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DOWNLOADABLE TEMPLATE

GOVERNANCE

AI Governance Framework Template

Establish a practical structure for AI accountability, decision-making, oversight, risk management, lifecycle controls and organisational responsibilities.

INTAI LIMITED
AI Governance & Assurance Consultancy

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AI Governance Framework Template

This template provides the structural backbone for AI governance across an organisation, aligned to the intent of ISO/IEC 42001, the NIST AI Risk Management Framework and the EU AI Act's risk-based approach. Use it as the reference document that other AI governance templates and processes plug into.

1 Governance Objectives & Principles

State what your AI governance is trying to achieve, then define the principles that will guide decisions when trade-offs arise. Principles that cannot be tested against a real decision are just wall art.

PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT MEANS IN PRACTICE	HOW IT IS DEMONSTRATED
Fairness	AI systems do not produce unjustified discriminatory outcomes	
Transparency	Decisions and their basis can be explained to those affected	
Accountability	A named individual is answerable for each system's outcomes	
Safety & Robustness	Systems perform reliably and fail safely	
Human Oversight	Meaningful human review is possible at appropriate points	
Data Governance	Data used is lawful, fit for purpose and adequately protected	

> **REFERENCE**
>
> This structure aligns with the intent of ISO/IEC 42001:2023 (AI management systems), the NIST AI Risk Management Framework, and the risk-based approach taken by the EU AI Act. Organisations operating in the UK should also consider the UK Government's pro-innovation AI regulatory principles and any applicable sector-specific guidance.

2 Roles & Accountability Structure

Governance fails most often not because the rules are wrong, but because nobody is clearly accountable for applying them. Name the roles and confirm who they report to.

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES	ACCOUNTABLE TO
Board / Executive Committee	Sets risk appetite; ultimate accountability for AI governance	
Executive Sponsor	Owns the AI governance framework and its resourcing	Board
AI Governance Committee	Reviews and approves high-risk use cases; owns policy and standards	Executive Sponsor
System / Use Case Owner	Accountable for a specific AI system throughout its lifecycle	

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES	ACCOUNTABLE TO
		AI Governance Committee
Data Protection Officer / Legal	Advises on data protection, regulatory and legal risk	AI Governance Committee
Internal Audit / Assurance	Provides independent assurance over governance effectiveness	Board / Audit Committee

3 AI Lifecycle Governance Stages

Attach governance controls to specific points in the AI lifecycle, rather than treating governance as a single approval at the start. Most material risks emerge, or change, after deployment.

LIFECYCLE STAGE	GOVERNANCE CONTROLS	REQUIRED EVIDENCE	GATE OWNER
Idea & Screening	Use case logged; risk screening applied	Use case register entry	System Owner
Design & Build	Risk assessment completed; data sources reviewed	Risk assessment record	AI Governance Committee
Validation & Testing	Performance, bias and safety testing completed	Test & validation report	System Owner
Deployment	Governance sign-off; inventory entry created	Approval record; inventory entry	AI Governance Committee
Monitoring	Ongoing performance and drift monitoring	Monitoring reports	System Owner
Retirement	Formal decommissioning and data disposal review	Retirement record	System Owner

4 Risk Tiering Model

Not every AI system needs the same level of scrutiny. A tiering model lets you focus governance effort where it matters, while avoiding disproportionate process on low-risk tools.

TIER	CRITERIA	GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENT
Minimal Risk	No material impact on individuals or decisions	Register in inventory; light-touch review
Limited Risk	Some influence on decisions; transparency obligations apply	Risk assessment; disclosure to affected users
High Risk	Material effect on rights, safety, employment, access to services, or falls within a regulated high-risk category	Full risk assessment; impact assessment; committee approval; ongoing monitoring
Unacceptable	Prohibited use (e.g. manipulative or exploitative systems, certain biometric uses)	Not permitted

5 Policy & Standards Inventory

List the policies and standards your governance framework depends on, and their current status.

POLICY / STANDARD	PURPOSE	STATUS	OWNER
Acceptable AI Use Policy	Sets rules for employee use of AI tools		
Data Governance Policy	Governs data used to train or operate AI systems		
Model Risk Management Standard	Sets requirements for validating and monitoring models		
Third-Party AI & Vendor Policy	Sets requirements for AI procured from suppliers		
Human Oversight Standard	Defines when and how human review is required		

6 Monitoring & Assurance

Governance is an ongoing activity, not a one-time approval. Set out how effectiveness will be checked.

ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY	OWNER	REPORTING LINE
System performance & drift monitoring			
Risk register review			
Internal audit of governance controls			
Committee reporting to Board			

7 Escalation & Incident Response

Define what counts as an AI-related incident and how it should be escalated. Ambiguity here causes delay at exactly the moment speed matters most.

INCIDENT DEFINITION (WHAT TRIGGERS THIS PROCESS)

SEVERITY	RESPONSE TIME	ESCALATION ROUTE
Critical (safety, legal or significant harm)		
Significant (material but contained)		
Minor (limited impact, no external exposure)		

8 Review Cycle & Change Log

Review this framework at least annually, and whenever there is a material change in regulation, technology or organisational risk appetite.

VERSION	DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGE	APPROVED BY
1.0		Initial version	

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Need help putting this into practice?

INTAI works with organisations to design, implement and assure practical AI governance — from first strategy through to ongoing risk management and regulatory readiness. If you would like support applying this template to your organisation, our team is glad to help.

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