



Department
of Social Policy

Department of Social Policy

Handbook for Undergraduate Students

2016/17

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lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy



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Dear Social Policy Student,

A very warm welcome to the Department of Social Policy!

Your Department has an international reputation for excellence and is one of the largest Social Policy departments in the UK. The latest Research Excellence Framework (the UK's nationwide assessment of research quality, impact and environment) ranked the Department first in the country for world leading and internationally excellent research. We were also awarded the joint highest marks for the non-academic 'real world' impacts of our work.

The study of Social Policy began at the London School of Economics in 1912. It grew out of the early social work training course of the Charity Organisation Society and the generosity of an Indian industrialist, Sir Ratan Tata, who carried out pioneering work on poverty. This tradition of combining action and research was followed by the ground-breaking contributions of Richard Titmuss, Peter Townsend, Brian Abel-Smith and David Donnison; and led to the development of Social Policy as a discipline and the building of the Welfare State itself in Britain and abroad.

The interests of the Department today embrace virtually all the major issues that confront individual countries and the world today including: how best to provide health care and education; the provision of reasonable housing and social services; the problems posed by ageing populations; poverty, inequality and social exclusion at national and global levels; and the role of national and local government and non-governmental organisations in instigating policy reform and change. The Department's focus is very much on headline issues, as well as on more traditional areas of scholarship. All of these are explored in an increasingly international and dynamic context – one in which national, European and global matters interact and merge.

The interdisciplinary nature of Social Policy means that when you graduate you will be equipped with a broad range of knowledge and skills that can be applied in many different settings. Many Social Policy alumni apply their academic training directly, working as policy specialists in the government, NGO and private sectors. Furthermore, the high-level analytical and research skills developed by our degree programmes are also highly valued by employers as diverse as the media, management consultancy, teaching and the development sector.

You will find LSE to be a vibrant and exciting place. There is much to enjoy, both academically and socially. In particular you will quickly discover that there are major public events – lectures, debates and so on – almost every day of the week. Being in the centre of the capital city, close to the heart of government and all the main media, LSE is uniquely well-placed to act as a host for the most distinguished of visitors. These occasions will focus on areas close to the things you are here to study, as well as matters well beyond, and I would urge you to make the most of this opportunity.

I am sure your time here will be both rewarding and stimulating. Enjoy!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Jenkins', written in a cursive style.

Professor Stephen Jenkins
Head of Department

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**Department of
Social Policy**



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

The School

The Essentials

Term Dates 2016/17

lse.ac.uk/termdates

Michaelmas Term

Thursday 22 September – Friday 9 December 2016

Lent Term

Monday 9 January – Friday 24 March 2017

Summer Term

Monday 24 April – Friday 9 June 2017

School closures

Christmas Closure	Thursday 22 December 2016 – Monday 2 January 2017
Easter Closure	Thursday 13 April – Wednesday 19 April 2017
May Bank Holiday	Monday 1 May 2017
Spring Bank Holiday	Monday 29 May 2017
Summer Bank Holiday	Monday 28 August 2017

Reading Weeks

Reading weeks are held in week six of the Michaelmas and Lent terms. Course convenors are responsible for determining if there will be any teaching activity or if, instead, a reading week will take place for their course. For further details, please see the Moodle page for the relevant course.

Welcome Week

lse.ac.uk/yourFirstWeeks

lse.ac.uk/welcomeweek

The Your First Weeks section of the website provides comprehensive information to help you settle in to life at LSE. These pages will refer you to information regarding what to expect after you arrive, how to open a bank account, what to do if you arrive early or late to LSE, crucial health information, how to set up your LSE IT account, School support services and much more. The Welcome Week guide contains information about events taking place at the start of the academic year, including those specific to the Department, and the Students' Union Welcome Fair, as well as central School welcome events.

LSE for You

lse.ac.uk/lseforyou

LSE for You is a personalised web portal which gives you access to a range of services. For example, you can:

- view or update your personal details
- select your courses
- reset your Library and network passwords
- monitor and pay your tuition fees online
- check your exam results

You can also access online tutorials on how to navigate and personalise LSE for You via the login page. Use your LSE network username and password to login.

Moodle

moodle.lse.ac.uk

Moodle is LSE's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Moodle is a password-protected web environment that may contain a range of teaching resources, activities, assignments, information and discussions relating to your course. The content of Moodle is the responsibility of your teacher and so it will vary from course to course.

Moodle can be accessed from any computer connected to the internet, on and off campus. To access Moodle go to **moodle.lse.ac.uk** and use your LSE username and password to log in. This page also has links to help and advice on using Moodle. You will also find links to Moodle from a number of web pages including the webpage for 'Staff & Students'. If you have any technical problems with Moodle you should contact the IT helpdesk it.helpdesk@lse.ac.uk.

Email

The School will use your LSE email address to communicate with you, so you should check it regularly. Microsoft Outlook is available on all student PCs on the LSE network. You can also access e-mail off-campus using webmail and remote desktop or, on the move using email clients for laptops and mobile phones. For instructions visit: lse.ac.uk/itservices/remote.

Key School Services A-Z

Advice, Communications & Operations

The Advice, Communications & Operations Team provide advice to students on academic matters (particularly around non-progression, interruption and withdrawals), run the Student Services enquiry counter, co-ordinate Welcome Week and co-ordinate Student Services Centre communications: Their specific responsibilities include:

- Providing the first point of contact for enquiries and signposting enquirers to the appropriate school services
- Coordinating all School Welcome Week events, maintaining the [Your First Weeks](#) web pages and managing the [Off Campus Support Scheme](#)
- Providing one-to-one advice on [School Regulations and Codes of Practice](#)
- Processing applications to the [Repeat Teaching Panel](#) and monitoring attendance
- Producing replacement student ID cards for undergraduate and taught masters students
- Administering the School's student consultative fora and the Departmental Tutors Forum

Contact the Advice, Communications & Operations team with a general enquiry

- In person: at the SSC counter during opening hours
- By email: ssc.advice@lse.ac.uk
- Over the telephone: 020 7955 6167

Counselling Service

lse.ac.uk/studentcounselling

This free and confidential service aims to enable you to cope with any personal or study difficulties that may be affecting you while at LSE. As well as one-to-one appointments, there are group sessions and workshops throughout the year on issues such as exam anxiety and stress management.

