

When a SIMS customer becomes an academy its relationship with Capita Children's Services will change and certain licensing procedures must be followed as outlined in this document. For many schools and academies this may be the first time they begin to work with Capita and this document also outlines how this relationship can develop through the support we offer.

Defining an academy

According to the DCSF an academy is classed as a new establishment and therefore:

- Has a new DCSF number
- Does not report on historical data from the former school(s) when completing its school census
- Is entitled to hold the data from the former school(s) and should hold as much information about its pupils as is held within the common transfer file (CTF), as if the pupils have moved establishment.

SIMS software licensing arrangements for academies

- **Local authority (LA) supported schools** – because academies are no longer under LA control, they are required to purchase a new set of SIMS software licences, directly from Capita. Licences purchased from the LA will be invalid. SIMS Direct is the name we give to schools and academies that purchase their licences directly from Capita
- **SIMS Direct schools** – these schools hold a licence in their own right and can novate their licence to the new institution. The fee for this is £300. (They will almost certainly still require us to provide services to migrate their data to the new school's database.)
- **Annual Maintenance charges** – this is charged per annum for updates and support of the software. Academies pay this directly to Capita

Support and training options

- **SIMS software support** directly from Capita is included within the annual maintenance charges. This support includes comprehensive web solution and telephone support for all elements of SIMS from our experienced and dedicated support teams
- **Additional software support from Capita** – where an academy needs more than the above, perhaps during their transition or whilst staff are recruited, additional support is available and will be tailored to the academy's needs. This support can include regular, pre-arranged or ad-hoc, onsite staffing support in a variety of SIMS and IT roles
- **Additional technical support** – Capita can also provide tailored support for other elements of the academy's IT use, including network and hardware support. An academy purchasing additional support will receive a discount on Capita training
- **Onsite consultancy and training** is provided by Capita and can be delivered at the academy or at one of our training venues
- **Local authority support** – an academy is free to purchase additional support from its own or another local authority and to take advantage of the training it offers

Implications for the SIMS database

Capita's advice, and our supported solution, is that the new academy has a new SIMS database installed. Our experience shows that continued use of the old database, with a new DCSF number, can cause serious problems for an academy.

It is recommended that the academy keep their old database for reference, preferably as a virtualised environment or on a standalone computer. The old database should also be upgraded along with the new database.

Changing the DCSF number on the SIMS database

Part of the **March 2009** release will make it impossible for the DCSF number on a SIMS database to be changed by anyone other than Capita Children's Services. Prior to installing this release, changes to the DCSF number, although possible, will not be replicated throughout the database and can cause serious issues, including:

- School Census will report pupils with an incorrect date of arrival
- School Census will report attendance, exclusions and learning aims which are not relevant and therefore in contravention of the Data Protection Act
- School Workforce Census will report the wrong staff and contracts
- Assessment and Profiles may operate incorrectly
- B2B will cease to operate correctly and may corrupt the Local Authority database

This list, although not exhaustive, has been written following a number of serious issues academies have asked for support with.

Implications and advice for FMS customers

As with the SIMS database, the installation of a new FMS database is Capita's recommended solution. We do not recommend continued use of the old database with a new DCSF number and where this is the case, there may be implications for support, as outlined below.

It is recommended that the academy keep their old FMS database for reference, preferably as a virtualised environment or on a standalone computer. The old database should also be upgraded along with the new database.

Changing the DCSF number within a FMS database

Part of the **June 2009** release will make it impossible for the DCSF number (if entered) within an FMS database to be changed by anyone other than Capita Children's Services.

FMS and its suitability for academies

Many Academies successfully use FMS as their financial management system to generate salary projections from Personnel 7 within SIMS. Whilst FMS is a double entry commitment based accounting package, it does not have some of the statutory reporting requirements but Academies have produced these reports by using Microsoft Excel. The advantage of using FMS and Personnel 7 is that Personnel 7 is School Workforce Census compliant.

Support implications of maintaining the same database

- Academies that choose to ignore the advice of Capita Children's Services and continue to use their old school database, as an academy will incur additional support charges when issues arise
- These charges apply if local authority advice contradicts the advice of Capita

Cost implications of a new database

As stated, all academies are required to buy their licenses directly from Capita, the cost of these is determined by the school type and number of students. There is no additional charge to maintain the old database separately. When setting up the new academy Capita is able to provide a service to migrate relevant data to the new database. As well as consultancy and training we can also provide assistance with:

- Installation of the new database
- Setting up the academy structure
- Entering staff
- Transferring the appropriate student and assessment data into the new database

How long can an academy keep the school's data?

Normal data protection rules apply to the historical data and academies must:

- Only collect information that is needed for a specific purpose
- Keep the information secure
- Ensure the data is relevant and up-to-date
- Only hold as much as is needed, and only for as long as it is needed
- Allow the subject of the information to see it on request

Further information and support

Please visit our websites to find out more about the software and services we offer and to read about how other schools and academies are making improvements with SIMS.

SIMS website: www.sims.co.uk

SIMS Support: <http://support.capitaes.co.uk/>

Training and consultancy: www.sims.co.uk/training

Case studies: www.sims.co.uk/casestudies

Achievement magazine: www.sims.co.uk/achievement

To speak to one of our consultants about your needs please contact our sales desk on: 01234 832100.