your institution or department may have a standard naming convention for you to follow when naming sections. Use these steps to add a new section:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>On the Navigation bar, click Sections.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result: The Sections page displays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Click Add New.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result: The Sections – Add New page displays, defaulting to the Properties tab.
Enter the necessary information in the **Properties** tab. An * indicates a mandatory field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Name</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Section Name</td>
<td>Enter the section name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Course Name</td>
<td>Enter the course name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Description</td>
<td>Briefly describe the course content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Term</td>
<td>Enter the term in which the section will be available, i.e., fall, spring, summer, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Year</td>
<td>Enter the year the section will be available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Content Version</td>
<td>Select from Office 2010 or Office 2013, depending on what is available to your institution and what you intend to use in the section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Auto-Enroll</td>
<td>If this box is checked, students automatically enroll in this section. If unchecked, students will be wait-listed until you accept them into the section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropbox</td>
<td>If this box is checked, the Dropbox displays as part of the section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Center</td>
<td>If this box is checked, the Study Center displays to students. You can disable the Study Center any time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide Section</td>
<td>If this box is checked, students cannot see the section. You can use this to set up a template, which you can then copy or while you are editing the section.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Step 4

Click Save.

Result: You created the section. A dialog box displays asking if you want to edit section settings.

### Step 5

Click OK to add the textbooks, instructors and students to the section.

Result: The Edit Section page displays.

**Editing Section Textbooks**

Edit the textbooks for your section using the following procedure:

**IMPORTANT:** Instructors can add more than one textbook to a section. The SAM institution type (Key Code or Site License) and either the Key Code or number of licenses determine the number of e-books student can launch. Once students launch an e-book, it consumes an e-book license. Students have access to activities from other e-books but can only read the initial e-book they launch.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | **On the Navigation bar, click Sections.**  
      Result: The Sections page displays. |
<p>| 2    | Select a section. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3    | Click **Edit**.  
**Result:** The *Sections – Edit* page displays, defaulting to the **Properties** tab.  
**NOTE:** If you do not want to edit the section, click the **Cancel** button. |
| 4    | Click the **Textbooks** tab to add textbooks to this section.  
**Result:** The Textbooks tab displays. |
| 5    | From the appropriate drop-down menus, select the appropriate series and subject.  
**NOTE:** You can also search by the ISBN or Title.  
**Result:** A list of textbooks display. |
| 6    | Click the + icon to add them to the **Active Textbooks** menu.  
**NOTES:**  
- Textbooks with an e-reader display with an e icon.  
- When you add e-books to your section, students do not see them by default.  
**Result:** The textbooks display in the **Active Textbooks** section. |
| 7    | Click the Student Readings toggle to enable student readings.  
**IMPORTANT:** You can turn off the textbooks to hide readings during exams or to hide these from students so they do not launch them. You can still create content and assignments from these textbooks. Students just do not have access to them. |
| 8    | Save your edits.  
- Click **Save and Close** to save the changes you made in all tabs and return to the **Sections** page.  
**OR**  
- Click **Save** to save the changes you made in all tabs and remain on the same page.  
**Result:** the *Sections* page displays. |
**Editing Section Instructors**

Edit the instructors for your section using the following procedure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | On the **Navigation** bar, click **Sections**.  
Result: The **Sections** page displays. |
| 2    | Select a section. |
| 3    | Click **Edit**.  
Result: The **Sections – Edit** page displays, defaulting to the **Properties** tab.  
**NOTE:** If you do not want to edit the section, click the **Cancel** button. |
| 4    | Click the **Instructors** tab to add instructors to the section. SAM assigns you to the section automatically. |
| 5    | Click the + icon to expand the Instructor Candidates section.  
Result: A list of instructors display. |
| 6    | Search for the instructor you want to add to the section.  
Click the + icon.  
Result: The instructor displays in the Active Instructors section. |
| 7    | Expand the Active Instructors. |
| 8    | Click the Ownership toggle to make instructors owners.  
- Only the creator or supervisor of the section can assign owner status to other instructors.  
- Clicking the icon again reverts the user to instructor-only status. |
| 9    | Optional: Click the minus icon to remove an instructor from a section. |
Editing Section Students

Edit the students for your section using the following procedure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | On the Navigation bar, click Sections.  
Result: The Sections page displays. |
| 2    | Select a section. |
| 3    | Click Edit.  
Result: The Sections – Edit page displays, defaulting to the Properties tab.  
NOTE: If you do not want to edit the section, click the Cancel button. |
| 4    | Click the Students tab to enroll students in the section. |
| 5    | From the All Students or Wait Listed Student menus, select the student(s) to add.  
Click the + icon to add them to the Enrolled Students menu. |
| 6    | Click the Display Expired toggle to view students whose Grace Period expired. |
| 7    | To remove a student, click the minus icon next to the student. |
Creating Exams and Training

Instructors can create SAM exams and training manually or by using Express Creation. With Express Creation, instructors can create and schedule the exam and training at the same time. Manual creation of exams and training supports the options to save the exam or training or save and schedule.

