Allan Gray Balanced Portfolio

31 October 2023

Portfolio description and summary of investment policy

The Portfolio invests in a mix of shares, bonds, property, commodities and cash. The Portfolio can invest a maximum of 45% offshore. The Portfolio typically invests the bulk of its foreign allowance in a mix of funds managed by Orbis Investments, our offshore investment partner. The maximum net equity exposure of the Portfolio is 75%. The Portfolio's net equity exposure may be reduced from time to time using exchange-traded derivative contracts on stock market indices. The Portfolio is managed to comply with the investment limits governing retirement funds. Returns are likely to be less volatile than those of an equity-only portfolio. The Portfolio is a pooled portfolio offered by Allan Gray Life and is only available to members of the Allan Gray Umbrella Retirement Fund.

Portfolio objective and benchmark

The Portfolio aims to create long-term wealth for investors within the constraints governing retirement funds. It aims to outperform the benchmark without assuming any more risk. The Portfolio's benchmark is a composite benchmark that comprises indices that reflect the Portfolio's mandate.

How we aim to achieve the Portfolio's objective

We seek to buy shares at a discount to their intrinsic value. We thoroughly research companies to assess their intrinsic value from a long-term perspective. This long-term perspective enables us to buy shares which are shunned by the stock market because of their unexciting or poor short-term prospects, but which are relatively attractively priced if one looks to the long term. If the stock market offers few attractive shares we may increase the Portfolio's weighting to alternative assets such as bonds, property, commodities and cash, or we may partially hedge the Portfolio's stock market exposure. By varying the Portfolio's exposure to these different asset classes over time, we seek to enhance the Portfolio's long-term returns and to manage its risk. The Portfolio's bond and money market investments are actively managed.

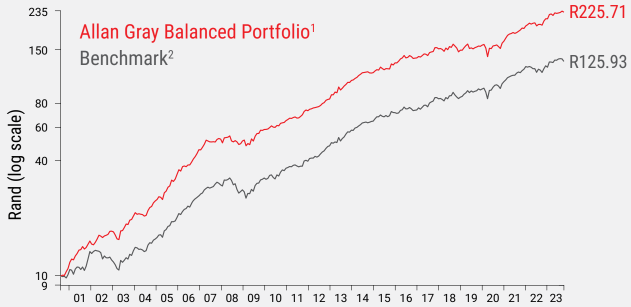
Portfolio history

The Portfolio is managed in the same way as the Allan Gray Life Global Balanced (RRF) Portfolio. When assessing the Portfolio's performance and risk measures over time, including for periods before its inception (5 April 2017), the returns of the Allan Gray Life Global Balanced (RRF) Portfolio and the Allan Gray Life Global Balanced Portfolio can be used. When this data is combined, investors can get a view of the performance and risk measures of the strategy over the long term.

*The blended returns are calculated by Allan Gray Proprietary Limited using end of day index level values licensed from MSCI ("MSCI Data"). For the avoidance of doubt, MSCI is not the benchmark "administrator" for, or a "contributor", "submitter" or "supervised contributor" to, the blended returns, and the MSCI Data is not considered a "contribution" or "submission" in relation to the blended returns, as those terms may be defined in any rules, laws, regulations, legislation or international standards. MSCI Data is provided "AS IS" without warranty or liability and no copying or distribution is permitted. MSCI does not make any representation regarding the advisability of any investment or strategy and does not sponsor, promote, issue, sell or otherwise recommend or endorse any investment or strategy, including any financial products or strategies based on, tracking or otherwise utilizing any MSCI Data, models, analytics or other materials or information.

Performance net of all fees and expenses

Value of R10 invested at alignment



% Returns	Portfolio[1]	Benchmark[2]	CPI inflation[3]
Cumulative:			
Since alignment (1 September 2000)	2157.1	1159.3	245.1
Annualised:			
Since alignment (1 September 2000)	14.4	11.6	5.5
Latest 10 years	8.5	8.5	5.1
Latest 5 years	8.4	8.3	5.0
Latest 3 years	14.6	10.5	6.0
Latest 2 years	8.6	4.5	6.4
Latest 1 year	8.4	6.6	5.4
Year-to-date (not annualised)	5.6	4.8	4.7
Risk measures (since alignment)			
Maximum drawdown[4]	-23.5	-24.8	n/a
Percentage positive months[5]	68.3	64.0	n/a
Annualised monthly volatility[6]	9.2	9.9	n/a
Highest annual return[7]	49.0	39.3	n/a
Lowest annual return[7]	-12.2	-20.3	n/a

