

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (EPAs)



ABOUT EPAs

The UK's Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries are development-focused Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). The UK has 8 EPAs with 33 ACP countries, 27 of these are Commonwealth countries.

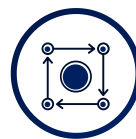
EPAs provide immediate and permanent duty-free quota-free access to UK markets for all exports* that originate from EPA partner countries. For developing countries, EPAs work to boost growth and support jobs in partner countries, as well as providing a framework to develop supply chains and drive competitiveness. For the UK, EPAs help to build stronger investment partners for the future; deepen global supply chains; and support economic resilience.

BENEFITS OF EPAs



Savings from reduced tariffs

EPA partners are able to save on duties for their exports to the UK.



Generous rules of origin

EPAs allow partners to source raw materials from around the world, so they can manufacture and export more value-added products duty-free.



Large opportunities in the UK

The UK has a growing market for non-EU imports, with increasing demand for sustainable, fair-trade products.

*Except for Arms and Ammunition and with the exception of South Africa who benefit from duty free trade on ~95% of goods.

FAQs

What is an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)?

EPAs are development-focused Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).

With the exception of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA, they are currently goods-only agreements.

EPAs provide immediate and permanent duty-free access to UK markets for all partner exports except ammunitions. South Africa benefits from duty free trade on ~95% of goods.

What is the difference between EPAs and regular FTAs?

EPAs are FTAs. But unlike most other FTAs, the requirement to remove import duties is deliberately unbalanced in favour of developing countries. The UK offers full duty-free access immediately to partner exports, while partner countries are able to retain import duties on as much as 20% of their market to protect sensitive industries.

Where duties are to be removed by partner countries this can be phased over a number of years.

There are generous safeguards within the EPAs which developing countries can apply, in the unlikely case that UK imports pose any risk to domestic markets.

The EPAs are currently goods-only agreements, apart from the CARIFORUM-UK EPA. Regular FTAs cover areas such as services, investment, procurement, labour and environment. The EPAs have the possibility to expand into these areas should parties wish to do so.

What are the benefits of EPAs?

EPAs help to encourage increased trade, which can create jobs, support economic growth, and help to reduce poverty in partner countries.

EPAs give UK businesses more reasons to buy products from partner countries – including the financial incentive of the reduced duties and the certainty of the treaty commitments.

By providing legal certainty to businesses, the EPAs help to build stronger investment partners for the future and encourage global supply chains, supporting economic resilience.

Where partners have agreed to open their own markets, cheaper UK imports can help to grow domestic industries – for instance through cement for construction or fertiliser for agriculture.

The formal frameworks and Committees set up under EPAs create a forum for partners to discuss how we can work together to better facilitate trade and cooperate more closely.

The EPAs highlight areas for us to jointly explore opportunities for development cooperation.

What is the difference between EPAs and DCTS?

The Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) is a unilateral scheme that cuts tariffs, removes conditions and simplifies trading rules for 65 developing countries. Both arrangements provide for duty-free trade in goods imported to the UK, however EPAs require some liberalisation from partner countries due to WTO rules, whereas the DCTS does not.

The DCTS is based on legislation with the UK Parliament. EPAs are treaties, agreed in partnership with other countries.

EPAs create a framework for dialogue with partner countries in a Committee structure, whereas DCTS, as a unilateral measure does not. EPAs, unlike the DCTS has the scope to cover areas beyond goods and tariffs, including services, investment, procurement and sustainable development.

FAQs

What paperwork do I need to fill out to get preferences?

Import goods into the UK - step-by-step guide

The following web page is a step-by-step guide on how to import goods into the UK, including information on commodity codes, reducing customs duty, licenses and certificates:

<https://www.gov.uk/import-goods-into-uk>

Get proof of origin for your goods

Businesses need to prove the origin of their goods in order to not pay tariffs under EPAs. Use the following link to determine the correct proof of origin and for more information on the process: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-proof-of-origin-for-your-goods>

Some EPAs require a EUR1 form to be filled out in order to not pay tariffs on goods. Partners should first use the information in the 'Get proof of origin for your goods' link above to determine which form is required.

