



SIMS



Starting Next Year's Curriculum Early

applicable to 2022

Mini Guide

Revision History

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01 | Starting Next Year's Curriculum Early

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Introduction

This handbook assists you in understanding the implications of beginning next year's curriculum early. It details how to create an additional curriculum plan and timetable for the forthcoming year. Starting the next year's curriculum early does not affect the start date of the normal academic year and the Pastoral Promotion process remains unchanged.

In general terms, starting next year's curriculum early enables students to begin working on the curriculum for next year before it would otherwise be available. In no other way does it indicate that the forthcoming academic year will begin in June/July.

*NOTE: Please make frequent backups in Nova-T6 of all the .SPL files that you are using. Select **Data | Force Backup** to create a backup. Alternatively, use the **Save | Save As** option to make a new copy of the .SPL file.*

General Information

This handbook details two approaches that you can follow, depending on the outcome that you require, and assumes that you are familiar with the processes described.

Each approach is detailed in a separate chapter so that you can follow the instructions in a logical order. It is suggested that you decide which approach you want to adopt before proceeding. You may need to discuss your plans with the Exams Officer and the staff member responsible for assigning students to classes and the associated Course memberships before proceeding.

Regardless of the approach that you adopt for starting next year's curriculum early, the general activities required to achieve this include the following:

- Creating a new SPL file.
- Sending the curriculum plan and Timetable to SQL whilst ensuring that the correct links are maintained, or that no links are maintained and a completely new set of schemes is created.
- Assigning students to classes for the June/July timetable.

Further details on these processes can be found in the following documents available from the SIMS Documentation Centre (https://customer.support-ess.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0036819):

- *Academic Management* handbook
- *Using Nova-T6 and Options to Prepare the Timetable* mini guide
- *Getting Started with Nova* handbook
- *Maintaining Nova* handbook
- *Analysis and Other Functions in Nova* handbook.

NOTE: SIMS Profiles uses data from classes that are active within a specific date range selected for each individual Profiles session. If classes are terminated earlier than originally planned, Profiles information is lost for any terminated classes. To ensure that this does not occur, the date range selected for a Profiles session within the current academic year, must end on or before the start date of next year's timetable.

Considerations for Course Manager and the School Census

When you have finished assigning students to their classes, select **Tools | Academic Management | Course Manager | Update Course Memberships**. This routine should always be run when any changes to class memberships are made.

Please be aware that if students start their Post-16 Courses early, this can have an effect on the funding and success rate of your school's Learning Aims. For the most up-to-date information on Course Manager and School Census issues, please refer to the SIMS Newsfeed - Hub on the support portal

(https://customer.support-ess.com/csm?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0035899).

02 | Employing Approach A

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Overview of Approach A

This approach enables students to be assigned to classes in a year that is above the current year.

- In Nova-T6, the curriculum structures intended for students who are still in pastoral year 9 for example, are placed into the year 10 curriculum plan.
- In SIMS, year 9 students are moved from the NC year 9 timetable and placed into a year 10 band and into year 10 classes.
- All the bands, blocks and classes exported from Nova-T6 are treated as new in SIMS. You must break any existing links between Nova-T6 and SIMS before and during the running of the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process to ensure that this occurs.
- As a result of the export process, an end date is placed against any structures previously sent. All student memberships are truncated to end on the day *before* the start date defined during the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process.
- The new curriculum structures do not contain any student memberships of bands or classes at this point.
- When you have assigned students to bands and classes, it is very likely that they will have a different timetable from their previous timetable. However, some students may be perceived as remaining, for example, in the same set for Maths even though they have moved from Year 9 Maths Set 1 to Year 10 Maths Set 1. It is not possible to use the **Routines | School | Academic Promotion Rules** process to promote curriculum memberships from one NC year to another within the same academic year. You must enter student memberships for the June/July curriculum manually or you can use the .SLK file export/import method.

