

Brand Voice & UX Writing Guide

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SME Certification Portal - Phase 1

Purpose

This guide exists to ensure **long-term consistency** as the platform scales. It is a **reference**, not a design constraint.

As we continue building out the platform, this document serves as a shared reference going forward. It is not meant to introduce new scope or changes to what's already approved — simply a baseline to help keep copy, labels, CTAs, and visual cues consistent as new screens and flows are added.

Core Principles

The core idea is straightforward:

- **The platform should read like a certification authority**, not a marketplace or startup.
- **Language should stay certification-first**, registry-focused, and action-led.
- **Visual and copy choices should reinforce trust**, clarity, and institutional credibility.

Please treat this guide as a reference point when working on future UI, copy, and UX decisions. If anything ever feels unclear or conflicting, align with the team quickly.

Core Positioning

Certification-first platform - NOT a marketplace, NOT a fundraising platform.

Terminology Rules

AVOID These Terms (Legacy/Generic)

Do NOT Use	Reason
Registration	Generic, not certification-focused
Complete Registration	Use "Complete Setup" instead
Create Account	Identity-based, not action-led
Create Your Account	Use "Secure Your Access" instead
Sign Up	Marketplace language
Register your company	Use "Start Certification" instead
Business Registration	Certification-first, not registration
Register as...	Identity-based, avoid
Investor	Phase 1 focuses on certification only
Fundraising	Not in scope for Phase 1
Investing	Not in scope for Phase 1
Pledging	Not in scope for Phase 1
Deal-making	Marketplace language
I am a SME / I am an Investor	Identity-based framing

USE These Terms (Certification-First)

Use This	Context
Start Certification	Primary CTA for SME path
Initiate Application	Alternative to "Start Certification"
Complete Setup	Final step button
Setup Complete	Success message heading
Secure Your Access	Heading for user credentials step
Establish Credentials	Alternative for credentials step
Access Registry	Secondary CTA for browse path
Access Certification Portal	Alternative completion CTA
Certification	Core action

Use This	Context
Verification	Process description
Credibility	Value proposition
Registry Access	Benefit
Official UAE SME Registry	Key value prop (central theme)

Terminology Replacements (Direct Mapping)

Old (Avoid)	New (Use)
Complete Registration	Complete Setup
Create Your Account	Secure Your Access
Registration Successful!	Setup Complete!
Creating account...	Completing setup...
to complete registration	to complete setup
An error occurred during registration	An error occurred during setup
Register your company	Start Certification

Account Type Selection (Intent vs Identity)

Key Principle

The entry point should be **action-led (intent-based)**, not **identity-led**.

AVOID identity-based framing: - "I am a SME" - "I am an Investor" - "Register as..."

USE intent-based framing: - "Certify a Business" - "Browse Certified Businesses"

Option A – SME Path

Element	Correct Copy
Heading	Certify a Business
Subtext	Get certified to access the official registry and new opportunities.
Button	Start Certification

Element	Correct Copy
Icon	Shield / Checkmark icon

Option B – Browser/Partner Path

Element	Correct Copy
Heading	Browse Certified Businesses
Subtext	Access the registry of verified SMEs.
Micro-copy	View-only access (<i>clarifies read-only in Phase 1</i>)
Button	Access Registry
Icon	Search / List icon

Icon Guidelines

Action/Context	Icon Type
Certification (SME Path)	Shield / Checkmark
Browse Registry	Search / List

Screen-by-Screen Terminology

Account Type Selection (Step 1)

Element	Correct Copy
SME Card Heading	Certify a Business
SME Card Subtext	Get certified to access the official registry and new opportunities.
SME Button	Start Certification
Browser Card Heading	Browse Certified Businesses
Browser Card Subtext	Access the registry of verified SMEs.
Browser Card Micro-copy	View-only access
Browser Button	Access Registry

Company Information (Step 2 - SME)

Element	Correct Copy
Heading	Company Information
Subtext	Enter your business details to get started with certification.
Button	Save & Continue

Note: This step is already aligned with certification flow. No changes required.

Personal Details (Step 3 - SME / Step 2 - Browser)

Element	Correct Copy
SME Heading	Personal Details
SME Subtext	Set up your login credentials to complete setup.
Browser Heading	Secure Your Access
Browser Subtext	Enter your details to access the SME registry
Button	Complete Setup
Button (Loading)	Completing setup...

