

FE Supplier Manual

April 2026



Supplier Checklist

Supplier checklist Here's a summary of what we ask you to do. Each action is explained clearly and in detail within the relevant section of this Supplier Manual. The safety of our colleagues, customers and suppliers is at the forefront of what we do.

1. Compliance & Legal Standards



- **Product Safety:** Ensure all goods are fit for purpose and meet all UK legal and safety requirements.
- **Insurance:** Provide Product & Public Liability certificates (typically **£5m per event**).
- **ESG & Carbon:** Disclose your carbon footprint and work towards providing **Environmental Product Declarations (EPD)** for all SKUs.

2. Commercial & Contractual Setup



- **Agreements:** Sign the annual **Trading Agreement, Supplier Contract**, and a mandatory **Returns Agreement** before trading.
- **Risk Assessment:** Complete the **Online Risk Assessment (ORA)** to achieve "Approved" status.
- **Onboarding:** Liaise with your Commercial Contact and designated **Supply Chain Planner** to finalize logistics.
- **Spares:** The provision of essential spares free of charge

3. Quality Control for Exclusive Brands



- **Technical Data:** Submit full product specifications, certifications, and **Technical Data Sheets** to the Quality Team.
- **Audits:** Cooperate fully with all ethical and technical site audits.
- **Pre-Delivery Approval:** All exclusive products must receive **formal Quality Team approval** prior to the first delivery.
- **Gold (Sealed) Samples:** Unless otherwise agreed suppliers must retain samples across all products

4. Data & Logistics



- **Product Content:** Supply accurate product and packaging data to ensure immediate "Live for Sale" status.
- **Packaging Compliance:** Provide precise packaging weights to our compliance partner, **Valpak**.
- **Health & Safety:** Report any H&S delivery constraints immediately to find a managed solution.

What do we expect from our suppliers?

1. Mandatory Documentation & Risk Assessment

- **Online Risk Assessment (ORA):** All potential suppliers must complete this to demonstrate ESG and Responsible Sourcing compliance.
- **Supplier Commitments:** Approval is contingent on signing and satisfying our Responsible Sourcing policies.

2. Exclusive Brand (Own Brand) Validation

- **Site Approval:** Exclusive products can **only** be manufactured at factories pre-approved by the Highbourne Quality Team.
- **Sedex Membership:** Expected for all Exclusive Brand manufacturing sites, including a **SMETA Assessment** report every 2 years. However, we will accept alternative ethical audits such as SA 8000 or BSCI
- **Quality Audits:** Sites are subject to initial and ongoing risk-based Quality Assessments.

3. Inspections & Process Control

- **On-Site Visits:** Technical Managers may visit sites to witness testing and process controls during product introduction or following quality concerns.
- **Reporting Changes:** Suppliers must notify Highbourne of any changes to manufacturing locations or product ranges **prior** to implementation.

4. Compliance Fees & Penalties

- **Audit Costs:** Suppliers are charged for site assessments and aborted audits due to inaccurate information or refused entry.
- **Failure to Comply:** We will not source from any factory that fails a Site Assessment.
- **Levies:** Supply and Distribution levies will be imposed if unapproved sites are used for exclusive products.

How can you achieve our Product Requirements:

Product Safety



- **Testing & Certification:** All products must be tested by accredited facilities and meet all relevant UK, European, and International safety standards.



- **Safety Assessments:** Complete all mandatory safety evaluations prior to offering any product to the Group; the Quality Team is available for technical guidance.



- **Documentation & Guidance:** Ensure all user instructions are accurate, including comprehensive safety warnings for assembly, operation, and maintenance.



- **Risk Notification:** You must immediately notify the Quality Team of any newly discovered product risks.



- **Liability:** Suppliers are responsible for all costs and expenses associated with mitigating risks to Highbourne staff or customers.



- **Specification Adherence:** Absolute compliance with agreed Highbourne Group technical specifications is mandatory for all manufactured goods.

Product Data Requirements



Pimberly Platform: All new product inductions and existing data updates are managed via our cloud-based portal, **Pimberly (Vendor Contact)**.



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Data Accuracy: We operate a "**Get it Right First Time**" ethos; all provided data must be complete, accurate, and submitted within specified timelines to ensure products are live for sale without delay.



Mandatory Attributes: Suppliers must provide all "Common Data Attributes" as a minimum benchmark for branch and digital sales.

Legal & Compliance Data: It is the supplier's responsibility to identify and upload all required legal documentation, certifications, and "flags" for validation.



Continuous Updates: Suppliers must proactively provide updated documentation for any version changes or new industry regulations.

Support: For system guidance or access, contact the Data Management team at hbg.supplier.support@cityplumbing.co.uk.



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Product Instructions and Packaging Requirements

Artwork and Marketing Compliance



- **Exclusive Brand Branding:** All artwork for Exclusive Brand products must strictly adhere to the specific **Marketing Guidelines** provided by your commercial contact.
- **Approval Process:** Designs must be finalized and approved before the first production run.

