Company Formation

A practical overview of **incorporation options in the UAE**: mainland companies, free zone entities, offshore structures, and ongoing compliance.

CORE AREAS

MAINLAND

Mainland companies are licensed by the relevant Emirate's economic department. Many activities allow 100% foreign ownership and permit business across the UAE and internationally.

FREE ZONES

Free zones offer 100% foreign ownership, sector-specific licensing, and streamlined setup. Free zone companies may benefit from 0% corporate tax on qualifying income, subject to legal conditions.

OFFSHORE

Offshore companies, such as RAK ICC and JAFZA Offshore, are generally used for holding assets, international structuring, and succession planning. They cannot conduct business inside the UAE.

SUBSTANCE & COMPLIANCE

Company formation does not end with a license. Businesses may also need tax registration, accounting records, AML compliance, office arrangements, employment files, visas, and substance filings where applicable.

KEY CONCEPTS

ENTITY TYPES

Common UAE structures include LLCs, sole establishments, civil companies, branches, representative offices, free zone companies, free zone establishments, and offshore companies.

LICENSING CATEGORIES

The selected business activity determines the license category, regulatory approvals, office requirements, visa eligibility, and permitted scope of business. Common categories include commercial, professional, industrial, tourism, and agricultural activities.

Thinking of setting up a business?

Our team can guide you through company formation, licensing requirements, and ongoing compliance.

BOOK A CONSULTATION ↗

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