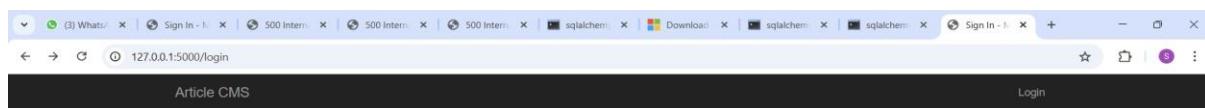


Project: Deploy An Article CMS to Azure

1. A screenshot of an article created in the Article CMS on Azure. The screenshot must also include the URL. The article should have the following fields set:

- Title: "Hello World!"
- Author: "Jane Doe"
- Body: "My name is Jane Doe and this is my first article!"
- An image of your choice. It must be either a .png or .jpg.



A screenshot of a Microsoft Edge browser window. The address bar shows '127.0.0.1:5000/home'. The main content area has a dark header 'Article CMS' and a 'Logout' button. Below it is a table with one row. The table columns are 'ID', 'Title', 'Author', and 'Has Image?'. The data row shows '1', 'Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet', 'John Smith', and 'False'. At the bottom of the table is a 'Create New Post' button.



Article CMS

Edit Post

Title: Hello World!

Author: Jane Doe

Body: My name is Jane Doe and this is my first article!



Image
Choose File No file chosen

Article CMS

ID	Title	Author	Has Image?
1	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet	John Smith	False
2	Hello World!	Jane Doe	True
3	Cat	Rita	True

Microsoft Azure

images - Microsoft Azure

Search resources, services, and docs (G+)

Search resources, services, and docs (G+)

Copilot

Verify it's you

odl_user_290018@udaci...@udaci...@udaci...

Home > images11 | Containers >

images Container

Overview

Diagnose and solve problems

Access Control (IAM)

Settings

Authentication method: Access key (Switch to Microsoft Entra user account)

Add filter

Search blobs by prefix (case-sensitive)

Only show active blobs

Showing all 2 items

Name	Last modified	Access tier	Blob type	Size	Lease state
6Y9U1K4UM03NK2CL5YRFB1D22HSSXAQ6.jpg	11/16/2025, 4:27:22 PM	Cool (Inferred)	Block blob	4.52 KIB	Available
RSRUFBY2UVPC1M0617WM8J9MSNFC746K.jpg	11/16/2025, 4:26:15 PM	Cool (Inferred)	Block blob	5.05 KIB	Available



2. A screenshot of the resource group from the Azure Portal including all of the resources that were created to complete this project. (see sample screenshot above).

Showing 1 - 6 of 6. Display count: auto

Give feedback

Air: Satisfactory
Tomorrow

ENG IN 04:38 PM 16-11-2025

3. A screenshot showing the created tables and one query of data from the initial scripts in the SQL database (see example in the project repository).

File Edit View Help

Welcome cms22.database.windows.net SQLQuery_1 - (98) c...admin dbo.posts.sql - (99) c...admin dbo.users.sql - (77) c...admin

Run Cancel Disconnect Change Database: cms Estimated Plan Enable Actual Plan Parse

```
1 CREATE TABLE [dbo].[users] (
2     [id] INT NOT NULL IDENTITY(1, 1),
3     [username] VARCHAR(64) NOT NULL,
4     [password_hash] VARCHAR(128) NOT NULL,
5     PRIMARY KEY ([id])
6 );
7
8 INSERT INTO dbo.users ([username], [password_hash])
9 VALUES ('admin', 'pbkdf2:sha256:150000$Q1rz8Hg$5f4cd25d78a6c7990ea53f74ef5d3bb2609af2b39d9e5dd6f3beabd8c854dd60')
```

Messages

1:31:02 PM Started executing_query_at Line 1
(1 row affected)
Total execution time: 00:00:00.325

LN 9, Col 115 Spaces: 4 CRLF SQL 0 rows Choose SQL Language 00:00:00 cms22.database.windows.net : cms

26°C Sunny

ENG IN 01:31 PM 16-11-2025

File Edit View Help

Welcome cms22.database.windows.net SQLQuery_1 - (98) c...admind dbo.posts.sql - (99) c...admind dbo.users.sql - (70) c...admind

Run Cancel Disconnect Change Database: cms Estimated Plan Enable Actual Plan Parse

```

1  NAME: [dbo].[posts]
2  INT NOT NULL [DEBUTIVLY], 1,
3  title VARCHAR(150) NOT NULL,
4  author VARCHAR(75) NOT NULL,
5  body VARCHAR(800) NOT NULL,
6  image_path VARCHAR(100) NULL,
7  timestamp INT NOT NULL DEFAULT(GETDATE())
8  user_id INT NOT NULL,
9  PRIMARY KEY (id),
10 FOREIGN KEY (user_id) REFERENCES users(id)
11
12
13 INSERT INTO dbo.posts (title, author, body, user_id)
14 VALUES (

```

Messages

1:31:32 PM Started executing query at Line 1
(1 row affected)
Total execution time: 00:00:00.445

Ln 7, Col 52 Spaces: 4 UTF-8 CRLF SQL 0 rows Choose SQL Language 00:00:00 cms22.database.windows.net : cms 01:31 PM 16-11-2025 ENG IN

File Edit View Help

Welcome cms22.database.windows.net SQLQuery_1 - (98) c...admind dbo.posts.sql - (52) c...admind dbo.users.sql - (70) c...admind

Run Cancel Disconnect Change Database: cms Estimated Plan Enable Actual Plan Parse

```

1 SELECT * FROM dbo.users;
2 SELECT * FROM dbo.posts;
3

```

Results Messages

	id	username	password_hash
1	1	admin	pbkdf2-sha256:150000\$Q1rzb0hg\$5f4cd25d78a6c79906a53f74ef5...

	id	title	author	body	image_path	timestamp	user_id
1	1	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet	John Smith	Proin sit amet mi ornare, ultrices augue quis, facilisis ...	NULL	2025-11-16 08:01:33.293	1

Ln 3, Col 1 Spaces: 4 UTF-8 CRLF 2 rows MSSQL 00:00:00 cms22.database.windows.net : cms (85) 01:31 PM 16-11-2025 ENG IN

File Edit View Help

Welcome cms22.database.windows.net SQLQuery_1 - (85) c...admind dbo.posts.sql - (52) c...admind dbo.users.sql - (70) c...admind

Home > cms22.database.windows.net

New Query New Notebook Refresh Learn More Version : 12.0.2000.8 Type : Azure SQL DB

Search

Name	Status	Size (MB)	Actions
cms	ONLINE
master	ONLINE

Choose SQL Language cms22.database.windows.net : master 01:32 PM 16-11-2025 ENG IN

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Azure portal interface. In the top navigation bar, there are several tabs: 'File', 'Edit', 'View', 'Help', 'Welcome', 'cms22.database.windows.net:cms', 'SQLQuery_1 - (85) c...:saadmin', 'dbo.posts.sql - (52) c...:saadmin', and 'dbo.users.sql - (70) c...:saadmin'. Below the navigation bar is a search bar labeled 'Search' with the placeholder 'Search by name or type (t, v, f, or sp)'. A table titled 'Name' lists two entries: 'POSTS' and 'USERS', both under the schema 'dbo' and categorized as 'Table'. The main content area is a large, empty white space.

This screenshot shows the Microsoft Azure portal's Query editor (preview) for the CMS database. The left sidebar includes links for Overview, Activity log, Tags, Diagnose and solve problems, and a detailed 'Query editor (preview)' section. The 'Tables' section is expanded, showing 'dbo.POSTS' and 'dbo.USERS'. The 'dbo.USERS' table has columns: id (PK, int, not null), username (varchar, not null), password_hash (varchar, not null), and user_id (int, not null). The 'Results' tab displays the following table:

id	username	password_hash
1	admin	pbkdf2sha256:150000\$Qlrlz6Hg\$5f4cd25d78a6...

A status message at the bottom indicates 'Query succeeded | 0s'.

This screenshot shows the Microsoft Azure portal's Query editor (preview) for the CMS database. The left sidebar and 'Tables' section are identical to the previous screenshot. The 'Results' tab displays the following table for the 'dbo.POSTS' table:

id	title	author	body	image_path	timestamp	user_i
1	Lorem ipsum dolor s...	John Smith	Proin sit amet mi orn...	2025-11-16T08:01:3...	1	
2	Hello World!	Jane Doe	My name is Jane Doe...	RSRJFBY2UVPCTM06...	2025-11-16T10:56:1...	1
3	Cat	Rita	Hil! I am rita. I love ca...	GY9U1K4UM03NK2C...	2025-11-16T10:57:2...	1

A status message at the bottom indicates 'Query succeeded | 0s'.

4. A screenshot showing an example of blob endpoints where images are sent for storage (see example in the project repository).

The image consists of three vertically stacked screenshots from the Microsoft Azure portal, illustrating the configuration and management of a storage account named "images11".

Screenshot 1: Storage Account Overview

This screenshot shows the "Essentials" and "Properties" tabs for the storage account "images11". Key details include:

- Essentials:**
 - Resource group: cms
 - Location: eastus
 - Subscription: UadacityDS_241
 - Subscription ID: 439253e6-9257-449b-87ba-079b323b67d0
 - Disk state: Available
 - Tags: Add tags
 - Performance: Standard
 - Replication: Locally-redundant storage (LRS)
 - Account kind: StorageV2 (general purpose v2)
 - Provisioning state: Succeeded
 - Created: 11/16/2025, 1:39:09 PM
- Properties:**
 - Blob service:**
 - Hierarchical namespace: Disabled
 - Default access tier: Cool
 - Blob anonymous access: Enabled
 - Blob soft delete: Enabled (7 days)
 - Container soft delete: Enabled (7 days)
 - Versioning: Disabled
 - Change feed: Disabled
 - NFS v3: Disabled
 - Disabled
 - Security:**
 - Require secure transfer for REST API operations: Enabled
 - Storage account key access: Enabled
 - Minimum TLS version: Version 1.2
 - Infrastructure encryption: Disabled
 - Networking:**
 - Public network access: Enabled
 - Public network access scope: Enable from all networks

Screenshot 2: Container Details

This screenshot shows the "Containers" blade for the "images11" storage account. It lists two containers: "Logs" and "images".

Name	Last modified	Anonymous access level	Lease state
Logs	11/16/2025, 1:39:44 PM	Private	Available
images	11/16/2025, 1:41:41 PM	Container	Available

Screenshot 3: Access Keys

This screenshot shows the "Access keys" blade for the "images11" storage account. It displays two sets of access keys: "key1" and "key2".

Key	Rotated	Connection string
wC7bweFhSgEfey9JeK9xsVO4fryQLm2x/mYzI/W6u+5qY9OM7lsU1kLDS7aCa4B/R...	11/16/2025 (0 days ago)	DefaultEndpointsProtocol=https;AccountName=images11;AccountKey=wC7bwe...
wKgnWYN9sBVozh1VS4Fehu9Jfp4HPX4v3RjRstgh+jOb2gtQwKVgYK1kEy6Zo...	11/16/2025 (0 days ago)	DefaultEndpointsProtocol=https;AccountName=images11;AccountKey=wKgnWY...

