

Not another framework!

Understanding the Defence Cyber Certification (DCC) scheme and how it applies to you

The UK defence 'mountain' is getting more hazardous. DCC is the permit system that proves you're trained, equipped, and independently checked for the route you want to climb.

Instead of marking your own homework at base camp, DCC provides independent, verifiable assurance. It replaces inconsistent self assessments with trusted checks, strengthening the defence supply chain and increasing your organisation's resilience as conditions worsen higher up the slope.

The climb always starts the same way. Certification to the Cyber Essentials scheme is the mandatory first foothold, required at every level before you can progress further up the mountain.

30%
of all global data breaches involve a third-party supplier, a 100% increase year-on-year

89
nationally significant cyberattacks were recorded in the year leading to September 2024 (SDR 2025)

Level 3

Expert

For substantial cyber risk and classified work; requires Cyber Essentials Plus + 144 controls.

It's formal recognition of full 'defence in depth' capability – the highest standard of cyber assurance MoD requires.

Level 3 allows you to:

- Bid, deliver and work on the highest risk defence contracts (classified programs and critical national infrastructure)
- Market yourself as a top tier secure supplier capable of handling the most sensitive MoD systems

Level 2

Advanced

For high risk contracts; requires Cyber Essentials Plus + 139 advanced controls.

It's recognition that you have advanced governance, technical security, and resilience aligned to Def Stan 05-138.

Level 2 allows you to:

- Bid for and deliver low-risk to high-risk MoD contracts
- Access to higher-risk projects that require suppliers to have independently assured higher level security maturity

Level 1

Comprehensive

For low-moderate risk contracts; requires Cyber Essentials + 101 controls.

It's a two stage, independently validated assessment demonstrating maturity beyond basic cyber hygiene.

Level 1 allows you to:

- Access contracts above entry level (CRP Level 1)
- Bid for and deliver low-risk to standard defence services

Level 0

Foundation

For very low risk defence contracts; requires Cyber Essentials + 3 controls.

Level 0 allows you to:

- Enter MoD procurement frameworks
- Bid for and deliver very low-risk MoD contracts

A safer climb for everyone

With DCC in place, every organisation on the climb that handles MoD information carries proportionate, independently validated security controls. This reduces the risk of attackers exploiting weaker links. No unsecured climbers putting the whole expedition at risk.

It's a structured, scalable, risk based framework aligned to Def Stan 05-138 and the Cyber Security Model (CSMv4). That means you know in advance which safety equipment is required for each ascent, and exactly what level of controls you'll need for different contracts.

- No more contract-by-contract checks
- Reduced opportunities for exploitation
- Increased protection of sensitive and critical systems
- Improved crisis resilience across the defence ecosystem
- Reduced administrative burden
- Increased procurement confidence
- Faster contracting for both MoD and suppliers

We'll show you the route.

Get in touch.

findoutmore@pgitl.com
+44 (0) 20 4566 6600

Sources: Strategic Defence Review 2025 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-strategic-defence-review-2025-making-britain-safer-secure-at-home-strong-abroad>); IASME (<https://iasme.co.uk/defence-cyber-certification/>); ADS (<https://www.adsgroup.org.uk/knowledge/unders-tanding-the-defence-cyber-certification/>); Computer Weekly (<https://www.computerweekly.com/news/366627637/MoD-supply-chain-cyber-scheme-gets-up-and-running>)