The EUR1 form can be found through the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eur1-and-eur-med-movement-certificate>

Further trade guidance for each EPA can be found here:

Cameroon Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-uk-cameroon-economic-partnership-agreement>

CARIFORUM Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-cariforum-uk-economic-partnership-agreement-epa>

Cote d'Ivoire Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-uk-cote-divoire-stepping-stone-economic-partnership-agreement>

ESA Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-esa-uk-economic-partnership-agreement-epa>

Ghana Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trade-with-ghana>

Kenya Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-uk-kenya-economic-partnership-agreement>

Pacific Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-uk-pacific-economic-partnership-agreement-epa>

SACUM Trade Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-sacum-uk-economic-partnership-agreement-epa>

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What is cumulation?

In the context of EPAs, cumulation is a trade provision which allows materials or components originating from specified countries to be incorporated in the products from an EPA country, and then be considered as originating in that EPA country.

Each EPA has its own cumulation provisions, which can be found within the annex of the relevant agreement text. To allow cumulation to take place, partner Governments will need to ensure the specified countries have entered into an arrangement on administrative cooperation with the EPA country, and the requirements under the notification process have been met.

Cameroon - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/607d7fdcd3bf7f400d3b8dee/MS_2.2021_UK_Cameroon_Interim_Agreement_Economic_Partnership.pdf#page=611

CARIFORUM - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ce5153240f0b620990a729d/5._CARIFORUM_Command_Paper_Part_Five.pdf#page=118

Cote d'Ivoire - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fabafcde90e075c548c05eb/UK_Cote_d_Ivoire_Stepping_Stone_EPA_4.pdf#page=18

ESA - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c59aa56ed915d04782b9eef/MS_4.2019_ESA_v2_pt3.pdf#page=160

Ghana - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/607d7e3fd3bf7f400a6b3084/CS_Ghana_1.2021_UK_Ghana_Interim_Trade_Partnership_Agreement.pdf#page=57

Kenya - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fdb54868fa8f54d564af133/MS_9.2020_Economic_Partnership_Agreement_UK_Kenya_Member_of_East_Africa_Community.pdf#page=413

Pacific - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c920e9140f0b633ff9a354d/MS_15.2019iii_Pacific_States_Eco_Partner.pdf#page=80

SACUM - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5dc1968ee5274a4a9a46503a/MS_34.2019_v4_pt3_UK_SACU_Mozambique_EPA.pdf#page=15

It is important to:

- determine eligible countries for cumulation of materials
- check what materials are eligible and any exceptions
- check the criteria that needs to be met on minimal operations

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (EPAs)

Where can I understand more about:

UK Standards-

For more guidance on UK standards and regulatory requirements that business may need to meet to export and sell goods to the UK use the following link-

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-standards-and-regulatory-import-requirements>

What tariff applies to my export-

Use the following link to find a commodity code for goods you're exporting to the UK, which will be needed when you fill in a customs declaration form.

<https://www.gov.uk/trade-tariff>

The Rules of Origin that apply to my product and how to demonstrate originating status-

The following link has information on how to prove where your goods come from, as well as information on approved exporters.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-proof-of-origin-for-your-goods>

Identifying potential buyers in the UK-

Use the following link for more information on expanding your business in the UK, including an online free guide on how to set up and grow in the UK. Once you have signed up and entered basic information about your business, you can view targeted guidance and data.

<https://www.great.gov.uk/international/expand-your-business-in-the-uk/#>

Guidance on importing plants and plant products from EPA partners to Great Britain-

To find out more on how to export plants, fruits, vegetables, cut flowers, trees, seeds and used agricultural machinery to the UK use the link below. (Although this is a page focused on UK importers, there is useful information for exporters to UK too.)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-plants-and-plant-products-from-non-eu-countries-to-great-britain>

For advice on import requirements and authorisations for animal products, email:

imports@apha.gov.uk and for imports risk management, email: importsriskmanagement@apha.gov.uk

If your query is to deal with plants or seeds, speak to phsi-importers@apha.gov.uk or to do with plant health, please speak to: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk.