Disability and Well-being Service

lse.ac.uk/disability

The Disability and Well-being Service (DWS) runs three specialist services, all of which are free and confidential:

- The Disability Service, for students with physical/sensory impairments and those with long-term or chronic medical conditions
- The Neurodiversity Service, for students with dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger syndrome and other neurodiverse conditions
- The Mental Health and Well-being Service, for students with mental health concerns

The DWS can also set up Inclusion Plans (IPs), outlining reasonable adjustments such as extended library loans, negotiated deadlines and rest breaks in exams. It runs several interest and support groups, for example the Neurodiversity Interest Group and the Circles Network. For further information please visit the website or email disability-dyslexia@lse.ac.uk.

Financial Support Office

lse.ac.uk/financialsupportoffice

Financial Support

The Financial Support Office (FSO) is responsible for the administration and awarding of scholarships, bursaries, studentships and School prizes. It is located within LSE's Student Services Centre with a daily drop-in session during term time between 1pm and 2pm (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during vacations). No appointment is necessary. FSO provide information about funds such as the Student Support Fund, LSE Access Fund and the Postgraduate Travel fund.

Full details and application forms are available from

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/students/moneyMatters/financialSupport/Home.aspx>

International Student Immigration Visa Advice Team (ISVAT)

lse.ac.uk/isvat

ISVAT provides detailed immigration advice for International Students on their website which is updated whenever the immigration rules change. They can advise you by e-mail (if you complete an online query form on the [ISVAT web pages](#)) or at the drop-in service at the Student Services Centre. ISVAT run workshops to advise students applying to extend their stay in the UK; and in complex cases, they will make individual appointments.

For more information including drop in times and dates of workshops go to: lse.ac.uk/isvat.

ISVAT also manages staff and student exchanges through the Erasmus + programme at LSE. For more information on our exchanges, go to lse.ac.uk/Erasmus

IT Support

lse.ac.uk/imt

Student IT Help Desk/ Laptop Surgery - first floor, Library Contact the IT Help Desk (it.helpdesk@lse.ac.uk) for support for School-owned hardware and software on the LSE network, network and email account issues, and general IT queries.

Language Support

lse.ac.uk/languages

English Language Support

If English is not your first language the Language Centre is on hand to give you advice and support throughout your time at LSE. The support is free and begins as soon as your main programme starts. There are specific classes for Academic Departments and information sessions are held during the first days of term to advise you on the most appropriate classes to take. Classes begin in week 2 of the Michaelmas Term. Please see lse.ac.uk/languages for information on the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) In-session Support Programme.

LSE LIFE

lse.ac.uk/lselife

LSE LIFE is the School's centre for academic, professional and personal development. They can help you find your own 'best' ways to study, think about where your studies might lead you, and make the most of your time at LSE.

LSE LIFE offers

- guidance and hands-on practice of the key skills you'll need to do well at LSE: effective reading, academic writing and critical thinking
- workshops related to how to adapt to new or difficult situations, including development of skills for leadership, study/work/life balance, and preparing for the working world
- a place to meet and work together with your peers on interdisciplinary group projects and research
- support in making the transition to (or *back to*) university life;
- advice and practice on working in study groups and on cross-cultural communication and teamwork
- ideas and inspiration about academic pursuits and pathways into professional life

and much more ...

LSE LIFE is located on the ground floor of the library and is your first port of call to discover what is available for you. The LSE LIFE team, together with advisers and specialists from LSE Careers, LSE Library, the Language Centre and other parts of the School, will be on hand to answer your questions. Sign up for a workshop, come by for help with your homework, or just drop in.

Library

lse.ac.uk/library

Your LSE student card is also your Library card. No additional registration with the Library is required. Staff at the Library are available for any enquiries you may have about using their collections and electronic resources.

Follow us at

www.twitter.com/LSELibrary

www.facebook.com/LSELibrary

Student Services Centre (SSC)

lse.ac.uk/ssc

The Student Services Centre is located on the ground floor of the Old Building. It provides advice and information on the following services:

- Admissions (drop-in service)
- Certificates of registration
- Course choice and class changes
- Examinations and results
- Fees – process fee payments and distribute cheques (drop-in service)
- Financial support – Advice on scholarships, awards, prizes, emergency funding and studentships (drop-in service)
- Information for new arrivals
- Programme registration
- Graduation ceremonies
- Transcripts and degree certificates
- Visa and immigration advice (drop-in service)

The SSC provides a counter service for students at the following times:

- 11am–4pm every weekday

You can also contact Student Services by telephone. Details of who to contact and more information on advice can be found on the SSC website.

Timetables

lse.ac.uk/timetables

The Timetables Offices is responsible for scheduling and allocating rooms to all of the School's Undergraduate, Masters and Research taught courses. Teaching begins on Monday 6th October 2014, this is referred to as week 1 of Michaelmas Term. The timetable of all taught courses can be viewed on the Timetables web page.

Notification of changes to teaching arrangements is communicated via email to students.

School Wide Codes and Regulations

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

lse.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity

To uphold the School's commitment to equality of respect and opportunity, as set out in the [Ethics Code](#), we will treat all people with dignity and respect, and ensure that no-one will be treated less favourably because of their role at the School, age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or belief sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and social and economic background.

In practice, this means we expect you to:

- Treat all members of the School community fairly and with respect;
- Act courageously and openly, with respect for the knowledge and experience of others;
- Play your part in creating an environment that enables all members of the School community to achieve their full potential in an environment characterised by equality of respect and opportunity; and
- Actively oppose all forms of discrimination and harassment, including challenging and/or reporting unacceptable behaviour.

The School is committed to embedding and mainstreaming equity, diversity and inclusion. For further advice or information, please visit the School's Equality and Diversity website (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/equityDiversityInclusion>), see our blog, and follow us on Twitter @EDI_LSE.

Access Guides to LSE buildings

DisabledGo have produced detailed access guides to the LSE campus and residences, and route maps between key locations. These are available at lse.ac.uk/DisabledGo

Regulations and Codes of Practice - The Calendar

lse.ac.uk/calendar

General School and Programme Regulations

The School has regulations, policies and procedures covering many aspects of student life and you should familiarise yourself with them. Some of the regulations explain the organisation and conduct of your academic study. These include information about the structure of programmes, assessment, graduation and what to do if illness affects your studies.

Codes of Good Practice

The Codes of Good Practice for Undergraduates and Taught Masters Programmes explain the basic obligations and responsibilities of staff and students. They set out what you can expect from your Department – and what Departments are expected to provide – in relation to the teaching and learning experience. The Codes cover areas like the roles and responsibilities of Academic Advisers and Departmental Tutors; the structure of teaching at the School; and examinations and assessment. They also set out your responsibilities, i.e. what the School expects of you.

