



Global Trade Compliance Review

As a business operating in the UK you must comply with customs regulations laid down in UK law, administered and policed by HMRC. You must also have procedures to establish the correct data for customs declarations and as well as having competent, and skilled staff undertaking customs and international trade activities.

HMRC audits UK companies who import and export; they do so to ensure that they are complying with UK regulation and providing accurate statistics. As an importer or exporter of record you have responsibilities around record keeping (typically between 4 and 6 years) and ensuring that these records are easily accessible in the case of a customs audit. HMRC audits are typically on-site.

What will HMRC want to see?

The data HMRC will want to see will depend on whether it is an import or export audit. For example, for an import audit, they will likely want to see completed C88/SADs, sales contracts/emails, commercial invoices with Incoterms, packing lists, transport documents (bill of lading, airwaybills, etc.), agents' invoices, payment terms, and evidence of valuation (basis of import duty and VAT charges). Export audits will focus more on declared value of goods, reviewing any licensable goods, bills of material linked to origin declarations, export preference documentation, and importantly, proof of export.

Many companies leave their customs declarations to their agents and freight forwarders and are not aware



that the correct lodgement of a customs declaration is their responsibility, and how incorrect declarations can adversely affect the level of duty payable. HMRC is putting more responsibility on traders and are intending to run stricter audits in the hope of increasing the number of “compliant” companies allowing them to concentrate on those that are not.

Knowing that there are both administrative penalties and criminal offenses for breaches of customs obligations, preparing for a customs import/export audit can be stressful and challenging, this is where the *Empowering SMEs in International Trade* programme can help. We are able to conduct on-site, **trade compliance audits**, exploring processes, systems and documentation, detecting areas of non-compliance and helping ensure you are maintaining the correct data and documentation, and importantly, for the requisite time. Essentially, we aim to ensure you are compliant and prepared for any future audit.

Eligibility criteria:

You can be a goods or services-based company, and a novice or experienced importer or exporter. However, you must:

- ✓ Be a Small Medium Enterprise (SME)
- ✓ Be based in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire or Derbyshire

How to register

To proceed, simply book a 1:1 support session via the programme’s Eventbrite page (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/empowering-smes-in-international-trade-programme-34071854063>). Alternatively, you can email us at internationalisation@globaltradedept.com.

NB: You may also like to access other support offered by the programme. Ask for more details.

Additional support offered by the programme

- ⇒ **Specialist 1:1 Support sessions:** Between 2 and 8 hours of company dedicated support via Trade Clinics and Deep Dive sessions focusing on import and/or export.
- ⇒ **Sustainable Trade Planning:** Sustainability consultation, with carbon calculation and full review of manufacturing and supply chain data; full report with recommendations on improving sustainability objectives within international trade activity.
- ⇒ **Global Trade Management programme:** 30 hours of operational, ‘hands on’ support from a dedicated Global Trade Manager to improve knowledge and boost import/export capacity.
- ⇒ **Global Trader Peer Networks:** Up to 10 hours of support delivered over 5 peer group sessions, each exploring a different international trade challenge or opportunity. Moderated by a global trade specialist with guest specialists where subject matter warrants.

“Our company has ambitious plans for international growth but we didn’t really know where to start. Having export support from the team was perfect timing, they even put us in touch with people who can help us out with translations and checked out our export codes. Their support has meant we have been able to develop an export strategy to deliver the planned growth.”

Swim Secure

About Global Trade Department

A business management consultancy specialising in International Trade, Compliance, Sustainability Planning, Business Resilience, and Growth.

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