



DRIVING STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY AT CASS BUSINESS SCHOOL WITH SAM



STUDENT OUTCOMES



ABOUT CASS BUSINESS SCHOOL, CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON

Cass Business School is one of City, University of London's five Schools. It's among Europe's leading business schools and in the global elite of business schools that hold the gold standard of 'triple-crown' accreditation. Producing some of the world's most employable graduates, Cass Business School is dedicated to ensuring students have up-to-date and relevant skills to secure some of the city's best jobs upon graduation.

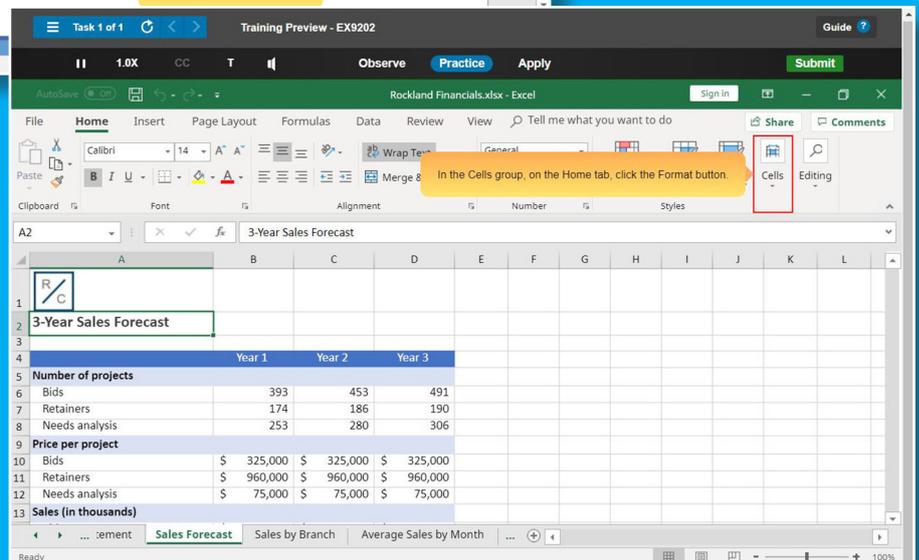
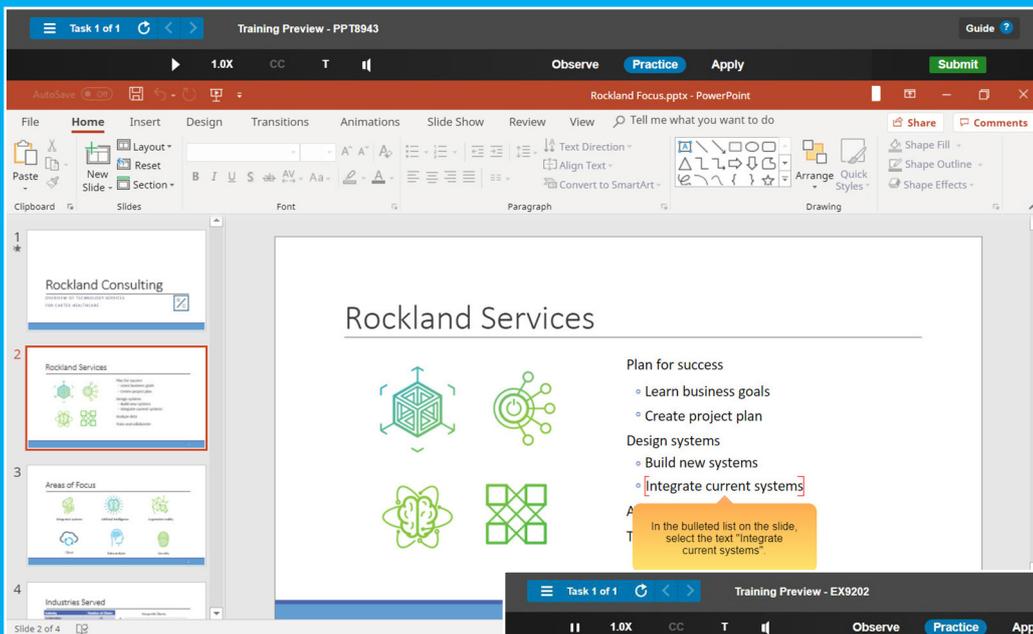
WHAT IS SAM?

