# Oracle Applications Overview


## Prepared for MU Ventures Ltd August 2007

# Document History

## *Originally Prepared By*

David Norris 01 August 2007

## *Revisions*

| Version | Date | Author | Changes Made |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.01 | 7 Aug 07 | DON | First Draft |
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## *Key to Symbols*

| | |
|---|---|
| ..... ➢ | Describes a Windows Workspace Menu Path, e.g. **Edit ➢ Copy** |
| ✧..... ➢ | Describes a Navigator Menu Path, e.g. **✧Setup ➢Flexfields ➢Key** |
| 🕮 | Indicates a key point in the text |
| 🖳 | Indicates an exercise to be completed by attendees |

# Objectives

The aim of this session is provide MU Ventures staff who will be using one or more of the core applications within Oracle Financials with an understanding of the structure of the applications and the implications that will have on the way they work with the Oracle applications.

By the end of this session attendees will:

- Have verified their own access to the live Oracle system (MDX LVE) and will understand the levels of authority they have been granted
- Be able to connect to Oracle applications, navigating through the fire wall and the application's own security levels
- Be able to navigate both the core Oracle applications forms and the self service forms and be able to search for and retrieve data from the system.
- Be able to print a standard report or document either to screen or to a hard copy.
- Be able to code a transaction using the Middlesex shared chart of accounts

# Prerequisites

Attendees for this session should be familiar with:

- The use of a PC as a terminal to another system (eg Sage)
- The principles of navigating an internet web page

# Overview

Oracle Applications is a modular suite of packages, sometimes referred to as an Enterprise Resource Planning (or ERP) system.

Its primary focus is on transaction recording, with an objective of providing relevant detailed information to users in a format that helps them process those transactions.

At the same time the system is required to produce summary information for the review and control of the activities of the business. For example Income and Expense Statements, Balance Sheets, Debtor, Creditor and Work in Progress Listings.

## *The Modules*

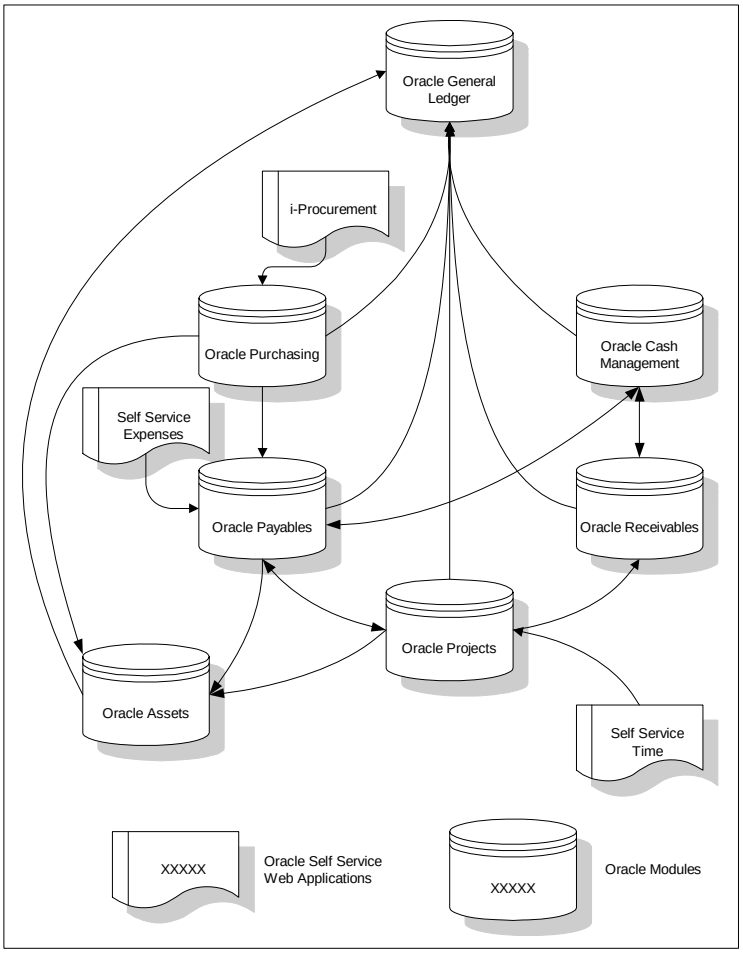
To achieve this, the information stored in Oracle is accessed through modules that are specifically designed to suit that part of the business that we want to record:
eg

- Purchasing
- Payables
- Receivables
- Projects
- Assets

The modules “own” their own data tables and provide the forms and reports that we use to access the data.

They also share data through interfaces, eventually summarising and passing the transactions to the General Ledger where control accounts are maintained and Financial Reports & Summaries can be produced.

