

Using SDA Link to update staff and student data

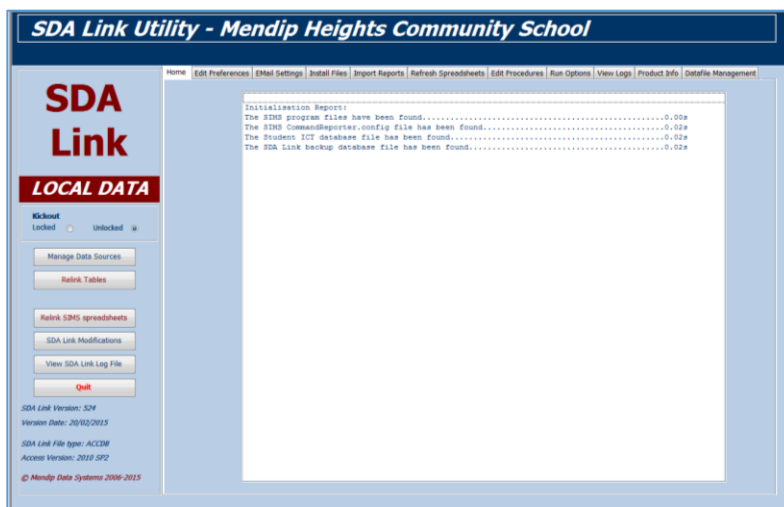
SDA Link is designed to import staff and student data from SIMS and can be set up to run automatically as a scheduled task e.g. overnight. The program should be installed on the server where it can access both **SIMS** to export the spreadsheets as well as **SQL Server** to update the SQL datafile.

The information below assumes the program has already been installed and relinked to the SQL datafile and SIMS. For full details on setting up the program, please see the **SDA Link User Guide**.

Open **SDA Link** using the desktop shortcut



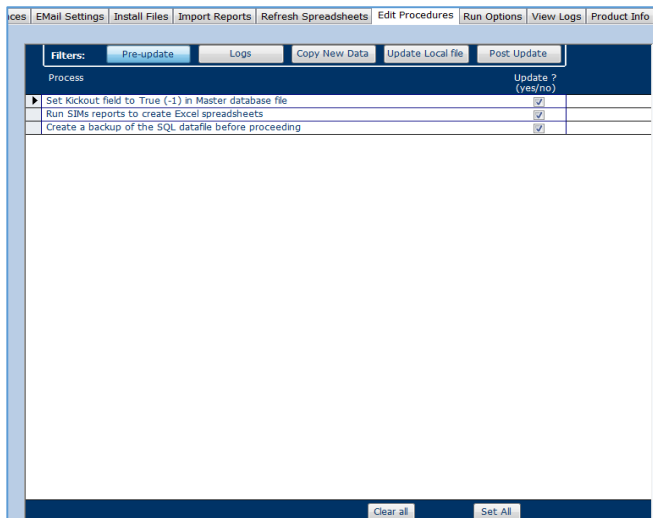
The program opens at the main screen:



The tabs on this screen are used to manage how the program is run.

a) Edit Procedures

The procedures run by **SDA Link** are split into 5 sections:



All procedures that are ticked will be carried out when the program is run.

The default selections will be correct for most schools but you can choose to ignore certain procedures if you wish.

NOTE: **SDA Link** cannot be run when the main **School Data Analyser** program is in use. The first procedure listed, **Set Kickout field to True**, gives users of **School Data Analyser** about 6 minutes to complete their work and then locks the program.

Normally the program should be run at 'off-peak' times or overnight to minimise disruption to staff.

