AI Governance Checklist

25 Questions Every Business Should Be Able to Answer

AI tools are becoming part of everyday business operations, whether organizations formally adopt them or employees begin using them on their own.

That creates new questions for leadership. Which tools are approved? What information can employees share? Who reviews new AI applications? What happens when something goes wrong?

Use this checklist to evaluate whether your organization has the policies, controls, and oversight needed to manage AI use responsibly.

How to use this checklist

For each question, select the response that best describes your organization today:

Yes — 2 points

The control is established, documented where appropriate, and currently being followed.

In Progress — 1 point

Work has started, but the control is not fully implemented.

No — 0 points

The control is not currently in place.

Not Sure — 0 points

Your organization cannot currently confirm whether the control is in place.

A "Not Sure" response matters. If leadership cannot verify that a control exists, that lack of visibility should be reviewed.

Governance & Accountability

1. Does your organization have a written AI Acceptable Use Policy?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

2. Has an individual or team been assigned responsibility for AI governance?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

3. Is there a defined process for reviewing and approving new AI tools before employees use them for business purposes?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

4. Do you maintain a current list of approved and prohibited AI tools?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

5. Are AI policies, approved tools, and governance decisions reviewed on a regular schedule?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

Data, Privacy & Access

6. Has your organization defined what types of information employees may and may not enter into AI tools?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

7. Do you know where sensitive, confidential, or regulated business data is stored?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

8. Are permissions reviewed before AI tools are connected to company files, email, cloud storage, or other business systems?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

9. Is access to approved AI tools limited according to job role and business need?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

10. Can AI access be promptly changed or removed when an employee changes roles or leaves the organization?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

AI Vendor & Third-Party Risk

11. Are AI vendors reviewed for security and privacy before their tools are approved?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

12. Do you understand how approved AI vendors store, retain, process, and use the information submitted to their tools?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

13. Do you know whether information submitted to an AI provider may be used to train or improve its models?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

14. Are contractual, confidentiality, privacy, and data-handling requirements considered before an AI vendor is approved?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

15. Is there a process for reviewing approved AI vendors when their terms, capabilities, integrations, or data practices change?

☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

Employee Use & Human Oversight

16. Have employees received training on your organization's AI policy and approved tools?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

17. Do employees understand what information should never be entered into an unapproved AI tool?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

18. Have you defined when AI-generated work requires human review before it is used, published, submitted, or acted upon?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

19. Are employees expected to verify important AI-generated information rather than assume the output is accurate?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

20. Do employees know how and where to report accidental data disclosure, suspicious AI activity, or misuse of an AI tool?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

Compliance, Risk & Incident Response

21. Has your organization evaluated how AI use may affect its regulatory, contractual, privacy, or industry-specific obligations?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

22. Has your organization completed a risk assessment that includes current or planned AI use?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

23. Does your incident response plan address AI-related events, including accidental disclosure of sensitive information?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

24. Are appropriate logs, approvals, exceptions, and other AI governance decisions documented when necessary?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

25. Are AI risks reassessed when tools, business uses, vendors, regulations, or organizational requirements change?
☐ Yes ☐ In Progress ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

Your Score

40–50 points

Strong Governance Foundation

Your organization has many of the core controls needed to manage AI use responsibly. Continue reviewing policies, approved tools, vendors, employee practices, and business risks as AI use develops. Pay attention to any individual questions answered "No" or "Not Sure," even when the overall score is high.

25–39 points

Governance Gaps to Address

Your organization has started building an AI governance foundation, but some important controls are incomplete or inconsistent.

Focus first on ownership, policies, approved tools, sensitive-data rules, vendor review, employee guidance, and incident response.

0–24 points

Governance Needs Attention

Your organization may lack several of the controls needed to manage AI use consistently. Start by identifying current AI use, assigning responsibility, establishing an acceptable-use policy, defining data boundaries, and creating a review process for new tools.

Don't Let the Score Hide a Critical Gap

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Your total score is only one part of the assessment. Regardless of the final number, treat a **No** or **Not Sure** response to any of these questions as a priority:

- Do you have a written AI Acceptable Use Policy?
- Does someone own AI governance?
- Is there a process for approving AI tools?
- Have you defined what information employees may share with AI?
- Are AI vendors reviewed before approval?
- Do employees know what data is prohibited?
- Have you defined when human review is required?
- Has AI been included in your risk assessment?
- Does your incident response plan account for AI-related events?

Signs Your AI Governance May Need Attention

Your organization may have governance gaps if:

- Employees are using AI tools that have never been reviewed.
- Different departments approve tools independently.
- No one has formal responsibility for AI governance.
- Employees do not know what data they can share with AI.
- There is no current list of approved tools.
- AI vendors are adopted without security or privacy review.
- Leadership has limited visibility into how employees use AI.
- Human review requirements are unclear.
- AI-related incidents are not addressed in response procedures.
- AI use is growing faster than internal policies and controls.

Where to Start

You do not need to solve every AI governance issue at once.
Start with four questions:

1. What AI tools are being used today?
2. What company, client, or regulated data could those tools access?
3. Who is responsible for approving and governing AI use?
4. What rules do employees currently have to follow?

Those answers can help identify where stronger policies, security controls, employee guidance, or risk management may be needed.

How AvTek Can Help

AI governance involves more than selecting technology. It requires coordination across cybersecurity, compliance, data protection, policy, and business leadership.
AvTek helps organizations identify AI-related risk and develop practical controls through services including compliance readiness, cybersecurity, and vCISO guidance.

Ready to review your AI governance gaps?
Schedule an AI Governance & Risk Review with AvTek Solutions.
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