The following web link gives you an A-Z list of relevant regulatory documents where you can find further details of all School Regulations.

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/policies/home.aspx>

We recommend that you also read the School's Student Charter and Ethics Code.

The Student Charter sets out the vision and ethos of the School -

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/policies/pdfs/school/stuCha.pdf>

The Ethics Code highlights the core principles of LSE life -

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/policies/pdfs/school/ethCod.pdf>.

Fieldwork Safety

If you are planning fieldwork or any other off site activity please complete the relevant risk assessment at:
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/healthAndSafety/policy/FieldworkOffsiteVisits.aspx>

We recognise that you may want to carry out fieldwork in areas of the world that are subject to social or political unrest, high threat of kidnap and ransom or to areas with Foreign and Commonwealth Office Warnings. If you do, we are there to help you achieve your aims. We can help provide specialist county or area threat assessments to help you make an informed decision about the viability of traveling to your destination of choice. We can also provide specialist training and equipment to help keep you safe. Please note that the Health and Safety Team may not cover the costs of additional specialist control measures and you may have to secure your own funding.

Please read the Fieldwork Health and Safety Guidance document for further information:
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/healthAndSafety/pdf/Fieldwork-H&S-Guidance-May-2014.pdf>

For any further information or advice, please contact the Health and Safety Team

Telephone: 020 7852 3677

Email: Health.And.Safety@lse.ac.uk

Research Ethics

Research is not only integral to the work of academic staff, but many students will undertake a piece of primary research as part of their dissertation or thesis. Although any particular empirical investigation may be modest in scope, if it involves human participants it is essential that those conducting the research consider and address any ethical implications that may arise. All students are expected to discuss the ethical implications of their research with their Academic Adviser. Where appropriate, a research ethics checklist and a research ethics review questionnaire should be completed and submitted to the Department.

School Policy

The LSE research ethics policy and associated ethics review forms can be viewed at the following link:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/researchAndDevelopment/researchPolicy/ethicsGuidanceAndForms.aspx>
[x](#)

All students who plan to undertake research as part of their programme of study must read the LSE Research Ethics Policy and discuss any ethical implications with their Academic Adviser, before undertaking any research.

Ensuring the ethical propriety of their research is a requirement of all academic staff and this is something to which a variety of bodies concerned with the governance and funding of research are increasingly attentive – not only in the UK, but also in many other countries in which LSE based researchers may seek to conduct their investigations. Certain overseas governments have procedures for the approval of all or any research that directly involves their citizens. Collaborating agencies may require that proposed research be independently vetted. In such instances the School has a Research Ethics Committee that may be consulted. Although it would not usually apply to student research projects, there are certain circumstances in which a piece of research may have to be subject to prior independent ethical scrutiny and approval. For example, any research that involves patients of the UK National Health Service must have approval by a Local Research Ethics Committee.

In addition, the following research would also need ethical approval:

- research involving vulnerable groups; sensitive topics
- research involving groups where permission of a gatekeeper is required for access to members
- research conducted without full informed consent
- research involving access to records of confidential information
- research which would induce unacceptable psychological stress, anxiety, pain or humiliation.

Registration

lse.ac.uk/registration

Programme Registration

At the start of the academic year you will need to formally register on your programme of study. To ensure that you are able to complete this process as quickly as possible, each programme/department is allocated a specific time slot in which to register. At registration, you will be asked to provide proof of your eligibility to study in the UK in order to receive your School ID card. This card will, amongst other things, allow you to access your library account.

Undergraduate Course Choice

lse.ac.uk/coursechoice

You will need to choose all of your courses, including those that are compulsory, in LSE for You. All course choices need to be approved by your Academic Advisor so please make sure you discussed your options with him/her. The deadline for course choice for undergraduate students is **10 October 2016**.

To choose your courses first visit lse.ac.uk/coursechoice. Here you will find links to the programme regulations for which outline your available course choices and a course guide for each of them. You will also find tutorials on how to select courses, including information on how to select courses that are not listed in your programme regulations.

The schedule for publication of personal Timetables in LSE for You is shown below.

- Continuing students: from Tuesday 20th September 2016
- First years: from Friday 23rd September 2016
- General course students: from Friday 23rd September 2016
- Intercollegiate students: from Friday 30th September 2016
- Diploma students (undergraduate course): from Friday 30th September 2016

If you have made your course choices in LSE for You by the specified date, but cannot view a personal timetable this may be because you have a timetable clash. If this is the case you should see a message telling you the codes of the courses that are clashing. For further information on timetable clashes please see the timetables web page:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/diaryAndEvents/timetables/timetableClash.aspx>

If you make a change to your course choices after the publication date please allow three working days for the changes to appear on your timetable.

Postgraduate Course Choice and Seminar Sign Up

lse.ac.uk/coursechoice

You will need to choose all of your courses, including any compulsory ones and your dissertation, in LSE for You.

Course choice opens for browsing during Welcome Week so that you can get used to the system. However, you will not be able to make any choices during this period. The system opens fully from **23 September 2016** but you will only be able to access the 'Graduate Course Choice' option in LSE for You when your admissions paperwork is completed. The deadline for course choices is **10 October 2016**. The system will re-open at the beginning of Lent Term so you can make any changes that are needed for Lent Term.

To choose your courses first visit lse.ac.uk/coursechoice. Here you will find links to the programme regulations for which outline your available course choices and a course guide for each of them. You will also find tutorials on how to use the Graduate Course Choice system.

Many courses have 'controlled access' and you will need to apply to the Department teaching the course for permission to take it before you can select it. If such an application is required, it will be indicated in the system. You can make applications to take these courses within the system. Your overall diet of courses is also subject to the approval of your home department.

Some departments allocate places to seminars centrally whilst others permit you to choose using the seminar signup facility in LSE for You. Personal Timetables can then be viewed in LSE for You.

Certificate of Registration

lse.ac.uk/certificateofregistration

A certificate of registration provides proof to organisations, such as the Home Office, council tax offices and banks, that you are registered as a current student at the School. It details your full name, date of birth, term time and permanent home addresses, student number, the title, subject, start and end dates of your programme, registration status and expected date of graduation.

Once you are formally registered with the School you can print out your certificate instantly via LSE for You (LFY) under the 'Certification and Documentation' option. If you require a certificate with information beyond what is on the Certificate of Registration please see lse.ac.uk/registrydocuments.

