

AI Readiness Checklist

Is Your Business Ready to Implement AI?

Assess your organisation's business goals, data, infrastructure, governance, employee readiness, and implementation plans before investing in AI. A practical assessment for business and technology teams.

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How to Use This Checklist

Successful AI implementation requires more than selecting an AI tool or model. Before proceeding, organisations should evaluate business needs, technical foundations, security posture, employee adoption readiness, and implementation planning. This checklist guides you through five critical readiness areas.

Assessment Instructions

For each statement, select one response based on your organisation's **current situation**, not future plans:

- **Ready:** The requirement is in place and supported by evidence.
- **Needs Improvement:** Some work has been completed, but gaps remain.
- **Not Yet Assessed:** The organisation has not evaluated this requirement.

Before You Begin — Complete These Fields

Organisation or team:

_____

Assessment date:

_____

AI use case being considered:

_____

Person or team completing the assessment:

_____

Assessment Statement	Ready ✓	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Assessed
Example statement	☐	☐	☐

Answer based on your organisation's current situation. Avoid selecting "Ready" based on plans or intentions that have not yet been implemented or validated.

SECTION 1

Are Your Business Goals Clear?

Before evaluating any AI solution, your organisation must have clear, agreed-upon objectives. Vague or shifting business goals are one of the most common reasons AI projects fail to deliver value. Use the checklist below to assess goal and use-case readiness.

Assessment Statement	Ready ✓	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Assessed
1. We have identified a specific business problem that AI is expected to address.	☐	☐	☐
2. The current workflow and its main bottlenecks are documented.	☐	☐	☐
3. Business stakeholders agree on the intended outcome.	☐	☐	☐
4. We have defined measurable success criteria (e.g. time saved, accuracy, cost, customer experience).	☐	☐	☐
5. We have evaluated whether AI is appropriate for this problem.	☐	☐	☐
6. The expected business value justifies the implementation effort and operating costs.	☐	☐	☐

Reflection Questions

What business problem are we trying to solve?

_____

What measurable outcome would make this project successful?

_____

Who is responsible for evaluating the result?

_____

Evidence to Collect

- Current process documentation
- Stakeholder input and sign-off
- Baseline performance metrics
- Proposed success measures

SECTION 2

Is Your Data and Infrastructure Ready?

AI systems depend entirely on the quality, availability, and accessibility of data. Poor data quality, undefined ownership, and legacy integration gaps are among the most common technical blockers in AI projects.

Assessment Statement	Ready ✓	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Assessed
1. The data required for the use case is available from approved sources.	☐	☐	☐
2. Data is sufficiently accurate, consistent, relevant, and up to date.	☐	☐	☐
3. Data ownership and access permissions are clearly defined.	☐	☐	☐
4. Required systems, databases, and applications can be accessed through suitable integrations.	☐	☐	☐
5. Dependencies on legacy systems and disconnected platforms have been identified.	☐	☐	☐
6. Infrastructure can support the expected workload, response times, and operating costs.	☐	☐	☐
7. A plan exists to handle missing data, conflicting records, and integration failures.	☐	☐	☐

Reflection Questions

Which data sources and systems does the solution depend on?

_____

What data-quality or integration gaps need attention?

_____

Evidence to Collect

- Data-source inventory
- Data-quality assessment reports
- System architecture diagrams
- API documentation
- Infrastructure requirements

SECTION 3

Do You Have the Right Governance and Security Practices?

AI systems introduce unique governance and security considerations. Without clear accountability, access controls, and incident response procedures, organisations risk data exposure, unreliable outputs, and regulatory non-compliance.

Assessment Statement	Ready ✓	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Assessed
1. Rules for acceptable AI use are documented.	☐	☐	☐
2. Sensitive information is protected through appropriate access controls.	☐	☐	☐
3. Data handling and retention requirements have been reviewed.	☐	☐	☐
4. Ownership and accountability for the AI system are established.	☐	☐	☐
5. Human review is defined for outputs that could affect important decisions or business operations.	☐	☐	☐
6. Potential security vulnerabilities and misuse scenarios have been considered.	☐	☐	☐
7. The solution will be tested for inaccurate outputs and other relevant failure scenarios.	☐	☐	☐
8. A process exists for reporting, investigating, and correcting AI-related incidents.	☐	☐	☐

Reflection Questions

What information can the AI system access?

_____

Which outputs require human review?

_____

Who will respond if the system produces an unsafe or unreliable result?

_____

Evidence to Collect

- Security review documentation
- Access policies
- Risk assessment records
- AI usage policies
- Incident response procedures

Requirements vary according to industry, jurisdiction, data sensitivity, and intended use. Consult relevant specialists as needed.

SECTION 4

Are Your Employees Ready to Adopt AI?

Technology adoption fails when employees are not prepared, consulted, or supported. Workflow fit, training provision, and clear feedback channels are essential to ensuring AI tools are used effectively after deployment.

