

**TLC: What we do**

The Teaching and Learning Centre supports individuals and departments wishing to develop the quality of teaching and learning in the School. In practical terms the TLC:

- Co-ordinates an in-house programme of events and the initial teaching induction for both full-time and part-time staff involved in teaching and research;
- Offers one-to-one educational consultations tailored to particular needs and interests, including teaching observation;
- Alerts staff to external events, providing funding as appropriate;
- Supports departmental development, following internal departmental reviews;
- Keeps the School up-to-date on developments in teaching and learning in HE nationally and internationally, through departmental links, the Teaching Matters news sheet, and our website;
- Works with the Centre for Learning Technology to aid the integration and use of technology into the main teaching and learning activities of the LSE;
- Co-ordinates student study support across the School including advising students with disabilities and providing dyslexia support;
- Undertakes research into teaching and learning, currently the "LSE PhD experience".

**In this issue:**

- Roberts funding for PhD and research staff personal and career skills development
- HEFCE Report: PhD Research Degrees – Entry and completion
- USTOR – Using Software in Teaching OR
- What a discussion board can do
- The tale of an LSE student.....
- New PC classrooms

**Skills development for PhD students and research staff**

The Research Councils have allocated funding to all HEIs, in which they finance PhD students and junior research staff, to provide these groups with improved training and development opportunities. This initiative arose from a review by Sir Gareth Roberts in 2001 for the DTI and DfES on the supply of science and engineering skills in the UK (see the April 2002 report on the review: SET for Success [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/enterprise\\_and\\_productivity/research\\_and\\_enterprise/ent\\_res\\_roberts.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/enterprise_and_productivity/research_and_enterprise/ent_res_roberts.cfm)). An important conclusion from this study was that there is "inadequate training – particularly in the more transferable skills – available during the PhD programme. As a consequence, many employers do not initially pay those with PhDs any more than they would a new graduate, viewing the training particularly in transferable skills) that PhD students receive as inadequate preparation for careers in business R&D." (para 0.40).

Funding for the School is based on per capita student/staff numbers funded by ESRC and EPSRC. There should now also be funding from AHRC. TLC is managing the budget and, following consultation with departments, has

funding for the next two years for two posts: one in TLC and one in the Careers Service. Appointments have now been made, and we are looking forward to major developments in provision of central development support in the coming academic year. This will build on a number of existing initiatives, including the "Authoring a PhD" series, and recent PhD conference and career skills development week. PhD students will also be encouraged to organise inter-departmental networking activities – this has already started with two successful events organised by a newly created PhD student society. Departments will be encouraged to bid for funds to offer cross-departmental sessions, or specialist internal activities for PhD students which help to develop the skills they need for successful PhD completion and for future employment.

Any departments interested in developing new approaches to PhD student support are invited to contact TLC.

**HEFCE Report: PhD Research Degrees – entry and completion**

*Frederico Matos, Research Officer, TLC.*

This article summarises some of the main findings from a recent HEFCE report<sup>1</sup> that considers factors affecting PhD completion rates. It examines the completion rates of the cohort of research students who started their PhD degrees in UK higher education institutions (HEI) in the academic year 1996-97 and follows that cohort for a maximum of 7 years up to 2002-03. Data were drawn from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Students who did not progress beyond the first year of their programme were excluded from the study; but no other adjustments were made for example for fieldwork and other periods of absence.

Previous surveys conducted by the Research Councils have focused on submission rates. Completion, as used in the HEFCE report, is in effect the period to submission plus the length of the examination period. It seems likely that HEFCE is using completions in order to keep the exercise simple and to avoid the need to make decisions on how to treat individual cases. But it is worth noting that as yet HEFCE has fought shy of setting targets and performance indicators: at this stage the data it has provided are simply presented as information for institutions.

The report assesses how the following categories impact on completion rates: source of student sponsorship, domicile of student, sex, age on entry, previous qualifications and route to PhD programme, subject area, and institution and subject area within institution.

<sup>1</sup> HEFCE (2005) PhD research degrees. Entry and completion. See in [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05\\_02/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_02/)

## Main findings

After 5 years: 57% full-time (FT) and 19% part-time (PT) students have completed their PhD. After 7 years: 71% full-time and 34% part-time have completed. **After 7 years, 11% of full-time and 28% of part-time students are still 'actively' pursuing their programme.**

The report found the following factors as influencing the completion rates for PhD students: financial backing, student domicile, age on entry, previous qualification, subject and mode of study. Higher completion rates are linked with: financial backing from Research Council, charities or British Academy; overseas students; younger students; students in the natural sciences. The analysis below, unless otherwise stated, refers to completion over the 7-year period.

For the School's purposes, the single most important datum is that the seven-year completion rate for students in the social studies subject area is 61% for full-time students and 29% for part-time students.

## Mode changes

**Students who change from FT to PT study have lower completion rates than students on FT only mode of study. The opposite happens for PT who change to FT since they have better completion rates than PT only students.**

18% of starting full-time students and 11% of starting part-time students have changed mode of study. Overall, 17% of students (3,066) have changed between part-time and full-time study. Table 1 sets out the full picture

**Table 1 PhD completion by mode changes for PhD programme cohort**

Start mode	During course	No. of students	% PhD completion
FT	FT only	11,147	74%
	FT to PT	2,525	58%
<b>All FT</b>		<b>13,672</b>	<b>71%</b>
PT	PT only	4,310	32%
	PT to FT	541	54%
<b>All PT</b>		<b>4,851</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>All</b>		<b>18,523</b>	<b>61%</b>

Adapted: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion: from table 9, page 11

## Movement

### Institutional movement

**Both full-time and part-time students reduce their completion rates by 4% if they have moved between HE institutions during their programme.**

4% of full-time and 6% of part-time students move between institutions while studying for their PhD (4% of the overall population). For full-time students, 71% of students who have not changed institutions have completed their PhD whereas 67% of those who have moved have completed.

### Interruption and inactivity

10% of all students take a break of at least one year while they are doing their PhD. 7% of full-time students have taken at least one year off study and have resumed their programme whereas 12% of part-time students have done so. The report does not indicate how such periods of

deregistration impact on completion. This information would be important for LSE, given proposed ways of reducing "time to submission".

## Source of student sponsorship

**Students with financial backing from research council, charities and the British Academy have the highest completion rates. Students with no financial backing or with 'other' financial support have the lowest completion rates.**

Table 2 shows the distribution of financial support for PhD students. The research councils are the main funders for research students, funding 25% of full-time students. Another number to put on evidence is the staggering number of students who have no financial backing: 22% FT and 58% PT. Unsurprisingly, (see Table 3) students with no financial backing show the worst completion rates, as well as students with 'other' financial support: 59%.

**Table 2 Source of student sponsorship**

	Full-time students		Part-time students		All students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Research Council	3,381	25	29	1	3,410	18
Charity / British Academy	768	6	50	1	818	4
Institution	2,130	16	617	13	2,747	15
Government	622	5	243	5	865	5
UK industry	860	6	587	12	1,447	8
Overseas	2,046	15	69	1	2,115	11
Other	821	6	450	9	1,271	7
No financial backing	3,044	22	2,806	58	5,850	32
<b>All</b>	<b>13,672</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,851</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,523</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, table 17, page 18

**Table 3 PhD completion by source of funding for full-time students**

Source of sponsorship	No. of students	% PhD award
Research Council	3,381	80%
Charity/British Academy	768	80%
Overseas	2,046	75%
UK Government	622	74%
UK HE Institution	2,130	72%
UK industry	860	67%
Other	821	59%
No financial backing	3,044	59%
<b>All</b>	<b>13,672</b>	<b>71%</b>

Adapted: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, from table 18, page 18

## Subject area

**Students from natural sciences, medicine and veterinary sciences have the highest completion rates. Social studies and business studies students show considerably lower completion rates.**

In the UK and for entry year 1996, the biggest cohorts of research students were doing PhDs in physical sciences and engineering (14% of total students each) followed by biological sciences (with 13% of all students). The 4<sup>th</sup> biggest cohort, with 10% of all students were doing their PhD in social studies (and 4% in business studies). An important point to make, however, is that a greater proportion of social science students study part-time than is the case for those in the natural and medical sciences.

**Table 4 PhD completion by subject area for full-time students**

Subject	Full-time	Part-time
	% PhD award	% PhD award
Biological sciences	81%	41%
Physical sciences	81%	38%
Agriculture	77%	48%
Medicine/veterinary	76%	53%
Allied to medicine	76%	34%
Mathematics	75%	31%
Engineering	70%	42%
Education	66%	28%
Languages	64%	30%
Humanities	62%	28%
Social studies	61%	29%
Computing	60%	23%
Business	58%	28%
Law/librarianship	56%	26%
Architecture	54%	22%
Creative arts	55%	33%
Combined	65%	25%
<b>All</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>34%</b>

Adapted: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, from tables 32 and 33, pages 27 and 28

For FT, the best completion rates are for students in the biological and physical sciences both with 81% completion rates. Social sciences have 61% completion rate and business studies 54%. The lowest completion rate is 54% for architecture. For PT students, best completion rate is for medicine and veterinary (53%) and the worse again for architecture (22%). PT students in social sciences have a 29% completion rate and business students 28%.

The report justifies the **relatively low completion rates** in the Social Sciences by stating that “fields of research in ‘Social sciences and humanities’ are not always as well established as in the natural sciences, and methodologies may still be disputed. Sometimes it may be difficult to identify topics, which can yield substantial results through a PhD research programme. Completion rates for students on programmes in these subjects are not universally low, but when we take account of other factors we see that the ‘subject effect’ is negative compared to the natural sciences and related subjects”. (HEFCE 2005:34)

#### Students' domicile

**Completion rates do not vary greatly according to students' domicile but, controlling for all other variables, overseas students have the best completion rates.**

Table 5 shows the distribution of students considering their registration status. Unsurprisingly, home students are the biggest cohort, 60% FT and 81% PT. The smallest group is the students coming from EU countries (12% FT and 7% PT). Overseas students represent a third of all FT students, but only one tenth of the PT cohort, which is predictable considering the obstacles they face to get a working visa.

**Table 5 Domicile of PhD students**

	Full-time students		Part-time students		All students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Home	8,153	60	3,946	81	12,099	65
EU	1,619	12	316	7	1,935	10
Non-EU	3,900	29	589	12	4,489	24
<b>All</b>	<b>13,672</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,851</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,523</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, table 20, page 20

Domicile does not seem to impact considerably on the completion rates of PhD students (see table 6 below). FT overseas students seem to do slightly worse than home and EU. For PT students they do slightly better than home students. We could state that across the board EU students are more consistent in terms of completion rates, always with the highest completion rates. “However, when the other factors [the report has] included are taken into account, non-EU students and, to a lesser extent, EU students have a higher relative completion rate than home students” (HEFCE 2005:20)

This data appears quite different to the LSE experience where overseas students have lower completion rates.

**Table 6 PhD completion by domicile**

	Full-time % PhD award	Part-time % PhD award
Home	72%	33%
EU	72%	40%
Non-EU	70%	40%
<b>All</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>34%</b>

Adapted: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, from tables 21 and 22, page 21

#### Gender and Age

**Gender affects completion rates minimally with male students' completing slightly faster than their female counterparts. As for age, the youngest students complete faster and that is not only because they are the most representative cohort of full-time students: older students have lower completion rates independently of their mode of study.**

**Table 7 Sex of PhD students**

Sex	Full-time students		Part-time students		All students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	8,480	62	2,725	56	<b>11,205</b>	<b>60</b>
Female	5,192	38	2,126	44	<b>7,318</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>All</b>	<b>13,672</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,851</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,523</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, table 23, page 22

FT males do slightly better than FT female students, but the opposite situation happened for PT students and differences are very small.

