



SIMS 2021 Spring Release Note

7.198 Combined Edition - version 1.1

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Welcome to the SIMS 2021 Spring Release

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.

This release note is available in PDF and Word formats. To take full advantage of the functionality available in this release note (e.g. links to handbooks and video tutorials), you must use the PDF version. We cannot be held responsible for any changes, errors or omissions resulting from subsequent editing of the supplied document.

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 Information for Schools in England

At the time this release note was produced, we had not yet received the baselined validation and summary report files from the DfE for School Census Summer 2021. Schools should not provide their Return file to the DfE until they have imported a fileset that includes the official DfE validation and summary report files.

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. For more information on support for SQL Server and Windows environments, please refer to the *SIMS Technical Roadmap* on the support portal

(https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0035434).

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.

Important Information for Windows 8 and Windows Server 2012 Users

If you are running SIMS on a Windows 8 or Windows Server 2012 workstation, you may encounter difficulties when attempting to open PDF files in SIMS. This is caused by Windows Reader being the default program used to open PDF files.








To resolve this issue, you must first ensure that Adobe Reader 10 or later is installed.

Next, you will need to associate Adobe Reader with all PDF files. From the Taskbar, click **File Explorer**, click **Computer** in the panel on the left-hand side of the page then from the Menu Bar, select **Computer | Open Control Panel**. Click **Programs | Default Programs | Associate a file type or protocol with a program**. In the **Extensions** list, scroll down to and click the **.pdf** item then click the **Change program** button. Click **Adobe Reader** then click the **Close** button.



Release Notes

Each functional area displays a set of icons, which indicate 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.

-  *Content applicable to English Primary and Northern Ireland Primary schools*
-  *Content applicable to English Secondary and Northern Ireland Secondary schools*
-  *Content applicable to Welsh Primary schools*
-  *Content applicable to Welsh Secondary schools*
-  *Content applicable to Independent schools*
-  *Link to the applicable handbook(s)*
-  *Link to a New Feature video*

If you have any comments or questions regarding any SIMS user documentation, please email us (publications@capita.com).

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.

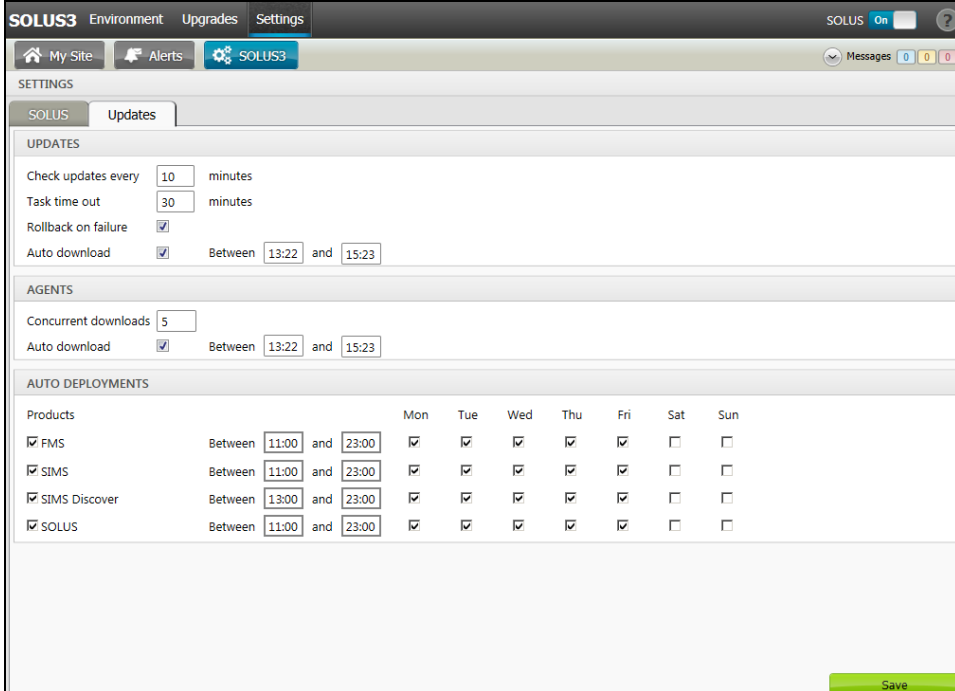
IMPORTANT NOTE: Backups are no longer zipped, because of the number of issues caused by zipping backup files. Recent operating systems now allow the use of compressed folders, which are recommended for automatically compressing backups. Please refer to your operating system documentation for instructions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

Important Information Regarding the Upgrade of SIMS and Discover

IMPORTANT NOTE: You must upgrade to the SIMS 2021 Spring 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 the settings for Discover auto-deployment are set to start later than the SIMS auto-deployment start time plus the timeout.



The screenshot shows the SOLUS3 Settings page. The 'UPDATES' section is expanded, showing the following settings:

- Check updates every: 10 minutes
- Task time out: 30 minutes
- Rollback on failure:
- Auto download: Between 13:22 and 15:23

The 'AGENTS' section shows:

- Concurrent downloads: 5
- Auto download: Between 13:22 and 15:23

The 'AUTO DEPLOYMENTS' section shows a table of products and their deployment schedules:

Products	Between	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.

Important Information Regarding SIMS Documentation

The SIMS **Documentation Centre** is accessed by clicking the **Documentation** button on the SIMS **Home Page**.

User documentation is arranged by output type (handbook, tutorial, QRS, etc.) and then by functional area. It is also arranged by role (e.g. Teacher, Administrator, Returns Manager, etc.). Frequently Asked Questions and Troubleshooting sections are also available.

User documentation that is accessible via the SIMS **Documentation Centre** is hosted on the web. Help files are delivered to the `\Program Files\SIMS\SIMS .net` folder on each SIMS workstation.

