



Important Update – Forthcoming Microsoft SQL Server 2019 Upgrade for SIMS Servers

Bulletin in Brief

- The Summer 2024 SIMS release will be the last SIMS release that is compatible with Microsoft SQL Server 2014.
- Education Digital Services can provide schools with the required upgrade to the latest version; Microsoft SQL Server 2019.
- All schools subscribing to SIMS Managed Service support option, must have their upgrade performed by Education Digital Services.
- You should expect to upgrade your SIMS system by the deadline of 9 July 2024.
- All our new server installations or SIMS migrations now use Microsoft SQL Server 2019.

REQUIREMENT TO MEET MINIMUM SPECIFICATION FOR SIMS

Your school SIMS server relies on a database to store and access SIMS data. Education Software Solutions (EES), the owners of SIMS, have advised that the Summer 2024 SIMS release will be the last SIMS release that is compatible with Microsoft SQL Server 2014. Therefore, **to continue to use SIMS after the Summer 2024 release, your school must upgrade to Microsoft SQL Server 2019.**

Please note that from our records, it shows that your SIMS server is currently using Microsoft SQL Server 2014. Education Digital Services can provide schools with the required upgrade to the latest version; **Microsoft SQL Server 2019.**

When will SQL upgrades be available?

The deadline to upgrade your SIMS server is 9 July 2024. The upgrades will be available to purchase from Education Digital Services within the coming month. All schools subscribing to SIMS Managed Service support option must have their upgrade performed by Education Digital Services. This will include the provision, installation and configuration of the new software; support following the upgrade and reconfiguration of services provided by us, such as your Remote Backup Service and the SOLUS3 platform.

Anticipated installation costs for a Microsoft SQL Server 2019 upgrade are:

- A typical primary school using a peer-to-peer SIMS server with up to four SIMS workstations should budget an *estimated* £323 for the installation and additional licences which may be required (based on using free SQL Express licences).

For queries related to this project please contact us at:

EducationProjects@lancashire.gov.uk

<https://educationdigitalservices.lancashire.gov.uk>

- Schools who use a domain server as their SIMS server may benefit from upgrading to the free SQL Express edition if the following apply and should budget an *estimated* £410 for the installation and additional licences which may be required:
 - The school has under 20 SIMS users.
 - The school has four physical cores or less in the server.
 - The size of the schools SIMS database is under 10GB.
- Schools who use a domain server as their SIMS server and the following apply will be upgraded to SQL Standard and should budget an *estimated* £410 for the installation and additional licences which may be required:
 - The school has 20 or more SIMS users.
 - The school has more than four physical cores in the server.
 - The size of the schools SIMS database is over 10GB.

Additional licencing costs for larger schools is due to increased numbers of SIMS users or more than four physical cores in the server and the need to use Microsoft SQL Server 2019 Standard licenses. If the school is able to reduce the number of SIMS users to under 20 and reduce the number of physical cores in the server to four, then they will qualify for the free SQL Express edition. Please note, if your SIMS server is already licenced for Microsoft SQL Server 2019, this cost will be reduced.

Planning your installation

Where possible, all upgrades purchased through Education Digital Services will be automated by remote delivery and will be conducted out of school hours to minimise disruption. Some manual configurations will take place the morning after the upgrade.

The deadline to upgrade your SIMS server is 9 July 2024. Please see our website for more information – [Education Digital Services – Lancashire County Council](#). More information on how to order your SQL upgrade will follow in the coming month. All our new server installations or SIMS migrations now use Microsoft SQL Server 2019. If you intend to replace your SIMS server prior to the Summer 2024 SIMS release, this work will be included in your order.

Kind regards

Lancashire County Council Education Digital Services

For queries related to this project please contact us at:

EducationProjects@lancashire.gov.uk

<https://educationdigitalservices.lancashire.gov.uk>