



Department of
Social Policy



Department of Social Policy

Undergraduate and Postgraduate course brochure 2026/27



lse.ac.uk/social-policy



Welcome

This guide is designed to provide you with information to assist you in your course selections. It will provide you with additional information as to the content of optional courses, along with details of assessment methods and teaching terms.

This information is intended as a guide only, is not exhaustive and is subject to change. The School's online course guides should be consulted for the most up to date information.

The number of courses required to be taken as a part of your programme and the number of options you have available to you to choose at your discretion are detailed in your relevant programme regulations.

You can find the online course guides and confirmation of your programme regulations using the School Calendar: lse.ac.uk/resources/calendar.

Details of teaching terms can be found using the online timetable, which is updated for the next academic year during the preceding summer:

info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/timetables



Undergraduate course summary

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNIT	TEACHING TERM	PAGE
SP100	Understanding International Social and Public Policy	1 Unit	AT/WT	4
SP101	Foundations of Social Policy Research	1 Unit	AT/WT	4
SP111	Social Economics and Policy	1 Unit	AT/WT	5
SP112	Politics of Social Policy Making	1 Unit	AT/WT	5
SP200	Comparative and International Social Policy	1 Unit	AT/WT	6
SP201	Research Methods for Social Policy	1 Unit	AT/WT	6
SP210	Development and Social Change	1 Unit	AT/WT	7
SP230	Education Policy	1 Unit	AT/WT	8
SP231	Poverty, Inequality, and Social Policy	1 Unit	AT/WT	8
SP232	Health and Social Care Policy	1 Unit	AT/WT	9
SP314	Ethnicity, Race and Social Policy	0.5 Unit	AT	9
SP315	Urbanisation and Social Policy in the Global Souths	0.5 Unit	WT	10
SP331	Sexuality, Everyday Lives and Social Policy in Developing Countries	0.5 Unit	WT	11
SP332	Social Security Policies	0.5 Unit	WT	12
SP333	NGOs, Social Policy and Development	0.5 Unit	AT	13
SP335	Migration: Current Research, Critical Approaches	0.5 Unit	AT	13
SP336	Behavioural Public Policy	0.5 Unit	WT	14
SP343	Social Policy of Climate Change	0.5 Unit	WT	14
SP372	Punishment and Penal Policy	0.5 Unit	WT	15
SP373	Policing, Security and Globalisation	0.5 Unit	AT	15
Undergraduate Academic and Professional Skills Development Programme		0 Unit	AT/WT	16

KEY

COURSE VALUE

0 Unit 0.5 Unit 1 Unit

TEACHING TERM

Autumn Term (AT) Winter Term (WT) Both Autumn and Winter (AT/WT)

Course Code SP100**Course Title** Understanding International Social and Public Policy**Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** E-exam

The course introduces students to the study and practice of international social and public policy. It considers how societies organise to address social needs, with reference to academic and policy debates across the so-called global North and South.

In the first half of the course (Autumn Term), you will develop your understanding of how welfare systems have developed and of the institutions and actors involved in different contexts across the world, including the state, market, civil society and families.

In the second half (Winter Term), you will consider the challenge of inequality and how different approaches in social policy, involving those institutions and actors, can redress or reinforce inequalities.

Course Code SP101**Course Title** Foundations of Social Policy Research**Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** Essay and Quiz

This course is concerned with two questions that are essential to the study of social and public policy. First, how do we know what policies are needed, how they are experienced and whether they are effective? And second, how is this knowledge used: how (if at all) does it feed into the policy process and improve policies and outcomes?

SP101 aims to equip students to become informed consumers of research, able to read and evaluate research outputs that use a range of approaches to address questions in social and public policy. Students will be encouraged to think critically about the way that knowledge is constructed, about the nature of expertise, and about the influence of values and positionality on knowledge production. They will learn to assess the validity of claims made on the basis of research studies that use a variety of methods. The course will also explore the way evidence is used in policy making and in public discourse.

The course provides the foundations for students to become active researchers themselves in later stages of the BSc ISPP degrees, preparing them for the second year research methods course and for their third year dissertation.

Course Code SP111**Course Title Social Economics and Policy****Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** Online Assessment

This course provides an introduction to the economics of social policy and the economics of income distribution. The course begins by introducing basic economic concepts and principles and discussing their application to different social policy areas, including childcare, education, health care, social care, housing and the environment. Key concepts include supply, demand and elasticities, externalities and market failure, private insurance and social insurance.

The course goes on to analyse the distribution of household income, poverty and inequality, labour market earnings, and unemployment. It covers concepts of human capital and productivity and looks at a range of policies, including minimum wage legislation, taxation and the social security system.

Throughout, the course emphasises the importance of understanding political goals in assessing the effectiveness or justice of economic and social policies, and seeks to encourage students to draw on both theory and empirical evidence in addressing its core questions.

The course uses charts but is taught without mathematics and is designed to be suitable both for students with no prior knowledge of economics and for those who have taken A level economics.

Course Code SP112**Course Title Politics of Social Policy Making****Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** Essay and E-exam

The course introduces students to the way in which social and public policies are developed. It aims to provide tools to understand how policies are produced through political disagreement and negotiations and how policies reflect different needs and problems voiced by groups in societies. It focuses on the ways in which policy processes and decision making can be analysed.

The course focuses on different models that are used in the analyses of policy processes in different international contexts. Furthermore, it links different analytical approaches to policy processes with political considerations of how political problems are framed and how policy goals are established. The course looks at these issues from the perspective of different actors and the ways in which different actors interact with each other within policy processes.

The course brings together critical analytical frameworks for policy processes with empirical problems (cases). The course enables students to understand that policy processes are both about understanding society and shaping it. Furthermore, it introduces students to the various policy actors, including international actors and how these actors work together within socio-political and economic constraints. It also highlights the importance of identifying and understanding the different value positions and the associated negotiations that underwrite policy processes.

Course Code SP200**Course Title** Comparative and International Social Policy**Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** Essay and E-exam

The course introduces the comparative method in social policy research as well as the main analytical approaches to understanding social policy developments in high income countries. By examining the interaction between social policy, employment and families, it explores how and why different countries pursue different paths and how this may be changing.

The course also examines social policy in middle- and low-income countries and explores the forces shaping both how policy problems are perceived and the impact of key international and supranational institutions on social policy-making in different areas of the world.

