Expectations vs reality: a comparative study of the LSE's discourse and students' perspectives on the LSE community.

Abstract

This study explores the concept of the LSE as a community by comparing administrative and undergraduate students' perceptions. Previous literature has studied the administrative and students' perspective in isolation. This comparative analysis draws a bridge between the two. The study uses mixed methods and discourse analysis to compare the discourses on community put forward by the LSE as an institution and the student body. This research suggests that there are significant differences between the two perspectives. Not only that, it suggests that the two perspectives are not always internally consistent. It finds that the administrative image was incoherent as the discourses purveyed by published texts did not align with the discourses purveyed by administrative staff. It also suggests that the students' sense of belonging and community depend on a range of factors including ethnic and linguistic diversity and participation in societies. The overall discrepancy between administrative and undergraduates' perceptions hides strong internal inconsistencies in terms of feelings of belonging and community.

Keywords: community, belonging, LSE, diversity, discourse.

LSE Group 6

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Introduction

This study looks at the relationship between the institutional image and students' perspectives of community. We are particularly interested in exploring the discrepancy between how the LSE sells an image of itself to future students and the subsequent experience of these students. Our decision to focus on the LSE reflects our own personal experiences. As students of the London School of Economics, we wanted to look at whether the LSE's expectations were matched by the reality of students' experiences.

The notion of community is a central pillar of how universities try to attract students. It is closely related to the idea of belonging. We understand community to mean a group with shared values, aspirations and practices. Our study defines belonging as an ideational factor (Nigel and Mulkay, 1984) and in the university context the extent to which the student identifies himself or herself with the institution (Peers and Fleer 2014).

This study attempts to compare the institutional image and student perspectives through an analysis of the discourses that shape these two perspectives. In order to investigate these discourses, we use mixed methods, including semi-structured interviews, surveys, and archival documents. By mapping the discourses through which the LSE attempts to attract or welcome students, and the factors that students see as important to the way they understand being part of the LSE, we can compare how these institutionally-sustained discourses are experienced in practice.

The study suggests that there is a considerable mismatch between these perspectives. It also reveals that there are internal inconsistencies within these two perspectives. The LSE's idea of community is therefore not consistent, either internally or compared to that expressed by the students. This research has implications for the LSE as it seeks to promote itself in Britain and overseas. In particular, it suggests that the LSE should communicate more with its students in order to have a deeper understanding of what they take community and belonging to mean and the importance of these to their university experience.

Literature Review

In the study of belonging in university communities four broad areas of study can be identified (McClure and Ryder, 2017:197-199). The study of student persistence in college correlates student performance to senses of belonging (Cooper, 2009:3). The study of different identity groups identifies how student groups create their own sense of belonging (cf. Vaccaro et al, 2015; Vaccaro and Newman, 2016; Wells and Horn, 2015). The study of institutional and interpersonal factors aims to relate these two factors to the sense of belonging. Lastly, studies on socioeconomic factors explore how parents' financial and educational background (cf. Ostrove and Long, 2007; Gaulter and Zimdars, 2018) (cf. McClure and Ryder, 2017) influences sense of belonging.

This project is situated within the third category. Studies in this category focus on both interpersonal and institutional factors. Vaccaro and Newman for example primarily look at intra-group interaction while Cooper looks at inter-group interaction (Vaccaro and Newman, 2016:145; Cooper, 2009:4-6). On the other hand, the complementary perspective looking at institutional components mainly focuses on material factors. For instance, Kelchen's focus on student fees (Kelchen, 2016).

This project draws on both perspectives. The study of interpersonal factors is valuable in focusing on the student opinions, whereas the study of institutional factors is valuable in highlighting the influence of material factors. We define belonging as ideational (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), therefore the former perspective is more valuable to this particular study while the latter outlines a limitation.

The present study is unique by comparing both institutional and interpersonal factors. Previous studies of the LSE or other university communities have isolated the two perspectives (cf. Finlay and Jenkins, 2008). A comparative methodology is therefore beneficial in drawing a bridge between the two areas of study and arguing against the assumption that self-enclosed the administration and the student community are self-enclosed systems.

Methodology

The project uses discourse analysis (DA) and mixed methods of quantitative-qualitative analysis. The methodological focus of this study limits itself to the examination of written and spoken communications in assessing the notion of belonging (Nigel and Mulkay, 2009). The function that the methodology of discourse analysis gives to our study is to uncover these written, and spoken, communications as *activity* (the administrative use of language to gain reputation), *variation* (the administrative image differs from the students') and *construction* (that both administrative and students' rhetoric condition reality) (Potter and Wetherell, 2010). However, the Foucauldian assumption that the more powerful dominates social interaction is not implemented, the use of traditional DA methodology aims create an explanatory research rather than an argumentative piece (Foucault, 1971). Additionally, it limits itself to solely identifying separate discourses rather than adjusting 'social wrongs' and therefore does not engage with the methodology of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2007).

Our study uses semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and archival data. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were chosen as they can match the size and the demography of the student community.

