

Guidance Notes

Application for a Licence to dispense with the word "Limited" in the Name of a Company

Please read these Guidance Notes carefully before making an application.

(A) Purpose

1. These Guidance Notes are intended to provide general information and guidance on the procedure for applying to the Registrar of Companies ("the Registrar") for a licence to dispense with the word "Limited" and/or the characters "有限公司" in the name of a company under section 103 of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) ("the CO").

2. These Guidance Notes shall be effective from 3 March 2014 and will replace the Companies Registry's guideline entitled "Note on Application for a Licence under section 21 of the Companies Ordinance (Revised 2011)" from the same date.

(B) Making an Application

3. An association which is intended to be formed as a limited company for the purpose of promoting commerce, art, science, religion, charity, or any other useful objects and which intends to apply the company's profits or other income in promoting its objects and prohibit the payment of dividends to the company's members, may apply to the Registrar for a licence under section 103(2) of the CO for the association to be registered as a limited company by a name without the word "Limited" as the last word and/or the characters "有限公司" as the last four characters of its name.

4. An existing limited company whose objects are restricted to promoting commerce, art, science, religion, charity, or any other useful objects and whose articles require the company to apply its profits or other income in promoting its objects and prohibit the company from paying dividends to its members, may apply to the Registrar for a licence under section 103(4) of the CO to delete the word "Limited" and/or the characters "有限公司" from its name.

5. An application must be made to the Companies Registry ("the Registry") in writing and must be accompanied by a checklist (proforma checklists at <u>Appendices I and II</u>) duly completed together with the documents and information as set out in the checklist in support of the application. It is important that applicants provide as much information as possible, so

as to demonstrate that the relevant company fulfils the requirements to be granted a licence under section 103 of the CO.

6. In particular, a draft copy of the Articles of Association (the "Articles") of the company must be provided to the Registrar (item 2 of the relevant checklist) in support of the application. In this regard, the Registry has prepared a Standard Form of Articles of Association (the "Standard Form") at <u>Appendix III.</u> The Standard Form is intended to serve as a guide for applicants when they prepare or alter (as the case may be) the provisions of the Articles of their companies for the purpose of an application for the licence. The Articles should be drafted or altered with due regard to the Standard Form and all deviations from the provisions in the Standard Form should be marked up with explanations provided.

7. In cases where the approval and/or consent of any other Government department(s) and/or bureau(x) and/or other authority(ies) to the contents of the company's Articles or amendments thereto is/are required, the applicant must provide information on whether such approval and/or consent have been obtained.

8. Applicants are advised to submit applications to the Registry as early as practicable in order to allow sufficient time for the Registrar to consider the applications and supporting documents.

9. Depending on the circumstances of each case, including whether further approval/consultation is required, it normally takes 3 to 6 months for the Registry to process an application for the grant of a licence under section 103 of the CO. It may take longer processing time if the documents submitted are insufficient or the applicants fail to respond timely to the Registry's enquiries.

(C) Discretion to Grant Licence

10. A licence will be granted at the discretion of the Registrar and it may be granted on any terms and conditions the Registrar thinks fit. The terms and conditions are binding on the company and are to be incorporated in the Articles of the company if the Registrar so directs.

11. The Registrar is entitled to consider any relevant information and all the circumstances of the case relating to the application for determining whether a licence should be granted or not. A licence will not be granted to a company where the objects of the company are not for promoting commerce, art, science, religion or charity or any other useful objects. On the other hand, where the company can establish, preferably by means of its past history, that it is capable of carrying out its objects, and that its financial position has been, and will be, secure, the application may be considered favourably.

12. Other relevant factors include the circumstances where the applicant can establish that the company is an exempt charity under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap.112), or will be granted such exemption upon incorporation, and that its application is supported by the relevant Government department(s) or well-established public or charitable organisations. If there are any other special circumstances which would justify the approval of an application, a statement of such special circumstances should be submitted together with the application.

