

Enabling HR Assistant for External HR Providers

Before you start

Before you start, please ensure that you can meet the following pre-requisites.

Pre-requisites

Personnel officer permissions

You must have 'Personnel Officer' permissions to enable and access HR Assistant. Other users will not see the application on the focus menu (see below for pictures).

Licence Patch

The School's HR and Payroll provider must match the licence patch below. Schools can have only one current HR provider and the licence dictates how and what data is included in the data exchange files. If this is not the case or if you change your HR provider, please contact the new HR provider for guidance.

The licence patch determines which options are available within the user interface and enables different options depending on the HR provider license applied.

Application

The application is shipped with SIMS but is only enabled if a licence patch has been applied.

Matching staff data between the HR System and SIMS

Staff NI and employee/payroll numbers must match between SIMS and the HR system before data exchange is attempted. Whilst the application will show all changes that it plans to make, success is predicated on matching staff correctly.

Lookups must match in SIMS and the HR system. For example, absence codes are limited to 6 characters (upper case) in SIMS and a code of COVID would be fine in SIMS. However, the HR system may only support 4-character codes and the lowest common denominator would drive the code choice. Mismatching codes is one of the most common failures and usually happens when a new code is added to the HR system without adding the same code to SIMS. Please refer to **Appendix 2 - Lookups that need to match between SIMS and the chosen HR system.**

The installation process

The installation process contains three steps.

Step 1 - Installing a SIMS Licence Patch for HR Assistant. The network manager or your SIMS Support Unit will normally do this.

Step 2 - The HR provider will then advise:

- What files to export from HR Assistant and upload to the HR system (if any)
- How to get files for import into SIMS.

Step 3 – Importing Into SIMS

- Staff Basic Information
- Staff Absences (if supported)

This guide and the application help to step you through each activity.

Step 1 - Apply the SIMS Licence Patch.

You can do this in advance of the rest of the activities. This is to allow the patch to be installed out of hours or at a time your SIMS Support Unit can accommodate.

You can use SOLUS or DBUpgrade to install the patch.

Using Solus to apply a licence

You may need to request that the patch be allocated to your school(s).

The request must be in this format: "Please apply the HR Assistant licence for provider <Name the Provider> for School Number <Enter Number>, <School Name>." The request should follow your normal support channels and be authorised by an appropriate person at the school / MAT (Multi Academy Trusts) / Group.

Here is how to request the licence patch: https://prodess.service-now.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0037690.

<https://prodess.service-now.com/csm?id=search&spa=1&q=KB0035810> provides a link to the SOLUS Handbook. It describes how SOLUS works and how to apply patches.

The licence patch is assigned to the school and will either trigger automatically if set for auto-update or will need to be triggered by the network manager from inside the SIMS SOLUS console.

Once complete, you can confirm the licence has been applied by following the instructions below.

Using DBUpgrade to apply a licence (this is only required if you do not use SOLUS).

NB. You will need to be a network manager with system manager or SA access rights to complete this task.

Request the HR Assistant Licence Patch from your HR Provider <https://www.sims-partners.com/media/456>.

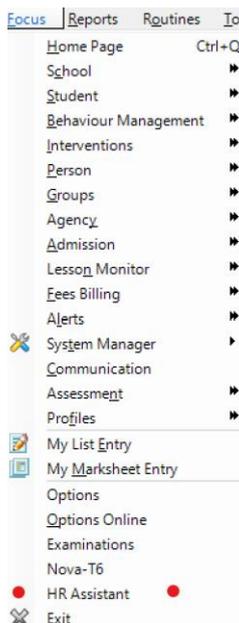
Use DBUpgrade to apply it. [SIMS - How to run a patch through dbUpgrade \(service-now.com\)](#) describes the patch application process if you need further guidance.

Once complete, you can confirm that the licence has been applied.