SAM (Skills Assessment Manager) provides online student training and assessment for Microsoft Office and computer concepts. Students observe, practice and actively apply skills live in the Office application, preparing students with the skills they need for academic and professional success. Flexible reporting tools, automatic grading and instant student feedback promote student self-study and save you time.

SAM is available for both Office 2016 and Office 365/2019. It includes prebuilt MOS exam simulations for Excel, Word, Outlook, Access and PowerPoint – designed to acclimatise your students to both the certification objectives and testing environment.

“SAM offers the chance to enhance Office skills in a fun way and you can learn at your own pace which is by far the best feature of SAM.”

– Student, Cass Business School



Cengage worked with Cass Business School to carry out a research study to gain student feedback on the implementation of SAM as a tool for improving Microsoft Office skills. As part of the study, over 150 students responded to an online survey and a select few attended a student focus group.

Survey responses from students using SAM provided valuable insight into the importance of SAM in relation to employability. 80% of students agreed SAM has helped increase their graduate employability skills. Individual students also commented on how the skills they learned in SAM had helped to secure professional work placements and interviews:

'The fact that the functions and procedures learnt are directly attributable to the workplace environment that I am aiming for helps me stand out in terms of my IT experience on my CV, which helped me gain an internship for my placement year.'

'It was a great opportunity to learn relevant Microsoft Office skills used in the workplace. I can say all my friends who used it would agree.'

Although 63% of students stated they were somewhat or very confident with Microsoft Office prior to using SAM, feedback from an online survey revealed that 91% of students agreed SAM made them feel better prepared for interacting in the Microsoft Office environment. In fact, SAM helped students identify specific knowledge and skills gaps in applications such as Excel and provided tasks for remediation: *'I thought I knew how to use Excel and when I began the training, I knew this wasn't the case. Now that I've completed it, I feel much more confident.'*

91%

of students agreed SAM made them feel better prepared for interacting in the Microsoft Office environment

SAM supports students at their unique skill and knowledge level to prepare them for success. This is particularly important at Cass because students have different levels of proficiency with Microsoft Office. One student commented: *'[SAM] breaks down complex tasks into simple understandable steps with examples. It doesn't assume previous knowledge, but you can skip what you already know - great for beginners or those with knowledge already that want to improve.'*

When asked what they liked most about SAM, many students referred to the instant feedback available in SAM, with one student commenting: *'The fact that there were different ways to test your knowledge and receive immediate feedback on it. It was a massive help especially in computer concepts skills.'*

Students also commented on the flexibility of SAM, which allows students to fit studying around their busy University schedules and different requirements. *'It provides me with complete flexibility, versatility and empowerment, enabling me to be in full control and apply all the features, functionality and benefits in exactly the way that suits my needs, objectives and school priorities.'*

DRIVING EMPLOYABILITY WITH MICROSOFT OFFICE SKILLS

It's well-known that Microsoft Office skills are the language of the working world. As part of the focus on employability, Cass Business School are using Skills Assessment Manager (SAM), an online learning solution for Microsoft Office applications from Cengage. SAM prepares students with the skills they need for academic and professional success by providing content that increases proficiency and boosts job eligibility.

Supporting 500 students annually, SAM is deployed across six degree pathways in the Business School:

• Business Studies • Accounting, Finance and Investment • Management • Banking and International Finance • Financial Risk Management • Actuarial Science

SAM is used as a compulsory pre-requisite module to an elective in Microsoft Visual Basic but is also offered as an extra-curricular module to students who simply want to improve their Microsoft Office Skills or work towards a Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam. On completion, students are awarded a Cass Business School certificate in Office Skills that they can include on their CV. Most students use SAM to improve their Excel skills which are considered essential for many graduate jobs. In fact, in Cengage's recent Student Voices report, 54% of respondents cited IT Skills as the most important employability skills they seek from their institution.