Course Code SP201**Course Title** Research Methods for Social Policy**Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** Project and take-home assessment

This course introduces students to tools used by scholars and practitioners in the study of social policy, focusing on their application to addressing research questions and policy issues in various disciplines and contexts. The course is aimed at helping students transform from a consumer to a producer of research. Through various hands-on activities, students will gain first-hand experience of a research process from start to finish, and, subsequently, build confidence and competence for conducting independent dissertation research in the third year. In the process, students will develop life-long problem-solving and analytical skills not only essential for working in the field of social policy but also highly valued by and transferable to other sectors.

This course is divided into two parts. SP201.2 in AT focuses on research design and qualitative methods. SP201.1 in WT focuses on quantitative methods, including statistical programming using STATA.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Formulate your own research question
- Propose appropriate data and methods to answer the question
- Recognise ethical issues in social research and address them in research design and conduct
- Conduct qualitative research, including collecting data from in-depth interviews, analysing the data, and writing up the results
- Apply basic statistical methods to quantitative data and interpret the results

Course Code SP210**Course Title** Development and Social Change**Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT **Assessment Method** Essay, Online Assessment and Class Participation

SP210 introduces students to the interrelationship between social and public policies with a particular emphasis on the so-called 'Global South'. It focuses on the ways in which different countries organise their policy processes and institutions to achieve their objectives in relation to inequality and poverty.

The course invites students to think about how 'development' might be considered a taken-for-granted process of 'amelioration' or a constantly negotiated process of 'transformation' in both the so-called 'Global South' and 'Global North'; how socio-economic needs are identified, focused, and addressed or ignored in different settings; who can and cannot participate in policy processes and why; and what are the historical, political and social determinants of these processes in different places.

The course is designed to link research/theory to policy and practice. In addition, it introduces students to various policy actors and the ways in which they work together within specific socio-political and economic constraints. The course rigorously links theoretical analysis with empirical enquiry and highlights the importance of identifying and understanding different value positions that underwrite policy thinking.

SP210 is taught from a Critical Development Studies (CDS) lens of analysis, primarily because CDS is concerned with analysing systemic changes needed to achieve economic, social and environmental justice (ie, non-mainstream, alternative development) in the same way that social policy interventions are intended to enhance well-being, particularly of the most marginalised in societies across the globe.



Course Code SP230**Course Title** Education Policy**Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** E-exam and Class Participation

This course provides an introduction to the main issues in educational policy. It draws on interdisciplinary research literature and has a comparative and international focus. The course aims to show how major concepts used in social policy can be applied to the study of education, for example, equality of opportunity, equity and the distribution of resources.

Issues to be addressed include: policy goals of education; historical development of education and the role of the state in provision and funding; the impact of social characteristics on educational outcomes (class, gender, ethnicity and race); education of children with special educational needs and disabilities; financing education; private schooling; privatisation and the changing role of the state; early years education; school-based education; post-compulsory education including higher education; education systems in comparative perspective and education regimes, decentralisation and devolution. Not all of these issues are covered as separate weekly topics.

The method of teaching on this course makes it more suitable for third year students. This is a particularly popular course. You are advised to apply early.

Course Code SP231**Course Title** Poverty, Inequality, and Social Policy**Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** E-exam

This course aims to introduce students to the ways that social policy scholars understand and measure poverty and inequality between groups and across an individual's life course.

The course covers poverty and inequality measurement and examines the role of the state and other institutions (markets and families) in reducing them. It analyses factors that influence poverty and inequality such as gender, age, disability, citizenship and climate change, and related policy responses, including taxation, social security, early childhood education, education, labour market policies, pensions and social care.

The course takes a national and global perspective, drawing on examples from a range of country settings – high-, middle- and low-income countries.

By the end of this course, students will have developed essential skills that will benefit them during their studies and beyond. These include the ability to critically engage with theories and evidence, communicate complex arguments clearly, interpret tables and figures critically, and work effectively both independently and collaboratively.

This course is essential for anyone interested in measuring poverty and inequality, as well as designing and evaluating social policies to address some of the most pressing challenges facing societies today.

Course Code SP232**Course Title: Health and Social Care Policy****Value** 1 Unit **Teaching Term** AT/WT**Assessment Method** Essay and E-exam

The course equips students with the concepts, tools and knowledge to understand the challenges of health and social care policy in the 21st century, in the differing contexts of the UK and other rich countries, and in low- and middle-income countries. In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, this feels more important than ever.

In the first term, we consider the fundamental aims of health and social care policy, including for example health and well-being, health inequalities by ethnicity and social class, public health and health promotion, and health as a human right. We then examine policy approaches and healthcare regimes across different country contexts, including the strengths and weaknesses of different models of healthcare financing, public and private.

In the second term, we move on to think about how to bring about change - both change in people's behaviour through regulation, 'nudge' and incentives, and change in health and social care systems, including an examination of the role played by global pharmaceutical and healthcare companies, and the potential for reform. We investigate the role that evaluations of health and social care play in shaping policy change. Finally, we turn to specific groups and needs, including for example the challenges of mental health policy, child protection, and healthcare needs of sexual minorities.

Course Code SP314**Course Title: Ethnicity, Race and Social Policy****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** Essay, E-exam, and Class Participation

The overarching theme of the course is to examine and explain the distribution of resources, opportunities and life chances of different social groups categorised by their ethnicity and race, while also considering how individual experience is mediated through other dimensions of identity such as social class, gender, and faith/religion.

The course proceeds through conceptualising core notions of race, ethnicity, racism, discrimination, before examining questions around migration, citizenship, and belonging, integration, multiculturalism, and interculturalism. It then moves to examining inequalities in key social policy domains (settlement and housing, education, employment, and criminal justice) and assesses different policy approaches to ameliorate racialised inequalities, including positive action, affirmative action, diversity approaches, cultural competence/sensitivity/intelligence, and minority-only service provision. It uses an array of case studies in lectures and in classes/ readings from all regions of the world with a mix of high, middle, and low-income contexts.

Course Code SP315

Course Title: Urbanisation and Social Policy in the Global Souths

Value 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT

Assessment Method Essay and Class Participation

The course critically explores the challenges and opportunities that urbanisation and urbanism (urban transformations) pose in the social, spatial, cultural, economic, institutional and political realms in the urban Global Souths. A plurality of theoretical and conceptual perspectives underpinning each topic area, including policies and planning practices, are explored each week.

