Microsoft Azure VMware Solution Specialization

Program guide, audit checklist, and FAQ

V1.5 Checklist
Valid Feb 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024

Microsoft

Program updates and announcements

Module B, Feb 1, 2024
Control 1.1 Certification has removed a VMware member requirement
As of Jan 25, 2024, the partner no longer has a requirement to be a member of either the Technology Alliance Program (TAP) OR a Partner Connect (PC) member with VMware

Module A waiver information has been updated in the Module B checklist

Module B - Dec 1, 2023
No changes to the V1.4 checklist have been made. This checklist is active until Feb, 1, 2024

Module A – Oct 1, 2023
Azure Active Directory has been renamed Microsoft Entra ID

August 28, 2023
The Microsoft Cloud Partner Program has changed its name to the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program effective immediately

Module B - July 5, 2023
V1.4 Microsoft Azure VMware Solution Specialization checklist is published. This checklist version is required for audits during July 5, 2023 - Jan 25, 2024

- **Control 2.1 Workload Assessment** specifies partner-owned and community tools for performing discovery, dependency mapping, grouping and assessment of on-premise VMware environments for AVS migration feasibility

The AMMP Program has been renamed Azure Migrate and Modernize for FY24

Module B - Jan 2, 2023
V1.3 Microsoft VMware Solution Specialization audit checklist is published. This checklist version is required Jan 2, 2023- June 30, 2023

Module B - Dec 5, 2022
The PREVIEW for V1.3 Microsoft Azure VMware Solution Specialization was made available for partners. This checklist version is required Jan 2, 2023

- There are no new Module A or B Control updates
- FAQ updates include the clarification that a "No Pass" results when a partner fails or withdraws from the audit. This status resets from "Audit Failed" within one week to "Not Enrolled," allowing partners to reapply

Module B - Oct 3, 2022
Microsoft retired Gold Cloud partner competency, Solutions partner designation required Gold and Silver competencies are retired and replaced with Solutions Partner designations. Partners will not be allowed to renew their specialization if they have not attained an aligned Solutions Partner designation

Module A- July 1,2022
Checklist updates published May 2, 2022 Preview Module A, are now required

- InControl 2.2, a new Skilling Plan has been added to the checklist. This is required July 1, 2022

Module B - May 2, 2022
Checklist updates published in the May 2, 2022 partner Preview Module B are now required
A new control has been added to the Microsoft Azure VMware Specialization Module B control checklist in Design control 3.2, the Azure Well Architected Review Assessment. This is required July 1, 2022

1. The Module B partner Preview V1.1 with new control 3.2, was made available for review
2. Guidance for the definition of Proof of Concept and Pilots was added to the FAQ
3. The new Module A partner Preview with required 2.2 control Skilling plan for the Cloud Foundation audit checklist was made available for review in Module B

Jan 1, 2022
Guidance and FAQ Updates

Contents

Microsoft

Microsoft Azure VMware Solution Specialization Program Overview

This document defines the requirements to earn the Microsoft Azure VMware Solution specialization. It also provides further requirements, guidelines, and an audit checklist for the associated audit that is required to earn this Azure specialization.

The Microsoft Azure VMware Solution specialization is designed for partners to demonstrate their deep knowledge, extensive experience, and proven success in planning and deploying Azure cloud VMware for their customers. Such partners empower their customers to use Azure VMware to realize the full breadth of Azure solutions and to build transformative, secure VMWare solutions at enterprise scale.

The Microsoft Azure VMware Solution specialization allows partners with an active Solution Partner designation to further differentiate their organizations, demonstrate their capabilities, and build stronger connections with customers. For this specialization, partners must have an active Solutions Partner for Infrastructure (Azure) designation to apply.

Partners will receive a Pass or No Pass result upon completion of the audit process. A Pass result satisfies the audit requirement for this Azure specialization for two (2) years. See the Partner FAQ for renewal information.

Partners who meet the comprehensive requirements to earn an Azure specialization, receive a customer-facing label they can display and a prioritized business profile in Microsoft AppSource partner gallery. See the FAQ for more benefit information.

Please note: This specialization also requires 3rd party certifications to proceed to audit. These are found in Module B Control 1.1.

How to apply

Partners with the appropriate role and access permissions can apply. Only a Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program Account Administrator or a Global Administrator of an organization's Microsoft partner account can submit an application for the Azure specialization on behalf of the organization.

To do so, they sign into their **Partner Center** account. On the left pane, select Azure under the **Specialization section,** toggle to the specialization that you wish to apply for by using the drop-down menu at the top of the page.

NDAs for the audit

Auditors comply with requests from partners to sign a direct NDA. All ISSI auditors are under a nondisclosure agreement (NDA) with Microsoft. If a partner would like an NDA to be signed directly between ISSI and the partner organization for purposes of the audit, one can be provided by the partner during the audit scheduling process to ISSI. ISSI will sign and return it.

