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## 2023 Finance Graduate Stream FAQ



### What work does a finance graduate undertake and get exposure to?

There are five core finance areas in the department:

- External Budgets – facilitates the government decision-making process, including assisting Groups with new policy proposals and costings, and undertaking estimates variations and preparation of the Budget documents.
- Financial Reporting – is responsible for preparing the department’s financial statements, providing advice on financial accounting matters, managing asset and lease accounting, and ensuring the department meets its taxation obligations.
- Financial Performance and Internal Budgeting – is responsible for reporting on the financial performance of the department to the Executive Board, managing the internal budget allocation process, and the administration of the department’s budgeting, forecasting and reporting system.
- Financial Framework and Operations – manages the department’s compliance with the Financial Framework, develops, coordinates and facilitates financial training, provides assistance and guidance in relation to travel and credit cards, and manages the department’s relationship with the Service Delivery Office.
- Finance Business Partners – are responsible for providing strategic financial services and advice regarding the financial performance of Groups to Group Executives and the CFO.

Finance graduates get exposure to broad finance work within the department from the top down. Typically Finance graduates will spend time in both the finance and external budget branches during the graduate program, undertaking two work placements from within the five core finance areas.

### How many placements does a finance graduate undertake?

Finance graduates undertake two work placements during the ten-month graduate program within the same stream. Placements will be co-ordinated by stream leads. Placements may be within the same Group.

## How are finance graduates supported within their placement?

Graduates will have a dedicated supervisor and will learn from subject matter experts within the team. Finance graduates are encouraged to develop valuable networks. Opportunities include shadowing an executive, finding a mentor, participating in graduate events, and surge positions.

## What learning and development do finance graduates undertake?

DESE graduates are required to undertake mandatory learning and development as part of the graduate program.

Graduates undertake a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration delivered through the University of Canberra. The Graduate Certificate, in conjunction with on-the-job experience, enables graduates to obtain the initial skills, knowledge and understanding required for a career in the department and the wider APS. The Program has been specifically tailored to meet the needs of graduates, serve as an introduction to public sector management and will focus on providing practical education relevant to your career.

After the successful completion of the program, graduates may be supported to undertake a CPA or CA certification.

## What is the career progression after the graduate program?

On successful completion of the program, graduates advance to the APS5 level. Graduates are encouraged to apply in bulk internal and external recruitment rounds at the APS6 levels. DESE graduates have a good track record of progressing after the graduate program.

## What does a typical day in the life of a Finance graduate look like?

You can expect a wide variety of activities in a typical day, including:

- Working with business colleagues to understand the outcomes they're looking for
- Being part of a team
- Preparing detailed budgets and costings for projects, initiatives and DESE groups
- Interpreting accounting standards and providing financial analysis and reports
- Writing briefs including senate estimates and updates to internal policies and guidelines
- Preparing detailed account reconciliations and reports
- Undertaking work within the departments finance systems
- Assisting in procurement activities including interpretation of the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines
- Problem solving, conducting process mapping and suggesting improvements
- Working with colleagues across the whole organisation
- Being part of a department that is invested in your professional development and success.

## What does the department look for in a finance graduate?

- A burning desire to expand upon the knowledge and skills you've learnt throughout your degree
- Tertiary qualifications in commerce or accounting related disciplines
- Strong written and oral communication skills, including the ability to communicate effectively, problem solve and work as part of a team
- Well-developed interpersonal skills, including the ability to actively engage with co-workers and stakeholders
- Enthusiasm, a strong work ethic, and an attitude open to learning and innovation.