The discourse analysis was firstly implemented through text analysis. Here Wetherell's search not for coherent but dominant interpretative repertoires was valuable in creating a 'controlled' variable to allow comparison (Potter and Wetherell, 2010). Secondly, a qualitative approach was implemented through the use of two semi-structured and three fully structured interviews for the administration and eight semi-structured interviews for the students (Silverman, 2011). Lastly, the discursive analysis was added to through the use of 155 questionnaires to outline the students' perspective.

Perspective	Methodology	Implementation
Administration	Discourse analysis	Textual analysis
		Fully structured + Semi-structured interviews
Student	Quantitative analysis	Questionnaires
	Discourse analysis	Semi-structured interviews

The questionnaires, texts and fully structures interviews were obtained online. The semi-structured interviews were obtained in person. Furthermore, the administrative representatives as well as the students' national origin in this data was categorised as broadly as possible in order to maintain the anonymity of respondents.

The analysis limits itself into questioning the extent to which the dominant interpretative repertoires correlate, but does not seek to pinpoint their cause. It is an observational analysis. Secondly, the analysis limits itself to acknowledging that it is solely an 'indirect' comparison as the methods used to define the administrative image had to differ from that of the students, due to inherent differences in demography and the inability in accessing the formers staff data. Contrarily, the analysis' main value is that it is a comparative analysis, which allows the testing of a discrepancy between the administrative and the students' discourse(s) on community. It is again emphasised that the former variable is 'controlled' by design and that this creates an assumption.

LSE's Institutional Image on Community

This section identifies and analyses three different discourses in shaping the institutional image of the LSE on community. We used six texts[1] and five interviews[2], three fully-structured and two semi-structured, to advance the analysis.

The first discourse identified was on locality. The analysis of the brochures especially highlighted London as a unique locality and used it as a function to connect the local to the global. By contrast, the interviews focused on the physical aspect of locality. They argued

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[1] See appendix 1.
[2] Interview transcript available on request.

that "having a physical place has been a major factor in building the community"[3], but also acknowledged that "[t]he location [London] prevents students from feeling part of the community. A London campus is more difficult to turn into a community."[4]

The second discourse was that of inclusivity. First, in relation to societies both acknowledged the wide range of societies and the need of "creating a student community or many small communities through societies and events"[5] as they were judged vital for enhancing the sense of community at the LSE. Second, account was given to personalized staff-student interaction. The creation of "point[s] of contact"[6] was mentioned in the accommodation brochure as well as in the undergraduate prospectus and the departmental guide. Lastly, whereas the brochures focus on ideational inclusivity of "open discussion, tolerance and mutual respect"[7]. The interviews heavily emphasised the material side of inclusivity, a concurrent factor was the allocation of financial resources.

Responsibility, who bears the burden in staff-student interaction, is the term we chose to categorise the third discourse. Five brochures emphasized a top down supportive framework. For example, the student accommodation prospectus points out at the supportive structure of the warden team as a consistent "point of contact". A more fragmented perspective arose in the interviews with the LSE staff. These referred to student' proactivity and to the importance of "being able to give something to the group to which you belong, and to expect that you will get something back […]". This relates to the interviews evidencing a polarized model of the staff-student interaction. On one extreme interviewees structured staff-student interaction through a holistic, cooperative model of "many different LSE communities as well as one overarching LSE community"[8]. On the other extreme, it was also based on a hierarchical, competitive model, in which "all members of the LSE's community [...] feel 'the School' (i.e, those empowered to make decisions at the institution) cares about and respects them individually."[9]

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[3] Interview transcript available on request.
[4] Interview transcript available on request.
[5] Interview transcript available on request.
[6] See Appendix 1, figure 2.
[7] See Appendix 1, figure 3.
[8] Interview transcript available on request.
[9] Interview transcript available on request.

Students' Perspective

This section identifies students' perspectives on the feeling of community at the LSE. Using 155 survey responses, we identified a series of factors that explain the students' sense of belonging to the LSE community, significant at the 5% level, with 8 semi-structured interviews to explore further .

The range of societies was the most significant factor identified, with a 1 unit increase correlating to a 0.281 increase[10] in students' sense of community at the LSE. 80.6% of respondents noted they were a participating member of an LSE SU Society and/or Sports Club, with 86.4% of respondents agreeing to a large extent that there is a wide range of societies at the LSE. However, this relationship is more nuanced than expressed through quantitative analysis. Interviewees consistently identified that belonging to a society only increased the feeling of community when they actively engaged in the societies and when the societies themselves created activities that encourage social interaction. One interviewee concisely summarised this by saying "You can't belong if you don't go. And if you don't feel like you belong, you won't go."

The survey also revealed that the LSE campus and living in halls had conflicting effects on students sense of belonging to the LSE[11]. The results highlighted that on average students believed the LSE campus did not advance the sense of community, giving a mean score of 2.88 on a scale of 1-6 with 1 being to no extent, and 6 being to a significant extent. In contrast, living in halls did increase students' sense of belonging to the community, giving a mean score of 4.17 on the same scale.

