Purchasing Policy

Effective Date: March 29, 2011
Revised: February 26, 2026
Signature\Position: Assistant Vice-President, Finance and Services

1. Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to ensure accountability associated with the acquisition of goods and services, outline the limits of authority, and provide principles for the fair and transparent treatment of Suppliers.

This policy, and all goods and services procured on behalf of the University, must be in accordance with all applicable domestic and international trade agreements, federal and provincial legislation and directives, and with obligations to granting agencies and research sponsors. Those responsible for procurement of goods and services will comply with this and related University policies, financial controls, and provisions with respect to conflicts of interest.

2. Scope
This policy applies to the procurement of all goods and services unless listed in the exceptions outlined in the Purchasing Procedure, regardless of the final source of funding. Where procurement regulations from external funding agencies or organizations are different from University policies, the more restrictive regulations will take precedence.

3. General Standards
The University is committed to the following;

- Ensuring an ethical, professional and accountable supply chain
- Being accountable for the results for Purchasing decisions and the appropriateness of procurement process

Respecting public procurement directives and trade agreements

4. Purchasing Centers

The Purchasing Services Department is the primary procurement authority for the University. The University operates in a decentralized environment, three Purchasing Centers have been established with the authority to purchase goods or services on behalf of their respective departments.

Physical Resources has procurement responsibility for the Guelph main campus for the following:

- Capital Projects
- Construction & renovations
- Facilities maintenance
- Utilities

Hospitality Services has procurement responsibility for the following:

- University Bookstore - Guelph main campus only
- Food & Coffee Services - Guelph main campus only
- Conference & Catering Services - Guelph main campus only
- Ancillary Services – for resale only

Library Services has procurement responsibility for the following:

- Books, periodicals and publications acquired through the University's central library process for use in the University Library.

While recognizing the delegated authority of these units to perform procurement activities on behalf of the University, Purchasing Centers are required to comply fully with this policy, all external controls applicable to the University, any associated procedures and the direction of the Director of Finance Operations and the Manager of Purchasing Services.

5. Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with this policy will be reviewed by the Director of Procurement Services. Non-compliance may result in consequences including disciplinary action and/or suspension/revocation of purchasing privileges.

6. Personal Purchases

The University procurement system including all contracts and relationships with Suppliers may not be used for personal purchases or benefits including shipping and customs clearance.

7. Procurement Process Guide

Depending on both the nature and value of purchases, different procurement methodologies may be used. A high-level overview is shown below, further details are in the Purchasing Procedure.

8. Valuation of Purchases and Contracts

In general, the total purchase price or contract value determines the procurement process and the approval authority required. Further details on the signing authorities can be found in the Signing Authority Register under the authority of the University Secretariat.

When determining value of a purchase or contract all costs must be included for the full term of the deliverables excluding freight and applicable taxes.

Purchases may not be split to arrive at a value below a particular threshold or to avoid a competitive process, as dictated in the BPS Directive.

One Time Purchases – e.g; equipment, costs must include any regular or extended warranty and any consumables ordered at the time of the original purchase.

Long Term Contracts – e.g.; software or professional services, cost must include licenses, training, implementation, support, allowable expenses and any other costs included in the contract. All estimated costs over a maximum 5 year term must be used in the valuation calculation

9. Thresholds

GOODS & SERVICES

Value	Purchase Order Options	Competition Requirement	Approval Authority
$0 to $25K	Preferred Supplier contract PCard (under $5K) OneForm (under $10K) HVPO (over $10K)	1 quote	Dept Manager or Chair or Dean **

$25K to $75K	Preferred Supplier contract HVPO	2 quotes Invitational under Preferred Supplier contracts	Dept Manager or Chair or Dean
$75K to $121K	Preferred Supplier contract HVPO	3 quotes Invitational under Preferred Supplier contracts	Dept Manager or Chair or Dean
Over $121K	Preferred Supplier contract HVPO	Open Competition through Purchasing is **mandatory***	Dept Manager or Chair or Dean & Purchasing or Finance Approval Authority according to the Signing Authority Register [1]

