ACE Quick Guide to Creating a Table of Contents

What is a Table of Contents?

A Table of Contents (TOC) is a list of the **headings and subheadings** of **different sections** in your assignment, alongside the **page number** on which each begins. It usually follows an abstract and precedes the introduction. Check with your module lecturer whether a TOC is needed for an assignment – it is **rarely required for an essay** but **may be expected for an academic report**.

How to Create a Table of Contents:

1 You can create a TOC in Microsoft Word by clicking **References** in the toolbar and then **Table of Contents** on the left (see Figure 1). You can select a built-in option or scroll down for a custom TOC.
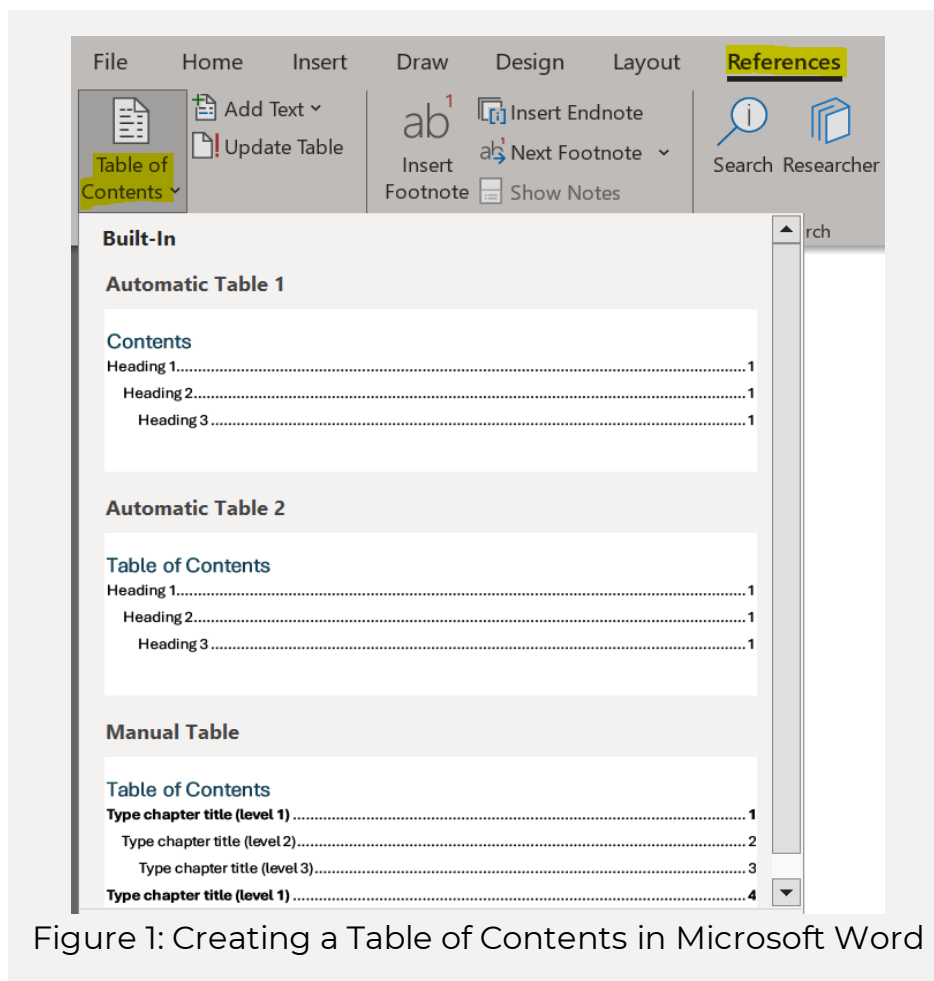

