

**Conditions Required for the Approval of an Approved Quarantine Establishment for Export of Cattle not intended for slaughter to the EU**

Cattle for export to some EU Member States (MSs), where these MSs have an approved eradication programme for certain diseases or are officially disease free, must meet a number of additional requirements.

Your PVP can advise you on whether the MS you wish to export to has either disease freedom or an approved eradication programme.

The ROI now have an eradication programme for BVD approved by the EU as of 18th July 2022. This means that there will be additional requirements for cattle not intended for slaughter exported to the ROI. .

There are a number of options for herd owners, depending on the BVD status of their herd. Details can be found at the following link, [BVD requirements to export cattle to EU Member States with an approved BVD eradication programme or BVD free status | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/bvd-requirements-export-cattle-eu-member-states-approved-bvd-eradication-programme-or-bvd-free). One option is to move animals after a period of quarantine in an Approved Quarantine Establishment (AQE). An AQE can also be used to meet some requirements relating to IBR for export to countries with IBR disease freedom or approved eradication programmes.

**Approval of Quarantine Establishments**

AQE facilities must be approved by DAERA. An application form (AQE 2) should be submitted to Trade Admin at TradeAdminPost@daera-ni.gov.uk. An inspection will be arranged and, where this is satisfactory, approval will be granted. Health and safety must be taken into consideration as part of the approval. Photographs of the establishment may be taken by DAERA staff as part of the approval visit. Approval is granted for one year and continued approval will require an annual re-visit. DAERA reserve the right to inspect the AQE once approved, to ensure it is operating correctly.

You may have an existing approved Export Isolation Facility (EIF)/Approved Isolation Facility (AIF) on your farm or have previously had such a facility. EIFs are designed to meet a slightly different requirement to an AQE. An EIF is designed to prevent the spread of disease from animals bought into a herd to the rest of the main herd. An AQE is designed to prevent disease from your main herd spreading to animals for export. It may be possible to upgrade the approval of your existing EIF to add AQE status provided you can meet all of the requirements detailed below. EIF status alone is NOT adequate for exports, you must have AQE status. A facility can only be used as EITHER an EIF or an AQE at any one time.

**Associated herds**

AQE facilities can only be used by one herd which must be nominated on your application form. Facilities cannot be used by any associated herds.

* Each herd within an association must apply separately for an AQE, if required, so that there is a record that each keeper has agreed to abide by the licence conditions.
* Whether associated herds operate from separate yards or not, each one must have its own unique AQE approved. In other words, if both herds want to apply for an AQE status, both must have an AQE approved - they cannot share the same one.
* Animals added to one facility will not impinge on the conditions required by the other.
* Suspension of the AQE status in one herd does not automatically affect the AQE status of the other.
* The same principles will apply if there are three or more associated herds in the grouping.

**Requirements – Building**

* An AQE must be a building. Quarantine within a field is not an option as it is not possible to perform adequate cleansing and disinfection.
* The building must be clearly marked as a quarantine facility to prevent accidental entry of unauthorised personnel.
* Foot baths with fresh disinfectant must be available at the entrance to the building. A brush should be available to allow adequate removal of gross contamination. If disinfectant mats are used there must be adequate facilities to remove gross material from boots BEFORE stepping onto the mat. A DAERA approved disinfectant must be used. The list of approved disinfectants can be accessed here [Approved Disinfectants | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/approved-disinfectants) The dilution rate for standard orders should be used.
* Buildings used for an AQE must be physically separate building (i.e. solid walls ideally rendered to a height of 1.8m , no shared airspace, water supply or drainage with other animal accommodation) from any buildings used for other livestock.
* Buildings must be escape proof i.e. the keeper should have taken all possible measures to ensure animals cannot escape.
* Buildings where animals are held in quarantine must have dedicated securely fixed feeding and water troughs.
* Buildings used for on farm quarantine must be designed such that any discharges from non-quarantine animals e.g. effluent and manure cannot contaminate the quarantine area to prevent the risk of disease spread from non-quarantine animals.
* The building must be constructed to allow adequate cleaning and disinfection between animal groups. Note that wood is not an acceptable material for use within an AQE if it compromises in any way the thorough cleaning and disinfection of the AQE.
* The building must have adequate means for catching, confining and where necessary restraining animals. If a permanent facility is not in place in the AQE then there must be a plan in place as to how a fully cleansed and disinfected mobile unit can be moved into the AQE for this purpose. There must be adequate lighting to allow examination of animals as required
* The building must be cleared, cleaned and disinfected using a DAERA approved disinfectant before being used for quarantine.
* When in use for quarantine the building must be used for this purpose and no other and must not contain any animals other than those subject to quarantine e.g. not used for storage of general farm materials
* If the building is used between quarantine periods for other uses it must be cleared, cleaned and disinfected before any quarantine animals are introduced.