02| Employing Approach A

- When the official academic year begins in September, a similar timetable is created, and it is very likely that the majority of students will remain in the same classes for the new academic year. In the September timetable subsequently created in SIMS, classes sent via the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process are empty. Again, it is not possible to populate the classes using the **Routines | School | Academic Promotion Rules** process across two academic years because students cannot be promoted into classes of the same NC Year. You must enter student memberships for September manually or you can use the .SLK file export/import method.



More Information:

Exporting and Importing SLK Files on page 9

Creating a Data Set for June/July in Nova-T6

Two separate timetables are required, one for use in June/July and the other for use as the normal September timetable. As you want to create a different timetable from the previous September timetable, the Transfer Curriculum routine can be used to create a brand new timetable. This timetable will be free from any links between Nova-T6 and SIMS.

- Run Nova-T6 from SIMS.
- Load a data set containing the current timetable (i.e. for academic year 2021/22).

NOTE: It is important that this is not a maintenance data set.

- Select **Data | Transfer Curriculum** to display the **Transfer Curriculum** dialog.

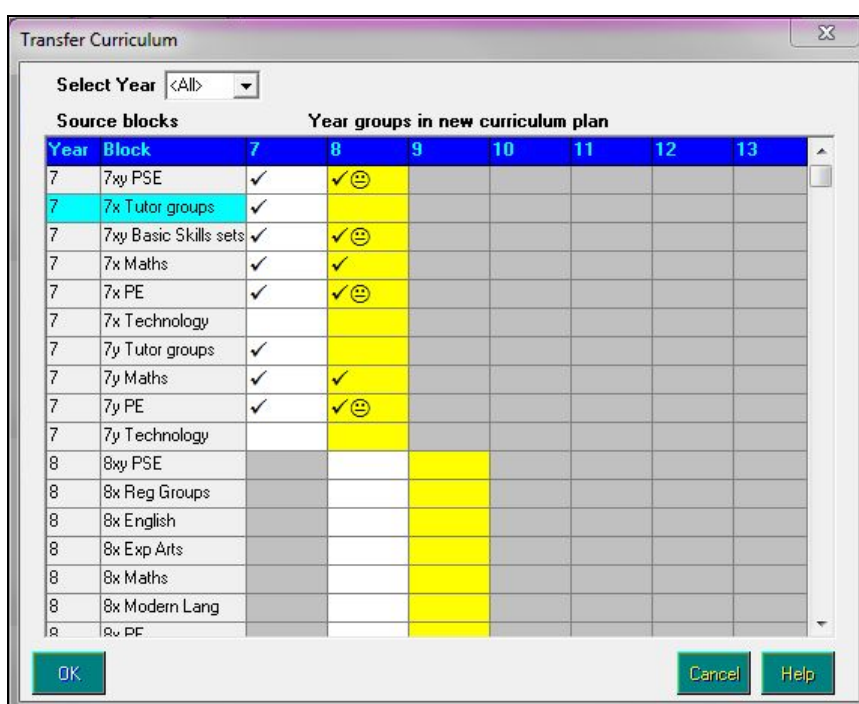
| Year Block | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|-------------------|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| 7xy PSE | | | | | | | |
| 7 7x Tutor groups | | | | | | | |
| 7 7x Maths | | | | | | | |
| 7 7x PE | | | | | | | |
| 7 7x Technology | | | | | | | |
| 7 7y Tutor groups | | | | | | | |
| 7 7y Maths | | | | | | | |
| 7 7y PE | | | | | | | |
| 7 7y Technology | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x PSE | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x Reg Groups | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x English | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x Exp Arts | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x Maths | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x Modern Lang | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x PE | | | | | | | |
| 8 8x Technology | | | | | | | |
| 8 8y Reg Groups | | | | | | | |
| 8 8y English | | | | | | | |
| 8 8y Exp Arts | | | | | | | |
| 8 8y Maths | | | | | | | |

The default option of <All> lists all of the **Source blocks** in the current curriculum plan. However, the list can be filtered by selecting a specific year group from the **Select Year** drop-down list, if required.

