

# About the REST API

OpenAthens customers can use our REST API to interact with the system programmatically. REST in this case is an acronym for **RE**presentational **St**ate **Tr**ansfer rather than any comment on how much tea our developers get through. API stands for **A**pplication **P**rogramming **I**nterface.

## What kind of things can you do with the API?

The API allows you to programmatically create, manage and delete accounts. This means you can do things such as:

- Build a self service portal for your users to create and maintain their own accounts
- Run your own bespoke self registration pages
- Start a session for an OpenAthens account that already exists on the system (ideal if you want to [put a login box on your own site](#))

There is also the capability to use the API with an existing application that holds user credentials to log a user in using those instead of OpenAthens accounts. See - [API connector](#)

Rather than embedding a username and password in your application you can [generate an API Key](#) that can be used instead. This will mean that you can change your administrator password without worrying about breaking your application. You can generate as many keys as you need.

## Documentation:

For details see [OpenAthens REST API documentation](#)