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Rules of Registration and Use of Domain Names

IMPORTANT: The purpose of this document is to describe the Nominet (UK) ("We", "Our" or "Us") rules for the registration and use of domain names within the *.uk* domain and its sub-domains (the "Rules"). The Rules as amended from time to time form part of our terms and conditions and are part of your contract of registration with us. The terms and conditions are [here](#). Except where otherwise stated in the Rules, the definitions used in the terms and conditions apply to the Rules.

1. Domain Name Definitions

1.1 <internet.co.uk> is a domain name ("Domain Name"). A Domain Name is made up of several levels of domains. In the Domain Name <internet.co.uk> the <.uk> is called the top or first level domain, the <.co> is the second level domain and <internet> is the third level domain. In the Domain Name <fourth.internet.co.uk> the domain <fourth> is called a fourth level domain and <.internet> is a third level domain, <.co> is a second level domain and <.uk> is a top level domain. In these Rules the terms top level domain ("TLD"), second level domain ("SLD") and third level domain ("Third Level Domain") and fourth level domain ("Fourth Level Domain") will be used accordingly (see **Fig 1**).

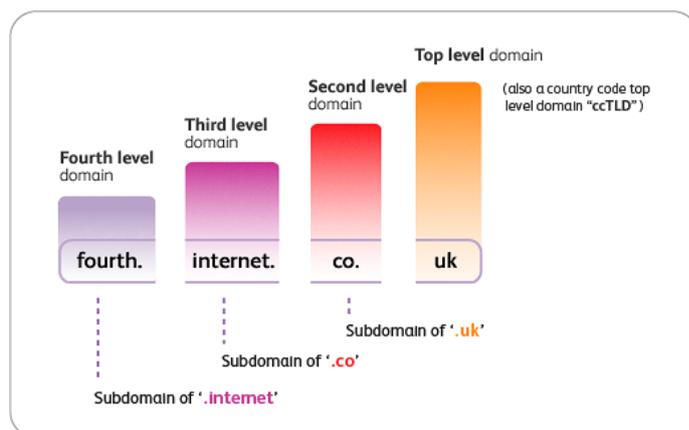


Figure 1.

1.2 The SLD is a sub-domain of the TLD. The Third Level Domain is a sub-domain of the SLD. The Fourth Level Domain is a sub-domain of the Third Level Domain. (see **Fig 1**).

1.3 *.uk* Domain Names can only be registered within a particular SLD. For example the Domain Name internet.co.uk is registered within the .co SLD.

1.4 When an application for registration of a Domain Name is submitted to us by you, or on your behalf, you are an applicant. If your application is successful your Domain Name will be registered by us and you will be the registrant.

2. Registration of Domain Names - SLDs administered by us

2.1 The Rules have been made by us in our capacity as designated manager for the *.uk* TLD with the authority of the UK Internet Community.

2.2 We administer the SLDs within the *.uk* TLD (except for the SLDs listed in Appendix B below) and determine which SLDs are available for registration of a Domain Name within the *.uk* TLD. A list of the SLDs which are administered by us are listed in Appendices A & C below.

2.3 Each application by you for a Domain Name must be an application to register one Third Level Domain within one particular SLD listed in Appendix A.

2.4 Certain organisations have registered Domain Names with us and these organisations may offer to register a Fourth Level Domain for you as a sub-domain of their Domain Name. We do not accept responsibility for any registration of Fourth Level Domains by you with other organisations, nor do we control the naming of these Fourth Level Domains by these Rules or otherwise.

2.5 Each SLD listed in Appendix A has its own specific rules ("SLD Rules"). All of the SLD Rules form part of the Rules. Where there is a conflict between the Rules and the SLD Rules, the SLD Rules take precedence.

2.6 If your application to register a Domain Name within an SLD listed in Appendix A is successful, this in no way entitles you to any right to or registration of any other Domain Name. For example an application to register the Domain Name internet.co.uk will not entitle you to a registration for the Domain Name internet.xyz.co.uk or the Domain Name internet.org.uk.

3. Other SLDs

3.1 The SLDs listed in Appendix B, as amended from time to time, have been delegated to and are administered by other entities as trustees.

3.2 We do not administer the SLDs in Appendix B and therefore do not accept applications for registration of a Domain Name within these SLDs. If you would like to submit an application to register a Domain Name within these SLDs, please click on the appropriate link in Appendix B to access information on and the identity of the administrators of these SLDs.

3.3 Appendix C lists other SLDs administered by us which are reserved for specific purposes.

4. General Rules

4.1 We reserve the right to check your application for compliance with the Rules either before or after your Domain Name is registered or renewed with us.

