



ASSUREAI RESOURCE

AI Readiness Checklist

Confident AI adoption for the public sector.

A practical checklist for public-sector teams, councils, local authorities and regulated organisations considering wider use of AI tools.

About this checklist



AI can help teams work more efficiently, improve drafting, support research, summarise information and reduce repetitive administrative work.

It also introduces risks.

Before AI tools are used more widely across an organisation, teams should have a clear view of their current readiness. This checklist is designed to help identify whether the basic policy, people, process and oversight conditions are in place.

It is not a legal, data protection or information governance assessment. It is a practical starting point for discussion, planning and responsible adoption.

Who this checklist is for

This checklist is intended for:

- public-sector teams considering practical AI use
- councils and local authorities exploring staff AI training
- managers responsible for service improvement, digital change or governance
- teams that already know staff are experimenting with AI tools informally
- organisations that want to move from informal AI use to safer, more controlled adoption

How to use this checklist

Work through each section and mark each statement as:

Response	Meaning
Yes	This is already in place and understood.
Partly	Some work has been done, but there are gaps or inconsistencies.
Not yet	This is not yet in place or has not been reviewed.

You do not need perfect scores before starting to use AI. The aim is to identify where the organisation is confident, where it needs clearer guidance, and where further training or governance support may be needed.

1. Policy and governance



Clear policy and governance help staff understand where AI can be used, where it should not be used, and who is responsible for approving higher-risk activity.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
We have a clear internal position on where AI tools may and may not be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff know whether public AI tools can be used for work tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have guidance covering confidential, personal or sensitive information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AI use is linked to existing governance, information security and data protection processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managers know who is responsible for approving new AI use cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff know where to find AI guidance before using a tool for work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

2. Data protection and information security



AI readiness depends on staff understanding what information can and cannot be entered into AI tools, especially where personal, confidential or sensitive information is involved.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
Staff know not to enter personal, confidential or sensitive data into unapproved AI tools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We understand which AI tools are approved, restricted or prohibited.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have considered data retention, model training and third-party processing risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AI use is considered alongside GDPR, DPIA and information governance requirements where relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff know where to ask for guidance before using AI with sensitive information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have considered how AI-generated outputs should be checked before being shared externally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

3. Staff confidence and training



Staff need enough practical understanding to use AI safely. This includes knowing what AI tools are useful for, where they are unreliable, and when human review is required.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
Staff understand what generative AI can and cannot reliably do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff know that AI outputs need human review before being relied on.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff understand risks such as hallucinations, bias, outdated information and overconfidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managers have enough knowledge to support responsible AI use in their teams.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff have seen practical examples relevant to their actual roles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training has covered both productivity opportunities and safe-use boundaries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

4. Approved use cases



AI adoption is usually safer when organisations start with clear, practical and lower-risk use cases rather than allowing uncontrolled experimentation.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
We have identified low-risk use cases where AI can save time or improve drafting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have separated acceptable use cases from high-risk or unsuitable use cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff understand when AI can support work but not replace professional judgement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We avoid using AI for final decisions about people, services or statutory outcomes without proper review.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have examples of approved prompts or workflows staff can safely follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have a process for reviewing new use cases before they are encouraged more widely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

5. Tool access and controls



Organisations need to know which AI tools staff are using, what level of access they have, and whether the tools are suitable for work-related activity.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
We know which AI tools staff currently have access to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have considered whether free public AI tools are suitable for work use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved tools have clear usage boundaries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff understand the difference between approved workplace tools and personal AI accounts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have a process for reviewing new AI tools before they are adopted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tool access decisions are aligned with existing IT, security and procurement processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

6. Risk management



AI risks should be identified, discussed and managed before wider rollout. Higher-risk use cases need more scrutiny than basic drafting, summarisation or internal productivity support.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
We have considered the main risks of AI use in our organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have a process for escalating concerns or suspected misuse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have considered equality, bias, transparency and accountability risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Higher-risk use cases are reviewed before implementation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AI outputs are checked before being shared, published or used in operational decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff understand that AI-generated content may be inaccurate, incomplete or misleading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

