



ACST1001

Finance Fundamentals

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2026

Department of Applied Finance

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor

Shane Magee

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Contact via Email

Room 707A, 4ER Building, 4 Eastern Road

See iLearn

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit focuses on the fundamental finance skills that are essential for any successful business.

Students will examine the roles and interaction of participants in the financial system and apply financial decision-making tools to value and evaluate investment and financing opportunities. Students will also learn about risk and return, the importance of cash flows and the various financial instruments traded in global financial markets.

Students will develop fundamental finance knowledge and apply this in authentic real-world problems.

Students will develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Explain how the financial system supports and influences business decisions.

ULO2: Apply time value of money techniques to value financial instruments.

ULO3: Explain the relationship between risk and return.

ULO4: Use critical thinking and problem solving to make investment and financing

decisions for a business

General Assessment Information

Late Assessment Submission Penalty (written assessments)

If you submit your assessment late, 5% of the total possible marks will be deducted for each day (including weekends), up to 7 days. Submissions more than 7 days late will receive a mark of 0.

Example 1 (out of 100):

If you score 85/100 but submit **20 hours late**, you will lose **5 marks** and receive **80/100**.

Example 2 (out of 30):

If you score 27/30 but submit **20 hours late**, you will lose **1.5 marks** and receive **25.5/30**.

Extensions

Automatic short extension: Some assessments are eligible for automatic short extension. You can only apply for an automatic short extension before the due date.

Special Consideration: If you need more time due to serious issues and for any assessments that are not eligible for Short Extension, you must apply for Special Consideration. Need help? Review the [Special Consideration page](#) for further details.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Skills development: Financial decision-making	20%	No	04/09/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Skills development: Financial decisions with Excel	30%	No	09/10/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Formal examination	50%	No	University examination period	Individual	No	Observed

Skills development: Financial decision-making

Assessment Type ¹: Reflection task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **04/09/2026**

Weighting: **20%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

The purpose of this assessment is for you to build an important foundational layer of expertise in financial decision making through continuous engagement with real-world financial problems.

You will reflect on your learning journey, analyse your engagement with weekly problem sets and demonstrate your ability to apply financial techniques to practical scenarios.

Skills in focus:

- Discipline knowledge
- Critical thinking and problem solving

Deliverable(s): Reflective report [max 1,000 words excluding appendices with supporting evidence]

Individual assessment

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain how the financial system supports and influences business decisions.
- Apply time value of money techniques to value financial instruments.

Skills development: Financial decisions with Excel

Assessment Type ¹: Problem-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **09/10/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

The purpose of this assessment is to develop your proficiency in using Excel for financial analysis, enhancing your ability to apply various Excel functions and techniques to solve real-world financial problems effectively. Excel is a fundamental tool in many industries. Strong Excel skills remain a highly desirable requirement for many employers.

Students will analyse spreadsheets with data on real-world financial problems.

Skills in focus:

- Digital skills
- Discipline knowledge
- Critical thinking and Problem solving

Deliverable(s): Spreadsheet analysis

Individual assessment.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply time value of money techniques to value financial instruments.

Formal examination

Assessment Type ¹: Examination

Indicative Time on Task ²: 35 hours

Due: **University examination period**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Observed

The purpose of this assessment is for you to formally demonstrate the expertise you have gained in this unit.

You will participate in a 2-hour exam held during the University Examination period. Important information about the exam will be made available on the unit iLearn page. You should also review the [MQ Exams website](#) for general tips.

Deliverable(s): Formal exam

Individual assessment

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain how the financial system supports and influences business decisions.
- Apply time value of money techniques to value financial instruments.
- Explain the relationship between risk and return.
- Use critical thinking and problem solving to make investment and financing decisions for a business

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- [Academic Success](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Textbook:

Berk, J., DeMarzo, P., Harford, J., Ford, G., & Mollica, V., 2025, Fundamentals of Corporate Finance, 4rd Edition, Pearson, ISBN: 9780655713395. This book can be purchased from the publisher, [Pearson](#), and is also available from the [Macquarie University library](#).

Microsoft Office, including Microsoft Excel:

Microsoft Excel will be used in ACST1001. All Macquarie University computer labs have Microsoft Office, including Microsoft Excel. You can also install Microsoft Office (including Microsoft Excel) on your own devices (for free!) by following these instructions: <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/software/microsoft>.

Unit web page:

Course materials will be available on the learning management system (iLearn). It is essential that you regularly visit the unit's web page. You will have access to the Unit Guide, announcements, supplementary reading materials, lecture and tutorial materials, and staff consultation hours here.

The web page for this unit can be found at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>. To access the web page, you need to enter your username and password and use second-factor authentication. You should contact IT Helpdesk if you need any assistance at: <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>

Learning and teaching activities:

Classes for ACST1001 in Session 1 2025 comprise (1) weekly 90-minute face-to-face on-campus/live stream lectures and (2) weekly 90-minute face-to-face on-campus tutorials/online Zoom tutorials.

Unit Schedule

Week	Topic
1	Introduction to financial decisions
2	The financial system
3	Tools for financial decision-making: Time value of money 1
4	Tools for financial decision-making: Time value of money 2
5	Tools for financial decision-making: Time value of money 3

Week	Topic
6	Valuation of financial assets: Bonds
7	Valuation of financial assets: Shares
8	Risk and return
9	Firm financial decisions: Investment decisions 1
10	Firm financial decisions: Investment decisions 2
11	Firm financial decisions: Financing decisions
12	Industry event
13	Revision

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the

University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2026.04 of the [Handbook](#)