

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.

Server

Component	Requirement
Computer and processor	1.5 GHz processor or higher (Dual Core 2.4 GHz or higher recommended for optimum performance in secondary schools).
Memory (minimum recommended)	1024MB or higher (4GB recommended for optimum performance in secondary schools).
Disk space guidance	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. File Server—2GB for applications and SIMS Setups folder.
Drive	CD and DVD drive.
Display	1024x768 or higher monitor resolution.
Operating system and software	Operating System—Windows Server 2003 (SP2 and above) and Windows Server 2008. We support both 32 bit and 64 bit versions of these operating systems for server use. We also support Microsoft Windows XP Pro (SP2 and above) 32 bit only. Software—Microsoft SQL Server 2008/SQL Express SP1 and Microsoft SQL Server 2005/SQL Express SP3. We recommend that secondary schools use the full Microsoft SQL Server 2008 standard edition or higher for optimum performance. Support for SQL 2005 is planned to be dropped by October 2010. A minimum of .Net Framework 2.0 SP1 is required. For Partnership Exchange, SLG and SOLUS ³ users and future proofing we would recommend Microsoft .Net Framework 3.5 SP1.
Backup of whole system required?	Yes.
Other	A DVD/CD compatible drive 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 Children's Services recommends the purchase of a dedicated database server 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 will usually mean that a dedicated database server running full SQL Server 2008 is required. On RM CC3 networks, RM recommends that schools have a separate member server for SIMS and that admin systems are not installed on the Domain Controller. On Netware, Capita Children's Services recommends that SIMS be hosted on a member server running an operating system as above. 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 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 website for more information on Attix5 software:
<http://home.capitaes.co.uk/sims/partners/index.asp>

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	1.5 GHz processor or higher.
Memory (minimum recommended)	1024 (2048) MB or higher.
Disk space guidance	At least 10GB of free disk space should be dedicated to the document server. Disk space on the Document Server is based solely on customer usage and should be monitored. Profiles is usually the largest user of disk space on the Document Server. The production of three profiles a year for 1000 students of 100Kb each (8 page word document without graphics) would give rise to 300MB per year. The largest profiling session we have heard of generated 12GB for 2400 students. This would compress to about 3GB on the Document Server. Other SIMS applications will also make use of the Document Server.
Drive	CD and DVD drive.
Display	1024x768 or higher monitor resolution.
Operating system	Windows Server 2003 (SP2 and above), Microsoft Windows XP Pro (SP2 and above), Windows Server 2008.
Backup of whole system required?	Yes.
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.

Workstation

Component	Requirement
Computer and processor	1 GHz processor or higher (Dual Core 2 GHz recommended for optimum performance).
Memory (minimum recommended)	512 (1024) MB or higher. 1024 (2048) MB RAM or higher for Vista or Windows installations.
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 or higher monitor resolution.
Operating system and software	Operating System (32 bit only) —Microsoft® Windows XP Pro (SP2 and above) and Microsoft Windows Vista Business (SP2). From Spring 2010 we will be supporting Windows 7. Microsoft .Net Framework 2.0 SP1. Customers using SOLUS ³ will require (and SOLUS ³ will install) .Net Framework 3.5. Software—Microsoft Office 2003 or 2007. Adobe Acrobat Reader 6 or above.
Backup of whole system required?	Useful.
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. Tablet PCs are recommended to use Pentium processors and have keyboards available.

Standalone/Peer to Peer

Component	Requirement
Computer and processor	1.5 GHz processor or higher (Dual Core 2.4 GHz recommended for optimum performance).
Memory (minimum recommended)	1024 MB or higher (4GB recommended for optimum performance).
Disk space guidance	Please refer to the Server and Workstation specifications.
Drive	CD and DVD drive.
Display	1024x768 or higher monitor resolution.
Operating system and software	Please refer to the Server Specification. In addition, Microsoft® Windows Vista Business (SP2) is also supported for small schools (5 PCs or fewer), 32 bit only. Microsoft .Net Framework 2.0 SP1. Customers using SOLUS ³ will require (and SOLUS ³ will install) .Net Framework 3.5.
Backup of whole system required?	Yes.
Other	Please refer to the Server and Workstation specifications.