Packaging Solutions & Logistics



- **Operational Compatibility:** Packaging must be pre-agreed with delivery sites to ensure safe unloading, storage, picking, and loading.
- **Handling Safety:** Cartons intended for manual handling must include suitable **handholds or cutouts** capable of supporting the product's weight for one or two-person lifts.
- **Contamination Control:** Suppliers must have active procedures (aligned with GPSR) to prevent foreign objects, such as knives or scissors, from being trapped in packaging.

Environmental & Plastic Requirements



- **Packaging Weights:** Accurate primary, secondary, and transit weight data must be provided to the Quality Team and **Valpak**.
- **Plastic Bag Specifications:** * **Thickness:** Minimum 38 microns (average) or 42 microns (nominal) to prevent ripping and ensure child safety.
 - **Safety Warnings:** Any bag with an opening of **190mm or larger** must carry the standard suffocation warning.
 - **Sustainability:** All plastic must contain at least **30% recycled content**, be marked with the correct polymer/recycling codes, and be minimized in size.

Product Instructions and Packaging Requirements

Manual Handling & Weight Warnings



- **Threshold:** Any individual product weighing 15kg or more must display a prominent weight warning label.
- **Label Specs:** Labels must be at least 70mm, featuring the standard yellow triangle with a black border, and clearly state the weight in kilograms.
- **Supplementary Guidance:** Use 'Two-Person Lift' icons for awkward or bulky dimensions to ensure safety during branch receiving and picking.
- **Visibility:** Ensure labels are positioned to be easily identified by warehouse staff and customers during all stages of handling.



Packaging Durability (Drop Tests) where applicable



- **Standard Procedure:** Products must survive a 10-drop sequence (corners, edges, and faces) onto a concrete floor to ensure packaging integrity.
- **Drop Height Requirements:**
 - **Up to 10kg:** 75cm drop
 - **10kg – 20kg:** 60cm drop
 - **20kg – 25kg:** 45cm drop
 - **Above 25kg:** 30cm drop
- **Pass/Fail Criteria:**
 - * The product must remain 100% functional with zero aesthetic damage.
 - * The carton must remain intact enough to continue protecting the goods.
- **Compression Test:** If stackability is a concern, the carton must withstand a 24-hour load equivalent to a 1-meter stack without sustaining damage.

Product Instructions and Packaging Requirements

Product Instruction Standards



Design Principle: Prioritize illustrations and diagrams over text; ensure instructions are simple (max 2 actions per step).



Language & Clarity: Must be in English, jargon-free, and use a legible text size.



Branding: Follow specific group branding guidelines. A "brandless" version if supplied to multiple Highborne businesses.



Mandatory Content:

- **Safety:** PPE requirements, pre-installation checks (e.g., wiring/pipe detection), and safe tool usage.
- **Components:** Full parts list with quantities, required, and any necepllied fixings.
- **Technical:** Maximum adjustments, CE/UK/MIKCA marking, version numbers, and maintenance/cleaning guides.
- **Support:** Guarantee details, disposital instructions, and an agreed helpline number.

User Trials & Validation



Testing Requirement: Suppliers must conduct user trials using the development phase to ensure instructions are practical, accurate, and easily understood by the enser.

Barcoding & System Integration



Exclusive Brands: Barcodes are automatically generated during the **PIM (Pimberly)** setup process; your commercial contact will provide these.



Branded Products: Suppliers are responsible for Scand'l-iant GS1-compleniant barcoding.



Validation: You must send sample bacode labels to the relevant **Goods inward** for scan-testing prior to the first delivery.



Non-Conformance: Incorrect or illegible barcodes will result in a **Non Conformance Report (NCR)**. Products ble rejected or re-worked at the supplier's expense.

Product Instructions and Packaging Requirements

Product & Packaging Modifications



Mandatory Consultation: Any changes to the physical dimensions of a product or its packaging must be approved by your Commercial Contact **before** implementation.



Logistics Impact: Dimensional changes directly affect the load capacity and safety limits of our delivery fleet and branch storage systems.



Fleet Compatibility: We must ensure that any 'New Project' or modified SKU remains compatible with our diverse vehicle capabilities and warehouse racking.

Product Traceability & Batch Coding



Traceability Mandate: Suppliers must implement a robust policy for identification and batch coding to ensure full product recall capability.



Coding Hierarchy:

- ❖ **Priority 1:** All products must be **indelibly marked** with a unique code.
- 📦 **Priority 2:** If marking the product is impossible, all single and multiple packaging must carry the unique code.
- 📄 **Note:** Even if the product is marked, the packaging must still reflect the same code.



Data Links: The unique code (date, time, or batch ref) must link directly to all inspection records, test data, and raw material details.



Risk Management: Batch sizes must remain manageable to allow for efficient isolation and capture in the event of a product recall.



