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G-Cloud15
Access NCCIS
Service Definition

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1 Service Overview

Client Caseload Information Systems (CCIS) are local databases that provide local authorities (LAs) with the information they need to support young people to engage in education and training; to identify those who are not participating and to plan services that meet young people's needs.

Each CCIS system is required to provide a monthly return of data to the DfE in accordance with the management information requirement and xml schema definition (XSD) as well as the Annual Activity Survey.

Data received by the LA is verified and processed into a snapshot database used to provide local authority performance tables specifically around the NEET (Not in Education, Education or Training) agenda.

The process of data collection, validation, and reporting as well as help line services and support including the online web portal are the main components that make up the National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS).

Core NCCIS Services

Database
Licence and hosting of the primary/current NCCIS database and up to the previous 4 years for historical reporting purposes. The database includes all of the required elements of the CCIS Management Information Requirement as well as extended data for the purposes of reporting and matching information. The database is refreshed each year with key data carried forward to ensure continuity of reporting.

NCCIS Application Suite
NCCIS comprises of a number of bespoke applications used to manage and process the data transferred in and out of the NCCIS solution. Each application is licenced by the Access Group and includes support and maintenance. The applications combine to provide the following key functionality:

- NCCIS Receiver/Staging
- Submission Checker
- NCCIS XML Import
- Workbook Generator
- Audit files generator
- NEET Calculator
- DWP Data Processor
- ONS Data Processor
- Not Known/NEET Match

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- Annual Data Migration Tool
- Performance Table Generator

Access agrees to include minor changes or amendments to the applications/functions listed above as part of the support and maintenance agreement; however significant changes or new functionality can be provided at extra cost. Bespoke development of new features or changes, including project management, installation and implementation costs will be based on SFIA costings provided in our G-Cloud entry.

NCCIS Web Portal
The NCCIS Web Portal is the secure interface between the customer and local authorities or service providers.

Access to the portal requires a named user account. User accounts are issued through the Helpline Service on request and only after identities have been verified. Accounts are assigned varying levels of access depending on the type of user (e.g. Local Authority user, CCIS supplier, etc.).

The Web Portal is the channel through which the statutory monthly XML submission files are transferred to the customer. Only users with appropriate access are able to upload their files.

The Web Portal
provides access to key documentation, information and data useful to local authorities and service providers. Published content is controlled by the customer and placed onto or removed from the portal by Access.

The Web Portal also provides a secure means for local authorities and service providers to securely transfer between one another, supporting data sharing and co-operative working.

Helpline Services
The Helpline Services provide telephone, email and on-line support to local authorities and service providers delivering CCIS. The helpline deals with all queries and issues relating to the CCIS Management Information Requirement including XML problems, Submission Errors, Data Errors, Reporting issues, Data Recording guidance, Performance Tables, young person transfer and general enquiries.

All questions and issues are logged within our case management system. All subsequent communication and correspondence are also recorded against the case. Each case is subject to our service levels and closely monitored to a satisfactory conclusion.

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The Helpline service also manages access to the NCCIS Web Portal creating, resetting and disabling user accounts.

Quarterly performance reports on the helpline service detailing number of calls, response times and conclusion are provided and presented at performance meetings.

Management of Monthly Submissions

Each month the customer receives submissions for 151 local authorities, some directly from the authority and some from sub-regional service providers. Each submission is transferred through the NCCIS Web Portal and security checked before being verified and processed.

Access monitors the status of each submission and follow up services that have not yet submitted, not flagged their submission as live or have submissions that do not pass data quality checks.

Each submission undergoes a number of processes including validation, transformation, calculation (such as NEET Joiners and Leavers), export of audit files and LA workbook generation. Our solution incorporates all of these elements.

Reporting, Data Analysis and Data Management

A range of data analysis and reporting is available depending on the needs of the customer. Fixed prices can be agreed for these based on the SFIA rate card as per the following examples.

Internal data analysis

This could include:

- Monthly analysis to check the integrity of data provided by local authorities
- Checking young people who are "NEET" or "Not Known" against other areas to help identify what the young person is doing and to distribute the outcomes to
- local authorities.

Reporting

This could include:

- Managing the annual activity survey to provide summary information regarding the activity of young people who have left compulsory school education
- Monthly national and Local Authority headline data as specified by the customer
- Quarterly summaries of participation.

Data requests

This could include data about young people as specified by the customer to support evaluation projects or wider data publications such as Destination Measures.

