How to set up multi-factor authentication (MFA) on your @learn.athabascau.ca account
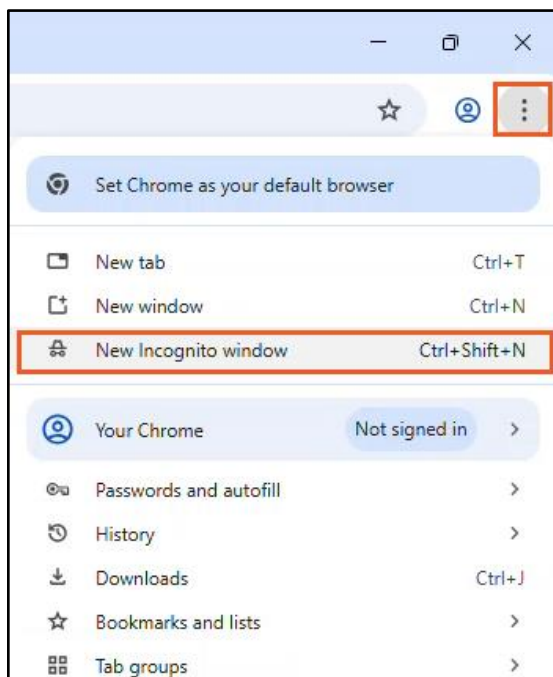
Due to an increased number of student email accounts being compromised, Athabasca University's Digital Security team is in the process of introducing [multi-factor authentication (MFA)](#) for students within the Microsoft 365 environment across the university, at no cost.
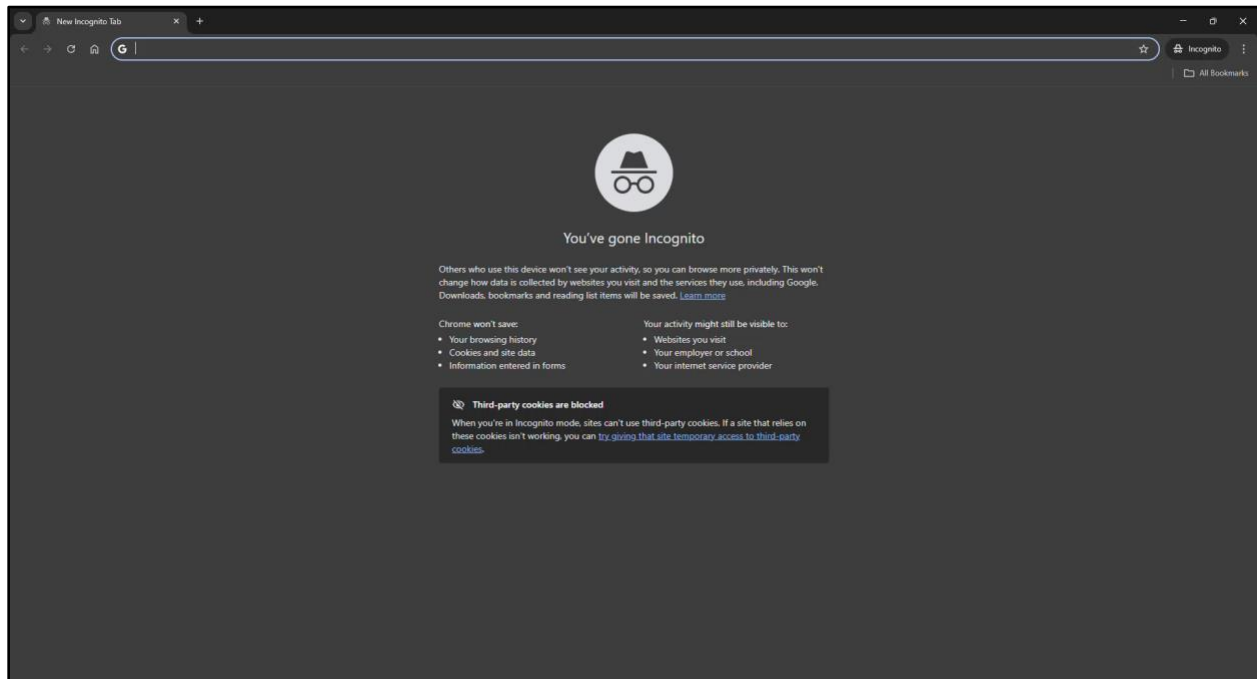
This step sheet walks through the process of enabling MFA on your @learn.athabascau.ca account. Please follow the instructions below when prompted to configure MFA.

If you encounter difficulties setting up or using MFA, please email the AU Service Desk at helpdesk@athabascau.ca.

