MICROSOFT CLOUD
SKILL TRAINING
& CERTIFICATION

Your Passport to Rewarding Job Opportunities

Gold

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Microsoft

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INTRODUCTION

In just a few short decades, information technology has evolved from the back office to the front office and is now an essential component into nearly every aspect of business and personal life.

As cloud computing becomes even more critical to IT and business at large, the demand for people with cloud skills will only continue to grow.

To ensure that IT professionals are able to make full use of these cloud resources, Microsoft has developed a comprehensive suite of training materials and certifications, which enable individuals to acquire and verify the skills needed to deploy and manage critical applications including Microsoft Azure and Microsoft 365 effectively.

Certifications measure an individual's knowledge and skills against industry benchmarks and can provide employers with assurance than an individual has the right skills and expertise for the job.

This eBook will demonstrate why certification is so important and explains the benefits and career opportunities available for IT professionals who have achieved certification in cloud and Microsoft Azure skills.
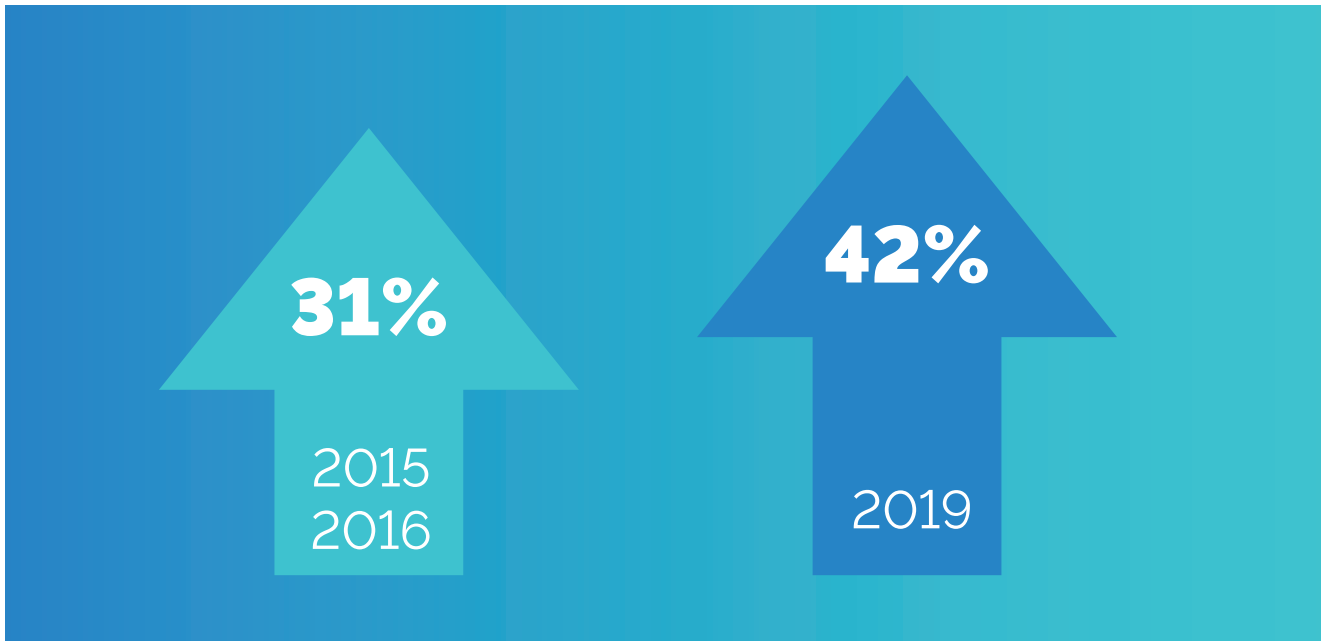
It will detail the training and certification options available from Microsoft and demonstrate why IT professionals should make DDLS their provider of choice for Microsoft Azure training and certification.

1 - THE GROWTH OF CLOUD

Worldwide, organisations large and small have embraced cloud computing services enthusiastically, and no more so than in Australia.

This heavy reliance on cloud services highlights the importance of employing people who are skilled in cloud services.