The screenshot shows two Microsoft Azure browser tabs. The top tab is titled 'images11 - Microsoft Azure' and displays the 'Endpoints' section for a Storage account named 'images11'. It lists various service endpoints with their URLs: Blob service (https://images11.blob.core.windows.net/), File service (https://images11.file.core.windows.net/), Queue service (https://images11.queue.core.windows.net/), and Table service (https://images11.table.core.windows.net/). The bottom tab is titled 'images - Microsoft Azure' and shows the 'Containers' section for the 'images' storage account. It lists two blobs: '6Y9U1K4UM03NK2CL5YRFB1D22HSSXQA6.jpg' and 'RSRJFBY2UVPC1M0617WM8J9MSNFC746K.jpg', both last modified on 11/16/2025.

5. A screenshot of the redirect URIs related to Microsoft authentication (see example in project repository).

The screenshot shows the 'udacitycms - Microsoft Azure' web app configuration page. The left sidebar includes sections like Overview, Activity log, Access control (IAM), Tags, Diagnose and solve problems, Microsoft Defender for Cloud, Events (preview), Resource visualizer, Deployment (with sub-options like Deployment slots and Deployment Center), Settings (with sub-options like Environment variables, Configuration, Authentication, Identity, and Backups), and JSON View. The main content area shows the 'Web app' configuration with fields for Name (udacitycms), Publishing model (Code), Runtime Stack (Python - 3.10), Default domain (udacitycms-hsggc0fb9cpfyav.southindia-01.azurewebsites.net), App Service Plan (ASP-cms-8321 (F1: 1)), Operating System (Linux), and Health Check (Cannot fetch health check data. Please try again later.). Other tabs include Deployment Center, Application Insights, and Networking.

udacitycms - Microsoft Azure

Home > Microsoft Web - WebApp - Portal - dc17b221-a64a | Overview > udacitycms

udacitycms | Environment variables

App settings

Name	Value	Deployment slot setting	Source	Delete
BLOB_ACCOUNT	Show value	✓	App Service	
BLOB_CONNECTION_STRING	Show value	✓	App Service	
BLOB_CONTAINER	Show value	✓	App Service	
BLOB_STORAGE_KEY	Show value	✓	App Service	
CLIENT_ID	Show value	✓	App Service	
CLIENT_SECRET	Show value	✓	App Service	
SECRET_KEY	Show value	✓	App Service	
SQL_DATABASE	Show value	✓	App Service	

Configuration

Authentication

Identity

Backups

Add or remove favorites by pressing **Ctrl+Shift+F**

28°C Sunny

02:36 PM 16-11-2025

cmsEntralD - Microsoft Azure

Home > Udacity - DS | Overview > cmsEntralD

cmsEntralD

Overview

Quickstart

Integration assistant

Diagnose and solve problems

Manage

Support + Troubleshooting

Essentials

Display name : cmsEntralD	Client credentials : Add a certificate or secret
Application (client) ID : ce983c51-5ef0-4cb2-838f-f9618aee6f57	Redirect URIs : Add a Redirect URI
Object ID : e6504f79-4822-4a2e-a740-2db2269e6226	Application ID URI : Add an Application ID URI
Directory (tenant) ID : f958e84a-92d8-439f-a62d-4f45996bd6d0	Managed application in ... : cmsEntralD

Supported account types : All Microsoft account types

Get Started

Documentation

Build your application with the Microsoft identity platform

https://portal.azure.com/ using **Ctrl+Shift+F**

28°C Sunny

02:43 PM 16-11-2025

cmsEntralD - Microsoft Azure

Home > Udacity - DS | Overview > cmsEntralD

cmsEntralD | Certificates & secrets

Certificates & secrets

Token configuration

API permissions

Expose an API

App roles

Owners

Roles and administrators

Manifest

Certificates (0) **Client secrets (1)** **Federated credentials (0)**

A secret string that the application uses to prove its identity when requesting a token. Also can be referred to as application password.

New client secret

Description	Expires	Value	Secret ID
cmsSecret	5/15/2026	dI08Q-clypIPEn2W-nhG1hPt91GqBc7...	43e28e10-e1ba-4785-a09c-797c8f147c77

Got feedback?