4.2 We will accept applications which comply with the Rules and register Domain Names on a first come first served basis. This means that, except where set out in the SLD Rules, we will not vet your application to:

1. restrict who may apply for and register Domain Names; or
2. restrict which Domain Names may be held by you; or
3. restrict the number of Domain Names which may be held by you.

4.3 If your application is for a Domain Name which is identical to a Domain Name which has already been registered with us, your application will be rejected. Note that domain names are not case sensitive, so that internet.co.uk is the same as InTeRnEt.co.uk, and accordingly cannot be separately registered. Thus these Rules are drafted on the assumption that all letters are lower case.

4.4 We do not impose restrictions on your status as applicant for the registration of a Domain Name in the following SLDs ("Open SLDs"):

1. 4.4.1 .co.uk; or
2. 4.4.2 .org.uk.

In the SLD Charter of the SLD Rules for the Open SLDs we do set out certain intentions regarding the class of applicant or use of registrations of the Domain Name which we assume you will comply with when applying for a registration of a Domain Name within an Open SLD. However, we do not forbid applications, and will take no action in respect of registrations that do not comply with the SLD Charters. We may request certain information from you regarding your legal identity when you make an application for or seek to amend the registration of a Domain Name in the Open SLDs.

4.5 For any application by you for a Domain Name within the remaining available SLDs listed in Appendix A ("Closed SLDs") we do specify certain criteria in the "Requirements on Applicants" section of the SLD Rules which you must comply with before your application for a Domain Name in a Closed SLD can be accepted by us.

4.6 As set out in our terms and conditions, we may cancel or suspend the registration of a Domain Name if you breach any of the Rules.

4.7 Some Domain Names and SLDs have been allocated to registrants or to other organisations for historical reasons. No change in these rules will affect the validity of a Domain Name registration which was registered before the date of that change unless, in Nominet's sole discretion, technical reasons require that such a change shall effect the validity of an existing Domain Name registration.

5. Restrictions on Domain Names

5.1 If the Third Level Domain in your application does not meet the requirements in this section then your application cannot be accepted by us.

5.2 The Third Level Domain may only contain the following thirty-seven characters ("Characters") or a combination thereof:

5.2.1 the twenty-six unaccented Roman letters (i.e. a-z inclusive);

5.2.2 the ten western digits (i.e. 0-9 inclusive); and

5.2.3 hyphens.

5.3 The first or last Characters of a Third Level Domain may not be a hyphen.

5.4 Nominet does not offer Internationalised Domain Names and so domain names that start with the characters "xn--" (i.e. "xn" followed by two dashes) may not be registered.

5.5 A Third Level Domain may not be one Character long. For example, an application to register l.co.uk or a.co.uk would be rejected.

5.6 For the SLDs co.uk, me.uk, org.uk, and net.uk, a Third Level Domain may not consist of only two letters. For example, an application to register ie.co.uk, -a.co.uk or e-.co.uk would be rejected. For the avoidance of doubt Third Level Domains containing a letter and a number or two numbers are permitted thus 2a.co.uk, a2.co.uk, or 22.co.uk are acceptable.

5.7 Until further notice, the Domain Name (e.g. internet.co.uk) may not be more than sixty-four Characters long in total, including the SLD and TLD. We intend to allow longer domain names, where the third level domain has a maximum of 63 Characters. This change will be brought in when possible and the amended limit shall take effect when announced on Nominet's website.

5.8 For the SLDs co.uk, me.uk, org.uk, and net.uk, a Third Level Domain may not be identical to any existing SLD (as listed in Appendices A, B and C to the Rules), or any SLD under .uk the creation of which has formally been announced by Nominet. For example, an application to register org.co.uk or nhs.co.uk would be rejected.

5.9 For the SLDs co.uk, me.uk, org.uk, and net.uk a Third Level Domain may not be identical to an existing TLD or any TLD the formal approval of which has been announced by ICANN (or any replacement body which controls the creation of new TLDs). For example, an application to register uk.co.uk, eu.org.uk or com.co.uk would be rejected.

6. Appendices

APPENDIX A

Our SLDs (second level domains)

Domain	SLD purpose
co.uk	Commercial entities and purposes
ltd.uk	Private limited companies
me.uk	Personal names
net.uk	Internet Service Providers' infrastructure
org.uk	Not-for-profit entities
plc.uk	Public limited companies

6.2 APPENDIX B

SLDs administered by third-party registrars as trustees.

Domain	SLD expected use
ac.uk	Higher and further education and research institution
gov.uk	National, regional, and local government bodies and agencies
mod.uk and mil.uk	Military and related purposes
nhs.uk	National Health Service
police.uk	Police forces

6.3 APPENDIX C

SLDs which are operated by Nominet but for restricted use.

