
A COMPANION TO THE SUPPLIER CONTROL FRAMEWORK

AP Control Checklist

Twenty-five questions across the nine stages of the supplier lifecycle. Check how strong your control is, stage by stage.

Answer quickly

Tick Yes, Partly or No. Most questions should take a moment.

No score

This is a tool, not a test. There is no rating and no grade.

Read the gaps

If an answer takes time, or is "partly", that is the signal.

Each question comes from the nine-stage standard in The Supplier Control Framework. Tick **Yes**, **Partly** or **No** for the way your team works today, not the way the policy reads.

ACT: COMMIT Money is committed before any invoice exists.

1

Contracting

Is there a valid, current contract for this supplier and this spend, and are its terms structured well enough to be used downstream?

		YES	PARTLY	NO
1.1	Is there a valid, current contract in place before a supplier is activated?	☐	☐	☐
1.2	Are contract terms held as structured data that later stages can check against, rather than only filed as a PDF?	☐	☐	☐
1.3	Are amendments and renewals tracked, and is each contract linked to the supplier and the spend it governs?	☐	☐	☐

2

Supplier onboarding

Is this supplier a verified, legitimate entity, set up by the right people, with bank details confirmed to belong to them?

		YES	PARTLY	NO
2.1	Is the supplier's identity confirmed against an external registry and screened against sanctions before it is activated?	☐	☐	☐
2.2	Are bank details verified to belong to the supplier, rather than accepted as supplied?	☐	☐	☐
2.3	Is every supplier record created under segregation of duties, with each change approved and reasoned?	☐	☐	☐

3

Purchasing

Was this purchase authorised, made through an approved process, and placed with an approved supplier and contract?

		YES	PARTLY	NO
3.1	Is spend directed to approved suppliers at the point of purchase?	☐	☐	☐
3.2	Is authority checked before the commitment is made, rather than ratified afterwards?	☐	☐	☐

ACT: PROCESS Work arrives and is checked against what was set upstream.

4

Receipt

Were the goods or services actually received, and recorded by someone authorised to confirm them, before the invoice was approved?

	YES	PARTLY	NO
4.1 Is receipt confirmed before an invoice is approved for payment?	☐	☐	☐
4.2 Is the person confirming receipt authorised to do so, and does the confirmation reflect real delivery?	☐	☐	☐

5

Invoice capture and validation

Is this a valid, original invoice from a verified supplier, consistent with what was ordered, received and agreed?

	YES	PARTLY	NO
5.1 Is every invoice checked for duplication?	☐	☐	☐
5.2 Is each invoice checked against the supplier, purchase order, receipt and contract together?	☐	☐	☐
5.3 Are tax and compliance validated at entry, before anything reaches the ledger?	☐	☐	☐

6

Matching and approval

Can this invoice be approved on a basis that can be explained and replayed for an auditor, by someone with the authority to approve it?

	YES	PARTLY	NO
6.1 Could you explain, and replay for an auditor, why a given invoice was approved?	☐	☐	☐
6.2 When a match fails, can the process tell a rounding difference from a real discrepancy?	☐	☐	☐
6.3 Is the person who processes an invoice kept separate from the person who releases the payment, in practice and not only in policy?	☐	☐	☐

ACT: SETTLE Cash leaves and the books are closed.

7

Payment release

Is this payment going to the right supplier, at the right account, for a validated and approved invoice, with nothing changed since it was approved?

		YES	PARTLY	NO
7.1	Is payment release separate from approval, with its own control?	☐	☐	☐
7.2	Are bank details re-checked against the verified record at the point of release?	☐	☐	☐
7.3	Are unusual payment patterns surfaced before a payment executes?	☐	☐	☐

8

Post-payment and reconciliation

Did we pay the right amount, once, for everything we owed, and do our records reconcile against what suppliers say we owe them?

		YES	PARTLY	NO
8.1	Are payments reconciled against an independent source, such as supplier statements?	☐	☐	☐
8.2	Do recurring problems feed back upstream to strengthen the control that should have caught them?	☐	☐	☐

ACT: SUSTAIN Control continues as suppliers change.

9

Supplier lifecycle management

Is this supplier still valid, compliant and behaving as expected today, not only on the day it was first approved?

		YES	PARTLY	NO
9.1	Are suppliers re-validated on a cadence and in response to risk, not only at entry?	☐	☐	☐
9.2	Does a change of ownership, sanctions status or bank details trigger re-verification rather than being absorbed silently?	☐	☐	☐
9.3	Is offboarding a controlled act, so a dormant supplier cannot be used as a route to transact?	☐	☐	☐

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Across the lifecycle

The test that sits behind every stage.

		YES	PARTLY	NO
25	Could you trace any payment end to end if asked to today?	☐	☐	☐

What your answers tell you

Most of these questions should take a moment to answer. If one takes longer, or the honest answer is "partly", that is the signal. It shows where control is assumed rather than validated, and where to look first.

A few ways to use the checklist: work through it with your team, compare answers across entities or regions, and revisit it when a supplier, a process or a system changes. A check that ran once at setup is a record that something was once true. Controls need re-testing to stay controls.

Go deeper with the framework

The Supplier Control Framework sets out the nine stages, six control types, five failure patterns and seven principles behind these questions.

softco.com/lp/get-supplier-control-framework

NOTES

The framework is a standard for what good looks like, not a description of any single system. No vendor, SoftCo included, delivers every element today.