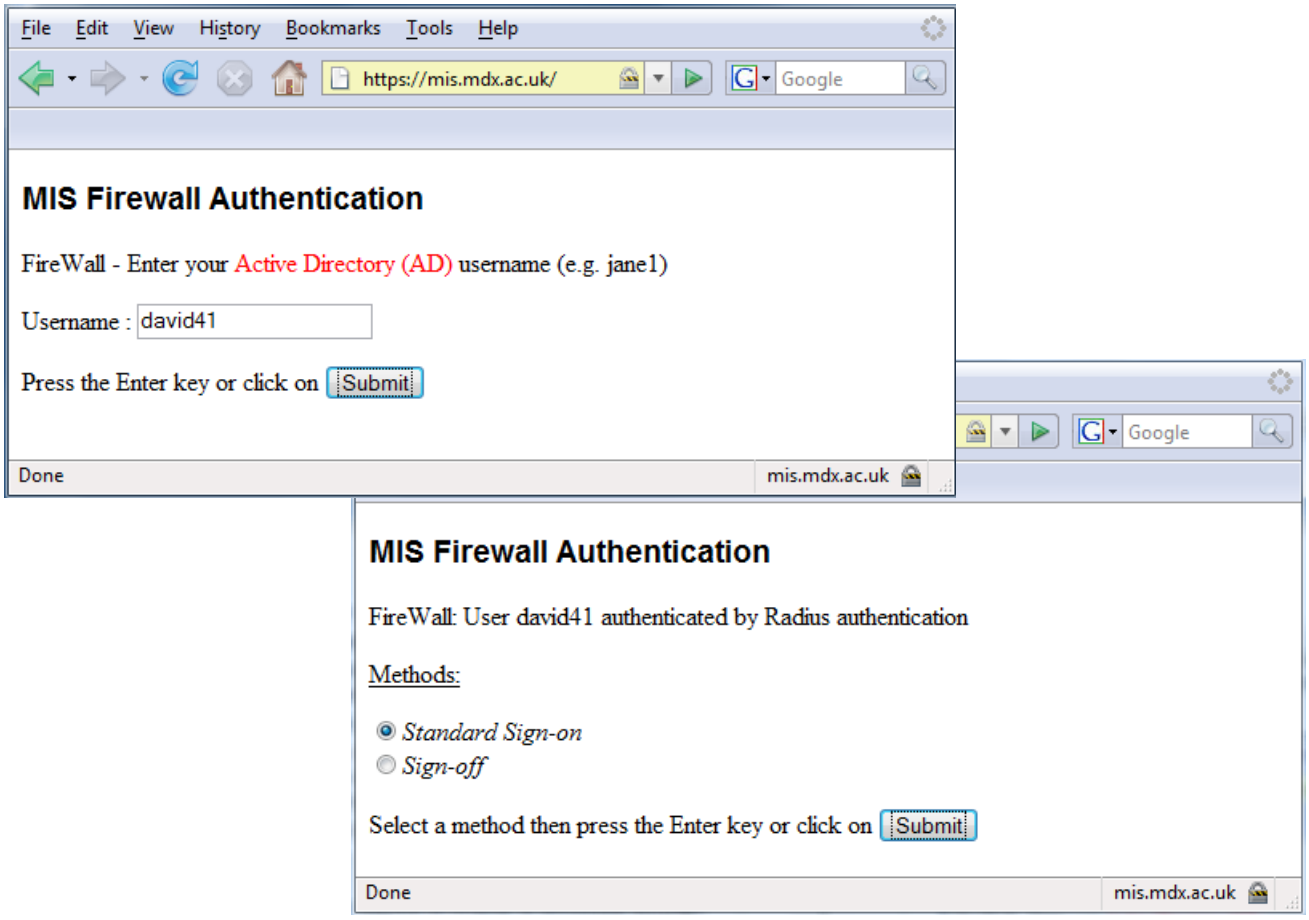
### The Oracle Modules



# Accessing Oracle Applications

## *Firewall*

We operate Oracle Financials behind a firewall so the first stage to connecting to Oracle must be to validate through the firewall using your normal network password. Firewall authentication can be reached from the intranet home page.



