



Automating Access Reviews with Microsoft Entra Identity Governance

Continuous access verification for a Zero Trust world.

In every enterprise, access granted today might not be needed tomorrow. Access Reviews automate this verification cycle—ensuring users retain only what's necessary, nothing more.

Why Access Reviews Matter

- Access permissions rarely age well. Over time, users accumulate unnecessary rights—creating compliance risks.
- Microsoft Entra Access Reviews help reduce “access creep” by periodically re-evaluating user assignments.
- They support continuous verification—one of the key pillars of **Zero Trust**.

Instead of granting access indefinitely, you define a recurring review policy to verify who still needs it.

Zero Trust = continuous verification, not one-time setup.

Architecture Overview

Flow:

1. User requests access via Access Package
2. Manager or resource owner approves
3. Access Review runs periodically
4. Reviewer confirms or denies continued access
5. Microsoft Entra auto-removes stale permissions

Think of Access Reviews as the “heartbeat” that keeps your identity governance system alive and healthy.

Governance automation = sustained least privilege.

Creating an Access Review

- When you create an Access Review in **Microsoft Entra → Identity Governance → Access Reviews**, you define:
- **Scope:** Which groups, apps, or packages to review
- **Frequency:** One-time or recurring (e.g., monthly, quarterly)
- **Duration:** How long each review period stays open

The goal is automation—so reviews happen consistently, not manually.

Reviewers and Decision Process

- Assign **Reviewers** → managers, resource owners, or group owners
- Reviewers receive **email notifications** and can approve or deny access in the **My Access portal**
- If no action is taken, Entra can **auto-apply default decisions** (for example, remove access)

This is where governance meets automation — reviewers confirm relevance, Entra enforces compliance.

This keeps access clean without waiting for manual cleanups.

Audit & Reporting

- Every review cycle generates **audit logs** showing who reviewed, what decisions were made, and why.
- Reports can be exported for **compliance audits** (ISO 27001, SOC 2, NIST, etc.).
- Integrates with **Microsoft Sentinel** for governance dashboards and monitoring alerts.

Transparency is critical—Access Reviews create a full audit trail for accountability.

This is what auditors love — traceability built into the process.

Business Value

- ✓ Minimizes over-permissioned accounts
- ✓ Simplifies compliance evidence gathering
- ✓ Reduces insider risk and human error
- ✓ Strengthens Zero Trust by continuously verifying access

