Hints and Tips for Using Course Manager
Independent and Northern Ireland schools only
Quick Reference Sheet

Introduction

Course Manager primarily deals with the creation and maintenance of course details. A course is defined as a qualification or Learning Aim. Courses are required to supply data for most Statutory Returns, particularly at Post 16 level. Using SIMS, you can:

- use the **Statutory Return Tools** routine to import any new Qualification Accreditation Numbers (QANs) into SIMS, e.g. for Diplomas.
- use the **Maintain Course** routine to manage the detail of all courses.
- use Nova-T and Academic Management to edit class information so that it will be available to courses.
- use the **Update Course Membership** routine to ensure that class information is inferred for course information (as defined via the **Maintain Course** routine).
- use the **Leaver** routine to ensure that course completion information is added in relation to the date when a student left the school.

For more detailed information relating to the management of courses, please refer to the *Managing Courses in SIMS* handbook. Sometimes, the annual requirements change for the various Statutory Returns and this has an effect on the use of Course Manager. The activities detailed here relate to frequently asked questions that occur throughout the school year.

Protecting all Students on a Course

NOTE: This process should only be used in circumstances where no classes have been timetabled for the course, e.g. twighlight lessons, etc.

1. Select **Tools** | **Academic Management** | **Course Manager** | **Maintain Course** and browse for the required course.
2. In the **Basic** panel, deselect the **Auto Update Class Links** and the **Auto Update Membership** check boxes. This prevents the pupils or students from being altered automatically.

   Course Manager inherits all the information from the Curriculum Assignment area of SIMS based on the classes attached to the Course.

Dealing with New GCE QANs if the Timetable has Already been Submitted

To enable the pupils or students on the previous QAN to be recorded correctly in the Census, a course will need to be created for the new QAN.

*NOTE: Please ensure that the Current Academic Year is set to the correct year before the following activity is carried out by checking in **Tools** | **Academic Management** | **Set Academic Year**.*

1. Select **Tools** | **Academic Management** | **Course Manager** | **Maintain Course** to search for the existing old-style GCEAS courses. Amend the title to make it clear that this course is being superseded by inserting Old, for example. Deselect both the **Auto-Update** checkboxes. Click the **Save** button.
2. Create a new course at the correct level.
3. Confirm that a duplicate is required for the subject/level combination.
4. Select both the **Auto-Update** check boxes.
5. In the **Classes** panel, add the classes that are relevant to the course.
6. Select **Active** from the **Active Status** drop-down list before saving the course.
7. Re-open the old course details.
8. In the **Basic** panel, deselect the **Auto Update Class Links** check box and ensure that the **Auto Update Memberships** check box is selected.
9. In the **Classes** panel, ensure that you are looking at the classes for the correct Academic Year and delete the list of classes before saving the course.
10. Carry out the procedures described above for all the old and new courses and then run the **Update Course Memberships** routine. The correct membership information will now be available for each of the courses.

Using Course Manager to Show Two QANS

1. Select **Tools** | **Academic Management** | **Course Manager** | **Maintain Course** and make a note of the details of the original course.
2. Create a new course using the same details as the original course, e.g. Subject, Level, etc.
3. Select the **Auto Update Class Links** and the **Auto Update Membership** check boxes.
4. Click the **Save** button.
5. In the **Classification** panel, click the **New** button and select the other QAN code from the **Select Code** dialog.
6. In the **Classes** panel, click the **New** button and add the required classes from the other course.
7. In the **Supervisors** panel, add the required supervisors and click the **Save** button.
8. Select **Tools** | **Academic Management** | **Course Manager** | **Update Course Memberships** to add all the students to the new course.

Adding a QAN Code to a Course that is not in the List

*NOTE: Please ensure that the QAN Catalogues have been imported through **Tools** | **Statutory Return Tools** | **Update DfE QAN Catalogue** before proceeding further.*

1. Select **Tools** | **Statutory Return Tools** | **Update DfE QAN Catalogue**. Click the **OK** button on the message dialog to confirm. **The Update DfE QAN Catalogue** page is displayed.
2. Click the **Browser** button to open the **QAN Catalogue files** dialog. Browse to the stored location of the files you have downloaded.
3. Select each file by highlighting the file name and clicking the **Open** button. The selected file is displayed in the **QAN Catalogue File** field.

   *IMPORTANT NOTE: Files are imported one at a time. The `QAN_Current_<version>.xml` file must be imported last as it links to data contained in the other files. Error messages will appear in the **Activity Log** if you attempt to import this file before the others. If the catalogue has already been updated and is the latest version, an appropriate warning is displayed and the import will not proceed.*

4. Click the **Import Catalogue** button to start the import process. A message in the status bar indicates that the process has commenced. An **Activity Log** dialog is displayed once the import is complete.

NOTE: The `QAN_Current_<version>.xml` file contains several thousand entries and will take some time to import.

5. Click the **Close** button. Repeat the process for all four files, ensuring that you import `QAN_Current_<version>.xml` last.
6. Select **Tools** | **Statutory Return Tools** | **Import QANs and Discount Codes for Course Manager**.
7. Click the **Search Title** button to locate the required QAN code.
8. Highlight the **QAN** code and click the **Add** button.
9. Click the **Update** button to make the code available in Course Manager.
10. Select **Tools** | **Academic Management** | **Course Manager** | **Maintain Course**.
11. Click the **Seach** button, locate the course and double-click to view the details.
12. In the **Classification** panel, click the **New** button and highlight the **QAN** code in the **Select Code** dialog.
13. Click the **OK** button then click the **Save** button.
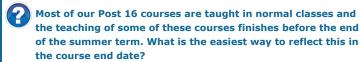
If the QAN code is not available, please contact the DfE for advice.