Interruption / Deferral / Withdrawal / Programme Transfers / Change of Mode of Study

lse.ac.uk/registrationChanges

Interruption: with approval from your department you can take a break in your studies. Interruptions are one calendar year long. You are usually required to return at the start of the nearest applicable term – be that Michaelmas or Lent term. Summer term interruptions are not possible. For more information, please see lse.ac.uk/interruptions

Deferral: if you complete the teaching year but have difficulties in the lead up to or during the exam period, then in exceptional circumstances you can seek to defer assessment(s) to the following academic year. For more information, please see lse.ac.uk/deferrals

Withdrawal: withdrawing means that you are leaving the programme permanently. Before withdrawing you may want to consider interruption so that you have some time to consider your options. For more information, please see lse.ac.uk/withdrawals

Programme Transfers: you can request to transfer from your current programme to another programme at the same level according to the School's regulations. There are usually restrictions on transferring programmes, and sometimes transfers are not possible. All transfer requests are considered by and require approval from both academic departments and the School before being authorised. For more information, please see lse.ac.uk/programmetransfers

Change of Mode of Study (for postgraduate students): if a change in your circumstances occurs that means that you need to change your study mode from full-time to part-time, you will need to seek authorisation from your academic department. Changing from full-time to part-time study mode is generally acceptable, and your course choice will be amended according to programme regulations. Your fees will also be amended in line with the part-time fees published in the Table of Fees for the same academic year. Changing from part-time to full-time may not always be possible. Requests to change from part-time to full-time study mode will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For more information please see: www.lse.ac.uk/PTchange

The Department

An Overview of Your Department

Sources of Information

Department Web Pages

lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy

Please refer to the Department website for staff details, programme and course information, news and events, and links to other useful sites.

Facebook

Most programmes have a Facebook page so that you can keep in touch with your fellow students. Ask your Programme Administrator for more details. The Department also has a general Facebook page. Like us to be kept up to date with departmental events, public lectures and interesting research.

facebook.com/LSESocialPolicy

Social Policy Student News

Social Policy Student News is our e-newsletter and is sent out fortnightly during term time. It includes information about departmental events, public lectures, personal development and job opportunities, plus lots of other useful information.

Student Noticeboards

There is a Departmental noticeboard and an e-noticeboard, both of which are located in the lobby area on the second floor of the Old Building, next to OLD 2.45.

Twitter

For news and views follow us on Twitter @LSESocialPolicy

Socialising

Student Common Room

The Student Common Room is in OLD 2.14 and is available for Social Policy students as a social and general study space. To ensure that the room is secure, the door has been fitted with a digital lock. The code for this lock is **C1278Y**. Please do not share this code with anyone from outside the Department.

Social Events

We have three major Departmental parties each year. The first, in mid to late October, is a **Welcome Party** for all new students. The second is a **Christmas Party** for all Social Policy students and staff. The third is a **student and staff party** usually held during the last week of Lent term. Dates and further details of all of these events will be circulated nearer the time. In addition, each degree programme usually organises its own social events during the year.

Department Committees and Student Representation

Each term, a number of Departmental meetings allow staff and students the opportunity to meet and discuss issues relating to their programme of study as well as wider School issues.

Programme Meetings

Each degree programme holds regular meetings to discuss and resolve programme/course specific concerns. These meetings are held prior to the Staff Student Liaison Committee Meetings and are normally attended by the Programme Director, the Programme Administrator, the Programme Representative(s) and other relevant course teachers.

Staff-Student Liaison Committee

A student from each year of each degree programme is elected in the first two weeks of Michaelmas Term to represent the views of his/her peers at their departmental Staff-Student Liaison Committees (SSLC). There is one SSLC for undergraduate students and one SSLC for post graduate students (taught and research). Each SSLC meets once in the Michaelmas and Lent terms, and is chaired by the Departmental Tutor (UG) or the Deputy Head of Department for Teaching (PGT). These meetings address wider Departmental and School issues and matters relating to the student teaching and learning experience. Normally in attendance are Programme Directors, Programme Administrators and the student programme representatives.

School Committees

One student representative from each of the Undergraduate, Taught Graduate and Research Student programmes also serve on the Students' Consultative Fora. The Department will request volunteers for these posts at the beginning of the Michaelmas term.

Teaching, Supervision and Support

Teaching

Lectures are an integral part of your programme and will introduce themes and ideas on a particular topic before the corresponding **class** (undergraduate) or **seminar** (postgraduate). Every lecture at the LSE is open to all students, subject to space in the lecture theatre, so if you would like to attend additional lectures out of interest, and your timetable permits, do take advantage of this opportunity. Attendance at **classes/seminars** is compulsory and attendance is recorded.

Advice and Feedback Hours

The purpose of "advice and feedback hours" is to give students regular access to teachers. This gives you the opportunity to talk to your course teachers on a 1-2-1 basis. If you need clarification on a particular topic, are having any difficulties with the course, or if you are interested in their particular field of study and want to know more, you can visit the course teacher during their advice and feedback hour. You can see any teacher during their advice and feedback hour, even if you are not a student on one of their courses.

All teachers hold an advice and feedback hour at least once a week during term time. Some teachers operate a drop in session, whilst others ask you to book an appointment via LSE for You. You can check a teacher's advice and feedback hour on the *Who's Who* pages of the departmental website, on the sign outside their office door and, for some courses, on Moodle. If you are unable to attend a particular advice and feedback hour, for example because of a timetable clash, you can contact the individual teacher to arrange an appointment at an alternative time.

Academic Adviser

At the start of your degree programme, you will be assigned an Academic Adviser, who is also usually your dissertation supervisor. Your Academic Adviser is your tutor and will guide and assist you in your learning development and is also available to help with any personal difficulties.

The Academic Adviser's responsibilities include:

- Providing academic guidance and feedback on students' progress and performance and to discuss any academic problems they might experience.
- Providing pastoral support on non-academic issues and referring students to the appropriate support services within the School.
- Implementing the provisions outlined in Inclusion Plans (IPs) for disabled students, in liaison with the School's Disability and Well-Being Service.
- Advising /approving course selection.
- Informing the Programme Director and School of any student whose progress is not satisfactory.

You should make arrangements to see your adviser and aim to do so at least twice each term, or more frequently if you are having particular difficulties. You can also use the advice and feedback hour system to keep in touch with your Academic Adviser. Any issues that cannot be resolved with your adviser can be taken to your Programme Director.

Role of the Programme Director (Taught Post Graduate Students)

A Programme Director is responsible for each taught programme. The responsibilities of the Programme Director include:

- Providing students with detailed information about their programme.
- Providing a programme induction for new students, including information on the selection of options and arrangements for supervision.
- Arranging regular termly meetings with student programme representatives and the nomination of a representative(s) to the Department's Staff-Student Liaison Committee.
- Providing a direct channel of communication between the School and any student who is encountering academic or pastoral difficulties.
- Agreeing, where appropriate, a student's request for course choice outside the degree regulations.
- Agreeing, where appropriate, a student's request for a degree transfer.