The most likely columns for receiving transfers are shown with a white background (for moving across) and with a yellow background (for moving up). A block may be transferred to any or all year groups, including those with a grey background.

A block and its classes can be copied with or without their associated teachers, if they have been assigned.

4. Highlight the required block and click into a cell with a white background to copy the block into the same year group for next year, or click into a cell with a yellow background to copy the block into the next year group up, e.g. this year's Year Group 7 into next year's Year Group 8.
5. Click in a cell to create a tick, whilst double-clicking inserts a face symbol.

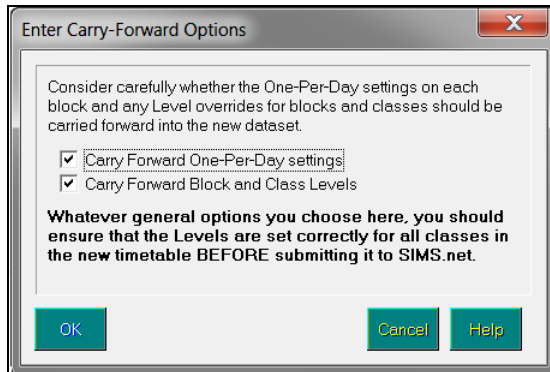


The tick indicates that the block is copied to the destination year group cell. The face symbol indicates that both staff and rooms that have been associated with the block's classes in the existing curriculum plan have also been copied. Right-clicking a cell removes its contents. An example is shown in the previous graphic.

NOTE: The **Shift** key can be used to mark a continuous series of blocks for transfer.

02| Employing Approach A

- When you have created the required block transfers, click the **OK** button to display the **Enter Carry-Forward Options** dialog.



It is possible to **Carry Forward One-Per-Day settings** of a block to the new timetable, if required. You can also **Carry Forward Block and Class Levels** into the new timetable.

NOTE: Please consult with the Exams Officer and the staff responsible for Course Manager regarding the allocation of levels to classes. The implications regarding the allocation of levels to classes will affect the School Census for post 16 students.

- Select the appropriate radio button(s) and click the **OK** button to create the new timetable data set, which is given the default name of <NoName> .

*NOTE: If you do not use the Transfer Curriculum routine to create a new timetable data set for June/July, run **Tools | Remove SQL Links** using a copy of the current timetable so that any unwanted links are removed prior to saving the file.*

- You must now save the new timetable data set with an appropriate file name, e.g. 2022 June-July.
- It is recommended that you now open the **Model** screen and rename the year groups in the new June/July timetable data set so that the names begin with the letter **J**. This enables you to distinguish the June/July block from other blocks on the Curriculum Assignment screens when using Academic Management.

| Years | | |
|-------|------|-------|
| Name | NCYr | Total |
| J7 | 7 | 162 |
| J8 | 8 | 161 |
| J9 | 9 | 167 |
| J10 | 10 | 163 |
| J11 | 11 | 167 |

- You can now edit the curriculum plan, as required, then schedule and allocate rooms to the timetable.

11. Run the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process and ensure that you use the dates for the June/July dataset.

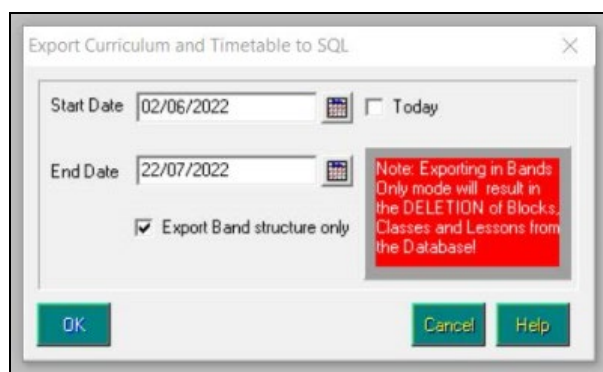
For the September timetable, make a copy of the June/July timetable. Remove the **J** from the year label on the **Model** screen and double-click in the top-right hand side of the **Model** screen to change the date range to begin in September.