HMRC Importing and Exporting question and answer forum-

Use the following link to ask questions and find guidance about customs requirements when exporting goods to the UK-

<https://community.hmrc.gov.uk/customerforums/ie>

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Where can I understand more about:

Border Target Operating Model-

The Border Target Operation Model outlines the UK's plans for a new approach to importing goods into Great Britain, that will be progressively introduced from the end of January 2024. It describes the UK's security controls (applying to all imports), and sanitary and phytosanitary controls (applying to imports of live animals, animal products, plants and plants products) at the UK border.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182464/Final_Border_Target_Operating_Model.pdf

Please refer to the Windsor Framework for imports into Northern Ireland.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1138989/The_Windsor_Framework_a_new_way_forward.pdf

Sanitary Processes-

For a summary of general conditions and veterinary checks for imports of live animals and animal products into Great Britain. Please see the links below for further information.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-live-animals-or-animal-products-from-non-eu-countries>

<http://apha.defra.gov.uk/official-vets/Guidance/bip/iin/index.htm>

For advice on import requirements and authorisations for animal products, email: imports@apha.gov.uk and for imports risk management, email: importsriskmanagement@apha.gov.uk

Phytosanitary Processes-

Plant health legislation controls the import and movement of certain plants, seeds and organic matter, and certain plant products. Please refer to the [Plant Health Portal](#) for further information on the import requirements into Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Plant health controls- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plant-health-controls#imports>

Plant health portal- <https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/trade/>

Guidance on fresh fruit and vegetables- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-marketing-standards#importing-and-exporting-between-the-uk-and-non-eu-countries>

Fish Products-

How to import or move fish for human consumption to the UK.-

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-or-moving-fish-to-the-uk#health-certificates>

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Where can I understand more about:

Organic products-

Businesses must be approved and certified by a UK organic control body to produce, prepare, store, import, export or sell organic food in the UK. Under the terms of the Windsor Framework, Northern Ireland (NI) continues to apply the EU regulations as they apply in the EU.

Details of control bodies approved to certify organic food in the UK- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/organic-food-uk-approved-control-bodies>

Rules on labelling food, feed and seed as organic or using organic production terms if you produce, prepare, store, import, export or sell organic food in the UK- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/organic-food-labelling-rules>

Lists of organisations and countries or territories outside the UK (third countries) that can certify organic food, feed and seed for import into Great Britain- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/organic-registers-lists-of-third-countries-or-territories-control-bodies-and-control-authorities>

Rules of origin virtual tool-

A tool where you can input where you are exporting from and where you want to export to, input the product and find useful documents and information- <https://findrulesoforigin.org/>

Food Standards Agency | Imports and Exports-

Find out about regulations that apply to specific products and more general rules concerning labelling and additives- <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/imports-exports>

Find trading partners to help you export to the UK-

To sell goods to UK consumers, you may need to partner with other organisations, such as importers, distributors or retailers. Find out more here- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-trading-partners-to-help-you-export-to-the-uk>

Freight Forwarders-

Freight forwarding is a service industry that involves moving goods around the world on behalf of exporters. It may save you time and money if you're exporting large volumes of goods or high value items. <https://www.great.gov.uk/learn/categories/selling-across-borders-product-and-services-regulations-licensing-and-logistics/logistics-and-freight-forwarders/freight-forwarders/>

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Where can I understand more about:

Moving goods into, out of, or through Northern Ireland-

In February 2023 the UK and EU agreed the Windsor Framework, which has replaced the old Northern Ireland Protocol. The Windsor Framework sets out new arrangements regarding the movement of goods into, out of, or through Northern Ireland. The link below provides more information on moving goods into, out of or through Northern Ireland.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/moving-goods-into-out-of-or-through-northern-ireland>

Standards and regulatory import requirements-

An introductory guide to the standards and regulatory requirements that businesses may need to meet to import and sell goods in the UK.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1162516/Standards_and_regulatory_requirements_June_2023.pdf

Check if you need a UK Visa-

Use the following link to find out if you need a UK Visa to come to the UK for work.

