**Exporter FAQs**

*Please note that all the guidance and services referred to in this document are free to access.*

**Where should I begin?**

The Department for Business and Trade, as the department for economic growth, provides [a range of services](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-and-trade/about/about-our-services) to help exporters. This is supported by [great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk/) – the main online source of government support for UK companies who want to start exporting or increase the amount of goods and services they sell overseas.

Further support is provided by the [Business Support Helpline](https://www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline) and the [Help to Grow campaign](https://helptogrow.campaign.gov.uk/), which offers user-friendly yet comprehensive advice, including webinars, to empower and inspire businesses at all stages, from the start-up phase through to scaling up and selling internationally.

The [Export Academy](https://www.great.gov.uk/export-academy/), run out of the Department for Business and Trade, also offers online courses, covering the essentials through to masterclasses and specific market and sector sessions, to train and upskill businesses on expanding and exporting.

Companies looking for advice on growing their business internationally through digital means can also sign up to the [Digital Exporting Programme](https://www.great.gov.uk/campaign-site/digital-exporting-programme/).

**Can I get one-on-one support with exporting?**

Yes! The Department for Business and Trade has International Trade Advisers across the English regions (the North, Midlands, and South) who offer one-on-one support and provide regional and sectoral expertise to local businesses, particularly SMEs, to help them invest, grow and export. These advisers have access to Digital Trade Advisers for businesses looking to export online or improve their presence on the internet.

The International Trade Advisers do not operate in London; businesses in London can contact their local office for support instead.

More information on these services can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-international-trade-support-from-regional-teams-in-england) and companies can request support in their area through the ‘contact us’ option.

Businesses across England can also take advantage of Business Growth Hubs, which provide tailored business advice to companies of all sizes. Companies can find their local Business Growth Hub [here](https://www.growthhubfinder.co.uk/).

Those in [Northern Ireland](https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/), [Scotland](https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/) and [Wales](https://businesswales.gov.wales/) can access dedicated support through their devolved governments.

The [Board of Trade](https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/board-of-trade) offers a further route to support for SMEs across the UK. Several Board of Trade Advisers have extensive experience growing businesses internationally and may be able to provide informal mentorship and advice to an entrepreneur or small business looking to build their knowledge and network – [boardoftrade@businessandtrade.gov.uk](mailto:boardoftrade@businessandtrade.gov.uk) can be contacted for more information.

**Where can I read general guidance as a prospective or current exporter?**

Guidance for new, occasional, and frequent exporters can be found [here](https://www.great.gov.uk/). A step-by-step guide and other information on how to move goods from the UK to international destinations can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/export-goods).

**Where can I check duties, customs procedures and other requirements for exporting goods?**

Businesses can find out about any rules and restrictions, any tax and duty rates and which exporting documents they will need to export their goods [here](https://www.gov.uk/check-duties-customs-exporting). This is where exporters can also find out about and apply for any licences that may be required to export their goods.

The requirements will vary according to the type of good being exported and the market it is being exported to.

**Where can I learn more about exporting/selling to a particular overseas market?**

Businesses can use services on [great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk/signup/?next=/where-to-export/) to identify which markets are best for their specific products. [Here](https://www.great.gov.uk/support/find-a-new-export-market/) is also where businesses can learn which markets they can export to more easily and at a lower cost thanks to special trade deals that the government has negotiated and signed with other countries.

Additionally, businesses can download country-specific export guides [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/exporting-country-guides).

Should they have an export-related question about a specific market, businesses can contact the Department for Business and Trade’s Export Support Team [here](https://www.gov.uk/ask-export-support-team) or locate in-country support by contacting the relevant UK embassy or consulate [here](https://www.gov.uk/world/embassies).

**How can I know if I will face barriers in an overseas market?**

Businesses can make themselves aware of any potential barriers to exporting their goods, providing their services or investing in foreign countries [here](https://www.gov.uk/barriers-trading-investing-abroad). It is also important that businesses help the government tackle these barriers by making them aware of any that are new or are getting worse – this can be reported [here](https://www.great.gov.uk/report-trade-barrier/).

**How can I find out about overseas export opportunities, including trade missions?**

Businesses can identify and apply to overseas export opportunities based on their products/services and the markets they want to sell to [here](https://www.great.gov.uk/export-opportunities/). They can also [create a business profile on great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk/find-a-buyer/) to make it easier for prospective international buyers to find them and learn more about their offer.

The Department for Business and Trade runs events in the UK and trade missions overseas aimed at facilitating business networking and connecting UK companies with international trade and business opportunities. Trade mission delegates benefit from exclusive meet-the-buyer events, peer-to-peer networking and support, educational insights from local experts and partners, enhanced press and marketing opportunities and bespoke itineraries. Businesses can find out and apply to trade missions [here](https://www.events.great.gov.uk/ehome/index.php?eventid=200183029&).

Additionally, businesses can contact the Department for Business and Trade’s International Ministerial Visits Team ([visits.support@businessandtrade.gov.uk](mailto:visits.support@businessandtrade.gov.uk)) to find out about upcoming ministerial visits and how they can potentially get involved.

**What is export finance and how can I access it?**

[UK Export Finance](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-export-finance), the government’s credit agency, provides export finance (e.g. government-backed finance, insurance and guarantees to help UK companies export). This could mean financial support to:

* win export contracts by providing attractive financing terms to their buyers;
* fulfil orders by supporting working capital loans; and/or
* get paid by insuring against buyer default.

Businesses can find out more about UKEF’s services and products [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/our-products) and by emailing [customer.service@ukexportfinance.gov.uk](mailto:customer.service@ukexportfinance.gov.uk). International Trade Advisers also support companies with understanding and accessing trade and export finance options.

British Business Bank (BBB), a government-owned business development bank, also works to improve the access to finance landscape for SMEs, stimulating supply and demand through targeted interventions. BBB core programmes support £12.4 billion of finance to small and high growth businesses, backing over 90,000 businesses across the UK.

[Here](https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/) is where businesses can find information on BBB’s business partners and the appropriate finance options available to them at all stages of their growth.

There are many other funding routes available to help a business grow and build its export capacity such as through [Innovate UK](https://iuk.ktn-uk.org/programme/european/horizon-europe/?utm_campaign=dsit&utm_source=google&utm_medium=ppc&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiA84CvBhCaARIsAMkAvkJ_JcCuiTDKueXSbKG38_xYz-HdGI3Bty-Rn1cPfHLTh7Mjr8hL8PUaAvHnEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds).