



Implementation Briefing (Amended December 2008)

Cost Calculator Users

The CCfCS is designed to allow multiple users within a local authority to obtain the analyses and cost comparisons they wish, based on a particular set of local authority data that has been imported into the application. A single copy of the data is set up, and each user can access it using their own copy of the program. For security reasons, access to the CCfCS is permitted only by logging on with a user account.

These user accounts are set up and administered by the person with the CCfCS user account 'Accounts Admin'. There are two other types of CCfCS user accounts. These are: 'Data Admin' accounts for the person (or persons) with authority to import and edit data and set up the way the CCfCS runs in the local authority; and 'Reporter' (sometimes called 'User') accounts for all other users, who can specify the analyses they wish to do, then view and save the resulting reports. All users choose their own password once their account has been set up. Further information on system security is in Appendix C of the User Guide.

Accounts Administrator

The person who operates the 'Accounts Admin' account controls access to the CCfCS system. The Accounts Administrator creates each new user account, deciding whether its permissions should be those for a Data Administrator or a User. You don't need to have any database experience to take on this role.

Data Administrator

The 'Data Admin' account lets you prepare the CCfCS for use in your authority. The Data Administrator uses the data import mechanism to bring the local authority's child and placement data into the CCfCS. This user account has permission to create and edit unit cost sheets. You don't need to have any database experience to act as Data Administrator, but you do need to be familiar with organising computer files and handling data so that you can undertake the installation tasks described below.

Data to be Imported

Table 1 on page 15 of the User Guide lists the child and placement data required by the CCfCS. More detailed information about coding is in Table 2 on page 55. Since many of the items are variables collected for the SSDA 903 annual return, the person responsible for preparing that return is likely to be able to supply the data. To apply the appropriate cost variations, the CCfCS also uses data on other variables (for example, offending) that may be less readily available. Data from the finance office is also needed on individual placement fees or allowances. The Import Setup form described in section 7.3 of the User Guide provides considerable flexibility of data formats that can be imported.

Data supplied to the CCfCS may contain extraneous fields, which will be ignored. Also, except for the

variables marked as mandatory in Table 1, other variables can be omitted and are then set to their default values (typically the cheaper option, for example that the child does not have a characteristic such as disabilities). The Data Administrator can add additional data to that already in the CCfCS at any time. This includes data on fields for which there was previously no data available, and additional placement information to update the data set.

System Requirements

The CCfCS is a Microsoft Access 2003 application that contains Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) code. It produces its reports in Microsoft Excel 2003. Users with administrative privileges need personal computers (PCs) running Microsoft Windows 2000 or XP with both Access and Excel 2003 installed. Users who have Reporter status need to have Excel 2003 on their computers, but may use the run-time version of Access supplied with the CCfCS Demonstration version. Office 2007 can be used for Implementation version 7.5, – see Appendix G of the User Guide.

Installing the Demonstration Version

People who install the Demonstration version of CCfCS select the appropriate option: either to install CCfCS without Access runtime if they already have Access installed, or to install CCfCS with Access runtime. Whichever option they choose, the installation steps are exactly the same in both cases. If you use the 'Typical' installation option, the programs will be installed in your 'My documents' folder, or you can use the 'Custom' installation option to specify a different folder to which the program should be installed (but you must have permission to install programs in the specified folder). Full installation instructions for the Demonstration version are provided in Appendix D of the User Guide.

Installing the Cost Calculator Implementation Version

The Cost Calculator for Children's Services (CCfCS) is supplied as two components: the front end program and the back end database which contains the raw data tables. The idea of the front end and back end databases is that the back end database contains all the data, which should be kept on the server and can be updated by the Data Administrator whenever new data need to be imported. The front end database should be placed on individual users' computers, so they can perform the tasks they need without the calculation results being affected by new data, or by other users changing the parameters.

Data Administrator Tasks

The Data Administrator sets up the CCfCS. You need to link the front end and the back end database (we recommend putting the back end database on the server, and a copy of the front end database on each individual user's computer). You need to set the import path of the data to be imported (again, we recommend putting the data on the server), and the path to which reports are output (this path will be on each individual user's computer; use a common path and folder name for all users). You need to fill in the import setup form listing which fields are provided in which file and any specific formats for the fields. You then import the data to the back end database, and send the front end to all users.

When new data need to be imported, the Data Administrator imports the data and adds it to the existing back end database. The updated database is then available to all users. If there is a new release of the CCfCS, you send a new front end to all users. Detailed installation instructions for the Implementation Version are provided in Appendix B of the User Guide.

Network Permissions

It is recommended that the back end database and the data to be imported are installed on the server. Appropriate network permissions are therefore needed to install CCfCS.

For further information visit: www.ccfcs.org.uk or contact the Cost Calculator Development Officer, email: costcalculator@lboro.ac.uk.