Some of the themes explored in the course are, urbanisation, urbanism and social change, theories of urbanisation and urban change, internal migration, gender and age - the rural-urban interface, urban poverty, livelihoods and capabilities, urban labour markets and challenges for social protection, urban housing and tenure, urban basic services, urban governance, and urban social movements and collective action. Cross-cutting themes such as gender and the role of civil society are integrated across the course.

Prospective students must commit themselves to full participation in all aspects of the course, namely attend all lectures and classes. Students are required to read before the lecture, as well as read and discuss the essential readings for the classes. Emphasis is also placed on students connecting given topics and related readings to empirical realities and current events.



Course Code SP331**Course Title** Sexuality, Everyday Lives and Social Policy in Developing Countries**Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT **Assessment Method** Policy Brief

This course aims to analyse and understand the way social policies deploy sexuality categories in regulating everyday life in developing countries, both in its public and private manifestations.

Sexuality is a central part of human experience. Institutions created to deal with human life/wellbeing have considered sexuality as one of the reference points from which to regulate social relations. Perceptions on sexuality are formed in the intersection of socio-political, historical processes and everyday practises in particular societies. Particular perceptions of sexuality in turn influence the way people negotiate access to resources to address their well-being.

In some central areas of social policy sexuality is used as one of the sorting mechanisms (in addition to gender, race among various other categories) to establish entitlements for resources (social, political and economic). In this regard social policy is both informed by perceptions on sexuality and in turn social policy acts as a mechanism of social reproduction of these perspectives impacting people's lives. And while globally high profile cases and rights abuses related to sexuality are important, a narrow global policy focus on these overlooks how more embedded and diverse social policy practices related to sexuality are impacting people's lives in many developing countries. This course aims to explore sexuality and its importance for social policy for developing countries. It aims to consider social policy and particular interventions in their historical contexts, as a way of unpacking the construction of sexuality in the intersection of colonialism, gender, race, class and international policy frameworks in developing countries.

The course also aims to interrogate the relationship between particular social policy prescriptions developed in most industrialised welfare societies and the way some of these are transferred to developing countries. The major concern of the analysis is to bring out the perceptions of sexuality that underwrite these policies and how these interact with existing perceptions of sexualities and their performances (identities, desires and bodily practices) in multiple developing country contexts. These policy areas include, among others, discussions of rights, entitlements, citizenship, same-sex marriage, sexually transmitted disease, HIV/AIDS, family policies, migration/border controls, criminality and employment-related policies.

This course is only available to third year undergraduate students.

Course Code SP332**Course Title** Social Security Policies**Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT **Assessment Method** Essay

The course analyses the purpose, design and impact of social security policies, meaning policies that protect and support household income at times when income from the labour market does not suffice. The need for social security arises both from demographic factors that affect nearly everyone during their life course – childhood, parenthood, old age – and from risk factors that end up affecting only some – unemployment, sickness and disability.

The course takes a comparative approach, examining differences in the design of social security policies across welfare regimes and drawing on examples from different countries. Students will develop an understanding of the challenges and trade-offs that arise in designing social security policies to meet multiple goals, will further their knowledge about the ways systems function in practice, and will develop the tools for assessing the structure and effectiveness of social security in any given country. The course will also consider how successfully social security systems are adapting to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, including an ageing population, migration, and the changing nature of employment brought about by rapid technological change.

The course will also look at the role of social security in protecting household incomes in times of Crisis, such as the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Most of the examples in the lectures and readings relate to higher- and middle-income countries, but many of the issues covered are also relevant in countries where social security systems are less developed. Students will be encouraged to further their understanding of social security in their country of origin, or another country of their choice, and to draw on this knowledge in classes.

This course is only available to third year undergraduate students.



Course Code SP333**Course Title** NGOs, Social Policy and Development**Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** Essay and Class Participation

While the study of social and public policy has traditionally been concerned with actions taken by governments, the wider non-governmental sector is increasingly recognised as playing a key role. This course focuses on both international and local “non-governmental organisations” (NGOs) that have emerged around the world to address a wide range of social, political and environmental concerns. It offers a critical perspective on NGOs in the context of development and social policy, covering both theoretical and policy issues. The focus is on two main inter-related themes: how NGOs serve as vehicles through which citizens organise, and how NGOs are instruments through which states, businesses and funding agencies pursue their interests.

Most of the examples in the lectures and the readings will relate to the Global South, but many of the issues covered are also relevant in rich industrialised countries. Topics covered include definitions and history of NGOs; the changing policy contexts in which development NGOs operate; conceptual debates around “civil society” and third sector; competing theoretical perspectives on NGOs; the domestic, international and global dimensions of non-governmental action; shifting relationships with other policy actors; service delivery and advocacy roles; international humanitarianism; challenges of NGO legitimacy and accountability; resource dilemmas; voluntarism and volunteering; and NGO organisational growth and change.

Course Code SP335**Course Title** Migration: Current research, critical approaches**Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** Essay

This interdisciplinary course addresses contemporary global migration issues with reference to both developing and developed country contexts, and to different patterns and forms of migration. The course examines the relationship between migration and social and public policies, including the implications for how migrants and migration are conceptualised, for inequalities in the movement of people, for welfare systems, and for the impacts of migration in countries of origin and destination. Teaching across the course integrates critical theoretical approaches to migration with applications using different migration-related research methods.

Topics covered include: Global migration trends and processes; conceptualisations of migration and migrants; drivers of migration; citizenship and migration; civil society and migration; transnationalism, welfare and migration; climate and migration; gender and migration; and the implications of migration for policies and societies in both sending and receiving countries.

This course is only available to third year undergraduates.

Course Code SP336**Course Title Behavioural Public Policy****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay

The application of behavioural economics and behavioural science to public policy issues has been, and continues to be, a major theme in the policy discourse internationally. This course offers students a thorough grounding in the theory and findings that define behavioural economics, from the major violations of standard economic theory to prospect theory and the theories of human motivation. The course goes on to consider the conceptual policy frameworks that have been informed by behavioural economics, with examples – so called nudge, shove and budge policies – illustrated so as to highlight how these frameworks are applied in practice. Students will also be exposed to the different behavioural-informed schools of thought that have prescribed divergent paths for public sector governance.

The course should interest anyone who is concerned with issues pertaining to social and public policy across any sector in any country. The literature consulted in this area is necessarily multidisciplinary, principally encompassing economics, psychology, political science, policy and ethics.

Course Code SP343**Course Title Social Policy of Climate Change****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** E-exam

Climate change is one of the world's most pressing problems with significant implications for human's welfare and wellbeing both now and in the future. Swift and significant policy action is therefore necessary to both adapt to and mitigate climate change.

This course examines the social and public policy of climate change, from both a domestic and international perspective, drawing on research from disciplines such as economics, political science, public policy, and social policy. In doing so, the course is divided in to three parts:

First, the course documents the nature of the problem at hand by exploring the measurement of climate change and its possible human and societal impacts.

Second, we focus on policy responses to climate change, examining how policy is formulated and implemented at both the domestic and international level.

Finally, the course focuses on applying these insights and tools to issues such as economic development, migration, non-governmental organisations, and political violence.

In completing the course students will have a fuller understanding of the societal impacts of climate change and policy responses, with an eye to communicating scientific evidence to an audience of academics, policymakers, and stakeholders.

Course Code SP372**Course Title Punishment and Penal Policy****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay

This third-year course will run as a half-unit option, and will explore punishment and penal policy from a range of comparative perspectives. Focusing on Anglophone jurisdictions and the rest of the world in equal measure, the course will consider in depth a wide variety of historical and international comparative studies of punishment and penal policy, both from the field of criminology and beyond. In so doing, the course will critically examine theoretical frameworks and empirical research on such issues as:

- the forms state punishment has assumed over time and in different national and regional contexts;
- the array and relative significance of the reasons why punishment and penal policy may develop, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, in particular ways at given historical junctures and in different jurisdictions;
- the relationship between political systems and punishment, with particular reference to processes of democratisation;
- the links between penal policy and different forms of economic organisation, from preindustrial capitalism to welfare capitalism and neoliberalism; and
- the role of punishment in society as explained through psychosocial theories and research.

This course is only available to third year undergraduate students.

Course Code SP373**Course Title Policing, Security and Globalisation****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** Essay and presentation

This course focuses on global developments in modern policing, and on the issues and challenges those developments implicate. The course applies an international and comparative lens to study policing's role and function in the context of contemporary debates about security and globalisation: among other topics, these include the policing of transitional societies and emergent democracies, the privatisation of policing, policing public order, and the effects of social movements — such as the demand to defund the police — that call for radical change in policing and the provision of security.

Undergraduate Academic and Professional Skills Development Programme

The Academic and Professional Skills Development Course is made up of a series of workshops and events designed to support our students with their academic studies and professional futures. The programme encourages students to connect what they learn during their time at LSE with the opportunities and requirements of the professional world.

Some of the professional skills workshops and all of the networking events are also open to Department of Social Policy undergraduate students in years 2 and 3. Please check the Moodle course page for information.

The course runs during Autumn and Winter Terms. It comprises of:

Academic skills workshops provide first year students with study skills training to support them at the start of their academic careers and help them get the most out of their courses and programme. These sessions are compulsory and timetabled under SP100.

Professional skills workshops introduce students in all years to the skills needed to support them to plan successfully for their future careers and thrive after they leave LSE.

Networking events provide students in all years with the opportunity to interact with our alumni students and develop their knowledge of the variety of industries they work in.

Alumni Mentoring Scheme

The Alumni Mentoring Scheme gives *second and third year students* an opportunity to apply to be matched with a mentor to support them with the transition from university to the world of work/further education. Having a mentor gives students the opportunity to: gain an insight into professional life; be supported to take charge of their futures; and learn from someone who has been in their shoes. Students can expect to have three forty-five-minute meetings with their mentor. Any contact beyond this is at the mentor's discretion. Mentors are Social Policy alumni students working in a variety of professional areas. While we aim to match students to mentors as closely as possible, we are not always able to match students to mentors working in areas they aspire to work in. Further information on the scheme and application process is sent to students during the Autumn Term.

Postgraduate courses

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNIT	TEACHING TERM	PAGE
SP400	International Social and Public Policy	0.5 Unit	AT	19
SP401	Understanding Policy Research	0.5 Unit	AT	19
SP403	Academic and Professional Skills Development for Social Policy	0 Unit	AT/WT	20
SP410	Migration: Current Research, Critical Approaches	0.5 Unit	AT	21
SP411	Social Policy and Development	0.5 Unit	AT	21
SP412	Non-Governmental Organisations, Social Policy and Development	0.5 Unit	AT	22
SP414	Racial Inequalities and Social Policies	0.5 Unit	AT	22
SP415	Urbanisation and Social Policy in the Global Souths	0.5 Unit	WT	23
SP417	Sexuality, Everyday Lives and Social Policy in Developing Countries	0.5 Unit	WT	23
SP418	Global Social Policy and International Organisations	0.5 Unit	WT	24
SP419	Social Movements, Activism, and Social Policy	0.5 Unit	WT	24
SP420	Understanding Policy Research (Advanced)	0.5 Unit	WT	25
SP430	Social Security Policies	0.5 Unit	WT	26

KEY

COURSE VALUE

0 Unit
 0.5 Unit
 1 Unit

TEACHING TERM

Autumn Term (AT)
 Winter Term (WT)
 Both Autumn and Winter (AT/WT)

Postgraduate course convenors, see p31

[Click here](#) to view the **postgraduate course guides online**

Postgraduate courses continued...

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNIT	TEACHING TERM	PAGE
SP432	Education Policy and Reform	0.5 Unit	AT	27
SP434	Behavioural Public Policy	0.5 Unit	WT	27
SP441	Social Policy and the Welfare State	0.5 Unit	WT	28
SP443	Social Policy of Climate Change	0.5 Unit	WT	29
SP444	Educational Inequality in the Global South	0.5 Unit	WT	30
SP445	Migration and Inequality	0.5 Unit	WT	30
SP473	Policing, Security and Globalisation	0.5 Unit	AT	31
SP475	Riots, Disorder, and Urban Violence	0.5 Unit	AT	31
SP476	Punishment and Penal Policy	0.5 Unit	WT	32
SP477	Crime, Justice & Social Policy	0.5 Unit	AT	33
SP480	Technology, Crime and Criminal Justice	0.5 Unit	WT	33

KEY

COURSE VALUE

0 Unit
 0.5 Unit
 1 Unit

TEACHING TERM

Autumn Term (AT)
 Winter Term (WT)
 Both Autumn and Winter (AT/WT)

Postgraduate course convenors, see p31

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Course Code SP400**Course Title International Social and Public Policy****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** E-exam

This course engages with the social and public policy challenges facing states and citizens across the world.

