UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX, DIVISION OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE

# Using the CMS ‘Method’ and ‘Contacts’ Screens

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# Introduction

This training guide will cover the basic navigation of the 'Method' and 'Contacts' screens in CMS (AKA Yellow Screens) and assist you in understanding what each field will do.

**What is the CMS 'Method' screen?**

The 'Method' screen is a database that has been designed to collate your departmental academic timetable requirements. This screen enables the Timetabling Team to construct the academic timetable based on the teaching methods recorded by the department/school in CMS.

**What is a Teaching Method?**

Teaching methods are the teaching activities that constitute the overall delivery of a module (e.g. lectures, seminars, workshops or lab sessions). Unlike one-off bookings such as meetings or occasional lectures, teaching methods are normally repeated every week over one or two blocks (e.g. semester one and/or semester two).

**What is the CMS 'Contacts' screen?**

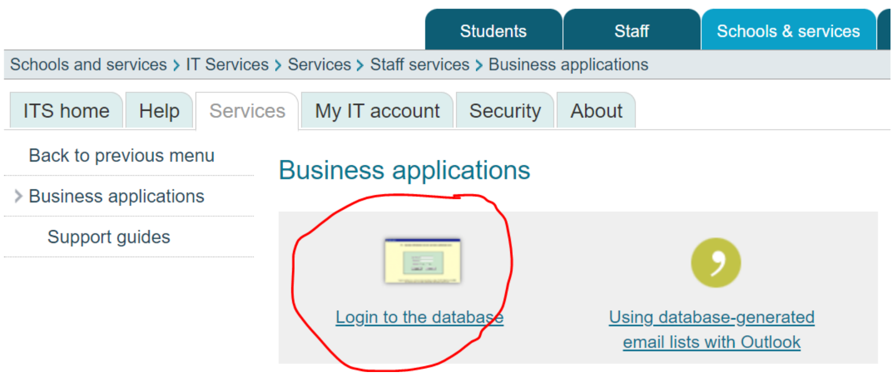
The 'Contacts' screen is a database that has been designed to collect the staff allocations for your teaching methods. This screen enables the Timetabling Team to allocate appropriate staff members to activities and resultantly construct a clash free academic timetable based on the information recorded by the department/school in CMS.

# How to access CMS

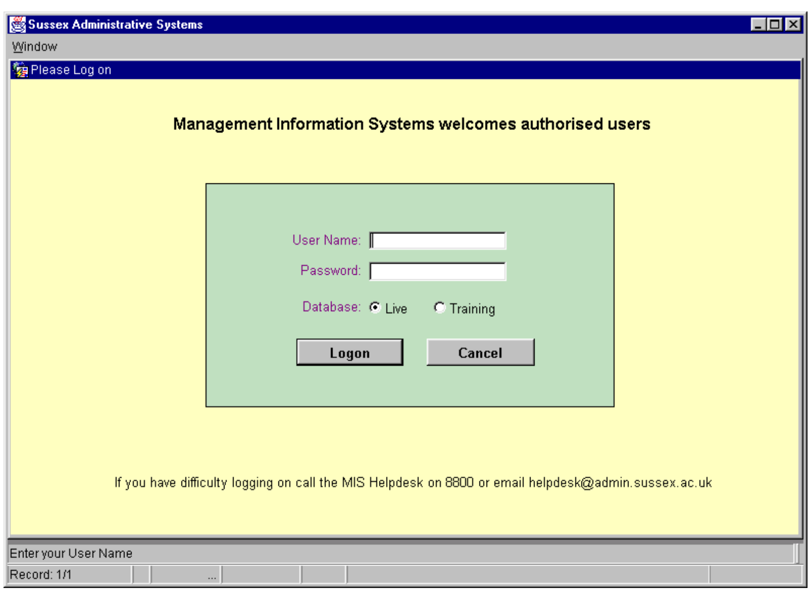
***CMS only works in 'Internet Explorer mode' within Microsoft Edge – it will not open in any other browser. You will need to configure your device to allow CMS to open within Microsoft Edge if you are using it for the first time and have not already done so. You can do this by following instructions supplied by ITS, here.***

1. Open Microsoft Edge and navigate to the 'Staff Hub' webpage: https://staff.sussex.ac.uk/

2. Under the 'Popular Links' banner you will find 'BIS log-ins'. Follow this link and then click the 'login to the database' link that appears under a small thumbnail image of CMS. This will take you to the login screen of CMS.




