



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE

Welcome to the Department of International History

Undergraduate Handbook 2026/27



lse.ac.uk/international-history



Contents

2	Section 1: Welcome from the Head of Department
4	Section 2: Staff contact details
9	Section 3: Departmental life
15	Section 4: Programme regulations
16	BA in History
16	BSc in International Relations and History
17	BSc in History and Politics
19	Section 5: Course selection and timetables
24	Section 6: Learning history, learning skills
36	A guide to essay writing
40	A guide to presentations
46	A guide to doing well in exams
50	A guide to 'gobbet' exercises and how to tackle them
52	Assessment and feedback
69	Section 7: LSE100
72	Section 8: LSE beyond your department
91	Section 9: Navigate your LSE



Section 1: Welcome from the Head of Department





This is to introduce you to the Department of International History (if you are a new student) or to welcome you back again (if you are continuing).

Each student will be allocated an individual Academic Mentor from among the academic staff. In addition, there are three Departmental Tutors, **Dr Tanya Harmer** who has special responsibility for third year undergraduates, **Dr Roham Alvandi** who has responsibility for second years and **Dr Dina Gusejnova** who has responsibility for general course students and first year undergraduates.

As Head of Department, I am responsible for the overall management of the Department. I am also available to all students by appointment with Ms Demetra Frini (**d.frini@lse.ac.uk**), the Department Manager.

Details of your induction events in w/c **21 September** are here:

lse.ac.uk/International-History/Welcome/undergraduate-events

The Department is located on the ground, mezzanine, first, second and third floors of Sardinia House and the department offices are in 1.03B, 1.03C, 1.03D, 1.03E, 1.03F and 1.03G.

For general enquiries, your first point of call as an undergraduate student should be the Undergraduate Programme Administrator's office which is 1.03F and queries should be sent to **ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk**



Professor Vladislav Zubok
Head of Department



Section 2: Staff contact details



**Head of Department****Professor Vladislav Zubok**

Room 3.17, Sardinia House

Email: v.m.zubok@lse.ac.uk**Deputy Head of Department
for Teaching****Dr Timothy Hochstrasser**

Room 2.14, Sardinia House

Email: t.hochstrasser@lse.ac.uk**Deputy Head of Department
for Research****Professor Kristina Spohr**

Room 2.16, Sardinia House

Email: k.spohr@lse.ac.uk**Undergraduate Tutor (3rd year)****Dr Tanya Harmer**

Room M.07, Sardinia House

Email: t.harmer@lse.ac.uk**Undergraduate Tutor (2nd year)****Dr Roham Alvandi**

Room M.12, Sardinia House

Email: r.alvandi@lse.ac.uk**Undergraduate Tutor****(1st year and GC)****Dr Dina Gusejnova**

Room M.14, Sardinia House

Email: d.gusejnova@lse.ac.uk**Undergraduate Programme Director****Dr Paul Keenan**

Room 2.13, Sardinia House

Email: p.keenan@lse.ac.uk**Department Manager****Ms Demetra Frini**

Room 1.03B, Sardinia House

Telephone: 0207 955 7548

Email: d.frini@lse.ac.uk

Office hours: 11am–1pm

**Undergraduate Programmes
Administrator****Ms Jacquie Minter**

Room 1.03F, Sardinia House

Telephone: 0207 955 6174

Email: ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk

Office hours: 10am–5pm

**Student Experience, Events
and Communications****Mr Max Smith**

Room 1.03G, Sardinia House

Telephone: 020 7955 5006

Email: ih.events@lse.ac.uk

Office hours: 10am–5pm

Departmental Senior Student Advisor**Ms Anna Izdebska**

Room 1.03G, Sardinia House

Email: ssc.dssa@lse.ac.uk**Double Degree Programme Manager****Mrs Nayna Bhatti**

Room 1.03C, Sardinia House

Telephone: 0207 955 7126

Email: n.bhatti@lse.ac.uk

Office hours: 10am–1pm



MSc Programmes Administrator

Ms Milada Fomina

Room 1.03E, Sardinia House

Telephone: 0207 955 7331

Email: ih.pg.admin@lse.ac.uk

Office hours: 10am–5pm

**Research and Project
Administrative Officer**

Dr Edlira Gjonca

Room 1.03D, Sardinia House

Telephone: 0207 107 7543

Email: e.gjonca@lse.ac.uk

Office hours: 10am–2.30pm

**Teaching and Research
Committees Officer**

Mr Mathew Betts

Room 1.03D, Sardinia House

Telephone: 0207 107 5409

Email: m.betts1@lse.ac.uk





Staff list

Name	Room	Tel.	Email
ALVANDI, Dr Roham	SAR M.12	6897	r.alvandi@lse.ac.uk
ASHTON, Professor Nigel	SAR M.09	7104	n.ashton@lse.ac.uk
BAER, Professor Marc (Sab leave 26/27)	SAR 3.17	Teams	m.d.baer@lse.ac.uk
BEST, Professor Antony	SAR 3.14	Teams	a.best@lse.ac.uk
CANT, Dr Anna	SAR 3.12	Teams	a.cant1@lse.ac.uk
CASEY, Professor Steven	SAR 2.10	Teams	s.casey@lse.ac.uk
EATON, Dr Charlotte	SAR M.13	Teams	c.eaton@lse.ac.uk
GUSEJNOVA, Dr Dina	SAR M.14	Teams	d.gusejnova@lse.ac.uk
HARMER, Dr Tanya	SAR M.07	Teams	t.harmer@lse.ac.uk
HALLADAY, Dr Andrew	SAR M.10	Teams	a.halladay@lse.ac.uk
HAWN, Dr Jeffrey	TBC	Teams	j.s.hawn@lse.ac.uk
HOCHSTRASSER, Dr Timothy	SAR 2.14	7092	t.hochstrasser@lse.ac.uk
JONES, Professor Matthew	SAR 3.09	Teams	m.c.jones@lse.ac.uk
KEENAN, Dr Paul	SAR 2.13	Teams	p.keenan@lse.ac.uk
KOZDRA, Dr Jan	SAR 3.16	Teams	j.kozdra@lse.ac.uk
LEWIS, Professor Joanna	SAR G.02	Teams	j.e.lewis1@lse.ac.uk
LUDLOW, Professor N. Piers	SAR 2.16	7099	n.p.ludlow@lse.ac.uk
MAYHEW, Dr Alex	SAR M.11	Teams	a.c.mayhew@lse.ac.uk
MOTADEL, Dr David (Sab leave 26/27)	SAR 3.16	Teams	d.motadel@lse.ac.uk
PHOTIADOU, Dr Artemis	SAR 3.13	Teams	a.photiadou@lse.ac.uk
PO, Dr Ronald	SAR 2.18	Teams	c.y.po@lse.ac.uk
PRESTON, Professor Paul	SAR 1.02A		p.preston@lse.ac.uk
QUADRI, Dr Zaynab	SAR M.13	Teams	z.quadri@lse.ac.uk
RAJAK, Dr Svetozar	SAR 3.15	Teams	s.rajak@lse.ac.uk
RICHARDS, Dr Jake (Sab leave 26/27)	SAR 2.08	Teams	j.richards@lse.ac.uk
SCHULZE, Professor Kirsten (Sab leave 26/27)	SAR 2.12	Teams	k.e.schulze@lse.ac.uk
SHIPP, Dr Leo	SAR M.13	Teams	l.shipp@lse.ac.uk
SOOD, Dr Gagandeep	SAR 2.07	Teams	g.sood1@lse.ac.uk
SPOHR, Professor Kristina	SAR 2.17	Teams	k.spohr@lse.ac.uk
STOCK, Dr Paul	SAR 2.15	Teams	p.stock@lse.ac.uk



Name	Room	Tel.	Email
UMOREN, Dr Imaobong	SAR G.04	Teams	i.umoren@lse.ac.uk
YIN, Dr Qingfei	SAR M.06	Teams	q.yin@lse.ac.uk
ZUBOK, Professor Vladislav	SAR 3.11	Teams	v.m.zubok@lse.ac.uk

Graduate teaching assistants and guest teachers 2026/27

For an up to date list please visit lse.ac.uk/International-History/People





Section 3: Departmental life





The role of the academic mentor and staff office hours

The Department of International History highly values the mentor-mentee relationship. When you arrive in the department you will be allocated an Academic Mentor who will normally remain mentor throughout your time of study at the LSE. It is important that you establish contact in the early days of term and maintain a close working relationship with your Academic Mentor throughout your course. They can advise on academic and non-academic matters. In other words, your Academic Mentor is your first point of contact if you have any concerns about your studies at the LSE (eg, choice of courses, progress in studies, finding a dissertation supervisor, references) or other personal concerns which you may wish to discuss in confidence. Your Academic Mentor will contact you at the beginning of each term and will let you know when they are going to be available to see mentees. They will also post the times of their regular, weekly office hours on their door. It is your responsibility to make sure that you respond to your mentor's request to see you. You should as a minimum see your Academic Mentor at least twice in the Autumn term and at least once in the Winter and Spring terms. Your mentor's office hours can be found on the Department's website.

Examination feedback

At the first meeting with your Academic Mentor in the second and third year, they will provide you with feedback on the previous year's examinations, indicating what the examiners saw as the strengths and weaknesses of the mentees' exam papers. You will also receive a breakdown of composite marks, where applicable.

Office hours

NOTE: All members of staff can be contacted during their office hours when they are willing to see students without prior appointment. Academic staff do not hold office hours out of term. If the teacher responsible for a course is not your class teacher, the office hours are a good opportunity to discuss the subject matter of the course with them if you so wish.

You can find all staff office hours listed on the department's website, and posted outside individual lecturers' offices. Many staff members also use Student Hub for the booking of their office hour slots.



Departmental Senior Student Adviser

The Student Advisor is available to support you throughout your time at LSE, helping you to navigate the advice and support services available to you (alongside your Academic Mentor and other departmental staff), and to assist with your personal, welfare or wellbeing needs. They will also be the best person to ask for support if at any point your engagement with your studies has been impacted - they can discuss the options available to you and ensure you receive appropriate support.

You can book a 30 minute appointment with your student adviser (in-person or online) or attend an online drop-in session for quick queries - please refer to the Departmental Senior Student Advice Team webpage for your department booking form and drop-in information.

Link to DSSA webpage: info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/student-services/Departmental-Student-Advice-Team





Departmental notice boards

There are departmental notice boards for general information, news of special lectures and other events (both inside and outside the School), scholarships, careers etc. These boards are outside SAR 2.06 (second floor, Sardinia House) and in the study room (ground floor, Sardinia House). The department will also endeavour to provide as much as possible online or by email.

Departmental study room

International History students are welcome to make use of this room which is mainly for study purposes. It is on the ground floor of Sardinia House.

Language course reimbursement

It has been agreed that International History can assist all students in the department with the cost of language study at the LSE. The department will assist by reimbursing half the cost of one normal fee certificate course on successful completion of study.

To qualify for reimbursement, at the beginning of the year students should inform the Undergraduate Administrator, via e mail: ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk that they have signed up to learn a language at the Language Centre and intend to apply for this reimbursement. The following details should be provided in the notification:

SURNAME:

FIRST NAME:

DEGREE OF STUDY:

YEAR OF STUDY:

LANGUAGE COURSE TO BE TAKEN:

COST:

BANK DETAILS:

Once you have registered your intention to apply you will receive a confirmation from the Undergraduate Administrator that your intention has been registered with the Department. Please keep this e-mail.