7. Management oversight



AI adoption should not be left entirely to individual staff members. Leaders and managers need enough understanding to set direction, support safe use and challenge inappropriate use.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
Senior managers understand the opportunities and risks of AI adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AI use is discussed as part of wider digital, service improvement or governance planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managers know how to challenge unsafe or inappropriate AI use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is a named owner or responsible group for AI adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AI training, policy and controls are reviewed as tools and risks change.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managers understand when specialist legal, data protection, procurement or information governance input may be required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

8. Next steps



The value of this checklist is in turning the answers into a practical plan. Focus first on the gaps that create the most risk or uncertainty.

Check	Yes	Partly	Not yet
We know which gaps need attention first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have prioritised quick wins and higher-risk areas separately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have identified where staff need clearer guidance or training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have a plan for moving from informal AI use to controlled adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We know when to seek additional support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have agreed who will own the next actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Use this space to record gaps, concerns or actions.

Readiness summary



Use this section to summarise the results.

Area	Yes	Partly	Not yet	Priority
1. Policy and governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low
2. Data protection and information security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low
3. Staff confidence and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low
4. Approved use cases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low
5. Tool access and controls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low
6. Risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low
7. Management oversight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low
8. Next steps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low

Interpreting your answers

Mostly Yes

Your organisation may be ready to expand practical AI use, provided staff continue to work within clear boundaries and higher-risk activity is reviewed properly.

Useful next steps may include:

- role-specific AI training
- approved prompt and workflow examples
- targeted productivity pilots
- manager briefings
- periodic policy and risk review

Mostly Partly

Your organisation has started to build AI readiness, but the current position may be inconsistent across teams.

Useful next steps may include:

- clarifying acceptable and unacceptable AI use
- training managers and staff on safe practical use
- identifying approved use cases
- reviewing tool access and data protection considerations
- creating a simple AI adoption plan

Mostly Not yet

Your organisation may need to establish basic policy, training and oversight before encouraging wider AI use.

Useful next steps may include:

- an AI awareness briefing for leaders and managers
 - basic staff guidance on safe and unsafe use
 - review of current informal AI activity
 - identification of low-risk initial use cases
 - escalation routes for questions or concerns
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Action plan



Use this page to record the most important actions from the checklist.

Action	Owner	Priority	Target date
		<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
		<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
		<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
		<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
		<input type="checkbox"/> High / <input type="checkbox"/> Medium / <input type="checkbox"/> Low	

Questions to discuss internally

The following questions can help turn the checklist into a practical planning discussion.

1. Where are staff already using AI informally?
2. Which AI uses are clearly low risk and useful?
3. Which AI uses should be restricted or reviewed before use?
4. What information should staff never enter into public or unapproved AI tools?
5. Which teams need training first?
6. Who should own AI policy, guidance and adoption planning?
7. What would a safe first 90 days of AI adoption look like?
8. What support is needed before AI use can be scaled responsibly?

How AssureAI can help

AssureAI helps public-sector teams adopt AI safely, practically and confidently.

Support can include:

- AI awareness briefings
- practical AI skills training
- responsible AI training for managers
- Copilot readiness training
- AI policy and governance workshops
- council AI readiness support
- practical adoption planning

The focus is on clear, usable guidance and training that helps teams understand where AI can help, where it creates risk, and how to use it responsibly.





Need help interpreting your checklist?

If several answers are marked “Partly” or “Not yet”, your team may benefit from a structured readiness discussion before expanding AI use more widely.

AssureAI can help you review your current position, identify practical next steps and design training or adoption support around your team’s needs.

Request a call through the AssureAI website:

assureAI.co.uk/contact

Visit:

assureAI.co.uk

Important note

This checklist is for practical planning and training purposes only. It is not legal advice, data protection advice, information governance advice or a formal risk assessment.

Organisations should seek appropriate specialist input where AI use involves personal data, sensitive information, statutory decisions, procurement, employment matters, service eligibility, safeguarding, legal obligations or other higher-risk contexts.

AssureAI is an independent training and adoption support provider. References to public-sector use are for context and do not imply endorsement by any public body.