(D) Application Fees

- 13. Fees payable for an application are
 - (a) a lodgment fee of **HK\$4,605*** which must be paid when the application is submitted to the Registry; and
 - (b) a licence fee of **HK\$4,475** which must be paid upon the grant of a licence.
 - (* Please note that the lodgment fee is non-refundable even if the application is unsuccessful.)

(E) **Revocation of Licence**

14. Pursuant to section 106 of the Companies Ordnance, the Registrar may at any time revoke a licence granted under section 103 on being satisfied that –

- (a) the company has failed to comply with any of the terms or conditions to which the licence is subject; or
- (b) any one or more of the requirements specified in section 103(1) or (3) (as the case may be) are no longer met.

(F) Amendments to Articles

15. Under section 105(2) of the CO, every company having been granted with a licence under section 103 must not alter its Articles except with the Registrar's prior written approval. Companies holding licences granted under section 103 are reminded that any proposed amendments to the Articles must first be submitted to and approved by the Registrar in writing.

16. Applications for amendments to Articles under section 105(2) of the CO usually involve considerable processing time, particularly in cases where approval and/or consent(s) from other Government department(s) and/or bureau(x) and/or other authority(ies) are required. Therefore, applicants are advised to submit their applications as early as practicable.

(G) Enquiries

17. Enquiries about the contents of these Guidance Notes should be directed to –

Companies Registry (New Companies Section) 14th Floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Telephone: 2867 2587 Email: crenq@cr.gov.hk

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Appendix I

Checklist for application under section 103(2) of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.622)

Note: Incomplete checklist will be returned to the applicant for completion before the application is processed.

* *Please tick where appropriate.*

1 100		*Document submitted	*Document not available	If document is not available, please provide reasons.
1.	Application letter.			
2.	A printed or typed copy of the Articles of Association drafted with due regard to the Standard Form, with deviations from the provisions in the Standard Form marked up with explanations provided.			
3.	A list of founder members and proposed governing body (information includes English and Chinese names, occupation and addresses).			
4.	If the association has been operating as an unincorporated body, a brief history of the unincorporated body.			
5.	Copies of financial statements for the past two years.			
6.	If the association is a new body with no past history and financial statements, please confirm so in writing.			

7.	A statement showing in detail the assets (with estimated values) and liabilities, if any, to be taken over by the proposed limited company including a list of all property owned by the association, either in its own name or in the names of trustees holding the property on behalf of the association.	
8.	An updated land search record of the property held.	
9.	An estimate of the future income (with sources) and expenditure (with breakdown).	
10.	A statement of work done for the past two years, e.g. nature and number of activities held.	
11.	A statement of work planned for the coming year, e.g. any specific plans or a schedule of events.	
12.	Grounds for the application.	
13.	Address of the association.	
14.	Evidence of tax exemption under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance, Cap. 112.	
15.	A statement as to whether the subject application has obtained any support from Government departments or relevant organisations. If affirmative, please provide letters of support.	

16.	A statement as to the current number of members.		
17	A statement as to whether the association has any subsidiary or holds a controlling interest in another body corporate. If affirmative, please provide a list of such subsidiary/body corporate with its nature of business/activities and details of members.		
18.	A statement as to whether the association is registered under the Societies Ordinance, Cap.151. If affirmative, please provide a copy of the certificate of registration.		
19.	For an application made by a church or religious organisation, a statement as to whether it is affiliated to any of the main churches in Hong Kong. If affirmative, please provide a letter of support.		
20.	A statement as to whether the approval and/or consent(s) of any other Government department(s) and/or bureau(x) and/or other authority(ies) to the contents of the proposed company's Articles or amendments thereto is required. If affirmative, please provide information as to whether such approval and/or consent have been obtained and a copy of such approval and/or consent (if any).		

Appendix II

<u>Checklist for application under section 103(4) of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.622)</u></u>

Note: Incomplete checklist will be returned to the applicant for completion before the application is processed.

* Please tick where appropriate.