Sending the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL

NOTE: You are strongly advised to run a backup in SIMS before sending the curriculum and timetable to SQL.

You can now send the new June/July curriculum plan and timetable to SIMS.

1. Select **Data | Export Curriculum and Timetable to SQL** to display the **Export Curriculum and Timetable to SQL** dialog.



2. Enter the **Start Date** and **End Date** in June and July for when this timetable will be operational, e.g. nn/06/2022 to nn/07/2022.
3. Click the **OK** button.

As the June/July timetable is unlikely to contain any required crossover of student memberships, you must ensure that the **Merge Curriculum** page of the **Nova/SQL Transfer** wizard recognises that all the bands, blocks and classes being sent via the **Export Curriculum and Timetable to SQL** process are regarded as new. This ensures that the classes are empty with no existing student memberships.

If you have labelled each year group with the letter **J** to enable differentiation between the June/July timetable and the September timetable, the **Nova/SQL Transfer** wizard does not try to re-establish links when checking the labels and descriptions because the **J** labelled names are not recognised as already existing in SIMS. However, to check whether links have been broken, use the **Action/Remove All** option.

4. Click the **Next** button to continue with the export process.

Assigning Students to Classes

1. Select **Tools | Setups | Curriculum Setup | Curriculum** to display the **Curriculum Setup** page.

You can now define a **Named Date Range** for the June/July timetable period that will be available for selection whenever the **Select Effective Date Range** dialog is displayed. For example, in the **Start** field, select the date from the **Calendar** to indicate the date that the June/July timetable will be operational from and in the **End** field, select the date to indicate when the class memberships in the June/July timetable are due to end.

2. Click the **OK** button.

3. Once you have defined the **Named Date Range**, select **Focus | School | Academic Structure | Curriculum Assignment by Scheme** to display the **Find Curriculum Scheme** browser.
4. Select **Bands** from the **Type** filter and click the **Search** button.
5. Highlight the relevant **Scheme Name** and click the **Open** button to display the **Group Memberships in Scheme** page.
6. Select the **Named Date Range** for the June/July timetable period and then select the **Don't ask me again (this session or until manually changed)** check box.
7. Click the **OK** button to display the Tick Grid for the appropriate classes, e.g. Year 10.
8. For Approach A, you want to place students out of their normal year group, e.g. Year 9 students are going into Year 10 classes, be aware that when the **Group Memberships in Scheme** page is first opened, the 'wrong' students are displayed. Click the **Add** button above the Tick Grid to display the **Select Student(s)** dialog.
 - Select the required **Year Group** of the students who you will be assigning to the bands in the scheme, e.g. Year 9 for Year 10 schemes, etc. and click the **OK** button.
 - Highlight the name of the first student in the list, hold down the **Shift** key and highlight the name of the last student in the list before clicking the **OK** button.

9. Click the **Relax** button above the Tick Grid, this enables you to assign memberships to students who would normally be ineligible for inclusion in schemes associated with this year group. It is also possible to use the **Filters** above the Tick Grid to select only year 9 students.
10. Carefully assign the required students to the band scheme. Once this is completed and saved, the students can be assigned to classes within the block schemes.

If you prefer to batch allocate student memberships, you can use the export/import of student memberships via .SLK files. To populate the June/July timetable where class memberships are carried forward from this year, memberships need to be exported for a date prior to June. The .SLK files can be opened in Excel so that the column headings can be edited to match the names of the classes in the new blocks.

Exporting and Importing SLK Files

The export/import of student memberships function can be used extensively at year end to allocate students to classes. For full instructions, please refer to the *Academic Management* handbook.

The following example describes how to carry forward the memberships of Year 9 Maths classes defined in the September timetable to Year 10 in the June/July timetable.

