

# OPAMA Module Approval:

## *Before you start*

Essential preliminary reading for all OPAMA users

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# 1. Introducing OPAMA

## 1.1 WHAT IS OPAMA?

Welcome to this introductory guide to getting set up to use OPAMA for approving new module proposals. OPAMA (Online Programme & Module Approval) is the name by which the web application and the online process have come to be known – but the name is also that of a workstream of the KIS to HEAR programme of SITS developments which started in January 2012. This workstream aims:

- to create a versioned ‘gold source’ of module and programme information on SITS that can be surfaced elsewhere (e.g. websites/handbooks, KEATS, online prospectus etc.)
- to integrate SITS module and programme set-up into the approval process
- to deliver an online tool which enables Schools to review and optimize the efficiency of their module and programme approval processes while maintaining a robust system of quality assurance

Module approval is the first element of OPAMA to go live, and is available to use from February 2014. The other elements (module modification, module annual rollover, programme approval and programme modification) are scheduled to be available to the College community by December 2014.

## 1.2 GETTING STARTED

This Guide deals with the preliminary requirements to get you started using OPAMA. It should be read by all users: Module Proposers, School Quality Administrators, Approval Panel Members and Panel Chairs, before attempting to use OPAMA for the first time. There are six further User Guides to the OPAMA module approval process, four geared to the requirements of one of the above user roles, one covering process reports and monitoring, and one covering the maintenance of the Personnel Collections.

The Project Team is keen to receive your feedback, on the usability of the system, on the OPAMA process, and on this User Guide, so that we can improve OPAMA in the months and years to come. Please do get in touch with us at [opama.support@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:opama.support@kcl.ac.uk) with any comments, compliments or brickbats.

# 2. Why put the Module Approval process online?

## 2.1 ACCURACY, AUDITABILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

The information that is entered on OPAMA has three main ‘corporate’ purposes - in addition to the overarching one of ensuring the excellent academic standard of King’s degree programmes and the modules which contribute to them - which should be borne in mind when completing the online form: these are *accuracy, auditability and accessibility*. The

current system based on paper records, although adequate to reflect our internal processes, does not fulfil these requirements sufficiently to stand up to external scrutiny. Switching to an online process will enable us to:

- ensure that our students receive accurate information about their curriculum: the quality of information provision is also subject to external audit as well as being a potentially vulnerable area of student complaint if information is incomplete or inaccurate
- advertise and showcase the College's module catalogue to potential students all over the world
- provide an opportunity for your School to streamline its approval processes to determine more quickly and easily whether the proposal meets the College's – and the Quality Assurance Agency's – quality criteria. Both the information itself and the process through which it gets approval are subject to external audit
- ensure that the approval process used in each School can maintain its local character whilst complying with quality assurance requirements consistently across the College, and with much greater transparency than previously

## 2.2 AUTOMATING MODULE SET-UP

The OPAMA online module proposal form replaces the MAF paper form. The questions that are asked are essentially the same as those you would have found on the MAF, but the order in which the information is gathered has been changed. This is in order to ensure that the correct relationships are created in the background between the pieces of data, enabling the complete module dataset to be downloaded into the relevant SITS fields as soon as the module is approved, with no separate creation process on SITS necessary.

## 2.3 SITS AS THE GOLD SOURCE OF DATA

Using OPAMA will enable the College to store information on SITS which was not previously stored in electronic form: notably the text entered to describe the educational aims and learning outcomes, along with a student-friendly module description. The aim is to make SITS the 'gold source' of information about our programmes and modules with a view to enabling information to be used in other publications such as the online prospectus, web pages and Departmental handbooks and module catalogues, without the need to key in the information again to another system, thereby ensuring consistency of information for students. Please therefore take care to ensure that the information you provide is of 'publishable' quality!

