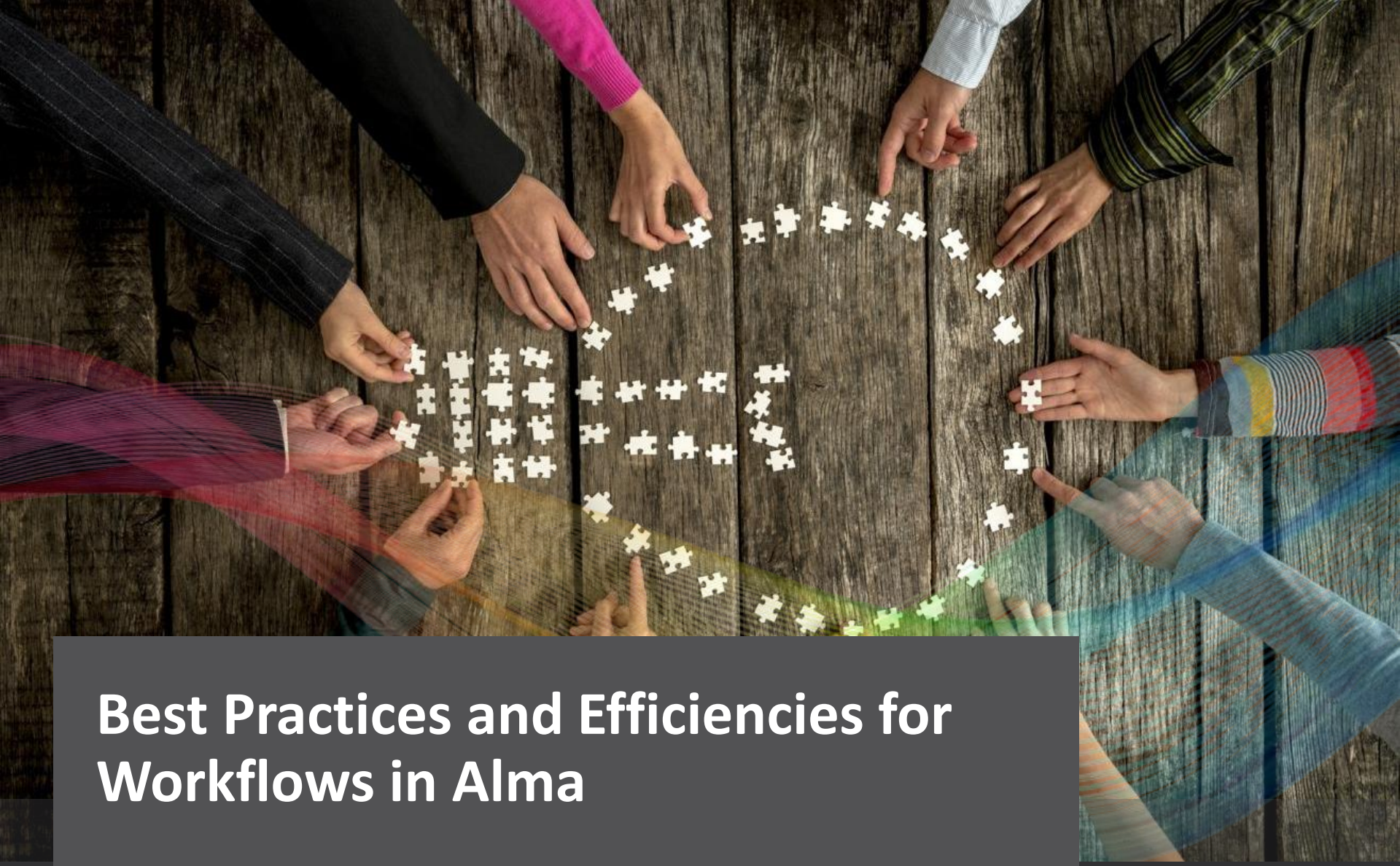

Best Practices and Efficiencies for Workflows in Alma

Amanda Robertson | Implementation Consultant

Kevin Lane-Cummings| Senior Training and Consulting Partner

ExLibris
a ProQuest Company

Introductions

Amanda Robertson

Amanda has been implementing and supporting Alma for four years as both an implementation consultant and a support analyst. Prior to joining Ex Libris, she worked as a special librarian and knowledge manager.

Kevin Lane-Cummings

Kevin has been with ProQuest for eight years, managing documentation for Serials Solutions products, training library staff on those products, and most recently creating training curricula for Alma. Prior to ProQuest, Kevin taught astronomy, edited aerospace papers, and did flight instruction.

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Objectives and Audience

By the end of this session, you will understand ways to use Alma more efficiently and usefully for your library.

This session is for Alma users who are responsible for acquisitions, fulfillment, and resource management.

While the information *can* be useful to those just starting out in Alma, we will not be providing basic instruction in Alma workflows. This session assumes you are already comfortable using Alma.

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Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Acquisitions Workflows
3. Fulfillment Workflows
4. Resource Management Workflows
5. Summary and Resources

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Introduction- Alma Workflows

Acquisitions

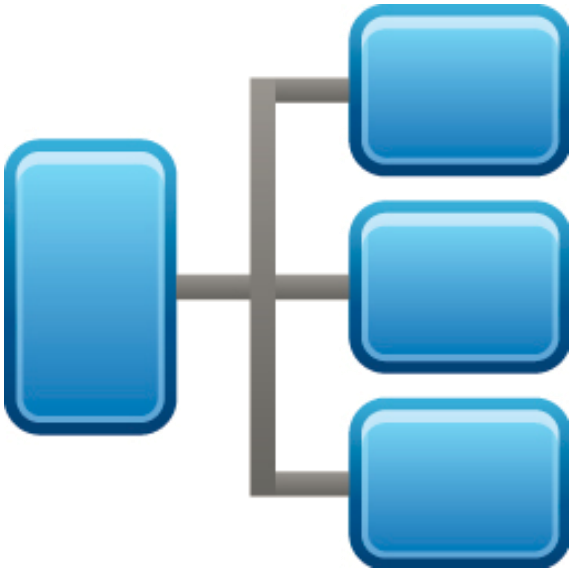
- purchasing/receiving
- invoicing
- record imports

Resource Management

- cataloging
- record imports

Fulfillment

- loans/returns
- requests
- resource sharing
- borrowing/lending
- course reserves



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Alma Workflows- User Roles

Permission to view items or perform actions are enabled by privileges (which are grouped into roles):

Administrator: Configure workflow-related rules and profiles.

Managers and **Operators**: Carry out workflow activities.

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Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Acquisitions Workflows
   I. Ordering Considerations
   II. Receiving
   III. Invoice Workflow (No ERP)
   IV. Invoice Workflow (ERP)
3. Fulfillment Workflows
4. Resource Management Workflows
5. Summary and Resources

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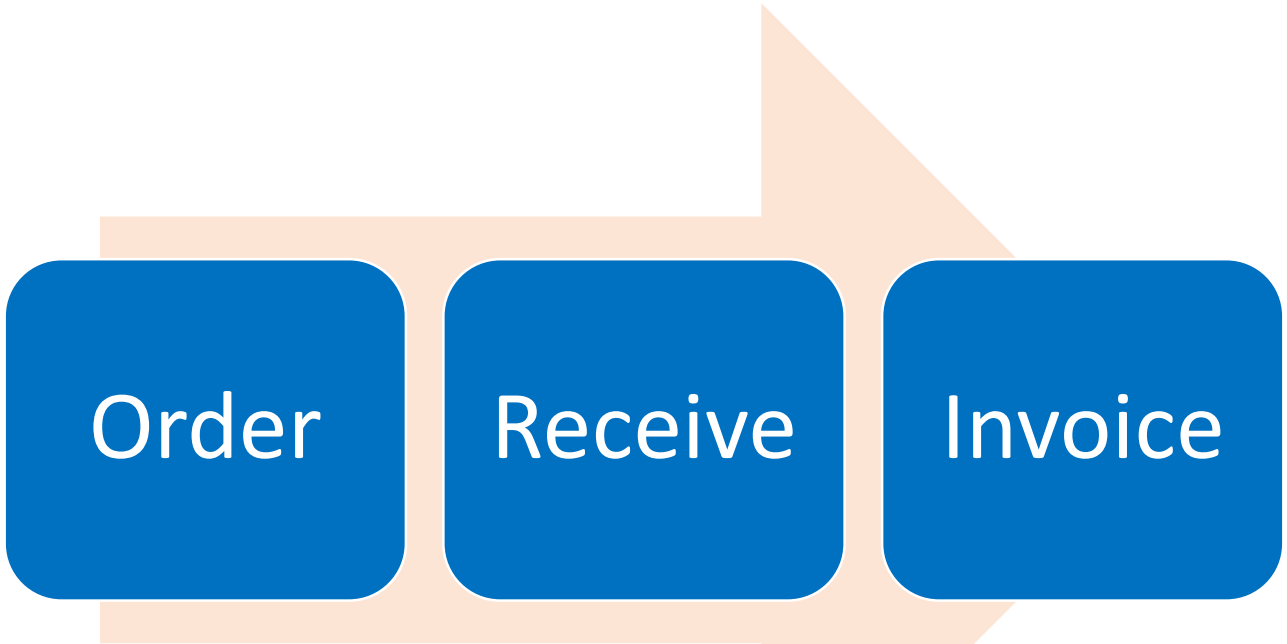
Acquisitions Workflow