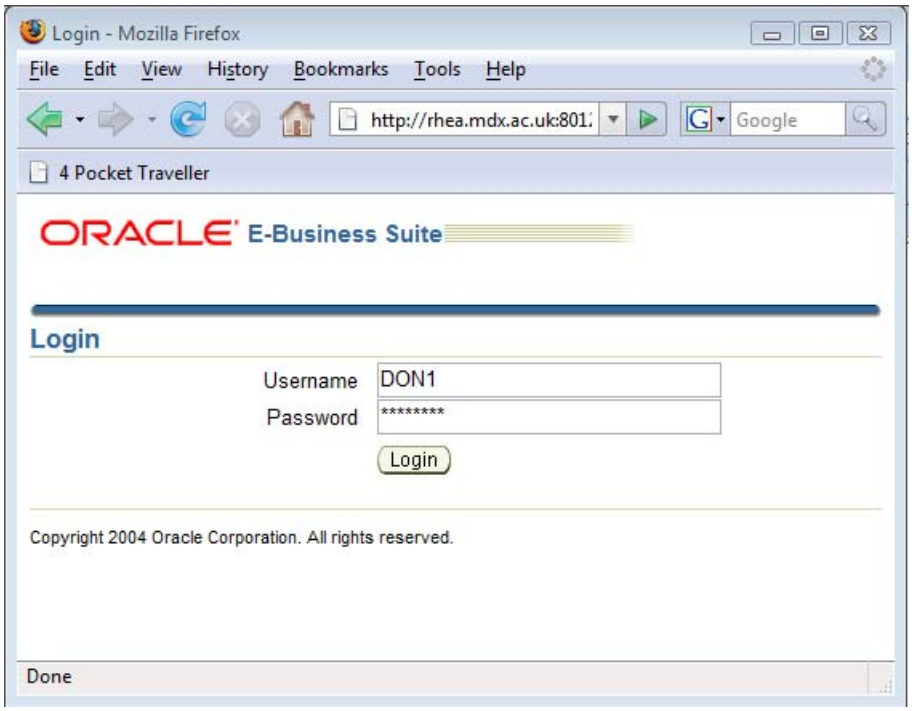

Once connected you can now navigate to the Oracle Home page. Again this is normally done from the intranet home page, by choosing

TOOLS then PAFIS from the black menu bar across the top of the page.

*Class to connect to Network and validate their firewall authentication.*

## *Oracle Logon*

The Oracle logon screen will invite you to enter a user ID (normally written in the same way as your network user ID and an Oracle system password. Before you first connect to the system you will be told what your one-time password is—at that time you will be asked to enter a new password which will be the one you use for the next 90 days.

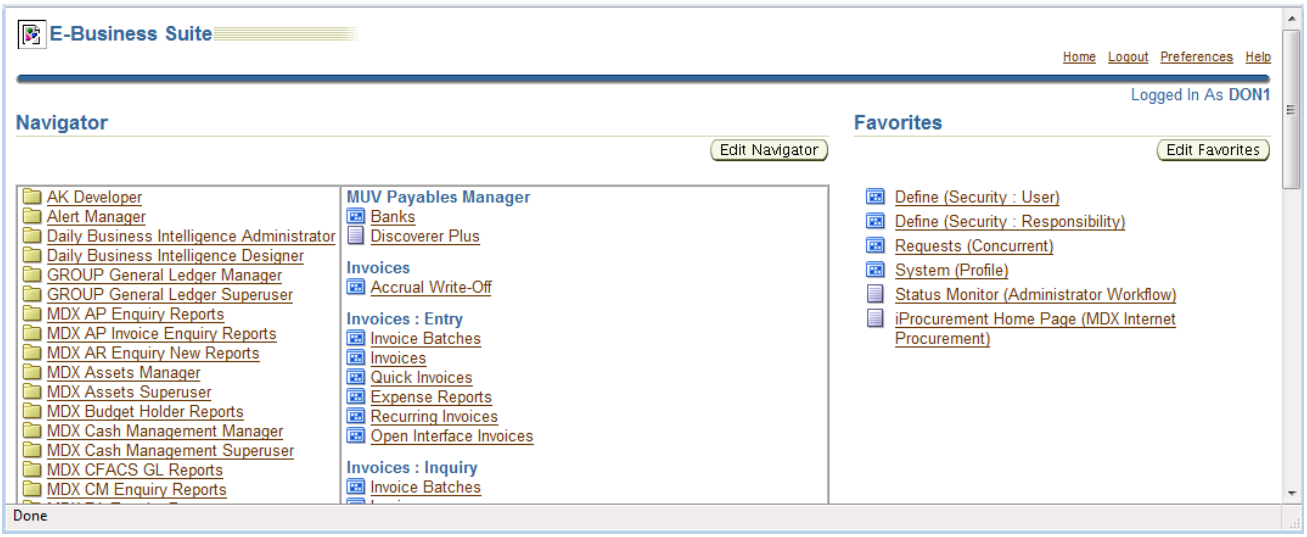



*You can request amendments to your standard Oracle Logon, including responsibilities and default code values by submitting a user access form to the Systems Accounting team. A copy of this form can be found on the Oracle help pages.*

*Attendees to connect to Oracle TRG ( http://rhea.mdx.ac.uk:8012/OA_HTML/AppsLocalLogin.jsp ) and examine the responsibilities that they have been granted.*

## *The Home Menu*

Once the Oracle Login is accepted you will be taken to the E-Business Suite Home Page, this is divided into 3 areas…




### Responsibility list

The first list identifies all of the responsibilities that you have been assigned, note how most start with MDX, MUV or MFL to indicate the company to which they relate. We will talk about these shortly.