Please note, if you do not register your request for reimbursement; receiving a reply confirmation from the Undergraduate Administrator at the beginning of the year, you will be unable to make a claim at the end of the year. The closing date to register your request will be circulated via e mail at the beginning of the year, along with further instructions.



Language certificates are normally issued in early June. Reimbursement will not be arranged unless the certificate is produced, and this must be done by the deadline given to be processed within the end of the LSE financial year. Students will receive payment by bank transfer in August.

Students may only claim for one course.

Research opportunities

The Undergraduate Research Assistantship Scheme – The Department of International History supports a number of paid research assistantships each year. These roles are offered to undergraduate students who are interested in contributing to the research projects of staff members through the completion of specific tasks. The research assistantships provide an opportunity to collaborate with a staff member in their research, gain experience of working on a project, and add to the depth of your CVs.

Undergraduate research assistants in recent years have contributed to projects including:

- Anti-colonial activism
- History of Slavery and Emancipation
- The Vietnam War in Latin America
- Human Rights and the Iranian Revolution
- US-China transnational relations in the 1970's

Departmental events

The Department hosts a range of events that take place during the year. These include social events, evening seminars with distinguished Historians, conferences, museum tours and lunches. We also work with the LSE Careers to host Careers events throughout the year, specifically geared towards History students.

Last year's programme included events such as 'Human Rights against Fascism in the Americas', 'Engaging a Risen China by Understanding its Past', and 'The Europe Illusion.'



To keep up to date with the Department's events, you can check the following places:

lse.ac.uk/International-History/Events (Department Events, such as seminars and conferences)

lse.ac.uk/International-History/Events/student-events (Student Social Events)

lse.ac.uk/International-History/CurrentStudents/Careers (Careers Events)

All details of events will be shared via email, in our monthly newsletter, via social media and are available on our website.

Annual lecture

The department hosts an annual lecture as part of the LSE Events programme. The speaker and topic of this year's annual lecture will be announced during Winter term.

History Society

The History Society (the LSE Student Union, student-run group) also host events throughout the year. Joining the History Society is a very easy process, and you can follow them via the Student Union webpage, or via their email:

history@lsesu.org if you want to learn more about how to take part.





Section 4: Programme regulations





BA in History

For all first, second and third year students in 2026-27.

Please refer to the calendar for the [programme regulations and course guide information](#).

BSc in International Relations and History

For all first, second and third year students in 2026/27.

Please refer to the calendar for the [programme regulations and course guide information](#).

Note to students of the BSc in International Relations and History Programme

BSc International Relations and History students are sometimes puzzled over their relationship with the Department of International Relations. This note is an attempt to explain.

Yours is a joint degree in curricular terms. It is so constructed as to ensure that you study an approximately equal number of courses from International History (IH) and from International Relations (IR).

As part of your degree you have four compulsory IR courses. In the first year, you will take IR100 Theories, Concepts and Debates of International Relations. In your second year, you will take two courses from the following five: IR200 International Political Theory; IR202 Foreign Policy Analysis; IR203 International Organisation; IR205 International Security; and IR206 International Political Economy. In your third year, you will take one further course from this selection of five courses. In addition, you choose up to two additional IR optional courses (or the equivalent in half units).

You cannot choose IR398 Dissertation. Dissertations must be done in the Department of International History.

Courses taught by the Department of International Relations are examined and marked according to criteria set out in its undergraduate marking scheme. The marking scheme can be found in this handbook.



Your “home” department is the Department of International History. Tutorial and administrative aspects of your degree are exclusively the responsibility of IH. This has been the case ever since the degree was created, on the initiative of IH. Representation on the Staff-Student Liaison Committee, attendance at the Cumberland Lodge weekend conference and other benefits are offered by the IH department rather than IR.

IR&H students have in recent years received invitations to the parties and out-of-classroom events organised by the Department of International Relations for IR undergraduate students. IR&H students can also apply for any research assistant positions made available by the Department of International Relations.

IR&H students occasionally ask about the possibility of transfer into the BSc IR degree. Unfortunately, these requests are accepted only in rare circumstances and they are subject both to space availability in the BSc IR degree and to meeting the programme transfer conditions.

We hope you will enjoy studying for your BSc in International Relations and History. We will do our best, in liaison with your Departmental Tutors and student representatives, to contribute (within the limits set out above) to providing a fulfilling university education in International Relations for that half of your degree studies.

BSc in History and Politics

For first, second and third year students in 2026/27.

Please refer to the calendar for the [programme regulations and course guide information](#).

Note to students on the joint BSc degree History and Politics

This programme combines the two complementary fields of history and politics in a joint honours programme, with around half of the programme in each field. It will provide you with insight into the interaction between political ideas and institutions, and historical developments. In addition to studying the individual trajectories of history and politics students have a unique chance to scrutinise the unique synergy between the two in specific case studies of politics in action across millennia.



You will learn political concepts and theories, will compare political phenomena in a variety of cultures and countries, and answer broad theoretical questions about the political world. You will learn to analyse complex evidence from a variety of sources, to develop your analytical powers and to present your findings effectively.

Yours is a joint degree in curricular terms. It is so constructed as to ensure that you study an approximately equal number of courses from Department of International History (IH) and from Government (GV). Your “home” department is the Department of International History. Tutorial and administrative aspects of your degree are exclusively the responsibility of IH. Representation on the Staff-Student Liaison Committee, attendance at the Cumberland Lodge weekend conference and other benefits are offered by the IH department.



Section 5: Course selection and timetables



Programme structure and what you need to do

Each year of an undergraduate programme comprises four papers. Each of these papers is completed by taking either one full, or two half units.

A full list of the available course selection in each year and links to more detailed information on each course can be located using the links provided under your degree programme in Section 4.

When to select your courses

- LSE wide opening and closing dates for course selection are as follows:
- Continuing undergraduates will be able to select courses from **10am on Tuesday 1 September until 5pm on Monday 12 October 2026**.
- New undergraduates (including General Course students) will be able to select courses from **10am on Tuesday 8 September until 5pm on Monday 12 October 2026**.
- You should aim to complete your course selection by the deadline of **12 October 2026**. If something goes wrong, emergency changes to course selections can be made until **19 October 2026**. After this no changes can be made, no matter the circumstances.

How to select your courses

1. **Find out about your courses** – check the Course Finder on lse.ac.uk/calendar and also Moodle to find out more about courses you want to take.
2. **Select your courses in LSE for You** – courses can be selected using [LSE for You](#). Step by step instructions are available on the SSC webpages.
3. **Check you have Moodle access for your selected courses** – check you can access courses on Moodle, after completing course selection.

Course Finder lists all the courses, course content and modes of assessment available for each programme. This is a place to view the information but not to make a selection using Course Finder. You should select courses in LSE for You as stated above.



Providing your selected courses are ready in Moodle, you should be automatically enrolled on their Moodle pages a few hours after selecting your courses on LSE for You.

Different departments handle course selection in different ways so if you are taking a course outside of International History then please make sure you understand how that course is managed. This is particularly the case for [language centre courses](#).

Should you need advice with this process please contact your Academic Mentor or a member of the PSS team on ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk

Capped courses

Some departments have capped courses, which means that places on these courses will be limited. On the [LSE for You](#) course selection system these courses are labelled as “capped”. A full list of capped courses is available [here](#).

These courses are offered on a first come first serve basis and as soon as the number of students registered reaches the capped number, the status of these courses will change to “full” and no one else will be able to select them.

If you want more information about capped courses please contact the department teaching the course.

Timetables

Undergraduate students are allocated to all teaching centrally by the Timetables Team. We recommend that you make your initial selections in [LSE for You](#) before 5pm on **Monday 21 September 2026**. You should receive your personal timetable in [Student LSE for You](#) at **10am on Friday 25 September** (for new students) and **10am on Wednesday 23 September** for continuing students. After this, if you make changes to your course selections it can take up to three working days for these to be reflected on your personal timetable.

Can't see your timetable?

Personal timetables are published at the end of September on Student LSE for You. Before you start selecting courses on LSE for You, you should complete [online pre-enrolment](#) (new students) and activate your IT account, as part of the pre-enrolment process, in order to see your timetable. Continuing students do not need to have re-enrolled for the new academic year before starting to select courses, however, you will not be able to view your timetable until you have re-enrolled. If the timetable still does not show, after pre-enrolment/re-enrolment, it is possible this is due to a timetable clash.



There is a 'Student Timetable Clashes' screen in LSE for You which may help to identify your clash. This screen provides details of simple clashes, these are the straightforward lecture to lecture clashes. Some clashes are more complex and do not appear on the list in LSE for You. Complex clashes may involve more than two courses and often arise when a clash free seminar/class group can't be found even though there are multiple groups.

You are also advised to consult the School-level timetables (found on the Timetables webpage) and check all of your course timings so you understand the full nature of the clash(es).

For more information about timetable clashes and how to access your personal timetable, please refer to the [Undergraduate course Selection and Timetables Student Guide](#) section 7 and the information on [Timetables webpages](#)

If you can't see your timetable, or it is incomplete, after 26 September check that you have:

- Completed [online pre-enrolment and campus enrolment \(new students\) re-enrolment \(continuing students\)](#) for this academic year
- Selected all your courses in [LSE for You](#)
- Not selected a course which creates a timetable clash (check the [timetable viewed by course Code](#)).
- Not made changes within the last three working days

It is not possible to change the lectures in your timetable; there is usually only one lecture for each course, and it takes place at a fixed time. You can potentially change class/seminar group in exceptional circumstances. To request a group change apply using the "Undergraduate Class/Seminar Group Change Request" tool within [LSE for You](#). You should include details of why you need to change group and outline your availability for alternative groups. We may request evidence in support of your request.

Whilst you can request a class group change via [LSE for You](#), you should be aware that this is at the discretion of the department running the course. You may need to provide evidence justifying the need to change classes. It is at the discretion of each department to define what reasons are valid for a class change. If you have any questions about this, please get in touch with the teaching department for the course directly. Please also note that any potential class group changes are subject to availability. You can find more information on the [class and Seminar group change requests webpage](#)



Auditing courses

Some LSE courses allow for students to “audit”. This is an informal arrangement where you join the lectures but do not go to classes/seminars or take the assessments. As an informal arrangement, it is not possible for LSE to confirm whether you have audited a course; it will not appear in your course selections, on your timetable or on your transcript. If you do choose to audit a course you should first check that your timetable will allow you to join the lectures. If so, contact the relevant course leader and ask permission to audit their course.

You must not attend any classes/seminars for courses you are auditing.

Winter term course selection

Most courses on offer are full time so it will not be necessary to interact with the January 2027 course selection process. However, if you are selecting half unit courses then you will need to engage with this process.

Course selection will reopen at the start of Winter Term 2027 to allow you to change Winter Term half units, provided the newly chosen courses are not already full. Late course changes are not permitted in Winter Term once course selection has closed. We strongly advise that you minimise the changes you make in this period. You cannot change any course that has any teaching in Autumn Term 2026.

Getting help

If you need help with Course Selection and Timetables please contact the department in the first instance. The PSS team or your Academic Mentor will be able to offer advice.

For queries about the course selection process you can contact the Student Exams and SSC Support team via [their enquiry form](#).