- EOD File
- Create PO Line Manually

- From PO/ Manually
- Excel file
- EDI

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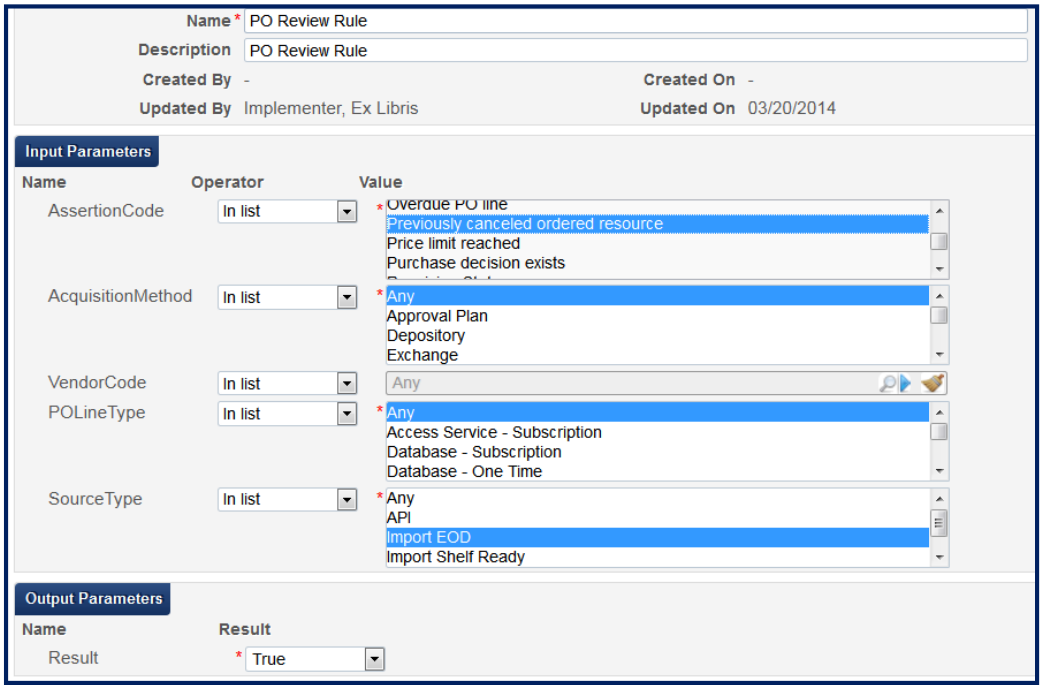
Create purchase review rules and switch default rule from true (review) to false (skip review)

Acquisitions Configuration menu > Purchasing Review Rules



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Ordering – Import Profiles

Acquisitions Configuration menu > Import Profiles

Set up unique profiles for different vendor accounts

New Order of Physical Material - Yankee Book Peddler

Create a specific profile that will only delete records if necessary.

Use naming conventions!! (see above)

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Ordering Considerations

Use a Technical PO Line for E+P orders

- Create an order line for each material type
- Primary order line (electronic); used for evaluation & payment processes
- Secondary order line (print); may be discontinued and may not require payment.
  - (secondary order line) has Acquisition method of "Technical“
  - (secondary order line) "Related POL" points to primary line

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Exercise 1

Create PO lines for electronic & print versions of an item:

1. Log in to Alma; change your “Currently at” location to an Acquisitions department if needed.

2. Go to **Resource Management > Search External Resources** and search OCLC WorldCat for *Confessions of a Shopaholic* by Sophie Kinsella – or title of your choice.

3. Find a record for an electronic **version** and click **Import.**

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Exercise 1, continued

4. Click shopping cart icon to order item.

5. Fill out PO line:
   - Purchase Type: ***Electronic Book – One Time***
   - Owning Library: ***Main Library***
   - Choose a Material Supplier
   - Enter List Price
   - Select a Fund
   - Acquisition method: Select either ***Purchase*** or ***Purchase at Vendor System***
   - Note the **PO Line #** at top of screen!
   - Select ***Order Now*** from drop-down
   - Click ***Go***.

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Exercise 1, continued

6. Go back to **Resource Management > Search External Resources** and search OCLC WorldCat for *Confessions of a Shopaholic* by Sophie Kinsella, or title you used for the electronic version.

7. Find a print book version and click Import.

8. Click shopping cart icon to order the item.

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Exercise 1, continued

9. Fill out PO line:
   - Purchase Order Type: ***Print book – one time***
   - Owning Library: ***Main Library***
   - Choose Material Supplier
   - Acquisition method: select ***Technical***. (Do not fill in list price or fund; not required.)
   - Open the **Additional** section. Search for your first PO line to associate that PO line to this one.
   - Select ***Order Now*** from drop-down and click ***Go***.

10. Go to Acquisitions menu > Search for PO Line. Find by title to see both PO lines.

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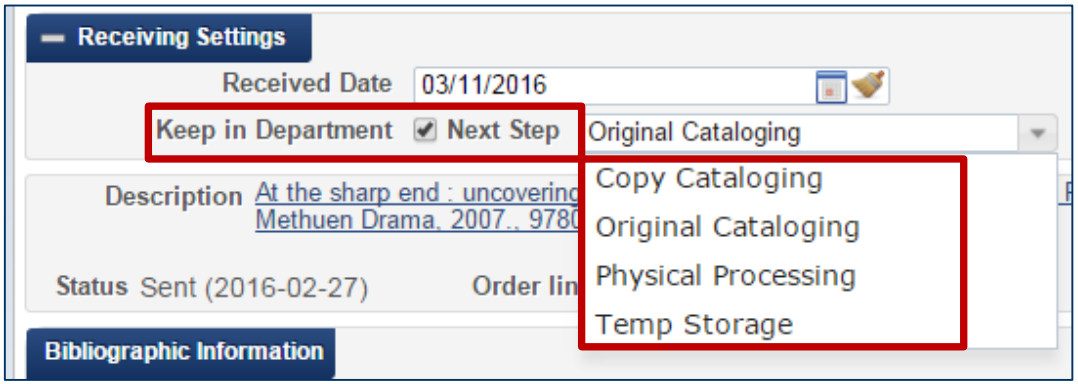
Use “Keep in Department” functionality to assign “next step”



Administration > General configuration > Configuration Menu > Work Order Types

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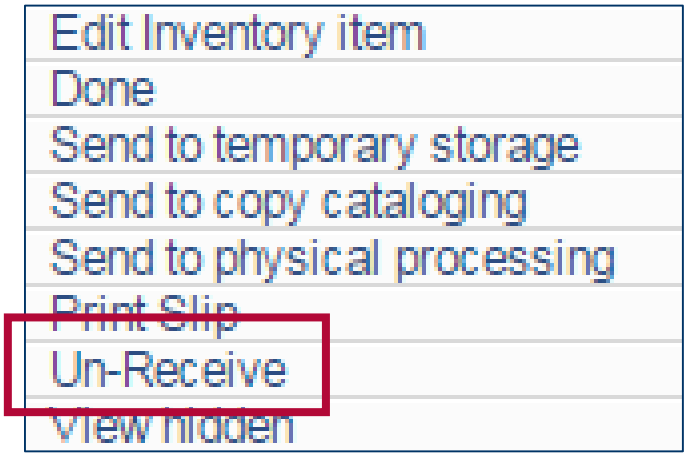
Receiving – Un-Receiving

Item can be un-received if …

- It is still in the receiving department (“keep in department”)
- There are no requests or interested users
- It is part of a one-time order



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Use Claiming if item not received

- Parameters defined in vendor record.

Claim Date Calculation	Examples
Expected receipt date after ordering + claiming grace period	Order made on April 1st. Expected receipt date after ordering of 5 days + grace period of 5 days. (10 days total). Expected arrival is April 11th.
Serial issues: Receipt date of last-received issue + claiming grace period + subscription interval	Received last issue on April 1st + claiming grace period of 5 days + subscription interval of 30 days. Expected arrival date: May 6th.

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Receiving- Claiming

Claiming job runs nightly.

Acquisitions menu > Purchase Order Lines > Claim *or* **Claims** Task List

Claim notifications:

- For Physical one-time items: Claim letter automatically sent from Alma to vendor
- For Subscription/continuous and Electronic POLs: Manually send email to vendor from PO Line > Communications tab

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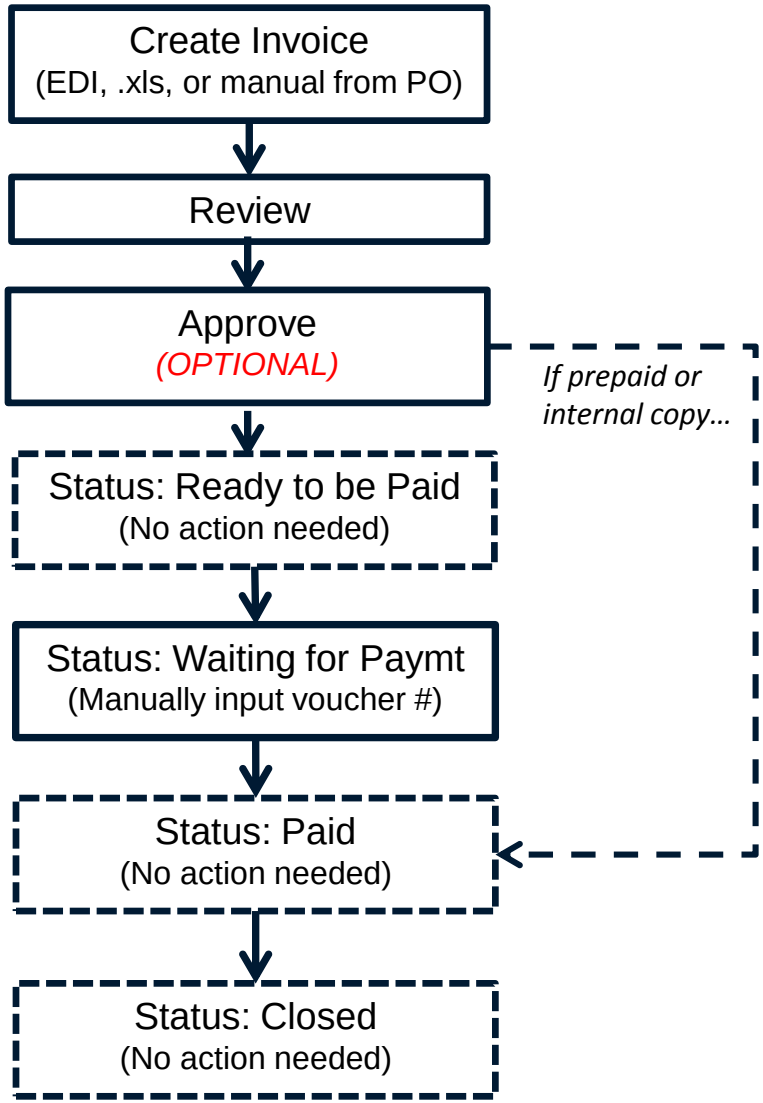
III. Invoice Workflow (No ERP)



