

July 2016

Dear Student

You should by now have received the formal offer of a place on the MSc International Relations Theory programme for the coming academic session. Congratulations and welcome!

I'm writing to give you some further information about the programme. It is not part of an 'official' offer of admission to the School, but rather provides some additional background on the programme so that you can make the necessary preparations before beginning your studies.

### **Studying at LSE**

As you probably know, the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) is one of the world's leading social science institutions. Many influential developments in thinking about society, economics and politics have originated here. The International Relations Department (IRD) at LSE is now in its 89th year and was established to address the major intellectual challenges posed by international relations. In addition to providing teaching at BSc, MSc and MPhil/PhD levels, the Department serves as a focal point for international relations research both in the UK and internationally. Your programme will include students from a wide range of academic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Some have had training in IR, while others come from related fields.

We deliberately restrict the number of students on our programmes as we value direct contact between students and staff. Competition for places is intense and we are very proud of our graduates. Alumni work in international organisations, government departments, regulatory bodies, the private sector, consultancies and academia.

The LSE system may be different to what you have hitherto experienced. Pedagogy works in three parts: lectures, seminars and independent study. Assessment includes both essays and written examinations.

### **The MSc International Relations Theory Programme**

The structure of the MSc IRT programme is as follows:

- A compulsory core paper *Theories of International Relations (IR436)* – designed especially for the programme
- As a second paper (which may comprise two half units), you will choose from a select group of relevant courses in the Department, including those tackling normative issues, strategic approaches, and empire in world politics
- The third paper will be drawn from a further range of courses in the Department or taken, subject to approval by your Academic Adviser, elsewhere in the School.
- All students will also write a 10,000-word dissertation (IR499)

You can access the 2016/17 [programme regulations](#) for MSc IRT at the end of August 2016.

For further information about courses for the MSc IRT programme, including detailed descriptions of the content, some suggested readings and methods of assessment, please see the online [Graduate Course Guides 2015/16](#). (These will be updated for 2016/17 at the end of August 2016.)

## Background Reading

To ensure that you hit the ground running in September, we suggest that you familiarise yourself with two relevant texts before arriving at the School:

- Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Palgrave, 2009)
- Patrick T. Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Routledge, 2016)

## Choosing Your Optional Courses

### Browsing:

- **Graduate Course Guides**

You should give some preliminary thought to which optional courses you wish to pursue. We suggest that you look at the online [Graduate Course Guides 2015/16](#) which lists all courses on offer and a 'Course Guide' for each. (These will be updated for 2016/17 at the end of August 2016.) Under each Course Guide you will find details regarding course availability, content, teaching hours, assessment method(s) and recommended reading.

- **Moodle**

Once you have [registered](#) with the School, you will be able to access 2015/16 reading lists and/or, when they are ready, 2016/17 reading lists via the School's virtual learning environment called '[Moodle](#)'.

- **Teaching Timetable**

It is advisable to consult the online [Teaching Timetable](#) to view all lecture and seminar term-time teaching before deciding which courses to take, in order to avoid any timetable clashes. (The teaching timetable will be updated for 2016/17 by mid-August 2016.)

### Signing up:

#### LSE for You (LfY)

Signing up for your optional courses is undertaken via [LSE for You](#) (LfY). For further details please read the information on the School's [Graduate Course Choice](#) website.

Although it will be possible to access the online seminar sign-up software from Monday 19 September, for [browsing](#) purposes, course [selection](#) goes live on Friday 23 September 2016. As MSc seminar teaching in the International Relations Department does not begin until

week 2 of MT at the earliest, we encourage you not to finalise your selections until the end of the first week of teaching when you have had a chance to sample lectures for the courses you are interested in. [Note: Our own deadlines may differ from those of other departments, so if you wish to register for a non-IRD option, you should check with the department concerned to ensure that you do not miss their deadline.]

Please do not worry unduly about choosing options at this stage – everything will be explained fully at the orientation meeting on Thursday, 22 September 2016.

**The following optional courses will not be available in 2016/17:**

- IR419 International Relations of the Middle East
- IR431 European Union Policy Making in a Global-Context (H)
- IR439 Diplomacy (H)
- IR445 China and the World
- IR461 Islam in International Relations: From Al-Andalus to Afghanistan
- IR462 Introduction to International Political Theory (H)
- IR463 The International Political Theory of Humanitarian Intervention (H)
- IR464 The Politics of International Law (H)
- IR465 The International Politics of Culture and Religion
- IR482 Russia and Eurasia: Foreign and Security Policies

**Arrival**

We very much hope that you will be joining us in London in September. Meanwhile, we strongly recommend that you consult the [‘Frequently Asked Questions for offer holders and current students’](#) on our departmental web pages for further information about the Department and your arrival.

Please also see below for information regarding the status of your offer and registration arrangements.

Yours sincerely



Professor Peter Trubowitz  
Head, International Relations Department

### Status of Offer

If you have not already done so, please check the status of your offer on your application tracker. If you are required to meet conditions of your offer by registration time, we recommend you submit the relevant documents to the [Graduate Admissions Office](#) (GAO) as soon as possible. You should also ensure you have submitted your offer reply and financial undertaking forms to the GAO. Please contact the GAO if you have any queries about this.

### MSc IRT Programme Registration

**Monday 19 September 2016, Hong Kong Theatre, Clement House, 2.00-2.30 pm**

In order to become an official student of the LSE, you must register in person at the School. **It is extremely important that you register in the MSc IR programme allocated registration slot (above).** When registering, you will be issued with an identity card which provides, amongst other things, access to your library account. You will find information on all aspects of registration on the School's [New Student Programme Registration](#) website.

If you are unable to register on the date and time specified for your programme, you should read the information on the [Graduate Programme Registration](#) website under '*What can I do if I miss my scheduled registration time?*' If you are unable to attend registration on the alternative dates/times provided then you must contact Martina Langer ([m.langer@lse.ac.uk](mailto:m.langer@lse.ac.uk)), IRT Programme Administrator, immediately, stating your reasons.

### MSc IRT Programme Orientation Meeting

**Thursday, 22 September 2016, 2.00-3.00 pm, room CLM 3.04**

Michaelmas Term begins on Thursday 22 September 2016 and is also the day of your orientation meeting. It is very important to attend your orientation meeting as the structure of your programme and administrative arrangements will be explained at this time. You will also meet the Deputy Head of Department (Teaching and Learning) and the MSc IRT Programme Director.

### Academic Adviser Appointments

You will be provided with information regarding the allocation of Academic Advisers, and meetings with your Academic Adviser will take place the following week. All will be explained at the orientation meeting.

Teaching begins in Week 1 on Monday 26 September 2016