

eCaseFile – Electronic Case File

1. Electronic Case File Background

The eCaseFile program is an electronic log book program to organize and record findings in a scientific investigation or case study, with linked sections on locations, people, items, tests etc. All inputs are automatically date/time stamped to preserve integrity – these cannot be changed by the user.

The electronic case file was designed with the following aims:

- To enable users to capture all the relevant details of an investigation in such a way that made it very difficult for them to inappropriately "share" their work.
- To encourage users to carry out their work in an orderly, timely and structured manner.
- The case file needed to be "exportable" in a format that facilitated the assessment process.

The following measures were implemented to help achieve these aims:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Users must commit to an initial plan before proceeding | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— once committed the initial plan is locked so they cannot change it subsequently to introduce "forgotten" items. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All entries are stamped with date and time, both creation time and last modified time | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— this prevents users doing things out of sequence whilst pretending they did them in a proper sequence. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All logs in the case file are additive only | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— this prevents users from "correcting" or re-sequencing their work. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Certain entries are cross-linked | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— this ensures that items are logged before being "sent for investigation". |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The case file is stored in a compact form | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— this keeps the eCase files small enough for easy transmission as e-mail attachments. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The case file is stored in an encrypted form | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— this prevents "manual adjustment" or copying between users. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The case file can be exported in RTF format | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— this allows the user and assessor to view and print the case details using a program such as MS Word. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The eCaseFile program supports a special "assessor mode" | <ul style="list-style-type: none">— this provides additional editing facilities so an assessor can repair files where necessary. (Contact the authors of eCaseFile for details of how to access this mode). |

2. eCaseFile – Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

What is an eCase File?

An eCase file is an electronic case file which has been designed to support a range of investigations. It consists of a number of different sections which contain time & date stamped information. It acts as a single storage mechanism for all the planning and actions associated with an investigation.

An eCase file holds information in a compact and encrypted format. Because it is small, an eCase file can be readily e-mailed as an attachment. Also, as it is encrypted, an eCase File can be relied upon as being an accurate record of the work of an individual. Finally, as information in an eCase file is time & date stamped, it provides an accurate record of the sequence in which actions were carried out.

For printing purposes, you can save the eCase file as an RTF file, which you can open and print from Word.

An example eCase file - with some sample information - is included with the eCaseFile distribution. To view this file, and create your own, you need to use the **eCaseFile.app** program.

How do I create an eCase File?

An eCase file is named in the form of **"*.ecf"** and is created and updated using a special standalone program called **eCaseFile.app**.

When you first save your .ecf file - it is suggested you do this as soon as you have completed the "Overview" page - navigate to where you want the file saved. It will automatically name the file according to the case and ID numbers given in your file. Further "Saves" will then save your data in the same place, updating the .ecf file and also keeping the previous saved version as a .bak file.

Can I double-click on my eCase files (*.ecf) and open up directly in the eCaseFile program?

Yes you can. What you have to do is set an "association" between **eCaseFile.app** and all *.ecf files. Once you've set up the association, you'll see that all *.ecf files have an icon similar to the **eCaseFile.app** program. Also, double-clicking on any *.ecf file will cause **eCaseFile.app** to start running and to open the *.ecf file you've clicked on.

This is a standard Macintosh procedure. For the details of how to do this, use the on-line help to look up instructions for **"changing the application that opens a document"**.

Can I save a copy of eCaseFile.app onto a memory stick to use on my standalone PC at home?

Yes you can. eCaseFile is small enough to fit on almost any modern memory stick and can be run directly from the stick if required.

Can I get a copy of eCaseFile for my Windows or Linux system?

Yes you can. eCaseFile is available for any Windows PC running Windows XP or later. In addition, eCaseFile is available for Ubuntu Linux 8 or later.

You can find alternative ZIP file distributions for Windows and Ubuntu Linux in the same place you downloaded the Macintosh version.

3. Warranties and Licensing

eCaseFile is supplied "as is" with no warranties as to its purpose, function or quality. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the correct running of the program and that the information contained in it is correct, no guarantees are given in these or any other respects.

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The eCaseFile distribution consists of a ZIP archive file which contains the eCaseFile program itself, a sample eCaseFile and this document in PDF format. Any redistribution of eCaseFile must be in the form of the original ZIP file.



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4. System Requirements

eCaseFile is supplied as a Macintosh APP file that will run directly without any installation. Simply copy the '**ecasefile.app**' file anywhere convenient and run it by double-clicking it. eCaseFile has been tested with Mac OS X 10.4 and later (including Snow Leopard).

5. Search Engine Keywords

The following keywords may help search engines to categorise eCaseFile:

Author (s)	Peter Reid & Helen J Reid
Owner (s)	Peter Reid & Helen J Reid
Title	Electronic Case File - Macintosh version
Classification	Case log program (MacOS)
Keywords	ukoer, sfsoer, case-study, record-keeping, forensic, investigation, logbook
Description	The eCase file program is an electronic log book to organize and record findings in a scientific investigation or case study, with linked sections on locations, people, items, tests etc. All inputs are automatically date/time stamped (to preserve integrity, the user cannot change these). The facility to Save as... RTF is also provided.
Creative Commons licence (url)	http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/uk/
Language	English
File size	Executable: 6.4 MB (Macintosh) Instructions: 120 KB (PDF)
File format	Executable: Macintosh .app Instructions: Adobe .pdf