

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

NOTE Please read these notes carefully before installing or upgrading your software. Do not attempt any installation or upgrade without first making a fully restorable backup of your SIMS system.

Ideas Portal

Our ideas portal is the perfect place to raise any new ideas or enhancements to the existing functionality you may have. Take the opportunity to view, vote and promote ideas that you feel would make the most difference to your experience in SIMS.

You can access the Ideas portal via the [support portal](#).

NOTE: You must log in to the support portal to access the ideas portal.

Satisfaction Survey

The SIMS 7 Satisfaction Survey is your direct opportunity to feedback to the product team on your experiences and views of the software itself. The short questionnaire will give you the chance to detail your thoughts on the modules, rate the user experience and evaluate the latest additions. This can be completed anonymously should you wish.

You can access the satisfaction survey:

- SIMS 7: Tools | SIMS Satisfaction Survey
- Online: <https://www.ess-sims.co.uk/user-survey>
- [Support Portal](#) (You do not need to log in to the support portal to access the satisfaction survey.)

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

SIMS Upgrade Support

Important Information – Please read before upgrading

If you are performing a SIMS upgrade spanning more than one release, it is essential that you read the release note associated with each version.

IMPORTANT: For more support on performing the SIMS Upgrades please refer to the SIMS Upgrade support article.

Upgrading using SOLUS

The SIMS Online Update Service (SOLUS) enables you to download and run SIMS releases and patches via the Internet. This is achieved using SOLUS3.

For instructions on carrying out an upgrade with SOLUS3, please refer to the SOLUS3 for Schools or the SOLUS3 for Local Authorities handbook.

Support for SQL Server

SIMS, FMS, Discover, Partnership Xchange, SOLUS, and InTouch run on SQL Server 2012, SQL Server 2014 and SQL Server 2016 SP3.

SQL2019 Update

The SQL Migration tool has been updated to upgrade SIMS, FMS, Discover, Partnership Xchange, SOLUS, and InTouch run to SQL 2019 and Windows Server 2019.

For more information on support for SQL Server and Windows environments, please refer to the [SIMS Minimum Hardware and Technical Roadmap](#) on the support portal.

B2B

If you use B2B, and you want the SQL Server service to be configured to run as a Domain account instead of the built-in LocalSystem account on Windows 2008 R2 or Windows 2012 Server, a separate patch can be run to enable this functionality. This patch is available from your Local Support Unit (Patch 20419) and it must be applied to your SIMS database by a user with System Administrator permissions.

General

If your school uses both Fees Billing and FMS, then SIMS and FMS must be upgraded at the same time.

Backing up SIMS and FMS

Where SIMS Personnel is used to generate Salary Projections in FMS, SIMS and FMS backups should be carried out at the same time. If one of the databases needs to be restored, the other database must be restored to the same point, i.e. if you restore the SIMS database, you must restore the FMS database to the same point and vice versa.

IMPORTANT: Backups are no longer zipped, because of the number of issues caused by zipping backup files. Recent operating systems now allow the use of compressed folders, which are recommended for automatically compressing backups. Please refer to your operating system documentation for instructions on applying compression to a folder.

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

Important Information Regarding the Upgrade of SIMS and Discover

IMPORTANT: You must upgrade to the SIMS 2022 Autumn Release before upgrading Discover. If you upgrade Discover before upgrading SIMS, data will not be transferred between the SIMS and Discover databases until SIMS has been upgraded.

Auto-Deployment of SIMS and Discover

If SOLUS3 auto-deployment is enabled for Discover, we recommend that Discover auto-deployment settings start later than the SIMS auto-deployment start time plus the timeout.

The screenshot shows the SOLUS3 Settings page with the 'Updates' tab selected. The 'UPDATES' section includes: 'Check updates every' set to 10 minutes, 'Task time out' set to 30 minutes, 'Rollback on failure' checked, and 'Auto download' checked with a time range of 13:22 to 15:23. The 'AGENTS' section shows 'Concurrent downloads' set to 5 and 'Auto download' checked with a time range of 13:22 to 15:23. The 'AUTO DEPLOYMENTS' section is a table with columns for Products, time ranges, and days of the week (Mon-Sun).

