

Interviews with iSAQB members!

Read interviews with eight of the 39 active iSAQB board members to learn about the purpose of the association, the different forms of certification, and why certification in the field of software architecture is long overdue.

Why was the iSAQB e. V. established?



Eberhard Wolff: *The goal of the iSAQB is to define the skills that a software architect should have. In order for architects to master their challenges, the iSAQB develops curricula and training measures for the acquisition of such skills. Since it is a non-profit association and many respected architects are members, the curriculum is widely recognized.*



Gernot Starke: *To clarify the tasks and responsibilities of software architects with respect to definitions and content – and therefore to create a clear concept of the role of the software architect. The iSAQB curricula explain very precisely the expectations placed on the software architect, which facilitates communication and prevents misunderstandings during the development stage.*

What does software architecture mean today?

Eberhard Wolff: *Software architecture is a process in which the fundamental decisions for the development of software are made – and therefore an activity of the development team.*

Gernot Starke: *Software architecture is undergoing a change from “individual” to “role”. For example in the context of numerous disruptive changes we have to balance innovation risk and consistency (in the sense of homogeneity) – while delivering high-quality applications at a reasonable cost. Methodical architecture activities help immensely to balance these competing factors.*

Why is certification important for the software architect and what is the added value of certification?



Ali M. Akbarian: *The certification shows that software architects have intensive experience with the standards of software architecture. These standards result in a standardized language between the people in a company. This enables clear and uncomplicated communication and saves time and money.*

Who can use the title software architect?

Eberhard Wolff: *The title is not protected, so anyone can use it. “Architect” is often used to designate a career stage, which means it stands for professional experience instead of particular skills. Sometimes an architect even performs the tasks of a project manager.*

That is why the activities of the iSAQB are important in better defining the term “software architect”. It involves more qualifications than one might think: in addition to technical skills, software architects also need soft skills in order to moderate decisions and to involve all stakeholders in the processes.

How does certification affect career opportunities?



Mischa Soujon: *The certification is a mark of quality for employers and customers. It helps people to climb the career ladder, but it is not a career stage.*

What are the different certification levels?



Mahbouba Gharbi: *The Foundation Level is a basic course for software architects, and also for software developers, testers, analysts and technical project managers. The Advanced Level is aimed at experienced software architects and software developers who are already familiar with software architecture.*



Stefan Tilkov: *The Advanced Level consists of different modules from three areas of competence: methodology, technology and communication. Participants must have 70 credit points before they can apply to take the exam. In the exam they have to solve a problem, which they then defend before an examining board and answer their questions. Those who pass the exam can use the title "Certified Professional for Software Architecture – Advanced Level".*

How is the iSAQB changing?

Mahbouba Gharbi: *The association has become much more well known in recent years, which is evident especially in the large number of certifications. Both the software industry and universities know about us, and our international reputation is also growing. Architecture is becoming a very important aspect of projects.*

Stefan Tilkov: *The association's work is very practically oriented and the curricula are updated continuously – new modules constantly add new aspects to the training.*

Are certificates from other organisations recognized by the iSAQB?



advanced-level/

Bettina S. Tacke: *It is possible that you can have your certificates accredited by the iSAQB. A current list of certificates for which the iSAQB grants credit points and other information on accreditation can be found at*

<http://www.isaqb.org/certifications/>

How does a software architect see himself?



Martin Lehmann: *An adequate and suitable software architecture is the essential factor for the success of any IT project. A software architect needs skills and experience for the joint creation and development of the software architecture in a team consisting of all stakeholders. Present-day software projects have to implement requirements with a high degree of flexibility and ever shorter release cycles. This necessitates the principle of "divide and conquer" and is evident in current trends such as "structuring in micro services" and "parallelism through independent teams".*

This means that the architecture tasks are much more distributed in the team than in the past, which requires the necessary skills. The software architect is increasingly becoming a moderator. But responsibility cannot be shared – the role of the software architect is still very important. The role is therefore defined today by this responsibility and the related tasks.

Gernot Starke: *Software architects create good systems that remain good. They ensure a design that allows for easy maintenance, expandability and other important system characteristics.*

How does the iSAQB come off in a worldwide comparison?



Michael Mahlberg: *The CPSA is one of the fastest-growing certifications for software architects worldwide. The certificate is also important for many countries with a high outsourcing volume, because it shows potential customers the provider's high standard of quality.*

Many of our licensed training course providers and training delivery organizations travel great distances to provide training virtually around the globe – from Cismadioara to Shanghai. Meanwhile, the number of local providers in the non-English-speaking world is also growing.



www.isaqb.org