



Insights from the Student Education Panel: Student Voice in Education

A summary of the meeting held in February 2024

Is student voice an important part of education?

Themes	Summary
Empowerment and Agency	Students value the empowerment that comes with having our voices heard and seeing our views translate into action. We stressed that being able to express views and participate in decision-making has effects not only during our time at the university but also as a practice and a skill for their future.
Diversity and Inclusivity	The diverse backgrounds and experiences of LSE students highlight the importance of considering a wide range of perspectives. We emphasize that there is no one-size-fits-all model for education.
Right to Freedom of Expression	Like anyone else, students have a fundamental right to have our voices heard and express our opinions. This is true in the context of education, just as in any other context.
Lived Experience	Students experience our own education first-hand, so it is important that we have an input into how it is shaped. Student voice provides an avenue for this.
Action	Students have little direct power over decisions regarding our education. Student voice allows us to communicate our needs to those who have power, resulting in real action.

We also wish to acknowledge that student voice is different for master's students than undergraduates since their program is only for a year. This has an impact on the motivation to use student voice and the means by which students prefer to express their opinions.

How are we experiencing student voice as part of our education ?

Themes	Summary
Student voice as feedback	Channels to provide it exist, though they vary across departments, are mainly focused on the past and it is hard to see effects, as there is also a lack of communication on the outcome.
Student voice as active participation in enhancing education at LSE	Sense of community encourages students voices, translated to action.
Student voice in academics	Limited chances to engage with professors not just superficially, or as requirement. Teaching assistants could have a more active role. Flexibility to act, with clear, transparent guidelines. Concluding with a follow-up with that feedback.
Student voice as a form of self-presentation and development:	Students view our personal development as crucial but perceive there is a perception among LSE students that there could be more opportunities in areas such as digital skills and career prospects. Postgraduates are particularly sceptical about the benefits of participating in societies.
Student voice as representation and campaigning	Access to mechanisms for providing feedback and ensuring open communication between students and the institution is essential for fostering a participatory educational environment. Although structures are in place to facilitate student voice, challenges remain in achieving equal representation across departments, enhancing the accessibility and frequency of these communication avenues, and diversifying the methods through which students can express our views. Additionally, there's a recognized need to adopt a broader perspective that extends the scope of student representation and advocacy beyond purely academic concerns, promoting a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to student engagement and collaboration.
Other notions of student voice	Freedom to express our student voices in different ways: preferences for using recordings/formatives, can tailor adjustments for examination, diversifying the channels for student voice.

Our recommendations on how to improve student voice:

- **Increase transparency** about feedback received and steps taken to address it.
- Create an environment and structure that encourage and **incentivize inclusion and representation of the student body**.
- Establishment of **common standards** across departments.
- Creating different feedback avenues to account for cultural diversity and **increasing the frequency of feedback collection**.
- Training programmes for staff on how to respond to feedback constructively.
- **Increase awareness of avenues available for student voice** through email communication that lists examples of positive changes brought about through the exercise of voice.