



## 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**nterest  
 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 year 12 students in London. To be eligible students must:

- attend a state school or college in London (preference is given to schools performing below the national average and/or has a high proportion of students eligible for free school meals)
- Have an interest in the social sciences
- Are enthusiastic and able to commit to the programme
- Have an excellent GCSE profile of mainly grades 5-9 for GCSE and be predicted A\*-B grades for A-levels.

Please see 'Application Process' section below for more detailed eligibility criteria.

### 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 2020-21 scheme open in on the **20 January 2020**

**Applications close** on **8 March 2020**

Applicants will be notified if they have been successful by **mid-June 2020**

### Launch

Successful applicants will be invited to attend a **launch event** with their parents/carers on the **evening of Thursday 6 August 2020**.

### Summer School

The Summer School runs from **Monday 24 – Friday 28 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	19/09/2020
Saturday Masterclass 2	26/09/2020
Saturday Masterclass 3	03/10/2020
Saturday Masterclass 4	10/10/2020
Saturday Masterclass 5	31/10/2020
Saturday Masterclass 6	07/11/2020
Saturday Masterclass 7	14/11/2020
Saturday Masterclass 8	21/11/2020
Saturday Masterclass 9	28/11/2020
Saturday Masterclass 10	05/12/2020
Saturday Masterclass 11	16/01/2021
Saturday Masterclass 12	23/01/2021
Saturday Masterclass 13	30/01/2021
Saturday Masterclass 14	06/02/2021
Saturday Masterclass 15	27/02/2021
Saturday Masterclass 16	06/03/2021

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 schools performing below the national average and/or with a high proportion of students eligible for free school meals)
- Have an interest in the social sciences
- Are enthusiastic and able to commit to the programme
- Have an excellent GCSE profile of mainly grades 5-9 for GCSE and be predicted A\*-B grades for A-levels.

We will prioritise students using the following criteria:

- Family background

- Eligible for free school meals in year 11 and/or pupil premium now or in the last six years
- No parental experience of higher education (neither parent has a degree qualification)
- Parents/carers working in low socio-economic
- Classification jobs and/or on receipt of means-tested benefits
- Undertakes caring responsibilities for a family member (a 'young carer')
- Neighbourhood (three postcode measures)
  - Living in an area of low progression to higher education (as defined by POLAR4 Quintile 1 or 2)
  - From Acorn groups LMOPQ
  - From Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) or Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintiles 1 or 2.
- Specific groups underrepresented in higher education
  - From an ethnic background currently underrepresented at highly selective Universities like the LSE; especially Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Pakistani.
  - From a white working class background
  - From a gypsy, roma or traveller community
  - Young people who are care experienced or estranged from their family
  - 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
  - Children of military families

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.

### How can I apply?

Applications are online and can be accessed via our website – [www.lse.ac.uk/LseChoice](http://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](mailto:ard.lsechoice@lse.ac.uk).

### When do applications open?

Applications will open on the 20 January and will remain open until Sunday 8 March 2020.

### 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 2019 we received over 500 applications for 180 places. 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 should 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 24– Friday 28 August 2020 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 19 September 2020 and 6 March 2021, with breaks for half-terms 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 one-to-one personal statement session.

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 welcome 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 knowledge and skills you gain will be valuable, regardless of what you decide to do once you leave school or college.