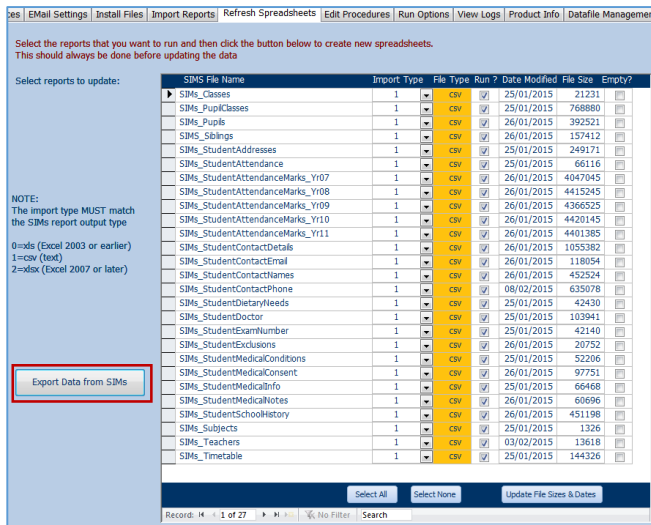
b) Refresh Spreadsheets

A total of 27 SIMs reports are used by the program.

These are exported as 'csv' spreadsheet files.

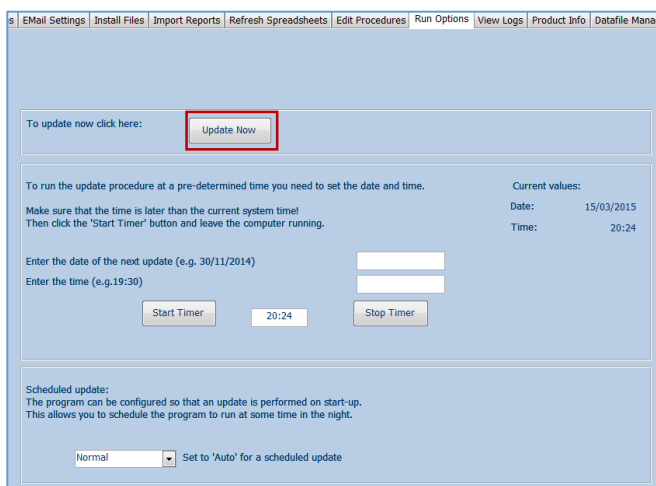
Normally the spreadsheets are updated automatically when the program is running.

However, the reports can also be run manually by clicking the **Export Data From SIMs** button.



c) Run Options

Click the **Update Now** button and **SDA Link** will work through each procedure in turn.



The program will create new **SIMS spreadsheets** then import the staff, student and timetable data from the **SIMS spreadsheets** into **SDA Link**. The imported data will then be processed before updating the SQL data file.

The procedures are very complex and are likely to take about 30 and 45 minutes to complete depending on the size of the school and the speed of the computer / server.

NOTE: Running **SDA Link** takes a lot of processing power and you are strongly advised **NOT** to use the computer for other purposes whilst the program is running.

As the program runs, a log file is created. If there are any errors, these will be shown in the log file so that any issues can be identified and then fixed.

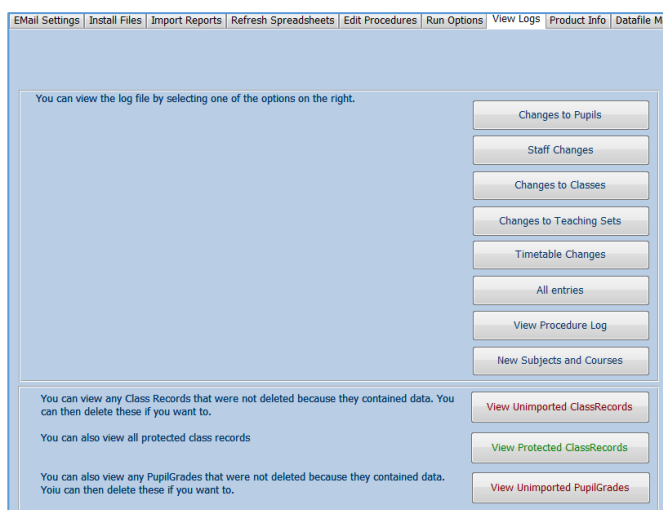
When the update has been completed, **SDA** will be unlocked and a summary log file will be emailed to the program administrator for information.