<https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>

Food labelling and Packaging-

Use the below link for more guidance on labelling to sell food and drink products in the UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/food-labelling-and-packaging>



Department for
Business & Trade



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

Guidance DOCUMENT

How to export to the UK using Economic Partnership
Agreements



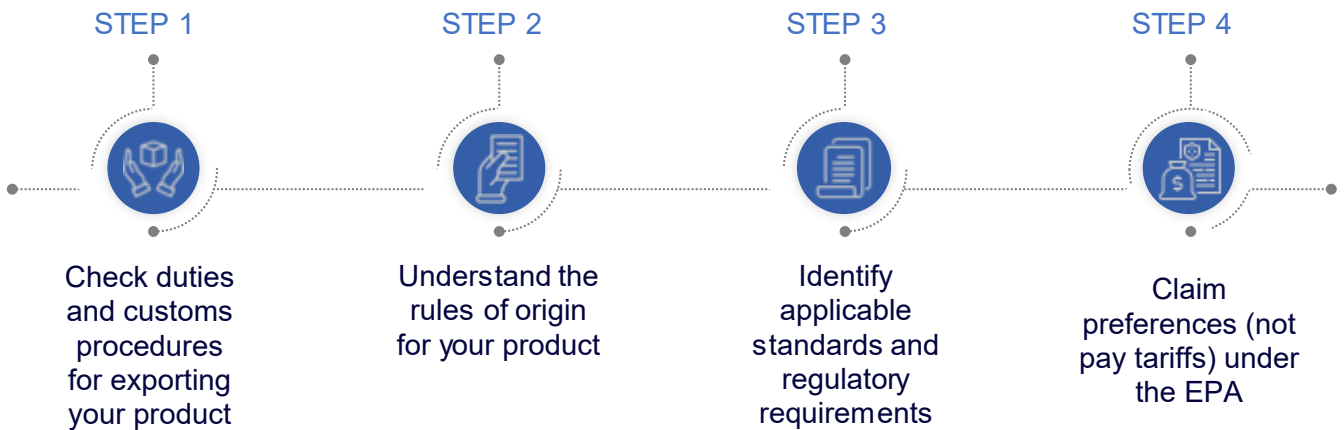
Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)

The UK has 8 Economic Partnership Agreements:

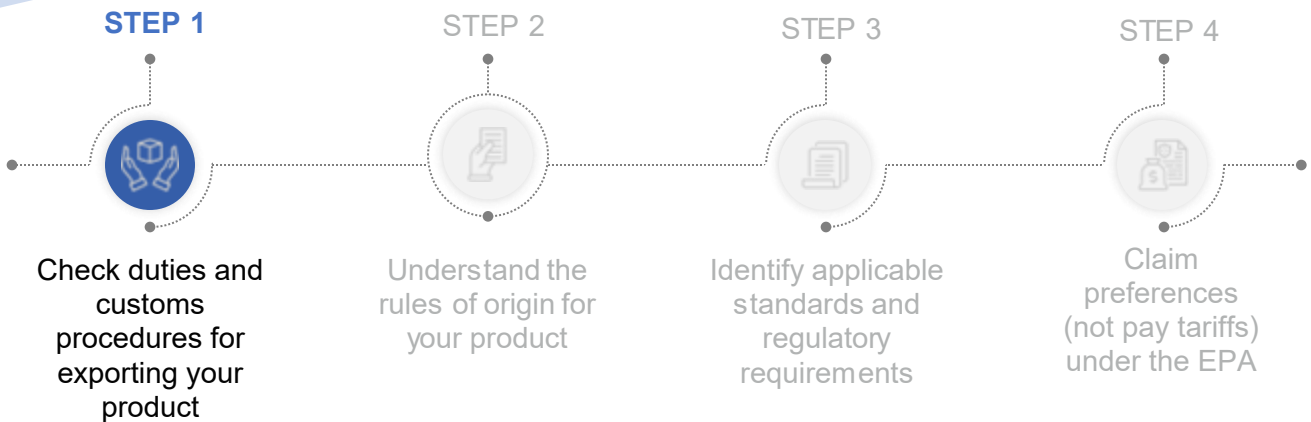
- UK-Cameroon EPA
- UK-CARIFORUM EPA
- UK-Cote d'Ivoire EPA
- UK-ESA EPA
- UK-Ghana TPA
- UK-Kenya EPA
- UK-Pacific EPA
- UK-SACUM EPA

There is step by step online guidance on how to export to the UK available. Click here to access the guidance or visit www.gov.uk/import-goods-into-uk.