Products		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FMS	Between 11:00 and 23:00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SIMS	Between 11:00 and 23:00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SIMS Discover	Between 13:00 and 23:00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOLUS	Between 11:00 and 23:00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the times are not set like this, and the Discover deployment starts before the SIMS deployment, then the data transfer between SIMS and Discover will not work until the SIMS upgrade is completed.

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

Where to Find More Information?

Via SIMS...

For the software handbooks, navigate to the SIMS Home Page, then click the Documentation button to display the SIMS Documentation Centre.

Via the Support Portal...

User documentation is also available from the support portal (<https://customer.support-ess.com/csm>).

If you are unable to obtain the required handbook using any of these methods, please email us (<mailto:publications@parentpay.com>) and we will be pleased to send a copy to you.

Permissions

The permissions spreadsheet, which lists all permissions relating to SIMS 7.212, is available from the Documentation Centre. To access the SIMS Documentation Centre, click the Documentation button on the SIMS Home Page.

In the support portal, open the 7.212 SIMS Permissions Spreadsheet (KB0036819).

Support for B2B

Personnel ended with the release of One version 3.74 (Spring 2021). The B2B: Personnel table that has previously been present in this release notes have been removed.

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

Census Release Notes

Please refer to the [Census Returns Manager](#) page for information on the new features, enhancements, and fixes.

Refer to, [School Census Summer 2023 Return and Configuration](#).

SIMS 7 Release Notes

Each functional area displays a set of icons indicating the school type(s) to which the content relates. Icons that indicate a link to the applicable handbook(s) and New Feature videos are also displayed.

- EP** Content applicable to English Primary and Northern Ireland Primary schools
- ES** Content applicable to English Secondary and Northern Ireland Secondary schools
- WP** Content applicable to Welsh Primary schools
- WS** Content applicable to Welsh Secondary schools
- IN** Content applicable to independent schools

Admissions

IN

Prospective Pupils label changed from Gender to Sex ^{NEW}

Applicable to independent schools in England & Wales

[Routines](#) | [Admissions](#) | [Enquiry](#) | [Prospective Pupils](#)

Updating the label as Sex instead of Gender in the Prospective Pupils area allows for consistency with the rest of SIMS7.

Applications

EP ES WP WS IN

New data items added to Bulk Update Applications ^{NEW}

Applicable to all schools

[Routines](#) | [Admissions](#) | [Bulk Update Applications](#)

New data items have been added to the Bulk Update Applications screen to make managing them on mass easier. These include *Emergency Consent*, *First Language Source*, *Medical Condition*, *Mode of Travel*, *National Identity* and *User Defined Fields*.

Assessment

EP ES WP WS IN

Access Arrangements and Total Conduct Points added to Marksheets ^{NEW}

Applicable to all schools

[Focus](#) | [Assessment](#) | [Marksheet Entry](#)

Users of assessment now have the capability to include *Total Conduct Points* or *Access Arrangements* into marksheets from within the Additional Student Information panel for visibility when operating in a marksheet.

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

Examinations Organiser

EP **ES** **WP** **WS** **IN**

Manually adding Qualification Numbers ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

Tools | Examinations | Add Qualification Data

The Discount Code and Qualification Type fields have been updated with smart search so you can enter a partial code to find the needed one. The Awarding body field has been sorted by description to improve searchability.

New Sort & Display Orders on Candidate Statement of Results report ^{NEW}

Applicable to all schools

Tools | Examinations | Candidate Statement of Results Report

Exam officers can now choose from an additional two new sort and display options for candidate names on the candidate statement of results report. The new options provide either both legal names or both preferred names on the report output.

New Candidate Statement of Results report with Component results ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England and Wales only

Tools | Examinations | Candidate Statement of Results Report

Exam officers can generate a printable report with component results (combined exam and component results) which can be provided to students on the exam results day.

Fees Billing

EP **ES** **WP** **WS** **IN**

Generating Debtor Letters ^{NEW}

Applicable to Independent schools

Fees Manager | Fees Clerk | Generate Letters

New functionality has been made available to generate debtor letter templates to help chase up outstanding debts with the registered Bill Payer/s.

Interventions

EP **ES** **WP** **WS** **IN**

Check-Ins added to Interventions ^{NEW}

Applicable to all schools

Focus | Interventions | Run Interventions

New functionality has been made available to allow users to record quick “Check-ins” with students as part of an Intervention. The new data item has also been added to the Design Report and Intervention Report areas.