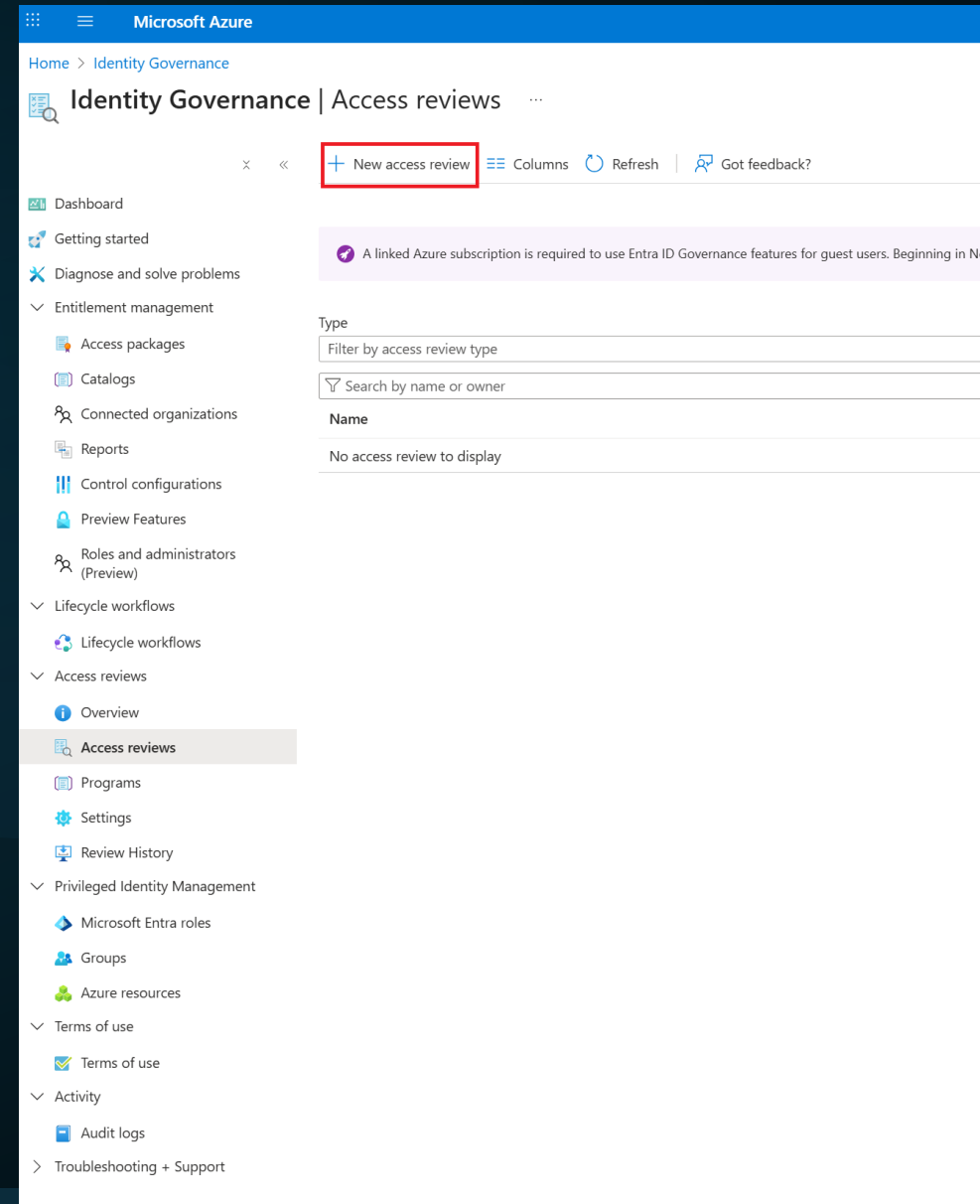
Access Reviews are not just governance—they're proactive risk reduction.

Here's what organizations gain from automating reviews.

Dashboard Entry Point

Navigate to *Identity Governance* →
Access Reviews to begin configuration.