SAM Assignments

Instructors can create SAM assignments (exam, training, projects) either manually or with Express Creation.

NOTE: You cannot create SAM Path assignments with Express Creation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8    | Save your edits.  
  - Click **Save and Close** to save the changes you made in all tabs and return to the **Sections** page.  
  OR  
  - Click **Save** to save the changes you made in all tabs and remain on the same page.  
  Result: the **Sections** page displays. |

Scheduling SAM Assignments

The following section shows you how to use Express Creation to schedule exams, training or projects.

NOTE: Schedule all existing exams, training and projects from their respective tabs by clicking the **Schedule** icon.

IMPORTANT: When instructors set dates in the calendar for all assignment types or set times and passwords for all exams and projects, the default days and times that display are for the local time zone on their computers. However, assignments are set for the institution time zone. As a result, instructors could select a day and/or time in the past. Be aware of this situation when scheduling assignments.
Creating and Scheduling Assignments with the Express Creation Wizard

Express Creation is a convenient way to create and schedule exam, training and project assignments associated to a chapter from a textbook in a section.

NOTE: You cannot create a SAM Path using the Express Creation wizard. Instead, use manual creation.

- For exam creation, you can select tasks and/or testbank questions. Task-based questions display selected by default. To use objective-based testbank questions, you must select them individually.
- For training assignment creation, you can select performance-based tasks that are parallel to those used in exams.
- For projects, you can assign step-by-step activities that require students to show proficiency with Word, Excel, Access or PowerPoint.

Follow these steps to use the Express Assignment Creation wizard to create and schedule assignments for your section:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>On the Navigation bar, click <strong>SAM Assignments</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Click <strong>Express Creation</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>From the Select Section drop-down menu, select a section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4    | From the **Textbook** drop-down menu, select a textbook from which to create an assignment.  
Result: The **Express Creation** wizard opens. |
| 5    | From the **Chapter** tabs, select the chapter from which to create an assignment. |
| 6    | Select from the following:  
- **Exams**: You may select multiple tasks or testbank questions within a single exam.  
- **Training**: You may select multiple tasks within a training assignment.  
- **Projects**: Select a project. |
| 7    | In the **Assignment** box, enter a *unique name* for the assignment. |
8a Exams:

By default, all tasks are selected; testbank questions are not selected.

- Deselect and select tasks to include in the assignment.
- Select testbank questions to include in the assignment.

- Select all appropriate exam assignment options.
- Complete the exam schedule and security options (available date, always available password, report availability dates, passwords, etc.).

- Click **Save Exam**.

Result: The following message displays. **If you Save your work right now, this assignment will be automatically scheduled and you will not be able to edit it any further within this Wizard. Do you wish to Proceed?**
8b  Training:
By default, all training assignments are selected. Deselect and select training if required. Complete the following:
- In the Instructions text box, enter exam instructions.
- Select the Training Options tab and enter all appropriate training options.
- Complete the exam schedule and security options (available/due dates and always available password).

- Click Save Training.

Result: The following message displays: If you Save your work right now, this assignment will be automatically scheduled and you will not be able to edit it any further within this Wizard. Do you wish to Proceed?
Projects:
- In the Project Assignment Options dialog box, enter and select from the various options.
- Complete the project schedule and security options (available date, and always available password, report available date, etc.).

- Click Save Project.
Result: The following message displays. If you Save your work right now, this assignment will be automatically scheduled and you will not be able to edit it any further within this Wizard. Do you wish to Proceed?

Gradebook
You can use the Gradebook to change Gradebook settings: The default setting is not to display the gradebook to students. You can display weights, scores and the final score to students.

Selecting a Section
Before viewing or maintaining a Gradebook, first select the section using the following procedure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>On the Navigation bar, click Results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Click the Gradebook tab.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Step 3

From the drop-down menu, select a section.

