

This document outlines the various ways to create Canvas accounts for observers and pair them with student users. Observers may observe a student in individual courses or in all courses in which the student is enrolled.

Admins: Observer Account Overview

Admins can create user accounts and enable user self-registration. Admins, instructors, and students may participate in linking observer accounts with student accounts.

Once an observer's account is created, they should log in to Canvas to observe students in a course. If your institution uses external authentication to log users into Canvas, it is recommended that you [create a Canvas discovery page](#) for your users.

Learn about adding observer accounts and about linking observer and student accounts:

[Self Registration](#)

Admins can enable self-registration to allow observer users to create their own Canvas account. Admins, instructors, or students must then provide an observer with a student pairing code to link the observer account to a student.

[SIS Import Tool](#)

Admins can configure CSV files to create observer user accounts and link observers to student accounts.

[Application Program Interface \(API\)](#)

Admins can configure an API to create observer user accounts and link observers to student accounts. Learn more about the [Canvas LMS API](#). Customer Support teams may also help configure an institution's API.

Observer Self-Registration

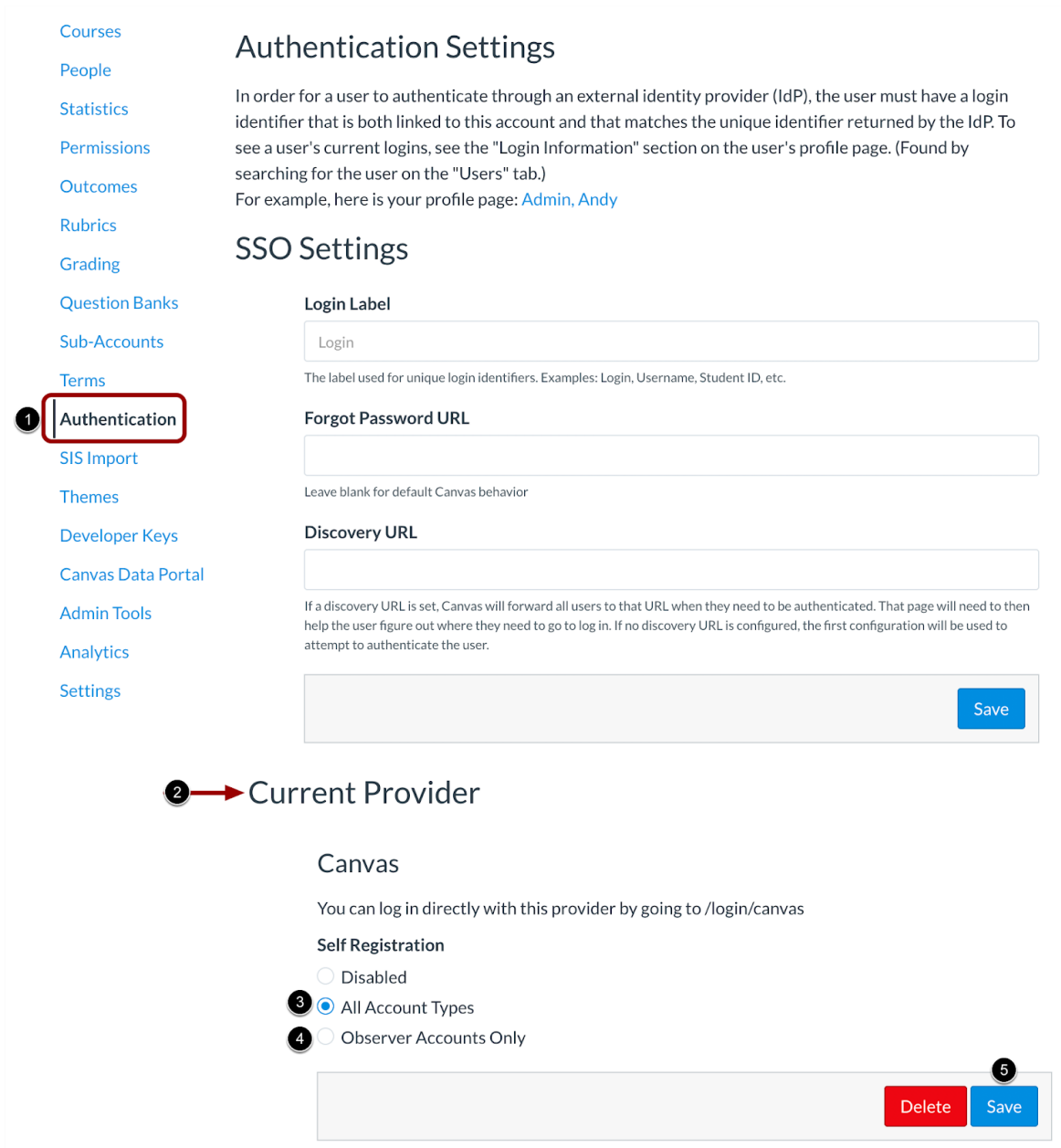
Affected Users	Actions to Take
Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enable Self Registration• Generate pairing codes for observer users *
Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate pairing codes for observer users *
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate pairing codes for observer users +
Observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Register for Canvas account• Enter student pairing code in Canvas User Settings or in the Canvas Parent app