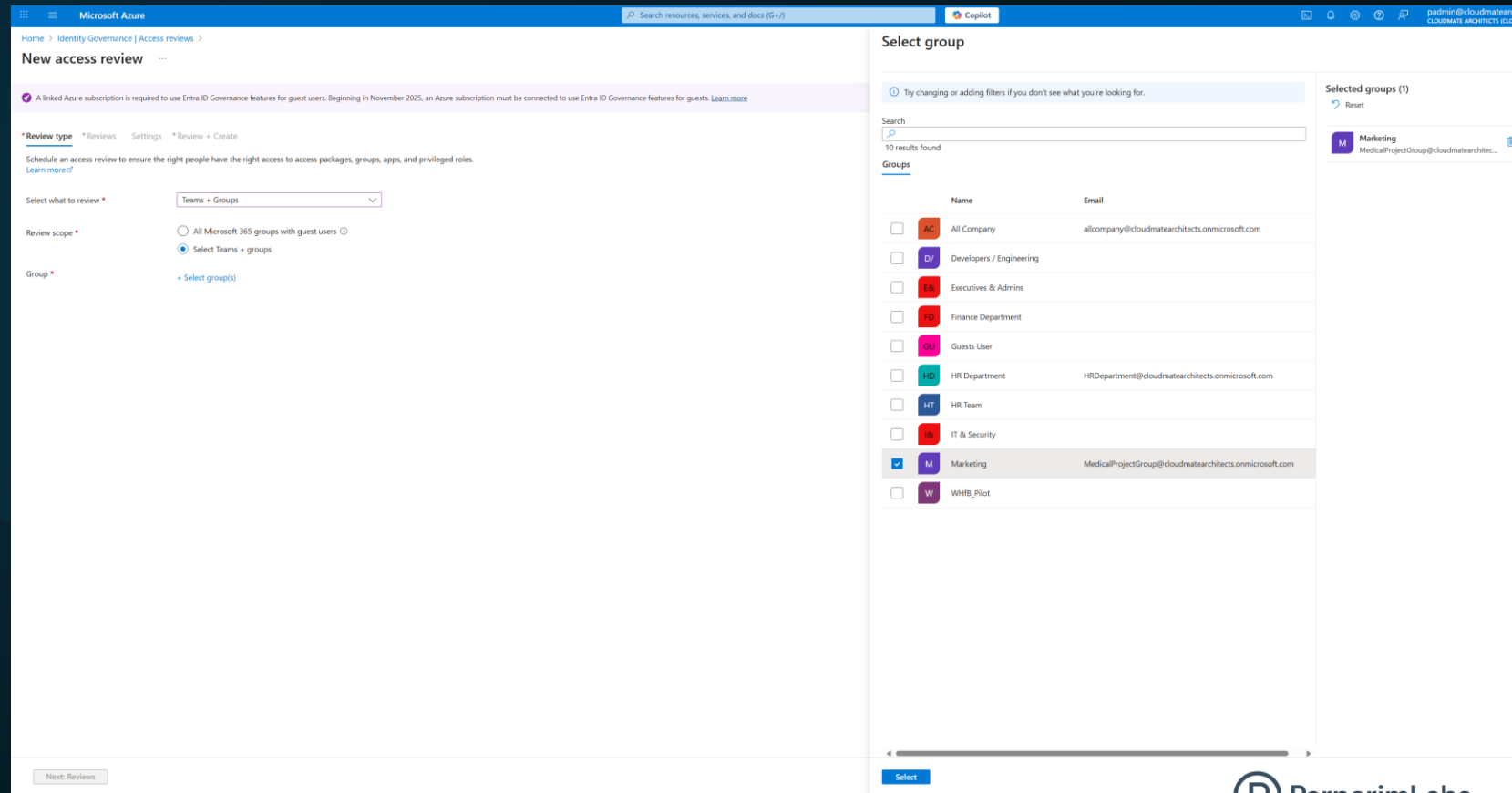
Start a new review.



Select Group for Review

Select what to review: Teams + Groups → Select specific groups.

*Chose the **Marketing** group as the target resource to evaluate membership validity.*



Define Review Scope

Scope set to **All Users** for inclusive governance coverage.

Scope determines who is evaluated.

Microsoft Azure

Home > Identity Governance | Access reviews >

New access review

A linked Azure subscription is required to use Entra ID Governance features for guest users. Beginning in November 2025, an Azure subscription must be connected to use these features.

*Review type *Reviews Settings *Review + Create

Schedule an access review to ensure the right people have the right access to access packages, groups, apps, and privileged roles. [Learn more](#)

Select what to review * Teams + Groups

Review scope *
☐ All Microsoft 365 groups with guest users
☒ Select Teams + groups

Group * Marketing

Scope *
☐ Guest users only
☒ All users

i In public preview, B2B direct connect users and teams in shared channels are included in access reviews. B2B direct connect users and teams are not supported in reviews of 'All Microsoft 365 groups with guest users', as well as reviews scoped to inactive users. Click here to learn more.

Inactive users only ☐

Assign Reviewer

Selected *Specific User(s)* — assigned yourself (Perparim Abdullahu) as reviewer.

Picked Perparim as reviewer.

The screenshot shows the 'New access review' page in the Microsoft Azure portal. The breadcrumb navigation is 'Home > Identity Governance | Access reviews >'. The page title is 'New access review'. A message at the top states: 'A linked Azure subscription is required to use Entra ID Governance features for guest users. Beginning in November 2025, an Azure subscription must be linked to your tenant.' The 'Reviews' tab is active, with other tabs being 'Review type', 'Settings', and 'Review + Create'. The instruction 'Determine review stages, reviewers, and timeline below.' is present. The 'Multi-stage review' checkbox is unchecked. Under 'Specify reviewers', the 'Select reviewers' dropdown is set to 'Selected user(s) or group(s)'. Below this, 'Users or Groups' shows 'Perparim Abdullahu' as the selected reviewer. The 'Specify recurrence of review' section has 'Duration (in days)' set to 3, 'Review recurrence' set to 'Quarterly', and 'Start date' set to '2025'. The 'End' section has 'Never' selected. At the bottom, there are buttons for '< Previous' and 'Next: Settings'.

