



Frequently asked questions

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General

What is LSE CHOICE?

LSE CHOICE is aimed at high-achieving year 12-13 students from state schools and colleges. It offers them the tools to successfully apply to LSE and other highly selective universities.

In 2021/2, we plan to deliver CHOICE in a mainly virtual format. This follows the success of our 2020/1 programme, which was delivered in an entirely virtual format.

LSE CHOICE stands for:

LSE Challenge

LSE Higher

LSE Opportunity

LSE Investment

LSE Commitment

LSE Excellence

LSE CHOICE will offer places to 120 students from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education. Students can apply for a place on one of five LSE CHOICE subject streams:

- Economics
- Government and Politics
- History
- Mathematics
- Sociology

How long does the programme last?

LSE CHOICE runs from August (during the summer after the year 12) to February (half-way through Year 13).

What key dates do I need to know?

Applications

- Applications for the 2021-22 scheme will open during the Summer Term (dates TBC, but will be updated on this document and on the website in due course).
- All applicants will be notified if they have been successful during the summer.

Launch

Successful applicants will be invited to attend a virtual launch event with their parents/carers on **Wednesday 18 August 2021**, from **7pm**.

Summer sessions

We'll run a series of summer sessions during August and September on topics such as study skills and applying to university (dates and times are to be confirmed, but will be updated on our website and in this document in due course).

Saturday masterclasses

The 12 Saturday masterclasses are scheduled for the dates below. They will take place from 10-11.45am (with a 15-minute break from 10.45-11am).

Saturday Masterclass 1	25/09/2021
Saturday Masterclass 2	02/10/2021
Saturday Masterclass 3	09/10/2021
Saturday Masterclass 4	16/10/2021
<i>Half term break</i>	
Saturday Masterclass 5	13/11/2021
Saturday Masterclass 6	20/11/2021
Saturday Masterclass 7	27/11/2021
Saturday Masterclass 8	04/12/2021
Saturday Masterclass 9	11/12/2021
<i>Christmas break</i>	
Saturday Masterclass 10	22/01/2022
Saturday Masterclass 11	29/01/2022
Saturday Masterclass 12 and graduation	05/02/2022

Traditionally, a graduation ceremony is held immediately after the last Saturday session. We hope to hold this on campus and to invite parents/carers also.

What activities are included?

Full details of the summer sessions will be confirmed shortly (and will be updated on our website and in this document). These will be aimed at preparing young people for highly selective universities such as LSE. It's likely they'll include:

- support with UCAS applications and future pathways
- information about LSE student life, including support available
- tips on studying at university level

The Saturday masterclasses will be delivered by experienced, qualified teachers. They're designed to broaden and enrich participants' knowledge of their subject, as well as to develop critical thinking skills. Each masterclass focuses on a different area of the chosen subject.

Participants will also have regular opportunities to interact with current LSE students.

In addition, CHOICE participants will get free access to Sutton Trust Online. This is platform aimed at year 12-13 students interested in applying to competitive universities. It will include a comprehensive library of resources, webinars, support with writing UCAS personal statements and the chance to engage with student ambassadors from LSE and other universities.

What is the level of commitment involved?

CHOICE participants are expected to achieve a high level of attendance. We understand that there may be occasions where you'll need to miss a session due to illness or other commitments. In these cases, we ask that a parent/carer or teacher notifies us as early as possible, so we can authorise your absence. Please note that persistent unauthorised absences may result in us withdrawing you from the programme.

Are the Saturday masterclasses the same as A-level revision lessons?

No. The aim of the masterclasses is not to duplicate the A-level syllabus, but to challenge students to think more broadly about their subject.

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

Absolutely not. CHOICE brings together participants from a range of geographical areas and provides an exciting opportunity to meet new people and make new friends.

Application process

What are the eligibility and entry requirements?