NOTE: If you wish to access the latest user documentation for the SIMS 2021 Spring Release without logging into SIMS, the **Documentation Centre** is accessible via the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0036819).

When a user logs into SIMS for the first time following an upgrade, a What's New page relevant to your school phase is provided.

For schools in Wales, the following key documents are provided in the Welsh language:

- What's New page
- Release note – Welsh Primary schools
- Release note – Welsh Secondary schools
- End of Key Stage Data Processing (Wales) handbook.

We would welcome any feedback you have on the SIMS **Documentation Centre**. If you have any comments, please email the SIMS Publications team (publications@capita.com).

The Documentation Centres can be accessed from within our products:

- In SIMS 7, click the **Documentation** button on the SIMS **Home Page** (via **Focus | Home Page**)
- In FMS, select **Help | FMS Documentation**
- In Discover, click the **?** button
- In Satellite products, click the **Help** link.

Alternatively, visit the SIMS User Documentation Hub (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0037321), where you can access our range of Documentation Centres.

You do not have to log in to the support portal to access user documentation.

For the PDF editions of our video tutorials to display correctly, it was necessary to install Adobe Flash Player. Support for Adobe Flash Player ended on 31 December 2020. Consequently, we have migrated our range of video tutorials from PDF to MP4 format. They remain available from the SIMS **Documentation Centre** on the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0036819).

If you have any comments or questions regarding any SIMS user documentation, please email the SIMS Publications team (publications@capita.com). Alternatively, you can provide feedback on each Documentation Centre resource using the **Helpful?** and **Rate this article** functions. When giving feedback, please provide enough information for us to locate and investigate the issue.

Important information about using the SIMS Documentation Centre

- If you are running SIMS on a Windows 8 or Windows Server 2012 workstation, you may encounter difficulties when you first log into SIMS after a SIMS upgrade because the What's New page is displayed automatically and cannot be closed easily. This is caused by Windows Reader being the default program used to open PDF files. To resolve this issue, you must first ensure that Adobe Reader 10 or later is installed.



Next, you will need to associate Adobe Reader with all PDF files. From the Taskbar, click **File Explorer**, click **Computer** in the panel on the left-hand side of the page then from the Menu Bar, select **Computer | Open Control Panel**. Click **Programs | Default Programs | Associate a file type or protocol with a program**. In the **Extensions** list, scroll down to and click the **.pdf** item then click the **Change program** button. Click **Adobe Reader** then click the **Close** button.

- If Google Chrome is your default Web browser, you must download PDF files instead of opening them in Chrome to ensure that PDF files display correctly. This is achieved by entering **chrome://settings** in the Address Bar then pressing **Enter**. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click **Advanced**. In the **Privacy and security** section, click **Content settings**. Scroll towards the bottom of the list, click **PDF documents** and move the **Download PDF files instead of automatically opening them in Chrome** slider to the on position.

If you require assistance with this or any other issue you encounter when attempting to access user documentation, please contact the SIMS Publications team (publications@capita.com).

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://capitaswprod.service-now.com/csm>).

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

Permissions

The permissions spreadsheet, which lists all permissions relating to SIMS 7.198, 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 7.198 SIMS Permissions Spreadsheet (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0044069).

Compatibility between One and SIMS

As part of the SIMS 2021 Spring Release, we have undertaken full integration testing of B2B:Student. The following table shows the versions of One and SIMS that have also been through a process of integration testing for B2B:Student.

Support for B2B:Personnel ends with the release of One version 3.74 (Spring 2021). The B2B:Personnel table that has previously been present in this release note has therefore been removed.

B2B:Student

		One Release Version	
		One Autumn 2020 Release (3.73)	One Spring 2021 Release (3.74)
SIMS Release Version	SIMS 2020 Autumn Release (SIMS 7.196) Running B2B:Student v4 Phase 2	✓ ¹	✓ ¹
	SIMS 2020 Autumn Release (SIMS 7.196) Running B2B:Student v4 Phase 3 (SSM - Scheduled Tasks)	✓ ¹	✓ ¹
	SIMS 2021 Spring Release (SIMS 7.198) Running B2B:Student v4 Phase 2	✓ ¹	✓ ¹
	SIMS 2021 Spring Release (SIMS 7.198) Running B2B:Student v4 Phase 3 (SSM - Scheduled Tasks)	✓ ¹	✓ ²

¹ For England only. These combinations will not transfer the additional exclusion reasons mandated by the DfE from September 2020. They will transfer the first reason identified as the reason for the exclusion and transfer a single reason.

² For England Only. This combination of SIMS and One is required for up to three exclusion reasons to be transferred, as mandated by the DfE from September 2020.

There are various elements of functionality in One and SIMS that require compatibility between the two solutions. The following table provides information on the version(s) of schemas that are supported in release versions of One and SIMS, and therefore indicate version and release compatibility.

		One Release version	
		3.73 (Autumn 2020)	3.74 (Spring 2021)
SIMS Component	B2B:Student	v1.1	v1.1
	B2B:Personnel	v1.1	v1.1
	ATF	v17.0	v17.0
	CTF	v19 (for import) v20 (for import/export)	v19 (for import) v20 (for import/export)
	School Census	SC 2020/2021	SC 2020/2021
	PLASC	PLASC 2021	PLASC 2021
	ASL	v17.0	v17.0
	AMPARK	SIMS 7.192	SIMS 7.198
	ADT	v17.0	v17.0

Version Support for FMS

The FMS support arrangements depend on the supported versions of SIMS where Personnel Links is being used. Support for FMS is detailed in the following table.

