University of Cambridge Export Control Procedure and Guidance

Part 1: Statement of Commitment from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research

1.1 The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence. In pursuit of this mission the University engages widely in international research collaboration, global movement of researchers and exchange of new ideas. However some of the knowledge held, goods used, and activities conducted by academics and researchers have the potential to be misused. Some of the work conducted at the University is subject, therefore, to export control law.

1.2 Controls over the export of strategic goods or technology have been enacted in the UK for decades via a consolidated list of controlled military and dual use items (civil technology which may be used for military purposes). In addition all UN members have been required since 2004 to maintain export controls to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Specific UN sanctions may also apply. As a result individual academics may need an export licence from the UK Export Control Joint Unit (ECJU) to carry out an activity - failure to obtain one being a criminal offence. Controls cover not only tangible goods, but also software, data, technology and knowhow.

1.3 In the academic context, export controls are most likely to apply in relation to scientific and technical research with military, nuclear, chemical, biological, missile and aerospace applications. However all researchers, particularly those in the scientific and technology disciplines, need to understand export control regulations and ensure that they comply with them.

1.4 The trend towards increased international research collaboration requires researchers and universities to become increasingly vigilant as to when export control law applies. Compliance with export control should also be seen as part of the broader responsibility for research integrity.

1.5 Researchers should also be aware that United States export control legislation can affect those who import controlled items that were manufactured in the United States.

1.6 The University is committed to complying with export controls. As such, the University has published this Procedure and guidance to raise awareness within the institution of export control regulations and set out a procedure for ensuring compliance. It is the responsibility of each individual researcher to ensure that they do not export controlled items without an appropriate licence.

Part 2: Guidance

2.1 What does ‘export’ mean?

2.1.1 ‘Export’ applies to the transfer of controlled goods, technology[1], software or knowledge from the UK to a destination outside the UK. This includes the physical export of items and also electronic transfer (e.g. fax, email or download). The rules focus on transfer across borders, so taking a laptop overseas when it has controlled items stored on it would be considered export: disclosure to a third person is not necessary. Oral transmission (e.g. conversation, telephone or video conferencing) could be covered where the detail of a technology contained in a document is read out or communicated in a manner that is substantially the same as providing the recipient

[1] ‘Technology’ is defined as information necessary for the development, production or use of goods.

with the document. The trafficking or brokering of goods between two overseas countries is also covered by the legislation.

2.1.2 Most exports by University employees will be of intangible technology. This might take the form of research data, blueprints, methodologies, plans, diagrams, models, formulae, source code, tables, technical reports, engineering designs and specifications, or manuals and instructions, either written or recorded on other media or devices.

2.1.3 To be controlled, technology must be 'required' for the development production or use of controlled items. This means that it must be responsible for achieving or exceeding the controlled level or function set out in the control lists.

2.1.4 In addition to standard technology exports (i.e. the export of information that is written down in some form), technical assistance can also be controlled. Technical assistance may take forms such as instructions, skills, training, working knowledge and consulting services. Such activities may involve the transfer of controlled intangible technology.

2.1.5 Under exceptional circumstances, transfers within the UK will also be within scope, but only where it is known that the ultimate end use of the item or information is related to WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction) outside the UK. These exceptional circumstances will include teaching where the tutor is informed, aware or has reason to suspect that a student intends to use the knowledge provided for WMD purposes.