According to a number of market researchers and analysts, Australia is a leader in the adoption of cloud computing.

42% of businesses are using paid cloud (ABS 2019) compared with 31% in 2015-16 (ABS 2017)[1]

The range of cloud services used by Australian businesses is enormous. It embraces processing, storage, networking; generic applications such as databases, data analytics tools and artificial intelligence; widely used productivity tools like Microsoft Office and Microsoft Dynamics CRM; and many highly specialised industry-specific applications.

1 - Defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as paying for IT services used over the internet to access software, computing power, or storage capacity.
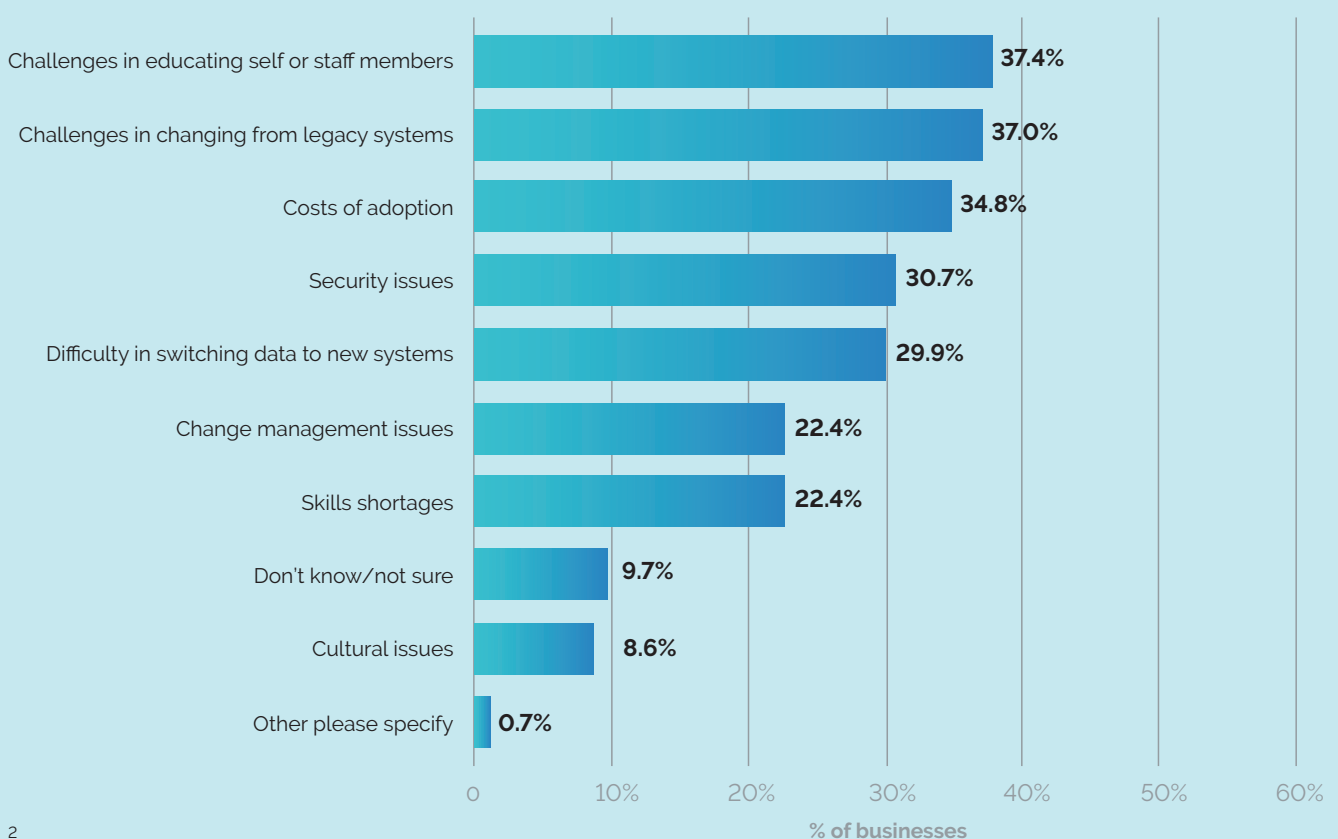
II - CLOUD SKILLS IN HIGH DEMAND

IT professionals who have expertise in a range of cloud management techniques are essential if organisations are to manage their cloud environments efficiently and reliably.