# 3. Before using OPAMA for the first time

## 3.1 WEB BROWSER

OPAMA will work with all commonly-used web browsers (the process has been tested on Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome and Safari as part of the project). However, if using the King's Global or Campus Desktop on a Windows machine we recommend you use **Firefox**

as this appears to look and work better than the current edition of Internet Explorer which is available on these environments).

### 3.2 PRS RECORD ON SITS

Before you use OPAMA for the first time, whether as a module proposer, School Quality Administrator, approval panel member or Panel Chair, you should check with your School Quality Administrator (or equivalent) that your PRS record (outline staff data held on SITS which enable you to access and use Student Records) is up to date. To be able to use OPAMA your PRS record should show

- Your unique PRS code
- Your name
- Your School
- Your Department
- Your King's email address

If any of these details are missing, you will find that you are not able to proceed with the OPAMA processes, even if you can access OPAMA itself.

### 3.3 NEW STAFF

If you are a new member of staff, your School will need to set up a PRS record for you from scratch. You will then use your PRS code to complete an authorisation process so that IT Services can set up an 'academic' user account in the 'Student Records' portal. You will be sent login details by ITS once this has been done.

## 4. Accessing OPAMA

### 4.1 LOGGING IN

Log into Student Records using your academic access credentials, which are normally the same as those you use for King's email (fig. 1):

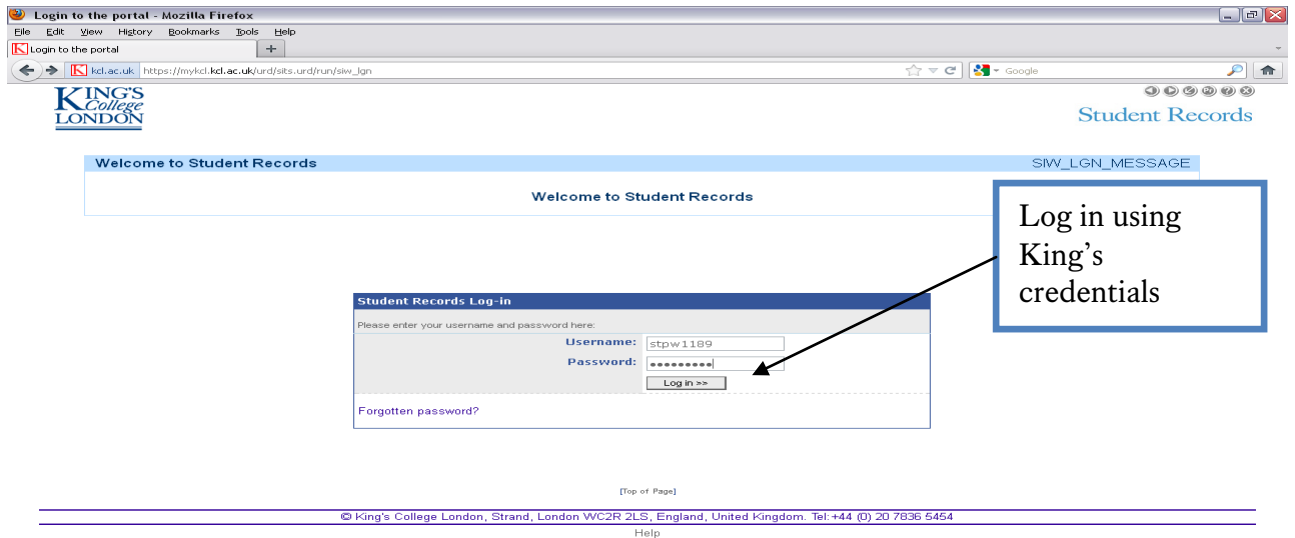


Fig. 1

From the academic staff landing page, click on the 'OPAMA' tab (fig. 2):