2.2. Which items or technologies are controlled?

2.2.1 Items or technologies are controlled in any of the following circumstances:

a) They are military or dual-use items (i.e. civil items and technologies that could be used for WMD or military purposes) or technology that appear on the UK Strategic Export Control Lists. Technology is only controlled where it is "required" and "necessary" for the development, production, or use of the controlled items.
b) Items that are not specifically listed on the control lists, but are intended, either in their entirety or in part, for WMD purposes (WMD end use controls). WMD end use controls only apply if you have been informed of, are aware or suspect WMD end use. If WMD end use controls apply, no items, knowledge, or assistance of any kind can be given without first applying for, and obtaining if necessary, the relevant export licence.
c) Items to be exported to a specific country which is subject to an embargo or sanctions (note that sanctions may include items that are not included on the Export Control Lists).[2] End use controls apply to sanctioned activities; i.e. an export cannot occur if the exporter knows that the items would be used in relation to a sanctioned activity.
d) They are not specifically listed on the control lists, but you are aware or are informed that the items are (or may be) intended for the incorporation into items on the military list and/or i) used in production, test or analytical equipment and components for the development, production or maintenance of items on the military list and/or ii) used in any unfinished products in a plant for the production of items on the military list and/or iii) used as parts or components of items on the military list that were exported without authorisation or in violation of an authorisation by the government.
e) They are not specifically listed on the control lists but you or anyone else involved in the export have been informed by the ECJU that the items are or may be intended to be i) used by military, para-military or police forces, security services or government intelligence

[2] The government provides up-to-date lists of current arms embargoes and other restrictions: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/current-arms-embargoes-and-other-restrictions

organisations and/or ii) used by an entity involved in the procurement, research, development, production or use of items on behalf of military, para-military or police forces, security services or government intelligence organisations. Exemptions to military end-use controls apply to medical goods for the benefit of civilian populations, goods generally available to the public or software and technology in the public domain and up-to-date regulations are available here.

2.2.2 Items imported from the United States of America may also be subject to US export controls, see appendix 3 for further information.

2.3 Exemptions

2.3.1 There are exemptions to the controls for software and technology (but not goods). These exemptions will apply to a large amount of the work done at the University. They apply to:

a) information that is already in the public domain;
b) the dissemination of basic scientific research;
c) the minimum information necessary for a patent application.

2.3.2 To be in the public domain, information must already be available without restriction upon further dissemination (with the exception of copyright restrictions). Information that has to be purchased from a supplier who controls the supply, requires registration, has restrictions on access, or is subject to Government or Military of Defence security classifications is not considered to be in the public domain.

2.3.3 Basic scientific research is defined in article 18(3) of the Export Control Order 2008 as "experimental or theoretical work undertaken principally to acquire knowledge of the fundamental principles or phenomena or observable facts and not primarily directed towards a specific practical aim or objective".

2.3.4 It is important to note that these exemptions do not apply to WMD end use or sanctions controls.

Part 3: Procedure

3.1 Responsibility of the Principal Investigator

3.1.1 The responsibility for compliance with export control regulations ultimately rests with the individual Principal Investigator (PI) who intends to export goods, technology, software or knowledge outside the UK or use technology imported from the United States of America. To assist PIs, the University has developed the following compliance procedure that all PIs in science and technology disciplines must follow in order to fulfil their responsibilities for compliance. Further guidance is also available on the University's export control website.

3.1.2 To support PIs Export Control Managers (ECM) have been appointed in the University Research Office. Contracts Managers in the Research Operations Office and Departmental Administrators in certain departments/faculties will also be provided with training to enable them to support the process and offer advice. The University's Export Control Director (ECD) has overall responsibility for this Procedure. Contact details for the ECD and ECM(s) will be provided on the University's Export Control website.

3.2 Awareness and training

3.2.1 It is the responsibility of PIs in scientific and technology disciplines to familiarise themselves with this Procedure and Guidance and the responsibility of Heads of Department to ensure that this Procedure and Guidance, and their responsibilities therein, are highlighted to new PIs on appointment.

3.2.2 All PIs in scientific and technology disciplines must be aware whether export controls and/or WMD or military end use have the potential to apply to research within their research group. To achieve this, an assessment should be carried out. Departments may choose to undertake a high-level assessment to identify research groups to whom export controls or WMD or Military end use may apply or require that each PI undertakes their own assessment to establish whether the controls may apply to their research. Some Departments or Faculties may wish to review a number of research groups together, a sub-department or their whole institution through one assessment. There is no mandated format in which this assessment should be undertaken, although a record should be made of the assessment and the assessment should be renewed regularly (at least every five years). An example assessment form is provided as appendix 1 of this Procedure.