For questions about course content: contact staff in the relevant [teaching department](#)(s), or the teacher responsible for the course, as stated on the relevant course guide.

For advice around which courses to take and how your programme fits together please contact (ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk).

For questions about timetabling: contact the Timetables Team via [the enquiry form](#).

If you are not able to access [LSE for You](#) at all then contact [Tech Support](#).

If you have a **question about Moodle** please contact: eden.digital@lse.ac.uk.



Section 6: Learning history, learning skills





Why study history?

The study of history instills ways of thinking and habits of learning which are intrinsic to the subject, while being no less transferable. These include an appreciation of the complexity of the past and historical enquiry; a respect for historical context; the ability to conduct robust, rigorous analysis of historical evidence; a raised awareness of the historical processes unfolding in the present time; and a deeper understanding of why the world is as it is today.



Questioning, exploration, debate and discovery through independent engagement with sources and scholarship, and the ability to formulate independent arguments are integral to the study of history. History courses do not impart knowledge and skills to be passively absorbed. ”

QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: History, 2022

Many employers are especially interested in History graduates because of their particular training and approach, based on robust questioning, rigorous evidence-gathering, and applying multi-perspectival approaches in coming to reasoned and reasonable judgements.





Apart from being extremely enjoyable and enabling students to learn about the past; to understand the past and through it, come to a far better understanding of the present; history also offers students the opportunity to acquire and improve on many of the key skills which have been identified as a priority for Higher Education after consultation with employers.

Each of the courses we offer has a separate description of its content and the way it is taught and examined. Each is distinctive and seeks to cover different yet complementary areas of history and chronological periods. Some also place particular stress on certain skills.

This document highlights the generic skills that are integral to all our courses.

Key skills

The ideal graduate has recently been defined as someone who is adaptive, responsible and reflective, as well as having high level analytical and problem solving skills. A number of key skills have been identified which have both intrinsic value and are regarded by employers as vital for the workplace.

- proficiency in retrieval, selection, and interpretation of information from different sources (both analogue and digital)
- effective communication of evidence-based arguments in clear, coherent form (oral and written)
- identification and engagement with strengths and weaknesses in the arguments of others
- ability to work independently and as part of a group, while responding constructively to supervision, guidance, and feedback



The assessment criteria for examination by essays written under timed conditions – extract from the draft benchmark statement for history 1999

This gives a good indication of what is required to do well in a history course. It will also help you identify the areas where you might need to improve. Essays not written under timed conditions will carry both a mark and a comment from the class teacher/marker. You are also reminded that all class teachers and class hours where you may go to discuss your progress on specific courses.

First class

Structure and focus

- Work which engages closely with the question set, and shows a mature appreciation of its wider implications.
- The structure of the answer will facilitate a clear, coherent, and compelling development of the writer's argument.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed in order to support and develop the writer's argument, and will be deployed with a vigorous sense of relevance and an appropriate economy of expression.

Quality of argument and expression

- The writing will be clear, fluent, and accurate. The range of vocabulary and linguistic idioms will be appropriate to the case being developed.
- The answer will go well beyond the effective paraphrasing of other historians' ideas, and demonstrate conceptual command of the historical (and, where appropriate, historiographical) issues at stake.
- The answer may develop ideas which are original, and may be structured in a way which enables the writer to develop independent lines of thought in compelling and coherent ways. Intellectual independence, when grounded in a mature consideration of available evidence, should take the candidate into the highest mark bands.



Range of Knowledge

- Relevant knowledge is both broad and deep. This will include knowledge of contemporary sources, historiography, secondary literature. The range of reading implied by the answer will be extensive.
- The answer will demonstrate a clear sense of the nature and complexity of historical development.
- The writer will show an ability to move between generalisation and detailed discussion, and will be able to synthesize as well as particularize.
- Writers will show an ability to evaluate the nature and status of information at their disposal, and where necessary identify contradiction and attempt a resolution.
- The answer will demonstrate an informed and secure understanding of the historical period or periods under discussion.

Upper Second class

Structure and focus

- Work which displays an understanding of the question, shows an appreciation of some of its wider implications, and makes a serious attempt to engage with the question set.
- The structure of the answer will facilitate a clear development of the writer's argument, towards the lower end of this mark band candidates will not sustain an analytical approach throughout.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed relevantly. Towards the lower end of this mark band candidates may not always bring out the full implications of evidence cited.

Quality of argument and expression

Draft Benchmark Statement for History

- The writing will be clear and generally accurate, and will demonstrate an appreciation of the technical and advanced vocabulary used by historians.
- The answer will deploy other historians' ideas and seek to move beyond them. The answer will also show an appreciation of the extent to which historical explanations are contested.



- Although the answer might not demonstrate real originality, the writer will present ideas with a degree of intellectual independence, and will demonstrate the ability to reflect on the past and its interpretation.

Range of Knowledge

- Knowledge is extensive, but might be uneven. Demonstrated knowledge will include reference to relevant contemporary and historiographical sources. The range of reading implied by the answer will be considerable.
- The answer will demonstrate a sense of the nature of historical development.
- The writer will show an ability to move between generalisation and detailed discussion. Although there may be a tendency towards either an over-generalised or an over-particularised response.
- Writers will reflect on nature and status of information at their disposal, and will seek to use it critically.
- The answer will demonstrate a secure understanding of the historical period or periods under discussion.

Lower second class

Structure and focus

- Work which displays some understanding of the question set, but may lack a sustained focus and may show only a modest understanding of the question's wider implications.
- The structure of the answer may be heavily influenced by the material at the writer's disposal rather than the requirements of the question set. Ideas may be stated rather than developed.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed, but not necessarily with the kind of critical reflections characteristic of answers in higher mark bands.
- Quality of argument and expression
- The writing will be sufficiently accurate to convey the writer's meaning clearly, but it may lack fluency and command of the kinds of scholarly idioms used by professional historians. In places expression might be clumsy.
- The answer will show some understanding of historians' ideas, but may not reflect critically upon them. The problematic nature of historical explanations may be imperfectly understood.
- The answer is unlikely to show any originality in approach or argument, and may tend towards assertion of essentially derivative ideas.



Range of Knowledge

- Knowledge will be significant, but may be limited and patchy. There may be some inaccuracy, but basic knowledge will be sound. The range of reading implied by the answer will be limited.
- The answer will show some limited awareness of historical development.
- The writer might be prone to being drawn into excessive narrative or mere description, and may want to display knowledge without reference to the precise requirements of the question.
- Information may be used rather uncritically, without serious attempts to evaluate its status and significance.

Draft Benchmark Statement of History

- The answer will demonstrate some appreciation of the nature of the historical period or periods under discussion.

Third class

Structure and focus

- Work which displays little understanding of the question, and may tend to write indiscriminately around the question.
- The answer will have structure but this may be underdeveloped, and the argument may be incomplete and unfold in a haphazard or undisciplined manner.
- Some descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed, but without any critical reflection on its significance and relevance.

Quality or argument and expression

- The writing will generally be grammatical, but may lack the sophistication of vocabulary or construction to sustain a historical argument of any complexity. In places the writing may lack clarity and felicity of expression.
- There will be little appreciation of the problematic or contested nature of historical explanations.
- The answer will show no intentional originality of approach.



Range of Knowledge

- There will be sufficient knowledge to frame a basic answer to the question, but it will be limited and patchy. There will be some inaccuracy, but sufficient basic knowledge will be present to frame a basic answer to the question. The answer will imply relevant reading but this will be slight in range.
- There will be understanding of historical development but it will be underdeveloped, and the ideas of historians and other writers may be muddled or misrepresented.
- There will be an argument, but writer may be prone to excessive narrative, and the argument might be signposted by bald assertion rather than informed generalisation.
- There will be sufficient information to launch an answer, but perhaps not to sustain a complete response. Information will be used uncritically as if always self-explanatory.
- The answer will demonstrate appreciation of the nature of the historical period or periods under discussion, but at a rudimentary level.





Writing notes

In order to complete any course in Arts and Social Sciences it is vital to produce a set of notes, taken from lectures, tutorials and especially books and articles. These notes must eventually provide you with the necessary arguments, ideas and facts with which to answer essay questions, during the year and in examinations. The purpose of this handout is to give some general hints on how to go about writing notes. As with essay-writing, it is impossible to make any hard-and-fast rules about note making. Everyone will write different notes on the same book or on the same lecture. Nevertheless, it is possible to lay down certain guidelines and to emphasise what you should not be doing.

The first step is, of course, to decide which topics you wish to write notes upon. To an extent this should suit your own interests, but it will also be dictated by the essays you are asked to write during the year and by the questions which appear on examination papers. Past examination questions may help provide you with a focus for the various ideas which appear in books as well as giving hints as to future questions.

Ultimately a set of notes, on each of the topics you have chosen to cover, should be:

- (i) short enough so that you can revise from them quickly, but comprehensive enough to answer a range of questions fully;
- (ii) easy to understand - usually by being divided into several major headings, each of which may have a number of sub-headings, and with a wide range of short, clear analytical points, if necessary, backed up by some selected factual illustrations (dates and events, or statistics, etc.). In any notes you should include a form of shorthand as far as possible, eg, B for Britain; Gov for government; WWI for First World War; 19thc for nineteenth century; cld for could. The more abbreviations you can make without making the notes difficult to decipher, the better;
- (iii) a clear introduction to the main elements under every topic, or in an article or chapter of a book. Again a balanced sub-division of notes into major headings will enable you to use one set of notes, with some quick restructuring, to answer several questions;
- (iv) a mixture of arguments and facts, but with the emphasis on argument and analysis. This will ensure that the essays you write are also based on analysis first and foremost. Notes must avoid mere chronology and the simple repetition of facts. Dates and events should **illustrate** an argument, **not** become a substitute for it.



By the time of the examinations, you should aim to write a single set of notes on each topic you have selected but these will be taken from four main sources:

- (5) **Lectures:** Lecturers will often include the main lines of debate on any topic and provide some clear views on issues. They should also sum up their main arguments at the end. The key piece of advice here is: **always write down these main arguments.**

Again it is tempting in lectures to write down dates, events and other facts. But this alone serves little purpose: it is the arguments that matter. Arguments might be more difficult to grasp than facts, but you need to develop the ability to note them down. Sometimes it is advisable to stop writing and listen to the arguments for a time. (Some quite successful students prefer to listen to lectures all the way through and write notes later)

But lectures are never sufficient on their own to provide the answer to a question: they will generally only provide you with between one and three sides of notes and are a base to be built upon.

- (6) **Classes and Seminars:** These can be used to explore additional issues and arguments, but in order to be valuable they require preparation by students. Those who do not prepare adequately for a class will not understand or be able to contribute to the debate. The main purpose of classes and seminars is to talk and think; they are an opportunity to express your own ideas and to consider other ideas put forward in the discussion. They are not meant to serve as a source of information, and so the amount of notes you can take from classes may only be half a side or so. It will depend on the quality of discussion and its coherence. It can be difficult to be coherent as a book. As classes are not lectures they should not become a monologue by the tutor, however short the students are on ideas. You may find it easier to write notes up after the class finishes.

But again, write down any arguments and illustrations which do seem pertinent. Also write down any questions and the answers suggested to them. And try to sum up the main opposing arguments in any debate which takes place.



