

Breaking into the world of corporate finance with Bravura

 By [Shan Raddiffe](#)

13 Aug 2018

Bravura launched its Corporate Finance Graduate Academy this Women's Month with the aim to empower black women through its specialised programme and help launch their careers in the world of corporate finance.



Soria Hay, head of Corporate Finance at Bravura

Founded by Soria Hay at the age of 29, the independent investment bank and corporate finance advisory firm Bravura is now a multinational success story with offices in Mauritius, South Africa, Namibia and Australia. Bravura Holdings has a primary listing on the Stock Exchange of Mauritius and a secondary listing on the Namibia Stock Exchange. Anchor shareholders include African Rainbow Capital Investments and the founders of the Bravura group.

Said Hay, “We have always believed in growing skills within our ranks, and the Corporate Finance Graduate Academy will address this as well as contributing to developing more skilled, empowered women in the field of investment banking and corporate finance – something the industry sorely needs. I would like to see more women entering, thriving and leading in this career.”

We chatted to Hay a bit more about the Bravura Corporate Finance Graduate Academy's programme and what applicants can expect. Those wishing to join the programme have until the end of August to apply for the first intake.

■ ***What is the official graduate qualification of this course?***

The graduate will be a Corporate Finance Analyst on completion of the programme.

■ ***What are the entry requirements?***

At least one of the following qualifications are required: BCom Honours Accounting / Economics / Finance / Law BBusSc Accounting / Finance / Economics BA Law / LLB.

■ ***Who is the course accredited by?***

At this point the programme is not accredited but actively supports studies towards qualifications accredited by the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and the CFA Institute.

▣ What should potential candidates know before applying?

This is an intensive programme for Black Women who are top academic achievers and will last for a 12-month period with the opportunity to extend this for a further 12 months (based on performance). The candidate will be required to work at Bravura's offices in Illovo, Johannesburg.

▣ Who should or shouldn't apply for this course?

Only Black Women as defined in the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 are eligible for this programme.

▣ What aptitudes should a good student have?

The candidate should have the ability to quickly learn difficult, technical financial and legal concepts. She should be able to adapt to change and handle (and even thrive on) stress and pressure. The candidate should have an exceptional work ethic combined with a passion for working with people (clients and team), and the will to persevere. While having a strong eye for detail, she should be able to keep in sight the bigger picture. She should be a highly organised self-starter with a solid sense of accountability.

▣ What unique opportunities do you offer your students?

Robust innovation is part of Bravura's DNA. Excellence and agility in delivering solutions for sophisticated clients is what sets Bravura's professionals apart from their peers, and this innovation-driven culture is something of which the candidate will gain first-hand knowledge.

The candidate will have the opportunity to become involved in mergers and acquisitions, capital raises, listings and B-BBEE transactions that shape South Africa's unique corporate landscape.

The candidate will come away with specialist and technical knowledge from an understanding of regulatory and legislative contexts, to detailed technical skills. The candidate will gain practical know-how in performing detailed industry, company and transactional research; completing valuation and other ancillary models; drafting documents such as pitch books, information memorandums, and so on; working with and reviewing legal agreements; and assisting with project management of corporate finance transactions.

▣ What, if anything, do students find surprising about entering this field of study?

Investment banking is a fast-paced and rewarding environment that equips professionals not only with specialist knowledge across different sectors but is also very much about interpersonal relationships (with clients and colleagues) and communication. Many graduates have the preconception that investment banking is a rigid environment and are surprised to learn that in reality it requires (and encourages) creative and innovative thinking to find optimal solutions that are driven

by each client's unique requirements.

■ ***What is usually the most difficult part/subject of this course?***

While the fast-paced environment is exciting and rewarding, it can challenge candidates at times with a requirement of working long hours to tight deadlines.

■ ***Which careers could graduates expect to go into after completing this course?***

The immediate career would be that of a Corporate Finance Analyst with the potential to work towards becoming an Associate and eventually Principal within the investment banking and corporate finance industries. However, the skills-set and cross-sector experience and insights that individuals gain within investment banking often leads to them entering different sectors and taking on roles of seniority such as that of a principal partner or a C-suite role, or alternatively founding their own enterprise.

ABOUT SHAN RADCLIFFE

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