1. Ensure that you are in the correct academic year before selecting **Focus | School | Academic Structure | Curriculum Assignment by Scheme** to display the **Find Curriculum Scheme** browser.
2. Click the **Search** button and select the scheme for Year 9 Maths, not J Maths.

The relevant students' memberships are displayed in the Tick Grid.

3. Click the **Allocate** button and select **Export Curriculum Membership Wizard**.
4. Select a **Reference Date** during May when student memberships are most up-to-date.
5. Select the **Populate with Student Membership** option.
6. Make a note of the .SLK file name created and the storage location.
7. Click the **Next** button on each page of the wizard until you reach the final page then click the **Finish** button.

Open the files in Microsoft Excel and replace the column headings with the new class labels. Save the files without changing the formatting.

8. Select **Focus | School | Academic Structure | Curriculum Assignment by Scheme** to display the **Find Curriculum Scheme** browser.
9. Click the **Search** button and select the scheme that you want to import student memberships into, e.g. 10x Maths block. Please note that band allocations must be completed first.
10. Ensure the selected date range is correct before proceeding, e.g. nn/06/22 to nn/07/22. The Tick Grid is currently empty.
11. Click the **Allocate** button and select the **Import Curriculum Membership Wizard** option.
12. Select the **Curriculum Membership File** type option.

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13. Navigate to the storage location of the previously saved .SLK file and click the **Finish** button to import the memberships.
14. Click the **Save** button to save the imported student memberships.

03 | Following Approach B

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Placing Year 9 Students into Year 9 Classes

This is an outline of the procedures required for Approach B:

- In Nova-T6, the structures intended for students who are still in pastoral year 9 are placed into the year 9 curriculum plan. It is likely that some of the blocks are new ones, for example Option blocks that will be available for year 10 from September onwards, and some of the blocks may continue from the previous timetable.
- In SIMS, year 9 students are placed into year 9 classes.
- You need to decide if any student memberships from the old timetable should be allowed to persist into the new timetable. For example, will the students remain in the same Maths sets or will new Maths sets be created?
- If you decide to create all new classes, all the existing Nova-T6 and SIMS links must be broken before and during the running of the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process. All classes imported into SIMS are treated as new and have no student memberships.
- If you decide to retain some existing student memberships, these classes must remain linked.

WARNING: When running the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process, you must be careful to ensure that the links are left in place for the classes where existing student memberships are to be preserved. This should not be attempted where the structure of blocks has been changed and/or classes have been moved between blocks and groups.

- You can use **Routines | School | Academic Promotion Rules** followed by running the **Curriculum Promotion** wizard via **Focus | School | Academic Structure | Curriculum Assignment by Scheme** to assist the placement of students into the correct classes.

Creating a Data Set for June/July in Nova-T6

This approach requires some careful consideration because the timetable for June/July is significantly different from the following September timetable in Nova-T6. Both timetables can utilise the same curriculum plan and share similar scheduling. Once you have created one of the timetables, you can base the second timetable on the first timetable. The best way to create the June/July SPL is to make a copy of the current SPL file and double-click the dates on the top right-hand side to change to the June/July dates.

NOTE: The Transfer Curriculum process can be used to create the June/July SPL but please be aware that this will destroy existing links. These need to be re-established where students are remaining in the same classes in the June/July curriculum plan.

1. In the current 21/22 timetable, select **Data | Save As** and enter an appropriate name for the new .SPL file.
2. With this data set loaded, open the **Model** screen and remove any blocks that are not required. You can also adjust the period allocations for the blocks that are required.
3. Create any new blocks, if necessary.

NOTE: You must consider that the year 9 curriculum plan should contain some or all of the blocks that will be placed into year 10 for the September timetable.

It is suggested that you label each year group with the letter **J** to enable you to differentiate between the June/July blocks and the current blocks when using Academic Management.

The June/July curriculum plan is unlikely to require a curriculum for year 11 because the majority of year 11 students will have left school by the time it becomes effective. You can leave the year 11 in place and remove all the blocks or leave the blocks intact and ensure that they are not scheduled.

