NPC Excel Processor – Installation and User Guide

Overview

The NPC Excel Processor can be used to convert the NPC Study templates (Excel format) into a comma separated format for use in numerical analysis. It will also produce a QA file (which extracts the question and answer information from the templates) and a log file.
You can either process a single file, or process multiple files in a single run.

Installation Instructions

Copy folder to a location you remember on your PC. Double-click on "setup.exe". Click on "Install" (ignore the "unknown source" message). Follow the prompts.

The program will automatically start when the installation is completed. (Note, the program will attempt to install the .NET 2.0 runtime if you do not have it. In order to do this, you should be connected to the Internet during the install.)

If you need to upgrade or uninstall this program, go to Control Panel -> Add/Remove Programs. Remove "NPC Excel Processor". Follow the prompts.

To start the program go to the Start Menu -> BurchTree -> NPC Excel Processor.

Details

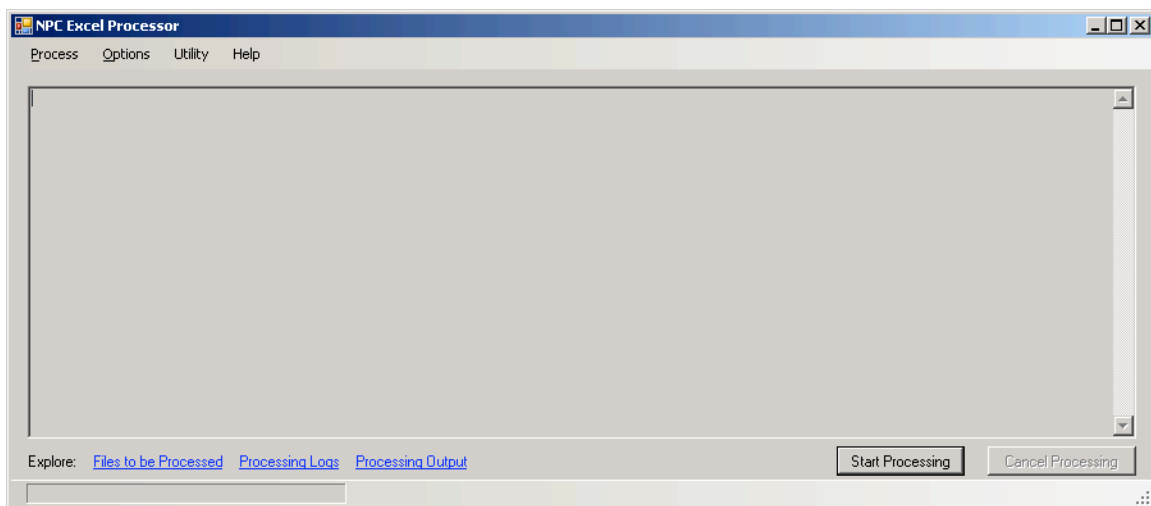When you first open the NPC Excel Processor, it should look like this:

Fig. 1 – introduction screen

You can either process a single excel template, or an entire directory full of templates. This behavior is determined by selecting the Process Menu (See Fig. 2), and choosing either "Process Single File" or "Process Directory".
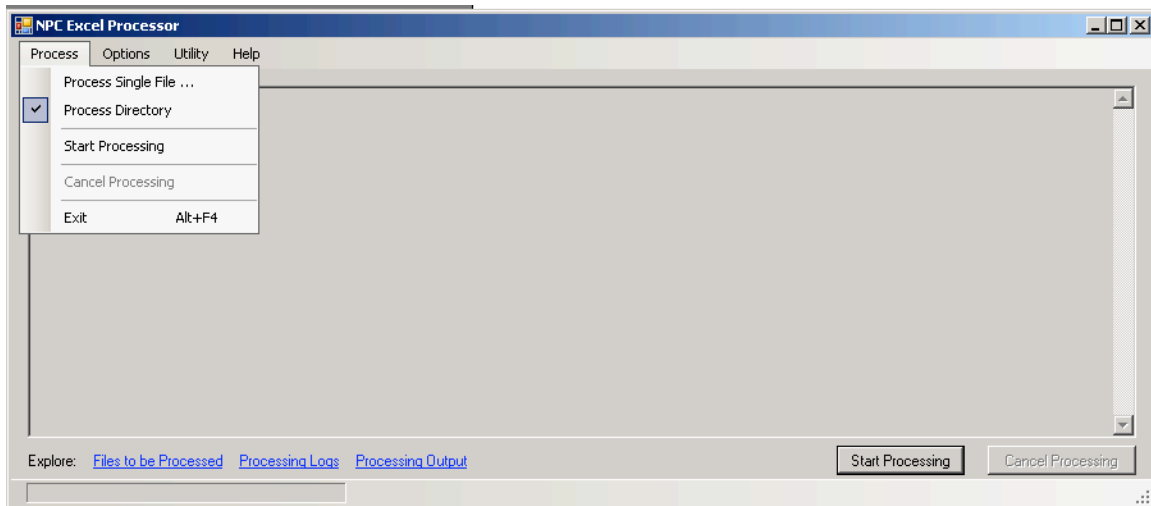