To be eligible for CHOICE, applicants must:

- attend a state school/college
- be in year 12 (and about to progress to year 13)
- live in Greater London, Essex or Kent
- not be participating in LSE Pathways to Law or LSE Pathways to Banking and Finance

Academic requirements vary according to subject choice, as follows:

Economics / Maths

- GCSE grades: mainly 7-9, including 6 in English and maths
- Minimum A-level predicted grades: AAA, including A*- A in maths and studying further maths, where possible

Government and Politics / History / Sociology

- GCSE grades: mainly 7-9, including 6 in English and maths
- Minimum A-level predicted grades: AAB, including at least one essay-based subject, which should also be an [LSE preferred subject](#)

In addition, the Widening Participation team use the following additional criteria to prioritise applicants (these are listed in order of importance, but applicants meeting multiple criteria will be given higher priority also):

- care-experienced young people
- living in a postcode area of low progression to higher education ([as defined by POLAR4 quintile 1 or 2](#))
- living in a postcode area of deprivation ([as defined by IMD 2019 quintiles 1 or 2](#))
- from ethnic minorities under-represented at LSE, ie, black African/Caribbean and Pakistani
- disabled young people
- eligible for free school meals and/or pupil premium now or in the last six years
- young carers
- estranged from family
- forced migrants, refugees or asylum seekers
- from a Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller community

We review all applications in a holistic manner. Whilst we prioritise students who meet the above criteria, we'll consider all the information in an application.

I attend a grammar school. Am I eligible?

As long as your school is a state school (ie, non-fee-paying), then yes, you're eligible to apply for LSE CHOICE.

How can I apply?

Applications are via an online form, which can be accessed via www.lse.ac.uk/lsechoice.

Applications open during the Summer Term (date TBC).

When will I know if I have been successful?

We aim to contact all applicants after the closing date to confirm whether or not they've been successful.

How competitive is LSE CHOICE?

LSE CHOICE is one of our most competitive programmes. In 2020 we received over 800 applications. Please ensure you include all relevant information on your application form and that you write a good quality supporting statement. This will help us make the most informed decisions possible.

Subject choice

Will I get to study my first choice of subject?

You'll have the opportunity to specify a first and second choice of subject when you apply. We always aim to allocate first choices where possible, but in some cases, applicants may be allocated their second choice. Therefore, if you include a second choice on your application, do ensure it is a subject you're genuinely interested in and mention this in your supporting statement.

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

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

Financial

Do I have to pay to be on LSE CHOICE?

No. LSE CHOICE is completely free to attend.

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

Most of the programme in 2021/22 will be virtual. However, students will be able to get financial support with any travel to campus, where required.

Applying for a degree at LSE

Will I get help with the UCAS application process as part of LSE CHOICE?

LSE CHOICE will include support with the UCAS application process, although details are still being confirmed. It's likely we'll offer a session on applying to LSE (and other competitive universities) delivered by an LSE undergraduate admissions specialist. In addition, Sutton Trust Online includes access to OSCAR, a personal statement builder tool, as well as webinars about applying to university.

As LSE CHOICE enriches participants' subject knowledge, it can help with writing about academic interests on the UCAS personal statement. Participants can write directly about their LSE CHOICE experience too, including the skills and confidence they gained. In addition, CHOICE participants often find the programme helps confirm what they want to study at university.

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

Students who participate in LSE widening participation programmes (like CHOICE) are automatically flagged in our admissions database. This means that if you decide to make an application to LSE, admissions staff would know that you had participated in CHOICE. This enables them to take this into consideration when assessing your application, but does not guarantee you an offer.

Does LSE make contextual or reduced offers?

Yes LSE, does make contextual offers. Taking part in LSE widening participation programmes like CHOICE also means you're eligible to receive a contextual (reduced) offer for certain LSE undergraduate degree programmes (see the [LSE undergraduate admissions pages for more information](#)).

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

Whilst we do welcome participants making an application to LSE, no, you won't be forced to do so! The most important thing is that we're enabling you to make informed decisions about what is right for you.

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

Deciding whether or not to go to university is a big decision to make. Whilst CHOICE is designed to help participants make successful applications to highly selective universities like LSE, we would encourage you to continue on the programme even if you decide university isn't for you. The combination of knowledge and skills you gain will be valuable, regardless of what you decide to do once you leave 6th form or college.