

Curtin Common Definitions

The below definitions are commonly used terms, particularly in policies and procedures. Where a policy or procedure specifically defines a term, that term overrides the below. Where a term is not defined in the document itself or below, a common sense or [Macquarie Dictionary](#) definition applies.

[Compliance Services](#) can advise in relation to definitions.

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Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Academic Board	A committee of Curtin University's Council established under Statute No. 21. The Board is responsible to the University Council for helping to ensure academic quality and integrity of the academic matters of the University's operations.	Secretariat webpage
Academic misconduct	Conduct by a Student, other than conduct constituting Academic Record Fraud or General Misconduct, that is dishonest or unfair in connection with any academic work, such as: (a) during any exam, test or other supervised assessment activity; (b) in relation to the preparation or presentation of any assessed item of work; or (c) in relation to the conduct of research or any other similar academic activity.	Statute No 10 - Student Discipline
Academic record	Any document or other record containing information relating to a person's academic results, awards or achievements.	Statute No 10 - Student Discipline
Academic transcript	The official University record of a student's results and is printed on official University transcript paper.	Admission and Enrolment Manual
Area (organisational unit type)	An organisational unit established principally for performing administrative or support functions within the University.	Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures
Assessment	The method(s) and procedures by which a student's academic progress and performance is measured in a unit.	Assessment and Student Progression Manual
Award course	A structured combination of units approved by the University Academic Board which when completed qualifies the student for an award from Curtin University.	Admission and Enrolment Manual

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Benchmarking	Benchmarking is a structured, collaborative, learning process for comparing practices, processes or performance outcomes. Its purpose is to identify comparative strengths and weaknesses, as a basis for developing improvements in academic quality. Benchmarking can also be defined as a quality process used to evaluate performance by comparing institutional practices to sector good practice.	TEQSA Guidance Note
Brand, Curtin	Includes, but is not limited to, the expression, reputation and related attributes of the University. Literally, it means the distinctive representations in design and stylistic requirements such as image types, footers and fonts that are used to create a strong visual identity which distinguishes Curtin from its competitors and indicates the source of goods or services	Brand Communications Policy
Broadcast message system (BMS)	An email system that enables messages to be sent to all Curtin staff or groups of Curtin staff with an email address administered through Curtin Information Technology Services (CITS).	
Bullying	Bullying at work occurs when a person or a group of people repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards an employee or a group of employees at work and the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety. Bullying does not include reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable manner.	
Casual academic staff	Casual staff members employed in accordance with the Academic, Professional and General Staff Enterprise Agreement.	Appointment of Casual Academic Staff Procedures and Enterprise Agreement
Class	Any scheduled teaching activity involving face-to-face contact and includes, but is not limited to lectures, tutorials, laboratory sessions and seminars.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
Client personal information	Any personal information that relates to any current or former client of the University.	Disclosure of Personal Information Procedures
Common free time	The period from 12.00pm to 2.00pm each Wednesday during teaching weeks, during which classes or other compulsory student activities must not be scheduled or held.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
Compliance	Adhering to the requirements of the University's policies and procedures, laws, industry and organisational standards and codes, principles of good governance and accepted community and ethical standards (including the ISO 19600:2014 Compliance Management System Guidelines) in the context of the University's risk appetite.	Compliance Policy
Compliance approach	The activities undertaken by the University in managing the risk of non-compliance with an obligation with which the University must comply. Activities include awareness-raising and education, development and monitoring of training, developing and monitoring of the Compliance Management Plan, assessment of the Annual Return, and the assessment and resolving of breaches.	Compliance Procedures
Compliance breach or failure	An act or omission whereby the University has not met its compliance obligations, processes or behavioural obligations.	Compliance Procedures