Challenges in educating self or staff members was the most cited challenge faced by organisations wanting to embrace cloud services. To alleviate the skills shortage, many organisations outsource their cloud management to specialist cloud broker organisations.[2]

Regardless of whether individuals are employed by end user organisations or by cloud brokers, people with skills specific to commissioning, configuring, operating and troubleshooting cloud services will be in demand in Australia for the foreseeable future.

Certification provides IT professionals with the opportunity to capitalise on this demand and make themselves more attractive to current and future employers.

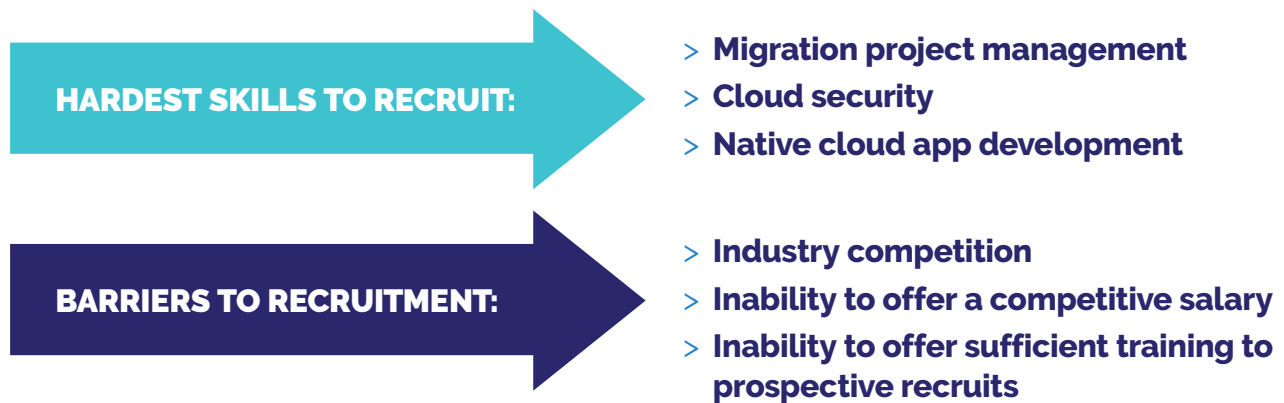| Challenge	% of businesses
Challenges in educating self or staff members	37.4%
Challenges in changing from legacy systems	37.0%
Costs of adoption	34.8%
Security issues	30.7%
Difficulty in switching data to new systems	29.9%
Change management issues	22.4%
Skills shortages	22.4%
Don't know/not sure	9.7%
Cultural issues	8.6%
Other please specify	0.7%

% of businesses

2

According to Deloitte Access Economics, organisations are struggling to acquire IT staff with cloud expertise[2].

CLOUD IS ACCELARATING THE SKILLS GAP[2]

Cloud opportunity

70% of CIO's have a "cloud-first IT strategy"

85% of enterprises pledge to integrate cloud architecture in their organisation

Only **16% of organisations** have skills and processes required for a cloud environment

By 2021 **38% of IT positions will be cloud related,** with 13% annual growth rate

A global study on *The Cost Of Cloud Expertise[3]*, produced by Rackspace reported:

HARDEST SKILLS TO RECRUIT:
> **Migration project management**
> **Cloud security**
> **Native cloud app development**

BARRIERS TO RECRUITMENT:
> **Industry competition**
> **Inability to offer a competitive salary**
> **Inability to offer sufficient training to prospective recruits**

THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH RECRUITMENT ARE LIKELY TO INCREASE:

> More than two thirds (69%) of IT decision makers are looking to increase their organisation's cloud usage in the next five years

> More than half of these organisations (56%) say that retaining talent is a concern.

III - WHICH CLOUD SKILLS ARE MOST IN DEMAND?