Exceptions: Any decision not to indelibly mark a product must be backed by a formal written risk assessment for Highbourne approval.

Deliveries

The Non-Conformance & Financial Recovery process. Action-oriented breakdown.



Quality Control (QC) & Inspections



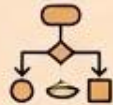
AQL Inspections: Goods entering DCs are sampled against technical specs & Generic Checklists using AQL.



Supplier Participation: Suppliers encouraged to attend DC inspections to align on quality standards.



Non-Conformance Procedure (The 'Jotform' Process)



If a defect is found, Quality Team issues report via email/Jotform with photos.



1. **Supplier Responsibility:** Immediately investigate Root Cause (RCA) & implement preventative measures.



2. **Quarantine:** Non-compliant stock quarantined or left on delivery vehicle.



3. **The 24-Hour Rule:** Respond within 24 hours to arrange rework/collection to avoid storage/rejection costs.



The Three Levels of Reporting



1. **Observation:** Product accepted, improvements required. No levy.



2. **Non-Conformance:** Rework/concession required. Levy applied.



3. **Rejection:** Product unfit for purpose, collect at supplier's expense. Levy applied.



Cost Recovery & Levies



Cost of Quality: Highbourne reclaims costs for 'extra attention' (admin, handling, 3rd party fees).



Escalation: Next delivery with same defect increases Cost of Quality levy & downgrades supplier rating.



Audit Fees: Suppliers charged for follow-up visits resulting from quality concerns.

Cost of Quality levies

The table below sets out the Cost of Quality levies that we charge in different situations.

	Subject	Rationale	Cost
1	Goods-in Product Rejection	Cost to the business in terms of management time and dead storage space. This is a standard charge levied to suppliers for each and every	\$1,000 per product delivery
2	Product Non-Conformity	Cost associated with progressing report, response and follow-through with corrective action verification.	\$500 per report
3	Product Rework	Cost to the business in terms of management time, dead storage space, transport costs, stock movement costs and cost of rework.	\$1,000 per product delivery, plus reimbursement of rework costs
4	Product recall/withdrawal from sale/public safety notice	Includes recalls/withdrawal instigated by the supplier, Highbourne Group or Trading Standards based on a safety risk assessment or a major product performance concern.	\$1,000 per product, plus reimbursement of costs and losses
5	Unauthorised product specification change to a Highbourne Group exclusive	Costs associated with investigating , inspecting and documenting the update. A further charge might be appropriate where stock is rejected (refer to 1).	\$1,000 per specification change
6	Out-of-date product certification	Costs associated with investigating , inspecting and documenting the update. A further charge might be appropriate where stock requires reworking due to out-of date CE/UKCA mark etc (refer to 2).	\$500 per certificate
7	Supplier Online Risk Assessment (ORA).	Costs associated with the review of ORA submission and resulting action plans to reduce risk.	\$500+VAT per submission
8	Non notification or unauthorised change of manufacturing site or additional site	Costs associated with management time to assess the risk to the business and carry out any follow up investigations required.	Standard cost for UK and EU is \$850 (including expenses) per visit. Costs for other countries will vary based on the standard rate of \$850 plus expenses.
9	Additional site visits to plan	Costs associated with unplanned site visits to investigate poor product quality and/or safety issues.	
10	Missing or inaccurate data	Costs associated with chasing up missing / incorrect product.data or chasing overdue / nil / inadequate responses to previous non conformances.	\$200 per day for each day the data is outstanding

	Subject	Rationale	Cost
1	Site Audits	Costs to visit carry out a Technical site audit (annually for high risk and every two years for Medium/Low Risk)	\$1,500
2	Corrective Actions	Delays in closing corrective actions following both an ethical or Technical/Quality audit (repeated every two months if continued non-compliance)	\$300
3	Pre-Shipment Inspections (PSI)	Cost to visit and carry out a PSI (risk based)	\$1,500
4	Packaging Data	Costs associated to additional work required by City Plumbing where a supplier doesn't provide accurate packaging information to Valpak	\$500

Cost of Quality levies

In addition, the table below sets out further associated costs and situations.

	Subject	Rationale	Cost
1	Delivery is not as per the PO quantity	The levy will be raised when a product delivery doesn't match the information provided on the original PO.	\$200 per a purchase order. We may, at our discretion, accept the stock, or request collection by the supp
2	Booking Conformance	A levy will be charged if Goods in diary booking adherence is different to what is submitted.	\$200 Per delivery bookin
3	Product return to supplier (RTS) - Failure to collect	Cost to business in the terms of dead storage space. We'll allow an initial period of 5 working days from notification of RTS before we apply charges. After 30 days, we'll deem the products as abandoned and dispose of them as we see fit, without liability to you.	\$10 per pallet per day, including weekends, from day 6 (or date agreed with Supply Chain) to actual collection date
4	Unsafe Pallet	A levy will be charged to recover costs due to workload addressing Unsafe or non specified pallets.	\$250 per pallet
5	Unsafe Load	A levy will be charged following any assessment of an unsafe load.	\$1000 per load
6	Date Sensitive - Under 80% product life remaining	Consignment will be rejected at point of delivery if goods are found to not have in excess of 80% of life remaining.	\$250 + \$50 per additional pallet
7	Artwork / Labelling	Costs associated to any delivery not conforming to the pallet labelling requirements.	\$250 per pallet

What are our requirements for stock presentation?



