



ALEPH VERSION 21

# **Configuration Questionnaire: General**

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# 1 Purpose of the Questionnaire

The purpose of the configuration questionnaire is to help both Ex Libris and the customer implement ALEPH in an efficient and most appropriate manner for the library. It is a series of questions designed with several purposes in mind:

- Bring to light aspects of the library's internal structure and workflows that are relevant to the configuration of the ALEPH and the conversion from the legacy system.
- Acquaint Ex Libris implementation staff with your library
- Introduce you to some basic concepts of the ALEPH system. It should be emphasized that this is only an introduction! Basic ALEPH concepts are explained as background for mapping data from your legacy system to ALEPH.

The questionnaire is divided into separate documents for each module of the system. This first section explains and asks about some basic elements in the system that are common to several modules

Every questionnaire has two parts – the questionnaire itself and a separate document in which you should fill in your replies. The "Customer Reply" document uses the same section numbers as the questionnaire.

Note that your replies are not binding and the system configuration can be changed at any point during the implementation process.

## 2 Introduction to ALEPH: Record and Database Types

ALEPH has a number of types of records. Each type is stored in a separate database. It should be noted that in ALEPH documentation these databases are referred to as "Libraries".

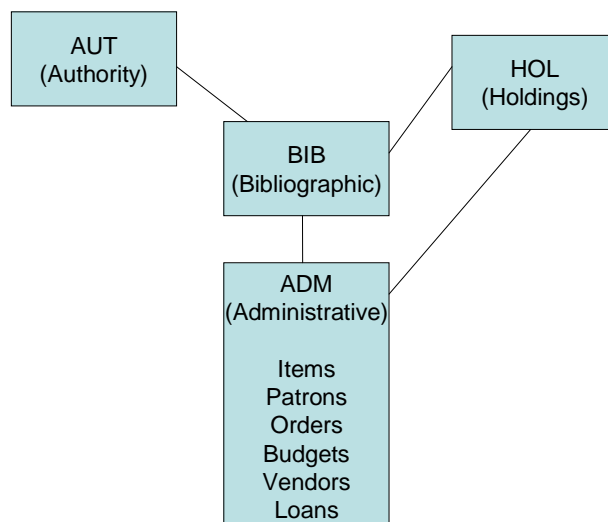
- Bibliographic records for bibliographic information. Bibliographic records are stored in a BIBliographic database or "BIB Library"
- Authority records for authority information. Authority records are stored in an AUTHority database or "AUT Library"

- Holding records for holding information. Holding records are stored in a HOLdings database or "HOL Library" using either the MARC21 or MAB formats.. It should be noted that in addition to the holding record, ALEPH also maintains an *item record* for each physical item in the library. The item record is the basis for circulation and serial check-in. Typically, each item is linked to a holdings record, unless it is a temporary item such as one on reserve. The holdings record determines the permanent location of the item through assignment of common sublibrary, collection and call number to the holdings and item records. Items are stored in the Administrative database, explained below. It should be noted that it is not mandatory to have a holding record for every bibliographic record. Some libraries opt to create holding records only for serials in which case the holding record contains the summary holdings statement and publication pattern.
  
- Administrative records include items, orders, patrons, vendors, budgets and other records required for library functions of acquisitions, items and serials control, circulation and ILL are stored in an ADMinistrative database or "ADM Library".

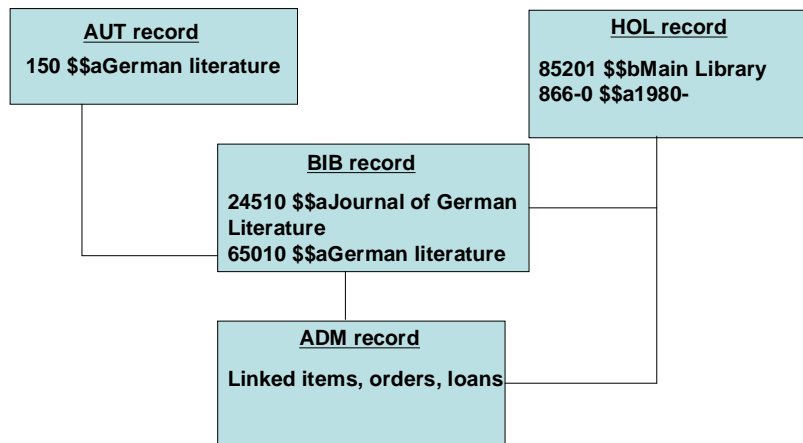
The BIB, AUT, HOL and ADM databases (or Libraries) in a single installation are linked and integrated so that information from one can be displayed together with the other.

A typical ALEPH installation will have one BIBliographic Library, one ADMinistrative Library and one HOLdings Library. The number of AUTHority Library will depend on the number of authority lists in use by the library.