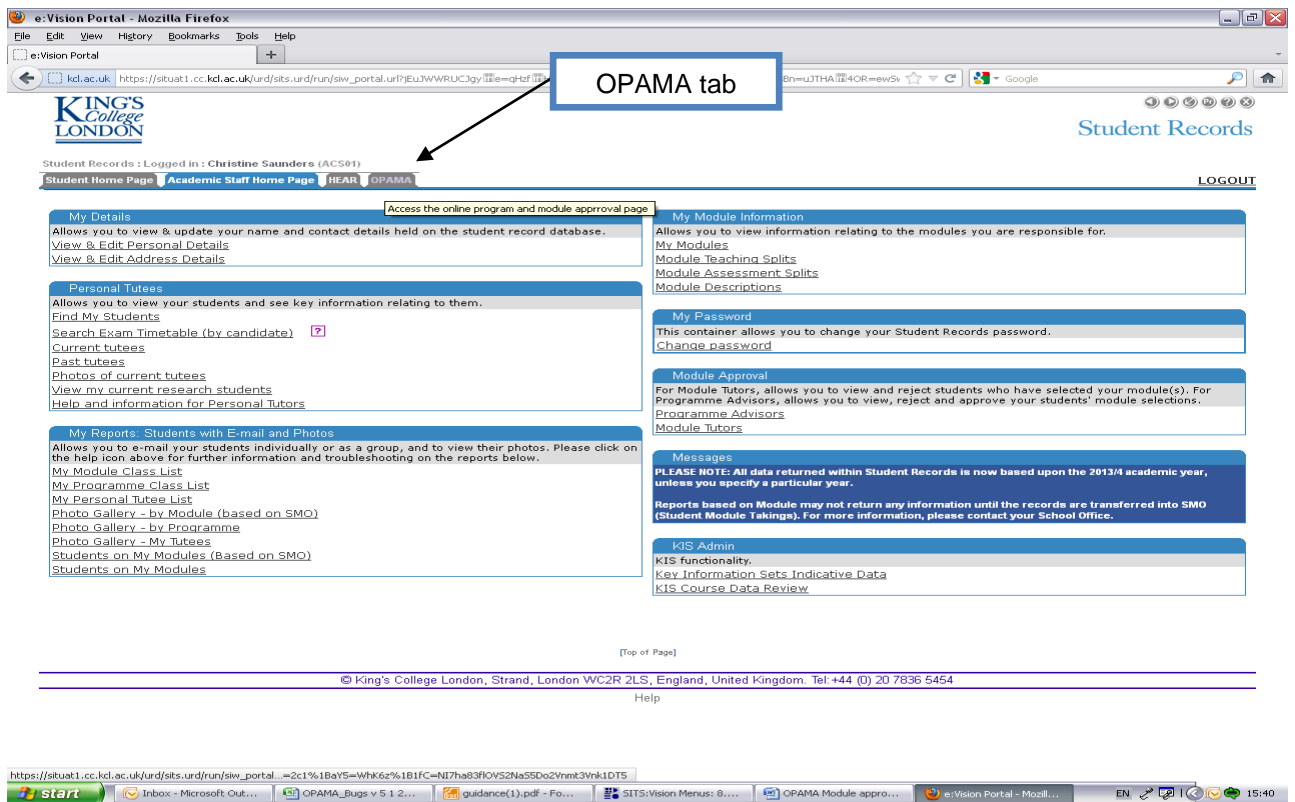


Fig. 2

## 4.2 OPAMA OPTIONS:

From the OPAMA landing page, you'll see a number of options:

- *OPAMA Help*: Information about help and support (1)
- *Modules*: This is the list of functions currently available in OPAMA - it will grow as other functionality (e.g. module modifications) comes on stream (2)
- *Personnel Management*: for use by the School Quality Administrator to edit lists of participants in the OPAMA approval process (Panel members etc,) (3)
- *My online tasks*: This is the area where you'll receive online alerts and links that will take you into module proposals as you work on them. Note that these are separate from the **email alerts** which you will receive if you need to take a look at a proposal as a School Quality Administrator, Module Approval Panellist, or Panel Chair (4)

