



Windows Server and SQL Server Migration to Microsoft Azure Advanced Specialization

Program Overview and Requirements

Program Updates and Announcements

Update May 05, 2021

New audit checklist version available for preview

Microsoft will be releasing version 2.0 of the audit checklist for the Windows Server and SQL Server Migration to Microsoft Azure advanced specialization. Version 2.0 is available for preview [here](#) and will go into effect July 1, 2021.

What's new:

We are introducing a new modular format to the Azure advanced specialization audit built on the Cloud Adoption Framework for Azure. This benefits your business by:

- Validating your business's ability to follow cloud adoption best practices and help ensure smooth cloud transition for your customers.
- Streamlining the Azure advanced specialization audit process to reduce the need to re-validate the same skills across multiple areas if your organization is seeking to earn more than one Azure advanced specialization.

The format will be broken into two modules:

- Module A will evaluate and assess a partner's implementation of cloud adoption best practices, following foundational principles in the Cloud Adoption Framework for Azure. This module is workload-agnostic, which means a partner can audit on Module A once and their passing result will apply to multiple Azure advanced specializations.
- Module B will evaluate workload-specific capabilities, which will be periodically updated to align to industry best practices. Module B will also include a requirement to conduct Well-Architected Reviews of customer workloads as part of the deployment.

Update March 24, 2021

Audit Preparation Resource

We have just launched a new webinar series, [Preparing for Azure advanced specializations](#). In this series of videos, Microsoft and ISSI will walk you through the audit checklist for each advanced specialization. Learn key best practices to help accelerate your organization's preparation for an advanced specialization and increase your likelihood of success.

Additional Audit Preparation Resource

ISSI provides extensive, in-depth consulting engagements to help partners prepare for Azure advanced specialization audits. Partners work directly with ISSI to schedule this remote session (via online web conference). For more information about this type of in-depth consultant engagement, [click here](#).

Alternately, partners can participate in an optional, one-hour, live overview session provided by ISSI. This Audit Preparation Overview session provides a high-level overview of key aspects of the advanced specialization audit process. The session includes a discussion of the checklist requirements along with best practices to help partners prepare for the audit. Partners work directly with ISSI to schedule this remote session (via online web conference). For more information about this overview session, [click here](#).

To ensure objectivity, audits are conducted by a different ISSI auditor than the one engaged for consulting. Consulting engagements can be scheduled at any time using the partner's preferred conferencing platform.

* Please note there is a cost associated with the consulting and audit preparations services. See Payment Terms and Conditions

Program Overview

Partners who demonstrate deep knowledge, extensive experience, and proven success in migrating Windows Server and SQL Server-based production workloads to Microsoft Azure may seek the Windows Server and SQL Server Migration to Microsoft Azure Advanced Specialization.

Workload migration presents partners with a unique opportunity to secure long-term cloud relationships with customers, which can lead to high-value, innovative managed services that open up new and recurring revenue streams. The Windows Server and SQL Server Migration to Microsoft Azure Advanced Specialization allows partners with an active [Gold Cloud Platform Competency](#) to further differentiate their organizations, demonstrate their capabilities, and build stronger connections with customers.

Partners who earn an advanced specialization will have a customer-facing label displayed on their business profile, gain access to specific go-to-market programs, and be prioritized in customer searches in the [Microsoft Partner Directory](#). For those reasons, this opportunity is available only to partners who meet additional, stringent requirements.

[Learn more about advanced specializations.](#)

What are the requirements?

Eligible partners must meet the highest standards for service delivery and support. All requirements will be verified by Microsoft and/or a third-party vendor, either automatically or by manual review, and are subject to change.

Requirements	Details
Related competency	Must have an active Gold Cloud Platform Competency
Performance	Your company must show a total monthly average of USD 15,000 Windows Server VM ACR aggregated from at least five customers from the previous three months AND Your company must show a total monthly average of USD 3,000 from SQL Managed Instance (MI) , SQL Database (DB) and Server VM (IaaS) ACR aggregated from at least five customers from the previous three months. At least USD 1,000 must be from SQL MI or SQL DB. <i>Your company should achieve ACR through Digital Partner of Record, Partner Admin Link, and Cloud Solution Provider.</i>
Knowledge	Your organization must have five individuals who pass the following certifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One unique individual must pass Azure Administrator Associate certification AND• One unique individual must pass Azure Solutions Architect Expert certification AND• One unique individual must pass Azure DevOps Engineer Expert certification AND• One unique individual must pass Azure Security Engineer Associate certification AND• One unique individual must pass Azure Data Engineer Associate certification

Audit

Pass a third-party remote audit. See [audit checklist](#) for more details.

*Advanced specializations can be activated in Partner Center only. If you have not yet moved your membership account from Partner Membership Center (PMC) to Partner Center, please sign in to PMC and follow the instructions. Once you've moved your account, you can review the requirements and begin working toward earning the advanced specialization.

How do I apply?

Only administrators of an organization's Microsoft partner account can submit an application for the Windows Server and SQL Server Migration to Microsoft Azure Advanced Specialization on behalf of the organization. If you have the appropriate role and access, you can apply [here](#). If you're still in PMC, work with your Partner Development Manager (PDM) to migrate to Partner Center. If you do not have a PDM, you can visit the support page [here](#) for instructions. Once you're fully migrated, you can apply through your Partner Center dashboard.