Examination and Assessment

Formative Assessment

Formative (non-assessed) coursework is designed to prepare you for the summative (assessed) work that you will complete later in the course. Formative assessment might include essays, problem sets, presentations or mock examinations. The purpose is to provide you with an opportunity for feedback on your work. All courses include some kind of formative assessment and you will be given full information about the required piece(s) of work by the course convener and/or your Programme Administrator.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment counts towards your final degree award. Summative assessment may take the form of a written examination, an essay, a presentation or a combination of two or three of these modes of assessment. The modes of summative assessment are set out in each course guide and you will be given full details of your summative assessment by the relevant Programme Administrator.

Extensions

If you have good cause not to meet a summative assessment deadline because of illness/injury, bereavement or other serious personal circumstances, you should first discuss the matter with the course teacher and seek a formal extension from the Chair of the appropriate Sub-Board of Examiners. This must be done as early as possible. Extensions will be granted only where there is good cause backed by supporting evidence (e.g. medical certificate), and where the circumstances are unforeseen and out of the student's control. All evidence must be in English, or accompanied by a certified translation.

Exceptional Circumstances

Exceptional circumstances are those which you feel may have had a significant impact on your academic performance during an exam or other summative assessment. Such circumstances might include, but are not limited to, illness, injury, or bereavement. If you wish to make the Sub-Board of Examiners aware of your circumstances and how these have affected your performance, please complete the Exceptional Circumstances form (available from the Student Service Centre). The form should be accompanied supporting evidence of your circumstances (such as doctor's letter, hospital note, death certificate or police report).

This and supporting documentation must be submitted to the Student Services Centre on the ground floor of the Old Building within seven days of your last exam or your dissertation/coursework submission deadline.

Penalties for the Late Submission of Summative Coursework

If you fail to submit a piece of summative assessment by the set deadline (or extended deadline as appropriate), the following penalty will apply. Five marks (out of 100) will be deducted for coursework submitted within 24 hours of the deadline and a further five marks will be deducted for each subsequent 24-hour period (working days only) until the coursework is submitted. After five working days, coursework will only be accepted with the permission of the Chair of the Sub-Board of Examiners.

Exceeding the Word Limit

Written work must not exceed the word limit. If it is clear that a piece of coursework exceeds the set word limit, the markers will make a judgement based only on the content up to the word limit.

Departmental Assessment and Feedback Statement

The Departmental Assessment and Feedback Statement is currently being revised for the 2016/7 academic year and will be issued to all students separately from this handbook. It will also be made available on Moodle and on the Departmental webpages.

MARKING FRAMEWORK: BSc PROGRAMMES

This is a guide to the principal criteria used for the marking of both assessed and 'formative' written work. The descriptors given are merely illustrative of the standards that markers apply. Feedback from markers will usually include specific comments under each of the four headings below. Overall marks/grades awarded will reflect an overall judgement, based on all four criteria, but will additionally take account of the extent to which students have substantively answered the question(s) set.

CLASS	MARK	CRITERIA			
		STRUCTURE AND CLARITY OF EXPRESSION	AWARENESS AND USE OF LITERATURE	KNOWLEDGE BASE AND UNDERSTANDING	ARGUMENT / CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION
I	75+	Exceptionally well rounded argument; persuasively written	Excellent use of extensive literature well beyond the reading list which is impressively exploited	Excellent understanding and outstanding exposition of relevant issues; impressively well informed; insightful awareness of nuances and complexities. No major room for improvement, given constraints of essay form	Argument marshalled in an outstanding manner with excellent integration of theory/conceptual framework; searching questioning, unbiased approach; unambiguous evidence of original and independent thought.
	70-74	Excellent, logically developed argument; very well written	Very good use of wide range of literature to support argument / points	Very good understanding and exposition of relevant issues; well informed; good awareness of nuances and complexities	Well constructed arguments with appropriate use of theory/conceptual framework; questioning, unbiased approach; clear evidence of independent thought; good demonstration of originality of thought
II.i	60-69	Well developed argument; well expressed	Good use of wide range of literature to support arguments	Clear awareness and exposition of relevant issues; some awareness of nuances and complexities but tendency to simplify matters	High standard of critical analysis with appropriate choice and use of theory/conceptual framework; some questioning of literature
II.ii	50-59	Adequately presented argument; meaning generally clear	Adequate use of standard literature to support arguments	Work shows understanding of issue but at superficial level; no more than expected from attendance at lectures; some irrelevant material	Appropriate choice and use of theory/conceptual framework; attempts analysis
III	40-49	Confusingly structured and argued; meaning unclear	Use of narrow range of standard literature to support arguments	Establishes some relevant points but superficial and confused; much irrelevant material	Weak understanding or use of chosen theory/conceptual framework; too descriptive and/or analysis too superficial
Fail	< 40	Lacking structure and meaningful argument; difficult to understand	No significant reference to literature	Very little or no understanding of the issues raised by the topic or topic misunderstood; content largely irrelevant	No choice or use of theory/conceptual framework; essay almost wholly descriptive; no grasp of analysis with many errors and/or omissions
NOTE: marks < 30 signifies work that is significantly flawed or seriously inadequate; marks < 15 signifies work representing only a minimal or no serious attempt.					

Plagiarism

The School and the Department take plagiarism very seriously. Please read the information below carefully. It is your responsibility to understand the School's definition of plagiarism and the regulations on assessment misconduct and plagiarism. The Regulations on Assessment Offences can be found at the following link and it is important that you have read and understood these regulations **before** you submit any written work.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/resources/calendar/academicRegulations/RegulationsOnAssessmentOffences-Plagiarism.htm>

More information on study skills, citation and referencing can be found on the Department's webpages. lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/InformationForCurrentStudents/basicStudySkills.aspx

If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, or need help with citation and referencing, it is essential that you talk to your course teacher and/or Academic Adviser as soon as possible. They are there to help!

Defining Plagiarism

The School regulations state that:

'All work for classes and seminars as well as scripts (which include, for example, essays, dissertations and any other work, including computer programs) must be the student's own work. Quotations must be placed properly within quotation marks or indented and must be cited fully. All paraphrased material must be acknowledged. Infringing this requirement, whether deliberately or not, or passing off the work of others as the work of the student, whether deliberately or not, is plagiarism.'