*Pairing codes [generated from a course People page](#); links observer to student in course

+Pairing code [generated from student User Settings page](#); links observer to student in all their courses

Admins

In order to allow observers to create their own Canvas accounts, you must enable Self Registration in your account.



The screenshot shows the Canvas Admin interface. On the left is a navigation menu with items like Courses, People, Statistics, Permissions, Outcomes, Rubrics, Grading, Question Banks, Sub-Accounts, Terms, **Authentication** (highlighted with a red box and a '1' in a circle), SIS Import, Themes, Developer Keys, Canvas Data Portal, Admin Tools, Analytics, and Settings. The main content area is titled 'Authentication Settings' and contains the following sections:

- Authentication Settings:**
 - Login Label:** A text input field containing 'Login'. Below it is a note: 'The label used for unique login identifiers. Examples: Login, Username, Student ID, etc.'
 - Forgot Password URL:** An empty text input field. Below it is a note: 'Leave blank for default Canvas behavior.'
 - Discovery URL:** An empty text input field. Below it is a note: 'If a discovery URL is set, Canvas will forward all users to that URL when they need to be authenticated. That page will need to then help the user figure out where they need to go to log in. If no discovery URL is configured, the first configuration will be used to attempt to authenticate the user.'
 - A 'Save' button is located at the bottom right of this section.
- Current Provider:**
 - The provider is set to 'Canvas'.
 - A note says: 'You can log in directly with this provider by going to /login/canvas'.
 - Self Registration:**
 - Disabled (radio button)
 - All Account Types** (radio button, selected, with a '3' in a circle)
 - Observer Accounts Only (radio button, with a '4' in a circle)
 - A 'Delete' button (red) and a 'Save' button (blue) are at the bottom right, with a '5' in a circle above the Save button.

To enable Self Registration:

1. Click the **Authentication** link in Account Navigation.
2. Locate the Current Provider section.
3. To allow any user to create a Canvas account for your institution, select the **All Account Types** option.

4. To allow only observers to create a Canvas account for your institution, select the **Observer Accounts Only** option.
5. Click the **Save** button.
6. Provide observer users information about accessing your institution's Canvas login page.

Observers

When an institution has enabled Self Registration, you can [sign up for your own Canvas account](#). Your institution may use a splash page or alternative Canvas authentication through an external site. For questions about your institution's login or Canvas URL, communicate with your administration.

Alternatively, if you already have a Canvas account for your institution, you can link your account with one or more student accounts using a pairing code.

Learn how to [link your account with a student account](#).