3.2.3 Where an assessment suggests that export controls and/or WMD or military end use may be relevant to work done in the research group, it is the responsibility of the PI to:

a) Require that all those in their research group who may work with controlled goods, software and technology undertake export control training.
b) Follow the remainder of this Procedure.

3.2.4 Where an assessment suggests that controls will not be relevant to work done in the research group, PIs are not required to follow the Procedure below, but should remain aware of the potential risks and seek advice where required. PIs whose groups have not yet been assessed are recommended to familiarise themselves with the Procedure and Guidance and seek advice if they believe it applies to them.

3.3 When export control due diligence is required or recommended

3.3.1 PIs must undertake export control due diligence at appropriate points in the research process to ensure that controlled exports do not take place without the required licence.

3.3.2 Export control due diligence is required:

a) At the outset of any new research project or collaboration that has the potential to include physical, electronic or verbal export outside of the UK of goods, software or technology (or the transfer of knowledge within the UK for use in a WMD programme outside the UK including through teaching). Indicators that this will apply include overseas research partners, planned overseas conferences, workshops or research trips, overseas funding or the involvement of international visitors in the research.
b) When major changes are made to an ongoing research project or collaboration that increases the likelihood of an export or changes the type of goods, software or technology that could be exported.
c) When new collaborators are added to an ongoing research project or collaboration.
d) At the point that a decision is made to export goods, software or technology outside the UK (or to transfer of knowledge within the UK for use in a WMD programme outside the UK including through teaching).

3.3.3 In addition, it is recommended to undertake export control due diligence:

a) When new goods, software or technology are generated that the PI suspects may have potential for dual-use, military use or WMD use (even if not likely to be exported in the immediate future).
b) On the receipt, from any third party, of goods, software or technology that have not already been classified and that the PI suspects may have potential for dual-use, military use or WMD use (even if not likely to be exported in the immediate future).

3.4 Export control due diligence

3.4.1 Export Control Due Diligence must consist of three stages:

a) Export Control Classification: Export Control classification is the process of identifying whether particular goods, software or technology that exist or are the intended product of research are listed on the UK Strategic Export Control Lists. To classify goods, software or technology, the PI should review the lists either directly or by using the Export Control Join Unit's Goods Checker. Guidance on using the lists and Goods Checker is available here.
b) End Use Due Diligence: The PI should consider:
    a. Whether the project or export include goods, software or technology that have the potential to be used for WMD purposes or there is any reason to suspect that a partner may use them for a WMD purposes.
    b. Whether the project includes partners from countries subject to a UK arms embargo and, if so, whether the project includes content that has the potential to be used for military purposes.
c) Partner Due Diligence: The PI should:
    a. Check whether any project partners or export recipients are subject to sanctions.
    b. Consider whether they have any other reason to be concerned regarding a partner or export recipient (see section 3.4 for further details).

3.4.2 The University Research Office can provide support and advice to all parts of this process. In the case of due diligence at the outset of funded research projects, Research Office support will be included as part of the grant application and post-award process. For unfunded projects or individual exports, the PI may contact the Research Office directly or make use of guidance on the Research Office website.

3.3.4 If relevant export control classifications, end use concerns or sanctioned parties are identified, an export licence may be required. In such cases, the PI is required to complete a licence enquiry form and contact the Research Office for advice.

3.4. Partner due diligence

3.4.1 The vast majority of collaborators and export recipients will be legitimate. However, it is the responsibility of anyone who exports controlled items to be vigilant for end-users whose intent is to procure or divert items for proscribed purposes (such as proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or military end-uses) or to proscribed destinations (such as those under embargo). For details on sanctions and embargos see the government's guidance.

