

Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test

Microsoft 365 | Microsoft Office

Technical Manual and User Guide

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Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test

Technical Manual

This document serves as the official Technical Manual for the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test. It provides a comprehensive overview of the purpose, structure, and psychometric foundations of the assessment, along with detailed guidance on its administration, scoring, and interpretation. The Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test is designed to measure the everyday software skills required in a wide range of administrative, clerical, customer service, and office-based roles. These skills—working with documents, spreadsheets, presentations, email and calendars, and shared files and online meetings—form the foundation for effective and productive work in modern workplaces.

The test provides an objective and reliable measure of these core competencies, supporting organizations in making informed, evidence-based decisions when selecting or developing employees who use Microsoft 365 in their daily work. Whether used for hiring, training evaluation, or internal development, the assessment offers a standardized method for identifying candidates who can confidently perform everyday tasks across the Microsoft 365 applications.

In addition to outlining the theoretical basis and validation evidence supporting the test, this manual offers practical insights on how to administer the assessment effectively, ensure fairness and compliance with professional testing standards, and interpret the results in a manner consistent with best practices. Whether you are an HR professional, a recruiter, a trainer, or a decision-maker involved in candidate evaluation, this manual serves as a key resource for understanding and applying the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test.

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1. Introduction

The Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test is designed to assess a candidate's practical knowledge of the Microsoft 365 applications used in everyday office work: Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook, together with the collaboration tools of the wider Microsoft 365 ecosystem, such as Teams, OneDrive, SharePoint and OneNote. It is intended for positions where employees create documents, work with spreadsheets and presentations, manage email and meetings, and share files with colleagues.

The test contains 30 multiple-choice questions to be completed within a 20-minute time limit. It measures the ability to perform essential tasks that are commonly required in administrative, clerical, customer service and other office-based roles.

1.1 Purpose of the Test

- To identify candidates who have a working knowledge of the core Microsoft 365 applications.
 - To provide hiring managers with a reliable and objective measure of Microsoft 365 proficiency.
 - To ensure that candidates can complete everyday office tasks in Microsoft 365 accurately and efficiently.
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1.2 Intended Audience

The Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test is suitable for roles such as:

- Administrative and executive assistants
 - Office coordinators and clerks
 - Customer service staff
 - Human resources and finance support staff
 - Other positions that involve daily use of email, documents, spreadsheets and shared files.
-

1.3 How to Use This Manual

This manual is intended for HR professionals, recruiters, training specialists, and decision-makers who use the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test as part of a selection or development process. Each chapter focuses on a specific aspect of the assessment, allowing readers to easily locate the information most relevant to their role.

- **Chapters 1–3** provide an overview of the test, its structure, and the skills it measures.

- **Chapters 4–6** contain practical information on item development, scoring, interpretation and administration.
- **Chapter 7** presents the technical evidence on reliability, validity and fairness.
- **Chapter 8** outlines security and fair-use guidelines.
- **Appendices** include supplemental information such as a sample item, score tables, item statistics and the composition of the norm group.

Readers do not need to read the manual sequentially. You may move directly to the sections relevant to your responsibilities.

2. Test Specifications

- **Format:** Multiple-choice questions (MCQ)
- **Number of Questions:** 30
- **Time Limit:** 20 minutes
- **Answer Options:** 4 options per question, with one correct answer
- **Content:** Five application areas – Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and the Microsoft 365 ecosystem
- **Question Types:**
 - Short, task-based questions about features, commands and settings
 - Workplace scenarios that ask for the right action, such as sharing a file or updating a meeting
- **Delivery Method:** Online, accessible via any modern browser (no software installation required)
- **Typical Completion Time:** 14 minutes (median in the norm group)

This format is designed to measure a candidate's ability to complete routine Microsoft 365 tasks quickly and accurately. The time limit is generous: in the norm group the median completion time was 14 minutes, and 97% of test takers finished before the time ran out.

3. Content Domains

The Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test includes 30 questions distributed across five content domains, one for each major area of Microsoft 365. The questions are presented grouped by application, in the order shown below.

3.1 Microsoft Word

Covers creating, formatting and reviewing documents.

- Track Changes
- Save as New File
- Footnotes
- Insert Page Numbers
- AutoCorrect
- Non-Breaking Space
- Bullet List Indent

Coverage: 7 items

3.2 Microsoft Excel

Assesses basic spreadsheet skills: entering and formatting data, simple formulas, charts and working with worksheets.

