

## A PARTNERSHIP THAT IS BUILDING CAREERS, A COMMUNITY AND A LINEAGE

Coronation Fund Managers has partnered with the ASISA Academy's IMACS@TSIBA Internship for more than a decade, creating a pipeline of talent for the business while helping individuals to build technical expertise, confidence and a strong, supportive graduate community.

Coronation Fund Managers sponsors two IMACS@TSIBA interns each year. During their four-month practical training at the company, interns gain industry exposure and are often successful in applying for Coronation's two-year graduate programme after the completion of the internship.



**The IMACS@TSIBA Alumni who are currently working at Coronation Fund Managers.**

The results – a retention rate above 80% and a growing alumni network of finance professionals – speak for themselves, according to three managers who work closely with the interns.

"This is more than a recruitment channel – it's a lineage," says Alistair Barge, Retail Client Services Manager at Coronation Fund Managers. He says graduates of the programme have stayed connected over the years, creating a supportive community across teams.

"It extends beyond cohorts," adds Barge. "They establish connections with people a year or two ahead." By contrast, he notes, graduates from other institutions often quickly become competitors for the same roles. "The TSIBA model keeps you as a team. These are your colleagues, you share your experience".

Barge adds that completing the ASISA Academy's industry-specific Investment Management Administration & Client Servicing (IMACS) course before the internship means TSIBA graduates arrive already fluent in the language and jargon of financial services, helping them to "get up to speed quickly".

Samantha Achilles, Team Leader in Personal Investment Client Services, says the distinction "is not just about the theory".

"TSIBA looks at a person's growth holistically. When they arrive, they know how to conduct themselves in the workplace, and they have the confidence to take initiative without handholding."

Abdusheed Emandien, Team Leader in Personal Investment Operations and Validations, says this independence is reinforced by the IMACS@TSIBA Internship's Industrial Practical Project, which requires interns to research the business and industry, interview staff and present their findings.

"They start with a rubric of what they need to learn about the business – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities. At the end of the internship, they must present on that and link it to the industry and the company they have been interning at. They join us with a nice set of questions they must find answers to."

Achilles notes that when interns are working on the project, they don't need meetings to be set up for them with department heads or specialists.

"For me this is unique for an entry-level graduate. Not once in the 10 years with the TSIBA students have I been asked to introduce them to someone in the business. They just find out who they need to speak to, reach out, and arrange it themselves."

IMACS@TSIBA alumni hold roles throughout Coronation Fund Managers today – some in senior specialist positions.

"From the start, Coronation Fund Managers treats IMACS@TSIBA interns as if they were recruited for a permanent position. "We give them the fully-fledged experience," says Emandien, who adds that the cultural fit is as important as technical skills.

"If the culture is not for you, then I don't believe you will achieve any meaningful development." This approach benefits Coronation as much as it does the interns. Achilles points out that the internship acts as a mutual trial period.

"With a graduate hire, it's always a gamble, even if you think a person has the potential and they come through the psychometrics well," she says. "With IMACS@TSIBA, you have already had months to see if they are the right fit."

Pointing to the fact that IMACS@TSIBA graduates are often recruited into the full two-year graduate programme alongside graduates from other universities, Barge agrees that something unique to the TSIBA students is that they "have to navigate their career themselves and figure out those questions".

He adds that he values the variety that IMACS@TSIBA injects into teams. "If we recruited only the top graduates from the top universities we could end up with the same self-reinforcing culture. TSIBA brings a different perspective and calibre of person."

Sometimes that means questioning established norms. Barge says it can be just asking: Why do we do this? "Everyone should know why we do things, and it should not just be because there is a rule that says do this."

Achilles agrees, saying she often looks for "a combination of brain and heart" when interviewing candidates, something she frequently sees in TSIBA interns.

Emandien sums it up: "TSIBA students are a different breed. They're not better or worse; they are refreshingly different. Someone from another university might have all the theory and knowledge, but not the people skills. Often with TSIBA, there's a balance, they know how to interact and engage."

Barge concludes: "It's beneficial for them, it's beneficial for us – and it's built a lineage of graduates who carry the TSIBA spirit into everything they do."