THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Welcome to the Department of Methodology

MSc Handbook 2026/27

lse.ac.uk/methodology

Section 1: Department of Methodology Welcome

Welcome from the Department of Methodology

Dear incoming student,

Welcome to the Department of Methodology at LSE.

The department is one of the leading international centres for research and education in social science methodology, and our master's programmes attract outstanding students from across the world. You should be very proud of your achievement in gaining a place to study here, and we are delighted that you will be joining us.

With faculty drawn from sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, international relations, social psychology, criminology, statistics and data science, our MSc Applied Social Data Science and MSc Social Research Methods programmes offer a distinctive environment in which to develop your knowledge and skills. You will be challenged to think carefully about how social data are produced, analysed and interpreted, and to engage with methodological questions that are central to understanding the social world.

As an LSE alumnus myself, I know what a special place LSE is. Situated in the heart of London, it offers a vibrant intellectual environment, together with the opportunity to study alongside students from across the world. Starting a new degree programme is always demanding, but you will not be doing it alone. Your teachers, academic mentors and the professional services staff in the department are here to support you. If there is anything you are unsure about, please do ask.

As Head of Department, I wish you every success in your studies. I hope your time at LSE will be stimulating, rewarding, inspiring and enjoyable.

Professor Patrick Sturgis
Head of the Department of Methodology

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About Your Department

The Department of Methodology is a national centre of excellence in methodology and the teaching of methodology. The Department coordinates and provides a focus for methodological activities at LSE, in particular in the areas of graduate student training and methodological research. Through the degree programmes run by the Department (the MSc Applied Social Data Science, the MSc Social Research Methods, the MPhil/PhD Social Research Methods, the MPhil/PhD Demography (Social/Formal) and the MPhil/PhD Computational Social Science), and through provision of courses for postgraduate students from across the School, the aim is to make LSE the pre-eminent centre for methodological training in the social sciences.

The Department faculty are an interdisciplinary group and, as such, have close connections to other departments at LSE. The disciplinary backgrounds of the staff include sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, international relations, social psychology, criminology, statistics and data science. Reflecting this range of interests, the Department is also home to a number of funded research projects and our faculty publish in top journals from across the social sciences (see our **Research pages**).

The Department offers a variety of advanced level courses and workshops in research design, quantitative analysis and qualitative methods, and various departments in the School require students to take these courses as part of MSc and PhD programmes. The Department also hosts regular public seminars which students are encouraged to attend. Information about these seminar series can be found on our **Events pages**.

Key Staff Members

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Here to help

Our Professional Services team are here to help! Whether you have a query about course selection, seminar sign up, assessments, life at LSE, what to do in London or you just need to chat, they are always happy to talk. See all our staff on our website: lse.ac.uk/Methodology/People

MSc Applied Social Data Science

Welcome from your Programme Director

Dear MSc Applied Social Data Science Class of 2026/27,

I'm delighted to welcome you to the Methodology Department at LSE, and it's my privilege to serve as your Programme Director this year. I joined LSE in 2022, and I'm continually impressed by the innovation and rigour this department draws out of faculty and students alike.

We'll meet in person over the coming weeks, and I look forward to hearing what brought you here and what you hope to achieve while you're with us. The MSc ASDS programme offers a rare blend of technical and social-scientific training that, taken together, should leave you unusually well-equipped to study and make sense of the social world.

Before term begins, one piece of (unsolicited) advice: take risks! Getting into LSE is a real achievement, and worth celebrating. But as you're well aware, the world is changing at lightning pace — not least with the rise of artificial intelligence and everything that follows from it. Keeping up means learning new things and engaging with complexity rather than retreating from it.

So choose hard courses. Study topics that make you stop and think. Make mistakes. Grapple with difficult material and sit with what you don't yet understand. Build a transcript that extends your skillset rather than confirming it.

None of this is easy — which is exactly why my job is to have your back while you do it. Our colleagues, faculty, and professional services alike are among the best you'll find anywhere, so you can take these risks knowing the support is there whenever you need it.

I wish you the very best as you begin your studies at LSE.

Dr Thomas Robinson
MSc Applied Social Data Science Programme Director

About the Programme

This one-year programme draws on the range of expertise within the Department and related academic departments, to provide advanced training in applied data science with a focus on social scientific applications. Large-scale data analysis, new computational and statistical techniques, and advances in generative artificial intelligence are increasingly important elements of a wide range of modern professions. The programme will prepare you for a variety of careers in the private, non-profit, and public sectors, and offer you the fundamentals required to pursue a career in research. The MSc may be taken full-time over a calendar year, or part-time over two years.

Studying for a master's at LSE requires conducting independent research and coursework. You are expected to be responsible for your own work, for managing your time, and for conducting research and completing coursework to develop the skills required for independent evidence-based analysis and evaluation.

The overarching goal of this MSc programme is to develop proficiency in using data to answer interesting and important social questions scientifically. You will become fluent in multiple programming languages – at a minimum R and Python – and will learn to create, manipulate, and analyse large amounts of data. Ultimately, you will learn to think creatively deploying these skills in the context of applied questions.

The programme includes required core classes designed to provide foundational knowledge and skills. These include a class focused on social scientific research design and classes focused on applied data science, quantitative methods, and computation and programming, specifically designed for students without a formal computing or statistical background. You also have the opportunity to choose a range of elective courses both within the Department and, space permitting, the wider School, allowing you to tailor the programme to your particular interests. The programme is tied together by a final Capstone Project, in which you will apply the technical and scientific skills you have learned to an original social scientific research project of your own design.

Programme structure

As well as the Capstone Project (see Capstone Project pages), the MSc in Applied Social Data Science degree comprises core courses in Computer Programming and Research Design, and optional courses. In total, you will take a total of 4.0 units of courses. You will have the opportunity to discuss your course choices with the Programme Director.

Methodology courses are identified by the "MY4**" code. Please note that when registering for courses run in both Autumn and Winter Terms (MY421 and MY452) you will need to ensure the course code has the correct suffix. For example, to search and register for MY452 in the Autumn Term you need to search for "MY452A". For MY452 in Winter Term that would be "MY452W".

You should familiarise yourself with the **MSc Applied Social Data Science programme regulations** in advance of the course selection period.

For information about individual courses, please refer to the **LSE Calendar.**

Core courses

Computer Programming (MY470)

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of computer programming as students design, write, and debug computer programmes using the programming language Python. The course will also cover the foundations of computer languages, algorithms, functions, variables, object-orientation, scoping, and assignment.

and

Fundamentals of Social Science Research Design (MY400)

This course runs in the Autumn Term and introduces you to a broad range of research designs, including quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches, drawing on a variety of substantive examples from social science literature. The course will help you to appreciate the scope and limitations of the research designs you encounter in your reading, and to make informed decisions when planning your own research.

You will also need to choose one of the following:

Data for Data Scientists (MY472)

Covers the principles of digital methods for storing and structuring data, including data types, relational and non- relational database design, and query languages.

or

Managing and Visualising Data (ST445)

Focuses on data structures and databases, covering methods for storing and structuring data, relational and non-relational databases, and query languages. The second part focuses on visualising data, including best practices for visualising univariate, bivariate, graph and other types of data as well as visualising various statistics for predictive analytics and other tasks.

You will also need to choose one of the following:

Applied Regression Analysis (MY452)

Offered in Autumn Term (MY452A) and repeated in Winter Term (MY452W), this course covers generalised linear models and their application to social science data. Advanced Winter Term courses such as MY455, MY457 and MY459 expect MY452-level knowledge. For these courses, take MY452A first unless you have equivalent preparation. Check each course guide for its full requirements.

or

Applied Machine Learning for Social Science (MY474)

Uses prominent examples from social science research to cover major machine learning tasks including regression, classification, clustering, and dimensionality reduction. Students will learn to apply the algorithms to social data and to validate and evaluate different models.

or

Machine Learning and Data Mining (ST443)

Begins with the classical statistical methodology of linear regression and then builds on this framework to provide an introduction to machine learning and data mining methods from a statistical perspective.

You will also need to choose courses to the value of 1.0 units from a list of options:

Under the **MSc Applied Social Data Science programme regulations**, in addition to choosing optional Department of Methodology courses, you can also study graduate level courses from across LSE. For these optional courses access is not guaranteed and course choices are subject to timetabling constraints. To register for a course not listed under the MSc Applied Social Data Science programme regulations students should seek the approval of their Programme Director. Please note that MSc ASDS students can only take up to 1.0 units of non-MY courses in total.

Please also note that places are limited on some optional courses. Admission onto any particular course is not guaranteed and may be subject to timetabling constraints and/or students meeting specific prerequisite requirements. It is also possible that courses may be suspended in any given year due to variations in instructors' availability.

We strongly recommend that you try to balance courses across the two main teaching terms of Autumn and Winter terms for full-time students and across the two years for part-time students.

Example MSc Applied Social Data Science programme structure

Course choices vary. This table is illustrative, subject to prerequisites and access conditions. MY461 is suspended in 2026/27, so an optional-course slot is shown instead. ST455 expects some mathematics and programming, but not MY452.

The academic year for an example ASDS student

Autumn Term	Winter Term	Spring Term	Summer (after term time)
MY470	MY452W	Capstone work- in-progress presentation	Capstone deadline in August
MY472	Optional course		Programme officially ends in September
MY400	ST455	Spring Exam Period*	
	MY498 (Capstone Project)		

*Assessments can take place throughout the academic year, not only in the Spring Exam Period.

MSc Social Research Methods

Welcome from your Programme Directors

Dear MSc Social Research Methods Class of 2026/27,

We're delighted to welcome you to the MSc SRM! We hope you'll enjoy meeting your new peers and teachers over the coming days and weeks. The MSc SRM cohort is a relatively small group each year, but comprises students from a wide range of backgrounds in terms of academic disciplines, research interests, and professional experience. The programme is designed to cater to and make the most of this diversity. You will have a considerable amount of flexibility in course choice, to tailor your degree content towards your particular interests, but you will all study the foundational elements of social research design together, and you will all study both quantitative and qualitative methods. This combination of shared interests and differences in perspectives makes for stimulating, enriching (and in our opinion, better) learning. The programme is distinctive in producing graduates that are well-rounded methodologists, who have breadth of understanding of a range of methodological approaches, and critical appreciation of their practical application to real-world social science research questions. Graduates from the programme go on to a variety of career paths in sectors including academia, governmental and non-governmental organisations, and public and private sectors.

Studying for a master's degree can feel like a considerable shift intellectually, and joining a new institution can be bewildering, especially if you have not studied in the UK before. Please don't be shy to ask any questions that are on your mind, to help you settle in and make the most of your degree. And remember that we are here for you throughout the year.

We look forward to meeting you all and wish you an excellent year ahead!

Professor Jonathan Jackson (Autumn Term)
Dr Raphael Susewind (Winter Term)
MSc Social Research Methods Programme Directors

About the Programme

This one-year programme draws on the range of expertise within the department, as well as related academic departments, to provide advanced training in social research methods and methodologies. The MSc may be taken full-time over one year, or part-time over two years. The programme is designed to prepare you for a variety of careers in private, non-profit and public sectors that involve carrying out and/or using the results of empirical social research. It was originally designed to provide students with training for doctoral research, and it still serves this vital purpose, both as an informal preparation for applying for PhDs, and as a formal part of certain PhD programmes: the syllabus for the MSc meets, and goes beyond, the UK's Economic and Social Research Council's requirements for the first year of a 1+3 PhD programme.

The aims of the MSc are twofold. Firstly, we aim to ensure that you emerge from the programme as a well-rounded social researcher, who has a good understanding of a range of different methodological approaches, what they bring to any given empirical social science research question, and how to evaluate them. You will study a core course in research design, a core course in qualitative methods, and a core course in quantitative methods, to provide this breadth of knowledge. Secondly, we give you the opportunity to pursue specialist interests. You might, for example, choose to supplement your core training with courses in more advanced and more focused methodological approaches. You might choose to take one or two half-unit courses in more substantively focused subjects outside the department, to strengthen your ability to apply your methodological training within particular academic disciplines or fields. In your final dissertation project you will have the opportunity to apply that learning in an original social scientific research project of your own design.

Studying for a master's at LSE involves independent study, research, analysis and reflection. You are expected to be responsible intellectually and practically for your own work - for managing your time, and for researching, learning and writing with integrity, so that you can present your own analysis and evaluation, with strong supporting evidence. In assessing your work we place a high value on rigour, clarity of expression, organisation of empirical evidence, fairness and consistency of argument, and originality – for example, in applying new theories to familiar problems, or critically evaluating established theoretical paradigms by applying them in novel contexts.

Programme structure

As well as a dissertation (see Dissertation pages), the MSc Social Research Methods comprises core courses in quantitative methods, qualitative methods, research design, and optional courses. In total, you will take courses to the value of 3.0 units (typically six half-unit courses), in addition to the dissertation, for a total of 4.0 units. You will have the opportunity to discuss your course choices with the Programme Director.

Methodology courses are identified by the "MY4**" code. Please note that when registering for courses run in both Autumn and Winter Terms (MY421 and MY452) you will need to ensure the course code has the correct suffix. For example, to search and register for MY421 in the Autumn Term you need to search for "MY421A". For MY421 in Winter Term that would be "MY421W".

You should familiarise yourself with the **MSc Social Research Methods programme regulations** in advance of the course selection period.

For information about individual courses, please refer to the **LSE Calendar.**

Core Courses

Research Design

MY400 Fundamentals of Social Science Research Design runs in the Autumn Term and introduces you to a broad range of research designs, including quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches, drawing on a variety of substantive examples from social science literature. The course will help you to appreciate the scope and limitations of the research designs you encounter in your reading, and to make informed decisions when planning your own research.