Pallet Specifications & Condition

- **Standard Size:** Must be 1200mm x 1000mm or 1000mm x 1000mm with a full perimeter base and 4-way entry.
- **Capacity:** Minimum 1-tonne single lift capability.
- **Condition:** Pallets must be dry, undamaged, and signed off by the receiving warehouse/Omega North Operations in advance.
- **Stability:** Goods must be securely shrink-wrapped with **zero overhang**. Suppliers will be charged for any re-stacking or rework required by DC staff.



Stacking & Configuration (Ti-Hi)

- **Data Alignment:** Layer counts (Ti) and stack heights (Hi) must exactly match the attribute data provided in **Pimberly**.
- **Height Limits:** Pallet heights must not breach the specific restrictions of the receiving branch or warehouse.
- **Efficiency:** Full pallet quantities are mandatory whenever possible to optimize transport and storage.



Mixed SKU Management

- **Segmentation:** Avoid mixed pallets where possible. If necessary, each SKU must be grouped together and clearly divided by cardboard or pallets.
- **Labeling:** A prominent "**Mixed Pallet**" label must be applied.
- **Organization:** Cartons of the same SKU must remain together; scattered SKUs across a pallet are not permitted.

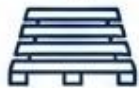


Documentation (Packing Lists)

- **Sequence:** Packing lists must follow the **exact sequence of the Highbourne PO** to allow for efficient tipping.
- **Transparency:** Part-orders must be clearly highlighted on all paperwork.
- **Accessibility:** A full packing list must be attached to the first pallet or handed to the driver.

What are our requirements for stock presentation?

Pallet and Stillages Labelling



- **Visibility:** Labels must be fixed to the **top and sides** of every pallet or stillage.
- **Mandatory Data:** Must include Supplier Name, PO Number, Delivery Note Number, SKU Code/Description, and accurate Quantity.
- **Safety & Compliance:** Include weight (kg), expiry dates, and relevant certifications (e.g., **FSC® / PEFC™**).
- **Barcoding:** Every label must feature a **working, scannable barcode**.
- **Warnings:** Clear markers for **Heavy (15kg+)**, **Fragile**, or **Chemical** contents.

Carton Standards



- **Product Protection:** Goods must be securely buffered within cartons to prevent transit damage.
- **Zero Tolerance for Mixed Cartons:** We **cannot accept** cartons containing mixed SKUs; these will be rejected immediately.
- **Labeling:** All sides and the top must show the SKU, description, and unit quantity.

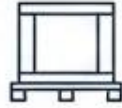
Linear Products (Tubes and Pipes)



- **Mechanical Unloading:** Tubes must be delivered on equipment (pallets/stillages) that allows for standard mechanical handling.
- **Safety Permits:** Manual unloading is **strictly prohibited** unless a specific "Permit to Work" has been issued.
- **Vehicle Requirements:** Deliveries must be on **flatbed trailers** with side pins for volume stability.
- **Weather Protection:** Loads must be **fully sheeted**. We will refuse any un-sheeted delivery to protect product integrity.
- **Layering:** All layers must be separated by both **horizontal and vertical bearers** to ensure stability and safe mechanical lifting.
- **Identification:** Products must be **externally varnished** and clearly **color-banded** at both ends for rapid identification in the warehouse.
- **Bundling:** Tubes must be supplied in bundles as per the PO, with a strict **maximum weight of 2 tonnes** per bundle.
- **Length Restrictions:** Any product exceeding standard pallet length must be pre-approved by your commercial contact to ensure our fleet and DCs can handle it.

What are our requirements for stock presentation?

Oversize Product Management



- **Definition:** Any item exceeding standard UK pallet dimensions (1200mm x 1000mm).
- **Equipment Approval:** Before the first delivery, your specific delivery equipment (e.g., bespoke large pallets) must be evaluated and approved by the Supply Chain Planner.
- **Integrity:** Oversize pallets must have a full perimeter base and dimensions sufficient to ensure **zero product overhang**.

Standardized Labeling Summary



To ensure "Right First Time" intake, every pallet, bundle, or carton must include:

- Supplier Name
- SKU / Product Code & Description
- PO Number
- Unit Quantity (Items per pallet/carton/bundle)

Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

Volumetric and packaging formations are crucial for planning branch layouts, allocating space for thousands of stocked products, and determining display stock based on minimum order quantities and pack volumes.

Volumetric data optimizes merchandising beyond just storage capacity.

