



# Securing Your Microsoft 365 Tenancy.

The Threat Is Immediate, Evolving, And Expensive.

**Get Secure,  
Stay Secure.**

# Executive Summary

[1 Minute reading time]

**Microsoft 365** is the backbone of modern business, underpinning communication, collaboration, and productivity. Its central role and the sensitive data it holds also make it one of the **most targeted cloud platforms in the world**. Breaches often result from overlooked misconfigurations, dormant accounts, and policy drift, issues that quietly accumulate and leave organisations exposed. The **consequences** are severe: **operational downtime, regulatory penalties, reputational damage, and rising insurance costs**.





Microsoft 365

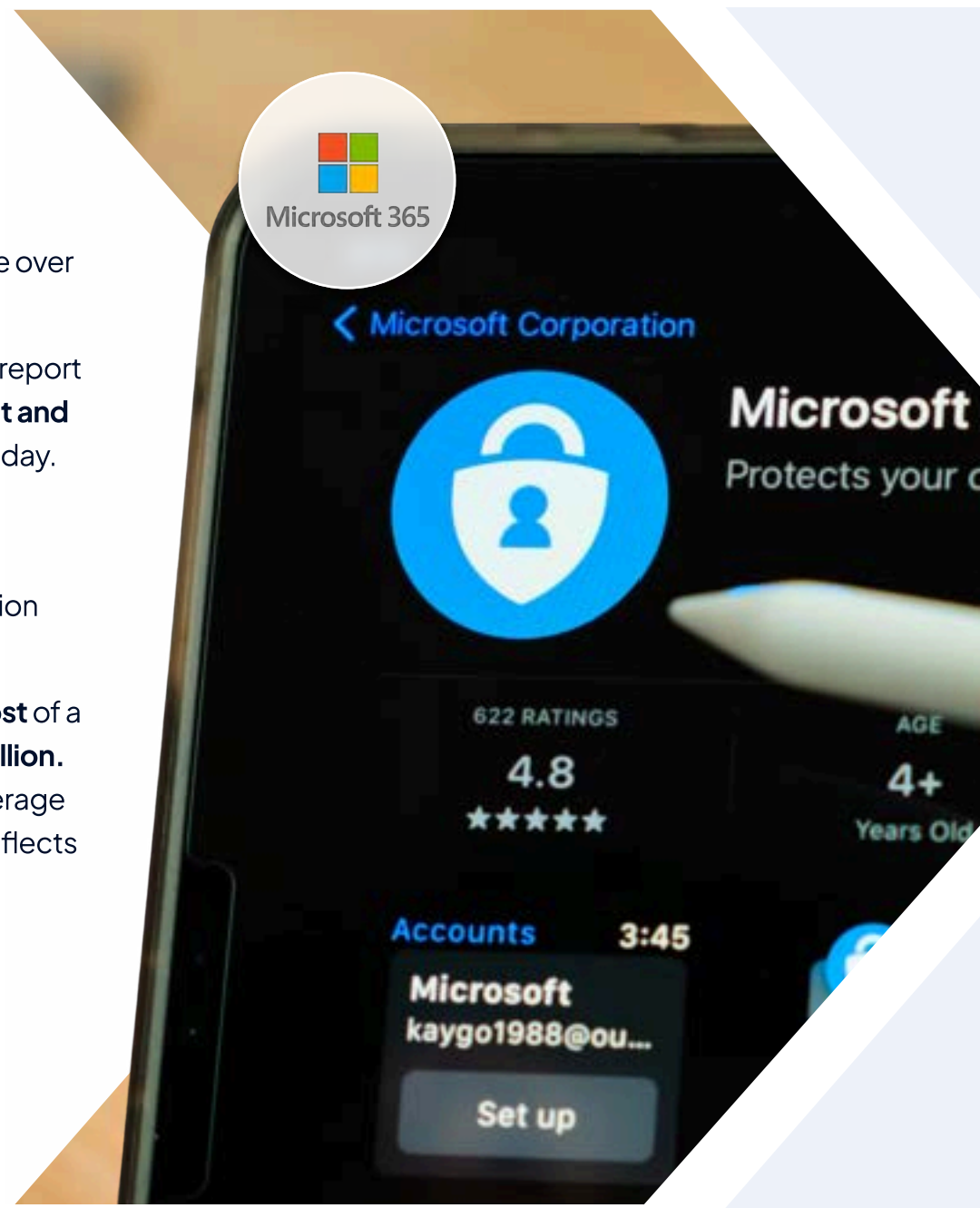
## The Critical Role of M365 in Modern Business

