FREE RESOURCE

The AI Readiness Checklist

Thirty-two questions across eight dimensions. Score each one honestly; the pattern of gaps matters more than the total.

How to use this. Score each statement 0, 1, or 2 — 0 = not true, 1 = partly true, 2 = true and evidenced. Do it with two or three people separately, then compare. Disagreement between colleagues is the most useful finding on the page.

DIMENSION 01

Strategy and mandate

- [ ] There is a written statement of what AI is for in this organisation, and what it is not for.
- [ ] A named executive owns AI outcomes, not just AI tooling.
- [ ] AI objectives are expressed as business outcomes (cost, cycle time, service quality), not adoption counts.
- [ ] There is a decision on which workflows will *not* be automated.

DIMENSION 02

Workflow and process

- [ ] The target workflow is documented as it actually runs, including exceptions and workarounds.
- [ ] We know the current baseline: volume, cycle time, error rate, cost per case.
- [ ] Handoffs between people and systems are written down, with the owner of each.
- [ ] There is an agreed definition of "better" for this workflow before any tool changes.

DIMENSION 03

Knowledge and data

- [ ] The documents an AI would need are findable, current, and version-controlled.
- [ ] We know which sources are authoritative and which are superseded.
- [ ] Data quality problems (duplicates, gaps, inconsistent formats) are known and bounded.
- [ ] Someone is accountable for knowledge staying correct after the pilot ends.

DIMENSION 04

Technology and access

- [ ] We know where the data for this workflow actually lives — including spreadsheets and inboxes.
- [ ] There is a route to integrate AI with existing systems that does not require a rebuild.
- [ ] We have a sandbox or test environment separate from production.
- [ ] Someone can support the workflow operationally after handover.

DIMENSION 05

Governance and decision rights

- [ ] For each AI-assisted decision, we can name who approves, who can override, and who is accountable.
- [ ] Prompts, outputs, overrides, and approvals are logged and reviewable.
- [ ] There is a written fallback to a manual process when the system is wrong or unavailable.
- [ ] Procurement rules cover AI vendors, data handling, and model changes.

DIMENSION 06

People and capability

- [ ] The people who do the work were involved in designing the change.
- [ ] Staff can explain what the AI does and where it is unreliable.
- [ ] Training covers exceptions and escalation, not only the happy path.
- [ ] There is a plan for the roles this changes — including roles that shrink.

DIMENSION 07

Risk and trust

- [ ] Sensitive personal or commercial data is identified and minimised before it reaches a model.
- [ ] We have tested accuracy on our own hard cases, not just vendor demos.
- [ ] Bias and disparate impact have been examined where decisions affect people.
- [ ] We know what happens when the model is confidently wrong — and who catches it.

DIMENSION 08

Measurement and learning

- [ ] Success criteria and a failure threshold were agreed before the pilot started.
- [ ] We will measure the workflow after rollout against the pre-pilot baseline.
- [ ] There is a review date at which the pilot is continued, changed, or stopped.
- [ ] What we learn is captured somewhere other people can find it.

READING THE RESULT

What your score means

Maximum score is 64. The total is less important than where the gaps cluster: a strong score in technology with weak governance is the most common — and most dangerous — profile we see.

SCORE	READING
0–20	Not ready for a pilot. Start with the workflow and the decision rights.
21–36	Ready for a bounded audit, not a build. One workflow, properly scoped.
37–50	Ready for a controlled pilot with defined measures and oversight.
51–64	Ready to scale what works — the constraint is usually organisational, not technical.