Payments terms and conditions

Pricing schedule

Module B Audit: $2,000 USD

Module A+B Audits: $3,000 USD

A Gap Review Meeting is included with each Module audit.

Payment terms

The cost of the audit is payable in full to the audit company and must be settled before the audit begins. Failure to pay will result in cancellation of the audit.

Program status term

When a partner meets all prerequisite requirements shown in Partner Center and Microsoft receives a valid Pass Report from the third-party audit company, the partner will be awarded Microsoft Azure VMWare Solution specialization for one (1) calendar year.

The status and the Azure VMWare Solution specialization label can be used only by the organization (determined by Partner Center MPN PGA ID account) and any associated locations (determined by MPN PLA ID) that met all requirements and passed the audit. Any subsidiary or affiliated organizations represented by separate Partner Center accounts (MPN PGA ID) may not advertise the status or display the associated label.

Audit blueprint

Audits are evidence-based. During the audit, partners will be expected to present evidence they have met the specific requirements on the checklist. This involves providing the auditor with access to live demonstrations, documents, and SME personnel to demonstrate compliance with checklist requirements.

The audit checklist will be updated to stay current with technology and market changes, and the audit is conducted by an independent, third-party auditor.

The following is included in the audit blueprint:

1. Audit Roles
2. Audit Process: High level overview
3. Audit Process: Details
4. Audit Best practices and resources

Audit roles

Role of the auditor

The auditor reviews submitted evidence and objectively assesses whether the evidence provided by the partner satisfies the audit checklist requirements.

The auditor selects and evaluates evidence, based on samples of the information available from live systems. The appropriate use of such sampling is closely related to the confidence that can be placed in the audit conclusions. All ISSI auditors are under a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with Microsoft. Auditors will also comply with requests from partners to sign a direct NDA.

Role of the partner

The partner must provide objective evidence that satisfies the auditor for all checklist items. It is the responsibility of the partner to have reviewed all check-list items prior to the audit, to have collated all necessary documentation and evidence, and to have ensured that the right subject matter experts are available to discuss and show systems, as appropriate. All audit evidence must be reproducible and verifiable.

Role of the Microsoft Partner Development Manager

For partners that have an assigned Microsoft Partner Development Manager (PDM), the PDM is responsible for ensuring that the partner fully understands the requirements prior to applying for the audit. The PDM may attend the optional consulting engagements that ISSI offers, but the PDM and other Microsoft FTEs may not attend the audit.

Audit Process: High-level overview

Step	Action	Responsibility
1	**Review:** Specialization requirements in Partner Center. Review audit checklists in the specialization and begin to prepare needed evidence with personnel for an evidence-based audit. Recommended: Before you apply, review the specific audit checklist thoroughly and confirm SME personnel availability.	Partner

2	**Meet the prerequisites and apply for the audit:** In the initial application phase, applications are submitted in two (2) stages: 1. Prerequisite requirements (see Partner Center for details) 2. Audit <u>Do not start the application process unless you are ready to undertake the audit.</u> Assess your firm's ability to complete the audit, including considerations for readiness, employee availability, and holidays.	Partner
3	**Validate**: The partner meets all requirements prior to audit.	Microsoft
4	**Confirmed by Microsoft**: Microsoft confirms to the third-party audit company that the partner is eligible for audit.	Microsoft
5	**Schedule with partner:** The auditor will schedule within two (2) business days.	Auditor (with partner)
6	**Conduct the audit**: Within thirty (30) calendar days of the approval for audit.	Auditor
7	**Provide a Gap Report:** If applicable, to the partner within two (2) business days of the completed audit, listing any Open Action Items. *	Auditor
8	**Acknowledge Gap Report receipt and schedule meeting:** Within two (2) business days of receiving the Gap Report, the partner acknowledges receipt of the report and schedules a Gap Review Meeting. Partners can begin immediate remediation of open items.	Partner
9	**Complete the meeting**: Within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the Gap Report, the partner schedules and completes the Gap Review Meeting with the auditor to provide evidence and address any Open Action Items. *	Auditor (with partner)
10	**Issue Final Report**: To the partner within five (5) business days. Notify Microsoft of audit Pass or No Pass result.	Auditor
11	**Notify the partner:** About program status within two (2) business days.	Microsoft

These steps will be skipped if the partner has no Open Action Items after the audit.

Audit Process: Details

Microsoft uses an independent, third-party audit company, Information Security Systems International, LLC (ISSI), to schedule and conduct Azure specialization audits. After the audit date has been confirmed, ISSI will provide an agenda to the partner. The duration of an audit is four (4) hours for Module B workloads and eight (8) hours for Module A+B audits combined, depending upon the scope of the audit.

