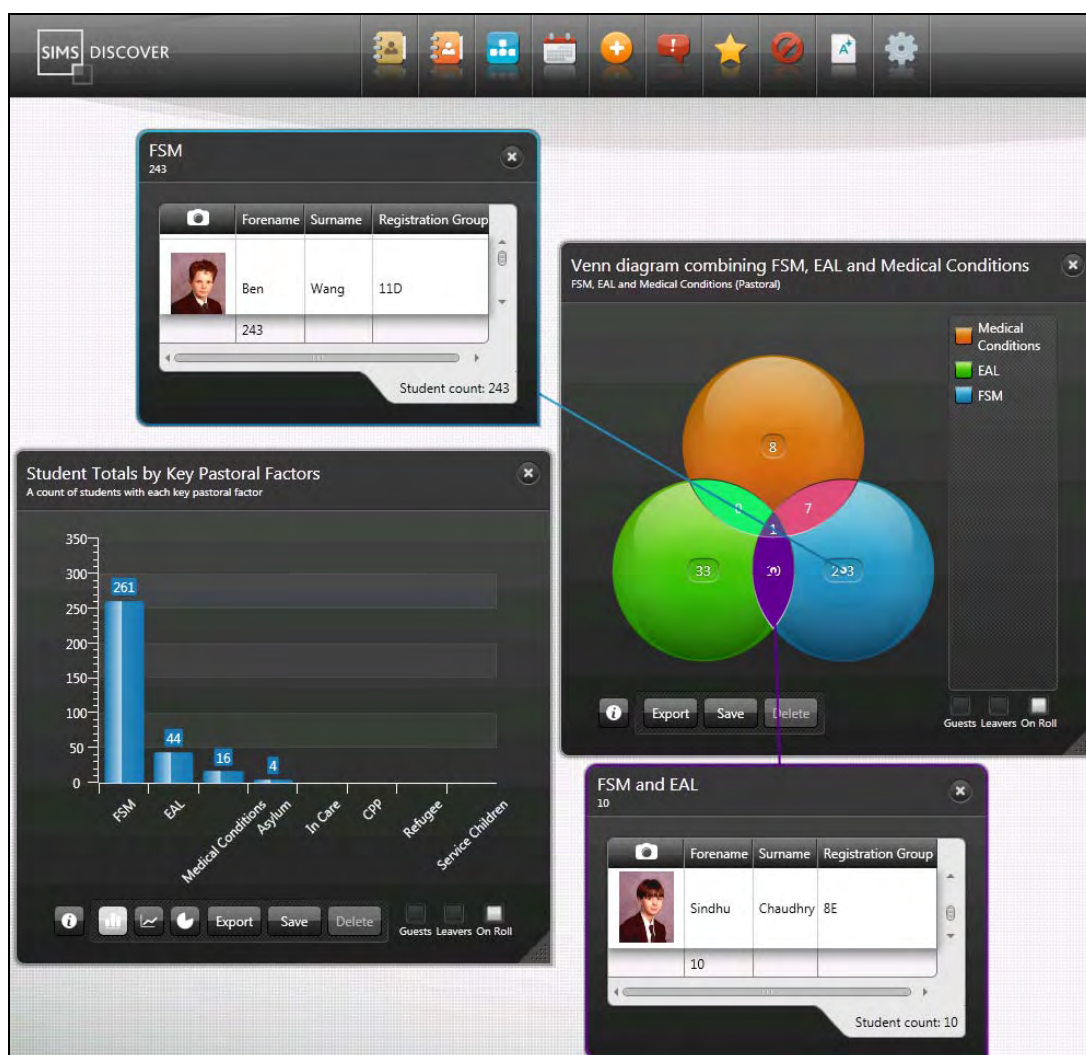


SIMS Discover Frequently Asked Questions Help Sheet

Introduction

The SIMS Discover application is a new generation of software that provides a flexible, easy-to-use, drag and drop tool which is used to analyse school's SIMS data. SIMS Discover enables you to access the majority of pupil/student data on one screen including Pupil, Attendance, Behaviour, Exclusions and Assessment data, as well as SEN, Pre-Admissions and Achievement data.