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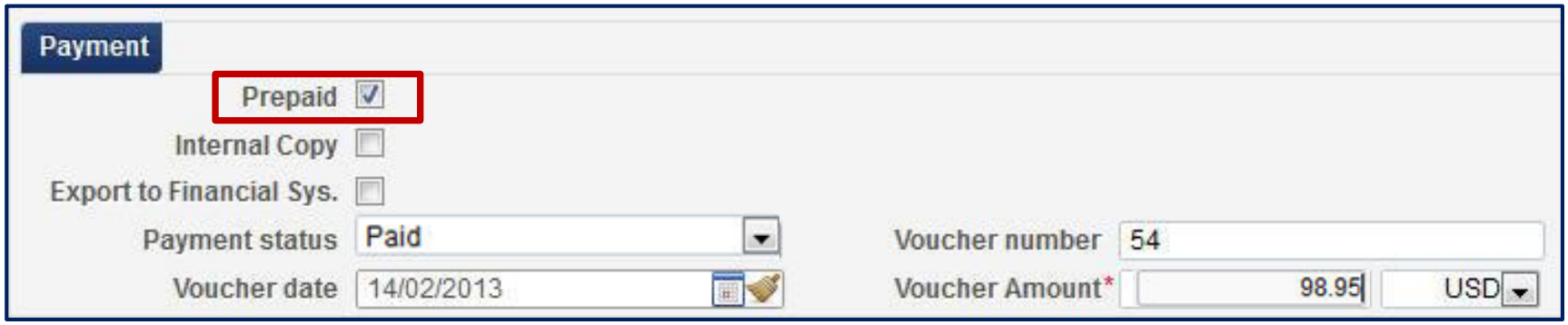
Invoice Workflow : Prepaid Invoices (No ERP)

Prepaid checkbox is enabled when payment is ***not*** *handled by Accounting.*



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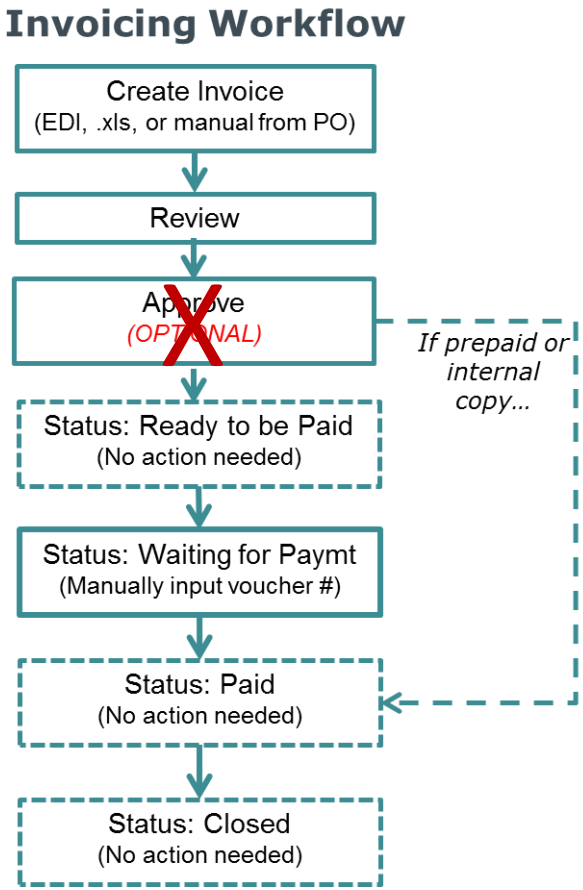
Invoice Workflow Considerations (No ERP)

- If ERP is not used for invoicing, skip Ready to be Paid and move directly to Waiting for Payment or Closed.



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Invoice Workflow Considerations (No ERP)

Configure *skipping* Ready to be Paid step:

- Acquisitions Configuration Menu > General > Other Settings
- Click **Customize** button and set **invoice_skip_erp** parameter value to *true*

Enabled	parameter key	parameter module	parameter value	free text description	Updated By	Last Updated	
✓	assertion_over_po_line_pric	acquisition	1000		exl_impl	28/01/2014	Restore
✓	auto_claim	acquisition	Y	Send Claim notification to ve	-	-	Customize
✓	expended_from_fund_defaul	acquisition	true		-	-	Customize
✓	exportPrepaidInv	acquisition	false	Invoice to be exported to ER	-	-	Customize
✓	handle_invoice_payment	acquisition	true		-	-	Customize
✓	invoice_allow_vat_in_line_le	acquisition	false		-	-	Customize
✓	invoice_high_total_price	acquisition	2500		-	-	Customize
✓	invoice_not_unique	acquisition	false		-	-	Customize
✓	invoice_prefix	acquisition	INV-		-	-	Customize
✓	invoice_skip_erp	acquisition	false	Dont send invoices to ERP.	-	-	Customize

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Invoice Workflow Considerations (No ERP)

Disable payment on all invoices if not using ERP integration

Acquisitions Configuration >Configuration Menu > Other Settings

- "handle_invoice_payment" to “false”

- Waiting for Payment requires a voucher # to close the invoice
  - Invoices that pass the review stage immediately close
  - If a voucher number is needed, you can record it even after the invoice is closed
  - If invoice needs to be altered, it should be set back to Review

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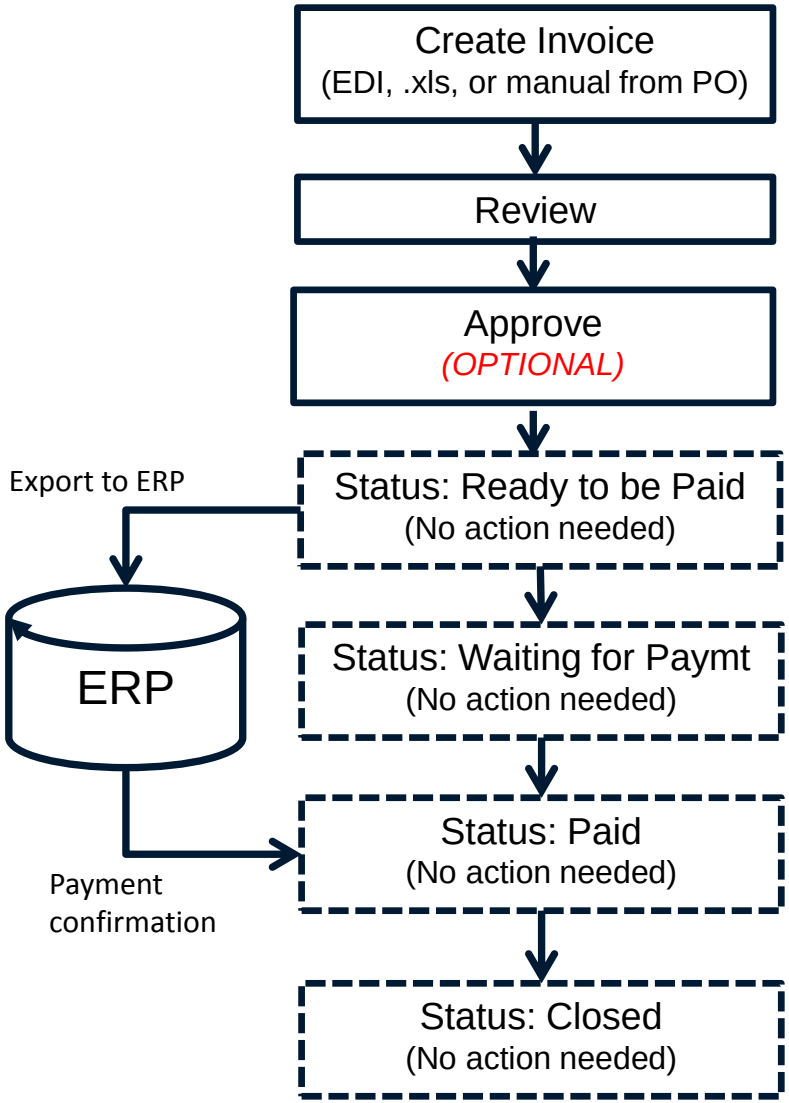
IV. Invoice Workflow (ERP)

Option: ERP



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Invoice Workflow : ERP Configuration step

Administration > General Configuration > External Systems

1) Set up S/FTP connection details

Update S/FTP connection

Name	Invoice payments	ID	46591210000521
Definition Type	FTP	Created by	exl_support (10/30/2012)