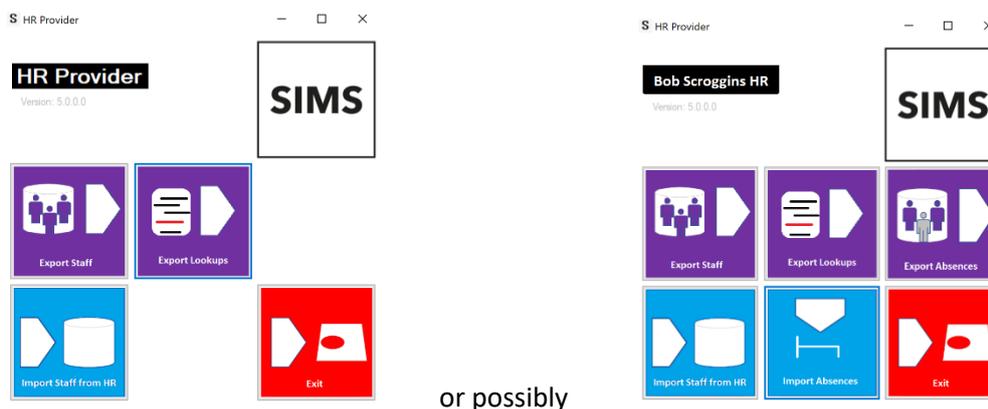
Confirming that the licence has been applied.

Ask the Personnel Officer to log into SIMS with their credentials.

Click on the 'Focus Menu'. If your permissions are correct and the licence has been correctly applied, 'HR Assistant' will appear on the Focus menu.



Click on 'HR Assistant' and it will show a popup like:



Note: Sample licensing examples - your provider may vary.

The application name and provider name will change as will the available buttons on the interface for different providers. Please ensure that the name matches your HR Provider.

Close HR Assistant by clicking the X in the top right.

Now close SIMS

If the results are not as shown, you will need to:

1. Confirm that the correct groups have been added to your Personnel Officer's user.
2. Re-apply the licence patch

Step 2 – Discussions with your HR provider.

Each HR provider’s system will be different and offer varying levels of data exchange. Your HR provider must provide guidance as to how to obtain data (via a file) from their system and how to extract and provide data to the HR system for initial set up and/or staff absences (via file).

Please note that ESS (Education Software Solutions) SIMS will not be able to assist users with 3rd party HR system operation.

Please also note that files may contain very sensitive data relating to staff health, wealth, and wellbeing. You are responsible for ensuring that data in transit between systems is securely stored and managed under GDPR.

Step 3 – Importing Data into SIMS via HR Assistant.