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Compliance commitment	Requirement that an organisation chooses to comply with ISO 19600:2014 Compliance Management Systems.	
Compliance culture	Values, ethics and beliefs that exist throughout an organisation and interact with the organisation's structures and control systems to produce behaviour norms that are conducive to compliance outcomes. (source: ISO 19600:2014)	Compliance Procedures
Compliance obligation	Compliance requirement or compliance commitment (ISO 19600:2014 Compliance Management Systems).	Compliance Procedures
Compliance requirement	Requirement that an organisation has to comply with ISO 19600:2014 Compliance Management Systems.	
Compulsory student activity	Any class or other activity that a student would be expected to attend as part of the normal tuition pattern for a unit or program of study, or any other activity such as a school-arranged examination, test or quiz that the student would be expected to attend in order to successfully complete the requirements of a unit or program of study.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
Contract	Any document which generates benefits to, or imposes obligations on Curtin which is legally enforceable and has been mutually agreed to by Curtin and another party as the final settled terms and will be submitted to each party for signing. Contracts may also be referred to as agreements and, for the purpose of policies and procedures, also includes Memorandums of Understanding. Other parties can be organisations or individuals. Contracts can include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully-executed; where the contract has been signed by all parties to the contract; or • electronically accepted; where the contract is put in place by acceptance by electronic means, such as checking acceptance online of terms and conditions prior to downloading or order acceptance 	
Contract manager	A University staff member who has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the contract.	Procurement Procedures
Contracted supplier	The supplier to a contract which is accessible by the University.	Procurement Procedures
Control	The measures or actions that are currently in place (i.e., at the time of the risk assessment) to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of effectiveness of operations, compliance and risk management. A control could be a policy, procedure, practice, process, technology, technique, method or device. The purpose of a control is to modify or manage a risk by reducing the likelihood and/or consequences of the risk. A control should be tangible and auditable (i.e., you should be able to demonstrate that the control exists).	
Copyright work	Means any work as defined in the Copyright Act 1968 (Cwlth) including but not limited to artistic, literary, dramatic, or musical work, sound recording, cinematograph film, television broadcast, sound broadcast, published edition of a work, photograph, video recording, CD ROM or computer works, and includes course materials, monographs and scholarly works.	

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Core Unit	A unit that is compulsory for the student to complete within a particular course or major.	Assessment and Student Progression Manual
Council	The University's governing body, established under the Curtin University Act 1966. Council is responsible for the overall governance and effective management of the University.	Secretariat webpage
Course	A structured combination of approved units which when completed qualifies the student for an award from Curtin University.	Course Approval and Quality Manual
Course weighted average (CWA)	A calculation of a student's weighted average percentage mark for all Grade/Mark units in which the student is enrolled in a course, including units credited as Automatic Credit or Designated Credit.	Admission and Enrolment Manual
Credit	The value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications.	Awards and Graduation Manual
Credit (for recognised learning)	The value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit reduces the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification.	Credit for Recognised Learning Manual
Department (organisational unit type)	An organisational unit established under a School that is financially administered by the parent School.	Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures
Direct report to the Vice-Chancellor	An Executive Manager who is directly responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the performance of his or her duties.	Constitution of the Executive Committee of Council
Disability	As defined by the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth). For reference, at Nov. 2014, this is: "disability, in relation to a person, means: (a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or (b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or (c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or (d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or (e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or (f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or (g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour; and includes a disability that: (h) presently exists; or (i) previously existed but no longer exists; or (j) may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or (k) is imputed to a person. To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability."	Students with Disability Policy ; Students with Disability Procedures ; Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
eVALUate	The University's online system of student feedback for unit and teaching evaluation.	
Executive Manager	A position held by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, a Vice President, a Pro Vice-Chancellor, the Chief Financial Officer; or any other position which is approved by the Executive Committee to be an Executive Manager following the advice of the Vice-Chancellor.	Constitution of the Executive Committee of Council
Faculty (organisational unit type)	An organisational unit established under a Portfolio for the administration and management of significant groupings of research and teaching related functional activities, such as Schools and any associated Departments.	Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures
Fieldwork	Fieldwork is any approved practical work, teaching, study, volunteer or research activity, usually conducted outside the normal place of University business. Fieldwork may be an integral part of a course (curricula) or a co-curricular activity organised by the university. Fieldwork includes but is not limited to clinical or practical work placements or activities; participation in laboratories; plant visits; industrial premises or site visits; practicums; study tours; field trips; work experience; service industry placements; isolated and remote fieldwork camps and/or excursions and international field trips/placements. Fieldwork does not include activities that have not been approved through the university such as: voluntary and leisure; paid employment or unpaid work experience; and site visits.	Research, Ethics and Integrity website
Final timetable	The final official version of the schedule of classes published to students and staff.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
Framework	An essential supporting structure and system comprising values, signature behaviours, guiding principles, ethical standards, Code of Conduct, accountabilities and commitments, and appropriately integrated functions, processes and documentation.	
Good standing	An academic status determined by the Board of Examiners. The student is permitted to continue in the course and to re-enrol. The entitlement to continue in a course and to re-enrol is in all cases subject to any other restrictions or prohibitions imposed on the student (for example, a prohibition on enrolment due to outstanding fees or misconduct).	Assessment and Student Progression Manual
Governance	The system by which an organisation is controlled and operates, and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to account	Risk Management Policy
Group (organisational unit type)	An organisational unit typically established under a School, Department, Section or Research-related organisational unit principally for the purpose of control or reporting of a collection of specific activities.	Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures
Guidelines	Guidelines set out advice based on good practice. Guidelines should be followed unless there are justifiable alternative methods.	Policy Development Procedures
Guild	See 'Student Guild'	

