
Guide to Merging Alma Institutions

Overview

This document describes the process for merging two or more Alma institutions into a single Alma institution (IZ).

The overall process for merging multiple institutions into one involves

- Customer makes decisions on data
- Ex Libris performs test merge
- Customer evaluates merge, provides feedback
- Ex Libris performs cutover merge
- Customer approves merge

Customers are encouraged to read this entire document well before the merge process to help prepare their data for merging. Some data elements must be modified prior to merging, and some data elements are not retained.

Deciding on the Primary institution and Merge Order

One of the first decisions to make is which institution is the primary institution and which institution(s) will be secondary.

The secondary institutions will merge into the primary institution. Therefore, certain data elements in the primary institution are preserved where the same elements in the secondary institutions are lost/not moved.

Examples of data which are not moved from secondary to primary:

- All record history, usually located on the 'History' tab of most data elements
- Records which are marked as deleted are not moved.
- Data elements specifically mentioned in this document as not included in merge are retained in the primary institution. Examples of this are Inactive patrons, or staff user roles
- All configuration, for example Fulfillment and TOU policies, Metadata search configuration, Reporting codes

Ex Libris generally recommends that the largest institution be designated the primary.

In this document, the Primary institution is sometimes referred to as institution A, and the secondary institutions B and C.

If there is more than one secondary institution, determine the order for loading. The order is important in cases where an entity is not present in the primary institution but may be present in more than one secondary institution. This is important in bibliographic, patron, and vendor records merge.

Configuration and codes

Customer codes and configuration are not disambiguated nor are they transferred from a secondary institution to the primary institution. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Library codes
- Location codes
- Item Type codes
- User Group codes
- Configuration elements
 - Metadata configuration such as search indexes, barcode generation prefixes, import and export profiles
 - Fulfillment and TOU policies, User block definitions, notifications such as overdue notices
 - Fiscal periods, Acq Reporting codes, currencies

Therefore, customers must:

a) ensure that the codes and configuration do not overlap in the data itself. If they do overlap, it will not be possible to distinguish the different sets of data with the same code post-merge.

For example, if institutions A and B both have a user group code of UNDG, when patrons are merged together, all patrons will continue to have the user group code of UNDG. If customers later want to distinguish between UNDG patrons from A and UNDG patrons from B, they cannot rely on the user group code to distinguish.

If you want them to have the same shared code, you can leave the data as is. However, if you want to be able to distinguish the two groups post-merge, change the codes in at least one of the sets of data. Using the example above, change the UNDG code in institution B to BUNDG or something along these lines.

b) transfer all configurations to the primary institution. All codes and configuration must be manually created in the primary institution.

Institution A patron groups

STAFF

UNDG

FAC

Institution B patron groups

BSTAFF

BUNDG

BFAC

Therefore, patron groups BSTAFF, BUNDG, and BFAC must be added to the primary institution. Additionally, all Fulfillment policies and Terms of Use must be re-created in the primary institution for these groups.

Special currency correction

If there are more than one default currencies in the different institutions, after the merge the master institution has two default currencies. Customers or Professional Services staff should select the correct default currency and remove the

other one(s).

Inventory

Bib record match and merge

Customer should select whether to match by NZ link id or by Solr Search match. Match by NZ link id can be done only if Primary and Secondary institutions are linked to the same NZ.

Match by NZ link id

- If Secondary record is linked to CZ, try to match Primary record by CZ link id (Primary and Secondary records should have the same CZ link id). If match is not found, copy Secondary Bib to Primary institution.
- If Secondary records is not linked to CZ and linked to NZ, try to match Primary record by NZ link id (Primary and Secondary records should have the same NZ link id). If match is not found, copy Secondary Bib to Primary institution.

Solr Search match

The Solr Search uses two parameters: serial and non-serial. For a list of Solr Search match types, see "Serial Match Methods" and "Non-Serial Match Methods" sections of [Managing Import Profiles](#) page.

- If Secondary record is linked to CZ, try to match Primary record by CZ link id (Primary and Secondary records should have the same CZ link id). If match is not found, copy Secondary Bib to Primary institution.
- If Secondary record is not linked to CZ, try to match Primary record by using selected Serial Match method/Non Serial Match method. If match is not found, copy Secondary Bib to Primary institution.

Merging

When the incoming merged record is added to the master record,

- a) if an incoming tag has \$9 LOCAL, the tag will be added to the master/merged record. The \$9 LOCAL is retained.
- b) all other tags are discarded in favor of the master record. In other words, if no tags have \$9 LOCAL, then the record from the incoming institution is discarded completely after the match is performed
- c) MARC Local tags are: 09X, 59X, 69X, 770-789, 009, 035, 9xx, and any field which ends in 9 (e.g. 119, 529, etc)

Associated inventory (item, holding records) is moved to the master bibliographic record.