3.4.2 Should a PI have suspicions regarding a partner or export recipient they must seek the advice of an ECM.

3.4.3 Examples of behaviour that may be of concern include:

a) Known links to an overseas military;
b) Reluctance to offer information about the end-use of the items;

c) Reluctance to provide clear answers to standard questions regarding the export, themselves or their business;
d) The claimed end-use is unconvincing given the customer's normal business, or the technical sophistication of the items;
e) Routine installation, training or maintenance services are declined;
f) Unusual shipping, packaging or labelling arrangements are requested;
g) Unusually favourable terms are offered in return for the export;
h) The item is planned to be installed in an area to which access is severely restricted or is unusual considering the type of item to be installed;
i) There are unusual requirements, such as excessive confidentiality about final destinations, customers, or specifications of items;
j) There are requests for excessive spare parts or lack of interest in any spare parts that would normally be provided.

3.4.4 Particular attention should be paid to end users who are new to you and the University and for which your knowledge is incomplete or inconsistent. If you have any concerns seek advice from the Research Office.

3.5 Export Licence Process

3.5.1 On completion of a licence enquiry form, the PI will be provided with support from an ECM. The ECM will work with the PI to decide whether a licence should be applied for. This will require significant input from the PI who is likely to be best placed to judge whether their export falls on the control lists.

3.5.2 If a licence is required the ECM will work with the PI to decide whether the export can take place under an existing Open General Export Licence (OGEL) and if not which type of licence is required.

3.5.3 Exports to the European Union will usually be made under the University's Open General Export Licence for exports to the EU. All researchers intending to export controlled goods, software or technologies to the EU must follow the guidance provided on the University's EU export control page and apply using the University's online OGEL record form before making the export.

3.5.4 Where an OGEL cannot be used, the ECM will work with the PI to prepare the licence application. The application process will require considerable input from the PI and may require a signed undertaking from the end user of the item or technology.

3.5.5 Once a draft licence application has been prepared, the ECM will complete a Licence Request Form for approval by the ECD. Upon approval, the ECM will apply for an export licence using the ECJU's licencing systems (SPIRE or LITE).

3.5.6 Once the licence has been issued, the ECM will discuss any terms of the licence to the PI as well as their record keeping responsibilities (see section 3.6). Export cannot take place until the licence has been issued and it must comply with all terms of the licence.

3.5.7 When exporting physical items using a freight forwarding service or similar, it is the PI's responsibility to ensure that they satisfy professional standards. It is also essential to provide clear written instructions to the freight forwarding agent which will include the full licence details, an explanation of the implications of licence for the export (e.g. for routing) and their responsibility for documentation (e.g. returning completed customs declaration for records).

3.6 Licence Record Keeping

3.6.1 If a licence is granted the ECM and PI will share responsibility for record keeping.

3.6.2 The ECM will be responsible for ensuring that the following records are maintained:

a) Licence Request Form
b) Details of the consignee and end user (as well as anyone else involved in the export) including name, address and country
c) The nature of the export and description of the item exported (including quantity)
d) Original source of the items exported (including supplier details)
e) Correspondence with the ECJU relating to the project
f) The export licence
g) Any further records required by the licence or judged relevant by the ECM

3.6.2 The PI will be responsible for ensuring that the following records are maintained (with advice from the ECM as necessary)

a) Records (including dates) of each transfer under the licence
b) The date of the transfer or the period of time over which the transfer takes place
c) In the case of software, a copy of the software that is exported and the details of the transfer
d) In the case of a transfer by electronic means, a copy of the email or facsimile

3.6.3 These records will be kept for a minimum of 6 years from the end of the year in which the export took place or longer if required by the licence.

3.6.4 A register of all export licences obtained by the University will also be kept by the ECM.

3.7 Handling export controlled goods, software and technology

3.7.1 PIs who have identified that they hold export controlled goods, software or technology are responsible for ensuring that these are subject to appropriate protections. This must include, as a minimum:

a) Records of controlled goods, software or technology held and who is authorised to access them.
b) Limit access only to essential personnel and review access regularly.
c) Ensure that those with access are aware of all relevant controls and restrictions.
d) For physical items, secure storage with access limited only to authorised persons.
e) For intangibles, storage on secure, access-controlled University systems (normally using multi-factor authentication).
f) When transferring controlled data ensure that all recipients are authorised to receive controlled information. Where possible, use encrypted methods to mitigate the risk of unauthorised access.
g) Ensure that controlled material, including laptops or digital storage containing controlled data, is not taken abroad without a licence.