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Intellectual property	<p>Includes any rights in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a patent, application for a patent, invention, manner, method or process of manufacture, or method or principle of construction as defined in the Patents Act 1990 (Cth); • a copyright work as defined in the copyright Act 1968 (Cth); • a design as defined in the Designs Act 1906 (Cth); • a plant variety as defined in the Plant Breeders' Rights Act 1994 (Cth); • a circuit layout or semi-conductor chip layout or design or eligible layout as defined in the Circuit Layouts Act 1989 (Cth); • a trade mark as defined in the Trade Marks Act 1995 (Cth); <p>and including related rights and confidential information and know-how in relation to the above rights, or as otherwise determined by the University.</p>	<p>Intellectual Property Policy Intellectual Property Procedures</p>
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	A quantifiable measurement, agreed to beforehand, that reflects the critical success factor of the organisation.	Planning Policy
Local Area Instruction	A Local Area instruction is a lawful and reasonable line management direction to support the implementation of applicable legislation, Statutes, Rules, Policies and Procedures (the Curtin Compliance Obligations). Where a partner entity is required to comply with the Curtin Compliance Obligation it may develop its own Local Area instructions to implement the obligation and Curtin may monitor the effectiveness of those Local Area instructions pursuant to the terms and conditions of any agreement with the partner entity. Any Local Area instruction will be consistent with the Curtin Compliance Obligations.	Policy Development Procedures
Logo	The registered trademark of Curtin University. This incorporates the shield, the word "Curtin" and the descriptor "University".	Brand Use Procedures
Major	A series of units that pursues learning in depth and provides a coherent and rigorous enquiry of a single discipline or area of study.	Awards and Graduation Manual
Non-Award Course	Is a program of study which does not lead to a formal award. It may comprise a unit or units of study from an award course and may be counted as credit towards an award course in some cases.	Admission and Enrolment Manual
OASIS	Online Access to Student Information Services; the student portal through which students are provided with access to a wide range of eServices.	Admission and Enrolment Manual

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Objectional material	<p>As defined by the <i>Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Enforcement Act 1996 (WA)</i>. For reference, at Nov. 2014, this is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a film classified RC, a computer game classified RC, or a publication classified RC; or (b) [deleted] (c) an article that promotes crime or violence, or incites or instructs in matters of crime or violence; or (d) an article that describes or depicts, in a manner that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult — (i) the use of violence or coercion to compel any person to participate in, or submit to, sexual conduct; (ii) sexual conduct with or upon the body of a dead person; (iii) the use of urine or excrement in association with degrading or dehumanizing conduct or sexual conduct; (iv) bestiality; (v) acts of torture or the infliction of extreme violence or extreme cruelty; 	<p>Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy Manual; Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Enforcement Act 1996 (WA)</p>
Official Communications Channel (OCC)	<p>The means by which official correspondence is delivered electronically to students within OASIS.</p>	<p>OASIS and Official Communication Channel Procedures</p>
Offshore operations	<p>Means all educational and education services provided by Curtin University to students or international clients outside Australia and includes twinning arrangements, franchising, licensing, distance education with or without local support, training, any arrangement under which Curtin University provides education or performs any educational service for fee or clients overseas, any activities conducted outside Australia which promote or support such activities, offshore short courses, and offshore student recruitment activities.</p>	<p>Offshore Operations (Human Resources Management) Policy</p>
Organisational unit	<p>An approved academic or administrative grouping established for business management and reporting purposes.</p>	<p>Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures</p>
Orientation week	<p>Is the week immediately preceding Week One of the standard teaching semester at the Bentley campus. Other campuses may not necessarily require a full week, and may refer to the program generically as Orientation. Orientation provides an opportunity for students to become familiar with Curtin services and facilities by participating in course introductory sessions and various skilling and information programs. It also enables students to collect unit outlines and address enrolment, timetabling and administrative matters prior to the start of the first teaching week. For the purposes of communication with students, the alternative term O-Week is acceptable usage.</p>	
O-Week	<p>See 'Orientation Week'</p>	
Personal information	<p>Information (including information forming part of a database), and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identify is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information.</p>	<p>Disclosure of Personal Information Procedures</p>