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Documentation

Access will review and update key documentation associated with the service as follows:

- XML Schema Definition – XSD published to local authorities and CCIS suppliers.
- Management Information Requirement – Supporting the XSD
- Ad-hoc documentation/Notes
- Where requested, Access will distribute documentation through the Web Portal or by email as required.

Regional Meetings

Access will attend any regional MI meetings with LAs/Services as requested by the customer.

System Security

Penetration testing and accreditation against the system and the hosting environment by a CHECK/CREST certified company annually.

Escrow

The system/source code and technical documentation can be held in an Escrow agreement should the customer require.

Message Board

The message board has been designed to help Local Authorities share ideas, local practices and discuss policies. The forum section includes announcements that will be updated via the NCCIS administration team and a searchable list of the various topics that have been created within the Forums. Users can create their own topics and discussions that they believe other users will find interesting.

ONS Postcode Data

This includes securely processing and distributing data from external sources as requested by the customer at specific time intervals such as quarterly ONS postcode data.

Young Person Transfer

The young person transfer tool also allows Local Authorities to securely transfer young person information. Local Authorities can use this functionality to initiate the transfer of a young person from one Local Authority to another. The transfer allows authorities to see all their active transfers in one central location, making the transfer process more efficient and accountable. It also allows Local Authorities to monitor any outstanding or rejected transfer requests.

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RONI Tool

Access has developed a RONI (Risk of NEET Indicator) Tool that integrates characteristics recorded in your local CCIS with centrally held pupil data from the Department for Education (DfE). Each data point is individually weighted to generate a risk score for each young person that is currently school year 11 within your area. This score helps identify those at risk of becoming NEET.

2 Onboarding

Access Implementation Methodology (AIM)

Our consultants follow a 4-phase, 12-step process and we propose a scale of project, management and administration that's appropriate for your specific needs. From evaluation, planning and design, through to implementation of your business solution.

Phase 1, Pre-project planning

Step 1: Needs analysis

After detailed consultation we will clearly define your needs in a proposal document that identifies the benefits you will experience by updating your systems.

Step 2: Solutions demonstration

We will take you through a tailored demonstration of your proposed solution and work with you to agree which elements will be included in the initial project. We listen and take account of all your feedback and will provide a quotation outlining the anticipated cost of your project.

Step 3: Sales handover

Having finalised the project's scope and agreed commercial terms, we prepare a handover document from sales to the project team who will partner you throughout implementation. They will meet with all appropriate members of your team to ensure continuity throughout the process.

Phase 2, Configure & Install

Step 4: Definition

The Access project team will work with you to define the structure and control processes that will guarantee the success of your project. Documents that we provide you at this stage will cover all your project objectives, the full specification and success criteria. This gives total clarity over individual tasks and responsibilities to ensure you're fully informed going forward.

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Step 5: Solutions workshops

This step helps your project team become fully immersed in the proposed software. We map business processes to functionality so that you can understand how the solution will look and feel.

Step 6: Confirmation of requirements

Following your feedback from the solutions workshops, we will confirm the detailed actions and solution components necessary to meet the project success criteria we identified earlier.

Phase 3, Training

Step 7: Configuration

The components identified in Step 6 are delivered and a User Acceptance Test (UAT) system is built ready for you to carry out a pilot test. We configure and tune all the variables within the system to match your specific requirements.

Step 8: User Acceptance Test (UAT)

The UAT is conducted in a workshop environment for your staff against an agreed test plan. At the end of this step you will be ready to go live.

Step 9: Education

With a fully designed, installed and tested system now in place, we will train your staff on all relevant areas of the software. We are highly skilled at adapting our training to the learning styles of each of your staff members. We can train all of your staff or, if preferred, we will train your in-house.

Phase 4, Support

Step 10: Go Live

The test system is converted into a live working environment ready for the processing of real-time business transactions. This is managed by a pre-agreed go live check list to ensure all possible circumstances are considered and addressed. We will be on-site to answer your questions and support your users throughout this time, helping them to get maximum clarity and impact from the software as they become increasingly confident.

Step 11: Support handover

We prepare a handover document and deliver it to our ongoing support team. This document contains all the information our support consultants need to answer any future queries you may have.

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Step 12: Post project review

Your experience is extremely important to us. Shortly after you go live we will request feedback on your experience of the implementation process to help us further refine our delivery processes. We then agree sign-off for the project.

