

**Directorate of Students & Education  
Student Business Systems  
KIS 2 HEAR Project (OPAMA  
workstream)**



# OPAMA Programme Approval: *Quality Assurance administration via OPAMA*

User Guide for Faculty (Institute, School) Quality  
Administrators

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# 1. Welcome & Introduction

Welcome to this User Guide, which is designed to help Faculty (Institute, School) Quality Administrators through the process of accessing and scrutinising new programme proposals submitted to your Faculty. This Guide will take you through the processes of supplying proposers with Route codes; of making amendments to proposals and communicating with the proposer; of taking the proposal offline to facilitate the decision-making process of your Faculty Education Committee (or equivalent); of recording Committee/Panel decisions on OPAMA, and sending the proposal on via OPAMA to the Quality & Academic Support office, where staff will obtain final approval from PDAC and instruct OPAMA to transfer the data to SITS.

This User Guide assumes that as Quality Administrator you are already familiar with using OPAMA for module approval and modification, and that therefore there is no need to repeat here information about accessing OPAMA, or about maintenance of Personnel Collections (PRCs) – however, if you're new to this work, full instructions are available in the SQA User Guide for Module Approval, available from the QAS website at <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/aboutkings/quality/academic/prog/approvalmod.aspx>

A quick word about terminology: since the implementation of the OPAMA module approval and modification tasks King's has undergone a considerable organisational reform which has resulted in the 'School' nomenclature largely being replaced by 'Faculty'. Although by rights we should probably change the acronym we've been using to describe Professional Services staff responsible for QA issues to 'FQA' we've left it at 'SQA' to provide consistency with the original OPAMA terminology used throughout the first two tasks. At some point in the future this can be changed, but we felt that now was not the time.

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 problems you may experience in using OPAMA.

## 2. Proposal preliminaries

### 2.1 PDAC APPROVAL TO PROCEED

All new programmes now require the approval to proceed given by the Programme Development and Approval Committee (PDAC), chaired by the Vice-Principal (Education). Proposals for programme approval should not be submitted until formal notification of PDAC's approval to proceed has been received. This can take the form of the PDAC minutes, or an email from the V-P or from the Quality & Academic Support office. Once this has been granted, the proposer should make contact with you (or you with them, as appropriate), to coordinate the proposal timings to coincide with your Faculty Education Committee's (or equivalent) timetable, and also so that you can issue the proposer with the

appropriate Route (ROU) code(s) to enable them to begin the construction of the programme proposal on OPAMA.

## 2.2 ROUTE (ROU) CODES

Besides being a vehicle to assist with the processing of new programme proposals, OPAMA will construct the various codes which will be used on SITS. Most of these can be deduced by the system from the information gathered from the proposer in the online form. The only exception to this is the Route code, which has to be unique on SITS, but is formed by applying conventions rather than rules and therefore doesn't lend itself to automatic generation by a computer. Route codes consist of an initial letter representing the 'designation' of the programme, plus either 2,3, or 4 letters. Below is a table showing the permitted combinations (see Fig. 1):

Type of Programme	Route code		Example (existing ROU code)	= existing programme
	Designation code	Add this no. of characters		
Undergraduate single honours	S	2	SEZ	English (BA)
Undergraduate major/minor	M	4	MPHCS	Physics <i>with</i> Computer Science (BSc)
Undergraduate Joint Honours	J	4	JWAHY	War Studies <i>and</i> History (BA)
Intercalated	I	2 or 4 depending whether Single, Maj/Minor or Joint	IPS	Philosophy (Intercalated BSc)
Integrated Master's	Depends whether Single, Maj/Minor or Joint	2 or 4 depending whether Single, Maj/Minor or Joint	JRBGS	Robotics & Intelligent Systems (MSci)
Postgraduate Taught, e.g. Master's degree	T	3	TRBT	Robotics (MSc)

Fig. 1

## 2.3 ALLOCATING ROUTE CODES

To allocate a new Route code, do the following:

- Determine the Designation of the new programme: find out whether it will be Undergraduate or Integrated Master's Single Honours (S), Major/Minor (M), or Joint Honours (J); Intercalated (I), or Postgraduate Taught (T).
- Find out the name (title) of the proposed new programme

- Apply the appropriate number of letter characters based on the table above. By convention, the letters should be derived from the programme name, e.g. first and last letters as is the case for History (HY), but as the code must be unique on SITS there will inevitably be occasions where intermediate letters from the name may need to be used, or if there are many similarly-named programmes on SITS you may have to resort to allocating letters which are not in the name – e.g. BA English Language & Literature is (S)EH, but the more recently approved BA English has had to be allocated (S)EZ.
- Check to ensure that the letters you've chosen are not already in use before letting the proposer know
- Repeat this process for any additional academic pathways which will need to be created; also for any nested awards that may be part of the proposal

#### 2.4 HOW TO CHECK WHETHER A ROUTE CODE HAS ALREADY BEEN USED ON SITS

To do this you will need access to the ROU table on the SITS client (or access to a colleague who can look this up quickly for you).

- In the ROU screen, enter the code letters you wish to allocate for the new programme
- Select Retrieve (or tab to the next field)
- If a programme appears, you can't use this combination of letters – try again
- If no programme appears, you can allocate this code

As a failsafe, when the proposer tries to enter the code letters in OPAMA, an error message will appear if the code already exists on SITS, and the user will not be able to save the information without trying another code.

