What is a central agency?

A central agency has particular Australian Public Service (APS)-wide responsibilities for setting the legislative, financial or employment frameworks within which all APS agencies operate.

The Department of Finance (Finance) is a central agency and plays a significant role in many areas of the government’s agenda. One of our key responsibilities is supporting the delivery of the Australian Government Budget, but our work extends well beyond managing government expenditure.
What can you offer Finance?

At Finance, we work closely in teams to achieve our objectives, so collaboration and communication skills are highly valued.

We are looking for high-calibre, ambitious graduates who will nurture positive relationships and have effective communication skills. We want people who are innovative and creative, are committed to excellence, and who show personal drive and integrity. We are committed to the APS Values and expect that our employees will be too.

Are you eligible to apply?

In order to apply for our graduate programme you must:
- be an Australian citizen, or provide evidence that you will be granted Australian citizenship before the programme commences
- have maintained at least a credit average throughout your university degree
- be completing your final year of study or have completed your degree in the last five years
- be willing to relocate to Canberra

SMART FACT

Did you know?
Finance developed and manages australia.gov.au - a gateway of information and services gathered from over 900 Australian Government websites as well as state and territory resources.
Does Finance take your degree?

At Finance, we work on many aspects of the government’s agenda. To support this, we are looking for graduates with a range of qualifications and experiences, including in the following disciplines:

- Accounting
- Arts
- Business
- Commerce
- Finance
- Property
- Economics
- Engineering
- Law
- Communications
- Information and Communications Technology

FINANCE IS FAR MORE THAN JUST A NUMBERS GAME. IF YOU’RE NOT SURE HOW YOUR DEGREE FITS IN, CONTACT THE RECRUITMENT TEAM TO ASK!

What set of skills is Finance looking for?

We are looking for graduates who are responsive, who want to be challenged and work in a fast paced environment, and who demonstrate a desire to learn and have the right attitude. Some of the main skills we look for in graduates are:

- ability to think critically
- strong research and analysis skills
- ability to work as part of a team
- strong verbal and written communication skills
- ability to think outside the square and to be creative
- attention to detail and accuracy
- good judgement

SMART PROFILE

JESSE FATNOWNA
- Social Policy Division, Budget Group.

I work in the Social Policy Division of Budget Group. Working on the Australian Government Budget has helped me to understand the way the Government makes expenditure decisions, and I’ve had a chance to be involved with the implementation of some of Australia’s biggest social reforms. Finance is a great place to work, the pay and conditions are very good and the Graduate Programme provides a great way to join the Public Service. Finance also has various networks that you can get involved with.

I’m a member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network. We help the Department organise events and act as a peer support network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members. Finance also has a Diversity Network, a Women’s Network and a Social Club who all organise various worthwhile events for the department throughout the year.
What does the Department of Finance do?

Finance sits at the heart of government decision making, and assists the government in shaping and delivering its agenda by providing high quality advice and services over a wide range of policy and programme areas. We engage on fiscal and economic matters – particularly in relation to the Australian Government Budget, but we also manage and provide advice on:

- the government’s non-defence domestic property portfolio
- key asset sales
- the government’s financial framework
- entitlements for parliamentarians and their employees
- Government Business Enterprises
- general insurance services to other government agencies
- risk management
- whole-of-Australian-Government procurement
- public sector reform
- whole-of-Australian-Government ICT.

SMART FACT

It’s an exciting time to join Finance. We are embarking on a programme of internal change that will modernise the way we do business. We are seeking to be a modern public service agency that is agile, responsive and connected.
Four business groups manage Finance's work:

- **Budget Group** advises the Minister for Finance, senior ministers and the Expenditure Review Committee of Cabinet on whole-of-Australian-Government budgetary, financial and non-tax revenue policy issues and expenditure priorities. Budget Group supports the Government in preparing, delivering and managing the Australian Government Budget.

- **Business, Procurement and Asset Management Group (BPAM)** manages the Australian Government's business and non-defence property assets, implements and manages the sale or divestment of such assets, handles residual business issues and is responsible for delivering all whole-of-Australian-Government coordinated procurement services.

- **Chief Operating Officer Group (COOG)** delivers corporate services to the department and its employees, including facilities, security, legal, human resources and IT. COOG also provides advice and support to parliamentarians and their employees about their employment conditions.

- **Governance and Resource Management Group (GaRM)** develops and advises on the resource management framework applicable to public sector agencies. This includes advising on governance and accounting policy issues, on the government's investment funds, and on superannuation arrangements for members of parliament and APS employees. GaRM also works across government to maintain Australia's position as a leader in the application of information and communications technologies to government administration, information and services.

**SMART PROFILE**

**FAHEEM KHAN**

- Immigration and Foreign Affairs Branch, Budget Group

I work in the Immigration Agency Advice Unit (AAU) in the Government and Defence Division. Working on the Federal Budget within an AAU has exposed me to the process of Government decision making and the importance of providing “frank and fearless” advice to decision makers. Joining Finance was my first professional full-time occupation after University and I have found the Graduate Programme to be a fantastic introduction to life within the Australian Public Service (APS). I have joined the Diversity Network within Finance and participated in the Finance FC team in the APS soccer competition, both of which have helped me settle in to both Finance and Canberra.
Finance offers a Graduate Development Programme designed to utilise your existing skills and build new capabilities. The programme will equip you with the knowledge you need to become a high quality Finance employee; and to establish a strong foundation to build your career within the APS.

The programme is comprised of training, networking and support.
Training covers topics that are relevant to all staff, regardless of their job role and will assist you to understand Finance and general APS functions.