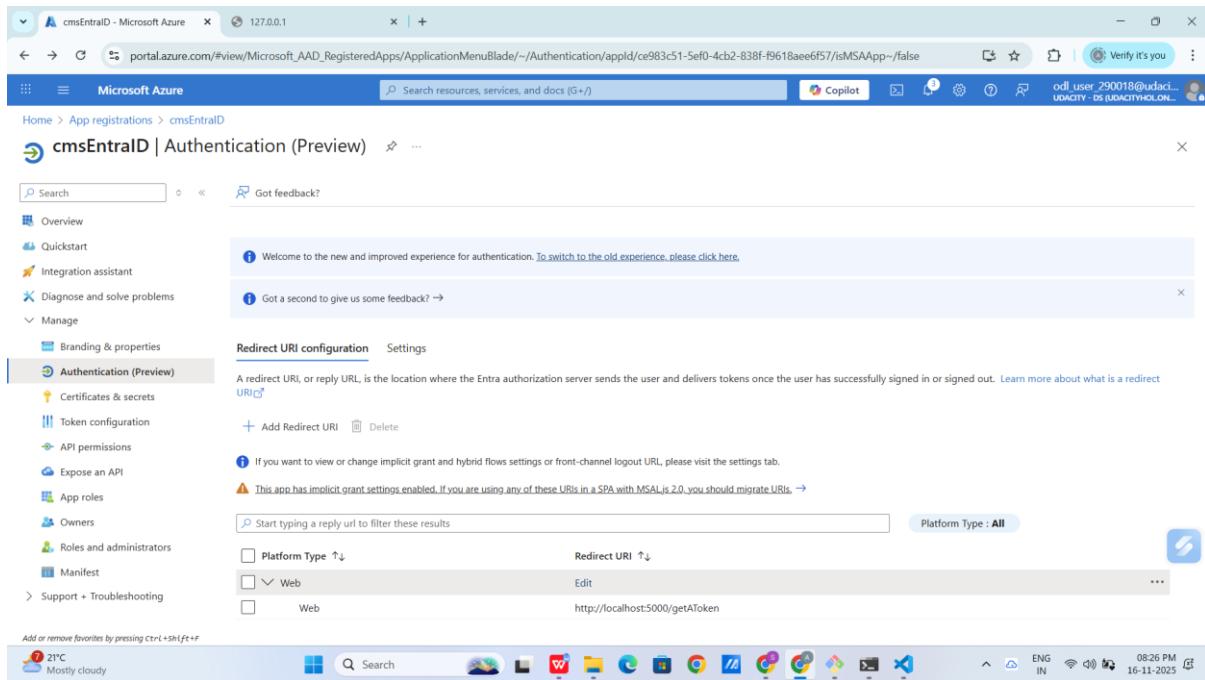
Got a second to give us some feedback? →

Credentials enable confidential applications to identify themselves to the authentication service when receiving tokens at a web addressable location (using an HTTPS scheme). For a higher level of assurance, we recommend using a certificate (instead of a client secret) as a credential.

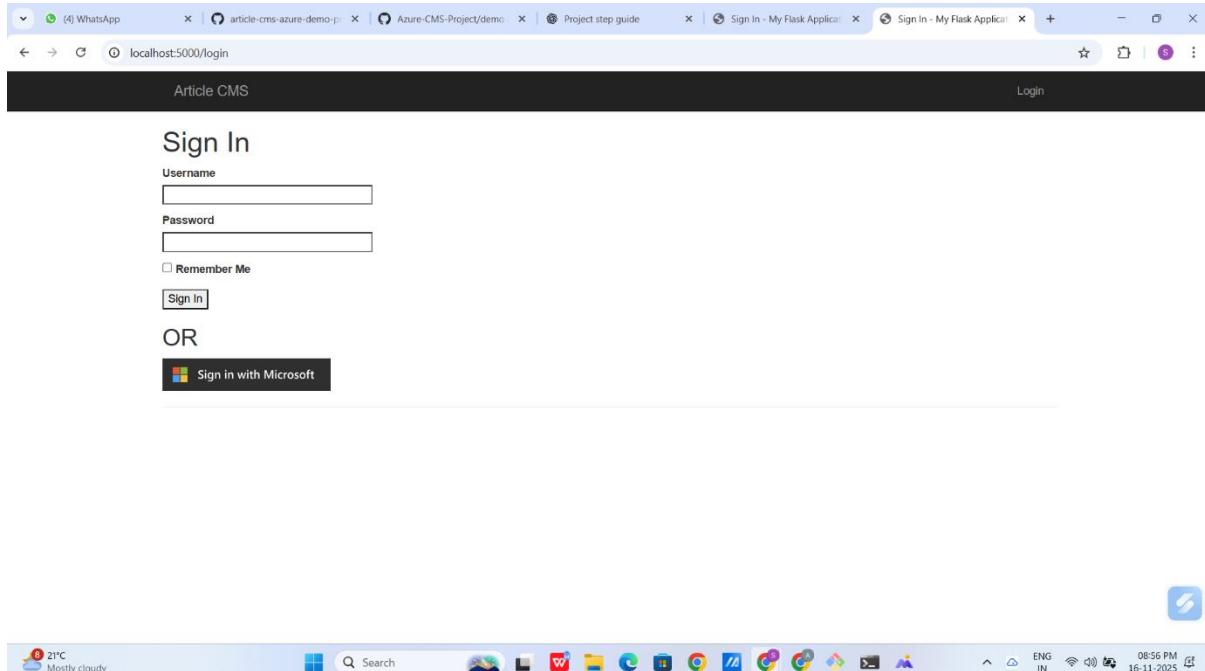
Application registration certificates, secrets and federated credentials can be found in the tabs below.