**Lactating Animals**

Special rules apply to any lactating animals that are in these quarantine facilities. The welfare of these animals must be safeguarded and it may be necessary to take these animals to a milking parlour on the farm if other means of milking them cannot be found. The following conditions apply in these circumstances:

The animals in the AQE must be brought into a clean parlour, **before** any other resident stock are milked. The animals in quarantine must not come into contact with resident animals.

Any farmyards, the parlour collecting area, the parlour itself and the milking equipment e.g. clusters must be thoroughly washed down before the animals in quarantine pass through. A “full standard wash cycle” must be applied to the milking equipment in the parlour after the resident animals are milked and before the quarantine animals are milked.

The animals in quarantine must be returned to their own accommodation immediately after they have been milked.

**Operating the Quarantine Area**

* You must provide the name of a veterinarian who will oversee your quarantine facility, this can be your usual vet. You should discuss with them how best to manage your quarantine area to prevent the risk of disease.
* The overseeing vet is advised to perform spot checks on the AQE as is necessary, to ensure it is operating correctly.
* Any contact with animals in the quarantine facility (e.g. feeding, inspection etc) should be carried out BEFORE dealing with other animals in your herd to prevent the risk of carrying in disease. Fresh overalls/clothing should be worn and boots should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before entering the quarantine area.
* Quarantine must be carried out on an ‘all in, all out’ basis. The quarantine period starts from the date that the last animal enters the building.
* Animals in the quarantine facility must be individually identified in accordance with current requirements. The welfare of the animals must be maintained and the animals must be checked with a MINIMUM frequency of once a day.
* The quarantine area should, as far as is possible, have all of its own equipment. Use of equipment from elsewhere on farm (e.g. tractors) should be avoided to prevent the risk of disease transfer from non-quarantine animals. If equipment must be used it should be cleaned and disinfected before use.
* Animals leaving quarantine for export must be loaded directly from the quarantine facility continuing to avoid any direct or indirect contact (e.g. through shared races) with non-quarantine animals.
* A record must be keep of all animals moved into and out of the quarantine facility and the date of cleansing and disinfection. (AQE 3 template may be used for this purpose).
* A record must be kept of all visitors to the quarantine facility. Visitors should be minimised to essential personnel only. (AQE 4 template may be used for this purpose).
* All records must be presented to DAERA staff during re-approval visits.
* **Important note**: the details above relate only to an AQE for **cattle** and to meet the requirements for **BVD** and **IBR**. If in the future an AQE is required with respect to other diseases or species this may require a new AQE application to be submitted.

**Privacy Notice**

The Department takes data protection, freedom of information and environmental information issues seriously. It takes care to ensure that any personal information received from you is dealt with in a way that complies with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (2016). This means that any personal information you supply will be processed principally for the purpose for which it has been provided. However, the Department is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you have provided for this purpose. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for the audit or administration of public funds, in order to prevent and detect crime. In addition, the Department may also use it for other legitimate purposes in line with the General Data Protection Regulations, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004.’

A full copy of the DAERA Privacy Statement can be found [here.](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/daera-privacy-statement)