		*Document submitted	*Document not available	If document not available, please provide reasons.
1.	Application letter.			
2.	A copy of existing Articles of Association endorsed in red to show the amendments to the name of the company and any other amendments which are proposed to be made if the application is successful, with due regard to the Standard Form with deviations from the provisions in the Standard Form marked up with explanations provided.			
3.	Copies of financial statements for the past two years (unless these have already been filed with the Companies Registry).			
4.	An updated land search record of any property held.			
5.	Please advise whether the company has been operating as an unincorporated body before incorporation. If affirmative, please provide a brief history of the unincorporated body.			

6.	An estimate of the future income (with sources) and expenditure (with breakdown) if this is likely to vary materially from the financial statements provided/filed under item 3.	
7.	A statement of work done for the past two years, e.g. nature and number of activities held.	
8.	A statement of work planned for the coming year, e.g. any specific plans or a schedule of events.	
9.	Grounds for the application.	
10.	All outstanding annual returns with relevant financial statements, if any.	
11.	Forms NR1, ND2A and/or ND2B to report any change in the company's registered office address, directors or company secretary or their particulars that have not yet been reported.	
12.	A statement as to whether the records of the company are up to date and all other outstanding documents (e.g. special resolutions, reprinted copy of Articles of Association etc) have been filed with the Companies Registry.	
13.	Evidence of tax exemption under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance, Cap. 112.	

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14.	A statement as to whether the subject application has obtained any support from Government departments or relevant organisations. If affirmative, please provide letters of support.			
15.	A statement as to the current number of members.			
16	A statement as to whether the company has any subsidiary or holds a controlling interest in another body corporate. If affirmative, please provide a list of such subsidiary/body corporate with its nature of business/activities and details of members.			
17.	For a newly incorporated company, a statement as to whether the company is registered under the Societies Ordinance, Cap.151. If affirmative, please provide a copy of the certificate of registration.			
18.	For an application made by a church or religious organisation, a statement as to whether it is affiliated to any of the main churches in Hong Kong. If affirmative, please provide letter(s) of support.			
19.	A statement as to whether the approval and/or consent(s) of any other Government department(s) and/or bureau(x) and/or other authority(ies) to the contents of the company's Articles or amendments thereto is required. If affirmative, please provide information as to whether such approval and/or consent have been obtained and a copy of such approval and/or consent (if any).			

Appendix III

Standard Form of Articles of Association

Articles of Association of

...... [Insert company name]

1.		name of the company is (and in these articles, it is ed the "Association")	Notes Insert company name. See section 81, Cap.622.
Int	erpret	ation	
2.	(1)	In these articles:	
		"these articles" means the articles of association of the Association;	
		"Ordinance" means the Companies Ordinance, Chapter 622 of the Laws of Hong Kong including the related subsidiary legislations;	
		["the director" means];	
		"Objects" means the objects of the Association as expressed in these Articles;	
			Insert defined terms (if any)
	(2)	Words importing one gender shall include all genders, and the singular includes the plural and vice versa.	
	(3)	Other words or expressions used in these articles have the same meaning as in the Ordinance as in force on the date these articles become binding on the Association.	Refer to Article 1(2), Sch.3, Cap.622H.
	(4)	For the purposes of these articles, a document is authenticated if it is authenticated in any way in which section 828(5) or 829(3) of the Ordinance provides for documents or information to be authenticated for the purposes of the Ordinance.	Refer to Article 1(3), Sch.3, Cap.622H.
3.	shal	regulations in Schedule 3 to the Companies (Model) Notice, Cap.622H, 1 form part of these articles save insofar as they are hereby excluded or lified or are inconsistent with the articles contained herein.	See section 80, Cap.622.
Lia	bility	of members	
4.	The	liability of the members is limited.	See section 83(1), Cap.622.
5.		n person who is a member of the Association undertakes that if the ociation is wound up while the person is a member of the Association, or	See section 84(2), Cap.622.