**Table 8 PhD completion by gender**

Gender	Full-time	Part-time
	% PhD award	% PhD award
Male	72%	34%
Female	70%	35%
<b>All</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>34%</b>

Adapted: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, from tables 24 and 25, page 22

The younger the student age group, the better the completion rates. The report, however, notes that the older cohort has more students in part-time study, which complicates this comparison. But older students, it states, have lower completion rates both in full-time and part-time programmes.

#### Previous qualifications

*When considering the year before entering their PhD, students with a first from a different HEI have the best completion rates followed by those with a first in the same HEI. Students with the worst completion rates are those with a masters from a different HEI in the case of FT students, and those with a first-degree classification other than a first from the same HEI in the case of PT students.*

Table 10 (below) shows the differences between full-time and part-time students.

**Table 10 PhD completion by previous study**

HEI attended	Qualification in previous year		Full-time % PhD award	Part-time % PhD award
Same HEI	Masters		70	38
	Degree	First	81	49
		Upper second / other	70	31
	<b>Total from same HEI</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>38</b>
Different HEI	Masters		67	39
	Degree	First	82	55
		Upper second / other	75	42
	<b>Total from different HEI</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>41</b>

No masters/degree award	69	33
<b>All</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>34</b>

Adapted: HEFCE - PhD research degrees. Entry and completion, from tables 29 and 30, pages 25 and 26

The report concludes "if all the students who are active at the end of the seven years went on to complete at some future date, we would end up with 82 per cent and 62 per cent [completion rates] respectively [for full-time and part-time]" (HEFCE 2005:32).

The report also includes some very tentative analyses of institutional difference from the overall average: the conclusion is that, even allowing for all the factors and for expected random variation, there are still significant differences between institutions, with perhaps 15 institutions having an overall seven year completion rate for full-time students, which is 20% or more below the overall average. HEFCE has provided individual institutions with their own dataset for completions. It has to be said that the data they have provided for the School bears little relation to our internal data. The Academic Registrar's reliable data on the School's performance roles is available and it will be circulated internally.

#### USTOR – Using Software in Teaching OR

Gwyn Bevan, Alec Morton, Susan Powell

Over the last few years, the world of OR has been transformed by the availability of user-friendly computer software packages, which, in terms of both functionality and raw computing power, pack a much more powerful punch than the OR packages of yesteryear. At the same time, the business and university IT environment has also changed drastically, and with it, student and employer expectations.

In the middle of last year, we felt that the time had come to explore in a systematic way how the OR teaching community was keeping pace with these new developments. With the help of a grant from the Teaching Development Fund, we invited a number of colleagues from different teaching institutions to visit the School for a two half-day workshop in December 2004.

The workshop alternated between plenary sessions, and streamed small group sessions. The plenary sessions addressed a range of topical issues, namely

- University-wide ICT strategies/software: opportunities for OR education?
- Zen and the Art Of Excel Modelling: perspectives for OR teaching;
- Computer-Based Examining.

The streamed sessions were provided for participants with particular teaching interests (in Mathematical Programming, Decision / Risk Analysis and Problem Structuring Methods, Stochastic Modelling and Statistics, and general IT Skills) to discuss issues relating to these particular areas. Each stream was structured with a general discussion, kick-started by three presentations.

A final session distilled the lessons learned and identified ways forward. After the end of the workshop, some participants stayed behind for a free format discussion of issues in finding and managing industrial projects for students.



The enthusiasm that met the announcement of this event came as something of a surprise to us. When the day of the workshop dawned, we found that we had a total of 28 attendees from 10 different institutions. The presentations that participants gave, both the plenary speakers and the streamed speakers, were of a very high quality and clearly a lot of work had been put in. The overall tenor of the event was extremely positive, and people were very open and forthcoming in sharing experiences.

Inevitably, some of the learning from the workshop was that, in many cases, "there are no easy answers". But there were many areas – for example in the use of Microsoft Excel in teaching the more computational subjects – where there is clearly a lot of innovative teaching going on, and the workshop gave us as a Department much to chew on.