Microsoft

During the audit, the partner must provide access to the appropriate personnel who can discuss and disclose evidence that demonstrates compliance with program requirements. We highly recommend that subject matter experts for each section attend as well as a person who is familiar with the entire audit.

On the day of the audit, the partner must be prepared to provide the auditor with access to live demonstrations, documents, and personnel, as necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements. During the audit, the auditor will seek to verify that the partner's evidence has addressed all required audit checklist items satisfactorily.

A note on audit checklist effective dates: Partners are audited against the checklist items that are active on the date of their remote audit, not the date they apply. Audits are updated twice annually. The partner application or renewal date has no bearing on the version of the checklist that is used for the audit.

The audit can produce either of two (2) outcomes:

1. The partner passes the audit.
    - The auditor will present a brief synopsis of the audit. This will include identifying observed strengths and opportunities for improvement.
    - The auditor will provide a Final Report to the partner.
    - The auditor will notify Microsoft.

2. The partner does not satisfy all checklist items during the audit.
    - The auditor will present a brief synopsis of the audit at the end of the day, including observed strengths and Open Action Items, as outlined in the Gap Report, within two (2) business days.
    - The partner will acknowledge receipt of the Gap Report within two (2) business days.
    - The partner will move into the Gap Review phase and schedule their Gap Review Meeting within fifteen (15) calendar days.

The Gap Review

If the partner does not, to the auditor's satisfaction, provide evidence that meets the required scores across all audit categories during the audit, the partner will move into a Gap Review. A Gap Review is part of the audit and completes the process.

Within two (2) business days after the audit, the partner will receive a Gap Report, which details any Open Action Items and the outstanding required evidence. It is suggested to begin remediation on any open action items as soon as possible following the audit.

The partner then has two (2) business days to acknowledge receipt of the Gap Report and schedule a Gap Review Meeting. The Gap Review Meeting is conducted with the auditor over the partner's virtual conference platform of choice. The meeting must take place within fifteen (15) calendar days of when the Gap Report was sent, and it may last no longer than one (1) hour. During the Gap Review Meeting the partner must present evidence that addresses any and all Open Action Items.

The Gap Review Meeting can produce either of two (2) outcomes:

1. The partner resolves all Open Action Items.
   - The auditor confirms that the partner has provided the required evidence.
   - The auditor provides a Final Report to the partner.
   - The auditor notifies Microsoft about the outcome (subject to Auditor Terms and Conditions).

2. The partner does not resolve all Open Action Items.
   - The auditor presents a brief summary of the audit, including missed items.
   - The partner receives a Final Report that details the missed items.
   - The auditor notifies Microsoft about the outcome (subject to Auditor Terms and Conditions).

If the partner is still unable to provide satisfactory evidence to the auditor during their Gap Review Meeting, the partner will be deemed to have failed the audit. Partners that still want to earn this Azure specialization will need to begin the application process again.

Completion of the audit

The audit process concludes when ISSI issues the Final Report after the audit or after the Gap Review. Partners will be awarded a Pass or No Pass result upon completion of the audit process, including if they withdraw from the audit process. At the conclusion of the audit process, the auditor will issue a Final Report to the partner and notify Microsoft of the pass or no pass result. A Pass result satisfies the audit requirement for this Azure specialization for two (2) years. A "No Pass" result is generated when a partner fails or withdraws from the audit. When a No Pass result is entered into Partner Center, you will see your status as "Audit Failed" in your dashboard. This status will reset within one week to "Not Enrolled," allowing you to reapply. Contact Partner Center Support if needed.

Audit preparation best practices and resources

Partners should ensure that the audit checklist has been thoroughly read in advance of the audit

- Partners should ensure that all partner stakeholders involved have a copy of the audit checklist and that a stakeholder who knows the entire process is available for the duration of the audit
- Partners should confirm that they have live access granted, and files and tools are readily available during the audit exhibits

Stakeholder SMEs attendance in the audit

Stakeholders who can best address the relevant section should be available for the audit. However, please make sure that a stakeholder who knows the entire process is available for the duration of the audit.

Auditors often probe for more information

The auditor probes for more information to ensure that mature and repeatable processes are in place with the partner and that they are established, effective, and efficient. The auditor is looking to see how a document was created, where it is located, and what source materials were used to create the document. By probing for more information, the auditor evaluates and validates that the partner is operating at an advanced level. This can only be done by questioning during the audit. This approach is explained to the partner during the opening meeting.

Acceptable evidence: Excerpts, exhibit file formats and use of PowerPoints

PowerPoints are a common and accepted format for presenting a high-level overview of a partner's systems. However, please also be prepared to present live demonstrations from source files so that the auditor may confirm that the systems in place are mature and effective. Excerpts can be used to communicate the high-level overview but are not acceptable evidence, source documents must be presented.