Interviewees identified a lack of social space and central hub, along with construction work, as hindering the sense of community the LSE campus creates. The criticism centred around the absence of a distinct university campus and the presence of non-LSE members of society. Further, there was a strong consensus that living in LSE as opposed to intercollegiate halls was crucial in a sense of belonging to the LSE. Specifically, small, catered halls that arranged a large number of social activities was highly influential to creating a community.

Survey responses and interviews both consistently identified that the LSE community is strongly diverse in the context of language, nationality, ethnicity and culture. An interesting dynamic arose between the different perspectives of domestic and international students; domestic students initially felt that this diversity caused them to be overwhelmed and felt out of place. In stark contrast, international students relished the diversity as it enabled them the opportunity to socialise and connect with members of the same nationality. This is consistent with the majority opinion that both domestic and international students tend to socialise with people of their own nationality.

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[10] See appendix 3, section 3.2.
[11] See appendix 3, section 3.1

An additional interesting finding was that the level of linguistic diversity was found to negatively correlate with students' sense of belonging. This suggests that language barriers could potentially play a role in influencing a sense of community.

Comparison

When comparing the LSE image with student perspectives, we identified 3 points of interest. Namely, the role of campus, the role of societies and the importance of diversity. Firstly, there are different perspectives on the importance of the LSE being a campus university. While the LSE promotes the benefit of having a London campus and asserts that "despite the busy feel of the surrounding area, many of the streets around campus are pedestrianised, creating a strong feeling of community."[12], the students consistently identified that being in the "heart of London"[13] instead contributes to the fragmented campus, which impairs the possibility for a campus feeling. Furthermore, a lack of social space, constant construction works and the blurring of boundaries between the institution and wider society consistently weakens students' sense of belonging.

Secondly, opinions vary in relation to the factors determining the benefit of societies in fostering a sense of community at the LSE. The LSE emphasises the wide range of societies as an enabling factor for inclusivity, in that having a large variety of societies allows all students to find a community to belong to. However, for the students, belonging in societies is not as straightforward. Instead, engagement and activities organised by the societies have an effect on the extent to which students feel they belong and can make friends.

Finally, the importance of diversity to the LSE is more nuanced than as advertised by the institution. While the LSE argues that this diversity facilitates students' sense of belonging, there was a varied response from the students interviewed. The international students agreed with the LSE's perception, however, the reality for domestic students is that they frequently feel 'inadequate' and overwhelmed. Additionally, while the diversity allows students to meet others from different cultural and national backgrounds, in reality, they only make friends with people from their own nationality.

Furthermore, we also identified internal inconsistencies within the LSE's administrative image itself. Firstly, the definition of community given by the LSE was non consensual. Some interviewees took 'community' as inherent whereas others saw the LSE as 'un-communitied'.

Secondly, the administrative branch had a polarised interpretation of belonging. For instance, some interviewees saw belonging in the context of the LSE as a give and take relationship, a competitive model of "giving and taking in the concept of belonging". The other end used a

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[12] See appendix 1, figure 4.
[13] See appendix 1, figure 5.

collaborative model to understand belonging as the need of "students and staff to make sure they feel valued".

Finally, a distinction was made between an internal feeling of belonging and an external feeling of belonging. An internal feelings of belonging is the engagement with the institution, which the administrative branch saw as "a disparate place". The external feeling of belonging means association with the institution, most significantly because of its international ethos, and was seen as a consistent as well as positive factor.

Similarly, there appears to be discrepancies between the views of students and the factors which contribute to the sense of belonging at the LSE. Firstly, the perspectives of the campus differed depending on expectations and personal preferences. While the majority of students feel that the campus is too small, lacking communal space and a central hub, this study acknowledges that a significant minority of students value the small nature of the campus enabling frequent contact with staff and fellow students. Additionally, other students identify that being in central London outweighs the drawbacks of the inadequate campus.

Secondly, students have distinctly different experiences depending on whether they live in the LSE or intercollegiate halls of residence. Students of LSE halls consistently feel that their experience in halls enhance their sense of belonging to the institution, citing factors such as catering, student activities in halls and proximity to campus as being particularly important in cultivating this sense of belonging. Based on survey responses, the same cannot be said for members of intercollegiate halls, who while still made friends, feel less of an attachment to the LSE community and even expressed feelings of isolation and exclusion within the community. One respondent said "I am a lot less connected to the LSE student body compared to students staying in an LSE hall." Whilst they may not feel a strong sense of belonging to the LSE community, living in intercollegiate halls still enabled them to belong to a community outside of the LSE.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the hypothesis of the study was confirmed. There are significant differences between how the LSE and its students conceive of community. There are also internal inconsistencies in these discourses. Students and staff overlapped in the discussion of the main discourses but also created their own unique discourses and practices. This discrepancy also extended into inter-administrative interaction. Overall this research therefore affirms the value of comparative research in tying together the administrative and the student perspective.

This paper acknowledges three main limitations to our research. Firstly, we have assumed that the administrative image is static when comparing this to the students' perspectives. In reality, however, the institutional image was found to be evolving. A demographic limitation acknowledged in our research relates to the choice of interviewees for the student opinion.

