

ltd.uk and plc.uk rules

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1. Introduction

In this paper, **xyzyy**, **XYZZY Ltd.**, and all similar forms are used as example names. At this date there is no such company in the Companies House register.

This paper mostly talks about the **ltd.uk** SLD. The rules for **plc.uk** are the same except for the second level label and the class of company it applies to, and all comments and proposals are intended to apply equally to both SLDs even when the latter is not explicitly mentioned.

2. History

The aim behind the creation of the **ltd.uk** SLD was to ensure that all businesses could get a domain name representing their name. There had been examples where **XYZZY Ltd.** had been unable to register **xyzyy.co.uk** because someone else already had it and could claim that the NIC¹ was preventing them from trading on the Internet in their own name. It was felt that there should be a way for any business to get a descriptive name. This is, of course, impractical as stated. However, all businesses of any reasonable size are limited companies and, as a result, have a unique name. Therefore it was practical to guarantee every limited company a unique domain name based on its company name. Of course, if the company actually traded under a completely different name, this would not necessarily be a great help, but that was felt to be outwith the scope of the issue.

The principles behind the **ltd.uk** SLD were therefore set up as:

1. Every limited company should have a name within the SLD.
2. Every limited company should only have one name within the SLD.
3. That name should relate to its company name in an obvious way.
4. There should never be a dispute between two companies as to which had a particular name.
5. As a corollary, there should be a clear mapping from any **ltd.uk** domain name to the name of the company it belongs to.

The basic principle followed was that the company name, minus the trailing “limited”, should convert directly to the domain name, so that **XYZZY Ltd.** becomes **xyzyy.ltd.uk**.² Where there is a space in the name, this could either be omitted or converted to a hyphen (so **XY ZZY Ltd.** has a choice of **xyzyy.ltd.uk** and **xy-zzy.ltd.uk**, whichever it feels best fits its trading style). When it came to the consideration of punctuation marks, guidance was taken from the Companies Act 1985:

“26(1)(c) which is the same as a name appearing in the registrar’s index of company names;
[...](3) In determining for purposes of subsection (1)(c) whether one name is the same as another, there are to be disregarded –

- (a) the definite article, where it is the first word of the name;
- (b) the following words and expressions where they appear at the end of the name, that is to say –

“company” or its Welsh equivalent (“cwmni”),
 “and company” or its Welsh equivalent (“a’r cwmni”),
 “company limited” or its Welsh equivalent (“cwmni cyfyngedig”),
 “and company limited” or its Welsh equivalent (“a’r cwmni cyfyngedig”),
 “limited” or its Welsh equivalent (“cyfyngedig”),
 “unlimited” or its Welsh equivalent (“anghyfyngedig”), F3. . .
 “public limited company” or its Welsh equivalent (“cwmni cyfyngedig cyhoeddus”);

¹ This predates Nominet.

² Note that principle 1 is already breached, since a company name may contain more than 63 letters and digits while a domain name label cannot.

“investment company with variable capital” or its Welsh equivalent (“cwmni buddsoddi â chyfalaf ewidiol”);
and “open-ended investment company” or its Welsh equivalent (“cwmni buddsoddiant penagored”);

- (c) abbreviations of any of those words or expressions where they appear at the end of the name; and
- (d) (d) type and case of letters, accents, spaces between letters and punctuation marks; and “and” and “&” are to be taken as the same.

These rules effectively say that only one of the following companies can exist at a time:

XYZZY Ltd.
XYZ (ZY) Ltd.
The XYZZY Limited
The XYZ ZY and company limited
X.Y.(zz-) cyfyngedig

These rules were mapped into the **ltd.uk** rules on the following general basis:

- The terms that are disregarded in 26(3)(a) to (c) may be either omitted or retained.
- Case of letters is ignored (as it already is in domain names).
- Accents and punctuation marks are omitted.
- Spaces may be omitted or replaced by hyphens.
- “&” is to be treated as “and”.
- and can be seen in section 10.3 of the present Rules of Registration.

For example, **The XYZ (ZY) Limited** is entitled to any of (but only one of) the following names:

the-xyz-zy.ltd.uk
the-xyzy.ltd.uk
thexyz-zy.ltd.uk
thexyzy.ltd.uk
xyz-zy.ltd.uk
xyzy.ltd.uk

When the rules were written, it was thought that there would be no other company that would be entitled to any of those names.