Release	SIMS Version	FMS Version	FMS with Personnel Links/Equipment Register	FMS without Personnel Links/Equipment Register
Spring 2021	7.198	6.198	Supported	Supported
Autumn 2020	7.196	6.196	Supported	Supported
Summer 2020	7.194	6.194	Not supported	Supported
Spring 2020	7.192	6.192	Not supported	Supported

NOTE: FMS 6.198 has been tested against SQL Server 2012, 2014 and 2016.

Important Information about Self-Hosted SIMS Learning Gateway

Support for self-hosted SIMS Learning Gateway (SLG) ceased at the end of March 2020.

From 1 April 2020, schools have been able to use their SLG installation for a limited period. However, all functionality will be removed in a future release.

ESS has provided a suite of apps to replace the functionality of SLG:

- SIMS Parent/Student (<https://www.capita-sims.co.uk/products-and-services/sims-parent-app>)
- SIMS Teacher app (<https://www.capita-sims.co.uk/products-and-services/sims-teacher-app>)
- SIMS ID (<https://www.capita-sims.co.uk/products-and-services/sims-id>).

To discuss moving to these apps, please contact your SIMS Account Manager. Alternatively, contact us (info@capita-sims.co.uk).

Supported SIMS Versions with PX Spring Release

The SIMS PX Agent should be upgraded to the PX 2021 Spring Release immediately after, or in conjunction with, upgrading to the SIMS 2021 Spring Release.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you install the SIMS 2021 Spring Release (SIMS 7.198) and continue to run an older release of the PX Agent, this is not guaranteed to work and is therefore not supported.

Admissions

New Features

EP ES WP WS IN

Replacement of Tier 4 Screen Labels with Study Visa



Applicable to schools with the Full Own Admissions Authority licence only

[Tools](#) | [Admissions](#) | [Defaults](#)
[Focus](#) | [Admission](#) | [Application](#)
[Focus](#) | [Admission](#) | [Enquiry](#)

To align with new legislation, all screen labels that reference **Tier 4** throughout SIMS have changed to **Study Visa**. This change excludes reports and items in the reporting dictionary; these areas will be updated in a future release.

Enhancements to the Application Import File (AIF)



Applicable to Independent schools only

[Routines](#) | [Admission](#) | [Import Applications](#)

The following additional fields can now be imported via the Application Import File (AIF):

- Use For Fees Financial PDF Documents ([Focus](#) | [Admission](#) | [Application - Family/Home Details](#) panel – [Contacts – Telephones and Email Addresses](#) panel)
- E-mail Bills ([Focus](#) | [Pupil \(or Student\)](#) | [Pupil \(or Student\) Details - Family/Home](#) panel – [Contacts – Relationship Details](#) panel)

- Fees Status ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer – Financial Details](#) panel)
- Payment Type ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer – Financial Details](#) panel)
- Fees % Breakdown ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer – Financial Details](#) panel)
- Extra % Breakdown ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer – Financial Details](#) panel)
- AUDDIS Mandate Indicator ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer – Financial Details](#) panel)
- Pupil Reference ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer – Financial Details](#) panel)
- Payer Ref ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer - Basic Details](#) panel)
- Billing Name ([Focus](#) | [Person](#) | [Bill Payer - Basic Details](#) panel).

AMPARK

New Features

EP ES WP WS IN

Enhancements for the SIMS 2021 Spring Release

The Assessment Manager and Performance Analysis Resource Kit (AMPARK) provides a set of resources for use with SIMS Assessment. This kit has been updated for the SIMS 2021 Spring Release.

For more information, please refer to the *Assessment Manager and Performance Analysis Resource Kit* release note, which is available from the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0044128).



Assessment

New Features

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

Adding User Defined Fields to Assessment Marksheets and Templates



[Focus | Assessment | Marksheet Entry](#)

[Focus | Assessment | Template](#)

It is now possible for a class teacher to add User Defined Fields (UDFs) to an Assessment marksheet as Additional Student Columns. It is also possible for an Assessment Co-ordinator to add UDFs to a template as Additional Student Information columns.

Update to the List of Names Recorded in the SIMS Dictionary



[Focus | Assessment | Marksheet Entry](#)

The SIMS dictionary has been updated with approximately 35,000 entries from the dictionary of names provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

When recording comments in Assessment marksheets, any names recorded in the dictionary will not be flagged as potential misspellings.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the existing functionality in SIMS that enables schools to add names recorded in their SIMS system to the SIMS dictionary. This feature can be accessed via [Tools | Performance | Profiles | Add Names to Dictionary](#). Running this process adds to the dictionary all surnames, middle names and forenames (both legal and preferred), for all pupil/students, applicants and staff recorded in SIMS.

We will continue to update the SIMS dictionary as part of future releases.

Removal of EYFS Baseline Assessment Templates



Applicable to Primary and All-Through schools in England only

The following EYFS Baseline Assessment Templates for Durham University's Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM), Early Excellence (EE) and National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) have been removed from the [AMPA\England Primary \(and Middle Deemed Primary\)\Assessment Manager](#) folder.

- EYFS Baseline Assessment Template CEM 2019.xml
- EYFS Baseline Assessment Template CEM 2020.xml
- EYFS Baseline Assessment Template EE 2019.xml
- EYFS Baseline Assessment Template EE 2020.xml
- EYFS Baseline Assessment Template NFER 2019.xml
- EYFS Baseline Assessment Template NFER 2020.xml.

These resources will not be delivered in future because they are no longer statutory. Schools must now use the statutory DfE online baseline assessment process.

Additional EYFS Revised Profile Templates for 2021



Applicable to Primary and All-Through schools in England only

The following additional resources have been provided for schools that choose to use the revised EYFS profiles. These resources are available in the [AMPA\England Primary \(and Middle Deemed Primary\)](#) folder.

- EYFS Revised Profile Wizard 2021.xml
- EYFS Revised Profile Template 2021.xml.

Only schools that have registered with the DfE to be early adopters should use these resources. All other schools must continue to use the updated legacy resources.