#### 2.5 EDITING THE ROUTE CODE AFTER IT HAS BEEN ENTERED INTO OPAMA

The Route code is editable up to the point where it is uploaded to SITS, where it forms the final characters of the Course (CRS) code. This means that if the programme name changes during the course of the approval process, or if new academic pathways or nested awards need to be created, you can change the code to reflect the change, and add other Routes as necessary.

## 3. Getting into the Programme Approval task

### 3.1 EMAIL ALERTS

You will receive an email alert that a new proposal is waiting for you in your OPAMA in-tray. [At present, this email is being sent only to the first person in the SQA PRC for your Faculty – this will be amended as soon as possible – until then, the first SQA should alert anyone else in the PRC who should be dealing with the proposal. All SQAs will see the proposal, and be able to access it from their OPAMA in-tray.]

There is a link from the email to the Student Records login page; or else you can access Student Records direct.

### 3.2 ACCESSING THE TASK

Log into Student Records and click the OPAMA tab as usual. In your in-tray you will see a message 'SQA scrutiny of proposed programme: [Programme name]' – click on 'View the proposal' (see Fig. 2)

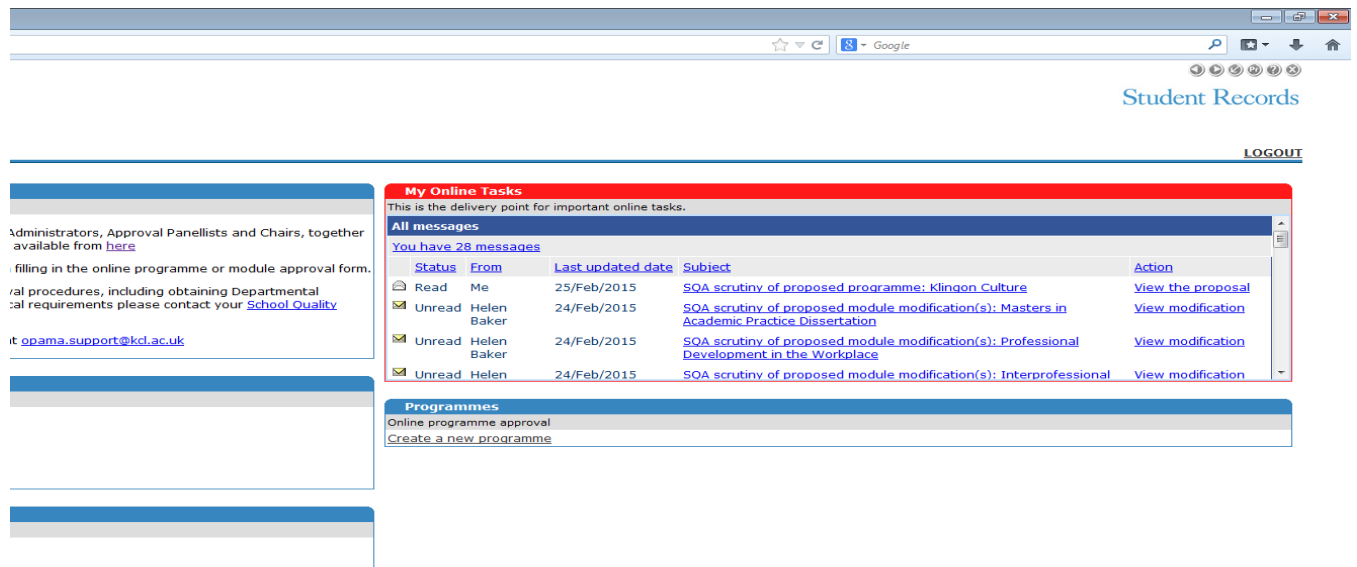


Fig. 2

### 3.3 THE PROCESS DIAGRAM

The process diagram is displayed, showing you that you are at Stage 2 of the process (see Fig. 3):

