

USER GUIDE

Universal Business Language (UBL)

User Guide

Seller Onboarding — TSUBL Documentation Package

TSUBL 2.0 / 2.1 · Updated September 2026

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Introduction

Universal Business Language (UBL) is an open library of standard electronic XML business documents for procurement and transportation, such as purchase orders, invoices, transport logistics documents, and waybills. UBL was developed by an OASIS Technical Committee with participation from a variety of industry data standards organizations, and is described in detail in the OASIS article "What is UBL?", which covers customizing and extending UBL, UBL governance, its modelling approach, and considerations for deployment.

Tradeshift uses Universal Business Language (UBL) as its preferred format for business documents. This means business documents are exchanged with Tradeshift users in UBL format, and UBL concepts such as subsets, profiles, business objects, code lists, extensions, and validation are used extensively when handling business documents on the Tradeshift platform.

Universal Business Language Basics

UBL is an open standard for business documents that is valid, live, and used across industry domains. In short, UBL is all about reuse — of subsets, business objects, code lists, and so on — helping business entities get the most out of their investment in electronic document exchange.

UBL describes a number of well-known business documents (such as Invoice, Credit Note, and Despatch Advice), and also focuses on the interaction between those documents — the business processes that connect them.

Another key concept is the UBL subset, represented by the UBL element CustomizationID. Every UBL instance must belong to a defined UBL subset in order to be usable. The next section explains how Tradeshift has defined its own subset.

The Tradeshift UBL Subset (TSUBL)

As noted above, every UBL instance must belong to a defined UBL subset, indicated by the CustomizationID element — otherwise it cannot be processed. Examples of common subsets in wide use include:

- OIOUBL — the Danish subset
- NES — the North European Subset
- PEPPOL BIS — the pan-European subset
- EHF — the Norwegian subset
- UBLTR — the Turkish variant
- Factura Electrónica — the Peruvian subset

The real benefit of UBL is its ability to meet the specific needs of different business domains while remaining based on the same underlying classes, elements, and concepts. Tradeshift has defined its own subset, called TSUBL. TSUBL is, in effect, a superset relative to some of the subsets above, in the sense that it contains a number of extensions that matter to Tradeshift and its international customers. TSUBL nonetheless remains a true UBL subset, because it uses only classes and elements defined in the UBL standard.

UBL 2.0 and UBL 2.1

TSUBL currently supports two customizations side by side:

- **UBL 2.0** — urn:tradeshift.com:ubl-2.0-customizations:2010-06 (legacy; still emitted for tenants and profiles not yet migrated)
- **UBL 2.1** — urn:tradeshift.com:ubl-2.1-customizations:2023-04 (current)

The very first lines of a Tradeshift UBL document declare the version of the standard and the document type. Here is an example header for an Invoice using the UBL 2.1 customization (namespace declarations omitted for brevity):

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<Invoice xmlns="urn:oasis:names:specification:ubl:schema:xsd:Invoice-2" ...>

  <cbc:UBLVersionID>2.1</cbc:UBLVersionID>
  <cbc:CustomizationID>urn:tradeshift.com:ubl-2.1-customizations:2023-04</cbc:CustomizationID>
  <cbc:ProfileID schemeAgencyID="http://tradeshift.com">
    urn:tradeshift.com:profile:BasicInvoice:ver1.0
  </cbc:ProfileID>
```

The equivalent UBL 2.0 header uses the legacy customization and the CEN/ISSS WS/BII profile instead:

```
<cbc:UBLVersionID>2.0</cbc:UBLVersionID>
<cbc:CustomizationID>urn:tradeshift.com:ubl-2.0-customizations:2010-06</cbc:CustomizationID>
<cbc:ProfileID schemeAgencyID="CEN/ISSS WS/BII" schemeID="CWA 16073:2010">
  urn:www.cenbii.eu:profile:bii04:ver1.0
</cbc:ProfileID>
```

Downloading the UBL Schema (XSD)

TSUBL uses the standard UBL XSD published by OASIS. Download the schema that matches the customization you are implementing:

UBL 2.0

- **Schema (XSD):** <http://docs.oasis-open.org/ubl/os-UBL-2.0/xsd/>
- **Introduction:** <http://docs.oasis-open.org/ubl/os-UBL-2.0/UBL-2.0.html>

UBL 2.1

- **Schema (XSD):** <http://docs.oasis-open.org/ubl/os-UBL-2.1/xsd/>
- **Introduction:** <http://docs.oasis-open.org/ubl/os-UBL-2.1/UBL-2.1.html>

<http://ubl.xml.org/wiki/ubl-specifications>

What's in the Documentation Package

After downloading and unzipping the archive, you will find this guide alongside one folder per supported business document type. TSUBL currently covers the following document types:

Document Type	Folder	Purpose
Invoice	Invoice	Standard commercial invoice
Credit Note	CreditNote	Adjusts or reverses a previously issued Invoice
Corrective Invoice	CorrectiveInvoice	Corrects a previously issued Invoice
Order	Order	Purchase order
Order Change	OrderChange	Requests a change to a previously sent Order
Order Response	OrderResponse	Seller's response to a received Order
Blanket Order	BlanketOrder	Long-term framework order covering multiple future releases
Blanket Order Change	BlanketOrderChange	Change to a previously sent Blanket Order
Despatch Advice	DespatchAdvice	Notifies the buyer that goods have been dispatched
Receipt Advice	ReceiptAdvice	Confirms receipt of goods
Remittance Advice	RemittanceAdvice	Notifies a supplier that payment has been made
Application Response	ApplicationResponse	Generic technical / business acknowledgement of a received document
Quotation	Quotation	Price quote / offer

Within each folder you will typically find:

- **One TSUBL_<Type>_Specification.xlsx workbook** — the combined specification for that document type. See "How to Read the TSUBL Specification Workbook" below.
- **One or more TSUBL_<DocumentType>_<variant>.xml example files** — illustrating the base structure as well as specific scenarios (allowances and charges, delivery information, PO references, tax exchange rates, advanced pricing, and more).

For example, the Invoice folder currently contains:

- [TSUBL_INV_Specification.xlsx](#) — the Invoice specification workbook
- [TSUBL_Invoice_01.xml](#) — general example of an Invoice
- [TSUBL_Invoice_01bad.xml](#) — example of an invalid Invoice, for negative testing
- [TSUBL_Invoice_TSGLI.xml](#) — example of an Invoice in TSUBL format, using the TSGLI identifier
- [TSUBL_Invoice_ALC.xml](#) — example showing allowances and charges
- [TSUBL_Invoice_Delivery.xml](#) — example with delivery address
- [TSUBL_Invoice_POref.xml](#) — example with a purchase order reference
- [TSUBL_Invoice_PricesAdvanced.xml](#) — example with advanced pricing
- [TSUBL_Invoice_SenderAssigned.xml](#) — example with a sender-assigned identifier
- [TSUBL_Invoice_TaxExchangeRate.xml](#) — example with a tax exchange rate
- [TSUBL_SelfbilledInvoice_01.xml](#) — example of a self-billed Invoice
- [TSUBL_DebitNoteInvoice_01.xml](#) — example of a debit-note Invoice
- [TSUBL_Invoice_UBL21_NewFields.xml](#) — example populated with the fields introduced by the UBL 2.1 customization (see "What's New: UBL 2.1 Fields" below)

The other document-type folders follow the same pattern: one specification workbook plus one or more worked XML examples. See the relevant folder for the full, current list of example files for that document type.

How to Read the TSUBL Specification Workbook

Each document type folder contains a single specification workbook, TSUBL_<Type>_Specification.xlsx. Its Overview tab (and, for Invoice, the additional PaymentMeans tab) is unique to that document type; every other tab is a shared reference list used across all TSUBL formats, so its content is the same no matter which workbook you have open.

Overview tab

The Overview tab lists the full TSUBL element structure and hierarchy for the document type, together with the following columns:

