Requisition Approval
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Introduction

Purchasing Process

The purchasing process, also referred to as the procurement process, is the means by which purchase requests are made in the Financial System. The end result of this process is a purchase order that is dispatched to the vendor. The Financial System automatically tracks requisitions, purchase orders, vouchers, payments, shipments and receipts. Three-way matching compares requisitions with their corresponding purchase orders and receipts, enabling accurate tracking of the purchasing process from request to completion.

The flow chart below illustrates the purchasing process:
Requisition Approval and the Approval Chain

Requisition approval is the step in the purchasing process that determines the fate of a specific requisition, or purchase request. At a minimum, one approver and one requisitioner are involved, although an approval chain may exist where there are several levels of approvers, each with authority to approve, deny or recycle a request as it travels up the approval chain. Ultimately, a requisition is either denied or approved. If approved, a purchase order is created and dispatched to the necessary vendor, and receipt of the shipment is tracked.

The diagram below illustrates an approval chain:

Moving up the chain: The Requisitioner creates a requisition that needs separate approval. The Approver may approve, recycle (request changes) or deny the requisition. Approver 1 approves the requisition, but the dollar amount is high enough to require additional approval. Approver 2 reviews the requisition and may approve it, recycle or deny it.

Moving down the chain: If Approver 2 recycles the requisition, Approver 1 must look at it again. If he chooses to recycle as well, the requisition is sent back to the Requisitioner for fixing. If either Approver 1 or Approver 2 denies the requisition, notification is sent to the Requisitioner.

Accessing the Financial System

Access is through the Portal. This is the same Portal used for the Human Resources system, for example to enter vacation and sick leave hours. Use a web browser such as Internet Explorer and enter the URL:

http://www.maine.edu
Click the link labeled “Employee Access.”

You will see a login page. Enter your primary UMS userid and password and click the “Sign In” button.
The resulting web page will have a menu on the left hand side. This is the **portal menu**:

Click the “Enterprise Applications” menu item to open the submenu. Then click “Financials” to enter the Financial system.

**Navigation:**

Enterprise Applications > Financials

The Financial system will appear. In this window, the left-hand menu contains items associated with Purchasing, Vendors and so on.

The menu you see when you are in the Financial system will be tailored to your role or roles. Staff with different roles will see slightly different menus. But the menu you see should give you access to all the tasks you need to perform.

Note that you use your UMS account user name and password to sign on via the **portal**. However, once you are in the Financial system you will use **employee ids** (**emplids**) to specify individuals. For example, if you reassign work to another person, you use an **employee ID** rather than a UMS account user name to designate him/her.

**Navigating: using the left-hand menu and page elements**
The left-hand menu contains submenus and links to pages where you do work. A submenu is marked with a little triangle next to its name. Clicking the triangle will open up the submenu so you can see its items. Those items may be more menus or they can be links to pages.
Overview of Requisition Approval

The following is an overview of the requisition approval process from the approver's standpoint. For a detailed look at this process from the standpoint of a requisitioner, please refer to the Requisitions and Receiving manual.

When Does a Requisition Need to be Approved?

Each requisitioner is assigned a pre-determined limit, in dollars, for purchases. If a request for a purchase is at or below that dollar limit, the system automatically
approves that request, without the need for approval. If a request is made that exceeds the dollar limit, then an approver must review the request.

Each Approver is also assigned a dollar limit. If the requisition exceeds the Approver’s limit, once he/she approves the requisition, it will be sent to a second Approver with a higher dollar limit (“up the Approver chain”). At the top of the “chain” is the UMS Purchasing Department. Any requisition with a dollar amount of $25,000 or more will ultimately require approval at the System Office, after being approved by the campus Approvers.

**Requisition Status**

Following creation, a requisition will have its status set to one of the following:

- **Pending** – The requisition has been created, but has not yet been approved by all necessary approvers in the approval chain.

- **Approved** – The requisition has been fully approved by all necessary approvers. An approved requisition has not yet been sourced into a purchase order. The final approver in the approval chain may make changes to a requisition marked “Approved.”

- **Cancelled** – The requisition has been cancelled, and will not be processed further. No changes may be made to the requisition.

- **Complete** – The requisition has been processed to completion. A complete requisition is one that has been sourced into a purchase order. No further changes may be made to a requisition marked “Complete.”

- **Denied** – Approval for the requisition has been denied. As with a cancelled requisition, no changes may be made to the request.

Once a requisition has reached final approval, its status will change from “Pending” to “Approved.” The information page of an approved requisition looks like this:

Once a requisition has been approved, it is automatically sourced into a purchase order. The resulting purchase order does not require manual approval, and is automatically dispatched to the vendor.
Using the Worklist

When a requisition is waiting for review by an approver, an item appears in the approver’s worklist and an e-mail is sent that approver. An approver may approve, recycle or deny a requisition. By recycling, an approver is asking that changes be made to the requisition before it is again submitted for approval. An approver has the option of making the desired changes to a requisition rather than recycling it.

What is the Worklist?