3 Additional Service Options

The table below highlights the additional value added services that our consulting teams can provide. Please take some time to review these.

Bespoke development	Any bespoke development work required to be conducted on behalf of the customer.
FlexPoints	Access FlexPoints are a cost-effective, flexible way to easily access and consume value added services including customisation, training, integration, analytics or reporting, as your business needs evolve. Access FlexPoints provide a simple way to create an allocation of points that you can call on at any time to spend on Access services. Having a banked allocation of FlexPoints provides the reassurance that as your business needs evolve you can use them to extend and modify your use of the technology.

4 Service & Support Management Details

Providing you and your users with a high level of incident support is of prime importance to us. As well as being able to answer your queries, our support staff will also be able to inform you about the latest software releases, and provide hints and tips to ensure you are getting the most out of your product. To emphasise the importance of support to Access we have over 500 employees in the UK in our Support and Customer Success functions.

Support Commitment

We recognise that the systems, software and services we supply may be critical to the well-being of your business. Our aim is to ensure that you have continuous operational capability from our products. We will help you to achieve this by providing efficient support, resolving the majority of tickets at first-line contact.

We will help you maximise your return on investment by providing the best in technical assistance, advice and customer care. We own your support queries and will ensure that they are resolved as promptly and efficiently as possible.

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Get to know our knowledge base
Knowledge Base is our huge database of commonly asked questions, articles and videos. All you need to do is Register and Login and you can find the answers you need any time of the day.

The advanced search function not only searches articles from Knowledge Base, but links up with our Community hub to display the topics that you need. So you've got everything you need all in one place.

Can't find the article to answer your question? Not a problem. Each article links to our Community so you can ask a question, or to raise a case with the Access team.

Got a question? Ask our Community
Community connects our customers together to help them solve problems and share how to get the very best out of their Access products.

Our customers know more about using our products in their jobs than anyone else. Community gives you the chance to receive – and share – friendly expert advice that goes beyond normal customer support. Discover best practice hints and tips from peers in your industry to help you make the most of your experience with your Access product.

Each of our products has its own dedicated Community, so you can get straight to the discussions that matter to you. No unnecessary searching needed.

If a question can't be answered by Community a member of the Access team will reply. We'll make sure that no query goes unanswered.

5 Account Management & Customer Success

With over 160,000 customers using products supplied by the Access Group we have a large team involved with ensuring that our customers are able to build on their investment with Access.

This includes the Customer Success team who are specialists in specific products whose role is to ensure that our customers on Standard and Premier Success plans benefit from educational webinars to ensure that you are always taking advantage of new functionality and most importantly continuing to adopt best practice in the day to day use and set up of the software.

Our Account Management team work with our customers specializing in vertical sectors or specific products. Depending on the complexity of the customer these are either office based using the latest technology to provide our customers with the highest possible levels of service or will visit sites for face to face meetings.

Our Account managers work with you keeping our customers informed on the way emerging technologies can help their business. They prepare briefings on the business,

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technical and financial benefits of technology and collaborate with customers to ensure the customer is aware of the breadth of software and support that Access can provide.

6 Backup and Disaster Recovery

The solution has been designed to cater for disasters ranging from a database restore through to a complete datacentre outage.

Backups are stored within a multi tenancy data vault and are encrypted at rest. The design of the architecture means that all data is simultaneously available in both the primary datacentre and the secondary datacentre meaning data is always backed up to another geographically diverse site.

All Servers are backed up on a daily basis at 10pm. These backups go directly to storage in the DR Datacentre to ensure off-site availability.

All systems hosted within DC2 are backed up as standard with the following retention policies:

- SQL Servers
    - Full backups every Saturday retained for 3 months except last Saturday of the month which is retained for 6 months **
        - Differential every night (excluding Fri & Sat) retained for 1 month
        - Logs every 15 minutes retained for 1 month.
            - **Pay data full backups retained for 5 years
- Non-SQL Servers
    - All non-SQL servers have a standard retention of 30 days

All backup data is replicated between Data Centres to ensure data is available in the event of the loss of a site.

Note: For SQL server backups only the database backed up, anything stored outside of this on these servers is exempt and cannot be restored.

Retention for backups:-

15-min SQL	28 days
Daily	28 days
Weekly	3 months

Backups will be deleted upon client request following termination of contract, otherwise they will be aged out via retention policies.

