

Valcon G-Cloud Lot 3 Service Definition

AI Centre of Excellence

[Cloud Migration Planning | Enterprise architecture]

Version 1.0

1. About Us

Valcon is a leading European consultancy specialising in AI and data-driven business transformation, with a growing and established presence in the UK. A trusted partner to major organisations including multiple UK Government departments and public sector agencies. Valcon connects strategy and operations, helping organisations create value in their transformation programmes.

With over 1,750 consultants across Europe, Valcon brings deep expertise across data, AI, technology and consulting. In the UK, Valcon works with clients across financial services, public sector, retail, industrials and infrastructure. Valcon is backed by private equity firm Rivean Capital.

2. Service Description

Leveraging Valcon's decades-long AI experience, we help organisations set up a robust internal AI practice. Spanning people, processes and technology, we jointly design your target operating model, identify skills and training gaps and support your internal pilots. We also augment your teams with our 90+ people data science capability.

Features

- Identify capability objectives and baseline, including skills gaps
- Define target operating model and organisational design
- Develop capability model: fully in-house, hybrid or supplier-based
- Design workforce, capability, and skills development pathways
- Establish AIOps (e.g. LLMOps, MLOps), model lifecycle, and release processes
- Integrate governance, risk, and compliance controls into operations
- Design platform services across experimentation, deployment, monitoring, and retirement
- Implement performance, bias, and drift monitoring at scale
- Define AI organisational structure, accountability, and funding model (if required)
- Establish service management and processes for how CoE supports organisation

Benefits

- Accelerated organisational AI readiness through proven methods and augmented capabilities
- Kickstarts and sustains readiness through flexible hybrid delivery model
- Accelerates safe AI delivery with repeatable, governed operating processes
- Reduces operational risk through embedded controls and assurance
- Improves scalability via platform standardisation and automation
- Optimises spend through shared services and reuse
- Strengthens transparency and accountability across AI services
- Builds sustainable workforce capability and knowledge
- Increases agility while maintaining regulatory compliance

3. Approach

Discovery, Assessment and Ambition

We begin with a discovery phase to understand your existing and desired future use of AI. This involves collating information from across teams, programmes, projects, datasets, systems, contracts, and third party solutions. We gather evidence and requirements through a number of mediums including: stakeholder interviews, surveys, artefact reviews, workshops and working sessions. We assess the operating model against industry best practice approaches, regulatory obligations and preferred frameworks, standards and guidance, including: AI Playbook for Government, UK Data & AI Ethics Framework, UK Algorithmic Transparency Record Standard (ATRS), ICO guidance, UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, DUAA 2025, ISO/IEC 42001:2023 AI management system (AIMS), ISO/IEC 23894:2023 (AI risk), NIST AI Risk Management Framework. We identify gaps between the current and desired state to form a practical set of recommendations and prioritised roadmap to close the gap. This will include an assessment of risks in applying AI in context (e.g. to specific processes) and, where necessary, a transition plan with interim states to ensure an effective transformation.

Design and Define

We use agile delivery starting with a Design sprint comprising joint workshops with your key stakeholders to form a backlog of activities and co-design key aspects of your target AI Centre of Excellence, spanning people, process and technology commensurate with your AI vision and risk appetite. We provide pragmatic steps to address any capability gaps that may include structural design changes to establish optimal team setup, reporting lines and interaction models.

We iteratively develop useful artefacts, including: Responsible AI principles, Responsible AI policy, Responsible AI Impact Assessments, Fairness and Explainability checklists, Data Protection Impact Assessments (alignment), and Safety and Robustness test protocols. As required, we design or propose changes to your current Data & AI governance, including: principles, policies, standards, and controls covering AI lifecycle stages e.g. problem framing, data acquisition, model development, validation, deployment, monitoring, retirement.

We define clear roles and decision rights for senior responsible owners, model risk committees, ethics boards, and service teams, as necessary, adapting and aligning our approach with your existing governance and escalation routes to achieve the optimal blend of control and efficiency. We define human oversight processes to define decision thresholds, escalation paths, and review cycles, ensuring meaningful human control where required. We specify explainability levels aligned to user groups/personas e.g. technical, operational, and public, alongside accountable and accessible algorithmic transparency records.

Any identified weaknesses in Data foundations must be addressed promptly to ensure efficient strategy execution. We set AI ready data requirements, such as: lawful basis, proportionality, purpose limitation, data minimisation, retention periods, handling in line with classification/sensitivity levels; metadata and lineage for provenance and impact views; and data quality cleansing, threshold setting and alerting with remediation processes to address errors. We integrate these controls with your existing data catalogue, data quality tooling, and platform or if these solutions are not in place can assist with identifying, selecting, prototyping, configuring and deploying the appropriate tooling to realise these changes.

We ensure training and inference data remain compliant and reliable. We establish bias testing across representative cohorts, including appropriate statistical metrics, and define remediation, re-training, and validation procedures to establish a continuous training approach.

Operationalise and Improve

We partner with you to realise the immediate changes, sitting alongside your people to embed the new approach. A phased roll-out targets specific teams with high impact services first, building momentum and refining patterns. This involves coaching and guiding senior leaders, priming them with clear messaging to engage their teams, backed up by targeted data and AI literacy development for critical roles to safeguard the success of AI initiatives. Where core capability gaps remain we can provide access to our expert data and AI specialists to keep your efforts on track while also supporting resourcing activity such as drafting or reviewing job specifications to fill critical AI positions.

We pilot a first cell of the AI Centre of Excellence centred around one key identified AI opportunity and develop it jointly from discovery to live in a hybrid / rainbow team.

With key teams in place, we concentrate on establishing governance and metrics oversight (e.g. ethics board or model risk committee) to review high risk deployments and lessons learned. Followed by embedding Responsible AI gates into delivery stages: problem framing, data preparation, model development, validation, release, monitoring, retirement with mandatory controls and evidence capture.

Our monitoring covers robustness, drift, performance/system health, and harms/ethical risks, including incident response playbooks and reporting channels. Our Responsible AI advice on guardrails, clauses, model cards, data sheets, and service level expectations around transparency and monitoring provide you with the information you need to strengthen your procurement and vendor governance.

Adoption and handover

Our expert consultants underwrite your investment by priming you and your teams for business change through our implementation readiness service. We assure broader adoption of new ways of working with our proven change management expertise and experience, including: targeted communications, training, role-based enablement, and tailored guidance materials for all relevant personas/roles. All supported by comprehensive knowledge transfer, supervision and hypercare to ensure maximum uptake and a seamless transition to BAU.

As the AI Centre of Excellence capability grows, we remain engaged in hybrid teams for as long or as little as your organisation requires it – providing additional flexibility and enabling you to scale as quickly as desired.

4. Effort and Cost

Effort will be determined collaboratively between the Valcon and the client based on the skills mix and scope required.

Please refer to the Pricing Document for current rates.

- Rate card prices are exclusive of VAT.
- Expenses are recharged at cost and supported by receipts.
- Expenses may include reasonable travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs.
- The payment schedule will follow milestone completions as agreed in the Statement of Work.

5. Assumptions

The successful delivery of the engagement depends on assumptions and dependencies jointly agreed between Valcon and the client. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Access to required stakeholders, technology and documentation,
- Timely decisions and approvals
- Availability of resources
- Defined governance and communication processes

All assumptions and dependencies will be recorded and validated as part of the Statement of Work (SoW).