

Solutions Architect

Basic information

Band: B

Job family: Technical

Terms: Permanent

Location: Cheltenham

Reports to: Lead Solutions Architect

Team: Enterprise Architecture

Business unit: Technology



Role purpose:

The Solutions Architect (SA) is responsible for 'translating' business requirements into IT solutions, taking into account the complexity of existing IT systems, through effective negotiation of the priority of scope and requirements, to help the organisation get best value from its IT spend.

The SA is required to design and provide technical support through the delivery of solutions that meet the requirements of the business, support the IT strategy, and are aligned with the IT architecture. Architecture considerations include data, applications, infrastructure, integration, interfaces, security, scalability and performance, as well as product transition and support documentation. This SA will represent projects to the IT governance process, and support the project stakeholders in representing it to the broader UCAS corporate governance.

In collaboration with other key stakeholders, the SA will produce technical sections of any architecture documents for development teams. And they will then review these deliverables throughout the development and delivery stages, being accountable for the outputs fitting with the UCAS and IT strategy/roadmap.

Key duties and responsibilities:

- Translate business requirements into cost-effective IT solutions, taking into account the complexity of existing IT systems, working with a number of technologies that include but are not limited to Salesforce, Mulesoft, AWS, Drupal, and Microsoft.
- Support the development of overall IT strategy and technical architectural blueprint.
- Analyse enterprise architecture accountability and validate the completeness of business requirements for the purpose of designing sound technical solutions - highlighting inconsistencies and gaps.

- Develop and ensure compliance to technical architecture standards and policies (across application and security layers), as aligned with enterprise architecture standards and policies.
- Design technical solutions and services to meet business requirements.
- Ensure technology architecture roadmaps and blueprints are developed, maintained, and integrated within the process of overall IT strategy development and technology planning.
- Define architectural considerations across data, applications, infrastructure, integration, interfaces, security, scalability and performance, as well as product transition and support documentation.
- Produce options and, where necessary, conduct feasibility studies, for delivery of the business requirements and key non-functional requirements.
- Estimate the cost of implementing requirements and advising on high cost/complex aspects where these could be omitted, or where requirement change could result in a more cost-effective implementation.
- Utilise the overall IT architecture strategy to recommend project delivery approach, typically re-use, package purchase, in-house build, or outsourced build.
- Be accountable for the production of 5System Designs, according to agreed design standards, taking account of the differing requirements of in-house and outsource developments.
- Set functional and architectural acceptance criteria, and evaluate potential products against those criteria.
- Maintain a holistic understanding of UCAS technology real estate and UCAS specific IP.
- Work with the Enterprise Architecture Team, to define and maintain the overall IT architecture, applications portfolio, architecture vision, and design patterns, and promote these within IT and to the organisation.
- Provide consultancy services to the business teams, to help maximise capability from current and future IT technologies.
- Track and understand emerging technologies and advise use of them while developing solution designs.
- Provide consultancy services to IT functions in UCAS customer groups to support their technical queries.

Accountabilities:

Financial authorities:

- No financial authority.

Non-financial authorities:

- Authority to represent the company with third party suppliers.
- Occasional travel in the UK (if required to attend IT conferences).

Primary customers/stakeholders:

Internal:

- UCAS staff in IT and across all business units up to Director level.

External:

- Technology providers and suppliers, partner consultancies and other organisations, IT functions for external stakeholders.

Person specification:

- Mulesoft ESB or relative integration experience.
- Salesforce CRM.
- Deep understanding of AWS components and product features.
- Microsoft technologies (Azure, O365, SharePoint, Windows Server, Active Directory, DNS).
- Microsoft SQL server, Oracle and MySQL database technologies.
- Drupal content management system.
- Atlassian (Jira, Confluence, BitBucket).
- BCS Enterprise and Solution Architecture Practitioner.
- Agile (Scrum and Kanban).
- ITIL V3 Foundation.

This role profile sets out the scope and main duties of the post at the date when it was drawn up. Such details may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the level of the post. All UCAS employees are expected to be flexible in undertaking the duties and responsibilities attached to their role and may be asked to perform other duties, which reasonably correspond to the general character of their role and their level of responsibility.

Our values in action

Customer – We always look through the customer lens. The logic of the customer is the logic of UCAS.

Commitment – When we commit, we deliver on time, quality, and budget, or we negotiate changed commitments for good reason. We never leave commitments uncovered.

Team – We work collaboratively. When we commit, we commit as an individual and as a team. We strive for and support team success as well as individual success.

Outcomes – We plan and do things to achieve outcomes. We define them, aspire to them, and deliver them.

Agility – We know we need to be agile when we look through the customer lens, when we make commitments, when we work in teams, and strive for the right outcomes.

Extraordinary – We are ambitious for our customers, for UCAS, and for our teams. We want more than ordinary outcomes – we strive to achieve extraordinary outcomes, extraordinary customer focus, and an extraordinary culture of high performance and quality of focus.