Fig. 2 – The Process Menu

If you choose to process a single file, you will be prompted to choose the excel file before you can continue.
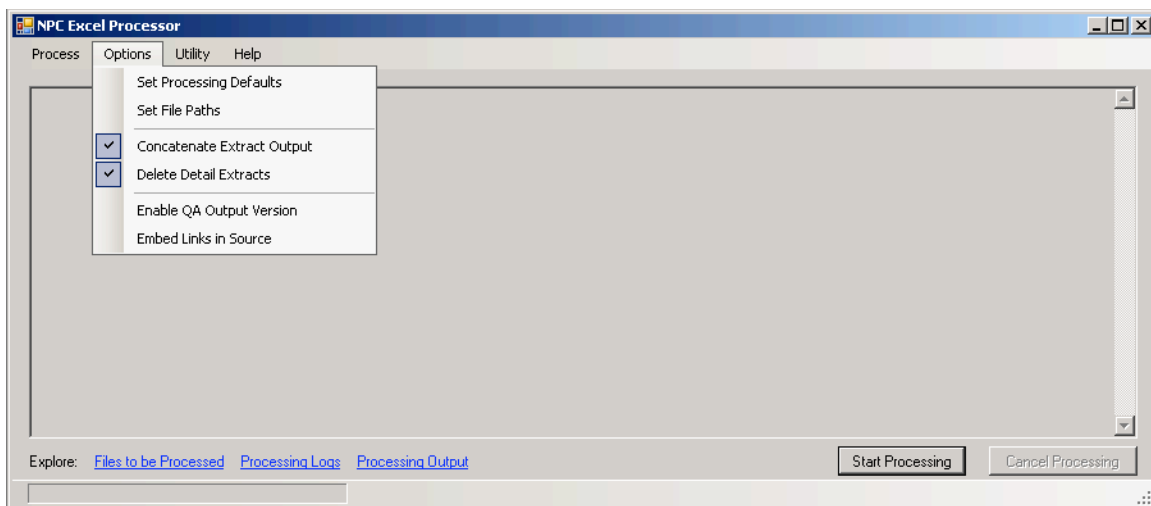

Fig. 3 – The options menu.

The options menu (see fig. 3) allows you to pick the directory where the excel files are located, if you chose the "Process Directory" option. This is accomplished using the "Set File Paths" option. This option will also allow you to choose where your output files will go, along with the log file directory.

The "Set Processing Defaults" option allows you to set some options using the screen shown in Figure 4
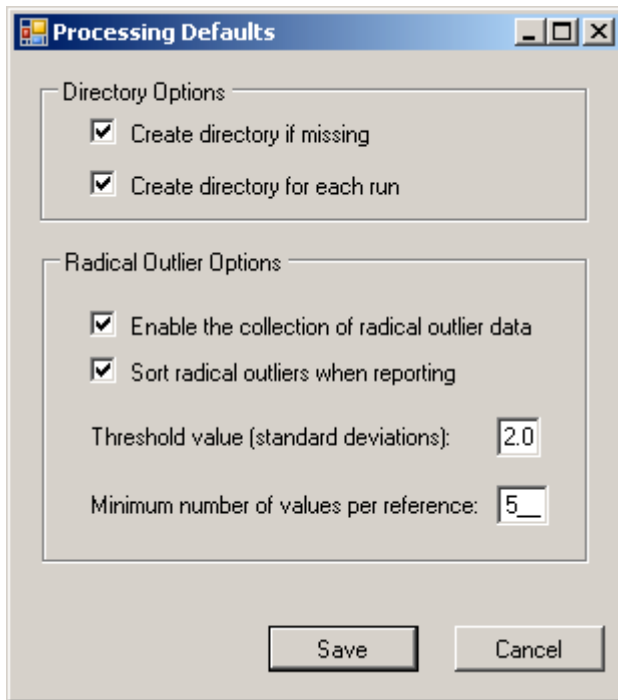
Fig. 4 – Processing defaults

