

Masters in Finance (part-time)

Participant profile

Name: Daniel Toole

Job title: Managing Director

Organisation: Agon Consulting

Career: Daniel joined the Masters in Finance programme when he was working in a corporate strategy role at the BBC. After graduating in 1999, he became Head of Strategy and Investment at BBC Technology, and then moved to Amey where he was Director of Strategy and Business Development (M&A). He is currently running Agon Consulting, offering management consultancy and fundraising advice.



“It gave me that extra depth of understanding where the theories break down, and you need to make adjustments in the real world.”

Like many people, I looked at both MBA and Masters in Finance courses, but chose Masters in Finance because it gave me hard skills in a technical area and I already had marketing and strategy experience. London Business School is one of the best in Europe, and globally it's in the top three in finance – which heavily influenced my choice. The ability to study part time allowing me to continue working was an easier option financially and also allowed me to put into practice what I was learning on a daily basis.

I'd done quite a bit of strategy and corporate finance before, but this course gave me a complete picture and a lot more confidence voicing my opinion. It gave me that extra depth of understanding - where the theories break down, and where you need to make adjustments in the real world. If you do enough work, you eventually get a sense of when things feel right, instead of just crunching the numbers. When you're operating at a high enough level, it's not an exact science, but you need this deeper course to get there.

The first year was challenging as I had to adjust to the heavy workload and learn how to manage working to very strict deadlines, a particular challenge when working in groups with very different working styles, but this was good grounding for the second year, teaching me time management and discipline. The range of electives are excellent and the professors are very proficient, so I learnt a lot both technically and from the different opinions and experiences of my classmates.

I was warned beforehand that it was a lot of work. It was definitely a challenge to manage the work/life balance, but I was interested in getting the most out of the course, and getting a high grade, so I was working till 10 or 11pm six days a week for two years. It was tough, but I found it very rewarding.

Immediately after I completed the programme I got promoted at the BBC, a role executing a major change in the organisational structure, and I had the opportunity and confidence to take on that role properly. Later in my career, I find I use less of the day-to-day analysis and technical skills, but the framework of thinking remains useful, allowing me to check and understand colleagues' work. I also value the relationships I built highly. I keep in touch directly with classmates, as well as with the School, and it's a helpful and interesting social, academic and professional network.

London Business School's Masters in Finance is a very good course at an excellent school – well run and structured. If you are embarking on it now, you will learn a lot from the content, and about what interests you, as well as how to manage other people and yourself. You will also make lifelong friends.