

A GUIDE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A PRINCIPAL

in a Private
School in
Ras Al Khaimah
2024



دائرة رأس الخيمة للمعرفة
RAS AL KHAIMAH
DEPARTMENT OF KNOWLEDGE





Introduction

Overview of Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge

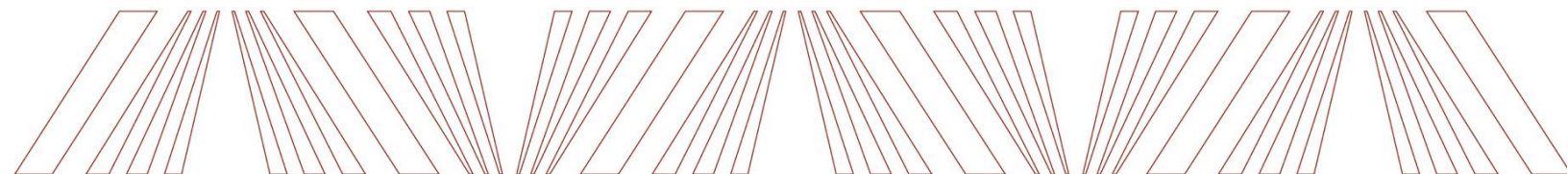
The Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAK DOK) is a newly established regulatory government authority in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah. Our core mission revolves around improving the quality of private education institutions. We are deeply committed to nurturing every learner, ensuring they reach their full potential within a robust and quality educational system. Our passion for education drives us to foster competitiveness and optimise operational efficiency across the education sector. By cultivating an innovative and forward-thinking culture, we aspire to improve and transform all aspects of education in our Emirate.

At RAK DOK, we envision an educational environment that offers equitable services to every student, positioning Ras Al Khaimah as a primary destination for academic excellence.

Effective and transparent leadership significantly impacts the quality of school provision and the outcomes of students. Primarily by developing and adopting an innovative and inclusive vision, influential school leaders improve the quality of student outcomes and play an essential role in contributing to the education objectives of the UAE national priorities and guidance.

The most effective leaders strive for ongoing school improvement in all domains, including community safety and well-being, curriculum and pedagogical provision, middle leadership effectiveness, daily operational excellence, community engagement, student outcomes, and staff development. Principals and vice-principals are central catalysts for the school's transformative journey.

Senior leaders, particularly principals, are highly effective, inspirational, skilled practitioners with high professional competence. All senior staff ensure comprehensive compliance with local and national regulatory requirements. Senior leaders inspire and provide a fully inclusive school. Senior leaders communicate a clear view of the school's aims so that all staff members are clear and committed to their part in achieving the school's vision. Local and national priorities are evident features of the school's plans for improvement and are regularly revised to reflect emerging government requirements. School leaders plan particular programmes and initiatives that are aimed at addressing local or federal priorities.





Definitions

Leadership	The ability to pursue clear objectives and convince others to join you in those pursuits
Management	The practical business of running a school, department, or aspect of the school's work in an efficient and organised way
Principal	A generic term to describe the specific leader(s) of a school – includes all other names of school leaders, including headteacher, superintendent, and director.
School Community	All those who work for and in partnership with the school to improve learning, including students, leaders, teachers, parents, governors/owners, non-teaching staff and community members
Stakeholders	Those who have an interest in a school, including the staff, students, parents, governors, owners/proprietors and community members
Vice-principal	An individual who assists the principal in the overall administration and management of a school or educational institution.

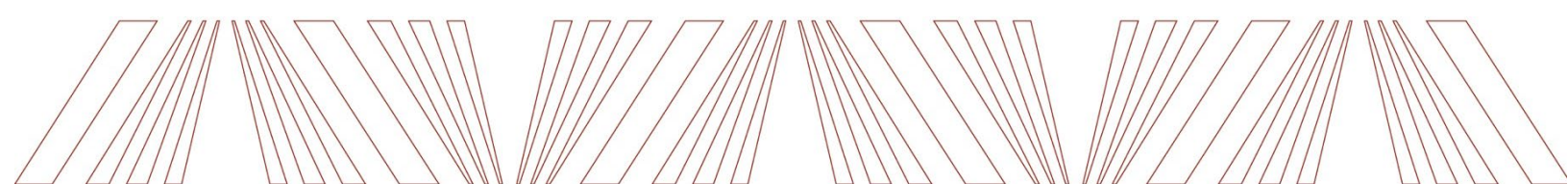


General Guidelines

In Ras Al Khaimah, we have the highest expectations for all leaders – particularly principals. We know that appointing an effective Principal is key to driving up student learning standards. Therefore, all Principals nominated by the school's owner(s)/Board of Governors to lead the school must receive an appointment letter from RAK DOK before commencing their contract. There is no guarantee the Principal will automatically be appointed if the school nominates the candidate.