Additional resources: Two optional audit preparation offers from the auditing firm *

To ensure objectivity, consulting auditors and auditors conducting the actual audits are different ISSI auditors.

1. Partners can participate in an <u>optional</u>, one (1)-hour, live Audit Process & Controls Overview session provided by ISSI. This session provides a high-level overview of key aspects of the Azure 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 session, see [Azure Specialization - Audit Process and Controls Overview](#)

2. ISSI also provides <u>optional</u> extensive, in-depth consulting engagements to help partners prepare for their Azure specialization audit. Partners work directly with ISSI to schedule this remote session (via online web conference). For more information about this type of in-depth engagement, see Azure Specialization Consulting Offer https://issi-inc.com/az-advspeconsulting/

Please note that there is a cost associated with both the Audit Process and Controls Overview and Consulting Services. These can be scheduled at any time with ISSI, however Microsoft recommends the partner does not schedule this during the audit.

Audit checklists

The Microsoft Azure VMware Solution specialization audit checklist contains two (2) modules, **Module A**: Cloud Foundation, and **Module B**: The Azure VMware Solution planning and implementation workload audit.

Module A, The Cloud Foundation module evaluates the use of a consistent methodology and process for Azure adoption that is aligned with customers' expected outcomes, spanning the entire cloud adoption lifecycle. Module B, The Microsoft Azure VMware Solution workload validates that the partner has adopted robust processes to ensure customer success across all phases of deployment and has adopted robust processes to ensure customer success across all phases of deploying Azure VMware solutions, from the assessment phase to design, pilot, implementation, and post-implementation phases.

Review the following audit checklist tables for more details about each control phase and to learn how the partner will be evaluated for an audit. The same customers may be used for Module A & B. The estimated length of both modules together is eight (8) hours.

Module A: Cloud Foundation

1   Strategy
2   Plan
3   Environment readiness and Azure landing zone
4   Governance
5   Manage

Module B: Azure VMware Solution Specialization workload

1   Third party certifications
2   Assess
3   Design and proof of concept (POC) or pilot
4   Deployment
5   Review and release for operations

To pass the audit, the partner must complete all audit checklist items.

Module A: **Cloud Foundation** is required for multiple Azure specializations. To complete Module A, Cloud Foundation, the partner needs to pass all controls in Module A by providing the specified evidence. Partners who have passed Azure Expert MSP V1.9 (Full and Progress) and later (2.0+) have satisfied the requirements for Module A in all audit versions unless otherwise noted. This is good for two (2) years from the AEMSP program Anniversary date.

When applying to subsequent Azure specializations, to waiver Module A Cloud Foundation, a previous Module A and B Pass result will satisfy the requirements for Module A if the Pass result for Module B was within the last two (2) years. The date for the cutover is two (2) years from the AD for the relevant Module B program shown in Partner Center.

The waiver can only be applied to the same version of Module A. Partners who have passed an Azure specialization audit before July 1, 2021 and for the Analytics on Microsoft Azure specialization audit before Oct 1, 2021, have likely not passed the Module A audit and will need to do so to qualify for the Module B workload audits.

Module B: Azure VMware Solution planning and implementation workload. Each control has **one (1)** or more requirements and required evidence the partner must provide for the auditor. Both the requirements and the required evidence are defined in the following tables. For some controls, a reference customer or customer evidence is the documentation requested.

Unless otherwise stated, the partner must show at least **one (1)** unique customer with deployments completed within the last **twelve (12)** months. Please note some checklists call for four (4) customer examples. The

partner can use the same customer across audit checklist controls, or they can use a different customer. For audit evidence relating to customer engagements, the partner can use a customer case study and reference it multiple times.

The same or different customers can be used for Modules A & B if they demonstrate requirements.

Microsoft

Module A: Cloud Foundation

1.0 Strategy and Economics
The partner must have a defined approach for helping their customer evaluate and define a cloud adoption strategy beyond an individual asset (app, VM, or data).
Requirement

1.1	**Cloud Adoption Business Strategy** The partner must have a process that captures the data-driven business strategies being used to guide customer decisions. The process should include, at minimum, the following: • A strategy review that captures the customer's business needs and the problems the customer is trying to solve • Personalized recommendations from the partner for the customers' business strategies **Required evidence:** A Report, Presentation, or Document that captures strategic inputs and decisions for **two (2)** unique customers, that demonstrates Cloud Adoption Strategy Evaluator assessment output, with projects completed in the past **twelve (12)** months. These projects must be aligned with the above-described process and highlight both customer Business and Financial outcomes. For an example, see the Strategy and plan template in the Cloud Adoption Framework for Azure, or the Cloud Adoption Strategy Evaluator.	

