



101 questions about exporting



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101 Questions on exporting

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Introduction

Exporting can seem like a daunting prospect. The intricacies of the global market can deter the cautious business, not to mention the concerns raised by dealing with an entirely different culture with unfamiliar expectations and etiquette. For the less wary organisation, the costs imposed as a result of incorrect exporting can be a bitter pill to swallow.

To make sure every business is able to export confidently, safely and compliantly, the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group has joined in partnership with UK Trade and Investment to bring you “101 questions about exporting”. Within these pages you will find a simple yet comprehensive guide to help you break into the global market and achieve your business goals.

Read on for the advice and information you need to reach new shores and realise your business potential.



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Q1 Why should I export?

Put simply: Growth, income, presence and much more. There are many reasons for exporting whether it is to expand the company and increase income or whether you wish to spread the risk by diversifying into overseas markets. This may also provide you with the perfect opportunity to re-evaluate your company's plan and selling points, leading to the benefit of new research and product development.



Q2 What help is available?

UK Trade & Investment offer expertise and advice from experienced International Trade Advisers and via an extensive network of overseas professionals based in Embassies, Consulates and High Commissions.

New and inexperienced exporters can benefit from a flexible package of assistance via the Passport to Export initiative with match funded assistance and advice from advisers to help you get started. Our website

can send you leads and information direct to your desktop.

Depending on your requirements, other organisations that can also advise you include: Chambers of Commerce; the European Information Centre (EIC); and Trade Associations.



Q3 How do I know if I'm ready to start exporting?

One of UK Trade & Investment's International Trade Advisers can visit you to assess your readiness for export. However, if you have an established domestic market, if the product or service is competitive, if

the market potential exists and you have the capabilities to support export growth, then with effective planning, there is no reason why you could not expand overseas.

“it is often
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Q4 Where can I find professional export training for my staff?

Both UK Trade & Investment and the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group offer various types of training and can put you in

touch with a full range of specialist providers for other courses in International Trade including those of the Institute of Export.



Q5 Are only large businesses able to effectively export?

No. In fact, whilst large businesses often have more financial, human and marketing resources, it is often the small dynamic businesses that can react quicker to overseas market demand. Your business needs to

possess the desire and commitment to do business overseas, a suitable product/service and access to the skills and funding to start the process.

Q6 Can I do business overseas with limited resources?

Yes, but you will need to put in place an export action plan with realistic objectives, to prioritise your activities and focus on areas that offer the greatest potential. UK

Trade & Investment can assist you in putting together a logical step-by-step plan.

Q7 Are there specific steps that I can take to save money?

The cost of having your export documentation processed and gaining training on exporting can be significantly reduced through Chamber membership.

All members of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group receive discounts on their documentation processing and training.

Q8 What funding is available?

Funding is available to help you research markets, visit markets or attend exhibitions. These are available to SME companies in

varying degrees. Contact UK Trade & Investment to find out more: 08457 35 45 55.



Q9 Which markets should I choose?

This will usually be driven by the potential of the overseas market, but also the ease of entry to that market. Those markets that offer both strong potential and ease of access will be the markets to focus on initially. UK Trade & Investment can assist you with a logical market selection process.

You might also have in-house information and knowledge or there may be information via desk research available through the industry (i.e. Trade Associations etc).

UK Trade & Investment can assist you with a logical market selection process.

Q10 How can I research my market?

You can gain general background information on a market through your own desk research – the UK Trade & Investment national website has up-to-date country and sector information at www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk.

research the market conditions, competition levels and identify the most appropriate route to market.

For more in-depth research, you can also access the UK Trade & Investment supported Export Marketing Research Scheme (EMRS) via the British Chambers of Commerce.

Also consider using UK Trade & Investment's Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) to help

“you could sell directly, via the internet, through an agent, distributor or under licence.”

Q11 How much do I need to spend?

Apart from your time commitment, expect to invest in at least two short visits and the purchase of some market research to define any necessary tailoring of your product/service and its literature. There may also be registration/approval costs.

Promotional support, if part of the arrangement with your partner, will have a cost and your eventual agreement with the partner should be professionally drafted.

Q12 What help is available to visit the market?

Sign up to one of UK Trade & Investment's overseas market visits – guided group trips overseas, offering practical and financial assistance. Companies can access local market information and

research potential market partners, whilst being accompanied by an experienced International Trade Adviser and locally-engaged UK Trade & Investment representatives in the market.

Q13 How can I sell my goods?

Depending on the product you could sell directly, via the internet,

through an agent, distributor or under licence.

Q14 Should I use an agent or distributor?

An agent helps sell your product at a commission, but you as the seller make the delivery to the customer and the commission to the agent is payable once you have been paid.

Distributors buy your products and sell in their own capacity at a margin but as good distributors have a number of product lines, you need to convince the distributor

that your product will be the one that will provide maximum return. To make this work to commercial advantage takes considerable time and resource. You also have less control over how your goods are sold.

In both cases, make sure you research the agent or distributor.

Q15 What are the pros and cons of setting up a joint venture business?

Joint ventures (JV) involve real financial or equity investment which has a range of implications for the business.

Advantages of a joint venture may include:

- Providing a permanent presence in the market
- Working with experienced foreign nationals provides obvious market/business culture expertise and a better understanding of legal and fiscal frameworks
- Can be profitable as the other partner in the JV will have established buyers

Disadvantages may include:

- Can be very difficult (and expensive) to unravel if it does not work out
- Needs careful planning and would require input from local lawyers and accountants
- There could be issues around IPR if not handled properly

Q16 How do I ship goods overseas?

You would be well advised to outsource this role to a specialist company, known as a freight forwarder. Forwarders take on the responsibility of transporting your goods to your destination. You can find a list of reputable freight forwarders from the British International Freight Association www.bifa.org

You should also be sure that your shipment meets all the customs requirements for each country through which your goods will pass. HM Revenue & Customs produce a useful guide “Starter pack for Importers and Exporters”, to

download at www.hmrc.gov.uk.



Q17 Do my products need to pass country specific quality/safety tests?

Normally yes. The British Standards Institute www.bsi-global.com/index.xalter and the STRD Standards & Technical Regulations Directorate www.dti.gov.uk/innovation/strd are good places to start.



Q18 What documentation do I need to use?

It is very important to ensure you have the correct documentation. You can gain more information from UK Trade &

Investment, the Chamber of Commerce or your freight forwarder.

Q19 How can I find out how to use the documentation?

Incorrectly completed documentation can not only mean that the process may take longer, but it is also likely to cause excess costs. Business Training, the training arm of the Thames Valley Chamber of

Commerce Group is able to provide a number of suitable training courses. You can call Business Training on 01753 870 640 or visit www.welcometobusiness.co.uk.

Q20 What is a Customs Export Declaration?

A Customs Export Declaration is a declaration of the goods that are being exported. A reference code

should be included for the goods to enable the appropriate duty to be applied.

Q21 What is the Customs Commodity Code that is required on my export declaration?

For exports out of the European Union you are required to provide an eight-digit commodity code which needs to be entered on the Customs export declaration. Sometimes this code is also referred to as the "first eight digits of the Customs Tariff number" or "CN (Customs nomenclature) code". This number will also be used as a basis for the import declaration in the country of destination.

If you are unfamiliar with Customs classification you are advised to contact the UK Customs Tariff Classification Help-Line (Tel. 01702 366077).

Based on the Commodity Code, Customs authorities will assess duty rates, apply product specific controls and origin rules. If you are unfamiliar with Customs classification you are advised to contact the UK Customs Tariff Classification Help-Line (Tel. 01702 366077).

Q22 What is a Customs NES declaration?

New Export System (NES) is HM Revenue & Customs; electronic method of making export declarations. The computerised system captures export declarations at all stages of the export process either by direct transmission from the exporter, or through a third party such as a freight forwarder.

The initial export declaration can be submitted at any time before the despatch of the goods. When the

goods arrive at the port of shipment, an arrival message must be sent to Customs who will then control the export and give permission to load. Once the ship or aircraft has departed, a departure message must be sent to Customs who will respond with an acknowledgement that clears the export account on the Customs system. The NES electronic departure message provides evidence that the goods were exported.

“call
Business
Training on
01753
870 640”

“The NES
electronic
departure
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Q23 What is a CPC number and where can I obtain one?

The Customs Procedure Code (CPC) is a six digit code which informs Customs of the reason for the export or import.

From January 2007, the format of these codes will change as part of the EU wide Single Administration Document (SAD) harmonisation. The new format will be two pairs of numbers followed by three digits

code which may be alpha-numeric.

A full list of the CPC codes for both import and export procedures are available in Volume 3 of the Customs Tariff.

Q24 What is a SAD document?

The Single Administration Document (SAD), Customs Form C88 is the Customs declaration document for imports and exports. All exports excluding postal exports require a C88, SAD and must accompany the goods to the port of exit from the EU.

