

How to Add a Pairing Custom Field in Azure DevOps User Stories

This document outlines the benefits of adding a custom field of type *Identity* in [Azure DevOps](#) user stories, prerequisites, and a step-by-step guide.

Benefits of Adding a Custom Field

Having the names of both individuals pairing on a story visible on the Azure DevOps cards can be helpful during sprint ceremonies and lead to greater accountability by the pairing assignee. For example, it is easier to keep track of the individuals assigned stories as part of a pair during sprint planning by using the "pairing names" field. During stand-up it can also help the Process Lead filter stories assigned to the individual (both as an owner or as a pairing assignee) and show these on the board. Furthermore, the pairing field can provide an additional data point for reports and burndown rates.

Prerequisites

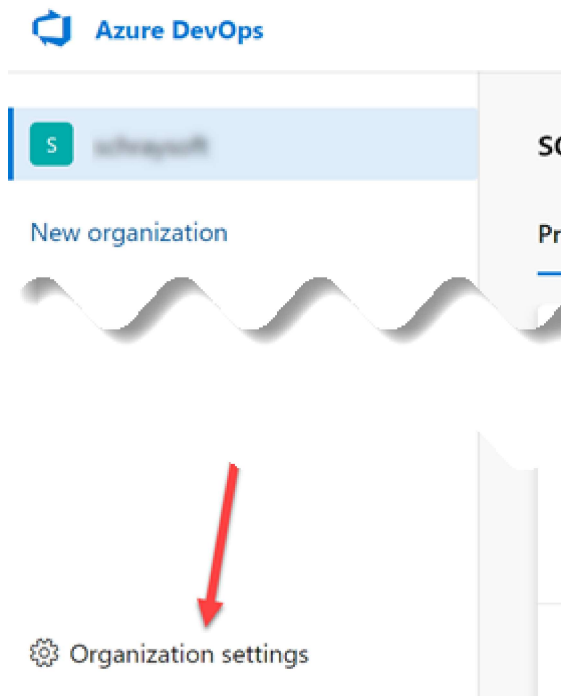
Prior to customizing Azure DevOps, review [Configure and customize Azure Boards](#).

In order to add a custom field to user stories in Azure DevOps changes must be made as an **Organization setting**. This document therefore assumes use of an existing Organization in Azure DevOps and that the user account used to make these changes is a member of the [Project Collection Administrators Group](#).

Change the Organization Settings

1. Duplicate the process currently in use.

Navigate to the **Organization Settings**, within the Boards / Process tab.



2. Select the **Process** type, click on the icon with three dots ... and click **Create inherited process**.

Azure DevOps

/ Settings / Process

Organization Settings

Search Settings

General

- Overview
- Projects
- Users
- Billing
- Auditing
- Global notifications
- Usage
- Extensions
- Azure Active Directory

