



Frequently Asked Questions

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General

What is LSE CHOICE?

LSE CHOICE stands for:

LSE **C**hallenge
 LSE **H**igher
 LSE **O**ppportunity
 LSE **I**nterment
 LSE **C**ommitment
 LSE **E**xcellence

CHOICE is an enrichment scheme aimed at identifying **the most talented Year 12 students from London state schools and colleges** and giving them the tools they need to successfully apply to LSE and other competitive universities.

LSE CHOICE aims to recruit up to 180 high-achieving students per year from London state schools, who meet our eligibility criteria.

There are two main elements to the scheme: a week-long Summer School and 16 Saturday morning masterclasses. Participants study one of the following five subjects:

- Economics
- Government & Politics
- History
- Maths
- Sociology

Who is LSE CHOICE for?

LSE CHOICE has 180 places available for students in London. To be eligible students must:

- Attend a state school or college in London (preference is given to applicants attending schools/colleges performing below the national average or with FSM at 35% or above as defined in the DfE Performance Tables)
- Have an excellent GCSE profile of mainly A*-B grades at GCSE and be expected to achieve final A Level grades similar to the usual standard offer of their chosen LSE course.

The scheme is aimed at Year 12 students who have the potential, academic ability and strong work ethic required to gain a place at a highly selective university such as LSE.

How long does the scheme last?

LSE CHOICE runs from August after the end of Year 12 to March half-way through Year 13.

What key dates do I need to know?

Applications

Applications for the 2019-20 scheme open in on the **21st January 2019**

Applications close on **10 March 2019**

Applicants will be notified if they have been successful by **mid June 2019**

Launch

Successful applicants will be invited to attend a **launch event** with their parents/carers on the **evening of Thursday 9 August 2019**.

Summer School

The Summer School runs from **Monday 19 – Friday 23 August 2019**, from 9am-4pm each day.

Saturday Masterclasses

The 16 Saturday masterclasses are scheduled for the dates below. Students are expected to be in attendance at LSE from 9:45am-12pm on each of these dates.

Saturday Masterclass 1	21/09/2019
Saturday Masterclass 2	28/09/2019
Saturday Masterclass 3	05/10/2019
Saturday Masterclass 4	12/10/2019
Saturday Masterclass 5	02/11/2019
Saturday Masterclass 6	09/11/2019
Saturday Masterclass 7	16/11/2019
Saturday Masterclass 8	23/11/2019
Saturday Masterclass 9	30/11/2019
Saturday Masterclass 10	07/12/2019
Saturday Masterclass 11	18/01/2020
Saturday Masterclass 12	25/01/2020
Saturday Masterclass 13	01/02/2020
Saturday Masterclass 14	08/02/2020
Saturday Masterclass 15	29/02/2020
Saturday Masterclass 16	07/03/2020

Traditionally, a graduation ceremony is held immediately after the last Saturday session to which parents/carers are also invited.

What is the level of commitment involved?

Once participants have accepted their place on the scheme they are expected to attend all five days of the Summer School and to achieve 90% attendance at the Saturday masterclasses. We understand that there may be occasions where you will need to miss a session due to illness or other commitments. In these cases we ask that you notify us as early as possible.

What is the structure of the Summer School and Saturday masterclasses?

Summer School

The non-residential Summer School runs from 9am-4pm, Monday-Friday for one week during August, and includes a mixture of:

- Academic lectures and classes in your subject
- Talks and workshops on university applications and personal statements
- A trip off-campus
- Talks on careers and student finance
- Group project work

Saturday masterclasses

The Saturday masterclasses take place from 10am-12pm at LSE and comprise lessons and discussions on a variety of subject-related topics delivered by experienced teachers.

Participants are issued with an LSE Student ID Card which enables them to use the LSE Library in the same way as LSE Students.

There is also an opportunity to attend further personal statement and study skills sessions.

Do I have to attend both the Summer School and the Saturday masterclasses?

Offers to join LSE CHOICE are made on the basis that participants will attend the full programme, including both the Summer School and Saturday masterclasses. Whilst we understand that other commitments and illness may sometimes prevent participants from attending all sessions, we do expect a high level of attendance and punctuality and reserve the right to remove participants with a particularly poor record from the scheme.

Application process

What are the eligibility and entry requirements?

In order to qualify, applicants must:

- Attend a state school or college in London (preference is given to applicants attending schools/colleges performing below the national average or with FSM at 35% or above as defined in the DfE Performance Tables)
- Have an excellent GCSE profile of mainly A*-B grades at GCSE and be expected to achieve final A Level grades similar to the usual standard offer of their chosen LSE course.

We will give priority to applicants in the following groups:

- Looked-after children, care experienced, or estranged from their family
- Have caring responsibilities for family members
- Have a disability

- Eligible for free school meals and/or pupil premium now or in the last six years
- Living in an area of low progression to higher education (as defined by POLAR3 quintile 1)
- No parental experience of higher education
- Parents/carers working in low socio-economic categories and/or on receipt of means tested benefits
- From a Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller community
- Forced migrants (accompanied or unaccompanied) including refugees, asylum seekers, unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC), persons granted humanitarian protection and limited / discretionary leave to remain and stateless persons.
- From Acorn groups LMOPQ as determined by post-code
- From Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) or Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintiles 1 or 2
- From a socio-economic or ethnic background currently under-represented at highly selective universities such as LSE; especially Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and white working class.
- Meeting one or more criteria above and attending a school/college that is performing below national average and/or has a high proportion of students eligible for free school meals.

