

## Quick Guide to Authorised Economic Operator status

### What is AEO status?

The AEO is a quality mark that shows your role in the supply chain is secure and that your customs controls and procedures are efficient and meet EU standards.

You don't have to have it, but it gives you quicker access to some simplified customs procedures and - in some cases - the right to fast track your shipments through some customs and safety and security procedures.

Around 600 traders are registered for AEO in the UK.

### Who can get it?

AEO status is for businesses that:

- are a legal entity
- are established in the territory of one of the 28 member states of the EU
- are actively involved in customs operations and international trade
- have an [Economic Operator Registration and Identification \(EORI\)](#) number

Anyone involved in the international supply chain that carries out customs related activities in the EU can apply for AEO status, regardless of the size of their business. This includes:

- manufacturers
- exporters
- freight forwarders
- warehouse keepers
- customs agents
- carriers
- importers
- others (for example, port operators, secure freight parking operatives and airline loaders)

### Types of AEO authorisation and their benefits

There are two types you can apply for (or both).

#### *AEO status customs simplification (AEOC)*

Benefits:

- faster application process for customs simplifications and authorisations
- reductions or waivers of comprehensive guarantees.

You'll need to be a holder of an AEOC if you want to qualify for:

- moving goods in temporary storage between different member states
- a notification waiver when making an entry in a declarant's records
- a 70% reduction in a business's deferment account guarantee
- undertaking centralised clearance (when available)
- completing self assessment (when implemented)

## *AEO status security and safety (AEOS)*

Benefits: a lower risk score - used to decide the how often customs carry out physical and documentary checks

- consignments being fast-tracked through customs control
- reduced requirements for the mandatory pre-arrival and pre-departure [Entry Summary Declarations](#) or [Exit Summary Declarations](#)
- reciprocal arrangements and mutual recognition with countries outside the EU (for example, USA or trading partners that adopt the World Customs Organisation safe framework)

If you have AEOS status you can benefit from arrangements under Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs). MRAs are negotiated by the EU with third country customs authorities. Normally the benefits will be similar to those for AEO, for example:

- faster clearance at the frontier
- less interventions
- lower risk scores

The EU has MRAs with:

- USA
- Japan
- Norway (for security declarations only)
- Switzerland (for security declarations only)
- China

## **Before you apply for AEO status**

Before you apply you must have an EORI number and you must meet HMRC's standards around:

- compliance
- record keeping
- solvency
- security
- professional qualifications and practical standards of competence

## **How to apply for AEO status**

Go to [www. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/authorised-economic-operator-certification](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/authorised-economic-operator-certification) and complete the following forms:

- [form C117](#) giving basic information about your business
- [form C118](#) giving detailed information about your business activities

HMRC will audit visit your business and if you meet the AEO criteria, you'll receive your authorisation within 120 days.

## **Get help from HMRC**

Contact HMRC if you have any questions about AEO (including how to apply) by:

- telephone: 03000 564 556
- email: [AEOapplications@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:AEOapplications@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)  
Contact the [HMRC imports and exports helpline](#) for trade support and VAT enquiries.

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