Adrian Ashdown

Senior Solutions Architect | .NET, Azure & SQL Server | Platform Modernisation & Integration

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Professional Profile

Senior solutions architect with 25+ years' experience across the Microsoft .NET, Azure and SQL Server stack, combining architecture leadership with deep hands-on engineering and database expertise. Most recently responsible for the architecture of a 90+ application background screening platform through its acquisition and integration into a global organisation, including an end-to-end migration of its SQL Server estate to Azure. Held database administrator (DBA) responsibility for business-critical systems in every role from 2002 to 2026. Experienced in regulated, data-sensitive environments, leading distributed teams, and working with senior stakeholders across technology, product, security and the business. Actively building AI skills, using AI tools day to day in both software development and wider business work.

Selected Achievements

- Architected and supported a bespoke background screening platform of 90+ applications and services, serving as primary DBA for its 20 production databases through acquisition and integration into a global organisation.
- Owned the end-to-end migration of the platform's on-premises SQL Server estate to Azure SQL Managed Instance, moving 20 production databases with only a few hours of downtime, then worked with the engineering team to redeploy 40+ dependent applications and services.
- Played a central role in integrating the UK platform into Accurate Background's global technology organisation following its acquisition of Vero Screening.
- Provided architecture leadership for screening platforms supporting EMEA and APAC operations, and led a distributed team of 12 across the UK and Estonia.

Key Skills

Architecture: Enterprise, solution, application, data and integration architecture; TOGAF and ArchiMate; platform modernisation and legacy transformation; distributed systems, APIs and messaging

Microsoft & Cloud: C#, .NET Framework, .NET Core and modern .NET; Azure-native services; Azure SQL Managed Instance and Azure SQL Database; Docker

Data: Microsoft SQL Server design, development, administration, performance tuning and resilience; T-SQL; ETL, reporting and analytics services

Engineering: PowerShell, JavaScript, Python, React, REST, SOAP, Entity Framework, Dapper, RabbitMQ; TDD and BDD; CI/CD with Jenkins and Octopus Deploy; Scrum and Kanban

AI: AI-assisted software development with Claude Code and GitHub Copilot; Claude, ChatGPT and Microsoft 365 Copilot in day-to-day business workflows

Leadership: Senior stakeholder engagement; people leadership, coaching and mentoring; technical governance and decision support; GDPR and information security

Infrastructure: Windows Server, Active Directory, IIS, firewall configuration and performance monitoring

Employment History

Independent Solutions Architect, Ashdown Systems Ltd, Lancing — July 2026 – Present

Independent consultancy providing solutions architecture services to startups and small businesses (ashdownsystems.co.uk).

Solutions Architect, Accurate UK (formerly Vero Screening), Brighton — November 2022 – June 2026

Partnered with senior leaders across technology, product, security and business functions following Accurate Background's acquisition of Vero Screening.

- Shaped architecture direction for a bespoke background screening platform of 90+ applications and services built on .NET, Azure and SQL Server.
- Owned the end-to-end migration of 20 production databases from on-premises SQL Server to Azure SQL Managed Instance, with only a few hours of downtime.

- Worked with the engineering team to redeploy 40+ database-dependent applications and services onto the new platform.
- Played a central role in post-acquisition integration, aligning UK systems, engineering and product capabilities with Accurate's global operating model.
- Remained primary DBA for the platform's 20 production databases and a trusted technical authority to UK engineering leadership.

Senior Software Engineer, Accurate UK (formerly Vero Screening), Brighton November 2018 – November 2022

- Helped design and evolve a bespoke background screening platform of 90+ applications and services across .NET, Azure and SQL Server.
- Primary DBA for 20 business-critical databases, responsible for design, performance tuning, resilience and operational support.

Lead Software Engineer, HireRight Ltd, Brighton March 2017 – October 2018

- Led a distributed engineering team of 12 (5 UK, 7 Estonia) while remaining hands-on in engineering, combining people leadership with technical oversight of business-critical systems and integrations.
- Continued as primary DBA for the bespoke background screening platform's production databases (around 10).
- Managed release activity, cross-team coordination and stakeholder communication within a global technology organisation.

Solutions Architect, HireRight Ltd, Brighton November 2014 – February 2017

- Provided architecture leadership and technical ownership for background screening platforms supporting EMEA and APAC operations, including integration with internal enterprise systems and external partners.
- Remained hands-on in engineering alongside architecture responsibilities, and continued as primary DBA for the platform's production databases (around 10).

Senior Software Engineer (Software Engineer III), HireRight Ltd, Brighton September 2007 – October 2014

- Senior engineer and technical lead with full-stack .NET and SQL Server responsibility across business-critical screening platforms.
- Primary DBA for the bespoke background screening platform's production databases (around 10).

Earlier Career

Systems Developer, John Hall Associates Ltd, Horsham August 2005 – September 2007

Full-stack .NET development and SQL Server database administration for internal business systems, including an online energy trading and auction platform.

Database Administrator, Sussex Probation Area, Brighton February 2002 – July 2005

SQL Server administration and infrastructure support for around 18 probation offices across East and West Sussex.

Senior Performance Analysis Developer, NTL, Portslade May 1997 – December 2001

Founding member of the software development and management information (MI) reporting team within the National Fault Centre.

Training

Solutions architecture, enterprise architecture and AI, LinkedIn Learning, Pluralsight and Microsoft Learn Ongoing
Architecture and Design of Distributed Systems (CSDOM4), QA, London 2015
People Leader Fundamentals, HireRight Ltd 2017

Education

Computer Systems Engineering (BEng programme), University of Sussex 1993 – 1997
BTEC National Diploma in Engineering, West Kent College, Tonbridge 1991 – 1993

Interests

Family life, reading, walking, cooking, drawing and painting.