

Data Governance for AI: Maturity Cheatsheet

Assess your AI data governance readiness across five pillars

60%

of AI projects abandoned due to lack of AI-ready data
Gartner, 2025

Only 15%

of organisations report mature data governance
Enterprise Data Strategy Board, 2025

24.1%

higher revenue for orgs with mature governance
IDC / NetApp, 2025

25.4%

lower costs through AI-driven efficiency
IDC / NetApp, 2025

THE FIVE GOVERNANCE PILLARS

01

Ownership & Stewardship

Can you name the owner of every dataset feeding your AI?
Action: Assign a named data steward for each critical dataset. Define RACI for data quality decisions.

02

Quality Management

Are validation rules running before data enters AI pipelines?
Action: Implement automated quality checks at ingestion. Track completeness, accuracy, and freshness.

03

Classification & Sensitivity

Do you know which data is public, confidential, or restricted?
Action: Apply sensitivity labels using Microsoft Purview. Define what models can and cannot access.

04

Metadata & Lineage

Can you trace every transformation applied to training data?
Action: Enable lineage tracking in Fabric/Purview. Catalogue all datasets with business context.

05

Access Control & Lifecycle

Are the right people accessing the right data at the right time?
Action: Implement role-based access. Set automated retention and archival policies.

GOVERNANCE MATURITY LEVELS

LEVEL	OWNERSHIP	QUALITY	CLASSIFICATION	LINEAGE	ACCESS
● Ad-hoc	No clear owners. "Someone in IT handles it"	Issues found after decisions are made	No labelling. Everything treated the same	No tracking. "It comes from somewhere"	Broad access. No retention policies
● Developing	Some owners assigned but informal	Manual spot checks, no automation	Basic categories but inconsistent	Partial lineage for critical datasets	Role-based but not enforced
● Managed	Formal stewards with defined RACI	Automated rules at key ingestion points	Sensitivity labels applied consistently	Full lineage in analytics platform	Enforced RBAC with audit trail
● Optimised	Stewardship council, cross-functional	Real-time quality scoring with SLAs	Dynamic classification with AI	End-to-end lineage with impact analysis	Zero-trust, automated lifecycle

THIS QUARTER: THREE QUICK WINS

WEEK 1-2

Run a Data Audit

Identify every dataset feeding your AI initiatives. Map ownership, document quality issues, and flag sensitive data.

WEEK 3-6

Assign Stewards

For every critical dataset, name one person accountable for quality. Not IT by default. The business function that owns it.

WEEK 7-12

Automate Quality Gates

Implement validation rules at ingestion. Start with the three highest-risk pipelines. Use Fabric quality rules or Purview scanning.

RECOMMENDED MICROSOFT STACK

Microsoft Purview

Data catalogue, sensitivity labels, classification, lineage, DLP policies

Microsoft Fabric

Unified analytics, data quality rules, OneLake governance, workspace permissions

Microsoft Entra ID

Role-based access, conditional access, zero-trust auth, audit logging

Azure Policy + Compliance

Automated policy enforcement, regulatory compliance, retention rules

"AI won't fail for lack of models. It will fail for lack of data discipline."

Publicis Sapient, 2026 Guide to Next

SCORE YOURSELF: WHERE DO YOU STAND?

Circle your level (1-4) for each pillar. Total your score out of 20.

Ownership & Stewardship	<input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4
Quality Management	<input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4
Classification & Sensitivity	<input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4
Metadata & Lineage	<input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4
Access Control & Lifecycle	<input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4

Your Total

/ 20

5-8

Foundation needed

9-12

Developing

13-16

Managed

17-20

Optimised

YOUR NEXT MOVE

- 1

Take the Full Assessment

Our AI Maturity Assessment scores your organisation across Design, Build, and Manage phases with a personalised 15-page report.
- 2

Get Your Personalised Report

Detailed scores, gap analysis, recommended products, and a 90-day action plan tailored to your primary constraint.
- 3

Book a Strategy Review

30-minute complimentary call to discuss your results, identify root causes, and explore whether Orion is the right fit.

Take Our AI Maturity Assessment

oriondata.co.uk/assessment