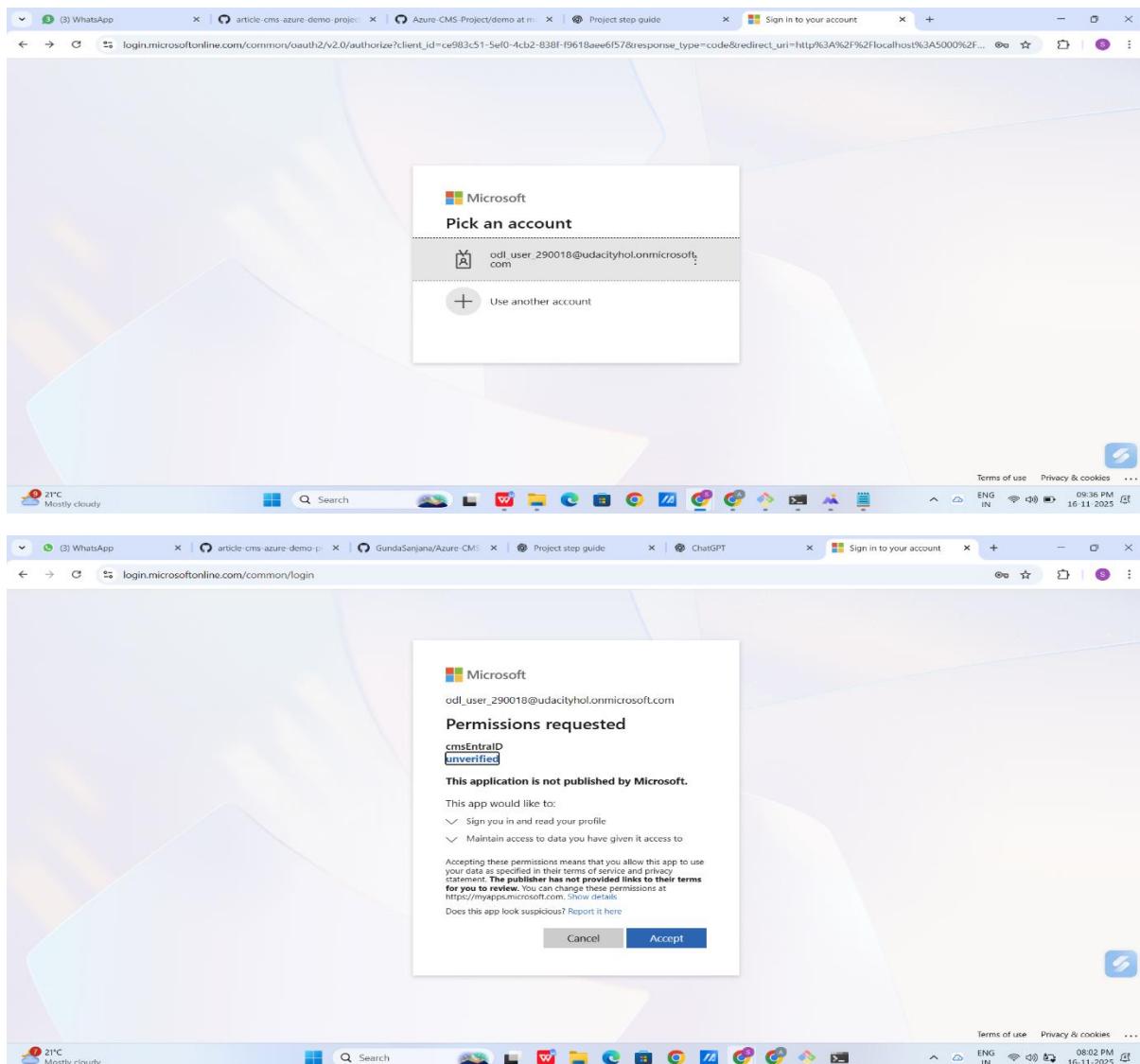
28°C Sunny

02:45 PM 16-11-2025



- 6. A screenshot showing one potential form of logging with an "Invalid login attempt" and "admin logged in successfully", taken from the app's Log stream or other logs you create and store (see example in project repository). You can customize your log messages as you see fit for these situations.**





Permissions requested

cmsEntraID unverified

This application is not published by Microsoft.

This app would like to:

- Sign you in and read your profile
- Maintain access to data you have given it access to

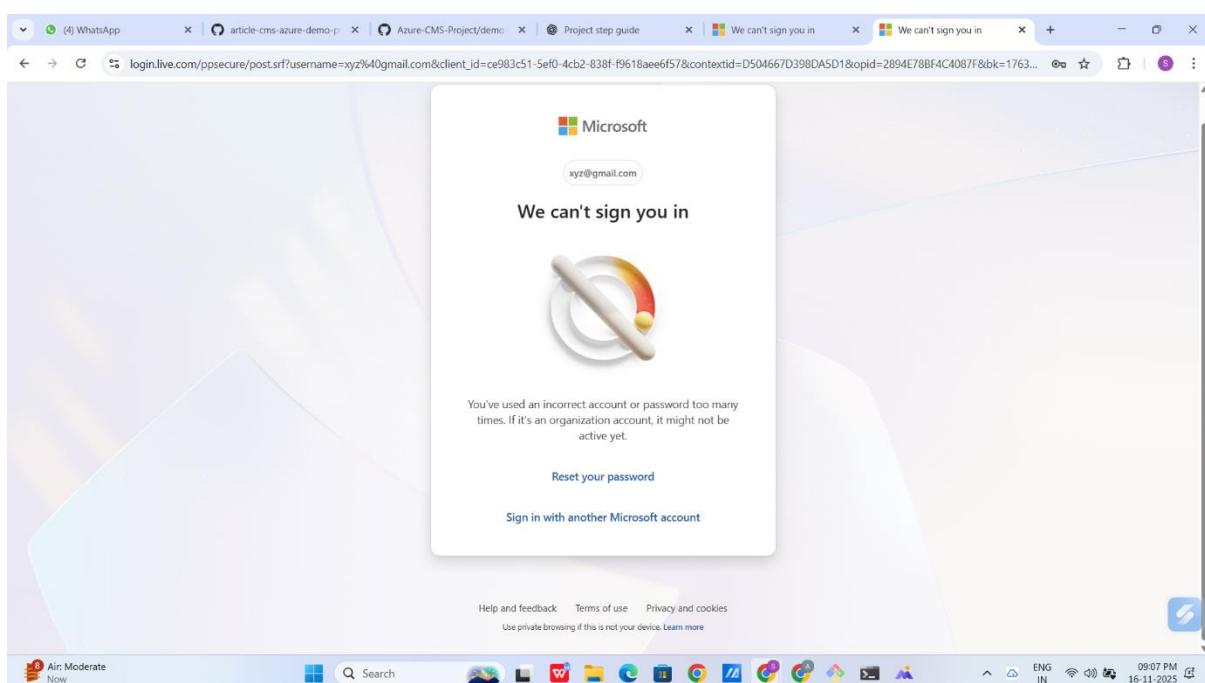
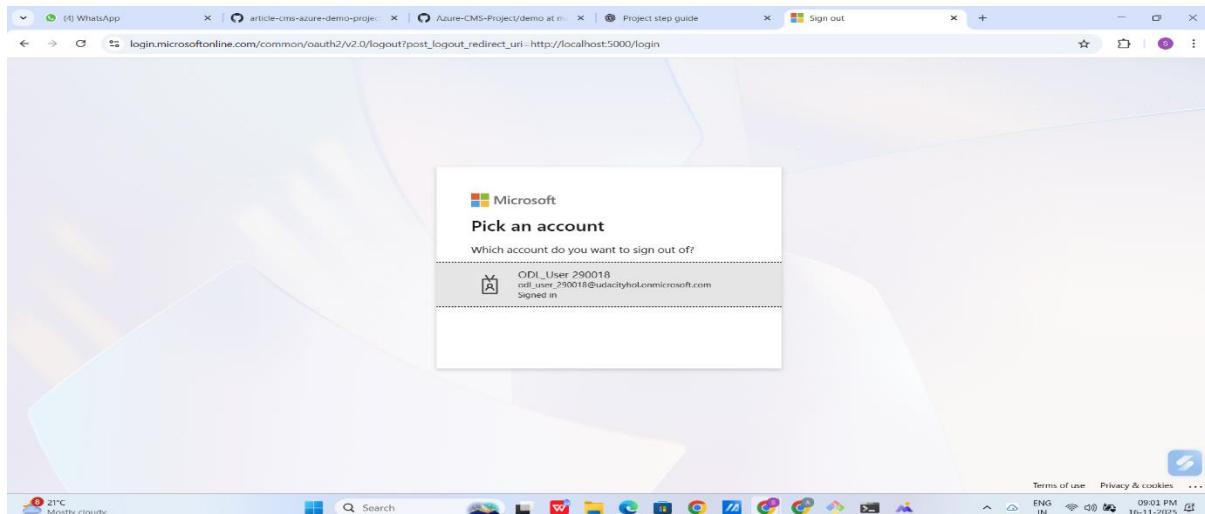
Accepting these permissions means that you allow this app to use your data as specified in their terms of service and privacy statement. **The publisher has not provided links to their terms for you to review.** Read more about accepting permissions at <https://myapps.microsoft.com>. Show details

