

Exponent®
Engineering & Scientific Consulting

David Walters, M.A., M.Sc.

Principal | Computer, Data & Security Sciences
London
+44-20-7864-9761 | dwalters@exponent.com

Professional Profile

David Walters, M.A., is a Principal at Exponent with more than 30 years of experience helping defence, government and national security organisations solve high-consequence technical, operational and organisational challenges.

He specialises in mission-critical capability delivery, commercial and procurement strategy, systems integration, and the adoption of frontier technologies. He helps organisations translate emerging technologies and complex operational needs into clear requirements, practical acquisition strategies, and deliverable capabilities. His experience includes unmanned systems, advanced sensing, rapid prototyping, tactical communications, digital transformation, and the integration of complex mission-critical systems.

Mr. Walters works at the intersection of technology, operations, systems engineering, and commercial delivery. He brings together scientists, engineers, operators, analysts, commercial specialists and senior leaders to shape requirements, make informed decisions, and move complex programmes forward. His consulting experience spans defence acquisition, strategic sourcing, contract management, operating-model design, affordability, cost optimisation, organisational transformation and supply-chain resilience.

He has supported the UK Ministry of Defence, NATO, international security organisations, sensitive government entities and private-sector defence clients. His work has included major defence reform initiatives, multibillion-pound capability programmes, urgent operational requirements, commercial transformation, operating-cost reduction, and the recovery of stalled programmes. He has helped clients generate substantial audited savings, improve organisational effectiveness, and accelerate mission-critical capability into service.

Before joining Exponent, Mr. Walters held senior leadership positions within major consulting organisations, leading defence, security, government and public-sector practices. His career combines operational military experience, systems engineering, commercial leadership and large-scale transformation delivery, enabling him to bridge the gap between technical innovation and practical implementation. He holds degrees from King's College London, Cranfield University and Loughborough University, and his work has been recognised through multiple Management Consultancies Association awards, including the MCA Platinum Award.

Areas of Expertise and Experience

High-Consequence Challenges and Mission-Critical Capability

Mr. Walters has led the development and deployment of mission-critical capabilities operating in demanding environments where performance, reliability and safety were essential to operational success.

His experience includes establishing the systems-engineering framework for a £130 million urgent operational requirement and leading the accelerated fielding of an unmanned vehicle-based detection capability from approval to operational service within 12 months. He has also supported major defence reform initiatives and transformation programmes involving multibillion-pound investment decisions, capability portfolios and organisational change, helping senior leaders balance mission requirements, technical risk and affordability.

Frontier Technologies, Advanced Sensing and Emerging Capabilities

Mr. Walters has worked extensively with advanced sensing technologies, ground-penetrating radar, tactical communications systems, unmanned platforms, additive manufacturing and digital information systems. His experience includes collaborating with Exponent engineers to field a vehicle-mounted ground-penetrating-radar capability for military operations and directing a rapid prototyping programme that used 3D printing, technical workshops and user trials to deliver and sustain 20 operational systems. His work spans concept development, requirements engineering, acquisition, testing, verification and operational integration across the capability lifecycle, helping organisations accelerate the transition from scientific and engineering innovation to real world use.

Systems Engineering and Multidisciplinary Integration

Applying systems-engineering principles across complex programmes, Mr. Walters has established technical governance, engineering assurance and decision-making frameworks that enable complex capabilities to be developed, integrated and deployed safely and effectively. He has integrated engineering, operational, commercial and delivery teams to define requirements, evaluate technical options and guide implementation across complex defence programmes. Earlier in his career, he coordinated a 50-person team responsible for the installation, fielding and support of a £4.2 billion tactical communications programme. His work frequently involves understanding how technology, people, processes and organisations interact within larger operational systems and translating complex stakeholder needs into practical, deliverable solutions.

Defence, National Security and International Programmes

Mr. Walters has supported capability development, information systems, defence acquisition and organisational transformation across the UK Ministry of Defence, NATO organisations, defence agencies and sensitive government entities. He has advised senior leadership teams on major capability and investment decisions, led operating-model and performance reviews, and supported information-services transformation programmes. His experience includes responsibility for policy, funding and user requirements relating to a deployable NATO command-and-control information system, together with transformation and recovery programmes across international defence and security organisations. Combined with operational military service in Bosnia and Kosovo, this experience provides a practical understanding of the environments in which complex capabilities are developed, acquired and deployed.

Technology Adoption, Acquisition and Capability Delivery

Mr. Walters has helped defence organisations move complex capabilities from concept to operational use through effective acquisition, commercial management and programme delivery. His experience includes supporting the UK MOD's equipment and capability portfolio, contributing to more than £1 billion in savings through improved investment decisions, analytical insight and cost-conscious delivery approaches. He has designed acquisition and contract-management models for sensitive government organisations, analysed investment across major defence equipment programmes and developed benefits models supporting multibillion-pound transformation initiatives. His work focuses on ensuring that technology investment, acquisition strategies and delivery governance remain aligned to operational

objectives, enabling organisations to transition new technologies from concept to operational capability more rapidly and effectively.

Academic Credentials & Professional Honors

M.A., Defence Studies, King's College, University of London, UK, 2005

MCA Award — Commercial Excellence, Management Consultancy Association (MCA), 2017

MCA Platinum Award, Management Consultancy Association (MCA), 2012

Chief of Defence Materiel Commendation, UK Ministry of Defence, 2012

MCA Award — Innovation, Management Consultancy Association (MCA), 2012

MCA Award — Change Management, Management Consultancy Association (MCA), 2011

Prior Experience

Defence and Security Practice Leader, Guidehouse Europe Ltd, London, UK, 2023–2026

Managing Partner & Head of Public Sector Practice, 4C Associates Ltd, London, UK, 2021–2023

National Government Services Director, PwC LLP, London, 2014–2021 (secondment to PwC Middle East, 2017-2018)

Managing Consultant, PA Consulting, London, UK, 2007–2014

Army Officer, UK Armed Forces, UK and International, 1991–2007

Publications

Walters David, and General Sir Mike Jackson, "The true cost of time", Defence Management Journal, Issue 49, Summer 2010, p 8-9.

Additional Education & Training

Advanced Command and Staff Course 8, Joint Services Command and Staff College

Royal Engineer Young Officers Course 107, Royal School of Military Engineering

Standard Graduate Course 91/3, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) Practitioner, 2007

PRINCE2 Practitioner, 2007

Passed Senior Commercial Specialist (2*) Assessment Centre, UK Government, 2023