



Zahara

All-in-one AP

Planning Guide

Planning your Zahara rollout.

w: zaharasoftware.com

t: +44 (0) 1225 615 075

e: info@zaharasoftware.com



sage
Intacct





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Information Required to Setup Zahara

- Suppliers Name, Account Reference, Contact Email
- Nominal Codes Code & Description
- Tax Codes Code & Rate
- Users Name, Email, Division Membership, Role
- Workflows Steps, Conditions and Approvers
- Divisions Name & Head of Division

Staging Checklist Tabs Explained

Guide

Depending on your integration the guide tab will have additional relevant information on how you can connect different areas of Zahara to the different functionality in your accounting software. It will additionally mention the required tabs and minimum information required for each tab to enable an effective set up of Zahara.

Business Unit & Divisions

Usually, a Business Unit will map to a company or legal entity in your accounts system. A Business Unit is the highest level of settings and is the container of the suppliers, coding, projects and budgets.



- In Zahara you can switch between Business Units and assign users to different Business Units, effectively separating them out.
- The fewer Business Units you have, the less admin overhead you create.

Please populate the name of your Business Unit in the designated cell in the staging checklist, as shown below, this will then auto populate it across the table below.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Business Unit 1 Name	Sample UK Ltd				
2						
3		Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4	Division 5
4	Business Unit *	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd
5	Name *	Sales	Finance			
6	Address *	11 Green Road, BA1 1BT				
7	Division Head	Susan Smith				
8						

Divisions are then the “natural groupings” of people inside the organisation. This could be Marketing/HR/IT or it could be a site office such as “London Office”.

- Most importantly divisions are where you create the approval workflows for this team of people.
- Divisions have addresses, for deliveries - and can have budgets assigned to them.
- They can have nominal, cost code and project restrictions.
- You can apply a PO prefix to a division.
- Divisions can have restrictions based on: nominals, cost codes and/or projects.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Business Unit 1 Name	Sample UK Ltd				
2						
3		Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4	Division 5
4	Business Unit *	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd	Sample UK Ltd
5	Name *	Sales	Finance			
6	Address *	11 Green Road, BA1 1BT				
7	Division Head	Susan Smith				
8						

If using staff expenses, please populate this sheet with an additional dedicated Business Unit and divisions as needed for your staff expenses approval process.

Users

These are the members of your business that will be using Zahara. To set someone up as a user we need their name, email and business unit and division membership to be able to create the user. We also then need to know their role within the company, roles in the staging checklist determine the tabs they have available.

Roles

A user can have multiple roles assigned to them in a division or business unit. The roles will essentially determine the tabs they have available to them on their dashboard. The roles available in Zahara are as follows:

- Finance – this role gives the user a dashboard with some basic finance figures. Assigning finance to a user in every division in a business unit will give them access to the invoice inbox to process and create invoices.
- Approver – This will give the user an approver dashboard, showing them all the documents in Zahara that are pending on them for approval. Here the user will be able to bulk approve or reject purchase orders and invoices.
- Buyer – This will give the user the buyer tab and enable them to quickly see the status of each PO or invoice they have raised in Zahara.
- Receiver – This will allow the user to see all POs that still require G.R.N-ing.
- Admin – This gives the user access to the user panel, reporting and the drop-down workflow selection when raising a PO or invoice.



Combined Finance and Admin roles in every division of a business unit gives the user the permission to manually export invoices.

E.G. If a user is part of the finance team, they will need access to all divisions so in divisions you can just put "ALL" rather than listing them all out, if it is all except you can list it "ALL (except...)" and they will therefore also potentially need the finance role. If they have the same roles and need access to the same divisions across all Bus then you can just pop "ALL" in the BU column and then specify their role and division in the appropriate columns, if they need access to 1 BU just mention that 1 in the BU column.