S/FTP Connection Details

Name	Invoice payments		
Description	Invoice payments		
Server	ftp.exlibris-usa.com	UserName	public
Port	21	Password	**********
Sub-directory	alma	Max. Number of Files	10000
Min. Number of Files	1	Max. file size	100000
Size type	MB	Allow Navigation	True
Ftp Server Secured	No		

2) Set up Integration Profile

External System

External System

Code pay_invoices Name Pay Invoice Integration Type Finance

General Information | Actions | Contact Info

Actions

Import Payment Confirmation

Active * Active Non Active

Plugin

Input File Path invoice_in

Run

Schedule Not scheduled

Export Invoice For Payment

Active * Active Non Active

Plugin

Output File Path invoice_out

Run

Schedule Not scheduled

Use xsd format

Funds Allocation Loader

Active * Active Non Active

Plugin

Input File Path

File Extensions * Csv Excel

Schedule Not scheduled

Run

3) Run Fund Allocation Loader to synchronize ERP and Alma funds

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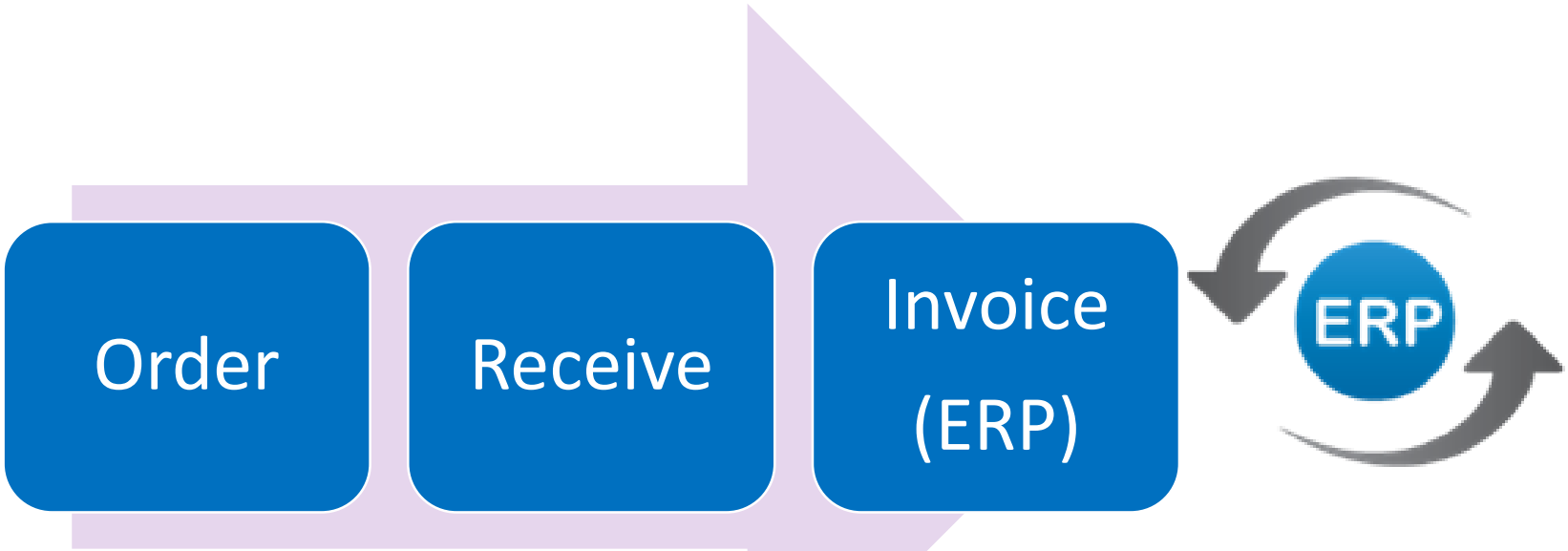
Invoice Workflow (with ERP)



- EOD File
- Create PO Line Manually

- From PO/ Manually
- Excel file
- EDI

Via FTP:

- Export payment requests to ERP
- Import payment confirm to Alma

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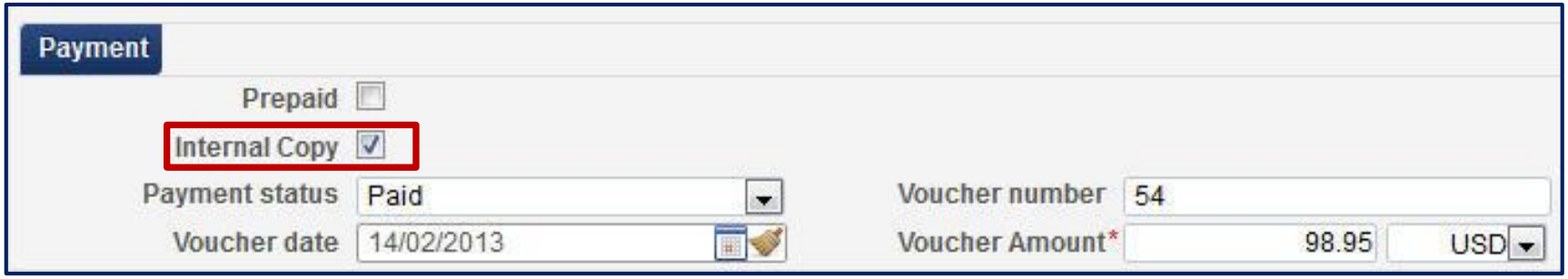
Invoice Workflow : Internal Copy

Internal Copy appears ***only*** when Alma is set to send invoices via the ERP.



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Invoice Workflow : Prepaid Invoice (with ERP)

Invoice Details

1 2 Back Cancel Save and Create Invoice Lines

Invoice Number *
Invoice Date *
Total amount * USD
Total invoice lines amount -
Vendor *
Vendor Account
Vendor Contact Person
Payment method Accounting Department
Invoice Reference #

Additional Charges

Use Pro rata

VAT

VAT % 0.0
Inclusive
Amount 0.0
Expended from fund
Vendor tax (local

Payment

Payment

Prepaid
Internal Copy
Export to Financial Sys.
Payment status Paid
Voucher number 54
Voucher date 14/02/2013
Voucher Amount * 98.95 USD

Export to Financial Sys. (ERP) available if ERP enabled in Alma configuration

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Invoice Workflow – Decisions

If same staff member performs both review and approval- skip approval step.

Acquisitions Configuration > Configuration Menu > Invoice Approval Rules.

1. Edit *Default* Approval Rule (“Default Review Rule”)
2. For Output Parameters, select **False** for the result and click **Save**.
3. Disable all other approval rules (un-select yellow check mark)

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Exercise 2

Disable approval on all invoices:

1. Go to **Acquisitions Configuration > Configuration Menu** and select **Invoice Approval Rules.**

2. Find the *Default* Approval Rule (i.e., “Default Review Rule”) and click **Edit.**

3. For Output Parameters, select **False** for the result and click **Save**.

4. For all other approval rules listed, click yellow checkmark in Enabled column to disable each.

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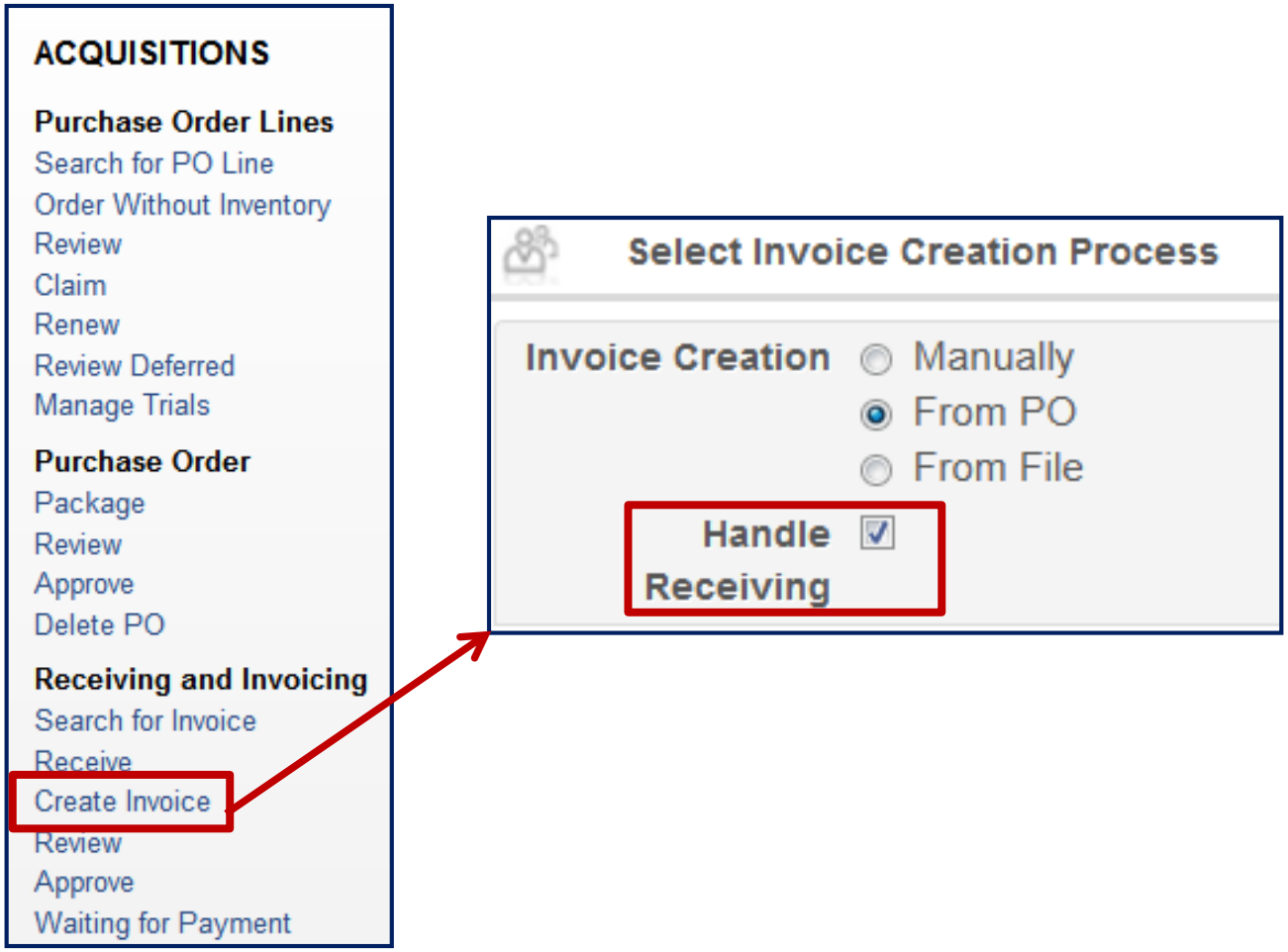
Invoice Workflow Considerations

