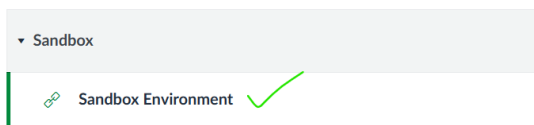## Getting to Know the AWS Management Console

Learning Objectives

By the end of this practical, students will be able to:

- Navigate the AWS Console Home page
- Use the AWS Search feature
- Switch between AWS Regions
- Access AWS account information
- Explore AWS Service dashboards and their navigation panels

Environment: AWS Academy Sandbox

Instructions

Step 1: Launch the Lab Environment

1. Open the AWS Academy course dashboard
2. Under modules, navigate to the Sandbox Environment
3. Click Sandbox Environment and then select "Load Sandbox Environment in a new window"
4. Click Start Lab, wait for creation, when the lab status is **READY**, click AWS to open the Console – this opens a new tab where you are automatically logged into the AWS Console.
5. After completing the practical activity, sign out of the Console and then end the lab
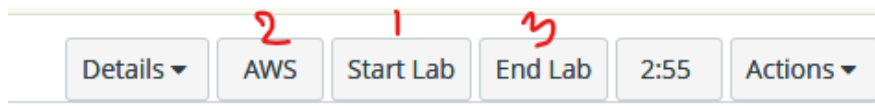
Step 2: Explore the Console Home Page

1. Look at the **Navigation Bar** at the top of the page.
   - Locate the **Service Selector**, **Search Bar**, **CloudShell**, **Notifications**, and **Support** icons.
2. Scroll through the **Dashboard Widgets**:
   - Identify widgets like *Welcome to AWS*, *Build a solution*, *Explore AWS*, *AWS Health*, *Cost and usage*, *Favourites*, and *Recently visited*.
3. Rearrange or remove a widget by selecting the **Actions** dropdown.

Task: Add the *Cost and usage* widget to your dashboard if it's not already there.

Step 3: Use the AWS Search Feature

1. In the top **Search Bar**, type IAM. **Do not press Enter** yet.
2. Explore the search results panel:
   - Click **Features**, then **Resources, Tutorials**, and **Blogs**.
3. Press Esc or click outside the panel to close it.

Task: Add IAM, VPC, EC2 and S3 to your favourites using the **star** icon next to its name.

Step 4: Switch Between AWS Regions

1. Locate the Region selector (e.g., US East (N. Virginia)) in the navigation bar.
2. Click it and switch to **US West (Oregon)**.
3. In the **Search Bar**, type IAM and press Enter.
   - Notice that the region now says **Global** (IAM is a global service).
4. Now search for EC2, press Enter, and observe that EC2 is **Region-based**.
5. Change Region back to **US East (N. Virginia)**.

Task: List two AWS services and identify if they are Global or Regional.

Step 5: View AWS Account Information

1. In the top-right corner, click the username (e.g., AWSLabsUser).
2. View details like Account ID and user.
3. Click **Service Quotas** to view the resource limits in place.

Task: Find the default quota for *Elastic IP addresses*.

Step 6: Work with Service Dashboard Navigation

1. In the Search Bar, type VPC and press Enter.
2. Explore the **Left Navigation Panel**:
   - Expand and collapse categories like *Virtual Private Cloud* and *Security*.
   - Click on **Network ACLs**.
3. Interact with the table:
   - Resize a column (drag between column headers).
   - Select a row using the checkbox.
   - Move the divider between the top and bottom sections.

Task: Click on the **Inbound Rules** tab and take note of the settings visible.

Step 7: End the Lab

1. Click on your username (e.g., AWSLabsUser) and select **Sign out**.
2. Return to the lab tab and click **End Lab**.
3. Confirm to stop your session.

Reflection Questions

1. Which services did you add to your favourites?
2. What is the difference between global and regional services?
3. Why is it important to know your current AWS Region?
4. What AWS widgets did you find most useful?