2.0 Plan
The partner must have a consistent approach to planning for cloud adoption that is based on the strategy outlined in the preceding section.
Requirement

2.1	**Cloud Adoption Plan** The partner must have a process and approach for planning and tracking the completion of cloud adoption projects. For an example of a cloud adoption plan, see the Azure DevOps Demo Generator for the Cloud Adoption Framework. **Required evidence:** The partner must provide evidence of their capability with examples of **two (2)** unique customers, with projects that were completed in the past **twelve (12)** months. Acceptable evidence must include at least **one (1)** of the following: • Cloud Adoption Plan Generator output or • Azure DevOps backlog or • Any other tools for project planning and tracking	

2.2	**Plan for Skilling**
	
	When customers adopt the cloud, their existing technical staff will need a variety of new skills to aid in making technical decisions and to support the new cloud implementations. To ensure the long-term success of the customer, the partner must document a skilling plan to prepare the customer's technical staff.
	
	The Partner must document a list of key customer technical roles expected to require new skills such as, but not limited to, IT Admins, IT Governance, IT Operations, and IT Security.
	The documentation must include:
	
	    • A description of the new skills the technical roles will need to achieve to successfully manage the new environment.
	    • Resources the customer can leverage when training their technical employees such as Microsoft learning paths, technical certifications, or other comparable resources.
	
	For guidance, review Microsoft docs Azure Cloud Adoption Framework How to build a skilling readiness plan.
	
	Required evidence:
	The partner must provide a skilling plan for at least **two (2)** unique customer engagements completed within the last 12 months. The **two (2)** skilling plans documentation can include a customer-facing presentation, planning documents, post deployment documentation or similar plan documentation.	

3.0 Environment Readiness and Azure Landing Zone

The partner must be able to demonstrate that the following design areas are addressed through their approach to landing zone implementation.

Requirement

3.1

Repeatable Deployment

The partner must demonstrate adherence to Azure landing zone design areas through a repeatable deployment. The deployment should configure, at minimum, the following identity, network, and resource organization attributes:

- Identity
  - Adoption of identity management solutions, such as Microsoft Entra ID (formerly Azure Active Directory) or equivalent

- Networking architecture design (topology)
  - [Define an Azure network topology - Cloud Adoption Framework| Microsoft Docs](#)
  - Application of hybrid architecture that use Azure ExpressRoute, VPN Gateway, or equivalent services for connecting local datacenters to Azure

- Resource organization
  - Implementation of tagging and naming standards during the project

The partner must demonstrate which of the following [deployment approaches](#) they used when they deployed Azure landing zones:

1. Start small and expand: Azure landing zone does not deploy governance or operations configurations, which are addressed later in the implementation.

2. Full Azure landing zone conceptual architecture: Azure landing zones implement a standard approach to the configuration of governance and operations tools prior to implementation.

3. Alternative approach: If the partner follows a proprietary approach or a mixture of the **two (2)** approaches above, the partner must clearly articulate their approach to environment configuration.

Required evidence:

The partner must provide evidence of a repeatable deployment they used to create landing zones aligned to the Azure landing zone conceptual architecture or equivalent complete architecture deployed to **two (2)** unique customer environments using [Bicep](#), ARM (AZURE Resource Manager) templates, Terraform modules, or equivalent tools to automatically deploy the environment configuration.

If a customer deviates from specified architecture, the partner must demonstrate the customer requirements to justify the deviation.

The provided template can be pulled directly from the [implementation options,](#) or it can be based on the partner's own IP (Intellectual Property). In either case, the script as evidence must demonstrate the configuration of the identity, network, and resource organization, as described earlier.

4.0 Governance

The partner must demonstrate their customer's role in governing cloud-based solutions and the Azure tools they use to facilitate any governance requirements their customer might have today or in the future.

Requirement	
4.1	**Governance Tooling** The partner must demonstrate the ability to deploy the required governance tools for **two (2)** unique customer projects. **Required evidence:** The partner must demonstrate the use of Azure Policy or equivalent tool to provide controls to govern the environment for **two (2)** unique customers with projects that were completed in the past **twelve (12)** months.

5.0 Manage

The partner must demonstrate that they have set up their customer for operational success after the deployment is completed. All partners have a role in setting up operations management, even if they do not provide long-term managed services.