Quantitative Methods

Different quantitative methods courses are offered according to students' previous training. The core course can be either **MY451 Introduction to Quantitative Analysis** or **MY452 Applied Regression Analysis**. Exceptionally, students who can demonstrate sufficient prior training in quantitative research methods commensurate with those covered in MY451 and MY452 can substitute a more advanced course (MY455, MY457 or MY459). This would be subject to the approval of the MSc Programme Director.

Qualitative Methods

You will normally take **MY421 Qualitative Research Methods** in Autumn Term. You can then take more advanced courses in qualitative methods in Winter Term should you wish to. In MY421A/W, you will learn how to collect data using methods including interviewing, focus groups, and participant observation. The course then covers methods of analysis, including thematic analysis and discourse analysis.

If you have sufficient training in qualitative methods, you may be able to take a more advanced qualitative methods course instead of MY421A/W, subject to approval by the Programme Director.

Optional courses to the value of 1.5 units

In addition to your three core courses, you will choose one additional 0.5-unit Methodology course. You then complete your course selection by choosing an additional 1.0 units of courses (usually two 0.5-unit courses, but sometimes a single 1.0-unit course), which can be chosen from the Department of Methodology or from graduate-level courses outside the department. For these optional courses, access is not guaranteed, and course choices are subject to timetabling constraints. To register for a course not listed under Part 2 of the **MSc Social Research Methods programme regulations**, students should seek the approval of their Programme Director. Please note that MSc SRM students can only take one MY47* course.

Please also note that places are limited on some optional courses. Admission onto any particular course is not guaranteed and may be subject to timetabling constraints and/ or students meeting specific prerequisite requirements. It is also possible that courses may be suspended in any given year due to variations in academics' availability.

We strongly recommend that you try to balance your taught course load across the teaching terms (two teaching terms for full-time students, and four teaching terms for part-time students).

Students on Gender or Population streams

Students on the "Gender" or "Population" streams of the MSc must select courses from the options listed under their respective headings at the foot of the "Part 2 - Optional Courses" section.

The Gender stream applies only to students who are taking MSc Social Research Methods as part of a 1+3 PhD programme, in conjunction with the MPhil/PhD Gender. Other students can select Gender stream courses as standard unlisted optional courses under Paper 6 (where this is allowed by the Department of Gender Studies and subject the approval of your Programme Director and Academic Mentor).

This Population stream applies only to students who are taking MSc Social Research Methods as part of a 1+3 PhD programme, in conjunction with the MPhil/PhD Demography (Social/Formal). Other students can select Population stream courses as standard unlisted optional courses under Paper 6 (where this is allowed by the host department of the course and subject the approval of your Programme Director and Academic Mentor).

Example Social Research Methods programme structure

There is significant flexibility for students to tailor their Autumn and Winter Term courses and therefore each students' selection will look different. This table is for illustrative purposes only.

The academic year for an example SRM student

Autumn Term	Winter Term	Spring Term	Summer (after term time)
MY400	MY456	Dissertation work-in-progress presentation	Dissertation deadline in August
MY451	MY423	Spring Exam Period*	Programme officially ends in September
MY421A	GV4L5		
	MY499 Dissertation		

*Assessments can take place throughout the academic year, not only in the Spring Exam Period.

Course Selection and Timetables

When to select your courses

Course selection will open for browsing at 10am on Monday 21 September and will open for course selection on at 10am on Thursday 24 September. Course selections need to be finalised by 5pm on Friday 9 October.

You can change your course selections as many times as you like until 5pm on Friday 9 October. In very exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to make changes after the deadline; after Friday 16 October no changes can be made, no matter the circumstances.

You will be able to make changes to Winter Term half unit courses early in Winter Term. For the exact dates check the **course selection webpages.** It is not possible to change full unit courses or half-unit courses that were taught in Autumn term.

The **LSE Calendar** is the place to check for programme regulations, detailing which courses you are permitted to take.

Visit **Finding Courses** to access the tools and information to help you decide which courses you want to take this academic year. You may wish to look at course content on Moodle and check the teaching timetable to detect potential clashes. Reading Week will be clearly stated in the respective course guide; the vast majority of courses include a Reading Week, but you should check carefully when making your course selections. Please be aware that enrolling on courses on Moodle is different to selecting your courses; you must select the courses in **LSE for You** to be formally enrolled on them.

Some departments have controlled access courses which means that places are limited (see next section). Make sure that you identify a few back-up courses in case your preferred optional courses are not available.

You will need to select your courses in **LSE for You** once the system opens. Guidance on how to do this can be found on the **SSC's webpages**. After selecting your courses in **LSE for You**, you should be automatically enrolled on their Moodle pages in a few hours, provided that the course pages are ready.

You should ensure you attend any departmental course selection meetings and seek advice before finalising your courses. Should you have questions about a particular course you can contact the Course Convener. If you have any queries about the overall programme or need advice on the course selection process you can contact the Methodology PSS team at **methodology.admin@lse.ac.uk**

Controlled access courses

Controlled access courses have limited places and/or some prerequisites are required to take the courses. This may be due to resources available to teach the course, including staffing levels in a department related to sabbatical leave or other commitments. Each department may have different criteria and arrangements for applying for a place on a given course. Make sure you read the course guides on the **LSE Calendar** and the **controlled access courses page** carefully before applying – for example, there is no point in writing a supporting statement if the teaching department does not require it.

Seminar sign-up and timetables

Some departments allocate students to seminar groups. For MY courses (MY4**), you need to select your seminar group from the available options. Once you are accepted to the course, go to the Seminar Sign-Up page on **LSE for You**. The page will show the courses which are eligible for student sign-up.

You should attend the seminar group to which you are assigned or sign up for. The School monitors your seminar attendance and unauthorised absence from your seminar group may also impact the terms of some student visas.

Considerable efforts are made to avoid overlap of courses, but occasionally a timetable clash may be unavoidable due to the complex and interdisciplinary nature of the programmes within the department. It is each student's responsibility to check for and avoid any clashes. No changes to the LSE timetable are possible.

Once you have been successfully registered for your courses and seminars in LfY, your personal timetable will be automatically updated.

If you need to sign up for a particular seminar group due to timetable clashes but the relevant seminar is not available, please contact **methodology.admin@lse.ac.uk** for MY courses, or contact the administration team of the relevant teaching department for assistance.

Changing your timetable

For any given course, a (usually weekly) lecture will be timetabled which all students are expected to attend together. It is not possible to change the lectures in your timetable.

Seminars, however, often take place at multiple times in smaller groups. During the course selection period, you can move to another seminar group where places are available by simply changing your choice on **LSE For You**. Once you have successfully registered for your courses and seminars in **LSE for You**, your personal timetable will be automatically updated.

After the course selection period, you will only be allowed to change seminar groups after the course selection period in exceptional circumstances. Please contact **methodology.admin@lse.ac.uk** for MY courses, or contact the relevant teaching department for assistance.

Part-time Study

For part-time students, the programme structure is identical but split over two years, meaning that part-time students will take the same number of courses overall and will have teaching and exams scheduled at the same time as full-time students. The only difference is that part-time students will take half their courses in the first year and half in the second year; the dissertation will be taken in your second year of study. You are strongly encouraged to discuss your options with your Academic Mentor and split your teaching load equally across the two years of your study.

We understand that part-time students have to balance study with other responsibilities and we want to support as much as possible with engaging in departmental activities and accessing resources. We encourage part-time students to become familiar with how to request extensions and the processes around seminar group allocation (see “Seminar signup” and “Coursework Submissions Format and Process”).

Auditing courses

Auditing is an informal arrangement where you join the lectures and classes for a particular course but do not undertake the assessments. Audited courses do not appear in your course selection or timetable and will not appear on your transcript.

Some students choose to audit courses to expand their knowledge in other areas. For more information about applying to audit in Methodology, see our **Auditing** page. The Department of Methodology's policy for auditing varies between courses. Students may not be able to audit seminars in some courses for pedagogical reasons. Please check the Moodle pages of the course you are considering auditing to learn more about their auditing policy.

If you would like to audit a course outside of the Department of Methodology, please contact the relevant department and ask for permission to audit their course. They may have different policies and criteria for students auditing their courses.

Getting help

As part of Welcome Week, we will hold Q&A sessions on the course selection process and programme regulations, hosted by your Programme Director and Professional Services Staff. You will also be invited to book a one-to-one meeting with the Programme Director to discuss your course preferences. This will be followed by a drop-in session for all Methodology students to help with any system queries when course selection opens.

If you experience any difficulties with the course selection process or have timetables queries, please contact us at **methodology.admin@lse.ac.uk** in the first instance.

Most issues can be resolved quickly but if we are unable to help, we will be able to signpost you to the correct source of information:

- If you are not able to access **LSE for You**, you can contact **Tech Support.**
- If you have a technical question about Moodle, please contact **Eden.Digital@lse.ac.uk**

How to get in touch and give feedback

Academic Mentor

At the start of the year, all students will be assigned an Academic Mentor who is an academic in the Department of Methodology. They can:

- Provide academic guidance and feedback on progress and performance, and discuss any academic problems
- Provide academic guidance with regards to course selection
- Provide pastoral support on non-academic issues and refer students to the appropriate support services within the School
- Where appropriate, implement provisions outlined in My Adjustments for students with disabilities in liaison with the School's Disability Office
- Maintain regular contact with students on academic and pastoral issues through one-to-one meetings and other means of communication, such as emails.

Along with the DSSA (see following page), Academic Mentors are your first port of call in relation to both academic and welfare matters. Any issues that cannot be resolved with your Mentor can be taken to a member of our Professional Services Staff, your Programme Director, Deputy Head of Department (Teaching) or, ultimately, the Head of Department.

Office hours

Academic staff in all departments have office hours in term time. These office hours can be accessed via Student Hub. Academics across the School are happy to meet any students in office hours to discuss queries relating to their teaching, research or any other aspects of student life. This is a great opportunity to spend time with world-leading academics. We urge you to take advantage of the office hour system, even if it is just for a brief chat.

Departmental Senior Student Advisor

In the Department of Methodology, our Departmental Senior Student Advisor (DSSA) is Franks Reyes Sarria. The DSSA is here to support you during your time at LSE, helping you to navigate (alongside your Academic Mentor and other departmental colleagues) the advice and support services available to you, and to assist with your wellbeing needs. You could speak to either your Academic Mentor or the DSSA about many queries.

Appointments of up to 30 minutes are available in-person and online. In some cases, the department's Professional Services Staff may recommend you discuss a situation with the DSSA to get the best possible advice. The DSSA can:

- Provide a supportive ear within your department
- Advise on aspects of university life that you're unsure about - whether that's assessments, regulations, or finding the right kind of support
- Help with issues that are impacting your ability to get the most from your LSE experience.

Information about drop-in sessions and a booking link for appointments with Franks Reyes Sarria are available on the central **DSSA webpage.**

Academic Representatives and Staff Student Liaison Committee

Each department at LSE facilitates a Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC), which offers a space for students and key programme staff to discuss issues concerning students. This is a key forum which relies on elected Academic Representatives from each of the two MSc programmes. Academic Representatives are asked to gather feedback from their peers according to an agreed meeting agenda, which will then be discussed in the meeting and, where necessary, shared with colleagues for comment or awareness.

The minutes of the SSLC meeting are shared with all students and with the LSE Students' Union, who have an oversight of all SSLC actions across the School.

The dates of SSLC meetings will be arranged by the MSc Programmes Officer with student timetables and staff availability in mind. Meetings occur once in Autumn Term and once in Winter Term (usually around Week 7). The Spring Term meeting takes the form of a focus group, with up to 6 student volunteers discussing their opinions on the programme, courses, experience from application to the end of the teaching terms, and how their relationship with the department as alumni might look.

Communicating with you

The School and the department will use your LSE email address to communicate with you so you should check it regularly. If you change your term-time or permanent home address and/or telephone number, you must update your personal contact details online via **LSE For You**. It is essential that you keep these details up to date.

Your address is protected information and will not be disclosed to a third party without your permission unless it is for reasons of official School business.

Appropriate use of email

All departmental staff receive a high volume of emails and ask that you bear the following guidelines in mind:

- Provide a clear and concise subject line, eg, "Request for assistance with Moodle" Only mark your email as "urgent" if it really is
- If your query is lengthy, complex or involves discussion of academic materials, make use of office hours or book a meeting with Professional Services Staff instead of asking for information over email
- Give staff plenty of notice on important matters – an initial response within 3 days is the norm for Professional Services Staff, and academic staff can require longer than this, so you should not expect immediate action even if you consider your request urgent.

MSc Newsletters

Each week during Autumn and Winter terms, you will receive a departmental MSc newsletter. This newsletter is packed with useful information about what's happening in the department and around LSE. It also includes PhD positions and job opportunities, including research assistantships, on an ad hoc basis – so make sure you read this newsletter each week.

Assessment and Feedback

Summative and formative assessment

"Summative assessments" are formal assessments, which count towards your final degree results and can take several different forms. Many MSc courses are primarily assessed by an unseen written exam in the Spring Term. A half-unit course is usually assessed by a two-hour exam, and a full-unit course by a three-hour exam.

Some courses also include assessed coursework as all or part of the summative assessment. Please refer to the course guides on the LSE website to find out the assessment form for each course.

Courses also include "formative assessments" which are pieces of work that do not count towards your final degree but are designed to prepare you for the summative assessments. The course convener will give you detailed instructions for any piece of summative and formative coursework you are expected to complete.

Exams

We set exams in courses where it is important to assess your knowledge and capabilities over the full range of course material. The best preparation for an exam is to thoroughly review the whole course. You will then be able to answer any questions that appear on the paper. Cutting corners in preparation for an exam and trying to predict specific questions is therefore a risky strategy as every year's exam varies and we do ask new and varied types of questions each year.