'I trained myself in Excel as part of my VBA course in my first year of university, and it helped me tremendously to understand the ins and outs of Excel for my future career and for the rest of my time at Cass.'

– Student, Cass Business School

'The training was extremely useful when it came to writing my CV, it helped me with a lot of formatting. I have also taken tests in Excel at interviews where I have used the skills learnt in training.'

– Student, Cass Business School

CONCLUSION

By successfully implementing SAM, students at Cass Business School have become more proficient and more confident in their abilities using Microsoft Office applications.

SAM as a digital teaching tool

84% of students said SAM was an effective tool for learning Microsoft Office. SAM enhances the speed and quality of instructor teaching and the detailed auto-feedback helps instructors and students alike to identify subjects that require remediation.

SAM increases student engagement and interest

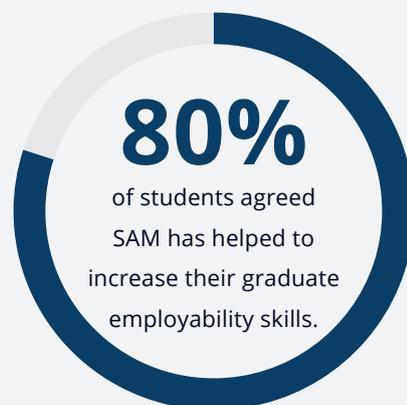
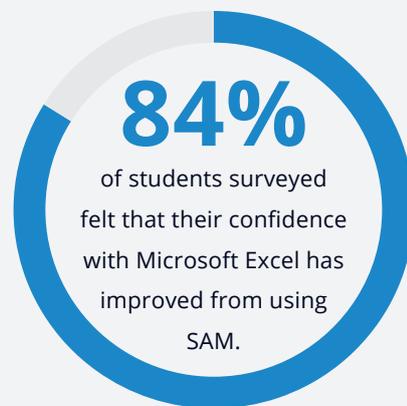
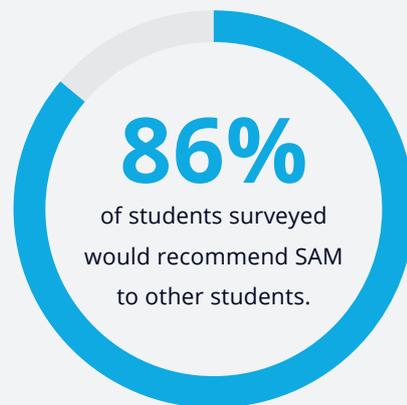
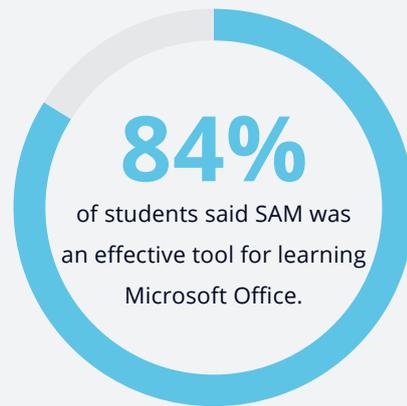
86% of students surveyed would recommend SAM to other students. Any-time access, step-by-step instruction, and a self-directed learning style allows students to take control of their learning to fit in with their busy schedules.

SAM provides employability skills

84% of students surveyed felt that their confidence with Microsoft Excel has improved from using SAM. 80% of students agreed SAM has helped to increase their graduate employability skills.

The continuing relationship building between Cengage and Cass Business School has ultimately led to an improved process and development of aligning SAM to the employability needs of students.

If you'd like to find out more about how SAM can support you and your students, please contact your local Cengage representative through cengage.co.uk/contact-us or email us at emea.edureply@cengage.com



To read more research from Student Outcomes, go to cengage.co.uk/studentoutcomes