

## Thinking ahead : Guidelines to use while you are inputting your data

It is wise to be aware, while you are inputting your data into **TimeTabler**, of the best formats to use, so that your MIS will recognise the data correctly when you import your completed timetable.

See also the specific documentation for the export to your particular MIS (admin system).

### A. Years (Section C5 in the Manual)

Use a separate Year Number in **TimeTabler** for each year in your school. **TimeTabler** allows up to 18 years.

**Note:** The only exception to this is if you have a **Sixth Form** and you have followed Worked Example 4 in Section I, and so used 12a, 12b, etc, to represent Year 12, and 12A, 12 B, etc, to represent Year 13 classes (or used a similar sixth-form notation with secondary Years 6 & 7). In some exports (eg. to **SIMS**) this case is dealt with by selecting a special option during the export; for other exports you may have to manually separate the years.

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### B. Class Scheduling Names (Section C10 in the Manual)

If your Year 10 is divided into 2 bands (eg. X and Y) then you may be tempted to use Class Scheduling Names of 10X, 10Y, and 10XY. In fact earlier copies of the Manual suggested this.

However, if this scheme is imported into your MIS the admin system may not recognise the labels and this will cause problems ...particularly when your Office Staff begin to allocate students to Option-groups, Maths Sets, etc.

It is much better to label Year 10 using composite classes made up of the real registration-groups (forms, tutor-groups).

For example, in a 6-form-entry school, you might use: **10ABC, 10DEF, 10ABCDEF**

In addition you should also enter the individual classes, **10A, 10B, 10C, 10D, 10E, 10F** even if you don't need them for any activities, because

- this will aid the export (your MIS will recognise the registration-group names 10A, 10B, etc, where it wouldn't recognise 10X), and
- it will help your office staff to recognise the registration-groups, and
- it will also help to draw the Curriculum Diagram correctly for you (see Section D22 in the Manual).

**Note:** If the Scheduling Name you've used is not the name used in your MIS (eg: 7A in **TimeTabler** is called 7.1 or 7Red in your MIS) then put the MIS name as the **Printing Name** in **TimeTabler**.

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### C. The names used in your MIS (admin system)

To check the next 3 items (D, E, F) you should first go into your MIS and print out lists of:

- Staff Codes,
- Room Names,
- Subjects.

## D. Staff initials (Staff Codes) (Section C9 in the Manual)

Make sure Teachers' Initials (Staff Codes) are the same in *TimeTabler* as in your MIS.

**Note 1:** Choose **BasicData** ➔ **Teachers** to see the **Teachers Screen** :  
You can click Print to get a paper copy of the details.

Use the printout of the Staff Codes from your MIS and check/correct the list in *TimeTabler*.

**Note 2:** During the export stage it is essential to have **exactly** the **same** Teacher Initials in *TimeTabler* as the Staff Codes already in your MIS.

If you wish, you can use different initials during scheduling, and simply tell *TimeTabler* during the export what those teachers are called in your MIS ...but it makes sense to use the correct initials from the start, if you know them.

In *TimeTabler*, while you are scheduling, the maximum number of characters is 3 (eg. KJo); but if your MIS allows more than 3 then you can add more characters during the export process.

**Note 3:** Enter \*D as the full name of any Teacher you wish to be ignored. Special Resources are ignored.



Initials	Full Name
JHa	Miss J.HARRISON
CJo	Mr C.Johnson
FHi	Mr F.HICKSON

## E. Room names (Section C7 in the Manual)

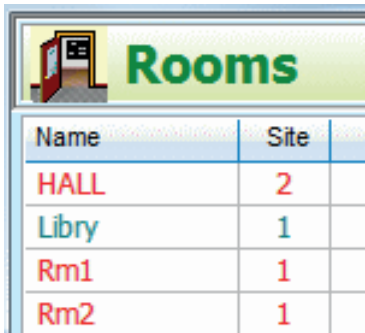
Make sure Room Names are the same in *TimeTabler* as in your MIS.

**Note 1:** Choose **BasicData** ➔ **Rooms** to see the **Rooms Screen**:  
You can **Print** out the list.

**Note 2:** During the export it is essential to have **exactly** the **same** Room Names in *TimeTabler* as in your MIS. Use your printouts to check.

Edit the room names in *TimeTabler* as necessary, but do **NOT** insert or delete any Rooms after you have started scheduling.