Modifications to KS1 and KS2 Templates for P Scales and Engagement Models



Applicable to Primary and All-Through schools in England only

The DfE and the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) announced in January 2021 that due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, the Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) National Curriculum Assessments and Tests could not continue as intended. The following assessments, scheduled between April and July 2021, have been cancelled:

- KS1 Teacher Assessments and Tests
- KS2 Teacher Assessments and Tests
- Phonics Screening Check
- All other statutory trialling.

When this announcement was made, ESS had already completed much of the work to produce the usual range of statutory resources to support the National Curriculum Assessments and Tests in 2021. We have taken the decision to release these resources to schools via the **AMPA** folder in the usual way. The resources reflect the changes that were expected to have been made, had the National Curriculum Assessments and Tests gone ahead, and as conveyed to us in requirements supplied by the DfE and STA at that time.

Therefore, you will find the usual suite of KS1 and KS2 statutory resources, and the Profiles Screening Check resources for both the legacy and revised versions of profiles, in the relevant **AMPA** folders.

While we have provided these resources, we have done so in view of an ever-changing environment. We suggest that schools carefully consider whether to record information in these resources. These resources should be used only to capture 'validated' results. If schools wish to capture data based on past papers etc., they can do so but they should be aware that any data recorded in these resources will be treated as the statutory validated results for pupil/students.

Key Stage 1

- The BLW value has been replaced by P Scales and Engagement Model in the relevant grade sets. Validation on the templates has been updated to reflect the changing grades in line with DfE requirements.
- KS1 A - Teacher Assessments templates have been updated to ensure that a single pupil/student is recorded against a P Scale or Engagement Model only. Validation has been amended because Science TA is not required by the DfE for 2021.
- KS1 B - P Scales Individual Assessments - the template remains in the **AMPA** folder but all validations have been removed because these are no longer statutory.
- KS1 C - Tests have been suspended by the DfE for 2021. However, the template remains available to enable schools to run a past paper test, if required.
- KS1 D - Broadsheet Review - the templates remain unchanged.

All associated reports have been updated to reflect these changes.

Key Stage 2

- The BLW value will be replaced by P Scales and Engagement Model in relevant grade sets. Validation on the templates will be updated to reflect the changing grades in line with DfE requirements.
- KS2 A - Teacher Assessments – validation to ensure that a single pupil/student is recorded against a P Scale or Engagement Model only. Validation has been amended because Science TA is not required by the DfE for 2021.
- KS2 B - P Scales Individual Assessments - the template remains in the **AMPA** folder but all validations have been removed because these are no longer statutory.
- KS2 C - Tests and KS2 D - Broadsheet Review templates remain unchanged.

All associated reports have been updated to reflect these changes.

Updates to the Phonics Screening Check



Applicable to Primary and All-Through schools in England only

[Routines](#) | [Data Out](#) | [CTF](#) | [Export](#)

Due to the cancellation of the Summer 2020 collection for the Year 1 Phonics Check because of COVID-19, an additional CTF export type named **Phonics Test Results (for Autumn Term 2020 Screening Check only)** was provided as part of the SIMS 2020 Autumn Release to enable schools to make the return for the new Year 1 Phonics Check in Autumn 2020. For the SIMS 2021 Spring Release, this has been renamed **Phonics Test Results (For Summer Term 2021 Retake Screening Check only)**. This enables schools to complete the return for any pupil/students who undertook the Year 1 Phonics Check in Autumn 2020 and who are now undertaking the Year 2 Phonics Check or recheck in Summer 2021 only. All results for the pupil/students who will be taking the Year 2 Phonics Check or recheck in Summer 2021 must be recorded with a result date of 13 April 2021 or later.

Results for the pupil/students who are undertaking the Year 1 Phonics Check in Summer 2021 should be recorded using the Year 1 Phonics Check 2021 template. Results for the pupil/students who are undertaking the Year 2 Phonics Check or recheck in Summer 2021 should be recorded in the Year 2 Phonics Check 2021 template.

For any pupil/students who are undertaking the Year 1 Phonics Check in Summer 2021, schools must complete the return using the **Early Years Foundation Stage data (FSP)** option in the CTF export routine (via [Routines](#) | [Data Out](#) | [CTF](#) | [Export CTF](#)).

Revised Programme of Study EYFS Profile for Early Adopters



Applicable to Primary schools in England only

[Routines](#) | [Data In](#) | [Assessment](#) | [Import](#)

A revised resource file has been provided for early adopters using the Programme of Study Revised EYFS framework to import. Only schools that have registered with the DfE as early adopters should use the new framework from 1 September 2021.

- The new **Use Revised EYFS from 2020** check box in [Tools | Performance | Options](#) enables you to select whether to display only the new EYFS framework Areas of Learning (subjects), age bands (strands) and statements.
- New subjects have been provided in Programme of Study to correspond with the revised areas of learning.
- New strands have been provided in Programme of Study to correspond with the revised age bands.
- New statements have been provided in Programme of Study to correspond with the revised age-banded statements.

This resource is available in the [AMPA\England Primary \(and Middle Deemed Primary\)](#) folder and is named **PoS Revised EYFS Aspects.xml**. Only schools that have registered with the DfE as early adopters should use these resources. Other schools must continue to use the existing legacy resources.

Schools that use the revised EYFS profiles will be unable to incorporate observation checkpoints in Assessment individual reports.

Welsh National Test Collections



Applicable to Primary, Secondary and All-Through schools in Wales only

The online personalised assessments in Numeracy (Reasoning) will become a statutory requirement from the 2021/22 academic year. The National Numeracy Test (NNT) templates are now obsolete and have been removed from the [AMPA](#) folders for 2021. However, the National Numeracy Test wizards are still provided to enable the archiving of NNT components.