(7) Books and Articles: These are clearly vital in order to explore the views of historians and political scientists, but can be complex and long. The problem here is scale: there are numerous books and articles on any bibliography and each can lead to long, detailed notes. You need to be selective, but about the number of books and articles you read, and what you note about them. Part of your university education means developing an ability to make judgements about what you should and should not read on the basis of what is important or relevant to your particular task. Regarding the number of books to read: be guided by any advice that tutors and lecturers might give. You should try and concentrate on detailed studies, rather than general texts and read until you feel that you have a sound understanding of the major problems on any subject, and are able to write a fair answer to any essay question you have been asked.

On individual books, don't simply read everything from cover-to-cover: some books are worth reading as a whole but generally you should use books selectively, looking only at sections that are relevant to your needs. You need to distil from books their main arguments, to note down some factual illustrations that back arguments up (dates, events, actions of key characters, statistics, etc.) and sometimes to write out key, telling quotes (but keep these to a minimum, since they are difficult to remember in examinations.)

It can be difficult to understand the main arguments of a large book at first and the problem is always what exactly to note down. To some extent this requires practice, but it is possible to distil the main arguments from a book by reading either the introduction, or the conclusion, or the introductions and conclusions to individual chapters. At these points almost every book contains a summary of its main ideas. Once you are aware of the main arguments, then any subsidiary arguments and any illustrations or good quotes should also begin to stand out.

Some students believe in "skip-reading": they simply read the first sentence of each paragraph. In some books this may not be a bad idea but in general it is a rather crude way of going about things! However, it can be useful to skip-read a book at first in order to get the gist of what it is saying - then go back and read it in greater detail.

Again, practice should enable you to keep notes on books to a minimum (perhaps four to six sides on major works; but others should be shorter to you'll simply end up with too much). But initially you may find yourself writing down more than the essential arguments and illustrations. You must work at preventing this because otherwise you will not be making the best use of your time. It may be wise to practice writing notes with an article rather than a book, because articles can be just as valuable as books but are shorter, give a clear idea of why they were written and usually make their main arguments clear in the conclusion.



Primary source materials such as diaries and memoirs by those involved in events can be used to reinforce and illustrate arguments, but may be biased and have a limited perspective. Keep notes on these down to essentials. Collections of documents are more important and should be looked at by graduate students on a selective basis.

After reading several books and articles you may be able to distinguish several approaches to a question. It is then important to note down these differences: it can be useful in essays to show that you understand different schools of thought on an issue, the various arguments used to back them up and any differing interpretations of evidence.

Once you have taken notes from all the above sources, you are well advised to boil them down into a single, coherent, comprehensive set of notes, suitable for quick revision. Some students prefer not to do this, but others can become confused in examinations as they try to fuse together ideas drawn from several sets of notes.

A single set of notes will iron out any discrepancies, knock out repetitions and expose any remaining gaps in your knowledge. It will also force you to make final decisions on what you think about a historical problem: what elements are most important, where do you stand in any debate, and why do you take this viewpoint? Again, a single, well-structured set of notes will allow you to adapt quickly in examinations to whatever question appears.

There will be an early chance to test your notes, when you are asked to write an essay during the year. This will expose any gaps in the notes. Whoever marks this essay should point out possible ways to strengthen arguments or to bring in further ideas and information. You should then go back to your notes and make any necessary changes.





A guide to essay writing

History does not lend itself to “right” and “wrong” answers to questions, and there is no single “correct” approach to any important historical problem. It is possible to write essays on the same question using different material and reaching different conclusions which both gain the same good mark. But the following provides advice to those answering historical questions in course work and examinations, points out some pitfalls and suggests possible approaches to major problems.

A. Organising and using your notes

After choosing the questions which you wish to answer, you will need to amass a body of information – from lectures, from tutorials and from your own reading – and organise it into a coherent set of notes. As you read, note down not just information but points to emphasise, investigate or question. **Do not simply copy out relevant passages** (unless they merit direct quotation). Try to summarise or analyse the facts in your own words rather than simply acquiring factual information.

Thinking ahead to examinations (on which more below) it is best always to structure your notes in such a way that they can be used to answer a wide range of questions on any given topic. This can be achieved by subdividing notes thematically. For example, on the Origins of the Cold War, you might have subdivisions covering origins 1944-47, ideological differences, economic aspects, particular points of dispute, then on the 1947-53 period the impact of events in Europe (Czech, Berlin) and events in Asia (Korea, establishment of communist China). This kind of structure will enable you to answer a broad range of questions on the Cold War.

It is a good idea to begin your reading with general material and move to more specialised reading once you have acquired a broader background. **All essays require reading from several sources.** You cannot use only one book or article. It is vital to read widely and to evaluate the different views of writers.

B. Answering the question

The greatest problem in writing a history essay is deciding exactly what is required from a given question. Frequently students lose most marks by failing to answer the question, so this weakness deserves close attention. Having gathered a comprehensive set of notes you must select the right material and structure an argument to answer the question.



- (1) In its simplest form, failing to answer the question may simply mean getting the subject wrong: asked to write an essay on the Truman Doctrine you write one on the Monroe Doctrine. The only way to avoid this is to read thoroughly and think carefully. But such basic errors are very rare.
- (2) Another problem is when only half of a question is answered. "Why, and with what consequences, did China enter the Korean War?" requires you to answer both parts. Too often this kind of question is simply answered from the viewpoint of "why?" you also need to say something about the **results** of Chinese entry.
- (3) Far more common is a failure to direct your answer specifically at the question. It is very easy to slip into writing "all I know about" a particular issue. For example, when faced with the question: "How far was Russia responsible for the outbreak of the First World War?" you either write a general history of Russian foreign Policy before 1914 or you write a general account of the July-August 1914 crisis. Obviously some points about Russian foreign policy before the 1914 are needed. But you must **direct yourself at the question**, looking at Russia's role in the 1914 war crisis in the same detail, and then assessing (by looking at the role of other powers and general factors) the significance of this in leading to conflict.
- (4) Always **think what is required** and plan your argument accordingly. This crucial operation should not be left until the end of your reading but should go on continuously throughout. As your reading progresses decide on which books or articles are most relevant. Then plan the stages of your argument in more detail. What specific points need to be made? In what order and with what relative emphasis? Can they be clarified by well-chosen examples or quotations?
Plan your essay.
- (5) Answers can be **unbalanced** if too much time is spent on background and not enough on the essence of the problem; too much can be written on one theme when numerous issues need to be discussed.
- (6) A particular problem with history questions is slipping into a chronological narrative. It is very easy to produce a list of facts and dates without argument or analysis. But factual material should be used as a "skeleton" around which an analysis is based. The opposite problem is a diatribe: all opinion and no evidence. This is not acceptable either. Arguments must be supported.

An answer needs analysis.



C. Structure

An essay needs to have a paragraph structure through which the argument is developed. Ideally, this should include an introduction to “set the scene” or to give a brief outline of the essay; a number of paragraphs, each dedicated to a particular element in an answer; and a conclusion, which draws elements together, looks back to the original question and reaches sensible and coherent conclusions about it.

With questions where you are asked to produce a “list” of factors for example “Why did the Nationalists win the Spanish Civil War?” the structure is fairly easy: each paragraph can look at a particular factor. But questions which ask you to “discuss” an issue will need more thought. In such circumstance your answer should show that you understand the question, that you are aware of different schools of thought on a particular problem (the various ideas put by historians), but that you have a case of your own, which you favour, and which you develop in the essay.

D. Style

In general be crisp, precise and lucid: use clear, understandable English to make your points. Do not waffle. Do not be repetitive. Do not “overwrite”: this is where, in order to illustrate your unsurpassed appreciation of the intricacies of the beautiful English tongue, you determine on a course of unrelenting punishment for the unfortunate witness to your dubious talent (the reader) by writing somewhat in the present manner.

There are various other things to avoid: bad spelling; colloquialisms; long or convoluted sentences. The use of the first person (“I think . . .” and “In my view . . .”) should also be avoided.

Once you have finished an essay a good idea is to leave it overnight or even longer before reading it over. It is easier to pick up on errors in this way.



E. References

Since an essay is an evaluation of evidence, there must be some indication of the sources of the writer's material. An elaborate set of footnotes is not required but you must:

- (1) List books and articles consulted at the end of the essay using the following form:

AUTHOR, TITLE OF BOOK, YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

AUTHOR, TITLE OF ARTICLE (in inverted commas), TITLE OF JOURNAL OR BOOK IN WHICH THE ARTICLE APPEARS, VOLUME NO. FOR JOURNALS OR EDITOR FOR BOOKS, YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

ESSAYS WITHOUT BIBLIOGRAPHIES ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

- (2) Provide a footnote or an endnote showing the source (including page no.) of any direct quotation you make or in order to acknowledge the source of a particular argument.

Copying word for word from sources (primary or secondary) without due acknowledgement is not acceptable. Essays which contain such acknowledged and "undigested" borrowing may be rejected as this is a form of plagiarism.

An essay must always reflect your own analysis.



A guide to presentations

Introduction

The Department of International History is committed to offering students mixed forms of assessment whilst ensuring that you are marked according to clear criteria and achieve high standards of performance, as in written exams. Here is what Dr Hochstrasser has written as a guide to his students:

"The seminar presentations offer a chance to ask questions and clarify issues suggested by reading, or for students to disagree over and debate particular points and interpretations. Every student will be expected to contribute to seminar discussion in some fashion. The stress throughout will be on participation and inquiry. Engagement in such seminar-based discussion is a way for students to develop the critical thinking skills that are important to the learning outcomes, as well as to accumulate a knowledge base in the major historiographical arguments. ...Presentations are crucial for setting the scene in each class and introducing the subject.

Content: Four of the five boxes that the teacher has to fill in when making an assessment relate directly to the content, so it is clearly crucial that you get this right. The criteria we are asked to evaluate you on are: "focus and range", "structure and coherence", "use of sources and historiography" and "depth of analysis and quality of arguments". All four of these criteria should be familiar to you from term time essays. It therefore follows that we are looking for something of comparable quality to an essay, albeit in a different genre.

You hence need to have a strong argument, a clear sense of what the boundaries of the subject and issue are, a grasp of the existing historiography, and a feel for why your topic matters. You also need to ground your presentation in strong sources, although in a presentation rather than an essay, these sources need to come through in the examples you use, the direct quotations you might include, or possibly the visual materials you employ rather than through the footnotes and bibliography of a conventional essay. And just like in an essay you need to provide an answer to the question you pose at the start.



Presentation: This is a history course not an IT one, so don't feel that each presentation has to be a display of tech wizardry full of special effects. But equally you do need to be able to present well, just as a good essay needs to be well written. So you do need to be clear, to avoid cramming too much on each slide, to judge the length wisely, and to have visuals that add rather than distract from what you are saying. We also would ask that each of you provide the class (and teacher) with a hand-out. This is both pedagogically useful (ie, good teaching technique) but also means that there is a record of your presentation that an external examiner can look at, long after your last slide has disappeared from the projector screen.

Timing: Presentations must not be longer than 10-15 minutes, as otherwise they risk dominating the whole class and squeezing out all time for debate. The teachers will therefore cut you off if you exceed this time limit unduly – meaning of course that your argument risks being truncated. So time yourself beforehand so as to ensure that you can get through the slides and the content without gabbling or speaking impossibly fast. It would also be sensible for each presenter to make certain that they turned up in class early, so as to be able to load their presentations onto the computer, start up power-point, and the projector before five minutes past the hour when the class is meant to start. Similarly if you plan to use your own laptop, you'll need to allow time to connect this to the system."