The solution has been designed to deliver Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) using the following definitions:

- RPO is the maximum time period in which data might be lost.

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- RTO is the duration of working time within which data should be restored after a disaster. This time starts from when a support call is logged with Access.

Ransomware/Malware
In the event of a server or service being infected then a system will need to be restored from a backup taken prior to the infection taking place (if available), in this event RPO & RTO times are not applicable.

Standard Restore Testing
We undertake restores automatically on a weekly basis via an automated process to a separate server to ensure that the backup is consistent and valid on restore.

DR Testing
We run a full DR test on a 6 monthly basis, this is a non-invasive test where we bring the DR site up in an isolated fashion to ensure the services recover (Zerto allows us to do this without bringing the production environments down).

As standard all systems will be configured with Bronze DR, in the event of a disaster the system will be recovered within a secondary Data Centre from backup with the following RPO and RTO SLA's. No DR testing is included within this option:

- SQL Server
  - 15 minute RPO
  - 12 Hour RTO
- Non-SQL Server
  - 24 Hour RPO
  - 12 Hour RTO

SQL Server
SQL Server Full Database backups are taken overnight as well as having SQL transaction logs taken at 15 minute intervals. This allows a database to be restored to an overnight position or to be restored to a chosen point in time within the day.

Frequently a database is restored following a user accidentally changing lots of data so the RPO does not always apply as the user may have changed the data several days ago, however the solution has been designed with a maximum RPO of 12 hours and a RTO of 6 hours.

Single Virtual Machine Failure – IIS or RDS Server
In the unlikely event of a single virtual machine (VM) failing (e.g. the IIS VM ceases to respond but the other VMs are still functioning correctly) then a new instance of the VM will be started. This new instance will be an exact copy of the VM from when it stopped responding. The solution has been designed so that the files on an IIS and RDS server are fairly static with an RPO of 12 hours and a RTO of 6 Hours.

Single Virtual Machine Failure – SQL Server

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In the unlikely event of the SQL Server virtual machine (VM) failing then a new instance of the VM will be started. This new instance will be an exact copy of the VM from when it stopped responding. The solution has been designed with an RPO of 12 hours and a RTO of 6 Hours.

Complete Primary Datacentre Outage
In the unlikely event that the primary datacentre goes completely dark where all VMs are lost or there is no internet connectivity an investigation period will be undertaken for 2 hours to determine the cause and decide if a datacentre promotion is required to make the secondary datacentre the primary one. Once this decision has been made the solution has been designed with an RPO of 12 hours and a RTO of 12 Hours 'Optional' Customer Copies of Backups.

7 Business Continuity

The Access Group's full and most up to date business continuity plan can be requested by emailing buyer.enablement@theaccessgroup.com

8 ISO27001 Accreditation

The Access Group holds ISO27001:2022 accreditation across the entire organisation. This independently verified certification demonstrates our commitment to protecting your data. Maintaining this accreditation requires us to demonstrate effective security controls, regular staff training, and documented processes that are tested through independent annual audits.

9 Development Life Cycle

NCCIS has a detailed roadmap of improvements driven by customers, statutory requirements and our own roadmap. We take a partnership approach to developing and refining our product roadmap and delivering on the promises we make. This includes individual meetings with our customers and active participation in user groups. The developments set out in the roadmap are the direct results of this partnership approach and reflect individual specifications refined through this rigorous process. UI/UX prototyping tools form a critical part of this process, allowing wireframes and example user journeys to be demonstrated to our customers at an early stage, gaining valuable feedback before development begins. This allows us to ensure that what we develop meets the wider needs of our customer base and provides users with the opportunity to help shape the end product.

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10 Technical Requirements

There are no server based scripts or executables which need to be run remotely from the client. There are also no components which require client side installation.
Web based functionality is supported on the following browsers (including mobile variants):

- MS Edge
- Firefox
- Chrome
- Safari

Owing to the way most browsers now auto-update, our testing can only practicably focus on the most recent version of the browser publicly available at the time of testing a development item. As part of our regression and release procedures, wider application testing is performed to ensure continued compliance.

11 Service Constraints

Where Access is providing managed hosting services, the agreed threshold for application availability through the Access Hosted system in any month is 99.5%.

Maintenance management: Downtime due to maintenance is very infrequent with all customers being informed in advance to minimise disruption.

Planned maintenance: We will advise customers 5 working days in advance of a 'normal' change.

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