The National Reading Test (NRT) resources for years 2-9 are also no longer required. All associated resources have been removed from the [AMPA](#) folders for 2021.



Welsh National Data Sets



Applicable to Primary, Secondary and All-Through schools in Wales only

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic preventing the collection of data for the 2019/20 academic year, there have been no updates made to the National Data Sets. Therefore, all reports in SIMS that contain national data continue to reflect 2019 data and references. This has been approved by the Welsh Government.

Removal of Welsh National Tests Menu Routes



Applicable to Primary, Secondary and All-Through schools in Wales only

[Routines | Data In | NDC Results | Import Welsh National Tests](#)
[Routines | Data Out | NDC Results | Welsh National Test Results](#)

To reflect the move of all Welsh National Test collections to an online medium, the menu routes that provided the ability to import and export Welsh National Test data have been removed from SIMS.

For more information relating to the available resources for Welsh assessment, please refer to the *Assessment Manager and Performance Analysis Resource Kit* release note, which is available from the support portal

(https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0044128).

Attendance

New Features



Additional Attendance Codes for COVID-19 Recording (England)

Applicable to schools in England only

[Focus | Attendance | Take Register](#)

[Focus | Attendance | Display Marks](#)

[Focus | Attendance | Edit Marks](#)

In consultation with the DfE, a range of subcodes have been introduced for session marks **I** (Illness) and **X** (Non-compulsory school age or COVID-19 related) to enable schools to record additional information regarding a pupil/student's absence.

Subcodes also assist in the recording the daily totals for the Educational Setting Status (EdSet) form.

- To record a subcode for a single pupil/student, right-click a cell where an I or X mark has been recorded and select **Enter Subcode** from the pop-up menu.
- To record subcodes for multiple pupil/students, highlight the required I or X marks, right-click one of the highlighted cells and select **Enter Subcode** from the pop-up menu. Please note that highlighted cells must include only I marks or only X marks; it is not possible to apply subcodes in bulk where a combination of I and X marks have been highlighted. This feature works in a similar way to recording comments and minutes late for multiple pupil/students.

The following subcodes can be recorded.

Code I

- **I01** – Illness
- **I02** – Illness - Confirmed case COVID-19.

Code X

- **X01** – non-compulsory school age
- **X02** – Self-isolating - COVID-19 symptoms



- **X03** – Self-isolating - COVID-19 contact inside school
- **X04** – Self-isolating - COVID-19 contact outside school
- **X05** – Quarantine - self-isolating
- **X06** – Shielding as advised
- **X07** – Government advice not to attend.

Once a subcode has been recorded, a blue triangle is displayed in the bottom right-hand corner of the cell. Hover over the blue triangle to view the subcode description.

Subcodes will be overwritten if the following processes are run for pupil/students for whom subcodes have been recorded.

- Enter a code over a date range (via [Focus | Attendance | Enter a Code over a Date Range](#))
- Enter a weekly pattern (via [Focus | Attendance | Enter a Weekly Pattern](#))
- Recording exclusions (these are displayed as code E) (via [Focus | Pupil \(or Student\) | Exclusions](#) and [Focus | Pupil \(or Student\) | Pupil \(or Student\) Details – Exclusions](#) in the [Links](#) panel).

Please note that where a 'session code only' process is used for entering code I, it will not remove any existing subcode if the 'session code' is already I. Similarly, where a 'session code only' process is used for entering X, it will not remove any existing subcodes if the 'session code' is already X.

To support the introduction of subcodes, the following items have been added to the Attendance marks sub-report in the reporting dictionary (via [Reports | Design Report – Student | Attendance marks](#)):

- Subcode
- Subcode Description.

Additional Attendance Codes for COVID-19 Recording (Wales)

Applicable to schools in Wales only

[Focus | Attendance | Take Register](#)

[Focus | Attendance | Edit Marks](#)

Two Attendance codes have been provided, enabling schools to record further details of COVID-19-related absences from 02/11/2020 to 31/08/2021. Attendance session marks recorded using these Attendance codes will be mapped to the main code in the Attendance Collection return.

- The [code indicates remote learning due to COVID-19 and is mapped to the main code of X = Non compulsory school age absence.
- The ; code indicates illness due to COVID-19 and is mapped to the main code of I = Illness.

Attendance Collection (Wales)

New Features



Attendance Collection 2021 Return Key Dates



[Routines | Statutory Returns | Attendance Collection](#)

Primary school phase:

- Submission period: 23/07/2021 - 17/09/2021
- Attendance data collection period: 01/09/2020 to 23/07/2021
- Data is only collected for pupils aged five and over at 31/08/2020.

Secondary school phase:

- Submission period: 21/05/2021 - 11/06/2021
- Attendance data collection period: 01/09/2020 to 21/05/2021
- Data is only collected for students aged 15 or under at 31/08/2020.



Additional Attendance Codes for COVID-19 Recording (Wales)



Applicable to schools in Wales only

[Focus](#) | [Attendance](#) | [Take Register](#)

[Focus](#) | [Attendance](#) | [Edit Marks](#)

Two Attendance codes have been provided, enabling schools to record further details of COVID-19-related absences from 02/11/2020 to 31/08/2021. Attendance session marks recorded using these Attendance codes will be mapped to the main code in the Attendance Collection return.

- The [code indicates remote learning due to COVID-19 and is mapped to the main code of X = Non compulsory school age absence.
- The ; code indicates illness due to COVID-19 and is mapped to the main code of I = Illness.