3. Log into CMS using the screen below.

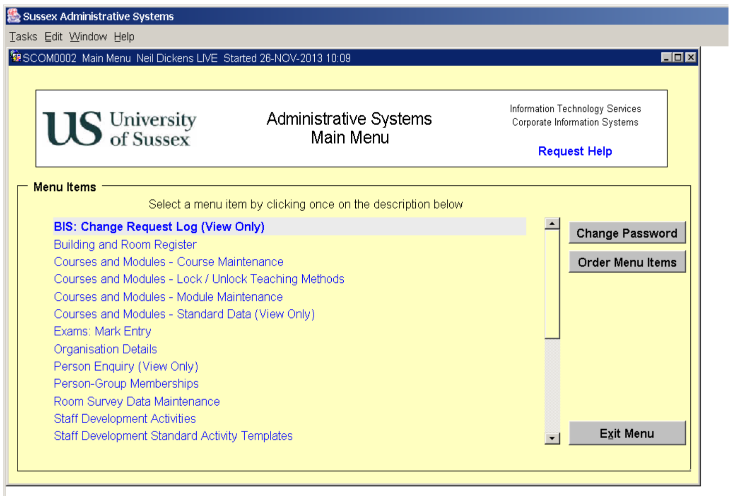



*N.B. When training or performing any 'test' changes, you should log into the 'training' database. When entering your teaching methods in real time you will need to log into the 'live' database to ensure they are captured.*

# Accessing the 'Courses and Modules – Module Maintenance' screen

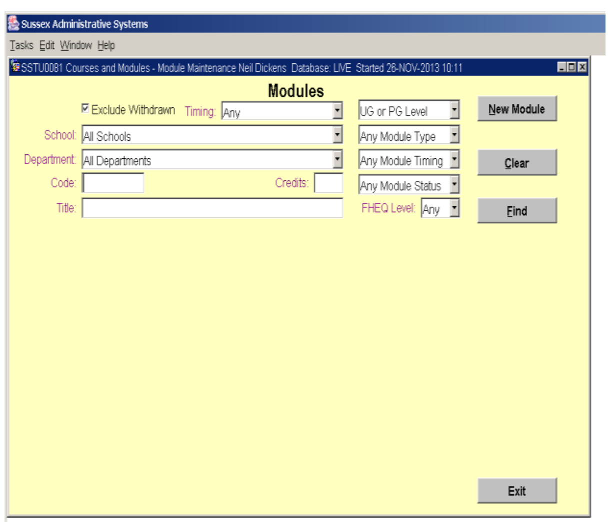
1. Click on the 'Courses and Modules – Module Maintenance' link from the menu items.

   *(You can re-order your menu items so that the screens you use most often appear nearer the top. This is done using the 'order menu items' button seen below)*




2. This will open the 'Courses and Modules – Module Maintenance' screen, which is where you can enter your teaching methods and staff information.

   From here you will need to filter to or search for the module you are looking for using the drop-down boxes and/or text fields and click 'find' (see below).




*You can enter as little or as much detail as you like with these search filters. For ease we recommend simply typing the module code into the 'code' field.*

## Explanation of Fields

**Exclude Withdrawn –** ticking this enables you to exclude any withdrawn modules from your search

**School –** enables you to narrow your search to a particular school.

**Department** – enables you to narrow your search to a particular department. You will have a smaller list to choose from if you have already selected a school in the field above.

**Code –** allows you to type part of or a full module code. You will receive fewer search results by typing more specific information.

**Title** – allows you to type part of or a full module title. Again, you will receive fewer search results by typing more specific information.

