



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Universities Alliance

Charter



The Defence Universities Alliance Charter

BACKGROUND

As the Strategic Defence Review 2025 sets out, the nature of warfare is changing and so the composition of the Defence industrial base must adapt and transform to stay at the cutting edge of development. There is a need to look beyond traditional Defence companies to redefine the industrial base, reflecting the deep range of partnerships and expertise within institutions throughout society and reorientate them towards UK Defence and National Security.

The Defence Universities Alliance will proactively bring the UK's world class academic institutions and research centres into the new defence industrial base to support a whole of society approach to solving national security challenges, driving growth and supporting a thriving network of Defence expertise and debate. While helping to cohere and provide strategic direction to the relationship between Defence and academia.

VISION

The Defence Universities Alliance will be a collaborative, strategic alliance of UK Higher Education institutions publicly committed to partnering with the Ministry of Defence, the UK Armed Forces, the Office of the Chief Scientific Advisor for National Security, and the defence sector to deliver Defence and National Security outcomes.

STRATEGIC AIMS

1. Defence Research

Advancing Defence and National Security research and development within UK institutions, enabling the Higher Education sector to become a global leader in defence research and innovation.

2. Defence Skills and Career Promotion

Ensuring that the Higher Education sector develops and equips graduates, students and other emerging talent with the skills required for careers in defence and national security, while encouraging a greater proportion of skilled graduates to consider pursuing roles in the defence sector.

3. Collaboration

Fostering partnerships between government, academia and industry to ensure a whole of society approach to defence and national security challenges.

MOD OFFER

MOD commits to the following in its obligations to members of the alliance and commits to further develop the detail behind these obligations in partnership with members.

1. **Providing strategic direction** on defence needs and opportunities for research and development, innovation, and skills.
2. **The opportunity to shape and influence Defence's strategic direction** on research and development, innovation, training and skills.
3. **Developing and fostering the network and community** of Defence funded students, researchers, and other academics that engage with Defence and National Security, and the provision of community events and opportunities.
4. **Building and strengthening members' industrial relationships** across the defence sector.
5. **Supporting members in maturing their approach to research security** and their understanding of other compliance requirements relevant to Defence and National Security.
6. **Facilitate improved engagement** with the Chief Scientific Advisor, Senior Civil Servants and Ministers.

OBLIGATIONS

The signatories of this Charter commit to:

1. Support Defence research

- a. Members will commit to actively growing research and development activity and capacity in defence and national security relevant fields and technologies to support defence aims and objectives. Defence is working with UKRI, and DSIT, to ensure UKRI funding provides greater support to Defence aims and objectives.
- b. Members will be expected to meet an initial baseline requirement for their approach to research security based upon the NPSA trusted research evaluation framework. Further details will be provided within the guidance issued for the DUA.
- c. Within the alliance members will then be expected to grow towards being able to actively champion and model best practice approaches for research security within the sector and to robustly follow and implement NPSA Trusted Research guidance and the upcoming DSIT Research Security Strategy.
- d. Members will be expected to uphold the commitments and principles of The Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

2. Support defence skills requirements and promote careers in Defence

- a. Members will publish and raise awareness of the Defence-related research and other Defence related activity they undertake within their institutions and the importance of supporting Defence and National Security outcomes.
- b. Members will ensure that careers in the defence sector are promoted as part of a balanced portfolio of impartial careers guidance.
- c. Members will allow and support the attendance of defence sector firms and the Armed Forces at careers events to ensure a balanced representation of different industries and careers.
- d. Members commit to working with the alliance to support the provision of defence and national security relevant courses, skills, and technology areas to support Defence and National Security requirements.
- e. Members will support the continuous professional development of existing MOD and defence sector workforce.
- f. Members commit to working with the alliance and utilising the alliance's connections to defence industry and wider defence sector, to identify ways to support students considering careers within the defence industry and sector.

3. Collaborate

- a. Members commit to work with and assist the wider Defence community where applicable.
- b. Members will dedicate time and expertise to advance the strategic aims of the Defence Universities Alliance and the development of the alliance itself.
- c. Members commit to collaborate and work with other DUA members in genuine partnership to share expertise and run joint initiatives or programmes to enable better and faster solutions to challenges in research and defence skills development.
- d. Members must take robust and proactive steps to detect and resist any foreign interference that attempts to subvert or negatively influence their institutional autonomy or the freedom of speech and academic freedom of their staff, students or visiting speakers.

SIGNATORIES