Course Manager

New Features



Updating the Planned End Date for Two Year Courses

[Tools](#) | [Academic Management](#) | [Course Manager](#) | [Maintain Course](#)

[Tools](#) | [Academic Management](#) | [Course Manager](#) | [Update Course Memberships](#)

For students who are studying in Year Taught In Yr 10 or 12 on a two-year course, their membership of the course is created by running the Update Course Memberships routine. However, in their first year of the course (academic year 2020/2021), the Planned End Date will be set to 31/07/2022 by default because the Class End Date for the second year of the course is not known at the time that the course membership is created. The Actual End Date is displayed with the same date as the future Planned End Date.

In the second year of the course, e.g. when students are in Yr 11 or 13 in the academic Year 2021/2022, after running Update Course Memberships, the Planned End Date and the Actual End Date now display the future class end date.

Displaying All Post-16 Courses for an Academic Year

Applicable to schools in England only

[Tools](#) | [Academic Management](#) | [Course Manager](#) | [Post-16 Programmes of Study](#)

Updated criteria in the **Other Courses** column now ensures that all courses that are active at some point during the selected academic year, regardless of their duration, are displayed.

Preservation of Planned Hours when Removing a Programme of Study

Applicable to schools in England only

[Tools](#) | [Academic Management](#) | [Course Manager](#) | [Post-16 Programmes of Study](#)

After clicking the **Remove Programme** button on the **Maintain Post-16 Programmes of Study** page, planned hours and any additional notes are now retained against the student's record.

Revised List of QWADs Provided by the Welsh Government

Applicable to schools in Wales only

[Tools](#) | [Academic Management](#) | [Course Manager](#) | [Update QWADs for Course Manager](#)

The list of QWADs provided by the Welsh Government has been updated for 2020/2021. QWADs are reported on in the Post-16 PLASC Return.

Updating NIEFQANs and Discount Codes for Course Manager

Applicable to schools in Northern Ireland only

[Tools](#) | [Academic Management](#) | [Course Manager](#) | [Update NIEFQANs and Discount Codes for Course Manager](#)

An additional menu route was provided as part of the SIMS 2020 Autumn Release to enable the details of NIEFQANs and their associated discount codes to be updated.

Once the latest NIEFQAN file has been imported, the **Expiry** date is now displayed. This is derived from the academic year in the NIEFQAN file, i.e. if the academic year identifier for the NIEFQAN is 2020, then the expiry date is displayed as 31/07/2021 (this being the end of the 2020/2021 academic year). The **Subject** description now reflects the discount code description and is displayed to assist the identification of the required NIEFQAN.

Cover

EP ES WP WS IN

Fixes

This release includes a fix in the following area:

- Where a Cover supervisor was initially assigned to one class and then re-assigned to another class via the Cover Diary, the **My Timeline** widget on the SIMS **Home Page** now displays only the re-assigned class (via **Focus | Home Page**).

CTF

New Features

EP ES WP WS IN

Deceased Pupil/Students Identified in the CTF Exception Log



[Routines](#) | [Data Out](#) | [CTF](#) | [Export CTF](#)

When preparing to create a CTF file for export, an * is now appended to a pupil/student's **UPN** in the **Students** panel if they have a **Reason for Leaving** of **Deceased** recorded in the **School History** panel of the pupil/student record. Once the export has completed, an * is now appended to their **UPN** in the **Exception Log** panel. An * is not appended to the **UPN** tag in the exported CTF file.

Under these circumstances, the following message is displayed on export:

The list of pupils you are about to export contain a deceased person(s), these are indicated with an * next to the UPN. Do you wish to proceed with the export?

Validating Exam Data Against the NIEFQAN File on CTF Import



Applicable to Post Primary, EOTAS and Special schools in Northern Ireland only

[Routines](#) | [Data In](#) | [CTF](#) | [Import CTF](#)

When a pupil/student leaver moves from one school to another, any exam data contained in the CTF file is now validated against the NIEFQAN file. Additionally, any discrepancies are highlighted in the CTF **Exception Log**.

Fixes

This release includes a fix in the following area:

- When importing a CTF file, where a pupil/student's **Date of Leaving** a previous school is not recorded in the CTF file, this date now defaults to the day before the **Admission Date** to the new school (via [Routines | Data In | CTF | Import CTF](#)).

Dinner Money

New Features

WP

Backdating the Transitional Protection Flag for Free School Meals

Applicable to schools in Wales only

[Tools](#) | [Dinner Money](#) | [Backdate Transitional Protection](#)

Schools that use Dinner Money can now amend the FSM Transitional Protection flag where they believe that this has been populated incorrectly. Making these changes ensures that Dinner Money charges are backdated correctly for pupils and admitted applicants. The FSM TP indicator and effective date are consequently removed from their record.

Schools that do not use Dinner Money can make amendments by deselecting the **FSM Transitional Protection** check box in the **Dietary** panel of the pupil record via ([Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details](#)).

All changes will be reflected in the PLASC 2021 Return.



For information on the new features, enhancements and fixes included in FMS 6.198, please refer to the *FMS 6.198* release note.

Home Page

New Features



Current Term to Date Cycle Added to the Attendance Summary Configuration

[Focus](#) | [Home Page](#)

When configuring the **Attendance Summary** widget on the SIMS **Home Page**, an additional **Cycle** named **Current Term to Date** has been provided to enable schools to view information from the start of the current school term to today's date.

Current Term to Date Cycle Added to the Conduct Summary Configuration

[Focus](#) | [Home Page](#)

When configuring the **Conduct Summary** widget on the SIMS **Home Page**, an additional **Cycle** named **Current Term to Date** has been provided to enable schools to view information from the start of the current school term to today's date.

Fixes

This release includes a fix in the following area:

- An error no longer occurs when opening a contact record using the Quick Search functionality on the SIMS **Home Page** (via [Focus](#) | [Home Page](#)).