Guidance on how to complete the SAD is available in the Customs UK Tariff Volume 3.

Q25 Do I need a licence for my products/services?

For the great majority of exporters no licence is necessary to export goods from the UK but it is definitely worth checking. In some cases

goods that don't normally need a licence may require one - i.e. civil engineering products that could have a military use.

Q26 What are Export Controls and Export Licences?

Export Controls apply to goods upon which the UK government has placed export licensing requirements. Typically export controls relate to goods that may be used in some way or other for military applications, goods of national heritage or certain chemicals used in the production of controlled drugs.

If you think your goods may be applied for military purposes contact the DTI's Export Controls

Organisation (020 7215 8070).

If you think your goods may be of importance to national heritage, contact the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (020 7211 6164). For chemicals, contact the Home Office (020 7273 2085/3627).

If considered to be sensitive, you will need to apply for an export licence before you can take them out of the UK.

Q27 What is a Pre-Shipment Inspection (PSI)?

A small number of countries require goods and documents to be examined before export by an independent agency. Usually, countries where PSI applies will have appointed one dedicated agency to perform the pre-shipment inspection.

Before exporting to a country where PSI applies, you are advised to establish specific procedures and whether you or your customer will carry possible PSI related cost.

Q28 Can you explain what Duty is?

Duty is charged at the place of importation and paid by the importer, unless the exporter has agreed to do so under the delivery term of a duty paid sales contract. There is one exception to this rule, for common agricultural policy (CAP) goods there is possibility that a duty can be levied at the place of export.

Import duties are collected by the customs authorities in the country

to which the goods have been exported. Duty rates will vary from country to country depending on value, tariff classification and the origin of the goods.

In some cases the duty may be suspended if the goods are entered to a special customs regime such as temporary import or inward processing.

“If considered to be sensitive, you will need to apply for an export licence”





“It is sensible to get professional advice at an early stage if you are looking to establish an overseas presence.”

Q29 Am I liable to pay import duty?

It depends on the route to market. If the company is shipping the goods and selling directly then they are liable. If you are shipping to a third

party they are normally paid by the importer but this can be reflected in the price negotiations.

Q30 Will we have to pay corporate tax overseas?

This will depend upon the structure of your international operations. For example, if all your international sales are undertaken from the UK and you have no subsidiaries or permanent establishments overseas, you should not have an obligation to pay overseas corporation taxes.

However, if you do have distinct business operations overseas, you may incur an obligation to corporation tax. It is sensible to get professional advice at an early stage if you are looking to establish an overseas presence.

Q31 Will we need to pay income tax for our overseas/internationally mobile staff?

This will depend upon the precise activities of your individual staff. If your employees are only spending a short period of time in an overseas location, they should not be liable for any overseas tax. However, if they are spending

longer periods of time in a particular location, an overseas tax liability could arise and professional advice should be sought from an accountant or lawyer.

Q32 Where do I find the tax forms for different countries?

You will often be able to find the relevant tax forms from the website of each country's tax authority. However, whilst many websites do provide some information in the

English language, it is probable that the actual tax forms would only be available in the relevant national languages.

Q33 Are we liable for VAT on goods/services we export?

If the goods are leaving the European Union, you will not need to include VAT on your international invoices. However, it is necessary to ensure that you retain a clear 'audit trail', so that you can prove to HM Revenue & Customs that the goods have clearly left the EU.

For goods to EU countries, the VAT position will depend upon the position of your client. It is sensible to talk through your precise situation e.g. whether you are selling to businesses or private individuals with HM Revenue & Customs or your accountant.

Q34 How do I find out about different countries' packaging requirements?

Your freight forwarder or agent/distributor should be able to advise you about the requirements. This is also a question that could form part of your Overseas Market

Information Service (OMIS) research if you choose to commission a report via UK Trade & Investment into your chosen market/s.

Q35 What is a phytosanitary certificate?

A phytosanitary certificate is now required for all goods using wood and plant materials. It indicates that the wooden packaging has been fumigated or undergone heat

treatment. The Plant Health Section of the Forestry Commission issues these certificates, website: www.forestry.gov.uk.

Q36 What does INCOTERMS mean?

INCOTERMS are a set of agreed rules which set out the delivery terms for internationally traded goods. They allow the buyer and seller to agree responsibility for

carriage, customs clearance and division of the costs and risks. There are 13 INCOTERMS, which cover the range of responsibilities for both the buyer and the seller.

“you can also attend a course run by the Chamber, which over a half day will provide you with all the information you need”

Q37 Is there further information and training available on INCOTERMS?