If same staff do receiving and invoicing tasks, consider doing **receiving at the time of invoicing** to save time



Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Acquisitions Workflows
3. **Fulfillment Workflows**
   I. Physical Items
   II. Bookings
   III. Lost Items
4. **Resource Management Workflows**
5. **Summary and Resources**

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I. Fulfillment Workflow: Physical Item Requests

Task	Who does task	System used
1. Submit request	Patron or Library Staff	Primo or Alma
2. Print request slip	Circulation staff	Alma *(Pick from Shelf)*
3. Go to shelf/retrieve item	Circulation staff	N/A
4. Scan-in item at Circulation desk	Circulation staff	Alma *(Scan in Item)*
5. Place item on hold shelf	Circulation staff	N/A
6. Loan item to patron	Circulation staff	Alma *(Manage Patron Services)*

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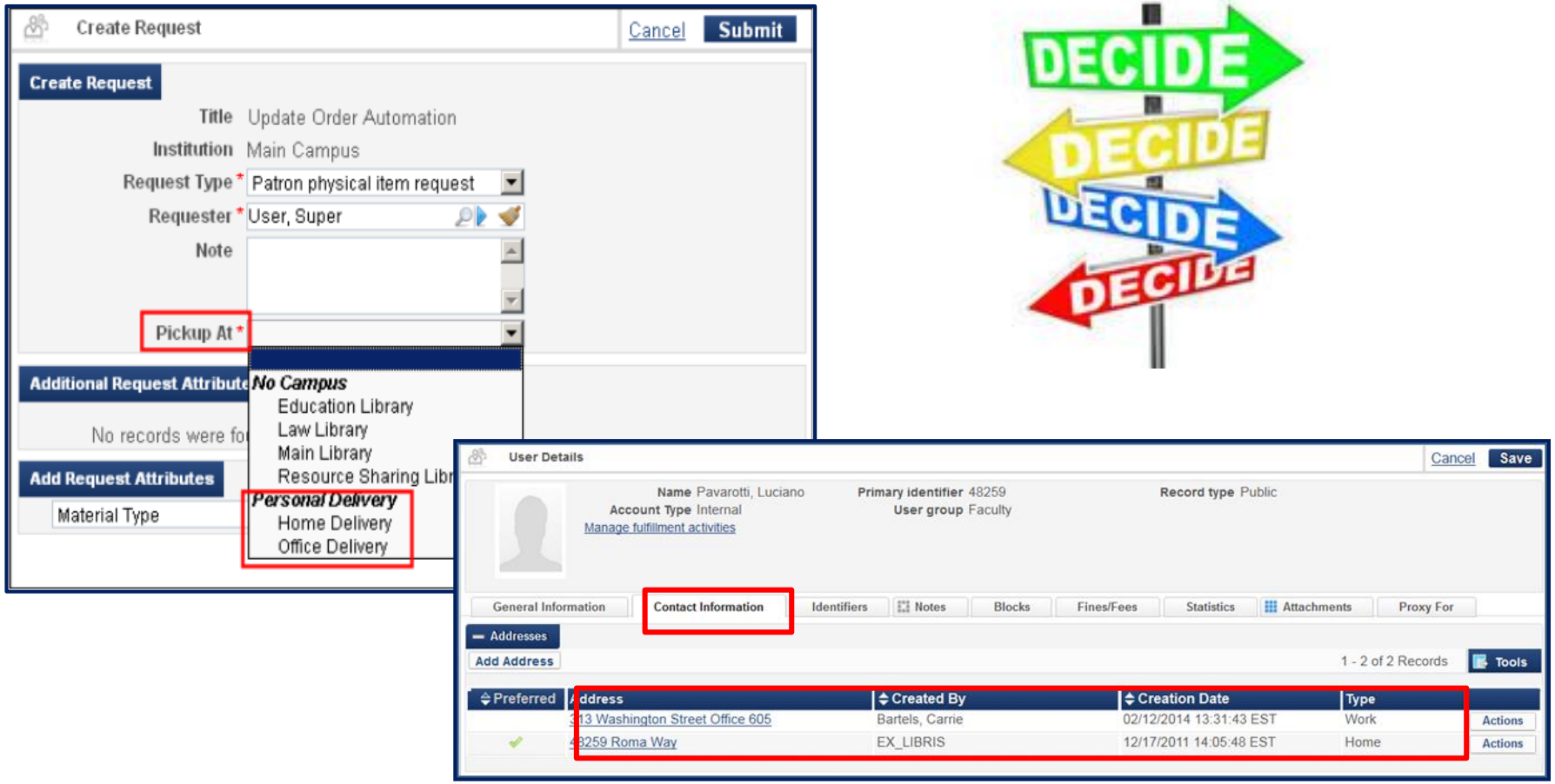
Fulfillment Workflow: Personal Delivery

Alma allows personal delivery of requested physical items to a user's office or home.



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Fulfillment Workflow: Personal Delivery Configuration

- Circulation Desk indication-personal delivery support
  - Fulfillment Configuration menu > Circulation Desks

  Select circulation desk > edit > supports personal delivery checkbox

- Terms of Use indication-personal delivery allowed
  - Fulfillment Configuration menu > Terms of use and policies
  - filter by Request > select a Terms of use > select appropriate Personal Delivery policy from drop-down
  - Configure Personal delivery fee request policy if applicable.

- Home and/or office address required in user record
  - Administration > Find and Manage Users

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II. Fulfillment Workflow : Booking Requests

- Reserves item(s) for patron for specified time frame
  - Requester knows exactly when resource is available to him/her
  - Limits amount of time item is available to requester

- Can be used for high-demand items with limited number of copies, equipment, study rooms, videos

- Can be submitted via Primo or Alma

- Requires policies, terms of use, and fulfillment unit rules for configuration

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Booking Requests Workflow

Task	Who does task	System used
1. Create request	Patron or Library Staff	Primo or Alma *(Repository Search)*
2. Verify availability of item for requested time; request submitted	Alma	Alma
3. Loan item to patron at scheduled time	Circulation staff	Alma *(Manage Patron Services)*

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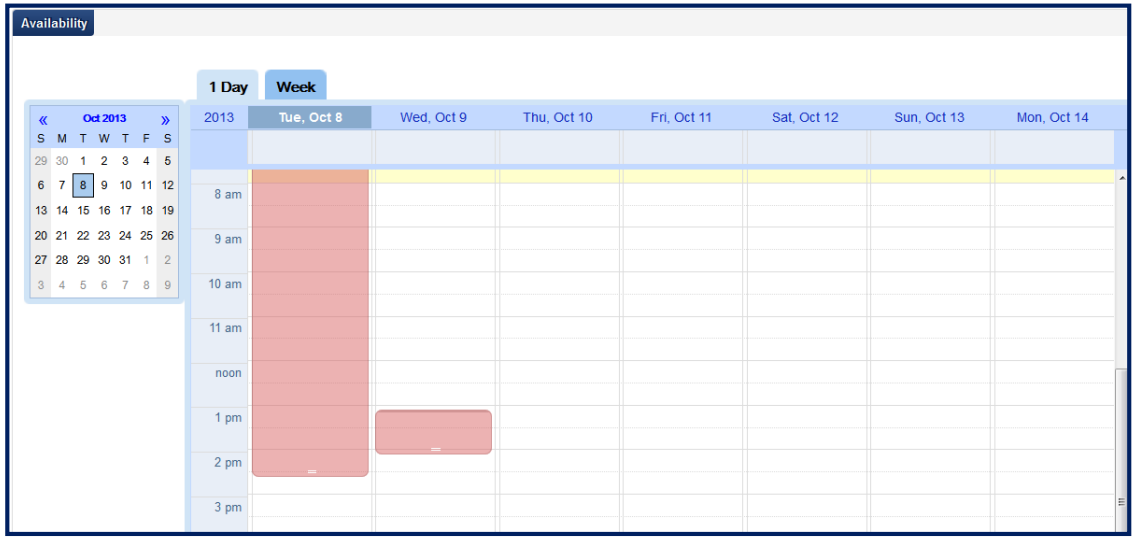
Booking Requests: Availability

Item's availability displayed in calendar format in **Availability** section of request form in Primo:

- If multiple copies of an item: Calendar takes into account availability of all copies
- If item is on regular loan prior to booking request: Shows as unavailable during timeframe of loan