Some exams at LSE are "open book". This means that you are allowed to bring a limited amount of written materials you might find useful, including notes from lectures, slides, prepared sheets of equations, etc. Where we allow these materials, we do so because we do not aim to test your memory for particular equations, but rather your ability to reason about questions given the reference materials you would have available if you were applying the methods to your own research.

For many examinations, classic advice applies. For example:

- Read the exam requirements and the questions thoroughly and accurately
- Answer the questions in any order. You may find it helpful to skip difficult questions and return to them later but try to avoid spending a lot of time selecting which question to answer next
- If possible, allow ten minutes to review and correct your answers before the exam ends
- Practice with past papers, found online via the **Library website**.

Coursework

All coursework is submitted in electronic format on the Moodle page or GitHub page of the relevant course. No hard copy is to be submitted. Unless otherwise specified, PDF is the preferred file format and the submission should be contained in a single file.

Coursework files should be named with the course code and your 5-digit candidate number, eg, MY426_11056.pdf. Your candidate number is available via **LSE for You**. The title page should include the following: course code; candidate number; title of submission; word count. Your name and student ID number must not appear anywhere on your work to ensure the work is marked anonymously.

You are expected to submit the assignment by the specified date and time. Moodle and GitHub record the date and time that submissions are received. You should upload your submission at least a few hours before the deadline to avoid lateness due to technical issues or potential congestion on the submission page.

Word limits

A strict word limit is provided for each assignment and must not be exceeded. When a submission exceeds the word limit, the markers will stop reading at the word limit and will make a judgement based only on the content up to the word limit. The bibliography/reference list is not included in the word count.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. By submitting your work you are confirming that you have read the **LSE regulations on plagiarism** and that the work you are submitting is your own. The Department of Methodology uses plagiarism detection software.

Letter of Notification (LON)

If you have been issued with an electronic Letter of Notification (LoN) as part of your Adjustments, you are responsible for attaching it to each assessment upload on Moodle. The purpose of this letter is to provide markers with guidance about your condition. It alerts the marker that you have a condition and asks for this to be considered in regard to relevant criteria such as sentence structure, spelling, etc. when marking. While the marker receives the LoN, this is confidential and the Exam Sub-Board for your programme will not be advised that a LoN has been added to your work.

Extensions for summative coursework

Coursework deadlines at LSE are strict, and penalties are applied for late submissions. This is to ensure fairness to all students and to foster a professional approach to time management. Extensions can only be requested in exceptional, unforeseen circumstances, and when supported by evidence. IT problems are not an acceptable reason for making an extension request. You should ensure you regularly back up your work and leave sufficient time to upload it.

If you believe that you have good cause not to meet the deadline (eg, illness/injury, bereavement or other serious personal circumstances), you should request an extension. For MY courses, you can find "Coursework Submission and Extension Guidelines" on each Moodle page. You should follow the instructions to request an extension. Your request will be referred to the Exam Sub-Board Chair for a final decision. You will be informed of the outcome of your request by email from **methodology.admin@lse.ac.uk**; if an extension is granted, the date and time of the new deadline will be specified.

Different departments may have different extension policies for the courses they offer. You should check the relevant course page on Moodle for specific information about extension policies for that course.

Late penalties

If a student fails to submit by the set deadline (or the approved extended deadline, if relevant), late penalties will be applied according to **LSE's rules.**

Feedback on summative assessments

The Department of Methodology provides comments and an indicative grade for every piece of assessed work. Feedback on essays/assessed work is normally received within 5 weeks of submission (not including school closures and work submitted in Spring Term). For exams, cohort-wide feedback is shared on Moodle and provisional marks are released in August.

Feedback on formative work

Formative work is included in every Methodology master's-level course. The format of this varies between courses, and includes, for example, Moodle quizzes, presentations, short essays, project plans and mock exams. Where written work is submitted for feedback, that feedback will normally be returned within 3 weeks.

Feedback on the Capstone Project/dissertation

Feedback for the Capstone Project/dissertation will be provided for all students following the School's Graduate School Board of Examiners meeting and the release of final classification and course results (usually mid-November – see the **publication of results page**).

Capstone Project/dissertation support and supervision for resitting/deferral students

Capstone Project/dissertation students who defer or re-sit their Capstone Project/dissertation are not eligible for further supervision. Students returning from interruption will receive dissertation supervision support as needed and should approach the Programme Officer in the first instance. Students who are re-sitting their dissertation following a failed first attempt will receive feedback in the same format and timeline as noted above.

MY400 Proposal: Self-plagiarism Information

MY400 requires you to produce a project outline as your formative assessment. This outline will help you develop a research proposal as your summative assessment.

In many cases, the work you submit for MY400 will form the intellectual basis for your Capstone Project/dissertation outline. You can use the MY400 summative assignment as a foundation for your proposal.

Creating an outline proposal is crucial for developing a full research proposal and conducting research. This preparatory work clarifies the research problem, refines research questions, considers theoretical frameworks, and specifies a design to address empirical questions. Engaging in this process also provides essential feedback. As you refine your proposal, carry out the study, and draft the Capstone Project/dissertation, your thinking will evolve alongside the research. While your Capstone Project/dissertation may build upon MY400 summative work, it should not involve wholesale copying. The more you edit and refine your work, the clearer your thinking will become. We encourage you to build upon MY400 and other MY course assignments/summative work for your final project.

We believe your thinking should evolve throughout the project-writing process. As you engage in empirical work and revise your project, the content and quality of your writing will improve. Thus, extensive copying from prior assignments is discouraged. You may reuse up to 2,000 words, in your final Capstone Project/dissertation report, but anything beyond that will be considered self-plagiarism in accordance with LSE policy. Ensure that your reused content is properly referenced in your bibliography, using footnotes to indicate which sections stem from previous coursework.

If you have questions about referencing or self-plagiarism, please contact the MSc Programme Director or your supervisor. The allowance we make for the Capstone Project/dissertation is an exception to the general LSE rule that there should be "no significant overlap" between the contents of different pieces submitted for assessment. So, for example, assessed work for MY400 and other courses should not be based around the same research questions, or contain the same paragraphs copied from common literature reviews. Where you are given flexibility to tailor your coursework to your research interest and wish to do this in more than one course, we encourage you to do so by exploring different aspects of your research interest through different research sub-questions.

Research Transparency and Integrity

This section applies to the MY498 Capstone Project and the MY499 dissertation. It sets out habits of transparent, responsible research that you can develop throughout the programme and carry into further study and professional work. How you put these habits into practice will depend on your research question, methods and disciplinary approach.

Research is cumulative, and so is your programme. Taught courses and coursework develop the knowledge and judgement you bring to your final project. The habits described here support that learning throughout the programme; the submission requirements below apply to MY498 and MY499, not to assessments on other courses.

Why do transparency and integrity matter?

Readers should be able to understand how you reached your findings, what resources and assistance you relied on, and how you exercised your own judgement. A clear account allows them to assess your evidence, interpretations and conclusions critically, and helps others learn from and build on your work.

Transparency is part of research integrity. Integrity concerns how you conduct your research as well as how you report it: representing data and sources accurately, considering evidence and interpretations that challenge your argument, and being candid about limitations. It means reporting what you found, rather than what you hoped to find.

What records should I keep?

Keep useful records as your research develops. Depending on your project, these might include research notes and fieldnotes, reflections on interpretation, coding frameworks, analysis scripts, data-preparation records and notes on important decisions. Keep enough to help you develop your thinking, revisit decisions and give an accurate account of your work. You are not being asked to record every activity or submit all your working materials.

Use supervision to explore ideas, theoretical questions, uncertainties and developing interpretations, as well as practical and methodological decisions. Sharing work in progress, including difficulties and unfinished thinking, gives your supervisor a basis for useful advice. The project section below explains the supervision arrangements.

What should I explain in my project?

In the relevant parts of your dissertation or Capstone Project, explain where your data or materials came from, how they were collected or selected, and how you developed your analysis and conclusions. Explain how your analytical approach informed your work with the materials, whether through interpretation, coding, statistical modelling or another approach. The aim is a clear account suited to your research, not a standardised procedure for every project.

Describe consequential decisions and changes of direction where they help readers understand the work. Do not omit relevant evidence or findings simply because they complicate your argument. Where your position or relationship to the research shapes its production or interpretation, explain this too. Acknowledge sources of analytical procedures, code and substantive assistance.

If you draw on your own earlier coursework, follow “MY400 Proposal: Self-plagiarism Information”. For the ethics review process and how to report its outcome, see the research ethics and project writing-up guidance that follow.

What belongs in the main text or an appendix?

Keep in the main text what readers need to follow and evaluate your argument, usually within the discussion of methods, analysis or findings. Put supporting detail in an appendix. There is no separate transparency essay or prescribed length for these explanations: build them into the account of your research where they are useful.

Supporting material might include topic guides, blank consent forms and participant information sheets, a coding framework with a worked example, survey instruments, variable definitions, data-preparation steps or robustness checks. Do not include participants’ signed consent forms or identifying details. Where appropriate, link to a repository for more extensive supporting material, respecting confidentiality, access restrictions and anonymous assessment. Follow the word-count and appendix requirements in “The Capstone Project/Dissertation”.

How can I use generative AI responsibly?

MY498 and MY499 permit responsible, intelligent and transparent use of generative AI to support research and learning. This can include help with planning, coding, analysis and writing, including suggestions for code, interpretations or draft wording. You remain responsible for the reasoning, accuracy and integrity of the work you submit. This permission does not extend to other courses: follow the instructions for each assessment.

What is appropriate will differ across research designs, topics and disciplinary or epistemological approaches. A use that helps one project may undermine the purpose of another. Use supervision to discuss opportunities, limitations and ways to evaluate AI's contribution. You do not need routine supervisor approval for each permitted use; any required research ethics approval remains a separate matter. Check the MY498 or MY499 Moodle page for assessment-specific instructions, and ask your Programme Director if anything appears inconsistent or unclear.

Direct the work rather than delegate your understanding. Be clear about the task you give a tool, examine what it produces and decide what to accept, revise or reject. Check outputs against relevant sources, research materials, tests and your own reasoning, with care proportionate to the consequences of error. You should be able to explain the work you rely on and why you trust it. A polished output is not a substitute for developing your own judgement and skills.

How should I explain my use of generative AI?

Include a short AI-use statement in an appendix. Identify the tools, the tasks they supported and how you checked their contribution. Group repeated uses by purpose; an account of every interaction or prompt is not expected. If your only use was spelling and grammar checking, say so in one sentence. If you did not use generative AI, a single sentence stating this is enough.

Distinguish spelling and grammar checks from substantive rewriting, restructuring or development of an argument, and describe the latter if used. Where AI's contribution matters to understanding a method, interpretation or finding, explain it briefly at the relevant point in the main text and refer to the appendix where helpful.

Where AI forms part of your research method or is itself the subject of study, provide the technical detail needed to understand and assess that method. This may include model versions, prompts and evaluation procedures. That is methodological information, not a diary of your interactions.

How should I protect research materials?

Respect consent, confidentiality and restrictions on access when using tools, keeping records and sharing materials. Before uploading personal, sensitive or restricted material to an AI service, check that the proposed use is permitted by the relevant ethics, consent and data-protection arrangements. If unsure, seek advice before uploading. Access to an LSE-provided tool does not by itself authorise every use of data. Transparency never requires public disclosure of protected materials.

The purpose of this guidance goes beyond compliance. Being able to explain what you did, what help you drew on and why you trust the result is a valuable habit in research and professional work. Using tools intelligently, being open about their contribution and taking responsibility for your work are habits to carry into whatever you do next.

Research ethics for dissertations and Capstone Projects

This section provides guidance on ethical issues and procedures for MY498 Capstone Projects and MY499 dissertations. Ethics are central to research from planning through to reporting. Read this alongside Research Transparency and Integrity and the project guidance that follows.

What are research ethics?

Research ethics concern "the moral principles guiding research, from its inception through to completion and publication of results and beyond" (ESRC, 2010, p. 40).*

When are ethics relevant to my project?

All research involves ethical questions and protocols. Yet research ethics are likely to be a particularly important practical consideration when your research involves human participants, such as is the case with interviews, questionnaires, focus groups and participant observation. They are also particularly relevant where your research involves personal, medical or other sensitive data, or where combining data sets could lead to the identification of individuals, including pre-existing data.

Why are ethics important?

There are a number of reasons why research ethics are important, including:

- Good research is ethical research in that ethical norms (such as honesty, integrity and impartiality) support the aims and conduct of sound scholarly research;
- Researchers are morally obliged to respect people and avoid causing unnecessary harm. Harm implies generating negative consequences for human participants, organisations or social groups;
- Acting ethically is important in order to build and safeguard public trust for academic research.

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* ESRC (2010). Framework for Research Ethics (FRE). Economic and Social Research Council, p. 40.

All students must complete an ethics review for their dissertation or Capstone Project. Depending on the outcome, your project may require approval by your supervisor or the School's Research Ethics Review Board (RERB). Follow the review route indicated by the online system and your supervisor.

How do I get started?

Submit your review through the **School's Research Ethics Portal.**

In completing the ethics review, it is your responsibility to answer the questions honestly, truthfully and, where prompted, to provide detailed clarification to any YES/NO responses. Where your research topic, research design or empirical focus changes, and where these changes affect your answers to the questionnaire, you must complete a new review.

Complete the review and obtain any required approval before beginning data collection. If the system indicates that approval is not required, your supervisor must check and confirm that outcome.

What are the common practical issues in research ethics?

Carrying out research ethically potentially involves many different things. Two important considerations which should concern you most if you are collecting data from human subjects are: informed consent and anonymity. A third consideration, integrity, applies to all research.

1) Informed consent

A fundamental feature of a great deal of sound social science research involving humans is informed consent. This requires potential participants to have sufficient knowledge and understanding of your research, and the conditions of their involvement, to make an informed decision as to whether or not they wish to take part (Farrimond 2013)*. Informed consent also implies that participants do not feel any (undue) pressure to participate in the study. It additionally means that potential participants are not misled in any way (ie, you should avoid deception).

