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DOWNLOADABLE CHECKLIST

STRATEGY & PLANNING

AI Use Case Readiness Checklist

Test whether a proposed AI use case has a clear business need, suitable data, defined ownership, realistic value and manageable risk.

INTAI LIMITED
AI Governance & Assurance Consultancy

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AI Use Case Readiness Checklist

This checklist helps you decide whether a proposed AI use case is genuinely ready to move forward — or whether it needs further work on its business case, data, ownership or risk profile before resource is committed to building or buying a solution.

1 Business Need

Confirm the use case is grounded in a real, specific business need before assessing feasibility.

- ☐ **Can the business problem be described clearly without reference to the technology being proposed?**
  If a use case only makes sense once you mention AI, that is often a sign the need itself is not yet well defined.
- ☐ **Is there a specific business owner who wants this problem solved, rather than a technology team proposing a solution in search of a problem?**
  Use cases sponsored by the business, not just by technology or innovation teams, are far more likely to be adopted.
- ☐ **Has the current, non-AI way of doing this task been documented?**
  Understanding the baseline process makes it possible to judge realistically how much value AI could add.
- ☐ **Is there a reasonable expectation that AI is a proportionate solution, rather than the simplest possible fix being overlooked?**
  Sometimes a process fix or a simpler automation solves the problem more reliably and more cheaply than AI.

2 Data Suitability

Assess whether the data needed actually exists, in a usable state, before committing to the use case.

- ☐ **Does the data needed for this use case exist and is it accessible?**
  Data that exists somewhere in the organisation is not the same as data that is accessible and usable for this purpose.
- ☐ **Is the data of sufficient quality and volume for the intended use?**
  Small or noisy datasets, common in SMEs, may need a different approach than assumed at the outset.
- ☐ **Has the lawful basis for using this data for this purpose been considered?**
  This is particularly important under GDPR where personal data is involved, including for public sector applicants.
- ☐ **Is the data reasonably representative of the population the AI system will affect?**
  Unrepresentative data is one of the most common sources of unfair or unreliable AI outcomes.

3 Ownership & Accountability

- ☐ **Is there a named owner accountable for this use case throughout its lifecycle, not just at launch?**
  Ongoing accountability, including for monitoring after deployment, is often overlooked at the proposal stage.

- ☐ **Has a governance route for this use case been identified, appropriate to its risk level?**
  Higher-risk use cases should be routed to a governance committee or equivalent before proceeding further.

4 Value & Feasibility

Test whether the expected value is realistic and whether the organisation can actually deliver it.

- ☐ **Is the expected business value specific and, where possible, quantified?**
  Vague value statements make it hard to judge whether a use case was actually worth pursuing after the fact.

- ☐ **Is the use case feasible with current or realistically obtainable capability?**
  A use case that depends on capability the organisation does not have, and cannot reasonably acquire, is not yet ready.

- ☐ **Has the organisation considered the ongoing cost of running and maintaining the solution, not just building it?**
  Ongoing monitoring, retraining and support cost are frequently underestimated relative to build cost.

5 Risk Screening

Some use cases warrant early escalation regardless of their apparent value, because of the nature of their impact.

- ☐ **Does the use case involve automated decisions that materially affect individuals?**
  This includes decisions about employment, credit, pricing, benefits eligibility or access to public services.

- ☐ **Does the use case process biometric data or involve individual identification?**
  This is subject to particular scrutiny under the EU AI Act and, in many cases, GDPR.

- ☐ **Could the use case fall within a high-risk category under the EU AI Act or equivalent national guidance?**
  If uncertain, this should be checked before proceeding rather than assumed either way.

- ☐ **Does the use case involve vulnerable individuals, minors, or safety-critical processes?**
  These warrant a higher standard of scrutiny and, typically, mandatory governance committee review.

- ☐ **Can the basis for any AI-influenced decision be explained to the person it affects?**
  An inability to explain a decision is itself a material risk, independent of the decision's accuracy.

6 Governance Route

☐ **Has this use case been logged in the organisation's AI use case register or inventory?**
An unlogged use case cannot be governed, monitored or included in regulatory readiness activity.

☐ **Is it clear what level of approval is required before this use case can proceed to build or procurement?**
This should scale with the risk tier identified above, not default to the same approval level for every use case.

HOW TO SCORE THIS CHECKLIST

A use case with unresolved 'No' answers in the Data Suitability or Risk Screening sections should not proceed without further work, regardless of how strong the Business Need or Value sections appear. Those two sections identify the risks most likely to cause serious problems later.

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Need help acting on this checklist?

INTAI works with SMEs, public sector bodies and larger organisations across Europe to turn checklist findings into a practical, proportionate AI governance programme — from strategy and policy through to risk management and regulatory readiness. If you would like support closing the gaps this checklist has identified, our team is glad to help.

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