Figure 1: Creating a Table of Contents in Microsoft Word

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Microsoft Word will produce an empty TOC and prompt you to **apply a heading style** to create your first TOC entry (see Figure 2). **Highlight your first heading** (in Figure 3 this is 'Part 1'), click on **Home** in the top left and choose one of the **Heading Styles** on the right. **Heading 1** can be used for **headings** and **Heading 2** for **subheadings**.
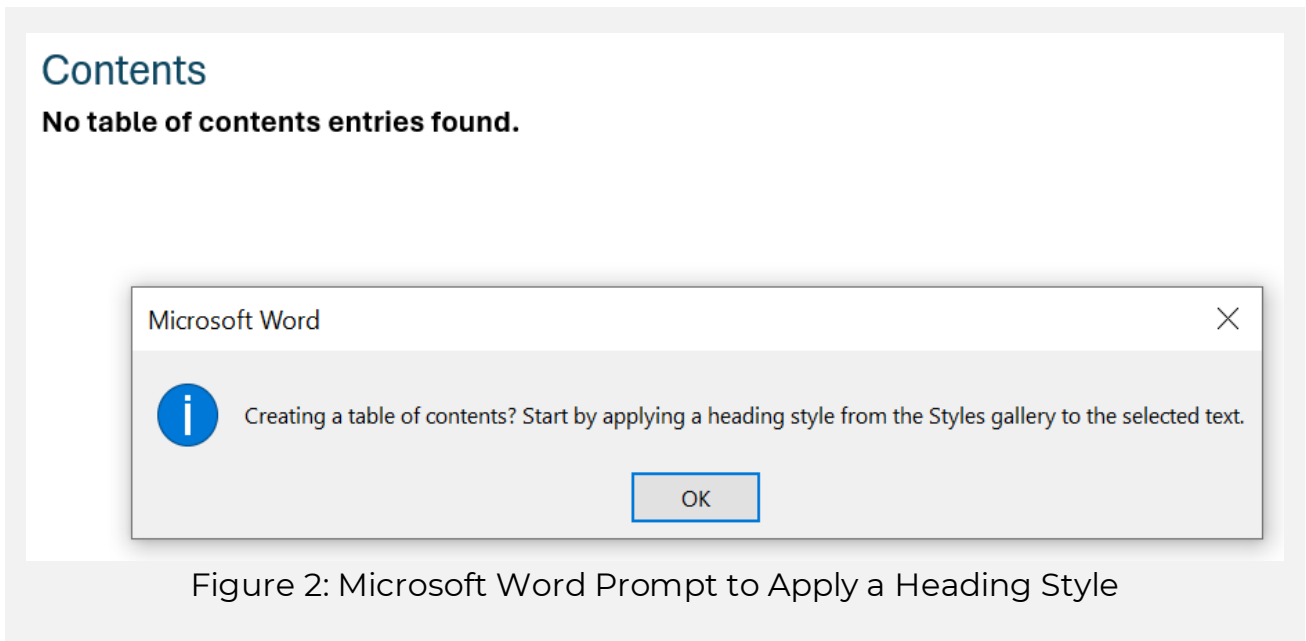

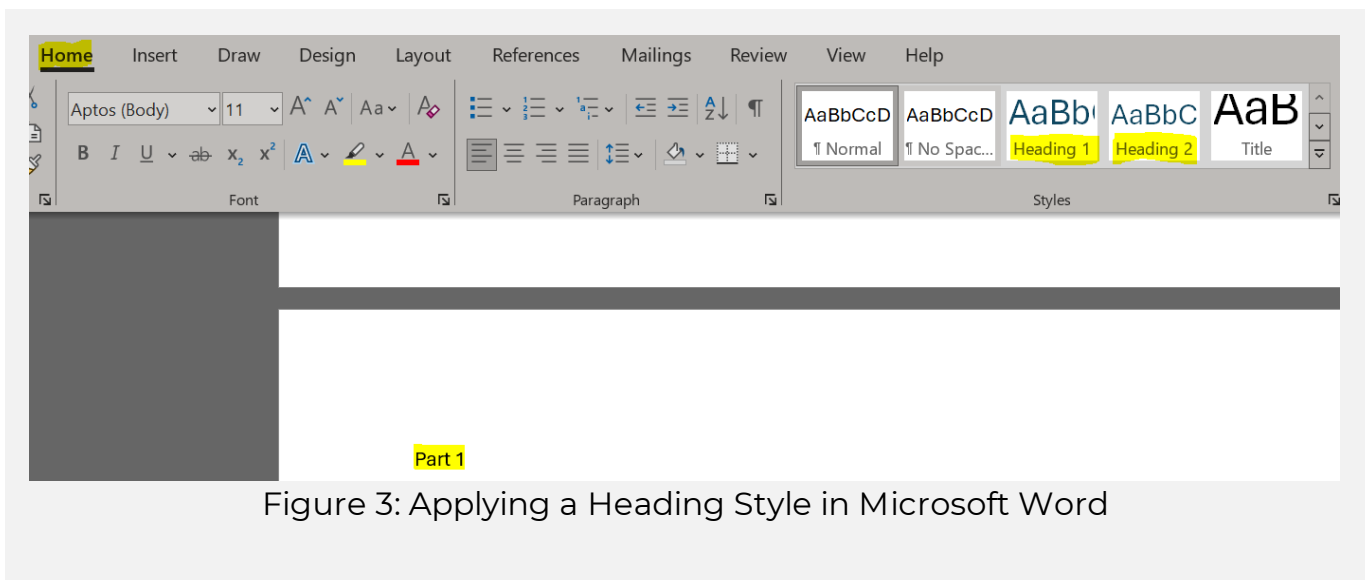Figure 2: Microsoft Word Prompt to Apply a Heading Style