We review all applications in a holistic manner and whilst we prioritise students who meet the above criteria we will consider all the information contained in an application. We therefore encourage applicants to include any additional information in the application. Where teachers are required to provide a reference as part of the application process we request that this includes as much contextual information as possible to support us in our selection process.

How can I apply?

Applications are online and can be accessed via our website – www.lse.ac.uk/LseChoice.

Or at the following link: <https://lseportal.force.com/wideningparticipation>

Alternatively, you can email us at ard.lsechoice@lse.ac.uk.

When do applications open?

Applications will open on the 21st January and will remain open until Sunday 10 March 2019.

When will I know if I have been successful?

We will aim to contact all applicants in mid-June to confirm whether or not they have been successful.

How competitive is the scheme?

In 2018 we received over 400 applications for 180 places, so LSE CHOICE is a competitive scheme. Please ensure you include all relevant information on your application form and answer the

questions as fully as possible in order to help us make the most informed decisions possible.

Do you operate a waiting list?

We may place a proportion of applicants on a waiting list (you will be notified if this is the case). We will get in touch with you directly if a place subsequently becomes available.

I have a medical condition/disability. Can I still apply?

Absolutely. We welcome applications from all students who meet the programme criteria, regardless of factors such as disability, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or personal circumstances.

Teaching

Will I get to study my first choice subject?

You will have the opportunity to specify a first and second choice subject 'stream' when you apply. We always aim to allocate participants their first choice where possible, but in some cases participants may be allocated their second choice.

If I don't like the subject stream I am placed in, can I change to a different stream?

As places on LSE CHOICE are limited, we are unfortunately unable to allow participants to switch between different streams.

Financial

Do I have to pay to be on LSE CHOICE?

No – LSE CHOICE is completely free to attend.

I am from a low-income family. Is there any help available to cover travel and attendance costs?

We reimburse reasonable travel expenses for the week of the Summer School – all we need to see is a copy of your journey history. We also provide a bursary payment of £20 for each Saturday masterclass you attend (which includes a contribution towards your travel costs).

When can I expect to receive my Summer School travel expenses and Saturday masterclass bursary payments?

Provided we receive the correct bank details and claim form from you by the end of the Summer School, you can expect to receive your travel reimbursement at the end of September.

Participants can expect to receive bursary payments in 3-4 instalments over the course of the Saturday masterclasses, with the first around November and the last around April.

Summer School

When does the Summer School run?

The 2019-20 Summer School will take place from Monday 19– Friday 23 August 2019 and will be held at LSE.

Are food and drink provided?

Breakfast and lunch are provided free of charge each day.

Is the Summer School residential?

No – participants are expected to attend LSE from 9am-4pm each day.

What can I expect to study at the Summer School?

Participants spend time with their individual classes and also as a whole group. Sessions cover:

- Academic lectures and classes in your subject
- Talks and workshops on university applications and personal statements
- A trip off-campus
- Talks on careers and student finance
- Group project work

Does it matter if I don't know anyone else who is taking part?

Absolutely not – in fact, it's a great way to meet like-minded people!

Saturday Masterclasses

When do the Saturday masterclasses run?

The masterclasses run on 16 Saturdays between 21st September 2019 and 7th March 2020, with breaks for half term and Christmas.

If I am accepted on to the scheme but cannot attend all of the Saturday masterclasses, will I be allowed to continue on CHOICE?

We fully understand that illness, conflicting commitments and unexpected issues sometimes make it difficult to attend all the sessions, so missing the odd session will not compromise your place on the scheme (however, please note you will not receive your bursary payment for any sessions you do not attend). Please ensure you let us know in advance if you are unable to make a session to avoid a call home.

However, please note that **consistent absences** may result in us withdrawing your place and possibly offering it to someone else. Furthermore, **persistent lateness** will result in a reduction in your bursary payment.

What can I expect to study at the Saturday masterclasses? How are these different from the Summer School?

The Saturday masterclasses are designed to broaden and enrich participants' knowledge of their subject and to develop critical thinking and group discussion skills. Each masterclass focuses on a different area of your subject.

Are the Saturday masterclasses the same as A Level revision lessons?

No – the aim of the masterclasses is not to duplicate the A Level syllabus but to challenge students to think more broadly about their subject.

Will I be in the same class for the Summer School and Saturday masterclasses?

Yes – classes remain consistent throughout the whole scheme.

Applying to LSE

What kind of help with the UCAS application process can I expect to receive if I take part in LSE CHOICE?

LSE Undergraduate Admissions Specialists deliver talks on admissions and personal statements during the Summer School, and participants are also given the opportunity to register for a 1:2:1 personal statement session during the Saturday school.

Participants often find that studying their subject in greater depth really helps with deciding what they want to study at university and enables them to write a stronger personal statement. Participants also have access to the LSE Library.

Am I guaranteed a place at LSE if I take part in LSE CHOICE?

Students who participate in our Widening Participation projects (like LSE CHOICE) are automatically flagged in our admissions database, meaning that if you decided to make an application to LSE, admissions staff would be able to see that you had participated in CHOICE. This enables them to take this into consideration when assessing your application, but **does not guarantee you an offer**.

Do I have to apply to LSE if I take part in LSE CHOICE?

Whilst we do encourage participants to make an application to LSE, CHOICE is not a recruitment drive and you will not be forced to apply to LSE! The most important thing is that we are enabling you to make informed decisions about what is right for you.

What if I decide that I don't want to go to university?

Deciding whether or not to go to university is a big decision to make. Whilst CHOICE is designed to help participants make successful applications to highly selective universities like LSE, we would encourage you to continue on the scheme even if you decide university isn't for you. The combination of deeper subject exploration and study skills will be valuable regardless of what you decide to do once you leave school or college.