**UG or PG Level** – use this to filter to all undergraduate or postgraduate modules.

**Any Module Type –** use this to distinguish between electives, optional modules, programmes, etc.

**Any Module Timing –** allows you to filter to closed, current or future modules.

**Any Module Status –** allows you to filter to confirmed, draft, suspended or withdrawn modules.

**Credits –** type the credit value (in digits) to return modules with that particular credit weighting.

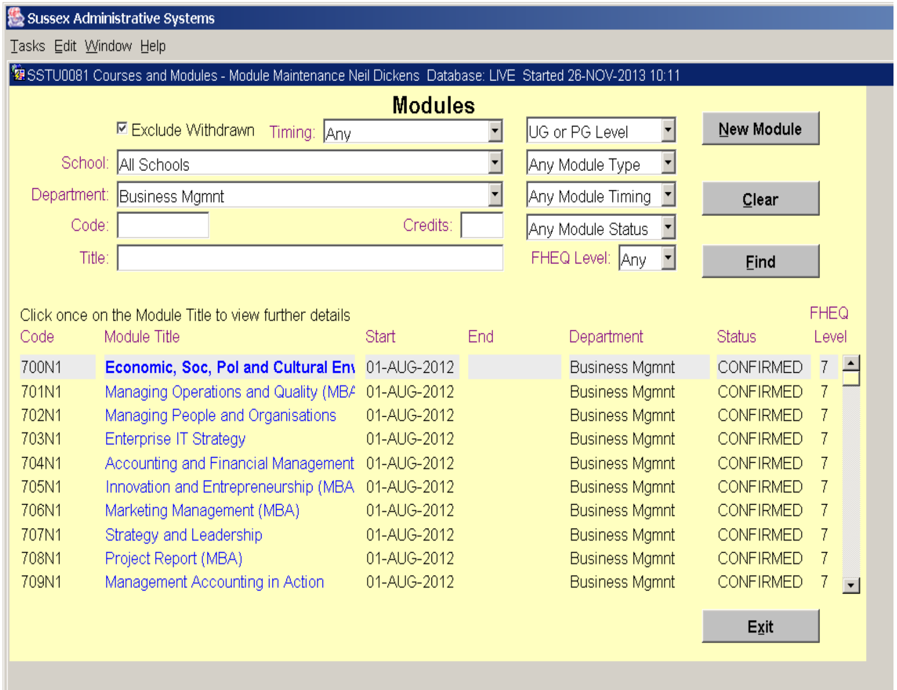
**FHEQ Level –** enables you to choose the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) level of the module you are looking for (e.g. 6 = Bachelors degree).

*N.B.*

*If your search only returns one module, rather than seeing a list of modules to choose from you will be entered directly into that module maintenance screen.*

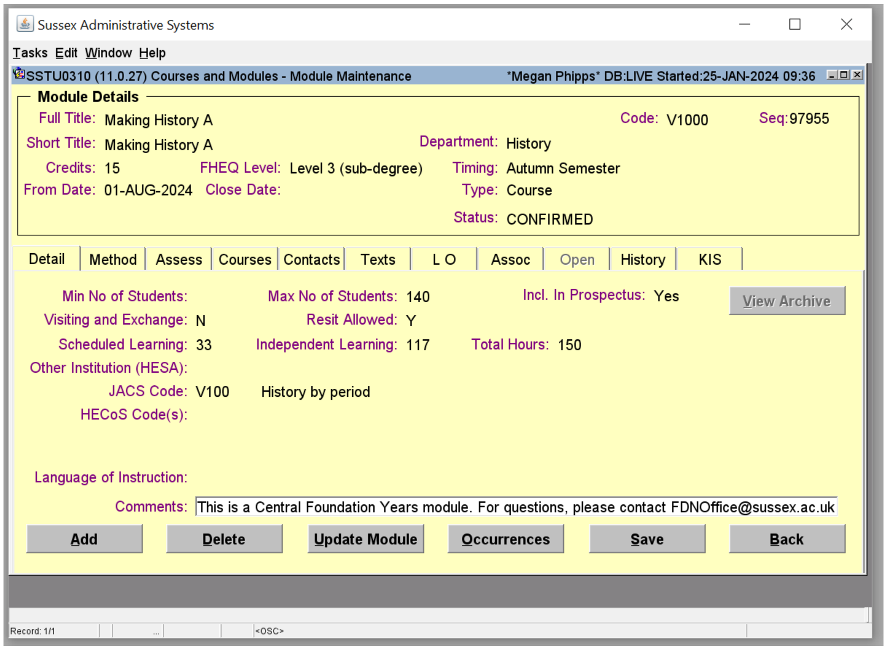
*To start a new search you will need to click the 'clear' button if you have used several filters and wish to reset them.*

3. If you have used the filters to locate a module, you might be presented with a list as per the example below. Simply click on the relevant module in this list and you will be taken to the module maintenance screen for that module.

