

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| University Of Massachusetts Lowell | |
| Date: July 01, 2001 | Section:3.1 |
| Subject: Vendor Contracts – General Policy | |

The University recognizes 3 types of contracts which, generally speaking, enable departments to place purchase requisitions in excess of \$5000 without further bidding: (1) Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium Contracts (MHEC), (2) State Contracts: (3) Campus or University Contract. Use of the contracts is explained in the sections that follow bearing the respective heading.

Following are the general policies that apply to the use of these contracts:

1. Departments shall use contracts whenever practicable. Requests for materials that are covered by contract, that are issued to non-contract vendors, may be changed to a contractual vendor providing it is exactly what the department wants. The Purchasing Department will convert to the appropriate contract vendor, with the department's approval.
2. Sizeable orders may still merit the competitive bid process, which may produce better prices because of economies of scale. Departments are cautioned to exercise good judgment and common sense when making the decision whether or not to bid their requirements.
3. Purchase Orders/Requisitions that are issued against MHEC, State, Campus or University contracts should be so marked on the Purchase Order/Requisition.
4. Contracts are awarded based not only on price, but also on quality, service, shipping and warranty terms, and the reputation of the vendor. Departmental requesters may find the desired contract product/service from a non-contract vendor at a lower price; however, best price does not necessarily mean the best deal. For example, some mail order houses may offer a better price, but their policies for delivery, warranty, work, returns, exchanges, as well as product availability and customer service ultimately may prove to be more costly to the requester and the University. Vendors with whom the university has little or no working relationship do not have the same incentive to satisfy University customers, as do our contract vendors. So, buyers beware!
5. A listing of MHEC and State contract titles will be available on the Purchasing Web Site.