

Arx Certa

Expert UK Cloud, Infrastructure & AI

AI READINESS · POLICY TEMPLATE

AI Usage Policy Template

A 6-page policy template UK businesses can adopt or adapt. Stops staff pasting client data into public AI tools.

Free download · May 2026 · v2026-05

Scorecard companion: arxcerta.com/ai-readiness-scorecard

How to use this template

This is a starting point, not legal advice. It captures the structure and the clauses Arx Certa has seen work in real UK engagements — small professional-services firms through to mid-market businesses. The aim is to give you something defensible to publish inside 30 minutes of edits.

QUICK CUSTOMISE

- 1. Search-replace placeholders.** Every instance of **[Company]**, **[Policy owner]**, **[Review cadence]**, and **[Effective date]** needs filling in.
- 2. Have three conversations before publishing.** (a) Which tools are actually approved today. (b) What categories of data your business holds, and which can/can't be entered into which tier of tool. (c) Who owns this policy and what happens when someone breaches it.
- 3. Publish, acknowledge, and review.** Every staff member signs the acknowledgement on page 6. Review on the cadence you set (annual minimum).

Before you publish — check your wider AI setup

The 4-minute scorecard tells you whether the policy is the right next step or whether other foundations need to go in first. It's free.

Take the scorecard → arxcerta.com/ai-readiness-scorecard

Purpose and scope

1. PURPOSE

This policy sets out how staff, contractors, and partners of **[Company]** may use AI tools in the course of their work, what they must not do, and the governance arrangements that support safe and effective AI adoption.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, freelancers, and any third party with access to **[Company]** systems or data. It covers all AI tools, defined to include: generative AI systems (e.g. ChatGPT, Copilot, Claude, Gemini), embedded AI features within software products, automation agents, and any system that processes inputs to produce predictions, content, or decisions using machine learning.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE AND REVIEW

This policy takes effect from **[Effective date]** and will be reviewed at least every **[Review cadence — e.g. 12 months]**, or sooner if AI regulation, sector guidance, or the company's risk profile changes materially.

Approved and prohibited tools

4. APPROVED TOOLS

Tool	Approved for	Tool owner
ChatGPT (Enterprise/Business tier)	Business data, with care	[Policy owner]
Microsoft 365 Copilot	Internal documents and email	[Policy owner]
Claude (paid tier)	Business data, with care	[Policy owner]
[Add internal AI tools]	[Scope]	[Owner]

5. TOOLS REQUIRING APPROVAL

Any AI tool not on the approved list above requires written approval from **[Policy owner]** before use. The approval request must include: vendor, data flow (where inputs and outputs go), data processing agreement status, and the business case.

6. PROHIBITED TOOLS AND USES

- Public/free-tier AI tools must not be used to process personal data, client information, or business-confidential content.
- AI tools that do not provide a Data Processing Agreement on request must not process personal data.
- Any AI tool listed on the company's prohibited tools list (maintained by **[Policy owner]**) must not be used.

Data rules

7. DATA TIERING

Tier	What it covers	Permitted AI use
Tier 0 — Public	Information already in the public domain.	Any approved AI tool.
Tier 1 — Business	Internal information not covered by confidentiality.	Enterprise-tier tools only.
Tier 2 — Confidential	Client data, commercial terms, internal personnel.	Enterprise-tier with DPA only.
Tier 3 — Restricted	Personal data (UK GDPR), regulated data, secrets.	Pre-approved per use case; DPIA required.

8. IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY ENTERED SOMETHING YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE

Stop using the tool, take a screenshot of what was entered, and tell **[Policy owner]** the same working day. We will assess containment, vendor obligations (data deletion requests), and whether the incident is reportable under UK GDPR Article 33.

Operating procedures

9. REQUESTING A NEW TOOL

Submit a written request to **[Policy owner]** covering: tool, intended use, data tier touched, vendor DPA status, and the business case. Allow 10 working days for review.

10. HUMAN IN THE LOOP

AI outputs that influence decisions about customers, suppliers, candidates, or staff must be reviewed by a named person before being relied upon. The reviewer is the accountable decision-maker, not the AI tool.

11. DISCLOSURE

Where AI tooling has materially contributed to deliverables provided to clients or partners, we disclose this in line with sector norms and any contractual obligations. Default position: be transparent on request.

Governance and specific clauses

12. OWNERSHIP AND REVIEW

This policy is owned by **[Policy owner]**. It is reviewed at the cadence set out above and updated when sector guidance materially changes. Material changes are reported to the leadership team within 30 days.

13. BREACH PROCESS

Breaches are reported to **[Policy owner]**. Sanctions range from additional training through to disciplinary action under the existing disciplinary policy, proportionate to severity and intent.

14. CLAUSE — CHATGPT AND PUBLIC-TIER TOOLS

Public-tier ChatGPT (and equivalents) must not be used for Tier 1 data or above. Use the company-provisioned enterprise account, where available, for any business-related prompts.

15. CLAUSE — MICROSOFT 365 COPILOT

Copilot may be used for Tier 1 internal documents and email. Tier 2 data is permitted within the company's M365 tenant only. Outputs touching personal data must follow the human-in-the-loop rule above.

16. CLAUSE — AI AGENTS AND AUTOMATION

Automation agents that act on company data must be pre-approved per use case. Each agent has a named owner, a documented data flow, and an audit log retained for at least 12 months.

Sign-off

STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read and understood the **[Company]** AI Usage Policy. I understand the tiers of data, the approved tools, and the process for raising risks. I will follow the policy in the course of my work.

Name _____

Role _____

Date _____

Signature _____

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Notes
v0.1	May 2026	Initial draft from Arx Certa template.

The policy is 30 minutes of work. Is the rest of your AI setup ready?

Take the 4-minute AI Readiness Scorecard for a weighted score across five dimensions plus a 30-day action plan you can take to your leadership team.

Take the scorecard → arxcerta.com/ai-readiness-scorecard