Reviewer Models

Group Owner / Manager / Selected User — flexibility for governance design.

Specify reviewers

Select reviewers *

Users or Groups * ⓘ

Specify recurrence of review

Duration (in days) *

Selected user(s) or group(s) ▼

Group owner(s)

Selected user(s) or group(s)

Users review their own access

Managers of users

Configure Settings

Default action: *Remove access if reviewers don't respond* → enforcing least privilege.

Microsoft Azure

Home > Identity Governance | Access reviews >

New access review

A linked Azure subscription is required to use Entra ID Governance features for guest users. Beginning in November.

* Review type * Reviews **Settings** * Review + Create

Configure additional settings, including decision helpers and email notifications.

Upon completion settings

Auto apply results to resource ☐

If reviewers don't respond

At end of review, send notification to

Remove access

Approve access

Take recommendations

Enable reviewer decision helpers

No sign-in within 30 days ☒

User-to-Group Affiliation ☐

Advanced settings

Justification required ☒

Email notifications ☒

Reminders ☒

Additional content for reviewer email

Access Review Agent (Preview) ☐

Notification & Justification

Enabled **justification**, **email notifications**, and **reminders** for accountability.

Governance guardrails..

Microsoft Azure

Search resources, services, and docs (G+)

Copilot

admin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com

Home > Identity Governance > Access reviews >

New access review

A linked Azure subscription is required to use Entra ID Governance features for guest users. Beginning in November 2025, an Azure subscription must be connected to use Entra ID Governance features for guests. [Learn more](#)

Review type

Reviews

Settings

Review + Create

Configure additional settings, including decision helpers and email notifications.

Upon completion settings

Auto apply results to resource ☐

If reviewers don't respond ☐ Remove access

At end of review, send notification to [+ Select User\(s\) or Group\(s\)](#)

Enable reviewer decision helpers

No sign-in within 30 days ☒

User-to-Group Affiliation ☐

Advanced settings

Justification required ☒

Email notifications ☒

Reminders ☒

Additional content for reviewer email

Access Review Agent (Preview) ☐

< Previous

Next: Review + Create

Select recipients

Try changing or adding filters if you don't see what you're looking for.

Search

27 results found

All Users Groups

	Name	Type	Details
<input type="checkbox"/>	DB David Brown	User	david.brown@cloudmatearchitects.onmicro
<input type="checkbox"/>	GU Guests User	Group	
<input type="checkbox"/>	EG Emma Garcia	User	emma.garcia@cloudmatearchitects.onmicr
<input type="checkbox"/>	HD HR Department	Group	HRDepartment@cloudmatearchitects.onmik
<input type="checkbox"/>	ES Emma Smith	User	emma.smith@cloudmatearchitects.onmicro
<input type="checkbox"/>	HT HR Team	Group	
<input type="checkbox"/>	JD John Davis	User	john.davis@cloudmatearchitects.onmicroso
<input type="checkbox"/>	IS IT & Security	Group	
<input type="checkbox"/>	LJ Laura Johnson	User	laura.johnson@cloudmatearchitects.onmicr
<input type="checkbox"/>	M Marketing	Group	MedicalProjectGroup@cloudmatearchitects
<input type="checkbox"/>	LA Liam Anderson	User	liam.anderson@cloudmatearchitects.onmicr
<input type="checkbox"/>	W WHB_Pilot	Group	
<input type="checkbox"/>	MS Michael Smith	User	michael.smith@cloudmatearchitects.onmicr
<input type="checkbox"/>	MT Michael Thompson	User	michael.thompson@cloudmatearchitects.or
<input type="checkbox"/>	MJ Mike Johnson	User	mike.johnson@cloudmatearchitects.onmicr
<input type="checkbox"/>	MX Mohammed Khan	User	mohammed.khan@cloudmatearchitects.on
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Perparim Abdullahu	User	padmin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft
<input type="checkbox"/>	SW Sara Wilson	User	sara.wilson@cloudmatearchitects.onmicroso

Select

Manual vs Auto-Apply

Auto-apply ON = decisions enforced automatically.
OFF = owner applies later (safer for first rollout).