### Menu list

Selecting one of the responsibilities by clicking on its hyperlink will display the menu associated with that responsibility. Selecting one of these hyperlinks will take you to either an Oracle Form or an Oracle Self Service web page.

### Favourites list

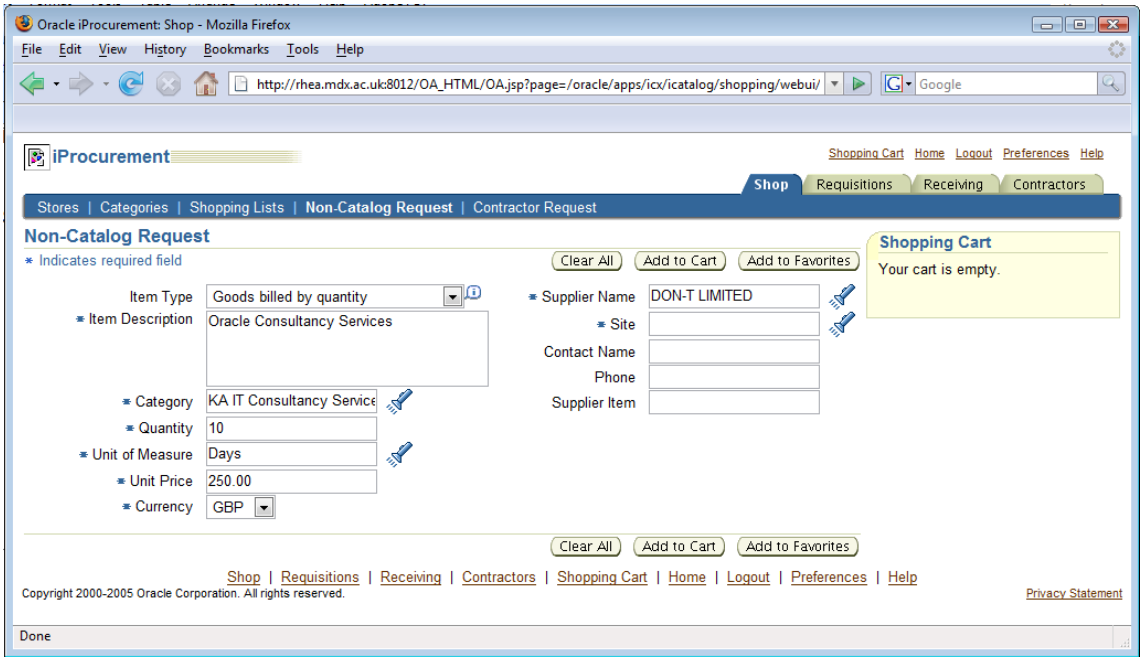
To try and speed up access you can also choose to add your favourite links to the right hand side of the page. Experience has shown that, for most users, less than 10 favourite links will cover the majority of their system usage. Again selecting one of these hyperlinks will take you to either an Oracle Form or an Oracle Self Service web page.

# Entering and Reviewing Data

Two styles of screen display are used to access the data in Oracle applications. These are known as Self Service and Oracle Forms.

## *Self Service Forms*

This is a web based format, as the name implies it is designed for infrequent or non-expert users of the system, normally to record data entry




such as a Purchase Requisition or an Expense Claim or for those who are asked to approve such requisitions using Workflow.

Self Service forms are written as html pages and have little functionality outside of that which is programmed into the buttons and hyperlinks within the form. They can however act as useful enquiry tools when some details about the purchase, internet expense claim or notification that you wish to review is available.

