

# Welcome from Lesley Batchelor OBE, FIEEx (Grad) - Director General, Institute of Export & International Trade



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## **Doing Business in Qatar offers a wealth of demand for British goods and services.**

With significant plans for infrastructure investment over the next few years, mainly as a result of its successful bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, and with the 'Qatar National Vision 2030' programme looking to deliver significant economic, social, and environmental growth, Qatar is going through a period of significant change. With change comes great opportunity for the UK's exporters.

There are plenty of good reasons for more UK businesses to look seriously at Qatar as a market, as English is widely spoken and there are strong historical and cultural ties between the two countries – due to many Qataris having come to study in the UK. Certainly the FIFA World Cup in 2022 will present a wealth of opportunities for businesses from all over the world. However, as with any market, there are various challenges to be overcome and a patient long-term strategy is essential for success in the Qatar market.

A secure contract should always be signed before starting work in Qatar. You should also be careful to ensure your pricing is competitive as the Qatari Riyal is tied to the US Dollar, and you should always be prepared for varying payment times. To do business in Qatar you will need a local sponsor, and be aware that there is a requirement for a 51-49% partnership split in favour of the Qatari national, laying the risk at the door of the foreign company.

Businesses are generally advised to register trademarks and designs at the Qatar Intellectual Property Department. You should also make sure you're aware of the latest information on the VAT rate being introduced in Qatar following the GCC VAT Framework Agreement. This agreement was signed by all GCC member states with the lowest VAT rate of 5% agreed for implementation by 1st January 2019.

Finally, if you're working with firms with large numbers of staff in Qatar, be sure to do your due diligence on where they employ from, given the high migrant labour in Qatar.

Qatar is certainly a land with many opportunities for British businesses but, as ever, do your due diligence and research. Don't go in blind and feel free to get in touch with us at the Institute if you have any questions about how to do business in Qatar securely and successfully.

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