



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

Appointment of CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION



Old Building



Perrett
Laver

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Introduction

Under the leadership of Professor Larry Kramer as President and Vice Chancellor, the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) is now seeking to appoint a new Chief Operating Officer and Head of Administration (COO).

The COO reports directly to the President and Vice Chancellor and is member of the School Management Committee (SMC), LSE's senior management and executive team. The successful candidate will support the President and Vice Chancellor through exceptional leadership of the School's administrative services, driving strong performance, delivering value for money, and ensuring collaboration, communication, and cooperation across professional service divisions across all operational areas. They will be responsible for building and continuously developing a high-performing team of professional service division leaders and working closely with academics and academic leadership to understand and meet the operational requirements of LSE's research and education missions.

In early 2025, LSE embarked on an ambitious Operations Excellence Programme, which seeks to fundamentally transform operations and processes in order to significantly improve the way LSE administration runs for the whole School community. This is therefore an exciting time to join LSE for a new COO who will lead this programme, with support from the wider School Management Committee, and drive meaningful and far-reaching organisational change.

The post holder will possess extensive experience of a kind needed for a COO leadership role within a complex organisation, gained at a senior level in the public and/or private sector. It is desirable that at least some of this experience comes from within the university sector. It is essential that the post holder has a track record of delivering operational change and transformation. They will demonstrate intellectual credibility and a proven track record of managing substantial human, physical and, financial resources, while driving transformational change to improve performance and increase value for money.

Political acumen and the ability to navigate complex challenges will be crucial to success in this role.

The successful appointee will possess exceptional leadership, communication and relationship-building skills, and be able to deliver operational excellence while respecting the collegial culture of higher education through successful consensus-building. They will have a clear commitment to equality and diversity, be aligned with the values of the LSE and its mission to create a truly inclusive university.



About London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)

“To know the causes of things for the betterment of society”

The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) is one of the foremost universities in the world, and its focus on the social sciences makes it a unique intellectual environment in which to understand and develop innovative approaches to the big questions confronting our societies. With 18 Nobel Prize winners and 37 past or present heads of state among its diverse community of alumni, LSE is a truly influential and international university at the forefront of global policy debate.

An LSE education provides students with a research-led, disciplinary and interdisciplinary experience, encouraging learners to engage critically with both their subjects and real-world challenges, thus equipping them professionally and personally for the work into which they will graduate.

LSE is made up of a diverse international community, yet also rooted in London and working to make a positive impact within our city and beyond. We are ranked the top university in the UK and were named the ‘University of the Year 2025’ by **The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide**.

A member of the Russell Group of the UK’s research-intensive universities, LSE has the highest proportion of world-leading research of any UK University. In recent years, LSE has continued to perform exceptionally well in league tables and research impact exercises. In the latest UK Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021), 58% of LSE’s research was judged to be world-leading and 35% was deemed to be internationally excellent.

LSE continues to develop and change but its founding purpose, “to know the causes of things for the betterment of society” remains as important as ever.

LSE at a Glance...



We have **233,000 alumni** across the world



Over **40 world leaders** have studied or taught at LSE



LSE counts **20 Nobel Prize winners** among our staff and former students



During the year 2023/24, LSE had **11,884 full time students**:
5,346 undergraduates, **5,498 taught postgraduates** and **540 postgraduate researchers**



34 per cent of students were classed as Home and **66 per cent** as Overseas



Students come from **146 countries**



We have **29 academic departments and institutes**



19 research centres, covering the breadth of the social sciences



Ranked 6th in the world for social science and management subjects
in the **QS World and Subject Rankings 2024**



In this year's **QS World rankings: Europe 2025**,
LSE won an **Employability Champions award**

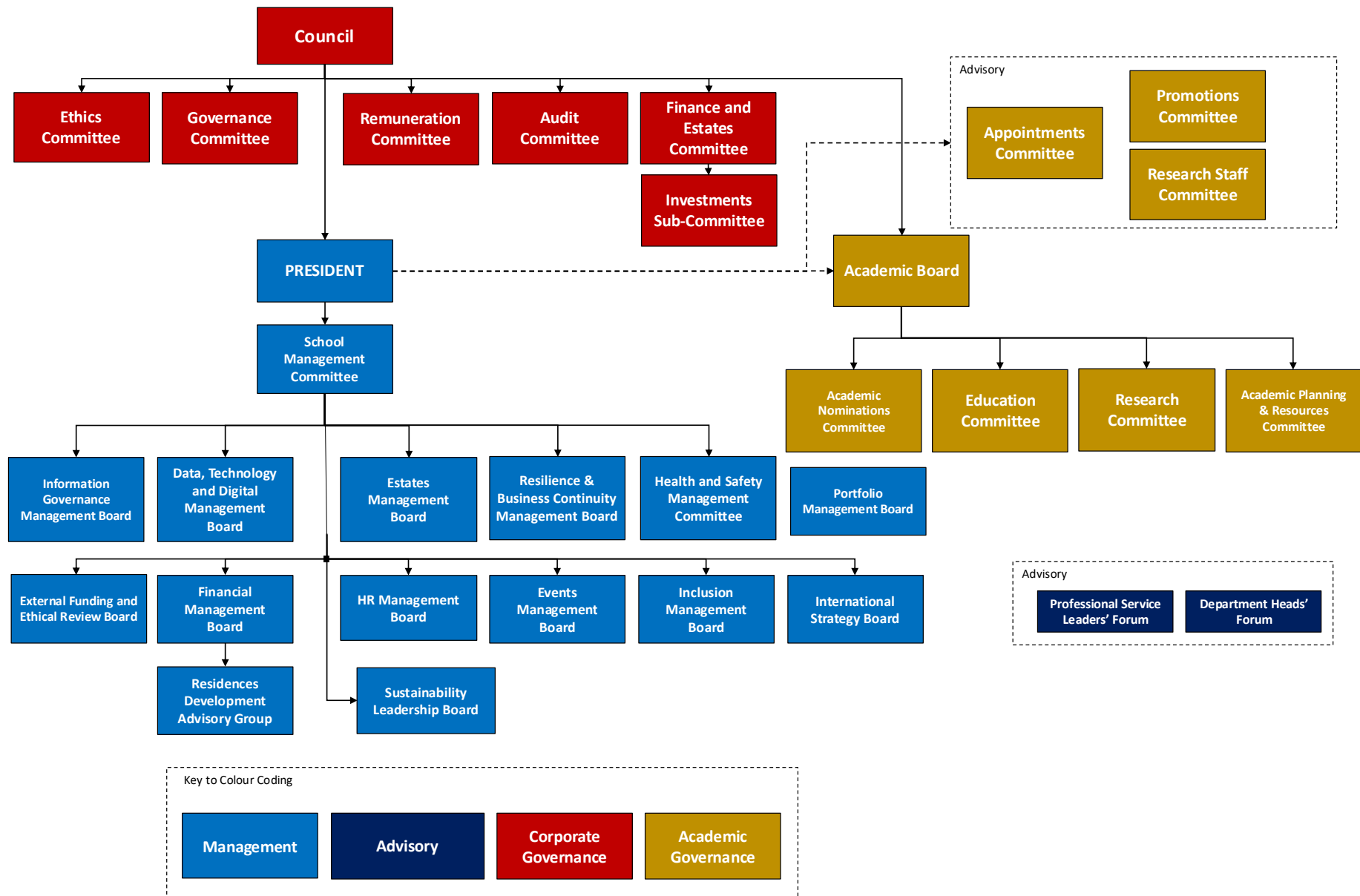


According to the most recent data, **92 per cent of graduates**
entered employment or study within **15 months** of graduating



The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025 ranked LSE
the **top university in the UK** and named LSE **University of the Year 2025**

Our Structure



Job Description

Job title: **Chief Operating Officer and Head of Administration**

Department/Division: **Executive Office**

Accountable to: **President and Vice Chancellor**

The postholder will support the President and Vice Chancellor as a member of the School Management Committee, LSE's senior management and executive team, through exceptional leadership of the School's administrative services, driving strong performance, delivering value for money, and ensuring collaboration, communication, and cooperation across all operational areas.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Lead, develop, coach, and drive excellence in a range of divisions including Estates, Human Resources, Data and Technology Services, Academic Registrar's Division, Communications, and Residences and Catering, to ensure effective leadership, strategic development, and successful delivery of the relevant services.
- Lead organisational change across the School's administration, in the first instance successfully delivering the Operations Excellence programme to achieve improved standards, efficiency, effective integration, and alignment with the School's strategy.
- Regularly convene the leaders of all professional services to ensure their cooperation, shared understanding of strategy, policy and issues, and effective communication between them and the rest of the School's management.
- Support the holistic development of the School's corporate services infrastructure, both through line management authority in some divisions and through leadership of work on systems and processes across all divisions, encouraging innovation and quality in all aspects of the School's work, while focusing on the needs and aspirations of students and staff.
- Support the process of budgeting and planning across all service divisions, in coordination with the Chief Financial Officer.
- Work closely with academics, academic leadership, and other managers throughout the School to understand operational requirements of departments, research centres, institutes, and service divisions, and facilitate the effective delivery of those requirements, balancing the need for efficiency against localised processes where these materially add value to student or staff experience.
- Ensure all services adopt service plans, policies, standards, and procedures that satisfy the School's objectives, statutory and regulatory obligations, and recognised codes of practice.
- Achieve a reputation for operational quality and problem-solving commensurate with the School's distinguished academic reputation and strategic ambitions.
- Oversee the School's campus estate and space management.
- Work with School Management Committee colleagues, especially the General Counsel, to ensure operational risks are identified and considered, and appropriate measures to manage or mitigate them.
- Lead in ensuring that corporate services provide with maximal value for money.
- Build a strong, capable, and confident team of high-performing professional service division leaders in the School.
- Represent the School externally at a senior level with other academic institutions, public bodies, and organisations in the private and commercial sectors.