Updated MMSID: The MMSID of any record in the primary institution is retained; the MMSID of records from the secondary institutions are replaced with a primary institution MMSID. For secondary institutions, the previous MMSID is saved in the originating system ID. Also, a map of old MMSID -> new MMSID is provided to customers post-merge, for use in API updates if relevant.

Further, information on new, matched, and deduplicated bibs can be requested.

Items

Item barcodes must be unique across institutions.

Item process types are migrated as follows:

TRANSIT, WORK_ORDER_DEPARTMENT, ILL, HOLDSHELF -> set to TECHNICAL

LOAN, LOST_LOAN, LOST_LOAN_AND_PAID -> re-created during merge based on the transferred loan records

ACQ -> re-created during merge based on transferred acquisitions information. If no acquisitions is merged, then this is not migrated.

Electronic Inventory

Electronic inventory refers to either a collection or a portfolio. All electronic inventory is moved from secondary to primary, even inactive inventory.

The bibliographic records associated with electronic inventory are matched/copied in the same way as described in the 'bib record match and merge' section above. Additionally, for matched records, the link status of the primary bib remains the same (local or global); secondary bib does not overwrite the link status of the primary bib. For non-matched records, when the secondary bib is copied to the primary institution its link status remains the same as it was in the secondary institution.

Once the bibs are matched, then their electronic inventory is handled.

All local (non-CZ linked) electronic inventory is copied; no attempt is made to find matches between secondary and primary for local electronic inventory.

For CZ-linked resources, customers may choose the following options for handling electronic inventory:

Combine Collections:

a) on/yes: at the end of the merge, there is only one activation for these resources - the secondary collection is not copied (so any information on the collection such as notes or local date range are not retained).

b) off/no: at the end of the merge, there is an activation for each institution which had the resource.

Deduplicate Portfolios:

a) on/yes: if collections are combined, then no portfolios are copied from secondary to primary. Only the portfolios from the primary institution are retained.

b) off/no: if collections are combined, all portfolios from the secondary institution are copied to the primary institution. This can result in duplication of portfolios.

Note that most often, customers answer Combine Collections and Deduplicate Portfolios the same way: meaning, if Combine Collections is 'Yes', then so is Deduplicate Portfolios. It is not typical to have Combine Collections = Yes and Deduplicate Portfolios = No because it results in all portfolios being duplicated. Also, if Combine Collections = No, then there is no need to answer the Deduplicate Portfolios question so it is No by default.

Further, information on new, matched, and deduplicated collections and portfolios can be requested.

Fulfillment

Patrons

Customers may choose whether to match/merge patrons or not. If matching, then patrons are **matched** using the primary identifier only. Patrons with the same primary identifier are considered equivalent. If not matching, then if the primary identifier is already present in the master institution, then the incoming patron record is rejected.

If an incoming patron does not find a match in the primary institution, it is added completely. Similar to the concept of the 'master' record in the description of merging bibs, if a patron from a secondary institution is added to the primary institution

because there was no matched patron, then that newly added record becomes the master patron record in terms of merging.

If an incoming patron finds a match in the primary institution, it is **merged** in the following manner:

The master patron record is retained. From the incoming patron record, active fines/fees, blocks, notes, identifiers, and statistics are moved to the master patron. Contact information is not moved from the incoming patron record.

If the master patron record exists but is marked as 'deleted', then the master patron is actually deleted and then incoming record is moved as new.

Patron identifiers must not be duplicated in the same patron. If a patron is matched and both the master and the incoming patron have the same identifier, the incoming identifier is not moved.

Patron identifiers also must not be duplicated in the same institution, on different users. The following case is not handled:

- Patron from Institution A
 - Primary Identifier: 123
 - Barcode: B999
- Patron from Institution B
 - Primary Identifier: 345
 - University ID: B999

The above two patrons are not matched/merged, because the match point is always Primary Identifier and 123 does not match 345. The secondary identifiers (Barcode and University ID) are not compared to other patrons, so the duplicate identifier of 'B999' is moved to Alma when the patron from B is added as a new patron. Alma does not allow duplicate identifiers anywhere, so the customer must correct the situation either before or after the merge. The situation may be corrected by:

- modifying one of the identifiers manually, either before or after the merge
- merging the two different patrons in Alma using [Merge Patron](#) job

Staff roles are not moved.

Patron emails may be scrubbed during test load only, if customer selects to do so. Scrubbing emails is a practice used during migration which deactivates patron emails so that any test e-letters which are emailed out are not actually sent to a real email address.

