

Introduction

This is the recommended minimum hardware for running your SIMS system effectively. We believe that schools should budget to replace hardware on a three year cycle. This specification for network workstations will be easily exceeded by a PC purchased within the last three years, except for memory which can be upgraded easily if required.

Workstations of minimum specification would be recommended for occasional use and are likely to be less able to deal with multiple open applications. Staff who spend significant amounts of time using SIMS are strongly recommended to use equipment bought within the last three years. Similarly, minimum specification SQL Servers will not be adequate in larger schools; a poor performing SQL Server will give all users a poor experience of the software.

SIMS/FMS SQL Server

Component	Requirement
Computer and processor	Quad Core processor or higher recommended for optimum performance. A minimum of four v-cores should be assigned to virtual servers.
Memory (minimum recommended)	8GB or higher (16GB+ recommended for optimum performance in Secondary schools. If a virtual server is in use, this should be statically assigned memory, <u>not</u> dynamically.
Disk space guidance	100GB Operating System space plus Overhead space — 1GB working space + 1/4GB for SQL Express. Customers should allow 5MB per pupil/student. For example, a 1000 pupil/student school would be advised to have at least 5GB free for SIMS. A separate data partition is recommended to install the SIMS file share, SQL Server, SOLUS3 and Doc Storage. Unless disk space is at a premium, the data drive should also be no less than 100Gb. File Server — 10GB for applications and SIMS Setups folder.
Drive	CD and DVD drive.
Display	1024x768 or higher monitor resolution.
Operating system and software	Operating System — Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2 and Windows Server 2016. We also support Microsoft Windows 7 and Windows 10 as servers for low numbers of users (i.e. five client PCs or fewer). Software — Microsoft SQL Server 2014 or 2016 Full (Standard or better) required for optimum SIMS performance. Please refer to the Technical Roadmap for planned support and retirement dates for SQL Server. Primary schools or small sites can use the Microsoft SQL Server Express Edition; this edition might limit performance and is not recommended for Secondary schools or larger sites. Both .NET Framework 3.5 and 4.6 are required.
Backup of whole system required?	Yes.
Other	A DVD/CD compatible drive or ISO mounting software is required for software installation. It is not recommended that servers are used 'normally' as workstations except in small schools. Non-dedicated servers are unlikely to be suitable with more than five concurrent users of SIMS. Capita ESS recommends the purchase of a dedicated database server (not used for other domain roles in the school) where there are 20 or more concurrent users, or where the network server is of a low specification. A whole school network will almost certainly require a dedicated database server. The use of Lesson Monitor and/or Assessment Manager in each classroom usually means that a dedicated database server running a Full SQL Server edition of Standard or higher is required. Internet access is required. SOLUS requires access to the http protocol on dl.capitasolus.co.uk and solusmanager.sims.co.uk and all sub-folders therein.

Backups

You are reminded that it is critical that backups are moved to an alternative media on a daily basis, i.e. that one is kept in a physically separate place to the server that is backed up. Customers need to ensure that they have a disaster recovery plan (DRP). This includes where they will source a replacement server and what they will do whilst the system is down. The DRP is only worthwhile if on a termly basis, the backups are restored to another machine and proven to work.

Capita ESS recommends Attix5 Backup Professional software for the back up of SIMS. SIMS and Backup Professional are fully integrated to provide seamless, offsite backup for SIMS data.

See the Capita ESS website for more information on Attix5 software:

<http://www.capita-sims.co.uk/products/attix5-pro>

Additional Requirements for Attix5 Users

If using Attix5 Backup Professional to backup and protect SIMS, you will need to ensure that you have sufficient disk space available on the server or workstation. The free space available on the device needs to be 150% of the amount of SIMS data (i.e. if you have 1GB of SIMS data, you will need 1.5GB of free disk space).

Document Server

Component	Requirement
Computer and processor	Quad Core processor or higher recommended for optimum performance. A minimum of four v-cores should be assigned to virtual servers.
Memory (minimum recommended)	4GB or higher (8GB recommended for optimum performance).
Disk space guidance	Please refer to the <i>SIMS/FMS SQL Server</i> and <i>Workstation</i> specifications.
Drive	CD and DVD drive.
Display	1024x768 (1280x1024 or higher for optimum experience).
Operating system	Please refer to the <i>SIMS/FMS SQL Server</i> specification.
Backup of whole system required?	Yes.
Other	Please refer to the <i>SIMS/FMS SQL Server</i> and <i>Workstation</i> specifications.

Workstation

Component	Requirement
Computer and processor	Quad Core 2.4GHz processor or higher recommended for optimum performance.
Memory (minimum recommended)	4GB or higher recommended.
Disk space guidance	Workstations will need 1.5GB free including 500MB on system partition for third party components in the Windows directory. Workstations using FMS should allow for an additional 150MB.
Drive	CD and DVD drive.
Display	1024x768 (1280x1024 or higher for optimum experience).
Operating system and software	<p>Operating System — 32-bit and 64-bit versions of Microsoft Windows 7 Professional (SP1), Windows 8 Pro and Windows 10 Pro.</p> <p>The PC will require Microsoft .NET Framework 4.6 to be present. This can be delivered via SOLUS3 or it can be downloaded and applied separately.</p> <p>Software — Microsoft Office 2013 (32-bit and 64-bit) and Office 2016. Adobe Reader DC or above.</p>
Other	Internet access is required. SOLUS requires access to the http protocol on dl.capitasolus.co.uk and solusmanager.sims.co.uk and all sub-folders therein.

SOLUS3 Server (when installed separately to the SIMS database)

Component	Requirement
Computer and processor — Primary schools	Minimum: I3 with 2GB RAM Recommended: I3 with 4GB RAM recommended for optimum performance.
Computer and processor — Secondary schools	Minimum: I5 with 8GB RAM Recommended: I7 with 16GB RAM recommended for optimum performance.
Disk space guidance	5GB or higher.
Display	800x600 or higher monitor resolution.
Operating system and software	Please refer to the <i>SIMS/FMS SQL Server</i> specification.
.NET Framework	.NET Framework 4.6.