

Artificial Intelligence at Best Companies

Our Commitment to Responsible AI

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→ Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly common across many organisations. Whilst AI has the potential to improve efficiency, productivity and insight, it also brings new responsibilities around transparency, security and accountability.

At Best Companies, we believe it is important to be open about how AI is used within our organisation and our products. We are committed to ensuring AI is deployed responsibly, ethically and with appropriate human oversight.

Our approach is guided by the principles of the GDPR, including but not limited to lawfulness, fairness and transparency, security and accountability. We recognise that trust is fundamental to our relationships with clients, survey participants and our employees, and we have established processes to ensure AI is used appropriately.

→ How We Use AI Within Our Organisation

Like many modern organisations, we use approved AI tools to support certain business activities and improve efficiency. Examples may include:

- Drafting and reviewing content.
- Information gathering.
- Summarisation and analysis of business information.
- Supporting software development and technical activities.
- Productivity and administrative support.

AI is used to assist our employees, not replace them. Employees remain responsible for reviewing, validating and approving any AI output before it is relied upon, shared or used in decision making. AI content is treated as advisory and subject to human judgement and oversight.

Employees are required to follow internal policies governing acceptable AI use, including restrictions on the information that may be entered into AI systems and requirements to verify outputs for accuracy, confidentiality, bias and appropriateness.

→ AI Within Our Products and Services

Best Companies has introduced AI capabilities within certain products to help users interpret insights and gain greater value from their engagement data.

Where AI is incorporated into our products, its purpose is to:

- Generate summaries and highlight key themes.
- Support interpretation of organisational insight data.
- Provide coaching suggestions and prompts.
- Help users identify areas for focus and improvement.

Importantly, AI within our services is designed to support users, not make decisions for them. AI outputs are advisory in nature and are intended to assist human decision making rather than automate it. The final interpretation, decision and any resulting action always remains with the individual user or organisation.

Our AI tools are not used to make automated employment decisions, do not replace manager judgement and are not intended to have legal or similarly significant effects on individuals.

→ Transparency in Our Use of AI

We believe users should understand when AI is being used and what role it plays.

Where AI functionality is available within our products, we aim to clearly explain:

- The purpose of the AI feature.
 - What information is processed.
 - How outputs are generated.
 - The limitations of the technology.
 - The role of human oversight.
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→ Technology Overview

Our AI functionality uses Microsoft Azure OpenAI Service, provided as part of Microsoft enterprise AI services hosted within Microsoft Azure. The primary residency position for relevant Microsoft Azure hosted data is the Microsoft Azure UK South region. Where limited developer access, tooling or service routing is required, this may pass via Azure Germany West Central, physically located in Frankfurt, Germany, and must remain subject to access control, logging, encryption in transit and contractual processor safeguards. Any proposed change to the processing region, support model, routing, AI service configuration or sub-processor arrangement must be reviewed before implementation.

In simple terms, the technology uses large language model capabilities to analyse relevant content and generate a response, such as a summary, theme or suggested coaching prompt. The AI functionality is developed at application level within our Microsoft Azure environment and operates within a controlled and sandboxed architecture. The AI layer is separated from the wider application environment and only receives the specific content required to generate the requested output at runtime.

The typical data flow is that an authenticated user accesses the product, relevant content is passed from the application layer to the sandboxed AI processing layer, the Microsoft enterprise AI service generates the requested output, and that output is returned to the product interface for user review. The output is then considered by the user before any action is taken.

The wider technology environment includes the application layer, application logic, access controls, relevant databases or storage, monitoring and logging, and Microsoft enterprise AI services. Access is controlled through authentication, role-based permissions and least privilege access principles. Security controls include encryption in transit and at rest, logging, monitoring, supplier due diligence, contractual processor safeguards and ongoing governance review.

Client data is processed only to provide the requested AI function. Best Companies does not develop its own AI foundation models. Client data is not used by Best Companies to train its own AI models or by Microsoft to train the underlying models where the service is configured on that basis. The technology is used to support interpretation and understanding, not to make decisions on behalf of the user, assess individuals, replace manager judgement or produce legal or similarly significant effects.

→ Safeguards within the Technology

The AI functionality is supported by prompt design, output controls and surrounding application logic intended to guide the AI towards consistent, constructive and responsible responses. These safeguards are designed to avoid judgemental, prescriptive or evaluative wording and to support the technology's role as an assistive tool rather than a decision-making mechanism.

The AI capability is also subject to internal governance, testing, validation and ongoing monitoring to ensure outputs remain appropriate, safe and aligned with their intended use.

We also distinguish between AI outputs and other product functionality. For example, where our scoring methodologies are used, these are based on predefined business rules and calculations rather than artificial intelligence.

→ Data Protection and Privacy Safeguards

Protecting client and survey data remains our highest priority.

Responsibility for AI within Best Companies is held at Director level, with technical oversight from the Chief Technology Officer. Our Data Protection Officer and Compliance Lead also supports the review of AI use from a data protection, and compliance perspective.

When AI services are used within our products, client data is processed only for the purpose of generating the requested functionality. Best Companies does not develop its own foundation AI models, and client data is not used to train or improve the underlying Microsoft AI models supporting the service.

Our AI capabilities utilise Microsoft Azure OpenAI Service, provided as part of Microsoft enterprise AI services hosted within Microsoft Azure. These services operate within a controlled enterprise environment and are subject to Microsoft's security, privacy and compliance controls.

In addition, Best Companies applies:

- Data protection impact assessments where appropriate.
 - Supplier due diligence and security reviews.
 - Access controls and role-based permissions.
 - Information security policies and controls.
 - Ongoing monitoring and governance reviews.
 - Data minimisation principles.
 - Human oversight of AI outputs.
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→ Governance and Human Oversight

We maintain a human in control approach to AI.

Before new AI technologies are adopted, they are subject to internal review and governance processes. This includes consideration of privacy impacts, security risks, fairness, accuracy, contractual obligations and regulatory requirements.

All staff have received training, as part of our wider Data Protection training programme, on the importance of AI accountability, responsible use, human oversight and the need to verify AI outputs before they are relied upon.

Our governance framework is designed to ensure that:

- AI is used ethically and responsibly.
- Potential risks are identified and managed.
- Appropriate security measures are maintained.
- AI outputs remain subject to human review.
- Individuals are treated fairly and without discrimination.
- Privacy rights are respected.

Our systems are periodically reviewed to ensure they remain aligned with their intended purpose and continue to operate safely and appropriately.

→ Looking Ahead

AI continues to evolve rapidly. Best Companies remains committed to monitoring developments in technology, regulation and industry best practice. We will continue to review our governance arrangements, policies and controls to ensure we maintain the high standards our clients expect.

We believe AI should be used to enhance human expertise, not replace it. By combining technology with strong governance, privacy protections and human judgement, we aim to deliver the benefits of AI whilst maintaining the trust placed in us by our clients and their employees.

→ Further Information

Should you have any questions about this resource or require further information about our wider security, data protection and compliance practices, please view our [Trust Centre](#) or contact us directly at support@b.co.uk.