- Count Formulas
- Chart Types
- Number Formatting
- Average Formula
- Row Formatting
- SUM Formula
- Worksheet Tabs
- Freeze Panes

Coverage: 8 items

3.3 Microsoft PowerPoint

Measures the ability to build and deliver presentations, including slide design, managing objects on a slide and presenter tools.

- Presenter Notes
- Selection Pane
- Presenter View
- Slide Master
- Reuse Slides

Coverage: 5 items

3.4 Microsoft Outlook

Covers managing email and meetings in Outlook, including organizing messages and handling email safely.

- Security Awareness
- Categories
- Flagging Emails
- Meeting Update
- Filter Unread

Coverage: 5 items

3.5 Microsoft 365 Ecosystem

Covers the collaboration services that connect the applications: sharing calendars and files, working with SharePoint and OneDrive, taking notes in OneNote and running Teams meetings.

- Share Outlook Calendar
- SharePoint
- Teams Meeting Controls
- OneNote
- Share OneDrive Link

Coverage: 5 items

3.6 Summary of Item Categories

Domain	Number of Items	% of Test
Word	7	23%
Excel	8	27%
PowerPoint	5	17%
Outlook	5	17%
Microsoft 365 Ecosystem	5	17%
Total	30	100%

4. Item Development

The Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions (MCQs). Each item is designed to measure one specific Microsoft 365 skill within the scope of the test's content domains.

4.1 Item Types

The test items are primarily:

- **Knowledge-based questions:** assessing recognition of features, commands, settings and terminology in each application.
- **Application-based questions:** presenting a short workplace scenario that requires selecting the correct feature, command or action.

The questions are short and can be answered from familiarity with the applications; candidates do not use the software during the test.

4.2 Answer Options

Each item provides four answer options, with one correct answer and three distractors.

- Distractors are designed to reflect common errors or misconceptions (e.g., a similar but wrong command, or a feature that belongs to a different application).
 - This approach ensures that incorrect responses provide useful diagnostic information about candidate knowledge gaps.
-

4.3 Item Writing Guidelines

Items are created following standardized guidelines to ensure fairness, clarity, and relevance:

1. **Clarity:** Questions are written in plain language, avoiding unnecessary complexity or ambiguity.
 2. **Relevance:** Each item reflects a Microsoft 365 task commonly performed in office-based roles.
 3. **Balance:** Items are distributed across all five content domains to represent the test blueprint.
 4. **Time Awareness:** Items are short enough to be answered within the average time per question (≈40 seconds). In the norm group, the median time per item ranged from 13 to 38 seconds.
 5. **Accessibility:** Questions are kept short and readable across devices and browsers.
-

4.4 Example Item

Domain: Microsoft Word

Skill: Creating an Automatic Table of Contents

Question:

You are writing a long report in Word and want a table of contents that updates automatically when the chapter headings change. What should you do first?

- A. Type each chapter title in bold and a larger font size
- B. Apply Word's built-in heading styles, such as Heading 1 and Heading 2, to the chapter titles
- C. Insert a text box at the start of the document that lists the chapter titles
- D. Add a bookmark to the first word of each chapter

Correct Answer: B – Apply Word's built-in heading styles to the chapter titles.

Rationale:

- Option A changes only how the titles look; Word does not treat manually formatted text as headings, so the titles will not appear in an automatic table of contents.
- Option C creates a static list that does not update when the headings change.
- Option D marks locations for links and cross-references, but does not create table of contents entries.

This example illustrates the question format. It is not one of the 30 scored test items.

4.5 Item Review and Quality Control

- Each item is reviewed internally for technical accuracy and clarity.
- Items were piloted with more than 1,200 test takers and analyzed for difficulty, discrimination and item bias (differential item functioning).
- Poorly performing items are revised or removed to maintain test quality.

5. Scoring & Interpretation

The Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test is scored objectively. Each of the 30 multiple-choice questions has one correct answer.

5.1 Scoring Method

- **Correct response** = 1 point
- **Incorrect or unanswered response** = 0 points
- **Total score** = sum of all item scores (maximum = 30, minimum = 0)
- No penalty is applied for guessing

5.2 Score Reporting

Candidates receive a raw score (0–30) and a percentile rank.

Raw score: Number of correctly answered test items.

Percentile rank: A percentile rank shows how a candidate's score compares with the norm group of 1,069 test takers. For example, a candidate at the 75th percentile scored higher than about 75% of the norm group (test takers with exactly the same score are counted as half above and half below).

