

# ESS LICENCES

Factsheet – December 2021

## The changes

From April 2022 ESS are taking SIMS and FMS licences in-house and are offering schools a 3 year deal going forward. Schools do not have to take this offer, they are able to use other systems but if this route is taken there are a number of considerations.

## What to do?

Schools have two options to consider:

- Stay with ESS and continue using SIMS and FMS
- or
- Research alternative systems and make a decision whether to switch.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that the information transferred from the local accounting system for input to the central accounting system (forming part of the statutory accounts) is complete and accurate.

What's happening?

What do schools need to consider?

## What are the considerations?

### Staying with ESS

- Schools will need to ensure that [Procurement rules](#) are followed for the life of the contract.
- Support for SIMS/FMS will still be offered by ITSS.
- ESS will honour current contract price (subject to changes in pupil numbers) although this will increase in line with inflation. A 3 year contract gives certainty over future cost commitments.
- Formats of reports will not change, meaning that MKC reporting formats will be met.
- MKC finance and audit colleagues are able to access the systems when required.
- Schools will purchase the licence direct from ESS and the support from MKC ITSS.

### Changing Systems

- Schools will need to ensure that [Procurement rules](#) are followed taking into account the life of the contract.
- Schools must seek approval from the Head of Finance/Deputy S251 Officer in line with policy- [Financial Procedures for Schools](#)
- Schools must ensure reports sent to Schools Finance are identical to existing formats and codes, for TBs, VAT submittals and CFRs, to allow data to be uploaded into the LA accounting system.
- Schools must understand how the system will be supported and how much that support / maintenance costs.
- Consider what reassurance you have on pricing for future years, when you take a low introductory offer.
- There will be charges from MKC associated with failure or non-compliance if essential reporting format requirements are not met which as a consequence will result in additional work needing to be undertaken by MKC finance or audit.