At a minimum, the following guidelines should be considered by the school's owners/Board of Governors when considering the appointment of a Principal by private schools:

- All private schools must have an appointed Principal responsible for all educational, administrative, financial, and operational matters.
- Only after receiving the appointment letter from RAK DOK should school owners proceed with processing a legally valid contract with the Principal.
- School owners can only inform parents of their new Principal once they obtain the appointment letter from RAK DOK.
- An appointed private school Principal is the only authorised person to act for the school's owners and governing/ advisory board.
- A Principal transferring from one existing school to another in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah must undergo the same process.





Roles and responsibilities of a principal

The primary responsibilities and duties of an appointed Principal at a private school are to:

1. Oversee and ensure the school's commitment to quality education and its continued improvement, with a focus on students' outcomes.
2. Ensure the implementation of the school's stated curriculum and related assessment and certification requirements in all phases.
3. Ensure that the school meets the needs of all students and groups of students while ensuring that students who are determined make at least good progress in all aspects of their education and development.
4. Ensure that all Emirati students are making at least good progress in all aspects of their education and development.
5. Ensure the school complies with RAK DOK regulations and requirements.
6. Promote the Arabic language and the Emirati identity as part of the school culture and curriculum.
7. Recruit and appoint qualified staff, including Vice Principal(s) and section/department heads, according to rigorous standards in line with the demands of RAK DOK and other related government agencies.
8. Implement rigorous policies and procedures and oversee provisions to ensure students' health and safety.
9. Oversee and ensure all school records are updated, accurate and available to RAK DOK upon request.
10. Implement and adhere to current and future regulations issued by RAK DOK and relevant authorities.
11. Ensure the implementation of the vision and mission stated in the RAK DOK-approved academic plan for a new school.
12. Ensure the Principal receives the professional license from the UAE MOE.



Qualifications and Experience Requirements

Before applying for a Principal appointment at RAK DOK, school owners should ensure that the candidate meets the following requirements:

Experience & Qualifications

- Relevant and appropriate teaching experience, and preferably holds teaching qualifications.
- Experience of no less than three cumulative years in educational leadership in the same or similar curriculum schools, where the candidate has held such positions as vice principal, head of section(s), or head of department, if the candidate has not been a Principal before;
- For a first-time Principal candidate/candidate newly recruited to Ras Al Khaimah, an advanced (post-graduate) university degree/diploma/qualification in educational matters (or equivalent) or evidence.
- The Principal must clearly understand the school improvement and development process.
- Understanding the strategic vision for education in the United Arab Emirates and the Emirate.
- To understand students' determination in schools and international best practices supporting inclusive education.
- Significant and strong knowledge of school quality evaluation and accreditation processes.
- Considerable experience in national/international curriculum development and enrichment.

Generic Competencies

- Ability to conduct the necessary lesson observations, feedback sessions, and meetings within the scope of school improvement.
- Ability to monitor and improve any areas of RAK DOK and MOE regulatory frameworks and standards.
- Ability to identify and rectify any violations and deviations of the compliance requirements in the school or educational institution.

Skills and Personal Attributes

- Possess distinguished language proficiency in the language of instruction in the curriculum delivered in the school.
- Experience in accurately analysing school assessments and other related data for improvement.
- To have appropriate technological skills
- Ability to mentor, support, guide and support individuals and teams.
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to effectively build consensus among the Board of Governors.
- Ability to prioritise time and available resources to meet ambitious and measurable objectives and targets.
- Crisis management and problem-solving skills.



h. Attention to detail.

