

National Research University Higher School of Economics
Faculty of Economic Sciences

STRATEGIC CORPORATE FINANCE

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STRATEGIC CORPORATE FINANCE



Vladimir Golubyatnikov,

Strategic Corporate Finance Program
alumnus 2011,
Business Development Director,
ERG Group, Kazakhstan:



SCF gave me both hard and soft skills, and ample possibilities for networking. It provides students with innumerable opportunities for development. Many of my classmates completed dual degree programs abroad and now work in major multinational companies.

Strategic Corporate Finance

The first graduate program taught in English at the Faculty of Economic Sciences

Higher School of Economics (HSE University) is one of Russia's largest and most modern public universities. Established in 1992 as a program in economics, HSE currently offers 87 programs in 16 areas of study for undergraduate students and 129 Master's programs in 28 areas of study. 23 Master's programs are currently taught entirely in English. On its four campuses - in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Perm and Nizhny Novgorod - HSE offers instruction to nearly 30,000 students each year. Because HSE attracts the best and brightest from throughout Russia, most students have a high level of proficiency in English.

The Moscow-based Faculty of Economic Sciences at the Higher School of Economics, a highly selective educational institution specializing in economics and finance, invites prospective students to apply for the graduate program in Strategic Corporate Finance (SCF). All classes at the Strategic Corporate Finance program are delivered in English. Graduates of the SCF program receive a Master of Science in Finance degree.

About the Program

Our master program is designed for those who want to gain a deep understanding of finance while simultaneously obtaining a broad professional vision. The key focus of the SCF program is corporate finance; however, the program is built in a way that allows students to gain a broad spectrum of knowledge in other areas of finance and economics as well. In addition to corporate finance, our students study macroeconomics, microeconomics, econometrics, validation and financial modelling, asset pricing, venture capital, value-based management, behavioural finance, and much more. Graduates of our program work in consulting and at leading investment banks, M&A advisory firms, and investment funds. Some become strategy consultants, buy-side analysts and portfolio managers, while others develop their own businesses, conduct academic research, or build careers as CFOs in real sector companies. Many of our alumni work not only here in Moscow, but in other major finance capitals like London, New York, Amsterdam, Berlin, and Sydney.

The high quality of the SCF program comes from the program's instructors, among whom are leading Russian academics visiting professors from Western universities, and finance practitioners from some of the largest international companies. One of the program's key advantages is the opportunity to gain both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of a financier. Qualitative theoretical knowledge will provide you with broad career choices in the future, while practical skills will give you a competitive advantage and allow you to be well-prepared for the challenging job interviews that await you down the road. For that reason, professors with Doctoral degrees teach core courses in macroeconomics, microeconomics, corporate finance, financial theory, risk management, and corporate governance. A variety of practice-oriented courses in business valuation, M&A deals, financial modelling, and venture capital, for example, are carried out with the help of staff from KPMG, E&Y, PricewaterhouseCoopers, consulting firms, and financial specialists with extensive knowledge in emerging markets.



To be admitted to the program, you must have a high enough level of English to read international journals, and you must have some knowledge of macro- and microeconomics, as well as mathematics for economists. We recommend that those interested in studying in our program familiarize themselves with the fundamentals of finance with the help of the textbook, Principles of Corporate Finance by Berk and De Marzo.



Anastasia Stepanova,

SCF alumna 2006, SCF Program
Academic Director:

” I was in the first SCF class and graduated about 10 years ago. The program has changed a lot since then. Enrollment has increased from 20 to 70, and each year this number is increasing. Starting from September 2016, the program is instructed in English. We already have international students from 11 countries. Also, the hallmark of the program is that financiers always work in teams, and sometimes the teams can be quite diverse. Students from different countries, someone with experience in the industry, with a mathematical background, graduate or major in economics – they all work together. This helps to simulate real life, when you never know what kind of back-ground the people who run the project with you will have. We study full time; sometimes we study also on weekends. Majority of students get Russian Government fellowships, and each year we accept the best and brightest students from Russian and foreign undergraduate programs.