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Plagiarism	Presenting the work or property of another person as one's own, without appropriate acknowledgement of the other person's work.	Management of Plagiarism Policy
Planning and Management Committee (PMC)	A committee responsible for advising the Vice-Chancellor on all matters for which the Vice-Chancellor exercises responsibility and assisting the Vice-Chancellor in the performance of some of those responsibilities.	Secretariat webpage
Policy	A policy establishes the key principles that direct conduct and decision making.	Policy Development Procedures
Portfolio (organisational unit type)	An organisational unit that is established to assist in the corporate management and administration of the University, and is typically headed by a Vice President, a Deputy Vice-Chancellor or such other designated position who reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor.	Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures
Procedures	Procedures are approved methods to be employed in implementing legislation, Statutes, Rules or policy.	Policy Development Procedures
Procurement	The end to end process from the identification of a requirement to the disposal of the acquisition at the end of its life (in the case of goods) or the completion of obligations (in the case of services).	Procurement Procedures: Purchasing and Payment Policy
Purchasing	The mechanics of buying. Purchasing is a component of the wider function of procurement and consists of activities such as ordering, receipt and payment	Purchasing and Payment Policy
Record	Information in any format, created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. (AS ISO 15489: Records Management)	Information Management Policy
Recordkeeping	The making and maintaining of complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.	
Research	The creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. (The Australian Research Council, Excellence in Research for Australia, 2014). It excludes consultancy as defined by the Consultancy Policy and Procedures.	Research Management Policy
Research centre	An area of major research activity of national excellence in research germane to the University's vision, mission and goals, of significance to the community, and meriting repute in the national and international contexts. Research Centres provide a focus for research activity within a specialised area or discipline.	Research Institutes, Centres and Clusters Procedures
Research cluster	Groups of researchers within or across Schools and Faculties working in a specific area and aspiring to recognition as a Research Centre.	Research Institutes, Centres and Clusters Procedures

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Research institute	An area of recognised international and national excellence in research in the University. Research Institutes are established to facilitate, extend and enable the promotion and conduct of research, development and related activities in well-defined areas of research strength that advance the achievement of the University's vision, mission and goals. Research Institutes are larger than Research Centres, and produce higher quality and more significant research.	Research Institutes, Centres and Clusters Procedures
Restricted material	As defined by the <i>Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Enforcement Act 1996</i> (Cth). For reference, at Nov 2014 this is: "an article that a reasonable adult, by reason of the nature of the article, or the nature or extent of references in the article, to matters of sex, drug misuse or addiction, crime, cruelty, violence or revolting or abhorrent phenomena, would regard as unsuitable for a minor to see, read or hear."	Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy Manual; Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Enforcement Act 1996 (WA)
Risk	The effect of uncertainty on objectives. It is measured in terms of consequence and likelihood.	Risk Management Policy
Risk appetite	Amount and type of risk an organisation is prepared to pursue or retain to achieve its objectives. The University's risk appetite is detailed in the Risk Reference Tables (see riskmanagement.curtin.edu.au).	Risk Management Policy
Risk assessment	A process to identify, analyse and evaluate risk. It provides an understanding of risks, their causes, consequences and likelihood.	Risk Management Policy
Risk management	Coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regards to risk.	Risk Management Policy
Rule	A rule made under a statute.	
School (organisational unit type)	An organisational unit established under a Faculty principally for developing and delivering the designated academic function of the University.	Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures
School Review	A School Review is a systematic, external, evidence-based, recurrent review of a School's performance that identifies issues for commendation and improvement to enhance the quality of a School's operations. It includes self-assessment, benchmarking and other external referencing and validation by an external panel. School Reviews occur every five years according to the schedule approved by the Provost.	School Review Policy
Section (organisational unit type)	An organisational unit typically established under an Area or a Faculty that allows additional operational breakdown of the administrative functions of that Area or Faculty.	Establishment and Change of Organisational Units Procedures
Sessional staff	See 'Casual academic staff'	Appointment of Casual Academic Staff Procedures and Enterprise Agreement

