CamCORS

From 1st October 2002 there will be available an online reporting system for supervisions: this system has been commissioned by the Senior Tutors' Committee and is (in full) the Cambridge Colleges' Online Reports for Supervisions, to be known as CamCORS.

One of the primary intentions in developing this system has been to facilitate the provision of reports by those asked to supervise by departments and faculties (mainly though not exclusively, for Part II (and III) of various Triposes. From an educational perspective, the Senior Tutors believe that provision of adequately detailed reports to students is an invaluable part of the educational process. We have had it in mind to provide a system that will facilitate the writing of reports, monitoring of reports by Colleges, the facilitation of claiming for payment by supervisors (who, if they use CamCORS, will have to enter payments details only once (on login for the first time) and thereafter only keep them current).

What needs to be done to prepare for CamCORS?

In order to create supervision reports on CamCORS, the supervisor will need to have some basic information about the student: this includes the CRSid (i.e. the part to the left of the @cam.ac.uk email address. Your department or faculty should establish who will obtain this information for all the students in your faculty or department from University Computing Services. Those responsible for organising supervisions will need to know from whom they should get the subset of this information which they need for the students for whom they are they are setting up supervisions.

The role of the Course Director

We refer to the person who has the responsibility for organising supervisions centrally as the Course Director. We assume that by some method the Course Director already supplies a list of names of students to the persons who have been asked to supervise. To use CamCORS, a supervisor will only need the following information:

Student's name (surname with preferred name); CRSid; Tripos Part. Only the CRSid and Tripos Part are essential to enable supervisors to create the report forms.

It will be very helpful to supervisors if CRSids are grouped by Tripos Part and in a form that it is easy to copy and paste. This might most simply be done by sending them an Excel Spreadsheet with each bit of information in a separate column. You can also use either a comma-separated, new row format file or a simple email. But you will best know the form that might best suit the members of your department or faculty. Supervisors can of course simply ask students for their CRSids and type in each one.

Supervisors
Most Senior Members of the University and those who are experienced supervisors
will have been registered as supervisors with CamCORS Supervisor Accounts before
the start of the academic year 2002-03. But Course Directors might well be wishing
to use some new supervisors.

Course Directors may register supervisors by sending a list (either as an Excel
Spreadsheet or as a CSV File) to camcors-registration@ucs.cam.ac.uk. Course
Directors doing so should identify themselves by name and the Tripos or Paper for
which they are responsible for organising supervision. CamCORS Supervisor
passwords will then be sent to the supervisors at the address held in the University
Computing Service Database. If someone is already registered they will not be
reregistered so Course Directors need not worry about this possibility.

After the initial registrations this year, the method of registering supervisors will
depend upon their status within the university.

Senior Members of the university who already have a CRSid

Any Senior Members of the university who already have a CRSid may register
themselves as a supervisor by going to the online form at:
(http://www.cam.ac.uk/cambuniv/camcors). Their password will be sent by
University Computing Services to the address held in their database.

Graduate students who are being invited to supervise

Graduate students should be registered by the Course Director who should email:
camcors-registrations@ucs.cam.ac.uk with their names and CRSids. Alternatively,
they can be told to ask their colleges to register them.

**Other supervisors who are not members of the University and who do not have a
CRSid**

Until now these people (broadly speaking) have not been entitled to a CRSid. This
has now changed. They need to be told to get a form from
http://www.cam.ac.uk/cs/formr1.pdf and to complete it to apply for a CamCORS
account. This will need to be signed by the person authorised to sign such
applications and stamped (the stamp is important as it eases the burden on UCS
having to know all these signatures). If it is decided that someone other than those
who currently are authorised signatories for UCS accounts, then UCS will need a
sample signature and need to be informed in the usual way. The CRSid and password
will then be sent to the address the applicant gives on the form. Such people are more
widely used in some subjects (like MVST and English) than in others.

Instructions on creating Report Forms

Supervisors should be asked to create the reports forms as soon as they have agreed to
supervise and have their CamCORS account. They should not wait until the end of
term. Supervisors can keep notes, if they wish to do so, on CamCORS: these will not
be visible by anyone other than themselves until they submit the reports. But relevant

people (College Offices, Senior Tutors, the student, the Director of Studies and the Tutor) can see the Report Form. This has a header (which is automatically generated from within CamCORS), which contains email links to all of the above. Colleges can therefore see that arrangements are in place for the supervisions without the need for further action from the supervisor. If the need arises this would be an easy way for the supervisor to contact relevant college people. All email addresses within CamCORS are assumed to be crsid@camcors.cam.ac.uk if supervisors normally use a different address they will need to redirect their email in the usual way (see below).

Some technical information

This is a brief (but complete) summary of everything that is needed on the client side in order for people to use CamCORS from within a Department or Faculty:

i)   An HTML4.01-compliant web browser that supports SSL;

ii)   If you have a firewall, the ability to make outbound SSL connections to https://camcors.cam.ac.uk

iii)   The ability to download text files from CamCORS and store them locally.

Browsers

CamCORS has been tested with a wide range of browsers for both Windows and for Linnux. It is optimised (aesthetically) for Internet Explorer. Old versions of Netscape do not render CamCORS screens particularly beautifully, but the functionality works. Several other browsers for those using Macs/Unix operating systems are available free of charge. On Unix platforms, we recommend Mozilla, Galeon or Konqueror.

Emails

All CamCORS Users need to have a valid @cam.ac.uk mail address. If your department or faculty has its own departmental email servers with accounts that use CRSids, you should set these servers up to allow @cam forwarding. If your mail server does not use CRSids, then either your users will need to use the redirection facilities on Hermes or your mail server will need to be able to pick up mail addressed to an @cam.ac.uk address.

Printing and saving locally

In order to save or print reports CamCORS Users need Adobe Acrobat (available as freeware) and if your departmental or faculty network is so configured that users cannot install their own software the CO will need to do this.

CamCORS is very easy to use and there is extensive online help. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Steering Group (steering-group@camcors.cam.ac.uk).

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