Cloud technology has created many development and innovation opportunities, but to fully realise these, organisations need individuals with the right skills on board.

A specialist Australian employment agency, Launch Recruitment identifies two main categories[4] of cloud computing careers: IT professionals with specific cloud skills and IT administrators with cloud architecture expertise.

IT professionals are now expected to be competent in cloud technologies. Increasingly, administrative level staff will be expected to have knowledge with cloud operating programs for services such as accounting, therefore increasing the value of certification for all employees regardless of their industry.

THE SKILLS THAT WILL BE IN HIGH DEMAND WILL INCLUDE:

> **DevOps Expert**
Software developers will need to adopt 'DevOps', where software is built, tested and released in a rapid, frequent and more reliable fashion to take full advantage of the level of automation offered by cloud computing.

> **Cloud Architects**
Cloud architects with experience working on large scale migration projects will be highly sought after, especially those with certification in Azure, AWS or Google.

> **Cloud Engineers**
Cloud engineers will be required to plan, develop, configure, maintain and support the cloud software and infrastructure.

> **Cloud IT Professionals**
Cloud IT Professionals will also be expected to have strengths in technical skills required to design and implement cloud technologies: storage, networking, and virtualisation, and a solid knowledge of troubleshooting methodologies such as disaster recovery, redundancy and failover.

> **Cloud Security Expert**
The demand for cloud security skills will continue to grow as businesses opt for more complex multi-cloud environments over homogenous public or private clouds, and continuous learning and training will be needed as each cloud platform evolves independent of others.
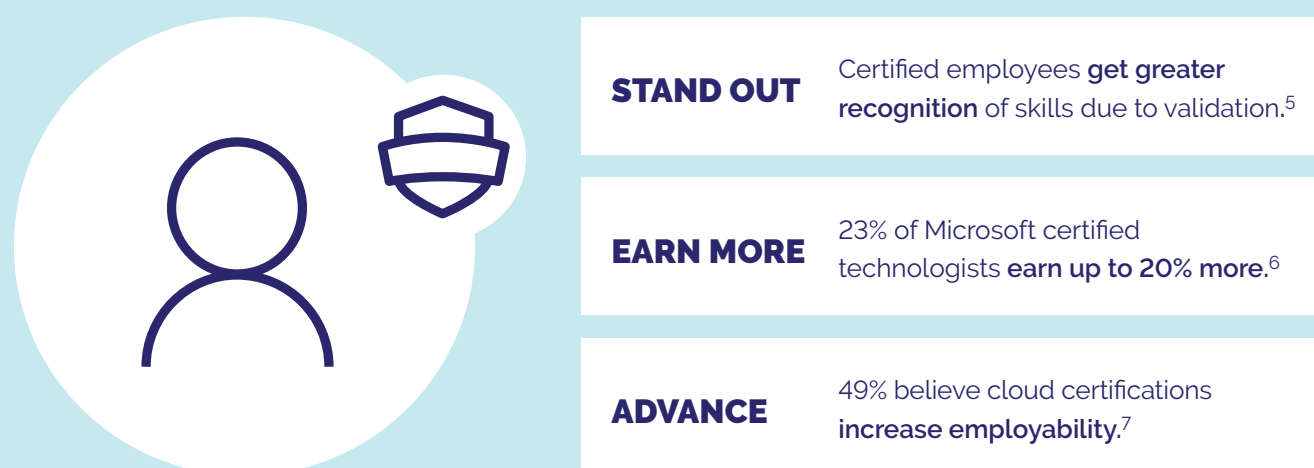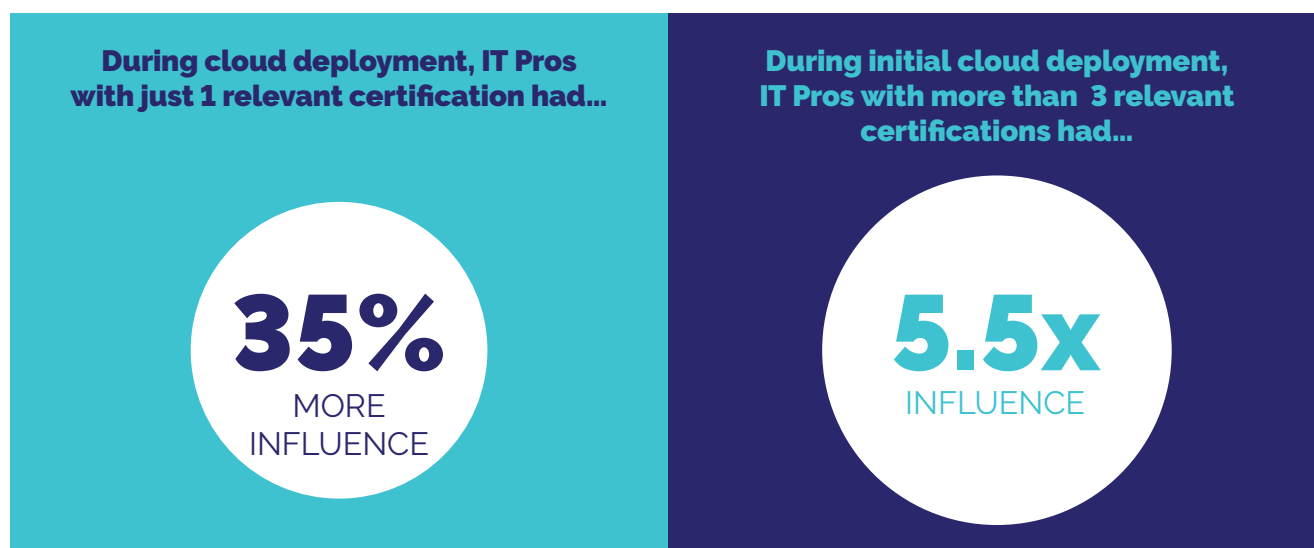
IV - THE BENEFITS OF GETTING CERTIFIED