3.7.2 The Research Office can provide advice to any research team that is developing their systems for handling controlled goods, software, and technology.

3.8 Audit

3.8.1 Export licences may be subject to audit by the ECJU's Compliance Unit to ensure that the terms of the licence have been complied with. The ECD, ECM, and the PI involved in the export will be involved in the audit.

3.8.2 The ECJU expects that the ECD will also undertake an annual internal audit of a small number of existing licences (the number will be proportionate to the number of active licences). The results of the audit will be reviewed and any necessary changes to this procedure will be made.

3.8.3 An internal audit checklist has been prepared to guide this process, see link below. The checklist and supporting information will be stored by the ECM for a minimum of 6 years following the audit.

3.9. Guidance and Training

3.9.1 Training on export control for researchers is available from the University Research Office.

3.9.2 ECMs will undertake training from the ECJU. The ECM will be expected to attend at least one such session upon taking up their position and periodically after that to refresh their knowledge.

3.9.3 The ECD will ensure that sufficient training is available for researchers whose work may be subject to export control.

3.9.4 This procedure and additional guidance will be made available on the Research Office website.

3.10 Breaches

3.10.1 Breaching export controls is a criminal offence with potential institutional and individual penalties. Penalties can include revocation of licences, seizure of goods, issuing of a compound penalty fine and imprisonment for up to 10 years.

3.10.2 If the University identifies breaches of export control these will be voluntarily disclosed to HMRC.

4. Document management

This procedure and guidelines will be reviewed every three years.

Last Reviewed: May 2025

Next Review: May 2028

Version Log

Version 1.0 – Developed by the University Research Office and approved by the Research Policy Committee 1 May 2025.

Appendix 1: Export Control Risk Assessment Template

This is a template risk assessment form designed to identify research groups to which export controls are relevant. It is designed to enable Departments and Faculties to identify research groups that should be required to follow the export control procedure and may also be used by PIs to self-assess their groups for the same purpose. It is not designed to risk assess specific projects or decide whether export control licences are required. This is a template document and may be adapted to suit the needs of particular Departments or Faculties as required. Some institutions may wish to assess multiple research groups, sub-departments or their whole institution in one assessment if appropriate.

Before completing this form, the Principal Investigator should review the University's export control webpages and read the University's Export Control Procedure and Guidance. Advice on completing this form is available from the University Research Office.

General Information	
1. Principal Investigator Name	
2. Research Group Title	
3. Date of Assessment	
Risk Assessment	
1. Does the research undertaken by the group have military or dual-use potential? I.e. does it include research relating to goods, software or technology on the UK Strategic Control Lists or is the group aware of any other military or dual-uses?	
2. Does the research group have access to goods, software or technology which is subject to UK or US export control legislation?	
3. Does the research group collaborate with the UK or other state militaries or with the defence sector?	
4. Does the research group collaborate with institutions or individuals that are subject to sanctions?	
5. Does the research group undertaken any research that has the potential to be used in connection a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) End Use. [3]	
5. Does the research group collaborate with institutions or individuals based in arms embargoed countries on applied research topics?	

If any of the questions in the risk assessment section of this form have been answered in the affirmative, export controls are likely to be relevant to the research group. The group should comply with the University's Export Control Procedure.

A record should be kept of this assessment and the assessment should be renewed at least every five years.

[3] A 'WMD End Use' is defined as "use in connection with the development, production, handling, operation, maintenance, storage, detection, identification or dissemination of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or the development, production, maintenance or storage of missiles capable of delivery of such weapons" (Export Control Order 2008 No3231 Regulation 2).

Appendix 2: Export Control Compliance Matrix

The following table is designed to provide an overview of the compliance responsibilities set out in the Export Control Procedure and Guidance.