Security

- Policies
- Permissions

Boards

- Process **1**

All processes

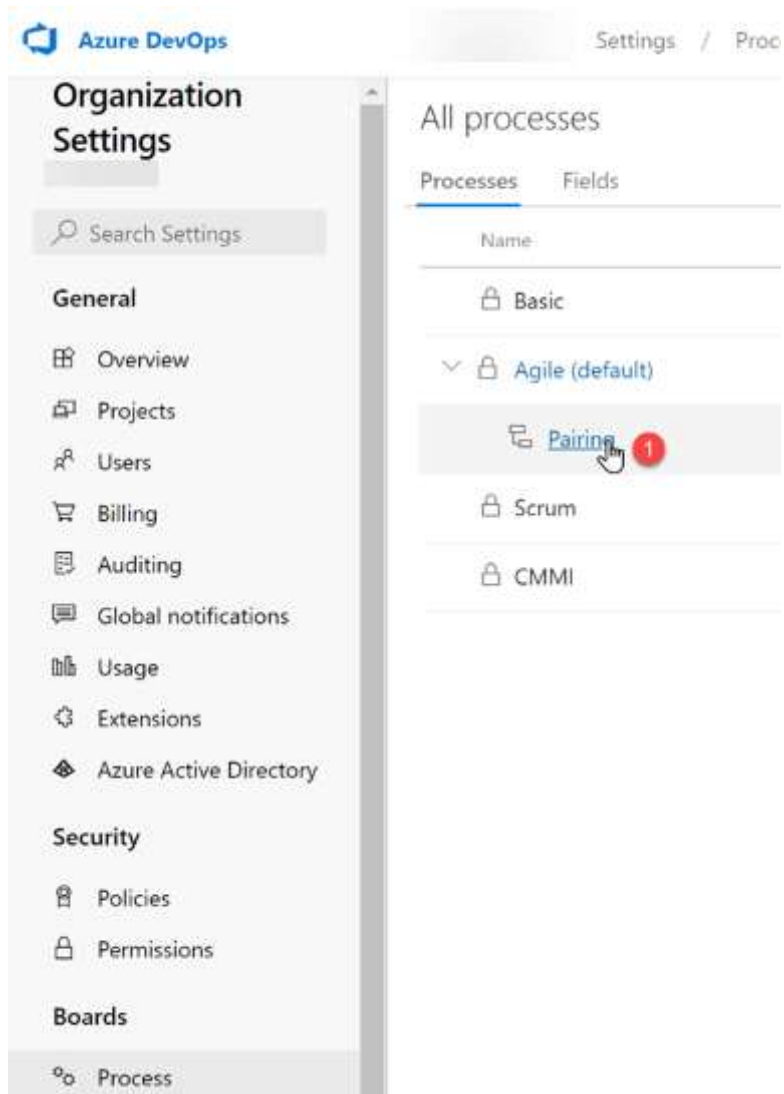
Processes Fields

| Name | Description |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Basic | This template is flexible for a |
| Agile (default) | This template is flexible and |
| Pairing | |
| Scrum | |
| CMMI | This template is for more for |

- + New team project
- Create inherited process **3**
- Security

3. Click on the newly created inherited process.

As you can see in the example below, we called it 'Pairing'.



4. Click on the work item type **User Story**.

Organization Settings

Search Settings

General

- Overview
- Projects
- Users
- Billing
- Auditing
- Global notifications
- Usage
- Extensions
- Azure Active Directory

Security

- Policies
- Permissions

All processes >

Work item types B

+ New work item type

Name

Bug

Epic

Feature

Issue

Task

Test Case

Test Plan

Test Suite

User Story

5. Click **New Field**.

The screenshot shows the Azure DevOps 'Organization Settings' page. The left sidebar contains a 'Process' link under the 'Boards' section. The main content area is titled 'All processes > Pairing > User Story' and has tabs for 'Layout', 'States', and 'Rules'. Below the tabs, there is a toolbar with buttons for 'New field', 'New group', 'New page', 'Get extensions', and a refresh icon. The 'New field' button is highlighted with a red circle and a mouse cursor. Below the toolbar, the 'Details' tab is active, showing a list of fields for the 'User Story' process. The fields are organized into sections: 'Description' (Text (multiple lines)), 'Acceptance Criteria' (Text (multiple lines)), 'Planning' (Story Points (Decimal), Priority (Integer), Risk (Text (single line)), Pairing (Picklist (string))), 'Classification' (Value area (Text (single line))), 'Deployment' (Deployments), 'Development' (Links), and 'Related Work' (Links).

6. Give it a **Name** and select **Identity** in Type. Click on **Add Field**.

Add a field to User Story

Definition

Options

Layout

Add a field to store custom, queryable data about your work items.

☐ Use an existing field

Field

Acceptance Criteria

☒ Create a field

2

Name

Pairing

3

Type

Identity

4

Description

Optionally provide a description for the field

[Learn more](#)

