Top 20 Young M&A Professionals

Scorecard for Independent Panel

Eligibility Criteria (Pass / Fail)

Before scoring, confirm nominee:

- Is **under 30 years of age** (or 35 if company policy applies) at nomination close
- Is professionally qualified in **finance, legal, or accounting**
- Is **not yet an equity partner / director / principal**
- Has minimum **2 years' transaction experience**
- Has demonstrable involvement in M&A / PE / corporate finance transactions

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Scoring Criteria (100 Points)

Criteria	Weight	What Judges Assess
1. Deal Experience & Transaction Exposure	20	Number, scale, complexity, and type of transactions worked on
2. Quality of Contribution to Deals	25	Importance of candidate's role in execution and problem-solving
3. Technical Excellence	15	Analytical, legal, financial, structuring, due diligence, or accounting capability
4. Leadership & Initiative	15	Ability to lead workstreams, manage pressure, influence outcomes
5. Commercial Judgment	10	Understanding of strategic, commercial and negotiation dynamics
6. Reputation & Peer Recognition	10	Internal and external feedback, trust, credibility
7. Future Potential	5	Likelihood of becoming a future leader in the industry

Total: 100

Detailed Criteria Guidance

1. Deal Experience & Transaction Exposure (20)

Judges score based on:

- Number of deals worked on in past 24 months
- Exposure to:
  - M&A
  - Private equity
  - Capital markets
  - Restructurings
  - Cross-border deals
- Complexity and sophistication

Score guide:

- 0–5 = Limited exposure
- 6–10 = Moderate
- 11–15 = Strong
- 16–20 = Exceptional for age

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2. Quality of Contribution to Deals (25)

This is the highest weighted criterion.

Questions:

- Did the nominee materially move transactions forward?
- Did they solve difficult problems?
- Were they indispensable to execution?
- Did they demonstrate calm under pressure?

Examples:

- Built financial model used in negotiations
- Identified key legal/regulatory issue
- Resolved diligence obstacle
- Helped structure funding solution

Score guide:

- 0–8 = Supporting role
- 9–17 = Significant contributor
- 18–25 = Critical contributor

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3. Technical Excellence (15)

Discipline-specific assessment:

Finance

- Valuation
- Modelling
- Financing structures

Legal

- Drafting
- Negotiation
- Regulatory expertise

Accounting

- Due diligence
- Financial analysis
- Tax/accounting structuring

Judges assess:

- Accuracy
- Depth
- Sophistication

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4. Leadership & Initiative (15)

Even without managing full deals, does the nominee:

- Lead workstreams?
- Manage juniors?
- Take ownership?
- Show maturity beyond years?

Examples:

- Drives meetings
- Coordinates advisers
- Anticipates issues
- Escalates intelligently

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5. Commercial Judgment (10)

Not just technical brilliance.

Assess:

- Business understanding
- Strategic thinking
- Client awareness
- Practical recommendations

Question:

Do they understand why the deal matters—not just how it works?

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6. Reputation & Peer Recognition (10)

Based on references or nominations.

Consider:

- Trusted by seniors?
- Respected by peers?
- Reliable under pressure?
- High integrity?

Suggested nomination requirement:
Include **one senior referee statement**.

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7. Future Potential (5)

This is the "future star" measure. Ask:

- Will this person likely become a leading dealmaker?
- Are they already showing partner-level qualities?

Indicators:

- Gravitas
- Confidence
- Strategic mindset
- Relationship-building ability

Judge Scoring Sheet

Each judge scores independently.

Candidate	Deal Exposure (20)	Contribution (25)	Technical (15)	Leadership (15)	Commercial (10)	Reputation (10)	Potential (5)	Total
Candidate A	16	21	13	11	8	9	4	82

Selection Bands

This helps the panel rank consistently.

Score	Assessment
90–100	Exceptional – Automatic Top 20
80–89	Strong contender
70–79	Competitive
60–69	Good but not Top 20
<60	Insufficient evidence

Bonus Criterion

Industry Contribution / Impact (5 bonus points) for:

- Mentoring juniors
- Women in finance initiatives
- Transformation / diversity contribution
- Thought leadership
- Pro bono / ecosystem building

This helps reward candidates who contribute beyond deal execution.

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