

## Academic year reform implementation

### Frequently asked questions – Information for students

#### GENERAL

**1. Why is the LSE changing the structure of its academic year?**

The School is changing the structure of its academic year to improve the student learning experience. Delivering existing volumes of academic course content across longer teaching terms will create the conditions for more effective student learning. The extra term-time week will allow departments the space and flexibility to offer innovative forms of teaching and assessment, and to deliver (with School services) additional study skills support. The introduction of Lent Term 'Week 0' exams for [some courses](#) will also allow assessment on those courses to take place at a time closer to the corresponding teaching.

**2. How will the structure of the 2015-16 academic year (and thereafter) be different from the current year?**

The 2014-15 session will be the last to feature three ten-week terms. From 2015-16, the School will move to a system of two 11-week teaching terms and a 7-week Summer Term. A new exam period will also be held in the week prior to the start of Lent Term for some courses.

#### DATES

**3. What are the term dates for next year?**

Michaelmas Term 2015: Thursday 24 September – Friday 11 December

Lent Term 2016: Monday 11 January – Thursday 24 March

Summer Term 2016: Monday 25 April – Friday 10 June

**4. What are the closure dates for next year?**

Christmas: Wednesday 23 December 2015 – Friday 1 January 2016

Easter: Friday 25 March – Thursday 31 March 2016

May Bank Holiday: Monday 2 May 2016

Spring Bank Holiday: Monday 30 May 2016

Summer Bank Holiday: Monday 29 August 2016

**5. What are the other important dates for next year?**

Early degree-specific registration	From 24 August 2015
Pre-sessional registration	From 25 August 2015
Pre-sessional teaching	25 August – 25 September 2015
Main registration period	18-25 September 2015
Welcome Week	21-25 September 2015
First day of MT teaching	28 September 2015

MT WK6	2-6 November 2015
Graduation ceremonies	14-17 December 2015 (i.e. for 12-month MSc students)
LT0 exams	4-8 January 2016
First day of LT teaching	11 January 2016
LT WK6	15-19 February 2016
First day of ST	25 April 2016
Exams	3 May – 10 June 2016
Graduation ceremonies	13-15 July 2016 (i.e. for UG and 9-month MSc students)

## READING WEEKS

### 6. I've heard that LSE will be introducing reading weeks in 2015-16. Does this mean I'll get a break from all of my courses in the middle of each term?

Unlikely. Departments plan to use the extra week in Michaelmas and Lent Terms in different ways – see below. Accordingly, you must be in attendance across both terms, and do not plan internships, work experience or travel for the reading week.

### 7. How will my department use the extra term-time weeks in Michaelmas and Lent Terms?

At the time of writing, known departmental plans are as follows. If your home department is not listed, please check its website for more information.

<u>Approach</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Departments</u>
Pure reading weeks	Some departments plan to hold department-wide reading weeks, with no scheduled activities. This approach will preserve space in the middle of the term for students to consolidate their learning and to prepare assignments.	Anthropology, Economic History, European Institute, Gender, Methodology, Geography and Environment, Media and Communications,
Mixed reading weeks	Some departments plan to hold department-wide reading weeks, but have permitted programme directors and individual course conveners to determine how best to make use of the time. Some courses (i.e. within the same dept) plan to offer a pure reading week, while others will hold essay-writing and advice sessions; research methods and design workshops; skills development training; film viewings; and applied case studies, to name but some of the additional learning activities that departments have reported.	International History, International Relations, Language Centre, Management, Methodology, Government, Sociology
Formal teaching + mixed reading weeks	Some departments have left both the decision about whether to hold a reading week and what to do during it to individual course conveners. Some courses (i.e. within the same dept) will feature teaching across all 11 weeks (e.g. lectures in WK1-10; classes/seminars in WK2-11; or formal teaching in WK1-10 and revision teaching in WK11); while	Accounting, Law, Statistics, Social Policy

other courses will feature WK6 reading weeks, of which some will host additional learning activities.

Formal teaching	Some departments have confirmed that they will teach across all 11 weeks of term in all courses (e.g. lectures in WK1-10, classes/seminars in WK2-11; or formal teaching in WK1-10 and revision teaching in WK11).	Economics, Finance, Mathematics, Social Psychology
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**8. What if during reading week I have formal teaching on one course that clashes with an activity on another course?**

In practice, there should be very few clashes of this kind. Courses that run a learning activity in WK6 will do so during the normal lecture or class/seminar slot for the course in question (i.e. where it is a course-specific activity); or during the normal lecture or class/seminar slot for the core course (i.e. where it is a programme-specific activity). Scheduling additional learning activities in this way will mean that they should not clash with formal teaching on other courses.

There are a handful of courses, however, that plan to run additional learning activities that will take longer to deliver than the length of the corresponding lecture or class/seminar slot (e.g. film screenings/discussions). In such cases, the activity will need to be truly 'additional', in the sense that a student will not be disadvantaged in assessment if she/he has to miss it owing to a clash with formal teaching.

## EXAMS

**9. Which courses will be examined in Lent Term Week 0 2016?**

The list of courses that will be examined in LT0 next year can be found [here](#).

**10. When will the LT0 2016 exam schedule be available?**

30 November 2015

**11. If I fail/bad fail or defer a LT0 exam, can I re-sit or make the deferred attempt in the Summer Term?**

No. The absence of autumn re-sits would make it inequitable for students who fail LT0 exams to re-sit in the Summer Term (i.e. because students who fail in Summer Term have no equally proximate re-sit opportunity). School regulations have been amended to clarify that re-sits or deferred attempts can only be made in the equivalent exam period the following year.

The only exception to this rule will be in the 2015-16 transitional year, e.g. if a student fails, bad fails or defers a ST 2015 exam in one of the courses that from 2015-16 will be examined in LT0, she/he will normally be expected to re-sit or make the deferred attempt in LT0 2016.

**12. What if I miss a LT0 exam? Will I still be able to progress?**

You will receive a '0 Incomplete' or '0 Absent' mark for the course in question, depending on whether the exam is the sole piece of summative assessment for the course. If you are on a degree programme (i.e. not a General Course student), progression will depend on your overall results at the end of the year, to which the normal progression rules will apply,

e.g. an undergraduate student may progress to the next year of his/her programme if she/he is carrying no more than 1.0 failed units.

## **INFORMATION**

### **13. How can I find out more information about how the extra term-time week will be used on the courses I want to take?**

Departments have been asked to develop course-level reading week plans. Your department will communicate with you about these plans.

For further information on any of the points above, or for any questions that are not covered, please contact Mark Thomson ([m.t.thomson@lse.ac.uk](mailto:m.t.thomson@lse.ac.uk), x6114).

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