5

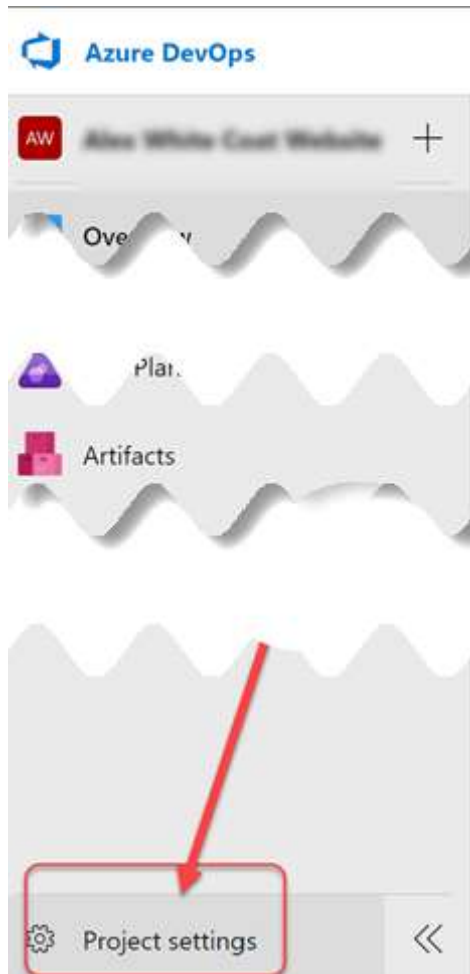
Add field

Cancel

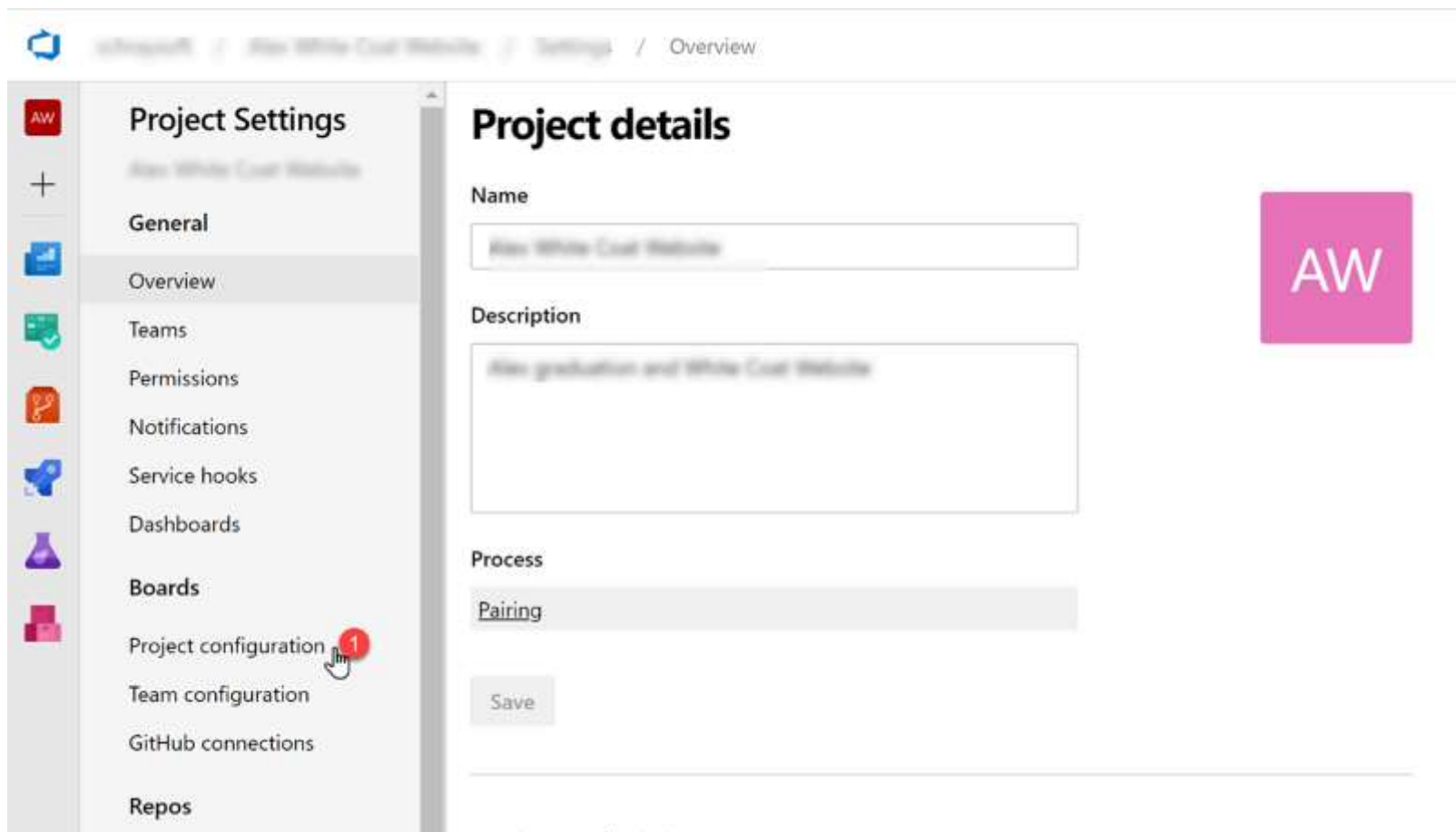
This completes the change in Organization settings. The rest of the instructions must be completed under Project Settings.