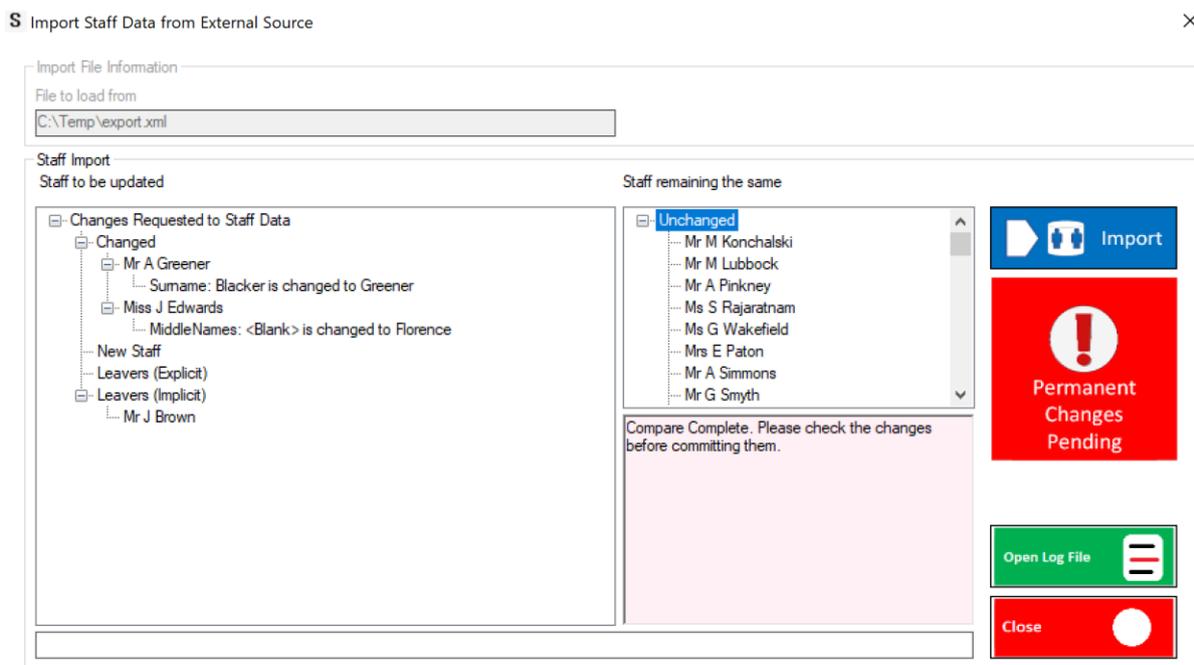


Staff

Press the button on HR Assistant above.



Be careful to choose the correct file (latest) provided by the HR Provider which will contain **all current staff**. Any staff that are not in the data exchange will be made to leave!



The top 2 changes in the illustration should be expected by the Personnel Officer but implicit leavers are usually an error. An implicit leaver is simply a person who is not included in the data exchange.

The HR system usually includes leavers for a period with a leaving date. Whilst the outcome would be the same, it is certainly worth sanity checking any leavers.

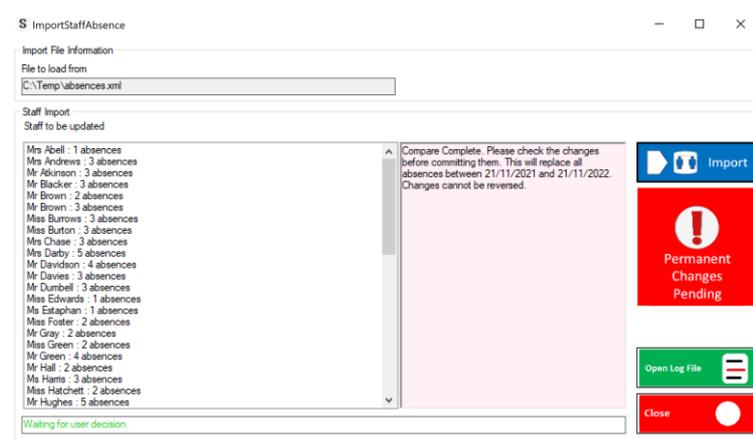
Whilst onboarding, it is common for mismatches to occur due to missing or incorrect NI / Payroll numbers or having ‘helpers’ in SIMS who are not deemed to be ‘proper’ staff. The likelihood is that any person working with the pupils would be subject to vetting and as such should be managed via the HR system.



Staff Absences

The Import Absences button may show and would import a file of staff absences and replace **ALL** staff absences between the dates set in the file.

```
<Staff>
<StartDate>21/11/2021</StartDate>
<EndDate>21/11/2022</EndDate>
```



All existing absences are removed within the start and end dates before the replacement set is imported.

Press the Import button only when you are sure that the data is correct.

Overall Guidance

The application shows what will happen on the screen with enhanced detail for staff basic import.

It is critical that the personnel officer sanity-checks the import and does not press the Import button until all issues are resolved with their HR system / HR System Provider.

Risks are probably larger where MATs (Multi Academy Trusts) or School Groups manage the Personnel update centrally and users have access to files for multiple schools. In such circumstances, it is essential that you take extra care to ensure that the correct school’s file is imported.

If there are mismatches between the systems, the screen will usually show the errors. Some updates are harder to undo than others. In extremis, it may be necessary to restore from backup.

Appendix 1. Resolving Common Issues

Serial	Issue	Guidance
1	No licence file patch	Ask your HR system provider for advice to ensure that the correct patch is provided.

Appendix 2 - Lookups that need to match between SIMS and the HR System

NB: Lookup values do not have to match the ones below but if, for example, a school chooses to use a code of Z for Zero Pay and not N for Nil Pay, the lookups must match with the set used in the HR System.

Lookup values are case sensitive. 'Nil Pay' is different from 'nil pay' or 'Nil pay'.

Absence Pay Rate

Lookup Type Details: Absence Pay Rate

Save Undo Print

1 Basic Details 2 Values

1 Basic Details

Description: Absence Pay Rate

Data Area: Staff

Mode: Standard

2 Values

Code	Description	Active
L	Less than 50%	Active
M	Maternity Rate (9/10)	Active
F	Full Pay Rate	Active
H	Half Pay Rate	Active
N	Nil Pay Rate	Active

Absence pay rate is matched on Description.