**Note: other departments interested in organising similar disciplinary meetings to discuss teaching matters with colleagues from other institutions are actively encouraged to contact TLC to discuss funding and other support for such events.**

### Using a Discussion Board

*Dr Margaret Bray, Economics*

This is a real, slightly edited example, from Microeconomics Principles 1, a course for 450 second year undergraduates. It demonstrates how the discussion board can be used as a follow up to lecture content.

The discussion board makes the exchange available to all students in a way that e-mail does not. I would not have taken this much trouble with something that would go only to a single student, and would probably have received several e-mails on the same point. It was particularly helpful that the student responded to my first attempt at explanation by saying that he still did not understand, and then commented on a further attempt.

The question is about the meaning of the term "benefit withdrawal rate" in the context of in work benefits such as the Child Tax Credit, or its predecessor the Working Families Tax Credit. Many students find this hard to understand, particularly those that come from countries where there is no benefit system. It lies at the heart of a piece of work that the students did during the Christmas vacation.

### Discussion board posting by student

I will be very grateful if you could please clear a doubt:

In part 2 of Problem 2, the effective marginal tax rate  $m$  is defined as  $m + b$  ( $m$  = marginal income tax rate,  $b$  = benefit withdrawal rate) when a household receives benefits. Shouldn't it be  $m - b$ , because if taxes are taken to be a positive contributor to the marginal tax rate, then benefits should have a negative effect?

### Email to student

If you pay income tax with a marginal tax rate of 22% so  $t = 0.22$ , and your benefit, say child tax credit is withdrawn at a rate of 0.40 so  $b = 0.40$ , when you earn £1 more you pay £0.22 extra income tax, and lose £0.40 in benefit (child tax credit) so you take home an additional

$$1 - t - b = 1 - 0.22 - 0.40 = 0.38$$

### Email from student

Thank you for replying to my query. I am sorry but I am still confused as to why the benefits are being taken away from your income rather than being added.

### Email to student

Can you let me know if this makes sense?

*The benefits you get are added to your income, but the amount of benefit that you get is reduced, as your income gets higher. The amount by which your income is reduced for every extra £1 you earn is called the benefit withdrawal rate.*

*Suppose the aim of the system was to ensure that everyone has at least £200 a week. One way to make this happen would be for the government to pay £200 to someone with no income, to pay £200 -  $y$  to everyone with income  $y$  when  $y$  is less than or equal to £200, and to give nothing to anyone earning £200 or more. Under this scheme everyone who earns £200 or less ends up with £200, and everyone earning more than £200 ends up with the amount they earn minus any taxes they pay.*

*The trouble with this benefit system is that it gives no incentive whatever to work for a low wage. If you cannot earn more than £200 there is no point in working at all, you get £200 in earnings plus benefit if you work 0 hours or 40 hours. In order to provide some incentive to work the benefit withdrawal rate has to be less than 100%..... So suppose now that people with no earnings at all get £200 in benefit, and that the withdrawal rate is 40%, which implies that for every extra £1 a family earns its benefit is reduced by 40 pence. So a family that earned £10 a week would get benefit of £200 -  $0.4 \times 10 = £196$  and, assuming that the family pays no tax, a total of £10 +  $196 = £206$ , consisting of £196 benefit and £10 earnings.....*

*The general formula for this case is that a family that earns income  $y$  less than £500 gets £200 -  $0.40 y$  in benefit, and  $y$  in income, giving a total amount of £200 -  $0.4 y + y = £(200 + 0.6y)$ . A family that earns more than £500 gets no benefit.*

### Email reply from student

I have now perfectly understood what is meant by the withdrawal rate of benefits and how it affects the incentive to work. I think you should put this one on the discussion board.

The section in italics was put on discussion board

### The tale of an LSE student who is dyslexic

Well, I did it at last! I now have a degree! Wasn't without its problems though, was it? And now the dust has settled, and I have a bit of time on my hands (and a temp job in the Civil Service), a few words of thanks.

One day, the story of how I became a student will be made into a film. The story outline is as follows.

Man quits school at 11, works as a shoe repairer by day and runs a youth group at night. One of his youths is so clever that Oxford accept him with only 2 E grades at A-level. Off he goes, but soon finds the going tough. So, first person he calls is his leader, who rushes up there to talk him out of quitting.

Conversation goes on late into night with student talking about his degree. Eventually, he realises his leader not

only understands him but challenges what the academics have written. He then utters the immortal line;  
 "You could do this, you know."  
 "Do what?"  
 "A degree."  
 "Me, do a degree? Don't be silly!"  
 On Monday, the leader rings his sister to announce he is going to university. She thinks he is mad.  
 There follows 5 years of rejections by universities and battles to overcome them - very Jude the Obscure. Then, Ruskin College, Oxford say 'Yes' and the dream begins. After a glorious year at Ruskin, top grade student, star of the Oxford Union, chair of a couple of university societies - and all the while dashing back to London each Friday evening to run his youth group - leader gets dream offer from LSE, which he falls over himself to accept.  
 Starts as glitteringly as he finished at Oxford, then comes inexplicable academic disaster! He overcomes that, then it happens again! Depression! Misery! Is our hero going to quit and end up as bitter and twisted as Jude the Obscure! Very nearly! Then, tests reveal the problem and the wagon rolls again! Eighteen months later, he has a degree.  
 And that sister of his the one who thought he was mad? She graduated this summer as well - with a degree in nursing. Seeing her brother do it had made her want to do it as well. Better than that, all his sister's kids now see university as a natural option. Not bad in a family of tradesmen and manual workers who used to think education wasn't for them.  
 Our hero is applying to be a teacher. But hey, they are putting obstacles in his way because he doesn't have a measly grade C GCSE at Maths. Still, obstacles are there to be overcome aren't they. Do a bit of Civil Service work in the meantime and take the exam privately. He'll do it! Not a bad story really, is it? I'll let you know the final chapter when it happens.

### **New PC classrooms**

Better ergonomics, improved lighting and flat screen monitors.

*Steven Ainsworth, IT Services*

Over the Christmas holidays IT Services considerably improved five of its computer classrooms. S175, S170 and S075 have had facelifts, whilst S018 has been dramatically changed for the better. S03 becomes our first classroom to have flat screen monitors, reducing stress on the eyes caused by long periods at the computer.

We visited all our classrooms with the intention of creating new spaces to work in. Armed with information from teaching consultations and feedback from our 2004 user survey, we set about putting a plan of improvement together that satisfied a tight budget. With help from the Estates department and investigation into solutions implemented at other Universities, we settled on a course of action that would see an upgrade in the condition and environmental aspects of the rooms, such as lighting, along with improved ergonomics, study space and equipment security through the replacement of chairs and desks.

S018 had a number of additional improvements made to it. Half the wall was knocked out to 'borrow' the light from the corridor, this opened up the room and took away the 'basement' feel it had. The projector was also relocated to the ceiling to enable a computer to be repositioned, improving access around the room.

Early feedback from staff and students on the improvements has been good and IT Services would like to thank all LSE staff and outside contractors involved with this project in making it a success.



### **External News**

Note: colleagues interested in attending any teaching and learning conferences and workshops are welcome to apply to TLC for funding.

### **The Higher Education Academy**

For further information on the Academy, visit its website:  
[www.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk)

### **HEA Subject Network**

**BEST** (Business, Management and Accountancy subject centre) [www.business.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.business.heacademy.ac.uk)

**Economics** [www.economics.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.economics.heacademy.ac.uk)

The Economics Network has been given funding to create an online bank of eLearning materials. They are seeking to pay economics lecturers on a fee basis to provide content for two projects over the coming twelve months.

1. PowerPoint for Intermediate Core Economics
2. Question Bank

To discuss either of these projects, email [tsn-econ@bris.ac.uk](mailto:tsn-econ@bris.ac.uk).

### **Developments in Economics and Business Education (DEBE) Conference**

*Thursday 1 and Friday 2 September 2005, Møller Centre, Cambridge.*

**GEES** Geography, Earth and Environmental Science  
[www.gees.ac.uk](http://www.gees.ac.uk)

### **Flows and Spaces in a Globalised World - Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Annual Conference**

*31 August - 2nd September 2005, London*

[www.rgs.org](http://www.rgs.org)

**History, Classics and Archaeology**

[www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk)

### **International Public History Conference: People and their Pasts**

*Friday 16 to Saturday 17 September 2005, Ruskin College, Oxford.*

UK Centre for Legal Education [www.ukcle.ac.uk](http://www.ukcle.ac.uk)

Mathstor, Mathematics, Statistics and OR:  
<http://mathstore.ac.uk/>

### **Induction Course for lecturers new to teaching mathematics in UKHE**

Thursday 15 - Friday 16 September 2005, University of Birmingham

This induction course is aimed at people who have started teaching mathematics in UK higher education institutions within the last three years, whether they are new graduates or coming from industry or from outside the UK.

Philosophy [www.prs.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.prs.heacademy.ac.uk).

Psychology [www.psychology.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.psychology.heacademy.ac.uk)

**Mini-project scheme** designed to promote the use of effective learning and teaching activities in Psychology. Projects should typically aim to bring into wider use exemplary or innovative techniques, methods or materials already developed for local use within departments. However, some 'pump-priming' funding might be available for new projects. The maximum funding for any one project will normally be £5,000.

*Applications should be submitted by the last working day of December and June.*

C-SAP Politics, Sociology and Anthropology: [www.c-sap.bham.ac.uk](http://www.c-sap.bham.ac.uk)

### **C-SAP Conference 2005 – “New Contexts in Learning and Teaching”**

23– 25 November 2005, Jury's Inn, Birmingham

To find out more about the conference, or to register, please contact C-SAP by phone on 0121 414 2995 or by email: [enquiries@c-sap.bham.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@c-sap.bham.ac.uk)

SWAP Social Policy and Social Work [www.swap.ac.uk](http://www.swap.ac.uk)

### **Improving Student Learning Symposium 2005**

5-7 September 2005, Imperial College, London

ISL aims to bring together those who are primarily researching learning in HE with those who are primarily interested in improving their own practice. The theme of this year's conference is student and classroom assessment, and papers have been accepted under these specific headings:

1. Learning, teaching and assessment methods
2. Course and programme design
3. Skills development and lifelong learning
4. e-Learning
5. Supporting learners
6. Diversity and inclusivity
7. Implementing and managing change and innovation
8. Institutional strategies
9. Departmental strategies
10. Faculty development methods and/or strategies.

For full conference details and to book online go to:

[www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/1\\_ocslid/isL2005/](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/1_ocslid/isL2005/)

This newsletter is available in electronic format and, on request, in alternative formats. Please contact the TLC Administrator ([tlc@lse.ac.uk](mailto:tlc@lse.ac.uk)).

## **Internal events**

### **Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education**

TLC is pleased to announce that, following agreement from GSSC, we will be offering staff and PhD students who teach the opportunity to complete a postgraduate certificate in higher education. This will be an adapted form of our existing Teacher Accreditation Programme. It will enable people to gain a formal qualification in teaching in HE. This is in line with the government white paper January 2003 : The Future of Higher Education which raised the expectation that: "New national professional standards for teaching in higher education will be established as the basis of accredited training for all staff, and all new teaching staff will receive accredited training by 2006." (Chap 4 p.46)<sup>2</sup>. The 2004/5 session has seen a significant increase in the numbers of PhD students opting to follow the programme, as many see it as a useful extra in applying for both academic and other jobs in the future.

### **PhD supervision training**

TLC is changing the format of the PhD supervision training for LSE academic staff. Rather than a single one-day workshop, once per year, staff will be invited to participate in an assortment of different types of events. These will include lunchtime briefings, afternoon seminars and half day "problem-based" workshops. Proposed dates for the first set of events are:

#### **Session 1: So what is a PhD? and what is the "LSE PhD experience"?**

*Provisional date: Tuesday 20th September, 4pm - 5.15pm*

Brief session exploring the different elements of the PhD experience, based on views of LSE staff and students, and external "stakeholders", and looking at data related to PhD student selection, viva outcomes and completion.

#### **Session 2: Exploring roles and responsibilities in the PhD process**

*Provisional date: Friday 23rd Sept, 2pm - 5pm*

Using case studies based on LSE students, this session will explore the different stages of the PhD process, and consider roles and responsibilities at each stage, taking into account the key players involved. Participants will also be introduced to the range of support systems in place within the School. The following stages will be highlighted:

- Recruitment/selection
- Induction
- The first year
- Upgrade
- On-going development
- Count down to completion/viva
- Post-viva

#### **Session 3: Dealing with difficult cases**

*Provisional date: Thursday 13 October 4pm - 5.30pm*

This session will use a combination of prepared case studies and problems brought to the session by participants. We will explore a range of difficulties faced by PhD students and strategies that staff can consider when endeavouring to support students through these difficulties. The session will include an information pack on sources of support for PhD students and their supervisors beyond their immediate department.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/uploads/White%20Pape.pdf>

TLC also offers departments the option of requesting tailored sessions. TLC, in conjunction with TQARO, trialled the first such event with the International Relations department earlier this year.

Over the coming year, TLC will also be preparing a guide for supervisors. This will be based on examples of good practice from both within and beyond the School, and on research into the experiences of LSE PhD students, supervisors and research student tutors currently being undertaken by the TLC research officer, Frederico Matos.

### Dates for new staff inductions

TLC is in the process of contacting new staff, including new graduate teaching assistants, inviting them to the various induction events at the start of next session. Please ensure that any new colleagues you work with are aware of these dates, and encourage them to contact TLC directly to register.

### New Academic Induction Programme 2005-06

Attendance at the following series of workshops is compulsory for new lecturers with less than three years teaching experience in a UK university or equivalent. All others are welcome to attend any of the sessions. New researchers are not required to attend the induction sessions, but are most welcome.

### Deans' Induction

*Tuesday 13 September 2005, 10.45am – 5pm*

The formal "welcome" to LSE, including an introduction to teaching and research at LSE, and to the School's governance, along with more practical information on various LSE services.

### Senior Common Room Reception

*Tuesday 13 September 2005, 5pm – 7pm*

### Facing the Media

*Wednesday 14 September 2005, 10.45am – 5pm*

A practical one-day workshop on using the media to

publicise your research profile, including practical work on press releases and radio and television interview skills.

### Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

*Thursday 15 & Friday 16 September 2005, 9.45am – 5pm*

A two-day workshop with focus on student learning, lecturing and running/managing seminars/problem classes and assessment at LSE.

### Being a personal tutor at the LSE: role and responsibilities and Disability Equality

*Monday 19 September 2005, 10am – 1.15pm*

A presentation, with question and answer session by Dr Mark Hoffman (Dean of Undergraduate Studies) on the practicalities of personal tutoring at LSE and practical support on addressing the implications of recent government legislation concerning disability from the LSE Adviser to Students with Disabilities and Dyslexia.

### Graduate Teaching Assistant Training

The School expects all GTAs who are also registered students at the School, and who do not have prior teaching experience to attend, as a minimum:

- a series of workshops (parts 1-4). There is separate provision for those teaching qualitative and quantitative subjects
- the Deans' Induction for GTAs on *Wednesday 5 October 2005, 2pm – 4pm*
- any briefing sessions offered by the department in which they will be teaching

Part one dates for 2005-06 are as follows:

### Part 1: Introduction to teaching and learning at the LSE

*Thursday 22 September 2005 9.45am – 5pm or*

*Friday 23 September 2005 9.45am – 5pm or*

*Thursday 29 September 2005 9.45am – 5pm*

### Part 1: Introduction to running problem-set classes, and marking class work

*Wednesday 28 September 2005 9.45am – 5pm or*

*Monday 3 October 2005 9.45am – 5pm*

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