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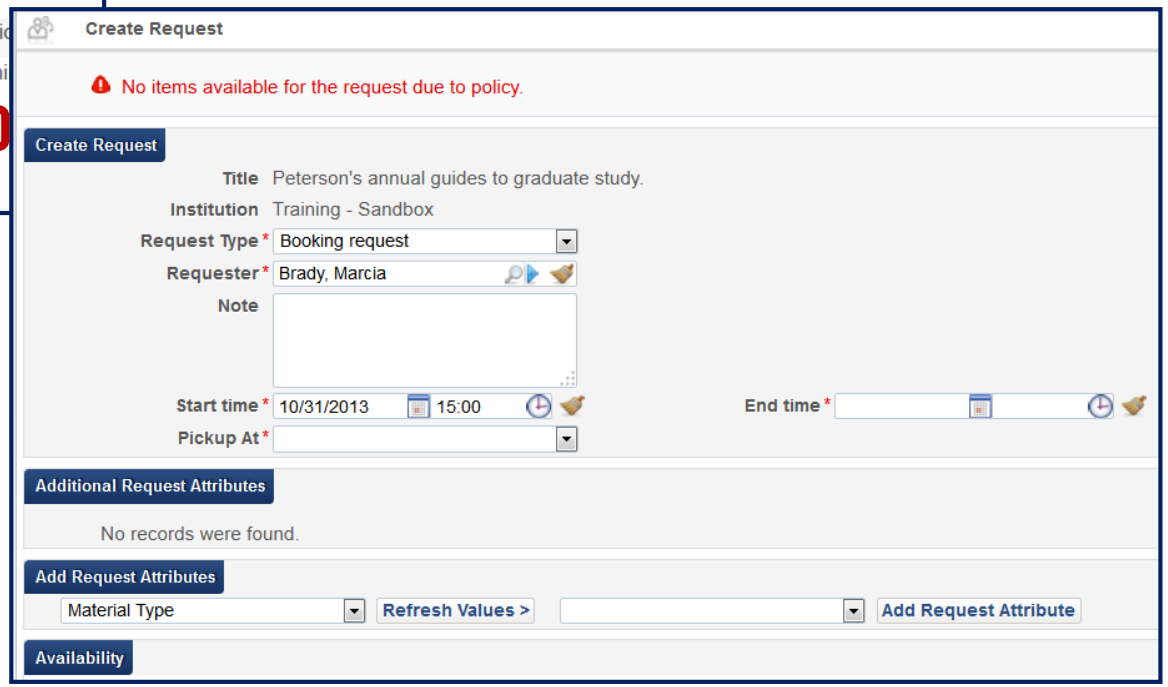
Booking Requests: Future Date

If booking request placed before *future limit* specified in policies, error message displays

Terms Of Use	Booking Requests	
Booking release time	30 minutes	-
Is item bookable	Item is bookable	Item is bookable
Maximum allowed booking length	3 hours max	-
Preview period	1 hour	1 hour preview peri
Pickup Locations	Pickup only in owning library	Must pickup in owni
Future limit	7 days	7 days future limit
Back to back booking	Back to Back booking - 4 hours	-



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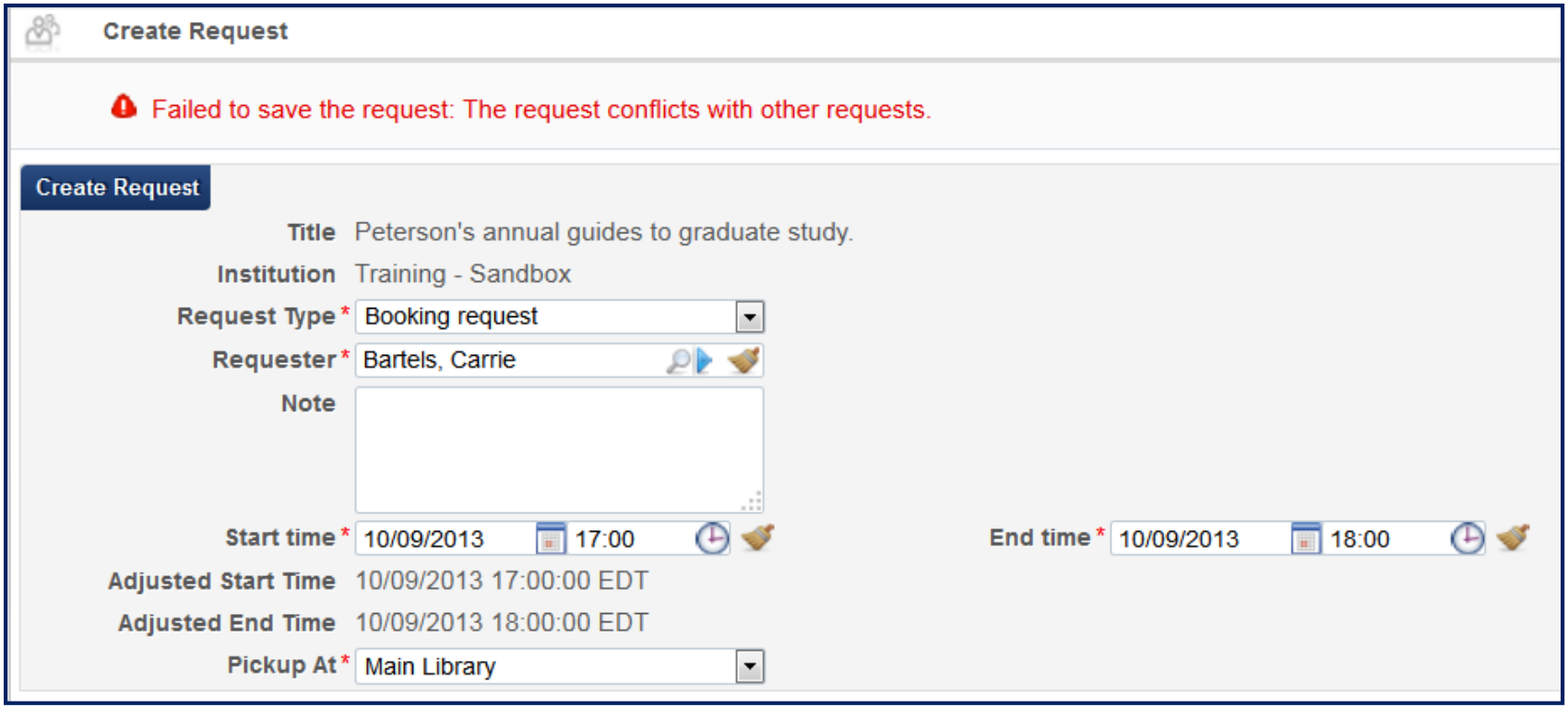
Booking Requests: Not Available

If booking request overlaps another booking request, message displays



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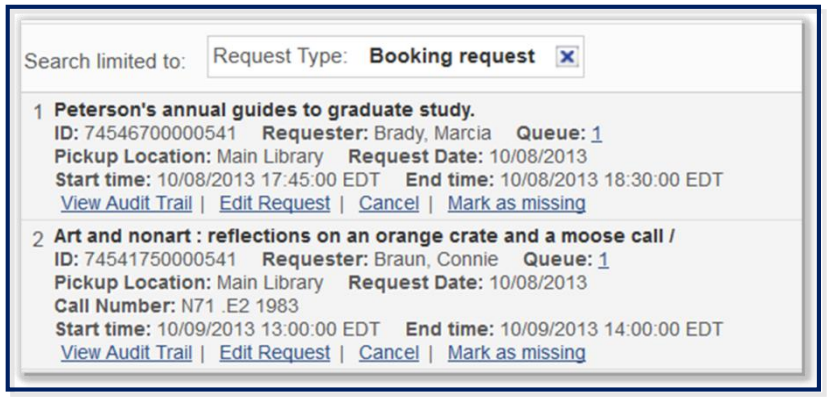
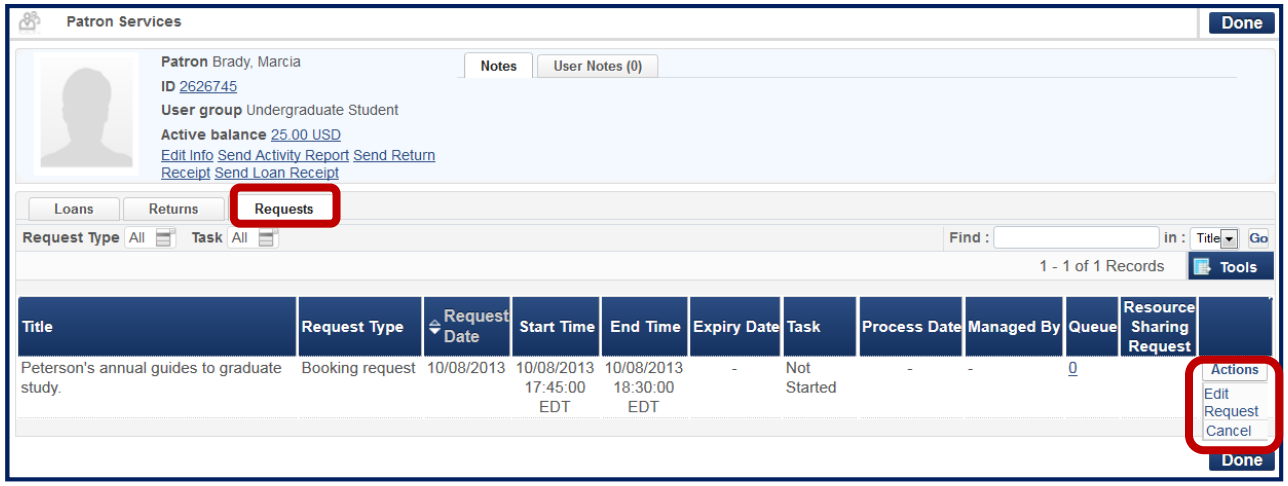
Manage Booking Requests