Workflows

A big part of Zahara are the approvals/workflows. You can create workflows for purchase orders & invoices and can create multiple workflows per division, but we do recommend having as few as possible. They give the customer the ability to control spend and match invoice/orders together. In a workflow the following step types are available and can be combined with the conditions on the next page:

- Email an approver
- Email a group of approvers (one of them will approve)
- Send an email to someone
- Adjust an associated budget
- Send a purchase order to the supplier
- Export the invoice into the Accounts system (Xero QuickBooks Online/Sage 50)
- Export the PO or Invoice PDF into FileDirector document management system
- Hold for GRN
- Convert PO to Invoice

We also have placeholders available for the approval steps, if the approver is the same across all divisions, e.g. the head of division or CEO, using a placeholder makes it easier for copying over the workflows across the Business Unit and staff changes in the future.

- Approval emails can be edited in the templates section of the Business > Settings but are generic across the whole BU, but the subject line is customisable by step. Approval emails will hold the document, and it will only progress to the next step in the workflow once it has been approved.
- Send email steps can be customised to each step, but they are just a notification, they will not hold the document in the workflow and once the email has been sent the workflow will directly move on to the next step.
- Conditions/Conditional Starts can determine whether a step in a workflow is run or not run – these conditions are as follows and can be value based or even supplier based, check below for the full list of available conditions.

PO Approval Conditions	Invoice Approval Conditions
Net value	Net value
Gross value (inc tax)	Gross value (inc tax)
Originator	Originator
Supplier name	Supplier name
Supplier type	Supplier type
Product code	Product code



Project	Project
Project code	Project code
Project name	Project name
Budget	Order/invoice difference % & value
Secondary order ref	Invoice exceeds order
Custom field	Order
	GRN
	Custom field

We also have placeholders that can be used on approval steps:

- Originator - Creator of the purchase order
- Head of Division
- Business Unit Manager - usually CEO
- Project Manager

The examples here (and in the staging checklist) are for:

- Purchase Order Approval Workflow – simple workflow for a purchase order
- No Order Invoice Approval Workflow – the approval workflow for an invoice that hasn't been matched to a PO in Zahara
- Invoice Difference Approval Workflow – the approval workflow for an invoice that has been matched to a PO, usually action is only taken if there is a difference between the 2 of over a certain amount, can be a £ or % difference.

The different headings in the workflows tab are as follows:

- Type – this is to determine the name of the workflow and the type of workflow it will be/it's functionality in Zahara.
- Level – refers to the step. We will create the workflow with the steps in the order you specify them to be in and therefore documents will progress through the workflows in the same order.
- Condition – determines on what basis you want the step to run, all means that every document going into that workflow will go through that step, a condition of "Net Value >£5,000" means a step will only be run if the net value of the document is over £5,000.
- Action – determines what kind of step you wish this to be, do you want it to be an approval step or an email step or a send PO to supplier step. Check the previous page to see the different types of step available for workflows.
- Used/Required – is for you to say which user or placeholder will be used for this step or whether the step is required for the workflow.

Please use additional tabs for multiple business units.

Workflows for staff expenses will need to be populated on a separate tab, if not already visible you will find the Staff Expenses Workflows tab under the hidden tabs.

The steps for the staff expenses workflows may not be as intricate as other workflows you need in Zahara, so do not worry if they are only 2 or 3 steps.



Purchase Order Approval Workflow

Below is the example purchase order approval workflow from the staging checklist.

Type	Level	Condition	Action	Used/Required
Purchase Order Approval	Step 1	ALL	Approval	Susan Smith
	Step 2	Net value > £5,000	Approval	Gill Reynolds
	Step 3	Net value > £20,000	Approval	Head of division
	Step 4		Send confirmation to Buyer	Yes
	Step 5		Send purchase order to Supplier	Yes

Invoice Approval Workflow

An invoice approval can specifically look at:

- Order/Invoice Difference
- GRN state ie 'Not Fully Delivered'
- Whether an order exists or not

No Order

This is an example workflow for the process an invoice with no purchase order would go through. If an invoice comes in with no PO to match to, the approval process may be slightly different to if there was a PO.

Invoice Approval - No Order	Step 1	ALL	Approval	Susan Smith
	Step 2	Net value > £5,000	Approval	Gill Reynolds
	Step 3	Net value > £20,000	Approval	Head of division
	Step 4	ALL	Approval	Finance user (insert name)
	Step 5		Export invoice	Yes

Invoice Difference

This is an example of a workflow for an invoice that can be matched to a purchase order. The conditions mean that the steps will only be run on the basis specified, therefore if the differences are lower than the stated thresholds the invoice will not trigger the steps and skip proceeding to the following steps.