Activity	Principal Investigator	Research Group Members	Export Control Director	Export Control Managers	Head of Department	Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research	Research Office Due Diligence Team
Institutional Commitment to Research Integrity	Informed	Informed	Responsible	Consulted	Informed	Accountable	Informed
Development and Implementation of the Export Control Procedure and Guidance	Informed	Informed	Accountable	Responsible	Informed	Accountable	Informed
Providing Training for staff and students	Informed	Informed	Accountable	Responsible	Informed	Informed	Consulted
Ensuring Export Control Compliance within a research group	Responsible and Accountable	Responsible and Informed	Informed	Consulted	Consulted	Informed	Consulted
Ensure that the Procedure and Guidance is highlighted to new PIs	Informed	NA	NA	NA	Responsible and Accountable	NA	NA
Departmental/Faculty Risk Assessments	Consulted	Informed	Informed	Consulted	Responsible and Accountable	Informed	Informed
Ensure training of research group members in groups identified by risk assessment	Responsible and Accountable	Informed	Informed	Consulted and Responsible	Informed	Informed	NA
Compliance with Export Control Procedure for research groups identified by risk assessment	Responsible and Accountable	Informed	Informed	Consulted	Consulted	Informed	Consulted

Export Control Due Diligence and Partner Due Diligence	Responsible and Accountable	Consulted and informed	NA	Consulted and Responsible	NA	NA	Consulted and Responsible
Identifying Licence Requirements	Responsible and Accountable	NA	Informed	Consulted and Responsible	NA	NA	Consulted
Submitting export licence applications	Consulted	NA	Informed and Accountable	Responsible	Informed	NA	Consulted
Explaining Licence Terms	Informed	Informed	NA	Responsible and Accountable	NA	NA	NA
Complying with Licence Terms	Responsible and Accountable	Responsible and Informed	NA	Consulted	NA	NA	NA
Licence Record Keeping	Responsible and Accountable	Responsible and Informed	NA	Responsible and Accountable	NA	NA	NA
Appropriate processes for handling controlled goods, software and technology	Responsible and Accountable	Responsible and Informed	NA	Consulted	NA	NA	NA
Audit	Consulted	Consulted	Responsible and Accountable	Responsible	Informed	Informed	NA
Reporting Breaches	Responsible and Accountable	Responsible	Informed	Responsible and Accountable	Informed	Informed	NA

Matrix Key

- Responsible = Executes the task
- Accountable = Final approval authority
- Consulted = Provides input and expertise
- Informed = Needs awareness of progress

Appendix 3: US Export Control legislation Guidance

1. United States export controls may also apply to University researchers.

2. US export controls operate via restrictions on disclosure to certain 'parties of concern' that apply to controlled products or technology. This can mean disclosure within the UK and potentially even within a University group. Restrictions apply even if only a percentage of the technology to be disclosed has come from the US (normally 25%).

2. The controls operate via specific licence conditions, which exporters are meant to notify importers (i.e. the University recipient). Researchers must be aware if goods or technology have been received under US export licence conditions which restrict giving access to parties of concern. Researchers should seek advice from the University Research Office to ensure that the exporter provides the specific conditions that must be complied with, which is a duty on the exporter – a general requirement to comply with US export control law should not be accepted.

3. Parties of concern are

- entities on the US entity list or
- nationals of prohibited countries

and are listed at https://www.bis.doc.gov/index.php/policy-guidance/lists-of-parties-of-concern.

4. If a person to whom the technology is to be disclosed appears to be on one of the lists, additional due diligence is required before proceeding, in particular consulting the exporter. Researchers are encouraged to consult with the Research Office for assistance. Depending on which list applies there may be a strict export prohibition, a requirement for a licence from the US licencing authority, or lesser limitations and requirements.

4. University personnel receiving US technology must be mindful at all times of any US export licence limitations and restrictions that apply and seek advice where necessary. For more detail on US export controls see the Research Office website.