Result: The section’s student list displays.

![Image of a table grid showing student names, scores, and other details.](image)

**NOTE:** No results display when the selected section contains no students or no student results. Instead of the table grid, the following message displays: **No Students are enrolled in selected section or no student results exist.** Instructors can edit Section Settings and manage Assignment Types before student results exist.

---

### Modifying Gradebook Section Settings

Modifying Gradebook’s Section Settings changes the default display for all sections. Modify the Gradebook Section Settings use this procedure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>After you have started Gradebook and selected a section, the table grid displays. From the <strong>Section</strong> drop-down menu, select a section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Click the <strong>Manage</strong> tab in the upper right corner of the window. Result: The <strong>Manage</strong> tab displays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3    | **Click Section Settings.**  
**Result:** The **Section Settings** dialog box displays. |

|   | ![Section Settings dialog box](image) |

| 4a | **Modifying the Default Gradebook Display:**  
In the **Section Settings** dialog box, under **Default Gradebook Display**, select either **Percentage** or **Points**.  
**NOTE:** The default is **Percentage**. |

| 4b | **Modifying the Student Gradebook Display:**  
In the **Section Settings** dialog box under **Student Gradebook Display**, select what to display to students:  
- **Final Score** – displays the weighted Final Score  
- **Assignment Scores** – displays the individual scores for each assignment  
- **Weights** – displays the Assignment Type Weights (in percentages only)  
**NOTE:** All options are unselected by default. Students do not see the gradebook unless one or more of these options are changed. |

| 4c | **Modifying the Exam and Project Scoring Method**  
In the **Section Settings** dialog box under **Student Gradebook Display**, select what to display to students:  
- Click the drop down menu for Exam  
- Select from Highest (default), Average, or Lowest  
- Repeat for Project |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4d</td>
<td><strong>Modifying the SAM Path Scoring Options</strong>&lt;br&gt; In the <strong>Section Settings</strong> dialog box under <strong>Student Gradebook Display</strong>, select what to display to students:&lt;br&gt; - <strong>Grade Each Separately</strong>: Students receive a grade for each separate component of the SAM Path assignment.&lt;br&gt; - <strong>Grade Exam Only</strong>: The Exam grade displays in the Gradebook. If there are multiple exams in a SAM Path, only the post exam counts towards the final score.&lt;br&gt;  — Display Exam in Exam Assignment Type&lt;br&gt;  — Display Exam in SAM Path Assignment Type&lt;br&gt; - <strong>Display Cumulative Score</strong>: One score displays for the SAM Path assignment.&lt;br&gt;  — If the SAM Path assignment is either a <strong>Training &gt; Exam</strong> or <strong>Exam &gt; Training</strong> type, the exam score displays for the cumulative score.&lt;br&gt;  — If you selected <strong>Display Training and Post Exam only for incorrect tasks in the Pre Exam</strong> in the assignment options, the cumulative score for Exam &gt; Training &gt; Exam is the Pre Exam + the Post Exam.&lt;br&gt;  — If all tasks display in the Post Exam, the cumulative score is the score number of questions students got right on either the Pre Exam or Post Exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Click Save</strong>.&lt;br&gt; Result: Section settings update.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Optimizing SAM

For information about optimizing SAM, refer to the [SAM Lab Administrators Guide](#).

Follow these guidelines to help ensure that SAM loads and runs at optimal speeds:

- Exit other applications while using SAM, especially during exams, to ensure adequate bandwidth and critical system memory to provide the best user experience.
- Disallow or block social networking applications during SAM sessions. It may have a negative impact on overall workstation performance.
- For SAM Training, each user may require up to 1 megabit per second of bandwidth to download and use SAM. Therefore, a lab with 30 students may require 30 mbps of available capacity during SAM Training sessions. (SAM Exams and Projects require significantly less bandwidth).
- If your institution uses a firewall, confirm that standard HTTP Port 80 is open for the [http://sam.cengage.com](http://sam.cengage.com) site. If your institution accesses the site via secure SSL, confirm that Port 443 is open as well. The Lab Administrator guide provides additional information.

### Technical Support

Go to [www.cengage.com/support](http://www.cengage.com/support) for all of these and more:
- Live chat for students 24/7
- Training videos (go to http://www.cengage.com/dcs/)
- SAM Knowledgebase and Manuals

Or

Email your problems and questions at any time to http://poweron.cengage.com/magellan/TechSupport/login.aspx.