

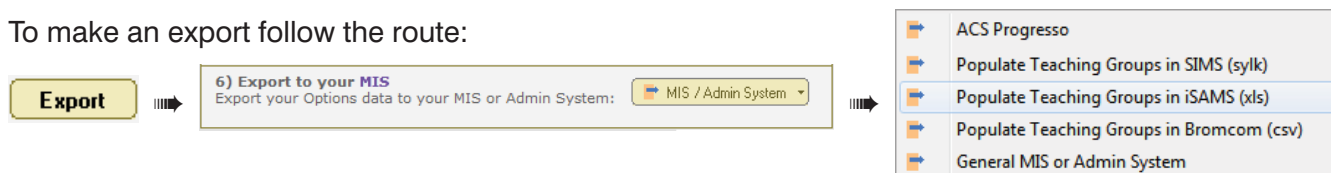
New Features in Options 2016

Exporting the Names of Students in each Group to your MIS

The export to **SIMS** that was introduced last year has now been extended to **iSAMS** and **Bromcom**, as well as **Progresso**. This process populates the option groups in your MIS, ensures accuracy and will save you a lot of typing time!

(Other MIS suppliers have been approached – including WCBS/3sys, SchoolBase, Engage, Integris and SEEMiS – but have not yet decided a time-scale. You may want to make your views known to them?)

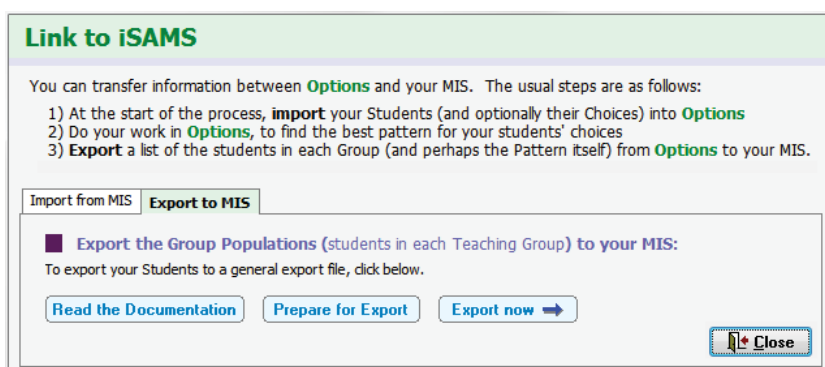
To make an export follow the route:



The screen which then opens:
allows you to:

- Import your students' names to the 'Students & Choices Screen', using a file from your MIS,
- **Export** the Names of the Students in each Teaching Group to your MIS, quickly and without error.

Click on the 'Read documentation' button for the instructions.



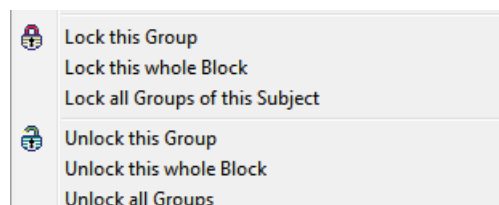
Lock a Student / a Group / a Block / a Subject

In earlier versions of **Options** you can **Lock** a specific student ...so that this student is then not moved when you get the program to 'AutoAssign students'.

Now there are more Locking options. Just **right-click** on any group on the 'Current Pattern Screen' and you get a Menu:
You can:

- Lock the single Group you have highlighted.
- Lock the entire Block/Column that the group is in.
- Lock all the groups for this Subject.

For example, if you are happy with all the History groups in your Pattern, you can now Lock them all, before working to fine-tune the other groups. Locked groups are coloured red.

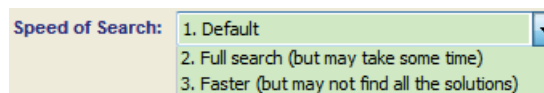


Speeding up the Options process for larger schools

Some schools with a large number of columns, especially in Scotland, have found that **Options** has needed several hours to find the best Pattern. This new feature will speed up the program in such cases.



you now have an extra choice which affects the Speed:



1. This is the default setting. In this case the program chooses the best setting for you (from the two below), depending on the number of calculations it must perform.
2. If you choose this setting you are insisting on the Full calculation, which may take some time.
3. If you choose this setting then you are insisting on the Fast method, which will take less time but may not find all the possible solutions.

So if you find that AutoCreate is taking too long, select 3 and try again.

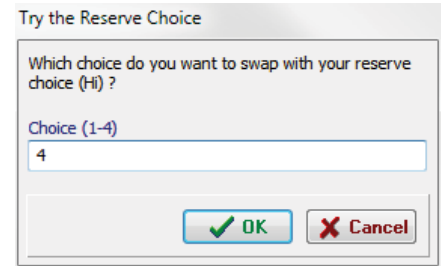
continued...

Review & Counsel Screen : Reserve Choice




This screen now has an extra feature. If the student you have selected has a Reserve choice, then you can now click on the Reserve choice (shown at the top of screen) and then enter "4" for example, and this will swap his Reserve choice in for his 4th choice.

You can then drag-and-drop that choice to where you want it in the pattern, in the usual way.

As usual, the change will appear in the Report you get when you click on 'Review Changes'.



Other new features in *Options 2016*:

- Exporting a list of Subjects:
You can now export a list of Subjects, which can then be easily imported into **TimeTabler**.
Go to Export ►► TimeTabler ►► Export list of subjects (only).
- Rename Block Labels: This can now be done directly from the Pattern Design Screen. 
- The 'Design a Pattern' & 'Current Pattern' screens:
Both screens now say how many groups this pattern has, in top-right corner. It's a quick indicator of how expensive or cheap this pattern may be compared with others. If you have clicked on a History group (say) then it also tells you how many History groups there are in this pattern.
- Create a Clone: to clone a pattern easily. Go to the Design a Pattern Library, select the pattern to clone by clicking on it, then click on 'Create a Clone'. 
- Better search: The 'Locate' button on the Students & Choices Screen now allows you to search on forename as well as surname. 
- Printing & Exporting. At most print buttons you can now choose from: Print to a printer; Save as a PDF; Export to Excel; Export to HTML; Export as a JPEG picture.

Features that were added in later Updates to *Options 2015* that you may not be aware of:

- Subjects Screen. The number of Faculties / Colours was increased to 25 to help with rules, and the Rule about '*not more than 'n' groups from this faculty*' was increased from 4 ►► 9.
- Clash table: Several small improvements, for example to exports / reports.
- Student Inspector: you can now drag from the Choice-grid to the Pattern-grid as well as vice versa.
- Export to Progresso: it now asks if you want to export subject abbreviations or full names (as names can be >6 chars in Progresso).
- If you click on a group on the Current Pattern Screen, other groups of that Subject are highlighted in yellow (you can switch it off, if you wish, via the 'Style' button).
- Customize ►► Character set alternative: was added for schools with 'non-Roman' alphabets.

TOOLS

- TOOLS has been updated. You can collect your Choices on-line, directly from students/parents.
- Free (!) Hosting for the TOOLS feature for your school, to make it easier for you.
For full details visit : <http://studentoptions.co/documentation/TOOLSHostingAgreement2016.pdf>