

Assess your organisation's readiness across four key areas of data to prepare for future technologies like AI.

Data Readiness Checklist

Data Quality




Good data quality ensures decisions are based on accurate, consistent, and reliable information. Without it, even advanced tools like AI or predictive analytics will produce misleading results.

Item	Description	● Bronze	● Silver	● Gold
Data definitions	Consistent terminology across datasets.	Terms exist but are informal.	Documented and shared across teams.	Maintained in a central, controlled glossary and linked to systems.
Single source of truth	One definitive dataset for core information.	Multiple datasets with overlaps.	Master dataset identified and mostly used.	Fully integrated systems referencing a single authoritative dataset.
Completeness & accuracy	Checking and updating data.	Ad hoc checks when issues arise.	Regular scheduled validation.	Automated quality checks with alerts and audit trails.
Standardised formats	Consistency in dates, codes, naming.	Some standards but not applied everywhere.	Common formats used across most systems.	All systems aligned, with enforced standards and automated validation.






Data Security & Compliance

Protecting data safeguards individuals' privacy, maintains trust, and ensures compliance with regulations such as GDPR. Strong security is essential before introducing new technologies that handle sensitive information.

Item	Description	 Bronze	 Silver	 Gold
Access control	Managing permissions based on role.	Permissions assigned but rarely reviewed.	Roles defined and reviewed annually.	Dynamic access controls with real-time monitoring.
Secure storage	Keeping sensitive data safe.	Data stored securely but without encryption.	Encrypted storage in controlled systems.	End-to-end encryption, secure backups, and resilience testing.
Data protection compliance	Meeting legal obligations.	Basic awareness and reactive compliance.	Documented policies and annual training.	Embedded compliance with proactive monitoring.




Data Skills & Culture

Technology alone doesn't deliver value — people do. Building skills and fostering a culture where data is understood, shared appropriately, and used ethically maximises the impact of digital innovation.

Item	Description	 Bronze	 Silver	 Gold
Skills mapping	Knowing who can work with data.	Informal awareness of skills.	Documented skills inventory.	Skills mapped to organisational needs and updated regularly.
Upskilling plans	Training for data literacy and tools.	Ad hoc training when needed.	Structured training plan in place.	Continuous learning culture with tailored development pathways.
Collaboration & sharing	Sharing data across teams.	Sharing happens informally.	Clear processes for appropriate sharing.	Cross-team projects supported by shared data platforms.
Ethical awareness	Understanding fairness and bias in data.	Limited awareness.	Awareness built into projects.	Ethical impact assessed for all major data initiatives.

Data Governance & Strategy

Governance provides structure, accountability, and alignment with organisational goals. A clear strategy ensures that data initiatives are coordinated, sustainable, and support long-term success.

Item	Description	 Bronze	 Silver	 Gold
Governance framework	Structures for decision-making around data.	No formal framework.	Governance roles assigned and policies documented.	Clear governance bodies with accountability and oversight across the organisation.
Data ownership	Knowing who is responsible for the data.	Responsibility unclear or shared informally.	Named data owners for key datasets.	Organisation-wide accountability with owners, stewards, and escalation paths.
Lifecycle management	How data is created, used, retained and retired.	Retention handled ad hoc.	Retention schedules defined and partly applied.	Fully embedded lifecycle management with automation and audit trails.
Alignment with strategy	Linking data work to organisational goals.	Data activities reactive and siloed.	Data projects linked to local priorities.	Organisation-wide data strategy aligned to long-term goals, regularly reviewed.

👉 Review this checklist annually and whenever a new technology or data-driven project is introduced. Even small improvements can dramatically increase readiness for AI and advanced analytics.