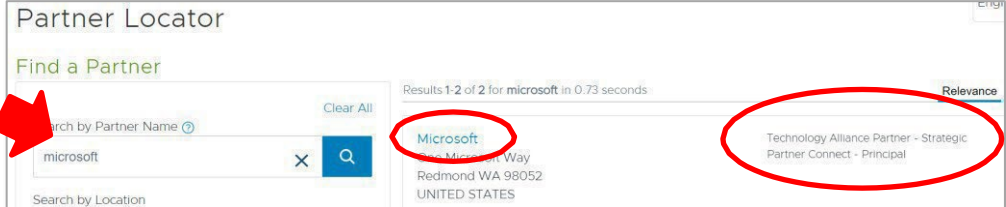| Requirement	
5.1	**Operations Management Tooling** The partner must demonstrate the use of Azure products or equivalent to help their customer and/or managed service provider operate the environment after deployment. **Required evidence:** The partner must demonstrate the deployment of at least **one (1)** of the following Azure products or third-party equivalents: Azure Monitor, Azure Automation, or Azure Backup/Site Recovery, for **two (2)** unique customers with projects that were completed in the past **twelve (12)** months.

Microsoft

Module B: The Azure VMware Solution workload specialization

1.0 Third-Party Certifications	
Partner resources are highly knowledgeable in Azure and VMware technologies.	
Requirement	

| 1.1 | **Certification**
The partner must have **two (2)** full-time employees who have at least **one (1)** of the following certifications:
• VSP- VMware Sales Professional
• VTSP - VMware Technical Solutions Professional
• VCP - VMware Certified Professional - Data Center Virtualization
• VCP- VMware Certified Professional - Cloud Management and Automation
• VCP-NV - VMware Certified Professional - Network Virtualization

OR

The partner must have at least one (1) of the following VMware competencies:
- Master Services Competency – Data Center Virtualization
- Master Services Competency – Cloud Management Automation
- Solution Competency – Management Automation
- Solution Competency – Server Virtualization | |

| 1.1 | **Required evidence:**
Individual certifications must be verified through digital or printed certification badges. The partner must also provide evidence that the certified personnel are current full-time employees.

Organization-level certifications must be verified through the VMware Partner Locator on the VMware website (https://partnerlocator.vmware.com/).
Example using Microsoft:

 | |

2.0	**Assess**

Partner must have a consistent approach for assessing customer requirements for the workload.

Requirement

| 2.1 | **Workload Assessment**
The partner must demonstrate how they assess each workload prior to migration to ensure adequate pre-migration or pre-deployment planning and sizing are performed. Assessment must include:

o Evaluation of licensing model compatibility and support policies of software vendors (e.g., SAP, Oracle, etc.) supporting on-premise software in AVS, when applicable.
o Use of Azure Migrate or similar toolsets such as: Partner owned tools, VMWare vRealize, Rivermeadow, or community tools for performing discovery, dependency mapping, grouping and assessment of on-premise VMware environments for AVS migration feasibility. If tools other than Azure Migrate are used, the results must be imported and consolidated into Azure Migrate to produce the final recommendation.
o Assessment of and plan for the quota of AVS nodes for active usage as well as for standby capacity to be used for any additional requirements such as surge in traffic or DR scenario.
o Understand and advise to customers on the differences and implications of choosing between "Performance-based" and "As on-premises" assessment type.
o Assessment of and plan for changes needed for on-premise VMs identified with "Ready with conditions" or "Not ready for AVS" status.
o Sizing or capacity planning for the number of AVS nodes needed to run workloads
o Assessment and identification of any software that needs access to AVS hosts either for configuration or installation.
o Estimation of and plan for the ExpressRoute network bandwidth requirements | |

considering total storage volume to be migrated and the timelines within which to complete the migration.

- o Assessment of networking topology covering on-premise networks, AVS management network and AVS workload networks without any overlap.
- o Assessment and estimation remote locations(branches, offices, DCs, etc.), VPN sites, VPN users needing access to AVS workloads after migration.
- o Assessment and estimation inbound and outbound network connectivity and security requirements.

Required evidence:
Partner must provide relevant documents with evidence of the above items being reviewed from **one**
(1) customer with Azure VMWare Solution (AVS) deployment projects completed within the last **twelve (12)** months. The partner must show that all assessment details above were considered for that customer). Assessments may be done manually or through an industry-accepted assessment tool.
Accepted Documentation: Output from Assessment tools (Azure Migrate, or other similar third-party tooling reports, provided they show the final recommendation from Azure Migrate), Assessment Checklist, Templates, Questionnaires, and Project plans.

3.0 Design

The partner has robust methodologies for designing the workload.

Requirement

3.1 **Solution Design**
The partner must provide solution designs that show a consistent approach to addressing customer requirements that were captured from the assessment phase.

Completed migration projects must meet at least **one (1)** of the following scenarios:
1. On-Prem-To-Cloud, either P2V or V2V, of a workload.
2. Cloud-To-Cloud, from other clouds or VMware environment, of a workload.

