



Windows Server and SQL Server Migration to Microsoft Azure Advanced Specialization

Program Overview and Requirements

Update July 1, 2021

New audit checklist 2.0 available for use

Microsoft released the current version 2.0 audit checklist into preview on May 5, 2021 for the Windows Server and SQL Server Migration to Microsoft Azure Advanced Specialization. Version 2.0 went into effect July 1, 2021 and is now required.

What's New:

We introduced 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 has been broken into two modules:

- Module A evaluates and assesses 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 evaluates workload-specific capabilities. These are periodically updated to align to industry best practices. Module B also includes a requirement to conduct Well-Architected Reviews of customer workloads as part of the deployment.

Update March 24, 2021

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.

** 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 these 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
Competency	Your company must have an active Gold Cloud Platform Competency
Performance	<p>Your company must show customers migrating to Azure and meet the following requirements:</p> <p>Your company must show an average of \$10,000 USD Windows Server Virtual Machine (VM) Azure Consumed Revenue (ACR)** in the previous three (3) months from at least three (3) customers (aggregated from across your customers).</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Your company must show an average of \$ 3,000 USD from SQL Managed Instance (MI), SQL Database (DB) and SQL VM ACR** in the previous three (3) months from at least (3) customers (aggregated from across your customers). At least \$1,000 USD of that average must be from SQL MI or SQL DB.</p> <p>Learn more about Azure ACR</p> <p>Note: <i>Your company can have the same set of three (3) customers meeting the requirement for both Windows and SQL Server or they could be different.</i></p> <p>**ACR can be achieved through Digital Partner of Record, Partner Admin Link, and Cloud Solution Provider.</p> <p><i>Government subscriptions (i.e. Fairfax) are not eligible for ACR via PAL association.</i></p>

Knowledge	Your company must have at least three (3) individuals who have passed the following certification (each certification listed below is held by at least one individual): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Azure DevOps Engineer Expert certification• Azure Data Engineer Associate certification• Azure Administrator Associate certification
Audit	Your company must pass a third-party remote audit. Please see the 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 into 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.