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

School Census Autumn Returns (Statutory Returns)

EP ES

Key Dates for the Census Autumn 2023 Return ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England

Census Date: 05/10/2023

Attendance Collection from 10/04/2023 to 31/07/2023

Exclusions collected from 01/01/2023 to 31/07/2023

Alternative Provision Placements collected from 18/05/2023 to 05/10/2023

Funding and Monitoring collected from 01/08/2023 to 05/10/2023

Learning Aims and collected from 01/08/2023 to 05/10/2023

Free School Meals collected from 19/05/2023 to 05/10/2023

Reports to include AP Co House and Postcode ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England

Routines | Statutory Returns | School Census

AP Companies House No and AP Postcode information is now included for the Autumn Census.

Ability to bulk update in Update Prior Attainment ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England

Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Prior Attainment

The multi-select function allows users to bulk select & update data for multiple records simultaneously by using the Shift and Control keys to select multiple students within the Update Prior Attainment screen.

School Workforce Census for England (SWC) - Statutory Returns

EP ES

Key Dates for the School Workforce Census Autumn 2023 Return ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England

Census Date - 2/11/2023

Absence Start Date - 1/09/2022

Absence End Date - 31/8/2023

Continuous Contract Start Date - 1/9/2022

Continuous Contract End Date - 2/11/2023

Personnel7/SWC 2023 Business Support Staff ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England

Tools | Lookups | Maintain Staff Service Term - SWR Post

There is a new staff SWR Post of School Business Professional (SBP).

Personnel7/SWC 2023 Additional to Subject Lookup ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England

Focus | Person | Staff

Users can include additional subjects for staff qualifications related to the new post of School Business Professional.

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

SWC 2023: New data item SLT Senior Leadership Team ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England

Focus | Person | Staff

A new Senior Leadership Team (SLT) grid option has been added.

SWC Return New detailed report for Senior Leadership Team ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England only

Routines | Statutory Returns | School Workforce Census

A new detailed report for the senior leadership team has been added to the SWC return.

Reporting Dictionary update ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England only

Reports | Design Report

Senior leadership team items have been added to the reporting dictionary.

PDO Report update ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England only

Routines | Data Out | Person data output

Senior leadership team items have been added to the Person Data Output report.

Pay details Panel update ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England only

Pay details panel of Routines | Statutory returns | School workforce census

The Pay details panel now displays the Leadership (Teachers) table followed by the Other Staff table.

Sickness absences update ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England only

Routines | Statutory returns | School workforce census | Pay details

Sickness absences are now also included in the School workforce return if they have 0 working days lost and an end date entered. This will trigger error 4990 only for situations where working days lost are required.

Bulk select & update data for multiple records ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England only

Tools | Statutory Return Tool | Update Prior Attainment

The multi-select function makes it possible for users to bulk select & update data for multiple records at the same time.

SIMS 7 Combined Release Notes

SIMS 2023 Summer release (version 7.212)

School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) for Wales - Statutory Returns

WP **WS**

Key Dates for the Census Return ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in Wales

Routines | Statutory Returns | School Workforce Annual Census

Census Date: 07/11/2023

Vacancies that opened or closed from 1 September to 31 August of the academic year before the census date*, including vacancies that were not filled.

School teachers who left the profession or took retirement (early or at normal age) from 1 September to 31 August of the academic year before the census date*.

Supply Staff - Aggregated level data for the period 1 September to 31 August of the academic year prior to the census date*.

*Which is the previous 2022/23 academic year

Post-16 Return for Wales – Statutory Returns

WP **WS**

Applicable to schools in Wales

Routines | Statutory Returns | Post 16 PLASC

Dates have been rolled forward to the following:

Survey Reference Date is 31/07/2023

Collection Period is 01/09/2022 to 31/08/2023.

Students

EP **ES** **WP** **WS** **IN**

Inclusion of Dietary Needs into Bulk Update ^{NEW}

Applicable to all schools

Routines | Student | Bulk Update

The 14 Major Allergens, recognised by the Food Standard Agency (FSA), have been added to the Dietary Need values. Users can use these values to perform Bulk updates to the dietary needs of multiple students.

New Component Results panel added to Exams Quick Links ^{NEW}

Applicable to schools in England and Wales

Routines | Student | Student Details | Quick Links | Exams

Exam officers and data managers can use the new quick links to review the component results of a student for easy cross-referencing and data validation.