The worklist is an automatically generated list of individual work items waiting for an approver’s attention. Each work item in the worklist contains a link to the pages necessary to perform approval tasks for that work item; the corresponding e-mail sent to the approver also contains the link. In the case of requisition approval, this link leads to the approval page for the particular requisition.

Work items have built-in timeout parameters. If an item times out, both the owner of the worklist and his/her supervisor will receive e-mail notification.

Example of a Worklist
Worklist Page Columns

The worklist page is divided into columns. Each column has a header that denotes a different part of the work item. By default, the work items are sorted by date in ascending order, meaning the oldest work item will appear at the top of the worklist. Clicking on an underlined header will sort the worklist based on the items in that column. Clicking once on a header sorts the work items in ascending order, and clicking a second time sorts the work items in descending order. Following is a description of the worklist page columns:

- **“From”** displays who triggered the work item
- **“Date From”** displays the date the work item was triggered
- **“Worked Item”** and **“Worked by Activity”** display the type of requisition and its needed activity
- **“Priority”** ranks the work item by priority
- **“Link”** opens the target page where the item can be worked on

Notes on Worklist Page Columns:

**Work Item** – Work items are the types of items that need to be worked on. A single worklist may contain multiple work items with the same work item listing. For instance, a requisition approver may have several entries with *Req Approval Worklist* in the **Work Item** column. Each entry represents a separate requisition that needs to be worked on.

**Priority** – Each work item has a priority field that consists of a drop-down box that allows an approver to set one of three priorities for that work item:
1-High, 2-Medium, or 3-Low. The worklist can then be sorted based on priority.

**Worklist Page Buttons**

In the lower-left corner of the worklist page, underneath the worklist itself, there is a button labeled [Refresh]. The [Refresh] button redisplay the worklist, showing any changes you may have made (e.g. removed a work item).

Each work item also has two buttons associated with it, labeled [Mark Worked] and [Reassign]. To view these buttons, it may be necessary to scroll to the far right of the worklist page. The right side of the worklist page should look similar to this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work List Filters:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worked By Activity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Priority</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMS08 Requisition Amount Approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMS08 Requisition Amount Approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMS08 Requisition Amount Approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMS08 Requisition Amount Approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mark Worked** – This button enables an approver to remove an item from the work list without actually acting on the work item via the target page. This option should not be used unless the item is a simple notification and there is no work required.

**IMPORTANT**: DO NOT use the **Mark Worked** option unless the item is a simple notification and there is no work required.

**Reassign** – Enables an approver to forward a work item to another user, and removes the item from their worklist.

**Using Reassign**

*Reassign* shifts a work item to another approver. *Reassign* will shift just that work item to a specified approver. To reassign an item, click on the [Reassign] button. You will see a page like this:
In the User ID field, enter the Employee ID of the approver to whom you are reassigning the item. The Comment field is optional, and becomes a part of the work item. Click OK to reassign the item.

Work items may also be automatically reassigned to another approver for a predetermined period of time. To do this, first click on My System Profile near the bottom of the portal menu at the left of the screen.

This will take you to the General Profile Information page, where you can select an alternate approver to receive your work items for a period of time. In the Alternate User ID field, enter an Employee ID to forward your work items to. In the From Date field, enter a date on which you would like the forwarding to begin. The To Date field specifies the last date on which work items will be forwarded to the alternate approver you specified. Click Save to save your changes.

The following screenshot displays the General Profile Information page and the Alternate User selection screen:
Approving a Requisition

You begin the approval process by clicking on the Link of a work item in your worklist:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Worklist</th>
<th>Requisition Amount Approval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eloise Kleban</td>
<td>09/09/2004</td>
<td>Req Approval Worklist</td>
<td>341, UMS01, 00308990060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eloise Kleban</td>
<td>09/08/2004</td>
<td>Req Approval Worklist</td>
<td>342, UMS01, 00308990051</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DO NOT USE THE APPROVE AMOUNTS MENU ITEM. When approving requisitions, always do so via the item’s linked work page.

This will take you to the target approval page for that requisition:
The “Details” tab displays more information about the requisition.

The “Save” button will Approve, Recycle or Deny the requisition, depending on the value of the Approval Action drop-down menu.

The “Go to Requisition” link allows you to view the requisition and make changes.

Clicking on the Details tab will display a page similar to this:
**Approval Status**

The approval page will display the Approval Status as either *In Process* or *Denied*.

Once a requisition has been reviewed, an approver can choose from one of three Approval Actions: *Approve*, *Recycle*, or *Deny*:

- **Approve**: Click “Save” to Approve, Recycle or Deny the requisition.
- **Recycle**: The “Comment” field is optional for Approve and Deny actions, but strongly recommended for Recycle in order to detail necessary changes.
- **Deny**:
Approval Actions

Approve

If a requisition is approved by the final approver in the approval chain, its status is changed to “Complete.” If the requisition requires additional approval by an individual higher in the approval chain, then the requisition is passed on to the next approver and its status remains “In Process.”

Delays

If a requisition is denied, the requisitioner receives both an e-mail and a work item with the approver’s comments. The requisition’s status is marked “Denied.” Once a requisition has been denied, it cannot be modified by any approver or the requisitioner.

