Strong & Herd™
Import and Export Services

Shipping Office Support

Strong & Herd LLP | Manchester | Office-based | Full-time | Permanent | £25,000–£30,000 DOE

About the Role
We are looking for a proactive, organised and detail-focused person to join our Shipping Office team.

This is an entry-level role supporting the day-to-day operation of our clients' imports, exports and customs activities. It would suit someone who enjoys working with data, takes pride in getting things right and wants to develop a career in international trade, customs and compliance.

Previous import, export or customs experience is not essential. We are looking for the right aptitude and attitude and will provide structured training in the technical aspects of the role.

You will work as part of a small, experienced team, supporting a variety of clients across different industries. As your knowledge and confidence develop, you will gradually take greater ownership of client work and build your understanding of UK customs and international trade.

Accuracy is particularly important. Much of our work supports clients' regulatory and customs compliance, so we are looking for someone who will check information carefully, ask questions when something does not look right and follow tasks through to completion.

Key Responsibilities
The role will develop over time, but initially responsibilities will include:

- Logging import and export movements accurately onto client records and internal systems.
- Checking import and export data against HMRC records and identifying discrepancies or missing information.
- Preparing letters of instruction for clearance agents on behalf of clients.
- Supporting requests for amendments where customs declaration information is incorrect.
- Liaising with freight forwarders, customs agents and colleagues to obtain missing documentation and information.
- Maintaining complete and accurate customs and export records for clients.
- Checking freight invoices and supporting the review of freight charges where required.
- Producing basic reports and statistics from customs and shipping data.
- Monitoring shared inboxes and ensuring client queries and actions are appropriately recorded and followed through.
- Keeping accurate notes of client requirements, instructions and decisions on our internal systems.
- Providing cross-cover for other Shipping Office colleagues to help maintain continuity of client service.
- Supporting general Shipping Office and administrative duties as required.

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As experience develops, you will also have the opportunity to take greater responsibility for individual client activities and routine client communications.

What We're Looking For

Essential
Above all, we are looking for someone who is reliable, curious and willing to learn.

You should have:

- Strong attention to detail and the ability to work accurately with data.
- A genuine willingness to learn new subjects and develop your knowledge over time.
- The confidence to ask questions rather than make assumptions when something is unclear.
- Good organisational skills and the ability to manage several tasks and deadlines.
- A positive and adaptable approach when priorities change.
- Initiative and a willingness to take ownership of tasks and follow them through.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Good general IT skills, particularly Microsoft Excel, and confidence learning new systems and databases.
- A collaborative approach and willingness to support colleagues within a small team.

Desirable
It would be helpful, but is not essential, if you have:

- Experience in an administrative, logistics, freight, finance, import/export or other data-focused role.
- Some exposure to freight forwarding, shipping, customs or supply-chain operations.
- An interest in international trade or customs compliance.
- A basic understanding of customs declarations or HMRC systems.
- Experience with the inward processing procedure.

We do not expect applicants to already be customs experts. Technical knowledge can be taught. Accuracy, curiosity, accountability and a willingness to learn are more important to us at this level.

Training and Development
Strong & Herd specialises in customs, international trade and export compliance, and learning will be an important part of this role.

You will receive:

- Structured on-the-job training in import and export processes.
- Training in customs fundamentals and the systems used within our Shipping Office.
- Access to Strong & Herd's specialist import, export and customs compliance training courses.

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- Support from experienced colleagues as you build your technical knowledge.
- Opportunities to take greater ownership of client work as your skills and confidence develop.

The aim is to develop the successful candidate into a knowledgeable and trusted member of our Shipping Office team.

Client Communication
As your experience develops, you will increasingly communicate with clients, freight companies and other parties involved in international movements.

You will be expected to:

- Record client requirements, decisions and instructions accurately.
- Follow up outstanding information and actions promptly.
- Communicate clearly and professionally with clients and external parties.
- Recognise when an issue needs to be referred to a more experienced colleague.
- Help ensure queries are followed through to an appropriate conclusion.

The Person We're Looking For
You do not need to arrive knowing everything about customs.

We are much more interested in finding someone who wants to learn, cares about the quality of their work and takes responsibility for getting things done properly.

You should enjoy working as part of a small team but also be comfortable managing your own workload. You'll need the confidence to spot when something doesn't look right, investigate it and ask for help when necessary.

For the right person, this is an opportunity to build practical experience in an established international trade consultancy and develop specialist knowledge in an area that affects businesses trading worldwide.

What We Offer

- Salary of £25,000–£30,000 depending on experience.
- Full-time, permanent employment.
- Structured technical and on-the-job training.
- Access to Strong & Herd's specialist international trade and customs courses.
- A clear opportunity to develop within the Shipping Office as your knowledge grows.
- Varied work supporting clients across different sectors.
- A small, professional and supportive team environment.

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Location - This is an office-based role at:

Manchester International Office Centre (MIOC)
Styal Road
Manchester
M22 5WB

How to Apply
Please send your CV together with a short covering note explaining:

- why this role interests you;
- what appeals to you about international trade, customs or logistics; and
- what you believe you would bring to the Strong & Herd team.

Applications should be sent to:

Niamh O'Connor
Corporate Partner
niamho@strongandherd.co.uk

If you require reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process, please let us know.

Interview Process

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a two-stage interview process:

Stage One: Initial virtual interview.

Stage Two: Face-to-face interview at our Manchester office, giving you the opportunity to meet members of the team and understand more about the role, our Shipping Office and the working environment.

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