Invoice Approval – Order Difference	Step 1	Difference > £10 or 5%	Approval	Susan Smith
	Step 2	Difference > £500	Approval	Head of division
	Step 3	ALL	Send email	Finance user (insert name)
	Step 4		Export invoice	Yes

With a condition to choose whether an approval runs – like “Over Budget”, and a condition on every workflow step – like Net Value > £2000 AND < £5000 – you can create pretty much any approval process you like.



N.B: We don't support approval conditions based on GL/Nominal codes. Why? Because they are line- item level and there might be 200 expense codes. You could have a 30-line order with each line against a different GL code. Would we really want to send an Order out to 30 different people for a concurrent approval?

The recommendation here is to create a custom field – above the line item – say a Buying Category – like Capex/Opex/Real Estate/Asset. Then use that value to trigger a different approval based on the type of purchase

Suppliers

Suppliers can be staged from your accounts system. They can be synced with Xero & QuickBooks Online as well as Sage 50 using the SmartSync tool. If you are not using an integration with Zahara we will need you to fill in the supplier tab on the staging checklist, the key information we need to create a supplier are their names and supplier account codes, and if you are planning to send purchase orders out of Zahara or use the invoice inbox email addresses are necessary.

We recommend you originate Suppliers in Zahara, we can then create the new supplier in Xero/QBO/Sage 50 as part of an invoice create.

Additionally, to make use of our AutoPilot feature you will need to supply a default nominal and tax code for the supplier.

You will need to ensure your Zahara users are created as suppliers in the Staff Expenses module and other Business Units.

Suppliers for staff expenses will need to be populated on a separate tab, if you are using a direct integration and therefore your staging does not have a supplier's tab and if not already visible you will find the Staff Expenses Suppliers tab under the hidden tabs.

Nominal Codes

Also called GL /Account codes. These are typically the codes that are used in your chart of accounts to record income or expenditure, if using a Xero/SmartSync or QuickBooks integration these can be synced through to Zahara, otherwise we will need the nominal codes and their description filled in on the nominal codes tab in the staging checklist to manually import them.

You can also set nominal code restrictions in the division settings, this will reduce down the codes available in that division to just the ones you wish to use when creating a PO for that division, you can also specifically restrict nominals by those used in the budget associated to that division, if there is one.

You will need to ensure your nominal codes are the same in the Staff Expenses module and other Business Units.

Nominal Codes for staff expenses will need to be populated on a separate tab, if you are using a direct integration and therefore your staging does not have a nominal codes tab and if not already visible you will find the Staff Expenses Nominal Codes tab under the hidden tabs.

Tax Rates

You can create tax rate codes in Zahara. These can sync over if using a direct integration.

If you are a Zero-rated business – i.e. not VAT registered, we recommend you raise orders "true" – e.g. £100 + VAT - £120 in total. Then record an invoice true in Zahara so it matches. We can then accommodate the conversion when it's posted over to your accounts system, so it goes in as £120 with no Tax.



Budgets

Budgets can be created against nominal codes, cost codes or absolute amounts. A budget can be indefinite, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly. A budget can be assigned to a division or a project. A budget spend can be committed on approval or on "send to supplier". You can set a "spend control" on a budget, meaning if a user attempts to raise a PO against a budgeted nominal which will push the nominal overbudget they will not be able to raise the PO. You can also enable "roll-over", meaning any over or under spend will be carried over to the next period.

A budget is consumed by a purchase order, you also have the option to assign invoices to budgets or adjusting for the difference between the two when matched and approved. I.e. if you raise a purchase order for £500 this will be consumed from the budget, if the invoice comes in for more the budget can then be adjusted to consume more or if an invoice comes in for less money the difference can be restored to the budget.

When setting up a budget you must ensure the financial year end is set to the day you wish the new budget to start, meaning the day after your financial year end. Please give budgeted values to the nearest whole number. Additionally, one nominal code can be used across various budgets, but a nominal code can only be used once per budget, so if you have multiple budget lines for one nominal code in the same budget, please consolidate the lines before returning the staging checklist.

