TOTAL GROUP LTD

GUIDE FOR DEFENCE SUPPLIERS

Defence Cyber Certification (DCC)

What DCC is, which level you need, how the process works, what it costs and what you need to have ready.



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The MOD has asked industry partners to reach Level 0 by 31 December 2026

November 2026

THE BASICS

What is Defence Cyber Certification?

Defence Cyber Certification (DCC) is the cyber security certification for organisations in the UK defence supply chain. It was developed by the Ministry of Defence in partnership with IASME and is delivered through IASME-licensed Certification Bodies.

DCC is a point-in-time assessment of your organisation against a UK Defence cyber security standard, backed by evidence. It is independently assessed, not self-assessed: an assessor checks that your controls are in place and working.

> **Why act now?** The MOD has asked its industry partners to achieve Level 0 by 31 December 2026. Level 0 needs Cyber Essentials, so if you do not hold it yet, that is the place to start.

Who needs it

Direct MOD suppliers
Organisations contracting with the Ministry of Defence.

The wider supply chain
Subcontractors and smaller businesses supplying a prime contractor on defence work.

New bids and renewals
Businesses bidding for new defence contracts or renewing existing ones.

Existing CE and CE+ holders
Defence suppliers who already hold Cyber Essentials and need the next step.

The four levels

The MOD or the prime contractor decides which level a contract needs. The level depends on the risk of the work and the information you will handle.

LEVEL 0

3

controls. Requires Cyber Essentials

The baseline the MOD has asked industry partners to reach by 31 December 2026.

LEVEL 1

101

controls. Requires Cyber Essentials

A full set of organisational and technical controls for lower-risk defence work.

LEVEL 2

139

controls. Requires CE Plus

Stronger controls for contracts with more sensitive information or higher risk.

LEVEL 3

144

controls. Requires CE Plus

The highest level, for the most sensitive defence contracts.

Once certified you attest each year that your controls are still in place, and recertify every three years.

THE PROCESS

How you get certified, step by step

Every organisation starts from a different place, but the route is the same. Total Group takes you through steps 1 to 6 and keeps you compliant afterwards; the assessment itself is carried out by an independent IASME Certification Body.

1. **Confirm your target level**
   Check your contract, tender or prime contractor's requirements for the DCC level they need. If it is not stated, we help you plan for the level they are likely to ask for.

2. **Free scoping call**
   We agree what is in scope: your people, sites, devices, cloud services and the systems that handle defence information. Scope is the biggest driver of time and cost.

3. **Cyber Essentials or Cyber Essentials Plus**
   Every DCC level builds on Cyber Essentials (Levels 0 and 1) or Cyber Essentials Plus (Levels 2 and 3). We deliver both and physically test every control first, so you pass first time.

4. **Gap analysis**
   We map your current controls against your target level and show you exactly what is missing, in priority order.

5. **Close the gaps**
   MFA, patching, secure configuration, backup, logging and monitoring put in place and run for you, with the policies and records to match.

6. **Evidence pack**
   Your policies, registers and test results brought together in the form an assessor expects to see.

7. **Independent assessment**
   An IASME-licensed Certification Body assesses you against the evidence. We book it with our Certification Body partner and support you through it. We never assess our own work.

8. **Certified, then stay certified**
   An annual attestation that your controls are still in place, and full recertification every three years. We monitor your controls in real time so each attestation is a normal day, not a scramble.

BE READY

What you will need

The higher the level, the more evidence the assessor will ask for. Use this checklist to see how ready you are. Do not worry if you cannot tick everything: closing these gaps is exactly what we do.

Before you start

- The DCC level your contract or prime contractor requires
- A current Cyber Essentials certificate (Levels 0 and 1) or Cyber Essentials Plus (Levels 2 and 3)
- A named owner for cyber security, with board support
- Your headcount, sites and a rough count of devices and cloud services

Know what you have

- An up-to-date asset register of devices, systems and software
- A list of cloud services and where your data is held
- A simple network diagram and the scope boundary
- Where defence information is stored and who can reach it

Policies

- Information security policy
- Access control, joiners, movers and leavers
- Incident response plan
- Backup, continuity and recovery
- Supplier security

Controls in place

- MFA on email, remote access, cloud services and admin accounts
- Admin rights restricted and separate admin accounts
- Security updates applied promptly, with records
- Malware protection on every device
- Firewalls and secure configuration on every device
- Logging and monitoring of security events
- Backups you have proved you can restore

Evidence

- Vulnerability scan and penetration test results
- Patch and change records
- Staff security awareness training records
- Incident and risk registers, reviewed by management
- Supplier assessments for key IT suppliers

> **Tip:** keep evidence current all year. Each annual attestation is far easier when your records never go stale.

COST

How the price is worked out

There is no single price for DCC. The cost depends on how much there is to assess and how much work is needed before the assessment. These are the things that move the price:

Your target level
Level 0 has 3 controls; Level 3 has 144. Each step up adds controls, evidence and assessment time.

Organisation size
More people, devices and accounts means more to secure, sample and evidence.

Scope
The number of sites, cloud services and systems that handle defence information.

Where you start
Already holding Cyber Essentials or CE+, current policies and good records all bring the cost down.

Remediation needed
Gaps found in the gap analysis that need fixing before the assessment.

Assessment
The independent Certification Body assessment, which also scales with level and size.

Guide prices

Organisation size	DCC Level 0	DCC Level 1	DCC Levels 2 and 3
Micro (0 to 9 employees)	£475 to £649	£9,500 to £14,999	Bespoke quote (POA)
Small (10 to 49 employees)	£575 to £899	From £14,500	Bespoke quote (POA)
Medium (50 to 249 employees)	£695 to £1,499	From £19,500	Bespoke quote (POA)
Large (250+ employees)	£950 to £2,499	£25,000 to £49,999+	Bespoke quote (POA)

Estimates only, to help you plan. Prices exclude VAT. Cyber Essentials (Levels 0 and 1) and Cyber Essentials Plus (Levels 2 and 3) are quoted separately if you do not already hold them. We confirm a fixed quote after a free scoping call.

Find out where you stand, free

Book a free DCC scoping call. We will confirm the level you need, show you which controls you already meet and give you a fixed quote for the quickest route to certification.

Call 01727 881 224 **Email** hello@totalgroup.co.uk

Web totalgroup.co.uk/compliance/defence-cyber-certification

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