New Features



Additional Attendance Codes for COVID-19 Recording (England)

Applicable to schools in England only

[Focus](#) | [Lesson Monitor](#) | [Take Register](#)

[Focus](#) | [Lesson Monitor](#) | [Display Marks](#)

[Focus](#) | [Lesson Monitor](#) | [Edit Marks](#)

In consultation with the DfE, a range of subcodes have been introduced for session marks **I** (Illness) and **X** (Non-compulsory school age or COVID-19 related) to enable schools to record additional information regarding a student's absence.

Subcodes also assist in the recording the daily totals for the Educational Setting Status (EdSet) form.

- To record a subcode for a single student, right-click a cell where an I or X mark has been recorded and select **Enter Subcode** from the pop-up menu.
- To record subcodes for multiple students, highlight the required I or X marks, right-click one of the highlighted cells and select **Enter Subcode** from the pop-up menu. Please note that highlighted cells must include only I marks or only X marks; it is not possible to apply subcodes in bulk where a combination of I and X marks have been highlighted. This feature works in a similar way to recording comments and minutes late for multiple students.

The following subcodes can be recorded.

Code I

- I01** – Illness
- I02** – Illness - Confirmed case COVID-19.

Code X

- X01** – non-compulsory school age
- X02** – Self-isolating - COVID-19 symptoms

- **X03** – Self-isolating - COVID-19 contact inside school
- **X04** – Self-isolating - COVID-19 contact outside school
- **X05** – Quarantine - self-isolating
- **X06** – Shielding as advised
- **X07** – Government advice not to attend.

Once a subcode has been recorded, a blue triangle is displayed in the bottom right-hand corner of the cell. Hover over the blue triangle to view the subcode description.

Subcodes will be overwritten if the following processes are run for students for whom subcodes have been recorded.

- Enter a code over a date range (via [Focus | Lesson Monitor | Enter a Code over a Date Range](#))
- Enter a weekly pattern (via [Focus | Lesson Monitor | Enter a Weekly Pattern](#))
- Recording exclusions (these are displayed as code E) (via [Focus | Student | Exclusions](#) and [Focus | Student | Student Details – Exclusions](#) in the [Links](#) panel)
- Copy Lesson Marks To Session (via [Tools | Setups | Lesson Monitor Options | Lesson Monitor Setup – Write Marks](#) panel).

Please note that where a 'session code only' process is used for entering code I, it will not remove any existing subcode if the 'session code' is already I. Similarly, where a 'session code only' process is used for entering X, it will not remove any existing subcodes if the 'session code' is already X.

To support the introduction of subcodes, the following items have been added to the Attendance marks sub-report in the reporting dictionary (via [Reports | Design Report – Student | Attendance marks](#)):

- Subcode
- Subcode Description.

Additional Attendance Codes for COVID-19 Recording (Wales)

Applicable to schools in Wales only

[Focus | Lesson Monitor | Take Register](#)

[Focus | Lesson Monitor | Edit Marks](#)

Two Attendance codes have been provided, enabling schools to record further details of COVID-19-related absences from 02/11/2020 to 31/08/2021. Attendance session marks recorded using these Attendance codes will be mapped to the main code in the Attendance Collection return.

- The [code indicates remote learning due to COVID-19 and is mapped to the main code of X = Non compulsory school age absence.
- The ; code indicates illness due to COVID-19 and is mapped to the main code of I = Illness.

Options Online

ES WS IN

Options Online does not form part of the SIMS 2021 Spring Release.

For information on the latest release of Options Online, please refer to the Options Online Latest Release Information article, which is available on the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0039436).

Profiles

New Features

EP ES WP WS IN 

Update to the List of Names Recorded in the SIMS Dictionary

[Focus | Profiles | Data Entry | List Entry](#)

[Focus | Profiles | Data Entry | Grid Entry](#)

[Focus | Profiles | Data Entry | OMR Entry](#)

The SIMS dictionary has been updated with approximately 35,000 entries from the dictionary of names provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

When recording comments in Profiles, any names recorded in the dictionary will not be flagged as potential misspellings.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the existing functionality in SIMS that enables schools to add names recorded in their SIMS system to the SIMS dictionary. This feature can be accessed via [Tools | Performance | Profiles | Add Names to Dictionary](#). Running this process adds to the dictionary all surnames, middle names and forenames (both legal and preferred), for all pupil/students, applicants and staff recorded in SIMS.

We will continue to update the SIMS dictionary as part of future releases.

Reporting

Once you have upgraded to the SIMS 2021 Spring Release, please remember to import the most up-to-date predefined reports. To import the reports, select [Reports | Import](#), then navigate to and select [PreDefined_Reports_v7198.RptDef](#) (typically found in [C:\Program Files \(x86\)\SIMS\SIMS .net](#)). Once imported, the updated reports are available to all users with the appropriate permissions.

New Features

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

Replacement of the SEF B2.11 - Gifted and Talented Learners Pre-Defined Report with the SEF B2.11 - More Able Learners Report



[Reports | Run Report - Focus | Student](#)

The SEF B2.11 - More Able Learners report replaces the SEF B2.11 - Gifted and Talented Learners pre-defined report. The column headings in the report now refer to **More Able**.

For schools that have set up the original SEF B2.11 – Gifted and Talented report to run as a scheduled report or an alert, these links will need to be re-established with the new SEF B2.11 - More Able Learners report.

Enhancement to the Reporting Dictionary



Applicable to schools in England only

[Reports | Design Report](#)

To support the introduction of Attendance subcodes, the following items have been added to the Attendance marks sub-report (via [Student | Attendance marks](#)):

- Subcode
- Subcode Description.

Staff National Identity Displayed on the Person Data Output (PDO) Report



Applicable to schools in Wales only

[Routines | Data Out | Person Data Output](#)

The selected staff member's **National Identity** is now displayed in the **Personal Details** section of the report output of the Person Data Output (PDO) report.