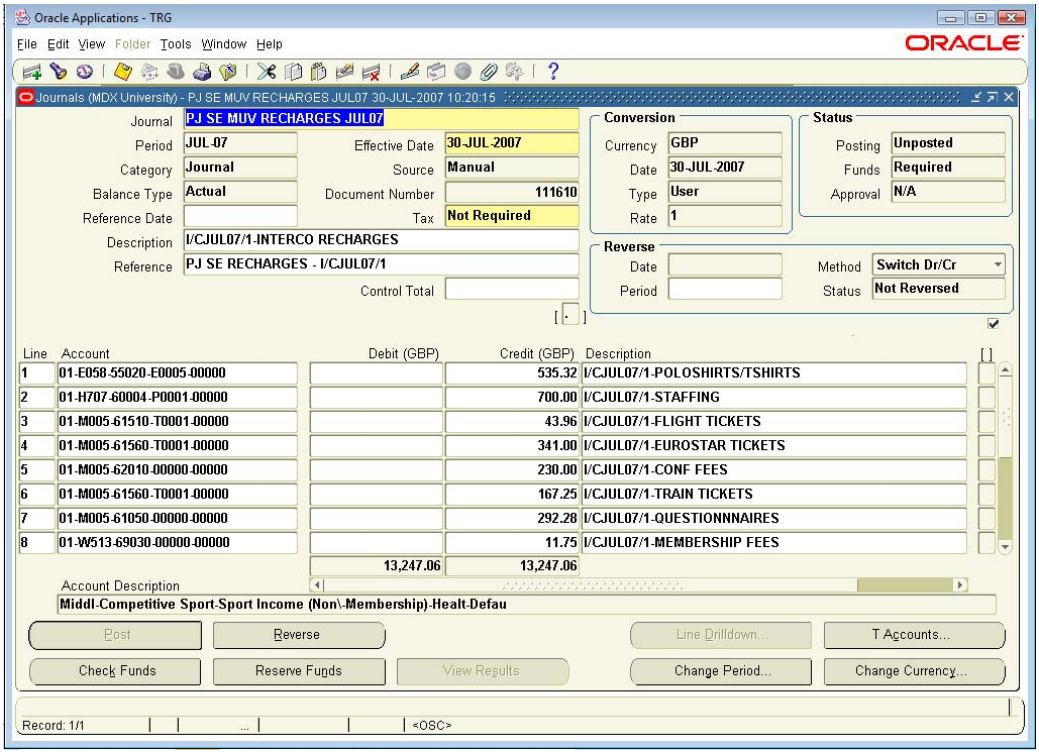
### Key Features & Notes

- Buttons & Hyperlinks
- The “Torch” search button
- Try to avoid using the windows navigation buttons as this can disable normal processing

## *Oracle Forms*

This is a more direct method of access, used to retrieve, review and edit data as held in the system. When you access Oracle Forms from the home menu you will have to wait while a substantial Java package is downloaded (known to as jinitiator) this carries all of the code needed to access and display the forms.

*Example form - GL Journals*



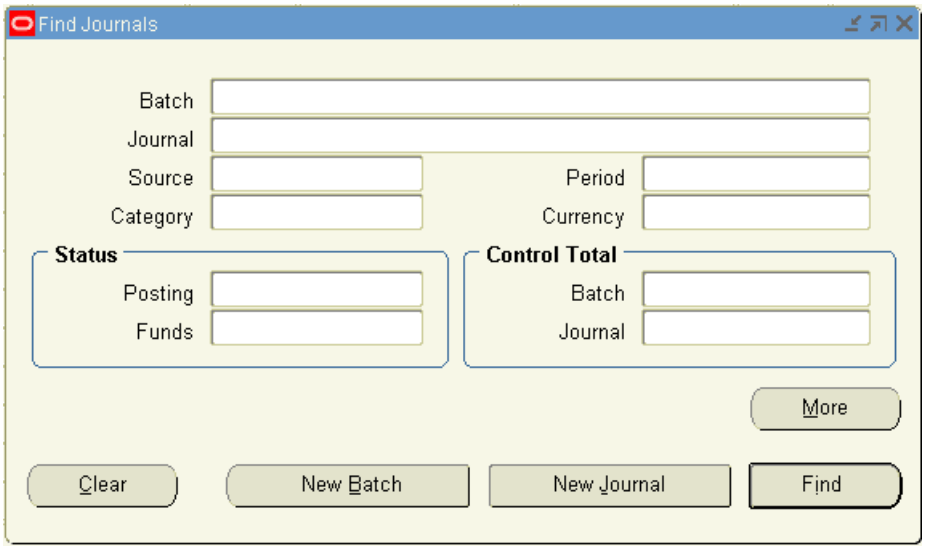

### Data Ownership

Oracle Forms provides a window into the data held in the Oracle systems, using a copy of the information held locally, in the PC's memory. Hence:

- When entering new information for the first time, or when changing information. Then that information is not "in" Oracle until it is saved.
- When viewing information you will normally "lock" that data record until you have finished.
- When you do save a change, Oracle records your user ID and the time of the last change.

## *Query Forms*

Often, when you access an Oracle Form a query window appears. For example the form below opens automatically when selecting the Journals form.




This recognises that you may wish to search for data when entering the form and provides search functions for the most common sets of data. Where appropriate it will also provide a selectable list of possible values.

If it is your intention to create a new record you simply select New Journal or the New Journal Batch buttons or you can enter the examples and press the find button

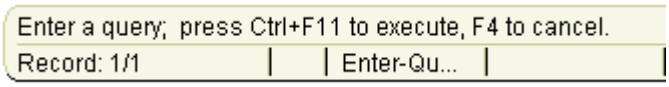
## *Query by Example*

One of the most useful tools within Oracle Forms is that of Query by Example, this allows you to search for information using examples of the data you wish to see.