5.3 Interpretation of Scores

Advisory Score Ranges

Based on the score distribution of the norm group, candidate scores can be interpreted in the following advisory ranges:

Raw Score	Percentile rank	Interpretation
0 – 14	1 – 8	Very limited familiarity with Microsoft 365; likely to struggle with everyday tasks.
15 – 18	10 – 21	Basic awareness; may manage simple, familiar tasks only.
19 – 21	27 – 40	Developing proficiency; suitable for roles with occasional Microsoft 365 use.
22 – 24	46 – 58	Solid working proficiency; handles common day-to-day tasks in the core applications.
25 – 27	63 – 75	Strong proficiency; confident across Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and shared files.
28 – 30	82 – 96	High proficiency; well prepared for roles that rely on Microsoft 365 throughout the day.

Percentile Norms

Percentile ranks provide additional context by showing how a candidate compares to the norm group (n = 1,069). Percentiles for English-speaking countries, India and the Philippines, and admin and clerical staff are given in Appendix E.

Percentile	Score (out of 30)	Interpretation
10th	15	Lower 10% of test takers
25th	19	Below-average performance
50th (Median)	23	Typical performance
75th	27	Strong proficiency (about the top quarter)
90th	29	Excellent performance (about the top tenth)

Example interpretations:

- A score of **23** places a candidate at about the **50th percentile** — the median performance.
- A score of **27** places a candidate at the **75th percentile**: they scored higher than about three-quarters of the norm group.
- A score of **29 or 30** places a candidate among the **top 16%** of test takers; 6% answered all 30 questions correctly.

Measurement Precision

Every test score contains some measurement error. For this test, the standard error of measurement is about 2 raw points: a candidate's true score is likely to lie within 2 points of the observed score. A difference of one or two points between two candidates is therefore not meaningful on its own.

5.4 Suggested Use of Scores

Employers may use both **advisory ranges** and **percentile ranks** when interpreting results:

- Roles requiring **occasional Microsoft 365 use**: Scores of **19–21** are generally sufficient.
- Roles requiring **regular, everyday Microsoft 365 work**: **22–24** is recommended.
- Roles that **rely heavily on Microsoft 365** across several applications: **25+** is advisable.

Scores should be used **together with** other candidate information such as interviews, work samples, or training history.

Choosing a cut-off. In the norm group, cut-offs of 22 or lower produced no adverse impact by sex or age. From a cut-off of 23, the pass rate of test takers aged 40 or over fell below four-fifths of the pass rate of younger test takers (a ratio of 0.795 at 23 and 0.66 at 24); within the US sample, the ratio stayed at 0.80 or above up to a cut-off of 25. If you use a cut-off of 23 or higher, monitor pass rates by age group in your own applicant pool. Avoid cut-offs above 27, where the test measures less precisely (see Section 7.6).

5.5 Limitations

- The test measures knowledge of how to use Microsoft 365, not hands-on performance in the software.
- It reflects performance in a timed, multiple-choice format.
- The test distinguishes most precisely between limited, basic and solid proficiency. It is less precise among the strongest candidates: 16% of the norm group scored 29 or 30.
- Microsoft 365 changes over time, so some interface details may differ between versions of the applications.
- Scores should not be the sole deciding factor in hiring decisions.

6. Test Administration

The Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test is designed for online delivery and can be administered flexibly across a variety of environments. This chapter outlines requirements and best practices for administering the assessment.

6.1 Delivery Method

- The test is delivered online through a secure testing platform.
 - No software installation is required.
 - The test can be accessed through any modern browser (e.g., Chrome, Edge, Firefox, Safari).
-

6.2 Technical Requirements

To ensure a smooth testing experience, the following minimum requirements should be met:

- **Internet connection:** Stable broadband connection.
 - **Device:** Laptop or desktop computer strongly recommended. Mobile devices are supported, but in the norm group test takers on phones scored on average 1.4 points lower than those on computers, and the gap remained after allowing for differences in background.
 - **Browser settings:** JavaScript and cookies enabled.
 - **Screen size:** At least 13-inch display recommended.
 - **Pop-up blockers:** Disabled if they interfere with test navigation.
-

6.3 Test Environment

- Candidates should complete the test in a quiet environment free of interruptions.
 - Use of Microsoft 365 applications, internet searches or other help is not permitted during the test.
 - It is recommended that candidates close other applications and browser tabs to maximize performance and reduce distractions.
-

6.4 Candidate Instructions

Before starting the test, candidates should be informed of the following:

- The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions.

