

Study cyber security in the UK

Where can I study cyber security?

Along with two of the ten best universities in the world for Computer Science – University of Oxford (fifth) and University of Cambridge (ninth)¹ – there are more than 400 undergraduate and postgraduate cyber security courses in the UK to choose from.²

Wherever you apply you'll find flexible, research-led teaching, and state-of-the-art computing labs, infrastructure, academic facilities, and virtual lab facilities — everything you need to launch a successful career in cyber security.

What is the application process?

To apply for a master's degree in cyber security you'll need to have a second class honours degree or above, ideally in computer science or business computing. Other degrees with strong computing and numeracy components such as engineering, mathematics or physics may also be considered.

The typical IELTS requirement is 6.5 overall, and no lower than 6.0 in any one component.

How long does it take to graduate?

Undergraduate cyber security programmes in the UK are typically completed over a standard course of study, with many offering the option to enhance your experience through an industry placement or study abroad year. Postgraduate pathways often follow an intensive structure and may be completed within one or two academic years. Some institutions also offer combined bachelor's and master's programmes for those looking for a more advanced, continuous learning route.

What is the course structure?

Cyber security courses usually begin with foundational subjects in computer science and digital infrastructure, establishing essential knowledge in programming, systems, and networks. As the course advances, students move into more specialised modules, with many programmes

¹ [QS Top Universities, 2025](#)

² [UCAS, 2025](#)

incorporating practical labs, simulated cyber incidents, and real-world security scenarios. You'll also find strong links to industry through guest lectures, certifications, and collaborative projects.

What will I study?

Your studies will cover a broad mix of theory and hands-on practice, including topics such as network security, cryptographic protocols, malware analysis, ethical hacking, and digital investigation techniques. There's also a focus on risk analysis, legal frameworks, and the management of security policies. Many programmes allow students to explore cutting-edge areas like AI in cyber defence, blockchain security, or security operations centres (SOCs).

Why is the UK a good choice to study cyber security?

The UK is one of the most proactive countries battling cyber-terrorism anywhere in the world and has a cyber security sector worth £11.9bn.³

With half of UK businesses experiencing a security breach in recent years,⁴ it's a particularly strong time to work in cyber security. And the sector is rapidly innovating to face a new era of threats, as cyber criminals harness artificial intelligence and machine learning to launch sophisticated attacks. With its culture of innovation, the UK is also home to world-leading AI cybersecurity standards, making it an excellent place to engage with the latest research and industry insights.

Are there any scholarships for studying cyber security?

There are often funding options available for international students who want to study cyber security in the UK. These range from part-funding, for example paying part of your fees, to full-funding which covers programme fees, living expenses, and return flights to the UK.

You can search our database of scholarships at study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships-funding and check with individual university websites for institution-specific opportunities.

What are my work options after I graduate?

Cyber security offers strong career prospects to UK graduates. While the wider tech sector has seen job cuts in recent years, the cyber security industry has remained stable and continues to grow, and graduates with the latest advanced skills and technical knowledge remain in high demand.⁵

³ [UK Government, 2024](#)

⁴ [UK Government, 2024](#)

⁵ [UK Government, 2024](#)

Cyber security professionals are employed by a variety of organisations across all sectors, from security consultancies, IT companies and network providers to financial services institutions, government departments and energy companies, and even schools and hospitals.

Many UK cyber security degrees also offer certification from the National Cyber Security Centre, which can be a big advantage when applying for jobs in this competitive field.

The UK's Graduate route allows international students to apply to stay in the UK and work, or look for work, upon graduation. International students who have successfully completed an undergraduate, master's degree or PhD have the option to apply to stay in the UK for an agreed period, following their studies. The Graduate route does not require you to secure sponsorship.

To find out more about studying cyber security in the UK and to find a course, visit [study-uk.britishcouncil.org/](https://www.study-uk.britishcouncil.org/)