

How Do I Buy or Handle...

Foreign Orders

Departments should use purchase orders when ordering from vendors outside of the United States. Virginia Tech purchase orders contain terms and conditions that protect the university.

Because use of purchasing cards does not protect the university from terms that conflict with the Code of Virginia, use of p-cards for purchases to vendors outside of the US should be avoided.

When communicating with the foreign vendor, use the following guidelines:

1. Tell the vendor that we are a university and ask for discounts as an academic, educational, or governmental institution
2. Ask if these are the best prices that can be offered to Virginia Tech
3. Make sure that quote and invoice are in English
4. Confirm that this is the most recent version of the quote
5. Ask for a shipping amount estimate
6. Ask if any other fees apply to this order (example: customs, duties, etc.)
7. Ask about Value Added Tax (VAT) only of the item will not be shipped to the United States
8. Confirm the power requirements for the equipment.
9. Ask if the equipment has any special needs: plumbing, gas, steam, etc.
10. If equipment, ask if they provide a pre-installation guide
11. Ask if any items radioactive, do they produce x-rays or use lasers (if yes, please contact [EHS](#))

12. Ask if they have an IRS Form W-8 BEN completed. (The Controller's Office will not process payment unless this is on file)
 - If so, get them to scan a copy which will help the Vendor Team set up the company in Banner.
 - If not, email them the form: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw8bene.pdf>
13. Ask what the Warranty covers and the term of coverage
14. Payment terms:
 - Ask for payment terms of net 30 days.
 - If they demand prepayment, ask for an invoice with wiring instructions (remind them that it may take up to 2 weeks for wire payment to occur and an additional 7 days if payment is made in foreign currency).
 - When you submit the requisition in HokieMart, attach the invoice stating prepayment terms and check the box that says 'AP Prepayment'.
15. Ask if the vendor will send any staff to the US to install the product. If the answer is 'yes', contact Procurement due to international tax issues with the Controller's office.
16. Ask if we can pay in US Dollars.
 - If not, see **Currency Exchange** How do I Buy guide for more assistance.
17. Payments outside of the United States are wired. Ask the vendor to put the wiring instructions on their invoice.
18. Confirm the name that will appear on the purchase order matches the name of the firm that invoices and receives payment. This is critical.
19. Confirm delivery terms. Confirm who will pay for the shipment to arrive at the university. Put this in document text on the purchase order.
20. Clarify mode of transport, Air or Ship. Put this in document text on the purchase order.

21. Confirm if an import agent is needed. Put this in document text on the purchase order.
22. Confirm lead time for delivery.
23. Confirm how the company will receive the purchase order (usually emailed by the buyer).
24. Clarify any other outstanding questions from the quotation.
25. Confirm any known tariff issues.

Remember that you can always submit the requisition using 'Best Vendor' to route to a Procurement buyer for processing.