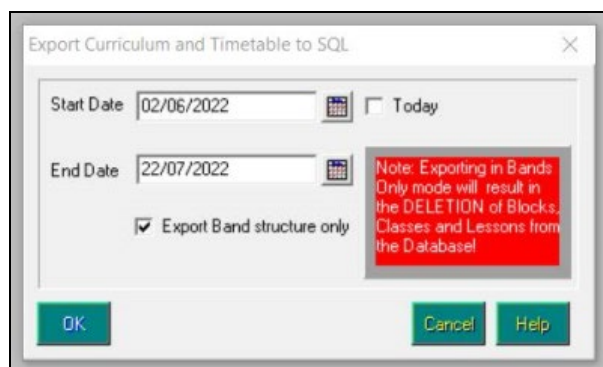
4. You can now edit the curriculum plan, as required, by scheduling and allocating rooms to the timetable.

Sending the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL

NOTE: You are strongly advised to run a backup in SIMS before sending the curriculum and timetable to SQL.

You can now send the new curriculum plan and timetable to SIMS.

1. Select **Data | Export Curriculum and Timetable to SQL** to display the **Export Curriculum and Timetable to SQL** dialog.



2. Enter the **Start Date** and **End Date** in June and July for when this timetable will be operational, e.g. nn/06/2022 to nn/07/2022.
3. Click the **OK** button.
4. In the **Merge Curriculum** page of the **Nova/SQL Transfer** wizard, ensure that the new blocks for the June/July timetable appear as new items in the wizard.

If you have labelled each year group with the letter **J** to enable you to differentiate between the June/July timetable and the previous September timetable and there are no existing links between Nova-T6 and SIMS, all bands, blocks and classes sent via the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process are regarded as new.

If the students who are in certain blocks in the current timetable are to remain in the *same* classes in the June/July timetable, one of the following approaches must be adopted:

- manually link these blocks, and their classes, labelled with the letter **J** in the year group, to existing classes in SIMS. This can be achieved whilst running the **Curriculum Matching** wizard and results in existing blocks in SIMS being relabelled with the prefix **J**.

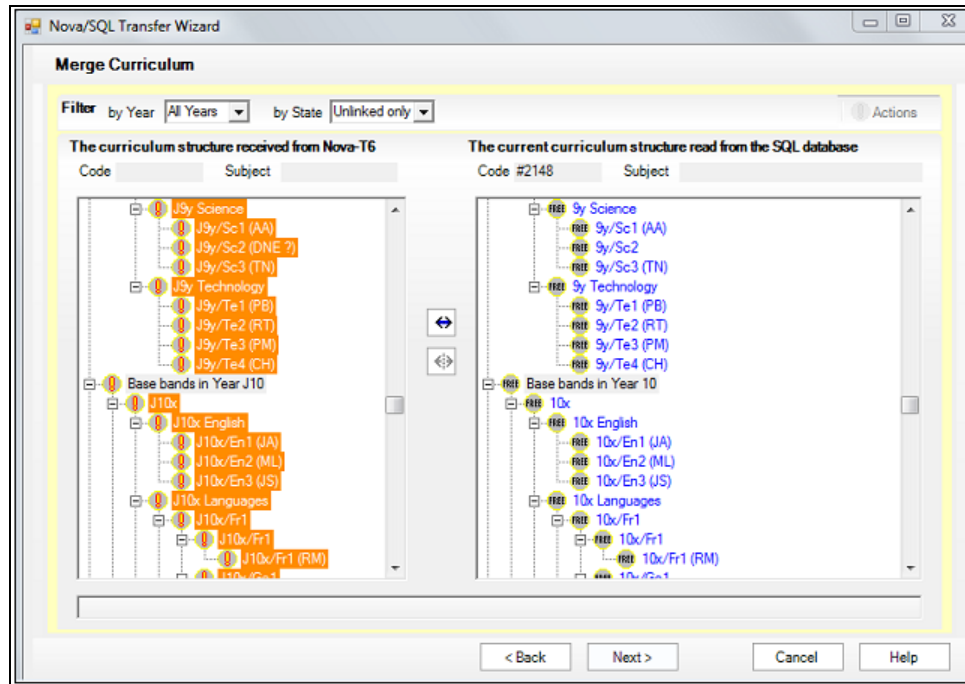
NOTE: Re-labelling existing classes will change the class names retrospectively.

