

## **LSE Department of Mathematics**

### **Draft Basic Travel Policy**

**This is a draft document, first formally considered by the Mathematics Department at the Departmental Meeting held on 28 September 2012, and revised February 2013.**

*"The LSE is committed to acting responsibly to minimise its environmental impact through the following aims...*

*3. Prevent pollution from emissions and discharges, in particular those that directly contribute to climate change.*

#### **Policy objectives**

*...Minimise emissions arising from commuting, business travel choices and deliveries"*

In keeping with LSE's Environmental Policy

(<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/estatesDivision/sustainableLSE/about/EMSatLSE/enviroPolicy.aspx>) and to reflect existing good practices in the Department of Mathematics, what follows is a draft travel policy the purpose of which is to reduce our carbon emissions as a department. Given that the department has, in many respects, a very small environmental footprint, travel, along with energy and paper use, is probably the source of the department's most negative environmental impact.

#### **1, Domestic Travel - Staff**

The Department of Mathematics has not, for many years, paid for staff to take domestic flights. Whilst there remains great reluctance to implement anything as formal as a ban, staff are expected as standard to use trains, or other appropriate forms of public transport, in preference to flying when travelling domestically on LSE business. It is understood that in exceptional circumstances, it may be acceptable to fly domestically. However, staff are expected to consult with the Departmental Manager before booking. For instance, where cost is the primary concern, and a colleague is close to exhausting their Research Funds, it may be possible to incentivise staff to utilise trains in preference to planes by providing the additional funds needed to take the train instead.<sup>1</sup>

#### **2, Overseas Travel – Staff, visitors and research students**

Overseas travel, primarily flying, for research purposes is probably the biggest source of departmental carbon emissions. As yet, there are no practical alternatives that would not negatively affect the research activity of the department. The Grantham Institute are in the process of developing a carbon off-setting scheme to cover flights that will be trialled initially in that department. This makes use of a 'gold-standard' offsetting scheme that they have thoroughly researched: [www.myclimate.org](http://www.myclimate.org). The Mathematics Department is currently logging the details of all staff overseas flights to see whether offsetting will be a viable/affordable option for the department. Offsetting appears to be the best means available to us of reducing the impact of our overseas flights, and we will continue to liaise with the School regarding the possibility of funds explicitly for offsetting research-related travel. In the meantime, technological

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<sup>1</sup> Colleagues would be expected to demonstrate that the difference in cost between a domestic flight and public transport alternatives was not purely the result of poor planning/late booking, and also verify the importance of attendance at the event/institution.

advances such as Skype will continue to be promoted as a potential substitute of travel, especially when the purpose of travel is research collaboration. This is being used regularly for collaboration, and for conducting interviews with prospective PhD students, and is therefore reducing the need for travel.

### **3, Getting to LSE – Advice to visitors**

It is important that we encourage visitors to LSE to use public transport to get here – in any case, this is usually the most practical option given our location. Therefore, everyone inviting guests to LSE is encouraged to highlight this message where possible. In particular, this information is provided on nearly every page of the departmental website, in the 'How to contact us' section on the left-hand side. Similarly, more detailed information with reference to the School's Environmental Policy is provided in the weekly seminar emails sent to the department's mailing list. Also, this information is provided when we contact job applicants to invite them to interview.

### **4, Commuting – Staff**

Whilst your journey to work falls outside LSE's jurisdiction, awareness raising about the implications of travel choices remains important. LSE provides many incentives to encourage staff to cycle or use public transport to get here and back each day. There are cycling incentives, as follows:

1. Incentives to help buy a bike - [Cyclescheme purchase of bicycles](#)
  2. [Cycle parking](#)
  3. Showers - [Shower locations on campus](#)
- Furthermore, LSE has an [interest-free loan scheme for travel passes](#), again to encourage staff to use public transport to get to LSE.

### **Useful additional links:**

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/mapsAndDirections/travellingToLSE.aspx>  
<http://www.transportdirect.info/Web2/JourneyPlanning/JourneyEmissionsCompare.aspx?repeatingloop=Y>  
<https://www.myclimate.org/nc/offsetting/co2-offsetting/offset-your-flight.html>  
<http://www.travelfootprint.org/>

*(Specifically on the question of carbon emissions relating to travel to Edinburgh from London, which has been asked by several people in the department:*

<http://www.seat61.com/CO2flights.htm>  
[http://www.carbonindependent.org/sources\\_aviation.htm](http://www.carbonindependent.org/sources_aviation.htm)  
<http://www.transportdirect.info/Web2/JourneyPlanning/JourneyEmissionsCompare.aspx?repeatingloop=Y>

*(Distance London to Edinburgh: 331.98 miles direct, 398 miles by road, 394 miles by rail.)*