

Tech & Compliance Update: What You Need to Know for 2026

A Message for Our Valued Clients We are reaching out to our core partners to ensure your business remains compliant and secure as several major shifts occur in the UK's digital landscape this year.

1. Cyber Essentials: The "April Deadline"

The UK's Cyber Essentials scheme is moving to **Version 3.3 (Danzell)** on **April 27, 2026**.

- **Mandatory MFA:** Multi-factor authentication is no longer optional for cloud services. If it's supported by the platform, it must be on for every user.
- **Cloud is Always "In-Scope":** You can no longer exclude SaaS or email platforms from your security assessments.
- **App Development:** If you develop software in-house, there are new evidence requirements for secure coding practices.

2. Microsoft 365: Price & Feature Shifts

Microsoft is implementing a global structural update arriving on **July 1, 2026**.

- **Storage Boost:** Business licenses are getting a **50GB mailbox uplift** (up to 100GB total) to handle AI-indexed data.
- **Integrated Security:** Advanced "URL checks" for malicious links are being added to standard Business Basic and Standard plans.
- **Pricing:** Expect a baseline price increase across Business and Enterprise suites to account for these new security and AI (Copilot) features.

3. GDPR: New UK Data Laws

The **UK Data (Use and Access) Act** is expected to be fully enforced by **June 2026**, bringing a more pragmatic approach to data.

- **Simplified Legitimate Interest:** Formal assessments (LIAs) are no longer required for specific tasks like crime prevention or emergency safeguarding.
- **New Complaints Process:** Individuals are now required to contact you (the data controller) first to resolve issues before they can escalate to the ICO.
- **Heavier Fines:** Fines for nuisance calls and marketing breaches (PECR) are increasing to match GDPR levels (up to £17.5m).

Next Steps: We recommend reviewing your MFA status across all cloud logins before the April deadline. If you need a report on your current Microsoft 365 licensing or a security audit, please let us know.