Here are some additional pointers

1. Planning an effective presentation

This takes some advance thought since you are aiming to make the best use of the relationship between presenter and audience. So consider the audience and how to capture their interest, develop their understanding and win over their confidence.

So think about the following

Background Preparation

- Objectives

What do you want to achieve; get across; have your audience take away?

- Audience:

How much will your audience know or need to know about your topic?



How can you link your material to what they already know?

How far do you want to win them over to a particular point of view?

Do you need to explain any particular theory, abstraction or jargon with a practical, clear example?

- Remit:

Stick to the guidelines you have been given on format, style but especially the time you have been allocated. **Do not go over the time limit.**

Choose your main points

You can't say everything. Try to present no more than 3 main points in a ten minute presentation. Allow time for an intro and conc. Deliver your points in logical, structured design, building on the previous points without large leaps in sequence.

Choose your supporting information

- What will add clarity to your argument (explaining complex terms; bringing in supporting theories?)
- What will add authority to your argument (bringing in other people's work, quoting a little from experts?)
- What will animate your argument? (photograph, video clip, example or vibrant analogy?)

A good introduction

This is crucial. It is the first point of contact with your audience. Use the introduction to confidently and clearly lay the foundation for the presentation to follow

Introduce what you will be talking about; how you will be talking about it (eg. reviewing the literature; making a comparative argument); what you will be arguing; what you want your audience to do (eg. ask questions as you are going along or at the end)

Always give your audience a moment to take in this information before you launch into your first main point.



Use linking statements

To develop a linear flow, use simple statements to send signals to your audience you are moving onto a new point/concluding point.

“The next stage in the argument is...”

“Another key issue...”

“By following this line of argument it becomes clear that...”

A great conclusion

Again this is vital to remind your audience of your main points, to pull the points together and to leave your audience with an over-riding sense of a confident, well-argued presentation (even if they don't agree with them). Think about:

Reviewing your remit; summarising main points/stages of argument; offer an overall concluding position; and offer a parting statement to provoke discussion (could be a question, provocative comment)

2. Using Powerpoint, Keynote, or similar visual software

Here's some good advice on Powerpoint presentations from Dr Clare Gordon at the LSE Eden Centre:

Slide Design

- Each slide should address a single concept
- Slides should follow a logical progression, each building on the other
- Use no more than six lines of text on any one slide
- Use upper and lower case text, **not** all capitals
- Choose a colour appropriate to the mood you want to convey
- Avoid using too many colours (maximum of 5)
- Use photographs to help the audience relate slide information to real world situations (keep in mind that if you use an outside source it is under copyright and permission to use it must be granted).



3. Delivering an effective presentation

Alas, it is not enough just to write an effective presentation, you have to be able to deliver - or perform it - to an audience with conviction, enthusiasm and clarity. This can be daunting but remember it is the material the audience are interested in hearing about and you are an expert on that topic. Here are some ways to develop your presentation-performance skills

Practice, practice

If you are not used to presenting or don't like being at the front of the class, you will have to learn how to or how to fake it. Read out your presentation before hand, watch someone you admire presenting and learn from them, get used to the material, the sound of your voice.

Familiarise yourself with your arguments and evidence, so you can read from bullet points, or index cards in short-hand. Remember, random events like a sudden noise outside, or bulb blowing can and will happen. Learn not be thrown but to pause, acknowledge any issue, and move on.

Be assertive

To sound confident, speak slowly and avoid saying sorry. Keep breathing is always a good plan with some deep breaths before you start. Your posture can send subliminal messages so try to stand up straight, shoulders down and looking up. Smile. So think posture and positive presence.

Have contact with the audience

This is hard but by making contact with audience you encourage their interest, concentration and enthusiasm. So go for as much as possible some eye contact. Shift your focus around the room to involve the whole audience. If you don't want to make direct eye contact or look at someone for some reason (you might have just finished with them or vice versa, look just above them or at the back of the room.

You can also use gestures – not rude ones – but use your hands in a constructive way to invite interest and direct focus. Too much movement will be a distraction.

Another good device is to ask questions – either practical ones – can you hear me? Did you follow that – or rhetorical devices such as “What does this tell us?”; “What exactly was he thinking when he made that decision?” or “How can we test this?”



Obviously use language that the audience can understand and involve your audience in the exploratory process of developing the narrative or argument: “So, how did we arrive at this end point”; “Surely we can take away from this image, a picture of total failure. I know I do.”

The Voice

Again, speak loud enough to be heard at the back of the room and as far as possible use your natural, day to day voice and as in normal conversation vary your volume – loud and soft.

Speak slowly to emphasise your confidence and control. If you are running out of time, don’t rush to say everything, cut something out instead.

Liquid refreshment

It’s a good idea to have a drink to hand when you speak such as a hot cup of tea to relax your throat and ease your voice. Do not drink alcohol either before or during the presentation. It will cloud your judgement and make you want to pee. Follow these instructions and you will be able to reward yourself at the end of the day!

Overall, be yourself- not too formal not too jokey. Avoid any behaviour that could be off-putting to an audience. And remember, you are here to learn and that everyone comes to LSE with a different experience of public speaking. Even the most shy of people, which is an admirable quality can overcome their nerves, even temporarily, in order to communicate ideas and arguments. So learn to express yourself without judging yourself harshly.

Professor Joanna Lewis.



A guide to doing well in exams

This department uses a range of assessments to examine students including the traditional method of answering two or three essays in a single examination. Like our main competitors, Cambridge and Oxford, we use this method as it is a reliable way of assessing how you have understood your courses, how you argue and analyse issues on your own, and how much you have actually worked all year. Employers value and respect our degrees because of this variety of assessment and this component in particular.

You are preparing for your exams indirectly of course from the start of the academic year which is why it is important to attend classes, hand in essays and most of all do a mock exam. You are all very good at passing exams otherwise you would not be here, so try to relax and not get too nervous. The School offers special classes in exam writing and managing stress. If you are not used to writing, start practising and maybe keep a diary that you write by hand. If your hand writing is bad in the exam, write on every other line. Find the perfect pen for your type of writing; sometimes a chunky bit to hold can help if your hand writing is bad. If you get cramps or feel your wrists and arms are under strain (RSI) then seek medical advice. Try not to grip the pen too tightly or write like you are trying to inscribe the words into the desk – relax your shoulders.

In this department, at the start of the academic year and again just before exams, second years and third years can get a summary of the examiners' comments on their previous scripts. So you need to attend your termly meetings with your Academic Mentor who will read them out to you and discuss areas where you can improve.

Some of you may have My Adjustments arranged through Student Services and Disability and Well-Being which will include having special arrangements for your exams which can include extra time, rest breaks, and/or a separate exam room. Even if you don't have an My Adjustments in place you can apply for Central Exam Adjustments which should be submitted to the Registry backed up with Medical Evidence:

info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/student-wellbeing/my-adjustments



Here is some very good advice written by one of our most respected teachers, Professor Antony Best

Timing! Most exams require students to write three essays in three hours. Quick question – how long should you therefore spend on each essay? Now don't think too long about this because it is not a trick question – the answer is one hour. So why then, every year, are examiners faced by “runt answers” of a paragraph or so? Be disciplined. When you get up to the hour mark, wrap up your answer and move on to the next one.

Rubric! If an exam paper has specific rubric you must follow the instructions. So if an exam paper is divided into two sections and you are asked to answer at least one question from each section, that is what you have to do, or else you risk losing marks. Sometimes there is no rubric barring you from doing something but do consider the consequences of being too narrow in your focus. For example, on the course HY235 you can answer all three questions on China, but keep in mind that being able to make allusions to similar or contrasting events in Japan and/or Korea could improve your answer.

ANSWER the question! Do not answer the topic. In other words, don't make the examiner feel that whatever question is asked you will provide exactly the same answer. The art of exam technique is being able to draw selectively from your reservoir of information to tailor a specific answer to a specific question. Thus you need to be flexible rather than rigid in your thinking. Also remember to re-read the question carefully to make sure that you have not misread any words in haste.

Think about the question! What assumptions are implicit in its wording? Is it designed to be provocative? Is it clearly referring to a past or ongoing historiographical debate? Think about whether identifying the question's implicit assumptions might help you to write the introduction of your essay and frame the overall structure. If there are dates in the question, ask yourself why they are there. If you don't know what they are referring to, you might well be better off trying another question instead.

Structure! It may be surprising to hear that an unstructured stream of consciousness does not necessarily make a good answer, but, hey, life can be cruel. You do need to think about how to structure your answer and, yes, it does need an introduction and a conclusion. Remember you are constructing an argument so use paragraphs sensibly.

Prose! It is not easy to write at speed under exam conditions and naturally markers are more forgiving of errors when marking scripts. However, you do need remember that good communication of your ideas is important. Try to avoid writing in pretentious language. You are intelligent or otherwise you would not be here in the first place, so don't write in a self-consciously intellectual style in an effort to impress. Avoid jargon wherever possible. If English is not your first language, it is important to write in simple, direct prose. Do not make the sentence structure over-complex.



Legibility! Do be kind to us and try to ensure that your handwriting is legible. Sometimes it helps if you write on alternate lines. Remember that in the worst case, when we are not able to make head or tails of your scribble, you can be required to come back to the School and type out your script.

Listing! It is important to weigh up the relative significance of the factors that explain a particular historical phenomenon. If you do not, the danger is that your essay can become a mere list rather than an explanation with a clear argument. Lists are akin to learning by rote and should be avoided.

Detail! Everything that you put into an essay is there to serve answering the question; if it does not help to answer the question it is extraneous. Therefore you need to be sparing in your use of historical detail. Do not swamp the essay with names, dates and events but simply use enough to make your point and to infer that you know much more. Do not get bogged down in the chronology of events or become too descriptive.

Historiography! Historiography can be used well and it can be used badly. There is, for example, no point bringing in an historian's name when referring to a well-known historical event – "Best says Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941". There is little point in referring to textbooks – "Best etc says that Israel started the Six-Day War in 1967". Historians should be referred to either when you know that one particularly important historical fact or interpretation is associated with a specific scholar, or when you are aware that there is an important historiographical debate about the topic you are discussing. Remember that, as with historical detail, historiography is a tool for helping you answer the question. You should be able to recognise that some topics lend themselves to a historiographical approach better than others. Japan's post-war economic development is a case in point, because a variety of different interpretations have been postulated and you can use this as the basis for the structure of an essay and thus avoid listing.

Inevitability! It is important to be able to understand the difference between the long- and short-term origins of an historical event and the danger of seeing events as inevitable. Long-term factors create an environment in which a particular event becomes a possibility. For example, a range of reasons can lead two states to become hostile to each other, but this does not mean that a conflagration is inevitable. In explaining why a war breaks out, it is therefore necessary to account both for the antagonism itself and why this mutual distrust eventually explodes into outright conflict. Normally the analysis of long-term factors should be more concise than that for the short-term or else you risk not answering the question.