- Your Microsoft Tenant is essentially the digital backbone of your organisation. M365 houses your communication, collaboration, and productivity tools. **A well-managed tenant supports business growth**, whether you're adding new users or integrating new apps and technologies.
- It houses high-value and **sensitive information**, ranging from **intellectual property to personal data**, making it an attractive **target for threat actors**.
- The tenant manages user identities, roles, and permissions across **Microsoft 365**, Azure, and other services.
- If compromised, **attackers** can gain **access to emails, files, apps**, and **infrastructure**. Just like you'd secure a physical office, your **M365 tenancy** needs **robust security** and **governance**.

# Threat Landscape: M365 under Fire

- **Microsoft 365** remains one of the **most targeted cloud services**. According to the Microsoft Digital Defence Report, businesses face over **600 million** cybercriminal and nation-state **attacks every day**.
- While precise published figures for total attacks vary, security firms report that thousands of bruteforce, **ransomware**, **phishing**, **identity theft** and **credentialspray** campaigns now **target M365 tenants** every single day.
- A nation-state-linked botnet of more than **130,000 compromised devices** has been targeting M365 tenants **globally** since at least December 2024. It uses **password spraying** and Basic Authentication abuse to **bypass MFA** and Conditional Access.
- Based on IBM's 2025 Cost of a Data Breach Report, the **average cost** of a **data breach** for UK organisations stands at approximately **£3.78million**. For medium-sized businesses, alternative sources estimate the average cost of a serious cyber breach at around **£4.3million**, which likely reflects broader impacts including reputational damage.

These numbers reinforce a hard truth: the threat is immediate, evolving and expensive!



# Beyond Numbers: The Real Cost of Compromised Security

In complex environments such as Microsoft 365, the impact of even a single compromise can be magnified:

- Operational Disruption: **Encrypted or exfiltrated data** can halt collaboration tools and productivity, pushing your team into **reactive, crisis mode**.
- Regulatory Fallout & Fines: A breach in M365 that **exposes personal data** can **trigger GDPR enquiries and fines** - potentially in the tens or hundreds of thousands of pounds, depending on scale and severity.
- Reputational Damage: Customer **trust**, supplier **confidence**, and share value are all at risk - and very **hard to fully restore** after a public incident.
- Insurance Impacts: **Insurance** premiums are **rising**. One claim can lead to rate hikes, or even **refusal of future coverage**.



## Alert! Stay Secure!

The "Get Secure vs. Stay Secure" Challenge

A report from a leading cybersecurity provider revealed that more than **70%** of compromises stem from **misconfigurations or overlooked security settings** within **M365** - classic examples of configuration drift or unchecked admin changes.

Microsoft 365



# Trusted Frameworks for M365 Security

Implementing M365 security means aligning with recognised frameworks:



## Cyber Essentials

**Cyber Essentials (CE) / Cyber Essentials Plus (CE+)** – UK government-backed certifications covering five core controls: firewalls, secure configuration, access control, malware protection, and patching.