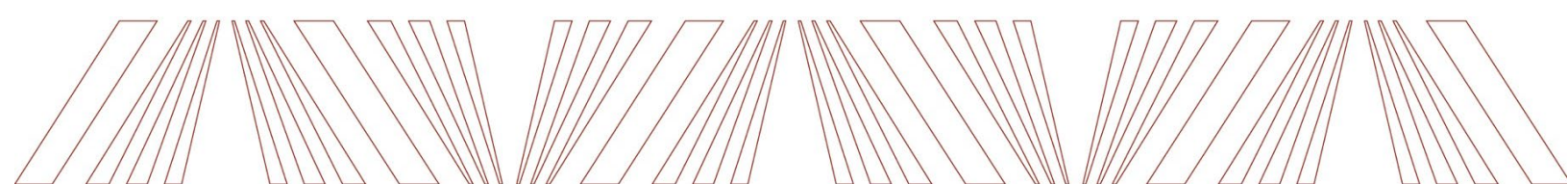
Why we will conduct interviews for candidates' owners nominated for the position of principal.

To support continuous improvements in schools, RAK DOK is a partner in the recruitment process of principals for private schools in Ras Al Khaimah. RAK DOK aims to validate the candidate's capacity and professional experience through:

- Reviewing the candidate's qualifications and experience requirements;
- Evaluating the candidate's understanding towards improving the quality of education in Ras Al Khaimah;
- Assessing whether the candidate can establish a vision and set strategic direction for the school;
- Evaluating the candidate's ability to lead the different phases of the school to establish consistency and continuity in the quality of provision;
- Ensuring that the candidate applying to lead an existing school is well aware of the quality of educational provision at the school and the recommendations from the MoE quality evaluation report, and can move the school forward;
- Ensuring that the candidate applying to lead a new school is fully aware of the contents of the RAK DOK-approved academic plan for that school and can implement the intended vision and mission;
- Validating the candidate's sensitivity to Ras Al Khaimah's nature, Emirati culture and traditions and the cultural diversity of the school's student population.
- Validating the understanding of inclusion and the needs of students with determination.

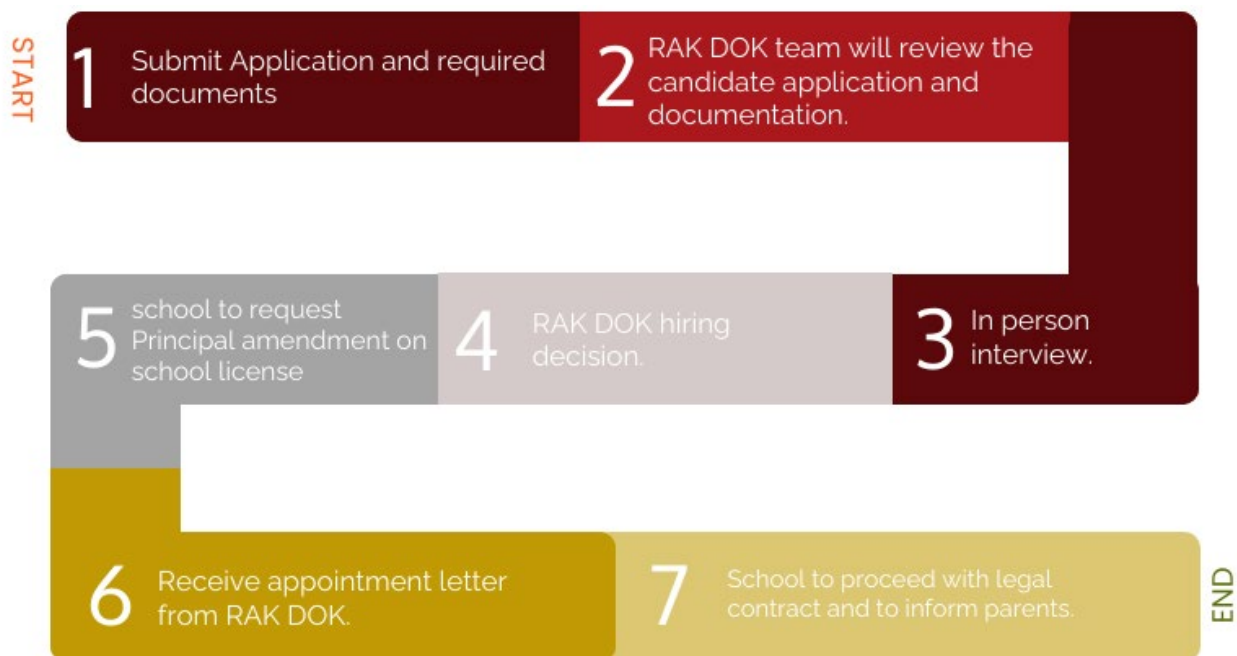
The interviewing team will use a range of questions or ask the candidate to prepare a response to a real case as a scenario assessment.