3. The May PAB paper

The May PAB paper identified two issues with the rules. Firstly, that a company is entitled to a choice of names, and secondly, that some company names contain characters (notably @, /, and \) that are not in the DNS but that Companies House treats as significant³.

The first issue is easy to deal with. It was always the intention that the algorithm could produce more than one result and, when it does, companies be given a choice of the resulting names. For example, a company formally known as **The XYZZY Company Limited** might trade on that full name and so want to be **the-xyzy-co.ltd.uk**, but on the other hand it might prefer to appear on the Internet simply as **xyzy.ltd.uk**. Since there is no risk of confusion, there seemed no harm in allowing the choice. This paper does not propose any change to this.

The second issue is rather harder. The problem occurs because **XYZZY Ltd** and **@XYZZY Ltd** are separate and legal company names. Which of them should be entitled to the name **xyzy.ltd.uk**? Furthermore, if a member of the public sees this name, which company will they think it belongs to? If they think it's **XYZZY Ltd** but the name is actually held by **@XYZZY Ltd**, will this constitute misleading trading? If so, will Nominet be liable for abetting it?⁴

³ Although the May paper mentions /, the Companies House register sorts names beginning Z/YEN as if they began ZYEN and the / was a punctuation mark. Similarly, ABC/ASSOCIATED TAXIS LIMITED comes between ABC ASSIGNMENTS LIMITED and ABC ASSOCIATES LIMITED. I have not been able to find a company with / in its name.

⁴ At the time the rules were first being written, it was originally intended to put all companies (limited, plc, royal charter, and others) into a single **ltd.uk** SLD. However, Nominet's legal advice at the time was that **XYZZY plc** could not legally use a **ltd.uk** name (or vice versa) and Nominet might be liable unless there were separate SLDs.

Even if Nominet is not liable, it is established policy not to allow the registry to be used in contradiction of legislation relating to public perceptions of businesses⁵, and so it should be policy that the domain name reflects the company name and not the name of a different company.

At the time the rules were first being discussed, in 1995-6, part of the proposed wording was:

If the name contains any character not in the allowable set but which is treated by Companies House as significant, it will not be allocated a name in this zone.

I have not been able to determine whether these words ever made it into the final rules in this form and, if so, when they changed. However, the existing rules do say:

10.2.4 [...] 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.

10.3.10 [...] The remaining Third Level Domain must be compatible with section 5.2 of the Rules.

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.

This appears to me to envisage the possibility that a company name would contain a character that is both significant and not allowed in domain names and that, in this case, there would be no ltd.uk name available to the company.

However, the Nominet Executive took a different view on this. They treated the @ sign as being a punctuation mark and therefore removed by the algorithm. This contradicts the position of Companies House (if they viewed @ as a punctuation mark, it would not be possible for two company names to differ only by an @ and this problem would not exist). The Executive are applying a "first come first served" rule to these conflicts. I am not aware of any of these names having come to a formal DRS decision.

4. Related problems

Though it does not appear to have become visible yet, there is a further problem with the existing rules compared with Companies House practice. The rules are explicit (rule 10.3.4 fourth bullet) that currency marks are treated as punctuation and deleted from company names, yet Companies House appears to take the view that they are separate characters to be treated as equivalent to words: £ is positioned in the register of companies as if it were POUND⁶, \$ as DOLLAR⁷

5. The .eu sunrise

The .eu "sunrise" period apparently treated characters like @ as punctuation when determining which trademarks were valid. However, .eu was operating under a specific legal regime that does not apply within the UK and it does not seem to have done this consistently⁸. Furthermore, it is clear that Companies House practice – and the proposed Regulations – differs significantly in that these are *not* punctuation characters. Therefore .eu does not provide a useful precedent for this.

6. Suggested solutions

It has been suggested that @ be converted to AT or ATSIGN, in the same way as & is converted to AND. The problem with this is that it doesn't match the legal situation or Companies House practice and so simply shifts the problem elsewhere without solving it. While &XYZZY Ltd is treated as equivalent to ANDXYZZY Ltd, it is quite possible to have both @XYZZY Ltd and ATXYZZY Ltd (and ATSIGNXYZZY Ltd) at the same time.