🕮 *If the torch icon is available, try that first as that may provide a quicker way of finding the data you seek.*

To use Query by Example

1. Navigate to the form that holds the data you want to see
2. Press Function Key 11, the fields that you can use to query will turn blue and you will see the following message at the bottom of the workspace:




3. Enter the examples that you want to search for

   🕮 Wildcard characters include

   % - any string

   ? - any character

4. Press CTRL and Function Key 11 together to run the query
5. The system will then retrieve and display any records that match these examples in the form

🕮 *The favourite error when using QBE is to enter the query before pressing F11, this will result in creating a new record and upsetting everybody.*

# Workflows

Workflow is the name we give to procedural programs that run in the background when we are using Oracle. For example, in the purchasing cycle we have:

1. PO Req Account Generator - which takes information we provide when recording a Purchase Requisition and creates an account code combination.

2. PO Req Approve - which identifies the person who should approve a PO Requisition and creates a notification which it sends to that person.

3. PO Create - which takes an approved Purchase Requisition and automatically creates a purchase order that is ready to be printed and emailed to the supplier.

We will cover workflows in more detail as part of each module, particularly purchasing. At this point three aspects of workflows are worth noting:

1. They are a background process that do not require you to do anything except enter and save the data. Some run immediately some are on a 5 minute cycle and some on a daily basis.

2. Workflow communicates with users by sending notifications. These messages are available from the Notifications Self Service form in Oracle. They are also copied and sent to a user's default email account.

3. While at least 2/3rds of notifications are simple advisory messages some also ask the user to complete an action - for example approving a requisition. On receipt of such notifications users are asked to connect to Oracle to complete the required actions.

# Navigation - Using the Oracle Forms

When navigating in Oracle forms, remember that you often have the option of carrying out a function in one of at least three different ways, so don't feel confused if you feel that we are talking about the same things several times in the next few minutes.

Navigation options include: Menus, Toolbar Icons and buttons, Function and Short Cut Keys.

📖 *To help you will find a reference card with your pack.*

## *Menus*

Oracle Forms uses an adapted standard windows format menu at the top of the workspace. The normal top entries are:

**File**: Provides control over forms and menu options together with printing and export

**Edit**: Standard cut, copy and paste functions

**View**: Search for entries or switch between summary and detailed views

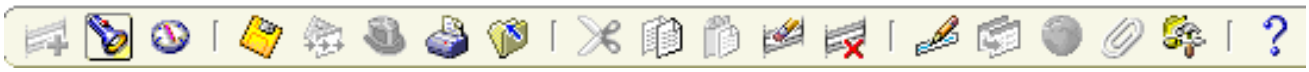
**Folder**: If the form provides for folder format changes this menu is active and allows you to define new layouts

**Tools**: Options specific to the information that is being viewed

**Window**: Window positioning and navigation

**Help**: Access online help and diagnostic tools

## *Toolbar Icons*



At the top of the Oracle Forms workspace you will find an ICON bar that highlights a number of common activities that you can carry out:

These include:

Add new record

Search

Navigator Menu

Save

Print

Close Form

Switch Responsibility

Cut, Copy and Paste

Erase, Delete and Edit

📖 *To help you will find a reference card with your pack.*

## *Function and Short Cut Keys*

As well as the menu and / or the Icons there are keystrokes that can be used when processing forms. These include:

**Tab**: Move to next field

**Enter**: Use default button for form, usually Find or Open

**Spacebar**: Press button that is currently highlighted

**F1**: Display context help

**F2**: List Tabs

**F4**: Exit

**F5**: Clear Field

**Shift F5**: Copy previous Field

**F6**: Clear Record Field

**Shift F6**: Copy previous Record

**F7**: Clear Block

**Shift F7**: Move to Next Record (Primary Key)

**F8**: Clear Form

**Shift F8**: Move to Next Record Set

**F11**: Enter Query

**Ctrl F5**: Run Query

**F12**: Count Query Results

# Chart of Accounts

## *Account Code Combinations*

Oracle Financials will suddenly make sense the day that you understand the idea of “Account Code Combinations” - hopefully today.

For Oracle, the “Account” is really a string of five segments that together define an account code combination. That is the label applied to each entry.

For MUV this string describes

Company-Cost Centre-Account-Analysis-Mini Project

E.g. 03-0000-20001-00000-00000

*The issue that normally arises is that Oracle applies tool that let you examine entries based on selected segments by summarising data based on those segments and ignoring others. The trick is not to confuse the analysis tools with the way that the data is stored.*

### Company

Currently there are three valid companies to choose from. 03 is the value for MU Ventures Limited. (01 is Middlesex Univ and 02 is MU Facilities Ltd)

### Cost Centre

Used to record the ownership of a transaction line. There are default cost centres for balance sheet items (0000) and for the ownership of Mini Projects (YA01 to YZ99).

Some cost centres are defined as parent values, they cannot be posted to directly but can be used as a short had reference to aggregate all of their Child cost centres.

### Account

Used to describe the entry, be it Receipt / Payment, Expense / Income , Asset / Liability, Loss / Profit.