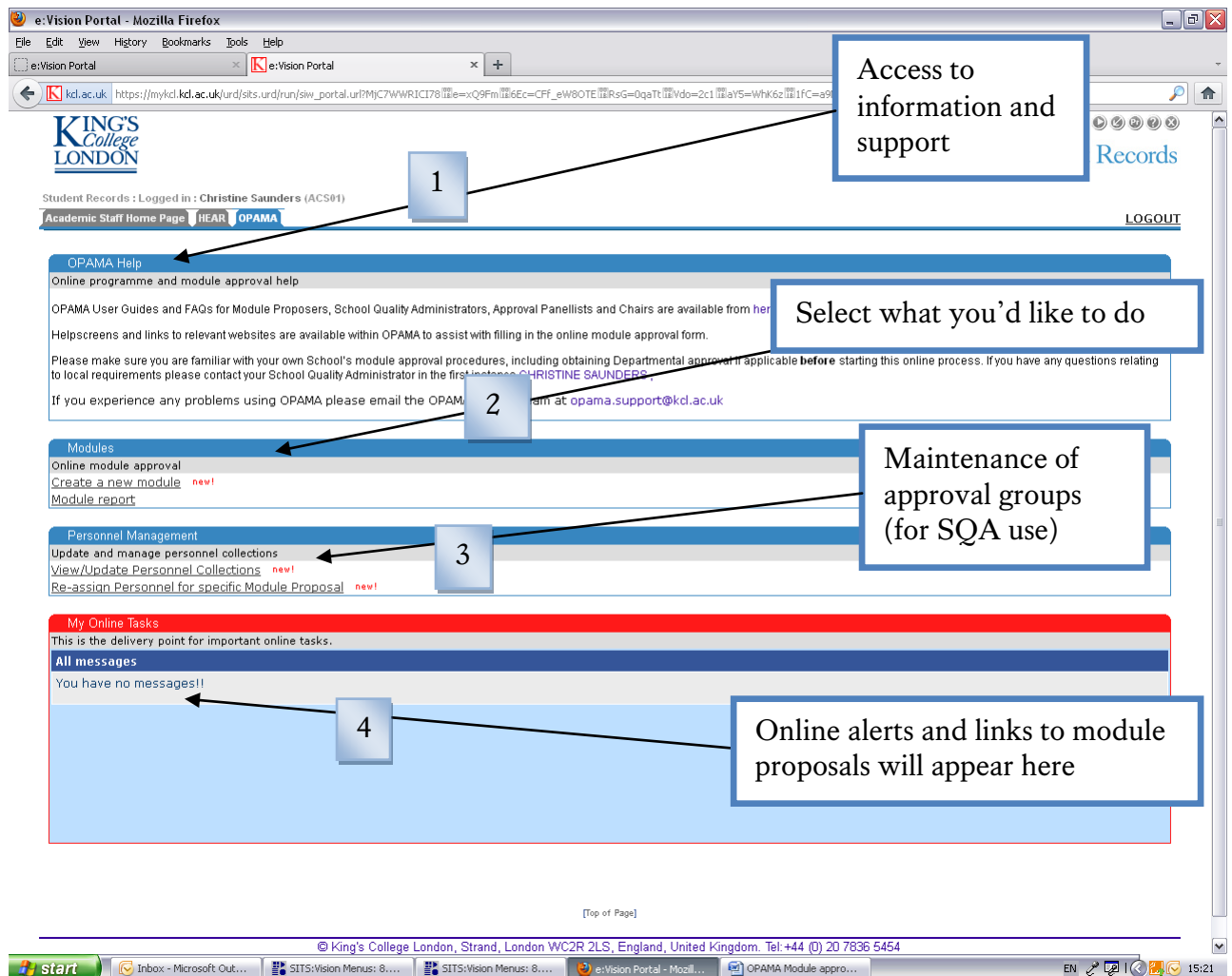


Fig. 3

What you do next depends on whether you are the Module Proposer, the School Quality Administrator, a Panel Member or the Chair of the Approval Panel – please consult the User Guide(s) relevant to your role.