or

- accept that this results in empty classes in SIMS and populate them via **Routines | School | Academic Promotion Rules**. You can promote student memberships from one group to another within the same year group and the same academic year.

03| Following Approach B

The new bands, blocks and classes are displayed with an orange background on the **Merge Curriculum** page of the **Nova/SQL Transfer** wizard.



The previous graphic shows the new **Base bands in Year J10** on the left-hand side of the page that are about to be sent to SIMS. You can also see the existing **Base bands in Year 10** on the right-hand side of the page. The existing bands are not linked and the **Free** marker indicates that these links will be terminated with an end date of the day *before* the date defined as the start date in the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process.

If you decide that not all of the classes should be regarded as new and that the student memberships of these classes should remain, you can re-establish the links, where required.

5. If you want to re-establish links, highlight the scheme in both columns and click the **Link** button. Items should be linked from the top downwards, bands first, followed by blocks. Hold down the CTRL button and hover the mouse over an item until its link is highlighted in the other column.

If you do not re-establish links, the new bands, blocks and classes that are sent via the Export the Curriculum and Timetable to SQL process will not contain any students.

Assigning Students to Classes

1. Select **Tools | Setups | Curriculum Setup | Curriculum** to display the **Curriculum Setup** page.
2. Click the **New** button and define a **Named Date Range** for the June/July timetable period that will be available for selection whenever the **Select Effective Date Range** dialog is displayed.

For example, in the **Start** field, select `nn/06/2022` from the Calendar to indicate the date from which the June/July timetable will be operational. In the **End** field, select `nn/07/2022` to indicate when the class memberships in the June/July timetable are due to end.

3. Click the **OK** button.

4. Once you have defined the **Named Date Range**, select **Focus | School | Academic Structure | Curriculum Assignment by Scheme** to display the **Find Curriculum Scheme** browser.
5. Select **Bands** from the **Type** filter and click the **Search** button.
6. Highlight the relevant **Scheme Name** and click the **Open** button to display the **Memberships of Groups of a Scheme** page.
7. Select the **Named Date Range** for the June/July timetable period and then select the **Don't ask me again (this session or until manually changed)** check box.
8. Click the **OK** button to display the Tick Grid for the appropriate classes, e.g. Year 10. As students are being assigned within their normal year group, they are automatically eligible for the correct schemes.

NOTE: This only needs to be carried out for schemes that are not already populated.

9. Carefully check the band assignments and amend them, if necessary. Once this is completed and saved, the students can be assigned to classes within the block schemes.

If you prefer to batch allocate student memberships, you can use the Academic Promotion Rules and the Academic Promotion wizard to populate the classes. The export/import of student memberships via `.SLK` files can also be used. To populate the June/July timetable where class memberships are carried forward from this year, memberships need to be exported for a date prior to June. The `.SLK` files can be opened in Excel so that the column headings can be edited to match the names of the classes in the new blocks.

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Populating the Classes for the September Timetable

Once the necessary preparations for next year have been completed in SIMS, including the creation of the new Academic Year and promotion of the Pastoral Structure, the copy of next year's timetable that is intended for use from September must be sent from Nova-T6 to SQL using the dates for next year. After this has been done, classes can be populated for September onwards.

If you have chosen to employ Approach B, the Academic Promotion routine can be used to populate the classes with students for the September timetable.

However if you have employed Approach A, you must follow the Exporting and Importing SLK Files process to populate the classes in September.