Domain	SLD expected use
nic.uk	Network use only
sch.uk	Schools

7. Specific Rules for registration in the .co.uk SLD

7.1 Introduction

These are the specific rules for the .co.uk SLD, administered directly by us. They form part of and, in the case of conflict, take precedence over the Rules.

7.2. SLD Charter

Domain Names registered in the .co.uk SLD are intended to be used for commercial purposes, and the Third Level Domains are intended to reflect and be related to these purposes.

8. Specific Rules for registration in the .org.uk SLD

8.1 Introduction

These are the specific rules for the .org.uk SLD, administered directly by us. They form part of and, in the case of conflict, take precedence over the Rules.

8.2. SLD Charter

Registrants in .org.uk are intended to be not-for-profit or public service enterprises, and a Third Level Domain within this SLD is intended to be related to these enterprises and their activities. These may include, as non-exhaustive examples, charities, trades unions, political parties, community groups, educational councils, and professional institutions.

9. Specific rules for the .me.uk SLD

9.1 Introduction

These are the specific rules for the .me.uk SLD, administered directly by us. They form part of and, in the case of conflict, take precedence over the Rules.

9.2 Charter

The .me.uk SLD is intended to provide a personal namespace within the .uk Top Level Domain. Unless Rules 9.4 or 9.5 apply, registrants of .me.uk domain names must be, and remain at all times, natural persons (a "qualifying person"), and shall not be recorded on the register as being the agent, trustee, proxy or representative for any person or entity (whether having an individual legal personality or not) which is not a qualifying person.

9.3 No actions unless in accordance with the Charter

Unless Rules 9.4 or 9.5 apply, no registration, transfer, renewal or change may be requested to a .me.uk domain name which would be in breach of Rule 9.2, and any such request may be rejected. If, despite the previous sentence, such an action is requested and does occur, Nominet may reverse that action at any time in addition to any other rights Nominet may have by contract or otherwise.

9.4 Charter

9.4.1 Where, as the result of the DRS or judicial proceedings (of relevant jurisdiction) a .me.uk domain name is to be transferred to a person who would not qualify under Rule 9.2 (the "transferee"), the transfer to, and continued registration by, the transferee shall be permitted provided that no use is made of that .me.uk domain name for any purpose, for so long as the transferee holds the domain name.

9.4.2 To prevent a breach of Rule 9.4.1, Nominet may put the domain name into a special status e.g. by blocking the entry of any nameservers onto the record for that domain.

9.4.3 The transferee under clause 9.4.1 will be able to transfer the domain name to a qualifying person, in which case the specific restrictions imposed under this Rule 9.4 will cease to apply.

9.5 Transitional Arrangements

As a transitional measure, any .me.uk domain name registered before 25 October 2004 will not be subject to Rules 9.2 and 9.3 until it is next transferred or cancelled.

10. Specific rules for the .ltd.uk and .plc.uk SLDs

10.1. Introduction

These are the specific rules for the .ltd.uk and .plc.uk SLDs, administered directly by us. They form part of and, in the case of conflict, take precedence over the Rules.

10.2. Requirements on Applicants

10.2.1. No Third Level Domain shall be registered in either the .ltd.uk or .plc.uk SLD unless all the requirements of this section are met.

10.2.2. All registrants in .ltd.uk and .plc.uk must be incorporated companies (not partnerships of any type or unincorporated companies) listed on the index of company and corporate names ('the Names Register') maintained under section 714 of the Companies Act 1985 (or later equivalents); and

10.2.2.1. (for .ltd.uk domains) must be entitled to use 'Limited', 'cyfyngedig', 'ltd.' or 'cyf'. in their corporate name; or

10.2.2.2. (for .plc.uk domains) must be entitled to use 'Public Limited Company', 'Cwmni cyfyngedig cyhoeddus', 'Plc.' or 'ccc'. in their corporate name.

10.2.3.1. is a company of the appropriate type for the SLD; and

10.2.3.2. is not already the registrant of a Domain Name in that SLD.

10.2.4 No Domain Name shall be registered in either .ltd.uk or .plc.uk SLD unless the Third Level Domain can be derived from the official company name of the applicant using the algorithm in Clause 10.3 below. If the algorithm of Clause 10.3 below does not generate a name permitted by the Rules, your application to register a Domain Name within the .ltd.uk or .plc.uk SLDs will be refused.

10.2.5 Applications for Domain Names in the .ltd.uk and .plc.uk SLDs must state the full name of the company as registered and the company registration number, and the applicant must be prepared to provide proof of the company's incorporation.