HOW TO EXPORT TO THE UK USING EPAs



Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)



Step 1: Check duties and customs procedures for exporting your product

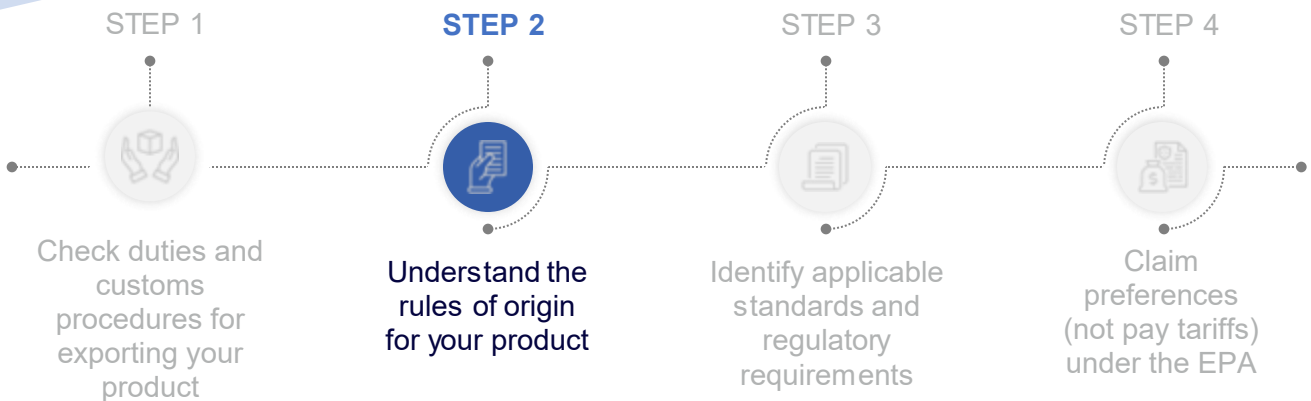
Products exported to the UK are subject to different tariffs based on:

1. The country they come from
2. The type of product being exported

Exporters from EPA partner countries can send goods to UK markets without paying any duty or tariffs, provided those goods meet the rules of origin requirements. To note, products from South Africa do face a small number of limitations on this access

You can check to see if there are any tariffs on your product by visiting- <https://www.gov.uk/trade-tariff>

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)



Step 2: Understand the rules of origin for your product

Rules of origin help you work out where your goods originate and which goods are covered in trade agreements.

You'll need to understand the rules of origin to:

- claim tariff preference when you're importing (not pay duties)
- prove where your goods come from

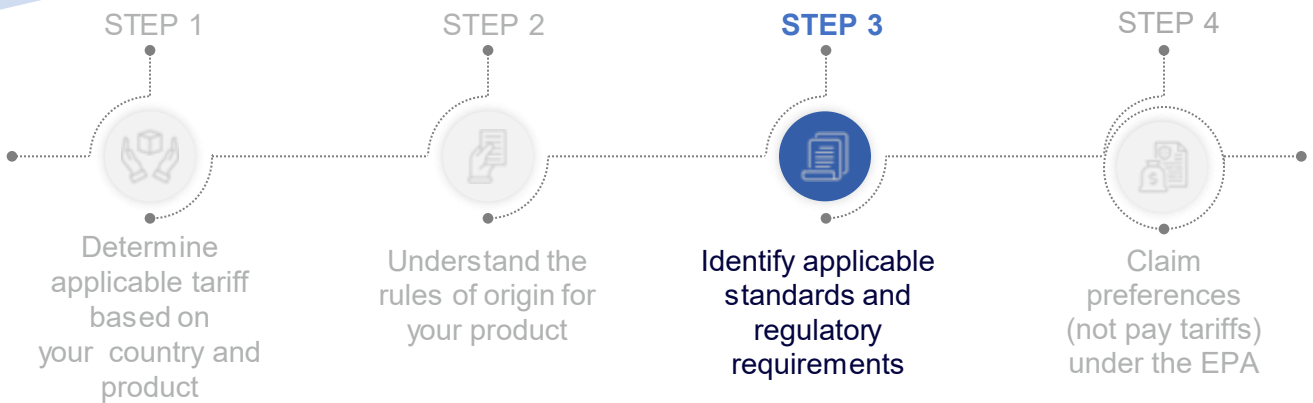
The origin of the goods:

- is the country where they have been grown, produced, or manufactured
- may not be the country where they are shipped or bought from

This applies to all goods, including those covered by EPAs. To show that your goods have come from the originating country, the goods must meet the criteria contained in the rules of origin. If your goods are covered by the EPA and meet the rules of origin, you'll need to have the right 'proof of origin' to not pay duties. You can [use the trade tariff tool](#) to learn about the different types of proof of origin you need. Visit- <https://www.gov.uk/trade-tariff>

You can find out more information about the type of certificate you need by [clicking here](#) or by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-proof-of-origin-for-your-goods> (scroll down to the section 'Check what type of proof you need').

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)



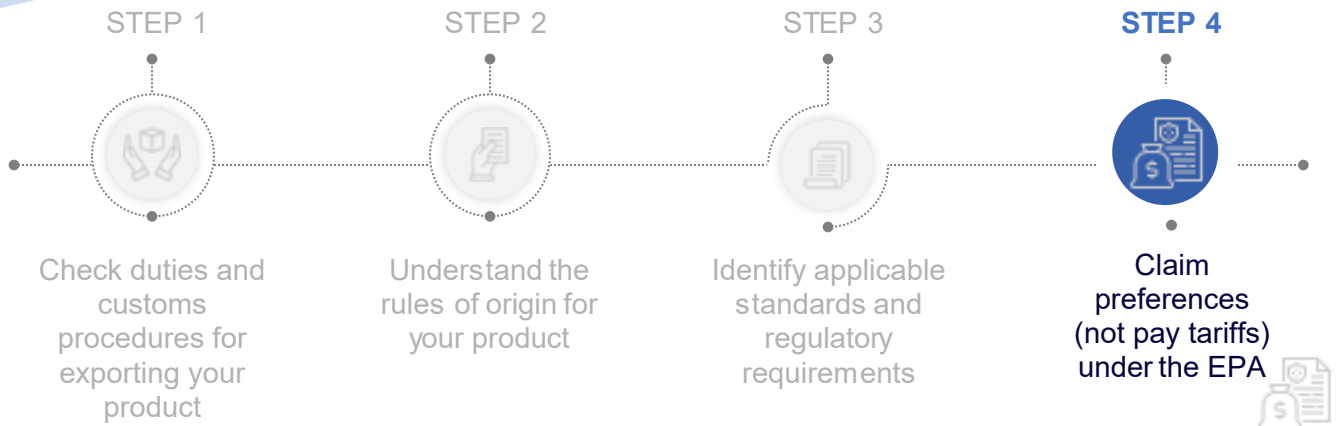
Step 3: Identify applicable standards and regulatory requirements

Before you can import products or sell them in the UK, you may need to meet specific requirements, including:

1. Standards (For example, manufacturing, packaging or health compliance standards)
This may involve electrical goods being imported into the UK having to comply with specific safety regulations, such as plug types, voltage and electromagnetic comparability.
2. Regulations (For example, regulations on organic production)
This could involve ensuring a food import meets UK food safety regulations such as allergen labeling.

Check the guide on standards and regulatory import requirements by [clicking here](#) or by visiting- www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-standards-and-regulatory-import-requirements.

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)



Step 4: Claim preferences under EPAs

To not pay tariffs under EPAs you must be able to prove the origin of the good.

Some EPAs require a EUR1 form to be filled out in order to not pay tariffs on goods. Partners should use the information in the 'Get proof of origin for your goods' link in Step 2 to determine which form is required. The EUR1 form can be found through the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eur1-and-eur-med-movement-certificate>

The following links may also be helpful sources of information.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-preferential-rates-of-duty-and-rules-of-origin

This web page above brings together all the relevant guides on using a trade agreement to trade goods between two or more countries at lower rates of duty.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/export-from-africa-to-the-uk

Find out about UK markets and sectors, trade agreements, UK import regulations and taxes, and support for African businesses from the UK government using the link above.

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