	within one year after the person ceases to be such a member, the person will contribute an amount required of the person, not exceeding, to the Association's assets-			Insert the amount to be contributed.
	(a)		the payment of the Association's debts and liabilities contracted ore the person ceases to be such a member;	
	(b)		the payment of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up the ociation; and	
	(c)	for	the adjustment, among the contributories, of their rights.	
Obj	ects			See section 82(1), Cap.622.
6.		•	ects for which the Association is established ("Objects") are lly expressed below:	Insert the objects. The articles must
	(1)	То		specifically restrict the Association to furthering its objects.
	(2)	То		
	(3)		do all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the inment of the above Objects.	
		Pro	vided that :-	
		(i)	In case the Association shall take or hold any property which may be subject to any trusts, the Association will only deal with or invest the same in such manner as allowed by law, having regard to such trusts.	
		(ii)	The Objects of the Association shall not extend to the regulation of relations between workers and employers or organisations of workers and organisations of employers.	
Pow	vers o	f the	Association	
7.	Obj	ects	ociation has power to do anything which is calculated to further its but not otherwise, or is conducive or incidental to doing so. In r, the Association has powers:	Set out the Association's powers and the conditions that have to be met when exercising the powers (if any).
	(1) (2) (3)	•	; ;	
App	olicati	on o	f income and property	
8.	(1)		he income and property of the Association shall be applied solely owards the promotion of the Objects as set out in these articles.	See section 103(1) (b), Cap.622.

See section 103(1) (c), Cap.622.

- (2) Subject to sub-article (3), none of the income or property of the Association may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever to any member of the Association.
- (3) The requirement under sub-article (2) above does not prevent the payment by the Association:
 - (a) of reasonable and proper remuneration to a member of the Association for any goods or services supplied by him or her to the Association;
 - (b) of reimbursement to a member of the Association for out-of-pocket expenses properly incurred by him or her for the Association;
 - (c) of interest on money lent by a member of the Association to the Association at a reasonable and proper rate which must not exceed 2% per annum above the prime rate prescribed for the time being by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited for Hong Kong dollar Loans;
 - (d) of rent to a member of the Association for premises let by him or her to the Association: Provided that the amount of the rent and the other terms of the lease must be reasonable and proper; and such member must withdraw from any meeting at which such a proposal or the rent or other terms of the lease are under discussion; and
 - (e) of remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth to a body corporate in which a member of the Association is interested solely by virtue of being a member of that body corporate by holding not more than one-hundredth part of its capital or controlling not more than a one-hundredth part of its votes.

Directors

Powers of directors

Set out the qualification of directors and their number.

Set out the powers and responsibilities of directors and the members' reserve power.

Reti	rement of directors by rotation	
11.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 20(4), Sch.3, Cap.622H.
Арр	pointment of directors	
12.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable but appointment of a director by a decision of the directors may only be made to fill a casual vacancy.]	Refer to Articles 20(1)-(3), Sch.3, Cap.622H. Appointment of a director by a decision of the directors may only be made to fill a casual vacancy.
Disc	qualification and removal of directors	
13.	A person ceases to be a director if the person:-	Refer to Article 23, Sch.3, Cap.622H.
	 (1)	
Ren	nunerations and benefits to the Directors	
14.	[The provisions as to the restriction on and entitlement of directors to remuneration and benefits from the Association should be set out here for consideration by the Registrar of Companies.]	Set out provisions regarding restriction on and entitlement of directors to remunerations and benefits from the Association.
Dec	laration of directors' interests	
15.	In accordance with section 536 of the Ordinance, a director must declare	See section 536, Cap.622.
Con	flicts of interests	
16.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Articles 15 & 16, Sch.3, Cap.622H.
Pro	ceedings of directors	
17.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Articles 6 to 13, Sch.3, Cap.622H.

Del	egatior	of powers by directors	
18.	[The A	Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 4, Sch.3, Cap.622H.
Vali	dity of	directors' decisions	
19.	[The A	Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 17, Sch.3, Cap.622H.
Con	npany	Secretary	
20.	[The A	Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 31, Sch.3, Cap.622H.
Me	nbers		
21.	(1)	The founder members who signed these articles are the first members of the Association.	Set out provisions for the admission and qualification of members.
	(2)	A person may become a member of the Association only if:- (a)(b)	members.
Cla	sses of	membership	
22.	(1)	The Association may establish classes of membership with rights and obligations as may be determined by	Set out the classes of membership and the rights attached to
	(2)	The rights attached to a class of membership may only be varied if	each class (if any).
Ter	minati	on of membership	
23.	Mem	bership is terminated if :	Set out provisions for termination of
	(1) (2)	the member dies or, if it is an organisation, ceases to exist;	membership.
Gen	ieral m	eetings	
24.	[The A	Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 34, Sch.3, Cap.622H.

