

Eligibility Policy

Eligibility for an ac.uk Domain Name

1. An organisation is eligible to register names in the ac.uk domain name space if it meets the purpose of the domain as expressed in clause 2 below and meets at least one of the items in clause 3 below.

Purpose of the ac.uk Domain

2. The ac.uk domain is managed to add value to organisations in the United Kingdom whose core mission is tertiary education and/or public research, bodies whose membership predominantly consists of such organisations and bodies who are substantially owned by such organisations, by assisting them to meet that mission. It does this by clearly representing their services to their stakeholders and users in a domain that reflects the high quality of provision.

Eligible Organisations

3. Subject to clause 1 above, Eligible organisations are the following:
- a. organisations recognised as having Degree Awarding Powers in the UK;
 - b. organisations in Wales funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales to provide higher education;
 - c. organisations in Scotland funded by the Scottish Funding Council to provide higher education;
 - d. organisations in Northern Ireland funded by the Department for the Economy to provide higher education;
 - e. other organisations with a permanent physical presence in the UK, with the core purpose of providing high quality higher education, that are regulated by the Office for Students under transitional arrangements until 31 July 2019, or are on the OfS Register of English higher education providers from 1 Aug 2019, or hold a similar designation from any equivalent process that might be introduced elsewhere in the UK. These are necessary but not by themselves sufficient criteria for eligibility;
 - f. further education colleges in England incorporated under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and in receipt of Skills Funding Agency or Education Funding Agency funding;
 - g. organisations in Wales funded by the Department for Education and Skills to provide further education;
 - h. colleges in Scotland funded by the Scottish Funding Council to provide further education;
 - i. organisations in Northern Ireland funded by the Department for the Economy or by the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development to provide further education;
 - j. organisations in England recognised as sixth form colleges by the Department for Education;

- k. specialist colleges in the UK, which aim to promote opportunities for high quality tertiary education and training in residential or day settings, for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- l. personal and community development learning (PCDL) centres in the UK delivering tertiary level education and which receive direct funding from their Local Authority;
- m. organisations recognised by the UK government as a Research Council;
- n. organisations with the status of a Learned Society in the UK (including Royal Colleges) that exist to promote an academic discipline or group of disciplines and whose activities typically include holding regular conferences for the presentation and discussion of new research results, publishing or sponsoring academic journals in their discipline, and also in some cases acting as a professional body, regulating the activities of their members in the public interest or the collective interest of the membership;
- o. organisations, including UK registered charities, with a permanent physical presence in the UK, with core activities including conducting publicly funded academic research or funding substantial academic research, where normally the results are placed in the UK public domain;
- p. organisations with a permanent physical presence in the UK, with significant activities publicly funded by UK government or devolved administration government funding bodies and/or members of the FE/HE sector and with a primary purpose to provide support to tertiary level educational establishments or the associated research community;
- q. the UK Higher and Further Education Funding Bodies and associated bodies involved in the administration or regulation of higher and further education; and
- r. exceptionally, other organisations that meet the purpose of the domain as expressed in clause 2 above and as accepted in our sole discretion on a case-by-case basis.

4. If an eligible organisation's status changes such that it becomes ineligible, it must inform us immediately. If we are informed or become aware that an organisation with an ac.uk domain name has become ineligible, we will normally allow twelve months (from the date on which notice is given) for the ineligible organisation to migrate its domain name(s) away from ac.uk into some other name space procured by the organisation. We provide no assistance in procuring an alternative domain name. The migration period:

- a. might be extended at our sole discretion if (i) the organisation provides compelling evidence that it is working actively, and with reasonable prospect of success, to restore its eligibility, or (ii) highly exceptionally, the organisation provides compelling evidence that more time is necessary for the migration; or
- b. might be reduced at our sole discretion if there is in our opinion risk of serious damage to the reputation of the domain as tested against the purpose of the domain.

Rules for the Choice of an ac.uk Domain Name

5. An eligible organisation may take out as many names within the ac.uk domain as it wishes, subject to the name conforming to RFC1035, conforming to the following rules and the payment of a fee if applicable:

- a. A request will not be allowed if it is for a name that is one character in length.
- b. The requested name must, in our opinion, be representative of the requesting organisation's name, or otherwise a detailed explanation is required. The requested name must also be unlikely to present a substantial risk of confusion with other similarly named organisations or activities already registered under ac.uk.

- c. The request for a name for a project, service or venture must refer to a project, service or venture that is publicly funded by UK government or devolved administration government funding bodies and/or members of the FE/HE sector and of relevance to the ac.uk community.
- d. Generic domain names, which could be applicable to a number of eligible sites, must provide evidence that they have the backing and approval from the majority of relevant members of the UK academic and/or research community, in order to be permitted to have that generic domain name.
- e. Domain names that start with the characters "xn- -" (i.e. "xn" followed by two dashes) may only be used for Internationalised Domain Names.
- f. Departments or faculties within an eligible organisation are not eligible for a separate domain name and should use a sub-domain of the eligible organisation's domain name.

6. Subject to these constraints, names will be approved on a "first come, first served" basis.

7. Precedents - Should the rules for choice of an ac.uk domain name (rules 5 and 6) be revised at a later date, existing registrations will remain valid even if they would otherwise fall outside the revised rules. These names are regarded as exceptional, and should not be regarded as setting a precedent.

Process for Application and Appeals

8. An application for a domain name must be made through the advertised route on the Jisc web site. We will acknowledge an application within five business days.

9. We will aim to make our decision within 20 business days, but if we do not receive all the necessary information we require to make our judgement, we reserve the right to extend this deadline indefinitely until we are satisfied that we have the information we need to make a decision.

10. If an application is rejected, we will provide reasons for our decision. While there is an appeal mechanism available, we will be prepared to enter into discussions for up to one calendar month to assist an applicant to re-apply where we judge the applicant might meet our criteria if the application was amended.

11. If the application is not successful the requester may appeal provided that the appeal is made within four weeks of the date of notification of the outcome of the request. Appeals will only be heard on the basis that the requester believes that the request meets the requirements of this policy. The requester must tell Jisc and provide supporting evidence showing how the request meets this policy. The appeal will be heard by an ad-hoc panel appointed for this purpose by the Jisc Board and independent of the application process. The decision of the panel is final.

12. We reserve the right to cease correspondence or other contact with applicants who we judge do not meet our criteria but who make persistent applications.

Charges

13. The charges will be published separately and may be revised from time to time.

Notes

14. References to specific agencies, organisations, councils and bodies refer also to successor agencies, organisations, councils and bodies from time to time.

15. Where necessary, the assessment of "core activities", "core mission", "significant activities", "primary purpose" or "core purpose" will be determined from the organisation's Articles of Association, prospectus or equivalent documentation.

16. This policy applies only to the registration of names in the .ac.uk domain. The policy regarding eligibility for a connection to Janet is maintained separately in the "Eligibility Policy" (MF-POL-023).

Source URL: <https://community.jisc.ac.uk/library/janet-services-documentation/eligibility-policy>