

IBM Brand Style Guide

IBM-inspired brand guide for usable report and content production. This specimen is a practical show-and-tell library: brand assets, colour roles, typography, badges, message states, data components, recommendations, briefs, and export rules.

IBM-styled content should feel **systematic, engineered, accessible, and explicit**. Use the grid to make complex information understandable; use blue to mark interaction and verified structure; use red, amber, and green only when the status itself matters.

IBM production manifest

Brand: IBM

Shape language: modular grid, square panels, strong alignment, visible rules

Writing rule: classify evidence, name the decision, then show the verification path

Content system: technical reports, governance memos, product explainers, audit handoffs

Colour rule: blue is the system accent; severity colours are functional, not decorative

Export rule: every public artefact uses placeholder evidence and hides browser PDF chrome

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1. Brand assets and surface rules

1.1 Logo on light surface

Show primary artwork on white or cool-grey backgrounds with generous clearspace. **Use for:** report covers, section openers, and client handoff PDFs.

1.2 Logo on dark surface

Use reverse artwork only when the whole page or module is dark. *Do not mix light and dark logo treatments in the same component row.*

1.3 Icon or monogram

Use a compact mark for small metadata blocks, export thumbnails, or dashboard tiles. Keep the mark visually centred and never use it as a bullet.

1.4 Partner lockup

Use a lockup area when the brand appears beside a product, client, or programme name. Keep equal optical weight and align baselines.



1.5 Primary blue

Use for links, active states, chart bars, focus indicators, and primary system emphasis. Pair with white or very light grey.



1.6 Strong text

Use for headings, dense tables, labels, and decision statements. It carries authority without needing extra decoration.




1.7 Raised surface

Use for cards, tables, briefs, and source ledgers. It should separate information without creating unrelated widths.



1.8 Critical state

Use only for blockers, risk, failed validation, or policy exceptions. Always pair it with a text label and recovery instruction.



1.9 Warning state

Use for dependencies, partial evidence, or pending verification. It should be visible in print, not a faint tint.



1.10 Verified state

Use for shipped controls, passed checks, and preserved patterns. Keep the label legible on the state colour.

2. Typography and formatting

2.1 H1 / cover title

Technical audit readiness report

Use for the single page purpose. Keep it direct; avoid marketing flourish.

2.2 H2 / section title

Evidence and decision path

Use H2s for major production tasks: assets, colours, data, decisions, export.

2.3 H3 / component title

Source ledger card

Use H3s inside reusable blocks. They should name the component, not repeat the section.

2.4 Body, emphasis, and citation

Normal body copy states the fact.

Bold

marks the decision or required field. **Italic** marks caveat, interpretation, or non-blocking nuance.

Use quotation styling for source excerpts and reviewer notes. A quote is not a notification; it is a cited voice that supports or challenges the report claim.

CHAPTER 3

3. Information tagging badges

Badges are **metadata tags**, not notifications. Use them inline beside claims, table cells, or source IDs to classify evidence without taking over the page.

EVIDENCE: VERIFIED PARTIAL INFERRED MISSING

PRIORITY: CRITICAL HIGH MEDIUM LOW

Badge	Purpose	Use example	Avoid
VERIFIED	Confirmed evidence	“Pricing table present in first-fetch HTML”	Using it for assumptions
PARTIAL	Some support, not enough	“Two engines cite the page; one cites stale copy”	Hiding uncertainty
INFERRED	Modelled judgement	“Likely entity mismatch from source drift”	Presenting as fact
MISSING	No evidence found	“No source card for the claim”	Using as blame language

4. Message states and notifications

Notifications are interruption patterns. They need colour, shape, label, purpose, and action. They are not badge rows.

CRITICAL

4.1 Critical blocker

Purpose: stop delivery until fixed. Use when evidence is inaccessible, a required source is missing, or a public artefact risks disclosure.

Example: “Source B004 is absent from the export ledger. Add it before approval.”

HIGH

4.2 Warning dependency

Purpose: expose risk without blocking every reader. Use for partial evidence, ownership gaps, or pending validation.

Example: “Table fit passes A4 but needs slide review before client deck export.”

MEDIUM

4.3 Information note

Purpose: explain method or scope. Use for assumptions, sampling windows, and environment details.

Example: “Crawler evidence was captured from a logged-out first fetch.”

LOW

4.4 Verified outcome

Purpose: mark a stable pattern to preserve. Use when a check passed and should not regress.

Example: “All priority cards now include owner, source, and verification fields.”

5. Report component show-and-tell

12

Component families covered. **Source:** B001.

4

State colours with visible contrast.

Source: B002.

100%

Recommendation cards include owner and verification. **Source:** B003.

0

Private artefacts in public output.

Source: B004.



Component	Purpose	IBM treatment	Example content
Manifest	Scope and production rules	Field grid with firm labels	“Export rule: placeholder evidence only”
KPI card	Executive metric	Large value, short source line	“12 component families covered”
Facts table	Dense comparison	Aligned headers, stable columns	Component / purpose / treatment / example
Source ledger	Claim provenance	One width, row dividers, source IDs	B001 – Component inventory
Brief card	Delivery handoff	Light command panel, blue left rule	Task / files / acceptance / verification

B001 – Component inventory – **High confidence**; checks rendered block families.

B002 – Severity review – **High confidence**; validates visible critical, warning, information, and verified states.

B003 – Recommendation audit – **Medium confidence**; verifies owner, due date, source, and acceptance fields.

B004 – Redaction audit – **High confidence**; confirms public-safe export.

6. Recommendation patterns

6.1 Critical control gap EVIDENCE: **VERIFIED**

Use when a missing component, evidence field, or verification step blocks approval.

Owner: Governance. **Due:** current release. **Verify:** source ledger contains B001 and B004.

6.2 High-priority dependency EVIDENCE: **PARTIAL**

Use when a recommendation depends on another system, owner, or evidence source.

Owner: Delivery. **Due:** next sprint. **Verify:** dependency has an assigned owner.

6.3 Medium optimisation EVIDENCE: **INFERRED**

Use when the report is correct but can improve scanability, table density, or export fidelity.

Owner: Design systems. **Due:** backlog. **Verify:** A4 and slide output remain aligned.

DONE

6.4 Completed control EVIDENCE: **VERIFIED**

Use for implemented safeguards and stable patterns.

Owner: QA. **Verified:** B004. **Preserve:** state label remains high contrast.

6.5 Preserve

- **Explicit source IDs** beside claims.
- Stable table columns and aligned panel widths.
- Clear owner, due date, and verification fields.

6.6 Avoid

- Ambiguous status labels.
- Decorative charts without data labels.
- Recommendations without acceptance criteria.

7. Handoff, code, and export

7.1 Implementation brief

Task: Apply IBM-styled report components to a technical audit.

Files: report Markdown, renderer CSS, evidence ledger, PDF exports.

Acceptance: every finding maps to source IDs, confidence, owner, and verification.

Verification: render HTML, A4, US Letter, and slides; inspect badges, notifications, charts, tables, and code panels.

IBM light code panel

TEXT CODE



Do: classify evidence, assign owner, include verification.
Do not: use a notification when a small metadata badge is enough.

7.2 Source-card purpose



Use source cards as governance records: source ID, type, observed date, claim supported, confidence, sensitivity, and storage location.

PUBLIC ARTIFACT
RULE

IBM-styled public examples must not include private client names, URLs, local paths, screenshots, raw exports, or uncontrolled evidence excerpts.

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