

AI Readiness Checklist

A 40-point self-assessment for UK boards and executive teams considering AI investment.

How to use this checklist

Work through each section with your leadership team. Mark each item Yes, Partial, or No. A pattern of **Partial** or **No** answers in any section signals where strategy work, governance, or foundational investment is needed before scaling AI. There are no trick questions — honest answers are the point.

Scoring guide: 30+ Yes = ready to scale · 20–29 Yes = ready for focused pilots · Under 20 Yes = invest in foundations first.

1. Strategy & Ambition

- We have a written AI ambition signed off by the executive team.
- AI investment is tied to specific business outcomes (revenue, cost, risk, experience).
- We can name our top 5 AI use cases and why they are prioritised.
- AI is referenced in our 3-year corporate strategy, not just IT plans.
- We know which use cases we are explicitly NOT pursuing this year.

2. Leadership & Sponsorship

- A named executive is accountable for AI outcomes at board level.
- The board has had at least one substantive AI strategy discussion in the last 12 months.
- Middle managers can explain the AI strategy in their own words.
- AI sits on the agenda of our executive committee at a regular cadence.
- We have budget approved for AI work that is separate from BAU IT spend.

3. Data & Technology Foundations

- Critical business data is accessible, documented, and reasonably clean.
- We have a defined data platform (warehouse, lakehouse, or equivalent) in production.
- We have a clear stance on cloud providers and major model vendors.
- MLOps / LLMOps tooling is in place (or has a named owner to put it in place).
- We can integrate AI outputs back into our core systems of record.

4. Talent & Operating Model

- We have decided between centralised, federated, or hybrid AI delivery.
- We have access to AI engineering and product capability (in-house, partner, or both).
- Line managers have had practical AI training in the last 12 months.
- There is a clear path from AI prototype to production owned by a real team.
- Build-vs-buy-vs-partner is a deliberate decision per use case, not a default.

5. Governance, Risk & Compliance

- We have an AI policy that staff can actually find and understand.
- AI use cases are risk-assessed before development starts.
- We track which AI systems are in use across the organisation (an AI register).
- We have a position on the EU AI Act and UK regulatory expectations relevant to us.
- Human-in-the-loop and escalation paths exist for high-impact AI decisions.

6. Delivery & Value Realisation

- Each AI initiative has named value metrics (not just 'go-live').
- Pilots have explicit go/no-go criteria before scaling.
- We measure and report AI value capture against the original business case.
- We have killed at least one AI initiative because the numbers didn't work.
- AI roadmaps are reviewed quarterly and re-prioritised based on evidence.

7. Culture, Trust & Change

- Staff are openly told where and how AI is being used in their work.
- Customers (where relevant) are informed when AI affects them.
- There is a safe channel for staff to raise concerns about AI use.
- Leaders model responsible AI behaviour (e.g. fact-checking outputs).
- Successes and failures with AI are shared openly inside the organisation.

8. Future-Readiness

- We monitor competitor and sector AI moves with a defined cadence.
- We have a view on how generative AI changes our cost base over 3 years.
- We have considered the workforce implications of AI honestly with HR.
- Our supplier and procurement contracts account for AI use by vendors.
- We have refreshed our AI strategy in the last 12 months.

Your score: _____ / 40 Yes

Date assessed: _____

What next?

If your score reveals gaps — in strategy, foundations, governance, or delivery — Summit Bridge can help you turn this checklist into a costed roadmap.

Strategy gap

Define ambition, prioritise use cases, build the business case.

See: [AI Strategy Consultant — summit-bridge.co.uk/ai-strategy-consultant](https://summit-bridge.co.uk/ai-strategy-consultant)

Governance gap

Stand up a practical AI policy, register, and risk-tiering model.

See: [AI Governance Framework — summit-bridge.co.uk/ai-governance-framework](https://summit-bridge.co.uk/ai-governance-framework)

Delivery gap

Mobilise the first wave of initiatives with value tracking from day one.

[Book a scoping call — info@summit-bridge.co.uk](mailto:info@summit-bridge.co.uk)

Book a complimentary 30-minute scoping call

No obligation. No sales pitch. Just honest, informed guidance on your highest-impact next move with AI.

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Typical engagement range: £15,000 – £85,000 depending on scope, duration, and number of business units involved.

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