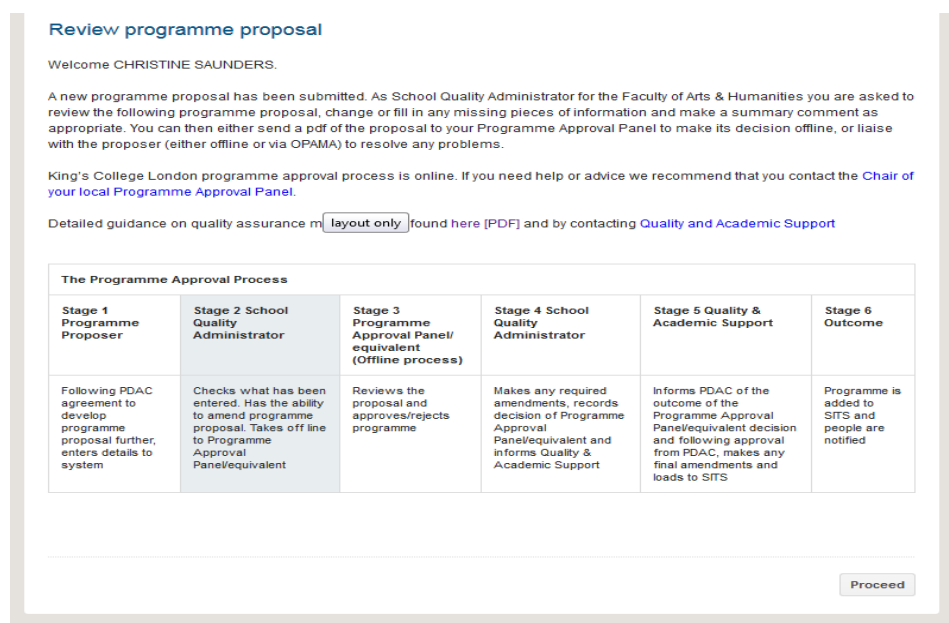
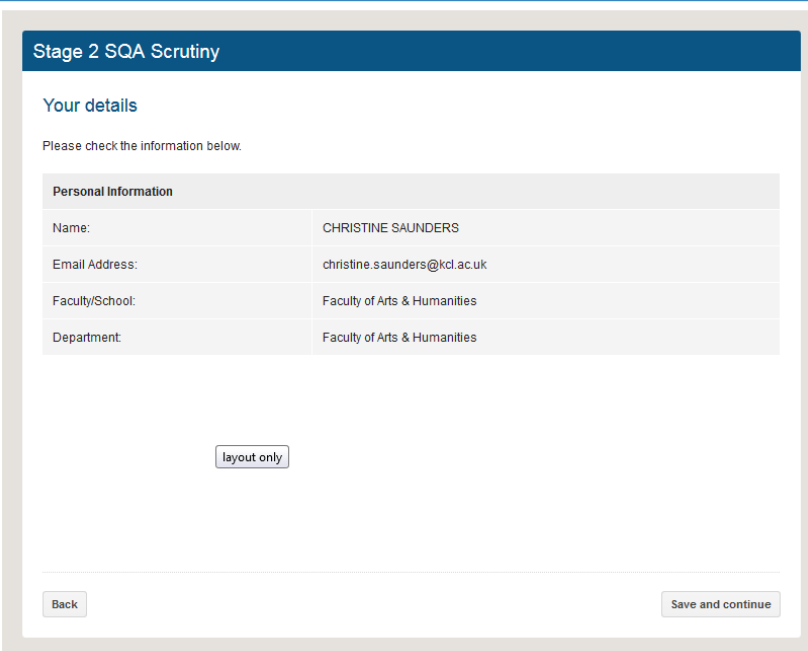


Fig. 3

Click **Proceed** to continue.

### 3.4 CHECK YOUR DETAILS

Check the details on the screen (see Fig. 4). If anything needs to be changed you need to arrange for your PRS record to be updated on SITS.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Stage 2 SQA Scrutiny". Under the heading "Your details", there is a prompt: "Please check the information below." Below this is a table of personal information:

Personal Information	
Name:	CHRISTINE SAUNDERS
Email Address:	christine.saunders@kcl.ac.uk
Faculty/School:	Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Department:	Faculty of Arts & Humanities

At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: "Back" on the left and "Save and continue" on the right. A "layout only" label is visible in the center of the form area.

Fig. 4

Click **Save and continue** to enter the proposal.

## 4. SQA scrutiny of the proposals (stage 2)

### 4.1 THE PURPOSE OF SQA SCRUTINY

The object of this stage of the process is to give you the opportunity to check on behalf of your Faculty's QA function, the information which has been input so far, to fill in any gaps left by the proposer, and to make sure that any programme data necessary for creating the programme on SITS is correct and consistent. You should also ensure that all the academic QA-related questions have been completed and are consistent with College QA policies as well as Faculty policy and strategy. When you have completed this part of the process, the proposal should be in a fit state to be sent to your Faculty Education Committee (or equivalent).

### 4.2 NAVIGATING THROUGH THE FORM

Each section of the form is numbered from 1-18 and contains introductory text and a numbered series of questions asking either for specific data chosen from lists, the answer 'yes' or 'no', free text boxes and opportunities to upload documents. All questions are editable, including the codes used to build the programme on SITS. You can also add or

delete proposed academic pathways and allocate Route codes to them as appropriate. Once you have edited anything, you must save it in order for it to be stored in OPAMA; the buttons at the bottom of each screen offer the following options:

- Save and continue – your data on that page is saved and the next screen will appear
- Save and exit – the data will be saved and you'll be prompted to exit the system. (When you re-enter the proposal via your task tray, you'll be taken to the page from which you exited.)
- Save and return to summary – enables you to hop into and out of the task so that you can skip sections if you wish
- Back – this takes you back to the immediately preceding page. *Tip: Always use the OPAMA 'Back' button, rather than the browser's back arrow key( ←) to go back a page when in OPAMA. Using the browser arrow key may cause the system to freeze and you may lose data.*
- Discard – use this option to abort the proposal if you need to. This will clear the proposal from your system and allow any codes which have been created to be re-used

#### 4.3 USING TEXT IN OPAMA

Please note the following when checking/editing a proposal:

- Programme names etc. must be written in sentence case
- when pasting information into a text box from a previously formatted document, e.g. Word, any formatting should have been removed first
- If typing into an editable text box, tab out of the text box before saving the text
- Ampersands (&) in any text box will cause any text containing an ampersand not to be transferred to SITS or appear on any output. SITS thinks an ampersand is a computing command – make sure you look for these and change & to 'and' as necessary
- Microsoft Smart (curly)quotes and double quotation marks (“”) will render as an odd character in SITS and on any output document
- Carriage returns in a plain text box containing information that will be transferred to SITS, e.g. the programme title, will cause odd spaces and characters to appear on SITS.

