

[News story: University of Edinburgh to become centre of excellence for cyber security research](#)

- Scotland to get its first Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Research
- Edinburgh joins Warwick amongst 14 centres announced across the UK
- Cabinet Office: Research centres will ensure we build the capabilities to tackle cyber threats

Ben Gummer, Minister for the Cabinet Office, visited the University of Edinburgh to praise its efforts in becoming the first such centre in Scotland to gain the accolade – making it one of the leading establishments in this growing field of work.

Chosen from more than 20 applicants from across the UK, the 14 selected universities are:

- University of Birmingham
- University of Bristol
- University of Cambridge
- Lancaster University
- Imperial College London
- Royal Holloway University of London
- University College London
- Newcastle University
- University of Oxford
- Queen's University Belfast
- University of Southampton
- University of Surrey
- University of Warwick
- University of Edinburgh

As announced in the Government's [National Cyber Security Strategy](#) last year, Academic Centres of Excellence will specialise in developing the latest cyber security techniques and contribute to the UK's increased knowledge and capability in this field.

All are now recognised by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) – launched in February 2017 in London – as meeting the tough minimum standards required:

- commitment from the university's leadership team to support and invest in the university's cyber security research capacity and capability
- a critical mass of academic staff engaged in leading-edge cyber security research
- a proven track record of publishing high-impact cyber security research in leading academic journals and conferences

- sustained funding from a variety of sources to ensure the continuing financial viability of the research team's activities.

The NCSC looks forward to working with these 14 universities over the next five years to continue to grow UK academia's capacity and capability in cyber security research and to cement its position as an international leader in this area.

With NCSC-approved research moving into Scotland for the very first time at the University of Edinburgh, the Minister gave an address to students on the campus, and spoke to leading academics about their work.

Universities will have Centre of Excellence status for five years from June 2017 before assessments are carried out again.

Ben Gummer, Minister for the Cabinet Office & Paymaster General, said:

This Government is determined to make the UK the safest place in the world to live, work and do business online.

That is why we need truly ground-breaking research to stay one step ahead of the growing threat of cyber attacks. I am pleased to announce the University of Edinburgh as the latest academic institution to contribute their expertise to this vital field, joining thirteen other universities from around the country.

By engaging with business, industry and academia, we will ensure that we develop the skills and research we need to tackle this growing threat to the UK.

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

It's fantastic to see so many leading universities committed to trailblazing improvements to the UK's cyber security research, and it is particularly good to see Scotland represented for the first time.

At the NCSC, we are absolutely committed to maintaining and improving our already strong reputation as a global leader in cutting edge research, and look forward to collaborating with these establishments to make the UK the safest place to live and work online.

These universities conduct world-class cyber security research and this initiative will improve the way academics, government and business work together – benefiting the whole of the country.

Professor David Aspinall, of the University of Edinburgh's School of

Informatics, said:

Cyber security and privacy is now an essential aspect of modern life which impacts the technology we see and use, as well as the behind-the-scenes technology we rely on that supports the physical and virtual infrastructures.

Our recognition as a centre of excellence will bring fresh impetus to our research, to help make the digital world safer for everyone.

Underpinned by £1.9 billion of investment, the National Cyber Security Strategy sets out the Government's key cyber security objectives:

- deter hostile action against the UK
- defend the UK against evolving cyber threats
- develop the cyber security industry, create a self-sustaining pipeline of talent into the UK

Investment into cyber security is almost doubling in order to meet the growing threat and to build the infrastructure necessary to put UK cyber security on a sustainable footing.

All universities which are recognised as an Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Research have met rigorous criteria which assess the quantity and quality of their researchers, their research output and the impact of their research. All of the successful universities have invested considerable capital – financial, intellectual, managerial, leadership and so on – over years to grow their capacity and capability to the point where they meet the standards for recognition.

The Universities of Edinburgh and Warwick join the list for the first time. The remaining 12 have all successfully had their applications for Academic Centre of Excellence status renewed since the scheme was first established in 2012.

The UK Government would be delighted to see more universities recognised as Academic Centres of Excellence and, to this end, the NCSC has committed to working with unsuccessful applicants to provide guidance and encouragement to help them work towards submitting another application in future years.