

# DEEP IMPACT

Planning for Brexit to ensure your teams have the right skills to help your business through the difficult times ahead.

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**W**ITH approximately 200 days remaining till Brexit at the time of writing, for some businesses the closing months of 2018 may feel like the calm before the storm. For those planning ahead, anticipating the impact that Brexit may have on their supply chains and ability to transport goods to overseas markets, the storm may already have arrived.

What we've found, with the many companies who have come to the Institute of Export looking for support with their post-Brexit planning, is that exporting has its challenges and it will probably become more challenging after Brexit. However, these challenges are surmountable with the right knowledge and application.

A message that says exporting is an easy way to mitigate risk around Brexit doesn't help. Companies shouldn't start exporting blindly at any time, and certainly not when

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the trade landscape is set to change as much as it most likely will with Brexit. Yet, as we often say at the Institute of Export & International Trade, exporting is easy – when you know how it's done.

Brexit may well be the jolt that UK businesses need to spread their wings and increase their exports. Yet, exporting successfully means increasing your international sales, and therefore profits, without being hit by unplanned hidden costs. To do this requires an investment of time and money in export skills and know-how.

## EXPORT SKILLS

Companies who don't plan for Brexit but move goods around the EU risk leaving themselves liable to sudden additional administrative costs, as well as potential delays at the border, which could have an impact throughout their entire supply chains come the end of March.

Businesses will need to evaluate the potential supply chain impacts Brexit will bring. They will have to become much more adept in understanding how the origination of their products and component parts, and the tariff codes their products and parts fall under, can be used to reduce duty payable for the import of those goods or parts, depending on the trade agreements the UK signs with overseas markets. Indeed, they may well have to acclimatise to using UK origin rather than EU origin as the origination required for duty reductions applicable to their goods' tariff codes – again depending on the trade agreements the UK may or may not sign.

Of course, British businesses have already been impacted by the weakened pound when it comes to the costs and potential profits involved in importing and exporting goods and parts. Who knows what lies in wait in terms of other potential changes to the European IP and VAT frameworks the UK currently operates within. What is already certain is that businesses moving goods between the UK and EU are about to discover

that people trained and skilled in the processes of trade are about to become just as important as their lawyers or accountants.

People who can facilitate the movement of goods to other countries with the accompanying paperwork properly completed, who understand how rules of origin and tariff codes work to help reduce duty on components and goods, who understand the myriad risks and costs involved throughout the supply chain – these are the people who will save your company both time and money.

## SKILLING UP

We expect to see a significant rise in uptake for our training and qualifications companies looking to upskill their staff in order to meet the export challenge head on post-Brexit.

Individuals studying with the Institute gain a thorough understanding of all aspects of international trade and are taught to apply the knowledge they learn to their current business situation, allowing the student's company to gain the ability to anticipate and plan internally for all potential eventualities in international trade.

Our courses are designed to be taken alongside full-time work, through our flexible programme blending online and offline teaching, allowing your employee(s) to continue work while learning. Significantly, our qualifications can now be accessed for free or more cheaply through the apprenticeship levy.

Amid all the uncertainty around Brexit, it is clear that companies need to train their staff in the skills and processes involved in international trade. We firmly believe that our qualifications and apprenticeships are the perfect solution for training the new generation of international trade specialists this country so seriously needs.

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