* Review type * Reviews Settings * Review + Create

Configure additional settings, including decision helpers and email notifications.

Upon completion settings

Auto apply results to resource ⓘ ☒

If reviewers don't respond ⓘ Remove access ▼

⚠ Setting 'If reviewers don't respond' to 'Remove access' or 'Take recommendations' while 'Auto-apply results to resource' is enabled could potentially lead to all access to this resource being revoked if the reviewers fail to respond.

At end of review, send notification to [Perparim Abdullahu](#)

Enable reviewer decision helpers

No sign-in within 30 days ⓘ ☒

User-to-Group Affiliation ⓘ ☐

Advanced settings

Justification required ⓘ ☒

Email notifications ⓘ ☒

Reminders ⓘ ☒

Additional content for reviewer email ⓘ

Access Review Agent (Preview) ⓘ ☐

Access Review Created

Access Review “Marketing Demo” successfully initialized; status: *Not Started*.

Identity Governance | Access reviews

+ New access review

Columns

Refresh

Got feedback?

Dashboard

Getting started

Diagnose and solve problems

Entitlement management

- Access packages
- Catalogs
- Connected organizations
- Reports
- Control configurations
- Preview Features
- Roles and administrators (Preview)

Lifecycle workflows

- Lifecycle workflows

Access reviews

- Overview
- Access reviews
- Programs
- Settings
- Review History

Privileged Identity Management


A linked Azure subscription is required to use Entra ID Governance features for guest users. Beginning in November 2025, an Azure subscription must be connected to use Entra ID Governance features for guests. [Learn more](#)

Type

Filter by access review type

Search by name or owner

Name	Resource	Status
Access Review Demo	Group Marketing	Not started

 PerparimLabs

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#AccessReviews #ZeroTrust #AzureSecurity

Review Details

Dashboard shows recurrence type (Quarterly) and assigned reviewers — confirming governance schedule.

Home > Identity Governance > Access reviews >

Access review details | Overview ...

×

«

🗑️ Delete series

Overview

Current

- Results
- Reviewers
- Settings
- Audit logs

Series

- Reviewers
- Settings
- Scheduled review
- Review history
- Audit logs

^ Essentials

Owner : Perparim Abdullahu[padmin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com]

Group : Marketing

Access review period : '2025 - No end date

Object Id :


Scope : Everyone

Review status : Initializing

Selected reviewers : Selected users

Description :