The Solution design must show:
- o Migration design/strategy outlining which applications, databases, or database auxiliary components (reporting service, integration service) are in scope for migration.
- o Migration risk assessment and mitigation.
- o High level migration sequence and estimated time to finish for migration and how to validate if migration is completed and successful.
- o Planning networking topology covering on-premise networks, AVS management network and AVS workload networks without any overlap.
- o Azure Landing Zone: The environment supporting the reference deployments should address each of the required design areas below. When not relevant, evidence must demonstrate customer decisions to deviate from these best practices.
- o Evidence of set up of Management Groups such as Organization Tenant, Platform, Landing Zone, Sandbox Management Groups.

3.1	- Evidence of setup of Azure subscriptions for Identity, Connectivity, Management, AVS (Production) and AVS (Pilot). - Evidence of Role Definitions and assignments configured as part of landing zone implementation. - Evidence of Policy definitions and assignments configured as part of landing zone implementation. - Evidence of AzOps process for managing resources in landing zone. - Validate and plan that the user principal or service principal to be used for registration of AVS Resource Provider has appropriate permissions in Azure subscription. - Assess and plan DHCP and DNS resolution strategy using either hybrid (on-premise + AVS) or cloud (AVS + Azure) approach. - If the AVS project is a migration scenario, it must demonstrate establishment of connectivity between AVS and on-premises location using ExpressRoute Global Reach when available. - Use of AVS ExpressRoute circuit key for termination on ExpressRoute Gateway on Azure Virtual WAN if it is used for any-to-any connectivity between Azure and on-premise locations. - Design and plan connectivity establishment from either on-premise or Azure jump box VM to vCenter, NSX-T and HCX interfaces of AVS. - Provision VLAN segments, DHCP server or relay, port mirroring and DNS forwarder using either NSX-T or Azure portal interface. - Design and plan connectivity establishment to a newly created guest VM on AVS either from on- premise location or Azure. - Design and plan connectivity establishment to internet, on-premise and/or Azure VM from guest VM in AVS. - Design and plan connectivity establishment to PaaS Azure service (e.g., Azure SQL Database or Azure Storage) using its private endpoint from guest VM in AVS. - Design and plan solution for backup, restore, monitoring and disaster recovery on AVS. **Required evidence:** The partner should provide relevant solution design documents that addresses the points above, from at least **one (1)** customer with AVS projects completed within the past **twelve (12)** months. **Accepted Documentation**: Design Documents, Functional Specifications, Architectural Diagrams, Automated Tooling Reports, and Physical and Logical Diagrams.

| 3.2 | **Azure Well-Architected Review of Workloads**
Unless otherwise specified, Reviews may be conducted before, during, or after deployment. The partner must demonstrate usage of the Azure Well-Architected Review on VMWare Solution workloads. The Azure Well-Architected Review is designed to help partners evaluate your customers' workloads against the latest set of industry best practices. It provides actionable guidance to design and improve your customers' workloads.

The Review can be used to evaluate each workload against the pillars of the Azure Well-Architected Framework that matter to that workload.

Required evidence:
Reviews may be conducted before, during, or after deployment. The partner must provide exported results from the completed Microsoft Well Architected Review using the assessments in the Well Architected Reviews for at least **one (1)** unique customer completed within the last **twelve (12)** months, indicating the customer's name. |

4.0 Deployment

Partner has robust methodologies for deploying the workload.

Requirement

| 4.1 | **Infrastructure Implementation and Configuration**
The partner must provide evidence of their capability to implement and configure an AVS infrastructure and enable applications on a customer tenant from at least **one (1)** of the following scenarios:

• Move the application from an on-premises location to Azure VMWare Solution (AVS)
• Deploy and run applications on a newly created Azure VMware Solution (AVS).

Required evidence:
Partner must provide documentation for at least **one (1)** customer with Azure VMWare Solution (AVS) deployment in production environments completed within the last **twelve (12)** months.

To cover the entire sequence of the project, including design and production deployment, the **Documentation** must include at least **two (2)** of the following:
    • Signed SOWs for all projects
    • Solution design documents for the project
    • Project plan and migration/deployment sequence approved by customer
    • Architecture Diagrams
    • Implementation or "As-built" documents |

4.2	**Migration Tools**
	The partner must show proof of knowledge and utilization of the VMware HCX application mobility platform in conjunction with Azure VMware Solutions, or ability to execute vMotion in an automated fashion, or ability to utilize third party tools to execute migrations at scale, with at least **one (1**) executed customer project.