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Frequently Asked Questions Relating to Post 16

Most of our Post 16 courses are taught in normal classes and the teaching of some of these courses finishes before the end of the summer term. What is the easiest way to reflect this in the course end date?

If all classes in the school are expected to end on the same day, the easiest method is to reflect the expected end date for the course on transfer from Nova-T and then run the **Update Course Memberships** routine.

Nova-T can also be used to deal with the situation where one set of courses finishes before other courses by applying two transfers of the timetable. This is the easiest way to get accurate planned end dates for courses if the timetabler is willing to introduce this degree of accuracy into the timetable.

However, if you are unable to persuade the timetabler to introduce this degree of accuracy into the timetable, it is also possible to use Curriculum Assignment in SIMS to indicate an earlier expected end date for the class and then run the **Update Course Memberships** routine.

How do we deal with re-sits?

Re-sits differ from retakes in that a course is not actually taking place.

From a School Census point of view, the start date, actual end date and planned end date are all set to the date of the re-sit when the status is set to **Re-sit**.

To create a re-sit, go to the **Membership** panel (**Tools | Academic Management | Course Manager | Maintain Course**) for the appropriate course. Add the student and set the **Start Date**. Set the **End Date** to the date for the re-sit then set the **Status** to **Re-sit**. Save the course details. This automatically adds an appropriate record. Set the **Start Date** to the same date as the **End Date**, then click the **Save** button. The start date, actual end date and planned end date are automatically set to the date of the re-sit.

How do we deal with retakes?

Retakes differ from re-sits in that a course is actually taking place.

If students are in a class, they are classed as retakes and are treated exactly the same as any other course. However, if you put these students in classes where other students are staying in the class for a longer period, you should make sure this is reflected in their class membership.

Dealing with Inactive Courses

When we ran the **Maintain Course** routine on the Autumn School Census day last year, nearly all courses were inactive even though they had members when we opened them. We tried running the **Update Course Membership** routine but it did not resolve the problem. How can we prevent this from happening again?

The active and inactive setting in the **Maintain Course** routine are useful for display purposes as for other group memberships, but have no other implication for the group. The course operates in exactly the same way for all tasks other than display and you can change the display setting in the **Maintain Course** routine. Like all such groups, memberships of courses are set to active or inactive at the first login of the day. Run the **Update Course Membership** routine one or more times before Census Day to get the appropriate course displayed as active.

Where courses are inferred from classes, how do we deal with a course starting at the end of the previous year?

This situation is easier to deal with than for a two year course. In the first year, transfer the class from Nova-T in the summer term and make sure that the class memberships are in line with the end of the classes for the year and then run the **Update Course Memberships** routine. When promotion is complete for the next academic year, transfer the class for the new year from Nova-T ensuring that the membership end date for the class is in line with the membership end date for the course. Ensure that the **Update Course Memberships** routine is run two weeks or less prior to the start of the new term.

System Permissions

To enable users to add, edit and delete course details, they should be assigned membership of the **Curriculum Manager** group. Other groups have the ability to view course details only.

For more information, please refer to the *System Manager* handbook.

Where courses are inferred from classes, how should we deal with a two year course?

The transfer from Nova-T and Academic Management is generally based on a single year. This means that for the first year of the two year course you should enter the end date directly in the **Maintain Course** routine but don't forget to deselect the **Auto Update Membership** check box or tick the protection of each student in the **Members** panel.

After you have completed the Summer Census, reselect the **Auto Update Membership** check box for the courses and run the **Update Course Memberships** routine. Transfer the second year class from Nova-T and run the **Update Course Memberships** routine in the new academic years.

Providing the membership of the first class doesn't finish before the end date of that class and the membership of the second class doesn't start after the start date of that class, the **Update Course Membership** routine will create a two year course with the end date inferred from the end date for the second year class.

This means that the holiday periods and other periods when teaching does not take place should not cause a problem as long as the timetabler and Academic Manager operate in partnership to ensure that class dates are in line with class membership dates.

Are there any pre-defined reports available for use with Course Manager?

There are sets of pre-defined reports available from our SupportNet website (http://support.capitaes.co.uk).

- For England: Courses and QANs reports (Resource no.13830)
- For Wales (Shared file 427).

We don't have a Sixth Form but we have some younger students taking Level 3 courses. Should these courses be included in the Post 16 part of the School Census, and if they shouldn't how can I prevent this?

No, the Post 16 part of School Census is only for schools with Sixth Forms. You can prevent the Post 16 part of School Census being included by setting the link between courses and QANs or deleting such a link if it already exists.

When we ran the Maintain Course routine on the Autumn Census Day last year, nearly all courses were inactive even though they had members when we opened them. Running the Update Course Membership routine did not resolve the problem. How can we prevent this from happening again?

The active and inactive setting in the **Maintain Course** routine are useful for display purposes as for other group memberships, but have no other implication for the group. The course operates in exactly the same way for all tasks other than display and you can change the display setting in the **Maintain Course** routine. Like all such groups, memberships of courses are set to active or inactive at the first login of the day. Run the **Update Course Membership** routine one or more times before Census Day to get the appropriate course displayed as active.

SIMS