#### 4.4 UPLOADED DOCUMENTS

There are many opportunities to upload documents in the Programme Approval task. Please note:

- Documents in most formats can be uploaded, e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF etc.
- Only one document can be uploaded per upload area – uploading a second document will automatically delete the first, so if necessary the information should be pasted into one document first
- Each document can be a maximum of 1Mb in volume



- If uploading an email, e.g. approval for new resources etc., its contents should be pasted into Word first and then uploaded in that format. While OPAMA can accept email format (.msp files), it is likely that most recipients of the process will not be able to open it in that format

## 5. Walkthrough of the stage 2 OPAMA screens

### 5.1 SECTION 1: SQA EDIT

The first screen gives you access to all sections of the online proposal form, in both view and edit modes (see Fig. 5):

**Stage 2 SQA Scrutiny**

**Section 1: SQA Edit**

Please refer to the programme proposal summary sheet below, and then enter any section(s) needing attention by clicking the relevant 'edit' button. Once you are finished, if you require additional input from the proposer please return the proposal via the button at the bottom of the page, otherwise click 'Email proposal to me' to proceed to the next stage of the process.

Section 1: Programme Development and Approval Committee approval to proceed	edit +_
Section 2: Core Programme Information	edit +_
Section 3: Award details	edit +_
Section 4: Collaborative provision, partnerships and placements	edit +_
Section 5: Modes of attendance and length of study	edit +_
Section 6: Programme Duration	edit +_
Section 7: Educational Aims	edit +_
Section 8: Educational Objectives	edit +_
Section 9: QAA Benchmarking	edit +_
Section 10: Department contribution to teaching	edit +_
Section 11: New resource requirements	edit +_
Section 12: Student numbers and fees	edit +_
Section 13: Programme Structure and curriculum	edit +_
Section 14: Examination Boards and marking	edit +_
Section 15: Inclusivity	edit +_
Section 16: Entry qualifications and selection process	edit +_
Section 17: External Specialist Advice	edit +_
Section 18: Additional Information	edit +_

**PAP Approval**

Only tick the box below once the programme has been approved in principle by the Programme Approval Panel (PAP) and all necessary edits have been made. If the programme has not yet been sent to the PAP, leave the checkbox blank and click 'Email proposal to me.'

Programme approved in principle by PAP

Return to proposer      Save and exit      Email proposal to me

Discard and exit

Fig. 5

The assumption is that you will wish to go through all sections of the proposal, but by clicking on the + symbol you can preview each section to decide whether or not you need to edit it. To edit any of the sections, click on 'edit' – this will take you into the original proposal screens for that section. If you amend or add anything make sure you save your edits by clicking either 'Save and continue to progress to the next screen', 'Save and return to summary' to return to the SQA Edit page, or alternatively 'Save and exit', to leave the task.

For a step-by-step guide to all the questions in the online form, please refer to the User Guide for Programme Proposers, along with the QAS Guidance on new programme approval.

*Tip: If you want to make notes of issues you find in the form as you go along, we suggest you make your own notes in Notepad or a similar text editor. This is particularly useful if you need to return the proposal to the proposer with suggestions/requirements for improvement, as you'll be able to paste your notes into the 'message to proposer' field when sending it back.*

## 5.2 PAP APPROVAL (STAGE 2)

The acronym stands for Programme Approval Panel and is the generic title we have given in OPAMA to whichever body considers and approves new programme proposals in your Faculty, normally the Faculty Education Committee or equivalent.

Before the proposal goes to the PAP you should **ignore** the section headed PAP approval – this section should only be completed **after** approval.

## 5.3 SQA OPTIONS AFTER SCRUTINY

Once you've finished editing the proposal, you can:

- Return it to the proposer for further work
- Discard the proposal (i.e. abort it completely – use with care!)
- Save and exit
- Email the proposal to yourself to begin the programme approval process offline

### 5.3.1 RETURN TO PROPOSER

If you click 'return to sender' you will go to a new screen with a text field into which you can type or paste your comments/questions about the proposal (see Fig. 6):

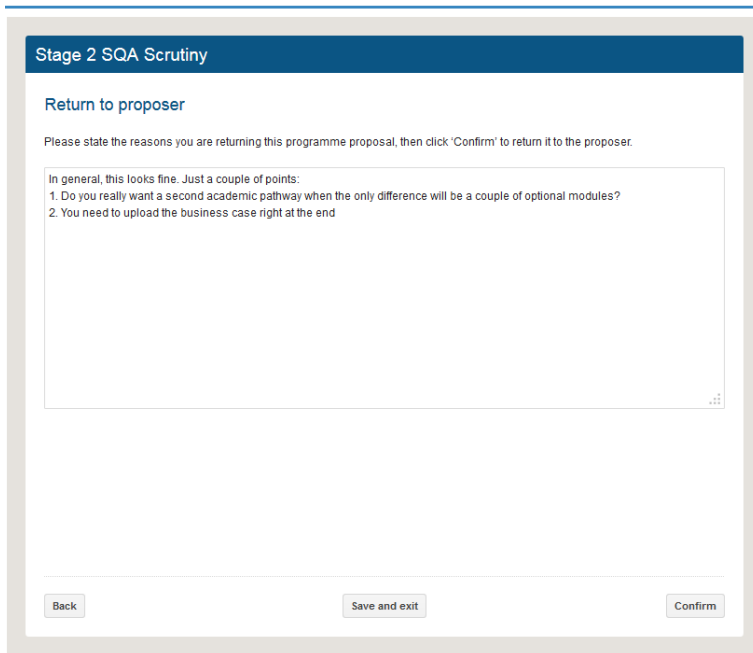


Fig. 6

Then click **Confirm** to send the proposal back – or if you've had second thoughts you can go back to the SQA Edit screen by clicking **Back**.