In general, the interview will last approximately 90 minutes.





The Appointment Process



Step 1: The school will submit the completed application form and the required documents through the online portal.

Required documents:

- 1- A valid passport
- 2- A valid Emirates ID- if applicable.
- 3- Family Book (for UAE citizens)
- 4- Residence (for non-nationals)
- 5- Criminal clearance certificate
- 6- Application form
- 7- Security clearance introductory form.
- 8- Educational qualification and transcripts attested.
- 9- Previous experience letters (if available).
- 10- MOE Qualification Equivalency or a copy of the equivalency receipt (Initial approval from the administrative department).
- 11- MOE educational leadership license. (if available).
- 12- Two (2) references.
- 13- CV and cover letter.
- 14- A copy of the school license or preliminary approval
- 15- TOEFL Certificate - at least score 500 or IELTS certificate - at least five – for candidate principals of foreign schools.



Step 2: The RAK DOK team will confirm receipt of the application within 24 hours and will review it and the completed documents submitted.

Step 3: In-person or virtual Principal interviews may include questions, scenarios, and a prepared presentation. The interview shall cover expertise in school strategic leadership, school operational management, understanding of curriculum, data analysis, school evaluation, school improvement, community engagement, and governance.

When responding to questions, candidates are advised to discuss and contextualise the situation, describe their responsibility in the task, and explain their actions to handle the situation. Presenting the outcome with quantifiable and measurable information to help convey the positive impact of their actions.

The Principal may receive a task to complete within a specific timeframe.

Schools may request to appeal the RAK DOK decision when a candidate was not approved.

Step 4: After the interview, the school may receive one of the following three (3) decisions:

- 1- Approval for employment as a Principal.
- 2- Conditional approval subject to performance monitoring during a specified period (e.g. one term, 6 months).
- 3- Rejection of employment as a Principal.

Step 5: When successful, the school shall receive a RAK DOK Principal confirmation email with a request to raise a request for changing the Principal's name on the school license.

Step 6: When successful, the school will receive a RAK DOK Principal appointment letter, which will be valid for two years.

Step 7: The school will proceed with the legal contract for the principal and inform parents of the new principal's appointment.

Process timeline:

Five (5) working days.

Service Fees:

The service is free.

By working towards these guidelines, school leaders will take action to make their schools high-performing educational institutions in the UAE, where students achieve similarly to those in the best educational systems in the world. Only when school leaders embrace the UAE vision will the UAE make further improvements, eventually celebrating in 2071 by being among countries that provide world-class education.

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 approved policy. The school administration must promptly resolve any discrepancies found during these audits to avoid further action.

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.

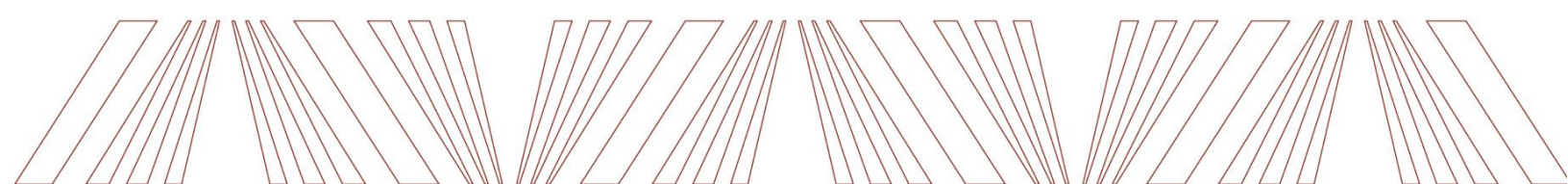
Feedback Mechanisms: School administrators are encouraged to submit feedback on this policy to DOK, which allows for continuous improvement based on schools' practical experiences.

Contact Information

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

Conclusion

The RAK DOK *External Research Review Process* ensures research in private schools is ethical, student-focused, and aligned with educational priorities. While RAK DOK facilitates access, final approval rests with individual school principals. Researchers are expected to uphold privacy, integrity, and data security while contributing valuable insights to education.





Revision History

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Note:

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

