

Press release: UK universities recognised for excellence in cyber security research

- Three new Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber Security Research recognised, including the first in Wales.
- Total number of Centres in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland boosted to 17.

Three UK universities have been recognised as Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber Security Research (ACE-CSR), highlighting the country is leading the way in cyber security skills.

The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) have identified the University of Kent, King's College London, and Cardiff University as having first-rate research with scale and impact.

The universities will now join 14 other institutions in a scheme forming part of the Government's National Cyber Security Strategy, which is making the UK the safest place to be online and helping to support the country's thriving digital economy.

The universities will now have the opportunity to bid for funding to develop cutting-edge research in cyber security, including at Doctoral level, as well as attend annual conferences and workshops.

The scheme aims to create a better understanding of the strength of the UK's academic capability in cyber security and identify areas where there are research opportunities or technical gaps. It makes collaboration between academia, business and government easier, and helps make sure cutting-edge research is turned into practical products and services. This includes developing tools to tackle mass marketing fraud online and better understand cyber criminals.

Minister for Digital Margot James said:

These universities are doing fantastic research in cyber security and they are rightly being recognised for their pioneering work.

We have some of the best minds in the world working in the field and thanks to this scheme they can now help shape our National Cyber Security Strategy and develop the talent and services of tomorrow.

Chris Ensor, Deputy Director for Cyber Security Skills and Growth at the NCSC, said:

The UK has world-class universities carrying out cutting edge research into all areas of cyber security.

It's fantastic to see three more universities recognised as Academic Centres of Excellence and I'm especially pleased that we now have centres in all home nations.

The NCSC looks forward to collaborating with these institutions to make the UK the safest place to live and work online.

Professor Pete Burnap, Professor of Data Science & Cybersecurity, and Director of the Airbus Centre of Excellence in Cybersecurity Analytics at Cardiff University said:

We are delighted to receive this recognition as it evidences our long track-record of research excellence in cyber security.

Our core identity is the interdisciplinary fusion of artificial intelligence and cybersecurity, a concept we call Cyber Security Analytics. AI is at the heart of the UK government's industrial strategy and our aim is to innovate with AI to improve automated cyber threat intelligence and support decision making and policy responses to make the UK more secure for individuals, business and the government.

We are proud to be the first Welsh university to be recognised by NCSC for our cyber research capability, and we hope to build on the impressive expertise that already exists across the region between academia, government and business.

Dr Jose M. Such, Director of the Centre, and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Informatics at King's College London said:

We are thrilled to be recognised for the high-quality socio-technical cyber security research we conduct at King's College London. This recognition acknowledges the critical and diverse mass of researchers working on this area at King's from different but complementary angles and points of view.

Our research focuses on three main research themes and their interrelationship: the use of AI for cyber security together with the cyber security of AI itself, the theoretical aspects of cyber security like verification and testing, and the socio-political and strategic aspects of cyber security.

Shujun Li, Professor of Cyber Security and Director of the Kent Interdisciplinary Research Centre in Cyber Security (KirCCS) at the University of Kent, said:

We are excited to be given the ACE-CSR status as an acknowledgement of the excellent research in cyber security at the University of Kent. Our research is truly interdisciplinary drawing on the expertise of colleagues from computer science and engineering as well as wider disciplines such as psychology, law, business and sociology. Our ambition is to have one of the largest and most productive cyber security research centres in the UK by 2022 as well as helping to grow the next-generation cyber security researchers.

The ACE-CSR programme is supported by Government's £1.9 billion National Cyber Security Strategy (NCSS) 2016-2021.

Notes to editors

List of institutions that are recognised as Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber Security Research are:

- University of Birmingham
 - University of Bristol
 - University of Cambridge
 - Cardiff University
 - University of Edinburgh
 - University of Kent
 - Imperial College London
 - King's College London
 - Lancaster University
 - Newcastle University
 - University of Oxford
 - Queen's University Belfast
 - Royal Holloway, University of London
 - University of Southampton
 - University of Surrey
 - University of Warwick
-
- University College London
-
- The universities will be recognised as Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber Security Research until June 2022.
-
- Our [consultation](#) on developing the UK cyber security profession closes at 5pm on 31 August 2018.
-
- The National Cyber Security Strategy includes a commitment to develop the cyber security profession in the UK. As part of this work the Government is consulting on how to develop the right skills, capabilities and professionalism for the industry. It includes a clear definition of objectives and proposes the creation of a new UK Cyber Security Council to coordinate delivery.

Press release: Joint Statement on the reformed Electronic Communications Code

Industry, the landowner community, representative bodies and Government have come together to reaffirm commitments to the ECC and the Ofcom Code of Practice.

MobileUK, the Country Land and Business Association, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have issued a joint statement:

The reformed Electronic Communications Code (ECC) came into force in December 2017 with the aim of boosting coverage and connectivity across the UK, through a package of measures which Government expects to deliver significant cost reductions to the sector, while ensuring that landowners receive a fair payment for allowing their land to be used.

Since the new legislation was introduced, there have been problems with negotiations progressing. While some initial uncertainty is to be expected, Government, regulators, the telecoms sector, independent infrastructure providers and the landowner community, recognise the importance of all parties working collaboratively together, both during this transition period and moving forwards.

We are therefore coming together to reaffirm the commitments made to each other in Ofcom's Code of Practice, and to reiterate our support for the Government's ambition to be a leading global economy underpinned by world class full fibre network and 5G infrastructure. It is essential that parties engage professionally in open and constructive communications. The future needs of customers and the economy are too important for it to be otherwise.