A series of short quotations from several different sources, if not clearly identified as such, constitutes plagiarism just as much as does a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source.

What does plagiarism look like?

The most obvious form of plagiarism is to use someone else's words verbatim without any acknowledgment whatsoever. However, **inadequate referencing is also considered to be plagiarism**. For example, inserting a section of text (of any size) from someone else's work in to your own without quotation marks and a page reference would be plagiarism even if the source were acknowledged. **If you use verbatim material from other sources it must both be in quotation marks and precisely referenced with page numbers.**

When the paraphrased or summarised ideas of another author are used, they should always be acknowledged, including the source and the author(s), for example (Smith et al 2015).

Self-Plagiarism

A piece of work may only be submitted for assessment once. Submitting the same piece of work twice (or a significant part thereof, as determined by examiners) will be regarded as an offence of 'self-plagiarism' and will be considered under the School's Regulations on Assessment Offences. This includes work by you previously submitted at a different institution or a different course at LSE. However, earlier essay work may be used as an element of a dissertation, provided that the amount of earlier work used is specified by the department and the work is properly referenced.

Avoiding Plagiarism

The appropriate citation of sources is an important tool for scholarly work and the responsibility for learning the proper forms of citation lies with the individual student. However, the Department of Social Policy and the School do provide resources to assist students.

If you are unclear about plagiarism and/or require assistance with the academic referencing conventions used by the School you should seek guidance from your Academic Adviser or the Library:

Further useful sources of information:

<http://www.plagiarism.org>

<http://www.plagiarismadvice.org/index.php>

Detection of Plagiarism

Examiners are vigilant for cases of plagiarism and the School uses plagiarism detection software to identify plagiarised text. Work containing suspected plagiarism may be referred to an Assessment Misconduct Panel, which may result in severe penalties. In a case of suspected plagiarism, the Department will act according to the School's Regulations on Assessment Offences.

The Programme

Undergraduate Programmes

Programme Administration

Undergraduate Programme Manager:

Ms Rosie Jones; OLD 2.45; r.r.jones@lse.ac.uk; +44 (0)20 7955 7963.

The Undergraduate Programme Manager has overall responsibility for the administration of all BSc programmes in the Department.

Departmental Tutors:

Departmental Tutor for BSc Social Policy and Economics, BSc Social Policy with Government and General Course students:

Dr Arjan Gjonca; OLD M2.25; a.gjonca@lse.ac.uk; +44 (0)20 7955 7663.

Departmental Tutor for BSc Social Policy, BSc Social Policy and Criminology (second and third years) and BSc Social Policy and Sociology students:

Dr Michael Shiner; OLD 2.60; m.shiner@lse.ac.uk; +44 (0)20 7955 6355.

The Departmental Tutors are appointed members of the academic faculty. The responsibilities of the Departmental Tutors include:

- Monitoring the academic and pastoral care provided by members of his or her department, including the provision of reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.
- Arranging regular termly meetings of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and the nomination of a representative to the School's Undergraduate Students' Consultative Forum.
- Providing a direct channel of communication between the School and any student who is encountering academic or pastoral difficulties.
- Agreeing, where appropriate, a student's request for course choice outside the degree regulations.
- Agreeing, where appropriate, a student's request for a degree transfer.

Academic Staff Contact Details

Listed below are the contact details for undergraduate Academic Advisers and/or principal teaching staff in Social Policy.

	Room	Phone	Email
Dr Mrigesh Bhatia	OLD 2.34	020 7955 6416	m.r.bhatia@lse.ac.uk
Dr Tania Burchardt	32L 3.30	020 7955 6700	t.burchardt@lse.ac.uk
Dr Leo Cheliotis	OLD 2.51	020 7955 7968	l.cheliotis@lse.ac.uk
Dr Ernestina Coast	OLD M2.24	020 7955 6335	e.coast@lse.ac.uk
Dr Joan Costa Font	OLD 2.37	020 7955 6484	j.costa-font@lse.ac.uk
Professor Hartley Dean	OLD 2.30	020 7955 6184	h.dean@lse.ac.uk
Dr Sonia Exley	OLD 2.64	020 7955 7348	s.exley@lse.ac.uk
Dr Timo Fleckenstein	OLD 1.17	020 7955 6994	t.fleckenstein@lse.ac.uk
Matteo Galizzi	OLD 2.35	020 7955 6501	m.m.galizzi@lse.ac.uk

	Room	Phone	Email
Dr Arjan Gjonca	OLD M2.25	020 7955 7663	a.gjonca@lse.ac.uk
Professor Emily Grundy	OLD M2.23	020 7107 5448	e.m.grundy@lse.ac.uk
Professor Tony Hall	OLD 2.28	020 7955 7809	a.l.hall@lse.ac.uk
Dr Moshi Herman	OLD 1.11	020 7852 3560	m.o.herman@lse.ac.uk
Dr Tim Hildebrandt	OLD 2.55	020 7955 7344	t.r.hildebrandt@lse.ac.uk
Professor John Hills	32L 3.32	020 7955 7419	j.hills@lse.ac.uk
Dr Armine Ishkanian	OLD 1.13	020 7955 7354	a.ishkanian@lse.ac.uk
Professor Stephen Jenkins	OLD 2.29	020 7955 6527	s.jenkins@lse.ac.uk
Dr Panos Kanavos	COW 3.08	020 7955 6802	p.g.kanavos@lse.ac.uk
Professor Martin Knapp	COW 4.03	020 7955 6225	m.knapp@lse.ac.uk
Dr Sunil Kumar	KSW 4.11	020 7955 6195	s.kumar@lse.ac.uk
Professor Julian Le Grand	5LIF	020 7955 7353	j.legrand@lse.ac.uk
Professor David Lewis	OLD 2.40	020 7955 6037	d.lewis@lse.ac.uk
Dr Tiziana Leone	OLD 2.56	020 79557515	t.leone@lse.ac.uk
Dr Grace Lordan	OLD M2.26	020 7955 6768	g.lordan@lse.ac.uk
Dr Jeroen Luyten	OLD 2.27	020 7852 3621	j.luyten@lse.ac.uk
Dr Steen Mangen	OLD 2.62	020 7955 7356	s.mangen@lse.ac.uk
Professor Alistair McGuire	COW.4.05	020 7955 6375	a.j.mcguire@lse.ac.uk
Professor Elias Mossialos	COW 4.08	020 7955 7564	e.a.mossialos@lse.ac.uk
Professor Eileen Munro	OLD 2.33	020 7955 7349	e.munro@lse.ac.uk
Professor Mike Murphy	OLD 2.61	020 7955 7661	m.murphy@lse.ac.uk
Professor Tim Newburn	OLD 2.40a	020 7955 6220	t.newburn@lse.ac.uk
Dr Adam Oliver	COW 3.06	020 7955 6471	a.j.oliver@lse.ac.uk
Dr Berkay Ozcan	OLD 2.32	020 7955 6867	b.ozcan@lse.ac.uk
Dr Irene Papanicolas	COW G.04	020 7955 6472	i.n.papanicolas@lse.ac.uk
Dr Coretta Phillips	OLD M2.27	020 7955 7974	coretta.phillips@lse.ac.uk
Professor Lucinda Platt	OLD 2.25	020 7955 6829	l.platt@lse.ac.uk
Professor Anne Power	OLD M2.21	020 7955 7374	anne.power@lse.ac.uk
Dr Caroline Rudisill	COW 3.05	020 7955 6574	a.c.rudisill@lse.ac.uk
Dr Amanda Sheely	OLD 2.65	020 7955 7481	a.sheely@lse.ac.uk
Dr Michael Shiner	OLD 2.60	020 7955 6355	m.shiner@lse.ac.uk
Dr Isabel Shutes	OLD 2.58	020 7955 7364	i.h.shutes@lse.ac.uk
Dr Matthew Skellern	OLD 2.27	020 7852 3570	m.skellern@lse.ac.uk
Dr Kitty Stewart	OLD 2.36	020 7955 7343	k.j.stewart@lse.ac.uk
Dr Clare Wenham	COW 3.07	020 7955 6592	c.wenham@lse.ac.uk