Recurrence type : Quarterly

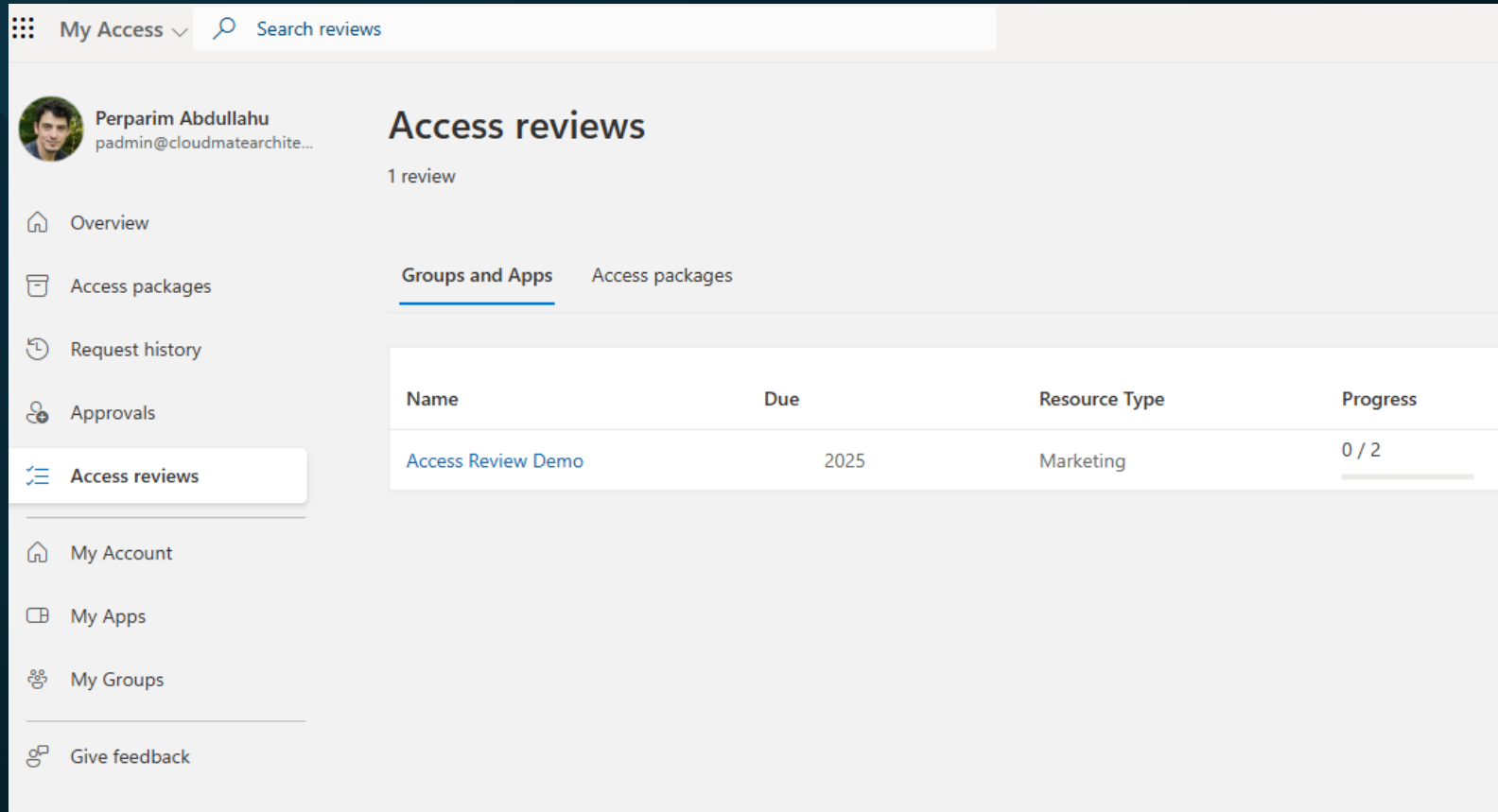
 Perparim Labs

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#AccessReviews #ZeroTrust #AzureSecurity

Reviewer Dashboard (My Access Portal)

Reviewers see all assigned reviews in one place for streamlined validation.

Reviewers work from **myaccess.microsoft.com**.



The screenshot shows the 'My Access' portal interface. At the top, there's a search bar labeled 'Search reviews'. Below it, the user's profile is displayed: Perparim Abdullahu, padmin@cloudmatearchite... The main heading is 'Access reviews' with a subtext '1 review'. A sidebar on the left contains navigation links: Overview, Access packages, Request history, Approvals, Access reviews (highlighted), My Account, My Apps, My Groups, and Give feedback. The main content area has two tabs: 'Groups and Apps' (active) and 'Access packages'. Below the tabs is a table with the following data:

Name	Due	Resource Type	Progress
Access Review Demo	2025	Marketing	0 / 2

Reviewing Assignments

Each user displays recommendations based on activity; reviewer decides Approve/Deny.