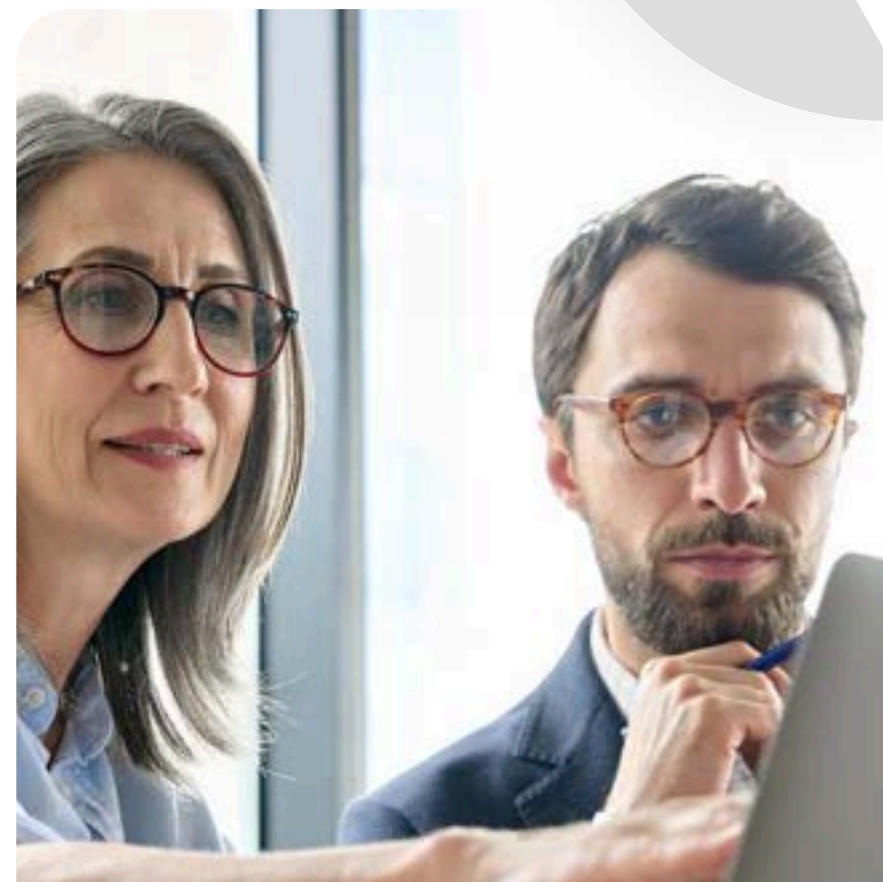


CE is **self-assessed**, while CE+ includes **independent testing** for greater assurance. Often required for public sector work.