* Farrimond, H. (2013). Doing Ethical Research. Palgrave Macmillan,Basingstoke.

Informed consent is typically achieved through the use of two documents: (a) a participant information sheet and (b) a written consent form. You should always use some form of participant information sheet (or similar) in your research with human participants. While obtaining written consent is the norm in particular contexts, there are quite a few circumstances where you may wish to rely on verbal consent (eg, when asking for a written signature may generate suspicion or mistrust) or where written consent is not feasible (eg, online/video interviews). If you have doubts, please consult with your supervisor, who may direct you elsewhere for further guidance.

You should bring two copies of relevant forms to any interview, etc, so that participants have a copy for their own records. Any hard copies of consent forms should be kept in a safe place in case they are needed at a later date.

2) Anonymity

Anonymity means keeping the identity of individual research participants (and organisations) from being discoverable from your work. This can be achieved in two main ways. The first is to avoid collecting personal data in the first place. This may be appropriate in cases such as questionnaire research where the identity of respondents is unimportant and therefore there is no need to collect names or similar information. The second way is by removing information which pertains to the identity of particular people or organisations. This is particularly important when writing up your dissertation and can be achieved by using some kind of coded pseudonym. For example, you might want to provide a quote from a recorded interview with a representative from a well-known environmental non-governmental organisation (ENGO) such as Greenpeace. Rather than referring to the name of the individual and the organisation, you can simply reference the quote as: "(pers. comm., ENGO 1)"

(Note, pers. comm. refers to personal communication). Anonymised details of the respective codes can be provided in an appendix, eg, ENGO 1 = Interview with major environmental non-governmental organisation, June 2014, London.

Note, even when respondents have indicated their willingness for their identities to be revealed, it is advisable to err on the side of caution by anonymising responses. As highlighted earlier, researchers should avoid causing harm, and ensuring anonymity is an important part of harm avoidance.

Finally, it is important for you to store personally identifiable data safely and securely. For more information on handling personal data, see: **info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/lse-life/resources/msc-dissertation/manage-data**

3) Integrity

Integrity requires an honest account of your evidence, analysis and conclusions. The preceding section, Research Transparency and Integrity, explains these expectations across different research approaches.

The Capstone Project/ Dissertation

The Capstone Project/dissertation is a key component of the MSc programme. The aim of this project is for you to bring what you have learned in your taught courses together with your research interests, to develop a substantial piece of empirical research. The research may involve primary data collection or secondary analysis of existing data.

Aim of the Capstone Project/Dissertation

To conduct an empirical investigation of a social science problem with methods relevant to the programme content under the supervision of a member of staff from the Department of Methodology.

Objectives of the project:

- To develop a detailed plan of a research project;
- To review a specific literature on the selected issue;
- To identify relevant research questions given the literature;
- To turn general research questions into specific empirical questions;
- To select and justify an appropriate research design;
- To identify and construct or collect appropriate empirical data;
- To employ suitable methods and techniques to analyse the data, given the research design;
- To select and employ suitable methods/techniques to investigate the empirical questions;
- To analyse the empirical material collected (using applied data science methodology, in the case of MSc ASDS students);
- To present the main insights from these analyses in compelling fashion, using tables, data visualisation, and/or interactive pages as appropriate;

- Where appropriate, to prepare a set of replication materials using appropriate version control software;
- To write a report which includes a review of the relevant literature, the research questions, an explanation and justification of the design, a description of the conduct and analysis of the research, and a discussion of the findings in relation to the Capstone Project/dissertation literature and methodological issues.

The Supervisor

Following the submission of an initial dissertation plan at the start of Winter Term, the MSc Programme Directors will allocate a supervisor to each student. The process of matching students to supervisors considers staff areas of expertise, methodological fit, student research interests, and equity in the number of projects per staff member. Note that your supervisor may or may not be the same as your academic mentor.

You can expect up to six 30-minute meetings with your supervisor. Your first meeting can take place once supervisors have been allocated; your last meeting must take place on or before Friday 2 July 2027. You are expected to take the initiative in arranging meetings.

The role of the supervisor is to advise on various aspects of the research including:

- the topic area and relevant literature
- the feasibility of the topic and timeline considerations
- specification of the research questions
- design and adequacy of methods
- sources of data and access to observational data where feasible
- analysis of data and interpretation of results
- structure and style of reporting.

Project Milestones

Autumn Term

You will attend two timetabled sessions in which the Programme Director will introduce you to the basics of producing a Capstone Project/dissertation and how supervision works. Throughout the term you should explore possible research topics and discuss these with your Academic Mentor and other relevant members of staff during their office hours.

Winter Term

Over the Winter Break you should narrow down the research topic you will focus on and prepare to submit your project plan. At this time, ideally you will have completed an initial literature review and considered the ethical dimensions of your project ideas.

Ethics seminar: January 2027, Week 1 of Winter Term

All students undertaking the Capstone Project/dissertation are required to attend a seminar in Winter Term in which the Ethics Coordinator will discuss research ethics as relates to the project, and the process by which you will apply for ethics approval.

Project plan submission: 21 January 2027

The project plan is a summary of the proposed work (its rationale, objectives, and likely methodology) and a detailed plan and the timeline of the different components of the project. You will submit this via a Microsoft form.

Your project plan should include:

- Project title
- Five keywords to describe the substantive and methodological focus of your project, using at least each of the following: academic discipline/field; concept(s), method(s), empirical focus
- Short summary/abstract (100 words)
- Description of the proposed data and how they will be gathered, accessed, or produced and a contingency plan in case this proposed access fails
- Timeline and key milestones.

You will also need to confirm that you are aware of the ethics review requirements and have considered these when planning your project.

The two MSc Programme Directors will review all proposals and use the details to allocate supervisors. The Programme Officer will then inform you of the allocation, at which time you should promptly arrange an initial meeting with your supervisor.

Ethics Review (initial draft ready for first supervision meeting, final version due 11 March 2027)

You must complete the ethics review and obtain any required approval before you commence data collection as part of your project.

Your initial supervision meetings provide an opportunity to discuss the ethics review and prepare the final submission, due by 11 March. For current procedures and instructions for the online system, visit the School's **Research Ethics pages.**

The online system directs applications to the appropriate review route. Lower-risk student projects are reviewed by the supervisor; higher-risk projects require review by the School's Research Ethics Review Board (RERB), following the supervisor's review. If the system indicates that approval is not required, your supervisor must check and confirm that outcome. The route depends on the nature and risks of the project, not simply on whether it uses interviews, surveys or existing data.

Funding applications primary round: March 2027, Week 10 of Winter Term

The Department of Methodology offers limited funding to MSc students to support original data collection and innovative analysis essential for their dissertations. Awards are not usually to exceed £500 per student.

The grants are reserved for projects that cannot be executed without the funding. Requests for funding intended to alleviate student effort (such as a research assistant) would not be considered. Students need to demonstrate that they have made alternative arrangements for their dissertation in case funding is not awarded. The grant takes the form of a reimbursement, meaning students will need to be able to make purchases outright before being reimbursed by the department.

Grants may support specialised research materials and equipment, proprietary software, data purchases, payments to research participants, travel to and from research sites, and similar expenses related to original data collection and innovative data analysis. All spending must comply with LSE financial regulations. Further advice on this will be available to successful applicants.

There are two funding application deadlines. The first is the "primary round" in Week 10 of Winter Term when we expect majority of available funds to be allocated. The outcomes of this round will be shared in Week 11 of Winter Term. The second is the "emergency round"; see information under Spring Term for further information.

Spring Term

Capstone/dissertation presentations: early May 2027

You are required to give a short "work in progress" presentation on your project, using slides. This presentation should address the following: your research questions, the social scientific concepts and theories you will be using, your proposed study design and methodology, an account of the data you will be collecting and/ or using, and any preliminary results of your analysis. The presentations are an integral part of the project process as they allow for faculty and peer feedback and comments on your progress in a friendly and supportive environment. You should speak for around 5- 10 minutes and it is recommended to use no more than 3-4 slides.

You should then meet your supervisor in the days after your presentation to discuss any feedback/comments received and how these could be addressed.

Funding applications emergency round: May 2027, Week 2 of Spring Term

We understand that the need for funding to support essential components of a research project is occasionally not evident at the time of the primary round of funding applications. For this reason, there is an "emergency round" where students who did not apply for funding in the primary round can apply for funding. Please note that the majority of available funds are expected to be allocated in the primary round, so you should not wait for the emergency round if you know that you will need funding earlier in the year. Applications for the emergency round will be competing for a smaller amount of a resource.

Summer/the "dissertation period"

You may hear the period after the end of Spring Term referred to as "Summer" or "Summer Break", but it is important to remember that 12-month master's students are technically still engaged in their programme until 26 September 2027. So, this part of the year is also sometimes called the "dissertation period". It is assumed that you will be occupied with your project until the deadline in August.

Once all other Spring Term assessments are complete, you may wish to leave London and continue working on your project elsewhere. If you wish to leave the UK **before the end of Spring Term, 18 June 2027**, you will need to register an approved absence. Contact the Programme Officer to discuss this. If you wish to leave the UK **after the end of term but still during the supervision period**, you should check that your supervisor agrees to hold online supervision meetings and, if you have a visa, always speak to the **Student Advice and Engagement Team** about leaving the UK.

End of supervision: 2 July 2027

Supervision of your projects will end on 2 July at the latest. In the period between your presentation and the end of supervision you should complete the first draft of your Capstone Project/dissertation. You are strongly encouraged to complete the bulk of your data analysis before supervision ends, so that you can get feedback on how your research is proceeding. If you would like your supervisor to review draft sections, agree a timescale with them and provide your draft in good time before the meeting.

Submission of an electronic copy of your Capstone Project/dissertation via Moodle: 12 August 2027 by 4pm

The Capstone Project/dissertation should be uploaded as a PDF file. Please ensure that it is typewritten (A4 double-spaced, size 12 font), of no more than 10,000 words, and includes a full reference list and an abstract. The appendices can be used to present supplemental material (such as summary of tabulated survey data, text analysis codebooks, additional regression results and so on) and links to any version control repositories that contain the code and/or software required to replicate your analysis, as well as any interactive websites built to visualise the main results of your analysis. The appendix should not normally extend beyond 10 pages.

The 10,000-word limit includes the main body of text; titles, headings and subheadings; abstract; footnotes and endnotes. The word limit does not include the coversheet; tables of content; figures and figure captions; tables and table captions; reference lists; appendices.

There is no minimum word count. Your report should provide sufficient detail and depth to explain and justify your research, and will be assessed against the published marking criteria rather than its length alone.

You may include code in the Appendix or as a GitHub link. Code will not be marked.

On the front page of the submission please provide the following information: your candidate number, the name of your supervisor, the date, and the project title. No hard copies of the submission are required.

MY498/MY499 Project Roadmap

Tasks	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Submit proposal	Due 21 Jan							
Supervision		Available until 2 July						
Ethics form		Due 11 March						
Design and collect data			Rough timings					
Present your work so far					Early May			
Feedback meeting					Post-presentation			
Data analysis					Rough timings			
Write up and submit							Due 12 August	

Guidance on writing up the project

As in other forms of assessment, it is the written text that is evaluated. Regardless of how much time and effort has gone into the research, its quality must be demonstrated in the report.

Structure and clarity are therefore crucial. There is no single right way to write a project: each one is different, and research can invite different interpretations. Reading peer-reviewed research in your disciplinary area is one of the best ways to learn how to present your own work.

The headings below are a guide, not a prescribed structure or a set of word targets. Give each part the space your project needs while keeping all counted material within the 10,000-word limit.

- Abstract
- Introduction and review of relevant literature
- Research design and methodology. Describe the ethics review process and its outcome, including any approval required and obtained.
- Analysis and discussion of findings
- Conclusion, including limitations, implications and further research
- Reference list
- Appendices, including the short AI-use statement described in Research Transparency and Integrity (pp. 29-31).

No particular referencing style is required. Use a standard academic referencing format (for example, Harvard) consistently throughout.

Methodology MSc Prizes

The department awards two prizes per programme to graduating MSc students. These are reflected on the transcript and come with a cash award.

For the MSc Applied Social Data Science, the prizes are “Best Capstone Project” and “Best Overall Performance”. For the MSc Social Research Methods, they are “Best Dissertation” and “Best Overall Performance”.

Taught Master's Assessment Criteria

(Please see below for additional comments on courses on quantitative methods).

Mark	Descriptive Equivalent for Exams	Descriptive Equivalent for Essays	Descriptive Equivalent for the Capstone Project/dissertation
Very Good to Excellent Distinction 70-100	Perceptive, focused use of a good depth of material with a critical edge. Original ideas or structure of argument.	Breadth or intensity of accessed data or literature plus an original or critical contribution or finding.	All the elements of a Merit-level project, plus evidence of excellence in some aspects of the work – for example, a particularly well-chosen research question, innovative or exceptionally well executed data collection, or advanced or innovative methods of analysis used with a high level of skill. A professional project completed to a high standard. Publishable in existing or modified form.

Mark	Descriptive Equivalent for Exams	Descriptive Equivalent for Essays	Descriptive Equivalent for the Capstone Project/dissertation
Good Merit 60-69	Perceptive understanding of the issues plus a coherent well-read and stylish treatment though lacking originality	Thorough, clear treatment shows understanding of arguments, contribution and context. Efficient use of data and literature.	A convincing and competently executed piece of empirical social research, with all of the following elements correctly in place and clearly explained: • one or more clearly stated, meaningful, interesting and answerable research questions, motivated by appropriate theoretical frameworks and a review of relevant literature; • one or more sets of primary or secondary empirical (qualitative and/or quantitative) data which are appropriate for answering the research questions, with a clear explanation of the data and how they were obtained; • analysis of the data in order to answer the research questions, using appropriate methods of analysis which are correctly used and explained; • answers to the research questions, correctly justified by the analysis of the data, and conclusions and interpretation drawn from the answers.
Satisfactory Pass 50-59	A "correct" answer based largely on lecture material. Little detail or originality but presented in adequate framework. Small factual errors allowed.	Pedestrian treatment of wide literature or database OR adequate treatment of incomplete data or literature.	All the elements of a Merit-level project, but with errors or omissions which reveal some lack of competence or understanding.

Mark	Descriptive Equivalent for Exams	Descriptive Equivalent for Essays	Descriptive Equivalent for the Capstone Project/dissertation
Unsatisfactory Fail 30-49 **Bad fail** 29 and under	Based entirely on lecture material but unstructured and with increasing error component. Concepts are disordered or flawed. Poor presentation. Errors of concept and scope or poor in knowledge, structure and expression.	Very basic approach to a narrow or misguided selection of material. Lacking in background or flawed in arguments. Little effort. Shallow and poorly presented. Lacking in conclusions or conclusions incorrect.	A project where some elements of a Merit-level project are incorrect or incomplete to the extent that the work does not constitute a meaningful and informative piece of empirical social research. For example, this may be because: • the research questions are missing, uninteresting, unmotivated or unanswerable; • empirical data are missing, inappropriate or • inadequately explained; • analysis of the data is missing or incorrect; • answers to the research questions are missing or not justified by the analysis

Assessment of Quantitative Methods courses

The criteria listed above apply also to courses on quantitative methods where appropriate, for example, to any parts of their exams which call for essay-type answers. However, many of these exams involve instead shorter questions, to which the answers can be relatively unambiguously marked as (fully or partially) correct or incorrect. In the marking, these questions may be further broken down into smaller steps and marked step by step. The final mark is then a function of the proportion of parts of the questions which have been answered correctly. In such marking, the principle of partial credit is observed as far as feasible. This means that an answer to a part of a question will be treated as correct when it is correct conditional on answers to other parts of the question, even if those other parts have been answered incorrectly.

Key MSc Applied Social Data Science dates

Autumn Term

During Welcome Week	Meet with your Programme Director
Monday 28 September 2026 (Week 1)	Teaching begins
Week 1	Using Generative AI (seminar)
5pm Friday 9 October 2026 (Week 2)	Finalise course choices on **LSE For You**
Week 6	Reading Week
Week 7	Introduction to the Capstone Project (seminar)
Week 10	Introduction to Capstone Project supervision (seminar)

Winter Term

Monday 11 January 2027 (Week 1)	Teaching begins
Week 1	Ethics for the Capstone Project/dissertation (seminar)
Thursday 21 January 2027 (Week 2)	Capstone Project plan due
Week 6	Reading Week
Thursday 11 March 2027 (Week 9)	Capstone Project ethics form due

Spring Term

Early May 2027	Capstone Project presentations
May/June 2027	Spring Exam period
Friday 2 July 2027	End of Capstone Project supervision
4pm Thursday 12 August 2027	Capstone Project submission deadline

Key MSc Social Research Methods dates

Autumn Term

During Welcome Week	Meet with your Programme Director
Monday 28 September 2026 (Week 1)	Teaching begins
Week 1	Using Generative AI (seminar)
5pm Friday 9 October 2026 (Week 2)	Finalise course choices on **LSE For You**
Week 6	Reading Week
Week 8	Introduction to the dissertation (seminar)
Week 10	Introduction to dissertation supervision (seminar)

Winter Term

Monday 11 January 2027 (Week 1)	Teaching begins
Week 1	Ethics for the Capstone Project/dissertation (seminar)
Thursday 21 January 2027 (Week 2)	Dissertation project plan due
Week 6	Reading Week
Thursday 11 March 2027 (Week 9)	Dissertation ethics form due

Spring Term

Early May 2027	Dissertation presentations
May/June 2027	Spring Exam period
Friday 3 July 2027	End of dissertation supervision
4pm Thursday 12 August 2027	Dissertation submission deadline

Completing your studies

Graduation Ceremonies

For more information, including the dates of future ceremonies and details of the School's overseas ceremonies, please see the **Graduating from LSE** webpages.

LSE Alumni Community

The international LSE alumni community comprises more than 142,000 people in over 200 countries. The Alumni Relations team, in collaboration with the department, works to keep the LSE alumni community engaged with each other and with the School at every stage, from new graduate to post-retirement, providing a programme of communications, events, services, volunteering and opportunities to connect. As a current student, there are many opportunities for you to get involved with the alumni network.

Register for LSE Alumni Online

The alumni website and networking community features news from campus, our world leading academics and alumni all over the world, and provides access to the alumni programme offered by the School. To use this service, please register for a student Alumni Online account with your Student ID number.

Alumni Professional Mentoring Network

This career networking resource allows LSE alumni to share their valuable professional experience and expertise with current students.

Alumni groups

LSE's network of regional and special interest alumni groups organise regular professional and social events that students can attend. There are more than 80 regional groups and 11 special interest groups.

Involve alumni in your events

Looking for alumni speakers? Wish to invite alumni to a networking session or event? Want to learn from the experiences of LSE alumni in a wide range of industries? Connect with alumni through the Alumni Relations team for your events and other endeavours.

What do LSE graduates do?

Find statistics about the careers undertaken by graduates and also many alumni career profiles.

Social Media

Follow LSE and the Department of Methodology on X and LinkedIn to keep up to date with alumni events and activities. Students are welcome to join the official LSE Alumni group as well as the Department of Methodology's dedicated Alumni page on LinkedIn. There are also a number of other LSE alumni groups on LinkedIn, many of which accept students as current members.

For more information about the benefits and services available, please visit the LSE Alumni Hub here or contact the Alumni Relations team via **alumni@lse.ac.uk**

LSE Alumni Association

LSE's Alumni Association is the official voice of LSE's global alumni community, comprising more than 130,000 people in over 200 countries, nearly 100 regional groups, and 11 special interest groups. You automatically become a member upon graduation. Membership is free. By registering with the LSE Alumni Online community, you will be able to stay connected with former classmates and the School after your graduation.

LSE alumni also have access to:

- Alumni Professional Mentoring Network
- LSE Careers for up to two years after graduation
- An email forwarding address to continue using an LSE email address
- The Library's printed collections on a reference basis, and can borrow free of charge.

For more information about the benefits and services available to alumni, please contact the Alumni Relations team on **alumni@lse.ac.uk**

Keep in touch

The department is always interested in keeping in touch with alumni through the channels listed above and through ad hoc occasions such as our newly implemented annual Alumni Reception. We also run a webpage of **Methodology alumni profiles** and have a mailing list for our **departmental seminar series**, which many alumni attend. We hope to stay connected from the time of your application right through to the advanced stage of your career.

Section 2: LSE beyond your department

- X Own your learning
- X Centre your self
- X Build your community
- X Broaden your horizons
- X Make your impact
- X Expand your skills
- X Shape your future

LSE beyond your department

Your department is at the heart of your LSE experience – your academic home. But it's only one part of a large, dynamic university full of opportunities to learn, connect, and grow. It can take time to explore what's available, and you're not expected to do everything. Your experience is yours to shape.

This section of your handbook introduces that wider offer and is structured around a set of themes covering different aspects of your LSE experience – from developing as a scholar and looking after your wellbeing to building connections, broadening your horizons, and shaping your future. You can explore each of these themes further with LSE LIFE – your one-stop shop for opportunities beyond your programme. There's no need to have it all figured out – just start where you are, follow your curiosity, and take opportunities that feel right for you.

You will also see mention of LSE Students' Union (LSESU) – the student-led organisation that represents all LSE students. It is independent to LSE, and organises student-run societies, activities, and campaigns.

LSE LIFE – your personal guide to LSE

So many opportunities, so many choices, so much to explore. Think of LSE LIFE as your personal guide to LSE – helping you find the skills, experiences, and opportunities that feel right for you during your time with us. LSE LIFE is here for you throughout the year – both online and on the Ground Floor of the Library:

- The **LSE LIFE events and opportunities listings** are regularly updated, central listings of all the extracurricular happenings across LSE. You can filter by provider and theme, or just browse and see what strikes your interest!
- **LIFE Conversations** are one-to-one appointments providing personalised guidance about student life, settling into London, or making the most of what's on offer. LSE LIFE advisers can help clarify your goals, make a plan for your next steps, and help you find the teams and programmes that best fit your interests.
- The **LSE LIFE space** is a bright, open space located right on the ground floor of the Library. Perfect to study by yourself or with friends, attend a workshop or event, or drop by at the reception with any questions you might have.

Own your learning

Shape your intellectual journey – whether for success in the classroom or world-changing research

Studying at LSE is probably unlike anything you've done before – and that's part of what makes it exciting. You'll encounter ideas that challenge your assumptions, arguments that demand a response, and questions that don't have easy answers. You'll be expected to read critically, write persuasively, question evidence, speak up in classes and seminars, and develop a point of view that is genuinely your own. It can feel like a shift from being told what to think to working out how to think: reading independently, testing ideas, and deciding how to use your time. Lectures and seminars matter, but much of your progress happens in the hours around them.

That's a lot to ask. It's also one of the most rewarding things you'll ever do. You're not expected to arrive knowing how to do all of this, and you won't get there simply by putting in more hours. A common misconception is to confuse effort with progress: reading endlessly or spending long days in the library can feel productive without making your thinking much clearer. Progress tends to come from smaller, more deliberate habits – reading selectively, turning notes into arguments, and testing your understanding in discussion with your peers.

Your department, teachers, and academic mentor are your first point of contact – but there's extensive support beyond that. Across LSE, specialist teams can help you at every stage of your academic journey.

- **Learning Lab** is there for you at every stage of your learning journey – from finding your footing to thinking more critically, writing more convincingly, and getting more from your reading. Workshops run throughout the year on a variety of topics such as academic writing, critical reading, research planning, exam preparation, dissertation writing, and using AI tools critically and effectively. You can also book one-to-one sessions with Learning Lab Study Advisers to discuss specific aspects of your work.
- **LSE Library** is a central part of your learning environment, providing access to course readings and extensive research collections, alongside a wide range of study spaces. From Winter Term, it's open 24 hours a day. You can also discover alternative study spaces across campus with the Facilities Guide. Each department also has a dedicated librarian who can help with any Library questions, such as finding, evaluating, and referencing resources.

- The **Centre for Language Studies** offers free English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses in Autumn and Winter Terms. EAP focuses on the skills required to perform in an English-speaking academic environment across the core subject areas you will encounter during your time at LSE.
- The **Department of Methodology** runs research design and methods courses, required on some master's programmes and optional on others. It also offers one-to-one support and short courses to complement your learning and support you through your dissertation and other research projects.
- **Digital Skills Lab** can support you in developing key digital and data skills that underpin many courses and assessments.

Using these resources early can help you find your footing more quickly. It's also worth coming back to them at key points in the year – for example, before your first summative assessments or when you start working on longer pieces of research. Over time, you'll develop a sense of what works best for you – whether that's how you organise your study, approach your reading, or make use of different kinds of support.

Three ways to start

- Join a Getting Started with the Library session during Welcome to learn more about what it has to offer!
- Attend a Learning Lab session in your first fortnight.
- Find a study space that works for you – the Library, a café, or your hall's common room.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Own your learning

Centre your self

Prioritise your wellbeing, adapt to change, and build strength from the inside out.

Looking after yourself isn't a distraction from your studies. It's the foundation on which you build everything else, and it means different things at different times. Sometimes it's about building habits that help you stay on track: managing your workload, knowing your limits, finding routines that work for you. Sometimes it means genuinely switching off – a yoga session, a workout, or a mindful break. Sometimes it means recognising that you need support and knowing how to find it.

Unwind and recharge: make time to relax and enjoy yourself

Whether you're deep in revision or simply spending time on campus between lectures and seminars, it's important to make space to relax, recharge, and enjoy yourself – even during the busiest periods of the academic year. From sports and wellbeing sessions to creative arts and crafts events: explore upcoming activities and events with the **Unwind and recharge**-filter on the LSE LIFE events listing.

You don't have to measure whether an issue is "serious enough" to raise with someone. A better question is whether it's making it harder for you to work, think clearly, or stay steady. If it is, that's enough reason to seek support – and early help usually gives you more options than late help. The following teams are here for you at every stage:

- The **Student Wellbeing Service** offers wellbeing appointments, counselling, workshops, and guidance when you're struggling or simply unsure what kind of support would help. They can help you talk through stress, anxiety, low mood, loneliness, homesickness, or a situation you're finding hard to manage. For students with disabilities, long-term health or mental health conditions, or specific learning difficulties, there's also a dedicated Disability and Mental Health Service.
- **Peer Supporters** are trained student volunteers who help by offering a non-judgemental, confidential listening space to any LSE student. They will listen, and if you wish, can help you explore options for how to move forward. Any student can speak to any peer supporter and reaching out is a chance to build connections and speak to students you might not otherwise meet.

- The **Faith Centre** offers spaces for worship, quiet reflection, chaplaincy, and interfaith activity for all students, whether faith is central to your life or not. For some it's a place of worship, and for others it's a calm, reflective space. They offer weekly Ashtanga Yoga and Tai Chi sessions throughout the year. The Faith Centre Director and Chaplain to LSE, Revd Canon Prof James Walters, offers confidential support regardless of your background or beliefs. You can also directly contact our Muslim, Catholic, Jewish, and Orthodox Associate Chaplains.
- The **Halls Wellbeing Team** can provide wellbeing support and guidance if you live in LSE halls of residence. Check the Halls Life platform for more halls wellbeing information and resources.
- **LSESU Sports** has plenty of options to get involved, from the gym and drop-in sessions to sports clubs, the inclusive sport programme, and departmental sport. Staying active is a great way to support your wellbeing, lift your mood, and ease your stress – whether you're trying something new or getting back into a routine.

Three ways to start

- Make time to attend one Unwind and recharge-event that strikes your interest.
- Pick up a wall calendar from the LSE LIFE reception desk to help you stay organised.
- Take a walk through Lincoln's Inn Fields between lectures or seminars.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Centre your self

Build your community

Get involved, connect with others, and make the most of what LSE and London have to offer.

LSE is a genuinely global institution. Your peers come from every corner of the world, bringing with them different perspectives, experiences, and ways of understanding the challenges that define our time. You'll meet people whose beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of seeing the world differ profoundly from your own. That's one of the most valuable things LSE offers – and it asks something of you in return: the willingness to listen and to engage thoughtfully, even if that means experiencing the discomfort of genuine difference. An LSE education doesn't just consist of lectures and assignments: it's also built from conversations, collaborations, and debates that don't appear on any transcript. Sometimes those conversations will challenge you. Sometimes they'll change you. The relationships you build and the communities you find here are fundamental parts of your experience and your education.

Building that community takes a little intention – showing up, trying things, and being open to connections you didn't necessarily expect. Societies, student groups, volunteering, and School-wide events are often the easiest routes in, but different things work for different people. Find what feels right for you, and don't try to do everything at once: one society, one regular event, or one study group will do more for your sense of belonging than signing up to many things and struggling to commit to any of them.

Find your people at LSE

Whatever your background, interests, or experiences, you are at home in the LSE community.

One of the best ways to meet new people is to connect over something you already share. The **Find your people**-filter on the LSE LIFE opportunities listings is designed to help you do just that. It gathers activities built around a common background, identity, or interest – covering cultural and national societies, sports clubs, music groups, and faith communities. You'll also find peer mentoring for undergraduate and neurodivergent students, Professionals at LSE events for students with five or more years of work experience, alumni mentoring for ethnic minority students, tailored programmes for female, disabled, and LGBTQIA+ start-up founders, and an LGBTQIA+ role models directory, among many other events and programmes. The School also hosts celebrations for Black History Month, LGBT+ History Month, and Women's History Month, amongst others. You will be able to find many of these online on the EDI calendar and on campus in the Hall-Carpenter Room – a dedicated space to cultivate an environment of inclusivity, available for student use.

Creating an inclusive experience for every student is a core priority for the School. The **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** team actively works with the community to deliver action plans that advance equity and inclusion for students with protected characteristics and those who are underrepresented at the School through targeted work and initiatives. There is also work to foster good relations and positive dialogue across our diverse School community which you can find out more about on the Campus Relations webpages.

Last but not least, don't forget London itself is part of the offer, too! Our campus is located right in the centre of the city – moments from the River Thames, Covent Garden, the Royal Courts of Justice. Make time to explore! You can find detailed accessibility guides on **AccessAble**, that cover all buildings on campus and include route maps.

- **LSESU Societies** are one of the main ways to meet fellow students through shared interests, identities, and activities. With over 200 individual societies covering academic interests, cultural identities, sports, politics, media, the arts, and more, they are great for getting together with others on a regular basis.
- The **Faith Centre** is home to the LSE's diverse religious activities, transformational interfaith leadership programme, and a quiet, reflective space for both students and staff.
- **LIFE in London** is a series of free events and trips designed to connect you to London, fellow students, as well as some of the great experiences the city has to offer. From concerts and workshops to heritage-themed trips, there is something for everyone.
- **Halls Life** is the platform for student life in LSE accommodation, offering events, student-written guides and experiences, and key information to help you make the most of your time in halls.

Three ways to start

- Check out the Discover LSE Fair and the LSESU Welcome Fair in Autumn Term, and the Welcome Back Fair in Winter Term – the offer is vast!
- Explore a London neighbourhood you've never been to.
- Talk to someone on your programme you haven't talked with before.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Build your community

Broaden your horizons

Develop a global perspective and engage with ideas, cultures, and questions that challenge and inspire you.

LSE is a place where people come together to debate, question, and explore the major issues shaping the world. Your degree is part of that conversation, but the intellectual life of the School extends far beyond your programme. Public events, lectures, discussions, and research talks give you the chance to encounter ideas, arguments, and perspectives that sit alongside – or sometimes challenge – what you study in class.

You don't need to attend everything. In fact, it's usually more valuable to engage selectively and thoughtfully: follow a question that genuinely interests you, explore a topic just outside your subject, or listen to people whose views differ from your own. Sometimes a single event or conversation is enough to change how you think about an issue, or to introduce you to a field, debate, or perspective you want to pursue further.

- **LSE Events** hosts one of the most active public lecture programmes of any university in the world. From heads of state and Nobel laureates to leading researchers, journalists, and policymakers: this is your chance to hear from some of the most influential figures in the social sciences first-hand. You can join the debate by posing your questions to the panel and even possibly meet the speakers at a book signing or reception after the event.
- **LSE Research Showcase** is a series of regular coffee-break research talks on campus, with free hot drinks and pastries, showcasing some of the fascinating research from our academic community.
- **World Cafés** are your chance to discover and debate important questions and ideas alongside students, teachers, researchers, alumni, and others from the LSE community. Short presentations from leading LSE researchers are followed by informal round-table conversations with scholars and other students.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Explore the big questions

Broadening your horizons also means more than studying global topics though: it means learning from the people around you and becoming more curious about lives and perspectives beyond your own. The opportunity is to leave LSE not only with expertise in your subject, but with a wider frame of reference: more aware of complexity, more comfortable with uncertainty, and more connected to the world beyond your own experience.

- **CIVICA** is the European University Alliance of the Social Sciences, of which LSE is a member alongside nine other European universities. Through CIVICA, you can take part in a range of activities and programmes, including immersive learning experiences abroad and online collaborative courses.

The world at your doorstep

You don't need to travel to encounter different cultures and perspectives at LSE: you can also engage with our international community right here on campus! **The LSE Language Community** – run by the Centre for Language Studies – offers bitesize speaking sessions with native speakers, weekly conversation circles, and tandem learning partnerships. The LSESU's **national and cultural societies** host events, food and film nights, and celebrations throughout the year. The **Faith Centre** offers interfaith events and activities open to students of any background, where you can learn about and connect across different cultures and traditions. Their Beecken Faith and Leadership programme is designed to help you develop key skills in reasoning and leadership in the context of engaging with religious difference, covering diverse topics, including the climate crisis and geopolitical conflict.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Connect across cultures

Three ways to start

- Attend a public lecture on a topic completely outside your degree and note one idea or name to follow up afterwards.
- Join a LSE Language Community session or find a tandem learning partner.
- Visit the Faith Centre spaces – if you have a moment, why not take a break in The Cave, their silent room for meditation, prayer, and reflection?

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Broaden your horizons

Make your impact

Discover what matters to you and contribute to creating change, big or small, at LSE and beyond.

LSE's approach to social sciences is understanding the causes of things *for the betterment of society*. After more than 130 years, that tradition still flourishes in the research produced here, in the public debates hosted here, and in the careers of the people who've studied here. It's also alive in what students do while they are here.

We invite you to ask yourself: what are the causes that matter to you? Meaningful action isn't necessarily about doing more. Often, it's about committing to something you care about deeply and staying with it long enough to understand it properly. The value of that kind of involvement lies not only in what you achieve, but in what it teaches you – about responsibility, about other people, and about your own limits.

- The **Volunteer Centre** is there to inspire and empower you to volunteer for causes that you are passionate about during your time at LSE. They provide a range of long term, short term, and one-off opportunities to suit your interests and schedule. You can also drop in to their space in Lincoln Chambers or book an appointment to talk through what might suit you.
- **Sustainable LSE** is the School's sustainability team, where you can learn about contributing to sustainability on campus and in residences while building new skills – whether you want to come to a one-off event or volunteer with the team more regularly. Their activities range from beekeeping and wildlife workshops to carbon literacy training and sustainability auditing.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Change the wider world

Impact at LSE doesn't only happen outside the School. It can also come from helping to shape the institution itself, from contributing to discussions about how LSE operates to simply showing up for another student who needs support. Alongside sharing your feedback at **departmental level**, you can also take part in a wide range of School-wide groups and programmes.

- **LSESU Student Voice** gives you countless opportunities to make yourself heard in what is one of the most politically active Students' Unions in the country – whether that's getting involved with ongoing campaigns or starting your own, submitting a policy proposal, or standing in the LSESU leadership elections.
- **Student Education Panels** are a chance to share your perspective and discuss your LSE experience with peers from diverse backgrounds, programmes, and levels of study, helping to inform processes and improvements across the School.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Shape your school

Support your peers

Your greatest impact on other students' experience at LSE can sometimes take place on a personal level, through supporting fellow students and helping to build a strong, welcoming community. There are several formal programmes through which you can support your peers:

- The **Student Academic Mentoring Programme** is an undergraduate-only initiative that helps first years to settle into their department and meet other students by matching them with second- and third-year undergraduate mentors. Neurodivergent undergraduate and postgraduate students can also apply to the Neurodivergent Student Academic Mentoring scheme – you don't need a formal diagnosis to take part.
- **Peer Supporters** are trained student volunteers who offer a confidential, non-judgemental listening space to any LSE student. All students who have already been studying at LSE for at least a year can become a peer supporter, including continuing undergraduates and those in the second year of a two-year master's programme.
- **Widening Participation** offer a range of paid roles, including Student Ambassador, Tutor, and Mentor positions, enabling current LSE students to share their experiences of applying to and studying at LSE with prospective students and young people considering higher education.

Three ways to start

- Drop by the Volunteer Centre on campus to learn more about your options.
- Join a Student Town Hall to learn about and debate policies that shape the way the LSESU runs.
- Attend a Meet LSE leadership event to get to know leaders from across LSE in an informal setting – keep an eye out for upcoming events in Student News.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Make your impact

Expand your skills

Unlock the talents, tools, and mindsets that set you apart.

You've arrived at LSE with a distinctive set of abilities, built on everything you accomplished, studied, and experienced before you got here. You'll apply, test, and extend those skills every day: speaking up in a seminar, shaping a group project, and adapting to new ways of thinking and working. Some strengths deepen in new contexts, and other gaps only become visible when you're stretched. Part of university is learning to recognise both, and to think about what else you want to be able to do.

It's natural to think about skills in terms of outcomes – what mark will this help me get, or how can I highlight this on my CV. Some skills are worth being deliberate about, and focusing on one practical skill with long-term value is often more effective than an ambitious self-improvement plan. If you want to study or work abroad, invest in the language skills that will get you there. If your dissertation or internship is likely to need technical skills, build them gradually before they become urgent.

- The **Digital Skills Lab** offers practical, face-to-face workshops, bootcamps, and self-paced resources covering data analysis and visualisation, coding, AI literacy, and assistive technology – including tools like Excel, Power BI, Python, R, Stata, SPSS, and generative AI (Claude and Copilot). It's open to all students and designed to be accessible whether you're a complete beginner or building on existing knowledge.
- The **Centre for Language Studies** runs non-degree language courses at all levels, from beginner to advanced, designed to fit around your programme commitments.
- **Student Media** is your chance to practise writing, editing, production, presenting, and media management with a genuine audience – across video, radio, *The Beaver* student newspaper, and the student-run journals within Houghton Street Press.

Some skills develop without you even thinking about it though – you pick them up just by being here, doing the work, and being around other people doing the same. In fact, you could pick any programme, event or initiative listed in this guide – whether it is related to making your impact, broadening your horizons, or building your community – and it would help you grow. Volunteering, leading an LSESU society, building a start-up, working on your academic skills, or pulling together a study group – each is a chance to get better at communicating clearly, leading and collaborating, or approaching problems creatively and critically.

Reflect on your skills

Reflecting on how you're developing is hard to do alone – it's easier to explore, understand, and articulate your experience with someone who can help you take a step back.

- **LSE Careers** offers one-to-one appointments with Careers Consultants to help you identify and assess the skills you're building, and think about how to develop and articulate them for the path you want to take.
- **LSE LIFE** offers one-to-one conversations to help you make sense of everything LSE offers beyond your academic programme, and figure out which opportunities might be right for you.

Three ways to start

- Identify one technical skill that you might need during or after your degree – when would be a good time to learn it?
- Try one thing outside your comfort zone – leading a meeting, presenting a new idea to your classmates, organising a group trip, or speaking first in a seminar.
- Use the LSE Careers Skills Framework to recognise your skills, reflect on your experiences, and identify areas for further development as you prepare to enter the world of work.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Expand your skills

Shape your future

Prepare for life after LSE by exploring your options and following your ambitions.

Thinking about life after university is a fundamental part of being at university. The futures LSE graduates go on to build are as diverse as the people who study here – in every corner of the world and every kind of organisation, and across every sector. What they share is a capacity to explore carefully, act purposefully, think critically, and keep learning. Some students arrive at LSE with a clear sense of the path they want to pursue. Others discover it gradually, through conversations, experiences, and opportunities they couldn't have foreseen.

Ask an Alum

Many cohorts of LSE students have gone on to build and shape their own unique career paths before you – and there's a great deal you can learn from their experiences. During your time at LSE, and even after graduation, you can access our global network of more than 240,000 curious and accomplished minds through **Ask an Alum**, our online platform that connects students and alumni for advice, support, and networking. Whether it's exploring different career options, developing your professional skills, or building your first business, just submit your questions and we'll connect you with someone who can help.

As you begin to think about your own future and explore the possibilities available to you, teams across LSE can help you navigate and pursue your options. Early conversations can be valuable for testing ideas, understanding different sectors, and learning what employers really mean when they describe particular roles. If you already have a specific career path in mind, it's equally important to understand the expectations and timelines associated with it, especially in fast-moving sectors, where work experience opportunities like short placements, vacation schemes, and internships often begin recruiting early.