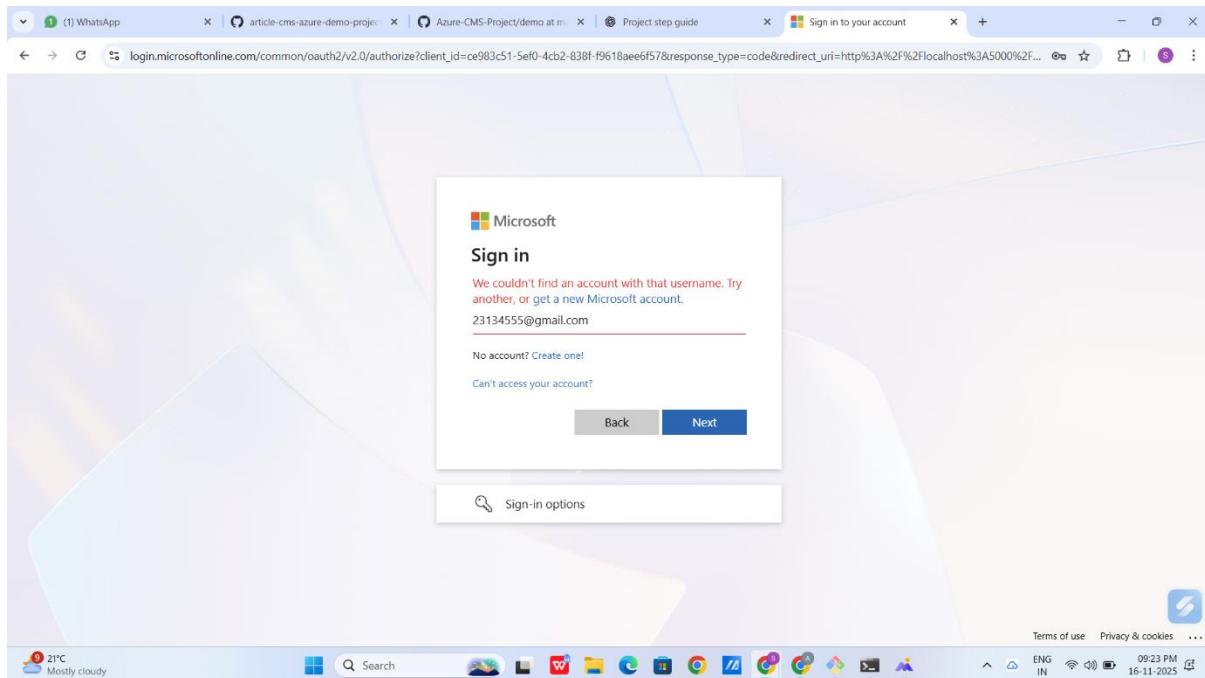
Does this app look suspicious? Report it here

Cancel Accept

Terms of use Privacy & cookies ...

ENG IN 08:02 PM 16-11-2025





7. Your application code—most importantly `__init__.py` and `views.py` since they will contain your updates for Auth and Logging.

7.1 `__init__.py`:

=====

The flask application package.