Minister for Digital Margot James said:

It's great to see industry and landowners committing to the Electronic Communications Code and backing our ambitions to improve connectivity and ensure Britain is fit for the future. From improving our existing networks to using the next generation of technology, collaboration is vital when it comes to building our digital infrastructure.

Press release: Joint Statement on the reformed Electronic Communications Code

Industry, the landowner community, representative bodies and Government have come together to reaffirm commitments to the ECC and the Ofcom Code of Practice.

MobileUK, the Country Land and Business Association, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have issued a joint statement:

The reformed Electronic Communications Code (ECC) came into force in December 2017 with the aim of boosting coverage and connectivity across the UK, through a package of measures which Government expects to deliver significant cost reductions to the sector, while ensuring that landowners receive a fair payment for allowing their land to be used.

Since the new legislation was introduced, there have been problems with negotiations progressing. While some initial uncertainty is to be expected, Government, regulators, the telecoms sector, independent infrastructure providers and the landowner community, recognise the importance of all parties working collaboratively together, both during this transition period and moving forwards.

We are therefore coming together to reaffirm the commitments made to each other in Ofcom's Code of Practice, and to reiterate our support for the Government's ambition to be a leading global economy underpinned by world class full fibre network and 5G infrastructure. It is essential that parties engage professionally in open and constructive communications. The future needs of customers and the economy are too important for it to be otherwise.

Minister for Digital Margot James said:

It's great to see industry and landowners committing to the Electronic Communications Code and backing our ambitions to improve connectivity and ensure Britain is fit for the future. From improving our existing networks to using the next generation of technology, collaboration is vital when it comes to building our digital infrastructure.

[Press release: British built laser spacecraft due to be launched into orbit](#)

Flying at 200 miles above the surface of the Earth, the powerful laser on the European Space Agency's (ESA) Aeolus spacecraft will beam down into the atmosphere and measure wind speeds – a completely new approach that could revolutionise the accuracy of weather forecasting, helping to protect people from disasters like floods and hurricanes across the world.

The spacecraft was built by Airbus Defence and Space in Stevenage. Other British businesses provided critical elements to the mission, including a camera, software and propulsion systems.

The substantial extent of UK participation was achieved through the UK Space Agency's strong, ongoing support of ESA's Earth Observation Envelope Programme, which benefits industry and science.

Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

The Aeolus mission is a great example of the potential real-world impacts that space can have on Earth. Its data will lead to more reliable weather forecasts that can be used by farmers, seafarers, construction workers and others to improve productivity and safety.

Space is a key part of our modern Industrial Strategy and it is work like this that shows how vital our role in the European Space Agency is in bringing real benefits to UK companies.

Aeolus is the fifth of ESA's Earth Explorer missions, which address critical Earth science issues, focusing on innovative missions and leading-edge technologies that deliver scientific excellence.

James Cotton, Satellite Winds Scientist, at the Met Office, said:

The Aeolus mission aims to improve the global coverage of wind profile observations, including areas where in situ wind measurements are currently lacking, such as over the oceans, in the tropics and the Southern Hemisphere.

Within numerical weather prediction, we expect the Aeolus winds to be particularly useful for improving our analysis of the atmospheric state in the tropics, a region where we know the model wind errors are large.

Aeolus will lift-off on a Vega rocket from Europe's Spaceport at Kourou in French Guiana this evening (22 August) at 21:20:09, Universal Time (UTC). [The launch will be available to view online.](#)

Colin Paynter, Managing Director Airbus Defence and Space Ltd, said:

The UK contribution to Aeolus, by the alliance of UK SMEs and established players led by Airbus, was first class, delivering a revolutionary Earth observation satellite that will give wind profile data in near real time, improving weather forecasting and helping to bring the benefits of space down to every citizen on Earth. Airbus was honoured to lead Team UK to deliver this spacecraft.

Britain's space industry is going from strength to strength. In 2016 the UK committed €1.4 billion across a range of ESA space programmes. The UK invests around €350 million every year with ESA which gives us access to over €5 billion per year of ESA research and technical expertise. As well as our leading role in Earth Observation, the UK is also the led European funder of telecommunications research which results in one-in-four commercial telecommunications satellites being substantially built in Britain.

The UK Space Agency is driving the growth of the space sector as part of the government's Industrial Strategy with major initiatives including the National Space Test Facility at Harwell, and the UK continues to be a leading member of the European Space Agency, which is independent of the EU.

In July, the government also committed £31.5 million to support the development of a spaceport in Sutherland, Scotland, which could be the first in mainland Europe.

Other UK companies involved in the Aeolus mission are e2v Chelmsford, Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd, Scisys, ABSL and AMPAC.

[Press release: Mark Field visits Cambodia for government and civil society talks](#)

Mark Field, UK Minister of State for Asia & the Pacific, is visiting Cambodia today (22 August) for meetings with the Cambodian government and members of civil society and the private sector.

During calls with the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Minister

and Education Minister, Mr Field will discuss the recent national election and bilateral ties between the UK and Cambodia.

Speaking ahead of his visit Minister Mark Field said:

I have made clear the UK's view that the Cambodian national elections were neither fair nor credible.

I will hold frank discussions with the Cambodian Prime Minister to urge the government to lift restrictions on political debate and media freedom, and restore the conditions for a proper, functioning democracy.

The Minister will also visit the Halo Trust Cambodia HQ in Siem Reap to meet the dedicated Cambodian de-mining teams, who with UK funding, have released over 70 sq km of land over the last three years, directly benefitting more than 185,000 Cambodians.

Mr Field's visit to Cambodia is part of a six-country tour of Southeast Asia that also includes Indonesia, the Philippines, Brunei, Thailand and Laos.

Further information