Some pre-defined graphs have been provided and these can be accessed via a series of **Category** buttons on the **Discover** Application Bar. The pre-defined graphs include options such as **Student Totals by Gender**, **Behaviour Points by Year Groups** and **Achievement by Type**.



The powerful user interface enables the data to be presented in a variety of graphical outputs, e.g. Venn diagrams, bar charts, pie charts and line graphs. The ability to further interrogate the data is also available by drilling down into a data item to reveal the underlying pupil/student data. Graphs can be created to your own specifications and once created, a new graph can be saved for future use in Discover. It is also possible to publish and export graphs to other school users, Governors and members of the Senior Management Team.

Another use for the graphs in Discover is the ability to build a Dynamic Group based on data items in one or more graphs. For example, you can create a Venn diagram of pupil/students whose Attendance is less than 85%, those with below average Assessment results and those who have more than 10 Behaviour points. Once compiled, the central intersection of the Venn diagram contains a set of pupil/students who require careful monitoring. A Dynamic Group containing these pupil/students can be created and the group can be synchronised with the data in SIMS to ensure a consistent approach for monitoring this group of pupil/students.



Do I have to pay for SIMS Discover?



Discover is an upgrade to SIMS Analysis and is provided under your annual entitlement payments, so no further payment is required.



Can I use SIMS Discover in a hosted environment?



Yes, however the performance of Discover in a hosted environment is largely reliant on the specific conditions/bandwidth and configuration of the hosted environment. We would encourage customers using a hosted environment to trial Discover in their own environment before rolling it out to all schools. We have planned work for the future to reduce the bandwidth required to host Discover.



Does SIMS Discover show only Assessment data?



Discover shows pupil/student data from various areas of SIMS, including Pupil, Attendance, Behaviour, Achievement, SEN, Exclusions, Pre-Admissions, etc.



Is Discover easy to use?



Yes, the user interface has been designed to be used with the minimum of training.



When I click on a graph in the drop-down menu, nothing happens.



You need to click the graph name, then drag and drop it onto the Discover canvas.



My graphs have disappeared from the screen. Where have they gone?



They are probably off screen. Click the Discover canvas and scroll down until the graphs are visible.



How do I know which pupil/students are in each segment of a Venn diagram?



When you click a segment, a pop out displays the pupil/students' details and photographs.



Can I filter the graphs?



Yes, drag a data item from one graph and drop it into another graph.



Can I save any graphs that I create?



Yes, graphs can be saved to any of the category buttons on the Discover Application Bar.



What is a Dynamic Group?



It is a group that contains a membership of pupil/students and it is updated automatically from SIMS based on a selection of user-defined criteria.



How will I know if the membership of a Dynamic Group changes?



You can request alert messages to be sent, which notify you whenever a pupil/student joins or leaves a group that you supervise.



Can I adjust the intervals on the axis of the graphs, e.g. for Attendance or Behaviour points?



Yes, these settings can be adjusted using the Discover SIMS Configuration utility.



If I use Lesson Monitor, does this data show in Discover?



Yes, there is a pre-defined graph that shows pupil/student Absence by Subject.



Is sensitive pupil data protected, e.g. SEN data?



Yes, if a SIMS user does not have the permissions to view a data item in SIMS, they cannot see this data in Discover.



Can Discover show a Venn diagram of 5A*-C, English and Maths?



Yes, a three circle Venn diagram can be created with virtually any pupil/student data in each circle.



The graphs are very nice but can I see the raw data?



Yes, the reverse side of each graph has a table showing the pupil/student details for each data item. This data can also be exported to a .CSV file for further analysis.



Can I print from Discover?



Currently, you can export the graphs and data tables but it is not possible to print them. We are planning to add this functionality in a future development.



Can I extract data for a given date range?



No, all data is for the current academic year but we are planning to add this feature in a future development.



Can I link Discover to the school's Assessment Aspects?



Yes, there is a set up facility for the Data Manager to build school specific Assessment graphs.



Can Discover show Teacher data?



Not at present but this is under consideration for future development.



Will Discover run on any laptop or PC?



No, it requires a 2Gb PC with a separate graphics chip or a graphics card.



Will there be any further enhancements to Discover?



Yes, we are currently working on these for Autumn 2011.
