

Frequently asked questions on sending international items for business, Ebay and Amazon Marketplace customers

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Electronic customs data requirement

Providing customs data electronically when sending items (excluding items of correspondence) to destinations that are not in the same customs union as the UK will become a mandatory requirement by the UPU (Universal Postal Union) on 1st January 2021.

To ensure that your business is fully compliant, Guernsey Post requests that any necessary requirements for submitting international electronic data are reviewed and then implemented as soon as feasibly possible.

Please contact your Account Manager if you need further support with providing electronic customs data. If you don't have a dedicated Account Manager, please email commercial@guernseypost.com or call our Customer Services team on 711720. We can then work through the various options available to get you onboard with these changes.

Why are we asking you to provide electronic customs data?

Electronic customs data is required to ensure that existing, emerging and future legislative, security and customs requirements in overseas destinations are met. Some countries will be applying penalties, delaying or returning items in the absence of the required data and we want to help you avoid this.

What are the benefits?

There are also real commercial benefits to providing complete and accurate electronic customs data, you are likely to receive fewer complaints and less delays in customs, resulting in faster and more successful deliveries. Providing complete and accurate electronic customs data will:

- allow you to be ready for and comply with emerging and future legislative changes and individual country requirements
- avoid delays and/or penalty charges
- enable an easier and slicker customs clearance and import process for recipients

FAQs

What is electronic customs data and what data needs to be provided?

The requirement is to provide electronic customs data to Guernsey Post so this can be sent ahead of your item. You also need to continue to attach the physical customs declaration form (CN22 or CN23) to items you're sending. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) requests that these are completed accurately and in full, to facilitate a rapid clearance. You may have already been attaching a 13-digit item identifier (known as an S10 barcode) on every item to facilitate the customs process. You'll now need to provide the customs data to us electronically.

Essential additional information, mandatory from 1st January 2021

A customs declaration form (CN22 or CN23), fully completed with additional mandatory information for items sent includes but is not limited to;

- Sender details (name and address)
- Recipient details (name, address including destination country, and if available, telephone number)
- Item details in the form of an accurate and concise description of individual goods, quantity and measurements used, weight and value. It is absolutely critical that each item is shown as a separate line entry
- A Harmonised System (HS) Trade Tariff code. While this is not mandatory it is strongly recommended for commercial items to facilitate faster customs clearance
- Country of origin of contents, which refers to where the goods were produced or assembled
- The postage fee - mandatory for items with a value of £270 and above
- Customs data to be provided to us electronically
- A Universal Postal Union (UPU) compliant S10 tracking barcode will need to be included both on the physical item and electronically so the customs data can be linked to the exported goods

What is the Trade Tariff or Harmonised System (HS) Code and where can I find it?

The Trade Tariff or HS Code is a set of digits used to categorise goods for customs charging.

You can find the HMRC Trade Tariff Codes at: www.trade-tariff.service.gov.uk. To use it, simply type in a description of your item(s) and the website tool will generate your code. For further assistance contact your Account Manager.

Why should I provide a Harmonised/ Tariff (HS) Code?

Provision of the Harmonised/Trade Tariff Code is requested for commercial items to help in the customs clearance process.

This is because the Trade Tariff Code lets the destination Post know electronically what is in the item, enabling accurate customs charging and simplified customs clearance. If the Trade Tariff Code is not completed or completed incorrectly then the wrong charges could be applied, or in some cases, customs authorities may stop the parcel and examine it, potentially delaying its journey - they might even reject it and send the item(s) back to you.

Do I need to supply information for goods being posted to both the EU and the rest of the world?

Yes. From 1st January 2021, customs data needs to be supplied whenever an item is required to go through international customs.

Will items now take longer to leave the UK?

Our dispatch times will remain unaffected. The time it takes to deliver the item may even improve as recipient countries that use electronic customs data for processing may also be able to clear items more quickly.

What if I cannot provide any electronic data because I am currently using a manual process?

If only manual data (i.e. CN22 or CN23 label only) is provided then this could result in the item being cleared manually; it may be opened, examined and therefore be delayed. If electronic data in the receiving country is required, your customer may incur fees or in the worst instance, the item may not be accepted into the destination country.

Therefore, we recommend you sign up to a PPI account which will give you access to our Business Portal. Through the portal you will be able to upload a CSV file which will ensure you meet the pre-advice requirements. Alternatively you have the option to send your electronic customs data through the Business Portal Online Customs Form.

Alternatively, if you do not wish to become a PPI account customer, and you want to continue to pay at our Post Office counter, you can sign up online to myPost. This is a free online account which will enable you to complete the required electronic information and save your sender details to speed up the process when entering data for multiple packages. For more information please contact our Customer Services team on 711720.

What is the difference between a CN22 and a CN23?

Officially, CN23s are used for posting items with a value of £270 and above, whereas CN22s are used for goods valued at less than £270 (although you can use a CN23 for all items if you prefer). If you choose to generate your label via the Business Portal Online Customs Form a CN23 will be generated ready for you to print and attach to your item.

Are there any changes to the CN22 / CN23 documents?

No - the change is that the information provided on them will need to be submitted electronically. You should already be completing CN22s and CN23s fully. The CN22/CN23 label needs to be affixed on the outside of the item as before.

Does the CN22 / CN23 still need to be displayed on the outside of items?

Yes, you still need to show the CN22 / CN23 on the outside of your items. If the CN22/CN23 is too large to fit on your item, you can then fold it and attach it to the item, ensuring that as much information as possible is on the visible side of the item.

Will there be any additional charges for manually inputting customs data?

Some destinations are charging to manually input customs data, so there would no longer be an additional processing charge if you provide your electronic customs data.

Does the requirement to provide data electronically apply to large letters or 'flats'?

Yes it does. Wherever a mail piece contains goods or gifts (with the only exception being items of correspondence), it is required to go through customs clearance and will need to be accompanied by electronic customs data.

Will there be any changes to barcodes?

The electronic customs data will need to be linked to the item using a UPU standard S10 / 1D barcode. This means all items will require a barcode, including untracked services. For more information on barcodes please refer to Guernsey Post's guide to sending international items.

Concerned about Data Protection?

Some customers may be concerned about supplying recipient contact details for data protection reasons. All customer data, including telephone numbers and email addresses when provided are managed in accordance to the Guernsey Post Terms and Conditions and Privacy Notice, including the information we share with overseas Posts in order to deliver items and notify recipients.



Guernsey Post Limited, Envoy House, La Vrangue, St. Peter Port, GUERNSEY, GY1 1AA.

Tel. 01481 726241 www.guernseypost.com