⁵ The stated policy reason for requiring all non-individuals to give their full contact details in the public WHOIS is that the Electronic Commerce Directive requires businesses using electronic commerce to publish these details. This is an example of Nominet choosing to enforce a requirement on a business where it is not required to.

⁶ £ASY CLAIMS LTD comes between POUND ARTS and POUND AVENUE.

⁷ Curiously, \$ LIMITED and DOLLAR LIMITED are separate companies, though they have the same registered office.

⁸ Apparently "Frank&furt" was not accepted as a valid trademark for frankfurt.eu, but "Oxf&Ord" was accepted as valid for oxford.eu.

Policy aims

As can be seen, the five original policy aims of the ltd.uk SLD turn out to be mutually contradictory and, therefore, they need to be revisited. There should be a clear formal policy for this SLD that the rules are designed to meet, rather than the other way round.

Proposal A

The policy underpinning the ltd.uk and plc.uk SLDs is:

- Only limited companies should be able to have names in these SLDs (with the type of company determining which of the two SLDs it uses).
- There should be a clear and obvious relationship between the name of a limited company and its domain name, so that anyone seeing the name can determine which company it is. This should be algorithmic rather than requiring human judgement.
- There should never be the possibility that two different companies could be entitled to the same name.
- A company should be limited to a single domain name within these SLDs.
- So long as it does not breach the above policy points, where there are cosmetic variations possible in a domain name (e.g. inclusion or omission of hyphens), the company rather than Nominet should have the choice of which exact variation is adopted.

The most important implication of these policy aims is, of course, that where two company names differ only in (say) an @ sign – even if only one of the two exists at the time – only the one without that sign can register in the ltd.uk SLD.

Companies Act 2006

The experience with @ has shown that it is very important for the ltd.uk rules to keep up with changes in legislation and practice at Companies House. Indeed, it was originally expected that the rules would change to match such changes.

A major change in this area has come with the Companies Act 2006. This repeals section 26 of the 1985 act (quoted above) and replaces it with:

57 Permitted characters etc

- (1) The Secretary of State may make provision by regulations –
 - (a) as to the letters or other characters, signs or symbols (including accents and other diacritical marks) and punctuation that may be used in the name of a company registered under this Act; and
 - (b) specifying a standard style or format for the name of a company for the purposes of registration.
- (2) The regulations may prohibit the use of specified characters, signs or symbols when appearing in a specified position (in particular, at the beginning of a name).
- (3) A company may not be registered under this Act by a name that consists of or includes anything that is not permitted in accordance with regulations under this section.

[...]

and..

66 Name not to be the same as another in the index

- (1) A company must not be registered under this Act by a name that is the same as another name appearing in the registrar's index of company names.
- (2) The Secretary of State may make provision by regulations supplementing this section.
- (3) The regulations may make provision –
 - (a) as to matters that are to be disregarded, and
 - (b) as to words, expressions, signs or symbols that are, or are not, to be regarded as the same, for the purposes of this section.
- (4) The regulations may provide –
 - (a) that registration by a name that would otherwise be prohibited under this section is permitted -

- (i) in specified circumstances, or
 - (ii) with specified consent, and
- (b) that if those circumstances obtain or that consent is given at the time a company is registered by a name, a subsequent change of circumstances or withdrawal of consent does not affect the registration.

The implications here are that the rules are likely to change *and* could change again with relatively little notice.

Draft regulations under the 2006 Act are available at <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file45531.doc> and summarised in Annex 1. Assuming these pass without further alteration, they change the situation quite a lot. For example, / and \ are clearly specified as punctuation marks, £ and = (along with others) appear as characters valid in names, and “2” and “too” are now specified as equivalent. Most usefully, every character that is permitted in a name either:

is a Latin letter or digit;

has a textual equivalent (e.g. “€” and “euro”); or

is punctuation that is ignored in determining equivalence of names.

Unfortunately, this is not quite sufficient: while **XYZZY % Ltd** (with spaces), **XYZZY Percent Ltd**, and **XYZZYPERCENT Ltd** are all equivalent, **XYZZY% Ltd** (with no space before the %) is a separate name to all of them.