Given time accessibility constraints we were only able to interview 8 students. We have therefore assumed that these interview responses are consistent with the wider student body. Furthermore, the choice of interviewees and survey respondents were constrained due to the scale of this research leading to the respondents being closely associated with the researchers. In order to mitigate the effects of this bias we asked details about country of origin and department to ensure we received responses that match demography.

Moving forward, our research has helped to identify additional areas of study that could provide fruitful analysis. In particular, it suggests that the importance that the LSE attributes to community as part of the discourse that it promotes to future students masks divergences in terms of how students understand the idea of community to work in practice. Our research suggests that the LSE could communicate with its students in order to develop a deeper understanding of community and belonging, and what these mean to those who come here to study.

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Previous LSE GROUPS Study
LSE GROUPS Study "On the fringes of LSE society?" – The impact of socioeconomic factors on student experience at the LSE

Appendix 1

Figure 1

WELCOME TO LSE
THE STUDENT GUIDE TO LSE LIFE

LSE STUDENTS' UNION

SHEFFIELD STREET PARTY

#helloLSE

Welcome to LSE

FROM YOUR GENERAL SECRETARY

Heeey folks - welcome to LSE! My name's Busayo Twins. I'm an LSE student who has been democratically elected to run the Students' Union as part of a full-time student officer team of four. It's our job to campaign on big issues facing LSE students, represent you on the LSE committees that deal with the budget, and other important stuff too boring to put here. So now that's out of the way - let's talk about this adventure you're about to start!

LSE is special from day one, thanks to the community of undergrads and postgrads who pitch in to organise socials, parties and taster sessions that welcome everyone. LSESU is one of the oldest and most active student unions in the UK; literally thousands of LSE students are members of our student-led clubs and societies. The activities and services we collectively offer will make you the most well-rounded and well-supported student in history. You might think this is an exaggeration so feel free to put us to the test!

Look out for the officer team throughout Welcome Week and say hi - we'll be wearing t-shirts with our names on them. Please email us when you have a question; our time is for you. Our roles exist to provide a service for you; this union is for you, and sharing your thoughts on student life helps us make it as amazing as possible.

Basically what I'm trying to say is: I am so excited for your LSE adventure and I am honoured to be representing you this year. I hope this week is incredible.

Relax and remember that you deserve to be here, and you deserve the experience of a lifetime.

Busayo Twins
General Secretary

su.generalsecretary@lse.ac.uk
@busayo_twins
LSESU General Secretary: Busayo Twins

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Figure 2

STUDENT
ACCOMMODATION

LSE

, THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

Dear Banksiders,

I would like to offer you a very warm welcome to Bankside House. We are LSE's largest residence with a diverse and lively community of over 600 students. Bankside House is located in the vibrant South Bank area, with art, music, theatre and film opportunities within easy reach. The Tate Modern and Shakespeare's Globe are our immediate neighbors and the LSE is a 20-25 minute walk away across the Thames. In short, it's a fabulous place to live!

Bankside has an experienced team in place to help you make the most of living in the heart of London and enjoying your time at the LSE. The Warden's team represents the LSE in halls and is responsible for the wellbeing of all residents as well as any disciplinary issues that may arise. The Warden's Team comprises six Sub-Wardens, two Senior Sub-Wardens and the Warden. There is a Sub-Warden responsible for each floor of the building and they are a first point of contact if you need help in an emergency or if you have a simple question or just want to have a chat with a friendly face. The Front of House Manager and the Reception Team ensure the smooth running of the hall and are responsible for the building and its facilities.

Your floor Sub-Warden will introduce themselves in person in the first few weeks of term and will quickly become a familiar face around the building. Sub-Wardens can help with a wide range of issues and are knowledgeable about the various support services that LSE has to offer. You can call on any of the Sub-Wardens in person or by email during the daytime. There is also Sub-Warden on duty from 6pm – 8am each weekday and all day at the weekend, throughout the year and including vacations, to assist in an emergency. The Warden's Team are in place to ensure that you have an enjoyable stay at Bankside and I would encourage you to contact us at any time. Our contact details can be found on the "Who's Who" pages of the Bankside website

If you need assistance in an emergency, you should call Reception on 0207 107 5705, or visit Reception in person to be put in contact with the Duty Sub-Warden. Save the Reception number into your phone now, so that it is easily at hand when you need it.

Student Committee

Bankside House also has an elected Student Committee who are responsible for arranging a wide range of social events and activities throughout the year, as well as representing the interests of all residents. For Freshers' Week, the Committee has organised a varied programme that will ensure that you get to know your new fellow residents, Bankside House and the surrounding area and have a fantastic time in the process. You can contact committee members through the Bankside Facebook page, in person at their regular committee surgeries or using their LSE emails, available on the "Who's Who" pages of the Bankside website.

In conclusion, I would like to repeat my warm welcome. I hope you have a great stay at Bankside House and wish you the best of luck for the term ahead.