Before you begin

To avoid common issues setting up MFA, we strongly suggest using a private browsing window to complete the instructions below. Most browsers include an equivalent feature. For example, **Chrome** has an **Incognito window** option you can access by selecting the three dots in the top right corner of the browser:

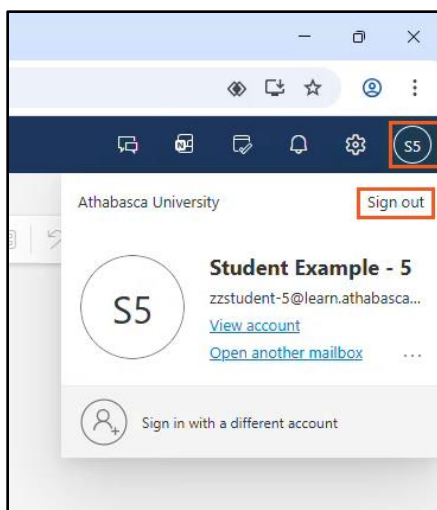**Microsoft Edge** refers to the private browsing window as the **InPrivate window**.

Firefox refers to the private browsing window as the **Private window**.

Likewise, in **Safari**, a **Private window** option is available in the **File** menu.
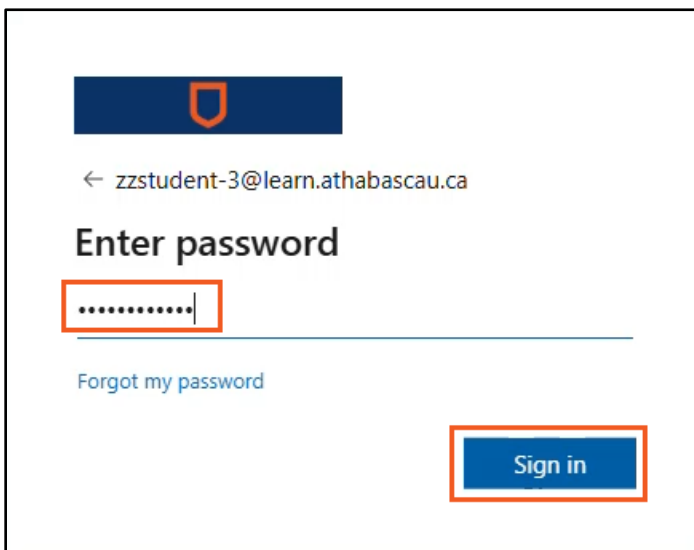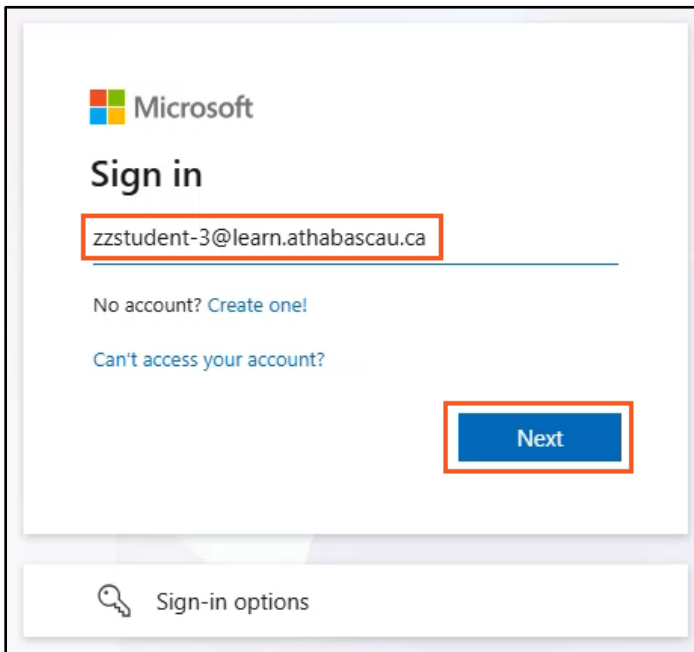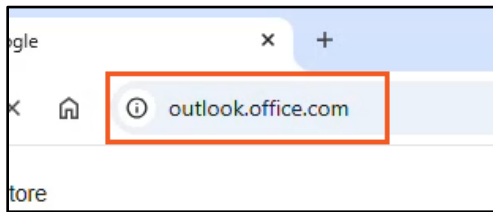
Note: A private browsing window is often helpful when encountering problems logging in to your student email account, even after MFA is set up.
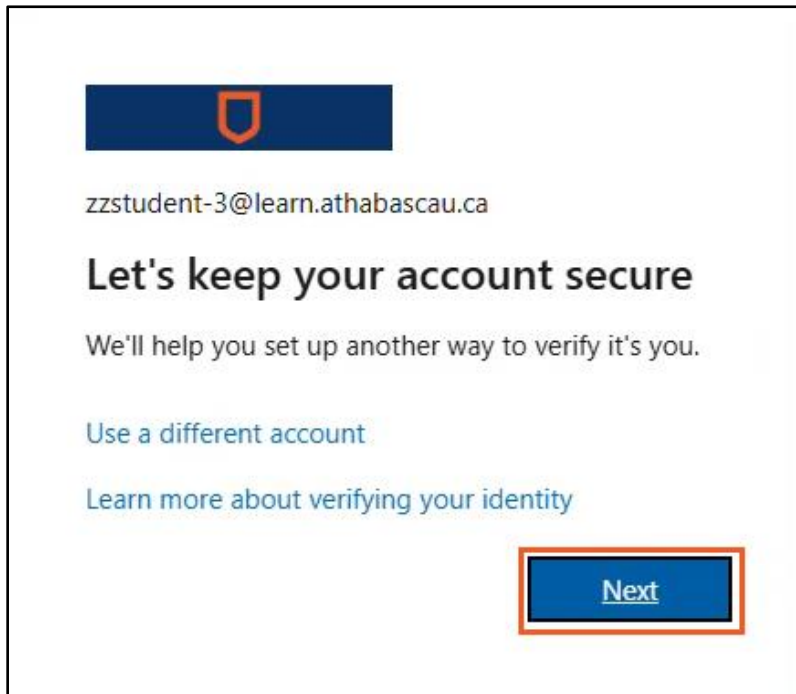
Instructions