Projects

Projects sit across all divisions inside the business unit, they have more functionality compared to cost codes in terms of reporting and tracking spend.

- They are primarily used as a ring fencing of spend – such as an event or job - a short-term spend.
- Projects can also have a granular budget assigned to them.
- Projects can also have an address – again for delivery purposes.
- A Project manager can be used as a placeholder in a workflow.
- Nominal restrictions can be placed on projects.
- Project restrictions can be created in divisions.

Cost Codes

Cost Codes are a flexible analysis code. You can use them to map to a Tracking Category in Xero or a Class in QuickBooks. You can also use them together with Projects in Sage 50. They are flexible and can be named or used to suit. Cost codes can also be restricted in divisions.

Staff Expenses Module

If you have opted for the Staff Expenses module it will be set up in Zahara as an additional Business Unit, if you would like this set up, please ensure you have enough Business Units available.

If we are setting up your Staff Expenses module, please provide us with the divisions you would like on the Business Units & Divisions tab in your staging checklist.

Additionally, as this is a separate Business Unit, you will want a reduced set of nominal codes, suppliers, or workflows, therefore you will find additional tabs available for each of these sections in your staging, they may be hidden tabs.

Please find further information about each section that needs to be filled in for Staff Expenses under the relevant sections:



- Business Units & Divisions
- Workflows
- Suppliers
- Nominal Codes

Order of Events for Projects Setup

- Fill in and return staging checklist to projects team.
- Schedule in kick off call
- Schedule in SmartSync, if required.
- Projects will start on the set up and send across a project plan, including target go live date and Zoom invites for training sessions.
- Send over a copy of your logo, it must be under 64kb in size.
- Training sessions will then take place and you will go through an “in testing” phase where you must test the workflows and any restrictions you have asked for to ensure everything works how it should and you are happy with the process.
- Once you are happy and any adjustments have been made to workflows, they can then be carried over to the rest of your divisions/business units.
- The system can then be purged of any test data (purchase orders and invoices) and the PO number can be set to start afresh or continue off from your current PO number.
- You will then be ready to go live

Steps for Completing Your own Set Up

- Create the Business Unit – upload your logo
- Create the Divisions you need
- Import suppliers & coding
- Import the users and assign them to the Divisions
- Create any custom fields or custom buttons
- Generate your unique invoice inbox email address
- Create the approval processes in one division and test robustly
- Fine tune all email templates/PO template
- Rename/label everything the way you want it
- Copy the approval processes over to the other divisions
- Adjust any variables in processes
- Set all defaults per division
- Test raising purchase orders & invoices
- Make any necessary adjustments
- Purge all purchase orders & invoices and set PO counter
- Go Live

The Zahara Process

The way Zahara is designed to work as follows:

- Create a purchase order in Zahara
- The purchase order is approved or pre-approved based on approval workflow rules
- A purchase order gets sent to the supplier (automatically/manually or not at all)
- The service or product is delivered – have it receipted (GRN)
- The invoice is received – record it and match it against the order
- The invoice is sent for approval or pre-approved based on the rules you have created



- The invoice is exported to your accounts system automatically or manually – dependant on integration
- Process complete, our work is done here – it's now down to paying the invoice from your accounts system

Post Project Setup

Zahara is deigned to be self-administering. There is an initial transfer of knowledge where you need to understand how things are done.

We have created a knowledge base with plenty of articles and videos that will help you get up to speed faster. Your procedure for help should always be:

1. Check the [Knowledge Base](#) – use the search function– chances are we have already created an article to answer your question or query. This KB article is extremely useful for understanding [workflow and approvals](#).
2. Understand key principles – User management is found off the Admin Menu, Admin > Settings; all business settings are under the Business > Settings menu and all approval workflows are inside the Divisions – edit the Divisions to get to them.
3. When it's broken or not working as you expect, and you have read up on the subject, then it's time to [submit a support ticket](#), where a member of the support team will respond and try to help.



Zahara Matrix

	Has a postal address	Available on a line item	Can be used as an approval condition	Can be associated with a budget	Can be used as the basis for a Budget	Can be connected to a Sage Department
Business Unit	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Division	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Cost Code	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Nominal code	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
User	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Tax Code	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No