CONSULTING SERVICES

Value	**Purchase Order Options**	**Competition Requirement**	**Approval Authority**
$0 to $121K	Preferred Supplier contract HVPO	Minimum 3 quotes	Dpet Manager or Chair or Dean
Over $121K	Preferred Supplier contract HVPO	Open Competition through Purchasing	Dept Manager or Chair or Dean President or CEO (Single source $0 to $1M) Board of Directors or equivalent (Single source over $1M)

* Exceptions may be approved by Purchasing Services in cases where a Preferred Supplier arrangement is in place, or a single source justification is approved prior to the purchasing commitment being made.

** The departmental signing authority is determined by departmental procedures.

*** All contracts must be signed by the authority listed above AND Purchasing or a Signing Officer according to the Signing Authority Register.

NOTE – A list of Preferred Supplier agreements and their terms and conditions can be found on the Purchasing website.

For Tri-Council or other external funding sources where specific authorizations are stipulated (for example approval of the Principal Investigator) the more restrictive requirements will apply.

10. Code of Ethics

The University and all those engaged in procurement activities are required to comply with the Ontario Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive [2].

The University has adopted the Supply Chain Code of Ethics as follows;

I. Personal Integrity and Professionalism

Individuals involved with Supply Chain Activities must act, and be seen to act, with integrity and professionalism. Honesty, care and due diligence must be integral to all Supply Chain Activities within and between BPS organizations, suppliers and other stakeholders. Respect must be demonstrated for each other and for the environment. Confidential information must be safeguarded. Participants must not engage in any activity that may create, or appear to create, a

conflict of interest, such as accepting gifts or favours, providing preferential treatment, or publicly endorsing suppliers or products.

II. Accountability and Transparency

Supply Chain Activities must be open and accountable. In particular, contracting and purchasing activities must be fair, transparent and conducted with a view to obtaining the best value for public money. All participants must ensure that public sector resources are used in a responsible, efficient, and effective manner.

III. Compliance and Continuous Improvement

Individuals involved with purchasing or other Supply Chain Activities must comply with this Code of Ethics and the laws of Canada and Ontario. Individuals should continuously work to improve supply chain policies and procedures, to improve their supply chain knowledge and skill levels, and to share leading practices.

Related Policies and Supporting Documents

University Policies and Procedures

Policy 6.6 – University Signing Authority Policy [3]
Policy 317 – Conflict of Interest for University of Guelph Employees [4]

Procedure – Code of Ethical Conduct for Suppliers Procedure – Purchasing Services Procedure [5]

Applicable Legislation & Directives

Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive [6]
Canadian Free Trade Agreement [7]
Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement [8]

Buy Ontario Act (Public Sector Procurement) 2025 [9]
Ontario Quebec Trade and Cooperation Agreement [10]
Bill S-211 Forced Labour in Supply Chains [11]

Source URL:https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/purchasing-policy

Links
[1] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/Signing%20Authority%20Register%20-%20Amendment%202023-01.pdf [2] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/tbs-bps-procurement-directive-en-2024-02-08.pdf [3] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/Policy%206.6%20University%20Signing%20Authority%20Policy%20_%20University%20Secretariat.htm [4] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/317%20Conflict%20of%20Interest%20_%20Human%20Resources.htm [5] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/Code%20of%20Ethical%20Conduct%20for%20Suppliers%20_%20Financial%20Services.htm [6] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/01%20BPS%20Procurement%20Directive.pdf [7] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/Canadian%20Free%20Trade%20Agreement%20_%20Accord%20de%20libre-%C3%A9change%20canadien.htm [8] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/Canada-European%20Union%20Comprehensive%20Economic%20and%20Trade%20Agreement%20%28CETA%29.htm [9] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/images/Buy%20Ontario%20Act%20%28Public%20Sector%20Procurement%29%2C%202025%2C%20S.O.%202025%2C%20c.%2027%2C%20Sched.%201%20_%20ontario.ca.htm [10] h

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