You can also run **SDA Link** at a specified time or as a scheduled update from this screen.

Scheduled updates are particularly useful as you can setup **SDA Link** to run when the network is quiet e.g. overnight. To do so, set to **Auto** and create a scheduled task in Windows to run **SDA Link** at a specified time e.g. 10pm each weekday evening

d) **View Logs**

Use this screen if you want to view various log files created when **SDA Link** runs



Appendix A – Exporting Data from SIMS

The supplied report definitions must be imported into **SIMS.net**

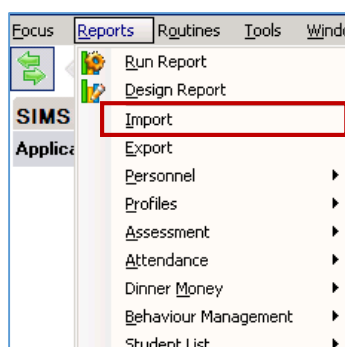
These reports can then be run remotely to create new spreadsheets which will be imported into **SDA Link**.

The reports can usually be imported successfully from the main screen by clicking the **Imports SIMS reports** button on the **Import Reports** tab.
Alternatively, follow the instructions below.

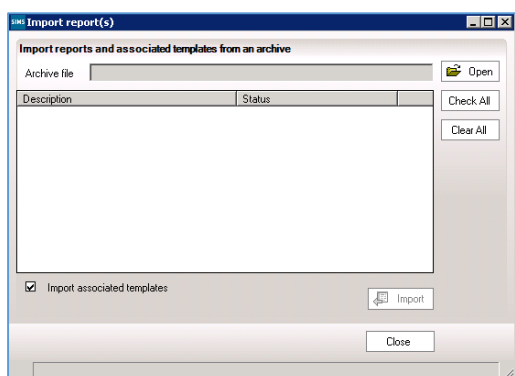
A1 Import report definitions to SIMS.net

Open **SIMS.net** using the same user name / password you entered in **Edit Preferences tab**

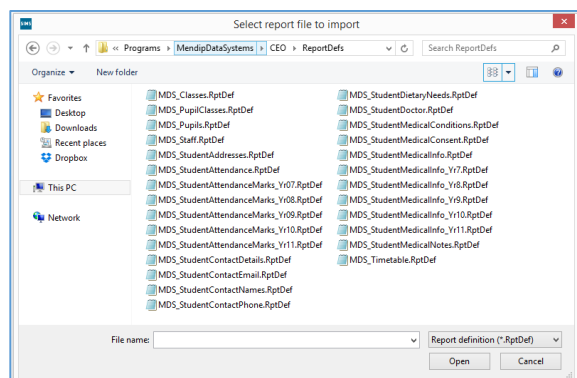
Select Reports...Import



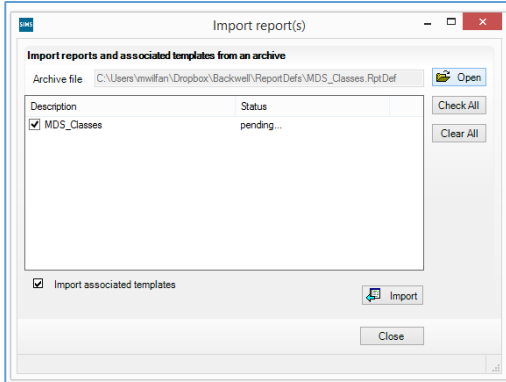
The **Import Reports** screen appears:



Click **Open** and browse to the **C:\Programs\MendipDataSystems\SDALink\ReportDefs** folder:



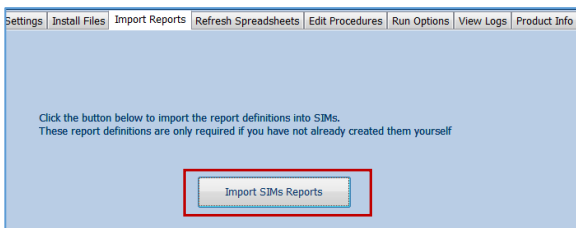
Select the first item **MDS_Classes.RptDef** in the folder & click **Open**