	Room	Phone	Email
Professor Anne West	OLD 1.16	020 7955 7269	a.west@lse.ac.uk

Programme Regulations and Options

Detailed programme regulations and course guides for all undergraduate options can be found in the School Calendar.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/resources/calendar/undergraduate.htm>

Undergraduate courses in Social Policy being taught in Session 2016-17:

SA100	Foundations of Social Policy
SA101	Sociology and Social Policy
SA103	Introduction to Global Population Change
SA104	Social Economics and Policy
SA201	Research Methods for Social Policy
SA204	Education Policy
SA217	Psychology of Crime and Criminal Justice
SA218	Criminological Perspectives
SA219	Comparative and International Social Policy
SA221	Poverty, Social Exclusion and Social Change
SA222	Implementing Social Policy: From Principles to Practice
SA223	Health and Social Care Policy
SA250	Demographic Description and Analysis
SA309	Crime Control: Ideas and Controversies
SA320	Comparative and International Social Policy
SA349	A Long Essay on an Approved Topic

LSE 100

The LSE Course: Understanding the Causes of Things

All first year undergraduate students are required to take LSE100 and your lectures and classes for LSE100 begin in January 2017. This is an interdisciplinary and innovative course which is taught over two terms: the Lent term of your first year and the Michaelmas term of your second year. In both of these terms, you will be required to attend a 2-hour lecture and a 1-hour class each week.

LSE100 introduces you to the fundamental elements of thinking as a social scientist by exploring real problems and real questions, drawing on a range of disciplines across the social sciences. This distinctive course actively challenges you to analyse questions of current public concern and of intellectual debate from a rigorous social science perspective. Focusing on 'big questions' – such as 'How should we manage climate change?', 'Do nations matter?' and 'Who should own ideas in the internet age?'. As an LSE100 student you will explore the different approaches to evidence, explanation and theory that are used in the different social sciences. In this way, the course not only broadens your intellectual experience, but also deepens your understanding of your own degree discipline. The course also helps you to develop the critical methodological, information and communication skills that underpin your study and application of the social sciences.

More information on the course can be found on the website lse.ac.uk/LSE100 or by visiting the LSE100 Moodle site.

Advice and Feedback Meetings

At the start of your degree programme, you will be assigned an Academic Adviser. Your Academic Adviser will guide and assist you in your learning development and is also available to help with any personal difficulties. **It is the responsibility of new students to arrange an initial advice and feedback meeting with their Academic Adviser during the first week of Michaelmas term to discuss course options.** At least, a further two meetings should take place to discuss progress – the first during weeks 6-7 and the second during weeks 9-10.

Lent Term (LT): students are expected to attend at least three advice and feedback meetings – the first by the end of the second week to discuss MT reports and formative essays, the second in weeks 6-7 to discuss progress and the third in weeks 9-10 to discuss progress and exam entry.

Summer Term (ST): At least one advice and feedback meetings to discuss LT reports and examination revision progress.

Undergraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee Meeting

Issues affecting the undergraduate programmes are raised and considered at a meeting of the Undergraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee. The Committee comprises the Deputy Head of Department (Teaching), Departmental Tutors, the Undergraduate Programme Manager, Programme Directors and student representatives for each year and programme of study. Meetings take place once a term and the minutes are circulated to all students. Volunteers to act as programme representatives will be sought at the start of term.

Undergraduate Class Changes

Undergraduate classes are automatically allocated via the School's timetabling software and class sizes are closely monitored. Students must attend the class to which they have been assigned as a warning email is automatically generated if a student is marked absent from two consecutive classes. Students should only request to change a timetabled class in exceptional circumstances.

In order to request a change to a scheduled class, you should apply using the LSE for You (LFY) 'class change request' function. If you have circumstances which prevent you from attending your scheduled class, you should state the dates and times that you are unavailable. Your request will need to be approved by the Departmental Tutor of the department responsible for the course concerned. You should remain in your original class group until a change has been officially effected.

Once a decision has been made, you will be notified via your LSE email account. If your request has been approved, it will be reflected in your LSE for You personal timetable within three working days of the date of approval.

A request for a change of class for a Social Policy course must be discussed with the relevant Departmental Tutor.

Transfer of Degree

A request to change a degree programme may be approved in exceptional circumstances. You should first discuss this request with their Academic Adviser and then complete a *Request to Transfer Programme* form (available online or in hard copy from the SSC). The request needs to be approved by the Departmental Tutors of the current and prospective departments. Permission to transfer will depend on the availability of a place, your qualifications, and the number of courses that you have already taken that fit into the regulations of the degree to which you wish to transfer.

Undergraduate Essay Writing

Introduction

Outline the main points or the 'nature of the problem'.

Use signposting (e.g., "First... Second... Third", or "will begin with..., next..., finally...") and present your main argument.

If you write a good introduction and then follow it, it will help make your paper coherent and logical. It will also make it easy for the reader to know what to expect.

Body of the Text

Signpost the sections of your text.

