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Component 1- Coursework: Portfolio

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Introduction

Digital software applications play an important role in modern business by supporting communication, organisation, data management and collaboration. This assessment explores different software solutions and examines how their features can support a range of business activities. It covers e-commerce solutions such as Wix and Shopify, mind mapping software, Microsoft Office applications, and communication and collaboration tools. The assessment also includes practical activities demonstrating selected software features, including Mail Merge in Word, the IF function in Excel, email communication using Gmail and meeting scheduling through Zoom. By combining research, analysis and practical evidence, the assessment provides an understanding of how different digital solutions can be applied in modern business environments.

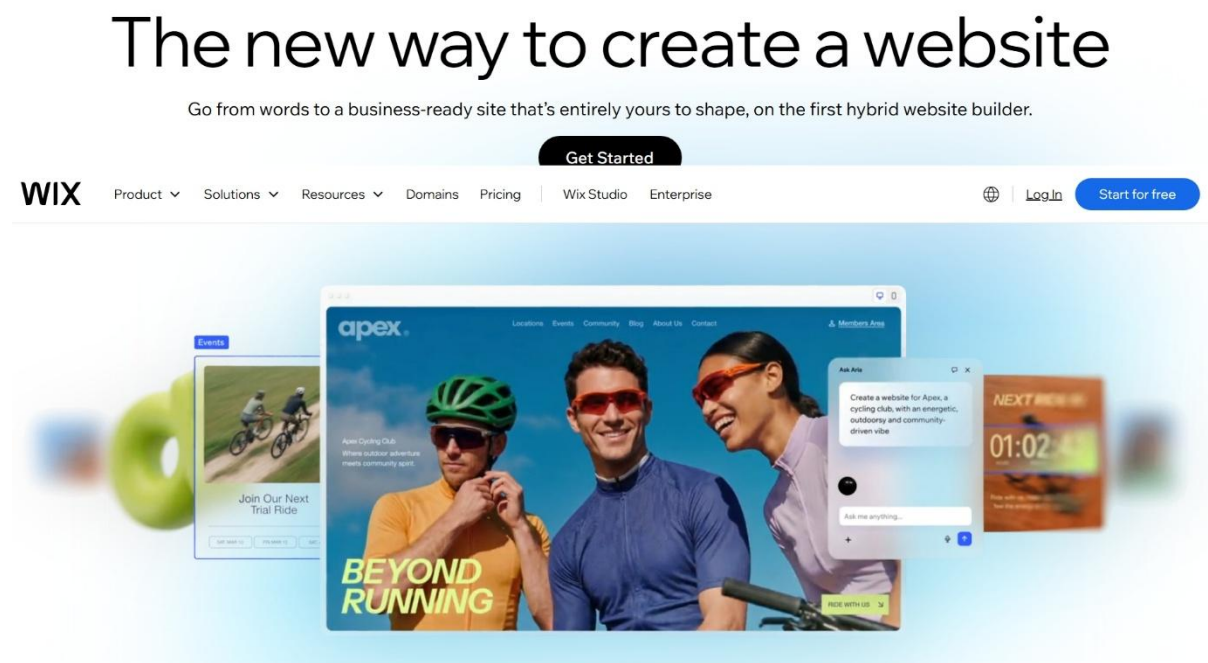
Task 1. e-Commerce Website builders/software solutions

1.1 Wix

Wix is a cloud-based website builder that allows users to create professional websites without requiring advanced programming knowledge. Its drag-and-drop editor makes it possible to customise pages by adding text, images, videos, contact forms and other elements. This makes the platform accessible to beginners, students, freelancers and small businesses that want to establish an online presence [1].

One of the main advantages of Wix is the range of tools available within the platform. Users can choose from different templates and add features such as image galleries, blogs, contact forms and basic e-commerce functions. The availability of these built-in tools means that different types of websites can be created without the need to install additional software. Wix also provides responsive templates, allowing websites to be viewed across desktop and mobile devices [1].

During this project, I used Wix to create my portfolio website. At first, it took some time to understand where some of the editing tools were located, but the platform became easier to use as I gained more experience with it. I was able to select a template and customise the content and design according to my needs. This practical experience also helped me understand some of the basic concepts involved in website design and online publishing.



Wix → Figure 1. Wix website builder interface.

Overall, Wix provides an accessible and flexible solution for creating websites, particularly for users with limited experience in web development. Its combination of templates, visual editing tools and built-in features can help individuals and small organisations create professional-looking websites while developing practical digital skills [1].

1.2 Shopify

Shopify is a cloud-based e-commerce platform that enables individuals and businesses to create and manage online stores without requiring advanced technical knowledge. Unlike traditional website builders, Shopify is specifically designed for online selling and provides tools for product management, secure payments, inventory control and order processing. This makes it suitable for entrepreneurs, small businesses and larger organisations that want to sell products through the internet [2].

One of Shopify's main strengths is its wide range of built-in e-commerce features. Users can customise the appearance of their online store, organise products into collections, manage customer orders and integrate different payment and shipping options. The platform also includes marketing and analytics tools that help businesses monitor sales performance and improve customer engagement.

During this project, I used Shopify for the first time to create a simple online store. Initially, I found the platform more complex than Wix because it offers many features related to online retail. However, after exploring the interface and following the setup process, I was able to add products, upload images, write product descriptions and customise the store layout. This practical experience improved my understanding of how e-commerce platforms support online businesses.

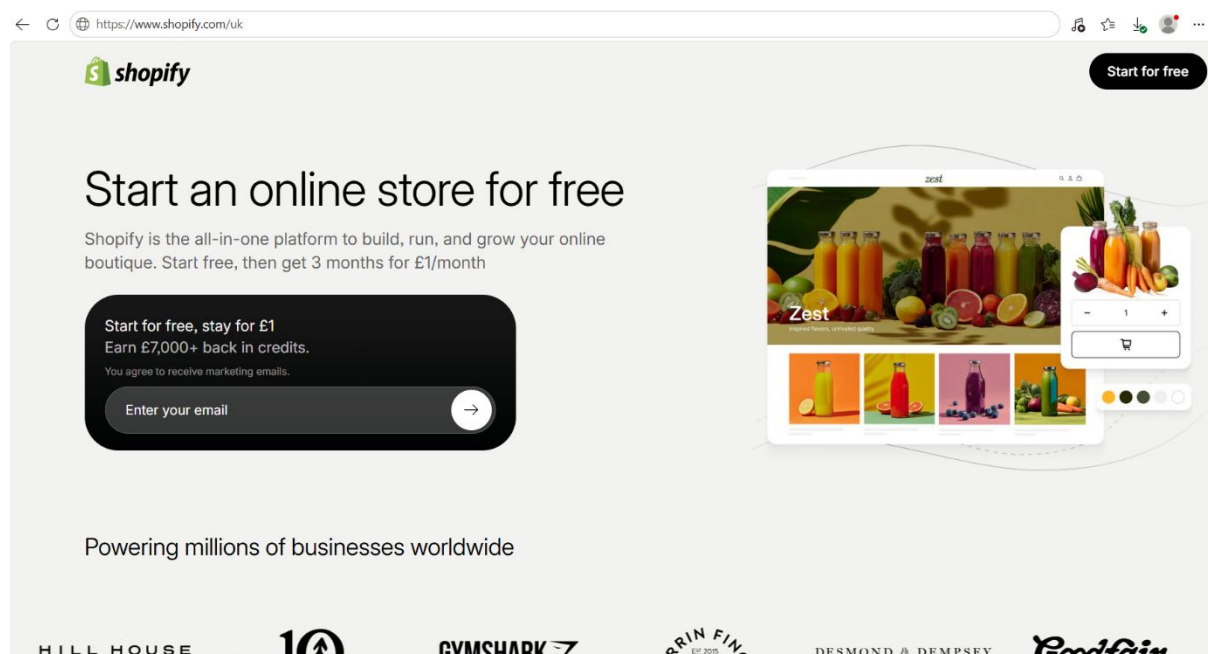


Figure 2. Shopify e-commerce platform interface.

Overall, Shopify provides a comprehensive solution for creating and managing online stores. Although it has a steeper learning curve than Wix, its extensive tools and business-focused features make it an effective platform for organisations that want to establish and expand their online presence [2].

Task 2. Mind-map of contemporary software applications

2. Mind mapping and the benefits of using mind mapping

Mind mapping is one of the most effective visual ways to organise ideas using a central topic and branches. Through mind mapping, it is possible to organise complex ideas without forgetting important details. Digital mind maps can also display connections between ideas, words and information through a combination of text and visual elements, helping users organise knowledge and concepts more clearly [3].

Mind mapping is useful for business operations because it can support planning, problem-solving and knowledge sharing. It helps people combine different ideas and information, which can contribute to discussions and decision-making. Within organisations, the development of employees' and managers' mental maps can also be influenced by knowledge sharing, making it relevant to organisational decision-making and business development [4].

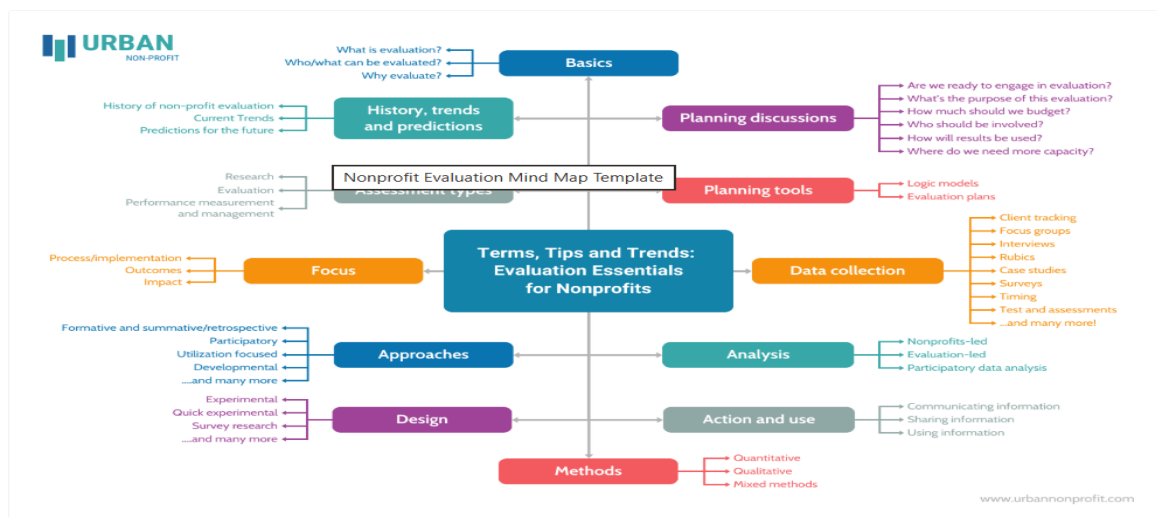


Figure 3. Example of a professional mind map for nonprofit evaluation.

Source: Urban Institute.

A mind map makes use of different cognitive skills, including words, images, numbers, logic, rhythm, colours, and creativity. For this reason, it is considered a powerful technique for organising information and generating new ideas. By using these skills together, mind mapping helps people discover solutions and opportunities that might otherwise remain hidden, making it easier to navigate complex problems and achieve better results [5].

2.2 Create a mind map of contemporary software applications

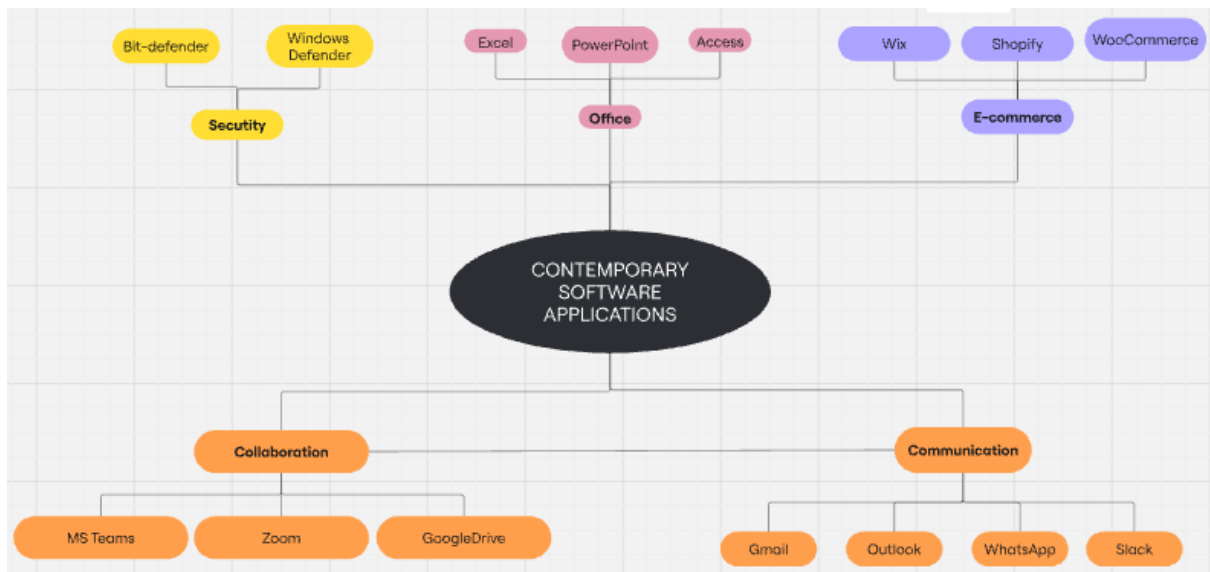


Figure 4. Contemporary software applications mind map created using Miro.

Source: Author's own work.

[View the Mind Map on Miro](#)

Task 3. Office Applications

3.1 Four office software solutions for business operations

Ms Word



Microsoft Word is a word-processing application developed by Microsoft. It is widely used by businesses to create, edit, format and share professional documents such as reports, letters, contracts, invoices and meeting minutes. Its features include templates, styles, tables, hyperlinks, comments, document conversion and Mail Merge, which can improve productivity and support professional communication [6].

In business environments, Microsoft Word is used to prepare formal documents, business correspondence, meetings agendas, company policies, and other professional records. It helps employees communicate information clearly and maintain consistent document formatting. One of its main benefits is that users can produce well-structured documents and automate repetitive tasks. However, some advanced features may require additional knowledge and practice, particularly for inexperienced users.

Fig 5 below shows the Microsoft Word interface and some of its main tools. The ribbon provides access to features such as formatting, inserting content, page layout and references, which support the creation and organisation of professional documents.

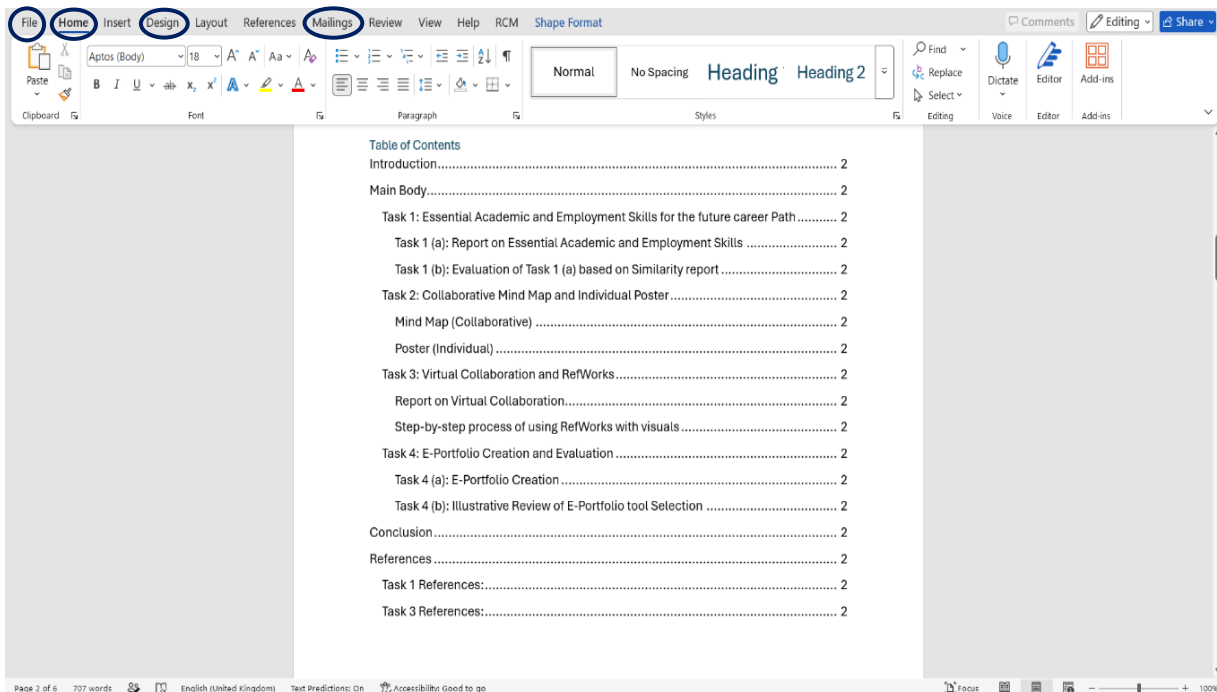


Fig 5: Microsoft Word interface

Major Features Word

Fig 6 below shows the Templates available in Microsoft Word. Templates provide ready-made document layouts that help users produce professional documents more quickly, save time and maintain consistency.

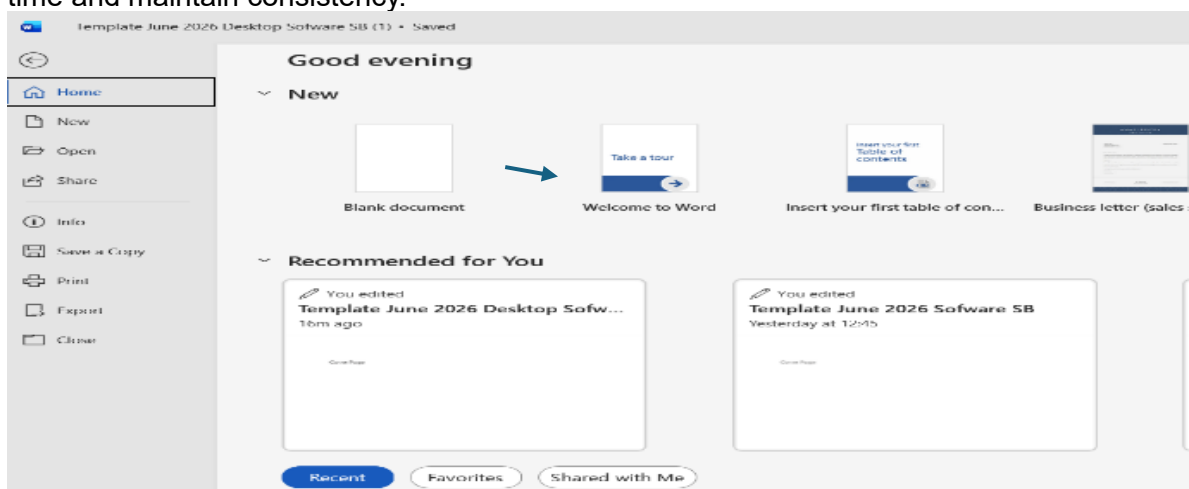


Fig 6: Microsoft Word Templates

Fig 7 below shows the Styles and Formatting feature in Microsoft Word. Styles allow users to apply consistent headings and formatting throughout a document, making longer documents easier to read, navigate and edit.

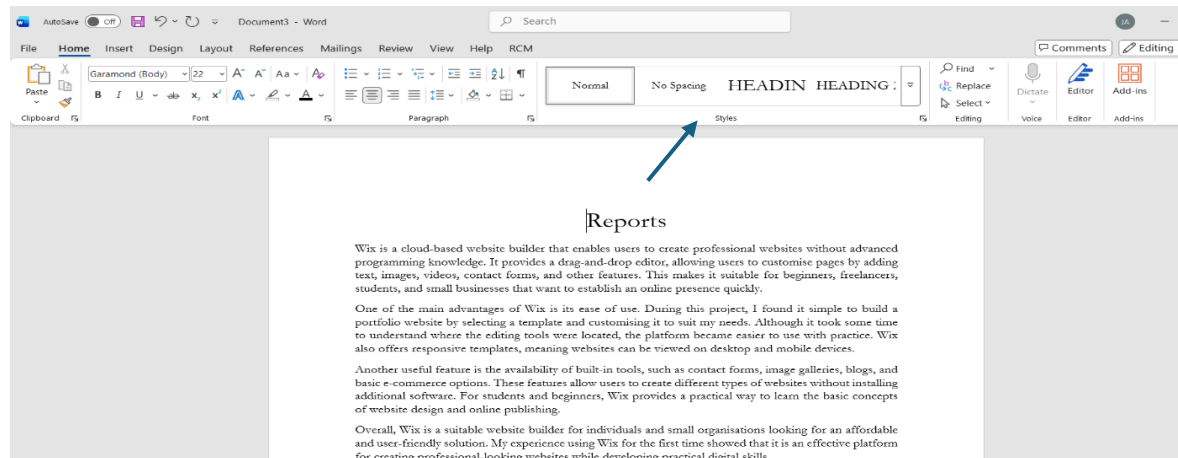


Fig 7: Styles and Formatting

Fig 8 below shows the Themes feature in Microsoft Word. Themes apply consistent colours, fonts and effects across a document, helping businesses maintain a professional and consistent visual identity.

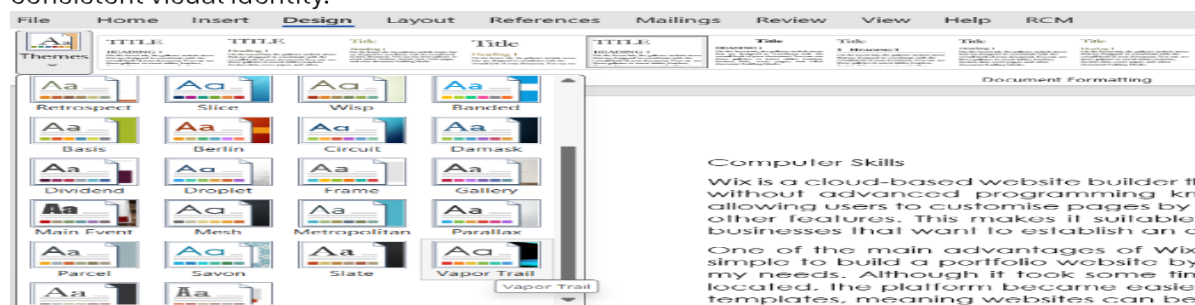


Fig 8: Microsoft Word Themes

Fig 9 below shows the Mail Merge feature in Microsoft Word. Mail Merge enables users to create personalised letters, emails, labels and envelopes for multiple recipients automatically, saving time and reducing repetitive work.

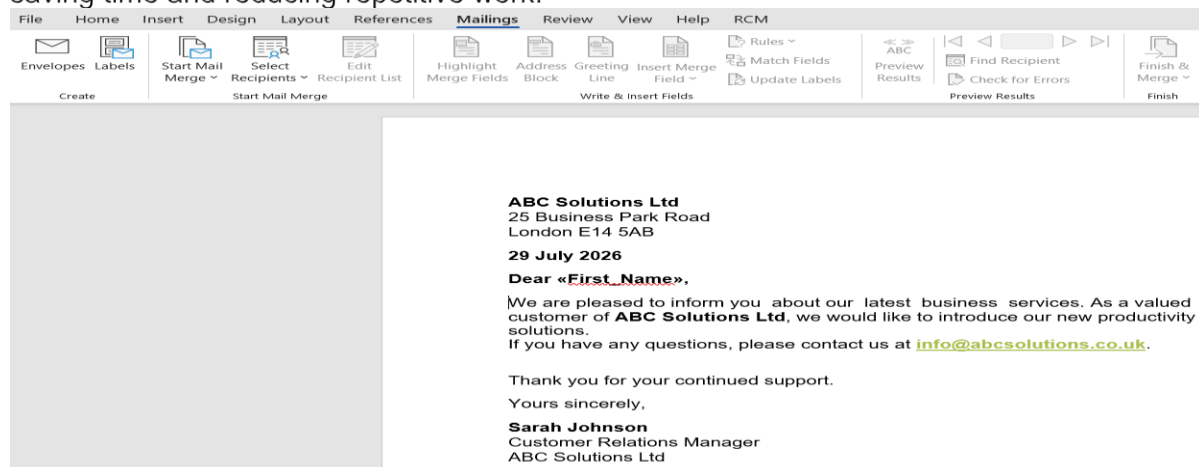


Fig 9: Mail Merge

Ms Excel



Microsoft Excel is a spreadsheet application widely used for organising, calculating and analysing business data. It provides numerous functions and features that can be combined to solve different business problems and support activities such as data management, forecasting and statistical analysis [7].

Excel can improve efficiency by performing calculations automatically and presenting information through tables and charts. However, complex formulas can be difficult for inexperienced users, and errors in formulas or data entry can produce inaccurate results.

Fig 10 below shows the Microsoft Excel Home tab, which contains the main editing tools used to enter and format data, change fonts and cell styles, align content, and perform basic calculations. These features help users create clear and well-organized spreadsheets.

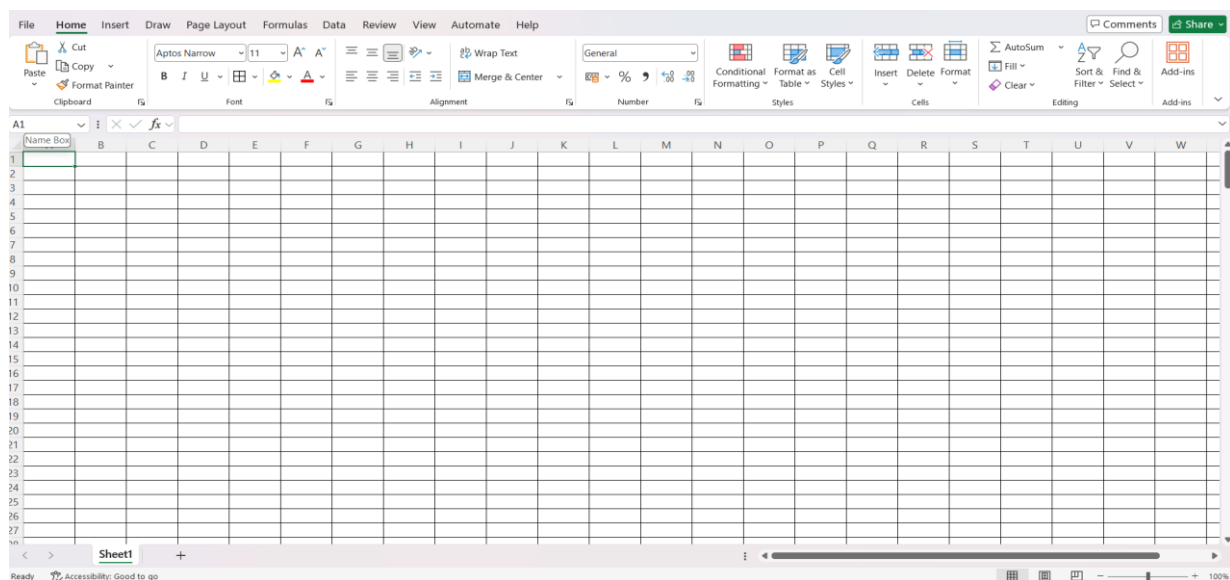


Fig 10: Microsoft Excel Home tab

Major Features Excel

Fig 11 below shows the Formulas tab in Microsoft Excel. It allows users to perform calculations using built-in functions such as SUM, AVERAGE and IF. These tools help analyse data accurately and efficiently, reducing manual calculations and improving productivity.

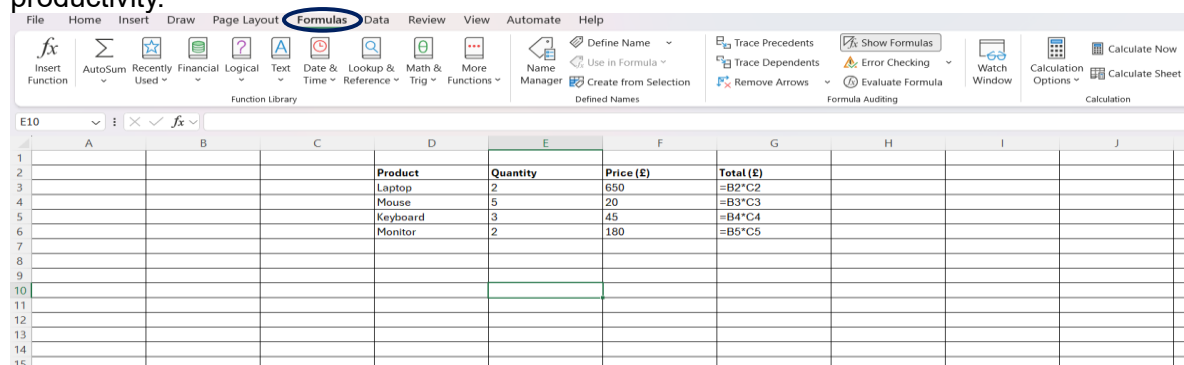


Fig 11: Microsoft Excel Formulas

Fig 12 below shows the Insert tab in Microsoft Excel, where users can create charts to transform data into visual information. Charts help users compare values, identify trends and present data more clearly, making reports easier to understand.

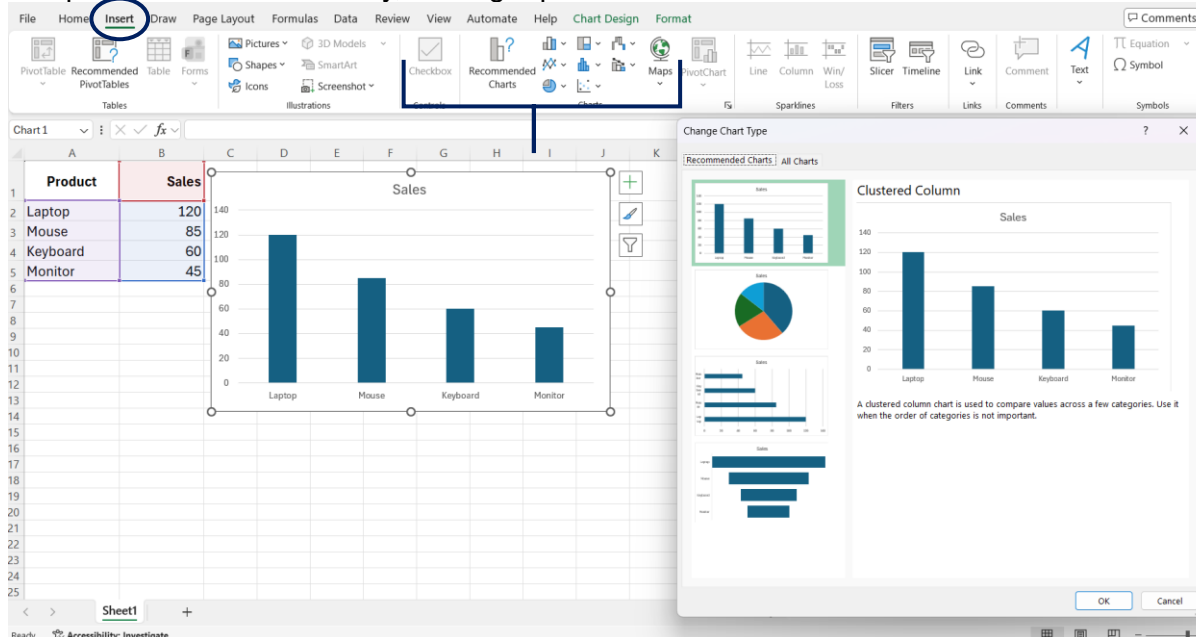


Fig 12: Microsoft Excel Insert (Charts)

Fig 13 below shows the Data tab in Microsoft Excel, focusing on the Sort and Filter tools. Sort arranges data in ascending or descending order, while Filter displays only the records that match specific criteria. These tools make large datasets easier to organise and analyse.

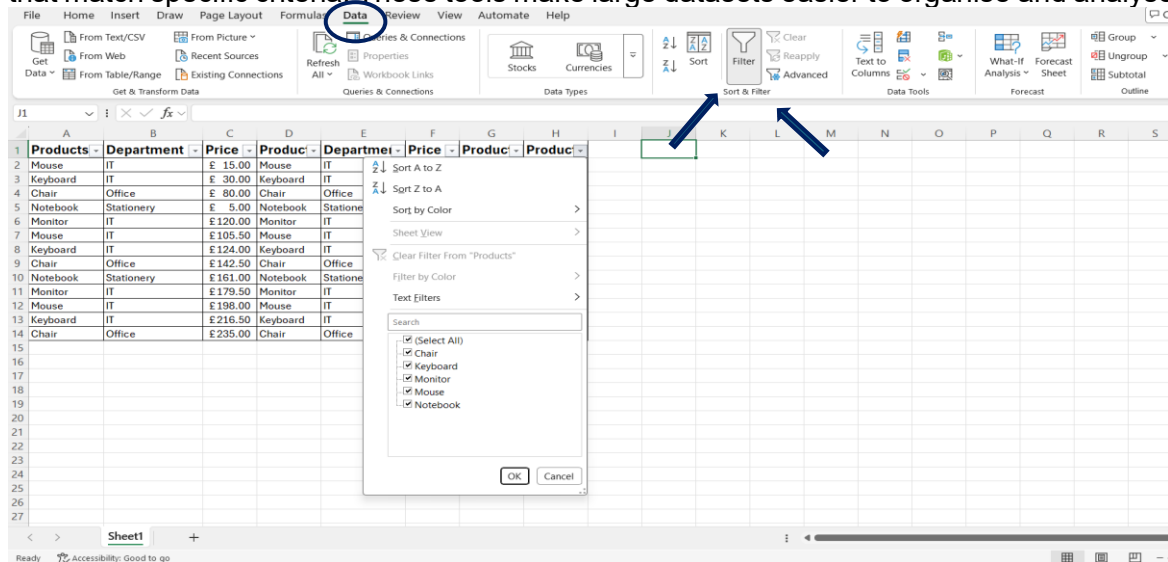


Fig 13: Microsoft Excel Data (Sort & Filter)

Ms PowerPoint



Microsoft PowerPoint is presentation software commonly used to communicate information visually through a sequence of slides. It allows users to combine text and graphics and display the presentation on a screen, making it useful for business meetings, training sessions and professional presentations [8].

Its main benefit is the ability to organise information visually and present complex ideas in a structured format. However, presentations can become less effective when slides contain excessive text or when users rely too heavily on the presentation rather than explaining the information themselves.

Fig 14 below shows the PowerPoint Home page, where users can create a new presentation or open an existing one. It also provides access to templates and recently opened files, helping users start and organise presentations efficiently.

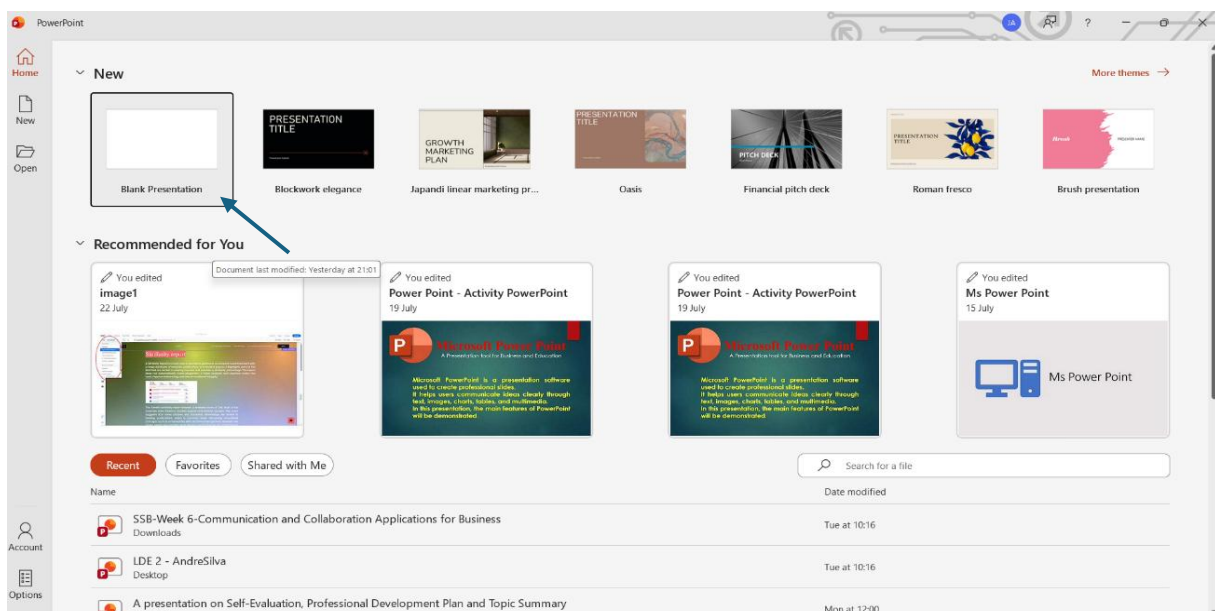


Fig 14: PowerPoint Home page

Major Features PowerPoint

Fig 15 below shows the Insert tab in Microsoft PowerPoint. It enables users to add different types of content, including pictures, icons, charts, tables and other media. These features help create more engaging and visually effective presentations.

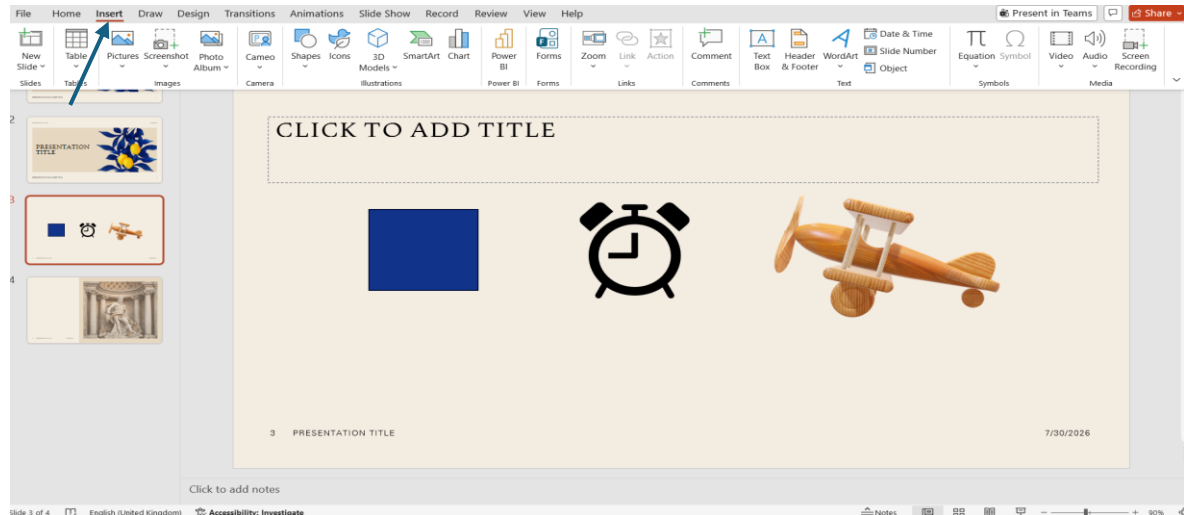


Fig 15: Microsoft PowerPoint Insert tab

Fig 16 below shows the Design tab in Microsoft PowerPoint. It allows users to customise a presentation by applying themes, colour variants and background styles. These tools help maintain a consistent and professional visual appearance across slides.

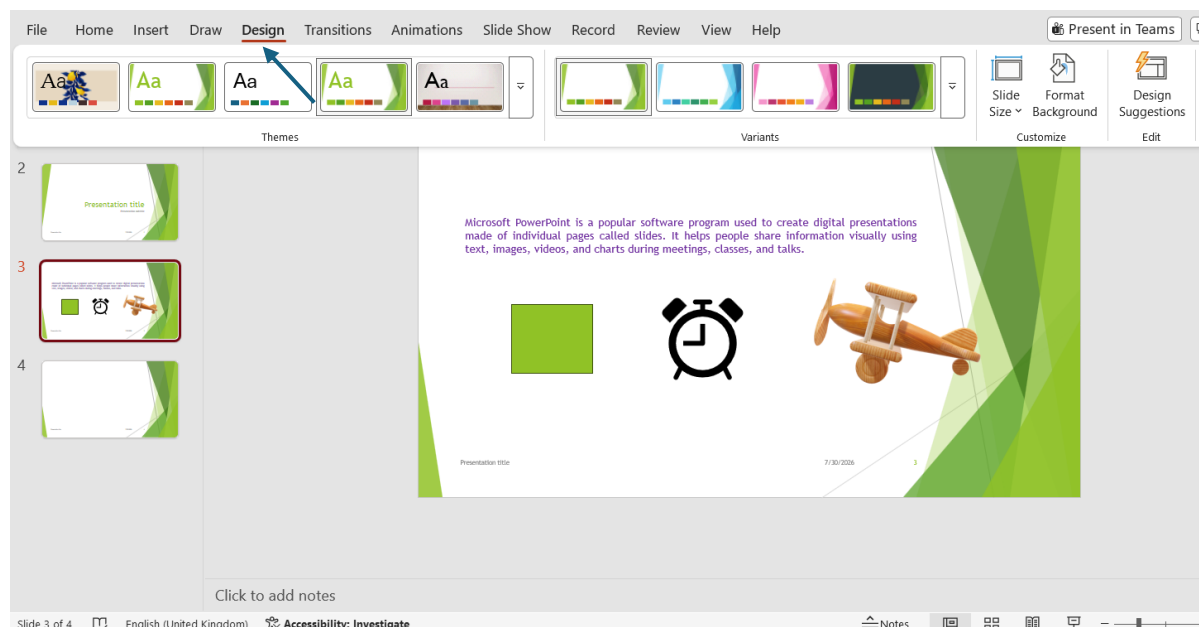


Fig 16: Microsoft PowerPoint Design tab

Fig 17 below shows the Slide Show tab in Microsoft PowerPoint. It allows users to present slides in full-screen mode and provides tools such as Presenter View, Rehearse Timings and Record Presentation to support professional presentations.