Make sure the checkbox is selected and click **Import**

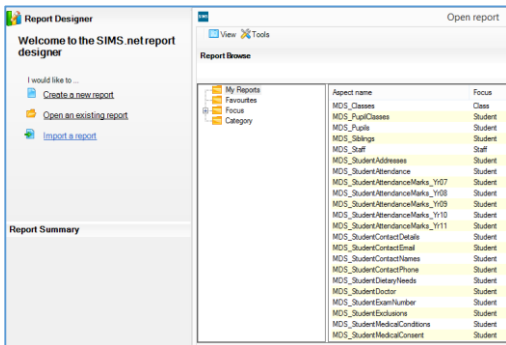
Repeat for all 27 report definition files – unfortunately **SIMS.net** won't let you do them all together!

However, you can do a bulk import from the **Import Reports** tab in **SDA Link**:



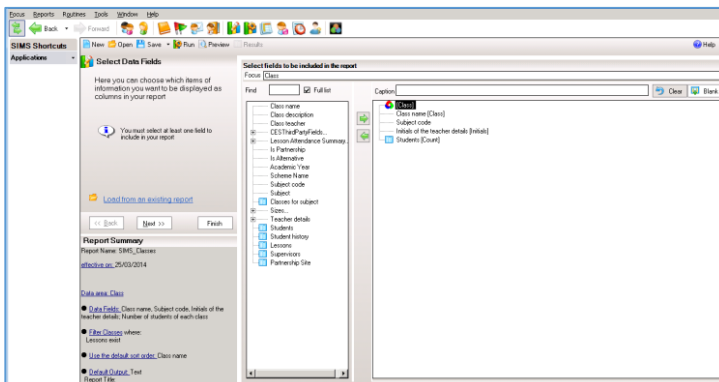
Once you have imported all the reports into **SIMS**, click **Reports...Design Report**

The report file list is shown ...

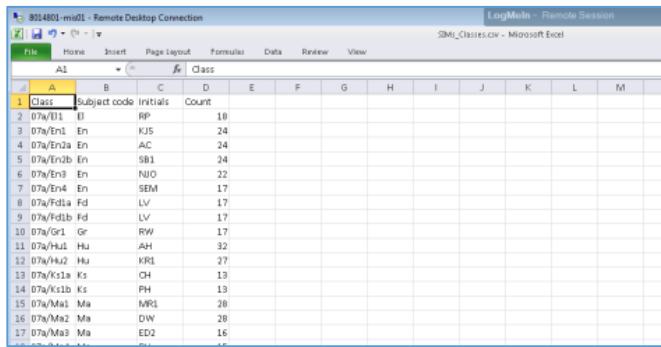


Open one of the imported reports e.g. **MDS_Classes**.

The report design is shown:



You should check the report design in case any fields need to be modified for your school
Click **Run** to test the report works correctly:



Class	Subject code	Initials	Count
07a/011	01	RP	18
07a/En1	En	RJS	24
07a/En2a	En	AC	24
07a/En2b	En	SB1	24
07a/En3	En	NJO	22
07a/En4	En	SEM	17
07a/Fd1a	Fd	LV	17
07a/Fd1b	Fd	LV	17
07a/Gr1	Gr	RWW	17
07a/Hu1	Hu	AH	32
07a/Hu2	Hu	FRE	27
07a/Ks1a	Ks	CH	13
07a/Ks1b	Ks	PH	13
07a/Ma1	Ma	MRE	28
07a/Ma2	Ma	DW	28
07a/Ma3	Ma	ED2	16

The spreadsheet should be created & saved in the folder:

C:\Programs\MendipDataSystems\SDALink\Spreadsheets

Check each of the reports in the same way.

Some changes may be needed depending on your school settings. For example:

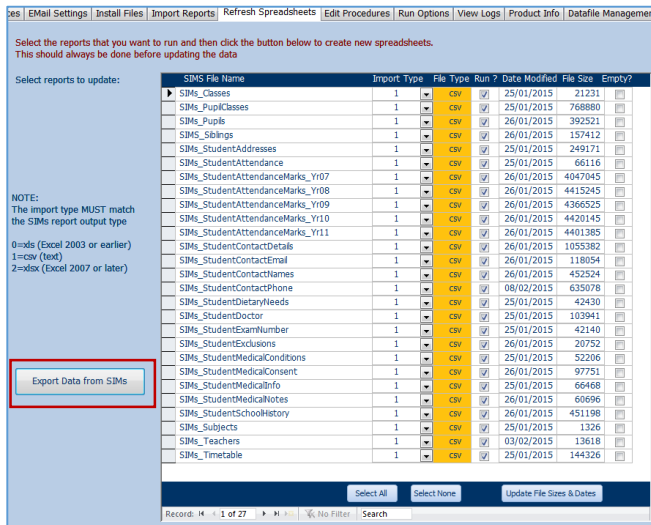
- By default, year groups are years 7 to 11. Your school may use e.g. Year 07
- Attendance marks are set for the academic year 2014-15.

The date range will need to be modified for each academic year

A2 Run the SIMS reports remotely from SDA Link

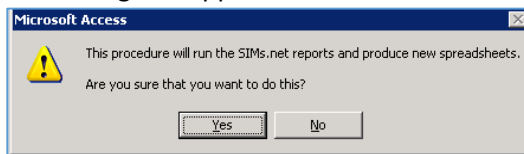
You need to check the reports can be run remotely from **SDA Link**.

Open **SDA Link** and click the **Refresh Spreadsheets** tab on the main screen:

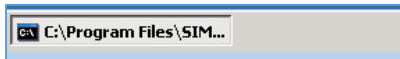


Make sure all checkboxes are ticked then click the **Export Data from SIMs** button

This dialog box appears:

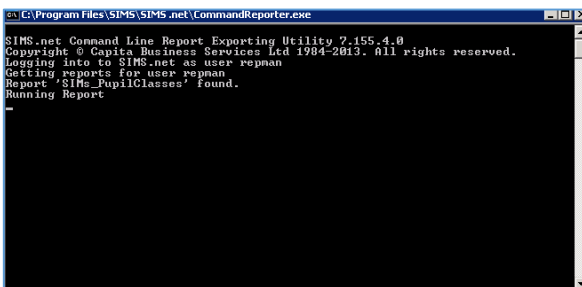


Click **Yes**. The reports should run in the background apart from an item on the taskbar



NOTE:

If you click this item, the **CommandReporter** dialog box appears showing the report is running



The box will close automatically when each report has completed.

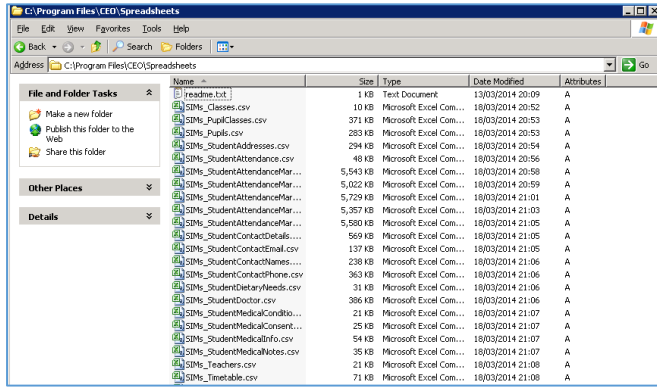
The whole process should take about 15-20 minutes to complete.

The time required depends on the size of the data files imported, server speed and other factors.

At busy times when other staff are also using **SIMS**, it may take much longer than this to complete all 27 reports. It may also affect the speed of the SIMS server for other users

If possible, avoid running these reports at 'peak times'.

When the process has completed, you should have 27 new csv files in the **Spreadsheets** folder



If there are any reports missing, please re-check the report design and run the report again.