

IT Support Provider Checklist

50-point scorecard. Score every prospective provider out of 10 per category, 50 in total. Below 35 out of 50, or any dodged question, is a reason to walk.

1. Certifications, verification and accreditations

Certifications are typically self-assessed and describe a single point in time -- some in the industry call this the 'proof gap'. Treat the badges below as a starting point, weighted by relevance, not a pass or fail list.

- Cyber Essentials -- verify the certificate number yourself
- When it was last renewed (2026 rules tighten in April)
- Cyber Essentials Plus or an equivalent independent audit
- Sector-relevant accreditations, weighed by relevance
- Professional indemnity and cyber liability insurance
- Evidence of ongoing, independent verification
- Whether they meet the standard they sell you, themselves
- Membership of a recognised industry body
- Willingness to be checked, not just to assert compliance
- What happened the last time something slipped

2. Service levels, response times and escalation

- Written SLA document (not a verbal promise)
- Response time by priority level, in writing
- Resolution time targets (not just response)
- Critical is clearly defined, with examples
- 24 by 7 vs business-hours cover clearly scoped
- Named escalation path beyond the helpdesk
- Escalation timeframes to senior engineers
- SLA penalties or service credits for misses
- Regular reporting on SLA performance
- Tested out-of-hours and emergency contact process

3. Security, data handling and compliance

- Signed UK GDPR-compliant DPA
- Clear data residency commitments
- Backup frequency, retention and restore testing
- Documented incident response plan
- 72-hour breach notification commitment
- MFA enforced on their own access to your systems
- Least-privilege, logged engineer access
- Staff vetting for engineers with system access
- Sub-processor and offshore transparency
- Right-to-audit clause in the contract

IT Support Provider Checklist (continued)

4. Onboarding, references and ways of working

- Documented onboarding plan with milestones
- Full network and asset audit as step one
- Realistic, staged onboarding timeline
- Named account manager and technical lead
- At least three verifiable client references
- Willingness to let you call references directly
- Straight answer on client retention and churn
- Evidence of proactive account management (QBRs)
- Documented offboarding and exit process
- Genuine understanding of your business goals

5. Pricing, contracts and commercial transparency

- Fully itemised pricing, no hidden extras
- No surprise charges for emergency or out-of-hours work
- Reasonable contract length with real break clauses
- Clearly stated notice period (30 to 90 days is standard)
- Transparent price review and increase terms
- Clarity on what is support vs billable project work
- No unexplained markup on licensing pass-through
- Pricing scales sensibly as users or devices change
- No penalty for right-sizing the contract
- A plain-English contract, no solicitor required to read it

Your scorecard

Category	Score (out of 10)
1. Certifications, verification and accreditations	
2. Service levels, response times and escalation	
3. Security, data handling and compliance	
4. Onboarding, references and ways of working	
5. Pricing, contracts and commercial transparency	
Total	out of 50

Want an independent number instead of a self-scored one? Get your free Technology Resilience Score assessment at littlebigtech.co.uk/assessment