

PORTFOLIO UPDATE

Atlas Concentrated Australian Equity Portfolio

Monthly Report October 2024



- October was a weak month, with global markets retreating between -1% and -3% due to concerns about the US election, with commodities volatile on opaque indications of what the purported Chinese stimulus plan may look like. Over the month, the Chinese central bank lowered interest rates again to boost consumption but stopped short of any stimulus that would increase the need to consume more iron ore.
- The **Atlas Concentrated Australian Equity Portfolio** fell by -1.8%, underperforming the index return of -1.2%, mainly due to macroeconomic fears rather than the outlook for individual company profits in 2025.
- Looking back at October 2023, there were many reasons to sell equities, with both the US and Australia touted to head into recession and further rate rise tipped to occur in 2024 to combat inflation. However, this would have been a mistake as the past twelve months have been very positive for investors in Australian equities, who have enjoyed returns over 20%. Indeed, against grim backdrop one year ago many individual companies were reporting strong trading conditions, at odds with the doom and gloom prevailing then on global share markets.

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	12m rolling	Inception % p.a.
Atlas Australian Equity Portfolio	5.1%	5.4%	2.9%	1.7%	3.2%	-3.4%	0.1%	1.3%	4.6%	-0.3%	1.7%	-1.8%	22.1%	10.0%
ASX 200 TR ex LPT	4.6%	6.9%	1.2%	0.5%	2.8%	-2.9%	0.8%	1.1%	4.0%	0.5%	2.7%	-1.1%	22.5%	8.9%
Active return	0.5%	-1.5%	1.8%	1.3%	0.5%	-0.5%	-0.7%	0.2%	0.7%	-0.8%	-1.0%	-0.7%	-0.4%	1.1%

Portfolio Objective

Our approach to investing in Australian shares is founded on fundamental company analysis, earnings quality, and sensible risk management principles. The objective is to build a portfolio of high-quality companies that deliver consistent and growing dividends with easily forecastable earnings. The Portfolio focuses on companies with strong profit and dividend growth.

Portfolio Details

Index	S&P ASX 200 Total Return (ex LPT)
Number of Stocks	18 - 30
Asset Allocation	100% Equity
Inception Date	May 2016
Security Target	within 5% of S&P ASX 200 weights
Sector Target	within 10% of S&P GICS sector weights
Management Fee	0.44% per annum (GST included)
Platform	Hub24/Netwealth/Praemium
Code	ATL001

Market Update

The key news over the month was global equities pausing and bond yield rates increasing ahead of the United States election in November.

Over the month, the market took a much more conservative approach, which saw the price of gold increase by 6% to US\$2,777 per ounce ahead of the United States election. Similarly, Oil edged up 1% over the month to finish at US\$72.55.

Top Ten Active Positions end October 2024

Positive

Amcor
ANZ
Macquarie Group
Transurban
QBE Insurance

Negative

BHP
NAB
Rio Tinto
Fortescue
Telstra

Estimated portfolio metrics for FY25

	ASX 200	ACEP
PE (x) fwd.	18.9	14.2
Dividend yield net	3.4%	4.7%
Est Franking	67%	82%
Grossed Up Yield	4.6%	6.4%
Number of stocks	200	23
Avg mcap \$bn	13	71
Beta (3 month rolling)	1.0	0.91

Source: Bloomberg & UBS

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Portfolio Performance

In October, the **Atlas Concentrated Australian Equity Portfolio** fell by -1.8%, underperforming the index based on macroeconomic speculation rather than company-specific news. The October AGM season showed that companies in the Portfolio have had a solid start for 2025, with most companies showing an increase in sales.

Over the month, positions in Commonwealth Bank (+5%), QBE Insurance (+4%), JB Hi-Fi (+3%), Amcor (+2%) and ANZ (+2%) added value. On the negative side of the ledger, Mineral Resources (-24%), Bapcor (-14%), Ampol (-9%) and Deterra (-8%) detracted value.

Quarterly Updates

In October each year, listed Australian companies with a June financial year end host their annual general meetings (AGMs) and gave their first quarter trading update.

In the first quarter, we saw mixed results across the retail space, with the grocers posting a sales growth of 3-5% but being hit with higher costs, which saw Woolworths (-10%) provide a -6% earnings downgrade for the first half of 2025.

Companies that saw a performance increase included JB Hi-Fi (+3%), which saw sales up +5%. ResMed (+6%) posted a net income increase of 42% following a 4.2% increase in gross margins due to higher revenue and lower costs. We were pleased to see Whitehaven (-7%) posting an 80% increase in coal production following their new Queensland mines' first full quarter of production.

Both toll road operators, Transurban and Atlas Arteria, posted strong traffic numbers. Transurban recorded a 1% increase in average daily traffic to 2.5 million daily trips. Atlas Arteria also saw a 1% increase in traffic and a 5% increase in revenue from inflation-linked toll prices.

However, it was not all good news for corporate Australia; Flight Centre (-29%) fell after revealing a more negative outlook for the business following a soft first quarter. Bathroom retailer Reece (-19%) announced that they now expect full-year earnings to be down 10-20% on last year following softer-than-expected trading across Australia and the US.

Portfolio Trading

No significant trading was done over the month.

Sector Exposure October 2024

GICS Sector	ASX200	ACEP	ACTIVE
Consumer Discretionary	8.8%	10.0%	1.2%
Consumer Staples	3.7%	0.0%	-3.7%
Energy	3.6%	7.9%	4.3%
Banks	26.9%	31.6%	4.6%
Diversified Fins	5.8%	9.8%	4.0%
Health Care	9.5%	12.2%	2.7%
Industrials	4.9%	1.8%	-3.1%
Materials	20.1%	14.0%	-6.1%
Telecommunication Services	5.0%	0.0%	-5.0%
Listed Property	6.7%	0.0%	-6.7%
Utilities	3.5%	8.8%	5.3%

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