



HM Revenue
& Customs

Use of special and diacritic characters on the Customs Declaration Service (CDS)

We are contacting you to let you know that the CDS is currently unable to accept special and diacritic characters.

Special characters include, but are not limited to:

- %
- _
- { }
- []
- #

Diacritic characters include, but are not limited to:

- **é - accent acute**
- **è - accent grave**
- **ê - circumflex**
- **ë - umlaut or diaerisis**
- **ç - cedilla**
- **ñ - tilde**
- **ø - streg**
- **ð - eth (capital form Ð)**
- **å - bolle**
- **æ - ligature**
- **œ - ligature**
- **ē - macron**
- **č - háček**
- **ů – crescent**

We would ask that traders do not use special or diacritic characters in their Department for Business & Trade (DBT) ICMS 2, SPIRE and LITE licence applications until the issue has been resolved.

This issue is planned to be fixed as part of the CDS Release in Spring 2025.

What you need to do for licences already granted

If you have an approved licence with characters that cannot be accepted by CDS, for exports please contact LITE support at LITE.support@businessandtrade.gov.uk so that the Export Control Joint Unit (ECJU) can reissue the licence.

For imports please contact enquiries.ilb@businessandtrade.gov.uk so that The Imports Licencing Branch (ILB) can re-issue the licence.

What you need to do for pending licence applications

Where the ECJU is currently processing an application which contains special and/or diacritic characters, please contact the ECJU at Exportcontrol.help@businessandtrade.gov.uk to check whether it's possible for you to amend the application.

Where the ILB is currently processing an application which contains special and/or diacritic characters, please contact the ILB at enquiries.ilb@businessandtrade.gov.uk to check whether it's possible for you to amend the application.

What you need to do for new licence applications

For new applications to ICMS 2, SPIRE and LITE please do not use the special and/or diacritic characters until the issue has been resolved.

Help and support

For further help and support, please use GOV.UK to [report a problem when using the CDS](#). If your problem is considered urgent, you'll receive a response within two hours. All other problems will be responded to within 24 hours.

Yours faithfully,
HM Revenue & Customs