It introduces students to core issues, concepts, actors and debates shaping our understanding of social and public policy, its drivers and impacts. It outlines the questions raised by efforts to ensure a healthy, educated and productive population, to protect those without other means of support, and to reduce inequalities of eg, gender, class, and ethnicity. It discusses diverse policy approaches to these issues, their ideological underpinnings, and the varying configurations of actors involved in the policy process – the state, the market, civil society, the family, and international organisations.

The course explores applications to a range of policy domains, such as education, urbanisation, health, family, social care, migration, inequality and redistribution, and to varied country contexts. The course is informed by an international and comparative approach that considers both rich and poor country contexts and international dimensions and locates these within a historical understanding of both national and global processes.

Course Code SP401**Course Title Understanding Policy Research****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** E-exam

This course aims to provide an understanding of issues associated with the research process, in the context of the MSc in International Social and Public Policy. The course includes an examination of philosophical issues underpinning research methods in social policy; the place of different research methods (qualitative and quantitative) in international social and public policy; the use of research; and the role of evidence in informing social and public policy.

This is not a “how to” methods course. Instead, students will be equipped to become critical readers and users of research. Students will gain an understanding of the role of research in the policy process, and of the philosophical underpinnings of different approaches to ISPP research, both quantitative and qualitative; they will scrutinise which research designs are appropriate for different kinds of policy investigation; and learn to critique the validity of the implications for policy drawn by researchers, given the methods they have used.

Course Code SP403**Course Title** Academic and Professional Skills Development for Social Policy**Value** 0 Unit **Teaching Term** AT and WT**Assessment Method** This course is non-credit bearing, and there is no formal assessment.

The Academic and Professional Skills Development Course is made up of a series of workshops and events designed to support our students with their academic studies and professional futures. The course encourages students to connect what they learn during their time at LSE with the opportunities and requirements of the professional world.

This course is open to Department of Social Policy taught postgraduates only. It is not available as an outside option. It is non-credit bearing and there is no formal assessment.

All Social Policy MSc students are encouraged to select this course in addition to the credit bearing courses which make up their degree.

**The course runs during Autumn and Winter Terms.
It comprises of:**

Academic skills workshops provide students with study skills training to support them at the start of their academic careers at LSE and help them get the most out of their courses and programme. These sessions are timetabled under SP403.

Professional skills workshops introduce students to the skills needed to support them to plan successfully for their future careers and thrive after they leave LSE. These sessions are timetabled under SP403.

Alumni events provide opportunities to interact with our alumni students and develop knowledge of the variety of industries they work in.

Course Code SP410**Course Title Migration: Current Research, Critical Approaches****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** E-exam

This interdisciplinary course addresses contemporary global migration issues with reference to both developing and developed country contexts, and to different patterns and forms of migration. The course examines the relationship between migration and social and public policies, including the implications for how migrants and migration are conceptualised, for inequalities in the movement of people, for welfare systems, and for the impacts of migration in countries of origin and destination. Teaching across the course integrates critical theoretical approaches to migration with applications using different migration-related research methods.

Topics covered include: global migration trends and processes; conceptualisations of migration and different types of migrant; drivers of migration, and migrant motivations; citizenship; transnationalism; welfare and migration; gender and migration; and the implications of migration for policies and societies in both sending and receiving countries.

SP410 is a compulsory course on the ISPP (Migration) specialism.

Course Code SP411**Course Title Social Policy and Development****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** Essay, E-exam, and Class Participation

This course provides the analytical tools needed to understand and critically evaluate the key practical challenges of social development. A wide range of development contexts will be discussed using empirical research and case studies.

Key themes include: linking social policy theory, implementation and practice; race and development; intersectionality and gender; policy actors, regulation and decentralisation, civil society, markets and development, participation; informality; and conflict and development. Some of these themes are treated as cross-cutting issues as appropriate.

SP411 is a compulsory course on the ISPP (Development) specialism.

Course Code SP412

Course Title Non-Governmental Organisations,
Social Policy and Development

Value 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT

Assessment Method Essay, E-exam, and Class Participation

The course focuses on the specialised field of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) within the field of social policy and development, and considers theoretical and policy issues.

Main topics include the history and theory of NGOs; the changing policy contexts in which NGOs operate; NGO service delivery and advocacy roles in policy; NGO relationships with other institutional actors including government, donors and private sector; challenges of NGO effectiveness and accountability; NGO organisational growth and change; and conceptual debates around civil society, social capital, social movements and globalisation.

SP412 is a compulsory course on the ISPP (NGOs) specialism.

Course Code SP414

Course Title Racial Inequalities and Social Policies

Value 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT

Assessment Method Essay, E-exam, and Class Participation

This course looks at: History of the Modern Idea of Race; Disciplinary Frameworks; Citizenship and Migration; Theorising Multiculturalism; Ethnic Settlement; Education; Employment and Poverty; Discrimination and the Role of the State I: Positive and Affirmative Action; Criminalisation and Incarceration; Discrimination and the Role of the State II: Legislative Frameworks, Diversity Management, and Representative Democracy.

Course Code SP415**Course Title Urbanisation and Social Policy in the Global Souths****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Project, Essay and Class Participation

The course critically explores the challenges and opportunities that urbanisation and urban transformations pose in the social, spatial, economic, institutional and political realms in the urban Global South. A plurality of theoretical and conceptual perspectives informing contemporary policies and planning practices are explored each week.

Some of the themes explored in the course are, urbanisation, urbanism and social change, theories of urbanisation and urban change, internal migration and the rural-urban interface, urban poverty and livelihoods, urban labour markets and livelihoods, urban housing and tenure, urban basic services, urban governance, and urban social movements and collective action. Cross-cutting themes such as gender and the role of civil society are also explored.

Prospective students must be willing to commit themselves to full participation in all aspects of the course, including an element of art. They will be required to read selected readings before the lecture, read and discuss the essential readings for the weekly seminars, and read more widely and actively participate in the seminars. This course seeks a weekly commitment from students to undertake a non-assessed activity entitled My_City, a short desk-based piece of research and writing that links key issues emerging from the lecture to a city of their choice with the view to meeting one of the pedagogical aims of this course, namely, the link between theory and policy/practice.

Course Code SP417**Course Title Sexuality, Everyday Lives and Social Policy in Developing Countries****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay

This course aims to analyse and understand the way social policies deploy sexuality categories in regulating everyday life in developing countries, both in its public and private manifestations. It aims to consider social policy and particular interventions in their historical contexts, as a way of unpacking the construction of sexuality in the intersection of colonialism, gender, race, class and international policy frameworks in developing countries.