Certification gives prospective employers confidence than an individual has the required skills for the job.

Gaining certification in a cloud technology such as Microsoft Azure will equip individuals with skills that are in high demand in Australia.

BENEFITS FOR GETTING CERTIFIED

STAND OUT

Certified employees **get greater recognition** of skills due to validation.[5]

EARN MORE

23% of Microsoft certified technologists **earn up to 20% more.**[6]

ADVANCE

49% believe cloud certifications **increase employability.**[7]

IDC reported that IT professionals with certifications related to cloud development and operations had dramatically more influence over their organisations' adoption and expansion of cloud services than IT professionals without relevant certifications[8].

During cloud deployment, IT Pros with just 1 relevant certification had…

35%
MORE INFLUENCE

During initial cloud deployment, IT Pros with more than 3 relevant certifications had…

5.5x
INFLUENCE

The validation of the proficiency or the training to prepare the IT professionals for the cloud-related certification provided something in addition to the knowledge, skills, or behaviours of being highly proficient.

5 - 2017 IDC-Microsoft, Cloud Skills and Organisation Influence: How Cloud Skills Are Accelerati/ong the Careers of IT Professionals white paper
6 - 2017 Pearson VUE, Value of Certification white paper
7 - 2017 Nigel Frank International Microsoft Technology for Busioness Salary Survey
8 - https://download.microsoft.com/download/C/3/0/C3068200-2F9B-4D8D-BF5D-32E1F7ED669A/IDC_Microsoft_How_Cloud_Skills_Are_Accelerating_IT_Pro_Careers_May_2017.pdf

V - WHAT MAKES MICROSOFT CERTIFICATIONS PARTICULARLY VALUABLE?

Industry-aligned to relevant job roles

Demonstrate application of real-world skills

Connections through verified achievements

> ## Certifications are industry-aligned to relevant job-roles
Microsoft certifications are role-based. They are constantly evolving to keep pace with technology's ever evolving job roles. The certifications provided represent the most critical skills that have been identified by SMEs, such as DevOps Engineering. New certifications are introduced as demand increases for particular roles.

> ## Demonstrate application of real-world skills
Microsoft Certifications involve skill-based testing, allowing individuals to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in hands-on performance labs that reflect realistic working environments.