1. If you are logged into Outlook, sign out of Outlook by selecting the **Account Manager** then **Sign out** in the top right corner of Outlook.
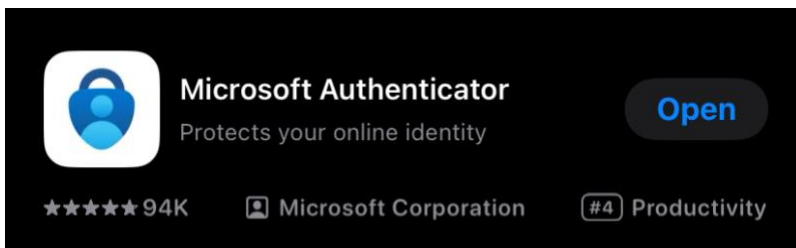
2. Navigate to **outlook.office.com** and sign in using your @learn.athabascau.ca email address and password.
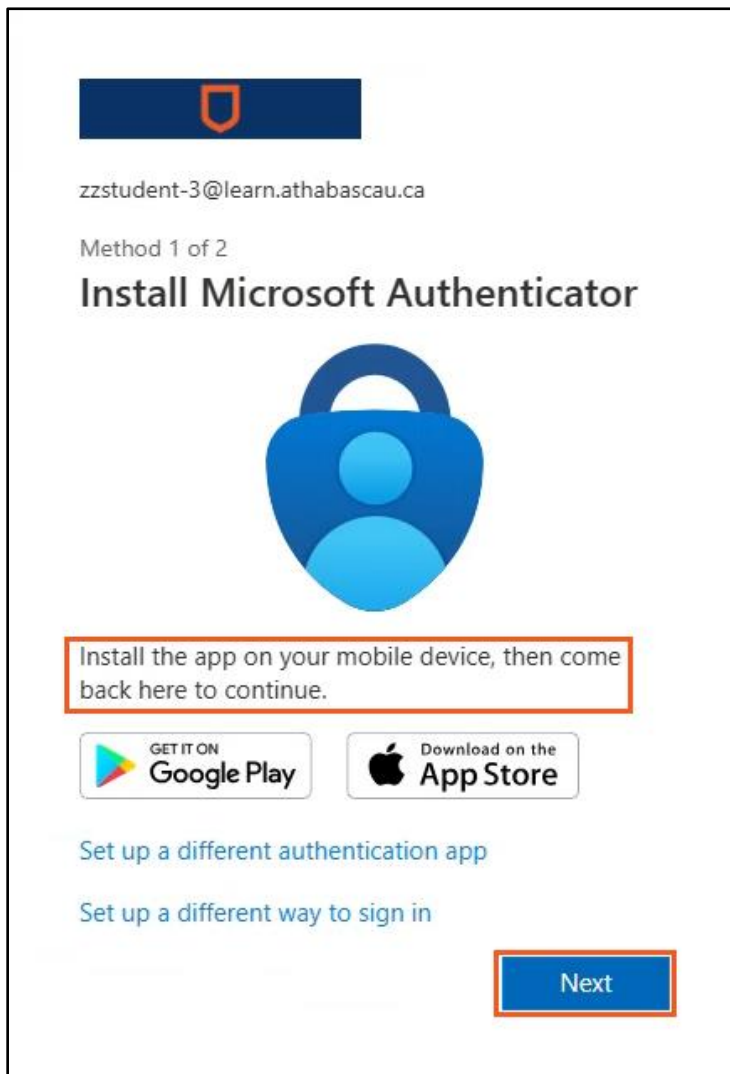
3. After logging in, the screen will display *Let's keep your account secure.* Select **Next**.
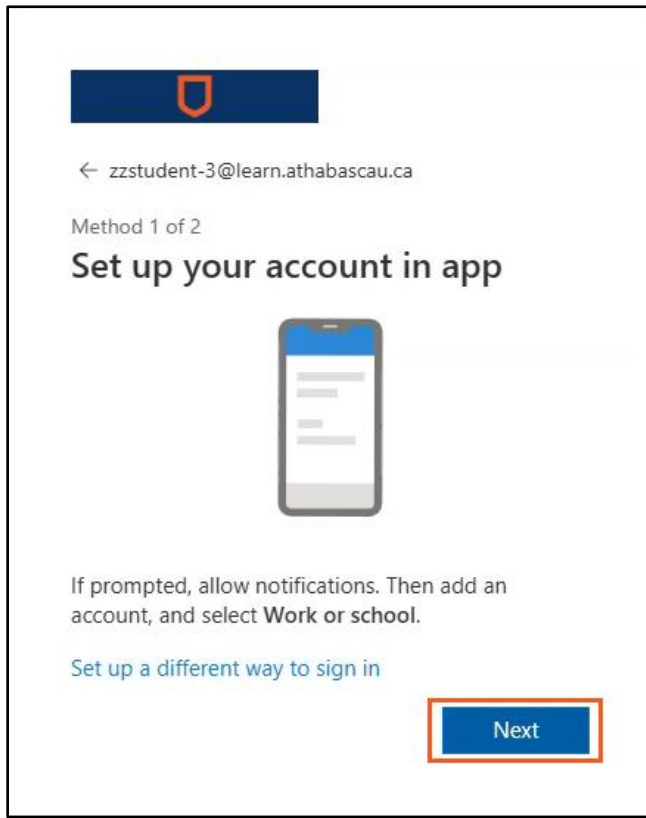

4. From your mobile device, **download the Microsoft Authenticator app**. This app is available on *Android* from the *Google Play Store*, and on *iOS* from the *App Store*.
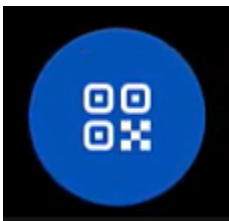
5. After downloading the Microsoft Authenticator app, from the *Install Microsoft Authenticator* screen in your web browser, **select Next**.
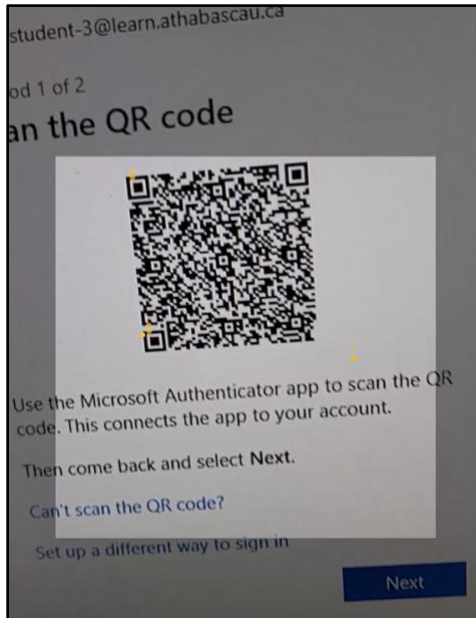
6. From the *Set up your account in app* screen in your web browser, **select Next**. A QR code will display.
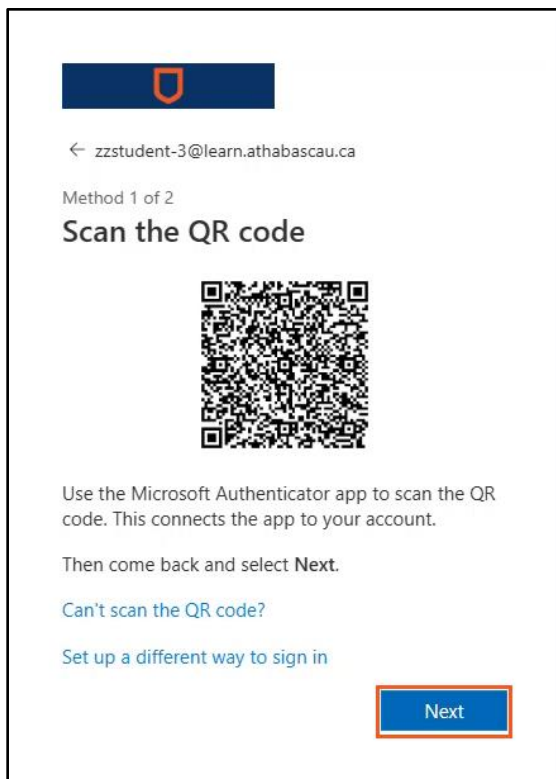

7. **Open the Microsoft Authenticator** app on your mobile device.

8. Within the Microsoft Authenticator app, select **Add Account,** select **Work or school account**, then select **Scan a QR code**. Or, if you already have an account added within the Authenticator app, **select the blue circle** icon from the bottom right of your screen.
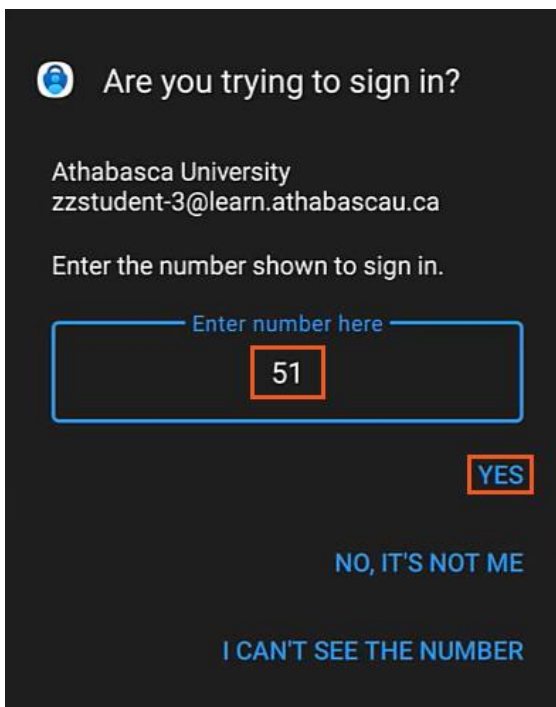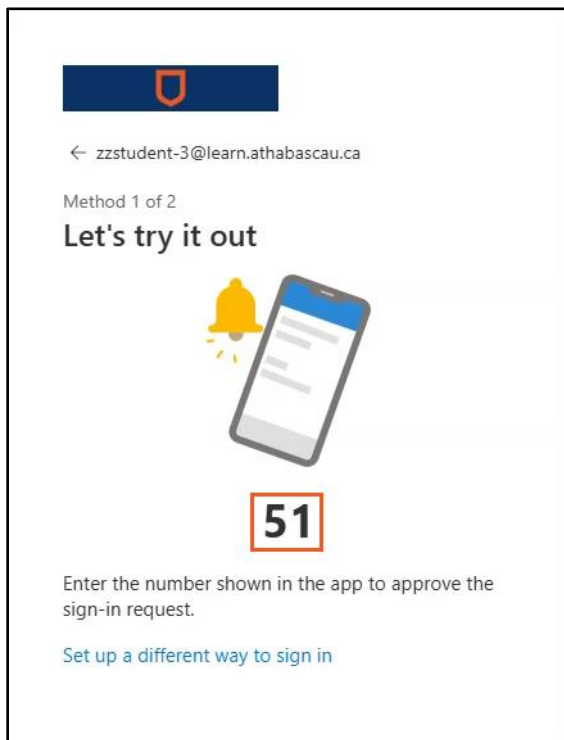
9. Using your mobile device's camera, **scan the QR code** displayed in the web browser.

10. From the *Scan the QR code* screen in your web browser, **select Next**.
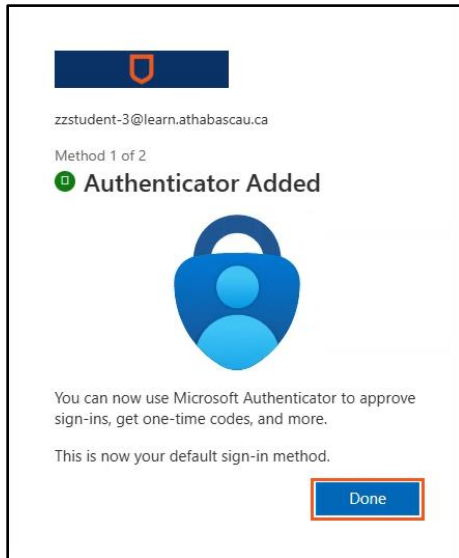
11. The *Let's try it out* screen displays in your web browser. **Enter the 2-digit code** from your web browser into the Microsoft Authenticator app when prompted, then **select Yes**.

12. From the *Authenticator Added* screen in your web browser, **select Done**.

13. From the *Add your phone number* screen in your web browser:
    a. From the *Country code* drop-down menu, **select your country of residence**.
    b. In the *phone number* field, **enter your phone number**.
    c. Under *Choose how to verify*, toggle ***Text a code***.
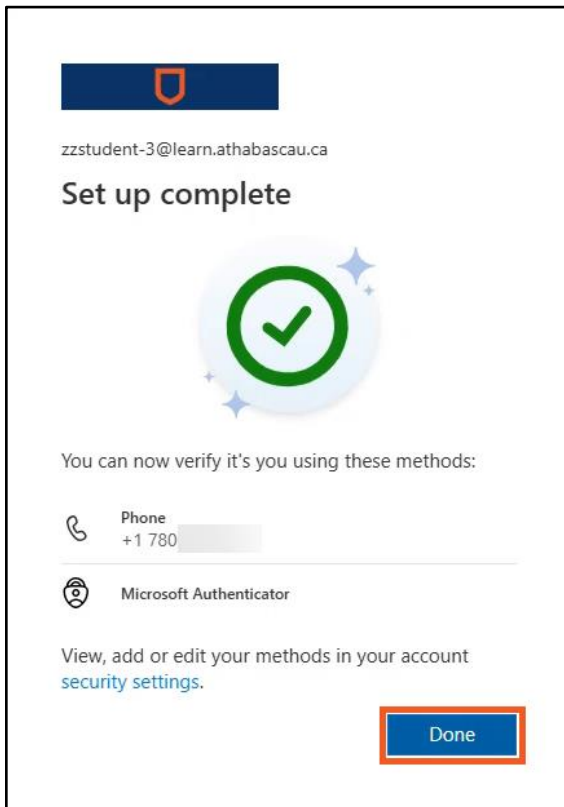   d. **Select Next**.

14. A 6-digit code will appear on your mobile device via text message. From the *Verify your phone number* screen in your web browser, **enter the 6-digit code** in the *Enter code* field, then **select Next**.

15. From the *Phone number added* screen in your web browser, **select Done**.

16. From the *Set up complete screen* in your web browser, **select Done**.

17. From the *Stay signed in?* screen in your web browser, **select Yes or No** to confirm whether you want to stay signed in to your @learn.athabascau.ca account.
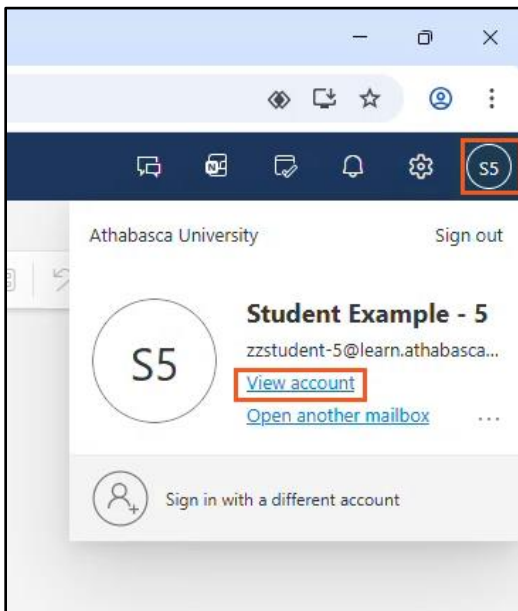

18. Your AU Outlook inbox opens, and your Microsoft Authenticator app is linked to your @learn.athabascau.ca account.
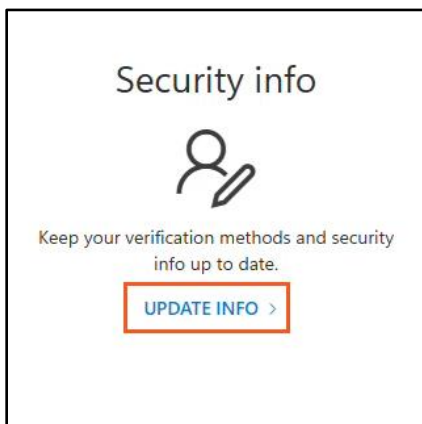
Adding additional authentication methods