Monitor Requests & Item Processes: Limit request/process type to *Booking request*



Patron record: Requests tab



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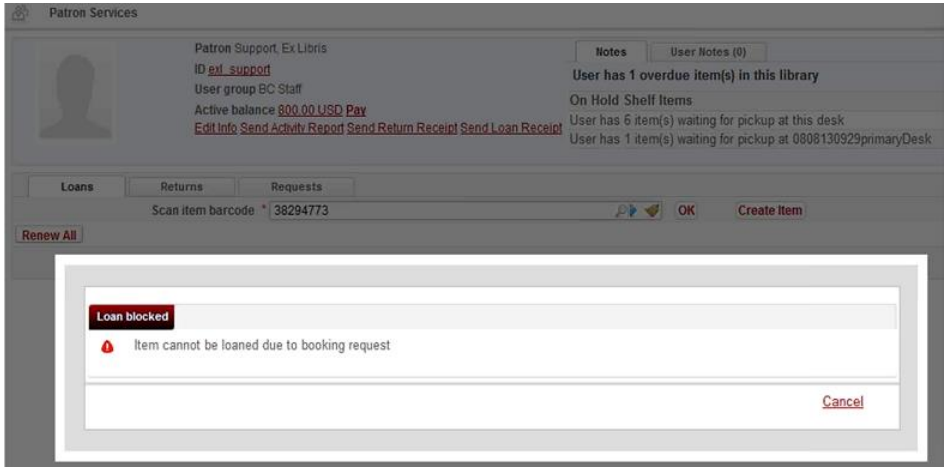
Loan Attempt During Booked Time

Regular loans for item will be blocked during booked timeframe:

- Loan attempt *during* booked timeframe:
  - *Item cannot be loaned due to booking request*



- Loan attempt *before* booking request time starts:
  - *The loan conflicts with a book request and the due date must be shortened*

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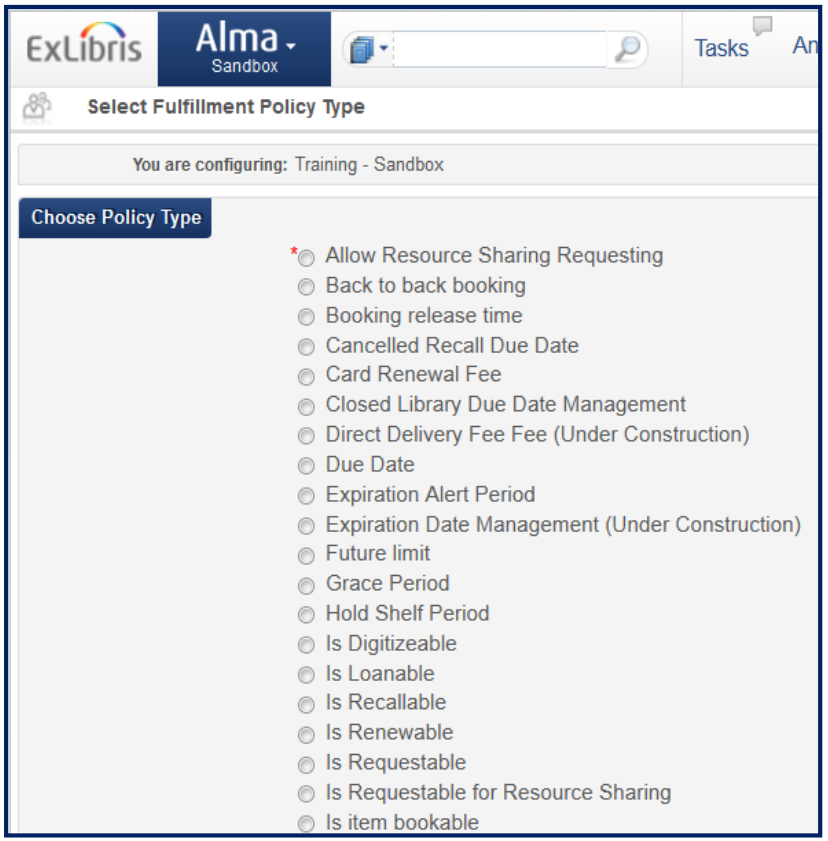
Booking Request Configuration

Fulfillment > Fulfillment Configuration > Configuration Menu > Advanced Policy Configuration

Create **policies** for booking requests:

- Back-to-back booking
- Booking release time
- Future limit
- Is item bookable
- Maximum allowed booking length
- Preview period
- Pickup locations



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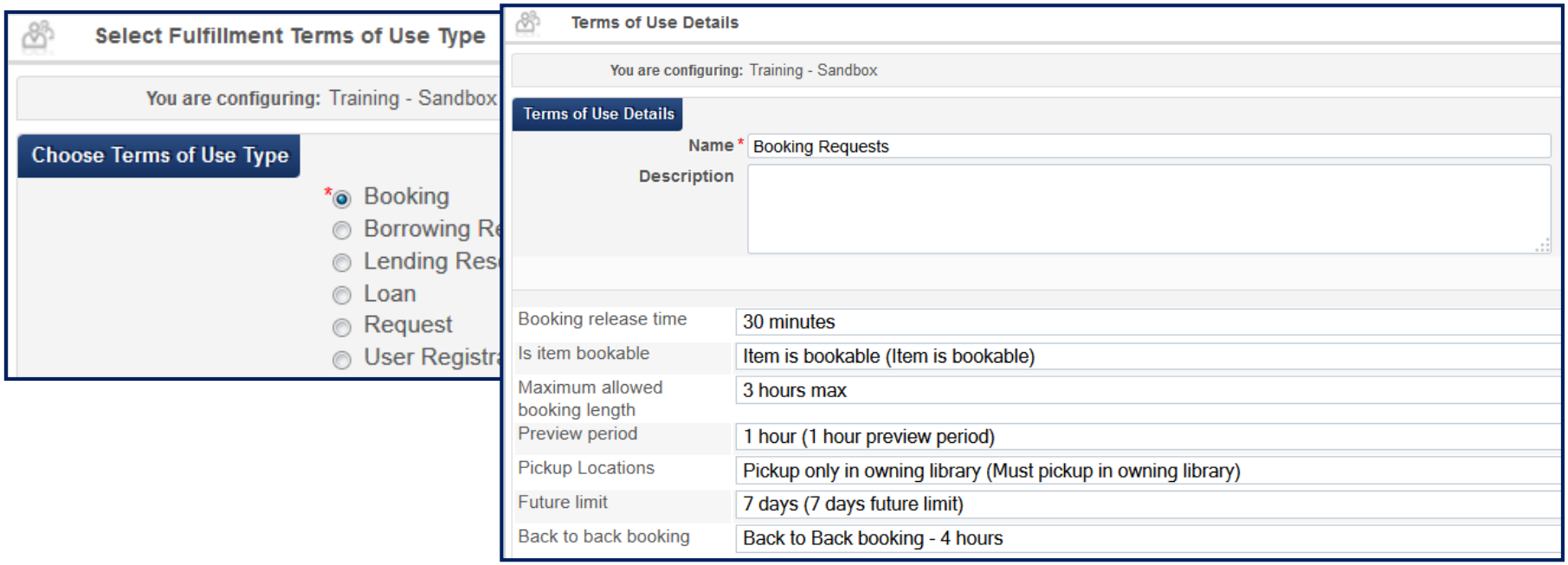
Booking Request Configuration: Terms of Use

Create booking terms of use to invoke configured booking policies:

Fulfillment > Fulfillment Configuration > Configuration Menu > Terms of Use and Policies



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Booking Request Configuration: Fulfillment Units

Create rules that indicate which Booking TOU should be applied for specified fulfillment unit location(s)

Edit Fulfillment Unit

Cancel Save

You are configuring: Training - Sandbox

Fulfillment Unit Details | Fulfillment Unit Locations | Fulfillment Unit Rules

Fulfillment Unit

Code Short Loan/Reserve Name Short Loan/Reserve

Rule Type Booking

Filter All

Add Rule

Tools

Enabled	Move Up	Move Down	Rule Name	Description	Output	Updated By	Update Date	
✓			Booking requests - course reserves	-	Booking Requests	Implementer, Ex Libris	10/08/2013	Action

Default Rule

Default booking rule Default booking rule Edit

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Booking Request Configuration: Set Request Limit

Number of permitted booking requests can be limited by patron type

Fulfillment Configuration Menu > Patron Configurations > **Patron Limits**

Mapping Table

Cancel Save

You are configuring: Training - Sandbox

Organization Unit List

Table Information

Sub System FULFILLMENT

Table Name PatronLimits

Updated By svetlana.smirnov

Last Updated 09/10/2013

Table Description Patron Limits Definitions

Mapping Table Rows

Tools

Enabled	User group	Max. cash	Max. overdues	Max. bookings	Max. overdue recalls	Updated By	Last Updated	
✓	Undergraduate St	100	10	2		svetlana.smirnov	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Graduate Student	100	10	2		svetlana.smirnov	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Consortium Memb	100	10	2		svetlana.smirnov	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Part-time	100	10	2		svetlana.smirnov	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Faculty	250	25	5		svetlana.smirnov	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Academic Staff	250	25	3		exl_impl	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Alumni	25	3	1		exl_impl	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Guest	25	3	1		exl_impl	09/10/2013	Delete
✓	Staff	250	25	3		exl_impl	09/10/2013	Delete