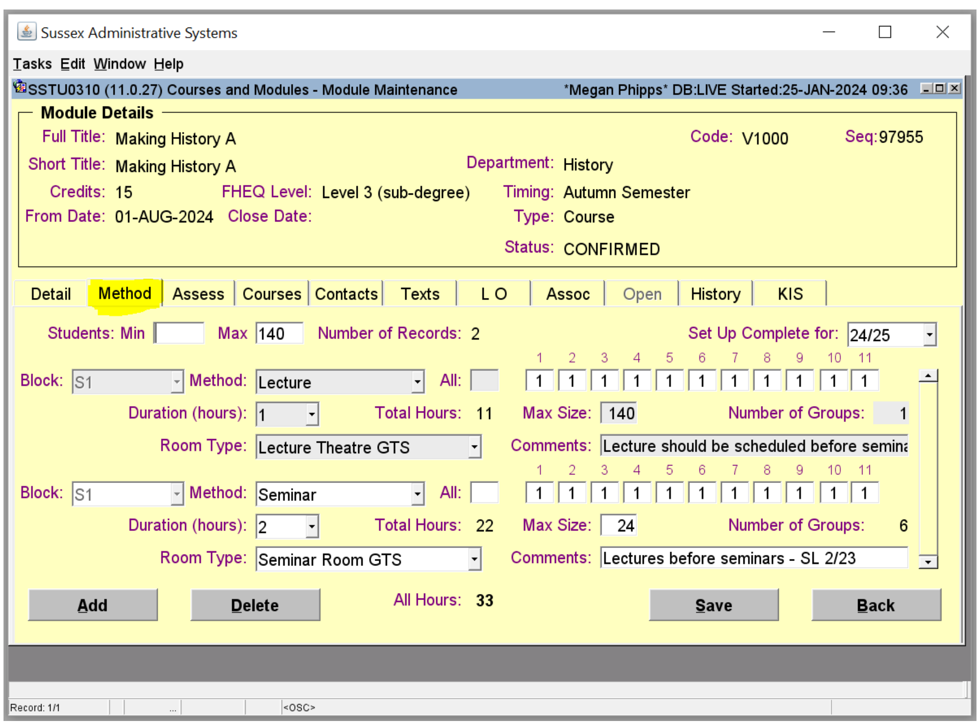


# Navigating the 'Method' screen

1. Once you have opened the 'Courses and Modules – Module Maintenance' screen for a particular module, you will be presented with a page similar to the following:




2. Click on the 'Method' tab to reach the teaching methods screen. Once you have done this you will be presented with a page that looks like this:



## Explanation of Fields

**Block -** indicates the block in which the teaching activity will take place (e.g. semester 1, semester 2).

**Students Min –** the minimum number of students on a module. **LEAVE THIS FIELD BLANK.**

**Students Max –** allows you to type the maximum number of students (in digits) that will be taking the module.

**Number of Records** – indicates the number of teaching methods that exist for that module.

**Method –** a drop-down menu that allows you to select the teaching method you want to input.*
*DO NOT SELECT ANY METHODS WITH AN ASTERISK

**Duration (Hours) –** a drop-down menu that allows you to select the duration of the activity in hours.

**Room Type –** a drop-down menu that allows you to select the room type for your teaching method.
*N.B. If you choose 'own room', please ensure that you provide more information in the 'comments' field.*

**All –** use this field to type the number of activities (in digits) for that particular teaching method per week (e.g. for a once weekly lecture, you would type 1). Pressing 'tab' or 'enter' on your keyboard, will be populate that number into each of the numbered boxes signifying the week pattern. You can also amend the values in each of the individual week boxes manually.

