

1st Quarter 2021

MPS Cash Plus Portfolio



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Jordan sits on the firm's Asset Allocation and Portfolio Construction Committees. He manages investments for intermediaries, pension funds, trusts and charities, specialising in multi-asset portfolios. Jordan is a CFA Charterholder.



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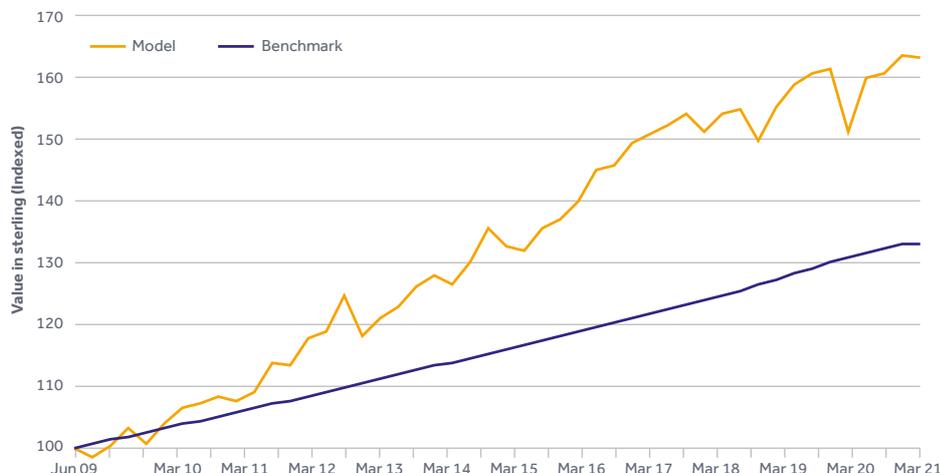
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Investment objective

This portfolio aims to produce an overall return in excess of cash over a typical investment cycle (i.e. 7-10 years); some of this return will come from the income generated. This portfolio has an absolute return focus and, therefore, should have lower volatility. Investments are predominantly made into fixed interest and cash type investments, with a lower proportion to be invested into global equities or equity based vehicles. To assist in the reduction of volatility and deliver uncorrelated returns during periods of unfavourable market conditions, alternative asset classes such as commodities, currencies, infrastructure and hedge funds may be used.

Performance since inception (30/06/2009)



Discrete performance (%)

Total return to end of last calendar quarter 31/03/2021.

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Model	+1.5	+7.6	-2.7	+5.7	+7.5	+4.0	+5.9	+3.6	+8.8
Benchmark	+2.3	+2.8	+2.7	+2.3	+2.4	+2.5	+2.5	+2.5	+2.5

Cumulative performance (%)

Total return from inception to 31/03/2021.

	3 Months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Inception (30/06/2009)
Model	-0.2	+7.8	+7.9	+18.9	+62.8
Benchmark	+0.0	+1.6	+7.2	+12.3	+32.7

Source: Canaccord Genuity Wealth Management (CGWM).
Total return before fees and charges are deducted.

Risk & return since inception (%)

	Model
Annualised volatility	+4.8
Maximum loss	-5.5
Sharpe ratio	0.8

Annualised volatility: risk is measured by the variability of performance. The higher the standard deviation, the greater the variability (and therefore the risk) of the Fund or the index.

Sharpe ratio: measures the risk/return trade-off. It is the annualised return less the average risk-free rate, divided by the annualised volatility of the model.

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The value of investments and any income from them can go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount originally invested.

Past performance is not a guide to future performance.

Levels and bases for taxation may change.

Investors should note that actual portfolio returns may be different to the returns of the model portfolio.

Figures represent performance of a model portfolio, individual account performance may differ.



MPS Cash Plus Portfolio suggested asset allocation (%)



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Top 10 holdings (%)

MAN ASSET MANAGEMENT IRELAND LTD GLG STRATEGIC BOND IXF GBP NET MDIS	7.0
ISHARES PHYSICAL METALS PLC ISHARES PHYSICAL GOLD ETC USD ACC GBP	6.3
LINK FUND SOLUTIONS LTD TROJAN X INC GBP	6.0
HENDERSON INVESTMENT FUNDS LTD JANUS HENDERSON UK ABSOLUTE RETURN	5.7
ISHARES IV PLC GBP ULTRASHORT BOND UCITS ETF GBP DIST GBP	5.3
VONTOBEL ASSET MANAGEMENT SA TWENTYFOUR ABST RETURN CREDIT G GBP	5.2
MFS INVESTMENT MNGMNT CO (LUX) SA GLOBAL OPPORTUNISTIC BOND IH1 GBP ACC	5.1
VONTOBEL ASSET MANAGEMENT SA TWENTYFOUR STRAT INC AQG GBP DIS GBP	5.1
M&G SECURITIES LIMITED CORPORATE BOND I GBP INC GBP	5.1
RIT CAPITAL PARTNERS PLC ORD GBP1 GBP	4.9

Source: CGWM

Portfolio Manager commentary

In the first quarter of the year equity markets picked up from where they left at the end of 2020. Renewed investor confidence was evident, as prices of riskier assets rose steadily during the period. The seeds for this newfound confidence had been sown in the latter stages of 2020: the new US\$1.9trn US fiscal package, unwavering monetary policy support from global central banks, significant progress in vaccine supply and deployment, and built-up consumer and corporate savings earmarked for spending. Corporate earnings announced in January revealed stronger results than analysts had forecast with guidance around expectations for earnings in 2021 to be even stronger again. These underlying drivers set the tone for investor appetite early in the new year.

Naturally, fixed income markets, often considered more defensive, struggled in this environment. As economic times turn more prosperous, investor expectations for interest rate rises move up – in this case implying that the current emergency levels of post-pandemic support from central banks were no longer necessary. It was predominantly government bond prices that fell in the first quarter, to be expected given their sensitivity to potentially higher interest rates. During the period, the yield (which moves inversely to its price) on the US 10-year Treasury bond rose back to its pre-pandemic level. High credit quality corporate bonds also failed to escape the rotation by investors into riskier assets as prices fell. Gold too, seen as increasingly defensive, witnessed price weakness. Only low credit quality bonds (also known as high yield) were able to avoid material losses.

Many will point to the fact that some of the industries and companies that struggled in the past year have seen their share price benefit from a rebound in investor optimism in the first quarter of the year. It is noticeable how the more traditionally cyclical business, like banks have seen their valuations rise significantly, some of this helped by anticipated interest rate rises which improve bank profitability. Another of the more economically sensitive industries – energy – has also seen valuations improve. Again, some of this is also helped by the oil price which rose from US\$48 to US\$63 over the period. Along with materials and basic industries (like mining and metal refining), we would expect these sectors to continue on this trajectory of share price improvement.

Over this period, the MPS portfolios have looked to benefit from the rotation to more cyclically sensitive sectors and regions in the global equity market. In US equity markets in particular, we have seen valuations of cyclical companies (sometimes referred to as 'value' stocks) outperforming more growth-like companies (e.g. the big tech stocks) for the first time in years. In trimming some of the technology and healthcare equity exposure from the MPS portfolios and re-investing the proceeds into a more cyclical, value-biased US equity fund, we anticipate portfolios will be better positioned for a sustained period of investor confidence.