- The time limit is 20 minutes.
 - Each question has four answer options, only one of which is correct.
 - Questions can be skipped and returned to later.
 - Scores are based on the number of correct answers; there is no penalty for guessing.
 - Leaving the test window during the test is recorded.
-

6.5 Security Measures

- Candidates are asked to confirm their identity before the test can begin.
 - The platform records when a candidate leaves the test window.
 - Test sessions should be monitored if security is critical (e.g., proctored testing for recruitment). High scores from unsupervised sessions can be confirmed with a short supervised retest or a practical task.
 - Candidate results are stored securely in compliance with data privacy regulations.
-

6.6 Sample Questions

Before the timed portion begins, candidates are presented with two sample questions. These items are:

- **Untimed:** they do not count toward the 20-minute limit.
- **Unscored:** responses do not contribute to the final test result.
- **Representative:** they illustrate the types of questions used in the test.

The purpose of the sample questions is to:

- Familiarize candidates with the test format and navigation.
- Allow candidates to practice selecting an answer before the test begins.
- Reduce anxiety and ensure smoother test-taking performance.

7. Validity & Reliability

The validity of the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test was examined through several sources of evidence: test content, internal structure, relationships with background variables, and fairness across groups. Reliability was examined with several internal-consistency methods. Together, these results support the use of the total score as a reliable measure of everyday Microsoft 365 proficiency.

7.1 Sample

The analyses presented in this chapter are based on data collected between June and October 2026 from test takers who completed the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test online. Of 1,233 completed test sessions, 164 were excluded before analysis:

- Repeat attempts by the same candidate (14); only the first attempt was kept.
- Test takers who said they had not answered the background questions truthfully (19).
- Ages outside 16 – 80 (5).
- Sessions with signs of rapid guessing on four or more questions (12).
- Test takers who said they had taken the test before (114).

The final sample of **1,069 first-time test takers** came from 56 countries (38% United States, 30% India, 10% Philippines, 5% Canada, 4% United Kingdom). 66% were women and 27% men, and the median age was 28. This sample forms the norm group for the percentile tables; its composition is described in Appendices G–J.

This sample size provides a solid foundation for evaluating the test’s reliability and validity evidence.

7.2 Content Validity

Content validity refers to how well the test content represents the skills it is intended to measure. The 30 items cover five areas of Microsoft 365: Word (7 items), Excel (8), PowerPoint (5), Outlook (5) and the Microsoft 365 ecosystem (5). Each item targets a common workplace task, such as tracking changes in a document, freezing panes in a worksheet, using Presenter View, filtering unread email or sharing a OneDrive link (see Chapter 3).

7.3 Construct Validity

Construct validity assesses whether the test measures Microsoft 365 proficiency, as intended. Three types of evidence support this.

Internal Structure

A single general factor accounts for the pattern of answers: the first factor is 3.7 times stronger

than the second, and all 30 items relate to it (factor loadings 0.36 to 0.72). Scores on the five application areas are strongly related (correlations of 0.81 to 1.00 after correcting for measurement error), which supports reporting a single total score.

Relationships with Background Variables

Average scores were higher for groups with more education and more exposure to office software:

- Bachelor's degree or higher: 22.9 correct, against 19.8 for high school or less ($d = 0.57$).
- Technical occupations scored highest: science and biotech 25.7, engineering 24.4, and information technology 24.3, against an overall mean of 22.3.
- Test takers who had taken the test before scored 2.8 points higher (25.1 vs 22.3), showing that the skills measured can be learned.
- Faster test takers tended to score higher ($r = -0.26$), consistent with fluent users recognizing the answers quickly.

Language

Self-rated English proficiency had only a small effect on scores once other background factors were taken into account, so the test does not primarily measure reading ability in English.

7.4 Criterion-Related Validity

Criterion-related validity concerns how well test scores relate to job outcomes, such as supervisor ratings or performance on practical Microsoft 365 tasks. These data were not collected in the norm study, so criterion-related evidence is not yet available. Until it is, users should confirm that Microsoft 365 skills are relevant to the role through job analysis, and use test scores together with other information.

7.5 Item and Test Performance

Item-level statistics are documented in Appendix F. Key findings are:

- Items range in difficulty from 48% to 91% correct (average 74%).
- **Discrimination values** were good for every item: item-total correlations range from 0.21 to 0.55, and 23 of the 30 items exceed 0.30.
- No item lowered the reliability of the test, and every item fitted an item response theory model (two-parameter logistic) well.