The important thing to remember is that thoughtful and curious people rarely settle their futures once and for all. Instead, they keep shaping them. Explore what intrigues you, build familiarity with different kinds of work and sectors, and begin to understand how your interests and strengths might translate into possible next steps.

- **LSE Careers** can help you explore your career options, reflect and build upon your skills, and offer insight into the world of work. They offer appointments, varied events and workshops, application, interview and assessment centre support, sector insights, and access to opportunities and vacancies through MyCareer.
- **LSE Generate**, our entrepreneurship hub, is here to help you innovate for the betterment of society. Drop by their co-working space on campus, or join their events, programmes, and mentoring schemes to develop entrepreneurial skills, test business ideas, and meet others interested in innovation.
- **LSESU Careers Societies** are run by students, for students. From finance and consulting to technology and the creative industries, they offer opportunities to explore different sectors through networking events, conferences, workshops, and talks.

Three ways to start

- Register with LSE Careers and browse MyCareer.
- Attend one Shape your future-event in your first term – even just to see what's out there.
- Ask an alum or anyone working at LSE how they've shaped their professional path so far.

Discover more – LSE LIFE: Shape your future

Section 3: Navigate your LSE

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- X Codes, charters, and action plans
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Navigate your LSE

Find the resources, guidance, and support you need to thrive throughout your time at LSE.

There are moments at university when you need further advice – about administrative and procedural matters related to your degree or more generally about navigating student life and London. Where you start often depends on the nature of your question.

Here are three key teams at LSE who can act as a good starting point for any general queries, even if you're not sure exactly what you're looking for. If they can't help you directly, they can connect you with someone who can.

- The **Student Services Centre (SSC)** is your first point of contact for advice on a wide range of administrative and programme-related enquiries including enrolment, visa advice and compliance, course selection, exams, and graduation. Contact them via their Live Chat or use the SSC enquiry form.
- **LSE LIFE** is your one-stop shop for extracurricular opportunities and support at LSE. Browse the LSE LIFE events and opportunities page and if you'd like some personalised guidance, book a one-to-one LIFE Conversation to talk through any aspect of your experience and find the programmes, events, and groups that are right for you.
- The **LSESU Advice Service** offers free, impartial advice on a wide range of issues – from academic matters and assessments to finances, funding, and housing. As part of the LSE Students' Union, they are independent from LSE, and thus free from a conflict of interest. To contact them, fill out the Advice Service Form.

This section covers some of the mechanics behind your programme and the wider School: how things work, who's responsible for what, and where to go when something needs sorting. You can use it as a reference throughout the year – when a term isn't clear, when you're not sure what your options are, or when you need more information on a procedure or regulation. Click through to the webpages linked for the most up-to-date information and don't hesitate to reach out to someone if you need further advice.

Specialist guidance and support

For those times when you do have a specific question or concern, you may want to seek specialist advice and support directly. Here are some of the teams you might turn to.

- **Fees, finances, and money matters**
  LSE Fees Office manages queries relating to the payment of tuition fees, tuition fee refunds, sponsor invoicing, and US or Canadian student loans. The **Financial Support Office** administers a range of bursaries, scholarships and studentships. Use the Student Finance Hub to check your fees, invoices, payments and instalment arrangements.

  If you are facing unexpected financial difficulty during your programme, the LSE Financial Support Office or the independent LSESU Advice Service may be able to help you.

- **Wellbeing and counselling**
  The **Student Wellbeing Service** offers confidential one-to-one wellbeing and counselling appointments, and workshops. If you need to speak to someone on the phone immediately or outside of working hours, you can call the 24/7 mental health support line provided by our partners Spectrum.Life.

- **Disability and mental health**
  LSE's **Disability and Mental Health Service (DMHS)** offers advice and support to all disabled students, including those with physical or sensory impairments, long-term health conditions, mental health conditions, neurodivergence, specific learning difficulties, and autistic spectrum conditions. DMHS will work closely with you to explore any academic adjustments (My Adjustments) that may be available and provide tailored support to help make your time at LSE as accessible and inclusive as possible. It is recommended that students contact DMHS before arriving at LSE, or as soon as possible afterwards, so they can collaborate with you to put in place appropriate support from the start of the academic year.

- **Discrimination, bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct**
  If you experience or witness discrimination, bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct you can report it – anonymously or with your contact details – on LSE's Report and Support system. You do not have to navigate these situations alone; you can contact any of LSE's Safe Contacts for confidential guidance. The School also partners with external specialists, Rape Crisis South London and SurvivorsUK who offer an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) service.

In an emergency, call 999 for the emergency services (police, ambulance, or fire brigade). On campus, **LSE security** can also help; call them on 020 7955 6555.

Term dates and LSE closures

The academic year has its own rhythm – terms, breaks, reading weeks, exam periods. It's helpful to see the whole picture before you get into specific procedures and regulations. This table shows the key dates for 2026/27. The notes below give a sense of what you can expect from each period and ideas about ways to approach them. Always check the Term Dates page for the latest information.

Academic year 2026/27	
Welcome week	Friday 18 September – Friday 25 September 2026
Autumn Term (AT)	Monday 28 September – Friday 11 December 2026
Reading week	Monday 2 November – Friday 6 November 2026
Winter break	Monday 14 December 2026 – Friday 8 January 2027 *School closure*: Wednesday 23 December 2026 – Friday 1 January 2027
January exam period	Monday 4 January – Sunday 10 January 2027
Winter Term (WT)	Monday 11 January – Thursday 25 March 2027
Reading week	Monday 15 February – Friday 19 February 2027
Spring break	Friday 26 March – Friday 23 April 2027 *School closure*: Friday 26 March – Thursday 1 April 2027
Spring Term (ST)	Monday 26 April – Friday 11 June 2027
Spring exam period	Tuesday 4 May – Friday 11 June 2027

Welcome week is the week before teaching begins. Systems come online, departments run their introductions, and the practical infrastructure of being an LSE student gets set up. It's also a chance to find your feet, meet people, and begin to feel at home. There will be other Welcome activities running before and after Welcome week, so you don't have to try and do everything in seven days!

Autumn Term is the first 11 weeks of teaching of the academic year. For many, it's a period of adjustment where you settle in and learn ways to manage independent study. You might see term weeks referred to as "AT4" or "AT week 4", for example – the fourth week of Autumn Term.

Reading weeks fall midway through Autumn and Winter Terms, though not every programme has them. It is not a holiday, but a pause to catch up and consolidate the work you've already done in the term so far.

The **January exam period** is the final week of the **Winter break**, bringing exams and coursework deadlines into sharp focus.

Welcome Back is a series of events and social gatherings at the beginning of Winter Term where you can make a new start, meet new people, and explore more of what LSE has to offer, once you've had one term to learn your way around. **Winter Term** is also 11 weeks. Longer projects, the start of dissertation work, and other deadlines tend to land here.

Spring break runs from late March to late April, with the School closed for a week around Easter. For most students with exams in May and June, this is when you'll do most of your revision. **Spring Term** is seven weeks long, and most of it is taken up by the **Spring exam period**. There is generally very little teaching: this is a term defined by assessment.

Outside term time, during closure periods and bank holidays, services and opening hours may change. During School closure, most School services are not available, though some buildings, such as the Library, may still be open.

Systems and online resources

LSE uses a set of core digital systems, but they do different jobs. It can be helpful to get an overview of which platform is for which task.

System	What it does	Find out more
Claude for Education	Generative AI chat from Anthropic, free to all LSE students. Each course sets its own AI use policy on Moodle, so check what is permitted before using Claude in assessed work.	Claude for Education; Academic integrity
Digiexam	The software platform used for e-Exams, in-person exams where you use a laptop computer. It locks down your personal laptop to create a secure exam environment. Not all courses use e-Exams – check your specific course regulations.	e-Exams; Exams
eduroam	The Wi-Fi network available across LSE and at universities worldwide. Connect using your LSE email address and password.	eduroam at LSE
Library Search	The online catalogue for finding books, journal articles, and other materials held by the LSE Library.	Library Search; Library
LSE Calendar	The official publication containing programme regulations, classification schemes, assessment offence regulations, appeals regulations, and codes of practice.	LSE Calendar
LSE for You	LSE's system for completing your course selection.	LSE for You
LSE LIFE events	Your starting point for browsing and booking onto events outside your department. Because teams promote events in various places, using different booking systems, this is the easiest way to find most opportunities in one place.	LSE LIFE events

System	What it does	Find out more
Moodle	LSE's virtual learning environment. Each course has its own Moodle page where you'll typically find lecture slides, recordings, reading lists, quizzes, discussion forums, and where you submit assignments and receive marks and feedback. Important: joining a Moodle page is not the same as enrolling on a course – course selection can only be done through LSE for You.	Moodle
MyCareer	LSE Careers' online portal. Use it to register for careers events, browse the jobs and internships board, book one-to-one appointments with Careers Consultants, and set preferences for sector-specific information.	MyCareer; LSE Careers
Parchment	The electronic platform through which final transcripts are issued and can be shared with employers or other institutions.	Accessing Parchment; Transcripts
Student Finance Hub	An online portal where you can review your tuition and accommodation fees, invoices, payments, and instalment arrangements once you're enrolled.	Student Finance Hub; Paying fees; Tuition fees
Student Hub	LSE's app (iOS, Android, and web) for everyday student life. Use it to view your timetable, check deadlines, browse the campus map, read about news and events, and book appointments with academic staff, LSE LIFE advisers, and departmental support teams.	Student Hub; About Student Hub
Student LfY	LSE's main administrative system. You'll use it for updating your address, finding your candidate number, accessing your assessment results and booking appointments with some School services.	Student LfY; What's in LfY

System	What it does	Find out more
Turnitin	LSE's text-matching software. It produces a similarity report that can be used to monitor for potential plagiarism. Some departments allow or require you to submit drafts through Turnitin before your final submission, so you can review the report and use it to improve your writing and referencing.	Academic misconduct guidance; Moodle

If you run into IT issues, you can visit the **Data and Technology Services (DTS)** team at the Tech Centre on the first floor of the Library, or raise a request via the DTS Service Portal. They offer a range of support services, including the iRoam Laptop Loan Service, and guidance on cyber security, assistive technology, educational discounts on tech and software, and free software available to LSE students. This includes free access to Microsoft Office 365, which provides essential tools like Word, Excel, and Outlook. Outlook is LSE's main email platform and primary method of communication, so it's important to check it regularly.

DTS also provides support for printing on campus. There are lots of printers available across the LSE campus, which you can connect to and use both from LSE computers and your personal devices. If you need to get something printed professionally, there is also a dedicated **Reprographics** team on site. They can help with anything from printing posters and leaflets to dissertation binding.

Your programme and courses

Glossary

The language of course choice, units, and regulations can seem unfamiliar at first. The LSE Calendar is the School's official resource for programme regulations, course information, and other important details related to studying at LSE. This list is here to help you get your bearings. It's a friendly introduction to terms you'll hear mentioned often, but it's not a substitute for the Calendar or advice from your department. For the most comprehensive, up-to-date, and relevant information, always consult both the Calendar and your department's guidance.

Term	What it means	Where next
Programme	The full degree comprising of all units studied, for example a BSc or MSc.	LSE Calendar
Programme regulations	The formal rules governing your degree. They specify which core courses you must take, which optional courses are available to you, how many units you need, and any dissertation or project requirement. Published in the LSE Calendar.	LSE Calendar
Unit	The measure of a course size at LSE. A half-unit course is typically taught over one term; a full-unit course is typically taught over two terms. A master's degree usually requires four units; an undergraduate degree usually requires 12 units (usually four each year).	LSE Calendar; Course selection
Core course	A compulsory course required by your Programme regulations.	LSE Calendar
Optional course	A non-compulsory course you choose alongside the core requirements, from a list in your Programme regulations (or, with approval, from elsewhere at LSE).	Course selection; LSE Calendar
Auditing a course	An informal arrangement where you follow a course's lectures for interest, but do not attend classes/seminars or sit assessments, and the course does not appear on your transcript or timetable. You need the course convener's permission to audit their course.	Course selection; your course guide
Controlled access/ capped course	A course where the number of places is limited. "Controlled access" courses require departmental approval (you may need to write a supporting statement). "Capped" courses fill on a first-come, first-served basis through LSE for You. Some courses are both.	Course selection
Course selection period	The main window in Autumn Term, when you formally choose your courses for the full year through LSE for You. A second, shorter window reopens in January for changes to Winter Term half-units only. Deadlines and processes vary by department.	Course selection

Term	What it means	Where next
Timetable clashes	When two of your courses are scheduled at the same time. LSE for You has a "Student Timetable Clashes" screen to help identify simple clashes. Complex clashes may require contacting your department or the Timetables Team.	Timetables
Course guide	The guide for an individual course, giving details such as the convener, syllabus, course content, modes of assessment, and indicative reading lists.	Course selection; Moodle; your department pages
Seminars/ Classes	Small-group teaching sessions where you discuss readings or work through problems with a class teacher and peers. Attendance is compulsory and active participation is expected, so come prepared. Master's programmes tend to call these seminars; undergraduate programmes tend to call them classes.	Moodle
Office hours	Regular weekly slots when academic staff are available for one-to-one conversations. You can speak to any teacher during their hours, even if you're not on their course. Some are drop-in; others require booking via the Student Hub.	Student Hub; Academic support

Making changes to your programme

If you would like to make changes to your programme or mode of study, you have options. An **interruption** is a year-long approved break in your studies, with a return the following academic year. **Withdrawal** is permanent. A **programme transfer** moves you to a different degree at the same level, with approval from both old and new departments. A **change of mode** switches you between full-time and part-time study, usually on postgraduate programmes. All of these should be discussed with your department and may have implications for your visa, fees, and funding.

Who's who – the people behind your degree

There are plenty of people within your department who can support you, and knowing who handles what will get you to the right answer faster. The entries below indicate typical roles and job titles of people in your department.

