



UK Certificate of Origin moving to plain paper

Over 40% of certificates of origin issued worldwide are now printed on plain paper. As we move into a digital future the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) wants the Chambers to be in the vanguard working with the Government to achieve its digital ambition for a paperless border by 2025. The move to plain paper certificates of origin is the first step in this journey.

With this in mind, the BCC as the authorising body in the UK for certificates of origin has decided that the issuing network will move from the prescribed UK certificate of origin to issuing on plain paper. This change is being introduced from 1st April and different issuing Chambers will introduce this change up to 30th September 2023.

In the case of Hampshire Chamber, we have decided to bring this new process into effect from **1st April 2023 and from that date all applications must be submitted via the on-line platforms (eCert/essCert).**

Certificates of origin printed via the online platforms have additional security features such as the QR code allowing anyone with the certificate of origin to scan the QR code and see an online version of the certificate of origin so they can check the version they have has not been amended or falsified. Anyone with the certificate of origin will also be able to verify the authenticity of the certificate of origin via the ICC verification website (<https://certificates.iccwbo.org>). Increasingly Customs authorities worldwide are looking to be able to verify certificates of origin online.

This change may affect presentations against letters of credit, so we encourage you to contact your advising banks and inform them of this update.

To reflect these changes the standard rules have been updated.

Plain Paper Certificates of Origin (applied for via express/DIY methods and printed by you)

The original certificate of origin must be **printed in colour** to a suitable standard that will be accepted by Customs authorities.

The layout and style of the certificates of origin will not change as this is laid out in the revised Kyoto agreement.

The copy and application copy must be printed in black and white. You will receive the certificate of origin and the copy but will only need to print the **original** certificate of origin. You can print the copy for your records if you wish.

If the certificate of origin is refused because of the quality of the printing or the paper, then this will be your responsibility if printed by yourselves.

The rationale for this change is as follows:

- ICC Regulations changed in 2018 to allow plain paper printing
- 12 countries have already switched, and they have not reported issues with customers or Customs authorities where guidelines have been followed
- Certificates can be printed directly to a PDF for attachment to an email
- Pre-printed certificates can be problematic for customers using shared printers

So, to recap, from 1st April, the prescribed blank UK certificate of origin cannot be used and any stock you have must be destroyed.

If you accidentally issue on the blank forms, this will be rejected by overseas Customs, potentially causing delays for your shipments and you will have to start your application again.

All applications must be submitted via the on-line platforms (eCert/essCert).

If applying via the express/DIY methods, once the application has been approved, the choice is yours as to whether you print on plain paper **or print directly to a PDF for attachment to an email to forward on to your client.**

For those applications that require a wet stamp, you will be able to apply as normal i.e., standard/chamber printed and the Chamber will print the original in colour and the copy in black and white **however** we do urge you to look at applying via the electronic platforms using the **express/DIY methods** to you save time and money.

We are also encouraging clients to upload all supporting documentation i.e. invoice, packing list, evidence etc to the application and to confirm any details such as packing information or other messages via the “notes to Chamber/special instructions” section prior to submitting.

Please direct any questions via email to ezcert@hampshirechamber.co.uk