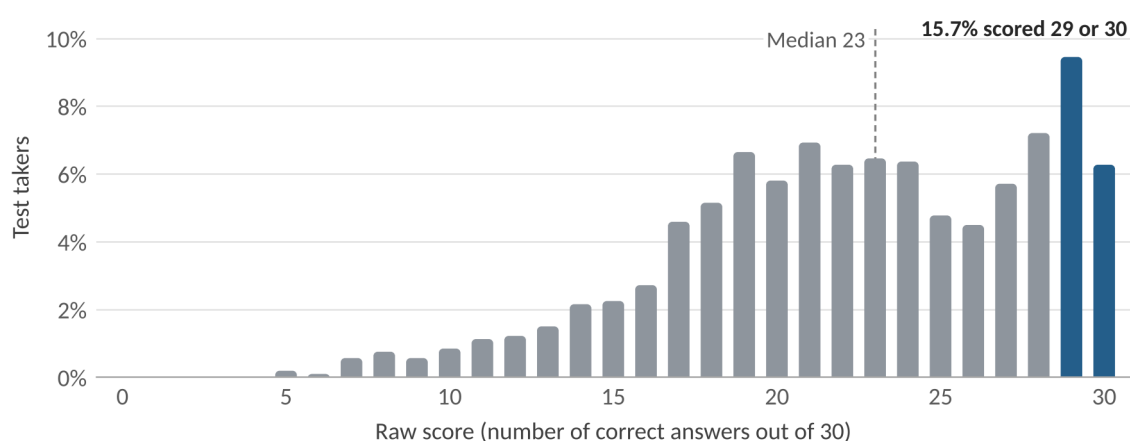


Figure 1. Distribution of raw scores in the norm group ($n = 1,069$). The median score is 23, and 15.7% of test takers scored 29 or 30.

Average performance was similar across the five content domains:

Domain	Items	Average correct	Reliability (alpha)
Word	7	76%	0.60
Excel	8	71%	0.65
PowerPoint	5	72%	0.63
Outlook	5	78%	0.47
Microsoft 365 Ecosystem	5	77%	0.45

These results confirm that the test is functioning as intended at the item level, and that it separates candidates best at low and average levels of proficiency.

7.6 Reliability Evidence

Reliability was measured with several internal-consistency methods across all 30 items:

Method	Value
Cronbach's alpha (KR-20)	0.85 (95% CI 0.84 – 0.87)
McDonald's omega	0.86
Split-half, odd vs even items (Spearman–Brown)	0.87
Standard error of measurement (SEM)	2.1 raw points

- **Cronbach's alpha = 0.85**, which indicates good internal consistency: the items collectively measure a coherent construct, everyday Microsoft 365 proficiency.
- **Standard error of measurement = 2.1 points**: a candidate's true score is likely (68%) to lie within 2 points of the observed score, and very likely (95%) within 4 points.

- **Consistency across groups:** alpha was 0.85 for women and 0.89 for men, 0.88 under age 40 and 0.76 at age 40 or over (where scores were less spread out), and 0.83 on computers and 0.89 on phones.
- **Test–retest reliability** has not yet been estimated.

7.7 Fairness Evidence

Fairness was examined in three ways: differences in average scores between groups, pass rates at example cut-offs (adverse impact), and item bias (differential item functioning).

Group Differences

The difference d is expressed in standard-deviation units; values below 0.20 are considered negligible and 0.20 to 0.50 small. Ethnic groups are compared within the US sample, because elsewhere ethnicity largely follows country of residence.

Comparison	n	Mean score	Difference (d)
Women vs men	706 / 291	22.2 vs 22.6	–0.07
Age 40+ vs under 40	297 / 772	21.7 vs 22.5	–0.15
US: African American vs White	59 / 148	21.4 vs 21.0	0.10
US: Hispanic or Latino vs White	49 / 148	20.6 vs 21.0	–0.09
First language not English vs English	494 / 546	22.9 vs 21.7	0.21
Phone vs computer	296 / 773	21.3 vs 22.7	–0.26

Women and men, and White, African American and Hispanic or Latino test takers in the US, scored alike. Test takers aged 40 or over scored as well as younger test takers on the Outlook and Microsoft 365 ecosystem items, and somewhat lower on the Word, Excel and PowerPoint items. Test takers on phones scored lower (see Section 6.2).

Adverse Impact

The table shows the pass rate of the first group divided by the pass rate of the second, at three example cut-offs. Under the four-fifths rule, a ratio below 0.80 (in bold) indicates possible adverse impact.