The course also aims to interrogate the relationship between particular social policy prescriptions developed in most industrialised welfare societies and the way some of these are transferred to developing countries. The major concern of the analysis is to bring out the perceptions of sexuality that underwrite these policies and how these interact with existing perceptions of sexualities and their performances (identities, desires and bodily practices) in multiple developing country contexts. These policy areas include, among others, discussions of rights, entitlements, citizenship, same-sex marriage, sexually transmitted disease, HIV/AIDS, family policies, migration/border controls, criminality and employment-related policies.

Course Code SP418**Course Title Global Social Policy and International Organisations****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** E-exam and Class Participation

What do the, the Catholic Church, Bill and Melissa Gates, UNICEF and the World Bank have in common? They are in one way or another involved in social policy that goes beyond the nation state. Policy could be seen as the exercise of political power and this political power has often been concentrated within the nation state. Far from the traditional study of policy this includes the effect of globalisation on a variety of actors in social policy. This course examines how globalisation has changed the way we perceive areas such as health, education, social care and other areas that concern social citizenship. The course examines the international policy environment, particularly intergovernmental organisations; bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which influence the social policy environment in developing countries. The impact of the inter-governmental policy process on policy outcomes is examined. The same goes for religious groups, social movements and corporations that all play a role in global social policy. The main goal of the course is not only to open up the understanding of social policy and globalisation but also to show the complexity of goals and actors of social policy. It is expected that the students will devote considerable time to reading and preparing for the seminars.

Course Code SP419**Course Title Social Movements, Activism and Social Policy****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay, E-exam, and Class Participation

The course begins by examining theories of social movements, collective action, and contentious politics. It then moves on to examine how social movements engage with the policy process and the ways in which social movement activism informs social policy formulation and implementation. It examines the nature, past and present roles of social movements and their potential capacity in shaping social policy in developed and developing countries, and in democratic, hybrid, or authoritarian regimes. The course covers theoretical arguments and examines empirical examples and case studies.

The course examines the following topics: the role and impact of social movement activism in identifying and meeting needs; the role of grassroots mobilisations and solidarity; how movements are affected by regulatory frameworks; how and when movements achieve their objectives; movements relations with other actors (including, NGOs, trade unions, political parties, etc.); populism.

The course considers the development, transformation, autonomy, interdependence, and probity of social movements. It draws on examples of social movements in different periods, countries, and areas of activity to examine and analyse how change happens and the obstacles to change.

The course also offers an accompanying film programme with four film screenings and discussions in LT. The remaining films are for students to watch in their own time.

Course Code SP420**Course Title** Understanding Policy Research (Advanced)**Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay

The course equips you with transferable quantitative and qualitative research design skills, including the design of policy evaluations, and an in-depth understanding of the role of different types of research in the policy-making process. It is an advanced course and students are expected to already have a grasp of basic research design principles and their application to social and public policy, for example as covered in MY400 Fundamentals of Research Design or SP401 Understanding Policy Research, both of which run in the MT, although these courses are not a formal pre-requisite. Lectures are given by leading academics engaged in research using the methods under consideration, some of which has achieved substantial policy impact. Students are encouraged to critically assess applications of complex research methods to contemporary national and international social and public policy questions. Topics may include uses of: mixed methods policy evaluation; participatory research; researching organisations (including organisational anthropology); longitudinal and life history analysis; micro-simulation techniques; systematic reviews, meta-analysis and meta-ethnographies; and small area, geographical and internationally comparative research. The relationship between research and policymaking is a theme that runs throughout the course.

SP420 is a compulsory course on the ISPP (Research) specialism.



Course Code SP430

Course Title Social Security Policies

Value 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT **Assessment Method** Essay

The course analyses the purposes, design and impact of social security policies, meaning policies that protect and support household income at times when income from the labour market does not suffice. The need for social security arises both from demographic factors that affect nearly everyone during their life course – childhood, parenthood, old age – and from risk factors that will end up affecting only some – unemployment, sickness and disability.

The course takes a comparative approach, examining differences in the design of social security policies across welfare regimes and drawing on examples from different countries. Students will develop an understanding of the challenges and trade-offs that arise in designing social security policies to meet multiple goals, will further their knowledge about the ways systems function in practice, and will develop the tools for assessing the structure and effectiveness of social security in any given country.

The course will also look at the role of social security in protecting household incomes in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The course will also consider how successfully social security systems are adapting to meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century, including an ageing population, migration, and the changing nature of employment brought about by rapid technological change.

Most of the examples in the lectures and readings relate to higher- and middle-income countries, but the course aims to be of interest and relevance to students from all countries. Students will be encouraged to further their understanding of social security in their country of origin, or another country of their choice, and to draw on this knowledge in classes.

Course Code SP432**Course Title Racial Inequalities and Social Policies****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** E-exam

This course considers education policy, reform and financing across a range of countries. It uses concepts and tools from a number of academic disciplines – social policy, sociology, economics, politics and philosophy – to scrutinise education. Throughout the course, there is particular focus on equity, social justice and the distribution of resources.

Issues to be addressed include: the impact of social characteristics on educational outcomes (class, gender and race and ethnicity, with a cross-cutting focus on special educational needs and ideas of “inclusion”) and related policy reforms; accountability and market-oriented reforms in education; privatisation and the changing role of the state; power and the politics of educational policy making; global policy transfer in education; early years education; school-based education and post-compulsory education; education systems in comparative perspective. Not all of these issues are covered as separate weekly topics – some are ‘cross-cutting’ and will be discussed throughout the course.

Course Code SP434**Course Title Behavioural Public Policy****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** ???

The course explores the politics of social policy in rich democracies of the OECD world. The main analytical approaches for the cross-national analysis of welfare states are introduced, and different actors in social policy-making are studied. Empirically, the course draws on historical evidence and the transformation of contemporary welfare states, including in-depth analysis of labour market, family and education policies in Nordic countries, Continental Europe, Anglo-phone countries and East Asia..

Course Code SP441**Course Title** Social Policy and the Welfare State**Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay

The course explores the politics of social policy in rich democracies of the OECD world. The main analytical approaches for the cross-national analysis of welfare states are introduced, and different actors in social policy-making are studied. Empirically, the course draws on historical evidence and the transformation of contemporary welfare states, including in-depth analysis of labour market, family and education policies in Nordic countries, Continental Europe, Anglo-phone countries and East Asia.



