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# LETTERS

## **RJC Certification is good for any business**

The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) Certification, in simple terms, is a process whereby you hold your business up to a series of ethical, social and environmental standards and human rights, laid out in the documentation.

This includes not only chain of custody stuff, such as your procedures on training staff on conflict diamonds and ensuring you aren't using diamonds from outside the Kimberley Process, but a broad range of other things too. For example, whether you are fully complying with UK employment and health

and safety law. You are independently audited and, if successful, receive certification.

I thought long and hard about whether my business could afford the man hours to go through the process, but I'm glad we did because we found areas of the business that needed improving, we learnt a lot, and we are now stronger for having done it.

At times it was hard and quite technical because the documentation is difficult to read and non-UK specific, but I wanted to be the first UK small independent to show that it can be done and isn't just for the big boys.

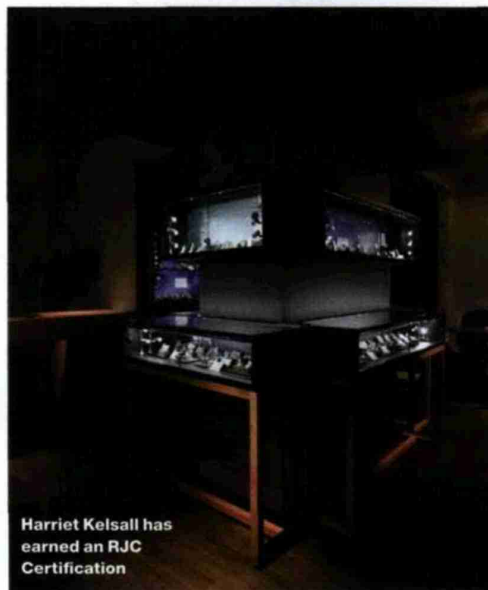
Simon Rainer from the British Jewellers' Association (BJA) has said that once he has a few members keen to go through the certification, the BJA will work on providing tools and guidelines to help them through it.

I would urge other small businesses to contact the BJA and get the ball rolling. In addition, the BJA negotiated a good rate for the auditors, which made going through it very affordable.

I have two overriding reasons for going through this process. Firstly, my business was one of the first 20 jewellers to launch fair trade gold in February. I believe passionately that, while fair trade gold is obviously fantastic, it isn't the full story and much more can be achieved ethically in the industry as a whole. I would hate it if companies stocked fair trade products and left it at that – so much more can and should be done in other areas of the industry.

Secondly, much has been said about RJC Certification being really just about big businesses making themselves feel better about their ethics, but I hope I have proved that this isn't the case. It is good for any business, big or small, to hold their ethical, social and environmental standards and human rights up for independent scrutiny, find

areas that need improving (as we did) and then fix them.  
*Harriet Kelsall, owner of Harriet Kelsall Jewellery Design in Hertfordshire and Cambridge*



Harriet Kelsall has earned an RJC Certification