Assessment Statement	Ready ✓	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Assessed
1. Employees understand the purpose of the proposed AI implementation.	☐	☐	☐
2. Relevant users have been consulted about their workflow needs.	☐	☐	☐
3. Training requirements and learning resources have been identified.	☐	☐	☐
4. Employees understand the limitations of AI-generated outputs.	☐	☐	☐
5. The proposed solution fits into existing work processes.	☐	☐	☐
6. Users have a way to report errors and provide feedback.	☐	☐	☐
7. Managers and relevant teams are prepared to support the transition.	☐	☐	☐
8. The organisation can monitor whether employees are using the solution effectively.	☐	☐	☐

Reflection Questions

Which teams will use the solution?

_____

What skills or training are needed?

_____

What could prevent employees from adopting the new workflow?

_____

Evidence to Collect

- User feedback and consultation notes
- Training plans and materials
- Workflow maps and process diagrams
- Communication plans
- Adoption measures and KPIs

SECTION 5

Do You Have a Practical AI Implementation Roadmap?

A clear implementation roadmap reduces risk by ensuring that responsibilities, testing requirements, oversight procedures, and success metrics are agreed before deployment begins. Use the checklist below to assess your planning readiness.

Assessment Statement	Ready ✓	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Assessed
1. We have selected an initial use case with a clear business purpose.	☐	☐	☐
2. Project responsibilities, resources, and dependencies are defined.	☐	☐	☐
3. A prototype or pilot can be tested before wider deployment.	☐	☐	☐
4. Testing will cover accuracy, reliability, security, performance, and cost.	☐	☐	☐
5. Human oversight and fallback procedures are defined where required.	☐	☐	☐
6. Success metrics and post-deployment monitoring are established.	☐	☐	☐
7. There is a process for collecting feedback and improving the solution.	☐	☐	☐
8. The organisation has defined the conditions that must be met before expanding deployment.	☐	☐	☐

Assessment Summary

Complete this summary table after finishing all five sections. Record your totals and identify the most important action for each readiness area. Do not assign a numerical readiness score or conclude that your organisation is AI-ready based solely on the number of boxes checked. Any unresolved security, data access, governance, or operational issue may require attention before implementation proceeds.

Readiness Area	Ready ✓	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Assessed	Priority Action	Owner
Business goals and use cases	__ / 6	__ / 6	__ / 6	_____	_____
Data and infrastructure	__ / 7	__ / 7	__ / 7	_____	_____
Governance and security	__ / 8	__ / 8	__ / 8	_____	_____
Employee and workflow readiness	__ / 8	__ / 8	__ / 8	_____	_____
Implementation roadmap	__ / 8	__ / 8	__ / 8	_____	_____

Next-Step Planner

Use the table below to record priority actions arising from your assessment. Focus first on gaps in governance, security, and data access before proceeding to implementation planning.

Gap Identified	Action Required	Owner	Target Date

This checklist is an initial review, not a complete technical, security, legal, or compliance audit. Investigate gaps, gather evidence, and consult relevant specialists before proceeding with AI implementation.

Turn AI Readiness Into Real-World Solutions

Identifying readiness gaps is only the first step. Organisations also need professionals who can connect business requirements with data, applications, AI technologies, and existing workflows. This is the role of the **Forward Deployed Engineer (FDE)**.

Forward Deployed Engineers work with customers, business stakeholders, and engineering teams to understand operational challenges, assess technical dependencies, build and test solutions, and support implementation in real business environments.

Understand the Problem

Translate business needs into clear technical requirements that engineering teams can act on.

Connect Systems and Data

Identify integration dependencies, data constraints, and implementation blockers before development begins.

Build and Validate Solutions

Test AI applications against real workflows and business requirements to confirm they perform as intended.

Improve After Deployment

Use feedback and performance data to identify necessary changes and drive continuous improvement.

GSDC CERTIFICATION

Develop Your Forward Deployed Engineering Knowledge With GSDC

The **GSDC Certified Forward Deployed Engineer Certification** is designed for professionals who want to understand the FDE role and develop relevant knowledge in customer-focused engineering and technical implementation.

The certification is relevant to software developers, AI and machine learning professionals, solutions engineers, technical consultants, and technology professionals interested in applying engineering to real-world business problems.

> "Assess your readiness. Identify the gaps. Plan your next step toward practical AI implementation."
>
> *– Global Skill Development Council (GSDC)*

Ready to Explore Forward Deployed Engineering?

Learn about the role, its responsibilities, and the knowledge required to connect business challenges with practical technical solutions.

Explore the GSDC Certified Forward Deployed Engineer Certification:

Visit the Certification Page

https://www.gsdcouncil.org/certified-forward-deployed-engineer

Who Should Consider This Certification?

- Software developers
- AI and machine learning professionals
- Solutions engineers
- Technical consultants
- Technology professionals bridging business and engineering

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Extensive and exclusive Ebook created by world's experts to help you with understanding core concepts.

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GSDC certifications are created and authored by world's leading experts in the field.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- **Gain a strong understanding of Forward Deployed Engineering concepts, roles, tools, technologies, and development practices.**
- **Identify business and customer challenges and design AI-driven solutions aligned with real-world requirements.**
- **Apply modern AI frameworks, APIs, data integration, and deployment practices to build and implement solutions within existing business systems.**
- **Apply testing, evaluation, security, monitoring, and optimization practices to deliver reliable, scalable, and production-ready AI solutions.**

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