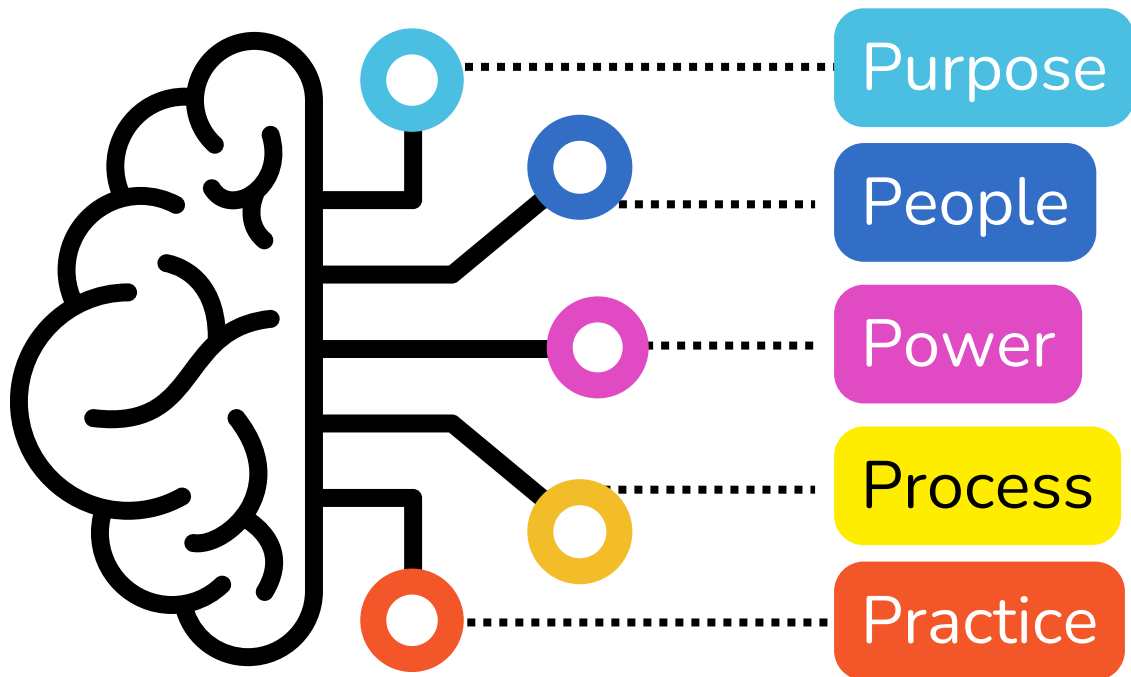


AI DECISIONS THROUGH THE 5 LENSES



**A self-guided template for examining
AI-influenced decisions developed by
Jannaways and uptakeAI**

AI DECISIONS THROUGH THE 5 LENSES

What this is:

This template helps you examine one AI-influenced decision, outcome or use case in your organisation using five questions. It takes roughly 20 minutes. You do not need technical knowledge or AI expertise to complete it.

It works whether you are a senior leader working through it alone, or a governance lead using it to structure a team conversation.

What it reveals:

Most governance frameworks focus on systems, models, or policies. This template focuses on decisions as they are lived in practice. It makes visible the points where human oversight disappears, where accountability fragments, and where the system quietly decides.

How to use this template

On your own: Work through each lens in order. Write your honest assessment. The value is in what you notice, not in having the right answers.

With a team: Use the questions to structure a 45-minute conversation. One person reads the question and prompt aloud. Everyone responds. Capture where you agree and, more importantly, where you do not.

Pick one issue. Start with the one that worries you most, or the one where you suspect the system has more influence than anyone has formally acknowledged.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE USE CASE

Before applying the lenses, be specific about the decision or use case you are examining. The more concrete you are here, the more useful the rest of the exercise will be.

What is the use case or decision? (e.g. prioritisation of repairs, allocation of support, referral triage, benefits assessment)

Who or what currently makes this decision in practice? (a person, a team, a system, or a combination)

Where does data, scoring, or automation play a role? (even if informally or partially)

How many people or cases does this decision affect per week/month?

Who is the most senior person with visibility of how this decision works day-to-day?

STEP 2: APPLY THE FIVE LENSES

Work through each lens in turn. There are no right answers. The value is in what surfaces.

LENS 1: PURPOSE

Is AI solving the right problem?

Efficiency gains can mask a deeper question: is the system optimising for what actually matters? Faster is not the same as better. Cheaper is not the same as fairer.

- What outcome is this system designed to improve?
- Is that the outcome that matters most to the people affected?
- If this system were switched off tomorrow, what would you lose - and what might you gain?