When reviewing ranges, we must create ideal product promotion space. Product appearance, pack hanging, and displaying features/benefits guide customer decisions and drive sales.

Single Item (1 level of packaging)

A single product item may be merchandised in many different ways. It does not matter if the product comes in a box, bag, shrink wrapped plastic, vacuum formed plastic hanger or loose. The SINGLE (SGL) is defined as the smallest possible selling unit.

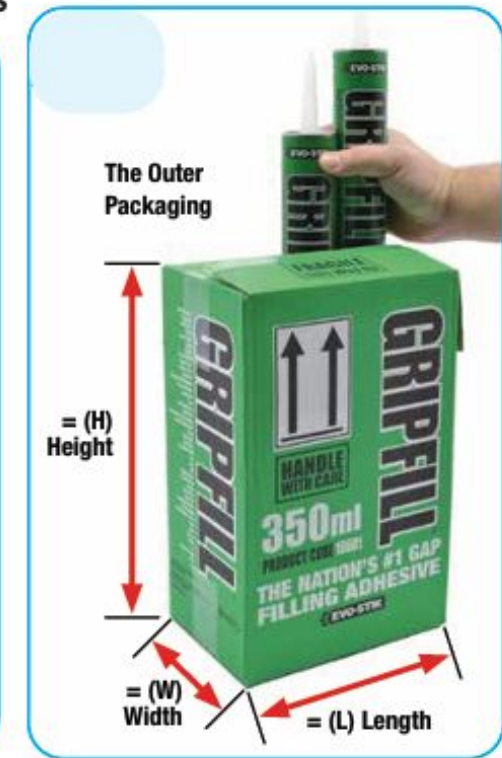
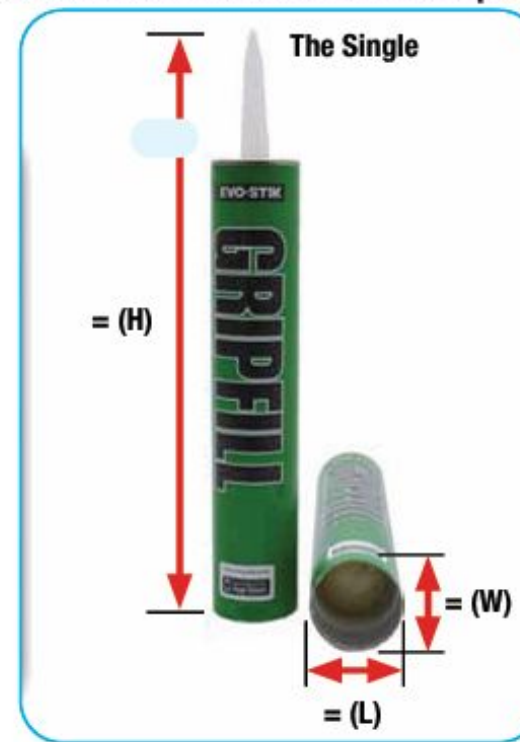


All dimensions must be supplied in Millimetres

Outer – single item distributed within a case of multiples (2 levels of packaging)

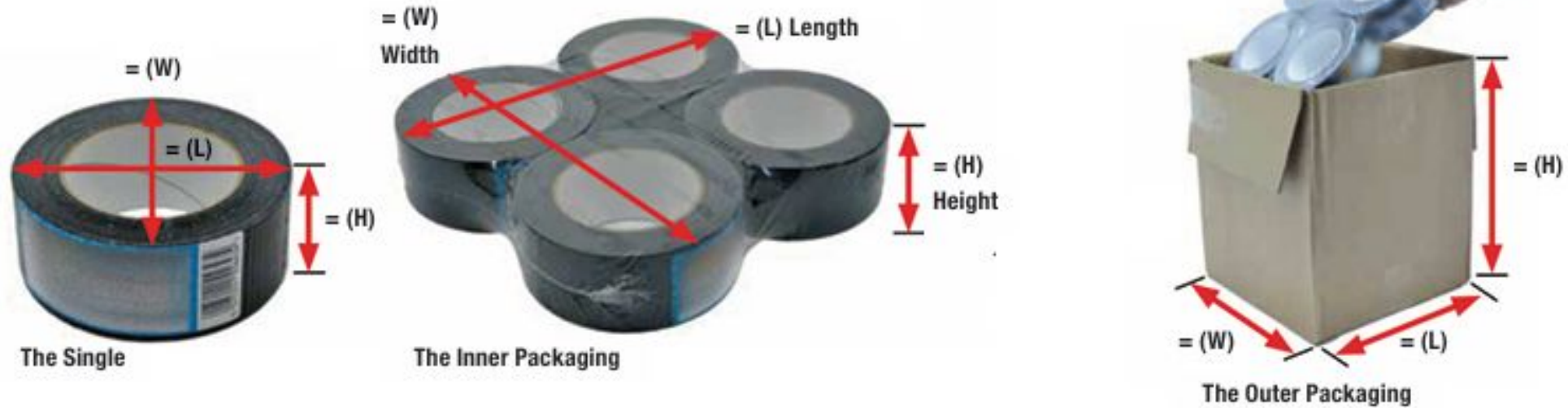
This can be defined as a box, shrink wrapped bundle, any container that can hold multiple SINGLE (SGL) products.