10.2.6 If we become aware that the registrant company has changed its name, been dissolved, or otherwise removed from the list of active names on the Names Register, we may transfer, cancel, suspend or amend the Domain Name in accordance with our terms and conditions and by sending a notice in writing to the last known registered office of the company, or without notice if the registrant company has been removed from the list of active names on the Names Register.

10.3. Selection of Domain Name

10.3.1. The following algorithm is intended to assist you to convert your company name to a Domain Name capable of registration within either the .ltd.uk or .plc.uk. The steps must be carried out in the order given. All steps must be carried out, but some steps give the option of making no change. This algorithm is not guaranteed to generate a Domain Name capable of registration with us, i.e. the algorithm may only produce a name which is still in an inappropriate format or has already been registered, and in these cases the name will not be registered to your company.

10.3.2. The following terms or abbreviations are removed from the end of the company's name:

- o limited
- o public limited company
- o cyfyngedig
- o cwmni cyfyngedig cyhoeddus
- o ltd
- o plc
- o cyf
- o ccc

10.3.3. Each occurrence of the characters "&" and "+" is replaced by (the separate word) "and"

10.3.4. All punctuation marks are removed, including the following

- apostrophe
- quotation marks
- commas, full stops, colons, and semicolons
- exclamation, question, number, and currency marks
- parentheses, (square) brackets, and braces

10.3.5. Remove any marks on or around the letters, for example accents, leaving only the "base letter", i.e. the letter without any marks in or around the letter.

10.3.6. If at this point the name contains only spaces, no Domain Name capable of registration with us may be derived. Otherwise the remaining steps in this Clause 10.3 are to be carried out.

10.3.7. If the company name begins with any of the following words or phrases, they may be removed:

- the

For the avoidance of doubt, this is done once only.

10.3.8. If the company name ends with any of the following words or phrases, they may be removed:

- company
- cwmni
- and company
- a'r cwmni

and any abbreviation of these (such as "co", "and co", or "cpy")

For the avoidance of doubt, this is done once only.

10.3.9. All spaces at the beginning and end of the Third Level Domain are removed and the gaps between words in the Third Level Domain are reduced (if applicable) to single spacing.

10.3.10. All remaining spaces must either be removed or changed to hyphens (one hyphen per continuous string of spaces). The remaining Third Level Domain must be compatible with section 5.2 of the Rules. For the avoidance of doubt the restrictions in sections 5.5 and 5.6 do not apply to .ltd.uk or .plc.uk domains, provided that there is at least one number or letter (but no hyphens) in the name.

11. Specific rules for the .net.uk SLD

11.1 Introduction

These are the specific rules for the .net.uk SLD, administered directly by us. They form part of and, in the case of conflict, take precedence over the Rules.

11.2 Requirements on Applicants

11.2.1. This SLD is reserved for the computers of network providers, that is the network information centre (NIC) and network operation centre (NOC) computers, the administrative computers, and the network node computers.

11.2.2. Registrants in the .net.uk SLD are required to be Internet Service Providers. Notwithstanding the Rules, no Domain Name shall be registered in this SLD unless, in our reasonable opinion, the applicant is an Internet Service Provider and the Domain Name registered is the same as or a similar variant of the applicant's name.

11.2.3. Without prejudice to any other test that we may apply, the applicant shall only be deemed to be an Internet Service Provider if:

11.2.3.1 the applicant is either:

- a company listed on the Register of Companies at Companies House in Great Britain under the Companies Act 1985 as amended from time to time or on the Register of Companies at the Northern Ireland Companies Registry under the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 as amended from time to time; or
- a partnership as defined by the Partnership Act 1890, Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000 or a sole trader; or
- a United Kingdom government department, local government body, or associated government funded organisation; or
- a recognised academic institution geographically located in the United Kingdom; or
- a Charity on the Register of Charities at the Charity Commission in the United Kingdom;

11.2.3.2 AND the applicant either:

- is listed as a local internet protocol (IP) address registry with a regional IP address registry; or
- has an Autonomous System containing hosts in the United Kingdom that is listed with a regional IP address registry and that is
- continuously or at all reasonable times reachable from major Internet exchange points.

11.2.4 Any Domain Name registered in .net.uk may only be used in the manner set out in this Clause, and we may suspend or cancel the registration if we believe it is not being so used, in accordance with the termination provisions set out in our terms and conditions.

11.2.5 The Domain Name must not be used in connection with any service provided by the registrant on behalf of any other entity. For example, the Domain Name must not be used as part of another entity's e-mail address or URL.