You can ask the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group or UK Trade & Investment for specific queries, but you can also attend a course run by the Chamber, which

over a half day will provide you with all the information you need. You can call Business Training on 01753 870 640 or visit www.welcometobusiness.co.uk.

Q38 What is a Bill of Lading?

Bills of Lading are usually issued by the shipping company or agent. A Bill of Lading is the document of title, it acts as a receipt for the

goods and provides evidence of the freight contract and is required by the buyer to clear goods at point of arrival.

Q39 What is an Air Waybill?

The Air Waybill is an air freight consignment note. It has a similar function to the Bill of Lading but is not a document of title. It

accompanies the consignment allowing fast clearance on arrival at the destination airport.

Q40 What is a Dangerous Goods Note?

Dangerous Goods Notes are required for all shipments of a hazardous nature. They are used for movements by sea, road and rail

and are prepared by the seller. They are required to act as a security document and allow the carrier to reduce any risks of safety.

Q41 How can I be sure that I will get paid?

You may be able to insist that your client pays for your product / service in advance. However, if this is not possible, you can help minimise the payment risks to your business by obtaining bank credit reports into your client company or entering into Letter of Credit

arrangements with the company.

Always do some research into payment terms and be prepared to adapt your terms to suit your customers to ensure you remain competitive.

Q42 What happens if the buyer doesn't pay?

You can and should insure against non-payment of export invoices with a specialist provider or arrange for your bank to take over the risk, e.g. discount your export

sales ledger. UK Trade & Investment can advise. You can pursue a foreign debt through collection agencies but prevention is better than cure.

Q43 Can you explain what a Letter of Credit is?

A Letter of Credit (L/C), sometimes called a documentary credit, is an undertaking by a bank to make a payment on an international transaction to a named beneficiary within a specified time frame. Each Letter of Credit has terms and documentary requirements which must be strictly complied with. The main advantage of a Letter of Credit

is to provide security to both the exporter and the importer.

The exporter must understand that unless the terms of the credit are met precisely, payment will not be made.

The main advantage of a letter of credit is to provide security to both the exporter and the importer.

Q44 What are the different types of Letters of Credit?

Irrevocable: The terms and conditions cannot be changed without the express agreement of the exporter. Revocable Letters of Credit are very unusual, as the conditions can be changed unilaterally by the buyer, which is rarely acceptable to an exporter.

Unconfirmed: The payment commitment within the Letter of Credit is provided by the buyer's (Issuing) Bank.

Confirmed: If an exporter has any concerns about the circumstances which may prevent payment being made from either the Issuing Bank or buyer's country, the adding of "Confirmation" moves the bank/country risk issues to the bank which adds its confirmation (the Advising bank) and notifies the DC to the exporter.

“EUR1 forms are available from the Chamber together with guidance on completion.”

Q45 Where can I gain more information about Letters of Credit?

Business Training is able to provide training on both an introduction to Letters of Credit and an advanced workshop for a more in-depth approach.

You can call Business Training on 01753 870 640 or visit www.welcometobusiness.co.uk.

Q46 I understand there are rules for L/Cs, how can I obtain them?

Most letters of credit are subject to UCP 500, which are the universally recognised set of rules governing the use of the documentary credits in international trade. ICC Publication 500/2, entitled Uniform Customs and Practice (UCP 500) &

eUCP details the 1993 version and also provides for the electronic presentation of documents. It is available to purchase from the Chamber. The new version, UCP 600, come into force in July 07.

Q47 What is an EUR1 form and how do I obtain one?

An EUR1 is required to certify the goods' EU origin in order to receive preferential import duty rates. Customs Notices 828, 829 and 832 cover these rules of origin and can be found on the following website:

www.hmce.gov.uk/forms/catalogue/catalogue.htm.

EUR1 forms are available from the Chamber together with guidance on completion.

Q48 Am I able to gain an EUR1 form electronically?

The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group is currently piloting the online version of EUR1 forms, which will allow you to save time and money, by having the forms processed faster and with less effort online.



Q49 Can I apply for an EUR1 Movement Certificate after my goods have been shipped?

Every effort should be made to complete an EUR1 before the goods are shipped, but as an exception it is possible to apply after shipment. There are some additional requirements as follows.

- “Issued Retrospectively” must be inserted into box 7 of the EUR1

- An extra declaration under paragraph 1 on 4 of the EUR1 stating “no movement certificate EUR1 for these goods has previously been issued”.

- Details of the place and date of exportation must be provided, together with proof of shipment.