=====

```
import logging
from flask import Flask
from config import Config
from flask_sqlalchemy import SQLAlchemy
from flask_login import LoginManager
from flask_session import Session
from flask.logging import create_logger
```

```
app = Flask(__name__)
app.config.from_object(Config)
# TODO: Add any logging levels and handlers with app.logger
# DONE (Note: Instructor's original app.logger code not pylint compliant)
LOG = create_logger(app)
LOG.setLevel(logging.INFO)
streamHandler = logging.StreamHandler()
streamHandler.setLevel(logging.INFO)
LOG.addHandler(streamHandler)
```

```
Session(app)
db = SQLAlchemy(app)
login = LoginManager(app)
login.login_view = 'login'
```

```
import FlaskWebProject.views
```

7.2 views.py:

```
"""
Routes and views for the flask application.
"""

from datetime import datetime
from flask import render_template, flash, redirect, request, session, url_for
from werkzeug.urls import url_parse
from config import Config
from FlaskWebProject import app, db
from FlaskWebProject.forms import LoginForm, PostForm
from flask_login import current_user, login_user, logout_user, login_required
from FlaskWebProject.models import User, Post
from FlaskWebProject import LOG
import msal
import uuid

imageSourceUrl = 'https://'+ app.config['BLOB_ACCOUNT'] + '.blob.core.windows.net/' +
app.config['BLOB_CONTAINER'] + '/'

@app.route('/')
@app.route('/home')
@login_required
def home():
    user = User.query.filter_by(username=current_user.username).first_or_404()
    posts = Post.query.all()
    return render_template(
        'index.html',
        title='Home Page',
        posts=posts
    )

@app.route('/new_post', methods=['GET', 'POST'])
@login_required
def new_post():
    form = PostForm(request.form)
    if form.validate_on_submit():
        post = Post()
        post.save_changes(form, request.files['image_path'], current_user.id, new=True)
        # LOG Informational
        LOG.info('INFO: New post added by user: ' + str(current_user.id))
        return redirect(url_for('home'))
    return render_template(
        'post.html',
        title='Create Post',
        imageSource=imageSourceUrl,
```

```

        form=form
    )

@app.route('/post/<int:id>', methods=['GET', 'POST'])
@login_required
def post(id):
    post = Post.query.get(int(id))
    form = PostForm(formdata=request.form, obj=post)
    if form.validate_on_submit():
        post.save_changes(form, request.files['image_path'], current_user.id)
        # LOG Informational
        LOG.info('INFO: Post ' + str(id) + ' edited by user: ' + str(current_user.id))
        return redirect(url_for('home'))
    return render_template(
        'post.html',
        title='Edit Post',
        imageSource=imageSourceUrl,
        form=form
    )

@app.route('/login', methods=['GET', 'POST'])
def login():
    if current_user.is_authenticated:
        # LOG Informational
        LOG.info('INFO: User ' + str(current_user.id) + ' is authenticated...')
        return redirect(url_for('home'))
    form = LoginForm()
    if form.validate_on_submit():
        user = User.query.filter_by(username=form.username.data).first()
        if user is None or not user.check_password(form.password.data):
            # LOG Unsuccessful login
            LOG.warning('WARNING: Login Unsucessful....Invalid username or password for user:%s' + str(user))
            flash('Invalid username or password')
            return redirect(url_for('login'))
        login_user(user, remember=form.remember_me.data)
        LOG.info('INFO: Local login successful for user: %s', user.username)
        next_page = request.args.get('next')
        if not next_page or url_parse(next_page).netloc != '':
            next_page = url_for('home')
        return redirect(next_page)
        session["state"] = str(uuid.uuid4())
        auth_url = _build_auth_url(scopes=Config.SCOPES, state=session["state"])
        return render_template('login.html', title='Sign In', form=form, auth_url=auth_url)

@app.route(Config.REDIRECT_PATH) # Its absolute URL must match your app's
redirect_uri set in AAD
def authorized():
    if request.args.get('state') != session.get("state"):
        return redirect(url_for("home")) # No-OP. Goes back to Index page
    if "error" in request.args: # Authentication/Authorization failure

```

```

#LOG Error
LOG.error('ERROR: Authentication/Authorization failure...')
return render_template("auth_error.html", result=request.args)
if request.args.get('code'):
    cache = _load_cache()
    # TODO: Acquire a token from a built msal app, along with the appropriate redirect URI
    # DONE
    result = _build_msal_app(cache=cache).acquire_token_by_authorization_code(
        request.args['code'],
        scopes=Config.SCOPES,
        redirect_uri=url_for('authorized', _external=True, _scheme='http'))
    if "error" in result:
        #LOG Error
        LOG.error('ERROR: Did not acquire a token for OAUTH...')
        return render_template("auth_error.html", result=result)
    session["user"] = result.get("id_token_claims")
    # Note: In a real app, we'd use the 'name' property from session["user"] below
    # Here, we'll use the admin username for anyone who is authenticated by MS
    user = User.query.filter_by(username="admin").first()
    login_user(user)
    _save_cache(cache)
    # LOG
    LOG.info('INFO: User Logged In...')
return redirect(url_for('home'))

@app.route('/logout')
def logout():
    #LOG
    LOG.info('INFO: User ' + str(current_user.id) + ' logged out...')
    logout_user()
    if session.get("user"): # Used MS Login
        # Wipe out user and its token cache from session
        session.clear()
        # Also logout from your tenant's web session
    return redirect(
        Config.AUTHORITY + "/oauth2/v2.0/logout" +
        "?post_logout_redirect_uri=" + url_for("login", _external=True))

    return redirect(url_for('login'))

def _load_cache():
    # TODO: Load the cache from `msal`, if it exists
    # DONE
    cache = msal.SerializableTokenCache()
    if session.get('token_cache'):
        cache.deserialize(session['token_cache'])
    return cache

def _save_cache(cache):
    # TODO: Save the cache, if it has changed
    # DONE

