

Frequently Asked Questions about e-invoicing

What is being asked of you as a supplier?

The new service has been designed with simplicity in mind in order to minimise the impact on your operations.

Most billing systems will produce PDF invoices. Please note that these must be data PDFs - **the system does not currently support scanned invoices or image PDFs**. If you can highlight the text in a PDF invoice then it is a data PDF.

Please note that only invoices must be data documents – any supporting documentation can be scanned if required.

Besides PDFs, the system supports almost any text based document. This includes but is not limited to:

- PDF
- XML
- HTML
- DOC (Word Document)
- CSV (Excel)
- EDI

The invoice data from each invoice received into the email account will be securely uploaded into our financial system for payment.

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What information must I include on my invoice?

The information you provide should ensure the invoice is HMRC compliant, and also of a consistent style and layout. However, to assist we have listed some items which will ensure a smooth transition to e-Invoicing with less rejections.

- 2 Decimal points in Line values (we can support 4 decimal places for Unit Price, but not at Line Value level)
- Invoice Date within the past 30days.
- Invoice Number (this should be unique)
- Purchase Order number to be displayed in it's own field (not held in comments)
- VAT number where you have listed VAT amounts
- Your company name and correspondence address clearly shown on the invoice
- Description of what your invoice includes, however you should avoid including Personal details which may be covered under Data Protection.

Can I send any type of PDF?

The only constraint of the service is that the PDF must be machine generated, i.e. produced directly from the billing application raising the invoice.

When a PDF is machine generated in almost all cases it will be a text PDF, with the invoice data items carried directly within the PDF. Our service takes advantage of this and maps the invoice data direct from the PDF to an e-invoice structure - in other words, the service is akin to mapping one flavour of XML to another flavour of XML.

If the PDF is generated by scanning the invoice, an image or photo of the invoice will be passed in the PDF. Unfortunately the only way to process image PDFs is to use OCR (Optical Character Recognition) technology - this approach cannot guarantee data quality. For these reasons we are not able to accept image PDF files.

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Can I scan my invoice and send it in?

No. Unfortunately the system does not currently support scanned invoices or image PDFs. Any PDF invoices must be machine-generated either by your billing application or a third party extension. Please see below for details.

What if I change the invoice format or Company Logo?

We understand that things change, and this may be your Accounts system, the Invoice layout, or even the company logo. If any of these change the position of fields on your invoices, or affect the look and feel of the invoice, please contact us as soon as possible, telling us of the changes with the new layout, with an example of the new invoice style, so that we can process the invoice as promptly as possible to reduce any delays in your payment.

What should be sent to the invoicing email address?

Please note that the invoicing email address is for an automated system and that only invoices, credit notes and any supporting documentation should be sent to it. If you have any queries that need answering, any correspondence or other non-invoice related documents, please direct these to your normal contact at your client.

What if I usually send supporting documentation with my invoice?

No problem. If you normally send documents such as timesheets or delivery notes (which can be image or data documents) feel free to attach them to the same email as the invoice they relate to. Any non-invoice documents that are sent on the same email as the invoice will be 'associated' with the invoice.

If you do send supporting documents with your invoice, please only include one invoice and supporting document(s) per email (NOT multiple invoices and multiple attachments on the same email).

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What if I cannot send a machine-generated PDF?

If you are unable to generate a PDF straight from your billing application, there are a couple of options:

1. PDF Driver. There are numerous, free to install PDF drivers on the internet, which when downloaded simply allow you to print to PDF in the same way as you would normally print to a printer. Examples include: <http://www.bullzip.com/products/pdf/info.php> or <http://www.cutepdf.com/products/cutepdf/writer.asp>.
2. Other e-document formats supported. Alternatively, we also support other data documents such as XML, HTML, EDI, .doc, .csv and many more. These can be delivered either via email or via a data transfer protocol such as FTP, HTTP, etc. If this option is preferred, please contact us for more detailed discussion of the options.

Can I send more than one invoice per email?

Yes. We can support many scenarios, including:

- One invoice file on one email
- Multiple invoice files on one email
- Multiple invoices in the same file
- Invoices and attachments in the same PDF file
- Invoice and attachments as separate files

Please note, if you do send supporting documents with your invoice, please only include one invoice and supporting document per email (NOT multiple invoices and multiple attachments on the same email).

What email address do I send invoices to?

Please contact your client for these details.

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Which accounts does this apply to and what are the relevant account numbers?

Since this is a generic letter that may be sent out to over a hundred suppliers at a time, it does not include account numbers for each individual supplier. If you require the account numbers or any other information that will help you to identify which accounts need to be updated to send invoices via email, please contact your liaison person at your client.

When do I start?

Right away. Please send all future invoices to the email address which you have been provided in your welcome pack.