Q50 My EUR1 has got lost in transit. What can I do?

If an EUR1 has been lost, stolen or destroyed you are able to apply for a duplicate at the office where the original was issued. The following additional requirements are needed:

- A letter stating why a duplicate is required and where and when the original EUR1 was issued.

- Box 7 of the EUR1 must state “Duplicate” and the serial number and date of issue of the original certificate.

- Supply a copy of the export invoice & any other supporting evidence against which the original was issued.

Q51 Can you tell me what “free circulation” means?

For goods to be in “free circulation” they must originate in the European Union. If the goods are imported into the European Union all import formalities have to be complied with and all duties, levies or equivalent charges have to be paid

and not refunded.

Goods in “free circulation” can move within the 25 EU Member States without Customs presentation and paperwork or the payment of customs duties.

“The Chamber offers both a while-you-wait service and a postal service to applicants.”

Q52 Can you tell me where I can get my A.TR documents processed?

Customs have delegated the authority to authenticate these documents locally to the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group, the Chartered Institute of Shipbrokers and postal only service

at the Customs Office in Salford.

The Chamber offers both a while-you-wait service and a postal service to applicants.

Q53 When submitting an A.TR for processing will I need to submit any additional backup documents?

The law requires that the issue of an A.TR must be linked to an actual export procedure which proves that free circulation rules have been met and that these additional documents which need to be submitted will confirm this. One of the following additional documents is required on submission:

- A pre-logged New Export System (NES) export declaration.
- A plain paper C88 Customs export declaration.
- An Exporter Declaration (specific wording available from the Chamber).

Q54 I have been asked to supply an EUR1 Movement Certificate, but the goods are not all of EC origin. Can I do this?

An EUR1 can be raised but it can only cover the goods of EC origin. The non-originating goods need to be clearly marked on your invoice. A statement must be entered in Box 8 of the EUR1 just below the

description stating the goods marked on the invoice are non-originating and therefore are not covered by this movement certificate EUR1.

Q55 Can you tell me what a CVO is?

CVO stands for Certificate of Value and Origin. As well as details of the goods the CVO provides, in special clauses extra details about labour and packing costs, royalties or commissions (if applicable), freight charges and any overseas insurance costs are detailed. The CVO also provides an exporter's declaration and statements, again

in the form of clauses, about the value and origin of the goods.

As well as details of the goods the CVO provides, in special clauses extra details about labour and packing costs, royalties or commissions (if applicable), freight charges and any overseas insurance costs are detailed.

Q56 What is a Certificate of Origin and from where can I obtain one?

Certificates of Origin are required by some countries as evidence of the origin of the goods and are available from the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber will also provide assistance on how to complete the document.

There are two types of Certificate of Origin, the European Community version and the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce version required by the Arab League Member States. Both documents must be certified by the Chamber when completed by the exporter.

Q57 Why may a Certificate of Origin be necessary?

There are a number of reasons. The following are a few examples:

- A legislative requirement by certain countries
- Overseas Customs Authorities may require proof of origin
- The document may be required

by the terms of a Letter of Credit

- EU funded projects may require proof that goods were sourced from within the EU
- A buyer may want to satisfy himself as to the origin of goods



Q58 We are exporting second hand clothing and have been asked to provide a Certificate of Origin. How do I declare the origin of these clothes as I have no proof?

All goods classified under tariff heading 63.09 (worn clothes and other worn articles) being exported/imported under non preference arrangements take on the origin of the country where the

clothes were last collected and packed for shipment. This does not however include new articles with faults in weaving, dyeing or shop soiled articles.

Q59 I wish to apply for a Certificate of Origin for goods to Libya. Are there any special requirements?

Firstly, an Arab British Certificate of Origin should be used for Libya. Secondly, there are also a couple of additional requirements: any application made to the Libyan authorities should be made in Arabic and therefore your

Certificate of Origin when submitted for legalisation must be submitted with an Arabic translation. The value of the goods in Sterling must be entered in the remarks box of the certificate.

Q60 It is a requirement of my Letter of Credit that I obtain two original Certificates of Origin, can I do this?

It is possible to raise more than one original Certificate of Origin, however there is a special procedure to follow. The certificates need to be completed identically; the serial number of the second certificate needs to be

changed so it reads the same as the first. On the first certificate the wording 1 of 2 originals needs to be placed in the box just below the serial number and 2 of 2 originals on the second certificate.

Q61 If the weights of my goods change, making my EC Certificate of Origin incorrect, what should I do?