Debra Ogden (Warden)

lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents

Figure 3

Welcome to LSE

Contents

LSE is a wonderful institution. As one of the world's leading universities for the study of social sciences, we attract extraordinarily talented students from over 140 countries. Our students are taught by academics at the forefront of developments in the social sciences whose expertise is called upon by governments, businesses and media around the globe. We particularly value the opportunity to educate the best and brightest undergraduates from all over the world.

Situated in the heart of London, the School is located in one of the most cosmopolitan and vibrant cities in the world. We are an international institution which thrives on diversity, and we hold strongly to the value of open discussion, tolerance and mutual respect. The School also provides a unique forum for public debate with heads of state, top global officials, corporate leaders, Nobel laureates and social activists visiting every week as part of our Public Events programme.

LSE's graduates continue to be in great demand and our alumni can be found in senior positions around the world. I'm confident that your time at LSE will be both enjoyable and rewarding, providing you with knowledge and experience that will prove hugely beneficial in your future academic, personal and professional careers. If you would enjoy the challenge and opportunities that we offer, then we look forward to welcoming you to the School.

Minouche Shafik
Director, LSE

Figure 4

The campus

LSE is based on one campus in the centre of London. Despite the busy feel of the surrounding area, many of the streets around campus are pedestrianised, creating a strong sense of community.

We are always striving to improve the campus environment for our students. In the coming years, two major new building projects will be taking place, and existing facilities are being enhanced to ensure a more accessible campus environment. While an exciting time to be an LSE student, the project may also cause some disruption in the Houghton Street area, although this disruption will be kept to an absolute minimum for everyone.

11 restaurants and cafés
3 student pubs

Sardinia House Dental Practice (SAR) offers discounted private dental services to LSE students.

The Faith Centre (in SAW) is bookable by student faith societies. It is a place for worship, prayer and quiet reflection, including Islamic prayer rooms, and a quiet cave for individual meditation. It is also a space for wellbeing classes on campus and a centre for transformational leadership programmes promoting interreligious understanding across the diverse student body.

Centre Buildings, opens 2020 (CBR) Teaching and learning spaces | Café | Learning commons | Academic departments and institutes.
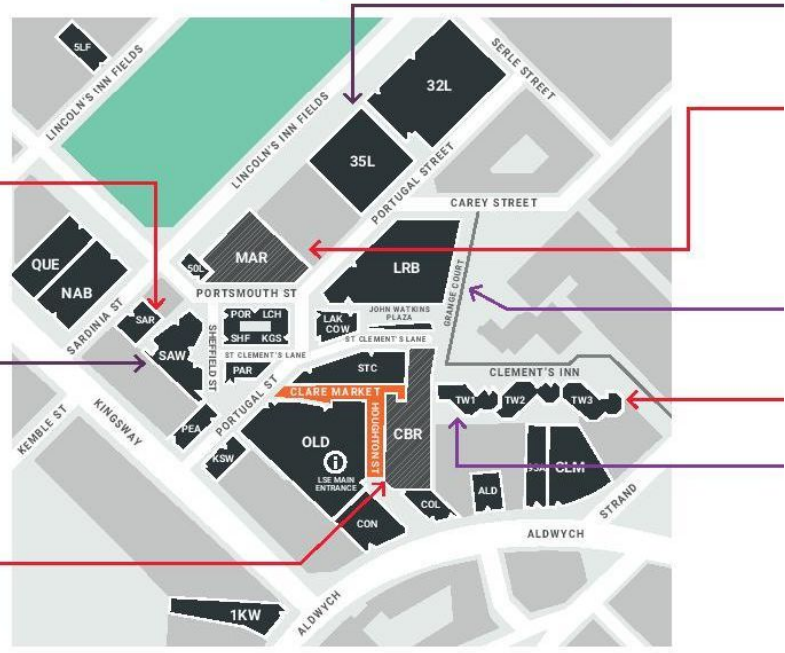
5LF · LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS · 32L · SERLE STREET · 35L · PORTUGAL STREET · CAREY STREET · QUE · NAB · MAR · SOL · PORTSMOUTH ST · LRB · ORANGE COURT · SARDINIA ST · SAR · POR · LCH · LAK COW · JOHN WATKINS PLAZA · ST CLEMENT'S LANE · CLEMENT'S INN · SHEFFIELD ST · SHF · KGS · SAW · PAR · STC · TW1 · TW2 · TW3 · KEMBLE ST · KINGSWAY · PEA · PORTUGAL ST · KSW · CLARE MARKET · HOUGHTON ST · OLD · CBR · CLM · ALD · OLD · LSE MAIN ENTRANCE · CON · COL · STRAND · ALDWYCH · 1KW · ALDWYCH

LSE Building · **LSE Building Development** · **No Access** · ⓘ **Information**

Figure 5

Appendix 2

Semi-structured interviews with staff

- What do you think belonging means in the context of the LSE?
- Do you think that the LSE actively promotes belonging? If yes, in what ways?
- How does the LSE create community?
- How does the LSE present the LSE community to prospective students?