Corporate Finance Center

As unique a financial program it is, in-class learning is closely intertwined with the hands-on work of the Corporate Finance research Center. Corporate Finance Center (CFC) is committed to promoting high quality research on the application of financial theory and techniques to real world corporate financial policies, corporate performance and corporate governance studies. CFC aims to develop new knowledge in emerging markets and to provide a forum for discussing empirical corporate finance results. Over the course of two years, students are given a broad range of unique academic opportunities. Eight years ago, the co-founder of the SCF program, Professor Irina Ivashkovskaya, created the Journal of Corporate Finance Research. The journal is published in electronic format quarterly by HSE University, is indexed by RSCI Web of Science index, and goes into SCOPUS. Several dozen of the journal's articles were written by graduates of our program. Publishing in a peer-reviewed journal is an excellent opportunity to display the caliber of your education to an employer, as well as to develop creativity and professional passion.

As of June 2017 Center opened Bloomberg hub offering unlimited data access. The Bloomberg database comprises extensive, constantly updated data on global and national capital markets, transactions involving financial assets, derivatives, as well as market liquidity options, trading applications and news flow.

Graduate Placement

The SCF program is a program with a respectable history. In our 11 years of work, many students have completed the program as highly educated financiers. Our graduates work for companies such as Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, ING, Accenture, Oliver Wyman, BCG, Roland Berger, ATKearney, VTB Capital, Sberbank CIB, Renaissance Capital, and an entire host of other companies and funds. It is not uncommon for our alumni to hire our recent graduates, since they are familiar with the high level of preparation the SCF graduates.

The recent financial crisis demonstrated how important it is to understand the structure of financial markets, the interconnection between different markets, and the stimuli of the players on these markets. And how important it is to make the right investment and financial decisions in both the financial and the real sector given the complexity of the modern world. Our program dives headfirst into these areas.



Professor Irina Ivashkovakaya,

Head of School of Finance:

“ It was originally my idea to create Strategic Corporate Finance Master program. For many years I have thought about what it is important to emphasize when you teach finance. These points include cash flow movements, how a company manages its funds and attracts funding, and what it invests in. These were the principles that we build our SCF program on. Now, after 10 years, the program will be instructed fully in the English language. When we develop degree programs for international students we make our programs global. To attract good students from abroad one needs first to properly position the program; then it gains popularity. I have also been teaching in Italy for the last few years and giving lectures in finance. I am interested in comparing our level to the European universities' faculties. I believe that we stack up very well against similar programs in European universities. The program is very dynamic and the students are happy with the level and course work. I see interest in their eyes, and this is encouraging.

Student Papers Examples

Examples of working papers and journal articles based on student course papers and master theses:

1. Grigorieva, S., P, T.Petrulina, The performance of mergers and acquisitions in emerging capital markets: new evidence, *Journal of Management Control*, October 2015, Volume 26, Issue 4, pp 377-403; **full text at SSRN**
2. Ivashkovskaya, I., Stepanova, A., Eliseeva, N., Does corporate financial architecture contribute to sustainable corporate growth? The evidence from Russian companies. **Journal of Corporate Finance Research**, 4 (32), 2014
3. Ilyin, D., The impact of intellectual capital on companies performance evidence from emerging markets **Journal of Corporate Finance Research**, 4 (32), 2014
4. Stepanova, A., Rabotinskiy, I., Corporate Governance and Cost of Debt: Review of Recent Studies, *Journal of Corporate Finance Research* 2(30), 2014
5. Makeeva, E., Neretina, E., Pirogov, N., A Binary Model Versus Discriminant Analysis to Corporate Bankruptcies for Emerging Market, **Journal of Corporate Finance Research** 4 (24), 2012), **full text at SSRN**
6. Makeeva, E., Neretina, E., Pirogov, N., A Binary Model Versus Discriminant Analysis to Corporate Bankruptcies for Emerging Market, 2012, **full text at SSRN**
7. Dranev, Y., Babushkin M., Asymmetric exchange-rate exposure in BRIC countries research program, **Working Papers series: Financial Economics, WP BRP 27/FE/2014**
8. Dranev, Y., Fomkina S., An asymmetric approach to the cost of equity estimation: empirical evidence from Russia **Working Papers series: Financial Economics, WP BRP 12/FE/2014**
9. Stepanova, A., Ivantsova, O., Does corporate governance have an effect on performance in the European banking sector? Evidence from a crisis environment **Working Papers series: Financial Economics, WP BRP 10/FE/2014**