Course Code SP443

Course Title The Social Policy of Climate Change

Value 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT

Assessment Method Essay

Climate change is one of the world's most pressing problems with significant implications for human's welfare and wellbeing both now and in the future. Swift and significant policy action is therefore necessary to both adapt to and mitigate climate change. This course examines the social and public policy of climate change, from both a domestic and international perspective. In doing so, the course is divided in to three parts. First, the course documents the nature of the problem at hand by exploring the measurement of climate change and its possible human and societal impacts. Second, we focus on policy responses to climate change, examining how policy is formulated and implemented at both the domestic and international level. Finally, the course focuses on applying these insights and tools to issues such as economic development, migration, non-governmental organisations, and political violence. In completing the course students will have a fuller understanding of the societal impacts of climate change and policy responses, with an eye to communicating scientific evidence to an audience of academics, policymakers, and stakeholders.



Course Code SP444**Course Title Educational Inequality in the Global South****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay & Class participation

This course explores sources of educational inequality in developing countries and the role of policies. We will examine issues and debates through an international and comparative lens, drawing on theories and evidence from multidisciplinary research.

The course starts by introducing theoretical perspectives and conceptual frameworks commonly used in the study of education in developing countries. Then we engage with a specific theme each week. Themes include but are not limited to free education for all, teachers and teaching, private schools, education in emergencies, etc. Specific themes might vary each year.

By the end of this course, you will be able to

1. Examine educational inequality through an international and comparative perspective and multiple theoretical frameworks.
2. Evaluate evidence and claims about education in academic literature and policy debate.
3. Propose new research and/or policy recommendations to address educational inequality in the global south

Course Code SP445**Course Title Migration and Inequality****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay

International migration is linked to inequality at both origin and destination in multiple ways, with potentially countervailing impacts. This course examines the relationship between migration and inequality by considering a) the effects of migration on inequality in the destination country (e.g. through impacts on the concentrations at the top and bottom of the distribution) and for non-migrants and immigrants; b) the effects of emigration on inequality in the origin country; and c) the implications of migration for global inequalities. It examines the ways in which migrants are selected and the implications for their outcomes at destination as well as for the origin country, the relevance of (selective) return migration for development and for exacerbating or mitigating national and international inequalities, and the role of remittance income in reducing or enhancing inequalities.

It also looks at elite migration, social mobility of migrants as mobility as a signifier of advantage as well as a consequence of disadvantage. It addresses inequality as a driver – and sometimes a consequence of migration, but also examines the ways in which certain policies or policy regimes can mitigate or enhance the relationship between migration and inequality. It draws on migration literature from sociology, social policy, political science and economics, though with a particular focus on the sociological and stratification literature.

Course Code SP473**Course Title Policing, Security and Globalisation****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** Essay and Presentation

The sub-discipline of police studies is now well-established and is flourishing. Whilst much traditional policing scholarship has focused on policing within particular societies, increasingly attention is being drawn to both international and comparative matters. Indeed, the social and economic changes associated with globalisation have affected policing as all else. This course will focus on transnational public and private policing, and on the issues and challenges raised by globalisation: from the policing of transitional societies and emergent democracies, the policing of migration, of public order, through to the study of new social movements seeking radical reform of policing and the provision of security.

Course Code SP475**Course Title Riots, Disorder and Urban Violence****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** Presentation and Essay

This course focuses on urban or collective violence, or what more colloquially tend to be referred to as “riots”. From Hong Kong and Santiago to the Gilets Jaunes in Paris and the uprisings in America after the death of George Floyd, this is a subject of great contemporary relevance.

The course will consider the various approaches that have been taken to this subject – via history, psychology and sociology – and, focusing on particular examples, the course will examine some of the core issues in the field including: the causes of riots; psychological versus sociological explanations; the role of race/ethnicity; the impact of traditional and new social media on the nature and organisation of rioting; the role and changing nature of the policing of urban disorder; and how riots might be understood both historically and comparatively. The primary means of assessment will be via a research-based essay focusing on a single “riot”.

Course Code SP476**Course Title** Punishment and Penal Policy**Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT **Assessment Method** Essay

This course runs as a half-unit option, and explores punishment and penal policy from a range of comparative perspectives. Focusing on Anglophone jurisdictions and the rest of the world in equal measure, the course considers in depth a wide variety of historical and international comparative studies of punishment and penal policy, both from the field of criminology and beyond.

In so doing, the course critically examines theoretical frameworks and empirical research on such issues as:

- the forms state punishment has assumed over time and in different national and regional contexts;
- the array and relative significance of the reasons why punishment and penal policy may develop, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, in particular ways at given historical junctures and in different jurisdictions;
- the relationship between political systems and punishment, with particular reference to processes of democratisation;
- the links between penal policy and different forms of economic organisation, from preindustrial capitalism to welfare capitalism and neoliberalism; and
- the role of punishment in society as explained through psychosocial theories and research.

Thanks to its substantive foci and broad comparative approach, the course enhances provision in the School in the field of penology (eg, the course "Explaining Punishment: Philosophy, Political Economy, Sociology" (LL4CL), taught by Professors Lacey and Ramsay in the Law Department).



Course Code SP477**Course Title Crime, Justice & Social Policy****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** AT**Assessment Method** E-exam

The course provides a detailed and critical introduction foundation to in the study of crime and criminal justice, through a focus on some of its constitutive ideas, institutions, practices, and participants. Lectures in the first half of term provide an overview of a criminological understanding of crime and deviance. Lectures in the second half of term provide an overview of a criminological understanding of justice policy. Throughout the course, particular emphasis is devoted to the historical, conceptual, and theoretical traditions that make up — and subvert — criminology's canon.

Course Code SP480**Course Title Technology, Crime and Criminal Justice****Value** 0.5 Unit **Teaching Term** WT**Assessment Method** Essay

This course runs as a half-unit option. It charts and explains in depth the multifarious relationship between technology, crime and criminal justice. Attention is paid both to ways in which technology may facilitate different forms of crime and to technology-based measures of crime control. Similarly, the course explores both the positive and negative impacts technology may have on the nature, delivery and effectiveness of criminal justice and cognate forms of state intervention. To the ends, the course brings together theoretical perspectives, concepts and empirical insights from an array of disciplinary fields (e.g., criminology, law, anthropology, history, sociology, international relations, crime science), and addresses with reference to a variety of national, transnational or international contexts such topical issues as:

- cyber-crime and cyber-security;
- technology as a means and as a tool of detection of environmental crime;
- computer technology and state-corporate wrongdoing (e.g., the Horizon IT case);
- technological innovation and changes in the nature and investigation of war crimes;
- the use of Artificial Intelligence in sentencing;
- the advent of facial recognition technology and its human rights implications.