Accuracy! It is important that whatever information you put into your answer is accurate. That applies to names (both of historical actors and historians), dates and places. Making errors suggests that you don't know what you are talking about. If you are unsure, then only put down what you know to be accurate. Thus, if you don't know that the Mukden incident took place on 18 September 1931 then just put down September 1931 etc.

Woe! Students are sometimes tempted to write notes to the examiners, explaining such things as why they have run out of time, such as "my alarm-clock betrayed me and I was late for the exam" etc. You are better advised to continue writing your answer. If there are serious mitigating circumstances affecting your performance these need to be communicated to Student Services.

Revision! Essays written in an hour and quick essay plans are the best way to get ready. Don't learn long quotations – waste of time!

Professor Joanna Lewis



A guide to 'gobbet' exercises and how to tackle them

A "gobbet" is a brief extract from an historical source on which you are asked to comment.

In examinations you will only have 25-30 minutes in which to comment, and any gobbet exercises which you write over the year should be restricted to one or two (A4) sides. This may not seem a great deal but succinctness is a key part of the exercise. The real message is: **pack all you can concisely into every sentence**. There is no room for irrelevance.

In a gobbet exercise you are essentially answering the question: what is the significance of the extract as a piece of historical evidence? And in order to demonstrate its significance your answer should really involve three elements, even if they are fused into a whole:

(a) **Context**. Who said/wrote what is in the extract, and what was their position? To whom did they say/write it? What is the historical context (ie, major events at the time, relevant to the extract). Is the extract important to a particular historical debate? What specific situation/issue was the speaker/writer concerned with? Why was this important? What were the results? These are some of the questions you may wish to ask. You must provide a reasonable amount of background material to put the extract in context.

(b) **Content**. This is essential. It is not enough to provide lots of background/general points on a particular issue. You must discuss the particular significance of the extract before you.

Neither should you simply repeat what is in the gobbet in different language. You must interpret, amplify and criticise it to highlight its significance. Repetition is useless; analysis is everything.

Note that it can sometimes be significant to highlight what is not being said: the speaker/writer may be "dodging" a particular issue.

It is important to be balanced in your approach. That is (i) give the speaker/writer a fair hearing: amplify and explain what they say, but (ii) also criticise what they say, so as to show their perception/dishonesty/vanity/simplification of issues/vagueness/ambiguity/inhumanity etc.

(c) **Comment**. Always try to show how the gobbet is important to historians: which historical arguments does it undermine or reinforce? (or perhaps it could be used by both sides in an historical debate for different purposes?)



To do this you need to show an appreciation of the uses of particular types of historical evidence.

There are many types of historical evidence, and all are likely to reveal different types of information and be of varying value in historical debate.

For example:

Internal government memoranda (Cabinet papers; minutes of a Foreign Office meeting; CIA intelligence estimates on the feasibility of making the two Castros and Ché Guevara “disappear simultaneously”) – will sometimes be dreadfully dull but are high quality evidence, top secret when they were written, revealing of the way governments operate.

Diaries - may be written by an egomaniac, exaggerating his/her own importance, but again can be very revealing, contemporary evidence and can contain the sort of information (eg, personal hatred) which you won't find in government documents.

Memoirs - will almost invariably involve a lot of personal bias (from Caesar to Kissinger) but can include unique information and may be based on PRIVATE PAPERS collected over the years; then again they could be based on mere memory - which can be very reliable.

Public speeches - won't reveal any secrets, and can be quite propagandistic, but could be used to get an important new message across.

There are all sorts of other forms of evidence (newspaper reports, photographs, coins, international treaties, parliamentary debates, films, buildings, etc. etc.). They are all worth thinking about. But always ask such questions as: when was this evidence recorded? In what form? Does this suggest it could be biased? Is it likely to give away any secrets?

Again, this may sound like a lot to think about and potentially a lot to write. But gobblet extracts are usually short (only a couple of sentences or so); if you have studied a course properly you should be familiar with the material; you will probably only been asked to study certain types of evidence (a few memoirs, some speeches, a number of government memoranda perhaps); and particular extracts will usually only be designed to highlight a few important points.

The two main factors to be balanced are:

- (1) the need to **ask lots of questions** on what is before you but
- (2) the need to **focus on the actual extract**, providing relevant points without vagueness.



Assessment and feedback

The Department of International History believes that teaching and research are interlinked in humanities. The philosophy behind our programmes is to introduce students to the diversity of historical and cultural human experience, to make them aware of the development of differing values, systems and societies, and to inculcate critical yet tolerant personal attitudes. History programmes place particular stress on the development of independent thought and analytical skills, and require excellent communication skills, namely high levels of literacy and of oral presentation. Candidates are required to master a variety of intellectual approaches, in different formats, and have to learn to deal with a wide range of intellectual and cultural challenges. Courses vary from general overviews at one extreme, to in-depth primary-source studies at the other. The former encourages understanding of the historical process, with its mix of continuity and change; the latter sharpens the analysis of documentary and other material, developing research methods. This philosophy informs the Department's constant search for better modes of assessment and feedback.

The Department values three-hour examinations in the Spring Term as method of assessment. This method tests above all the ability of students to accumulate an expert knowledge about specific historical areas and issues during the entire year. It allows students to articulate in a structured way a historical discussion, to organize their thoughts, focusing on the construction of an argument that relies on the flexible deployment of factual knowledge and historiographical interpretations. The Department considers that at Undergraduate level the upper second grade (60-69 per cent) should be given for "competent work showing a good grasp of the subject matter...familiarity with the most important reading and historiographical debates." The first-class grade (70 per cent and higher) requires "exceptional answers, well-presented and argued with sophistication, which demonstrate a wide familiarity with the subject matter and the historiographical debate."

The summative examinations at the end of the year provide sufficient time for students who come to the School from very different academic backgrounds and even different educational systems to "align" with common educational norms and standards, and develop their thoughts in particular areas of expertise that they chose. Students practice for the summative exam over the Winter and the Spring Terms through formative essays, and a "mock exam" while receiving constructive feedback from their teachers.

The summative exam is also a fair mode of assessment: it allows the Department to assess all candidates in the same way, with the same set of questions and time limit (candidates with adjustments may get more time as appropriate). This facilitates the task of grading and avoids any risk of plagiarism.



The Department has substantial experience with this mode of assessment. The criteria used for each grade are described in detail in the marking schemes below. At the same time, the Department has always employed complementary alternative modes to assess learning outcomes. This reflects the diversity of pedagogical methods preferred by individual teachers and different levels of learning outcomes required from the 2nd and 3rd year students in undergraduate programmes. It is also a reflection of the very different types of history which are taught in the Department which lend themselves to different forms of assessment. The Department allows teachers a measure of freedom in the way they teach courses, adopting the methods they judge most effective as a means of imparting and assessing knowledge and skills. This freedom also contributes to the atmosphere of “living assessment”: every year teachers reflect on their courses and some decide to experiment with different forms of assessment. The department reviews each of its taught courses every five years.

We pride ourselves on our innovation in teaching and some of our courses now include group work and group assessment. Several of our offerings include a mixture of assessed essays, assessed presentations and assessed participation. In certain cases this has led to a shortening of the final examination to 2 hours; some courses have dispensed with the final examination altogether and have continuous assessment only.

The dates of submission of assessed written work are usually in the Winter and the Spring Terms. The length of these essays and projects varies according to the level and structure of the assessment. **Always consult the Moodle site for your courses where clear guidance for the elements of assessment will be posted.**

Formative essays are very important to achieve learning outcomes: they allow students to test their skills against the criteria of their teachers, understand better most important threads of historiographical discussions, receive feedback and advice on additional readings, and prepare themselves thoroughly for a summative examination. It is a department policy that teachers set aside a time to return formative essays individually to candidates within two weeks after their submission with a detailed written feedback and further discussion on improvement on structure, concept, language, originality, and the use of sources, among other points. The Department has standard feedback sheets available for formative essays; you will find an example feedback sheet at the end of this section.

The Department’s engagement with different assessment methods reflects an increasing priority placed on presentation skills and the articulation of reasoned arguments in verbal contributions to class discussion



Class attendance is compulsory for all courses. Some courses include a grade for participation, because active and outstanding engagement in class work helps motivate students to prepare for class discussions and to engage more actively in these discussions. When participation is assessed it reflects attendance, student-led discussion assignments and weekly contributions to discussion which are recorded on a spreadsheet week by week. In general, teachers will be looking for good attendance, preparedness, alertness, willingness to participate in class discussions or debates and quality of contributions. Students will be expected to raise questions in class discussion as well as answer their peers' questions. Some teachers also assess oral presentations; you will find a guide to presentations, with some practical advice, in the section above.

In recognition of the importance of examination in the classification systems this Department pioneered a policy of giving feedback to 2nd and 3rd year students on their examination performance during the previous year. This is done through their academic mentors. We believe it is a valuable contribution to students' educational experience and provides you with specific clues and strategies to improve your learning outcomes. There are other modes of communicating feedback to students via Moodle and LSE for You for each individual course. All teachers meet with students to provide feedback on their performance in class, class presentations, and essays. All students also have academic mentors and can receive their feedback from them on their assessed work. The contact between students and their teachers, as well as academic mentors goes well beyond the class and office hours – and includes exchange of emails, consultations on lists of literature and sources, and readings of preliminary drafts.

There is also a compulsory dissertation for the 3rd year students in BA History (optional for the two joint BSc programmes) which demonstrates the learning outcomes of all three years for undergraduates. As a culmination of study, the dissertation is an opportunity for students to “do the work of historians” rather than just critically engage with historiography, to examine primary sources in archives, and to come up with their own interpretations of historical events.

The dissertation arrangements are designed to allow students as much freedom and independence as possible over the choice of subject. It is an exercise in setting a task and solving a problem; in formulating questions and providing convincing answers based on sound evidence. While guided by supervisors, students are expected to work alone for the most part; to show initiative and follow references and lines of enquiry, as well as to produce a substantial, coherent and well-argued piece. The length of the dissertation is 10,000 words and the value is equivalent to one paper in the degree programme.



New members of staff are given appropriate guidance and development on the Department's assessment and feedback procedures. Teachers are responsible for guiding GTAs by providing detailed marking breakdowns, exemplary essays, and ongoing consultations during the year.

The methods of assessment and feedback are communicated to students at the beginning of Autumn term in classes and during office hours. Also these methods are regularly discussed with Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC). Every new course is presented to student representatives at SSLC for consultation.

A few words should be said about the process of setting and marking of exams and assessed coursework. Where assessed essays have been introduced, questions are submitted at the start of the year to the relevant Chair of Exams and to External Examiners – a distinguished historian from outside LSE who is the additional and final check for fairness and clarity - for approval and feedback. Only once approved are these circulated to students. When it comes to exams, the Teacher Responsible for the Course (TRC) will normally set the exam and develop exam questions. This is then scrutinized collectively within the Department and passed on to an external examiner. Marking of all materials that contribute to the final grade is done “blind” – ie, students are not identifiable by the examiners since they are given a number which has no key until the exams have been graded.

Each exam paper or essay is read and marked by one examiner (the so-called “moderated marking scheme”, which is regularly reviewed by the department). A proportion of all essays and exam scripts, including fails, borderline marks and firsts are also scrutinized by a moderator who approves the distribution of marks. A sample of essays or exam scripts is reviewed by an external examiner. Agreed marks are then collectively discussed and reviewed by Sub-Boards established for each degree or joint degrees. These are attended by internal and external examiners. There is no identification of candidates by name until marks are agreed and/or a degree is awarded. The assurance of anonymity reduces to the absolute minimum the risk of bias in assessment on the grounds of race, gender or other personal characteristics.