Proposal B

Nominet should lobby BERR to have the proposed Regulations changed so that every legal company name has an equivalent that uses only letters and digits.

Annex 2 contains a suggested set of rules based on these Regulations, assuming that they are changed to address the above problem.

Proposal C

The Executive should monitor changes to the Companies Act, associated Regulations, and Companies House practice and – via the PAB – propose changes to the ltd.uk and plc.uk rules to remain in step with them.

S.66(4) names

S.66(4) of the new Act, and the proposed Regulation 7, allows two companies to have names that are considered equivalent provided they belong to the same group of companies and the other company consents – later withdrawal of that consent does not affect the situation. The rules will need to allow for this case. Since the companies already have to discuss this with each other, this could easily be extended to cover the ltd.uk domain name.

Proposal D

Where a company X has a similar name to a company Y under the proposed new Regulations, then one of the following shall apply:

- if company Y already has a ltd.uk domain name, company X shall choose a different ltd.uk domain name that nonetheless conforms to the relevant rules;
- company X shall choose a ltd.uk domain name that company Y would not be able to choose under the rules; or
- company Y shall explicitly consent to the choice of name.

Transitional issues

Until the rules are changed, there is a problem with companies whose names contain characters not permitted in the DNS and who wish to register a domain name. Registration of such names is currently suspended.

Proposal E

Until new rules are put in place to match the new Regulations, it should not be possible to register names based on company names containing characters not in the DNS.

Where a company was registered before the new Regulations came into effect, it could have a name which would be “too similar” to another under them but was acceptable under the 1985 Act and Companies House practice. For example, @ XYZZY Ltd and A.T.XYZZY Ltd are acceptably different at present but would not be under the Regulations; conversely, XYZZY & Co Ltd and XYZZY Company Ltd are currently treated as equivalent but could be separate companies under the Regulations.⁹ Or it could have a name which is treated differently under the old rules;

⁹ This may be an oversight in the Regulations, but while “co” is still a suffix ignored when comparing names, “and co” is not.

for example, £XYZZY Ltd would be entitled to xyzyzyltd.uk under the old rules, but (probably) poundxyzyzyltd.uk under the new ones.

Proposal F

Where a company either has a name containing a non-alphanumeric character, or chooses to omit part of its name when converting the company name to an ltd.uk domain name, it shall certify that:

- there is no other company that could be entitled to the resulting domain name;
- any other company that could be entitled to the resulting domain name already has a different ltd.uk domain name; or
- any other company that could be entitled to the resulting domain name has agreed to the application; and it shall be responsible for any error or false statement.

Existing “non-conforming” names

The last major issue to be considered is that of existing domain names that could not be registered under the new rules, or under the current suspension. For example, if @XYZZY Ltd had already been allocated xyzyzyltd.uk, what should happen? It is general Nominet policy that rules changes are not applied retroactively to companies that had a name registered legitimately, but they *are* applied where the name was applied by mistake and was actually in breach of the rules. Since this was explicit Nominet policy and over 700 names have been registered in accordance with it, it would be hard to claim that it was a mistake and the names should simply be cancelled. However, as discussed above, the present policy can lead to confusion and is not in the public interest.

If the company is dissolved, the domain name will automatically lapse. It has been suggested that this is likely in at least some cases, but it does not solve the issue.

Where there is another company that is also entitled to the name and would be able to register it under the new rules, then this could be a matter for the DRS. If so, the relative ages of the two companies would be a significant indicator.

Proposal G

Where a DRS dispute occurs between two companies in relation to a ltd.uk domain name, the complainant would be able to register the name under the Nominet rules in force at the time of the dispute, and the registrant would *not* be able to register the name under those rules, then:

- The complainant company is deemed to have rights in the name.
- If the registrant company was registered at Companies House after the complainant company, this shall be conclusive evidence that the registration is a “blocking registration” under paragraph 3.a.i.B. of the DRS policy. However, if the registrant company can demonstrate that, at the time of the registration, the complainant company either:
 - had a different ltd.uk domain name registered, or
 - had agreed to the registrationthen this shall be conclusive evidence that it was not a “blocking registration”.
- The above points are without prejudice to any other aspect of the DRS policy (e.g. under paragraph 3.a.ii or 3.c).