Anastasia Suchkova,
SCF alumna 2016:

“ I am currently a student of the Strategic Corporate Finance Master’s Degree program at the Higher School of Economics (HSE). Before finding out about this program, I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do with my academic career. After I graduated with my bachelor’s degree in accounting and auditing at the Russian state Financial University, I had no idea what I wanted to do next, so I decided to find a job. With time I began to understand that I wanted to continue my education in the sphere of finance. I thought that my accounting education would provide me with a good base to succeed in this field of study. I started to research Master’s programs. The most impressive program for me was Strategic Corporate Finance (SCF) at HSE. Why? I reviewed the disciplines that are studied in that program and they seemed very interesting to me. In addition, the professors in each of the disciplines had a long list of activities and publications. So after my initial great first impression, I did my best to prepare for exams and I passed them. I was very happy and a little bit scared. At work a lot of people told me that a Master’s degree is just a waste of time. Now, as a second-year student of this program, I can say that they were wrong. For the last year and a half I’ve had a wonderful experience in different areas of Finance and I’ve met a lot of open-minded students and professors. The biggest advantage of the program is that you can easily communicate with professors. Most importantly, the professors have huge amounts of experience not only in education but also in the real world of Finance.

I improved my teamwork skills and learned how to work effectively. Sometimes it was hard to study, but it was also always fun. In our program, we have lots of room for creativity. You have to think and make your own decisions consciously. The Strategic Corporate Finance program gives you a lot of opportunities to develop. Some students take part in case competitions, while others prefer to conduct original research. As for me, I enjoy conducting research alongside my professors. It was difficult at first, but it got much easier as I got more experience doing it. I felt very happy when I succeeded and got to reap the benefits of my research. We presented our research paper at an international conference in Brussels, where there were students of Ph.D. programs from all over the world. I can truly say that our Master’s Program is so successful that we can easily compete in the international arena.

I’m very lucky that I have the opportunity to study here. I have met good friends and wonderful, intelligent teachers who have helped me and motivated me in times of need. The knowledge and experience that I have received here will definitely help me in my future professional life.



What makes the Program Stand Out

The main things that make our program stand out are its hands-on approach, its emphasis on teamwork and its international orientation.

First of all, our program combines elements of in-class study with hands-on research, and provides students with the opportunity to get a foot in the door into the financial world community. Our students study, perform in-lab research, give presentations at conferences and write scholarly articles, signaling to employers that they are enthusiastic about their profession. They take part in case competitions and participate in professional organizations (for example, CFA, ACCA, EFA, EURAM, etc.). Moreover, we provide our students with a solid theoretical base and a way of conceptualizing the financial profession.

Secondly, our students are constantly working in teams on cases taken from real life. This is a common practice in the world's top business schools. Teamwork helps students polish the knowledge they have gained in the classroom and, most importantly, gets students comfortable with exchanging knowledge in a group setting ("cross-education"). Working in teams, students sharpen their soft skills (for example, public speaking, delivering presentations). Lastly, allowing students to move between different teams and work under the guidance of professionals in the field enables them to build social networks and make connections in the world of finance and investing.

The third guiding principle of our program is its international orientation. Our doors are open to students and faculty members from all around the world. Each year, our classes are attended by exchange students from various foreign countries. All of our student organizations are international in character. Local students are enthusiastic about being paired up with their

foreign counterparts to serve as their "buddies" and help acquaint them with daily life in Russia. Many of our students receive two degrees – one from HSE and one from a partner university. Up to 10 students each year spend their second academic year in another country. Our graduates become players on the world financial stage. They work in the world's most dynamic financial centers: London, Geneva, Amsterdam, Moscow, Sydney, New York City, and many others. The world's top investment banks (Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Barclays, and others), consulting agencies and investment funds find great value in students with well-rounded, cosmopolitan backgrounds. This is why we are so enthusiastic about our program's international orientation and consider this to be a key component to becoming a successful financial professional.

