

University of Cambridge eMarketplace FAQ's

Product pricing and availability

Q: How up to date is the Marketplace regarding product availability and pricing? Sometimes I can order items that end up being out of stock.

A: As part of the managed service Advanced action all Supplier price files. This includes requesting contract references from the Supplier if they are missing and questioning any price increase over 3%.

Regarding out of stock items, Suppliers are told to load 'hide' files for items that are out of stock or discontinued. The UoC Procurement Team also have the ability to 'deselect' items should they wish.

Please notify your Procurement team if you find any items that have turned out to be out of stock

Q: How often is the pricing of each item updated?

A: Pricing is updated in line with UoC contracts. New items are added frequently and accepted on to the Marketplace in line with Procurement Team rules.

209 price files across 55 different Suppliers have been processed in 2018 so far

Q: Why are there instances of price discrepancies between the marketplace and public web sites or written quotations?

A: Suppliers are asked to load pricing that reflects any agreed contracts they have in place with the Buyer, this is then approved by the UoC Procurement Team. If pricing on the Marketplace is more expensive than what is found on other websites please bring this to the attention of your Procurement team. For advice on how to deal with quotes please speak to your Procurement team.

Suppliers

Q: Do Advanced / Science Warehouse now have services options provided to suppliers, small or large?

A: There are three on-boarding options for Suppliers; Trader, Member and Leader. The Trader option is 100% free for Suppliers, this allows them to join the Marketplace, load their catalogue and also eInvoice through PO Flip. The other tiers (Member and Leader) provide an enhanced service and so have costs associated with them.

Advanced discuss each tier with Suppliers who then opt for the tier that provides them with the features they require. For further information on what each tier includes please speak to your Procurement team.

Q: Why aren't all of my order statuses updated? Only 36 of my 578 orders are showing as 'shipped' which is not correct.

Suppliers are required to either accept or reject your order, not all Suppliers choose to then update the order status to 'Shipped' as they tend to rely on their own system to send an email notification to the Buyer.

Advanced can work in tandem with UoC to request that Suppliers start to update the order status to Shipped but this cannot be made mandatory.

Data Quality

Q: Is it possible for stock levels, expected arrival date and ship date to be available on the Marketplace?

A: Advanced do offer stock availability to Suppliers but this relies on the Supplier having the technical abilities to provide this information. Suppliers also have the ability to populate the 'Additional Information' or 'Delivery Charge' tab with further information on delivery times for their items.

Q: Is it possible to ensure that all items have an image?

A: We understand how important images are when ordering from a catalogue, they help End Users feel secure in their purchase.

Q: Some products have such vague descriptions that we have to Google them separately. Can this be improved?

A: We are continuing to develop the Marketplace to make it easier for Suppliers to load images and soon they will be able to load images by providing a URL. We have also run several image campaigns, this included publishing figures in November 2017 and again in May 2018 to both Buyers and Suppliers to show the percentage of items that have an image. We are also developing a report to allow Buyers and Suppliers to see how many of their items have an image and comparing that to their competitors.

Please report these items to your Procurement Team who will then raise these with Advanced. The data held within the Marketplace is owned by the Suppliers but Advanced are happy to help where possible to improve this.

Q: Why is it so hard to find things on the marketplace? The data is inconsistent and it's really difficult to find items as the filtering is all over the place so you end up having to look at each individual item to find what you want.

A: The Marketplace uses the same search technology as Google and Netflix (elastic search) however the search is only as good as the data that is there. The product information that has been loaded to the Marketplace is the responsibility of the Suppliers and the Data Quality team at Advanced work hard to ensure that this adheres to our data quality rules.

UoC are connected to over 93 Suppliers and have around 5.7 million items visible. It may be useful for End Users to utilise the 'Favourite Items' or 'Saved Baskets' features to help find items easier. As always, should you find any items with missing or poor data quality please bring this to the attention of your Procurement Team in order for Advanced to take this up with the Supplier.

Q: Can the categorisation be improved as I have seen some incorrect mappings to CUF5 txn codes. Our requisitioners are generally non-technical and it is not always clear whether items are equivalent, and therefore substitutable or not.

A: Advanced have a dedicated Data Quality Team who work to ensure that all relevant items are correctly categorised. Please raise any incorrectly categorised items to your Procurement Team.

A lot of the items loaded to your Marketplace are scientific and as a result the description can be quite technical. End Users, especially those who are not generally technically minded, can use the 'Alternative Product' list to find alternative and similar items for comparison.

Marketplace Functionality

Q: Can they group or match items on Manufacturer ID to allow price comparisons?

A: You can view 'Alternative Products' by clicking in to an item's description. From here you can then choose to compare these items side by side.

Q: Is it possible for my searches to be automatically returned with cheapest items first?

A: This is something that we have looked in to but this would negatively impact searches when using general / non-specific terms. For example when you search 'paper' the first item returned in the search is paper, however if you sort the results by price from low to high, the first item is paper clips. We advise that End Users use the filters on the left hand side of the screen first before sorting the results by price.

Q: Would it be possible to have CUFS & Marketplace show a timed out screen when the programs time out?

A: The Marketplace displays a pop-up message after 25 minutes of inactivity to alert and end user that it will time out in 5 minutes.

Development Feedback

Q: It would be really useful if we could access item price history to help resolve invoice discrepancies.

A: We are currently agreeing our roadmap for 2019-20. A development on item price change history is currently being considered. As we have a finite number of development days for the year each development request needs to be carefully considered.

Q: Can customer reviews be added to the catalogues?

A: Customer reviews on both Suppliers and items is something that we have reviewed with both Buyers and Supplier and continue to revisit when new product areas are added to the Marketplace. The overall consensus was that due to the scientific nature of the Marketplace, End User opinion would not add value.

Q: It would be easier to be able to progress/expedite orders through the marketplace rather than contacting the Supplier directly by telephone or e-mail.

A: Further messaging capabilities within the Marketplace are being considered by our development team.