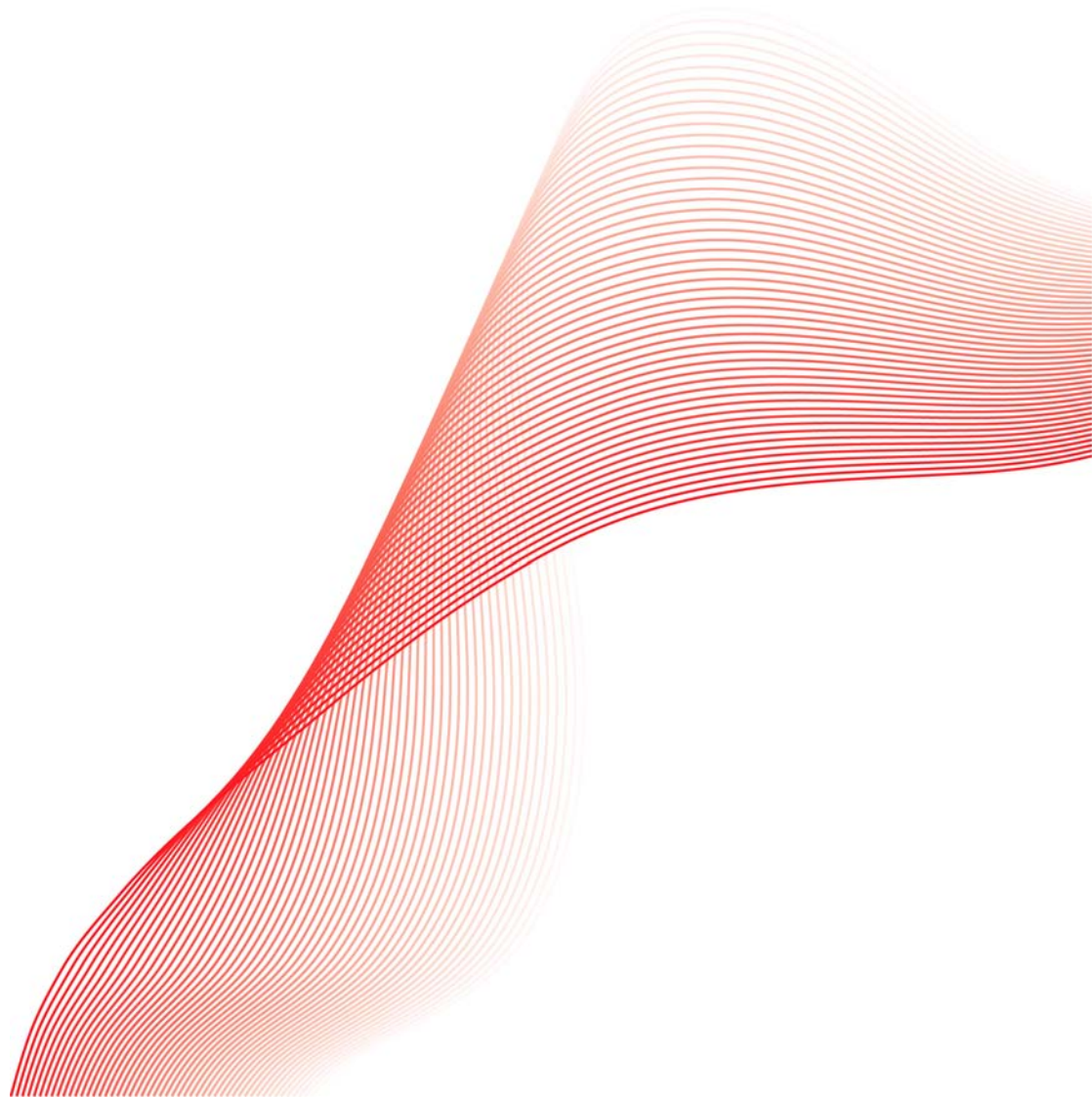


nominet[®]

How to register a .ltd.uk or .plc.uk
domain name



How to register a .ltd.uk or .plc.uk domain name

The .ltd.uk and .plc.uk second level domains are operated by Nominet, and are intended for companies. Users are restricted to one name per registrant, and the name that a registrant can have is worked out via a standard set of rules. This set of rules mirrors the system used by Companies House, so you should always be able to have a domain name which closely matches your company name and has not already been taken by someone else.

Because of these requirements, .ltd.uk and .plc.uk are 'restricted' second level domains. This means that to register under these domains you must pass, and continue to pass, the tests set out in the rules. The specific rules for .ltd.uk and .plc.uk are at Clause 10 of the Nominet registration rules (<http://www.nominet.org.uk/registrants/aboutdomainnames/rules/>), although the general rules also apply. These notes are for guidance only and do not replace or alter the rules.

There are two main tests in the .ltd.uk and .plc.uk second level domains.

- The registrant must be (for .ltd.uk) a 'Limited Company' incorporated under the Companies Act 1985, or (for .plc.uk) a 'Public Limited Company' incorporated under the Companies Act 1985; and
- The domain name registered by the applicant must be related to their company name in accordance with the algorithm set out in the rules (see below for details).

Most companies that are entitled to use the word 'Limited', 'Public Limited Company', 'Ltd.' or 'Plc.' in their name are created in this way.

All applications for .ltd.uk and .plc.uk domain names are checked by hand, so they will take longer than .co.uk or .me.uk applications.

Specific cases

- There are some companies that are created under other statutes (for example Industrial and Provident Societies) which may be entitled to use the word 'Limited' but are not entitled to .ltd.uk domain names.
- Companies which use the exemption under section 30 of the Companies Act 1985 do not use the word 'Limited' in their name but do qualify for a .ltd.uk domain name.
- Welsh companies who are entitled to use 'cyfngedig', 'cyf.', 'cwmni cyfyngedig cyhoeddus' or 'ccc.' are entitled to .ltd.uk and .plc.uk domain names.

The algorithm

The following algorithm is intended to assist you to convert your company name to a domain name capable of registration within either .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 Nominet, 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.

Any of the following terms or abbreviations are removed from the end of the company's name:

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

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

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

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

If at this point the name contains only spaces, you will not be able to register the domain name with us. Otherwise the following remaining steps are carried out:

If the company name begins with 'the' it may be removed. This can be done once only.

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"). This is done once only.

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.

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

(<http://www.nominet.org.uk/registrants/aboutdomainnames/rules/>).

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.

What happens if the company changes name or status?

The rules for these second level domains are designed to mimic Companies House. Under Companies House rules, once a company changes its name, it is possible for another to use the name that is no longer in use.

The rules therefore state that where a registrant no longer qualifies for the domain name, it can be cancelled. For example:

- if a Limited company becomes a Public Limited Company, they no longer qualify for a .ltd.uk domain name, and it will be cancelled (but they may apply for a .plc.uk domain name);
- if a company changes its name eg. from 'Company (UK) Ltd' to 'ProductName Ltd.' It will no longer qualify for the companyukltd.uk name, which will be cancelled, but it can apply for the productname.ltd.uk name as an alternative;
- if a company never qualified for a .ltd.uk or .plc.uk name but for some reason one was granted anyway, that name can be cancelled; and
- if a company has been removed from the register at Companies House, the domain name can be deleted without further notice.

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