1. The returns prior to 5 April 2017 are those of the Allan Gray Life Global Balanced (RRF) Portfolio since its inception on 1 August 2015. The returns prior to 1 August 2015 are those of the Allan Gray Life Global Balanced Portfolio since its alignment on 1 September 2000. The returns shown are net of the fees that would have been incurred had the current fee been applied since alignment.
2. 41% FTSE/JSE Capped Shareholder Weighted All Share Index including income, 10% FTSE/JSE All Bond Index, 9% 3-month STeFI, 24% MSCI All Country World Index including income and 16% J.P. Morgan GBI Global Index. From 01 July 2018 to 31 July 2022 the benchmark was 47% FTSE/JSE Capped Shareholder Weighted All Share Index including income, 14% FTSE/JSE All Bond Index, 9% 3-month STeFI, 18% MSCI All Country World Index including income and 12% J.P. Morgan GBI Global Index. From inception to 30 June 2018 the benchmark was 50% FTSE/JSE All Share Index, 15% FTSE/JSE All Bond Index, 10% Alexander Forbes 3-month Deposit Index, 15% MSCI All Country World Index and 10% J.P. Morgan GBI Global Index. Source: IRESS, Bloomberg, performance as calculated by Allan Gray as at 31 October 2023.*
3. This is based on the latest numbers published by IRESS as at 30 September 2023.
4. Maximum percentage decline over any period. The maximum drawdown occurred from 17 January 2020 to 23 March 2020 and maximum benchmark drawdown occured from 19 May 2008 to 20 November 2008. Drawdown is calculated on the total return of the Portfolio/benchmark (i.e. including income).
5. The percentage of calendar months in which the Portfolio produced a positive monthly return since inception.
6. The standard deviation of the Portfolio's monthly return. This is a measure of how much an investment's return varies from its average over time.
7. These are the highest or lowest consecutive 12-month returns since alignment. This is a measure of how much the Portfolio and the benchmark returns have varied per rolling 12-month period. The Portfolio's highest annual return occurred during the 12 months ended 30 April 2006 and the benchmark's occurred during the 12 months ended 30 April 2006. The Portfolio's lowest annual return occurred during the 12 months ended 31 March 2020 and the benchmark's occurred during the 12 months ended 30 April 2003. All rolling 12-month figures for the Portfolio and the benchmark are available from our Client Service Centre on request.

Suitable for those investors who

- Seek steady long-term capital growth
- Are comfortable with taking on some risk of market fluctuation and potential capital loss but typically less than that of an equity fund
- Wish to invest in a portfolio that complies with retirement fund investment limits
- Typically have an investment horizon of at least three years

Annual management fee

Allan Gray charges a fee based on the net asset value of the Portfolio excluding the portion invested in Orbis funds. The fee rate is calculated daily by comparing the Portfolio's total performance for the day, to that of the benchmark. This fee is presently exempt from VAT.

Fee for performance equal to the Portfolio's benchmark: 0.50% p.a.

For each percentage of daily performance above or below the benchmark we add or deduct 0.2%, subject to the following limits:

Maximum fee: 2.00% p.a. excl. VAT
Minimum fee: 0.50% p.a. excl. VAT

To the extent that the fee calculated exceeds the maximum fee or falls short of the minimum fee, the monetary excess or shortfall will be carried forward to the next day. Any excess or shortfall carried forward from previous day(s) will be added or subtracted to determine the fee payable.

A portion of the Portfolio may be invested in Orbis funds which are levied performance-based fees by Orbis. Orbis pays a marketing and distribution fee to Allan Gray.

Total expense ratio (TER) and transaction costs

The annual management fees charged by both Allan Gray and Orbis are included in the TER. The TER is a measure of the actual expenses incurred by the Portfolio over a one-year and three-year period (annualised). Since Portfolio returns are quoted after deduction of these expenses, the TER should not be deducted from the published returns. Transaction costs are disclosed separately.

Top 10 share holdings on 30 September 2023 (SA and Foreign) (updated quarterly)[8]

Company	% of portfolio
British American Tobacco	4.6
AB InBev	3.4
Glencore	3.0
Naspers & Prosus	2.6
Mondi	2.1
Standard Bank	2.0
Woolworths	2.0
Sasol	1.9
Nedbank	1.9
Remgro	1.6
Total (%)	**25.1**

8. Underlying holdings of foreign funds are included on a look-through basis.

Since inception, the Portfolio's month-end net equity exposure has varied as follows:

Minimum	(February 2020) 59.8%
Average	63.7%
Maximum	(July 2021) 67.9%

Asset allocation on 31 October 2023[8]

Asset class	Total	South Africa	Foreign[9]
Net equities	63.0	39.5	23.5
Hedged equities	14.1	3.1	11.0
Property	0.8	0.5	0.3
Commodity-linked	2.7	2.7	0.0
Bonds	11.7	8.4	3.3
Money market and bank deposits[10]	7.6	4.5	3.2
Total (%)	**100.0**	**58.7**	**41.3[11]**

9. Includes Africa ex-SA exposure following the consolidation of the foreign ex-Africa and Africa ex-SA allowances into a single foreign limit of 45%.

10. Including currency hedges.

11. The Portfolio can invest a maximum of 45% offshore. Market movements may periodically cause the Fund to move beyond these limits. This must be corrected within 12 months.

Note: There may be slight discrepancies in the totals due to rounding.