Referred to as OUTER packaging. There may be occurrences where this OUTER packaging forms the minimum selling quantity from your business to CPS. True OUTER packaging is where products can be broken out into singles for sale.



Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

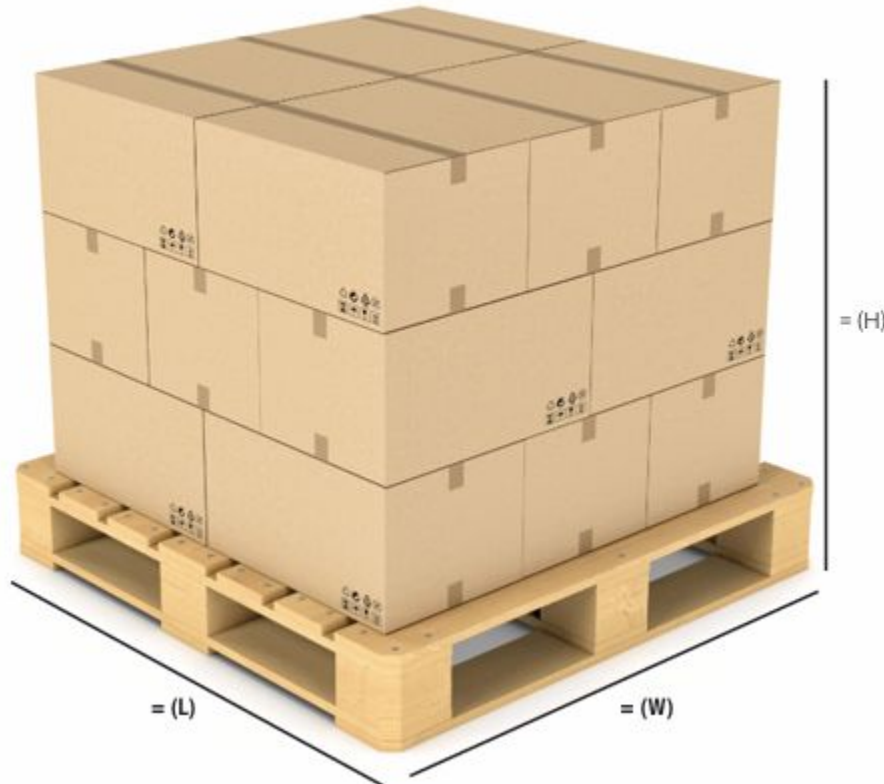
Inner – where there is an additional level of packaging within an 'Outer'
(3 levels of packaging)



A minimum order quantity from manufacturer to supplier, or a product's physical size may determine how products are packed. If your product is delivered in multiple levels of packaging, we need to understand the packaging dimensions of each layer. Inner packaging is defined as a Single product packaged in a container with other singles, then packaged within a outer case.

Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

The Palletised Product – Individual & Multiples (All packaging levels)



The palletised product is the top level of volumetric measurements. So if your product comes in bulk it may appear on a pallet. Differing product sizes will determine how a pallet is stacked and we need to identify how many product TIERS by product HEIGHTS. Pallets may include SINGLE, Multiple SINGLES or OUTER packaged products.

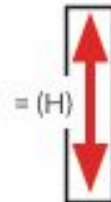
Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

The Single / Outer



When measuring dimensions of the Palletised product remember to include the actual pallet in the final measurements.

All pallets with stack able products must not exceed 1200mm in height.



Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

The Palletised Product – Tiers & Height (All packaging levels)



To calculate the product capacity on each pallet we need to understand Tiers and Heights.

Pallet TIER (TI) is equal the number of Singles/Outer product on each pallet layer. Pallet HEIGHT (HI) is equal to the number of product layers on the pallet.

This example shows a pallet of 'Singles'.