> ## Gain recognition and connections through verified achievements
Microsoft Certifications include an official recognition system of 'Open Badges', which can increase employability. 'Open Badges' are a way for employers to instantly verify skills, improving their confidence in an individual's abilities. Furthermore, 'Open Badges' are used by employers to sort professionals depending on their particular skill sets.

Broadcast certified skills

in
f

Microsoft
CERTIFIED

Instant employer verification

This badge is issued by *Microsoft*

Skills

Azure   Cloud   Cloud Architecture

Cloud Developer   Cloud Platform

Cloud Services   Cloud Technologies

Data Center   Cloud Infrastructure

Identity Management

Jobs matched to your skills

263,207 Current Job Openings
For: Cloud in all of the United States

TOP JOB TITLES	JOB POSTINGS
Cloud Architecture	1,297 >
Senior Software Engineer	1,246 >
DevOps Engineer	1,138 >
Senior Java Developer	689 >

VI - MICROSOFT COURSE PORTFOLIO: WHAT CERTIFICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

STAND OUT WITH ROLE-BASED TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Microsoft offers a comprehensive portfolio of training and certification with roles, skills and capabilities to meet industry and market needs. The portfolio includes four pathways which align with different job roles.
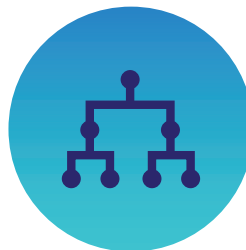
Developer
Microsoft developers design, build, test and maintain cloud services.

Administrator
Microsoft administrators implement, monitor and maintain Microsoft solutions.

Solutions Architect
Microsoft architects have expertise in compute, network, storage, security.

Functional Consultant
Functional consultants leverage Microsoft 365 to anticipate and plan for customers needs.

1. Solutions Architect
Apps and Infrastructure (Azure)
The Apps and Infrastructure path includes most of the Azure-focused certifications. This path is built for those individuals/organisations who want to validate their staff skills in building, developing, and securing Azure infrastructure and solutions.

2. Developer
Data and AI (Azure)
The Data and AI path is geared more towards those organisations with data on Azure, like data scientists and business analysts.

3. Administrator
Modern Workplace (Microsoft 365)
The Modern Workplace path is all about fostering operational efficiency and collaboration in today's organisations. This path covers Microsoft 365, Office 365, SharePoint, OneDrive, Teams and Azure AD.

4. Functional Consultant
Business Applications (Dynamics 365)
The Business Apps path features certifications for functional consultants working with various apps within the Microsoft Dynamics 365 family.

THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF MICROSOFT CERTIFICATIONS

Within each pathway there are three levels of complexity, 'fundamentals', 'associate' and 'expert'. The fundamental certification is not a prerequisite for the associate certification, but individuals must achieve a mid-level badge before they can attempt to earn the final/expert certification. Each of these certifications is achieved by passing a series of exams.

Fundamental Certifications

>

Associate Certifications

>

Expert Certifications

Recommended start.
Ideal for individuals just starting in technology or thinking about a career change.

