

AS A PHYSICIST INTO THE WORLD OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE



Who would have thought, when I began my undergraduate studies in physics in 2010 at Heidelberg University, that I would end up as an MSc Finance student at Imperial College Business School in London. To be fair, my journey was not straightforward. It included a second bachelor's degree in economics, a master's degree in physics and various internships at consulting firms and research facilities in Germany and abroad. While being indecisive about which field to focus on, I slowly confronted my urge to start a professional career. Ironically, it was at the time of writing my master's thesis in Berkeley that I finally made the decision to leave physics and complete my education with a one-year master's program in finance.

While living in California's Bay Area for 9 months, I learned to appreciate the benefits of a multicultural and progressive society. London therefore seemed to be the ideal next location, as it is one of the few truly international metropolises in Europe. With all its sub-cultures, it offers an infinite variety of restaurants, pubs, theatres and museums, so that new exciting places to discover and explore can always be found. After all, life in London is vibrant, fast-paced and never gets boring.

Being a student at a UK institution is very different to what I was used to in Germany. Firstly, the student body is truly international. Consequently, discussions in and outside the classroom are stimulating, as viewpoints from different cultural backgrounds usually are involved. Apart from being inspired by the work ethic of my classmates, I find the academic excellence of the teaching staff impressive. Given the small size of the class, it is much easier to participate in debates with professors, and thereby benefit the most from their knowledge. Due to Imperial College's historic focus on science and engineering, the content of our lectures is also more quantitative than it might be at other universities. While some of my classmates find it challenging to solve math problems or code in Matlab, I enjoy it very much, as it reminds me of the field I come from.

Overall, I feel that studying toward the Master's degree in Finance at Imperial College was the right choice, as it is effectively preparing me for continuing my journey into the world of business and finance. I am grateful to the BCCG and British Airways for awarding me the BCCG Scholarship.

Jonathan Neff,
Imperial College Business School, London