The screenshot displays the 'Access reviews' page in the Microsoft Entra ID portal. The user 'Perparim Abdullahu' is logged in. The page title is 'Access Review Demo'. A message states: 'Please review assignment to 'Marketing' [See details](#)'. Below this, there are action buttons: 'Approve', 'Deny', 'Don't know', 'Reset decisions', and 'Accept recommendations'. A table lists the reviews:

Name ↑	Recommendation ⓘ	Decision	Reviewed by
Laura Johnson laura.johnson@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com	Approve		Details
Perparim Abdullahu padmin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com	Approve		Details

The left sidebar contains navigation links: Overview, Access packages, Request history, Approvals, Access reviews (selected), My Account, My Apps, My Groups, and Give feedback.

User Detail View

Sign-in activity shown (e.g., last login within 30 days) to support approval reasoning.

Perparim Abdullahu

padmin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com

Last signed in less than 30 days ago2025)

☒ Approve (recommended)

User has signed into this tenant in last 30 days

☐ Deny

☐ Don't know

Reason *

Submit

Cancel

Professional Justification (Modal)

Example:

Verified active project involvement within Marketing team.
Access remains necessary to perform job functions tied to group resources.

The screenshot displays the Microsoft Entra ID 'Access reviews' interface. On the left is a navigation pane with options: Overview, Access packages, Request history, Approvals, Access reviews (selected), My Account, My Apps, My Groups, and Give feedback. The main content area is titled 'Access Review Demo' and includes a back arrow, the user 'Perparim Abdullahu' (padmin@cloudmatearchite...), and a prompt to 'Please review assignment to 'Marketing'' with a 'See details' link. Below this are action buttons: Approve, Deny, Don't know, Reset decisions, and a filter icon. A table lists two reviewers: Laura Johnson (laura.johnson@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com) and Perparim Abdullahu (padmin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com), both with an 'Approve' recommendation. A modal dialog titled 'Approve continued access' is open, showing a message: 'You and other reviewers can make changes until the review ends. 2 approvals'. It includes a 'Reason' field with the text: 'Verified active project involvement within the Marketing team. Access remains necessary to perform job functions tied to group resources.' and 'Submit' and 'Cancel' buttons. The background interface also shows a table with columns 'Decision' and 'Reviewed by'.