Change the Project Settings

1. Go to the Project that is to be modified, select **Project Settings**.



2. Select **Project configuration**.



3. Click on **process customization** page.

Navigation: Alex White Coat Website / Settings / Project configuration

Search:

Project Settings

Alex White Coat Website

- General
 - Overview
 - Teams
 - Permissions
 - Notifications
 - Service hooks
 - Dashboards
- Boards
 - Project configuration

Boards

Iterations Areas

Create and manage the iterations for this project. These iterations will be used by teams for iteration planning (sprint planning). [Learn more](#)

To select iterations for the team, go to [the default team's settings](#).

New New child + -

| Iterations | Start Date | End Date |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| Alex White Coat Website | | |
| Iteration 1 | ... | Set dates |
| Iteration 2 | | |
| Iteration 3 | | |

Click here (arrow pointing to [the process customization page](#))

4. Click on **Projects** then click on **Change process**.

Azure DevOps

/ Settings / Process

Organization Settings

Search Settings

General

- Overview
- Projects
- Users
- Billing
- Auditing
- Global notifications
- Usage
- Extensions
- Azure Active Directory

Security

- Policies
- Permissions

Boards

- Process

All processes > Pairing

Work item types Backlog levels **Projects** 1

| Name | Description |
|--------------------------|---|
| Allow White Coat Website | Allow graduation and White Coat Website |

... → Change process 2

5. Change the **target process** to Pairing then click Save.

Change the project process

Change the process used by the project to another process.