The remaining cases are perhaps best handled under a policy of compromise: the original registration was genuine but it is not in the public interest to allow the potential confusion between companies to continue. Therefore, where these registrations would become invalid because of a rule change, the registrant should be allowed to keep the name for a reasonable time but be put on notice that the name will be transferred automatically if the “correct” company requests it. Two years would appear to be a reasonable notice period for this.

Proposal H

Where the registrant of an ltd.uk name would not be able to register the name under the Nominet rules in force, and would not be able to register the name under the rules in force at any time over the last 2 years, then they may continue to renew the registration (but not re-register if the registration lapses), but if another company that *is* entitled to register the name under the current rules requests it, the name shall be cancelled and immediately registered to that other company.

7. Summary of proposals

7.1 Proposal A

- The policy underpinning the ltd.uk and plc.uk SLDs is:
- Only limited companies should be able to have names in these SLDs (with the type of company determining which of the two SLDs it uses).
- There should be a clear and obvious relationship between the name of a limited company and its domain name, so that anyone seeing the name can determine which company it is. This should be algorithmic rather than requiring human judgement.
- There should never be the possibility that two different companies could be entitled to the same name.
- A company should be limited to a single domain name within these SLDs.
- So long as it does not breach the above policy points, where there are cosmetic variations possible in a domain name (e.g. inclusion or omission of hyphens), the company rather than Nominet should have the choice of which exact variation is adopted.

7.2 Proposal B

Nominet should lobby BERR to have the proposed Regulations changed so that every legal company name has an equivalent that uses only letters and digits.

7.3 Proposal C

The Executive should monitor changes to the Companies Act, associated Regulations, and Companies House practice and – via the PAB – propose changes to the ltd.uk and plc.uk rules to remain in step with them.

7.4 Proposal D

Where a company X has a similar name to a company Y under the proposed new Regulations, then one of the following shall apply:

- if company Y already has a ltd.uk domain name, company X shall choose a different ltd.uk domain name that nonetheless conforms to the relevant rules;
- company X shall choose a ltd.uk domain name that company Y would not be able to choose under the rules; or
- company Y shall explicitly consent to the choice of name.

7.5 Proposal E

Until new rules are put in place to match the new Regulations, it should not be possible to register names based on company names containing characters not in the DNS.

7.6 Proposal F

Where a company either has a name containing a non-alphanumeric character, or chooses to omit part of its name when converting the company name to an ltd.uk domain name, it shall certify that:

- there is no other company that could be entitled to the resulting domain name;
- any other company that could be entitled to the resulting domain name already has a different ltd.uk domain name; or
- any other company that could be entitled to the resulting domain name has agreed to the application; and it shall be responsible for any error or false statement.

7.7 Proposal G

Where a DRS dispute occurs between two companies in relation to a ltd.uk domain name, the complainant would be able to register the name under the Nominet rules in force at the time of the dispute, and the registrant would *not* be able to register the name under those rules, then:

- The complainant company is deemed to have rights in the name.
- If the registrant company was registered at Companies House after the complainant company, this shall be conclusive evidence that the registration is a “blocking registration” under paragraph 3.a.i.B. of the DRS policy. However, if the registrant company can demonstrate that, at the time of the registration, the complainant company either:
 - had a different ltd.uk domain name registered, or
 - had agreed to the registration
- then this shall be conclusive evidence that it was not a “blocking registration”.
- The above points are without prejudice to any other aspect of the DRS policy (e.g. under paragraph 3.a.ii or 3.c).

7.8 Proposal H

Where the registrant of an ltd.uk name would not be able to register the name under the Nominet rules in force, and would not be able to register the name under the rules in force at any time over the last 2 years, then they may continue to renew the registration (but not re-register if the registration lapses), but if another company that *is* entitled to register the name under the current rules requests it, the name shall be cancelled and immediately registered to that other company.

BERR proposed rules for company names

The following characters are permitted in company names:

	A to Z and 0 to 9										
	&	@	£	\$	€	¥					
‡	.	,	:	;	—						
‡	'	'	'	()	[]	{	}	<	>
‡	«	»	“	”	”	?	/	\			
‡	*	=	#								
	%	+									

(‡ is a label for certain rows, used below, not a permitted character). Characters in the last two rows are not allowed to be used for the first three characters (ignoring spaces) of the name. Names are limited to 160 characters, including spaces.