We compete on the same level as some of Russia and Eastern Europe's leading economics programs. Many students in emerging market countries choose our program over economics programs and business schools in India and East Asia

Our program commands prestige and respect among high school graduates from all around the globe. During the 2016-17 admissions cycle, there were four applicants for each available spot in our program. We also received applications from soon-to-be high school graduates from outside of Russia. This year, after a thorough review of each candidate, the program admitted 14 students from abroad. We also send dozens of students to participate in exchange programs each year. For the second year in a row, we are hosting students from the University of Bologna who are participating in our dual-degree program. Currently our program hosts students from 11 different countries.



Program Global Experience

The dual-degree programs with European universities allow several SCF students per year complete their second year in Europe, studying towards a Master of Science at a partner university master program – Erasmus University (The Netherlands), Lancaster University (UK), and for our French-speaking students, Sorbonne University (Paris, France). A few students enjoy exchange programs at Tilburg University, Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Solvay School of Management of Free University of Brussels.

Many students complete their second year at other universities as well – Humboldt University in Germany, the University of Luxembourg, and others – where they have the opportunity to engage with disciplines other than finance. Students can also choose other schools for their dual degrees. For example, this year one of the second year students is pursuing Master in International Finance degree in Amsterdam Business School.

Master in International Finance (MIF) is an educational program held by Amsterdam Business School. It is a very good opportunity for graduates who have at least a couple of years of work experience to deepen their knowledge in the field of finance and investments. The MIF has many common features with the HSE program Corporate Finance. It's practically oriented, all the classes are being held in the evening, most of assignments are to be done in small teams (3-5 people). More than a half of the students are currently employed. The group is really multinational: about 45 students (full-timers and part-timers) representing 18 nationalities from 4 continents.

The program has a well-designed curriculum and structure. The study year is divided into 5 blocks. Each of them (except block 3) consists of 6 normal weeks with lectures and seminars, 1 week is assigned for individual studies, and the 8th week is reserved for final exams. Some of the courses are mandatory, others are elective and can be chosen or not based on personal interests. Usually we have 3-4 courses per block. Significant attention is paid to personal and career development. The program includes a set of workshops intended to help students to elaborate their CVs and cover letters and prepare for job application and interviews.



A very important part of the MIF is a study trip to South Africa that is organized in January (block 3). During a week spent in Cape Town, students attend lectures, workshops, panel sessions, visit financial companies and have a tour to townships, which allows to meet local people and see their life. The purpose of the study trip is to introduce us to investment opportunities and peculiarities of emerging markets, especially countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Since transportation costs are included in the tuition fee, almost everyone arrived 1-2 weeks before the start of the studies and spent this time travelling across the country. And it was really worth doing – South Africa is an amazing country with a very beautiful nature!



Gaisar Gabdulatzianov,

Dual degree master student
at Erasmus University, Rotterdam
and Higher School of Economics

Home master program:
Strategic Corporate Finance
2015/2016 AY

” This double degree program gives you an excellent opportunity to receive an international academic experience. A high academic ranking of Erasmus School of Economics signals to your future employers that you are an individual with high potential. But how is it really organized?

It's so amazing to feel yourself in international environment, when basically every day you face with new people from all over the world, who help you see the economic view from different perspectives. During the seminar sessions you are expected to read a lot of academic papers and discuss them in the open debates. In addition to that we also have to do a lot of group work, that helps you to improve your organizational and team working skills. In ESE you will be taught not only by highly reputable professors, but you will be also involved in interacting with working professionals with a strong track records. From these sessions you learn a lot about the latest developments in their professional area.

However, I also want to urge you to plan your studying in Rotterdam well in advance. One of the biggest challenges that I've faced was finding an apartment close to university. During August -September period it is very stressful to find a suitable and affordable accommodation. While staying in Rotterdam I started to really miss the Russian dishes, because for me it was quite difficult to adapt to the Dutch cuisine.

Overall, I have a great time at Erasmus! Hope you will also seize this opportunity to study in Rotterdam!



Program Key Partners

In Russia: KPMG, E&Y, PwC Russia, VTB Capital, Sberbank CIB, BCG

These key partners' participation in the program grants our students the opportunity to gain theoretical fundamentals while also obtaining the practical skills necessary to be a successful financier. A diverse set of hand-on courses on the valuation of companies, M&A deals, financial modeling, and venture capital are conducted with the participation of staff from KPMG, Ernst & Young, PricewaterhouseCoopers. Representatives of VTB Capital, Sberbank CIB, BCG conduct master classes.