Absence Type

Lookup Type Details: Absence Type

Save Undo Print

1 Basic Details 2 Values

1 Basic Details

Description: Absence Type

Data Area: Staff

Mode: Statutory with Category

2 Values

Code	Description	Category	Active
A	Annual Leave	UNK	
L	Long Term Sick Leave	UNK	
M	Maternity Leave	UNK	
D	Medical-certificated	UNK	
O	Other	UNK	
S	Secondment outside LEA	UNK	
C	Self-certificated	UNK	
U	Unpaid Leave of Absence	UNK	
SIC	Sickness	SIC	Active
MAT	Maternity /Paternity leave	MAT	Active
OTH	Other paid authorised absence, e.g. compassionate leave	OTH	Active
PUB	Paid absence for public duties	PUB	Active
SEC	Secondment	SEC	Active
UNA	Unauthorised absence	UNA	Active

Absence Types match on either the description or the code.

Illness Category

Lookup Type Details: Illness Category

Save Undo Print

1 Basic Details 2 Values

1 Basic Details

Description:

Data Area:

Mode:

2 Values

Code	Description	Active
ALRG	Allergy	Active
AURL	Ear Conditions	Active
BLDD	Blood Condition	Active
BONE	Bone Condition	Active
CIRC	Circulation Condition	Active
DEPR	Depressive or Anxiety Condition	Active
DGTV	Digestive or Nutrition Condition	Active
EYES	Eye Conditions	Active
FOOD	Food borne Illness	Active
GAST	Gastrointestinal Condition	Active
HART	Heart Condition	Active
HEAT	Heat- or Sun-related	Active
INFN	Infection	Active
INJB	Injury - Back or Neck	Active

Illness Categories match on description.

Sex/Gender

This is fixed in SIMS to Male | Female. Import is likely to fail in SIMS if alternative values are used in the HR system.

Teacher Category

Find Lookup Type

New Search Open Delete Print Browse Next Previous

Lookup Type Details: Teacher Category

Save Undo Print

1 Basic Details 2 Values

1 Basic Details

Description:

Data Area:

Mode:

2 Values

Code	Description	Category	Active
HT	Head teachers	HT	Active
LQ	Teacher on scheme lead'g to QT	LQ	
DH	Deputy head teachers	DH	Active
QT	Other qualified teachers	QT	Active
NQ	Teachers not recognised as qualified (e.g. students)	NQ	
PT	Peripatetic teachers in school on enumeration date	PT	Active
PS	Permanent supply teacher (other than any entered in above categories) ...	PS	Active
FA	Foreign language assistants	FA	
AC	Acting head teachers	AC	Active
AS	Assistant head teachers	AS	Active
OT	Other teachers (not QTS status but not unqualified)	OT	Active
TT	Trainees on initial Teacher Training courses	TT	Active
SLT	Senior Leadership	QT	Active

Teacher Category matches on description (Qualified Teacher).

QTS Route

Find Lookup Type

New
Search
Open
Delete
Print
Browse
Next
Previous

Lookup Type Details: QTS Route

Save
Undo
Print

1 Basic Details 2 Values

1 Basic Details

Description	<input type="text" value="QTS Route"/>
Data Area	<input type="text" value="Staff"/>
Mode	<input type="text" value="Statutory (Fixed)"/>

2 Values

Code	Description	Active
ACEG	Annual College Exit - Graduate course	Active
ACEP	Annual College Exit - Post graduate course	Active
OTTP	Overseas Trained Teacher Programme	Active
RTPR	Registered Teacher programme	Active
GTPR	Graduate Teacher Programme	Active
TFST	Teach First programme	Active
FLEX	Flexible Routes	Active
RECG	Mutual Recognition from NI, Scotland or the EEA	Active
OTTN	Overseas Trained Teacher, not yet on Programme	Active
SCD	School Direct	Active
SCDS	School Direct (salaried)	Active
ITEU	Initial Teacher Education - Undergraduate course	Active
ITEP	Initial Teacher Education - Post graduate course	Active

QTS Route matches on description.