Two years of comprehensive working experience.
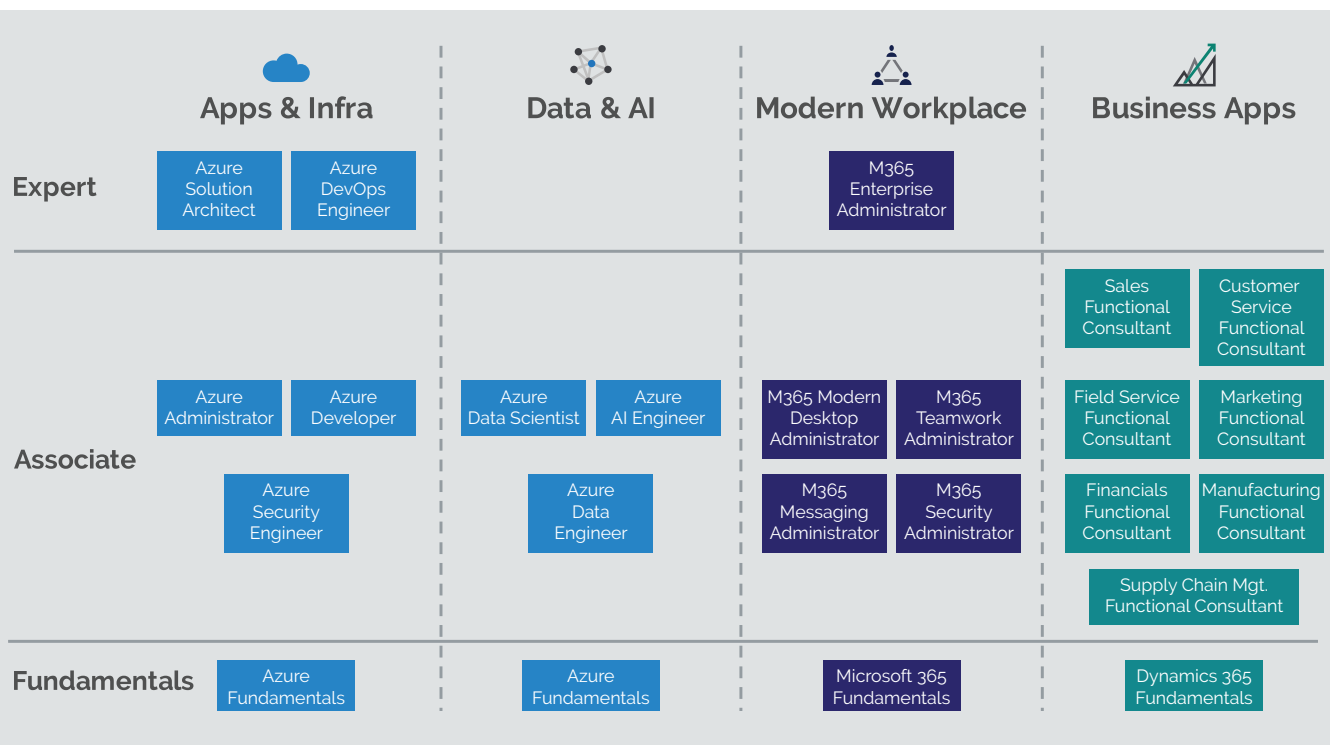It is helpful to have related Fundamental certifications but it is not required.

Two to five years of deep technical experience.
Many Expert certifications require a specific Associate level certification.

THE CERTIFICATION PATHS EXPLAINED

> **Fundamental** – This is the foundational Microsoft certification that validates the employee's knowledge of fundamental technology concepts. This certification is recommended for those new to technology and has no prerequisites.

> **Associate** – To build a strong career in IT, good knowledge of Windows Servers is essential. This certification helps employees acquire proficiency in the core technical skills necessary in any organisation.

> **Expert** – This is the highest certification awarded by Microsoft and is intended for IT professionals aiming to validate multifaceted technical abilities. This certification equips professionals with the requisite tools and knowhow to come up with innovative solutions across multiple technologies – both offline and over the cloud.

	Apps & Infra		**Data & AI**		**Modern Workplace**		**Business Apps**	
Expert	Azure Solution Architect	Azure DevOps Engineer			M365 Enterprise Administrator			
Associate							Sales Functional Consultant	Customer Service Functional Consultant
	Azure Administrator	Azure Developer	Azure Data Scientist	Azure AI Engineer	M365 Modern Desktop Administrator	M365 Teamwork Administrator	Field Service Functional Consultant	Marketing Functional Consultant
		Azure Security Engineer		Azure Data Engineer	M365 Messaging Administrator	M365 Security Administrator	Financials Functional Consultant	Manufacturing Functional Consultant
							Supply Chain Mgt. Functional Consultant	
Fundamentals	Azure Fundamentals		Azure Fundamentals		Microsoft 365 Fundamentals		Dynamics 365 Fundamentals	

Microsoft Azure training is delivered by Microsoft certified instructors from a global network of approved learning partners, like DDLS.

USE CASE EXAMPLE

Two scenarios, one solution.