Undergraduate course convenors

Course	Course Convenor	Email
SP100 Understanding International Social and Public Policy	Isabelle Huning	i.huning@lse.ac.uk
SP101 Foundations of Social Policy Research	Kitty Stewart	k.j.stewart@lse.ac.uk
SP111 Social Economics and Policy	Almudena Sevilla	a.sevilla@lse.ac.uk
SP112 Politics of Social Policy Making	Liam Beiser-McGrath	l.f.beiser-mcgrath@lse.ac.uk
SP200 Comparative and International Social Policy	Timo Fleckenstein	t.fleckenstein@lse.ac.uk
SP201 Research Methods for Social Policy	Shuang Chen	s.chen114@lse.ac.uk
SP210 Development and Social Change	Robtel Neajai Pailey	r.n.pailey@lse.ac.uk
SP230 Education Policy	Fiona Gogescu	f.t.gogescu@lse.ac.uk
SP231 Poverty, Inequality, and Social Policy	Kitty Stewart	k.j.stewart@lse.ac.uk
SP232 Health and Social Care Policy	Tania Burchardt	t.burchardt@lse.ac.uk
SP314 Ethnicity, Race and Social Policy	Coretta Phillips	coretta.phillips@lse.ac.uk
SP315 Urbanisation and Social Policy in the Global Souths	Sunil Kumar	s.kumar@lse.ac.uk
SP331 Sexuality, Everyday Lives and Social Policy in Developing Countries	Hakan Seckinelgin	m.h.seckinelgin@lse.ac.uk
SP332 Social Security Policies	Kitty Stewart	k.j.stewart@lse.ac.uk
SP333 NGOs, Social Policy and Development	Tim Hildebrandt	t.r.hildebrandt@lse.ac.uk
SP335 Migration: Current Research, Critical Approaches	Isabel Shutes	i.h.shutes@lse.ac.uk
SP336 Behavioural Public Policy	Adam Oliver	a.j.oliver@lse.ac.uk
SP343 Social Policy of Climate Change	Liam Beiser-McGrath	l.f.beiser-mcgrath@lse.ac.uk
SP372 Punishment and Penal Policy	Leonidas Cheliotis	l.cheliotis@lse.ac.uk
SP373 Policing, Security, and Globalisation	Johann Koehler	j.koehler@lse.ac.uk

Postgraduate course convenors

Course	Course Convenor	Email
SP400 International Social and Public Policy	Isabel Shutes	i.h.shutes@lse.ac.uk
SP401 Understanding Policy Research	Thomas Biegert	t.biegert@lse.ac.uk
SP403 Academic and Professional Skills Development	Tim Hildebrandt	t.r.hildebrandt@lse.ac.uk
SP410 Migration: Current Research, Critical Approaches	Isabel Shutes	i.h.shutes@lse.ac.uk
SP411 Social Policy and Development	Sunil Kumar	s.kumar@lse.ac.uk
SP412 Non-Governmental Organisations, Social Policy and Development	Tim Hildebrandt	t.r.hildebrandt@lse.ac.uk
SP414 Ethnicity, Race and Social Policy	Coretta Phillips	coretta.phillips@lse.ac.uk
SP415 Urbanisation and Social Policy in the Global South	Sunil Kumar	s.kumar@lse.ac.uk
SP417 Sexuality, everyday Lives and Social Policy in Developing Countries	Hakan Seckinelgin	m.h.seckinelgin@lse.ac.uk
SP418 Global Social Policy and International Organisations	Hakan Seckinelgin	m.h.seckinelgin@lse.ac.uk
SP419 Social Movements, Activism, Social Policy	Tim Hildebrandt	t.r.hildebrandt@lse.ac.uk
SP420 Understanding Policy Research (Advanced)	Tania Burchardt	t.burchardt@lse.ac.uk
SP430 Social Security Policies	Kitty Stewart	k.j.stewart@lse.ac.uk
SP432 Education Policy, Reform and Financing	Mobarak Hossain	m.hossain9@lse.ac.uk
SP434 Behavioural Public Policy	Adam Oliver	a.j.oliver@lse.ac.uk
SP441 Social Policy and the Welfare State	Timo Fleckenstein	t.fleckenstein@lse.ac.uk
SP442 The Future of Work and Social Policy	Thomas Biegert	t.biegert@lse.ac.uk
SP443 Social Policy of Climate Change	Liam Beiser-McGrath	l.f.beiser-mcgrath@lse.ac.uk
SP444 Educational Inequality in the Global South	Shuang Chen	s.chen114@lse.ac.uk
SP445 Migration and Inequality	Lucinda Platt	l.platt@lse.ac.uk
SP473 Policing, Security and Globalisation	Johann Koehler	j.koehler@lse.ac.uk
SP475 Riots, Disorder and Urban Violence	Tim Newburn	t.newburn@lse.ac.uk
SP476 Punishment and Penal Policy	Leonidas Cheliotis	l.cheliotis@lse.ac.uk
SP477 Foundations of Criminology and Criminal Justice	Johann Koehler	j.koehler@lse.ac.uk
SP478 Special Issues in Criminology and Criminal Justice	Coretta Phillips	coretta.phillips@lse.ac.uk

Undergraduate Programmes Team

Email: Socialpolicy.ug@lse.ac.uk
Tel: 020 7 955 6001

Clare Gorman

Student Community and Wellbeing Manager

Dr Craig Stewart

Teaching Operations Manager

Jake Watkins

Programmes Officer (Student Experience)

Dr Hao Wu

Programmes Officer (Assessments)

Postgraduate Programme Team

Email: Socialpolicy.msc@lse.ac.uk
Tel: 020 7 955 6001

Clare Gorman

Student Community and Wellbeing Man

Dr Craig Stewart

Teaching Operations Manager

Barry Singh

Programme Officer (Assessments)

Nathaniel Ocquaye

Programmes Officer (Student Experience)

Sevilay Erdogan

Programme Officer (PhD and Research Lead)

Department of Social Policy

London School of Economics
and Political Science

2nd Floor, Old Building
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE

lse.ac.uk/social-policy

@LSESocialPolicy