Success Screen

Element	Correct Copy
Heading	Setup Complete!
Subtext	We've sent a verification email to {email}. Please check your inbox to verify your account.

Error Messages

Element	Correct Copy
Generic Error	An error occurred during setup

Stepper Labels

Key Principle

- Avoid showing same label twice (e.g., "Details" twice)
- Consider renaming for clarity (e.g., "Review" or "Confirmation" for final step)

SME Path (3 Steps)

1. **Type** - Account type selection
2. **Company** - Company information
3. **Personal** - Personal details / credentials

Browser Path (2 Steps)

1. **Type** - Account type selection
2. **Account** - Personal details / credentials

Step Progression

The flow should follow: **Intent** → **Company** → **User** - Clear step progression - Consistent with institutional, certification-first tone

Landing Page

How It Works Section

Step	Heading	Description
1	Start Certification	Begin your certification process and submit your business details.
2	Submit Documents	Upload your trade license, financial statements, and required documents.
3	Get Certified	Our team reviews and issues your certification within 24-48 hours.

Important: Step 1 must emphasize certification process, NOT "company registration" or "register your company".

Registry Emphasis

The hero subtext’s reference to the **official UAE SME registry** works well and should remain a **central theme** as it is a core value proposition.

CTA Hierarchy

Primary CTAs (Green Button)

- Start Certification
- Complete Setup
- Access Certification Portal

Secondary CTAs (Outlined Button)

- Sign In
- Access Registry

Key Rules

- Limit each section to **one clear primary CTA** to avoid clutter or marketplace signaling
- All CTAs must remain **action-led**, not identity-based

Color Usage Rules

Element	Color	Notes
Primary CTAs	Green (teal-600)	e.g., "Start Certification", "Access Registry"
Secondary CTAs	Outlined (teal border) or neutral	
Structural Elements	Dark/black tones	For layout, headers, panels only — NOT for primary actions
Text	Graphite tones	

Important

- Avoid introducing additional accent colors at this stage
- Keep the system **institutional and cohesive**
- Green is for primary actions only

Layout Hierarchy (Landing Page)

Apply consistently across public-facing screens:

1. **Hero** (single CTA)
2. **Proof / Credibility** (stats)
3. **Value Proposition** (features)
4. **How It Works** (steps)
5. **Primary CTA** (single CTA)

Layout Principles

- Maintain clear section hierarchy
 - Limit each section to one clear primary CTA
 - Keep the visual tone **clean and restrained** (certification-grade rather than promotional)
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Auth Layout

Split-Screen Auth Layouts

- **Use:** Neutral, contextual imagery (business / documentation / collaboration)
 - **Avoid:** Aspirational or lifestyle visuals
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Global Content Rules

Certification-First Language

Ensure language remains strictly focused on: - Certification - Readiness - Registry access

Avoid (Phase 1)

- Fundraising
- Investing
- Pledging
- Deal-making

Use

- Certification
- Verification
- Credibility
- Registry access

We want to avoid implying that this is a fundraising platform in Phase 1. Investor-specific onboarding flows can be introduced in a later phase once the core certification utility is validated.

System Emails (Phase 1)

The following automated system emails should follow the same institutional, certification-first tone:

Email Type	Purpose
Welcome / Account Created	Confirmation of account setup
Application Submitted	Confirmation of certification application
Verification In Progress	Status update during review
Certification Issued	Success notification
Revisions or Additional Information Required	Request for additional documents

Copy for these emails should be reviewed and aligned to ensure consistency across the full user journey.

Meta Description

UAE SME Readiness Certification Portal – Get certified, gain credibility, and access new opportunities. Trusted by businesses across the UAE.

Meta Keywords

SME certification, UAE business, business certification, SME registry, registry access, business credibility

Visual Tone Summary

Aspect	Guideline
Overall Tone	Clean, restrained, certification-grade
NOT	Promotional, marketplace-style, startup-y

Aspect	Guideline
Authority	Reads like a certification authority
Trust	Reinforces trust, clarity, institutional credibility

This document should be referenced when creating any new screens or updating existing copy.