

UK CHINA TRADE / WORKING TOOL

Supplier Evaluation\Checklist

A practical pre-order review for UK businesses sourcing from China.

Use this checklist before you request a final quote, approve a sample, issue a purchase order, or add a factory to your supplier base.

USE IT FOR

New supplier shortlisting, existing-factory reviews, product-development checks and China+1 comparisons.

A NOTE ON RESPONSIBILITY

This tool supports a commercial sourcing review. The buyer remains responsible for contracts, product approval, importing, testing and regulatory compliance.

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Evaluate the supplier before the order becomes the problem.

Tick each point only when you have evidence, a written answer or a documented action. A promising quote is not a supplier evaluation.

01 / IDENTITY & CAPABILITY

Can this business actually make your product?

- ☐ Confirm the legal entity, factory location and key point of contact.
- ☐ Clarify whether it is a factory, trading company or a combination of both.
- ☐ Match its product range, equipment and process capability to your requirement.
- ☐ Ask which comparable products it currently manufactures and for whom.
- ☐ Understand production capacity, peak season constraints and normal lead times.
- ☐ Identify critical sub-suppliers or outsourced steps that affect quality or delivery.

02 / PRODUCT & COMMERCIAL FIT

Is the quote tied to a complete, comparable requirement?

- ☐ Provide a written specification, approved drawings, samples or reference products.
- ☐ Confirm materials, dimensions, performance requirements and packaging assumptions.
- ☐ Separate tooling, sample, testing, packaging and freight items from unit pricing.
- ☐ Confirm MOQ, price-break logic, payment terms and quotation validity.
- ☐ Ask what changes to cost, lead time or MOQ if the brief changes.
- ☐ Document ownership and protection of your drawings, tooling and brand assets.

QUALITY, EVIDENCE & CONFIDENCE

Confirm the product, the evidence and the control plan before production starts.

A supplier is only as dependable as the quality plan and product evidence you can review before you commit.

03 / QUALITY PLAN

How will the supplier prove the product is right?

- ☐ Define a golden sample or pre-production sample and who approves it.
- ☐ Agree measurable acceptance criteria before production begins.
- ☐ Establish the inspection points: incoming materials, in-process, pre-shipment.
- ☐ Ask how defects are recorded, contained, corrected and prevented from recurring.
- ☐ Confirm labelling, manuals, cartons and barcodes are included in the quality check.
- ☐ Decide who can approve shipment if a quality issue is found.

04 / EVIDENCE & COMPLIANCE

Do you have the evidence needed for the product and market?

- ☐ List the standards, test reports, labels and technical files relevant to your product.
- ☐ Confirm reports relate to the same product, component configuration and production site.
- ☐ Check expiry dates, report scope and issuing laboratory details.
- ☐ Confirm the buyer's UK market obligations and evidence-retention requirements.
- ☐ For electrical or battery products, define specialist testing and document review early.
- ☐ Do not treat a supplier statement as a substitute for required independent evidence.

RECORD THE GAPS BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

Supplier evaluation notes

QUALITY OR SAMPLE QUESTION

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EVIDENCE OR COMPLIANCE GAP

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PRODUCTION, DELIVERY & DECISION

Carry the same discipline through production and shipment.

05 / PRODUCTION CONTROL

Who is watching the work once the PO is placed?

- ☐ Issue a purchase order that reflects the approved specification and agreed commercial terms.
- ☐ Agree a production timeline with sample approval, material, assembly and inspection milestones.
- ☐ Set one communication route for changes, approvals and escalation.
- ☐ Ask for production updates that are tied to milestones, not vague progress claims.
- ☐ Confirm what happens if a material, specification or delivery issue appears mid-production.
- ☐ Keep written approval records for every meaningful change.

06 / SHIPMENT READINESS

Is the finished order ready to move without avoidable surprises?

- ☐ Confirm final quantity, packing list, invoice description and carton count.
- ☐ Check packaging protects the product and meets your warehouse or retail requirements.
- ☐ Agree the Incoterm, freight forwarder handover and export-document responsibilities.
- ☐ Confirm any battery, dangerous-goods or special-transport documentation before booking.
- ☐ Plan an arrival check and issue-reporting route before the goods land.
- ☐ Keep the final documentation set with the order record.

07 / DECISION RECORD

Before you proceed, make the decision explicit.

SUPPLIER\Name / location:

.....\Contact:

PRODUCT\Product / SKU:

\Order stage:

NEXT ACTION ☐ Proceed ☐ Clarify ☐

Hold\Owner / date:

NEED A CHINA-SIDE SECOND OPINION?

Bring one supplier, product or quality question to a focused sourcing briefing.

UK China Trade supports supplier discovery, factory communication, quality planning, production follow-up and Canton Fair meetings for UK product businesses.

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