

# Community in Education

What are some of the current challenges that prevent panellists from fully participating in communities at LSE?

## In the classroom

<b>Cultural divides</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nationality / cultural based groups often form inside classrooms/seminars. Choice of seminar groups exacerbates this (PG)</li> <li>Cultural and language barriers, and power dynamics, affect students' opportunities to participate equally</li> <li>Classroom experiences often don't reflect the diversity of LSE/London</li> </ul>
<b>Time constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to significant academic load (especially for PG students)</li> <li>Short lectures with heavy content load don't leave room for open ended discussions or questions</li> </ul>

## In the department

<b>Uneven funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights disparity between departments and impacts students' impressions of the larger LSE community</li> </ul>
<b>Social events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not inclusive (e.g. English-language movie screenings)</li> <li>Concentrated at the (already-busy) beginning of term</li> <li>Can require costly entry tickets</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement with professors and alumni</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited opportunities</li> <li>Rare for faculty to attend departmental events</li> <li>Seemingly little discussion/collaboration between professors (particularly publicly)</li> <li>Mixed experience of Academic Mentoring</li> </ul>
<b>Common Rooms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disparity of quality between departments</li> <li>Sometimes treated as 'silent zones' - not suitable for socialising</li> </ul>

## In the wider LSE experience

<b>Time Constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic load and pressures prevent students from participating fully</li> <li>A need to engage in part time work due to financial needs/burdens, expensive housing in LSE halls or privately</li> <li>Sensory overload (too much to absorb) in a short span of time</li> <li>Long hours of daily commute for commuter students</li> <li>Overloaded with communications – cannot keep up, so miss out on opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>PG-UG Divide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Societies are seen as more accommodating of UG students</li> <li>Certain opportunities are only available to UG students (e.g. LSE GROUPS)</li> <li>Lack of communication/ spheres for socialisation between UG and PG students</li> <li>Lack of Department-wide events</li> <li>PG students have a year or less to participate</li> </ul>
<b>LSE Global Citizenship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of collaborative events/projects between departments (incongruous with broad course selection options)</li> <li>No massive social events (e.g. Formal PG Fresher's or Farewell), where departments can come together</li> <li>Lack of awareness on opportunities/incentives to create societies/host shared spaces</li> <li>Limited LSE representation in inter-university events/competitions across all fields</li> <li>Lack of incentive to spend time on campus (e.g. no space, limited/expensive refreshment choices...)</li> </ul>

How could these challenges be overcome?

## In the classroom

<b>Cultural divides</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Randomized allocation in all seminars to ensure a broader mix of students</li> <li>More Language Centre free services</li> <li>Dedicated alumni student mentors</li> </ul>
<b>Time constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hybrid learning (for lectures only - to make the most of in-person contact time)</li> <li>Summative participation (or other incentives for active participation)</li> <li>More time at the beginning of the year to learn about education and opportunities for participation at LSE</li> </ul>

## In the department

<b>Uneven funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Departmental funding to be commensurate with the department size. Department to outline ideal-budget based on certain rationalities – funding to be given based on that.</li> </ul>
<b>Social events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wider variety of events to be scheduled more evenly throughout the year, and across years: guest lectures, parties, trips, careers and personal development events, etc.</li> <li>Funding available to alleviate cost barrier for less well-off students</li> <li>Conduct surveys and focus groups to identify key inclusive event opportunities that are currently being missed</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement with professors and alumni</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mandate faculty attendance in departmental events</li> <li>Allow Academic Mentors and/or mentees to choose who they want to be paired with to encourage long-term commitment</li> </ul>
<b>Common Rooms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocate common room size and facilities according to the department size for equity</li> <li>Outline user-expectations of Common Rooms (dedicated spaces for socialising vs studying). Designate common rooms as community spaces:</li> </ul>

## In the wider LSE experience

<b>Time Constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements for commuters</li> <li>Expansion of ReFreshers during less over-stimulating periods, e.g. mid-term. Repetition of 'Give it a Go' programme after Reading Week, instead of in Winter Term.</li> <li>Effective and more informal online communication, avoiding informational overload, e.g. Slack for course communications, rather than Moodle forums which are clunky and not representative of what students will experience in their future careers etc. It could also maximise opportunities for discussion when time is limited in classes.</li> </ul>
<b>PG-UG Divide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for UG and PG students to mix, e.g. PG UG 'speed dating' style networking, mutual advice sharing between UGs and PGs – both have something to offer the other (UGs familiar with LSE, PGs more familiar with academic/career advancement)</li> <li>More activities for PG non-members of SU societies to participate given the short timeframe of their studies</li> </ul>
<b>LSE Global Citizenship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incentivise cross-departmental collaboration among professors and create informal opportunities for intellectual discussions</li> <li>Increased LSE collaboration with SU societies</li> <li>Cultural awareness activities, events and campaigns to help students learn more about the cultures of other communities</li> <li>More activities for PG non-members of SU societies to participate (to help engender a stronger sense of community within the PG community)</li> <li>Digital platforms for meetups between people of similar interests</li> <li>Actively encourage student participation in events, societies, study groups etc.</li> <li>Hosting inter-university events</li> <li>More space on campus for organic/informal interactions e.g. chess and Ping-Pong tables</li> </ul>