Recycle

If a requisition is recycled, the previous approver in the approval chain – or the requisitioner, if there is no previous approver – receives an e-mail and a work item with the approver’s comments.

When an approver recycles a requisition, it is an indication that changes must be made in order for the requisition to gain “Approved” status (e.g. the vendor is incorrectly listed). It is important that an approver who recycles a requisition leave comments to indicate what changes are necessary. Optionally, the approver may make these changes rather than recycling the requisition. This is done via the “Go To Requisition” link located on the approval page.

**IMPORTANT:** When recycling a requisition, ALWAYS leave a comment detailing the required changes.
Worklists and Approval

The approval process and worklists are intrinsically linked. If an Approver recycles a requisition, the person below that Approver - either another Approver or the Requisitioner - will have a work item added to their worklist. If a requisition is recycled to another Approver, that Approver may either make the necessary changes, or recycle the requisition to the person below them in the approval chain.

If any Approver in an approval chain denies a requisition, it is immediately returned to the Requisitioner’s worklist and an e-mail is sent to the Requisitioner. All Approvers that may exist between the Requisitioner and final Approver are skipped.

Workflow Example

For example, as a Requisitioner, John Doe’s dollar limit is $50. So any requisition he enters for $50 or less does not need manual approval. His campus has decided that Approver Richard Roe will do his approvals. Richard Roe can handle requisitions up to $2,500. But a requisition over $2,500 goes to Approver Jane Johnson. She can handle amounts up to $25,000, but over that the requisition goes to the System Office for approval – to Approver Joe Blow.

a) John Does types in a requisition for $1,000. It goes to Richard Roe, who approves it. That’s all the approval it needs, so it goes on to become a purchase order.

b) John enters a requisition for $3,000. It goes to Richard Roe, who approves it. But then it has to go to Jane Johnson for review (it’s over Richard’s limit of $2,500). Jane approves it, and it then becomes a PO.

c) Finally, John enters a requisition for $30,000. This one goes to Richard Roe, then Jane Johnson, and finally to the System Office Approver Joe Blow before it can become a PO.

But what if one of those Approvers rejects the requisition? If any Approver denies (rejects) it, then the requisition is dead and will never become a purchase order.

If an Approver recycles a requisition (sends it back for more work or error fixes), it returns to the person (Approver or Requisitioner) below him in the “chain.” So in case (b) above, if Jane Johnson thinks the requisition needs work and she recycles it, it will go to Richard Roe. Richard can fix it or even recycle it back to John Doe, the Requisitioner. Once fixed, the requisition starts back up the approval chain.
Renewal of Standing Orders

Newly created standing orders are handled just like any other requisition. Pre-existing standing orders, however, entail special processing.

Near the time when an existing standing order’s time period is up, a Campus Administrator will run a process that copies the standing order into a new requisition. The requisition is marked “Hold from Further Processing” and has an Accounting Date set to the date when the new standing order will take effect.

The Requisitioner responsible for the standing order will review the new requisition, making any necessary changes. He/she will remove the “Hold”, which releases the requisition so it can be approved. A worklist item will be sent to the Approver’s worklist as usual, and the order can be approved, recycled or denied.

Once the new standing order is approved, it will be sourced into a purchase order and dispatched to the vendor on the Accounting Date.

5. Glossary

Alternate User ID – User ID that can be entered in an Approver’s System Profile to whom Work Items will be forwarded for a specified period of time. This is useful if an Approver will be temporarily unavailable – on vacation, for example.

Approval Chain – A requisition may require several levels of approval. This is referred to as an Approval Chain.

Approve – One of three possible approval actions; authorizes a requisition.

Business Unit - A required five-digit ChartField. Each university is a Business Unit.

Deny – One of three possible approval actions; denies a requisition.

Page - Financial display and data entry screen.

Page Columns – Labeled columns on a Page containing the same type of information (e.g. “From” or “To”). Also referred to as “Headers.”

Purchase Order – The end result of an approved Requisition. Purchase Orders are automatically created from approved Requisitions.

Reassign – Approvers have the option of Reassigning work items to another User ID.
Recycle – One of three possible approval actions. A recycled requisition must be changed in order to receive approval. An Approver can attach comments to this action.

Requisition – A request for a purchase.

Requisition Approver – Person who handles a request by either Approving, Denying or Recycling it.

Requisition Status – Status of a particular requisition. Requisition Status can be one of five possible choices: Pending, Approved, Cancelled, Complete or Denied.

Requisitioner – Person submitting a request or entering a requisition; also referred to as a “requester.”

Standing Order – An arrangement between the University and a vendor that enables purchases to be made from the vendor without entering a requisition each time. The standing order has a set time limit and dollar amount, and may include restrictions on who is authorized to use the order and what items can be purchased.

Work Item – A requisition as it appears on an Approver’s Work List.

Workflow - The automation of a business process (e.g. Journal approval) that passes work from one participant in the process to the next. Rules are set up that determine workflow paths.

Worklist - Automated to-do list created by Workflow. A tool that enables you to view tasks requiring your attention. The Financial system sends email to you when a new task has been added to your Worklist.