Comparison	Cut-off 20 (70% pass)	Cut-off 23 (51% pass)	Cut-off 27 (29% pass)
Women vs men	0.95	0.87	0.77
Age 40+ vs under 40	0.95	0.795	0.45
US: women vs men	0.96	0.88	0.90
US: age 40+ vs under 40	1.10	1.03	0.62
US: African American vs White	1.05	1.28	2.51
US: Hispanic or Latino vs White	0.91	0.91	1.51
Phone vs computer	0.84	0.89	1.04
US: phone vs computer	0.64	0.52	0.62

Up to a cut-off of 22, all ratios by sex and age were above 0.80. At 23, the ratio for test takers aged 40 or over was just below (0.795), and it fell further at higher cut-offs. In the US sample, the ratios for African American and Hispanic or Latino test takers were 0.79 or higher at every cut-off up to 23, with no statistically significant differences. The lower ratio for women at a cut-off of 27 reflects the country mix of the norm group: within the US it was 0.90. Phone users in the US passed at clearly lower rates than computer users at every cut-off.

Item Bias

Differential item functioning (DIF) analyses compared test takers with the same total score, using the Mantel–Haenszel method and logistic regression.

- No item showed large DIF between women and men.
- No item showed DIF by first language once country of residence was taken into account.
- No item showed DIF between sessions on the original and the current test platform, so all data could be combined.
- A few items showed large age-related DIF in both directions (some favoring younger and some favoring older test takers), so their effects largely cancel out in the total score.
- Between countries, several items showed DIF. At the same total score, US test takers did relatively better on several Outlook and collaboration items (for example Meeting Update, Filter Unread, Share OneDrive Link and OneNote), and test takers in India did relatively better on several Word, Excel and PowerPoint items (for example Track Changes, Row Formatting and Slide Master). These effects partly offset each other in the total score.

Because score levels differ between countries, percentiles for English-speaking countries and for India and the Philippines are provided in Appendix E. The norm group includes few test takers from some regions (for example, 18 from South Africa). Where local legislation requires evidence of fairness for a specific population, local data should be collected.

7.8 Summary of Validity Evidence

- **Content validity:** The 30 items cover everyday tasks in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and the wider Microsoft 365 ecosystem.
- **Construct validity:** Supported — a single dominant factor, strongly related application areas, and higher scores with more education and in technical occupations.
- **Criterion-related validity:** Not yet established; scores have not yet been compared with job performance.
- **Reliability:** Good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.85$; SEM = 2.1 points), highest from low to average scores.

- **Fairness:** No meaningful differences by sex, age or US ethnic group; a computer is recommended over a phone; cut-offs of 23 or higher should be monitored for age-related adverse impact.

Taken together, these findings provide sound evidence that the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test is a reliable instrument for assessing everyday Microsoft 365 proficiency in professional contexts, and that it is particularly effective at distinguishing candidates with limited or basic skills from those with solid working proficiency.

8. Security & Fair Use

Maintaining the security and integrity of the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test is essential to ensure valid results and fair treatment of all candidates. This chapter outlines measures taken to protect test content, guidelines for candidate conduct, and principles for responsible use of test scores.

8.1 Test Security

- **Session monitoring:** Employers may choose to use online proctoring, in-person supervision, or browser lockdown tools for high-stakes testing situations.
 - **Data protection:** Candidate responses and scores are stored securely in compliance with data privacy regulations (e.g., GDPR).
-

8.2 Candidate Integrity

- Candidates are expected to complete the test individually without assistance.
 - Use of external resources such as Microsoft 365 applications, internet searches, or notes is not permitted.
 - Interpret repeat attempts with care: retakers scored 2.8 points higher on average.
-

8.3 Fair Use of Scores

- Test results should be used as one component of a broader hiring or development decision-making process.
 - Scores should not be the sole basis for employment decisions. Instead, they should be combined with interviews, references, and job experience.
 - Employers should ensure that score interpretation is job-related and consistent with the skills required for the role.
 - Candidates should not be denied employment opportunities on the basis of test performance alone if Microsoft 365 skills are not essential to the role.
-

8.4 Ethical Guidelines

- Employers must ensure that the test is administered in a non-discriminatory manner.
- Reasonable accommodations should be provided for candidates with documented needs.
- Test data must be handled with confidentiality and should not be shared outside the hiring process.

