

CSA STAR: Security assurance in the cloud

The Cloud Security Alliance Security, Trust, Assurance and Risk (CSA STAR) certification programme is an extensive independent assessment of the security of a cloud service provider (CSP).

Overview

CSA-STAR certification is a rigorous third-party audit programme for assessing the security level of cloud service providers to measure the functional level of cloud services. Launched in 2013, the CSA STAR certification programme uses the security management requirements of the ISO 27001 management system standard, combined with an evaluation of the maturity level against the Cloud Controls Matrix (CCM).

The CSA Cloud Controls Matrix (CCM v3.0.1) is a framework of cloud-specific security controls, mapped to leading standards, best practices and regulations (e.g. ISO 27001, COBIT, PCI, HIPAA, FISMA, FedRAMP). It provides organisations with the structure, detail and clarity relating to information security tailored to cloud computing and is currently considered a de-facto standard for cloud security assurance and compliance.

To achieve the STAR Certification, a Cloud Service Provider (CSP) must already have achieved ISO 27001 certification or have the STAR Certification assessment performed in parallel with ISO 27001 certification.

The assessment includes an evaluation of the CSP's maturity level across sixteen control domains where each domain is scored with a specific maturity against five management principles, which include:

1. Communication and stakeholder engagement
2. Policies, plans and procedures, and a systematic approach
3. Skills and expertise
4. Ownership, leadership, and management
5. Monitoring and measuring

Benefits of CSA STAR certification

Wide-ranging and robust

CSA STAR provides a comprehensive framework for Cloud governance and security controls. It complements other standards, such as ISO 27001, to provide an effective, risk-based assessment of cloud security risks and re-mediation strategies.

CSA STAR certification demonstrates that a cloud service provider's information security defences are robust and that specific issues critical to cloud security have been addressed.

Strategic alignment and optimisation

The CSA STAR audit highlights whether your organisations objectives are aligned with the optimisation of your cloud services.

A licence to trade

For the cloud service buyer, certification provides assurance of the cloud service provider's competency to deliver services. Your organisation will be entered onto the CSA publicly available registry which contains a profile of your business as well as details of your CSA-STAR certification.

Other benefits

- Provides top management with visibility of cloud assets so that they can evaluate the effectiveness of processes, controls and the wider management system
- Provides empirical evidence to assess progress and performance levels via third party certification delivered and validated by a reputable organisation such as LRQA
- Helps you to benchmark your organisations performance against the competition, providing a competitive advantage whilst identifying any areas for improvement

How we can help

Gap Analysis

A focus on critical, high-risk, or weak system areas to create a certifiable system. It also looks at existing management systems and procedures, and how these can be used within your chosen standard.

Assessment & certification

The CSA STAR open certification framework features three distinct levels:

STAR Level 1: Self-assessment

STAR Level 2: Third-party audit

STAR Level 3: Continuous auditing

LRQA is a Certified Auditor for CSA STAR Level 2 certification. As part of our assessment process your organisation will be assigned to one of our team of highly qualified and competent specialists, whose skills are matched to your business needs – ensuring you get the most out of your certification.

Surveillance

Maintenance of CSA STAR certification is subject to annual surveillance which is usually carried out in combination with the ISO 27001 surveillance.

Integrated assessment

Accredited ISO 27001 certification is a pre-requisite for CSA STAR certification and as such it makes perfect sense for the assessment to be performed in parallel with your ISO 27001 assessment. This helps optimise your system and experience, reducing duplication - allowing your business to benefit from cost, time and administration efficiencies.

Why choose LRQA?

We're here to help negotiate a rapidly changing world, by working with you to manage and mitigate the risks you face. From compliance to data-driven supply chain transformation, it's our job to help you shape the future, rather than letting it shape you. We do this by delivering:

Strategic vision

Our technical know-how, sector expertise and innovative, forward thinking approach will help you meet the challenges of today – and become a safer, more secure, and sustainable organisation tomorrow.

Technical expertise

Our people are sector experts. They bring with them a clear understanding of your specific challenges, standards and requirements – then deploy deep knowledge of certification, customised assurance, cybersecurity, inspection and training to help you meet them.

Global capability

Operating in more than 120 countries, recognised by over 50 accreditation bodies worldwide, and covering almost every sector, we can help you manage risk, drive improvement and build credibility with stakeholders around the globe.

Effective partnership

Every business is unique. That's why our experts work with you, to fully understand your needs and goals, and work out how we can best support them.

Fresh perspective

We have led the way in shaping our industry and continue to take every opportunity to collaborate with clients and pioneer new ideas, services and innovation.

Get in touch

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