

Masters in Finance (full time)

Participant profile

Name: Jesse McDougall

Job title: Assistant Portfolio Manager

Organisation: Barclays Capital

Career: Before embarking on the Masters in Finance programme, Jesse worked as an investment banking analyst in Canada. Following her graduation from London Business School in 2005, she was recruited by Barclays Capital from the milk round, and works in a team running hedge fund strategies on a proprietary basis.



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When choosing a course, I looked at MBAs, but I did a management first degree, so I wanted a qualitative finance degree. London Business School’s excellent brand, the job opportunities that come out of it, and the fact that I wanted to be London-based were all reasons for my choice, and in addition, some former colleagues in Canada had attended the School, and all were very positive about the School.

I worked as an investment banking analyst, looking at M&A activities from an advisory basis. My goal entering the programme was to stay in finance but change from an advisory role to trading – and it worked perfectly for me. The course gives you the choice – a certain proportion is required study, and the rest is chosen electives, enabling you to express and develop the direction you want to take.

I took the opportunity to give up my job for ten months with no hesitation at all. I was very confident that the payback from London Business School would be more than sufficient. Financially I have no regrets, and I made precisely the switch I intended to make. I wanted to stay in London too, and the Masters in Finance facilitated that.

The course was excellent, far beyond my expectations. The speed and content were sufficiently challenging, starting at a high level, with an assumed knowledge base. As a result, it was fast paced, but not unmanageable. The content was up-to-date with what’s happening in the markets; for example hedge funds, trends and accounting. The professors were excellent too, stars in their field. It was a very positive experience.

We had 125 students on the course, so we formed a lot of relationships. You gain a fantastic network globally; made up of people you’ve had many drinks with, and shared late night projects with. Within a few months of graduating, everyone had great jobs, and here in London I keep in touch with a lot of people, and see them all the time.

I now have some input within the organisation regarding recruitment, and I’m much more likely to look at a CV from someone with a London Business School qualification, because I know the quality behind it. One of the contrasts between a US university and London Business School is the international attendance – 5% of our class was British, and there was no over-represented group! I learnt a lot about different cultures, and I now have a new cultural perspective both professionally and socially. A network of colleagues and friends like this is unique.

This programme is for people who have a solid finance background but want to shift forward in their careers. It’s a fantastic booster and enables a finance career change like no other.