- **TSUBL use**
 - "1" — the field is mandatory for the Tradeshift platform to create a valid document
 - "0..n" — the field is optional and repeatable; include it when it holds information
 - "1..n" — the field is mandatory and repeatable as needed
 - "0..1" — the field is optional and not repeatable

 *Even when a field is not mandated by the format specification, a Buyer's business firewall rules may still require it.*

- **Columns B-M** — show the TSUBL element structure and hierarchy (nesting).
- **CanonicalName** — the variable name Tradeshift uses internally to store the value supplied in the TSUBL field.
- **Business description** — a short description of the field's use.
- **Hardcoded** — filled in when the value must always stay the same.
- **XSD validation** — the format, or standardised list of values, accepted for the field.
- **TS Core validation** — the format, values, or standardised Tradeshift list that further constrains the field.
- **Example** — an example value for the field.
- **Comments** — additional notes, where applicable.
- **XPath** — the XPath to the field within the XML document.

Reference tabs

From CurrencyCode onward, the remaining tabs are standardised reference lists shared by every TSUBL format:

- **Currency Code** — ISO 4217
- **Country Identification Code** — ISO 3166
- **Tax Category ID** — UN/ECE 5305
- **Tax Scheme ID** — UN/ECE 5153 Subset
- **Unit Of Measure Code** — UN/ECE Recommendation 20

- **TS PartyID schemes and TS PartyID scheme names** — Tradeshift party-identification schemes, used in TS_cac:PartyIdentification/cbc:ID/@schemeID and @schemeName; this is how the platform identifies the sender and receiver account
- **Binary Object Mime Code** — IANA MIME media types
- **TS Document Types** — Tradeshift extensions for the DocumentReference field, used to store industry-specific information
- **TS Districts** — Tradeshift-accepted district code, description, and country code combinations

In every case, only the values listed on the relevant tab are accepted by the Tradeshift platform.

Mandatory Fields Required by Tradeshift

For every business document type (Invoice, Order, Credit Note, and so on), Tradeshift maintains a specification covering every supported business element. For each business element, the specification holds:

- The name of the business element (the canonical name)
- A short business description
- The Tradeshift use (optional, mandatory, repeatable, and so on)
- An optional format specification (only when special requirements apply)
- An example value
- An optional comment (only when special requirements apply)

Example: a mandatory field

The Invoice number of an Invoice:

- **Canonical name:** InvoiceNumber
- **Business description:** An identifier for the Invoice assigned by the Creditor
- **Tradeshift use:** 1 (mandatory, single instance)
- **Example value:** 2750

Example: an optional field

The header note of an Invoice:

- **Canonical name:** InvoiceNote
- **Business description:** Free-form text applying to the Invoice. May contain notes or other information not explicitly captured elsewhere in the structure.
- **Tradeshift use:** 0..1 (optional, single instance)
- **Example value:** This is a note

What's New: UBL 2.1 Fields

TSUBL now supports the UBL 2.1 customization (urn:tradeshift.com:ubl-2.1-customizations:2023-04) alongside the original UBL 2.0 customization. The Invoice and Credit Note specification workbooks flag every field introduced with this update, and each format's folder now includes a worked example populated with those fields:

- [Invoice/TSUBL_Invoice_UBL21_NewFields.xml](#)
- [CreditNote/TSUBL_CreditNote_UBL21_NewFields.xml](#)

Newly available Invoice fields include DueDate, BuyerReference, InvoicePeriod, OriginatorDocumentReference, and ProjectReference, together with full AgentParty and ServiceProviderParty sub-structures under both the Supplier and Customer parties.

Credit Note gains DespatchDocumentReference, plus the same AgentParty and ServiceProviderParty sub-structures under both parties.

Consult the Comments column on each format's Overview tab for the complete, field-by-field list.