Figure 3: Applying a Heading Style in Microsoft Word

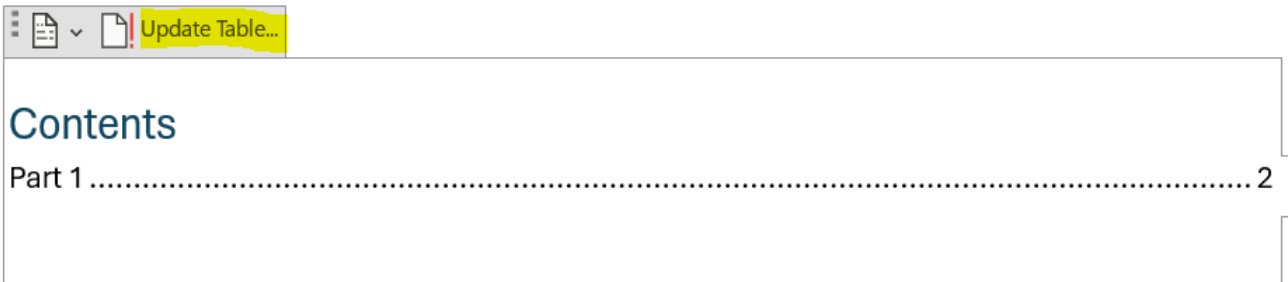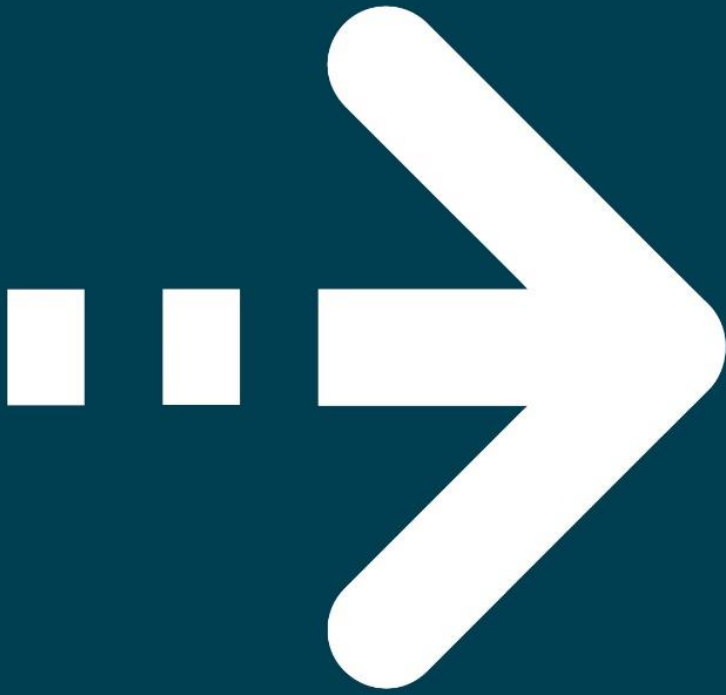**3** Your TOC should **update automatically**. If it does not, click on the TOC and then **Update Table**.

Update Table....

Contents

Part 1 2

Figure 4: Table of Contents with 'Update Table' Highlighted

Example Table of Contents:

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