### 5.3.2 EMAIL PROPOSAL TO ME

Clicking 'Email proposal to me' will cause exactly that to happen – the email will contain a pdf of the proposal together with attachments containing any uploaded documents which form part of the proposal (see Fig. 7):

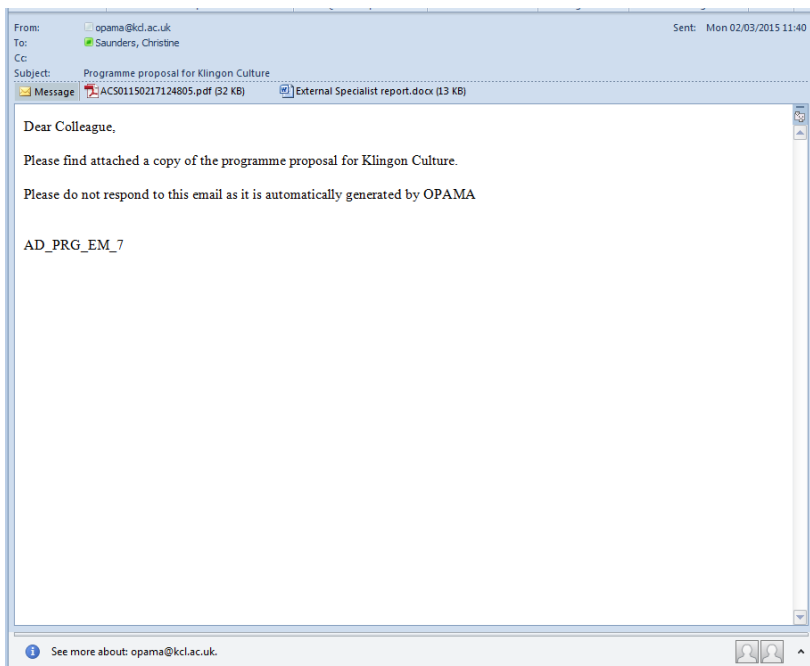


Fig. 7

You have now reached the end of Stage 2 of the online task, and will be invited to exit the system (see Fig. 8):

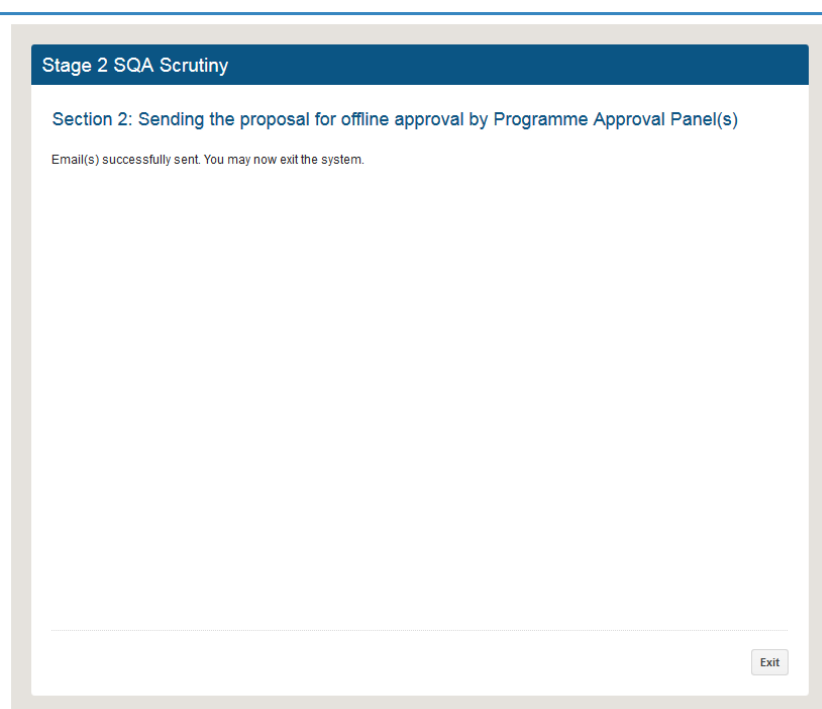


Fig. 8

*Tip: You can if you wish use the pdf as a reference document by having it emailed to yourself before you start the editing process as well as afterwards.*

## 6. The offline process (stage 3)

### 6.1 REFINING AND APPROVING THE PROPOSAL

It is assumed that faculties will use their formal committee meetings and local processes to get the proposal to the approved stage. If any other faculties are to be involved in the approval process, you will need to send the proposal with attachments to the relevant SQA so that they can conduct their own scrutiny and return any comments, and hopefully their approval, to you. There may need to be further refinement of the proposal, which can either be done on OPAMA or offline, using as many iterations between the proposer and the SQA as necessary, until a finalised programme specification has been created. At the end of this period, once the Programme Approval Panel has signed off the proposal, the SQA should return to OPAMA to complete the Faculty-level scrutiny and audit control processes.

# 7. Recording approval details (stage 2/4)

## 7.1 RECORDING PAP APPROVAL

Once all pre- and post-approval edits are completed, the SQA should tick the 'PAP approval in principle' box. This will cause a new button: 'Proceed to approval page' to replace the 'Email proposal to me' button (Fig. 9).