- Do you believe that LSE students feel that they belong?
  - Why? Why not?
- What factors do you think affect LSE's students' sense of community?
  Of these factors, what would you say is the more significant? Why these factors?
- How can this community feeling be continued and developed even further in the future? Or what limits/prevents students from belonging to the LSE?

Fully-structured interviews with staff

- What do you think belonging means in the context of the LSE?
- Do you think that the LSE actively promotes belonging? If yes, in what ways?
- How does the LSE create community?
- How does the LSE present the LSE community to prospective students?
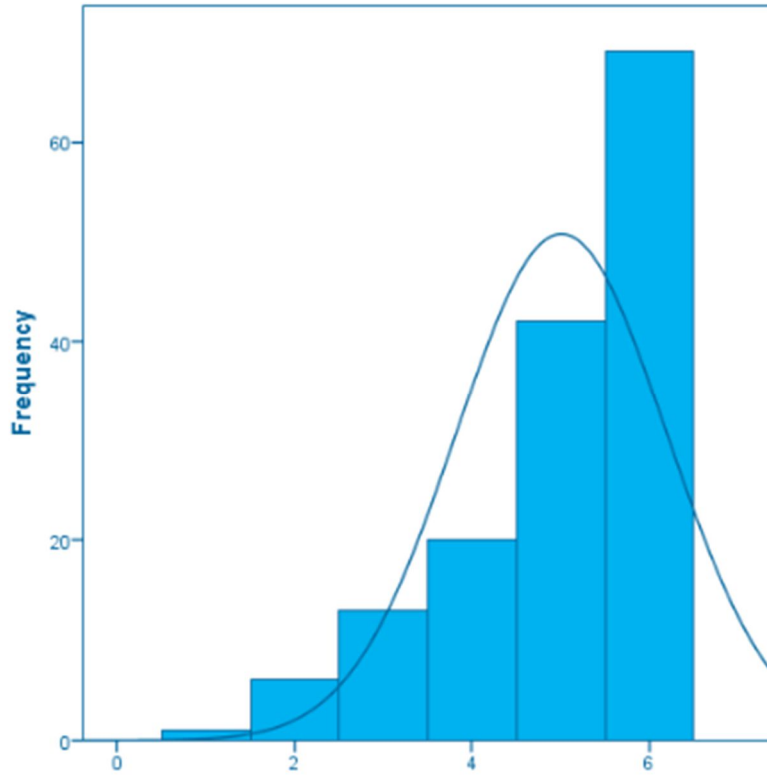
Appendix 3

Section 3.1

To what extent do you feel you belong to the LSE?
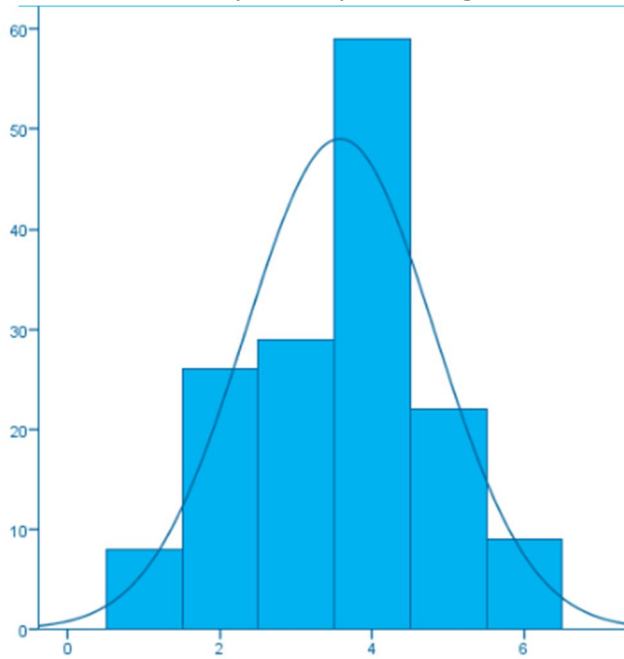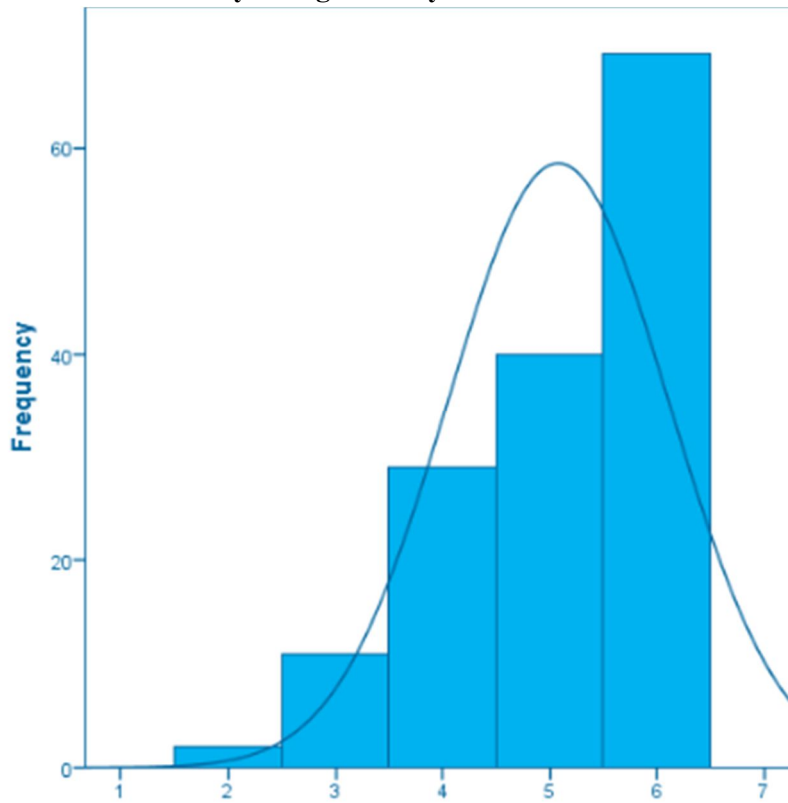