Select a target process

Select a target process

CMMI

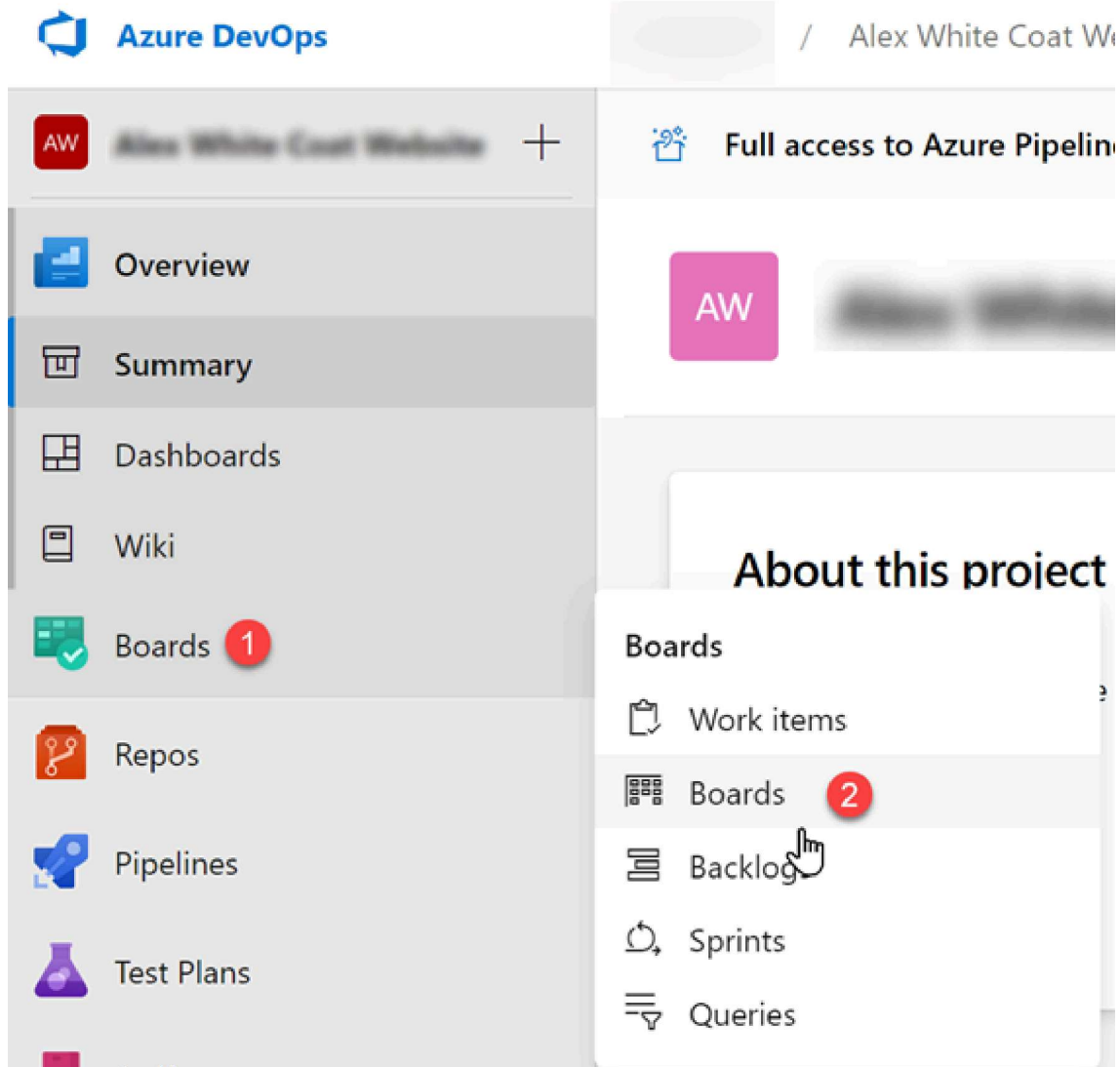
Scrum

Basic

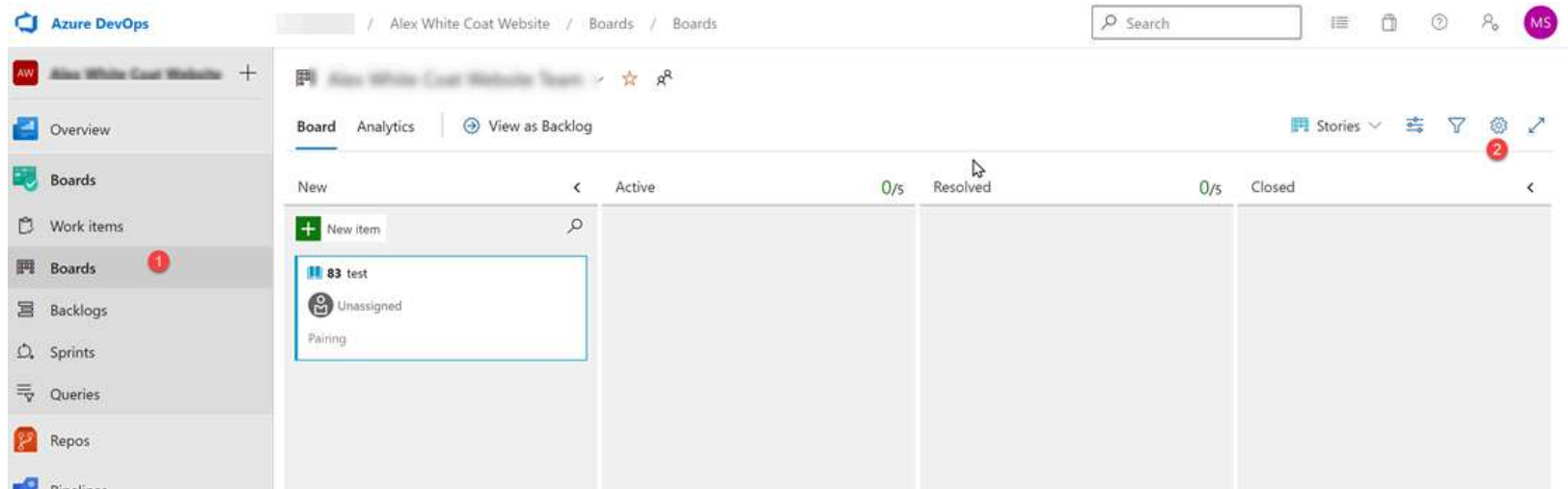
Pairing

Save

6. Go to **Boards**.



7. Click on the Gear icon to open Settings.



8. Add field to card.

Click on the green + icon to add select the Pairing field. Check the box to display fields, even when they are empty. **Save and close.**

Settings

Cards

Fields 1

Styles

Tag colors

Annotations

Tests

Board

Columns

Swimlanes

Card reordering

Status badge

General

Backlogs

Working days

Working with bugs

Fields

Show the important information to your team. Fields are editable directly on the card.

User Story

Core fields

☒ Show ID

☒ Show Assigned To as:

Avatar and full name (default) ▼

☒ Show Story Points

☒ Show Tags

Additional fields

Add up to 10 fields in the order that you want them to appear on the card.

+ Field 2

Pairing 3



Show empty fields

4 ☒ Check if you want to display fields, even when they are empty.

Save and close 5

Cancel

9. View the modified the card.

Notice the new Pairing field. The Story can now be assigned an Owner and a Pairing assignee!

