



دائرة رأس الخيمة للمعرفة
RAS AL KHAIMAH
DEPARTMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

Private School Establishment and Licensing Policy

Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge



1. Introduction

Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAK DOK) oversees establishing, licensing, and regulating private general education institutions in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah. This policy provides a unified and transparent framework for licensing new schools, renewing licenses, and approving amendments or closures. It ensures that only eligible and capable entities may operate schools in alignment with national educational goals and international quality benchmarks.

1.1 Purpose

- Establish a structured, user-friendly process for licensing private schools.
- Define eligibility criteria, approval stages, and compliance obligations.
- Clarify conditions for license renewal, amendment, suspension, or cancellation.
- Support education investors with clear and accessible regulatory guidance.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all private general education institutions licensed by RAK DOK in Ras Al Khaimah. It covers all licensing stages, including initial approval, official licensing, amendments, renewals, voluntary closure, and suspension.

2. Definitions

Term	Definition
Gender Status	The school's declared structure: boys-only, girls-only, or co-educational.
Initial License Approval	A conditional, time-limited approval allowing preparation for operation.
License	An official authorization issued by RAK DOK to operate a private school.
License Amendment	An approved change to any element of the school's existing license.



License Renewal	The annual process of updating the official license based on continued compliance.
Official License	A one-year license issued upon final clearance and readiness inspection.
RAK DOK	Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge - the regulatory authority overseeing the operation of private education institutions in Ras Al Khaimah.
School Readiness Inspection	A compliance visits to assess a school's operational readiness.
Suspension	Temporary withdrawal of a license due to non-compliance.
Temporary License	A short-term, conditional license granted in exceptional cases.
Voluntary Closure	When a school elects to cease operations following RAK DOK approval.

3. Policy Statements

3.1 New School Licensing

Eligibility Criteria

- Applicant must be at least 25 years old.
- Applicant must not have previous license revocations or a criminal record.
- Must submit feasibility and financial plan demonstrating operational sustainability.



- The school's name must not be the same as another school in the U.A.E.
(Double click on the icon for RAK DOK Conditions for Approving the name of a



Conditions for
Private School approving the name c)

- RAK DOK approval on the school's name must be obtained before the DED license name reservation.

3.2 Required Submissions for Initial License:

- Passport, Emirates ID, family book/residence visa, CV, and Bio of the owner/s
- If the license applicant is a company or legal person, the following documents must be submitted: A copy of the commercial license issued by the competent authorities in the country., and a copy of the company's articles of incorporation or a resolution that includes a statement that the company's goal is to engage in educational and training activities.
- Initial DED trade name reservation.
- Academic plan (phases, curriculum, enrolment, gender status, traffic management plan), Financial Plan, and Feasibility study
- CVs of owner(s) and proposed principal.
- Good conduct certificate (Administrative Approval - FAHR).
- Engineering plan from RAK-approved consultancy and land plan
- Building suitability documents or land lease/title deed.
- Facilities form, health/safety compliance plans.
- Introductory statement of owner(s) and NOC requests (if any).

3.3 Required Submissions for Official License:

Following the issuance of the Initial License Approval and confirmation of building readiness, the license applicant must submit the following final documentation for the issuance of the Official License:

- Building suitability certificate issued by RAK Municipality.



- A valid building lease contract certified by the relevant authorities, or the ownership deed; if applicable, a certified partnership contract indicating UAE national ownership.
- A Civil Defense certificate confirming compliance with safety and security requirements.
- A General Resources Authority (GRA) certificate confirming compliance with surveillance camera installation and monitoring requirements as mandated by the authority in Ras Al Khaimah.
- The proposed school principal's name, qualifications, and experience. Appointment is subject to RAK DOK interview and approval.
- The name of the textbook publisher and examination board (if a non-MOE curriculum is applied).
- School clinic license, along with:
 - A copy of the nurse's license (must be under the school's name).
 - A copy of the doctor's license.
 - The doctor's employment contract (if not under the school license).
- The proposed tuition fee structure for RAK DOK approval (valid for the first 3 years).
- A list of the school's Board of Directors, including roles and responsibilities of each member.
- A final inspection conducted by RAK Municipality to confirm the building's readiness, which must align with the approved engineering plan. Final technical approval is required prior to issuing the official license.

3.4 Use of Buildings and/or Land

- Buildings must be approved by RAK Municipality and Civil Defense.
- Must submit a valid certificate of completion or fitness for use.
- Modular or temporary structures may be approved with conditions.
- Villas or unapproved residential buildings are not permitted.
- Any relocation or building expansion must be approved as a license amendment.