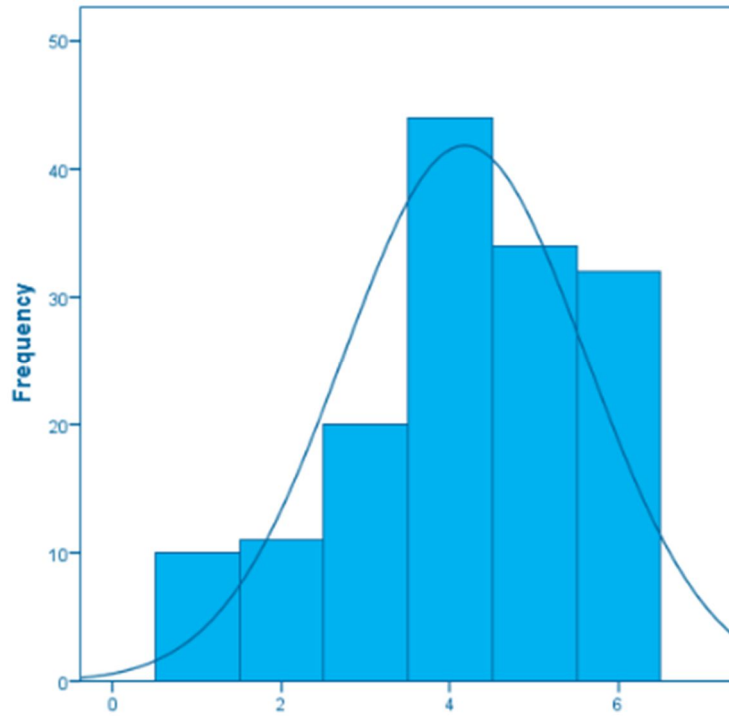**To what extent have you interacted with students from different nationalities?**
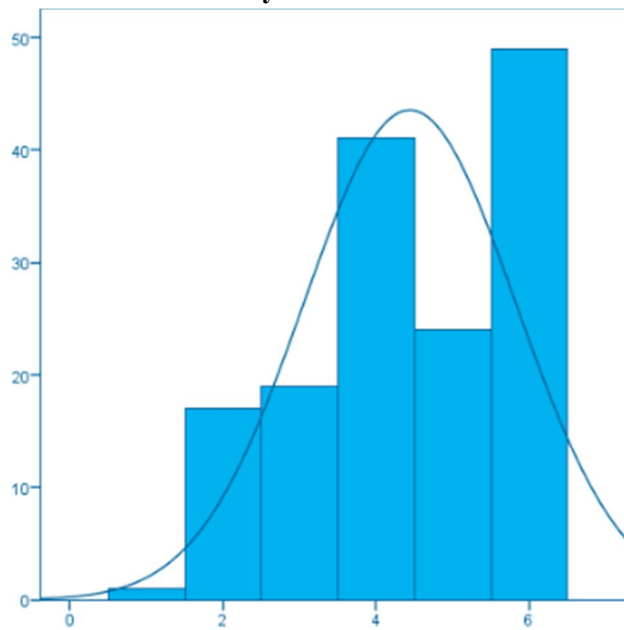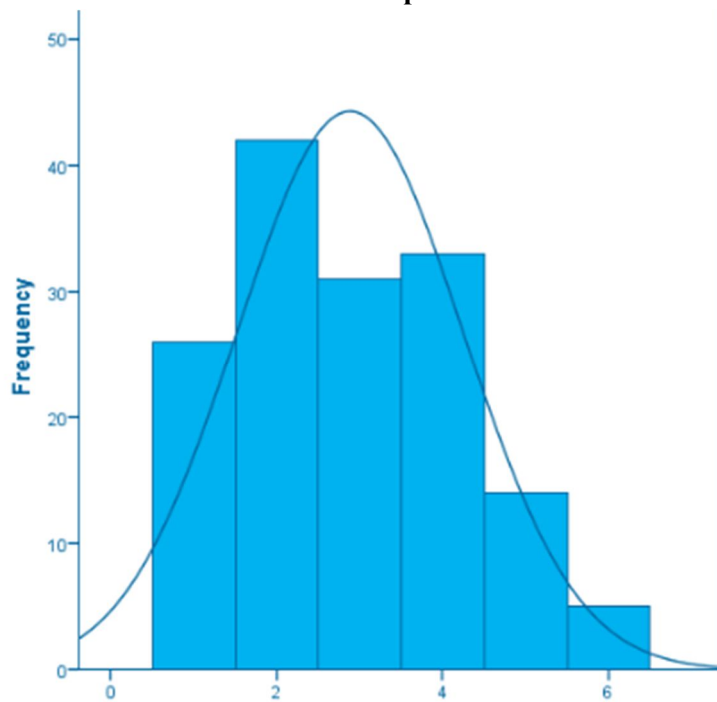
The LSE community is ethnically diverse.

