



PRACTICAL GUIDE | AUGUST 2026

Software Development Guide

A practical, stage-by-stage framework for moving from a business requirement to a dependable production solution.

Right-sized	Technology-led	Accountable
Designed for business fit	Modern engineering and AI	Visible delivery ownership

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Seven stages. One connected outcome.

Each stage should create evidence that the solution is becoming clearer, safer and more valuable. Skipping clarity early usually creates cost and delay later.

01. Discover Define the business problem, stakeholders, current process, desired outcome, constraints and success measures.	02. Analyse Convert needs into clear functional and non-functional requirements, flows, data needs, integrations and acceptance criteria.
03. Design Shape the architecture, user experience, data model, interfaces, security, deployment approach and delivery plan.	04. Build Break work into manageable increments, maintain coding discipline, review changes and demonstrate progress frequently.
05. Assure Test functionality, integrations, performance, security and usability against agreed acceptance criteria.	06. Deploy Prepare environments, data migration, rollback, training, documentation, go-live and hypercare.
07. Evolve Monitor production, manage incidents, learn from usage and prioritise improvements based on business value.	

Visibility prevents surprises.

Single source of truth Keep approved requirements, decisions, designs, code, tests and releases in controlled repositories.	Work breakdown Convert scope into deliverables, work packages and tasks that can be estimated, owned and tracked.
Definition of done A task is complete only when code, review, testing, documentation and acceptance expectations are met.	Change control Record the reason, effort, impact, dependency and approval for every meaningful scope change.
Quality gates Use agreed entry and exit criteria before development, testing, UAT and production deployment.	Risk ownership Every material risk needs an owner, mitigation, trigger and review date.

A simple weekly governance rhythm

Daily stand-up for execution; weekly status for scope, schedule, cost, quality, risk and decisions; milestone reviews for formal acceptance; retrospectives for continuous improvement.

Before development begins

Business objective approved The outcome and success measures are understood by business and delivery leaders.	Scope baseline agreed In-scope, out-of-scope, assumptions and dependencies are explicit.
Acceptance criteria ready Each priority requirement can be objectively verified.	Architecture reviewed Technology, security, integrations and deployment constraints are understood.
Plan and ownership visible Milestones, roles, estimates, risks and reporting rhythm are agreed.	Environments prepared Development, test, UAT and production responsibilities are clear.

Need help shaping or delivering your next application?

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