3.5 Use of Existing Buildings

- Where the license applicant proposes to establish a school within an existing building, the following documentation must be submitted:
 - A valid land map.
 - A copy of the title deed (if the land is owned).
 - An urban planning statement (if additional construction is proposed).
 - Approved architectural drawings of the existing structure.
 - RAK Municipality will conduct a site inspection to evaluate the suitability of the premises for educational purposes.
 - The building must follow the school building regulations.
- If the location and building are deemed suitable, the applicant must then submit:
 - A detailed engineering plan illustrating the layout of classrooms and school facilities.
 - An official letter from the municipality confirming the building's suitability, or a completion certificate verifying that the premises meet the standards for educational use.

3.6 Gender Status

- Schools must declare gender status: co-educational, boys-only, or girls-only in their academic plan.
- Co-educational schools must follow RAK DOK's Co-Education Policy.
- Changes to gender status require approval from the RAK DOK license amendment.

4. Application Process

1. Submit application via the RAK DOK portal.
2. Acknowledge receipt within two working days.
3. Review documentation, request clarifications if needed.
4. Review academic and financial plans.
5. Internal review and submission to RAK DOK Board for final decision.





6. Issue Initial License Approval valid for 6 months - extendable.
7. Conduct site inspections with RAK Municipality and Civil Defense.
8. Conduct final readiness inspection.
9. Issue an Official License valid for 1 year.

5. License Amendment

- Applies to:
 - Addition or withdrawal of partners.
 - Change of legal ownership.
 - License waiver or legal assignment to another party.
 - Change of the school's registered name.
 - Appointment of a new principal.
 - Change in the school's approved curriculum.
 - Relocation of the school to a new site.
 - Addition or reduction of grade levels or educational phases.
 - Structural modification of the existing school building or facilities.
 - Voluntary license cancellation.
 - Any other change that affects the school's licensed operational, academic, or legal status.

6. Required Documentation for License Amendments and Related Requests

The following documentation must be submitted based on the nature of the amendment requested:

6.1 Amendment of Ownership, Partner Withdrawal, or Change of Chairperson/Governance:

- Official letter from the license holder outlining the requested change.
- Valid passport and Emirates ID of the new owner(s)/partner(s).
- Valid UAE residence visa (for non-UAE nationals).
- Completed introductory statement of the new owner(s)/partner(s).



- Certificate of good conduct issued by the Ministry of Interior (via UAE MOI application).

6.2 Change of School Name:

- Official request letter signed by the license holder stating the rationale for the name change.
- Proposed list of three alternative school names, in priority order.
- Names must not duplicate any existing private school in the UAE and must align with the school's curriculum and educational philosophy.
- All name proposals must adhere to the DOK School Naming Guidelines.

6.3 Appointment of a New Principal:

- Application form submitted by the license holder nominating the new candidate.
- Certified copies of academic qualifications.
- Certificate equivalency from the relevant UAE authority or proof of equivalency submission.
- Recent passport-sized photo of the candidate (JPG format).
- Certified experience letter confirming a minimum of:
 - 5 years in school management, or
 - A combination of 5 years in teaching and leadership, with at least 3 years in a management role.
- Certificate of good conduct from the Ministry of Interior.
- Security clearance approval (FAHR).

6.4 Change or Addition of Curriculum:

- Official letter signed by the license holder justifying the curriculum change or addition.
- Academic plan aligned with the new curriculum structure.
- Name of textbook publisher and examination board (for non-MOE curricula).
- Parent communication and engagement plan outlining the proposed change.
- Proposed tuition fees in alignment with the new curriculum offering.



6.5 Change of School Location:

- Approved floor splan of the new building, issued by a RAK Municipality-approved consultant.
- Full set of architectural drawings and building layout.
- Completed Facilities Form.
- Implementation timeline for relocation and transition.
- Parent notification plan regarding the relocation.
- Municipality-issued completion certificate for the new building.
- Civil Defense clearance certificate.
- School clinic license and:
 - Nurse's license (registered under the school facility).
 - Doctor's license and contract (if not directly registered under the school).
- Valid building suitability certificate from RAK Municipality.
- Certified lease contract or title deed; for partnerships, a notarized agreement showing UAE national ownership (51% minimum).
- Civil Defense report verifying the safety and compliance of the new premises.