On this occasion, it will not be necessary to raise a new Certificate of Origin, as long as the new weight does not conflict with any of the support documentation submitted to the Chamber when the Certificate of Origin was originally certified. The weight can be amended and the certificates resubmitted to the Chamber to have

the amendment authenticated and approved.

It is important however that you consult the Chamber prior to making any amendment to a certified Certificate of Origin to ensure that an amendment can be made, as in some cases a new certificate may need to be raised.

Q62 My European Community Certificate of Origin has been lost in transit, what can I do?

It is possible to raise a replacement Certificate of Origin. The certificate must be completed identically to the original but an additional clause must be entered into the remarks box: "This certificate replaces certificate (insert the serial number of the original) which is

now null and void". The replacement Certificate of Origin must then be submitted to the Chamber for certification in the usual way, together with any supporting documentation and an explanation as to why a replacement is required.

Q63 My Letter of Credit states the origin of the goods needs to be UK, but they're not. What can I do?

Even though your Letter of Credit states the origin needs to be UK, you cannot make a false declaration of origin on any of your documents. It is also mandatory to state on the application copy the

name and address of the manufacturers of the goods. Due to this, the only option open to you is to apply to the Bank for an amendment to the Letter of Credit.

“you cannot make a false declaration of origin on any of your documents.”

“The repackaging and labelling of the product is not a substantial enough process to alter the origin of the goods.”

Q64 We are importing goods, which we repackage, label and export. Can we declare that the goods are of UK origin?

In order for the goods to be of UK origin, they need to be either wholly produced in the UK or by virtue of an economically justified substantial process which has occurred in the UK. The repackaging and labelling of the product is not a substantial enough process to alter the origin of the goods.

Q65 I am shipping goods to Iran. Do I need to use an Arab-British Certificate of Origin?

No, Arab-British Certificates of Origin are used when exporting to the 19 Arab-League member states. Iran is not one of these member states and therefore a European Community Certificate of Origin should be used.

A full list of Arab League member states is available on the Chamber's website:
www.welcometobusiness.co.uk

Q66 Our parent company abroad raises European Community Certificates of Origin for the Middle East, which they have legalised by the Embassy. Can we do the same in the UK?

In the UK this is not the case, the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce exists in the UK to facilitate trade between the UK and the Arab League Countries; the Arab-British Chamber Certificate of Origin is the official origin document for those markets. Therefore only Arab-British Chamber of Commerce Certificates of Origin can be

legalised in the UK for the Arab League Member States.

However the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce is not replicated in all EC member states, so the EC Certificate of Origin is used and sent to the appropriate Arab Embassy or Consulate for legalisation.

Q67 Is it possible to apply for a Certificate of Origin electronically?

Yes, it is possible. Exporters and their agents can now register with the Chamber to use the e-Cert / a-Cert system which makes the process of applying for both EC and Arab Certificates of Origin faster and more efficient.

There are two levels of service available: Standard - where the

certificates are submitted electronically and then processed by the Chamber in the conventional manner; eXpress – where the whole certification process is carried out online with the exporter printing the final document complete with the Chamber certification stamps and signatures.

Q68 When applying for an EC Certificate of Origin, will I need to supply additional information if the goods are not manufactured in the UK?

As the goods are not of UK origin, the Chamber will require documentary proof of where the goods originated, as well as the export invoice.

This proof of origin can be one of three things:

- a) A foreign certificate of origin
- b) A copy of the manufacturer's invoice

c) A declaration from the manufacturer.

The Chamber will need to have this additional documentation before they can process the Certificate of Origin.

Q69 My client has asked me to provide a legalised Certificate of Origin. What does legalised mean?

Legalised means that the Certificate of Origin once certified by the Chamber must then be stamped by the UK Embassy of the overseas destination.

Legalisation is a standard requirement of certain countries, while others may not have a standard requirement but it may be asked for by the client or specified by the Letter of Credit.

Q70 What does it mean if I have to get documents apostilled?

Apostille is a service carried out by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in the UK.

It confirms that a signature, seal or stamp appearing on a document is

genuine. It does not mean that the content of a document is accurate or that the Foreign & Commonwealth office approves of the content.

Q71 What is an ATA Carnet?

The ATA Carnet is a temporary export document. It allows your products to be temporarily imported into specific countries free of Customs duties and tax without the need to provide a guarantee or cash security while the goods are in the country. The

Carnet has a validity of 1 year and can be used for single or multi-country visits.

Carnet applications are available from the Chamber's Heathrow office on 01784 24247.

Q72 Can I extend an ATA Carnet which expires in two months?

