

Frequently asked questions (FAQ's)

Q. Why is the Trust implementing the policy of No PO, No Pay?

The policy has been implemented to increase efficiency in the procure to pay process across the Trust. The benefits to suppliers include a streamlined process for payment of invoices within terms of trade (if a PO number is quoted) and reduced processing costs for the Trust. This has been identified through independent reviews of the NHS as best practice and is therefore the direction of travel across the whole of the NHS.

Q. I have an old PO number that I have been quoting on invoices for some time, is this sufficient?

If there is any doubt on validity of PO numbers, it would be good practice to check with the person who raised the purchase order initially to ensure it is still valid, as this may delay processing of payments in the future.

Q. Will I be paid any quicker if I quote a PO number?

Standard payment terms are 30 days from date of invoice. However, invoices received without a valid PO number quoted will not be paid and will be returned. This may lead to a delay in the payment process.

Q. Past invoices without a PO number have been paid by the Trust. Will this still happen?

As a result of formalising our purchasing arrangements, all financial commitments for goods or services must be made using a purchase order. As part of the 'No PO, No Pay' policy the supplier is expected to put the valid PO number on their invoices, otherwise it will be returned.

Q. If an invoice is returned requesting a valid PO number to be quoted. How can this be obtained?

You should contact the member of staff who gave the original instruction to supply the goods/services and ask them to provide a valid PO number. When obtained, you should return the invoice to the address on the purchase order.

Q. What should I do if I am not a supplier and I have received a letter?

Some individuals who have received payments / grants from the Trust in the past have been recognised in our accounting system as suppliers. If you have received a letter and do not provide us with goods and / or services, please disregard this letter and accept our apologies for the inconvenience.

Q. I have supplied the Trust for many years without a purchase order – why is it different now?

You will be paid promptly and reliably when you supply goods or services to the Trust as the purchase order will be a formal confirmation of the Trust's requirement and will show the correct address for invoicing.

Q. What happens if I receive a purchase order and it does not seem to be correct?

Contact the person who placed the purchase order initially (details will be quoted on the order) and ask for clarification. If necessary, the original purchase order can be cancelled, and a replacement issued.

Q. What should I do if I do not receive a purchase order?

Contact the person who placed the verbal or email order and ask for a written purchase order, or as minimum, a purchase order number.

Q. How do I know that the purchase order has been approved by the correct level of authority?

Purchase orders will only be produced by our system once authorised by the appropriate person.

Q. What should I do if I have sent an invoice and my payment appears to be delayed?

Contact the person who is named on the purchase order or the person who placed the order. Invoices may be disputed for any of the following reasons and will always be sent back to the supplier address they were received from with notification stating why they have been disputed.

- No purchase order number quoted on the invoice
- Purchase order number quoted is now fulfilled and extra items have been delivered.
- Purchase order number does not match the Trust's issued order
- Purchase order number does not match the description/dates on the invoice
- The information on the invoice is incomplete
- The price is not the agreed price

Q. Will I still get paid if I forget to include the purchase order number on my invoice?

All invoices **must** quote an official Trust purchase order number. If this is not provided, the invoice will be returned to the sender and may result in a delay in payment.

Q. Who will send me the purchase order?

The system will generate an order to you. The purchase order will be emailed over to you, to the address provided by yourself in the new supplier set up details which would have been requested by us.

Q. Will additional information be attached to a purchase order?

The requestor will view the purchase order before it is issued so can attach anything necessary to it, so that it reaches you complete. If you believe there to be anything missing from your purchase order, please contact the requestor.

Q. What if I do not understand the details on the purchase order?

You will need to query it with the person named on the purchase order as requesting the goods/services.

Q. If I usually receive purchase orders by phone can this continue?

Yes. But you need to ensure that a purchase order number is quoted, and you would still have to quote the purchase order number on your invoice.

Q. What happens if I am asked to provide goods and / or services in an emergency?

The Trust employs an emergency order process and purchase order numbers can still be provided to you if there is a request by the Trust's staff to request genuine emergency orders.

Q. Why do I keep getting asked for proof of delivery?

The Trust is facing problems where Couriers are just leaving parcels at the loading bay and driving off without any proof of delivery. As controls are getting tighter, we require the correct documentation (ie delivery note) to be delivered along with the goods for and to be signed by a member of the Trust for us to verify and pay invoices timely.