It is important that you add additional authentication methods just in case your mobile device is unavailable. Follow these steps to set up additional authentication methods to ensure you do not lose access to your student account:
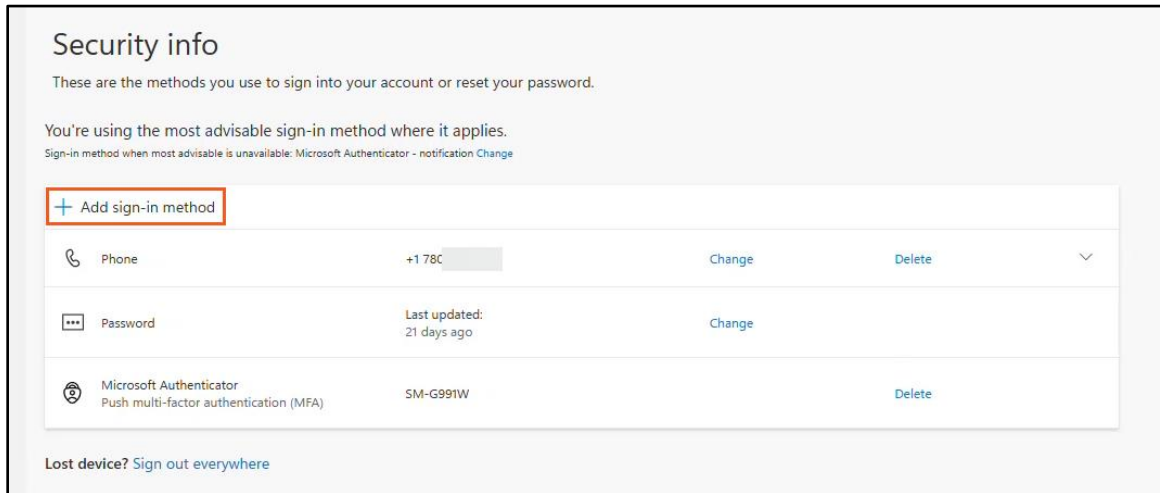
1. Log in to your Outlook account, if you have not already.
2. In the top right corner of the Outlook window, select the **Account Manager**, then select **View account**.
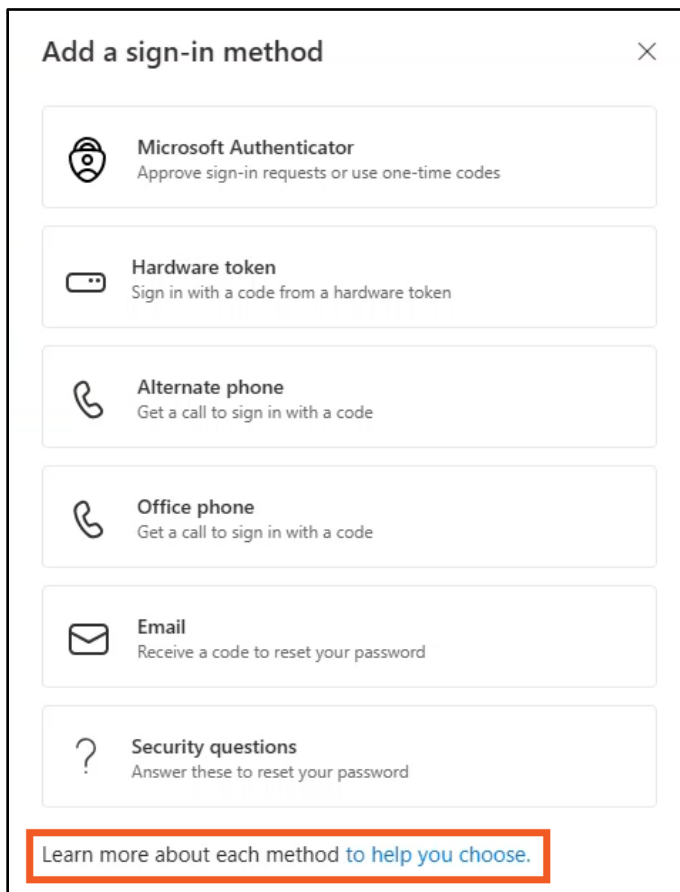