- Attend the School Council, Audit Committee, Finance and Estates Committee, and other governance bodies, and present reports as and when required.
- Advise the President and Vice-Chancellor and deputise in their absence as required on appropriate matters.
- Act in lead roles for the provision of compliance and safeguarding activities, such as the Authorising Officer for the UKVI sponsor licence.
- Deliver services effectively with a degree of flexibility, recognising that the post holder may be required to perform work not specifically referred to above.

This summarises the purpose of the job and lists its key tasks. It is not a definitive list of all the tasks to be undertaken as these can be varied from time to time at the discretion of the President and Vice Chancellor, in consultation with the postholder.

Flexibility

To deliver services effectively, a degree of flexibility may be required in the duties performed in order to meet the exigencies of service. Job roles may also naturally develop over time and ongoing substantial changes to a role will be discussed between line managers and their staff, with job descriptions updated as and when appropriate.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

LSE is committed to building a diverse, equitable and truly inclusive university. All posts (and post holders) will seek to ensure diversity and inclusion, while opposing all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, or social and economic background.

Ethics Code

Posts (and post holders) are assumed to have a responsibility to act in accordance with the School's Ethics Code and to promote the principles and values that the Code enshrines. The Ethics Code clearly states that the whole LSE community, including all staff, students, and governors of LSE, are expected to act in accordance with the principles which are set out in the Code. As such you are required to read and familiarise yourself with it. The School's Effective Behaviours Framework is designed to support this Code. It sets out examples for the six behaviours that all staff are expected to demonstrate, these can be found on this [link](#).

Environmental Sustainability

The post holder is required to minimise environmental impact in the performance of the role, and actively contribute to the delivery of the LSE Environmental Policy.

Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience:

Essential

- Experience of a COO/Deputy COO role (or equivalent) within a complex organisation, gained at a senior level in the public and/or private sector.
- Intellectual credibility (which may but is not required to be evidenced by a postgraduate qualification).
- A commitment to the ambitions and values of the LSE and the ability to work with and command the respect of the academic community, student body, and professional services staff. Track record of managing substantial human, physical, and financial resources and driving change to improve performance and increase value for money in their delivery.
- Ability to develop and implement strategy in a complex environment, taking account of interconnections and balancing wider consequences.
- Political “nous” in order to overcome and navigate challenges.
- Experience of leading transformational change programmes involving infrastructure, systems, and people.
- Knowledge of the Higher Education sector, including funding arrangements, performance and regulatory frameworks, and current sector issues, challenges and transformation.
- Demonstrable knowledge of and a clear commitment through previous actions to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Proven experience of working successfully in a collegial and consensus-based institutional culture.

Desirable

- Experience of a COO leadership (or equivalent) role within the university sector

Communication:

Essential

- Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate, influence and negotiate successfully with a range of internal and external stakeholders including trade unions.
- Able to communicate effectively at all levels within a complex organisation, to build support and cooperation in order to meet strategic goals.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.





Teamwork and Motivation:

Essential

- Able to set clear and challenging goals, and hold senior leaders accountable for these, while committing to support the team(s) to enable these goals to be met.
- Ability, experience and intellectual credibility to liaise with senior academic and professional staff and engage them in developing strategic plans whilst recognising the wider pressures on them.
- Able to support the wellbeing of staff and students through policy and leadership.

Planning and Organising:

Essential

- Proven experience of planning, setting and implementing strategic plans and effective resource allocation across complex operations.

Liaison and Networking:

Essential

- Ability to engage effectively with key stakeholders both internally and externally.
- Outstanding communication, networking, negotiation, diplomatic and managerial skills to inspire and lead others.

Decision Making:

Essential

- Demonstrate a strong track record of making good and sound decisions in an environment with ever-changing circumstances, potential uncertainty, and ambiguity.
- Ability to work and make decisions combining qualitative and quantitative data.
- Able to gather relevant data and information and provide authoritative advice to ensure appropriate decisions are made.
- Proven experience of identifying and resolving complex matters on a timely basis.

Essential: requirements without which the job could not be done.

Desirable: requirements that would enable the candidate to perform the job well.

Application Process and How to Apply

An executive search exercise is being undertaken by Perrett Laver in parallel with an open advertisement of the post. Perrett Laver will support the Appointment Committee in the discharge of its duties, both to assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements for the role and to identify the widest possible field of qualified candidates.

Application is by submission of a full curriculum vitae (CV) and a covering letter of application. The CV should include all educational and professional qualifications, full employment history, and details of key achievements. The covering letter should be between two to three sides of A4 and should address your interest in the position and the LSE, as well as how you meet the job description and person specification.

The application should also include suitable daytime and evening telephone contact details, a preferred email address, and the details of at least two referees. Referees will not be contacted without prior agreement and notice.

Completed applications should be uploaded [here](#), quoting reference **8056**.

The closing date for applications is **09.00 GMT on Monday 27th October 2025**.

Perrett Laver will conduct preliminary interviews with long-listed candidates in weeks commencing 17th November and 24th November, and the Appointment Committee will meet during week commencing 8th December to decide upon a shortlist of candidates.

These individuals will subsequently be invited for interview in early January.

Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.

As defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website <http://www.perrettlaver.com/information/privacy/>.





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