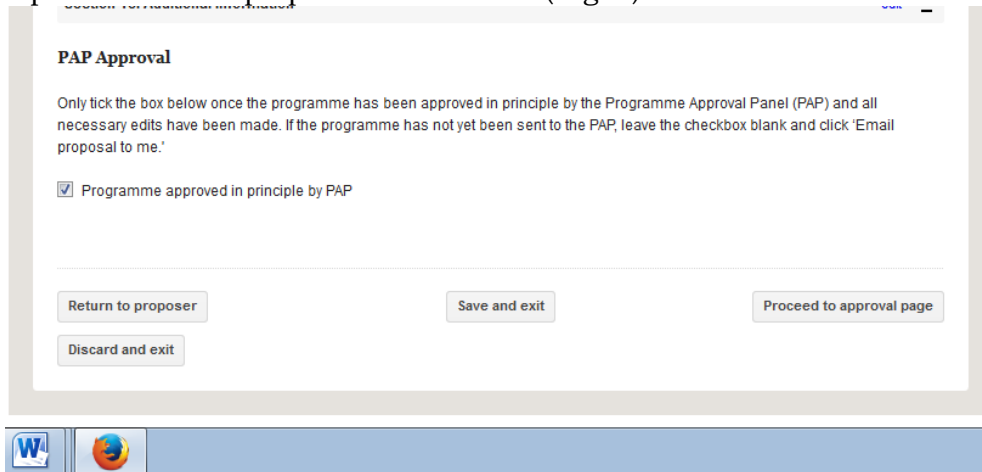


Fig. 9

Click on **Proceed to approval page** to move to Stage 4 of the process.

## 7.2 THE PROCESS DIAGRAM - STAGE 4

The screen shows where you are in the process (Fig. 10):

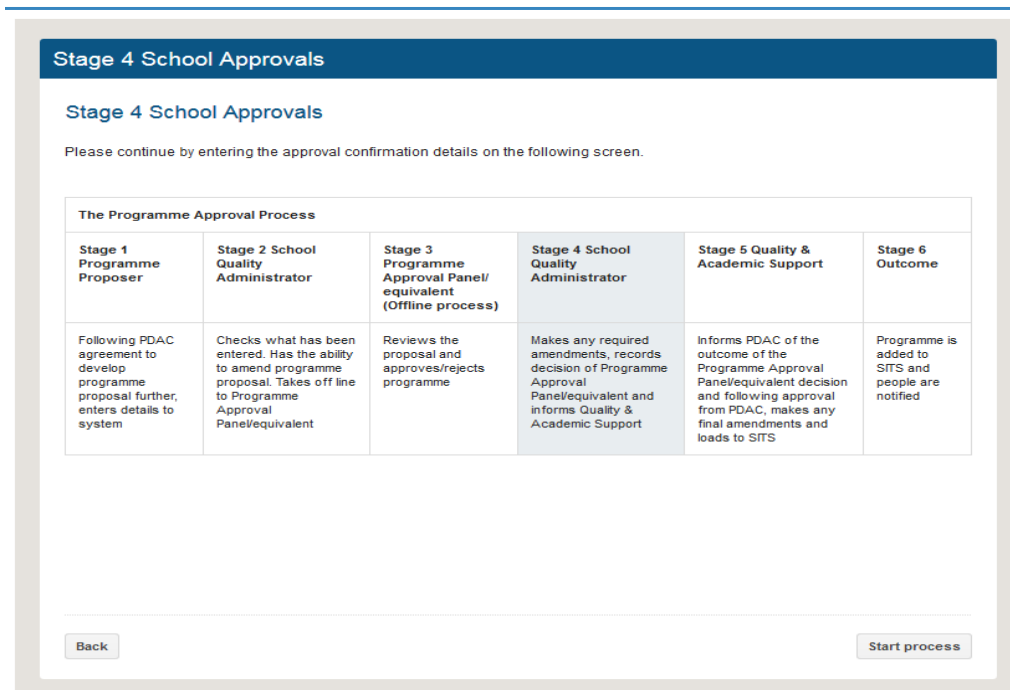


Fig. 10

Click **Start process** to proceed.

### 7.3 RECORDING FACULTY (INSTITUTE, SCHOOL) APPROVALS


On this screen, the date(s) of approvals by all the responsible individuals should be recorded so that a full audit trail of the approval process is available for scrutiny (see Fig. 11):

#### Stage 4 School Approvals

##### Approval by the Lead School

Please provide all the necessary approvals, and then send the proposal to the Quality Assurance & Academic Support office to get final approval from PDAC for this programme to proceed and the information uploaded to SITS.

**Q1 Please insert the date the programme was formally approved by the Programme Approval Panel**



**Q2 Name of the PAP Chair**


**Q3 Please upload confirmation of approval by the Chair of the Programme Approval Panel**

No file selected.

You can upload 1 document only (if you hold the necessary information on more than one document please combine them into one first) which must not exceed 1 Mb. You can upload .docx, .xlsx or .ppt files.

**Q4 Name of the person from another Faculty/Institute/School who represents the College Education Committee on the PAP**

**Q5 Date of approval by the CEC member**




**Q6 Please upload confirmation of approval by the CEC member of the Programme Approval Panel**

No file selected.

You can upload 1 document only (if you hold the necessary information on more than one document please combine them into one first) which must not exceed 1 Mb. You can upload .docx, .xlsx or .ppt files.

**Q7 Name of the External Peer (150 max characters)**

**Q8 Date of approval by the External Peer**



**Q9 Please upload confirmation of approval by the External Peer**

No file selected.

You can upload 1 document only (if you hold the necessary information on more than one document please combine them into one first) which must not exceed 1 Mb. You can upload .docx, .xlsx or .ppt files.