9. Appendices

The following appendices provide supporting information and reference materials for the Microsoft 365 Proficiency Test.

Appendix A. Glossary of Key Microsoft 365 Terms

- **AutoCorrect (Word):** Automatically corrects common typing errors and can replace typed abbreviations with longer text.
- **Footnote (Word):** A note at the bottom of a page, linked to a numbered reference mark in the text.
- **Non-breaking space (Word):** A special space that keeps two words together on the same line, for example a number and its unit.
- **Track Changes (Word):** Records insertions, deletions and formatting changes so that reviewers can accept or reject each change.
- **Freeze Panes (Excel):** Keeps selected rows or columns visible while you scroll through the rest of a worksheet.
- **Number format (Excel):** Controls how a value is displayed, for example as currency, a percentage or a date, without changing the value itself.
- **Slide Master (PowerPoint):** The top slide in a presentation's hierarchy, which stores the theme, fonts, layouts and placeholders used by all slides.
- **Presenter View (PowerPoint):** A view that shows the presenter the current slide, the next slide and speaker notes, while the audience sees only the current slide.
- **Selection Pane (PowerPoint):** A panel that lists all objects on a slide, used to select, rename, reorder, hide or show them.
- **Categories (Outlook):** Color-coded labels that can be assigned to messages, meetings and other items to group related work.
- **Follow-up flag (Outlook):** A marker that sets a reminder to act on a message by a chosen date.
- **Phishing:** An email designed to trick the recipient into revealing information, opening a harmful attachment or clicking a malicious link.
- **OneDrive:** Microsoft's cloud storage for work files, which can be shared with others through links that allow viewing or editing.
- **SharePoint:** A Microsoft 365 service for team sites and shared document libraries.
- **Microsoft Teams:** The Microsoft 365 application for chat, online meetings and team collaboration.
- **OneNote:** A digital notebook for collecting notes, organized into notebooks, sections and pages.

Appendix B. Sample Item

Domain: Microsoft Word

Skill: Creating an Automatic Table of Contents

Question:

You are writing a long report in Word and want a table of contents that updates automatically when the chapter headings change. What should you do first?

- A. Type each chapter title in bold and a larger font size
- B. Apply Word's built-in heading styles, such as Heading 1 and Heading 2, to the chapter titles
- C. Insert a text box at the start of the document that lists the chapter titles
- D. Add a bookmark to the first word of each chapter

Correct Answer: B – Apply Word's built-in heading styles to the chapter titles.

Rationale:

- Option A changes only how the titles look; Word does not treat manually formatted text as headings, so the titles will not appear in an automatic table of contents.
- Option C creates a static list that does not update when the headings change.
- Option D marks locations for links and cross-references, but does not create table of contents entries.

This example illustrates the question format. It is not one of the 30 scored test items.

Appendix C. Technical Requirements Checklist

- Device: Desktop or laptop computer (recommended over phones and tablets)
- Internet: Stable broadband connection
- Browser: Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or Safari (latest versions recommended)
- Screen size: 13-inch or larger recommended
- Browser settings: JavaScript and cookies enabled
- Optional: Headphones or quiet testing environment

Appendix D. Score Interpretation Tables

Advisory Score Ranges

Raw Score	Percentile rank	Interpretation
0 – 14	1 – 8	Very limited familiarity with Microsoft 365; likely to struggle with everyday tasks.

Raw Score	<i>Percentile rank</i>	Interpretation
15 – 18	<i>10 – 21</i>	Basic awareness; may manage simple, familiar tasks only.
19 – 21	<i>27 – 40</i>	Developing proficiency; suitable for roles with occasional Microsoft 365 use.
22 – 24	<i>46 – 58</i>	Solid working proficiency; handles common day-to-day tasks in the core applications.
25 – 27	<i>63 – 75</i>	Strong proficiency; confident across Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and shared files.
28 – 30	<i>82 – 96</i>	High proficiency; well prepared for roles that rely on Microsoft 365 throughout the day.

