



# Cyber Essentials Checklist

What you need to pass

# Why Cyber Essentials **Matters**



Only 14% of UK SMBs are Cyber Essentials certified.



That means **86%** are leaving themselves open to common, preventable cyber threats.

You don't need to be a cyber security expert to understand that customers, partners, and suppliers **expect your business to protect sensitive information**. One simple mistake can lead to big consequences, from data breaches to lost trust.

That's where **Cyber Essentials** comes in. This guide breaks down what Cyber Essentials involves, what's required to pass, and how to get started. **No jargon. No stress.** Just practical steps to help you protect your business and show the world you mean it.

## What is **Cyber Essentials**?

Cyber Essentials is a government-backed certification that helps businesses protect themselves from the most common cyber attacks, things like phishing, malware, and unauthorised access. It's designed to make sure you've got the right basic controls in place to keep your systems and data safe.

If you're aiming to **grow, bid on government contracts, or just reassure your clients** that you take cybersecurity seriously; Cyber Essentials is a smart step forward.

## **Who** Should Consider It?



- Businesses handling sensitive or regulated data
- Organisations wanting to differentiate from competitors
- Companies bidding on government, NHS, or MoD contracts
- Businesses looking to move beyond the basics and show they are serious about security

Cyber Essentials is ideal for any organisation that wants to demonstrate basic cyber hygiene, especially small to medium businesses looking to build trust, reduce risk, and meet supplier or government requirements

# The Five **Key Areas You'll Be Assessed On**

1

## Firewalls

- You must use boundary firewalls to secure internet connections and block unauthorised access.
- Your firewall must be properly configured and up to date.

2

## Secure Configurations

- Default settings on software, devices, and systems should be reviewed and improved.
- Remove or disable unnecessary functions and accounts.

3

## User Access Control

- Make sure only the right people have access to your systems.
- Use strong passwords and restrict admin rights to those who genuinely need them.

4

## Malware Protection

- Install anti-malware software or use application whitelisting to prevent malicious software.
- Keep your antivirus tools active and up to date.

5

## Security Update Management

- Keep all software and devices updated with the latest security patches.
- Set updates to install automatically where possible.

## Why Get Certified?

- ➔ **Win more contracts;** many government and private sector opportunities require it
- ➔ **Build trust** with customers and partners
- ➔ **Protect your data and systems** from everyday cyber threats
- ➔ **Lower your risk** and potentially save on cyber liability insurance
- ➔ **Strengthen your security culture** across the whole business



# Myths About Cyber Essentials

## "It's only for big businesses."

Wrong! Cyber Essentials is designed for organisations of all sizes, especially SMEs that want to protect themselves and grow with confidence.

## "We have antivirus - that's enough."

Antivirus is just one part of the puzzle. Cyber Essentials covers a broader set of risks and shows that your whole setup is secure, not just one piece of it.

## "It sounds complicated and expensive."

It doesn't have to be. We work with businesses of all sizes and tailor the process to your needs and budget. And we explain everything clearly, no tech talk needed.

## What's The Process Like?



Review of your set-up  
and identify any gaps



Implement the five  
key controls (with help  
if needed)



You complete a  
self-assessment



Guide you through  
certification and sup-  
port you at every step

# What Is **Cyber Essentials Plus**?

Think of Cyber Essentials Plus as the premium version of Cyber Essentials. It includes everything in the basic certification plus a hands-on technical audit carried out by a qualified assessor.



Instead of simply saying you meet the requirements, Cyber Essentials Plus proves it with real-world testing. This includes vulnerability scans, configuration checks, and simulated attacks to ensure your security measures actually work in practice.

If your business handles sensitive data, operates in a regulated industry, or wants to give clients total confidence in your defences, **Cyber Essentials Plus is the clear next step.**

## **Real-World Testing** **Explained**

- ➔ External vulnerability scan to check for public-facing weaknesses
- ➔ Internal assessment of desktops, laptops, and other devices
- ➔ Email and browser testing to spot common phishing and malware risks
- ➔ Verification of patching and anti-malware controls
- ➔ Evidence-based review of your secure configuration and access controls

## **Why Upgrade** **to CE Plus?**

















- ➔ Greater assurance - independent, expert verification of your defences
- ➔ Meets stricter contract requirements (including many public sector and MOD contracts)
- ➔ Identify weaknesses you might not spot on your own
- ➔ Reinforce customer trust with evidence-based security credentials
- ➔ Boost your readiness for more advanced compliance frameworks (like ISO 27001)

**We achieved Cyber Essentials Plus ourselves in 2021.**

Since then, we've supported a wide range of organisations on their path to Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus.

## Why Choose **Xeretec**?

Achieving Cyber Essentials certification is a powerful step towards stronger security. At Xeretec, we understand where businesses typically fall short in achieving certification. Our experienced cyber experts make the process clear, affordable, and disruption-free—guiding you every step of the way.

 <b>PRIVATELY OWNED</b> SINCE 1991	 <b>170+ STAFF ACROSS</b> <b>10 OFFICES UK &amp;</b> <b>IRELAND COVERAGE</b>	<b>PULSE DEVICE ANALYTICS &amp;</b> <b>VISION PRINT ASSESSMENT</b> <b>TOOLS LAUNCHED 2015-18</b> 
 <b>£50+ MILLION</b> AVERAGE ANNUAL RUNRATE	 <b>ACQUIRED</b> SEVEN COMPANIES	 <b>HELPDESK</b> LAUNCHED 2006
<b>FOCUSED ON</b> <b>QUALITY</b> WE HAVE ACHIEVED BOTH <b>ISO9001</b> AND <b>ISO27001</b> ACCREDITATIONS	 <b>1000</b> COMPANIES TO INSPIRE <b>EUROPE</b> <b>TOP 1000</b> COMPANIES TO INSPIRE BRITAIN AND EUROPE	<b>LAUNCHED</b> FIRST ON-DEVICE APPS 2017 
<b>xerox</b> PLATINUM PARTNER OF THE YEAR 2017 FINANCE PARTNER OF THE YEAR 2017	<b>2017</b> ONE OF THE FIRST GLOBAL DEVICE AS A SERVICE ROLL OUTS	
<b>TOP 75 VAR</b> AWARDED BY CRN 2021 	<b>NEW IT</b> <b>OFFERINGS</b> LAUNCHED 2017-22	 UCAAS  INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION  CYBER SECURITY  DIGITAL WORKSPACE
LARGEST INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED XEROX CONCESSIONAIRE IN WESTERN EUROPE HP AMPLIFY POWER SERVICES PARTNER	 PLATINUM Authorised Concessionaire	 HP Amplify Power Services Partner Managed Print Services Print Lifecycle Services Specialist PS Lifecycle Services Specialist Managed Print Specialist
<b>CYBER ESSENTIALS</b> <b>PLUS ACHIEVED 2022</b> 		

## Let's Talk

### Thinking about getting Cyber Essentials certified?

We'd love to walk you through what's involved and help you get started

→ **Contact us**