**Total Hours –** automatically calculated by CMS based on your input in the 'all' field.

**Max Size –** displays the maximum group size for that particular teaching method. By default the number automatically matches the 'students max' field for lectures. For any other teaching method (or if the lecture will not contain every student on the module), you can manually amend this value.

**Number of Groups –** an uneditable field that is automatically calculated by CMS based on the max size you have entered for your teaching method and the maximum number of students expected for the module overall.

**Comments –** free text field that can be used to add any further comments that are applicable to the delivery of the module and which the Timetabling Team should be made aware of (e.g. details of departmental rooms to be used, breakdown of who is teaching each week if a teaching method has a number of different tutors, etc). Please **do not** use this field to provide staff teaching restrictions – these should be provided through a separate process via the formal staff availability grids so that the Timetabling Team are informed of any staff constraints within the correct timescales and mechanisms.

**Set Up Complete for –** use this drop-down to choose the academic year you are entering teaching methods for. This indicates to the Timetabling Team that the methods have been reviewed and/or updated. It is vitally important that this field is showing the correct year – if it is not, it will not be captured when the Timetabling Team download the data that has been input.

- **If you click in a field, it will highlight that particular teaching method in grey to indicate that it is the one being edited.**
- **In order to be able to add text to the 'comments' field, you can double click within the field itself. This will open up a larger text window.**
- **To add a new teaching method, click in any field for the teaching method you want it to appear below, and then click the 'add' button. You might need to scroll to see the teaching method you have added. You can see how many records exist in the grey bar at the bottom of the screen.**

  *N.B. If you have a module that requires the same teaching methods in both semesters one and two (e.g. lectures in both semesters), please note that you will need to add duplicate methods, changing the block for each method to identify the semester they will be taking place in.*

- **Clicking the 'delete' button will delete the entire teaching method that you are editing (i.e. the one that is highlighted in grey). You will receive a warning box to confirm deletion to prevent any accidental operations.**
- **Before navigating away from the screen, you will need to click 'save' to store all of your amendments. If you forget to save, you will be prompted to do so if you try to exit the screen without saving.**
- **The 'back' button will take you back to the module search screen.**

**Navigational keyboard shortcuts in the 'Method' screen**

| | |
|---|---|
| Save a record | = ALT + S |
| Delete a record | = ALT + D |
| Add a record | = ALT + A |
| Return to main menu | = ALT + B |
| Exit screen | = ALT + X |

**<u>'Comments' Field - Advice</u>**

Using the comments field (where necessary) is strongly encouraged by the Timetabling Team as it allows users to enter additional information that cannot be conveyed in any of the other fields. The Timetabling Team need clear and concise information so that it will be understood to them as well as you.

Please ensure that you use the comments field for teaching methods that have any specific requirements or quirks that will need to be taken into account. Similarly, if an activity is going to be taken by a number of different tutors, if it is known at the time of entering the methods which tutor will be taking which sessions (or how many per tutor), it can be helpful to add this to the comments field. The comments box is also a helpful place to provide location details if 'own room' has been chosen as the location type.

*N.B. Please add your initials and the date/year (e.g. MP 25/26) to any comments typed within the 'comment's field. This allows the Timetabling Team to determine that a comment is relevant and not old information that is no longer applicable, since the 'Teaching Methods' screen is <u>not</u> wiped clean each year.*

An example of how **<u>NOT</u>** to use the comments box:

*"As far as I understand at the moment, both X and Y degrees will be taking this module. The students will then come to seminars to be delivered by (H Potter & R Weasley). For the seminars, the group should be split into A and B; A to have seminars on Tuesday, B on Thursday. A in the normal times (14:00-14:50). Groups then to be split again into A1 and A2, B1 and B2 and to have one room each at the seminar time. So each student should have three contact hours per week. Student numbers for this year are an unknown factor, quite possible in the realms of double that of last year's."*

