



Security Vetting in the UK

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If you are applying for a position requiring a security clearance, please read the following information.

UK Government policy requires that staff undergo security vetting in order to gain access to government information. It is intended to assure government bodies that an individual has not been involved in espionage, terrorism, sabotage or other actions intended to undermine democracy. It is also an assurance that an individual has not been a member of or associated with activities that demonstrate a lack of reliability through dishonesty, lack of integrity or behaviour. Finally it assures the dept that an individual will not be subject to pressure or improper influence.

Vetting is carried out by:

- Defence Business Services, a division of the MOD (Ministry of Defence)
- FCO Services (Foreign and Commonwealth Office)
- Intelligence Organisations
- Office of Civil Nuclear Security

There are 4 levels of vetting:

- Baseline Personal Security Standard (BPSS) - lowest
- Counter Terrorist Check (CTC)
- Security Check (SC)
- Developed Vetting (DV) - highest

Posts with clearances require a sponsor for the proposed incumbent, usually one of the organisations above or one of their contract organisations. Clearances are attached to posts, NOT individuals and officially a clearance lapses immediately an individual leaves a cleared post unless they are moving directly to another one. Where there is a gap of less than 12 months between cleared posts, the hosting organisation may choose to allow the previous clearance to stand but it will be entirely at their discretion. Alternatively they may ask for a 'top up' review, a condensed and shortened version of a full review to 'plug the gap' and avoid the lengthy and cumbersome full review process. Again this is at the discretion of the organisation holding the clearance and they will base their decision on the previous roles held by the individual, their overall conduct and the date the last review was carried out. There are strict rules about nationality especially for DV where the job holder and sometimes, parents of the jobholder must be British and have been for a set length of time. DV, is the highest form of UK clearance and can be very intrusive and the time taken to acquire it can be anything from 6 months to 1 year or more. SC tends to be issued within 4-6 weeks

For more information about the vetting process visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/security-vetting-and-clearance>

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