

Money Matter\$ - 23 October 2025

By Standard Chartered Bank

Title: Financial tips for graduates and newly-employed

The first few months back from a student life overseas after graduating can always be tough on a young adult. After all, for most, it will be the first big step into the “real world”. Having just returned, the young graduate will be busy looking for a job as well as balancing finances as one would require finances for petrol, food, entertainment and so forth. Here are some tips that might be useful before you start your career.

Find a good bank

Open a bank account; keep all your savings in one area so as to be able to keep track of the money you spend. Some banks offer SMS alert services to notify you on the amounts you withdraw from an ATM. Most banks also have online banking that provides you a complete view of your account. Make time to speak to your bank on their various product offerings to find the best bank for you.

Keep spending records

Almost similar to your practice overseas, keep all your receipts no matter how small. A good suggestion would be to buy a ledger book to account for all the items bought. In your abundant un-employed free time, calculate the amount you spend each week or better yet, each day. Identify what are your real needs and wants from your list and learn to adopt responsible spending habits.

Get a job

No matter what the job is, keep applying! Once you get a salary, everything will be a lot easier. While your first job may be all about how much you can get for your salary, other factors that you should be mindful about is the fact that your first job will help you get yourself on the job market and gain experience. Any experience gained is better than none and will contribute to building your resume, thereby increasing your value as an employee. Do not be fussy with jobs, as the experience gained may be worth more than you think.

Drive slower

Those that already have cars, whether as a graduation gift, or whether you are using your parents' car; if you are obliged to buy petrol, the solution is simple... Drive slower! The slower you drive the more fuel you save, the less you spend! At the same time, driving responsibly is also important for your own safety and the safety of others.

Explore cheaper entertainment

Rather than going overseas for a good time, why not save a little and drive down to other districts. What better way to know your country and achieve inspiration for your career choices than to explore the various aspects that keeps Brunei's economy going. There are plenty of free entertainment options around such as hiking in one of Brunei's natural forest reserves or parks.

Alternatively, pick up a hobby. Who knows? You might be able to turn your hobbies into entrepreneurial ideas.

Volunteer

If you need a break from job searching, try volunteering for various charitable organisations available in Brunei. This is a great opportunity for you to network and meet new people. At the same time, interviewers will be impressed with your passion for volunteer work and this could be one of your additional selling points during interviews.

Use a piggy bank

Save those coins! The simplest act of putting your coins in a coin bank could save you a fair amount of cash that you can use for purchasing stationeries or photocopying your Curriculum Vitae.

Current and Savings Accounts

It is understandable that once you get your first salary, the tendency is to enjoy and spend it all. Remember to save some of it towards a rainy day and build your emergency fund. A good option would be to set a standing instruction to another bank account, allowing a minimum spending amount of say, 50% of your salary kept in a current account and the rest could go to an account that can be withdrawn only during emergencies.

Invest your money

Banks have many investment choices that are quite varied. Most banks would have Personal Financial Consultants that can offer you good advice in accordance to your profile and risk appetite. It may be early to think about retirement but it truly is never too early to start thinking of building your nest egg. Take time to gain a wider understanding of investment opportunities by keeping abreast of economic news in the media. You can share your knowledge or interests with your banker so they understand more on how you would like to invest.

One could truly benefit from carrying out the simplest tasks of saving what is left from your scholarship allowances or private savings to enjoy a more flexible and relaxing time back in Brunei. Try these tips out and see how much you can save in a few months.

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