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# Startup Advisory Compliance Checklist

## **Build Smart. Build Right. Build for Growth.**

Starting a business is exciting, but without a solid compliance foundation, that excitement can quickly turn into risk. Many startups ignore the legal and regulatory framework until it's too late. This checklist is your guide to launching with confidence, clarity, and compliance.

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### **✓ Choose the Right Legal Structure**

Your legal structure impacts tax, liability, funding, and growth.

**Action:** Decide whether to register a private company (Pty) Ltd, a sole proprietorship, partnership, or nonprofit. Most funders prefer Pty Ltd structures.

### **✓ Register Your Company with CIPC**

Formal registration protects your name and gives you legal standing.

**Action:** Register your business through CIPC. Submit your Memorandum of Incorporation (MOI), appoint directors, and receive your company registration number.

### **✓ Draft a Custom MOI (If Needed)**

The MOI is your company's constitution — it matters more than you think.

**Action:** For businesses with investors, co-founders, or complex shareholding, draft a custom MOI tailored to your goals and internal governance.

### **✓ Register for Tax and Other SARS Obligations**

Startups must comply with all tax requirements from the start.

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**Action:** Register for Income Tax, PAYE (if hiring staff), and VAT (if turnover exceeds the threshold). Keep updated with SARS correspondence.

### **✓ Open a Business Bank Account**

A dedicated account builds credibility and simplifies bookkeeping.

**Action:** Use your company registration documents, tax number, and proof of address to open a business account in your company's name.

### **✓ Draft Foundational Agreements**

Clarity between founders, shareholders, and contractors prevents future disputes.

**Action:** Draft shareholder agreements, service-level agreements (SLAs), NDAs, and other key contracts. Keep signed copies on record.

### **✓ Understand Your BEE Position Early**

Your BEE status may affect your future growth.

**Action:** If you're an EME, prepare an annual affidavit. If you plan to grow or tender, begin planning for BEE structuring early.

### **✓ Protect Your Intellectual Property (IP)**

Ideas are valuable, protect them.

**Action:** Consider registering trademarks, copyrights, and domain names. Ensure contracts include IP assignment clauses where needed.

### **✓ Create a Scalable Governance and Admin System**

Start small, but build like you will grow.

**Action:** Set up file storage, compliance logs, recordkeeping systems, and an invoicing platform. Keep minutes and resolutions from the start.

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Chief Executive Officer: Rozanne van Heerden  
Chief Operations Officer: Wilhelm Kuhn



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### ✓ Plan for Growth With Compliance in Mind

Growth brings added compliance risk.

**Action:** Align your startup strategy with legal scalability — e.g., appoint a board, draft a BEE plan, create employment policies, and understand your funding compliance requirements.

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### Why Startup Compliance Matters

- ✓ Prevents legal disputes and reputational harm
- ✓ Builds investor, partner, and customer confidence
- ✓ Unlocks access to contracts, tenders, and funding
- ✓ Keeps you audit- and verification-ready
- ✓ Positions you for long-term sustainability and success

Startups do not get second chances with compliance — build it into your foundation from day one.

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### Need Help Launching Right?

RK Corporate Consulting supports South African startups with:

- Full company registration and SARS setup
- Shareholder and co-founder agreements
- Custom MOIs and governance frameworks
- Startup compliance health checks
- BEE and labour readiness for new teams

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**Navigating Compliance with Confidence**



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