The links between the databases can be illustrated as follows:



The links between the records are illustrated in the following diagram:



### 3 ALEPH Modules

ALEPH has the following modules. Please indicate which you plan to use in the customer reply document:

- OPAC
- Acquisitions
- Cataloguing
- Authority control
- Items control
- Serials Control
- Circulation
- Inter-library loan
- Course Reserves/Course Reading
- Media booking
- Z39 client – searching other Z39 databases
- Z39 server – enabling Z39 searches in your ALEPH catalogue

## 4 Cataloging Format and Type of Data

Which cataloging format/s are in use in your library? Check the relevant options:

- MARC21
- Unimarc
- MAB (German cataloging format)

## 5 Authority Lists

Which authority lists are in use in your library. Check the relevant options:

- Library of Congress Subject Headings
- Library of Congress Subject Headings for Children's Literature
- Library of Congress Names
- Medical Subject Headings (MESH)
- National Agricultural Library subject authority
- Canadian Subject headings
- Other

If you selected "Other", please give additional details:

## 6 Languages

What are the languages of the works you catalog?

- Latin based languages, Western European
- Latin based languages. Eastern European
- Cyrillic
- Hebrew
- Arabic
- CJK
- Other

## 7 ALEPH "Sublibraries" and "Collections"

This section explains two central ALEPH concepts sublibraries and collections.

## 7.1 Sublibraries

As noted above, ALEPH has an "ADMinistrative" database for administrative data like items, orders, patrons, vendors and budgets. A single ADM Library can be divided into administrative sub-units which are called "sublibraries" (in many other systems the equivalent entity is called a "location"). Item records, which are the basis for items and serials control, circulation, and ILL must belong to a sublibrary. The configuration of many library policies and workflows, can be defined at the sublibrary level, especially circulation policy. Where appropriate, staff authorizations can be limited to specific sublibraries (e.g. the ability to add and update item records). In many cases it is possible to filter the display of administrative records by sublibrary.

Sublibraries are normally created for administrative units that are independent to some degree within the institution. Generally libraries or library branches (like faculty or departmental libraries) should be defined as separate sublibraries. Examples include the "Main library", the "Law library" or "Medical Library".

It should be noted that special collections, if it is housed separately (in a separate building or room) and has its own opening hours and/or its own circulation desk from which material must be loaned and returned it should also be defined as a sublibrary.

Reserve collections, unless they fit the description above, do not have to be separate sublibraries as the special circulation policies that apply to its items can be defined via the item circulation status (e.g. overnight loans).

The number of sublibraries and degree of independence of the sublibraries can vary from institution to institution. If your institution has only one central library you do not necessarily need to define sublibraries (in fact the central library could be defined as a single sublibrary in the system).

## 7.2 Collections

It should be noted that in addition to the sublibrary, holdings (both holding records and item records) have two additional elements for defining location: Collection and Call number (i.e. the exact location of the item on the book).

If a group of material is shelved in a sequence from other groups of books, it can be defined as a separate 'Collection'. Each sublibrary can have a separate list of collections. It should be noted that the collection serves to provide additional location information – it has no functional significance. Staff authorizations and other library policies cannot be defined at the collection level.

## 8 Defining Sublibraries and Collections

Define a list of the sublibraries and collections you would like to define in ALEPH.



Keep the following points in mind:

- Generally separate libraries, especially if they are in different locations and are independent to some extent should be defined as sublibraries.
- Distinct collections do not have to be separate sublibraries. They can be defined as collections within a sublibrary. Define a collection as a sublibrary only if it:
  - Has separate opening/closing hours
  - Has a distinct address which should be displayed to end-users in the OPAC
  - Requires its own circulation desk (although it should be noted that it is possible to define specific work-stations as circulation desks)
  - Does some independent technical processing (acquisitions, cataloging, items control)

For every sublibrary please reply to the following questions:

- What kind of processing or technical services (acquisitions, cataloging, and items control) does the sublibrary handle?
- Budgets – does the sublibrary have its own budgets?
- Circulation policy
  - Does the library have its own opening hours?
  - Does the library have its own loan periods?
  - Does the library have its own fines rates? Does it collect its own fines?
  - Do the items loaned from one library have to be returned to the same library or can they be returned at any library?

## 9 Items

The item is an important record in the system as it is the basis for many library workflows. Every physical entity in the library that can be loaned, must be represented in the system by an item record

Items have two statuses – the “circulation status” which governs rules concerning circulation (e.g. the item is a regular four week loan) and the "processing status" that indicates the state of the item in terms of the library’s item processing workflow. By “processing workflow” we mean periods during which the item is not available for normal circulation. The most common processing workflows are acquisitions and binding. When the item returns from processing, the processing status is removed. Generally, items with a processing status will not be available for loan. However, some libraries may decide to enable patrons to place a request on such items.

The item processing status will be further discussed in the Cataloguing and Acquisitions questionnaires.

The circulation status will be further discussed in the Circulation questionnaire.