As with Subjects & Teachers, you can edit/correct the Room Names at any time before the export stage. Just make sure that the names are **exactly** the same as in your MIS, using the printout from C above.



Name	Site	
HALL	2	
Libry	1	
Rm1	1	
Rm2	1	

## F. Subject names (Section C6 in the Manual)

Make sure Subject Names are the same in *TimeTabler* as in your MIS.

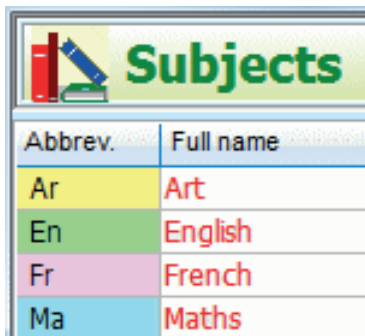
**Note 1:** Choose **BasicData** ➔ **Subjects** to see the **Subjects Screen**:  
Use the usual Edit method to edit the list.

Some MIS use the Full Name as well as the Abbreviation (eg. SIMS .net uses and shows both styles for the Subject, on different screens), so it is best to make sure your full names are sensible/helpful too.

**Note 2:** At the export stage it's essential to have **exactly** the **same** Subject Abbreviations in *TimeTabler* as in your MIS. Some MIS (for Maths) use a style of Ma, others use MA, (or even MAT).

The first 2 chars of each subject abbreviation should be unique, as most **Teaching Group Names** use the first 2 chars only. Eg. If you have subjects 'German' and 'Geog', it is better to rename them as 'Ge' and 'Gg' so that you (and your office staff) can easily differentiate Teaching Group 7A/Ge1 from 7A/Gg1.

To see what your Teaching Group Names will look like, go to the **Curriculum Diagram Screen** (see D22 in the Manual). See also the further notes on Teaching Group Names on page 3 and on page 5, below.



Abbrev.	Full name
Ar	Art
En	English
Fr	French
Ma	Maths

## G. Decide whether to add (more) Block IDs to your schedule.

There are 2 types of Block IDs (Block Labels) in **TimeTabler** :

### 1. Block Label

This is a useful label, to help you identify different Blocks. Examples are given in the box below. These labels can be any character, eg. Upper-case (A, B, ...) or lower-case (a, b, ...).

### 2. Container ID

Container Blocks are used to contain lessons that must not mix with other groups of lessons. This ID may be important to get the correct timetable but they are **not** used at all in labelling your Teaching Groups.

Note: Do **NOT** use Container Blocks unless they are necessary. In some parts of some curricula they are necessary, and work very well ...but using them unnecessarily makes scheduling complicated, takes longer to enter the data, and in some circumstances can reduce the available solution space. If in doubt please see the HelpMovie on this topic.

**Block Labels** are not essential but they can help you to identify **Teaching Groups** more easily. The short 'label' used in some MIS (eg. SIMS) can be ambiguous. The longer 'description' is clearer but is not displayed by some MIS. Some examples (in SIMS):

**Example 1.** Class Name 8A in **TimeTabler**, for History (Hi), 'pure class', taught by KJo.

On KJo's timetable:	<b>short 'label' in SIMS</b>	<b>long 'description' in SIMS</b>
Format of the label:	<b>8A/Hi</b>	<b>8A Hist</b>

**Example 2.** Class Name 8ABCD (given a Band-letter of 'z', see Step 5 of the actual export), for Maths (Ma), Set 4, taught by CJo.

On CJo's timetable:	<b>short 'label' in SIMS</b>	<b>long 'description' in SIMS</b>
Without a Block Label:	<b>8z/Ma 4</b>	<b>8ABCD Maths 4</b>
With a Block Label of 'B': for this Maths Block	<b>8z/Ma 4 B</b>	<b>8ABCD Maths 4 'B'</b>

**Example 3.** Class Name 10ABCDE (given a SIMS Band-letter of 'p', and a printing name of 'Year 10 Band P'), Option Block D, an Art group, taught by RNe.

On RNe's timetable:	<b>short 'label' in SIMS</b>	<b>long 'description' in SIMS</b>
Without a Block Label:	<b>10p/Ar 1</b>	<b>Year 10 Band P Ar 1</b>
With a Block Label of 'D': for this Option Block (if there are 2 Art groups in Block D, then they will be shown as 10p/Ar1D and 10p/Ar2D)	<b>10p/Ar 1 D</b>	<b>Year 10 Band P Ar 1 'D'</b>

So Block Labels can be useful to help identify Teaching Groups in mixed Option Blocks.