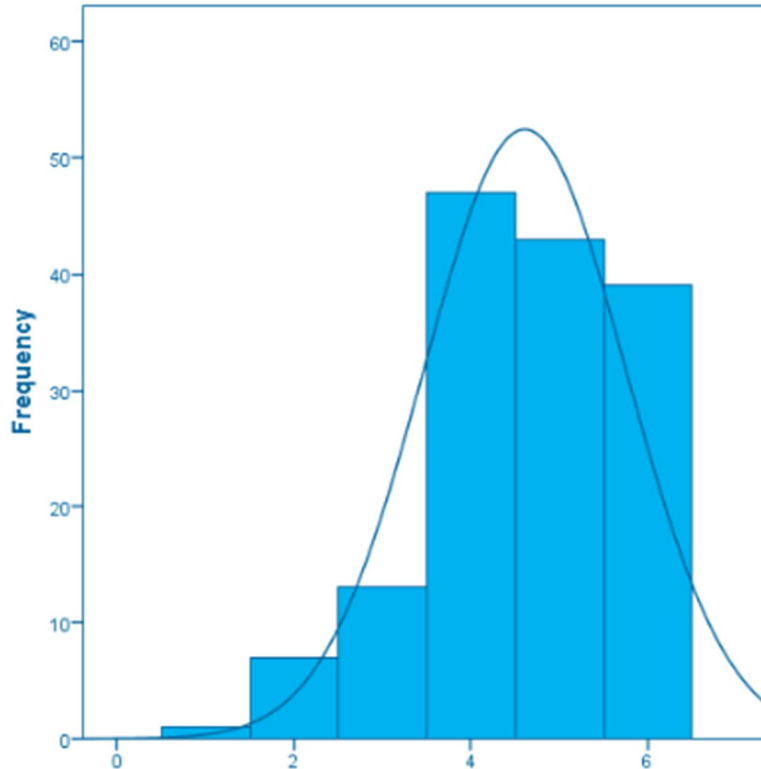**The LSE community is linguistically diverse.**

Living in halls increases your sense of belonging to the LSE.

To what extent does the LSE campus advance the sense of community?

There is a wide range of societies at the LSE.

Section 3.2

	To what extent do you feel you belong to the LSE?
Example: factor	*Beta value (Significance level)*
To what extent have you interacted with students from different nationalities at the LSE?	*0.129* (0.043)*
The LSE community is ethnically diverse.	*0.203** (0.024)*
The LSE community is linguistically diverse.	*-0.227* (0.034)*
Living in halls increases your sense of belonging to the LSE community.	*0.193*** (0.002)*
To what extent does the LSE campus advance the sense of community at the LSE?	*0.208*** (0.002)*
There is a wide range of societies at the LSE.	*0.281*** (0.001)*

*** Significant result at the 1% significance level.

** Significant result at the 2.5% significance level.

* Significant result at the 5% significance level.

Appendix 4

Semi-structured interviews with students

- What is your name/year/department/country of origin?
- Do you feel you belong to the LSE?
  - Why? Why not? What factors make you feel you do belong and/or which ones make you feel you do not?
- Do you live in halls?
  - Do you think living in halls increases your sense of belonging? Why? Why not?
  - Do you think not living in halls has affected your sense of belonging?
- Do you feel that the LSE campus increases your sense of belonging to the LSE community?
  - What do you think about the recreational spaces within the LSE campus? Are there enough?
    - Why? Why not?
- Do you think the diversity of students at the LSE (if any) contributes to the sense of belonging to the LSE community (if any)?
  - Why? In what ways?
  - Why not?
  - Do you think it is easy to make friends at the LSE?
- Do you think joining and/or participating in LSE SU societies contribute to the sense of belonging to the LSE community?
  - Why? In what ways?
  - Why not?
- What kind of material did you look at when you were applying to the LSE?
- How do you think LSE advertises its community? In particular, when you were applying to the LSE?
  - Do you think the LSE delivers that "promise"?
- Are there any factors which limit/prevent you from feeling that you belong to the LSE? What are the factors (if any) which limit or prevent you from feeling that you belong to the LSE?
- Could you tell me a bit more about your friendship group and social circles? Would you say that you socialise with more students from your own country or with international students?
- What makes you feel more or less inclined to socialise with international students?