```

```

if cache.has_state_changed:
    session['token_cache'] = cache.serialize()

def _build_msal_app(cache=None, authority=None):
    # TODO: Return a ConfidentialClientApplication
    # DONE
    return msal.ConfidentialClientApplication(
        Config.CLIENT_ID, authority=authority or Config.AUTHORITY,
        client_credential=Config.CLIENT_SECRET, token_cache=cache)

def _build_auth_url(authority=None, scopes=None, state=None):
    # TODO: Return the full Auth Request URL with appropriate Redirect URI
    #DONE
    return _build_msal_app(authority=authority).get_authorization_request_url(
        scopes or [],
        state=state or str(uuid.uuid4()),
        redirect_uri=url_for('authorized', _external=True, _scheme='http'))

```

8. Your WRITEUP.md file analyzing and explaining your choice between a VM or an App Service.

Write-up Template

Analyze, choose, and justify the appropriate resource option for deploying the app.

*For **both** a VM or App Service solution for the CMS app:*

- *Analyze costs, scalability, availability, and workflow*
- *Choose the appropriate solution (VM or App Service) for deploying the app*
- *Justify your choice*

a) Virtual Machine (VM)

Cost:

A VM is billed like a full server: you pay for the selected size (CPU, RAM, storage) as long as it's allocated, regardless of how busy the app is. For this CMS, a small VM like Standard B11s is enough, but the cost is still higher than a free or low-tier App Service plan, especially if I forget to stop or delete the VM. I would also be responsible for managing OS patches and any extra software, which indirectly adds "operational cost" in terms of my time.

Scalability:

A single VM scales vertically: to handle more load, I'd have to resize it to a bigger SKU or manually add more VMs behind a load balancer. This is more complex to manage and usually requires planning and downtime. Auto-scaling is possible, but I have to configure it explicitly using scale sets or other Azure services.

Availability:

VM availability depends on how I configure it. A single VM has a single point of failure. To achieve higher availability, I'd need multiple VMs in an availability set or zone, plus a load balancer. I am responsible for OS updates, security patches, and restarts, which can cause downtime if not handled carefully.

Workflow:

Using a VM gives me full control over the OS and runtime stack. I can install any version of Python, configure Nginx/Gunicorn manually, and host other services on the same machine. However, deployment is more manual: SSH into the VM, clone the GitHub repo, create a virtual environment, install dependencies, configure Nginx, and manage services. This provides flexibility but also increases complexity and maintenance effort.

b) App Service (Web App)

Cost:

App Service offers a Free F1 tier, which is ideal for this project and development scenarios. I don't pay for idle VMs directly; instead, I pay per App Service plan, which can host multiple web apps. For small workloads like this article CMS, the free or basic tiers are cheaper than running a dedicated VM 24/7. Scaling up to higher tiers is still generally cost-effective compared to managing multiple VMs myself.

Scalability:

App Service has built-in horizontal scaling. I can increase the number of instances with a slider or configure auto-scale rules based on CPU, memory, or schedule. It abstracts away the individual servers, so I don't have to manage the underlying OS. This makes it easier to handle traffic spikes and future growth of the CMS without re-architecting the deployment.

Availability:

App Service is a managed platform (PaaS), so Microsoft handles OS patching, infrastructure redundancy, and many aspects of uptime. The service is integrated with Azure's availability features, and I can choose higher tiers with built-in SLA guarantees. I don't need to manually set up multiple machines or a load balancer just to get a highly available endpoint.

Workflow:

The developer workflow with App Service is very streamlined. I can connect the App Service to GitHub via Deployment Center so that pushes to a branch automatically deploy to Azure. Configuration like connection strings and secrets can be stored in Application Settings rather than hard-coded in the code. I don't manage the OS, web server, or runtime directly; I only focus on the app code and settings. This reduces operational overhead and speeds up development.

VM or App Service? (and why):

For this project, I chose to deploy the Flask CMS using Azure App Service (Web App).

The main reasons are:

Cost – The App Service free tier is enough for this small CMS, so I don't pay for a dedicated VM. It's more economical for a learning project and small workloads.

Simplicity & Workflow – App Service gives me an easy deployment pipeline via GitHub and a simple configuration experience through Application Settings. I don't have to manage the OS, patching, or web server directly, which lets me focus on the Flask app itself.

Built-in scalability & availability – If the CMS ever needs to handle more users or traffic, I can scale up or out using the App Service plan without redesigning the infrastructure or manually configuring load balancers and extra VMs.

Because of these factors, App Service is a better fit for this application than a VM for my current needs.

Assess app changes that would change your decision.

If the CMS application changed in ways that demanded more low-level infrastructure control, my choice might switch toward a VM (or even a container-based solution). For example, if I needed custom OS-level software, unusual networking requirements, or background services that App Service doesn't support easily, a VM would give me full control to install and configure everything exactly as needed.

Similarly, if the application expanded into a multi-component system (e.g., additional microservices, custom message queues, or specialized database engines) that needed tight control over the environment and network topology, managing everything on VMs (or using containers orchestrated by services like AKS) might become more suitable. In that case, I would accept the extra operational complexity of VMs in exchange for the flexibility they provide.

Right now, though, the CMS is a straightforward web app that primarily needs a Python runtime, connection to Azure SQL and Blob Storage, and an OAuth2 login flow. For that scenario, App Service remains the most practical and maintainable option.