Your notes: what is this system actually optimising for, and is that the right thing?

LENS 2: PEOPLE

Who is affected, and who might be vulnerable?

AI-influenced systems often treat people as equivalent when they are not. A low-risk score for one person may mean something very different for another. And it is not only service users - staff whose work is shaped by AI are affected too.

- Could this system affect different groups of people differently?
- Does the system have any way of recognising vulnerability, or does it score everyone the same?
- Were the people affected by this decision consulted about how the system works?
- How has this system changed how staff do their jobs? Were they involved in that change?

Your notes: who is affected, and whose experience is invisible to the system?

LENS 3: POWER

Who decides? Who can override? Who can challenge?

In many organisations, the system's output becomes the decision by default. Not because anyone chose that, but because workload and trust make it the path of least resistance. Override rights exist on paper but are rarely exercised in practice.

- Can a frontline worker override this system's recommendation? How often does that happen?
- If someone wanted to challenge a system-generated decision, what would they have to do?
- Is there psychological safety to question the system, or does it feel like questioning objectivity?

Your notes: where has authority migrated to the system, and does anyone have the power (and confidence) to intervene?

LENS 4: PROCESS

Where does the system quietly decide?

Every AI-influenced system has thresholds, rules, and defaults that shape decisions before a human sees them. Some cases are auto-allocated, auto-prioritised, or auto-excluded. These invisible thresholds are where governance most commonly breaks down.

- At what point does a human first see this decision? What has already happened before that point?
- Are there thresholds or rules that route cases automatically? Who set them, and last review date?
- If the system's parameters changed last quarter, would your governance framework have noticed?

Your notes: where does human oversight disappear, and where are the invisible thresholds?

LENS 5: PRACTICE**What signals tell us this needs more oversight?**

Governance signals are often already present in your data, but nobody is watching for them. Rising repeat requests, disproportionate outcomes, override rates near zero - these all tell you something about whether the system is working as intended.

- What data would tell you this system is producing unfair or disproportionate outcomes?
- Is anyone monitoring override rates, repeat contacts, or complaint patterns for this decision?
- If this system failed silently i.e plausible but wrong results - how long before anyone would notice?

Your notes: what signals should you be watching, and who should be watching them?

STEP 3: WHAT DID YOU FIND?

Look back across your five responses. The patterns matter more than any single answer.

Where is human oversight weakest for this decision?

What surprised you? What did you not know before this exercise?

If you had to explain this decision to your board, what would you struggle to answer?

WHO NEEDS TO SEE THIS?

This template is most useful when it starts a conversation, not when it sits in a drawer. Consider sharing it with your governance lead, your board sponsor for AI or data, or the operational team closest to this decision.

OPTIONAL NEXT STEP: THE 90-DAY EXPERIMENT

From Insight to Evidence

The lenses show you where to look. The 90-day experiment gives you something your board can act on: evidence about how decisions are actually landing, generated safely and at small scale.

This is not a transformation programme. It is a time-bound governance intervention: one decision, one review cycle, one set of findings. No new technology, no procurement, no AI expertise required.



Week 1: Map the decision

Using what you found in the lenses exercise, map the decision pathway for the case you examined.

Where does the system score or prioritise? Where does a human first see the output? Where does your governance assume oversight happens? Where are the gaps between these?



Week 2-4: Review the invisible cases

Sample the cases your governance never sees: the ones auto-allocated, auto-prioritised, or routed below the threshold where human review kicks in.

What will you sample? (e.g. low-priority cases from the last quarter, auto-allocated referrals, cases that never reached a human reviewer)

What will you check for? (e.g. missed vulnerability, disproportionate outcomes by group, repeat contacts that suggest the first decision was wrong)

Who will do the review?

How will you record what you find?



By day 90: Evidence for your board

You now have data, not theory. The purpose of this phase is to turn your findings into something your board can understand and act on.

What did the review reveal? (summarise the key findings)

What needs to change? (threshold adjustments, oversight processes, monitoring, escalation routes)

What is your recommendation to the board?

WHAT COMES NEXT

At Jannaways and uptakeAI, we help organisations build the mindset, skills, and strategies to adopt AI responsibly and confidently, so technology empowers people, not replaces them.

If you want to go further...

If you want to go further, there is a 5-minute diagnostic that maps your governance gaps across the full picture

<https://www.jannaways.co.uk/ai-governance-diagnostic>, and a structured workshop programme for teams along with a suite of AI Literacy workshops <https://uptakeai.co.uk/our-services>

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“Governance is not about controlling AI. It is about seeing clearly enough to decide where trust is appropriate - and where it is not”