



Career Timeline

A Step-by-Step Guide for GIT Associates

*From your first year of BSc through to the end of your Master's —
everything you need to do, and when.*

Groningen Investment Team
2026 Edition

The Career Timeline

Below is a semester-by-semester breakdown of what you can do to improve your chances of landing the job of your dreams in finance. The timeline assumes a 3-year BSc followed by a 1-year or 2-year MSc.

1st Year BSc — Build Your Foundation

Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up your LinkedIn account. Add a professional photo, your university, and any relevant skills or interests. Start building your CV. Use the attached CV template as a starting point — adapt it to your own profile.
1st Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join one or more finance associations or investment clubs. Extracurriculars matter enormously, especially when you do not yet have work experience — they show initiative and genuine interest in the field. In parallel, start building personal projects alongside your studies: coding projects, stock pitches, a portfolio allocation exercise, etc. These go hand-in-hand with your association work — what you learn in club meetings and workshops gives you material for projects, and strong projects in turn make you stand out within the association and on applications. Recruiters highly value this kind of proactivity, especially from first-year students without prior work experience.
2nd Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for spring weeks and discovery programmes. These are mostly UK-based, but several European firms also run them (e.g. Optiver, Deutsche Bank). Use tools like Trackr to keep track of most of the available opportunities in one place.

2nd Year BSc — Start Applying

Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start applying for 2nd-year summer internships. Applications typically open in August and close around December, but most are reviewed on a rolling basis (i.e. applications are assessed as they come in, not after a deadline) — the earlier you apply, the better. Use the internship & job tracker spreadsheet that we have attached to keep track of every application: firm, role, deadline, status, and any notes.
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1st Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start thinking about your MSc: which programme, which university, and which specialisation. Some MSc programmes require a GMAT (a standardised test assessing analytical, quantitative, and verbal skills), so begin preparing early if that applies to you. • Consider looking into working student contracts (werkstudent). Many finance firms, banks, and asset managers offer part-time positions of 16–24 hours per week specifically aimed at students. These give you real, on-the-job experience in a professional setting while you continue your studies — and they look excellent on your CV. They are also a great way to get a foot in the door at a firm you might want to intern or work at full-time later.
2nd Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue applying for internship and insight programmes. • Keep refining your CV and interview skills based on feedback. • If you have secured a working student position, balance it carefully with your coursework — your GPA remains a priority.

3rd Year BSc — Execute & Transition

Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete your summer internship. Perform well — many internships are the primary pipeline for full-time offers. • You may decide to pursue a thesis internship (a common format in Dutch universities where you write your bachelor's thesis while embedded at a company or institution), so if that's the case, then start looking for a suitable placement. This is a great opportunity to combine academic work with practical experience.
1st Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start applying for MSc programmes. Many deadlines fall between November and February, so prepare your applications (personal statement, transcripts, references, GMAT score) ahead of time. • You can choose to do a minor in your home uni, go on exchange, or do an off-cycle internship (takes place outside the traditional summer hiring window, typically running for three to six months during the autumn, winter, or spring).
2nd Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish your studies and graduate with the strongest GPA possible.

MSc (1-Year or 2-Year) — Launch Your Career

Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are on a 1-year MSc, start applying for graduate programmes (structured entry-level positions at firms, typically involving rotations and formal training) immediately. Deadlines are tight and many open in the autumn.• If you are on a 2-year MSc, use the first year to secure a strong summer internship and the second year to convert it or apply for graduate roles.
Final Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finish your studies and transition into your graduate role or first full-time position.

General Advice

Your GPA Matters — A Lot

Most banks, asset managers, and consulting firms use your GPA (or weighted average) as an initial screening criterion. If your grades fall below their threshold, your application will typically be filtered out automatically — regardless of how strong the rest of your profile is. Nearly every internship application in finance will ask you to self-report your GPA, and many firms set explicit cut-offs. Competitive MSc programmes are no different: your undergraduate GPA is often the single most important factor in admissions decisions. Treat your grades as a non-negotiable priority from day one.

Start Early, Stay Consistent

The biggest mistake students make is waiting until their final year to think about careers. The students who land the best roles are the ones who started building their profiles in year one — not because they were more talented, but because they gave themselves more time to learn, fail, and improve.

Network With Intent

Attend every networking event, coffee chat, and career fair you can. But do not just collect business cards — follow up, ask thoughtful questions, and build genuine relationships. One meaningful conversation with someone working at your target firm is worth more than twenty generic LinkedIn connection requests.

Prepare Relentlessly for Interviews

Technical interviews in finance test your knowledge of accounting, valuation, and markets. Behavioural interviews test your story, your motivation, and your fit with the firm's culture. Neither is something you can wing. Dedicate structured time to preparation — use online resources, guides, and mock interviews with peers.

Embrace Rejection

You will get rejected. A lot. This is normal. Every successful professional in finance has a long list of rejections behind them. What matters is that you learn from each one: ask for feedback where possible, refine your approach, and apply again. Persistence is the most underrated skill in recruiting.

Build Technical Skills

Excel proficiency is table stakes. Go further: learn Python or R for data analysis, understand financial modelling, and be comfortable reading financial statements. Technical skills increasingly differentiate candidates, especially at quantitative firms and in buy-side roles.

Take Care of Yourself

Recruiting is a marathon, not a sprint. It is easy to burn out if you treat every application as life-or-death. Maintain your health, your friendships, and your hobbies. The people who perform best over the long run are the ones who stay balanced.

Good Luck!

This guide is meant to be a compass, not a rigid script. Everyone's journey is different — adapt it to your own goals, strengths, and circumstances. The most important thing is to start, stay curious, and keep moving forward.

If you have questions, reach out to the senior members of GIT. We are here to help.