Solution Architect

Responsible for end-to-end solution design across applications, data, integrations, and infrastructure. Collaborates with engineering, product, and stakeholders to translate requirements into feasible, secure, scalable technical designs.

Candidates should use the **STAR method** (Situation, Task, Action, Result). This assessment is about demonstrated experience, not theoretical understanding.

A - Requirements & Discovery

00:10 *- SFIA REQM / RSCH Level 4–5*

Eliciting, analyzing, and managing requirements from multiple stakeholders, using structured investigation to inform solution choices.

What to look for:

- Structured elicitation of functional and non-functional requirements from diverse stakeholders
- Translated ambiguous or conflicting needs into clear constraints and acceptance criteria
- Used evidence (prototypes, benchmarks, investigations, research) to reduce uncertainty
- Identified dependencies, risks, assumptions, and regulatory or security constraints early
- Demonstrated traceability from requirement through architectural decision to delivered outcome
- Facilitated stakeholder input while providing constructive challenge to refine requirements
- Established requirements baselines or backlogs with appropriate stakeholder agreement
- Negotiated competing priorities and managed requirements changes systematically

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B - Solution Design

00:15 *- SFIA ARCH / DESN Level 4–5*

Designing clear, feasible solution architectures across application, integration, data, and infrastructure layers aligned to organisational standards.

What to look for:

- Produced clear solution designs, diagrams, models, and patterns for services or platforms
- Designed end-to-end solutions spanning application, integration, data, and infrastructure concerns
- Explicitly considered non-functional requirements (performance, security, resilience, maintainability, observability)
- Balanced trade-offs between cost, complexity, speed of delivery, and long-term evolution
- Aligned designs with organisational standards, reference architectures, and architectural guardrails
- Evaluated alternative solution options and clearly articulated architectural decisions
- Created solution documentation appropriate for different audiences (engineers, stakeholders, operations)
- Ensured designs were implementable, testable, and operable from the outset

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C - Integration & Infrastructure

00:20 *- SFIA SINT / DATM / IFDN Level 4–5*

Designing robust integrations, data architectures, and infrastructure solutions that are secure, scalable, and operable.

What to look for:

- Designed robust integrations using appropriate patterns (APIs, messaging, events, ETL/ELT, streaming)
- Considered data models, ownership, lineage, retention, quality, and governance in solution design
- Chose appropriate infrastructure and cloud services (compute, storage, networking, security controls)
- Ensured solutions are operable: logging, monitoring, alerting, deployment, rollback, capacity planning
- Anticipated cross-system impacts, failure modes, integration edge cases, and data consistency challenges
- Designed for scalability, performance, and resilience under realistic load and failure scenarios
- Applied security controls and compliance requirements throughout the solution stack

- Balanced technical complexity with operational simplicity and maintainability

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D - Stakeholder Engagement

00:25 *- SFIA RLMT / CNSL Level 4–5*

Communicating solution options clearly, facilitating decisions, and acting as a trusted technical advisor to stakeholders.

What to look for:

- Communicated solution options and constraints clearly to technical and non-technical stakeholders
- Facilitated design workshops, playback sessions, and decision forums with clients and internal teams
- Presented structured options with clear trade-offs, risks, costs, and rationale
- Managed disagreement or conflicting requirements constructively and professionally
- Acted as trusted advisor to product, engineering, and customer stakeholders on technical decisions
- Tailored communication style and technical depth to audience (executives, engineers, product, operations)
- Built credibility through delivery, transparency, and technical expertise
- Influenced architectural direction through evidence-based recommendations and clear reasoning

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E - Quality & Delivery

00:30 *- SFIA METL / SLEN / QUAS Level 4–5*

Ensuring implementations align to architecture, supporting teams with lifecycle practices, and embedding quality throughout delivery.

What to look for:

- Ensured implementations remained aligned to agreed architecture through reviews and collaboration
- Supported teams in applying engineering processes, tools, and lifecycle practices (CI/CD, IaC, test strategies)
- Defined or contributed to architectural standards, patterns, templates, and decision records (ADRs/RFCs)
- Considered quality, security, compliance, and operational readiness as part of design and delivery
- Participated actively in delivery (backlog shaping, sprint planning, technical spikes) not purely advisory
- Conducted formal assessments or reviews to verify quality control and architectural compliance
- Identified risks, non-compliance, and improvement opportunities during solution delivery
- Balanced rigorous standards with pragmatic delivery, knowing when flexibility is appropriate

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Scoring Matrix

Thresholds: *18+* is a pass

Competency	1	2	3	4	5
A - Requirements & Discovery					
B - Solution Design					
C - Integration & Infrastructure					
D - Stakeholder Engagement					
E - Quality & Delivery					