- Begin each section of your argument with a strong thesis statement previewing the contents of the section, e.g. "Privatisation is often associated with recent changes in the welfare state; however, its implications are sometimes misunderstood. While privatization reduced direct state involvement in some sectors, it also increased state control."
- Where the change in topic may be unclear, use a signposting word. "Next, one must consider the importance of privatisation."
- Summarize the arguments of each section with a short concluding sentence. "In brief, the privatisations of the 1980s helped centralise government power even as they eliminated government ownership."

Be concise. Include only the information that is relevant to the question you are answering. If the information is not related to one of your core arguments, leave it out.

Back up your arguments with sources.

- Examples from the internet or media are good, but you must demonstrate a clear understanding of the key social policy literature to get a 2:1.
- You need to use a range of source material to get a good mark – two or three references are unlikely to be sufficient.
- The lecture should generally not be used as a source.
- Use correct formatting.

Conclusion

- The conclusion is not just a summary; it must conclude the key argument.
- The conclusion could begin: "In conclusion, the last twenty-five years have seen a reshaping of the welfare state, rather than a retrenchment. This reshaping has been driven by a combination of new ideologies and political compromise."
- Review each of your core points. Give one (or, at most, two) sentences per point.
- Restate your key argument. "For all of these reasons, the welfare state continues to grow, albeit in new directions."
- Do not introduce new material, such as quotations or examples. One exception is if you are using a pithy quotation for your opening or closing sentence.
- Do not make statements that are not supported by the body of your text.

Citation and Referencing

The appropriate citation of sources is an important tool for scholarly work and the responsibility for learning the proper forms of citation lies with the individual student. However, the Department of Social Policy and the School do provide resources to assist students. If you are unclear about the academic referencing conventions expected by the School you should seek guidance from your Academic Adviser or the Library: http://www2.lse.ac.uk/library/services/training/citing_referencing.aspx

Format

- Text should be clear, readable, and follow standard academic publishing conventions.
- One suggested format for formative essays:
 - Times New Roman or similar small serif font
 - 12 point font
 - Line spacing at 1.5
 - Text left justified or fully justified
 - Type your name at the top of the first page (formative essays only)
 - Type the name of the course below your name
 - Type the title of your essay
 - Insert page numbers
 - Staple your essay or send by email if agreed with the class teacher

For summative essays, please also refer to the submission procedures in the 'Department' section of this handbook.

Departmental Essay Writing Sessions

The department runs essay writing sessions for undergraduate students, which cover essay structure, referring literature and how to develop clear arguments. The Undergraduate Programme Manager will contact all students during the academic year about signing up for a session.

SA349: The Long Essay

Long Essay Regulations

These are the regulations for SA349, as detailed in the LSE Calendar (2016-17)

Teacher responsible: Professor Anthony Hall, Department of Social Policy

Availability: This is a compulsory course for the BSc Social Policy. It is optional for the BSc Social Policy and Criminology, BSc Social Policy and Economics, BSc Social Policy and Sociology and BSc Social Policy with Government.

Topic/word count: An essay of not more than 8,000 words on a topic to be approved by the candidate's Academic Adviser. It is designed to allow a detailed and thorough exploration of an area of interest to the student. The essay should be on a topic area **within the field of Social Policy**; it may involve original fieldwork, or the analysis and appraisal of existing literature.

Teaching: Students will have preliminary discussions about the topic of their essay with their Academic Adviser in the Summer term of their second year. During the Michaelmas term there will be a total of five support sessions covering certain aspects of writing a long essay. Students will agree the title with their Academic Adviser, and submit it to the Departmental Tutor, by the end of the Michaelmas term. Academic Advisers can be expected to offer advice on reading, guidance on the construction of the work and comment on an initial draft of the long essay, which should be handed in before the end of the Lent term.

Students in the third year must submit their essay to the Course Office (OLD 2.45) in the first week of summer term – the exact date and time will be confirmed in the Lent term.

Please note the long essay becomes compulsory for all third year students from 2017-18.

Purpose of the Long Essay

The dissertation is your chance to write a substantial piece of academic work on a topic of interest to you. As such, it is an opportunity to produce a work of scholarship, using the academic skills that you have developed during your course. Regardless of topic, your Dissertation will demonstrate the following skills:

- defining and outlining a topic;
- identifying the salient issues;
- finding or generating the relevant information;
- evaluating its reliability and validity;
- weighing up the evidence on all sides of a debate;
- arriving at a well-argued conclusion;
- organising and presenting the results of your work critically, cogently and coherently.

Long Essay Format

There are two major forms of long essay:

- (1) A piece of small-scale empirical research, conducted on a topic, issue or debate of broad relevance to social policy. It should critically evaluate earlier work in the field, paying due attention to its contributions, and to any methodological problems and limitations involved, including ethical issues (if any). Your own research should similarly be aware of any potential methodological weaknesses, relate your findings to those of others, and discuss the extent to which your findings have implications for the topic or issue in question.
- (2) The “library” essay: a critical exposition and review of a topic, issue or debate of broad relevance to social policy. This should pay due attention to previous research and commentary, theoretical problems and controversies, and to key findings and their implications for your essay topic. Since there is no major empirical component to the essay, the Examiners will pay particular attention to matters of scholarship. They will expect your essay to be especially thorough and critical in its handling of the issues, and in its development of the arguments it puts forward.

In practice, long essays are often a combination of these two types and may, in addition, contain other data such as case studies. Your Academic Adviser will be able to help you with this.

Essay structure

A widely accepted pattern usually has most of the following elements:

title page, including examination number and degree course
abstract
introduction (see below)
literature review
methods, design, approach to be followed
analysis/ statement of results
discussion
conclusions
bibliography (see further notes)
appendices (where appropriate)

Introduction: points to consider

Ideally, an introduction should

tell the reader how and why you became interested in the topic
give the reader a sense of why the issue you have chosen is an important and interesting one
outline what the issue or problem is, and how you propose to tackle it;
and (maybe) provide a brief list of the chapters and a sentence about what is in each.

If you write the Introduction before writing the essay, have a look at it again when you have finished it to make sure that you have not changed the focus of the essay in the course of writing it. If so, change the Introduction

Main body of the essay: points to consider

A well-argued essay is easy to follow. Essentially, you are trying to tell the reader a story. You will aid clarity if you break up the argument into clear steps. A properly paragraphed discussion makes your argument easier to follow. Make sure that your paragraphs are not too long.

Conclusions: points to consider

The conclusions drawn should be substantiated from within the body of the essay. It may be appropriate to discuss the implications of your conclusions - for example, for future work.