Fig. 11

Questions:

Q1: Select the date that the programme was approved by the Programme Approval Panel

Q2: Select the name of the Chair of the PAP by entering either her/his PRS code or by entering part of the code or part of the person's name in the dynamic search box, and clicking the code/name when found.

Q3: Upload either a copy of the minutes of the relevant PAP meeting or the text of an email from the PAP Chair confirming that the programme was approved. You are strongly advised (see 4.4 above) to paste the email text into a word document or pdf as these can be more easily opened than pure email message files

Q4-Q6: Provide name, date of approval, and evidence document, relating to the person who represents the College Teaching Committee on the Programme Approval Panel

Q7: Enter the name (free text) of the External Peer who sits on the Programme Approval Panel

Q8-Q9: Provide the date and evidence of the approval of the External Peer

Q10-12 Provide the date and evidence of the approval of any other Faculty named in the original proposal as needing to be part of the approval process.

Click Save and continue to proceed further.

#### 7.4 CONFIRM SITS COURSE CODES

The next screen asks you to confirm and, if appropriate, complete the list of course codes which will be created on SITS (see Fig. 12):

**Stage 4 School Approvals**

### Confirm SITS course codes

The following course(s) will be set up on SITS: If these are not the correct codes please click 'Back to summary' and make the necessary edits in Section(s) 2, 3 and 5

Category	Course name	CRS code	Primary ROU code	MOA code
Main programme	Klingon Culture	TMAR1ATKN	TKN	FT
Main programme	Klingon Culture	TMAR2ATKN	TKN	PT
Nested award	Klingon Culture	UGDP1ATKN	TKN	FT

Please enter the route codes for the following academic pathways specified in Section 2. These will be added to the course codes for the main programmes above.

Academic pathway title	Route code
Klingon History	to be confirmed

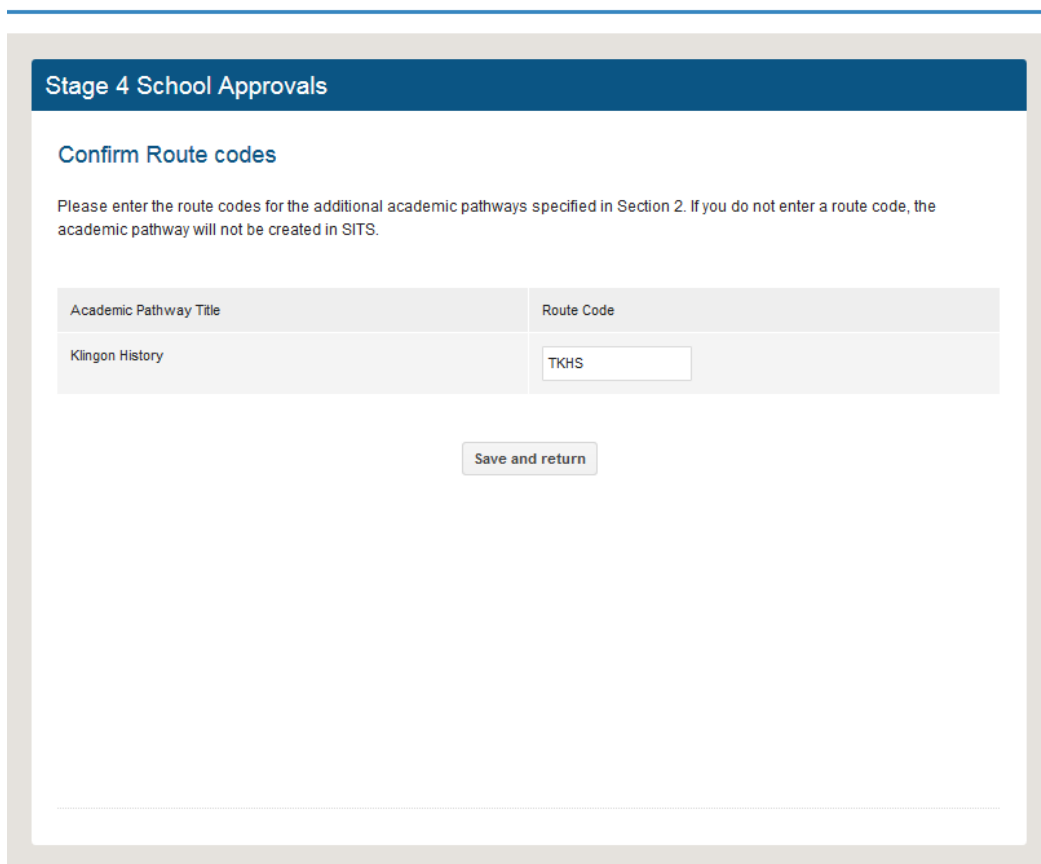
Enter route codes

Back to summary      Save and exit      Save and continue

Fig. 12

As you can see from the example, the system will construct codes for the main programme, a part-time version if it's PGT, and the code for any nested award(s). These will have been constructed using Route codes provided by you at the start of the process (or by the proposer if you have devolved this). If you think any of them are inappropriate it is still possible for you to return to the task summary and edit sections 2,3, and 5.

At this stage there is no Route code provided for the additional academic pathway, so you need to click **Enter route codes** to provide this (see Fig. 13). **Important note:** Make sure you know the code you're going to enter before doing this, otherwise error messages can occur if you try to go back to the 'Confirm SITS course codes' screen without entering a new route code....