In general, you can leave all of these options at their default setting

Create Directory If Missing – This will create a new directory if your chosen output directory doesn't exist

Create directory for each run – Unknown usage

The radical outlier options can be used to spot data outliers when multiple data templates are being processed – an outlier might indicate a scaling/unit error in the completion of a particular Excel template (or perhaps a typing error). If selected, it will generate additional log information

Going back to the remaining options in the Processing Options menu (Fig. 3)

There are a number of other options in this menu which can be toggled to provide the following functionality

Concatenate Extract Output – With output from multiple excel templates, you can opt to join the files together or keep them separate

Delete Detail Extracts –This creates a tidier output log when many templates are being processed simultaneously. It does this by skipping the output of some log files.

Enable QA Version – This option allows the outputting of QA information, which is the text information entered in to some of the data sheets of the template (in particular the first sheet)

Embed Links In Source – This is an advanced option which was used in validating the software, and is now not needed
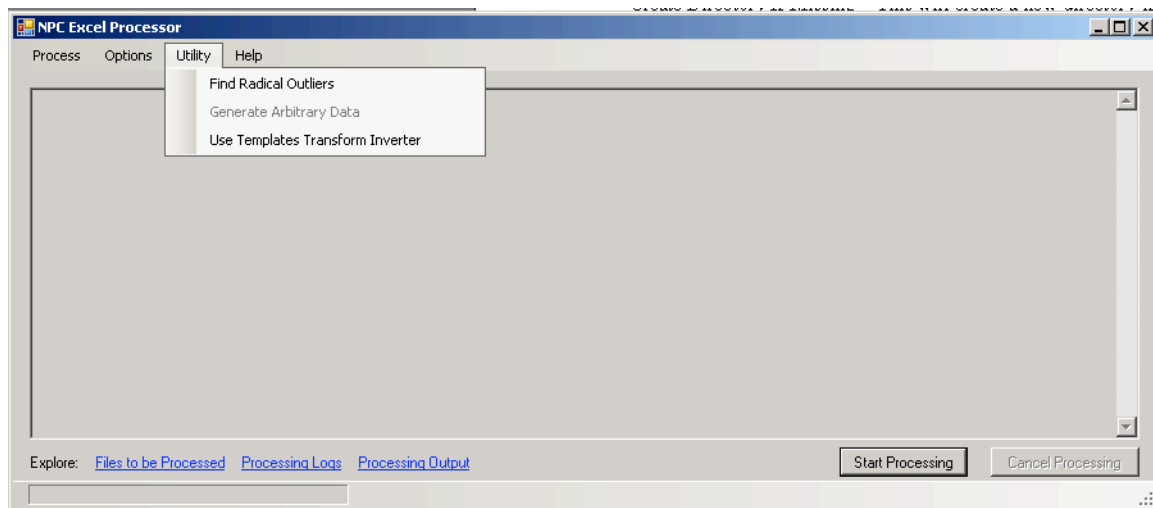

Fig. 5 – Utility Menu

The utility menu has two enabled functions (and one disabled one) . The "Find Radical Outliers" can be run on data that has been processed with the radical outlier option set. It will generate the report of outliers.

The Generate Arbitrary data template is disabled

The templates transform inverter was used during testing, and has no purpose in the generation of CSV files from Excel templates.

With all options set, the processor can be started from the Process Menu (see Fig.2) by selecting "Start Processing".

There will be information posted in the main window which reflects the processing purpose.

Note that the Help menu is not really enabled to show useful information

Troubleshooting:

If errors are encountered, they are typically accompanied by a description of the problem in the log file.

If problems persist, it is worth looking for differences between the the template which is causing errors and one of the main ones from the NPC study, to look for obvious differences.
A known area for problems is where templates are missing key question/answer information on the first sheet of the template.