

# Professional Balanced

## Quarterly Investment Option Update

31 December 2019

### Aim and Strategy

To provide moderate investment returns over the long term, with the likelihood of fluctuations in the value of the investment from year to year. The portfolio will primarily invest in a diversified mix of defensive and growth assets managed by professional asset managers identified and selected by ipac within each asset class.

### Investment Option Performance

To view the latest investment performances for each product, please visit [www.amp.com.au](http://www.amp.com.au)

### Investment Option Overview

<b>Investment category</b>	Multi-Sector
<b>Suggested minimum investment timeframe</b>	5 years
<b>Relative risk rating</b>	Medium to High
<b>Investment style</b>	Active
<b>Manager style</b>	Multi-manager

Asset Allocation	Benchmark (%)
International shares	30
Australian Shares	29
Australian and International Fixed Interest	20
Cash	7
Listed and Unlisted Property and Infrastructure	7
Growth Alternatives	4
Defensive Alternatives	3

Actual Allocation	%
International Shares	33.71
Australian Shares	29.66
Listed Property and Infrastructure	7.15
Growth Alternatives	3.10
International Fixed Interest	15.34
Defensive Alternatives	4.63
Cash	6.41

## Fund Performance

Global shares were up significantly over the December quarter, with the MSCI World ex Australia index finishing the period up by 7.66%. Drivers included strong US corporate earnings, the announcement of a "phase one" trade deal between China and the US in December, prevailing stimulatory central bank policies around the globe and an emphatic election result in the UK (leading to an apparent resolution to ongoing Brexit delays).

Australian shares finished the December quarter slightly higher, returning 0.68% as measured by the S&P/ASX200 index on a total return basis. Stripping the effect of dividends out of the return, the market's performance was effectively flat for the period. Shares were generally flat early in the quarter, before rising in November amid bullish broader global sentiment. Subsequently, the market gave up some of these gains in December on a lack of material company news and some end-of-year profit taking. At a sector level, health care was the standout performer, though energy and information technology stocks were also generally strong. Financials however pulled the market down, as did consumer staples to a lesser degree.

Global government bond yields trended higher for the majority of the December quarter, with markets buoyed by optimism stemming from improving trade relations between the US and China which could lead to a resolution of their long running trade dispute, while risk of a hard Brexit in the UK was reduced in December following the resounding re-election of Prime Minister Johnson's Conservative party. In a period where markets experienced bouts of volatility, global central banks continued to provide stimulatory monetary conditions, with the US Federal Reserve cutting the Federal Funds Rate earlier in the quarter by a further 25 basis points to 1.50-1.75%. However, the central bank did signal a pause in their interest rate easing cycle, with any future accommodative moves to be considered in light of the influence of economic data. The global economic backdrop was further supported later in the period by improving data in the major global economies such as China, which provided further tentative evidence of a global economic upturn.

Australian government bond yields moved higher over the course of the December quarter, aided primarily by the reduction of key geopolitical risks relating to US-China trade and Brexit. After reacting somewhat earlier in the quarter to a widely-expected cut of 0.25% in the official cash rate by the Reserve Bank of Australia amid continuing mixed local data, domestic bond investors generally largely followed their overseas counterparts during the period as optimism returned to markets.

(Indices quoted in local currency terms and on a total-return basis, unless otherwise stated.)

## Market Review

The start of the quarter saw initial concerns of the risk of a recession. However, as the quarter progressed, US economic data was generally positive overall. Market sentiment further improved following the conclusion of the US-China trade disputes. US gross domestic product grew at an annualised rate of 1.9% in the third quarter. In October, the Federal Funds Rate was reduced by 25 basis points to 1.50-1.75%. Meanwhile President Trump's impeachment had little impact on financial markets.

In Europe, business conditions were flat in December but remain up from their low adding to confidence that Eurozone growth may be improving. During the quarter, the European Central Bank made no changes to interest rates. Meanwhile, in December the Swedish central bank raised rates from -0.25% to zero, ending roughly five years of negative rates.

In the UK, the Conservative party won the general election and will seek to prevent an extension of the Brexit transition period beyond the end of 2020. During the quarter, the Bank of England left rates on hold.

In Asia, Japan's gross domestic product growth for the September quarter was revised upward. The government announced fiscal stimulus plans in December whilst the Bank of Japan left monetary policy on hold. In China, industrial production and retail sales were stronger-than-expected in November suggesting positive signs for growth. China's central bank lowered its one-year loan prime rate in November by five basis points to 4.15%.

## Availability

Product Name	APIR
AMP Flexible Lifetime Super	AMP1955AU
AMP Flexible Super - Retirement account	AMP1962AU
AMP Flexible Super - Super account	AMP1969AU
Flexible Lifetime - Allocated Pension	AMP1948AU
Flexible Lifetime - Investments (Series 2)	AMP1980AU
Flexible Lifetime - Term Pension	AMP1948AU
SignatureSuper	AMP1730AU

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