No, you are not able to extend the validity of your current Carnet but you can obtain a replacement Carnet.

This however would require you complete a new set of forms together with a new issuing fee and security fee.

You are advised to obtain written confirmation (at least a month before the expiry date of the Carnet) of the conditions under which foreign customs will accept a replacement ATA Carnet.

Q73 Can I get extra vouchers after the Carnet has been issued, or add anything to the list?

You are able to apply for additional vouchers from the issuing Chamber, however care must be taken on applying for a Carnet to ensure you have enough vouchers to complete your trip as a repeat issuing fee is payable.

It is however prohibited to add additional items to the ATA Carnet list once the Carnet has been issued.

Q74 What happens if I lose my ATA Carnet?

If you have lost your ATA Carnet you will need to apply for a substitute Carnet. This Carnet will have to contain all the same details as the original and you will be charged a

repeat issuing fee and security fee.

Alternatively, the goods covered by the lost or stolen Carnet may be entered to temporary importation.

Q75 I need to provide a Letter of Introduction stating that I am trading in the UK. Can you help?

The Chamber will be able to assist you with this matter. You will however need to provide the

Chamber with evidence to prove that your company is registered in the UK.

“If you have lost your ATA Carnet you will need to apply for a substitute Carnet.”

Q76 We are a making our first export to Algeria and need to obtain an EX-1 form. What is this?

All UK exports to Algeria must be accompanied by an EX-1 form certifying the goods are being exported from the UK to Algeria. This document will be issued by the Algerian Consulate who will automatically issue an EX-1 form if

your shipment requires legalised documentation, otherwise the exporter will need to contact the Algerian Consulate, who will issue an attestation in lieu of an EX-1 form.

Q77 Can you tell me what a Force Majeure is?

Most commercial contracts carry a Force Majeure clause which allows for failure to meet the terms of the contract due to circumstances beyond the control of the parties concerned.

Should a Force Majeure situation occur you may be asked to provide a statement explaining the situation, authenticated by an official body such as the Chamber.

Q78 What is an International Import Certificate?

An International Import Certificate (IIC) is an end use assurance. It is normal practice for a United Kingdom individual or company intending to import controlled goods from another COCOM (Co-ordinating Committee) member country to apply for an IIC at the request of the Licensing Authority of the country of export.

into the country of destination, without diversion or transshipment elsewhere, and not to re-export the goods without an export licence from the Licensing Authority in the country of importation. It is also an assurance from the Government of that country that it will control any subsequent export of those goods.

An IIC constitutes an undertaking by the importer to import the goods

Q79 I need a Certificate of Free Sale for the medical equipment we are exporting. What is this?

The Department of Health issue Certificates of Free Sale (CFS) if requested by UK based exporters of medical devices only. The CFS is not an export licence: it is in effect a 'letters of comfort', in support of other export documentation, requested by the authorities of the importing country. This provides assurances that the devices conform to the same quality and safety standards that apply in the

United Kingdom and the rest of the European Union.

The medical devices covered by the CFS are defined in by the Active Implant Directive, the Medical Devices Directive and the In-Vitro Diagnostic Devices Directive. CFS are also issued for accessories and consumables associated with medical devices.

Q80 Do I have to speak a foreign language to successfully do business abroad?

No, but speaking a foreign language can naturally increase

the options that you have when doing business overseas.

Q81 How important is it to understand foreign business culture?

It is vital that you try and understand the business culture of the overseas market. In many respects, the business culture can be more

important than the linguistic issues that you will face when doing business internationally.

“speaking a foreign language can naturally increase the options that you have”

Q82 Do I need to consider differing business culture when dealing with other countries that have English as a first language?

Yes; for example, the UK Trade & Investment Team South East offers a specific training course to qualifying companies on the cultural and business issues that

they can face when doing business with the US. Email events@uktisoutheast.com for more information.

Q83 Where can I find cultural information on individual countries?

UK Trade & Investment has webpages for each country/market with a wealth of information about the country's market profile and

business culture. Search on www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk for more information.

Q84 How should I promote my products/services overseas?

This depends on your company's strengths, weaknesses, history and your products and market sector. You could consider selling your products overseas via a website,

acquire overseas agents or distributors to promote your products. An International Trade Adviser can discuss the options with you.

Q85 Can I get help with overseas PR?

Yes. UK Trade & Investment's New Products from Britain service can help to promote your product/service in new markets and media. An International Trade Adviser may also be able to identify local PR agencies who will be willing to work with you. Also consider placing copy/adverts in local press relevant to your own company.