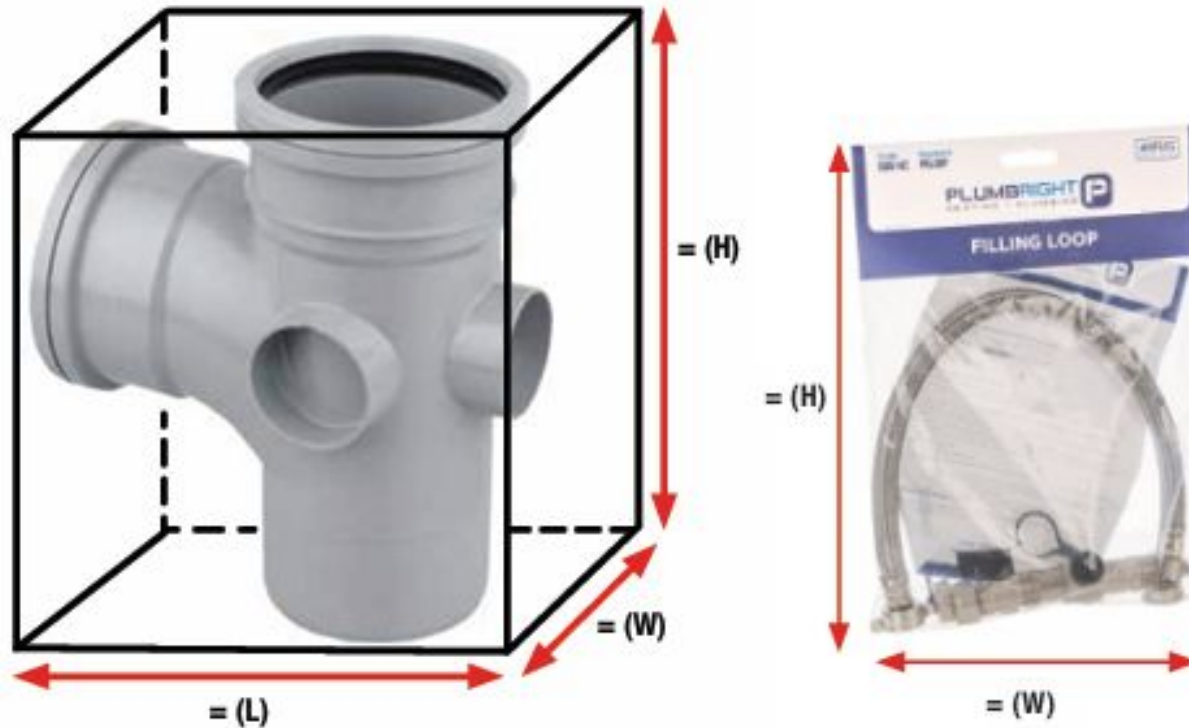
Each Tier contains 6 boxes: $TI = 6$

This pallet is 3 tiers high: $HI = 3$

To calculate correct TI/Hi count the total outermost packaging layer.

Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

Products in all shapes & sizes
(Acceptable tolerances)

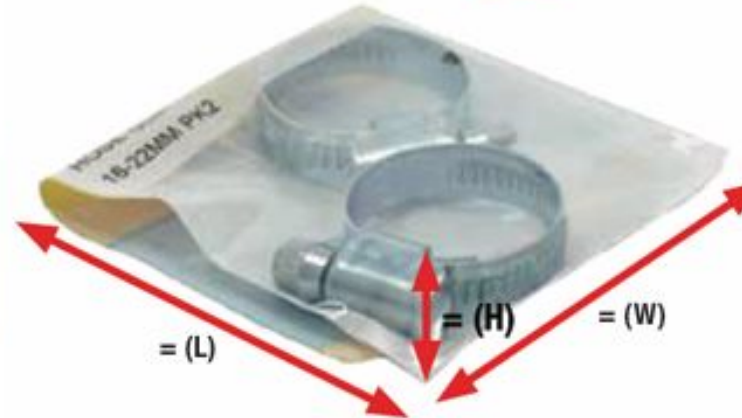
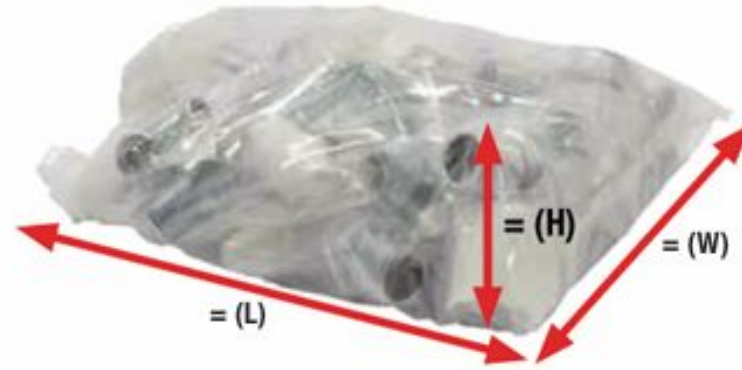


Unfortunately not all products are a cuboid shape, packed into boxes or stack equally. To define the “best” volumetric measurements for varying shaped products, assume the product is a cube, measuring out to the furthest L x H x W.

The final figure will be an over estimation, including dead space around the product, but is an acceptable tolerance when load planning, warehousing and merchandising products.

Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

The bagged product
(Acceptable tolerances)

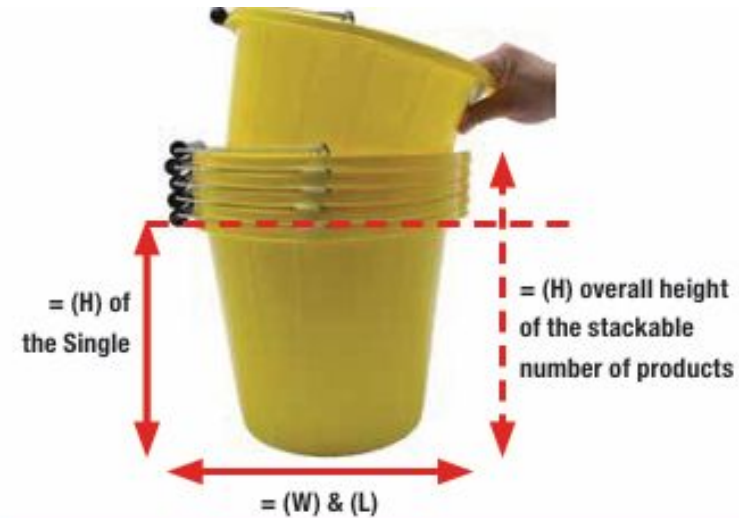
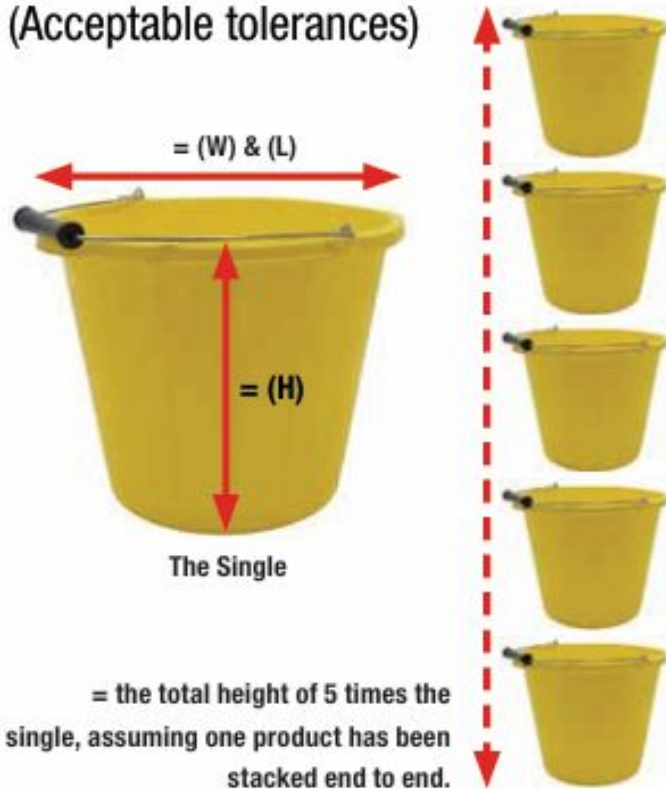


With bagged products coming in all shapes and sizes there is a high chance product will shift in the packaging causing a problem in obtaining correct volumetric data. As a rule try to obtain an optimum measurement by evenly distributing the product around the bag, fold over any loose packaging and where applicable, push down on the product ensuring tighter packaging. Take measurements as demonstrated.

Volumetric Data: From Supply Chain to Sales

The stackable product
(Acceptable tolerances)

(Acceptable tolerances)



The definition of a stackable product is not an item that is stacked one on top of one another, but a product that stacks inside each other. Take for example: bins, buckets, tubs and baths. These may be transported in multiple quantities (stacked inside one another) this will mean the dimensions and volumetric data of all stacked products will be much less than that of the same product stacked end to end. This is an acceptable tolerance as long as the product has been identified as 'stackable'.

VOLUMETRIC DATA: FROM SUPPLY CHAIN TO SALES

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



What unit of measurement do I use?

We require all measurements to be submitted in millimetres (mm).



How do I identify dimensions?

Assign a default front side. Orientate your product dependent on how it would be transported.



How do I send this data?

Submit at point of product creation via your commercial contact as per our New Product Introduction process.



What if my product / pack size changes?

- For promotions (e.g., 50% extra free), set up as a separate SKU with volumetric data.
- For size changes superseding legacy products, follow New Product Process.
- For buying quantity promotions (larger INNER/OUTER/PALLET), send refreshed volumetric data for affected levels. Packed pallets must not exceed 1.2m High or contain mixed products.
- Contact Data Management Team:
phdatamanagement@cityplumbing.co.uk, Tel: +44 (0)1788 52770.

Pallet Conformity

Pallets must be either:

1200 x 1000mm or 1000mm x 1000mm Standard Pallet with 4 way entry and full perimeter base.
Stamped Euro pallets (EPAL) 1200 x 800mm.

Grade 1



CHEP



IPP



A-Frame Pallet

A-Frames must meet our specification, please contact omegagc@cityplumbing.co.uk to get further details.



Unacceptable:

- Damaged
- Missing slats
- Missing supports
- Gross weight over 1000kg