**Note 1:** Note that Block Labels are not necessary for the Export to occur. But they can be a big help for you (and your office staff) to understand what you see later in your MIS.

During the actual export, **TimeTabler** gives you a list showing the short 'label' and the long 'description' for each Teaching Group in your schedule. At that stage you can decide to return here and add more Block Labels if you wish.

**Note 2:** To add a Label, there are 2 ways : in the Batch, or on the Schedule.

You can go to the **Curriculum Diagram Screen** (D22), double-click on a box and add the Label in the Batch.

Or in the schedule to be exported, go to the Class Timetable Screen (section F14 in the Manual), double-click on a lesson to go to the **Edit Details Screen** (F19, F21). Enter a Block Label in the box and click Apply (ensure that 'Apply to all other lessons in the Activity' is ticked).

## H. Subjects for activities

Make sure that every activity/lesson has a Subject.

Note that if a lesson does not have a Subject then it will **not** be exported.

**Note 1:** If any of your Teachers do not have a 'Main Subject' on the Teachers Screen (section C9), then you may accidentally enter an activity with no Subject !

In this case the Teaching Group Name (eg. 7A/En1) cannot be imported / displayed in your MIS !

**Note 2:** To check this, just go to Activities ➡ Curriculum Diagram Screen (see section D22 in the Manual).

Any items showing ?? have **not** yet got a Subject.

Or go to Schedule ➡ Check & Tidy ➡ Rooming Check (which also checks subjects).

**Note 3:** To add a Subject :

either double-click on the item on the Curriculum Diagram Screen (D22) to re-open the Wizard, and then choose a Subject from the pick-list:

Subject: \* (no subject) Choose

or use the Lesson Details button on the List-View Screen (see D7), to get the Edit Details Screen :

Lesson Details

When you have:

- entered all your data (basic data and all your activities) and
- checked all the items A - H above,

then you can consider the first step of a double-export (see the next page) if your MIS allows it.

### 2-stage exporting :

Some MIS (eg SIMS .net) allow you to do a 2-stage export ...and this can be very helpful for your admin staff.

A 2-stage export consists of :

- a 1st export after the Batches have been entered, eg. in May, but before the activities have been scheduled. This allows your admin colleagues to begin allocating students to Maths Sets or to groups in Option blocks without having to wait until you have finished scheduling.
- The 2nd stage of the export takes place after you have a complete timetable solution, and it exports the correct timetable data for each Teaching Group ...providing the Teaching Group Name has not changed!

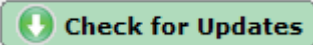
Note : If you are doing a 2-stage Export to your MIS, it is vital that the Teaching Group Names do not change between the 1st and 2nd exports, or else the MIS will probably not recognise the Group Names and you will have to correct the MIS manually !

To see what your Teaching Group Names\*\* will look like, go to the Curriculum Diagram Screen (see section D22 in the Manual) and select : Customize ➡ TGNS ➡ Show TGNS in Batches

This feature may only be available for SIMS .net and WCBS / PASS ...for other systems please ask the company's HelpDesk whether it is possible.

## Exporting

When you are ready to do the export, and have checked all steps A - H above, then:

1. Use  (on the front screen of **TimeTabler**) to get the very latest version of the program,
2. Visit our web-site to get the very latest version of the **next** part of the Documentation, (Export Document 2) at: <https://www.timetabler.com/export.html>

**\*\* A further note about Teaching Group Names (TGNs)** (eg. 7A/En1)

For some exports [eg. SIMS, RM Integris G2, Advanced Cloud School (Progresso) or Facility] **TimeTabler** creates the Teaching Group Names during the export.

In these cases you can choose the format at Step 5 of the export.

eg. 7A/En1 or 7A-En1 or 7AEn1 or 7A.En1 or 7A\En1 etc

For other exports (to RM Integris Classic, SchoolBase, IES, WebEIM & School2000) the MIS creates the Teaching Group Names - or more likely relies on them already existing in the MIS. In these cases, see their documentation for how to add & edit Teaching Group Names, etc.

Note: What we call 'Teaching Groups' are called 'classes' in SIMS.net, or 'sets' in some other MIS.

A copy of these Guidelines is available from the **KnowledgeBase** in the 24/7 Help & Support Centre (accessed via the front screen of **TimeTabler**) ...as are many other useful articles, and HelpMovies.