Q86 Is the design/use of logos/imagery appropriate for my overseas target market?

Usually yes. If you seek to establish a presence in the market you may need to consider local cultural issues and change or redesign your

logo or even your company/product name to suit local needs. (Particularly in China or Japan).

Q87 Can I get help to exhibit at overseas fairs/shows?

Eligible companies can access practical and financial assistance for exhibiting at trade shows, exhibitions and seminars overseas, via UK Trade & Investment's Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP). This will help you acquire knowledge and experience of exhibiting effectively overseas.

Eligible companies can take advantage of event back-up, a grant towards the cost of the exhibition stand and also the knowledge from our local teams overseas.

Q88 Do I need to translate my website for foreign customers?

If you have enough funding then it is generally recommended that you translate your website to the language/s of the market/s you are aiming to do business with. English

may be the business language of a number of overseas markets but a good translation into the native language can potentially secure more leads or future sales.

Q89 Should I provide a currency converter on my purchasing site/show my prices in euros?

Having dual prices is a good idea but if you use a converter make sure you include a disclaimer as

the rate it gives may not be the rate that appears on the customer's credit card or from their bank.

“If you seek to establish a presence in the market you may need to consider local cultural issues”



Q90 How can I ensure credit card payments are secure when trading on the web?

Take advice from other web trading companies. Consider using Paypal secure methods or similar and look into escrow accounts for larger sums where the buyer and seller have equal protection. Be aware

that payment from stolen cards overseas may be revoked later by the credit card company, check the trading conditions of those cards you accept.

Q91 Do I need to translate my literature?

Take advice from your local contacts. In some markets sales literature is acceptable in English

but most countries require technical information to be translated.

Q92 Where can I get my information translated?

The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group can provide you with a translation service that includes most languages of the

world. For more information you can contact the Chamber on 01753 870 500.

Q93 How do I position and price my product/service?

Utilise tailor made market research reports on current suppliers, their success factors and prices. Calculate costs accurately to define margins and price flexibility. Expect to quote in

local currency. Consider Euro transparency within EU markets. Contact UK Trade & Investment for the different terms of sale used in exporting (incoterms) or gain training through Business Training: www.welcometobusiness.co.uk.

Q94 How long will it take to get my first order?

You may obtain an initial trial order on your first exploratory visit to a new market, or even before, but there is normally a proving period as your partner develops familiarity

and gains confidence. As in the Home market, it could take 12 months or more to establish the trading pattern.

Q95 How can I finance the export business if cash flow is a problem?

As a first step it is worth asking suppliers about extended terms to enable you to develop additional demand from overseas. Also, if you are selling into markets where sight terms are the norm, i.e. no credit is

expected by the buyer, this assists cash flow. But when your export business begins to have an impact on cash flow it may be worth considering factoring to free up working capital.

Q96 What do I need to know about contracts?

Having robust terms and conditions is the key to protect against non payment, product liability, liquidated damages or IPR infringement

recognised in overseas markets.

It is one thing having a strong contract, but another to enforce it as English Law is not necessarily

It is key to involve a lawyer and other professionals (such as a trade finance specialist) in formulating commercial conditions to ensure that a business protects its interests.

Q97 How can I protect my intellectual property?

Intellectual property is a very complicated legal area so you should always seek professional advice. Patent agents and trade mark attorneys can be found through the websites of the

Chartered Institute of Patent Agents (www.cipa.org.uk) and the Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys (www.itma.org.uk).



gain training through Business Training:
www.welcometobusiness.co.uk

Q98 How can a professional language provider promote their services?

In the first instance, by registering details on the BLIS database. See www.blis.org.uk/professionals/index.htm for more details.

Q99 What about product/service liability?

Products and product literature need to comply with all local regulatory requirements. The British Standards Institute www.bsi-global.com can help to research this. Commercial staff based at British Embassies overseas will advise on insurance against liability actions. Contact details can be found on the relevant country pages at www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk. In the case of services, contracts need to specify what is being supplied and the limits of obligation. Take advice on local law to ensure it does not override any parts of the contract. Further information is available from the Law Society: www.lawsociety.org.uk.

Q100 What about after-sales service/technical support for my customers?

Your agreement with the local partners should require them to provide routine support, after training as necessary, with your expertise for back-up as required.

Q101 What next?

Well if you have gained the answers you need and are eager to reach new shores, or you still have any questions please contact us:

Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group
Tel: 01753 870 500
Web: www.welcometobusiness.co.uk

UK Trade & Investment
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