Required evidence:

Partners must prove experience with **one (1)** of the following options(A, B, **or** C):

A   Experience with VMware HCX platform, by providing documentation (migration plans, assessments pre and post migration, etc.) of having executed at least **one (1)** of the following scenarios for at least **one (1)** AVS customer:
  1. Application migration with live mobility of VMs
  2. Heterogeneous migrations amongst different vSphere versions
  3. Workload rebalancing between on-prem Datacenters and **one (1)** or more AVS regions

B   Experience using the VMware vMotion mechanism, by providing documentation (migration plans, scripts, assessments pre and post migration, etc.) that the partner can effectively use migrate VMware workloads in an automated fashion, and have executed at least **one (1)** of the following:
  1. Migrate workloads from on-prem Datacenters to Azure VMware Solution (AVS)
  2. Migrate workloads from other VMware based clouds to Azure VMware Solution (AVS)

C   Experience with other third-party tools by referencing the tools used in a project plan for successfully migrating a customer to Azure VMware Solution, or by providing snapshots of results/output file from the tools that were used. Tools may include but are not limited to:
  • Commvault
  • RiverMeadow
  • Rubrik

■■ Microsoft

4.3	**AVS Configuration and Azure Services Integration** The partner must provide evidence of their capability in at least **three (3)** of the following areas: • Configure Azure Blob Storage as backend for vSphere Content Libraries. • Populate vSphere Content Library with licensed Windows and Linux images. • Configure either on-premise Active Directory or federated Azure Active Directory (now Microsoft Entra ID) with on-premise Active Directory using domain controllers running as Azure VMs as identity source for Azure VMWare Solution (AVS). • Add or remove hosts without impacting applications running on AVS guest VMs. • Configure an Azure Application Gateway for an application running on AVS • Enable public Internet access in AVS • Increase or decrease number of nodes associated with Azure subscription for Azure VMWare Solution (AVS). • Request quota increases following the process in the partner's deployment handbook or guidance provided in the Microsoft documentation: Request host quota for Azure VMware Solution - Azure VMware Solution | Microsoft Docs • Configure Azure Virtual WAN if multiple sites(branches, HQs, VPN sites, etc.) are going to access workloads running in AVS. **Required evidence:** Partner must provide documentation for **one (1)** customer with Azure VMWare Solution (AVS) deployment in production environments completed within the last **twelve (12)** months. **Documentation** must include at least **two (2)** of the following, to cover the entire sequence of the project including design and production deployment: • Solution Design Documents for all projects • Project Plan and Migration/Deployment sequence • Architecture Diagrams covering Networking, HA/DR, Backup, Management and Monitoring and Load Balancing

5.0 Review and Release for Operations

Partner has robust methodologies for transitioning the workload.

Requirement

5.1	**Service Validation and Testing** The partner must validate the deployment, including: • Documented process and approach for testing and evaluating the performance of all applications against end user expectations and Azure best practices, when applicable. • Documented process and approach for evaluating and improving architectural best practices to remediate issues with migrated platforms or workloads that do not meet performance or cost expectations. **Required evidence**: **Documentation** of testing, validation, and performance evaluation addressing the above points for **one (1)** customer. The documentation must indicate that the implemented solution meets customer expectations with a sign-off from the customer.

		Azure VMWare Solution (AVS) migration projects must have been completed within the last **twelve (12)** months. These projects can be the same as the projects evidenced in previous sections as long as they demonstrate the control evidence.
	5.2	**Post-Deployment Documentation** The partner must provide post-deployment operational <u>documentation</u>, to ensure customers are successful in using the new service on Azure. Please include these key items. - Describe how the partner documents decisions, architectural designs, and procedures that were implemented. - Describe Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for business-as-usual operations team which describe 'how-to?' scenarios or provide existing SOPs that cover general customer operations. - Describe monitoring solution for Azure VMWare Solution (AVS) hosts. - Describe configuration of Azure Monitoring Agent(MMA) or other similar tools on guest VMs running in Azure VMWare Solution - Describe AVS guest VM logs captured in Azure Monitor or other similar tools. - Describe configuration of Azure Update Management and Configuration Management or other similar tools on AVS guest VMs using Azure Automation Account associated with Log Analytics Workspace. - Describe AVS guest VMs surfaced in Azure Security Center and subjected to capabilities provided through Azure Security Center Defender for Servers or similar tooling. - Describe backup for AVS guest VMs is configured using Azure Backup Server or similar tool from licensed and supported vendor, and backup copy can be used to restore the AVS guest VM. - Describe Disaster Recovery (DR) process is configured using supported and licensed tools such as HCX, SRM, or Partner solution etc.). - Describe that DR process can be automated, and workloads can be deployed in running state to an alternate site. **Required evidence:** <u>Documentation</u> showing the above points, for **one (1)** customer with completed Azure VMware Solution (AVS) projects. These projects can be the same as the projects evidenced in previous sections.

Azure Specializations Partner FAQ

Questions regarding the Azure Partner program specializations, the current checklists and pre-qualifications for partners can usually be answered by visiting [Microsoft Azure Partner Specializations](#)

Questions on the audit checklists and program can be sent to the Azure Partner Specializations help alias <[mailto:AzureAS@microsoft.com](#)>

If you have questions that have not been answered, please go to [Partner Center support](#) to create a ticket with our Frontline team.

Microsoft