

Ourbit Vendor-Neutral AI - Day 5: Context, Memory and Information Boundaries

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Programme: Vendor-Neutral AI - 15-Day Certification Programme

Purpose: Understand what information an AI system can use during a task and how to supply enough context without exposing unnecessary information.

Learning outcomes

- Explain a context window in practical terms.
- Distinguish current context from persistent state and retrieved information.
- Recognize context loss, overload and contradiction.
- Create concise continuity summaries.
- Apply data minimization when preparing context.

1. Available information shapes the answer

An AI system cannot reliably use information that is not available to it. Depending on the system, available information may include the current instruction, recent conversation, attached material, retrieved records or explicitly stored state. These mechanisms should not be casually treated as one unlimited “memory.”

2. Context windows are finite

Models operate on a bounded amount of context. In long interactions, older details may be omitted, compressed or compete with newer material. Even when everything technically fits, irrelevant content can make the important requirements harder to identify.

3. Context is different from durable state

Conversation context is temporary working information. Durable state is information deliberately stored so it can be recovered later. Retrieval is another mechanism: relevant information is selected from an external source when needed. Reliable systems make these boundaries explicit rather than assuming the model will “remember everything.”

4. Minimum necessary context

More information is not always better. Supply what the task needs, remove irrelevant personal or confidential data, label authoritative requirements and identify unresolved facts. This improves both privacy and signal quality.

Worked example - continuing a long project

A project has months of discussion. Instead of pasting every conversation into every new session, maintain a controlled current-state summary: approved architecture, completed work, open blockers, protected decisions, identifiers and next action. Link detailed source records when deeper evidence is needed. The summary becomes a continuity layer; it does not replace authoritative records.

Guided practice

Create a context packet for an AI asked to draft a customer response. Include the customer's actual problem, approved policy and required tone, but remove account numbers, unrelated history and personal information that is not needed. Explain each exclusion.

Knowledge check

- What is a context window?
- Why is current context not the same as durable memory?
- How can too much context weaken performance?
- What should a continuity summary preserve?
- How does data minimization improve a context workflow?

Applied evidence task

A long-running AI-assisted project has begun contradicting an early requirement. Design a recovery approach using an authoritative current-state record, selected source evidence and a concise task packet. Explain how you would prevent confidential material from being copied unnecessarily.

Day 5 takeaway

Reliable AI work depends on deliberate information management: know what is in context, what is stored elsewhere, what should be retrieved, what must remain private and which source is authoritative.

Assessment boundary

This learning evidence is isolated to vendor-neutral-ai-15-day.

Learning comes before credentials. Completing this reading alone does not issue a certificate. Programme assessment and practical requirements apply.