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Sexual assault	Sexual assault is when a person is forced, coerced or tricked into sexual acts against their will or without their consent, including when they have withdrawn their consent. Sexual assault: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is behaviour that the survivor has not invited or chosen. • Can be one-off events, or part of a pattern of violence. • May have a range of effects, including physical, emotional and psychological. Sexual assault and other sexual offences are criminal offences.	
Sexual harassment	Sexual harassment is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. • Interaction, flirtation or friendship which is not mutual or consensual. 	
Significant breach	A breach will be significant if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it approaches or exceeds the University's risk appetite; • it adversely affects the University meeting any of its TEQSA obligations; or • the cumulative effect of multiple, similar breaches is material. 	Compliance Procedures
Sponsorship	A commercial relationship in which the University provides funding, resources or services to an individual, event or organisation in return for rights and association for commercial advantage.	Brand Communications Policy
Staff personal information	Any personal information that relates to any person employed or previously employed by the University.	Disclosure of Personal Information Procedures
Statute	Means a Statute of the University in force pursuant to the Act.	
Student	A person who is admitted to a course or enrolled in a unit, which leads to, or is capable of leading to, an academic award of the University.	Credit for Recognised Learning Manual
Student	(a) an enrolled student as defined in section 4(1) of the <i>Curtin University Act 1966 (WA)</i> ; (b) a person who is admitted to a course conducted by the University (including a person who is on leave, or absent without leave, from that course) – until that person has withdrawn from, or is no longer admitted to, that course or until that person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) has been conferred his or her award for that course; or (ii) completes any activity relating to graduation from the course, whichever is the later; or (c) a person who is enrolled in a unit – until that person is given the final results for that unit.	Statute No. 10 - Student Discipline
Student personal information	Any personal information that relates to any person currently or previously enrolled or graduated from the University.	Disclosure of Personal Information Procedures
Student society	Any club, society or association within the University which is registered with the Guild in the manner prescribed by the Guild regulations.	Statute No. 4 Student Guild
Study period	A period of time in which a unit is available, for example, Semester 1, Trimester 3, etc.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Study week	The week before the commencement of the centrally scheduled examinations period during which students are expected to prepare for examination or practical assessments.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
Teaching weeks	Weeks within a study period during which classes are scheduled.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
Thesis	Means a scholarly report on an original research project(s) based on or manifested in rigorous experimental, theoretical, creative, empirical and/or design inquiry.	Rule No 12 to Statute 12: Enrolment: Degree of Doctor by Coursework
Third-party personal information	Any personal information that relates to a third person who is not a staff member, student or client of the University.	Disclosure of Personal Information Procedures
Transition	Conducted at many levels across the university and students are considered to be in transition upon entering the University and/or their course, moving from semester to semester and upon graduation. While the term has this wider definition, the terms "transition programs" and "transition activities" are generally used within this policy to refer to a range of interventions directed at assisting new-to-Curtin students.	Course Approval and Quality Manual Assessment and Student Progression Manual
Tuition free week	A week within a study period during which classes and other compulsory student activities are not scheduled unless specifically approved in accordance with policy.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
Under examination status	The status held by the candidate following submission of the thesis and prior to determination of the classification of the thesis by the Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Training.	Rule No. 11 to Statute 12 - Enrolment: Degree of Master by Research
Undergraduate	AQF Levels 6 – 8 (Bachelor Honours Degree) inclusive.	Admission and Enrolment Manual
Unit	A discrete entity of study within a subject area that is a component of a course.	Admission and Enrolment Manual; Assessment and Student Progression Manual
Unit coordinator	The most senior academic staff member responsible for a particular unit.	Admission and Enrolment Manual
Unit learning outcomes	Is what successful students are expected to know, understand or be able to do as a result of unit learning experiences.	Course Approval and Quality Manual
Unit outline	A document containing essential and administrative information about a unit of study, including details of learning outcomes, assessments and schedules.	Assessment and Student Progression Manual
University Academic Calendar	The University Academic Calendar comprising two standard semesters in a calendar year followed by Summer School, will be approved in advance by Academic Board on a rolling three-year basis.	Academic Calendar and Class Timetabling Manual
University Community	University community includes Council members, students, staff, University Associates, Curtin controlled entities, and all persons participating in University business or activities, including whether as a visitor, adjunct appointee, service provider, contractor or volunteer.	

Defined term	Definition	Related documents/links
Whole-of-University Contracts	These contracts are established for commonly purchased goods and/or services where many buyers from different areas will place orders. These contracts will be established and managed by Strategic Procurement. Staff will use these contracts if they have a need for goods and/or services that are available through a whole-of-University contract.	Procurement Procedures