Total expense ratio (TER) and transaction costs (updated quarterly)

TER and transaction costs breakdown for the 1- and 3-year period ending 30 September 2023	1yr %	3yr %
Total expense ratio[12]	1.50	0.97
Fee for benchmark performance	0.53	0.53
Performance fees	0.93	0.40
Other costs excluding transaction costs	0.04	0.04
Transaction costs (including VAT)[13]	0.06	0.08
Total investment charge	**1.56**	**1.05**

12. A higher TER does not necessarily imply a poor return, nor does a low TER imply a good return. The current TER may not necessarily be an accurate indication of future TERs.

13. Transaction costs are a necessary cost in administering the Portfolio and impacts Portfolio returns. It should not be considered in isolation as returns may be impacted by many other factors over time including market returns, the type of financial product, the investment decisions of the investment manager and the TER.

Portfolio manager quarterly commentary as at 30 September 2023

The local market continued to drift sideways in the third quarter of 2023. Year to date, the FTSE/JSE Capped Shareholder Weighted All Share Index (Capped SWIX) has delivered a return of 0%, and the FTSE/JSE All Bond Index delivered a return of 1%. The Portfolio's performance of 8% was ahead of these numbers, helped by local stock selection and offshore exposure.

It is well known that South African businesses face a myriad of challenges, notably loadshedding and a weak consumer environment. Reading the daily newspaper headlines paints a grim picture. Despite this, market returns over the past three years have been reasonably healthy, e.g. 14% for the Capped SWIX. This illustrates the benefit of starting at a low valuation during the COVID-19 slump of 2020.

Valuations for many South African shares remain at very cheap levels versus history, suggesting a reasonable prospect of good returns going forward – even in an unfavourable economic climate. This can be seen when looking at the market from a top-down view, e.g. the FTSE/JSE All Share Index's price-to-earnings multiple of only 10x compared to a 20-year average of 16x. Our bottom-up fundamental research on local shares also confirms that many are trading on low valuations compared to history and to our estimate of their intrinsic value.

Long-term South African government bonds offer yields in excess of 12%, which appear very attractive at face value. Locally, inflation has fallen below 5%, so these bonds offer a real (i.e. after inflation) yield of 7%. This is close to the highest it has been in the last two decades. It is likely that the South African Reserve Bank has reached the peak of the current interest rate hiking cycle or is close to it. If inflation remains subdued, there is a good chance that interest rates will be cut next year which would be good news for bondholders. We do believe South African government bonds offer decent value and have increased their weighting in the Portfolio in recent years. But despite these bullish arguments, South African government bonds make up only 4% of the Portfolio – a significantly smaller position than many of our peers. The South African government continues to run a large fiscal deficit which the local savings pool has limited ability to fund. As long as foreign investors remain apprehensive of South African bonds, there is a risk that bond yields increase even more, i.e. a decline in prices.

Meanwhile, local cash is also offering attractive yields in excess of 9% at much lower risk than long bonds. Cash also has valuable optionality, as it can be used to take advantage of future opportunities that may arise. We also prefer South African shares over South African bonds, given the low valuations of shares. Shares also protect investors against the risk of inflation, as companies can typically pass higher prices on to their customers to some degree.

Our approach remains focused on bottom-up company research to find superior investment opportunities. This includes identifying investments which offer the highest expected returns but also weighs up the associated risks as well as the diversification benefits of uncorrelated returns. All these factors are considered when building the Portfolio.

An important decision at present is whether to prefer "SA Inc" shares (i.e. companies that primarily operate in the local economy) or "rand hedge" shares (i.e. companies that operate offshore and benefit from a weaker rand). The very low valuations of SA Inc shares offer more potential upside if the economy recovers, but these are also the businesses facing the brunt of the challenges of operating in South Africa. At present, we are finding attractive opportunities in both categories, so there is no need to choose only one or the other. This diversification also means that performance of the Portfolio does not rely on a specific macroeconomic scenario playing out.

The Portfolio increased its foreign exposure to 41% during the quarter – still below the 45% foreign capacity limit. The majority of the foreign portion of the Portfolio continues to be allocated to various Orbis funds. In addition to this, the Portfolio has the flexibility to directly hold foreign shares, which is useful from a portfolio management point of view. One reason for not using the full foreign capacity is that local opportunities are more attractive at present. It is also worth remembering that a significant portion of "local" shares are in fact businesses with earnings outside of South Africa, so the underlying foreign exposure is higher than it appears.

During the quarter, the Portfolio added to positions in MultiChoice, South32, and Mr Price and trimmed Woolworths, Glencore and Prosus NV.

Adapted from a commentary contributed by Tim Acker

Important information for investors

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This pooled portfolio is underwritten by Allan Gray Life Ltd, a registered insurer licensed to provide life insurance products as defined in the Insurance Act 18 of 2017. Allan Gray (Pty) Ltd is Allan Gray Life Ltd's appointed investment manager.

Past performance is not indicative of future performance.

J.P. Morgan GBI Global Index

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MSCI Index

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FTSE/JSE All Share Index, FTSE/JSE Capped Shareholder Weighted All Share Index and FTSE/JSE All Bond Index

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