6.6 Addition or Reduction of Educational Phases/Grade Levels:

- Official request letter from the license holder outlining the reason for expansion or reduction.
- Existing floor plan approved by RAK Municipality.
- Updated floor plan (reflecting changes), issued by a RAK Municipality-approved consultant.
- Revised engineering plan showing distribution of new classrooms/facilities.
- Completed Facilities Form.
- Proposed tuition fees for the new educational levels.
- Name of textbook publisher and examination board for the new levels.

6.7 License Waiver (Legal Assignment):

- Notarized assignment contract transferring rights.
- Court-issued document confirming the completion of the waiver process and resolution of all legal/financial obligations.



7.0 License Renewal

- The license renewal application must be submitted at least 1 month before expiration to RAK DOK.
- If the license is not renewed within the designated timeframe, the school will be subject to penalties in accordance with RAK DOK regulations.
- Requires:
 - A valid Emirates ID of the school license holder.
 - A valid appointment letter for the school principal.
 - A professional license for the school issued by the Ras Al Khaimah Department of Economic Development, valid for one year.
 - A renewed Civil Defense certificate confirming compliance with preventive safety requirements, valid for one year.
 - A valid health supervision contract for the school's medical doctor, valid for one year.
 - A valid school clinic license issued by the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP).
 - A valid MOHAP-issued license for the school doctor, or a formal agreement with an external clinic if the doctor is not licensed under the school.
 - A valid MOHAP-issued license for the school nurse.
 - A letter from RAK Municipality confirming the validity and structural suitability of the school building, valid for one year.
 - A valid ownership deed or a certified lease agreement for the school premises.
 - The most recent school license issued by the Ministry of Education.
 - Confirmation that 100% of schoolteachers and leaders are registered on the Ministry of Education's Teacher Licensing System (TLS).

8.0 Voluntary School Closure

- Must notify RAK DOK at least 6 months in advance.



- Submit:
 - Student transition plan.
 - Staff compensation and final payment plan.
 - Communication plan for parents and stakeholders.
- Closure not approved until:
 - All obligations are cleared.
 - A final closure report is submitted to DOK.

9.0 License Suspension and Cancellation

9.1 Suspension

- May be imposed due to:
 - Critical safety violations.
 - Failure to respond to inspection findings.
 - Fraudulent activity.
 - Unauthorised admissions.
 - Or other breaches as outlined in DOK regulations and relevant laws.
- Suspension results in an immediate pause to operations.

9.2 Cancellation

- Occurs when:
 - The school is deserted or financially collapsed.
 - Repeated violations or misconduct.
 - Irreparable safety or governance failures.
- Required documents:
 - Written request for license cancellation approved by the license holder.
 - Latest commercial license.
 - Signed undertaking ensuring student placement or transfer is arranged.
 - Signed undertaking ensuring payment of all employee entitlements and clearance of staff from school obligations.



- RAK DOK issues official cancellation notices and removes the school from the registry.

10. Compliance

Effective Date: This policy shall take effect from the start of the Academic Year 2025/26. Full compliance by all private schools is expected by the beginning of the Academic Year 2026/27.

Enforcement and Penalties: Schools that do not adhere to this policy will be subject to accountability measures as stipulated by DOK, including possible penalties or other corrective actions. Non-compliance may result in intervention by DOK as per UAE federal regulations.

Compliance Audits: DOK reserves the right to conduct periodic audits to ensure schools comply with this policy. The school administration must promptly resolve any discrepancies found during these audits to avoid further action.

11. Feedback and Improvement

Annual Review: DOK will conduct a yearly review of this policy to incorporate feedback, address emerging needs, and ensure it aligns with the latest educational standards and regulatory requirements.

Feedback Mechanisms: School administrators are encouraged to submit feedback on the Private School Establishment and Licensing Policy to DOK, which allows for continuous improvement based on schools' practical experiences.

12. Contact Information

For any questions related to this policy, please contact: licensing@dok.rak.ae





13. Conclusion

This policy reinforces Ras Al Khaimah's commitment to a high-quality, transparent, and well-regulated private education sector. By establishing clear licensing processes and expectations, RAK DOK aims to empower investors and ensure students access education in safe, sustainable, and forward-looking institutions.

14. Revision History

Policy reference no:	RAKDOK-POL-2025-28
Document name:	Private School Establishment and Licensing Policy
Effective date:	01.07.2025
Version:	01
Issue date:	01.08.2025
Updated on:	-
Updated by:	-
Reviewed by:	Executive Director

Note:

The Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAK DOK), the "Authority, " issued and controlled this policy." It is understood that this policy is to be treated as confidential and should not be copied. Any disclosure, in whole or in part, for any purpose is considered not authorised unless prior written permission is obtained from the Authority.

