

PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

Independent Assurance Readiness Checklist

A pre-commission checklist for a focused, evidence-led review.

Intended audience

SROs, programme directors, programme managers, digital leaders and SME executives

Status

Review draft · August 2026

USE THIS BEFORE COMMISSIONING

A good assurance review begins with a decision, a mandate and access to evidence - not an open-ended request to “look at the programme”.

1. Define the decision

Check	Readiness statement	Notes / owner
☐	The decision or claim to be tested is written in one sentence.	
☐	The decision owner and decision date are named.	
☐	The consequence of a wrong decision is understood.	
☐	Relevant tolerances, obligations or acceptance criteria are available.	

2. Establish independence

Check	Readiness statement	Notes / owner
☐	The assurance team is separate from the delivery ownership being assessed.	
☐	Known conflicts or prior delivery responsibilities are declared.	
☐	The reviewer can report material concerns without supplier approval.	
☐	The recipient of the independent opinion is explicit.	

3. Secure access to evidence

Check	Readiness statement	Notes / owner
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☐	Plans, RAID, governance decisions and dependency records can be inspected.	
☐	Quality, test, defect, environment and release evidence can be inspected.	
☐	Architecture, integration, security and operability evidence can be inspected.	
☐	Supplier claims can be traced to source data and artefacts.	
☐	Relevant people are available for evidence-based interviews.	

4. Frame the review

Check	Readiness statement	Notes / owner
☐	Scope and exclusions are documented.	
☐	Materiality and rating definitions are agreed.	
☐	The review timeframe is proportionate to the decision.	
☐	Reporting, escalation and confidentiality expectations are clear.	

5. Prepare for action

Check	Readiness statement	Notes / owner
☐	Findings will have named client-side owners.	
☐	The board has capacity to take decisions during the review.	
☐	Actions require closure evidence, not verbal confirmation.	
☐	The programme accepts that assurance may challenge the current narrative.	

Readiness outcome

Outcome	Meaning
Ready	Decision, independence and evidence access are sufficiently clear to mobilise.
Ready with conditions	The review can begin once named access or governance gaps are closed.
Not ready	The request risks producing opinion without enough authority or evidence.