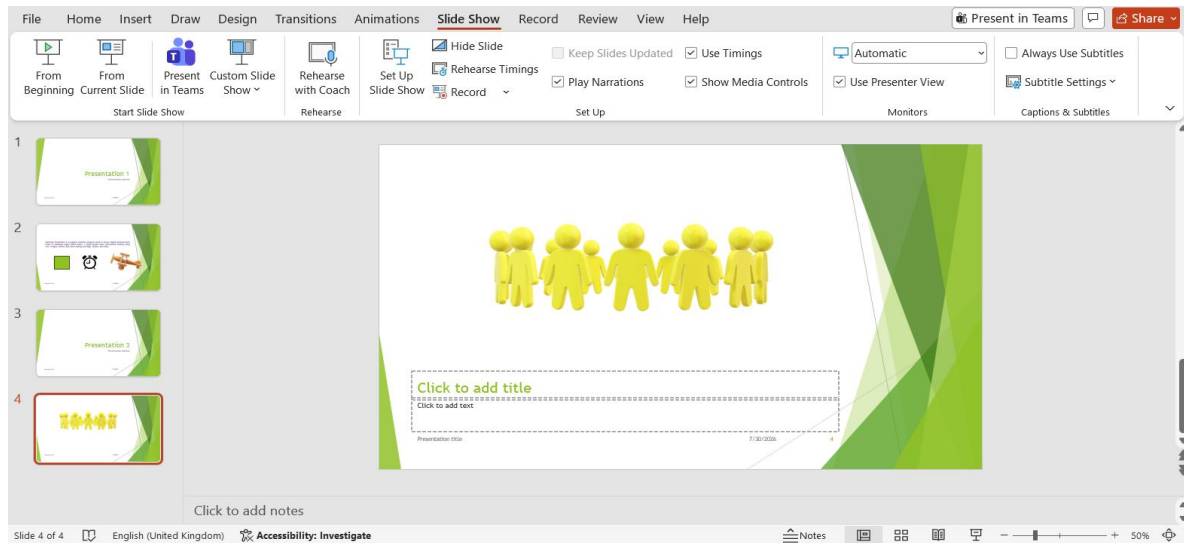


Fig 17: Microsoft PowerPoint Slide Show tab

Ms Access



Microsoft Access is a relational database management system that can be used to organise and manage structured information. Data can be stored in tables consisting of rows and columns, while relationships can be created between different sets of information. Access is also considered a convenient relational database system for beginners [9]. A major benefit is its ability to manage related information more systematically than a basic spreadsheet, particularly when working with multiple tables. However, learning database concepts such as relationships, queries and database structure can initially be challenging for new users.

Fig 18 below shows the Microsoft Access Home screen, where users can create a new blank database, choose from built-in templates, or open recently used databases. These options help users start new projects and manage existing databases efficiently.

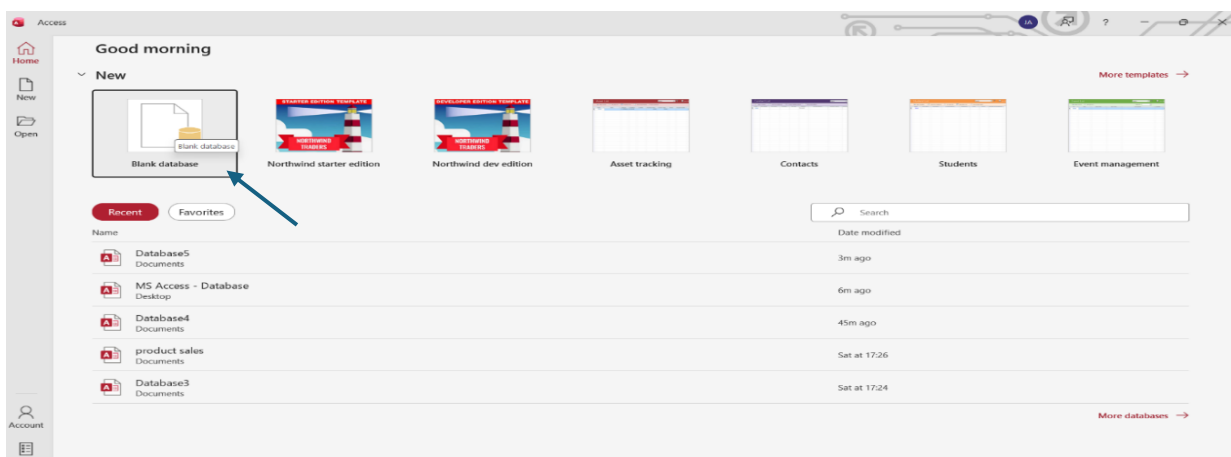


Fig 18: Microsoft Access Home screen

Fig 19 below shows the creation and design of a table in Microsoft Access. Tables are used to store and organise information into fields and records. Access allows users to define data types and use Design View to structure the table and organise database information efficiently.

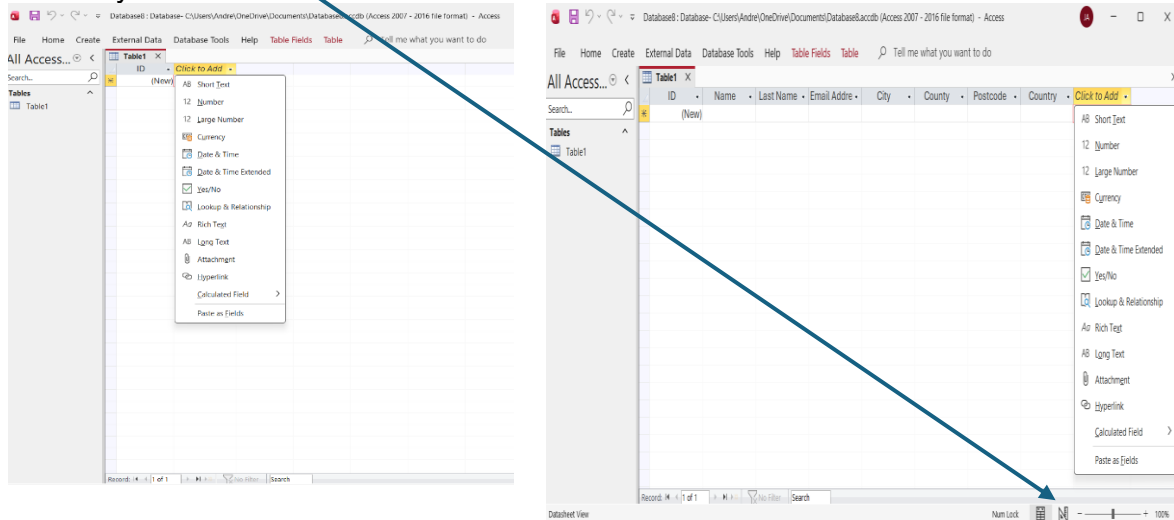


Fig 19: Microsoft Access Tables

Fig 20 below shows Table Design View in Microsoft Access. It allows users to define field names, select appropriate data types and configure field properties before entering data, helping maintain accurate and consistent information.

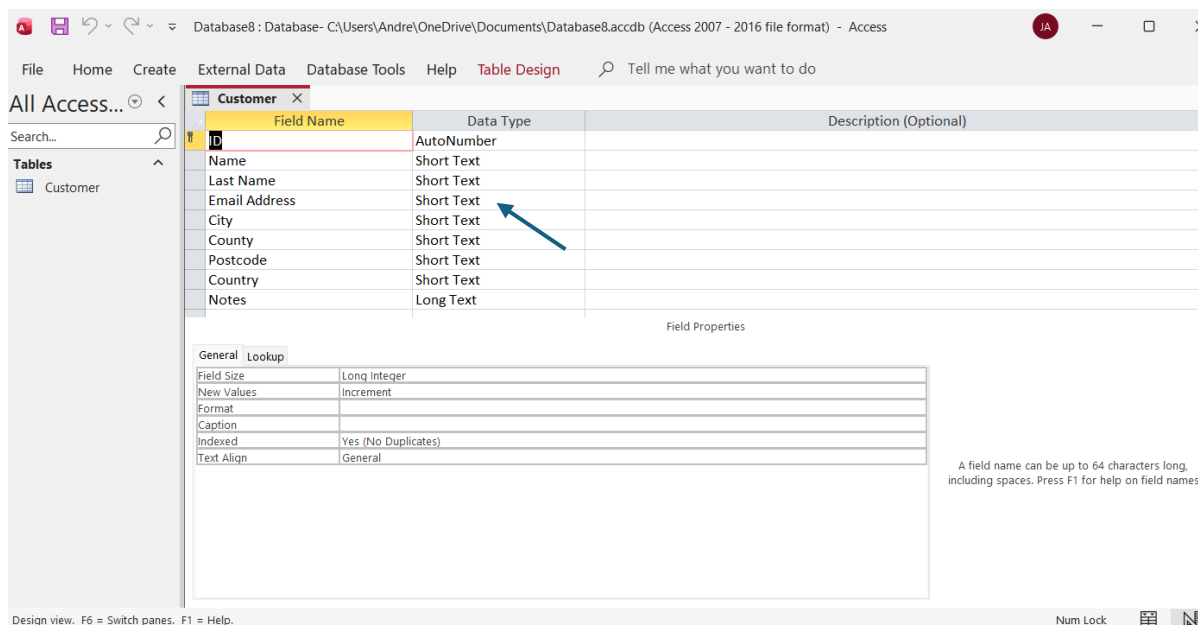


Fig 20: Microsoft Access Table Design View

Fig 21 below shows Datasheet View in Microsoft Access. It allows users to enter, edit and view records in rows and columns, making it easier to manage information while maintaining the table structure created in Design View.

ID	Name	Last Name	Email Address	City	County	Postcode	Country	Notes	Click to Add
1	Andre	Silva	silver13007@live.c	London	Canary Wharf	E14 9TP	UK		
2	Rafael	Mainardi	rafa123@live.c	Peterborough	Whittlesey	PE7 2WR	UK		
3	Liz	Souza	liz238@gmail.c	Peterborough	Cambridgeshire	PE1 5UR	UK		
4	Gabriel	Japan	gabjapan@hotmail	London	Brixton	SW9 8FR	UK		
5	Mary	Eva	maryeva@gms	London	Candem Town	WC1H 0BT	UK		
6	6 Connor	Quagliana	connor25@live	Huntingdon	Huntingshire	PE29 3LG	UK		
7	Kamal	Singh	singhkamal@l	London	Dollis Hill	NW2 6GY	UK		
8	Selim	Cinek	cinekselim@li	Cambridge	Cambridgeshire	SG8 ONU	UK		
9	Kevin	Allekotte	allekotte@live	London	Holborn	WC2H 0JG	UK		
10	Michael	Pecek	pecekal@gmai	London	Hampstead	NW3 1AB	UK		
	(New)								

Fig 21: Microsoft Access Datasheet View

Fig 22 below shows the Relationships feature in Microsoft Access. It connects tables through common fields, helping maintain data integrity, reduce duplicated information and organise related records more efficiently.

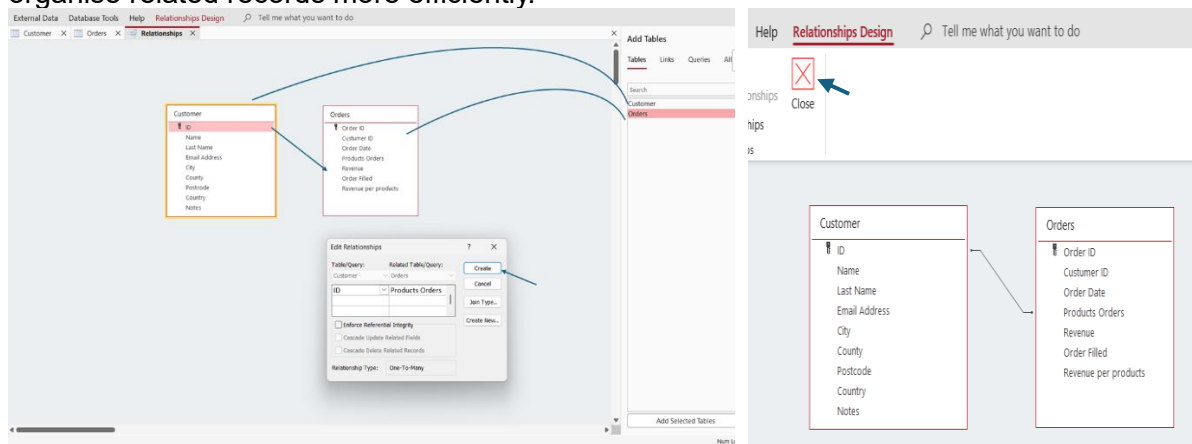


Fig 22: Microsoft Access Relationships

Major Features of MS Access

Fig 23 below shows a Form in Microsoft Access. Forms provide a user-friendly interface for entering, viewing and updating database records. They simplify data entry, reduce input errors and allow users to work with information without directly editing the tables.

The screenshot displays the Microsoft Access interface with the 'Form Layout Design' ribbon selected. The form contains the following fields:

- Name: Andre
- Last Name: Silva
- Email Address: silver13007@hotmail. Como
- City: London
- County: Canary Wharf
- Postcode: E14 9TP
- Country: UK
- Notes: (Empty text area)

Below the form is a table with the following data:

	Order ID	Customer ID	Order Date	Revenue	Order Filled	Revenue per products
*	(New)	0		£0.00	☐	

The status bar at the bottom indicates 'Record: 1 of 10' and 'No Filter'.

Fig 23: Microsoft Access Forms

Fig 24 below shows how to perform several queries. Queries are used to retrieve and organise information from one or more related tables. Query Design allows users to select specific fields, apply criteria, and display only the required records. This makes data analysis faster and supports more efficient business decision-making.

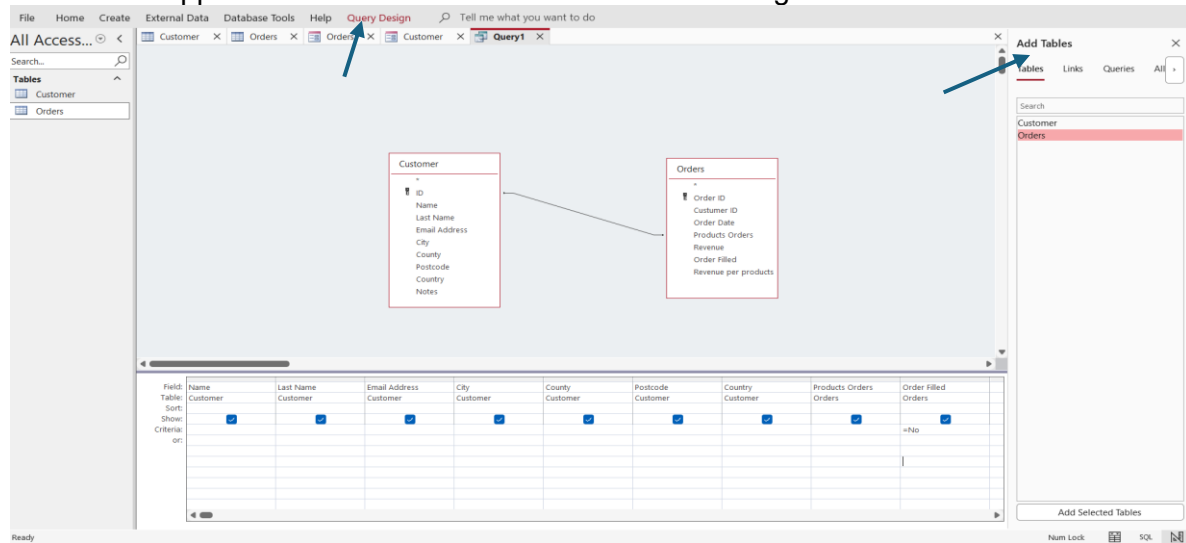


Fig 24: Queries

Fig 25 below shows the Query Results in Microsoft Access. After running the query, Access displays only the records that match the selected criteria. This makes it easier to locate specific information and analyse data without viewing the entire database.

Name	Last Name	Email Address	City	County	Postcode	Country	Products Orders	Order Filled
Michael	Pecek	pecekal@gmail	London	Hampstead	NW3 1AB	UK	10	☐
Michael	Pecek	pecekal@gmail	London	Hampstead	NW3 1AB	UK	10	☐
Michael	Pecek	pecekal@gmail	London	Hampstead	NW3 1AB	UK	10	☐

Fig 25: Microsoft Access Query Results

Fig 26 below shows SQL View in Microsoft Access. It displays the query as Structured Query Language (SQL) code, allowing users to view and edit the query directly and providing greater control over how information is retrieved from the database.

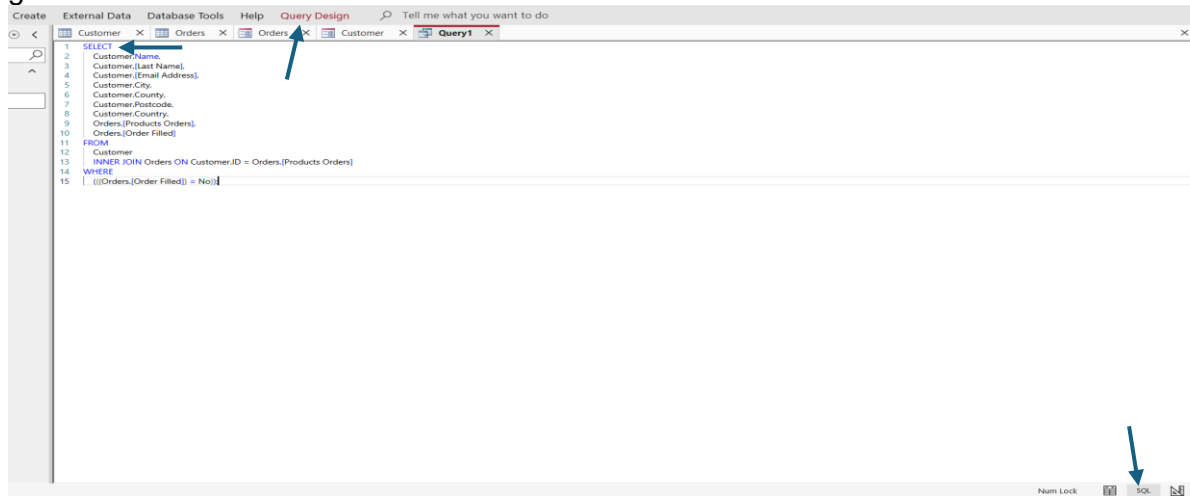


Fig 26: Microsoft Access SQL View

Fig 27 below shows the Reports feature in Microsoft Access. Reports are used to present database information in a clear and professional format, allowing users to organise and display data for printing or sharing.

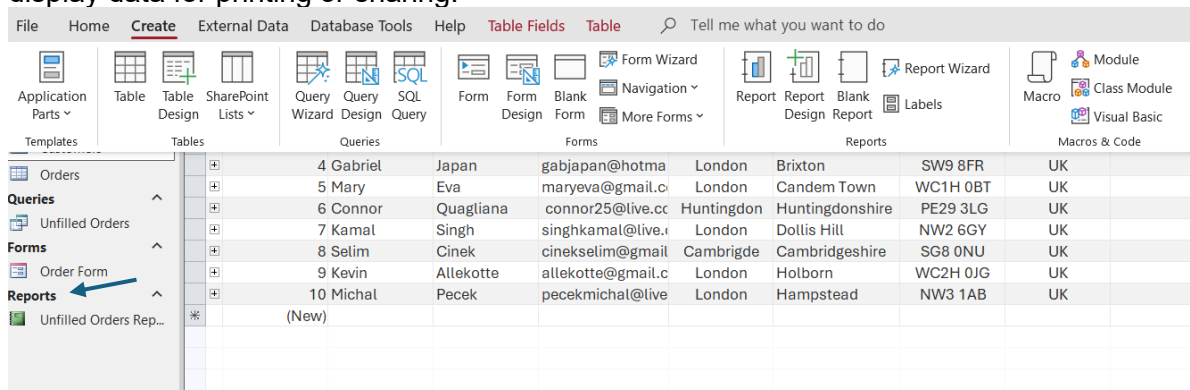


Fig 27: Microsoft Access Reports

Fig 28 below shows a completed report in Microsoft Access. Reports can be viewed, formatted and prepared for printing, allowing users to customise the layout and present business information clearly and professionally.

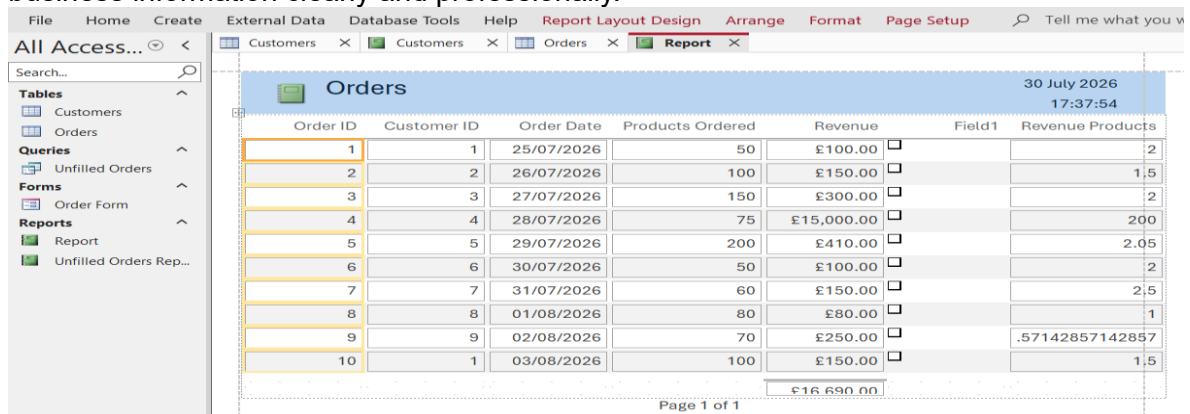
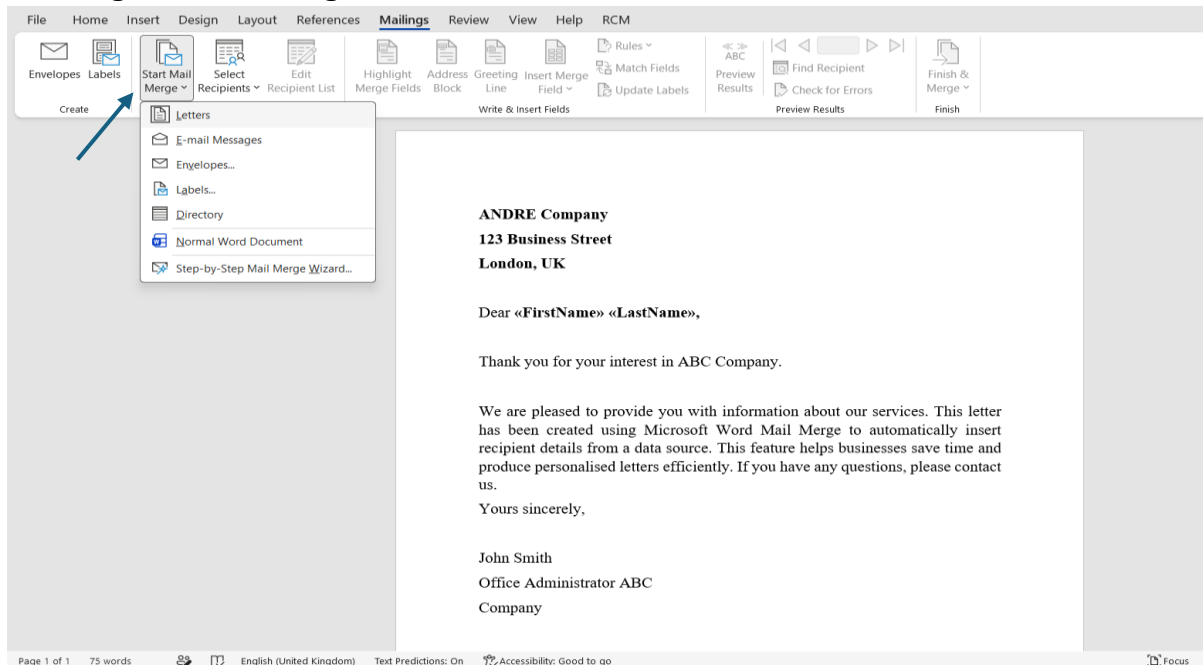


Fig 28: Microsoft Access Report Preview

3.2 Test any two features

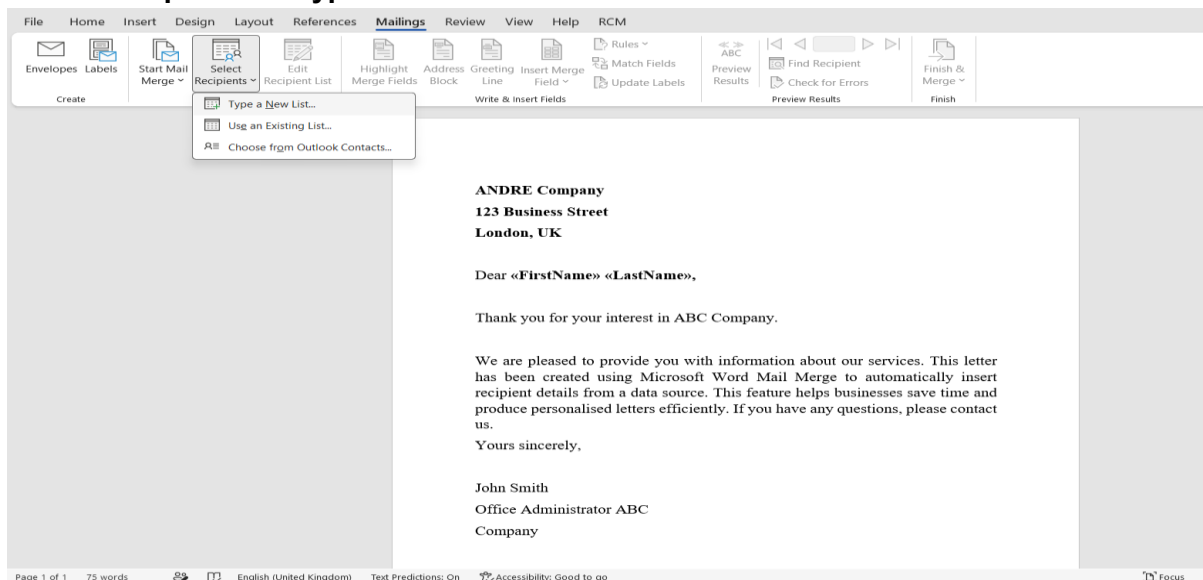
Mail Merge

Starting the Mail Merge



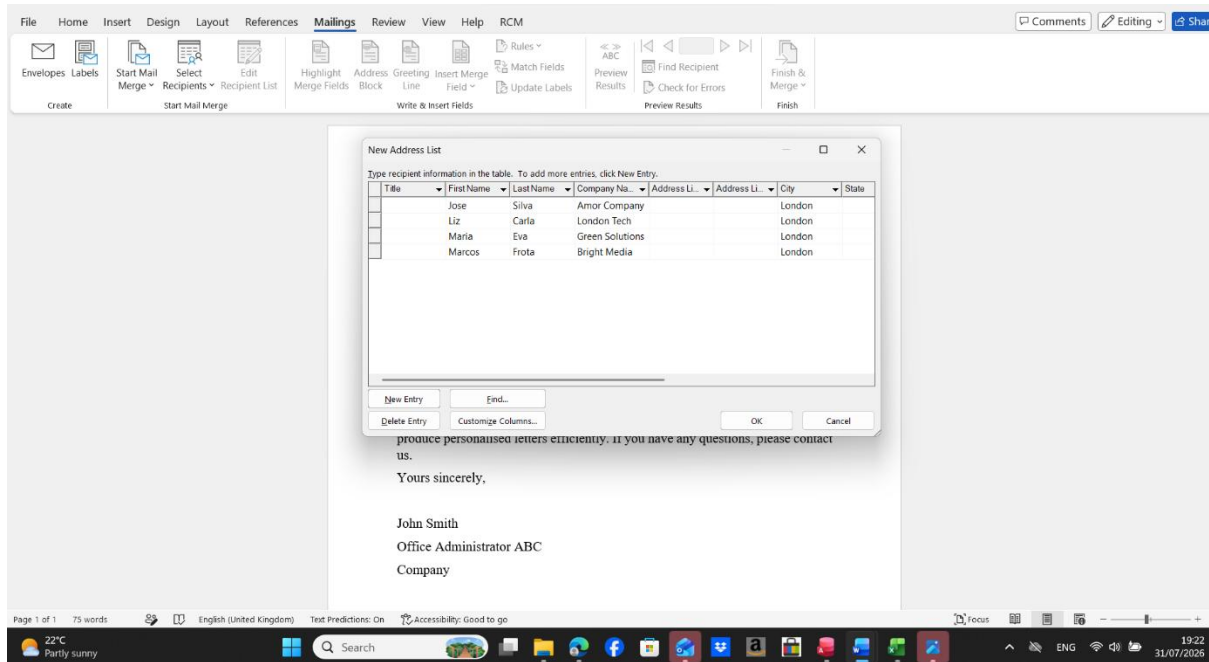
I selected the Mailings tab and used Start Mail Merge to choose Letters as the document type.

Select Recipients → Type a New List



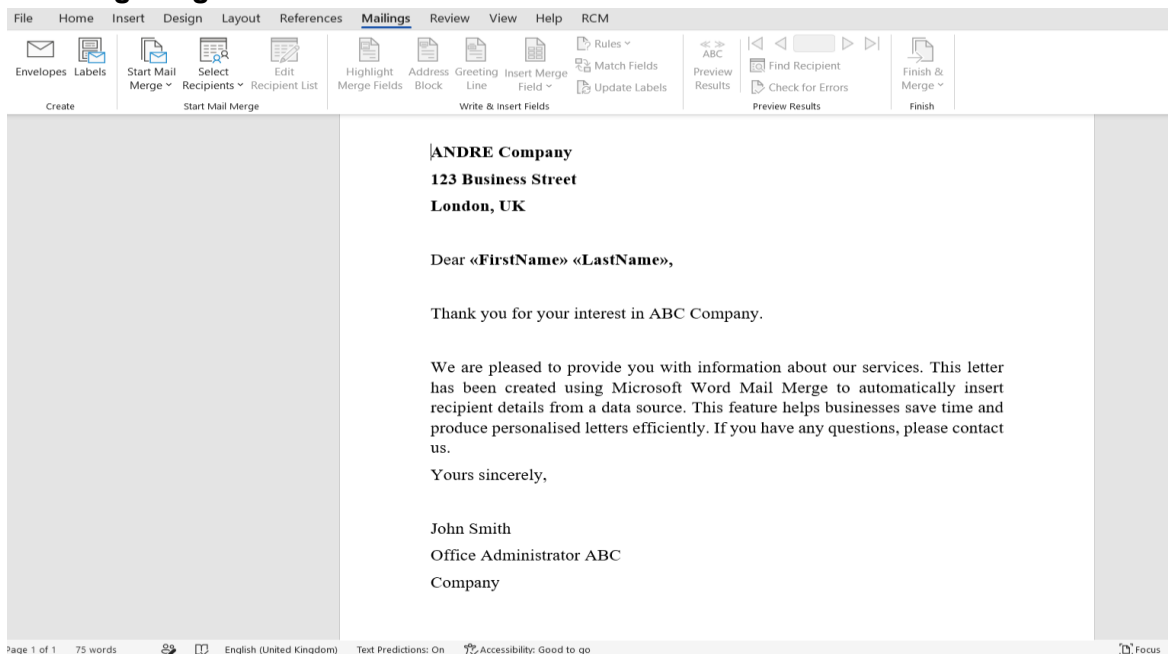
I selected Type a New List to create a new data source containing the recipient details.

Creating the Recipient List



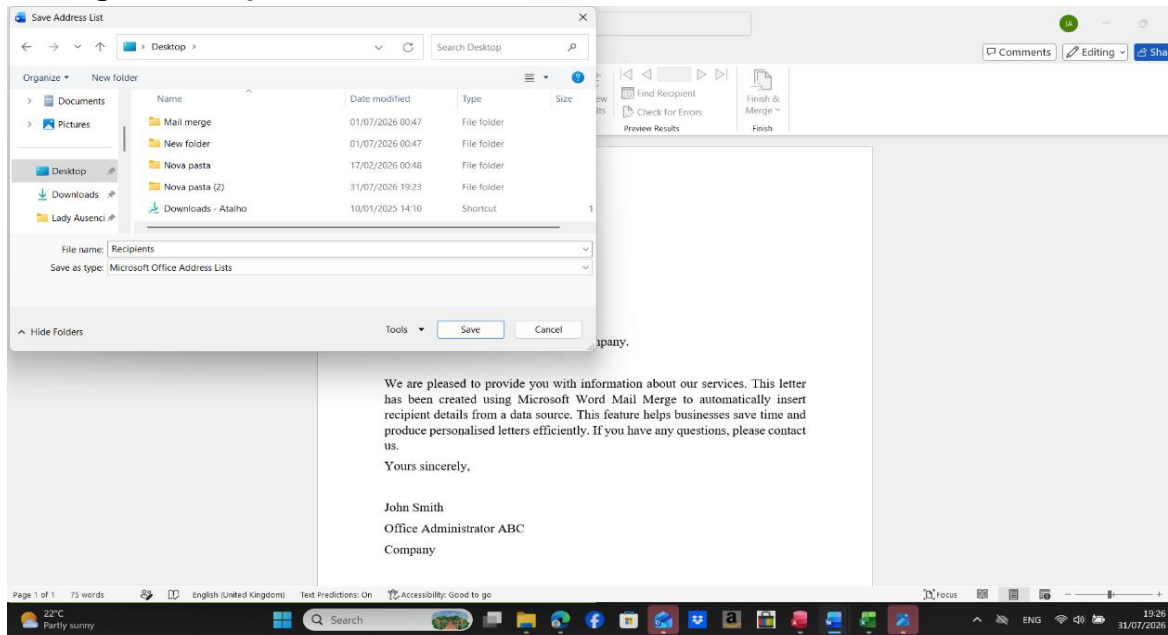
I created a recipient list containing names, company details and city information for use in the Mail Merge.

Inserting Merge Fields



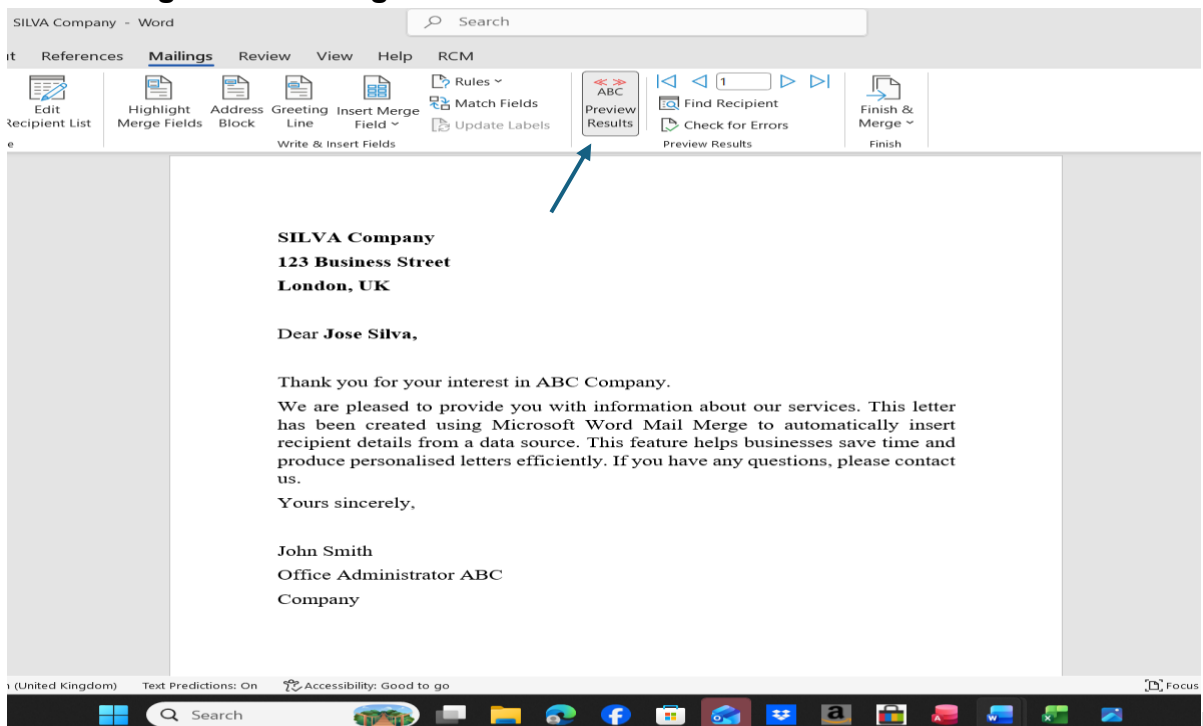
I inserted the First Name and Last Name merge fields into the letter so that each document could be personalised automatically.

Saving the Recipient List



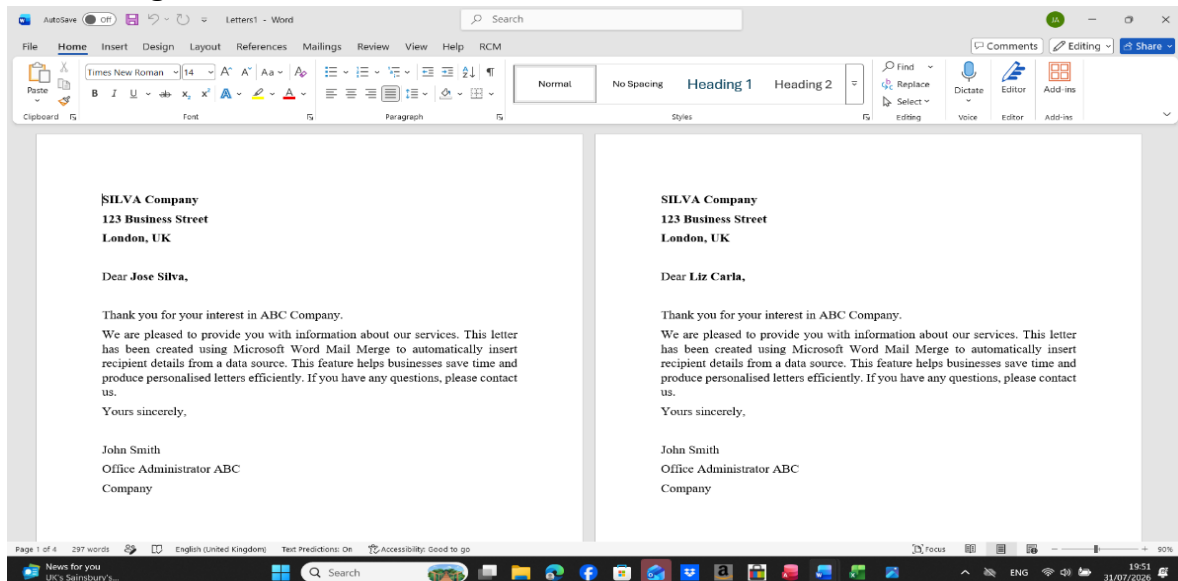
I saved the recipient list as “Recipients” so that it could be used as the data source for the Mail Merge.

Previewing the Mail Merge Results



selected Preview Results to check that the merge fields were correctly replaced with the recipient's information.

Final Merged Documents



After completing the Mail Merge, I generated individual personalised letters for each recipient. This confirmed that the Mail Merge was completed successfully.

IF Statement

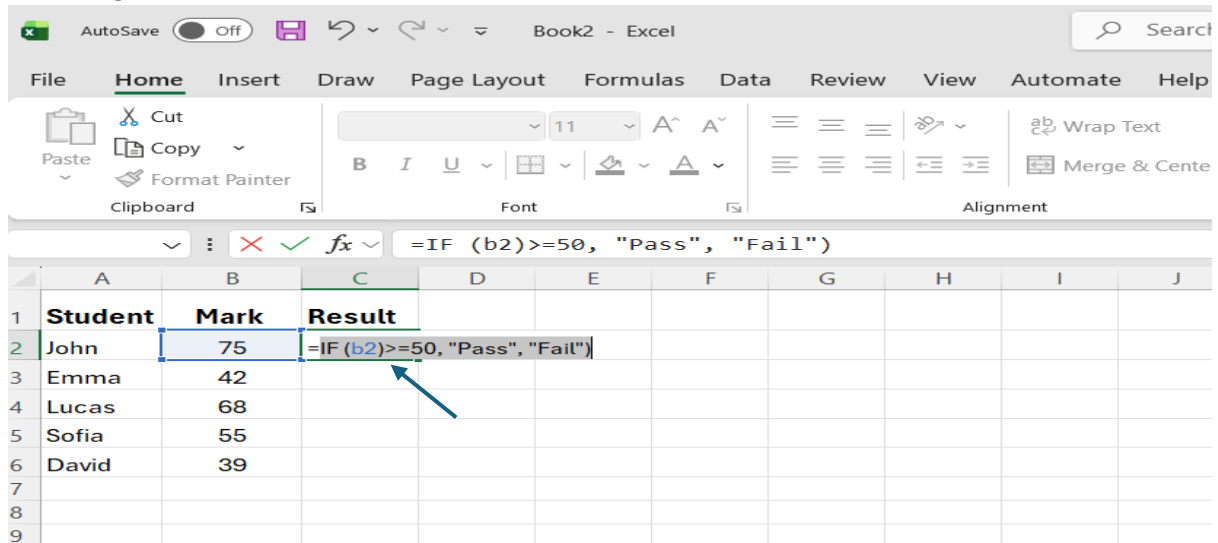
Creating the data table

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Excel interface with a table containing student names and marks. The table has columns for Student, Mark, and Result. The Result column is currently empty.

Student	Mark	Result
John	75	
Emma	42	
Lucas	68	
Sofia	55	
David	39	

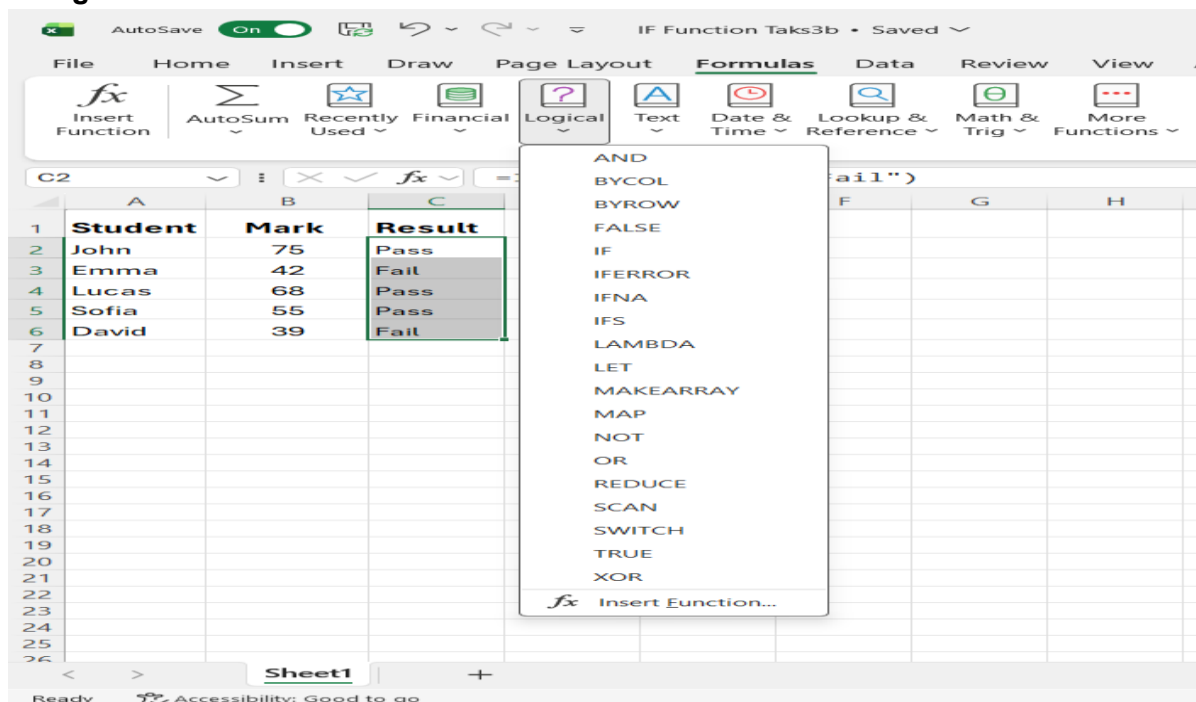
I created a simple table containing student names and marks. The Result column was added to display whether each student passed or failed.

Entering the IF Formula



In cell C2, I entered the IF formula `=IF(B2>=50,"Pass","Fail")`. The formula checks the student's mark and returns "Pass" for marks of 50 or above and "Fail" for marks below 50.

Using IF from the Formulas tab



I also accessed the IF function through the Formulas tab by selecting Logical and then IF. This provides another way to create an IF formula without typing the function directly.

Function Arguments

The Function Arguments window shows the three parts of the IF function: the logical test, the value returned when the condition is true, and the value returned when it is false.

The Function Arguments window shows the three parts of the IF function: the logical test, the value returned when the condition is true, and the value returned when it is false.

Final Results

Finally, I applied the formula to the remaining cells. Excel automatically displayed "Pass" or "Fail" according to each student's mark, confirming that the IF function worked correctly.

4.1 One contemporary Communication and one Online Collaboration

Gmail

Gmail is a communication application developed by Google that allows users to send, receive and organise emails. It is widely used for both personal and business communication because it provides a simple way to exchange messages, documents and other information online. In a business environment, Gmail can support communication between employees, customers and external organisations.

Gmail provides several useful features, including file attachments, email search, labels, spam filtering and the ability to organise messages into different categories. Users can also send messages to multiple recipients using CC and BCC. Another advantage is its integration with other Google applications, such as Google Calendar, Google Drive and Google Meet, which can make communication and organisation more efficient. Gmail also includes Smart Compose, which provides real-time suggestions while users are writing emails, helping to reduce repetitive typing and make the writing process faster [10].

One limitation is that Gmail depends on internet access for most of its functions, and businesses also need to consider privacy and security when exchanging confidential information by email. However, its accessibility and range of features make Gmail a useful communication tool for modern businesses.

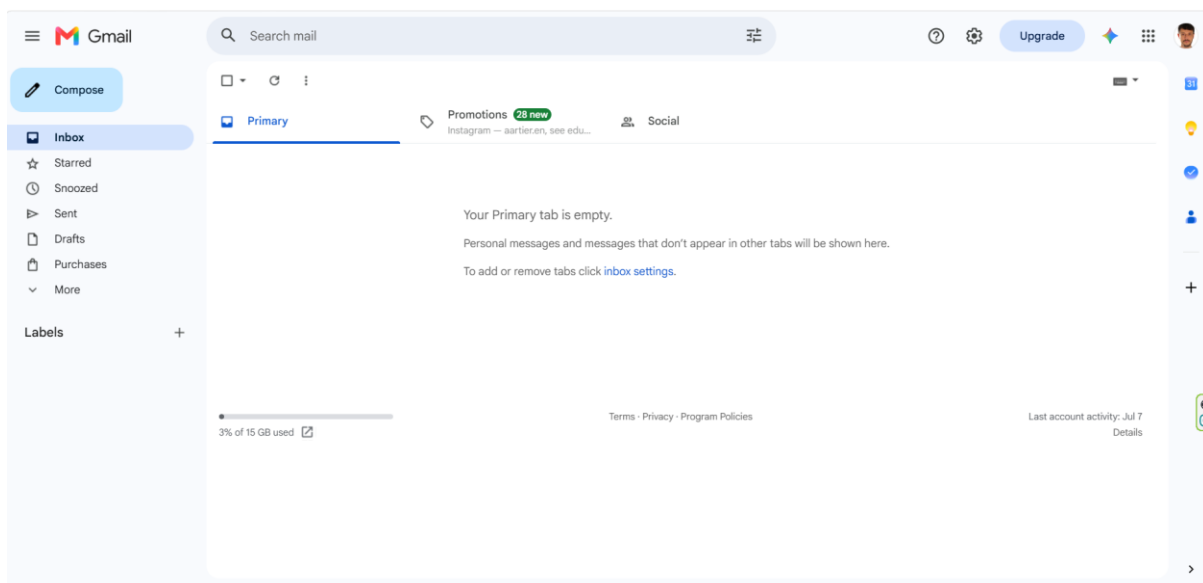


Figure 29. Gmail user interface.

Source: Author's own screenshot.

Zoom

Zoom is an online collaboration application developed by Zoom Communications that allows users to communicate and work together through video meetings, audio calls and online messaging. It is widely used in modern businesses for virtual meetings, remote working, training sessions and communication between employees, clients and other organisations.

Zoom provides several useful features, including video conferencing, screen sharing, meeting recording, chat and virtual backgrounds. Users can also share their screens during meetings to present documents, presentations or other information to participants. Features such as breakout rooms can divide participants into smaller groups, which can be useful for teamwork, training and group discussions [11].

For businesses, Zoom can improve collaboration by allowing employees to communicate and work together regardless of their physical location. It can reduce the need for travel and make meetings with remote employees or external clients easier to organise. However, the quality of video meetings depends on a reliable internet connection, and some features are limited depending on the plan being used. Overall, Zoom provides a practical way for businesses to support remote communication and online collaboration.

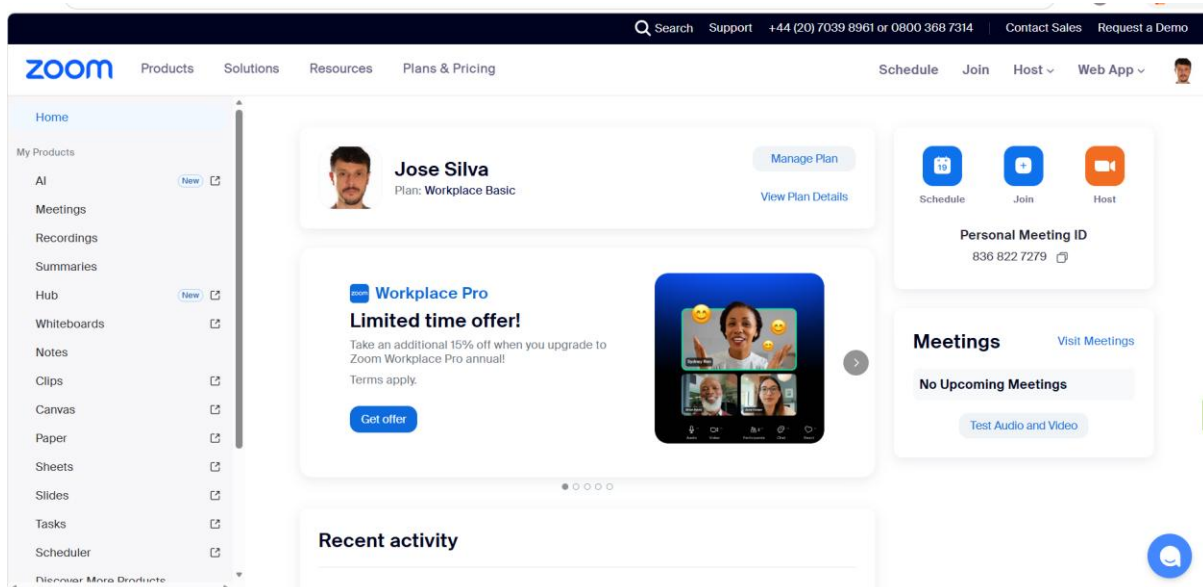


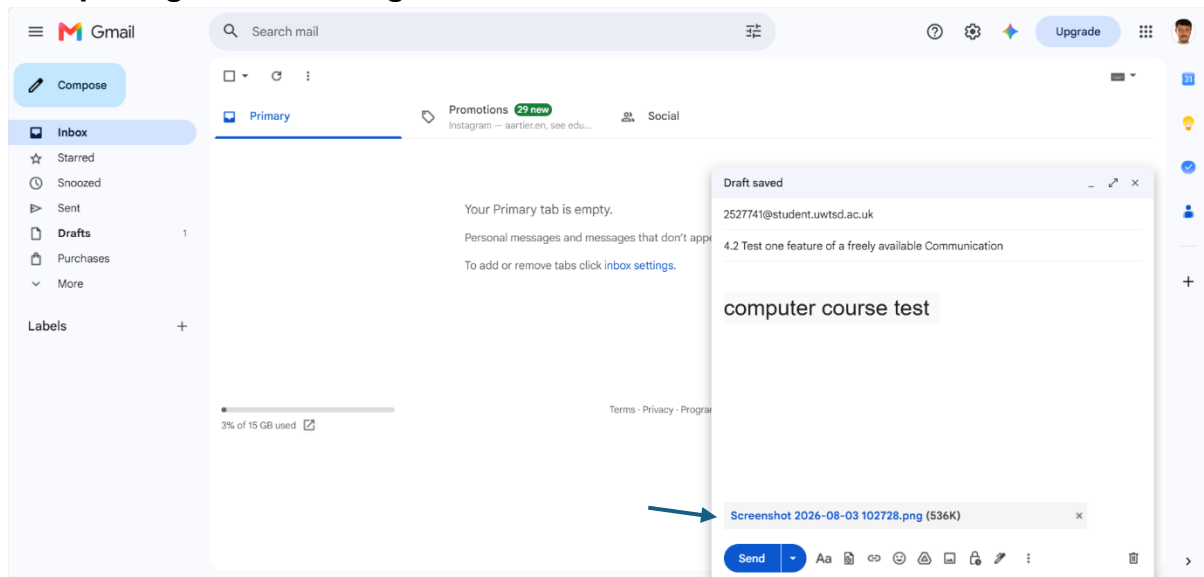
Figure 30. Zoom Workplace user interface.

Source: Author's own screenshot.

