

Special Imports

Q&A

This guidance applies from 7 October 2019 regardless of the negotiating outcome of EU Exit

Who needs to know?

Veterinary surgeons, wholesale dealers and project licence holders wishing to import a medicine into the UK for animal treatment.

What is the Special Import Scheme?

The Special Import Scheme permits veterinary surgeons to import medicines to treat animals under their care, where a suitable UK authorised medicine is not available. Veterinary surgeons are permitted to do this under the provisions of the Cascade.

The VMD issues import certificates permitting veterinary surgeons to import, hold and use medicines that are not authorised within the UK in accordance with the certificate conditions. A certificate must be obtained before importing a medicine into the UK or before obtaining the product from a wholesale dealer.

Note: [The Cascade](#) will change following the UK's Exit from the EU in a 'no deal' scenario.

Following EU Exit day, can I still apply for a certificate to import a medicine for animal use?

After Brexit we will continue to accept applications and issue import certificates. From the 7 October 2019, we will no longer issue Special Treatment Certificates (STCs). Only one type of certificate, a Special Import Certificate (SIC), will be available to vets wishing to import a medicine for veterinary use. These certificates will be issued for:

- a veterinary medicine authorised outside of the UK
- a human medicine authorised outside of the UK
- in very exceptional cases, an unauthorised medicine

What will the import certificate look like following EU Exit day?

An import certificate will continue to be issued for EITHER a specified number of animals OR for a named animal or herd under the applicant veterinary surgeon's care. Prior to EU Exit day all EU authorised medicines would have been issued for a specified number of animals.

Applications for products considered to have a higher risk profile will need to be made on an individual animal or herd basis. These products have been defined by the VMD upon initial assessment of the product and available literature.

What information will I need to provide to apply for a product that has not previously been permitted for import into the UK?

You should submit an online application for a specified number of animals under your care, and provide sound justification for the intended use of the Cascade. Factors such as the cheaper cost of the products and preferred withdrawal periods are not acceptable reasons to import medicines.

You must also submit a minimum data package consisting of:

- A copy of the Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) or equivalent product information in English
- A copy of the product labels in the native language

During assessment, you may be contacted by a VMD scientific assessor to seek further data about the product you wish to import or clarification on how it will be used and why. This may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Animal safety data
- Full details of the product ingredients
- Manufacturing/production information e.g. Batch release protocol
- Quality assurance information, such as tests of live vaccines for viral contamination (extraneous agents)

If during assessment we consider the product to be a higher risk import you will be required to provide the following details:

- Name of individual animal or herd CPH number
- Number of animals, if it is a herd/flock of animals (a group of horses is not accepted as a herd)
- Animal/herd owner's surname
- Animal/herd owner's address, including post code

Will I need to re-register for the scheme?

No – not if you have used the online application system before.

How do I register if I haven't applied for a certificate before?

You must register to use the online application system.

- Video tutorial on how to register and apply for a SIC will be available soon

Will the procedure for applying for an import certificate change?

No – although the landing page may look slightly different, applying for an import certificate will continue to be a simple, online application process. For veterinary surgeons, the application form will only give the option; 'I am a Veterinary Surgeon and wish to import a product from outside of the UK'.

- Video tutorial on how to register and apply for a SIC will be available on soon

In light of changes to the Cascade in a no deal scenario, what justification will be required when submitting an application for an import certificate?

You will need to provide sound justification why there is no suitable UK authorised veterinary product for your need.

A list of all authorised veterinary medicines in the UK will continue to be available on the [Product Information Database](#).

Will existing certificates remain valid after EU Exit day?

Yes - your existing import certificates will continue to remain valid for up to one year from the date of issue. This includes existing STCs.

What will happen to my application if it is undergoing assessment on EU Exit day?

We will continue to assess your application to published timescales. If your application is approved you will receive an import certificate, or if not a refusal letter.

Will there be changes to the fees for certificates?

No – there is currently no fee for Special Import Certificates. The charge for a Wholesale Dealer Import Certificate, applied if >100 import certificates naming the wholesale dealer as the importer were issued in the 12 months prior to application, remains at £760.

As a wholesale dealer, what must I do?

You must continue to ensure that you are in receipt of a valid Veterinary Surgeon's Special Import Certificate prior to supplying an imported medicine.

Will I need to declare the medicine I wish to import with HM Revenue and Customs?

Customs declarations only need to be completed if you are physically importing the medicine into the UK.

All queries relating to declaring imported medicines should be directed to the Classification Helpline at: classification.enquiries@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk. You can also search for the relevant commodity code on the UK Trade Tariff at: www.gov.uk/trade-tariff.

Where can I get more information?

The following draft guidance contains tracked changes for your ease of reference:

- Draft guidance will be available here soon
- Video tutorial on how to register and apply for a SIC will be available soon
- Information on changes to [the Cascade](#)

Contact

If you have any queries or comments, please contact:

- for queries about the online application process: importcert@vmd.gov.uk
- for queries about changes to the Cascade: vmrexit@vmd.gov.uk

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