Not	Notice of general meeting						
25.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Compar (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	nies Refer to Articles 35 & 36, Sch.3, Cap.622H.					
Pro	ceedings at general meetings						
26.	(1) No business shall be transacted at any general meeting unless quorum is present.	a Insert the figure for the quorum.					
	(2) A quorum is present if						
	(3) The authorized representative of a member organisation shall counted in the quorum.	be					
	 (4) (e.g. Appointment of chairman) (5) (e.g. Attendance and speaking at general meeting) (6) (e.g. Adjournment of general meeting) 	Set out the procedure for holding general meetings.					
Con	ntent and effect of proxy notices						
27.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Compar (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Articles 48 & 49, 51 & 52, Sch.3, Cap.622H.					
Deli	ivery of proxy notices and notice revoking appointment of proxy						
28.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Compar (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 50, Sch.3, Cap.622H.					
Vote	es of members						
29.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Compar (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Articles 43 - 47, Sch.3, Cap.622H.					
Con	npany Seal						
30.	[The Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Compar (Model Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 55, Sch.3, Cap.622H.					
Che	eque and Other Negotiable Instruments						
31.		Specify the signing arrangement and appointment of authorized signatory.					

Rec			
32.	The adeq	See Div.3, Part 12, Cap.622	
Acc	ounts		
33.	(1)	The directors must prepare annual financial statements for each accounting reference period as required by the Ordinance. The financial statements must be prepared to show a true and fair view and follow accounting standards issued or adopted by the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants or its successors and adhere to all of its recommended practices.	See sections 379, Cap.622
	(2)	The directors must keep accounting records as required by the Ordinance.	See sections 373 and 374, Cap.622
Aud	lit		
34.			Set out the provisions for auditing matters.
	[The Association may decide to purchase and maintain insurance for auditors.]		Refer to Article 57, Sch.3, Cap.622H.
Mea	ns of	communication to be used	
35.			See Part 18, Cap.622.
		Association may adopt the relevant provisions contained in Schedule 3 to the Companies Articles) Notice, Cap.622H, where applicable.]	Refer to Article 54, Sch.3, Cap.622H.
Per	mitted	Indemnity	
36.	The A third pa	See sections 468 and 469, Cap.622.	
Net	Assets	on Winding up and Dissolution	
37.	satisf assets the A institu	on the winding up or dissolution of the Association there remains, after the action of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever ("the net as"), the net assets shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of association but shall be given or transferred to some other institution or ations, having objects similar to the Objects, and which shall prohibit the bution of its or their income and property amongst its or their members to	

	be applied for charitable purposes as directed by a Judge of the High Court of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region having jurisdiction in the matter.	
Amendments to Articles of Association		
38.	No addition, alteration or amendment shall be made to or in the articles of association of the Association, unless such addition, alteration or amendment has previously been submitted to and approved by the Registrar of Companies in writing or is made under a direction given under section 104(2)(b) or 105 of the Ordinance.	See section 105(2), Cap.622.
Restriction on formation of subsidiary		
39.	The Association shall not form a subsidiary or hold a controlling interest in another body corporate, unless the formation of such a subsidiary or the holding of such a controlling interest has previously been approved by the Registrar of Companies in writing.	See section 15, Cap.622 as to the meaning of 'subsidiary'. In granting approval, the Registrar of Companies may impose such terms and conditions as the Registrar thinks fit.

We, the undersigned, wish to form a company and wish to adopt the above articles of association:

1.____

(Name of founder member)

2.

(Name of founder member)

[Note:

For a company which will hold or holds a licence under section 103 of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622), the Registrar of Companies may direct any terms and conditions to be incorporated in the Articles of Association of the company as the Registrar thinks fit.]