Essay feedback sheet

STUDENT

COURSE

TOPIC

Focus and Range		
Unsatisfactory		Comments:
Satisfactory		
Good		
Excellent		
Structure and Coherence		
Unsatisfactory		Comments:
Satisfactory		
Good		
Excellent		
Depth of Analysis and Quality of Arguments		
Unsatisfactory		Comments:
Satisfactory		
Good		
Excellent		
Use of Sources and Historiography		
Unsatisfactory		Comments:
Satisfactory		
Good		
Excellent		
Expression and Presentation		
Unsatisfactory		Comments:
Satisfactory		
Good		
Excellent		
Suggestions for improvement and other points		



Department of International History undergraduate marking scheme

Class	Marks %	Attributes
1	80-100 70-80	As below (70-80) plus answers that show strong evidence of independent judgement and originality, which are often combined with evidence that the student has read well beyond the course's reading list. Exceptional answers, well-presented and argued with sophistication, which demonstrate a wide familiarity with the subject matter and the historiographical debate.
2.1	60-69	Competent work showing a good grasp of the subject matter. Evidence of familiarity with the most important reading and historiographical debates. In general, factually correct and comprehensive in coverage, although there may be minor slips and omissions. Clear presentation and organization of answers which address the question directly and relevantly. Answers show an understanding of and familiarity with terms and concepts relevant to the question.
2.2	50-59	Answers demonstrate some understanding of the subject matter but are marred by poor presentation or by lack of sophisticated argument or knowledge. Answers are frequently narrative in style and only indirectly, or inadequately, address the question. They often include unsupported generalizations, occasional inaccuracies, irrelevance, omissions, contradictions and are weak in definition and application of concepts. Although the main issues are understood, they are often presented in a superficial manner and there is little attempt to go beyond the standard reading.



Class	Marks %	Attributes
3	40-49	Weak answers which nevertheless show evidence that there is some familiarity with the subject. Answers are often weak narrative/descriptive accounts, which move towards the relevant area required by the question but display only a partial grasp of the topic, the requirements of the question, and the manner in which to construct an answer. Argument fleeting and frequently simplistic. Evidence of basic familiarity with the facts but inaccuracies and omissions occur.
Fail	30-39 0-29	Incoherent and poorly structured answers containing many errors and showing little knowledge of the subject matter. Also coherent and adequately structured answers which wholly fail to address the question. Minimal evidence of any familiarity with the subject matter. Failure to address the question combined with incoherent structure and argument.



Department of International Relations undergraduate marking scheme

Writing essays and examination answers is a creative process. In a subject like International Relations there are no straightforwardly correct answers, and there is no single recipe for getting a good mark. The marking scheme below is intended to give you guidance as to typical strengths and weaknesses of work graded at different levels. However, most essays and answers reflect a mix of strengths and weaknesses, for example combining a very good grasp of evidence and concepts with weak analysis, or scoring well on originality but being not very well focused on the question. The overall grade for your essay or answer reflects the mix of elements in your work. This is the reason why the specific feedback from your class teacher on your essay work during the year is crucial in order for you to work out what areas of your work could be improved.

Essays and examination answers are assessed in relation to the following criteria:

Relevance to question: This means the degree to which you answer the question fully.

Organisation and structure: This means the degree to which your essay or answer is clearly structured and organised, and each section follows logically from the previous one, building up to a clear conclusion.

Clarity of exposition: This means the degree to which your essay or answer is well written, using good, grammatical English. And the degree to which you explain successfully the evidence, concepts and arguments you are using in your essay or answer.

Analytical depth: This means the degree to which the essay or answer does not just reproduce evidence and argument from the literature, but also critically evaluates (assesses the strengths and weaknesses of) evidence and arguments, and builds an independent argument in response to the question.

Use of evidence/literature: This means the degree to which the essay or answer demonstrates a good and extensive knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and debates within the literature.

Referencing/bibliography: This means the degree to which you reference the sources of the evidence and arguments you use in your work properly. All coursework essays should have full references and bibliography (see “Guidelines for Writing Essays and Notes”, appendix (j) of IRD Student Handbook). Examination answers should reference key authors and texts, but full bibliographical details are not expected in an examination answer.



Mark	Descriptive equivalent for exams, assessed coursework and class essays
Outstanding (First Class) 80+	Wholly relevant to question Very good structure and organisation, all building to support the persuasiveness of the conclusion Excellent exposition of evidence, concepts and arguments, well written Excellent, original analysis and argument Excellent knowledge and understanding of evidence, concepts and debates in the literature, demonstrates wide reading Good referencing/bibliography
Excellent (First Class) 70-79	Wholly relevant to question Very good structure and organisation, all building to support the persuasiveness of the conclusion Excellent exposition of evidence, concepts and arguments, well written Strong analysis and independently formulated argument Excellent knowledge and understanding of evidence, concepts and debates in the literature, demonstrates wide reading Good referencing/bibliography
Very Good (Upper Second) 60-69	Wholly relevant to question Good structure and organisation supporting clear conclusion Strong exposition of evidence, concepts and arguments, well written Good analysis and independent argument Very good knowledge and understanding of evidence, concepts and debates in the literature, demonstrates essential and wider reading Good referencing/bibliography



Mark	Descriptive equivalent for exams, assessed coursework and class essays
Good (Lower Second) 50-59	Predominantly relevant to the question Satisfactory structure and organisation, clear conclusion Clear exposition of evidence, concepts and arguments, reasonably clearly written Some good analysis and argument, some weak analysis and argument Good but partial knowledge and understanding of evidence, concepts and debates in the literature, evidence of essential and some wider reading Good referencing/bibliography
Adequate (Third Class Honours) 40-49	Partial relevance to question Satisfactory structure and organisation, but not all clearly building to conclusion Some clear exposition of basic evidence, concepts and arguments, reasonably clearly written Underdeveloped analysis and argument Limited knowledge and/or understanding of evidence, concepts and debates in the literature, evidence of essential reading Adequate referencing/bibliography



Mark	Descriptive equivalent for exams, assessed coursework and class essays
Unsatisfactory (Fail) 20-39	Poorly focused on question Poor structure and organisation, not supporting conclusion Poor clarity of exposition of evidence, concepts and arguments, badly written Lack of analysis, poor argument Basic knowledge and/or understanding of evidence, concepts and debates in the literature, limited evidence of essential reading Poor referencing/bibliography
Very Unsatisfactory (Bad Fail) 0-19	Irrelevant to question Absence of structure/organisation, no or unsupported conclusion Unclear exposition of evidence, concepts and arguments, badly written No analysis or argument No knowledge and/or understanding of evidence, concepts or debates in the literature No or very poor referencing/bibliography

Essay submission

Ordinary (formatively assessed) essays

- (1) All formative essays will be sent to class teachers on the day of the deadline as directed in the relevant course syllabus or according to the teachers' instructions.
- (2) Please do not submit your essays in any other form eg, by leaving under the door of your tutor or the office.
- (3) Formative essays should be submitted to Turnitin via the portals on course Moodle sites.

If you do not follow the set procedure for essay submission we regret that your essay may be returned unmarked and discounted.

Please note that class teachers are at liberty to impose penalties at their discretion for essays which are submitted late.



Submission of assessed work

You must submit an electronic copy of your essay to Turnitin available on the course Moodle page.

Please note in the case of assessed gobbet exercises, please consult with the Teacher Responsible for the Course whether Turnitin submission is necessary. If not, these should be submitted by email to ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk. **Please include the course code, eg, HY206, in the subject line of the email.**

Please note that the date and time that you submit a copy of your work on Moodle is taken as the official submission time for the purposes of lateness penalties.

Submission of your summatively - assessed essays, gobbet exercises and dissertation to Turnitin is now a departmental requirement. The department may withhold provisional marks and feedback if you do not submit your work to Turnitin.

When submitting work to Turnitin via Moodle:

- (1) YOU MUST Include your candidate number and the course code in the title of your file, so it reads: «HYxxxCandidateNumberxxxxx.doc»
- (2) Make sure you click on “Submit Assignment” after you have clicked on “Save Changes”. You can find the “Submit Assignment” button at the bottom of the Submission Status page. Otherwise your work will not submit properly.

Students are also strongly advised to save all their formatively and summatively assessed work on their H space for the duration of their degree.

* **Note:** Candidates with disabilities may get longer as appropriate.

Penalty policy on exceeding the word limit on assessed essays – “for up to every 100 words over the limit one mark out of 100 will be deducted”. This means that the penalty kicks in at one word over the limit – ie, at 3,001 for an assessed essay.



Extensions

The Department expects students to meet assessed coursework submission deadlines, and it is your responsibility to organise your time appropriately.

Extensions to deadlines can only be considered if you experience circumstances which are sudden, unforeseen, out of your control and proximate to the assessment(s) in question. You will also need to supply evidence of those circumstances which meets LSE's **Standards of Evidence** policy; in the majority of cases, requests without evidence cannot be considered.

To allow for processing time, any extension requests must be made **at least three days** in advance of the submission deadline. Students should complete the form provided on the course Moodle page, gather supporting documents or other evidence, and email the form and the evidence to ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk.

You will be notified by email as to whether your extension is granted by the Chair of the Exam Sub-Board. Please do not assume that your extension has been granted until you have received such an email.

Unfortunately, the Department cannot consider extension requests made less than three days before the submission deadline. If you experience adverse circumstances after this time but before the submission deadline, you should consult the **Exceptional Circumstances** procedures.

Important information on Turnitin

Students should be aware that where Turnitin is used within the Department, it is applied universally (i.e. to all submissions within a specific assessment or not at all – blanket use).

Students are directed to LSE LIFE's Academic Integrity module. This module can be found in LSE LIFE's Prepare to learn at LSE (undergraduates) Moodle courses.

[Prepare to learn at LSE \(undergraduates\)](#)

Turnitin Guidance

- Instructions on how to view and interpret your **[Turnitin originality report](#)** (provided by LSE LTI);
- Watch a **[video](#)** on how to interpret your Turnitin originality report.

Originality reports can take anytime between 10 minutes and several hours (depending on how busy the Turnitin servers are) to be fully generated



Department of International History Policy on the use of Generative AI

The Department permits the limited use of generative AI in accordance with its AI policy. Students should consult the Department's AI policy available on the course Moodle pages for the full guidance and requirements, as this is the authoritative and most up-to-date version.

Plagiarism

It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism in your work. You should use the Turnitin report to see if there are any issues with your coursework before the final deadline. If you are unsure or have any concerns, you can ask your class teacher, the Teacher Responsible for the Course, or your Academic Mentor for further advice. Coursework will be screened, and any cases of suspected plagiarism will be taken very seriously.

The School's regulations on plagiarism can be viewed [here](#).

LSE Department of International History

Policy for student conduct on social media

Things to be aware of:

Social networking platforms are in the public domain and it is not possible to be sure what is being viewed, shared or archived, even if material is posted on a closed profile or group. There can be no reasonable expectation that posts will remain private and will not be passed on to other people, intentionally or otherwise.

Social media is sometimes used for bullying and harassment. Such behaviour from our students will not be tolerated. Bullying and harassment contravenes the School's expected standards of conduct and could result in disciplinary action.