Notes:

- Admins and instructors can generate pairing codes to link you to students in a course. Students can generate an observer pairing code to link you to their Canvas account. [Learn more about pairing codes](#).
- If your User Settings does not display an Observing link, you can add */profile/observees* to the end of the URL (e.g. *canvas.instructure.com/profile/observees*).

Adding Observers via SIS Import

Affected Users	Actions to Take
Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate user data for observer accounts • Configure CSV files for upload • Upload CSV files
Observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log in to Canvas account

Admins:

To create observer user accounts:

1. Configure a [user_csv](#) with observer user data.
2. Upload CSV using the [SIS Import Tool](#).

You can pair observers with students using the SIS Import Tool. Each observer and student must have a unique identification number. To pair observers to students:

1. Configure a [user_observers.csv](#).
2. Upload CSV using the SIS Import Tool

Notes:

- If you add observers but do not pair them with students, a pairing code should be generated for observers. Learn more about [pairing codes](#).
- If you do not configure the API to link observers with students, you must enable Self Registration so that observers can enter pairing codes.

Observers:

To access your Canvas account and view paired students, follow these steps:

1. Log in to Canvas using the credentials provided by your student's institution.
2. If your admin has paired your account with a student, you can view the courses in which your paired student is enrolled. You can view a list of paired students in your User Settings.
3. If your account is not already paired to a student, [enter a pairing code](#) to link your account with a student. You can observe your student in a course or courses in which they are enrolled.

Notes:

- If your User Settings page does not include an Observing button, you can access the pairing page by adding `/profile/observees` to your institution's Canvas URL (e.g. `canvas.instructure.com/profile/observees`).
- If you cannot view all of your student's courses, you may need to reach out to a course instructor to request to observe your student in their course.

Adding Observers via API

Affected Users	Actions to Take
Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compile user data for observer accounts• Configure API
Observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Log in to Canvas account

Admins:

There are two ways to configure an API to add observer users and link them to student accounts.

You can configure an API to enroll observers in a course or courses and link them to students in courses. These observers can view courses in which they are enrolled and linked to a student.

Alternatively, you can configure an API to create observer user accounts and link them to student accounts. These observers can view all courses in which their linked student is enrolled.

Notes:

- When a user is added in Canvas, they are assigned a unique identification number (found in the URL when viewing a user's details page). Observers are linked to students using these unique identification numbers.
- If you do not configure the API to link observers with students, a pairing code should be generated for observers. Learn more about [pairing codes](#).
- If you do not configure the API to link observers with students, you must enable Self Registration so that observers can enter pairing codes.

View students in a course

You can enroll observers in a course and link their account to view students in the course. To add observer enrollments in a course and pair them with students via API:

1. Create observer user accounts using the [Enroll a user API](#).
2. Link observers to students in a course by including the `enrollment[associated_user_id]` parameter when creating the enrollment.

View all courses in which a student is enrolled

You can add observer accounts and link their account to a student account. This allows them to view all courses in which the student is enrolled. To create observer accounts and link them with students via API:

1. Create a user account using the [Create a User API](#)
2. Link an observer to a student using the [User observees API](#) to allow observers to view all courses in which a linked student is enrolled.

Observers:

To access your Canvas account and view paired students, follow these steps:

1. Log in to Canvas using the credentials provided by your student's institution.
2. If your admin has paired your account with a student, you can view the courses in which your paired student is enrolled. You can view a list of paired students in your User Settings.
3. If your account is not already paired to a student, [enter a pairing code](#) to link your account with a student. You can observe your student in a course or courses in which they are enrolled.

Notes:

- If your User Settings page does not include an Observing button, you can access the pairing page by adding */profile/observees* to your institution's Canvas URL (e.g. *canvas.instructure.com/profile/observees*).
- If you cannot view all of your student's courses, you may need to reach out to a course instructor to request to observe your student in their course.