1. **Individuals looking for employment** in supporting modern cloud-based infrastructure should opt for the Microsoft AZ900 Fundamentals course. This course will provide a solid grounding in cloud basics, and potentially a validated certification on successful completion of the exam. There is also the potential to look at attending Microsoft AZ104 Azure Administrator and achieving certification.

2. **Individuals already working in IT**, perhaps in Server support, or those responsible for moving server workloads to Azure, should consider following the same learning path, Microsoft AZ900 Fundamentals, Microsoft AZ104 Azure Administrator and then potentially specialising in a particular associate level course.

VII - MICROSOFT CERTIFIED LEARNING PARTNERS

Microsoft Azure training is delivered by Microsoft certified instructors from a global network of Microsoft approved learning partners, like DDLS.

Microsoft Certified Learning Partners provide world-class training and certification to solve industry challenges. They create customer-specific learning paths, industry specific offerings and training to suit local requirements.

DDLS offers a wider variety of Certified Microsoft courses than any other IT training organisation, scheduled more often and with more Microsoft certified and highly experienced trainers on our staff than any other Australian training organisation.

Industry research[9a, 9b]

800M people will need to learn new skills for their job in the next 2 years.

30% of technology jobs will go unfilled due to talent shortage.

Hiring managers prefer to hire individuals that are qualified.

Solutions[9c]

Learning Partners provide world-class training and certification.
• 100+ Learning Partners with almost 6K locations in 156 countries.

Learning Partners have delivered more than 102K Days of Azure Training since July 2018.

Learning Partners have delivered 198K Microsoft certified exams since July 2018.

9a - https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/jobs-lost-jobs-gained-what-the-future-of-work-will-mean-for-jobs-skills-and-wages
9b - https://www.idc.com/downloads/IDC_Worldwide_CIO_Agenda_2019_Predictions.pdf/
9c - https://certification.comptia.org/docs/default-source/downloadablefiles/hr-perceptions-of-it-training-and-certification.pdf

VIII - WHY DDLS?

DDLS is your best choice for training and certification in any of Microsoft's leading technologies and services. Delivering effective training across all Microsoft products for more than 30 years, DDLS is Australia's first Microsoft Gold Learning Solutions Partner.

We can advise you on the right courses to choose and help align training plans to certification outcomes.

OUR EXPERTS HELP CREATE YOURS

DDLS has the largest community of Microsoft Certified Trainers in the region. Instructor-led training is delivered at our seven Australian campuses, at your premises, or online. More Certified Microsoft courses than any other IT training organisation, along with more scheduled classes, makes it easier for you to acquire the skills you need with convenience and flexibility.

All the Microsoft skills you need

DDLS offers a large range of Microsoft certifications across the core solution areas of Apps and Infrastructure, Data & AI, Modern Workplace and Business Applications. We are the first Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for Learning Solutions in Australia, and the preferred training provider to many of Australia's large corporate organisations.

All DDLS Microsoft courses follow Microsoft Official Curriculum (MOC) and are led by Microsoft Certified Trainers. Join more than 5,000 students who have undertaken one or more of our quality Microsoft courses.

> **DDLS Anywhere**
> Regional reach with our mobile classroom – DDLS Anywhere.

> **Instructor-led training**
> Hands-on half or full day core product training in classroom-based sessions for groups of 12 people.

> **Customised Solutions**
> Customised training solution that caters to the ambitions and career roadmap of an organisation's employees.

> **Dedicated Account Management**
> Customer care centre to ensure we meet requirements rapidly and effectively.

> **Expert Instruction**
> Highly qualified, cross-vendor certified instructors with technical expertise, proficiency and extensive hands-on experience.
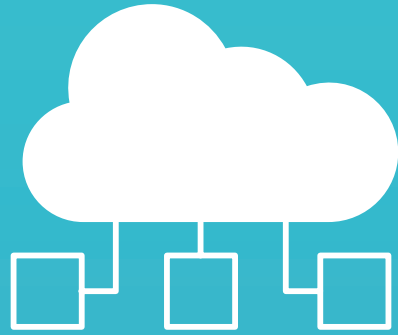
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> Australia's most comprehensive public schedule of training courses.

> **Award Winning**
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