Abroad: Amsterdam School of Business, Lancaster University, Humboldt University, Paris Sorbonne University, Erasmus University Rotterdam, University of Luxembourg

We see our graduates as global players on the professional market. To achieve this aim, we place a special emphasis on the global theoretical and applied experience, teaching the most current concepts in the field and building ties with global partners from academia. The universities listed above are partners of our program and provide dual degrees, exchange programs and joint research projects.



Professor Oleg Zamulin,

Dean, Faculty of Economic Sciences:

“ A lot of the program's success is based on its international connections and I view this program as the chief accomplishment of the faculty. HSE is a leading institution in Corporate Finance. Our instruction utilises the highest quality teaching methods and is very well connected globally. Our graduates work both in the private sector and in industry, but many also come back to their alma mater to become instructors and professors.

Syllabus

Core courses

- Theory of finance – 40
- Econometrics (Advanced) – 144
- Macroeconomics (Advanced) – 96
- Microeconomics (Advanced) – 96
- Corporate Finance-2 (advanced) – 64
- Business valuation (Advanced Level – Corporate Valuation-2) – 64
- Research workshops
- Corporate Finance (Bridging Course) – 32
- Science and Research Internship
- Term Paper
- Graduation Thesis

Elective courses

- Mergers and Acquisitions – 56
- Corporate Governance – 40
- Behavioral finance – 36
- Financial Modelling in a Firm – 32
- Corporate Risk Management – 36
- Consolidated Financial Statement – 32
- Multinational tax planning
- Asset management – 40
- Russian as a Foreign language
- International Tax Planning – 28
- International Finance – 40
- Financial Investigations – 36
- Financial Management in a Holding Company – 36



Admission

The [application is available on-line](#) and opens 1 November. In your interest is to apply as early as possible since all applications are considered as they arrive and if any action is required early application gives more time to fix the paperwork.

Part of your application for admission is an interview with the program representatives (this can be conducted via Skype). All applicants, regardless of their chosen track, should be prepared to be interviewed by program representatives. Based on your application package and your interview, the program, in coordination with the international recruiting center, will offer you admission either with the government scholarship or without it.

You are strongly advised to apply for scholarship immediately after you submit your application to the program and as early as possible by visiting the following link:

<http://www.hse.ru/admissions/financial-aid>

Important deadlines:

November 1 – April 1: applications submitted during this time will be considered for full-tuition scholarships

July 1: deadline for on-line applications

Please apply to the program here:

<https://www.hse.ru/admissions/graduate-apply>

You will also need to submit your papers in person or via mail to the Admission Committee of HSE even before your arrival to Moscow (the deadlines will be provided in the correspondence with the admission officer or recruiting center representative). The papers include:

- Notarized translation of your passport or any other nationally issued ID that by your country law replaces your passport
- Your education proof - undergraduate diploma or, your transcript, if your national education system is organized in such a way that you do not have a diploma in July
- Other documents that the applicant wants to be taken into account or the admission requires

Tests minimum requirements:

GRE – subscore 3 in GRE Revised General test Academic Writing part

TOEFL iBT – 60, pBT – 500; IELTS – 5

Native speakers or graduates from programs conducted in English are not required to take the [English language proficiency test](#).



Related Fees

Tuition fee (AY 2017-2018) 340,000 Russian Rubles (about US\$ 6,000) per academic year – (2 semesters, or 4 academic modules)

Dormitory, meals, city transportation, and entertainment (approximate monthly cost) US\$ 300

Admissions

Graduate admission:

<https://www.hse.ru/admissions/graduate-apply>

Visiting programs:

<https://www.hse.ru/admissions/semester-apply>

Exchange programs:

<https://www.hse.ru/admissions/exchange-apply>

The application deadlines are April 15 for the fall semester and October 15 for the spring semester. Please check with your university to see if they have an exchange program with HSE. If not you can always apply as a free-mover for a semester or year at the Faculty of Economic Sciences of HSE in Moscow.

* Photo taken at the Strategic Corporate Finance Program 10th Anniversary alumni reunion.

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