The screenshot shows a web interface for 'Stage 4 School Approvals'. The main heading is 'Confirm Route codes'. Below this, there is a instruction: 'Please enter the route codes for the additional academic pathways specified in Section 2. If you do not enter a route code, the academic pathway will not be created in SITS.' A table is displayed with the following content:

Academic Pathway Title	Route Code
Klinton History	TKHS

Below the table, there is a button labeled 'Save and return'.

Fig. 13

Once you've entered the Route code for the new academic pathway, click **Save and return** to see its code added to the list to be created on SITS (Fig. 14):



**Stage 4 School Approvals**

**Confirm SITS course codes**

The following course(s) will be set up on SITS: If these are not the correct codes please click 'Back to summary' and make the necessary edits in Section(s) 2, 3 and 5

Category	Course name	CRS code	Primary ROU code	MOA code
Main programme	Klingon Culture	TMAR1ATKN	TKN	FT
Main programme	Klingon Culture	TMAR2ATKN	TKN	PT
Nested award	Klingon Culture	UGDP1ATKN	TKN	FT

Please enter the route codes for the following academic pathways specified in Section 2. These will be added to the course codes for the main programmes above.

Academic pathway title	Route code
Klingon History	TKHS

Fig. 14

Repeat for any additional academic pathways which have been approved for the new programme.

To delete or replace an academic pathway you will need to return to the Edit screen and enter Section 2, Q12 to remove the academic pathway name and add a new one if appropriate, and then return to the Confirm SITS course codes if you need to add a replacement Route code.

Once you are happy with all the codes to be used on SITS, click Save and continue.

#### 7.5 NOTES FROM THE SQA TO THE QUALITY & ACADEMIC SUPPORT OFFICE

Use this screen to write any comments, e.g. to note any documentation that may be pending, for the information of the QAS staff member who will be checking that everything is complete (Fig. 15):

Stage 4 School Approvals

Notes from the SQA for the Quality & Academic Support Office

Please add any notes for the Quality & Academic Support office below (max 300 characters)

Am still awaiting confirmation from the External Peer - will forward email as soon as it arrives.

Back Save and exit Send to QAS

Fig. 15

Once you're happy that the proposal now accurately reflects your Faculty's approval, click Send to QAS.

#### 7.6 SAVE A COPY OF THE PROPOSAL

The final screen for you as SQA tells you that the proposal has been sent to the Quality & Academic Support Office. It also offers a final opportunity to have a pdf of the final Faculty version of the proposal emailed to you – we strongly advise you to do this in order to maintain a reference copy in case of a query from the QAS (Fig. 16):

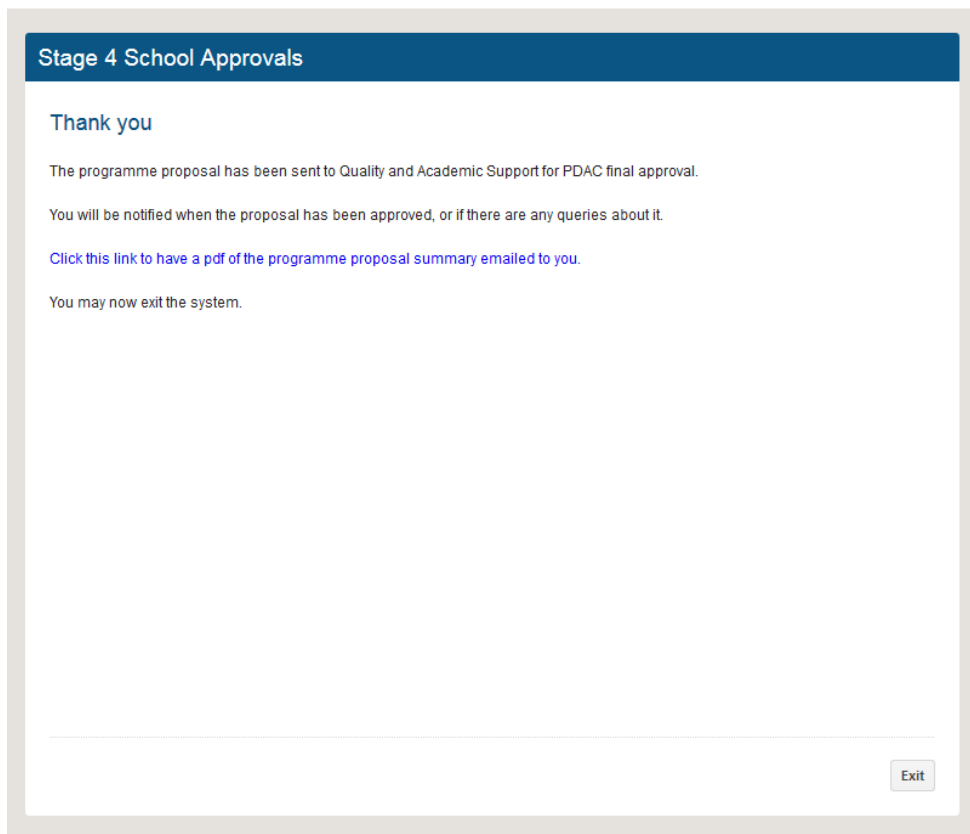


Fig. 16

You can now leave the system by clicking Exit.

You have now completed the SQA task for Programme Approval on OPAMA.

### 7.7 WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The QAS staff member will refer the proposal offline to PDAC for final sign-off, and will then return to OPAMA to record the final PDAC approval on the system. They are also able to make final amendments to the data, or refer the proposal back to the Faculty (i.e. you) to make final amendments, before uploading it to SITS. You will be amongst those notified once the process has been completed.