Decision	Reviewed by
	Details
	Details

Final Decisions Logged

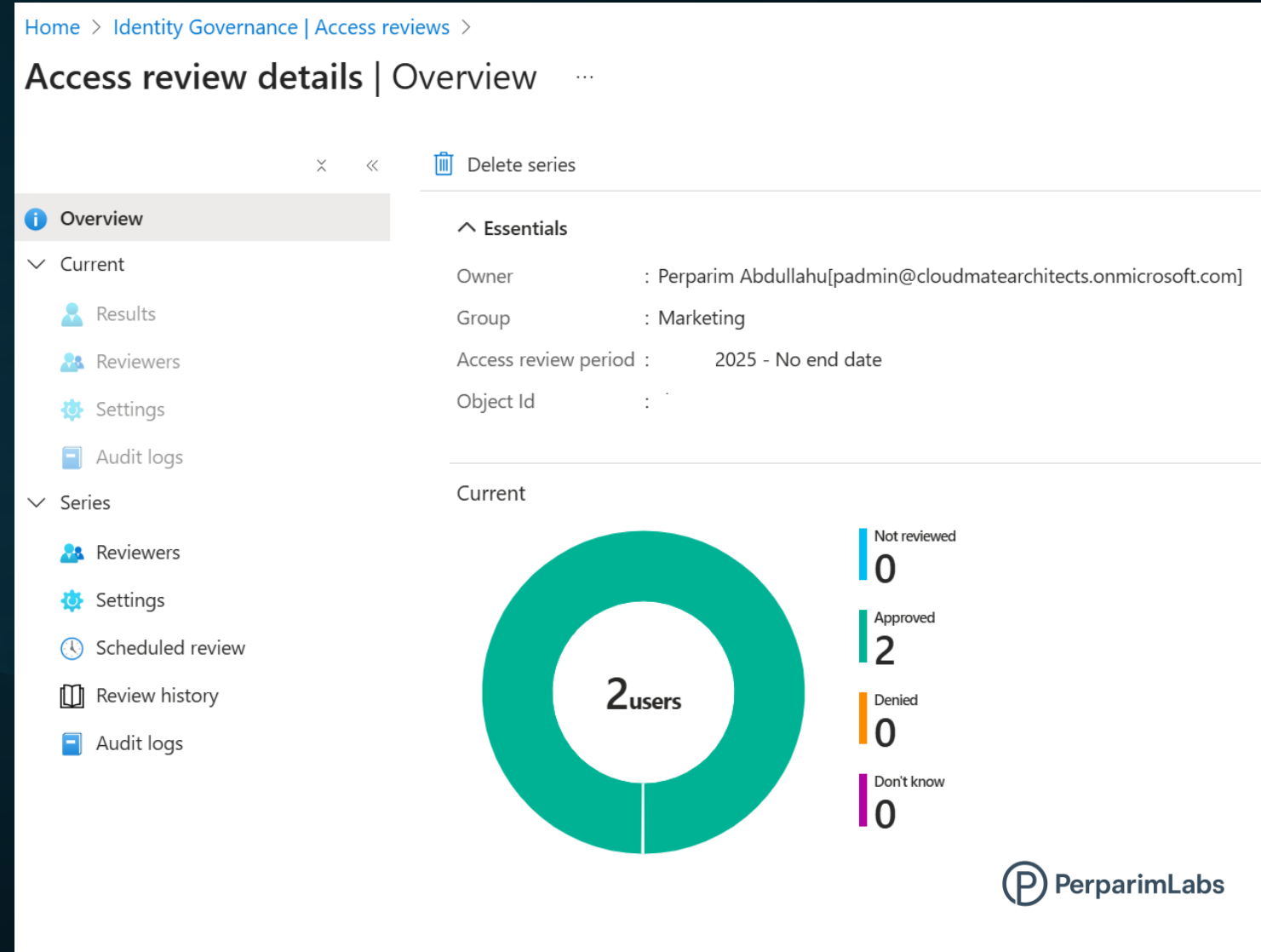
Decisions stored with reviewer identity — full traceability achieved.
Both users approved; reviewer identity tracked.

Traceable accountability.

Decision	Reviewed by
Approved	Perparim Abdullahu
Approved	Perparim Abdullahu

Results Overview

Visualization of completed reviews (Approved: 2, Denied: 0) confirming compliance posture.



Audit Log Verification

Audit entry recorded under *Access Reviews* → “Create Access Review” → *Success*.

Microsoft Azure

Search resources, services, and docs (G+I)

Copilot

padmin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com

Home > Identity Governance > Access reviews > Access review details

Access review details | Audit logs

Download Refresh Columns Got feedback?

This view will soon be replaced with a view that includes custom security attribute logs, infinite scrolling, and column reordering. Try out our new audits preview. →

Date: Last 7 days Show dates as: Local Service: Access Reviews Category: All Activity: All Add filters

Date	Service	Category	Activity	Status
10:54:21 AM	Access Reviews	Policy	Create access review	Success

Audit Log Details

Activity	Target(s)	Modified Properties
Date		2025, 10:54 AM
Activity Type		Create access review
Correlation ID		
Category		Policy
Status		success
Status reason		
User Agent		LoadBalancerAgent
Initiated by (actor)		
Type		User
Display Name		Perparim Abdullah
Object ID		
IP address		
User Principal Name		padmin@cloudmatearchitects.onmicrosoft.com
Additional Details		
oid		
tid		
wids		
ipaddr		

Review Status Active

Access Review transitions to *Active* state for recurring automation — embodying continuous verification.

Home > Identity Governance

Identity Governance | Access reviews

+ New access review Columns Refresh Got feedback?

Dashboard

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Filter by access review type

Search by name or owner

Name	Resource	Status
Access Review Demo	Group Marketing	Active



Final Takeaway

Microsoft Entra Access Reviews = Automation + Accountability.
They continuously verify entitlements, enforce least privilege, and provide transparent audit evidence—strengthening any Zero Trust architecture.