We understand that for some of you this may be your first full time job, so there are plenty of learning and development opportunities to support you through the transition.

The programme also includes buddy and mentor programmes, networking sessions with the other central agencies, and key events such as meeting senior executive staff within the department, as well as the portfolio ministers.

Finance values all types of learning, including on-the-job, mentoring, coaching and peer learning, and classroom-based learning. The programme will ensure there is a balance between these elements.

SMART FACT

Did you know? Finance works in partnership with countries in the Asia-Pacific region and there are opportunities for staff to work in Indonesia, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.
**SMART CHOICE**

**CPA (Certified Practicing Accountant) Recognition**

Finance is accredited as a CPA Australia Recognised Employer to the Knowledge Level, the highest level. Finance was the first public sector employer in the ACT to gain this accreditation.

This provides our finance and accounting staff that have a business requirement for a CPA qualification with resources and guidance to assist them.

CPA participants also benefit by having a simple alternative method to demonstrate adherence to the CPA programme’s practical experience requirement and to demonstrate adherence to minimum continuing professional development standards. These are both mandatory components of the award.

**Diversity**

At Finance, we strive for and celebrate diversity in our workforce. We believe that our employees, with their diverse skills, languages and backgrounds, are our richest asset and we encourage applicants from all sectors of the community to apply for a position with us. Documents such as a Diversity Strategy, Diversity Action Plan and Reconciliation Action Plan have been put in place to help Finance grow as an inclusive organisation and there are various support networks available for you to become involved in, such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network, the Diversity Network, the Women’s Network and the Social Club.

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SMART PROFILE

KATHERINE HARPER

- Resource Management, GaRM.

As an ancient history graduate, I was quite amazed (and relieved) I even got an interview at Finance. Finance appreciated the research and analytical skills that an Arts Degree had taught me and saw them as highly transferrable. I wanted to work at Finance because every new major project or proposal has to go through Finance at some point. It means you can be involved in some very interesting and varied work.

I work in the International Policy team. Most people are surprised by the things that we do as they are very different to what people normally associate with Finance. We work with countries in the Indo-Pacific region to help them develop and improve their public financial management. I have worked on projects to do with Indonesia, PNG, Solomon Islands, Singapore, Nepal, and India. I enjoy working in international aid as I have to keep abreast of international political, strategic, and economic developments.
LIFE IN CANBERRA

If you’ve never visited Canberra, or the last time you did was for a school excursion you probably need to broaden your view of Australia’s capital! Canberra has all the essential services of a bigger city and is close to both the snow and the coast. Finance recruits many graduates each year, so if you are relocating from another city, you will have plenty of people to explore Canberra with. There is no shortage of things to do in Canberra. You will be kept busy exploring the many cafes, restaurants, museums, bars, wineries, bike paths and parks...the list is endless!

We understand that moving away from friends and family is a major life change, so we aim to help make the move as smooth as possible. We provide interstate graduates with relocation assistance and three weeks temporary accommodation while you find your own place.

SUPPORT NETWORKS

At Finance we want to give you as much support as we can to help you settle in. Some of the networks we provide are:

**Buddies** – before you commence in January, we will pair you up with a current graduate. Your buddy can help answer any questions about starting work and show you around when you arrive.

**People Branch** – we will assist you with your relocation to Canberra as necessary and support and guide you through the year-long Graduate Development Programme.

**Your team** – some teams in Finance are small while others can be quite large. Within your team you will have a supervisor who can support you in your day-to-day work.

**Learning and Development Liaison Officer** – each business group has a Learning and Development Liaison Officer as a central point of contact and support for graduates.

**Mentor** – you’ll have the opportunity to team up with someone more senior within the department who can guide your learning, development and career progression at Finance.
Like what you have read? What next?

Applications open in February/March each year and you can apply online through our website, www.finance.gov.au. We will ask you to complete a couple of questions about your studies or previous experience.

Recruitment Timeline:

February / March: Applications open
May: Online Written Exercise
July / August: Offers made

April: Applications close
June: Assessment Centre
January: Programme commences

How can you prepare for your application and assessment?

- Provide real examples. If we ask you to describe a situation then talk about a real example. It could be something that you were involved in at university, a sporting achievement or in a part-time job.
- Use the STAR principle in your examples to give us the complete picture: outline the Situation you were in, the Task you had to complete, the Action you took, and the Result you delivered.
- Check spelling and grammar – most online recruitment systems do not have spell check.
- Get someone else to read over your application and see if it makes sense to them.
- Be yourself – we are trying to find out who you are and challenge you, not intimidate you.
- Get a good night’s sleep before assessment centres.
- Have fun and learn!

Why can’t Finance make offers straight away?

We want to make sure we find the best people for the job – this takes time. We have different stages and exercises to assess candidates on different skill sets and undertake a comprehensive review of all candidates. We will do our best to keep you informed throughout the application process.

SMART PROFILE

MEGAN GEURTS
- Risk, Insurance and Special Claims Branch, BPAM

As a claims officer in the Discretionary Payments Section, I have drafted countless Ministerial and Departmental Briefs and responded to correspondence from the public. Finance’s position as a central agency means I have been exposed to a wide range of other departments and has given me insight into the operations of their policy areas. I have found that Finance’s excellent reputation means our recommendations and suggestions are highly valued and respected by our Ministers and other departments.
WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you have more questions:

- Visit us at www.finance.gov.au
- Call us: Recruitment Hotline (02) 6215 1770
- Email us: recruitment@finance.gov.au
- Find us on Facebook:
  Log on to Facebook and search 'Department of Finance Graduate Programme'