Appendix E. Percentile Norm Ranges

Percentile Norms (n = 1,069)

Raw Score	N	International	English-speaking countries	India and Philippines	Admin and Clerical
0	0	1	1	1	1
1	0	1	1	1	1
2	0	1	1	1	1
3	0	1	1	1	1
4	0	1	1	1	1
5	2	1	1	1	1
6	1	1	1	1	1
7	6	1	1	1	1
8	8	1	1	3	1
9	6	2	1	4	1
10	9	3	1	5	1
11	12	4	1	7	1
12	13	5	2	8	2
13	16	6	3	10	2
14	23	8	5	12	3
15	24	10	7	15	5
16	29	13	10	17	8
17	49	16	14	20	12
18	55	21	19	23	18
19	71	27	27	25	27
20	62	34	35	28	36
21	74	40	45	31	46
22	67	46	54	34	56
23	69	52	63	37	64
24	68	58	71	40	71
25	51	63	78	44	76
26	48	69	83	50	81
27	61	75	87	58	85
28	77	82	90	69	90
29	101	89	94	83	94
30	67	96	98	95	98

International: all 1,069 test takers. English-speaking countries: United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland (n = 524). India and Philippines (n = 430). Admin and Clerical: self-reported occupational group (n = 285). Percentiles are based on smoothed score distributions and shown from 1 to 99.

Appendix F. Item Statistics

Items are listed in the order in which they are presented. Difficulty is the proportion of test takers who answered correctly; discrimination is the correlation between the item and the total of the other 29 items.

Item	Title	Domain	Difficulty (p)	Discrimination (r)
1	Track Changes	Word	0.56	0.41
2	Save as New File	Word	0.81	0.39
3	Footnotes	Word	0.82	0.42
4	Insert Page Numbers	Word	0.88	0.30
5	AutoCorrect	Word	0.91	0.27
6	Non-Breaking Space	Word	0.85	0.40
7	Bullet List Indent	Word	0.48	0.42
8	Count Formulas	Excel	0.70	0.37
9	Chart Types	Excel	0.66	0.43
10	Number Formatting	Excel	0.55	0.34
11	Average Formula	Excel	0.81	0.37
12	Row Formatting	Excel	0.53	0.43
13	SUM Formula	Excel	0.89	0.30
14	Worksheet Tabs	Excel	0.80	0.40
15	Freeze Panes	Excel	0.74	0.43
16	Presenter Notes	PowerPoint	0.77	0.39
17	Selection Pane	PowerPoint	0.78	0.50
18	Presenter View	PowerPoint	0.85	0.42
19	Slide Master	PowerPoint	0.57	0.55
20	Reuse Slides	PowerPoint	0.61	0.42
21	Security Awareness	Outlook	0.81	0.36
22	Categories	Outlook	0.48	0.45
23	Flagging Emails	Outlook	0.84	0.36
24	Meeting Update	Outlook	0.86	0.23
25	Filter Unread	Outlook	0.91	0.24
26	Share Outlook Calendar	Microsoft 365 Ecosystem	0.70	0.36
27	SharePoint	Microsoft 365 Ecosystem	0.64	0.41
28	Teams Meeting Controls	Microsoft 365 Ecosystem	0.69	0.27
29	OneNote	Microsoft 365 Ecosystem	0.89	0.34
30	Share OneDrive Link	Microsoft 365 Ecosystem	0.91	0.21

Appendix G. Norm Group: Age Distribution

Age	Percentage
17 – 25	38.7%
26 – 35	27.4%
36 – 45	15.8%
46 – 60	14.9%
61+	3.2%

Appendix H. Norm Group: Country Distribution

Country	Percentage
United States	37.7
India	30.5
Philippines	9.7
Canada	5.0
United Kingdom	4.1
South Africa	1.7
Australia	1.5
Malaysia	1.2
New Zealand	0.7
Other countries (47)	8.0

Appendix I. Norm Group: Occupational Group

Occupational Group	Percentage
Admin and Clerical	26.7
Other	16.7
Banking and Finance	8.3
Health Care	6.8
Customer Service	6.3
Engineering	6.2
Information Technology	6.1
Human Resources	4.4
Management	3.8
Education - Teaching	2.6
Science and Biotech	2.5
Sales and Marketing	2.0
Law Enforcement and Legal	1.8
Other categories (12)	5.9

Appendix J. Norm Group: Sex, Education, Employment and Device

Characteristic	Group	Percentage
Sex	Women	66.0
	Men	27.2
	Prefer not to say	6.5
	Other	0.3
Education	High school or less	11.2
	Some college or currently studying	17.1
	Associate degree	7.7
	Bachelor's degree	37.8
	Graduate or doctorate degree	13.7
	Other or not stated	12.5
Employment	Employed	36.6
	Not employed, seeking work	26.1
	Not employed	18.5
	Student	9.4
	Prefer not to answer	6.7
	Homemaker	1.9
	Retired	0.8
Device	Desktop or laptop computer	72.3
	Phone or tablet	27.7