When determining whether two names are the same for the purposes of forbidding two companies to have related names, the algorithm applied is as follows (these steps must be carried out in order):

Delete whichever of the following suffices (if any) in the following table is used. Abbreviations may include or omit full stops.

limited	ltd
cyfyngedig	cyf
unlimited	
Anghyfyngedig	
public limited company	plc
cwmni cyfyngedig cyhoeddus	ccc
community interest company	cic
cwmni buddiant cymunedol	cbc
community interest public limited company	community interest plc
cwmni buddiant cymunedol cyhoeddus cyfyngedig	cwmni buddiant ccc
european economic interest grouping	
investment company with variable capital	
cwmni buddsoddi a chyfalaf newidiol	limited partnership
partneriaeth cyfyngedig	
limited liability partnership	llp
partneriaeth atebolwydd cyfyngedig	pac
open-ended investment company	
cwmni buddsoddiant penagored	

1. Terms in the same box in the following table are treated as equivalent, provided that they are surrounded by spaces.

1 one	2 two to too	3 three	4 four for	5 five
6 six	7 seven	8 eight	9 nine	£ pound
€ euro	\$ dollar	¥ yen	% percent	@ at
& and	+ plus			

2. Where preceded by space, full stop, or “@”, strip any suffix in the following table:

biz	co	co uk	co.uk
com	company	EU	exports
GB	Great Britain	group	holdings
imports	net	NI	Northern Ireland
org	org uk	org.uk	services
UK	United Kingdom	Wales	allforion
cwmni	cym	Cymru	cynheiliaid
cyrddau	daliadau	DU	grwp
gwasanaethau	mewnforion	PF	Prydain Fawr
Y Deyrnas Unedig			

1. Delete all characters in the rows of the table marked with ‡.
2. Delete any trailing “S”.
3. Truncate the name to 60 characters (including spaces).
4. Delete any leading “the” (as a separate word), “www”, or “@”. If more than one such appears at the front, all are deleted.
5. Delete all spaces.

Nominet rules for the ltd.uk and plc.uk SLDs

Note: these rules are a suggestion as to how the BERR rules in Annex 1 could be implemented, and are not a formal proposal at this time.

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. In this algorithm, “the Regulations” means S.I.xxxx No. xxxx.

10.3.3. Delete whichever suffix (if any) in Schedule 2 of the Regulations appears in the company name.

10.3.4. Where any character in the first column of the following table appears¹⁰ in the company name, replace it by the string in the second column.

£	pound
€	euro
\$	dollar
¥	yen
%	percent
@	at
&	and
+	plus

10.3.5. Where the name ends with any of the strings in paragraph 4(2) of Schedule 3 of the Regulations, it may be deleted or retained.

10.3.6. Any character appearing in the following table is deleted.

.	,	:	;	*	=	#						
'	'	'	()	[]	{	}	<	>	!	
«	»	“	”	”	?	/	\					

Any hyphen may be deleted or retained.

10.3.7. A trailing S may be deleted or retained.

10.3.8. 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.

10.3.9. If the name begins with “the” (as a separate word) or “www”, it may be deleted or retained. If it begins with both, either both are deleted, both are retained, or the first is deleted and the second retained.

10.3.10. All spaces at the beginning and end of the name are deleted, and all remaining sequences of spaces are reduced to single spaces.

10.3.11. Each remaining space is either deleted or converted to a hyphen.

10.3.12. If the name is more than 60 characters long, it may be truncated to any length no less than 60 characters.

10.3.13. The appropriate suffix is added.

10.3.14. The resulting name shall conform to the restrictions in section 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, and 5.7 of the Rules. If it does not (e.g. if it contains a non-permitted character or begins xn--), then it cannot be registered and the company must either choose a different name (still conforming to this algorithm) or cannot

¹⁰ The present draft regulations only apply this transformation where the character is surrounded by spaces. This paper proposes that Nominet lobby to have this changed. If this lobbying is unsuccessful, the rule will need to be changed to restrict it to the same context as the regulations. Where it does not take place, the name will be excluded from registration by rule 10.3.14.

register in these SLDs. For the avoidance of doubt, rules 5.5, 5.6, 5.8, and 5.9 do not apply to these SLDs.