3. Select **Update Info** on the **Security info** tile.

4. Select **Add sign-in method**. Note the existing sign-in methods already set up below.

5. Note the additional sign-in methods that are available. Select the link at the bottom to learn more about each method.
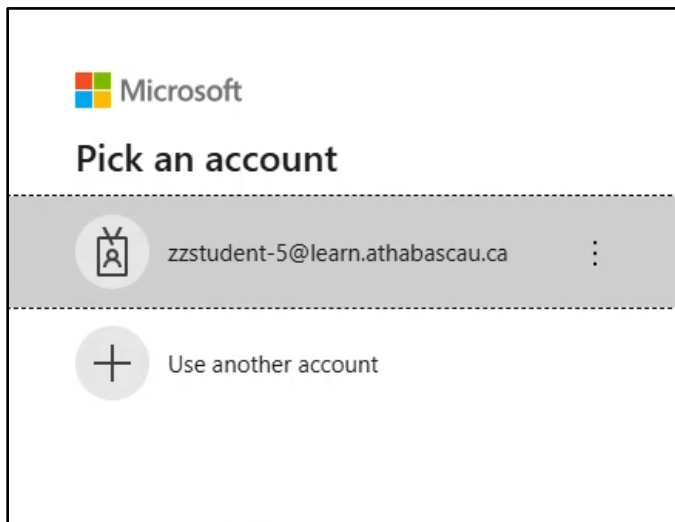
6. Add an additional sign-in method by clicking one from the list. **We suggest adding your personal email address (not your AU student email address) as a preferred additional sign-in method.** You may also add other methods from the list that are suitable to you.
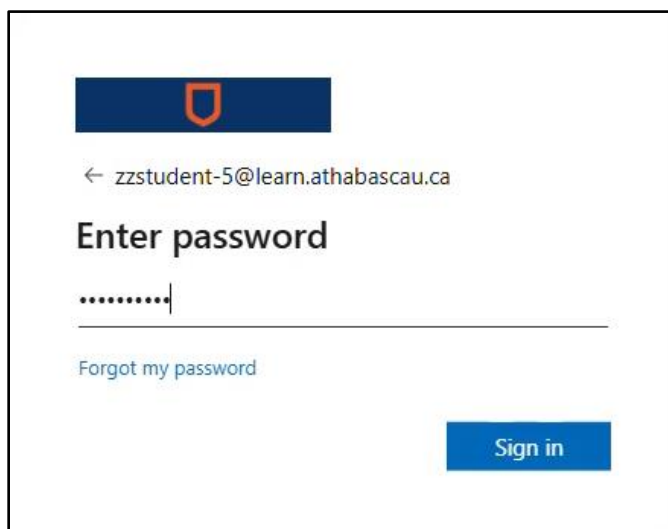
Notes about multi-factor authentication

Here is a recap of the process for signing into Outlook after MFA is configured:

1. Go to https://outlook.office.com.
2. Select your student email address from the account list or type it in if it is not in the list.
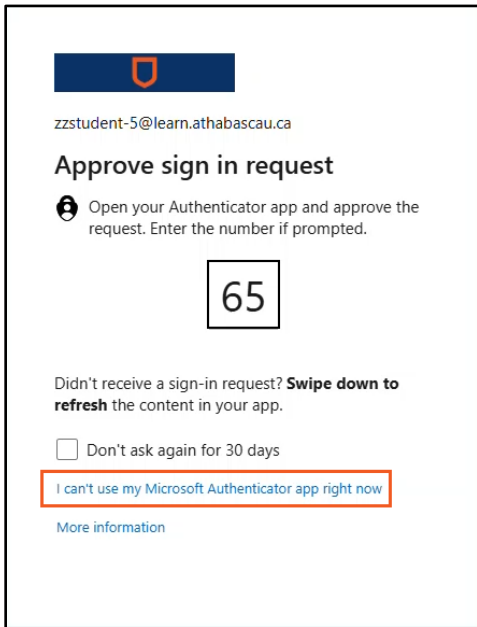

3. Enter your password, then select **Sign in**.

4. Enter the number displayed on your computer screen in your Microsoft Authenticator app on your mobile device. If you cannot use your

Microsoft Authenticator app, select **I can't use my Microsoft Authenticator app right now** to use one of the alternate methods you set up in the previous section.

5. If you select **No**, you will receive an MFA prompt every time you log in to Outlook. If you want to reduce the frequency with which you receive an MFA prompt, select **Yes**.

*Note: Even if you select **Yes**, you will receive an MFA prompt if your computer changes geographical location, if you use a VPN service, if you log in with a different computer, or if you change your password.*

If you encounter difficulties setting up or using MFA, please email the AU Service Desk at helpdesk@athabascau.ca.