School Census Summer 2021 Return

New Features

EP **ES**

School Census Summer 2021 Key Dates

[Routines | Statutory Returns | School Census](#)

Census date 20/05/2021

Attendance collected from 01/01/2021 to 04/04/2021

Exclusions collected from 01/08/2020 to 04/04/2021

Free School Meal Eligibility collected from 22/01/2021 to 20/05/2021

Learner Support collected from 01/08/2020 to 20/05/2021.

Reporting School Dinners Taken on Census Day

[Routines](#) | [Statutory Returns](#) | [School Census - School Dinner Taken](#)

If pupils in years R, 1 and 2 are not attending school on the School Census Summer 2021 census day, schools can now select an alternative date for reporting of school dinners taken between 05/04/2021 and 31/07/2021. In Special schools, this is also applicable to pupils aged between 4 and 6 who are not following the National Curriculum Year X, and pupils born between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2016 inclusive.

De-Activation of the 'Other' Exclusion Reason

[Tools](#) | [Lookups](#) | [Maintain](#)

The **Other** lookup value in the **Exclusion Reason** lookup type has been set to inactive because from September 2020 onwards, it should not be recorded.

Collection of School Attendance Information

Not applicable to Nursery schools

- For schools that use Attendance, data is collected on all categories of school attendance, rather than just absence.
- For schools that do not use Attendance, it is possible to record the following information:
- Total number of sessions attending approved educational activity (**T AEA Sessions**)
This information was also collected in the School Census Spring 2021 Return
- Total number of sessions unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (**T Excep Sessions**) *This information was also collected in the School Census Spring 2021 Return*
- Total number of sessions unable to attend due to Coronavirus (**T Corona Sessions**).

Fixes

This release includes a fix in the following area:

- If a pupil/student has an **Enrolment Status** of **Subsidiary - Dual Registration**, then the **ProgrammeAims** section of the XML file that is generated by the Create & Validate routine will no longer be displayed (via [Routines | Statutory Returns | School Census](#)).

SIMS Core

New Features

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

Access to the Support Portal from SIMS



[Tools](#) | [Customer Support Portal](#)

It is now possible to access the support portal from within SIMS. This replaces the link to My Account.

De-Activation of the 'Other' Exclusion Reason



Applicable to schools in England only

[Tools](#) | [Lookups](#) | [Maintain](#)

The **Other** lookup value in the **Exclusion Reason** lookup type has been set to inactive because from September 2020 onwards, it should not be recorded.

Replacement of Tier 4 Screen Labels with Study Visa



Applicable to schools with the Full Own Admissions Authority licence only

Focus | Pupil (or Student) | Pupil (or Student) Details

To align with new legislation, all screen labels that reference **Tier 4** throughout SIMS have changed to **Study Visa**. This change excludes reports and items in the reporting dictionary; these areas will be updated in a future release.

Changes to SEN Status Codes and Descriptions



Applicable to schools in Northern Ireland only

Focus | Pupil (or Student) | Special Educational Needs

When recording the **SEN Status** in the **Basic SEN Details** panel, the following options are now available from the drop-down list.

- **0 – Provision no longer needed**
- **1SpEP – Sch Delivered SpEp**
- **2SpEP – Sch SpEP plus external provision**
- **3SpEP – EA Statement.**

The original SEN Status codes 1 to 5 have been made inactive.

SIMS ID

EP ES WP WS IN

SIMS ID enables a single login point for multiple pieces of software. It works by synchronising key user data between SIMS and SIMS ID, enabling a Single Sign On (SSO) experience for pupil/students, staff and parents. Accounts, groups and timetable data are synchronised between SIMS and SIMS ID, with both administrators and users accessing SIMS ID as their go to point entry for local and online services.

- **SIMS ID Light** manages users in Cloud Services such as Hosted SIMS, Office 365 and Google.
- **SIMS ID Standard** manages users in Local Services such as Active Directory, as well as Cloud Services where required.

SIMS ID does not form part of the SIMS 2021 Spring Release. For more information, please visit the SIMS ID product page on the SIMS website (<http://www.capita-sims.co.uk/simsid>).

SIMS Parent and SIMS Parent Lite

EP ES WP WS IN

SIMS Parent and SIMS Parent Lite do not form part of the SIMS 2021 Spring Release.

For information on the latest releases of these products, please refer to the SIMS Parent and SIMS Parent Lite Latest Release Information article, which is available on the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0039437).

SIMS Pay

EP ES WP WS IN

SIMS Pay does not form part of the SIMS 2021 Spring Release.

For information on the latest release of SIMS Pay, please refer to the SIMS Pay Latest Release Information article, which is available on the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0039438).



SIMS Services Manager

EP ES WP WS IN

The SIMS 2021 Spring Release does not include an update to SIMS Services Manager and it does not provide the facility to install the product.

If SSM is not currently installed, the latest version is available from the *Useful Documents and Links* section of the *SIMS 7 Release Information* page on the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0035066).

The current version ensures compatibility between SIMS and SSM, as well as products that make use of SSM.

For customers that centrally host SSM, please refer to the most recent manual SSM update, which is available from the *Useful Documents and Links* section of the *SIMS 7 Release Information* page on the support portal (https://support.capitasoftware.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0035066).

Teacher app

EP ES WP WS IN

SIMS Teacher app Compatibility

The SIMS Teacher app is guaranteed to support the previous two releases of SIMS, inclusive of any release with which it is shipped.

The SIMS Teacher app can be used alongside the following versions of SIMS:

- SIMS 2021 Spring Release (SIMS 7.198)
- SIMS 2020 Autumn Release (SIMS 7.196).

Please note that the Teacher app does not form part of the SIMS 2021 Spring Release. For information on new features and enhancements, please refer to the **What's New** section of the SIMS Teacher app **Help Centre**, which is available by clicking the **Help Centre** button in the app.