4.2 Test one feature of a freely available Communication (1) and one feature of a Collaboration (1) application

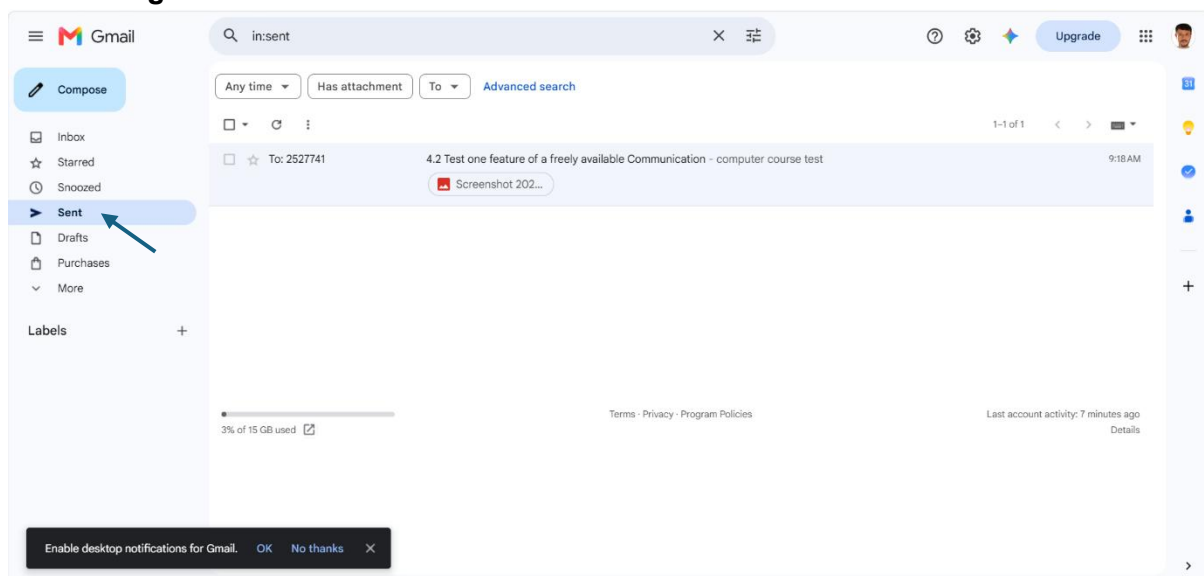
Gmail

Composing and Attaching an Email



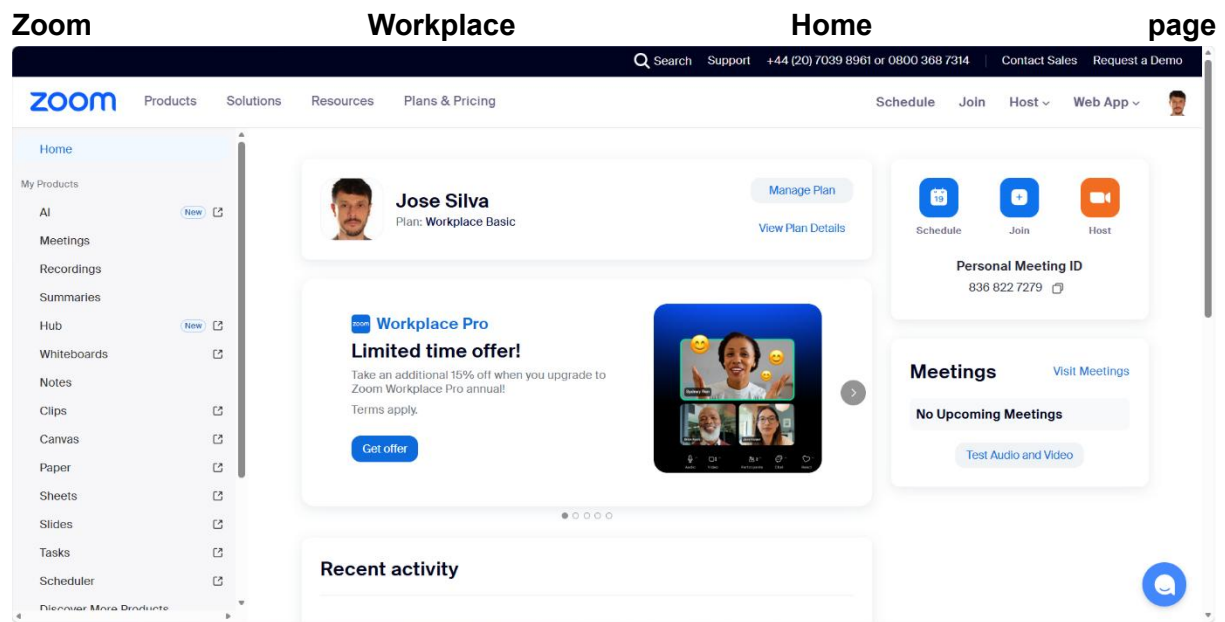
I composed an email, entered the recipient and subject, and attached a file before sending the message.

Confirming the Sent Email



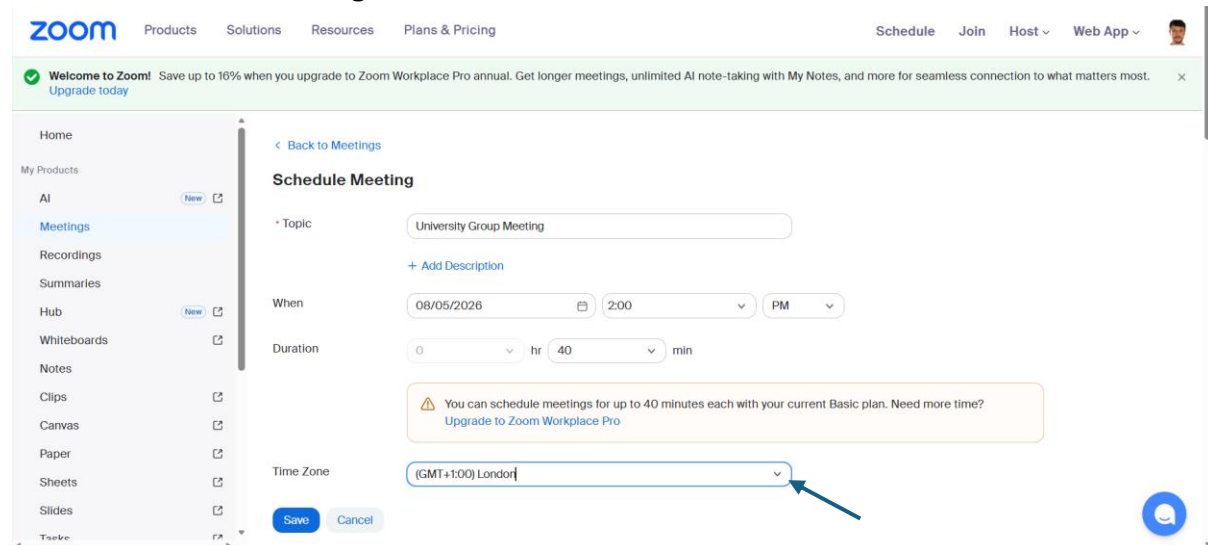
I checked the Sent folder to confirm that the email and attachment were sent successfully.

Zoom



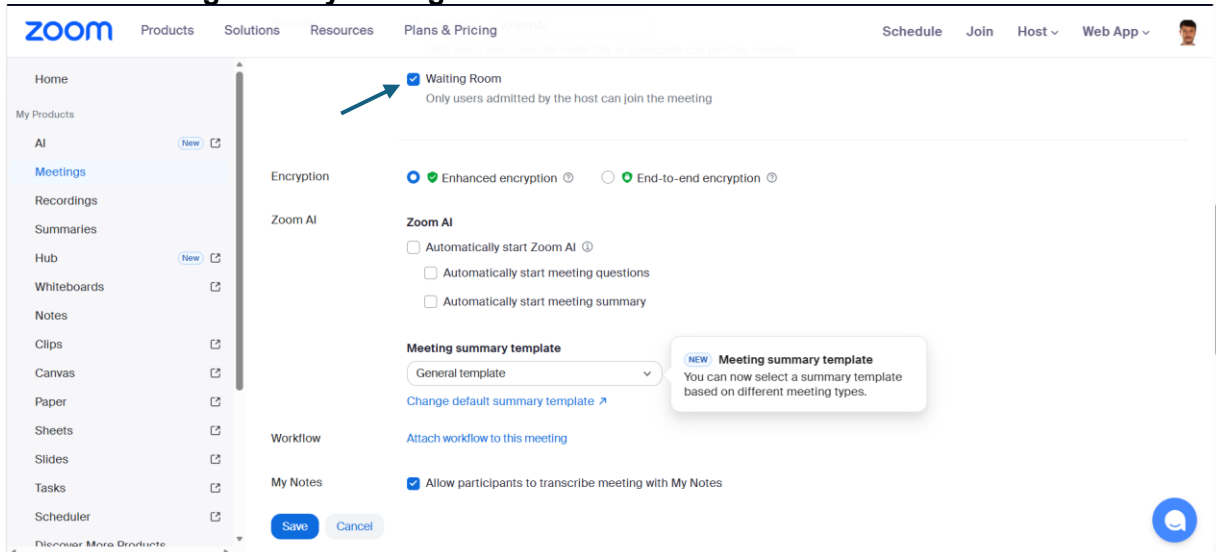
I logged into my Zoom account and accessed the Home page. From this page, I can schedule, join and host online meetings.

Scheduled Zoom Meeting Details



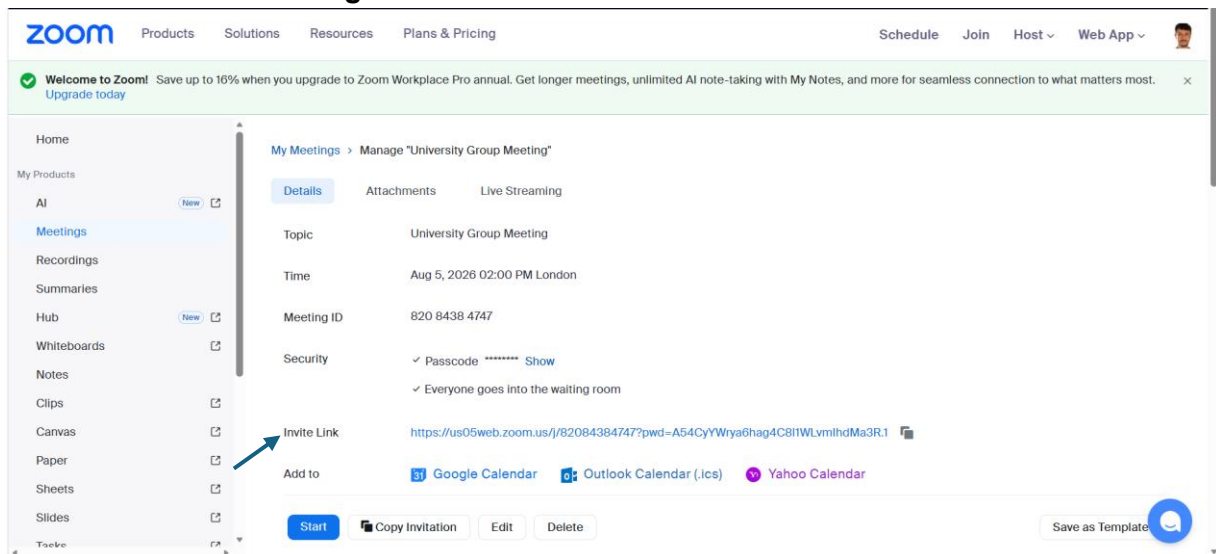
I created a meeting called “University Group Meeting” and selected the date, time and duration. I also changed the time zone to London to ensure that the meeting was scheduled at the correct local time.

Zoom meeting security settings



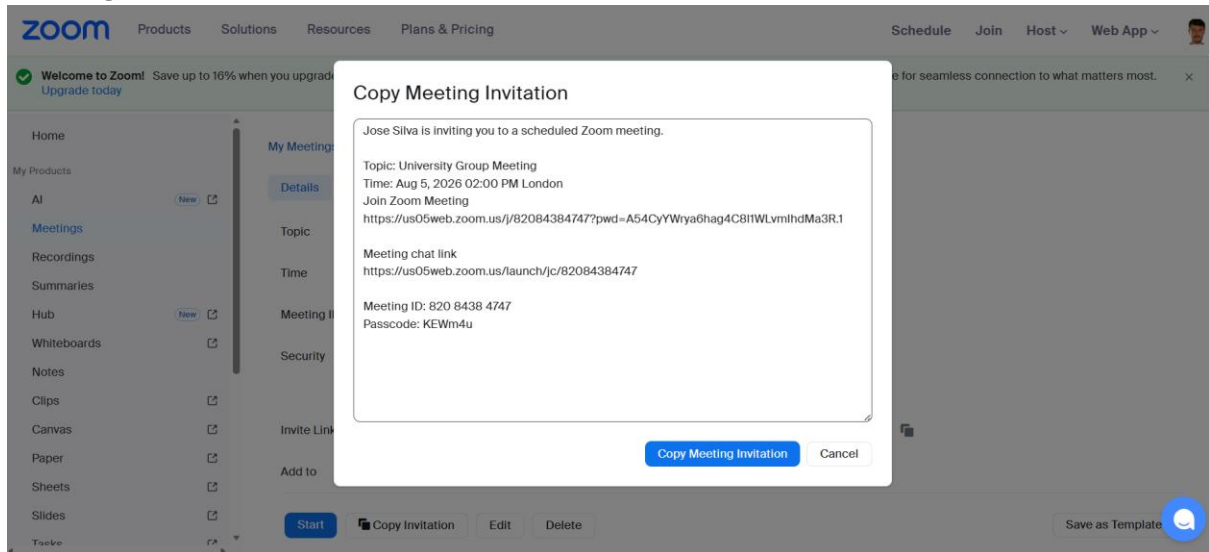
The Waiting Room was enabled so that participants could only join after being admitted by the host. Enhanced encryption was also enabled to provide additional security for the meeting.

Scheduled Zoom meeting details.



After saving the settings, Zoom generated the meeting details, including the Meeting ID and invitation link. The page also confirmed that the meeting was protected by a passcode and Waiting Room.

Meeting Invitation



I used the Copy Invitation option to generate the meeting invitation. It contained the meeting topic, date and time, joining link, Meeting ID and passcode, which could then be shared with the participants.

Conclusion

This assessment explored how different digital applications can support business activities, communication and collaboration. Through the practical tasks, I developed experience using tools such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Gmail and Zoom. Testing features including Mail Merge, the IF function, email attachments and meeting scheduling helped me understand how these applications can improve efficiency and organisation. The assessment also demonstrated that each application has different strengths and limitations, depending on the task being performed. Overall, completing both the research and practical activities improved my understanding of how digital tools are used in modern business environments and increased my confidence in using them effectively.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Activity on PPT



Example of a PowerPoint activity completed during the module.