Role	Who they are
Academic Mentor (AM)	A member of staff in your department assigned to you personally. They are there to support your progress – both in your studies and more broadly – and are an excellent point of contact whenever you have a question or concern. Your AM may also provide references for employment. On some taught Master's programmes, your AM may also be your Dissertation Supervisor, but check your department's arrangements.
Class Teacher	The person who leads your weekly class or seminar group. They may be a member of academic staff or a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA; possibly a PhD candidate). They mark work, give feedback, and hold office hours, where you can discuss topics from class further.
Course Convener	The academic responsible for running a particular course – setting its content, syllabus, assessments, and policies.
Departmental Senior Student Adviser (DSSA)	A confidential point of contact when something non-academic is affecting your studies. DSSAs can help you think through options around extensions, deferrals, changes to your studies (interruption, transfer, withdrawal), and how to access wellbeing and support services. Not all departments have DSSAs; some provide this support through other roles.

Role	Who they are
Programme Director	The academic responsible for the overall delivery and development of your degree programme. They handle programme-level issues and can approve requests to take courses outside your Programme Regulations.
Programmes Support Team/ Professional Services Team	The administrative team in your department and a valuable source of knowledge when you have practical queries about course selection, timetabling, Moodle, assessment processes, and student representation. They are led by the Department Manager.
Student Academic Representative	A student selected to represent the views of their peers at departmental committees such as the Student-Staff Liaison Committee. Selection takes place shortly after the start date of your programme, mostly from the first week of Autumn Term onwards.

One-to-one appointments with academic staff can usually be booked via Student Hub. If you need to get in touch about anything via email, you can find contact details for your programme director, course conveners, and teachers on Moodle. For any other contacts, check out your department's People page.

Student Voice: feedback on your programme

Your feedback is extremely important. There are several ways you can use your voice and shape the teaching and learning on your courses and programme.

Within your department, **Student Academic Representatives** (or programme reps) are students recruited to represent the views of their peers. They sit on Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) (or Programme Forums), the main forum where elected reps discuss your feedback on your teaching and learning experiences with departmental staff on a termly basis.

There are also broader Undergraduate/Postgraduate Taught Consultative Fora, made up of SSLC reps from across the School, as well as the LSESU Education Officer and Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education, allowing for School-wide feedback. Some of your reps will also attend your Departmental Teaching Committee each term, which oversee teaching and learning within departments, and help ensure effective student participation in educational decision-making.

You will have a chance to give feedback through **regular surveys** at both course and programme level, alongside broader surveys of the whole student experience including the National Student Survey for final-year undergraduates. These are generally coordinated by the Teaching Quality Assurance and Review Office (TQARO).

Beyond your department, you can shape LSE at a School-wide level, for example, through LSESU Student Voice, Student Education Panels, and LSESU leadership elections. See **Make your impact** earlier in this handbook for more opportunities.

Exams and assessments

Assessment at LSE comes in two forms. **Formative assessment** is practice – essays, problem sets, presentations, or mock exams that don't count towards your final grade. Formative assessments are where you can test ideas, experiment, and get helpful feedback. **Summative assessment** does count towards your final mark for a course, and might take the form of exams, coursework essays, group projects, presentations, or a dissertation.

Each department publishes **marking criteria** describing what markers are looking for – typically covering knowledge and understanding, use of literature, argument and analysis, and clarity of expression. Most written work also has a **word limit**, with rules on what exactly counts towards it and penalties for exceeding it set at department level.

If your programme includes exams, they'll usually take place in either the January or Spring exam period. Before you take any exam, read the School's official **Exam Procedures for Candidates** for full details of all exam regulations including personal items you're allowed to take into the exam room, writing in exam booklets or using computers for e-exams, and your **candidate number** – a unique five-digit number that ensures anonymous marking.

Another important element of exams that you'll find explained fully in the exam procedures is the School's **Fit to Sit** policy. This means that by entering an exam room or submitting an assessment, you declare yourself well enough to do so. If you are unwell or affected by serious circumstances, request an extension or deferral *before* the assessment – your options are much more limited afterwards.

Re-taking an exam or re-attempting an assessment is called a **resit**. Resits are normally held in one of two formal periods: the **In-Year Resit and Deferred Assessment Period (IRDAP)**, which typically runs in late August, or the **Resit and Deferred Assessment Periods (RDAP)**, which take place during the main Winter and Spring assessment periods the following year. Full details of taking resits and deferred assessments can be found on the School's Re-entry pages. Eligibility, timing and rules vary by programme, so check the Calendar and your department's guidance.

If you think a result or decision needs to be challenged, there is a formal appeals process. Full details about the appeals process can be found here.

Who can I talk to?

You can talk with your academic mentor, course convenor, or class teacher about feedback you receive.

You can talk with a Learning Lab Study Adviser about interpreting the marking criteria for an assignment or ways to use feedback to make progress.

For questions about the exam procedures, resits, or other administrative matters around exams and assessments, contact the SSC Student Advice and Engagement Team.

The SSC Student Regulations Team handles appeals, allegations of misconduct and plagiarism, and complaints about academic matters. They also administer the process around exceptional circumstances and deferrals.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is the principle that the work you submit is your own and that you've taken responsibility for referencing others accurately and following your department's guidelines on working with other people and with AI tools. Here are some specific terms you should understand.

Plagiarism is presenting other people's words or ideas as your own, whether deliberately or accidentally, including failing to reference sources properly. **Collusion** is collaborating with others on individually assessed work beyond what is permitted. **Contract cheating** is having someone complete an assessment on your behalf, and can also include the unauthorised use of GenAI tools. **Self-plagiarism** is reusing material from your own previously submitted work without proper attribution. More information about academic misconduct is in the Regulations on Assessment Offences.

LSE provides all students with access to Anthropic Claude for Education and Microsoft Copilot, however each course has its own **AI use policy**, set out on the course's Moodle page. Some courses permit some forms of AI use; others prohibit them entirely. **Turnitin** scans submissions for matches against other sources. Some departments let you submit drafts to Turnitin first to check your referencing. The **Turnitin similarity report** shows what percentage of your submission matches other sources. There is no safe maximum score: a low percentage can still be investigated and a high one does not automatically indicate misconduct.

When you submit summative work, you confirm an **academic integrity statement** affirming that the work is your own, that you have not colluded, and that you have followed AI and referencing rules. Suspected cases of misconduct are considered by an **Assessment Misconduct Panel**, and penalties can be severe.

Who can I talk to?

If you have questions about Turnitin, referencing, paraphrasing, using generative AI tools, or any other aspect of academic integrity, you can book an Academic integrity one-to-one appointment. Sessions take place online and everyone will be seen individually in order to provide personalised advice – no question is too silly! The Learning Lab and Library also provide general guidance on academic integrity, referencing, and paraphrasing, through workshops, one-to-one appointments, and online resources.

Do note that some rules and regulations may vary from department to department, so it is worth checking your course guides and speaking to your teachers or academic mentor when in doubt, too.

The SSC Student Regulations Team handles allegations of misconduct and plagiarism, and complaints about academic matters.

When something affects your work

LSE has formal routes for situations where circumstances affect your assessed work. Ideally, these circumstances should be addressed before the work is due or attempted.

An **extension** is extra time on a coursework deadline, requested in advance and normally accompanied by supporting evidence. It is the most common route for short-term issues with submitted work. Full details can be found in the Student Guidance on Extension Requests document.

A **deferral** postpones an assessment to a later sitting, usually the next exam period. It is used when an extension is not enough or when the assessment has a fixed date, such as an exam. Like an extension, it is requested in advance, normally at least 24 hours before the deadline or exam start.

LSE publishes guidance on **religious observance and assessments** for students whose faith commitments may affect assessment participation.

My Adjustments refers to personalised plans of reasonable adjustments to adapt teaching, learning, and assessments to the needs of students with sensory or physical impairments, mental health conditions, or specific learning difficulties. They include **Teaching and Learning Adjustments** (TLAs) and **Central Exam Adjustments** (CEAs) and might feature extra time in exams, assistive technology, or changes to your study environment.

There is also a procedure to follow where circumstances cannot be addressed in advance. Submitting **Exceptional Circumstances (ECs)** is the only way to inform examiners about circumstances beyond your control that affected an assessment you have already attempted or were absent for. Find out more on the Student Services Centre pages about ECs.

Who can I talk to?

The Disability and Mental Health Service (DMHS) is the service who puts My Adjustments in place, including Central Exam Adjustments. There is no requirement to tell the School about a disability. However, letting the DMHS team know about any long-term condition that has a substantial impact on your studies or your day-to-day life enables them to arrange adjustments and support.

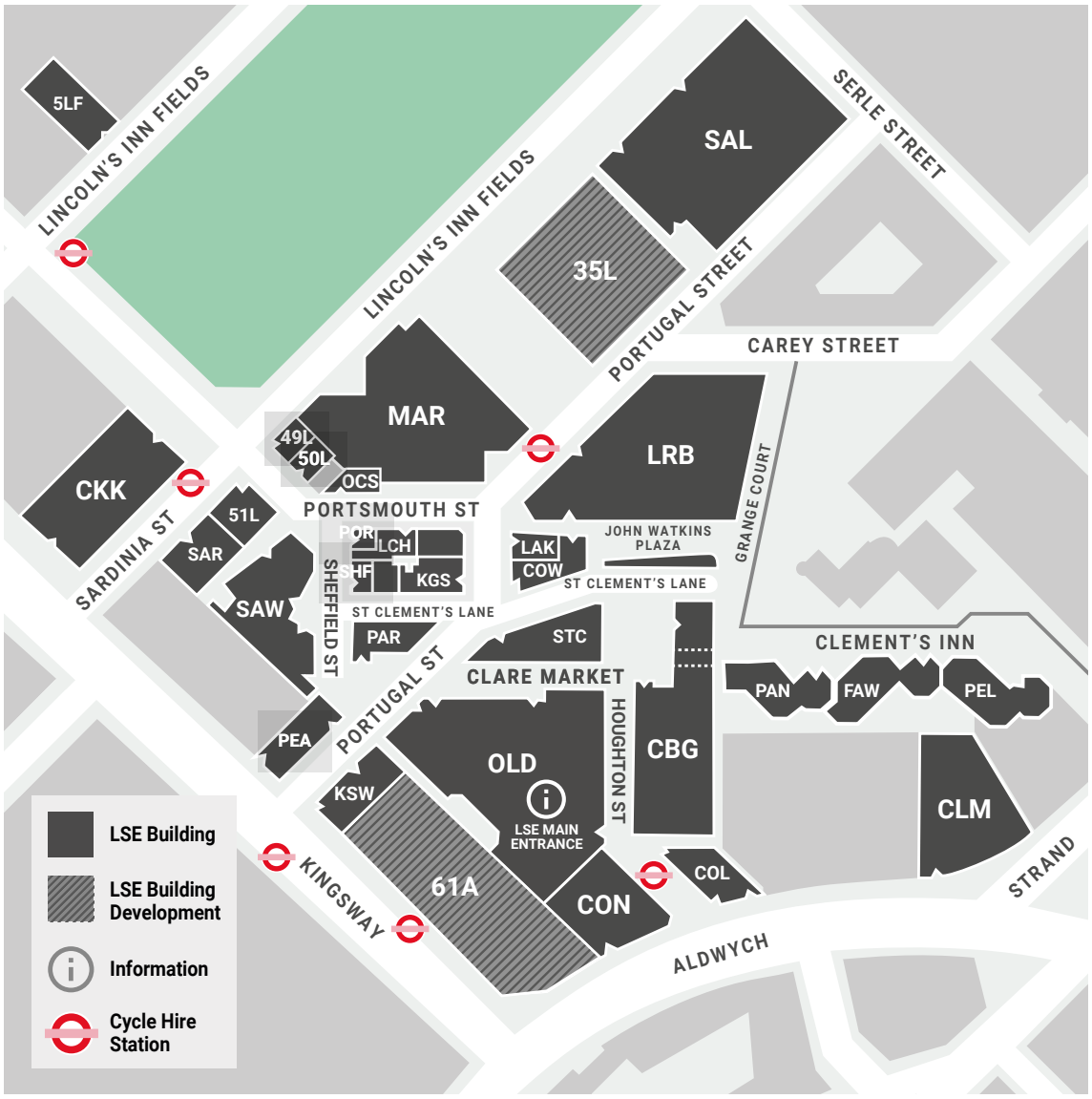
The SSC Student Advice and Engagement Team answers questions and provides advice about academic matters including ECs, progression, deferral, interruption, withdrawal, and the School Regulations and Codes of Practice more generally.

Codes, charters, and action plans

LSE has several codes and charters in place that outline the standards of education, conduct, and partnership between LSE, its staff, and students. Below is a selection of important codes, charters, and plans. A comprehensive list of School **Policies and Procedures** is available online.

- **LSE Academic Code:** Sets out what you can expect from your education in four areas: teaching standards, academic support, assessment and feedback, and student voice.
- **LSE-LSESU Student Charter:** Describes the community you're joining and how its members are expected to relate to each other.
- **Codes of Good Practice:** Explain the responsibilities of staff and students in relation to teaching, learning, and assessment.
- **Ethics Code:** Sets out the values the LSE community is expected to live by – covering responsibility, integrity, intellectual freedom, equality, collegiality, and sustainability.
- **LGBTQ+ Inclusive Action Plan:** Outlines six priorities to advance LGBTQ+ equity and inclusion.
- **Race Equity Action Plan:** Outlines six priorities to advance racial equity and inclusion, as part of the Race Equity Framework.

LSE campus



Find out more on the **LSE campus map webpage**.

AccessAble provides detailed accessibility guides for campus buildings, residences and study spaces, including route maps between locations to help students navigate campus confidently and independently. Explore more campus facilities with the **Facilities Guide for Current Students**.

lse.ac.uk/xxxxxxxx

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