You should be very mindful that posting offensive comments on a public site can damage your reputation. These may be seen by potential contacts and employers and could bring into question your judgement and character. In some cases, social media may also cause damage to the School's reputation and, where this is the case, the School may consider disciplinary action.



It is now standard practice for prospective employers to Google candidates, so you should assume that any references or images relating to drug taking, excessive alcohol consumption or other inappropriate behaviour could be around and attached to your name for many years.

Actions

Remember that there is no such thing as an entirely private social media account – you will always leave a trace of your actions online.

Clean up your profile and ensure nothing is available that you wouldn't want your parents, relations or potential employers to see.

Do not use language or phrases that could be considered, sexist, racist, homophobic, or any other type of offensive language.

Think about others' feelings before posting comments and consider whether you may cause offence or embarrassment.

Ask permission before sharing videos or photos of others.

Be careful about the information you post online such as your address or whether you're going away.

LSE regulations

The School's regulations provide definitions of unacceptable behaviour:



Bullying

Bullying may be physical or psychological in nature and conducted in an open environment or a secretive manner. It is behaviour that is often repetitive and intended to dominate another person or group by making them feel degraded, humiliated, intimidated or offended. It can cause a person to lose respect and confidence.

The types of behaviour may include:

- unmerited criticism, exclusion, isolation and/or gossip;
- gossiping campaigns or spreading rumours about a person;
- stalking or persistently displaying unwanted conduct to a person face-to-face, online or by another means of communication;
- taunting, teasing, ostracising or ridiculing a person either directly or to a third party;
- shouting at or berating a person in a public environment, such as in an office, during a committee session or in a classroom;
- taking or hiding another person's property;
- undermining a person's ability to carry-out or take credit for their work by unfairly overloading them with menial tasks, taking their work away from them, or stealing or copying their work;
- physically or verbally threatening or intimidating a person
- making unwelcome sexual advances.



Harassment

Like bullying, harassment can occur in many different forms: orally, in writing, in person or on social media. The School considers any unwelcome behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment to be a breach of its Anti- Harassment Policy.

Unwelcome behaviour may relate but is not restricted to a person's age, disability, gender identity, ethnicity, race, religion or belief, sex and/or sexual orientation. The kinds of actions or behaviour that is considered to be harassment include:

- jokes, offensive remarks or intimate questions conveyed orally or in writing directly to a person or about a person to a third party;
- producing, sending or displaying inappropriate and/or offensive images or other material to, or about, a person or group;
- abuse, threats or intimidation towards a person or group;
- damaging, defacing or removing a person's or group's property;
- breaching a person's confidentiality by disclosing their sensitive personal information;
- less favourable treatment by excluding a person from a benefit or opportunity that is open to others;
- unwanted physical conduct such touching, staring at or hitting a person;
- sexually assaulting or making sexual advances towards another person.

For the full policy, please see: info.lse.ac.uk/staff/Services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/harPol.pdf



Section 7: LSE100





LSE100 is LSE's flagship interdisciplinary course, taken by all undergraduate students in the first year of their degree programme. The course is designed to build your capacity to tackle multidimensional problems through research-rich education. It also provides unique opportunities to examine global challenges in collaboration with peers from other departments and leading academics from across the School.

Your LSE100 Theme

Before enrolling at LSE, you will have the opportunity to select one of three themes to focus on during LSE100. Each theme foregrounds a complex and pressing question facing social scientists. In 2026/27, the available themes are:

- How can we control AI?
- How can we transform our climate futures?
- How can we create a fair society?

For more information about each theme, visit: info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/lse100/welcome

LSE100 is a single course, and the themes are highly interconnected. Whichever theme you choose, you will have opportunities throughout the course to explore how issues from different themes relate to one another, including in both your individual and group assessments.

Alongside learning about your chosen theme from a range of disciplinary perspectives, you will also study the tools and frameworks of systems thinking and systems change. These interdisciplinary fields are increasingly adopted by academics, policymakers, corporations, and NGOs. During LSE100, you will develop a holistic understanding of how complex systems operate and how the social sciences can enable positive change at a systemic level.



How will I study in LSE100?

LSE100 is a half-unit course running across the Autumn and Winter Terms in the first year of your undergraduate degree. Each term, you will attend five 90-minute, interactive, discussion-based seminars held in alternating weeks.

Before each seminar, you will use Moodle to watch short video lectures featuring leading LSE academics and complete carefully selected readings that explore ideas and arguments from across the social sciences.

How will I be assessed?

Your LSE100 mark is based on two summative assessments:

- One individual written assessment (50 per cent).
- One group research project (50 per cent), which you will complete and present as a team.

Your final mark will be included with your other first-year marks and, if it is one of your six highest marks, will count towards your overall first-year average.

Chat with the LSE100 Team

If you have any questions, please get in touch at LSE100@lse.ac.uk or visit the LSE100 Course Office in KSW 4.10, located on the fourth floor of 20 Kingsway (KSW).

You can find out more about LSE100 at lse.ac.uk/LSE100, and you can also follow the course on [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), and [Student Hub](#).





Section 8: LSE beyond your department





- 75 Own your learning
- 77 Centre your self
- 79 Build your community
- 82 Broaden your horizons
- 84 Make your impact
- 87 Expand your skills
- 89 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.
- **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.



- **GO LSE** offers undergraduates the opportunity to study at one of the School's overseas partner institutions for a full year. Applications for the following year typically open in November.
- **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**.
- The **Laidlaw Scholars Leadership and Research Programme** is a two-year programme open to first-year undergraduates in any department. It offers a unique opportunity to develop your leadership and research skills alongside, and beyond, your academic studies.



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 9: Navigate your LSE





- 93 Navigate your LSE
- 95 Term dates and LSE closures
- 97 Systems and online resources
- 100 Your programme and courses
- 106 Exams and assessments
- 110 Codes, charters, and action plans
- 111 LSE campus





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.	<u>Moodle</u>
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.	<u>MyCareer</u> ; <u>LSE Careers</u>
Parchment	The electronic platform through which final transcripts are issued and can be shared with employers or other institutions.	<u>Accessing Parchment</u> ; <u>Transcripts</u>
Student Finance Hub	An online portal where you can review your tuition and accommodation fees, invoices, payments, and instalment arrangements once you're enrolled.	<u>Student Finance Hub</u> ; <u>Paying fees</u> ; <u>Tuition fees</u>
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.	<u>Student Hub</u> ; <u>About Student Hub</u>
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.	<u>Student LfY</u> ; <u>What's in LfY</u>



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



Term	What it means	Where next
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
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





Term	What it means	Where next
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.
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.



Role	Who they are
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.
Departmental Tutor	A senior academic responsible for running undergraduate studies in your department. They handle complex academic or personal issues your academic mentor cannot resolve, and consider requests around interruption, programme transfer, and exceptions to programme regulations.
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.

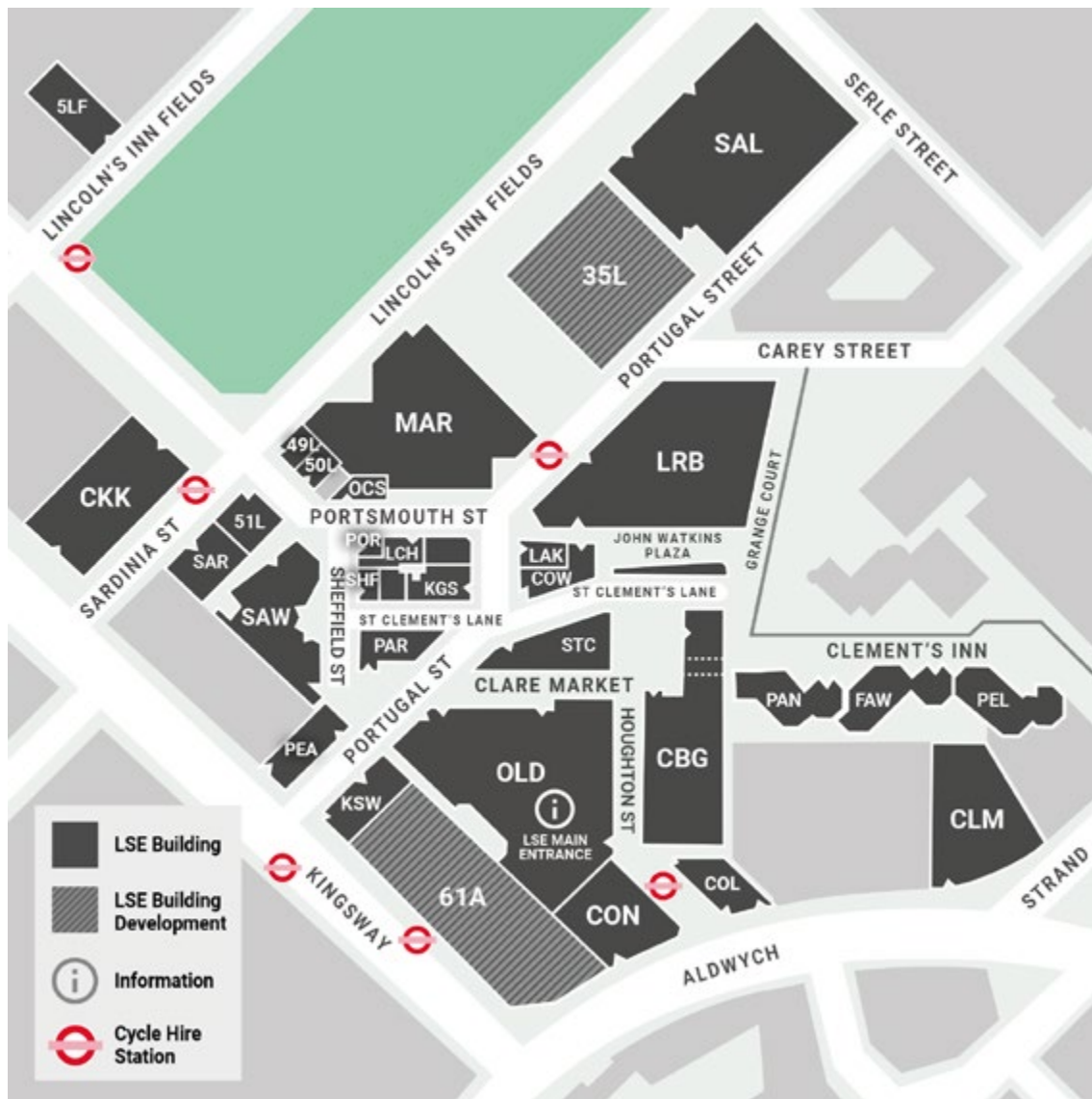
Codes, charters, and action plans

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/international-history



**Department of
International History**

The London School
of Economics and
Political Science
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE

E: ih.ug.admin@lse.ac.uk

T: +44 (0)20 7955 6174

The London School of Economics and Political Science is a School of the University of London. It is a charity and is incorporated in England as a company limited by guarantee under the Companies Acts (Reg no 70527).

The School seeks to ensure that people are treated equitably, regardless of age, disability, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation or personal circumstances.

Design: LSE Design Unit (**info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/communications-division/design-unit**)

Photography: Cover image from Unsplash, Pexels or iStock.

Internal photography: Nigel Stead, and Maria Moore.