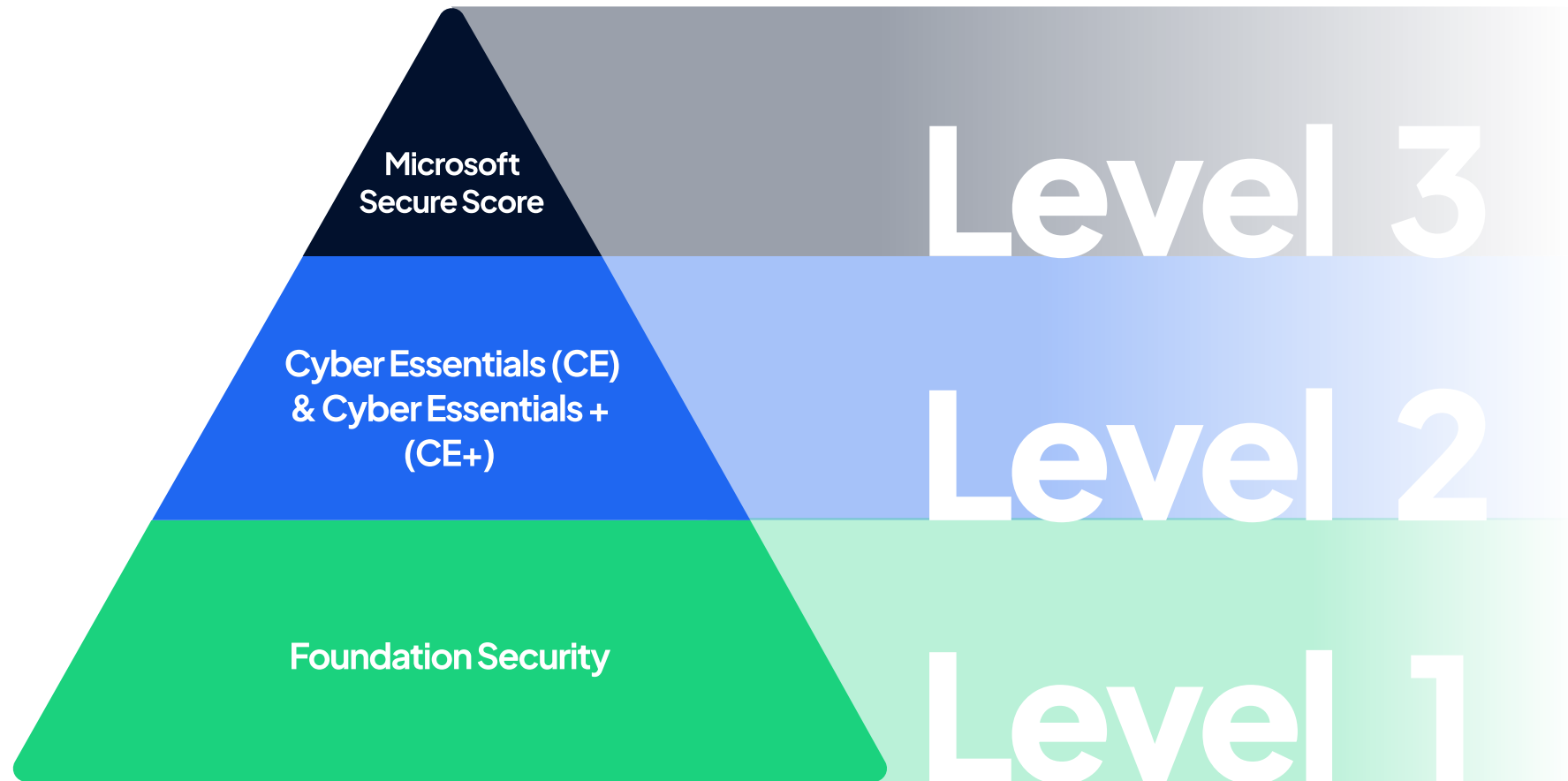


## Microsoft Secure Score

**Microsoft Secure Score** – A built-in tool in the Microsoft 365 Defender portal that **measures** your **security posture**, benchmarks against peers, and **recommends** priority actions across identity, devices, apps, and data. Regularly improving your score helps **reduce risk** and **stay aligned** with best practices.



# Netcentrix Recommended M365 Security Levels



# Level 1: Foundation Security

## Entry Level — Don't Stay Here for Long.

Foundation security is the essential starting point for any business using Microsoft 365.

**All Netcentrix M365 solutions are deployed with Level 1: Foundation Security as a minimum standard.**

It's like locking your front door - it deters the casual criminal, but it won't stop a determined attacker.

### Includes:

- MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) enforced for administrators only.
- Baseline Microsoft 365 security configurations.
- Basic password policies.

### Why it's not enough:

- MFA for admins alone doesn't protect staff — the most common entry point for attacks.
- No rollback capability if policies are changed or bypassed.
- Limited visibility into suspicious activity.
- Gaps in compliance that could void insurance claims.

**Bottom line:** Foundation keeps you from being completely exposed. You wouldn't stop here if you valued your business.

## Level 2: Cyber Essentials & Cyber Essentials+

### Compliance. Confidence. Customer Trust.

Cyber Essentials is a UK Government-backed certification that proves your organisation meets baseline cyber hygiene standards. Cyber Essentials Plus goes further, with an independent audit verifying your controls are in place and working.

#### includes:

- Mandatory MFA for all staff.
- Cyber Essentials-aligned policies for access control, device security, and patch management.
- Enhanced policy enforcement to ensure no gaps develop over time.

#### Why it matters:

- Meets partner and regulatory requirements in many sectors.
- Demonstrates to customers you take security seriously.
- Reduces the likelihood of a successful attack by eliminating common weaknesses.
- May lower cyber insurance premiums.

**Bottom line:** Cyber Essentials shifts you from reactive to proactive. You're no longer just "hoping" your business is secure, you have verified proof.

*\*NOTE: Level 2 Security does not include the CE and CE+ accreditation. Subject to the auditors report, by adopting Level 2 Cyber Essentials & Cyber Essentials+ for your M365 tenancy with Netcentrix, promotes audit-readiness and reduces risk of breach.*



## Level 3: Microsoft Secure Score Optimisation

### Top-Tier Protection and Ongoing Improvement.

Microsoft Secure Score is an industry-recognised benchmark that measures your Microsoft 365 security posture. Optimising it means continuously closing gaps and improving protection, not just ticking boxes once a year.

#### Includes:

- Implementation of Microsoft security recommendations to maintain and improve your Secure Score.
- Advanced conditional access policies to block risky sign-ins.
- Real-time monitoring of security posture changes.
- Continuous improvement process to adapt as threats evolve.
- Full audit trail of changes for compliance and insurance purposes.

#### Why it's powerful:

- Maximises the built-in security capabilities of Microsoft 365.
- Enables early detection of suspicious activity before it becomes a breach.
- Keeps your protection aligned with best-practice frameworks like Cyber Essentials, ISO27001, and CIS Controls.
- Provides measurable proof of your security strength.

**Bottom line:** Secure Score Optimisation isn't just a badge - it's a living, breathing security strategy that evolves with the threat landscape. This is the gold standard if you want to **get secure and stay secure.**





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