

## SIMS 2023 Spring FMS Release Notes

This article has combined all the new release features to enhance and improve accessibility. The following features are marked as relevant for each region and school type.

### Welcome to the SIMS 2023 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.

### 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.)

### Copyright Update

The FMS 6 copyright year span has been updated 1984-2023. The date span change is the only update that has been made to the Copyright information, this update can be viewed on the [Help > About SIMS.Net](#) pop-up.

## SIMS Upgrade Support

### Important Information – Please read before upgrading

To upgrade to FMS 6.210, your FMS system must satisfy the following criteria:

- Where Personnel Links are in use, SIMS must already be upgraded to a minimum of the SIMS 2023 Spring Release (7.210) to enable Salary Projections to be generated.
- FMS must be at a minimum version of 6.210.
- If you use FDS, all your FMS databases must be upgraded to a minimum version of FMS 6.210.
- FMS 6.210 should be applied to existing installations by running SOLUS on the SQL Server. Applying the upgrade by running SOLUS on an FMS workstation will cause the upgrade to fail and the database will be rolled back to the previous version. FMS must have been accessed on the Server at least once to create the FMSSConnect.ini file required by the upgrade.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are performing an FMS upgrade spanning more than one release, it is essential that you read the release note associated with each version.

### 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.

## 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 interface. The 'Updates' tab is selected, 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 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"/>

A green 'Save' button is located at the bottom right of the settings area.

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.

## 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 7.210, 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 7.210 SIMS Permissions Spreadsheet ([https://customer.support-ess.com/csm?id=kb\\_article\\_view&sysparm\\_article=KB0036819](https://customer.support-ess.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=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.

## FMS Release Notes

Information on the new features, enhancements, and fixes for FMS 6.

### Consistent Financial Return (CFR) 2022/2023 <sup>NEW</sup>

*Applicable to schools in England only*

The CFR functionality has been updated for the 2022/2023 Financial Year. This is no structural or significant validation changes. The only modification is that where the Return is edited and the edits across the four tables do not equal and opposite, the user will be asked to enter a reason.

### SIMS Personnel National Insurance Table 2023/2024 Update <sup>NEW</sup>

*Applicable to schools in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland only*

The 2023/2024 National insurance rates have been updated with the SIMS7 Spring 2023 release so that FMS6 salary projections are calculated using the new National Insurance bands and rates that have been supplied by HMRC following the Autumn 2022 Budget statement.

### Petty Cash Listing Report <sup>FIX</sup>

[Reports](#) | [General Ledger](#) | [Petty Cash](#) | [Transaction Listing](#)

This report will correctly display information where no "To" date has been entered.

### BACS Remittances <sup>FIX</sup>

Users can now email BACS Remittances via Outlook 365.

The FMS support arrangements depend on the supported versions of SIMS where Personnel Links are 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 2023	7.210	6.210	Supported	Supported
Autumn 2022	7.208	6.208	Not Supported	Not Supported

**NOTE:** FMS 6.210 has been tested against SQL Server 2019