There are several hundred accounts in Oracle, shared between all of the operating units.

## Analysis

Used to further analyses the account segment so, for example, staff costs might be sub-analysed between:

P0001 Wages and Salaries

P0002 Social Security Costs

P0003 Pension Costs

## Spare (Mini Project)

Until now the spare segment has not been used, but for MUV we have introduced the range 70000 to 79999 to record entries relating to a specific MUV Mini Project.

Each new project will be assigned the next value in the 70000 range and will be matched to one of the following Mini Project Control Cost Centres.

| School / Activity | ARTS & EDUCN | HEALTH & SOCIAL SCIENCES | FLOOD HAZARD RE-SEARCH CENTRE | CESMB | MUBS | CEEDR | COMP UTING SCIENCE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CONFERENCE | YA01 | YB01 | YC01 | YD01 | YE01 | YF01 | YG01 |
| CONSUL-TANCY | YA02 | YB02 | YC02 | YD02 | YE02 | YF02 | YG02 |
| CONTRACT RESEARCH | YA03 | YB03 | YC03 | YD03 | YE03 | YF03 | YG03 |
| TRAINING/CPD | YA04 | YB04 | YC04 | YD04 | YE04 | YF04 | YG04 |
| FACILITIES HIRE | YA05 | YB05 | YC05 | YD05 | YE05 | YF05 | YG05 |
| Misc | YA06 | YB06 | YC06 | YD06 | YE06 | YF06 | YG06 |

*When communicating project to staff, or referring to projects you should always state the reference as Cost Centre—Mini Project. For Example YAxx-7xxxx.*

Once we have recorded sufficient data within Oracle then we will be in a position to write Discoverer reports to analyse and control these Mini Projects.

## Account Code Combination Rules

Within the Oracle Chart of Accounts we can define account code combination rules that prevent invalid combinations from being created.

So for example, we have established a rule that if Company 03 is selected then only 0000, F001, YA00 to YZZZ and a few other cost centres can be used.

Similarly, Cost Centres YA00 to YZZZ must be supporting by a mini-project value that is not equal to 00000.

Should you enter such a combination you will see a warning message and be asked to re-enter some of the values.

## Segment Security

We have also introduced some basic security, tying the Company segment value to the responsibilities used to access the system. Thus, as a MUV user, you will only be allowed to use company segment 03.

## Exercise - entering GL Code Combinations.

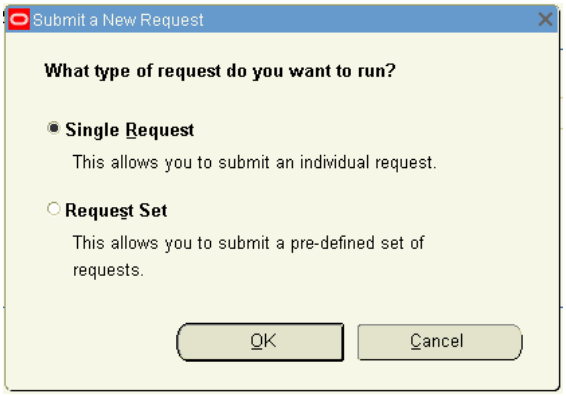
In your course pack you will find copies of the various chart of accounts segment values and a page with a few exercises. We will now look at those for five minutes then go through them as a group

# Printing (requesting a process)

Oracle controls much of its background processes through a tool known as the concurrent manager, for example standard reports and interfaces are started and managed by requesting a process in the concurrent manager forms.

To access these forms navigate to the Submit Requests form using

**✧ Other ➢ Requests ➢ Run**



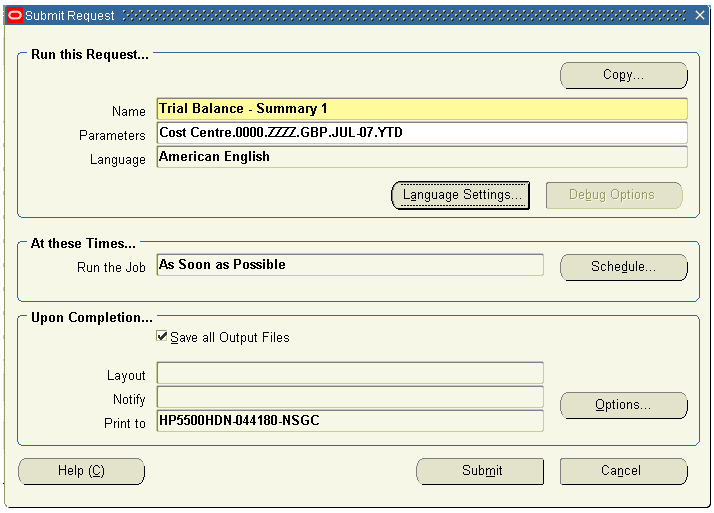

Normally you will work with a single request rather than setting off a set of requests at one time. Select that radio key and press the OK button.