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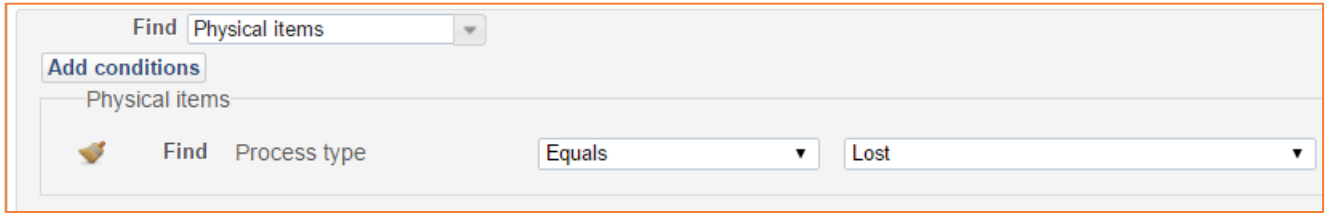
III. Lost Loans Workflows

Mark Item as Lost:

- Fulfillment > Manage Patron Services > [user record] > Title > Actions > Lost

Advanced Search for All Lost Items:

- Physical Items where Physical items (Process type equals "Lost")



Lost items cannot be requested (by default in Alma)

Exclude lost items from repository search

- Resource Configuration > Configuration Menu > Exclude Process Types from Publishing

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Lost Loans Workflows, continued

Configure Lost Loans Parameters:

- Add Lost Loan Fines, Replacement Fee, or Lost Item Replacement Fee Refund Ratio

Close Lost Loans

1. Create Lost Loan Fulfillment Set to display list of items Lost before a specific date:
   i. Fulfillment > Advanced Tools > Manage Fulfillment Sets
   ii. Configure Loan status = Lost
2. Run the **Close Lost Loans** process:
   Administration > Manage Jobs and Sets > Run a Job > Close lost loans

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Exercise 3

Deal with a lost loan item:

1. Mark a user's loan as lost.
2. Create a set of all lost items
3. Run the Close Lost Loans process

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Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Acquisitions Workflows
3. Fulfillment Workflows
4. **Resource Management Workflows**
   I. Edit CZ Records
   II. Imports
5. **Summary and Resources**

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I. Edit Community Zone Records

- Community Cataloging standard defined at: http://www.exlibrisgroup.com/files/Products/Alma/AlmaCommunityCatalogCatalogingStandardsPolicies.pdf

- Ability to add/contribute electronic portfolios and collections.

- Catalogers, Catalog Managers, and Catalog Administrators can edit CZ records.

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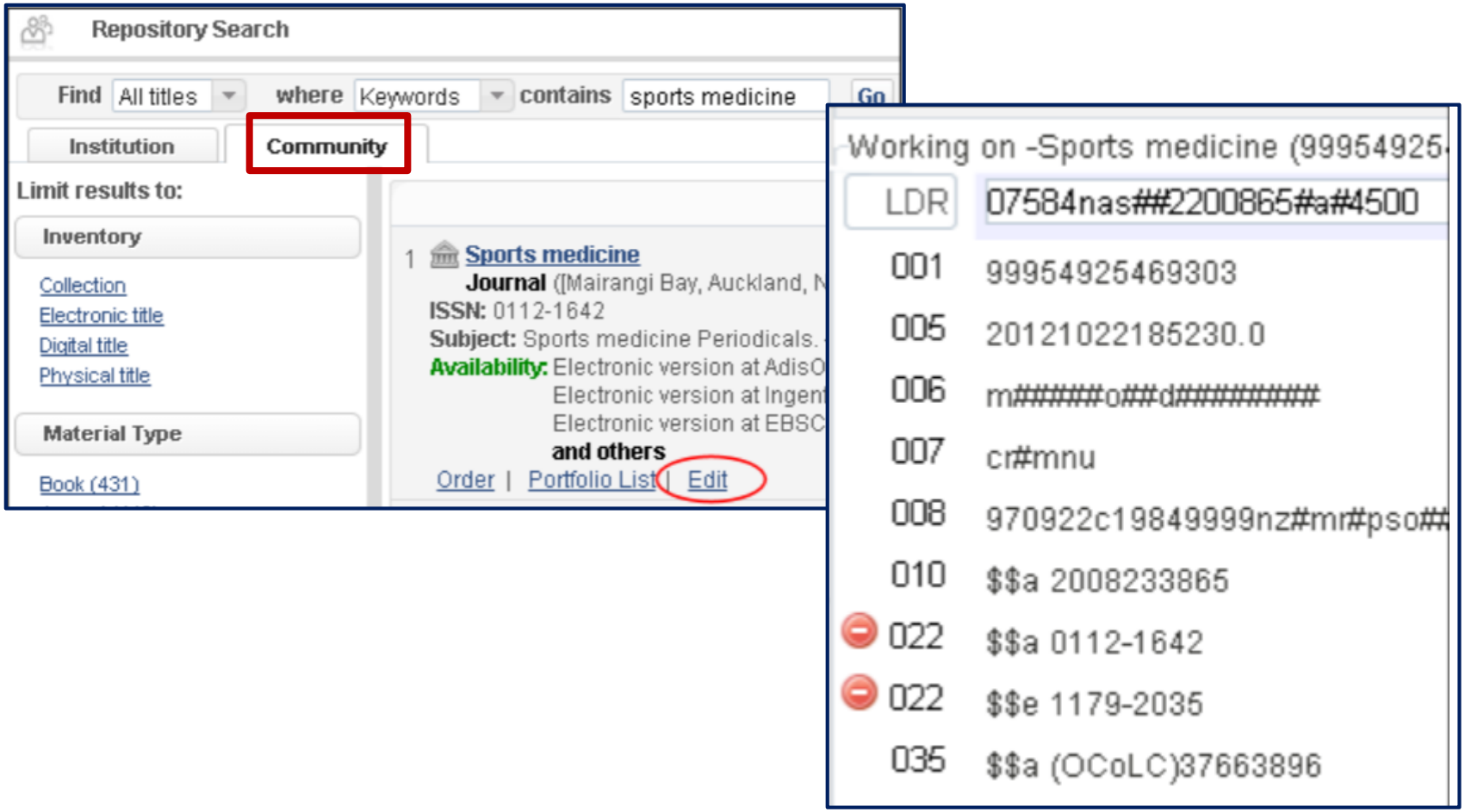
Edit CZ Records

- From Community Zone repository search, click Edit for record you wish to edit.



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Edit CZ Record in Metadata Editor

Note that the 022 field is not editable:

- Edits to 022 field can currently affect the link resolution that is dependent on the 022 field; restriction to be removed in a future release.

Save and release the record when editing is completed.

- Changes to CZ records is automatically reflected
- Validation using the CZ MD Registry, validation routines, and normalized routines.

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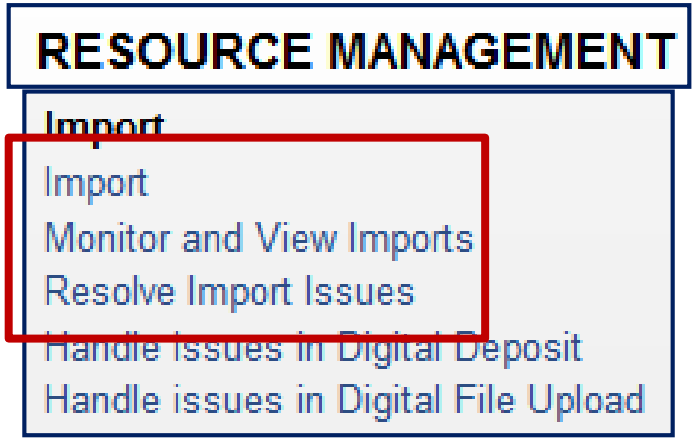
II. Imports and Handling Issues

- Once import profiles are configured, run imports from:
  - Import Profile (Actions > Run Import) *or*
  - Resource Management > Import
- Monitor and View Imports to check if job ran successfully
- Use Resolve Import Issues to view records that failed and see specific issues



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Resolve Import Issues

- Matching Issues: Imported record matches an existing record in the database
- Validation Issues: Imported records have invalid data per Validation Exception in import profile
    - e.g., mandatory fields missing, LDR missing, multiple occurrences of non-repeatable fields
    - Validation exception profiles: Resource Management Configuration menu > Metadata Configuration > MARC21 Bibliographic > Validation Exception Profile List
- Errors: Indicates something unexpected has happened which cannot be resolved
    - e.g., problems with file data not related to matching or validation of records

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Summary

During this session, you learned how to:

- Conduct workflows within various functional areas of Alma
- Edit configurations that can impact workflows
- Apply best practices to workflows at your own institution

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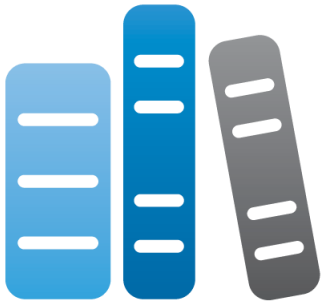
Resources

Available as online help in Alma or the Ex Libris Knowledge Center:

- Alma Acquisitions Guide
- Integrating with External Systems Guide
- EDI Standard Supported in Alma
- Alma Resource Management Guide
- Alma Fulfillment Guide
- Alma Developers (in Alma Administration menu)



Additional support resources within the ExLibris Ecosystem:

- Idea Exchange
- System Status Pages: Single Tenant ENV / Multi-Tenant ENV
- Developer Network

Technical Seminar Presentations

(located in the Cross-Product section of the Ex Libris Knowledge Center)

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Session Evaluation

Please enter the following link into your browser:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/techsem2017

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Thank you!

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