Further, information on matched and rejected records is available (See 'Statistics' below). There is no report on merged patrons; since the patrons are matched on primary ID, the primary ID continues to be the method of retrieval for merged patrons.

Non-Patron Fulfillment

Active and completed loans are moved from the secondary to the primary institution.

Fines and Fees are moved as part of the patron. Closed Fines and Fees (of amount 0) are not moved.

Regular requests and resource sharing requests are not moved.

Course Reserves information is not moved.

Acquisitions

The Acquisitions merge is available with the January 2023 release.

Provide a prefix for acquisitions information for each secondary institution, for example 'AB-'. This prefixes all of your fund codes so they are like 'AB-books' and 'AB-serials'. Additionally, the prefix is used if vendors are not merged and there is a duplicate incoming vendor code (see 'Vendors' section for more information). The prefix is used to disambiguate the POL_REFERENCE in purchase orders if necessary. Finally, the prefix is used to disambiguate license codes.

Note

If your institution is positive that you do not have any duplicate purchase order numbers, PO line numbers, or fund codes, you can choose to not use a prefix. As your Ex Libris representative to help check this.

Fiscal periods, Funds, and Ledgers

All institutions must have the same fiscal period definition (start and end dates). If the fiscal periods differ slightly, incoming fiscal periods are modified to fit the primary institution. The active fiscal period in the child(ren) is mapped to the active fiscal period in the master, and then the other fiscal periods are mapped back from that.

All incoming fund and ledger codes are given a prefix so that there is no overlap with the funds and ledgers of the primary institution. There is no option to merge funds and ledgers.

Vendors

Vendors can be merged based on the vendor code, or they can not be merged at all.

If you do not wish to merge vendors, provide a prefix for all secondary institutions: if not merging, then all incoming vendor codes are prefixed when moved to the primary institution.

If you wish to merge vendors based on vendor code:

Vendors are considered a **match** if the vendor code is the exact same

After matching vendors are **merged** in the following manner:

The main section of the master vendor record is retained. From the incoming vendor record, accounts, payment methods, served units, vendor and account contacts, and notes are added to the master record. Further, if there is an existing vendor interface with the same name on the master vendor, then the interface is not copied. Interfaces which do not already exist on the master record are copied.

Inactive vendors are not moved.

Counter information is not moved, and also SUSHI configuration on the vendor is not moved.

Purchase Orders and Invoices

Deleted purchase orders and invoices are not moved

Cancelled POs and Invoices are moved, but no attempt is made to place them in the proper Alma workflow.

Purchase requests are not moved.

The PO Access Model is not brought over, so customers can update electronic POs with 'Update PO Lines Information' job.

Purchase orders and invoices attached to inactive vendors are not moved.

Purchase order line numbers (POL_REFERENCE) are disambiguated using the Acquisitions prefix.

Invoice numbers do not need to be disambiguated since they are associated with a vendor.

Licenses

All incoming license codes are given a prefix. There is no option to merge licenses.

Other Considerations

Analytics

Because historical data regarding records is not transferred from secondary to primary, analytics in the post-merge environment contains only the history of the primary institution.

However, reports are copied from secondary institutions to the primary institution. Private reports are not included in this copy.

Network Zone/Consortia

When the institutions being merged are part of a consortia with a network zone (NZ), the migration team removes the secondary IZ(s) from the 'Held by' list in the NZ once the merge is complete.

The merge process retains the link to the NZ for inventory, so a re-linking of IZ-NZ should not be necessary. In other words, if a bib record in a secondary institution is moved to the primary institution as is because no match was found in the primary institution, the bib is copied over along with the link to the NZ record.

Statistics

The following reports are available

Report	Info
New Bib Records	New bibliographic records in the primary institution.
Bib records matched by Search	When records in a secondary institution found a match in the primary institution using the specified match method (not CZ or NZ matching). Relevant for institutions previously NOT linked to the same NZ.
Bib records matched by CZ Link	When records in a secondary institution found a match in the primary institution because both were linked to the same CZ record
Bib records matched by NZ link	When records in a secondary institution found a match in the primary institution because both were linked to the same CZ record. Relevant for institutions previously linked to the same NZ only.
Bib records matched by MERGE_RECORD_ID	There are not usually very many of these. When a bib in the secondary institution was previously merged.
Electronic collections deduplicated by CZ link	When e-collections in a secondary institution found a match in the primary institution because both were linked to the same e-collection in the CZ.
Electronic portfolios deduplicated by CZ link	When portfolios in a secondary institution found a match in the primary institution because both were linked to the same portfolio in the CZ.
Patrons deduplicated by Primary ID	The list of patrons in a secondary institution where a match was found in the primary institution.
Patrons rejected	Patrons which could not be moved to the primary institution because no primary ID is present.