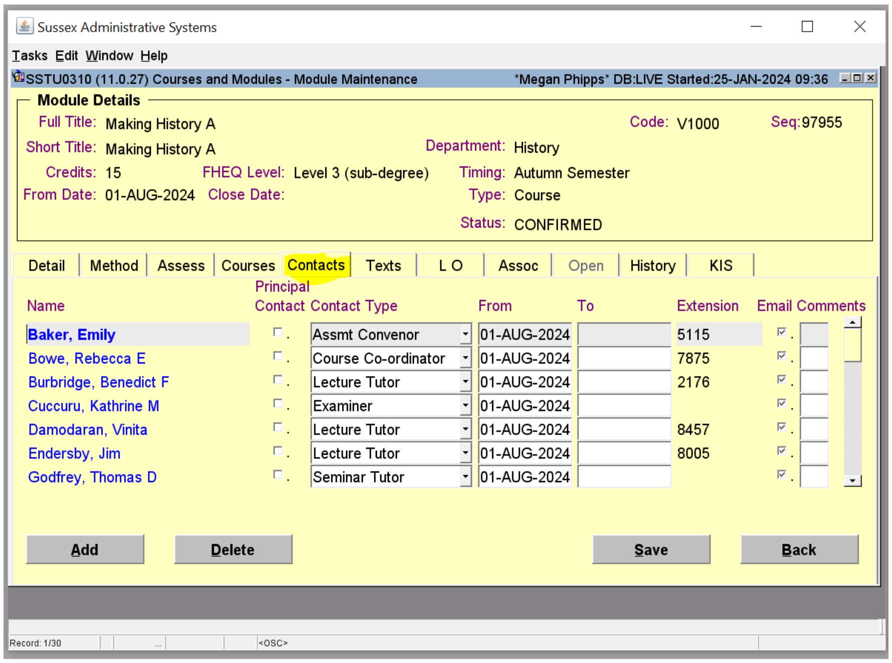
- *Too much ambiguity and too many assumptions*
- *Too detailed and complex – difficult to interpret*
- *Surplus information included that is already captured elsewhere*

Please **<u>do not</u>** use the comments field to provide staff teaching restrictions – these should be provided through a separate process via the formal staff availability grids so that the Timetabling Team are informed of any staff constraints within the correct timescales and mechanisms.

# Navigating the 'Contacts' screen

In addition to entering the teaching methods, you will also need to update the 'Contacts' screen to indicate who will be teaching for each teaching method. The Timetabling Team will then take this information to build the timetable and assign staff to each activity.

1. From within the 'Courses and Modules – Module Maintenance' screen, click on the 'Contacts' tab. You should now see a screen like this:




2. To enter a new contact, click the 'add' button.

3. In the new screen that appears, use the 'select contact type' drop-down menu to choose the member of staff's role in the module.

   *N.B. In order to provide the Timetabling Team with details of who will be teaching what, please ensure that the 'contact type' you choose matches the method type you have input (e.g. if you have input a lecture and would like to assign a lecture tutor, you will need to select 'lecture tutor' as the contact type).*

   *If a staff member is teaching for several different teaching activities (e.g. lectures <u>and</u> seminars), you will need to add them multiple times under each relevant contact type.*

4. Enter the staff member's surname in the 'enter surname' field. Then, click 'find'.

5. Choose the staff member by clicking their name in the list of staff members that appear in your search. You will be taken back to the 'contacts' screen where that staff member's name will now appear with the contact type you have chosen for them.

6. To amend a staff member's contact type, locate them in your list of tutors and select their new role from the drop-down menu under the 'contact type' field.

7. To delete a staff member (e.g. if they no longer teach on a module), click in any field against their name and click the 'delete' button. You will receive a warning box to confirm deletion to prevent any accidental operation.

8. If a member of staff will only be teaching in certain terms, you can add an end date in the 'to' field by double clicking and choosing a date. In most cases this field can be left blank.

**If a teaching method has been added to CMS but no staff member has been allocated for that contact type, that activity will be timetabled without any staffing information. This might lead to staff clashes later on in the process. It is therefore advisable that where staff information is known at the point of collating teaching methods, it should be added to CMS.**

- **Before navigating away from the screen, you will need to click 'save' to store all of your amendments. If you forget to save, you will be prompted to do so if you try to exit the screen without saving.**

- **The 'back' button will take you back to the module search screen.**

**Navigational keyboard shortcuts in the 'Contacts' screen**

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| Save a record | = ALT + S |
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