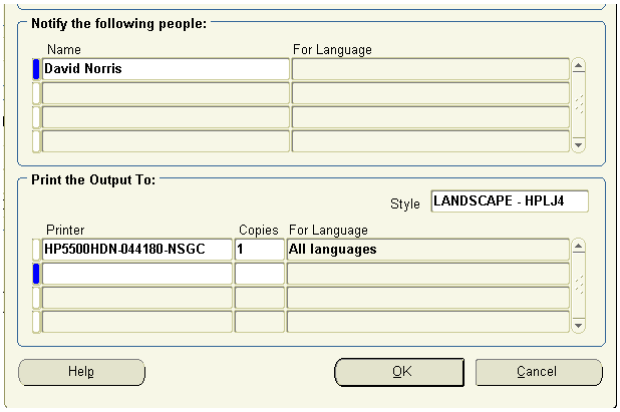
This will take you to the submission form where you can identify the process to run, enter any parameters, select a submission schedule or time and decide on how the process will report (even if the result will be emailed to you).

Selection and Parameters area

Scheduling area

Output and Notification - pressing options takes you to the form below

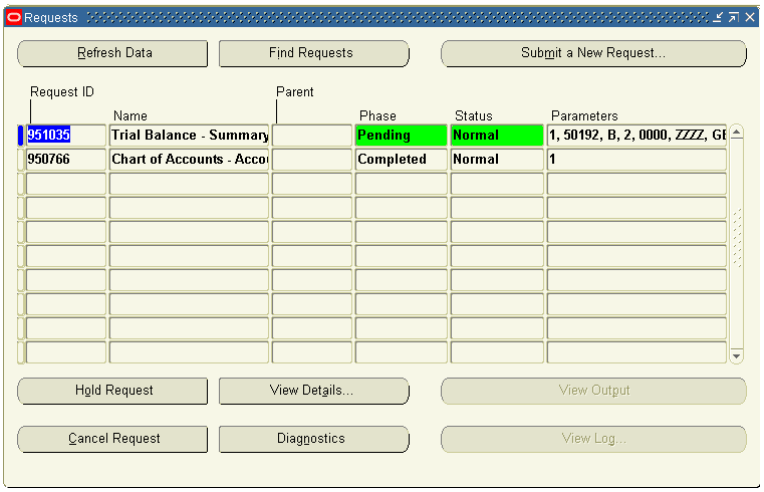



*We will shortly identify the names of the printers that you will be using in production. If you ever need to use an unfamiliar printer you can usually find the name on a label stuck to that printer.*

## The Concurrent Manager

Once the request is submitted you will be taken to the concurrent manager form. If you have nothing better to do you can then watch the process run through its various stages.




Pending Phase - Normal, Standby, Scheduled, Waiting

Running Phase - Normal, Paused, Resuming, Terminating

Completed Phase - Normal, Error, Warning, Cancelled, Terminated

Inactive Phase - Disabled, On Hold, No Manager

Once completed you can use the View Output button or the windows tools menu to reprint the report.

# Reporting

The standard reporting tools for Oracle Financials comes in four flavours, each will be covered in more detail in the appropriate module sessions.

## *Form Print and Download*

Anything you can see on screen can be printed using standard windows print tools, these will print the active window within the Oracle desktop. This approach is useful if you want a quick reference for a single transaction header or for the posting lines for that transactions.

Oracle also allows you to export lists of data to text, tsv or csv files. This can be helpful if you want to review all of the transactions on a single account.

## *Standard Reports*

As we have already seen, there are a number of standard text reports for each module that can be submitted using the concurrent manager.

### *FSG*

Financial Statement Generator reports provide summary financial information from the GL Balances table. They are text based reports that can be structured to produce output such as Balance Sheet Reports, Income & Expenditure Statements and similar analyses of GL balances

## *Discoverer*

Discoverer is the main transaction reporting tool available to our implementation of Oracle. Reports using deiscoverer are the best way of summarising and analysing activity in the Payables, Receivables and Purchasing Ledgers as well as reviewing GL Journal Lines.

# Exercises—GL Coding

1. Interest Income arising on the bank account

| Company | Cost Centre | Account | Analysis | Mini Project |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

2. Employee Salary cost for Stephen Evans

| Company | Cost Centre | Account | Analysis | Mini Project |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

3. CPR Training Materials purchased for Haringey Teaching PCT

| Company | Cost Centre | Account | Analysis | Mini Project |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

4. Travel expenses for a flight from Biggen Hill to Aberdeen to look at Flood Defences

| Company | Cost Centre | Account | Analysis | Mini Project |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

5. Record recharge of telephone costs from Middlesex University

| Company | Cost Centre | Account | Analysis | Mini Project |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |