THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT'S HANDBOOK 2018/19

Teaching and Learning Centre

How to use this handbook

This handbook is divided into eight sections, each of which covers an aspect of your role as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA). Each section provides an introduction, description and explanation of key topics which are supplemented by first-hand experiences and examples from former and current GTAs at the LSE. Further or more in-depth information is available in the appendices, glossary of terms or through the web links.

In this, the hard copy version, the hyperlinks are not clickable, but are searchable online or by using the Web link index which provides the full url or email address for all the hyperlinks in the text. This handbook is also available online on the TLC website.

This handbook was produced in the summer of 2018 and all content was correct at the time of going to press. Readers are recommended to check the school website for possible changes through the 2018-19 year to names, roles, contact information, policies, etc.

Welcome from Dr Claire Gordon

Head, LSE Teaching and Learning Centre

Welcome to all new teachers at LSE. I hope you will enjoy the challenges and stimulation of working with our diverse international social science student community, and that you will find the School to be supportive of you in this important role. You join a team of some 900 full-time (equivalent) academics at LSE.

Whether or not this is your first experience of teaching and supporting student learning in higher education, we hope this guide will help you develop your identity and practice as an academic teacher giving you the confidence, insights and tools to address any challenges that you may encounter.

We also hope you find the experience of class teaching enriching: it should help to embed your own understanding of the subjects you teach; it will also provide some useful breadth, to complement the focus of doctoral research work. In addition, there may be opportunities for you to discuss your own research with students and without doubt the experience of teaching will strengthen your communication skills, and provide useful evidence for future job applications both within academia and beyond.

LSE is keen to support the development of future faculty. We know our PhD students go on to take up academic posts in universities across the globe. That is why we take this development work seriously, and offer all teachers in the School the opportunity to undertake our LSE Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education if they so wish.

There are plenty of things about the teaching and learning process that you can usefully find out about from interactions with other members of your department and colleagues in the LSE Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC), from reflecting on your own practice and from getting feedback from students and colleagues. There is also a large body of educational research which can usefully inform your

evolving practice. Take advantage of what is on offer both from LSE Teaching and Learning Centre and from the departments where you teach. These different voices and perspectives can all make important contributions and help you develop your personal and distinctive approach to teaching and supporting student learning.

Please feel free to contact the LSE Teaching and Learning Centre and in particular, your department's TLC departmental adviser, if you have questions about teaching and student learning development at LSE.

My colleagues and I look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Dr Claire Gordon

“As LSE Graduate Teaching Assistants you form an essential part of our community of educators at the School. We hope that you will bring the same passion, commitment and rigour to your teaching as you do to your research.”

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Section 1
Introduction

1.1 GTAs at LSE

Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) are an important and vital part of teaching and learning structure in the School.

GTAs tend to be mostly doctoral students, who teach classes, hold office hours and mark student work and offer feedback. In many courses, especially the larger ones, GTAs are the front line and often tend to be the first academic point of contact for students.

Most GTAs find interacting with students and witnessing that lightbulb moment to be a gratifying and fulfilling experience. The School values the contribution of GTAs and invests in their development through providing training, observations, consultations, resources and awards which will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent pages.

> “I found the training for new class teachers very useful indeed. In particular, I thought it was very good for me to do the video-recorded practice teaching, even if I hated the idea prior to the session.”

1.2 Putting students first

Not only is this a campaign being run across the School at time of publication, it’s also how we try to approach education at LSE and is a good starting point from which to think about your role as a teacher in higher education (HE).

Let’s take a look at the students you will be teaching. In 2017, the student population at LSE looked like this (below). As you can see, LSE has a highly international student body, something in which it takes great pride. For many students and alumni, this global dynamic has contributed uniquely to their overall student experience at the School. While this is exciting, it also presents challenges in terms of teaching students from different learning traditions and education systems. Heterogeneity in the student population manifests itself in other ways too. Students in your class could:

- Be in different years (eg, years 2 and 3)
- Be from different departments/disciplines (eg, IR, economics, social policy, management)
- Have different academic backgrounds (eg, strong quantitative skills, strong writing skills)
- Have different motivations and priorities (eg, Postgraduate studies/academic career, job in the corporate sector).

While this can seem daunting, the development opportunities, support and resources provided by the LSE Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) and the School and your department will help you see how this can be turned into a positive in class.

STUDENT POPULATION AT LSE 2016-2017

11,885 students

5,082 Undergraduates | 5,990 Postgraduates

8,150 overseas students

2,730 Undergraduates | 4,885 Postgraduates

1, 222 Executive MSc students

Source: **lse.ac.uk/about-lse/lse-at-a-glance**

1.3 Studying at LSE

To understand how we can create a satisfying and productive student experience, we briefly summarise how things are set up at LSE.

The school year comprises three terms:

- Michaelmas (MT) – 11 weeks
- Lent (LT) – 11 weeks
- Summer (ST) – 7 weeks.

Undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are divided into courses – full-unit courses run over two terms and half-unit courses run over one term. The main exam period is generally in May and June. This information and more details about the course you're teaching on can be found in the School calendar and your respective departmental undergraduate handbook.

Instruction at the School is primarily through a series of lectures complemented by small group classes or seminars. The lecture is most often given by the course convenor(s) and introduces the topic and lays out the general theories, frameworks, methodologies, etc. The classes are designed to provide a hands-on, in-depth look at the material covered in the lecture in a small group led by you, the GTA. In addition to teaching classes and seminars, GTAs at LSE mark formative assessments and provide feedback and hold office hours once a week. You are also responsible for recording students' attendance in classes and writing termly progress reports for each student in LSE for You, an online system that holds students' personal (and academic) information.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT LSE

Development activities	Being a GTA at LSE induction programme
What	All new GTAs are *required* to attend Being a GTA at LSE induction programme and are paid for their time
When	Michaelmas and Lent
Who	Teaching and Learning Centre
More info	**info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/TLC-for-You/Graduate-Teaching-Assistants**

Depending on which course you are teaching, please read the Code of Good Practice – Undergraduate or Code of Good Practice – Taught Masters to get a better understanding of your role and responsibilities as a GTA and what you can expect from those around you – students, programme director, academic mentor (previously referred to as academic adviser) and others.

POP QUIZ ?

Please read the Code of Good Practice – Undergraduate or Code of Good Practice – Taught Masters before you attempt this test.

- Students are required to attend classes, but not lectures. **True/ False**
- Feedback on formative assessment should be provided to students within two/three/four weeks. _____ **weeks**
- Lectures at LSE start on the hour, but classes start at five past the hour. **True/ False**
- Have you located the summative assessment criteria for the course you are teaching? **Yes/No**
  If yes, where did you find it?

  ____

  ____

- How many degree programmes is the course you teach on a part of?

  ____

Atlas	Learning technology	English for teaching Purposes	Associate Fellowship Programme	LSE Fellow/GTA
A series of academic development workshops and events for new and experienced staff	Support, advice and training on how to use Moodle and classroom technologies	Two English for Teaching Purposes programmes, including one designed specifically for GTAs	Internationally recognised and accredited programme designed to support GTAs to develop and enhance their teaching practice in HE	Opportunities for applying to become a GTA or an LSE Fellow with LSE100, an interdisciplinary course taken by all first- and second-year undergrads
Throughout the year	Throughout the year	Throughout the year	Briefing session in September	Advertised twice a year
Teaching and Learning Centre	Learning Technology and Innovation	Language Centre	Teaching and Learning Centre	LSE100
lse.ac.uk/TLC/Atlas	**lti.lse.ac.uk**	**lse.ac.uk/language-centre**	**lse.ac.uk/tlc/pgcerthe**	**lse.ac.uk/LSE100**

CHECKLIST

Once you've been appointed as a GTA, ensure you:

- Have received and a signed formal contract from the School's HR division, and returned a signed copy along with proof of eligibility to work in the UK
- Have met with or have a meeting scheduled with the course convenor/course manager of the course you are teaching and take your job description along
- You have read and familiarised yourself with the course details as listed on the LSE Calendar
- Registered for the GTA induction and other GTA development activities offered by your department or the School

Section 2
Preparing to teach a class

2.1 The teaching context at LSE

At LSE most undergraduate courses are timetabled for 20-22 teaching weeks, and comprise both lectures and classes. Most lectures are given by full-time academic staff, whilst many of the classes are run by GTAs. Classes are usually held once a week (though some may be once per fortnight). Most undergraduate lectures are of 50 minutes duration, starting at five minutes past the hour, and ending at five minutes to the hour, to allow students and staff time to change over to another room for the following hour. Timing is an important element in teaching – run over at your peril! Students will generally give you warning that time is up, by packing their bags and leaving. Most classrooms have a clock, though these cannot always be relied upon.

GTA-led classes should have a maximum of 15-18 students, but if you find yourself with more (eg, 18+), do raise it with the course convenor and/or departmental tutor. At the start of the year, students may audit courses, and you will find that numbers and constituents of your class can change from week to week. This should be reflected in your class register, which is updated by the hour (see Section 3.3). Things should settle by about Week 4 of term. However, it is worth taking this point into consideration when planning early sessions.

You will probably also be required to offer a further weekly or fortnightly hour of support for each course on which you teach, called the office hour (see Section 6.1). Other academic staff (including the course convenor and all academic mentors) hold office hours. You may want to check on the office hours of the course convenor(s) for the course(s) on which you teach, should students raise questions that you would prefer to direct to the course convenor.

2.2 Gathering information about the courses you are teaching

It is important that new GTAs consult with the course convenor for the course from an early stage. Even if you have taught on the course for a year or more, do keep in close contact, and make sure you are properly briefed. The course convenor should provide guidance on course aims and objectives, the reading list, student coursework and assessment arrangements, and may possibly suggest teaching approaches. Some may specify the approach they wish their GTAs to take in class teaching tightly, whilst others are happy for the GTA to design their classes with greater flexibility. Find out how much choice you have.

You will certainly want to read the information that is provided to students about the courses that you will support, including any course guides produced by the course convenor and any departmental handbooks. Make sure you are familiar with the course structure, aims and learning outcomes, syllabus and particularly the assessment requirements of the course (eg, hand-in dates for coursework). It is very helpful to look at the past exam papers for your course too, although double-check that the course and exam paper have not fundamentally changed from one year to the next. Familiarise yourself with the Moodle, the School Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). There is an online support site for the course (see Technologies for teaching in Section 8.1). These contain course guidance and activities, including detailed lecture documents. In some cases, the full materials from the previous year will be available and can provide useful background and briefing for your work.

You may also benefit considerably from talking to class teachers who taught in the department and on your course last year. They will be knowledgeable about teaching your course, having developed lessons plans, given feedback and formally reflected on effective teaching styles (sometimes as part of the PGCertHE). Learning from and building on their experience will enable you to improve your own teaching and save you a great deal of time. They may also be able to give you information about the teacher's preferences or highlight the course topics that students seem to struggle with, note frequently asked questions or suggest interesting examples that they have used in their teaching.

The course convenor for your course should arrange a briefing session for you. At this meeting, it is worth checking what is expected from classes. Ask specifically about your role vis-à-vis:

- content (eg, What are the "core" topics? Are any "optional"? Where is the focus and emphasis of the course? How are theory and application of theory balanced? To what extent will students be expected to recall, apply, critique theories/models/formulae? And do you have any role in deciding any of this?)
- preparing students to do academic writing (eg, Are there any departmental style guides, emphasis on particular forms of argument, marking criteria, etc.?)
- preparing students for exams or other assessment (eg, Will you be running revision classes towards the end of the year? How much emphasis is put on exams? Is this year's paper likely to be similar to previous years? Are there examples of past essays that you and students can see?

- developing students' academic skills (eg, critique, analysis, evaluation, synthesis – what's the emphasis?)
- improving other student skills (eg, oral communication, team work, problem solving ability, presentations)
- guiding students on proper citation and referencing conventions, and on how plagiarism is defined in the discipline
- the underlying logic of the course (eg, How is it structured? Does the order of topics matter? Is there a "theory" part, then "applications" later, or are they interwoven?).

Quite often the person who has designed the course sees the underlying logic as obvious or taken for granted – yet it might not be clear either to you or the students. Getting a clear understanding of the course structure can also be important in helping you decide how to approach the teaching of particular classes. In Section 3 a variety of teaching approaches are discussed and it is helpful to "align" your choice of teaching method with the learning aims and outcomes of the course, the detailed learning outcomes for a given class and the way in which the students will be assessed. For example, if all students need to be able to work with a particular set of theoretical ideas that cut across several aspects of the course, then the initial work on understanding that theory needs to be worked on by all students (rather than, for example, allocating it to one student for a class presentation and hoping that others might do a bit of the associated core reading). Alternatively, there may be some aspects of the course (eg, particular examples, reference to specific countries or sectors, specific applications, etc.) which are illustrative, but where it is up to individual students what direction to take, what focus to give and how much effort to expend.

2.3 Preparation before a class

The rooms available for class teaching at the School are very variable in terms of size, shape and the layout of the furniture. As part of your preparation, try to visit the room(s) that you have been allocated for your teaching. Check the audio-visual equipment that is provided as standard in that room and order any additional equipment that you may need from the AV support team. See Section 8.2 for more information about teaching rooms.

If you wish to provide your students with handout materials or other consumables, contact your departmental manager or course administrator who will be able to help you with the stationery and materials you will need. These should be freely available to you, although there may be some restrictions for very large courses. These restrictions are usually in place as a means of ensuring reasonable equity between students attending

> "In my course, there is a detailed course handbook with all the lectures, all the class problem sets, and the answers for each of the problem sets. In addition, for each session, the teacher responsible has outlined the "difficult" parts of the topic, and suggested ways of tackling them."

Economics GTA

"I said please introduce yourself to the person next to you. Then I asked each student to introduce their neighbour to the rest of the class. I am lucky, I am teaching a subject close to my research and so I try and tell the students why I love the subject. I ask them what interests them about it and from there explain the syllabus we will be covering."

different classes, and avoiding students getting very different messages about course content and approach from several different teachers. Also be aware that there may be copyright issues if you are photocopying or scanning published material or content that is not copyright of LSE or Creative Commons licensed. You are advised to contact your departmental manager for further guidance.

Before you start teaching, also check out other sources of support available to you and your students. Section 8 may provide a useful starting point.

2.4 Preparing for your first class

Class teaching is discussed in Section 3. However, there are some important issues to consider when preparing to teach for the first time.

When you have made yourself familiar with the syllabus and learning aims and outcomes of the course you will teach on, you will need to plan the actual classes.

Thinking about content

You may wish to attend the lectures for the course to help you orientate your class teaching and synchronise your approach with that of the lecturer. Indeed some courses require GTAs to attend lectures. As mentioned earlier, lecturers often put their lecture materials on Moodle. Looking at past exam papers can also help you determine the themes and issues that should take a greater priority in your teaching. Some class teachers describe allocating the content of their classes into two planning columns, "must have" and "nice to have".

Reading lists at the School are often very extensive but some will indicate "core" texts as opposed to "further reading". However, many students will ask for further guidance in prioritising their reading. You may wish to guide them in doing so, and/or suggest other reading. In making your additional suggestions do consult with the course convenor for the course, and do check that anything you recommend is part of the library stock, or available online, by contacting the librarian responsible for your department.

Read, Think, Write, Repeat

An LSE Education Blog post that discusses strategies to use before, during and after class to help our students engage effectively with their assigned readings.

Beginnings

The first class is always an exciting time. Both you and the students may feel nervous and shy in the new group. Work hard to make everyone feel welcome and quickly at ease in the class. Establish rapport with the students and develop a positive working environment for all. There are many approaches that GTAs use to do this. Here are some suggestions:

You may find it useful to have a clear agenda for your first session, to be sure that you remember things such as:

- introducing yourself
- getting students familiar with each other
- giving an overview of the course, or at least how classes work within the course – in terms of both the content you will cover and the kinds of skills they may be developing
- working with the class to agree "ground rules" and ways you will work together (eg, discussing expectations around weekly workload/reading, punctuality, meeting assessment deadlines, student contribution to discussions, etc. – if these matters are not discussed early on, it may be difficult to sort out problems that arise later) – for more on this see Managing expectations in Section 3.3
- ensuring there is some time in the first session for course-related, subject specialist work
- setting the group up for the coming week (readings, roles, your office hours, their next lecture, etc.)
- mentioning Moodle – if your students have difficulty accessing it or have any problems using it, ask them to contact the IT Services helpdesk.

2.5 Getting to know your students

It is very helpful to get to know your students quickly and by name. However, particularly for those GTAs teaching more than one class, this can be easier said than done. LSE students (and staff) come from over 150 different countries and may have names which are difficult for you to pronounce and remember because they are unfamiliar.

Here are some strategies for learning names quickly that you may find helpful.

- Print out a class list, which can include student photos, from your LSE for You account. Annotate this list to include the names that students like to be called by (which might be different from the one on the register!)
- Provide plastic badges or sticky name badges for students and try and give the badges to the right students at the beginning of each class. GTAs who use this method say that they know all the names after the first three classes
- Discreetly note seating arrangements when taking the register. This enables you to use people's names even if you have not yet learned which face goes with which name
- To help with pronunciation, spell names phonetically on the class list and ask students to correct you if you make mistakes.

As well as learning names it can be helpful to collect some other key information about your students. For example, where are they from? What other courses are they studying? What's their interest/motivation to do the course? Which students live in the same neighbourhood (useful if you want students to work together outside of class)? Who has good IT skills (to encourage them to share skills/teach each other)?

Students who have disclosed that they have a disability may have an Inclusion Plan (IP, see Appendix 4 for an example) arranged with them by the Disability and Wellbeing Service. Students may prefer to keep their disability confidential from their fellow students, and indeed can choose to keep it confidential from you. Whether or not students have disclosed a disability, it is important that you teach in ways that are inclusive of all students, including those with disabilities. Some that you may not "see" include dyslexia, hearing impairment and chronic fatigue.

It is also useful to ask your students to tell you who their academic mentor is, especially if they are studying your course outside of their home department.

2.6 Considering student diversity in your teaching

The School goes beyond the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and takes a "beyond compliance" approach by integrating equality and diversity into its core values through the adoption of the LSE Ethics Code. The School expects all its staff and students to proactively consider and embed equity, diversity and inclusion in everyday behaviour and practices with respect for the knowledge and experience of others. Here are some suggestions on how to create a more welcoming and inclusive classroom environment:

- Include a range of national and cultural examples and experiences without resorting to stereotypes
- Ensure that the teaching methods and materials you use are accessible to students with a variety of specific learning differences
- Monitor classroom dynamics to ensure that students whose background may be unfamiliar to you and/or others in the class do not become isolated
- Vary the structure during the course to appeal to different modes of learning
- Don't call on students to act as "spokespersons" for their group, eg, "So how do Muslims feel about ...?"
- Recognise and acknowledge the history and emotions your students may bring to class
- Respond constructively to non-academic experiences that may affect classroom atmosphere and performance
- Consider the ways in which your use of language might impact upon different individuals
- Reflect, recognise and acknowledge your perceptions, biases and background and how they may play out in your teaching

Adapted from "General principles in teaching 'minority students'", in *A Handbook for Teaching Assistants*, University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB).

Teaching students with disabilities

Note that the Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the School to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities to pre-empt any substantial disadvantage in employment, study or the provision of services. For those students who have disclosed a disability you should receive in advance of the first class an Inclusion Plan outlining the reasonable adjustments. You may wish to seek further or specific advice from the Disability and Wellbeing Service, but we list here some practical measures that apply to teaching disabled students.

- Providing outlines of lectures or class handouts on Moodle in good time will help dyslexic students and those who may have difficulty taking notes because of a physical or sensory impairment
- Always making use of the existing radio mic systems will ensure students with a range of hearing impairments will be accommodated
- Reading through PowerPoint slides as you discuss the points will help students with a visual impairment follow more easily. If you make your PowerPoint slides available online, students can go over them at their own pace. You can use the notes field in PowerPoint to add more detailed information and comment. If you save the PowerPoint as a PDF with the "notes pages" option selected, students will be able to see your slides and notes. IT Services provides advice on using PowerPoint
- Making space beforehand for a student using a wheelchair
- Allowing audio recording of classes
- Using preferred methods of communication, depending on the student, eg, email, which can be read by a screen reader, to supplement handwritten notes or oral feedback.

Teaching in a global classroom

With a highly international student and staff body, it is no surprise to hear a multitude of accents, "Englishes" and foreign languages on campus. This can sometimes be overwhelming for native British students and international students. As a GTA, you have to help your students navigate the richness and messiness that comes from having this linguistic diversity while managing and modelling your multilingual or multicultural skills. While having a non-native accent is often viewed as a liability, this is not necessarily the case. Students and your peers and supervisors value the content of what is being shared over how it sounds. By adopting classic public-speaking techniques – speak clearly and at an even pace, make eye contact, use body language and gestures to reinforce your message and connect with your audience (questions, discussions, etc.) – you will be better understood by your students and other audiences. In a class where the subject matter and terminology is new and the accent or language is new, writing down key terms and names when you or another student mentions them in discussion, keeps all students on the same page. In this way, you are also modelling positive multicultural skills for your students.

Pot-ay-to, pot-ah-to …

At the school, students and staff can use the services of the LSE Language Centre to hone their linguistic skills. For staff, especially GTAs, there are three courses run under English for Academic Purposes programme.

The TLC also offers voice coaching masterclasses and one-to-one sessions with experienced voice coaches that have proved to be highly popular with GTAs.

General Course students

Given the international reputation of LSE, each year, 300+ General Course students come to LSE. The General Course offers a one-year programme of study that is fully integrated into undergraduate life at LSE. Applicants to the programme have a strong academic record (at least a 3.3 GPA – grade point average, or equivalent and/or in the top 10-15 per cent from their year; a 3.5 GPA if they are concentrating on Economics courses) and will have completed at least two years of university level study by the time they join us. Most General Course students are from North American institutions, but there are a small but significant number from European universities, in addition, to an increasing number of students coming directly from Chinese universities. This meant that, in 2014/15, General Course students were drawn from 45 countries and 133 universities. They make up about eight per cent of LSE's undergraduate population and about 25 per cent of the intake of "new" undergraduates to the School.

Their previous personal experiences range from those who have spent all of their lives in their home country and its educational system, to those for whom the LSE year is but one more step in a multi-national educational experience. There are General Course students attached to every department and they take a very broad range of courses. The School's policy is that General Course students should be fully integrated into the School and its departments, and treated, as far as possible, as are other second- or third-year undergraduates. The majority of General Course students will return to North America for their final year of study. A small but significant number are in their final year, and will graduate, from their home university, at the year's end.

Where General Course students join first-year classes, they will be as new to LSE as their classmates but, unlike their classmates, they may already have clear ideas about what it is to be a student, and how to go about university-level study. Where they join second and third year classes, they clearly will have had somewhat different "preparation" for the courses they are studying, compared with students on standard three year programmes. Either way, it is worth noting that they are newcomers who may experience problems in adjusting to life in Britain and the UK higher education system, but more particularly getting to know LSE's "ways of doing things". They may well need help in making sense of LSE administrative practices. Most commonly, they feel academically rather than culturally disorientated. In particular, they may need (and will welcome) additional guidance and feedback on essay writing as well as advice on exam preparation and revision.

The one important difference concerning General Course students that class teachers need to be aware of is the requirement for somewhat different "class reports" – see Class grades for General Course students in Section 5.2.

If you have any questions regarding General Course students in your classes do not hesitate to contact the General Course team on **gc@lse.ac.uk**

Standard contractual hours for a GTA appointment

Contact hours	Actual teaching contract time in hours	(ie, weeks x groups x length of seminar)
Preparation	2 hours per different course taught	(ie, weeks x courses x 2)
Lecture attendance and meetings	Actual hours	(ie, weeks x courses)
Office hours	1 office hour per 3 groups	(ie, weeks x groups 3)
Formative marking (qualitative subjects)	4 items per student per course; 3 items marked per hour	(ie, 4 x groups x 15/3)
Reports and Registers	0.5 hours per student per full unit per year	(ie, groups x 15 x 0.5)

2.7 Managing your time and workload

As of July 2018 the standard contractual hours for a GTA appointment breaks down as above. They may vary slightly across departments – for example marking regimes are highly variable between courses – so local arrangements may apply.

Preparing for classes can be very time-consuming, particularly in your first year. Expect to spend an hour or two at least in preparing for each class (as allocated for in your contract). However, don't feel you need to read everything on the reading list or attend every lecture (unless this is required). Remember that you are not expected to learn the subject for the students, but to facilitate their learning.

Students may expect additional help outside class time and office hours allocated to the course. It is up to you to decide how flexible to be on this, but don't feel under pressure to see students beyond the allocated office hours (unless there are pressing reasons). Decide from the start what your email availability will be and be sure to discuss this with your students in your first session. Are you happy for students to email you with queries? How quickly might they be able to expect response to emails? Can you post a reply to a discussion area in Moodle if the query is of general relevance? Is email an alternative to office hours or an additional contact mechanism? Be warned that emails from students can mount up significantly, and watch out for students who use it as a way of getting you to do their work for them.

Where relevant, direct them back to course and programme handbooks to find information for themselves. Finally, make sure that students use their official LSE email addresses when contacting you; other addresses may end up in your junk folder.

As mentioned before, a document outlining terms and conditions of employment for GTAs and guest teachers can be found on the LSE HR website.

CHECKLIST

Running my first class

- My name and contact details (on the board): email, office hours (building, office, time)
- Their names and emails (check to ensure they all use LSE email) note: I won't send to other email accounts
- Check first names/preferred names for class against formal name and photo
- Note the information they will get from me (deadlines, updates, marking, etc.)
- Ask them to attach the following to homework: my name, their name, module, group, week/item
- Tell them to staple this information to homework and post in GTA pigeonhole ie, your LSE snailmailbox

Contributed by a GTA

Section 3
Class teaching

3.1 The different types of class teaching at LSE

Classes can take a number of forms. In quantitative subjects, such as Economics, Mathematics and Statistics, the class may be used to work on problem sets given to students in the previous week. In qualitative classes the time may be spent in seminars discussing key questions, critiquing journal articles and/or clarifying and working with concepts introduced in the lecture. A few GTAs will support "workshops" rather than classes, for example, on some Department of Methodology and Information Systems courses. Here, you may spend much of the time giving students one-to-one or small-group support in a context where there might be quite a large group working at computers, or on particular small group assignments.

There are traditional approaches to class teaching within LSE. For example, many of the more discursive subjects will involve class discussions (whole group, small groups, pairs) as well as one or two short student presentations, followed by plenary discussion. Quantitative sessions are often "taught" from the front of class by the class teacher, with the use of a whiteboard to explain problems/concepts, etc.. That said, there is also considerable diversity. Many class teachers on discursive courses use techniques such as debates, small group discussions, "buzz" groups, or sequenced questions in a plenary setting. Other teachers invite students to the whiteboard to write solutions, get students to work in pairs or groups, or work round the class asking each student to answer a question. The main message here is, don't feel too constrained in your approach. Irrespective of your discipline, consider different teaching activities that will encourage students to take a more active role in their learning and help them achieve the intended learning outcomes. .

Whatever the context, class time needs to be distinct from lectures, and should be an opportunity for students to develop their own thinking on a subject and their abilities to present and discuss their ideas. The guidelines below are intended to help you accomplish this goal. It is also necessary that you discuss the approach you intend to take with the course convenor for the course, and desirable that you take time to discuss your classes with other GTAs.

3.2 Planning classes

Many new GTAs wonder how there can possibly be enough to say to fill the class period. However, your job is to facilitate and moderate the class, not do all the work for the students. New GTAs sometimes tend to over-manage the situation. Remember that the class isn't just a matter of your communication with your students; it's a chance for your students to share and explore ideas, clarify questions they may have, pool resources and develop their understanding. At LSE, classes are very diverse and often include students from all over the world with a tremendous variety of educational and cultural experiences. It is easy to overlook this potential and the value of student input and to end up trying to carry the whole conversation yourself, which is both exhausting and counter-productive.

Thinking through the main learning aims of the class

Most courses at LSE set out clear course aims and some have more detailed learning outcomes for the course as a whole. Using these as the broader context for your teaching will be useful as you prepare specific learning outcomes for each class. A learning outcome is a statement that describes what a student should be able to do after attending the class and completing the associated work assignments. These will inform and help you plan your class design.

Make sure you are familiar with the reading and topics associated with each class. Inform yourself of what the students have studied in any related lectures and think of some helpful questions to ask and points you can make.

From course learning outcomes to class learning outcomes

Below are some ways of deriving the specific learning outcomes for each class. Drawing on the content of the associated lecture, readings, problem sets, you may wish to consider:

- What are the key concepts (two or three) you want to students to understand (at the end of this class)?
- Is there a key skill, methodology or process the students need to become familiar with or master (at the end of this class)?
- Is there a framework you want students to be able to apply (at the end of this class)?
- Is there a key theory your students need to understand (at the end of this class)?

Including teaching and learning activities in the class

In preparing your classes, take time to consider what activities the students will do to enable them to enhance their understanding of the topic covered.

How are you intending the students to engage with the material? What learning processes do you want to use and how will you ensure all those attending can fully participate? For instance, you may decide on a horse-shoe arrangement of seats, to ensure that a student with a hearing impairment can see each person speaking.

Seating plans

Read about how the seating plan or layout can have an effect on class participation and interaction in Mapping the Teaching Environment.

Structuring class activities

Sometimes classes can seem to become unfocused because different students are interested in different aspects of the topic or problem. As a consequence, students can feel frustrated by what they see as irrelevant comments by others. By having a very clear view of the steps of a useful session, the GTA can achieve the balance between over-directing and a more laissez-faire approach. The examples of frameworks below may help structure class activities and discussion/dialogue between you and the students and among the students themselves. Note that you may actively involve the students at any/all points in each structure.

Frameworks for a structured class discussion

A "problem solving" structure

1. Formulate the problem/define the issue
2. Suggest hypotheses/reasons
3. Review relevant data
4. Evaluate alternative solutions, consequences, and implications.

Comparing/contrasting different models or theories

1. Outline/describe competing models
2. Compare/contrast the models (eg, through a matrix device)
3. Conclude on relative merits of the models.

Analysis and critique of a given theory

1. Review key concepts connected with a particular theoretical position
2. Consider the evidence in support/refutation of the theory
3. Consider the implications of the theory (eg, for practice, for future theory development)
4. Link theory from one session to the next.

These are simply examples. You may need to adapt or design a framework that suits your discipline and class topics better. However, keeping a clear sequence or structure in your mind may help you to maintain a clear focus in the discussion and to meet the learning outcomes for the class.

At times, particularly in the more discursive subjects, you may find it helpful to structure the session around an essay or exam question. In some courses, the adviser responsible may well provide guide questions.

For many quantitative classes, the aim is formative: students should go away understanding the theoretical and technical issues raised by a given set of exercises, and therefore be able to tackle similar problems which they meet in future. Ideally, before the class students should have completed and handed in some pre-set homework, which the class teacher has marked and will use in the class to illustrate those theoretical and technical issues.

Different departments have different policies, both in terms of what they expect from students and class teachers. However, class teachers generally agree that classes based on problem sets are much more successful where students are encouraged to do the work each week and to hand it in so the class teacher can get a feel for problems arising before the session and use this data to help plan the class.

> "With respect to the structure of my teaching, I have seen that creating links of each week's work to what has been taught during the previous ones has helped students in using each class as a building block for the next ones."
>
> **Economics GTA**

On some quantitative courses the teacher in charge will provide written solutions to the exercises, to be handed out in class, but on other courses – depending on the content of the exercises and the preferences of the teacher in charge – solutions (or sketch solutions) may not be available until after classes are finished.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches, and the teacher in charge has to decide on the balance of the two in each case. One advantage of not handing out solutions in class is that students are apt to pay more attention to the work done during the session; one advantage of handing them out is that, in very computational exercises, the class teacher can refer to pre-printed algebraic and numerical details of the solution, and hence concentrate on the basic theory and strategy involved.

In some cases, it will be possible to cover all the exercises in a homework set over one class, while on other courses there will be too much material. It will be up to the class teacher to judge – in the light of the student work they have marked and of their overall understanding of the course – which questions and/or which topics to prioritise. Top right is a suggested structure for running a quantitative class.

Structure for running a quantitative class

1. Take register and hand back marked homework (each of which provides a way of matching students' names and faces).
2. When pre-printed solutions are available, it is sometimes appropriate to pass them round at this stage, especially when the problems are very computational, while in other cases it may be better to hand them out at the end of the session.
3. Discuss with the class which selection of questions from the homework should be addressed in class; in some cases the class teacher might have (and insist on) a definite preference, in others it will be more appropriate to go with the students' preferences.
4. Check with students whether there is anything else – typically, a difficulty to do with recent lectures – that they would like you to talk about.
5. If the answer is NO: work through the chosen questions from the homework, with the emphasis on explaining theory and strategies for future application, not simply on "solving" particular questions.
6. If the answer is YES: the class teacher may need to extemporise about the issue which the students are interested in. It may or may not be possible to revert to discussing issues from the homework after such alternative topics.

3.3 Running classes: generic considerations

Class registers

At LSE, attendance at lectures is optional but attendance at classes is compulsory for undergraduate students. It is also an institutional responsibility to the main HE funding agency that undergraduate student attendance be monitored to some extent. Therefore, a small but important job for the GTA is to keep an accurate class register each week. It is important that your data entry is systematic, regular and accurate as class registers can provide vital "early warning" signals of students who may be in difficulty.

Student records can be marked in three different ways: P (present) if the student attended this particular class; A (absent without reason) if the student failed to attend this class and did not provide a valid reason for doing so; R (absent with reason) if the student did not attend this class but provided a valid reason for doing so (eg, illness).

You can access your class register through LSE for You on the School's main website. For step-by-step instructions on how to access a register, see IT Services' "Class registers" document. There is also a "Tutorials" link at the bottom of all LSE for You pages, providing guidance in using the various sections.

Each student registered to your class(es) should be on the register. If students come to class and are not on your register, you may allow it for one week (on the assumption that things are in a state of flux at the start of term) but you should request that students sort out their timetable. In order to maintain reasonable class sizes, do discourage students from simply turning up to the classes they prefer (some may try to avoid early morning classes!). You need to mark in attendance each session, record any coursework grades, and write brief comments The register also includes photographs of the students you teach, which can be a great way to start learning their names and faces!

Students who have disclosed a disability which requires "reasonable adjustments" will have an Inclusion Plan (IP). If this has been disclosed to you, it should be taken into account when looking for reasons for absences and when commenting on class reports.

The GTA provides a regular point of contact with students through the classes. If a student is experiencing difficulties and begins to miss classes it is the GTA who will be the first person to see this. It is, therefore, crucial that concerns are reported to academic mentors and departmental tutors. The online system now automatically emails the student and his/her academic mentor if you mark the student "absent" (with or without reason) from class on two consecutive sessions. If students show irregular attendance at classes, if they do not complete course work and if they fail to turn up for a class in which they are presenting work, it is worth adding a note to this effect on their online record. Through this early detection system many of the more serious difficulties and course failures can be avoided.

But be warned: students have direct access to anything you write. So keep it accurate and polite.

Note that some students in your class register may be highlighted in yellow. These students are being monitored by the Student Progress Panel (because they have already failed some exams). It is particularly important that you keep the reports on these students up to date, and note any relevant information. Please do not make the register "public" to the student group, as this could cause embarrassment.

> "I tried using ground rules last session and was pleased by the students' reaction. I gave them a list of five points–things like we will start on time– and I asked them to edit the list in pairs. They added some really interesting things, like no one should dominate the discussion and everyone should do the core readings each week. I think it helped us to get off on the right foot."
>
> **Economics GTA**

Managing expectations

Before running a class, you will need to become aware of the implicit set of attitudes and messages you bring into the classroom with you. Equally important are the attitudes and expectations that your students bring with them.

You: Your reactions, your responses to students, the attitudes you project in your actions all suggest to your students the sort of interaction they can expect. The way in which you field students' comments will give the most important clue. No one wants to feel that their remarks will be put down or dismissed. Students are also sensitive to what they think you REALLY want (eg, Does he want a discussion or a chance to give a mini-lecture on his favourite topic? Does she say she wants disagreement and then gets defensive when someone challenges her?). Your students will try to read you so that they can respond appropriately. Be sensitive to the clues you give them and do your best to create a "safe" place for open and frank questioning and discussion to take place, irrespective of the subject.

Your students: It is well worth the time and effort it takes at the beginning of a class, with a new group of students, to find out what they are expecting from you and the class. You could simply ask them and some confident students may respond helpfully. Better still, you could ask the students to write down some brief notes about how they see your role and theirs in the class and what they see as the purpose(s) of the class. This would also provide an opportunity for students to explain privately any special arrangements they may need in order to participate fully. If your students are first-years and new to classes at LSE you may even wish to facilitate a discussion about how you will work together. Some GTAs find it useful to draw up class ground rules. See Section 2.4 and Section 2.7 for more on, respectively, ground rules and managing your workload.

Listening effectively

As a class teacher, you will need to hone your personal and communication skills, in particular your listening and questioning skills, your ability to give clear explanations and your ability to end classes effectively. The following sections offer some useful hints about this.

- Try to keep an open mind and listen to what is actually said.
- Listen for meaning. For example, a student may ask you a muddled question about a small detail when actually what (s)he may be telling you is that (s)he is completely lost and doesn't understand this at all – or the student may be dyslexic
- Try not to pre-empt what a student is saying, by cutting them off mid-question and giving them an answer to a problem as you see it. As much as possible, let them explain their uncertainties and confusions. Concept development often requires that students first understand how the new ideas presented fit with what they already know. If the new concept requires them to let go of some previous understanding, this needs to be actively acknowledged. In other words, you can't simply overlay a new and contradictory set of ideas before the old ones have been explored and deconstructed

- Try to find a workable balance between, on the one hand, thinking ahead in the discussion in order to maintain the flow and focus and, on the other, being overly directive and forcing the discussion along your set path.

Questioning skills

There are a number of techniques you can use to encourage students to ask questions and to open up discussion. The most obvious is to draw on students' questions and comments and to expand upon them with your own remarks. You may want to jot down several statements or questions beforehand and use these as a springboard.

For many quantitative subjects, you may want to plan out a sequence of short questions aimed at helping students work their way through a problem, or grasp a better understanding of a theory or model. A number of class teachers in Economics, Mathematics, Statistics and Accounting use this approach. Some will go round the class more or less sequentially, so students know when their "time" to answer is approaching and can prepare. Others take a more random approach, calling on people by name. Yet others ask questions to the group as a whole, and let whoever wishes to respond.

This issue of whether or not to call on students individually and by name to contribute to the class is one of the more controversial aspects of questioning. Clearly, teachers have different styles and students will have varied expectations. The advantage of addressing individual students is that you can tailor comments and make interventions that are appropriate for specific students. It may be a way of involving a quiet student who you know has useful contributions to make but maybe finds it difficult to raise them in the class.

However, great care should be used when cold-calling students. If some students think that they may be "picked on" to answer questions it may make them very uncomfortable in the class and less able to think and work out their own position or solution. (This may particularly affect the non-native speakers of English in your class and those with disabilities.) This may also have a knock-on effect on the other students and so the positive atmosphere in the class can be eroded.

If you choose to use a direct questioning approach it is also sensible to think through what you will do when a student cannot answer your question or gives a muddled or an incorrect response. It is likely to fall to the teacher to "rescue" the situation and help re-build the confidence of an embarrassed or flustered student. Because of these potential difficulties it is, therefore, suggested that you do not ask individual students to answer your questions so directly until you have established a good rapport with your class and you have got to know your students better.

> I start each session with a "round" to establish who has read what. All the students know this will happen, and so can be sure to be prepared – even if they only read a chapter of a core text.
>
> **Sociology GTA**

With more discursive subjects, it is generally preferable to open up discussion with open-ended questions which will get students thinking about relationships, applications, consequences, and contingencies, rather than merely the basic facts.

Open questions often begin with words like "how" and "why" rather than "who", "where" and "when", which are more likely to elicit short factual answers and stifle the flow of the discussion. This more closed questioning approach tends to set up a "teacher/student" "question/answer" routine that does not lead into fruitful discussion of underlying issues. You will want to ask your students the sorts of questions that will draw them out and actively involve them, and you will also want to encourage your students to ask questions of one another. Again, it is for you to decide whether to call on students directly, or leave the discussion and discussant "open". Above all, you must convey to your students that their ideas are welcomed as well as valued.

Very occasionally you may have a student in your class who experiences more than the normal level of anxiety or shyness when called upon to contribute to the class discussions or to present their work. Treat such situations with sensitivity and if appropriate seek specialist guidance from the Disability and Wellbeing Service, Teaching and Learning Centre or the Language Centre.

There are a number of pitfalls in asking questions in class. Here are the four most common ones:

- Phrasing a question so that your implicit message is, "I know something you don't know and you'll look stupid if you don't guess what's in my head!"
- Constantly rephrasing student answers to "fit" your answer without actually considering the answer that they have given
- Phrasing a question at a level of abstraction inappropriate for the level of the class – questions are often best when phrased as problems that are meaningful to the students
- Not waiting long enough to give students a chance to think.

The issue of comfortable "thinking time" is an often-ignored component of questioning techniques. If you are too eager to impart your views, students will get the message that you're not really interested in their opinions. Most teachers tend not to wait long enough between questions or before answering their own questions because a silent classroom induces too much anxiety for the class teacher. It can be stressful if you pick on a student for an answer and all the group are waiting for a reply. Many students, particularly those with certain disabilities or dyslexia, students who are not confident in speaking in public, speaking English, or in the subject matter may become flustered in such a situation. Creating a more comfortable space in which to think is likely to induce a better "quality" of answer and increase the opportunities for all students to contribute effectively.

> Sometimes people are too shy to speak in front of the whole class, which is why no one wants to answer questions. I find that if you get people to talk in front of the class by eg, reading out a question, they are subsequently less shy about speaking in class. This is a good way to get people to answer your questions.

> I divide the classes in groups to work on questions I bring to the class. This is a main pattern of work, but I try to vary depending on the issue. I have even brought postcards to the class to ask them about Catalan architecture when we were talking about the role of the regionalist movements in the consolidation of democracy in Spain.

Government GTA

Once the students have confidence that you will give them time to think their responses through, and you show them that you really do want to hear their views, they will participate more freely in future.

Asking students questions about work that they have not done is clearly a different issue from those noted above, and comes back to issues around agreeing ground rules with students to ensure that they prepare adequately for class. It is important to agree on working patterns from the start, and follow them through. Here are a couple of examples of approaches some class teachers use.

Giving a clear explanation

The first piece of advice here is to try not to do too much explaining in class. This may sound a little strange but it is all too easy to be drawn into the trap of giving mini-lectures rather than facilitating learning. However, there are times when your students will look to you to help in clarifying points or linking class discussions and course work with related lectures.

In giving a clear explanation you should start from where your learners are. You may choose to summarise "what we know already" or indeed ask one of the students to do this task for the group. These are four quick tips to help structure your explanation:

- Structure what you say so that you have a clear beginning, middle and ending
- Signpost your explanation to make the structure clear to everybody
- Stress key points
- Make links to the learners' interests and current understanding. You can do the latter through the use of thoughtful examples, by drawing comparisons and by using analogy.

It is worth reiterating that classes should not turn into lectures.

Concluding a class

There is inevitably pressure on time, as many GTAs try to cover as much as possible in the time available. Finding that time has simply run out is a common experience. With that in mind, it is useful to plan the end of sessions as carefully as planning the beginning. As such, you may wish to:

- Use the summing up more as an opportunity to identify any "gaps" or issues that haven't been addressed, key readings which you have noted students have not yet read but probably would benefit from spending time on, and in giving students some pointers as to further work they may engage with
- Prompt students to plan ahead, to make links to the next lecture and next class, and ensure that everyone is on track to make the most of the next class in the series
- Ask students individually, in groups or collectively to contribute key points to the summary.

> I try to think of really good examples to illustrate the main points I want to make. If you can find something current from the papers or the news then you are often onto a winner – I like to bring along the paper and hand it round the group. I thought about asking the group to bring in their own examples too and I might try this next year.

3.4 Running classes: specific considerations

There is a growing interest in UK higher education in helping undergraduates to develop their "core skills". These include communication skills, numeracy, ability to work with others, problem solving and use of information technology. Classes offer a huge potential for students to develop and improve core skills, and in particular, their oral communication skills both through informal class discussions and by giving formal presentations. To help students do this is, therefore, an important aspect of your work as a class teacher.

- Discuss with students the overall purpose of student presentations both within the discipline and for their broader skills development
- Ensure that their presentations link to the class and/or the rest of the course
- Consider timing and format. For instance, keeping the presentation short is useful so that it does not dominate the class session but acts as a way of structuring the class – placing it halfway through the session for ten minutes, with five minutes for the presentation and five minutes for questions – and limiting the use of PowerPoint to four or five slides at most or one side of A4 is a good discipline
- Discuss the feedback criteria with the class and, where appropriate, develop a customised feedback sheet (see Appendix 3 for an example). The Teaching and Learning Centre can work with you on this
- Offer them visual aid advice, for instance good practice in using PowerPoint, or preparing handouts for other students in the class
- Suggest a meeting with you before the presentation. This can be useful in ensuring that the student has addressed the question and that the presentation is well integrated into the rest of the session
- Let the student/s know how they will be receiving feedback (office hours, feedback sheet, Moodle, in the class, audio feedback) and what elements of the presentation they will be given feedback on
- Outline the structure of the session at the start, indicating when and how long the presentation will be and how it fits into the overall class plan
- Clarify what the role of the rest of the class is during the presentation/s. Will students ask questions after the presentation? Will they give peer feedback on all or some aspects of the presentation to the student presenting?

Several departments now include guidance on seminar presentations in their documentation to students. You can usefully draw this to your students' attention. In addition, LSE LIFE runs learning development events on various aspects of seminar presentation and public speaking, and has a range of resources available on its Learning Development Moodle course, several of which are available for class teachers to adapt to their own needs.

Many students use the opportunity of class presentations to learn how to use PowerPoint and operate the computer display equipment. You may wish to alert students to IT training on using PowerPoint. Equipment to enable classroom presentation is now available as standard in the majority of classrooms across the School; and where there is no such facility, you can book portable equipment from the AV Unit. However, the equipment set up does vary from room to room, so encourage students to have a trial run if they can, and be sure to check out how the equipment works yourself (contact the AV Unit for hands-on guidance if you need it).

Many students find presenting in class very stressful and for some it is particularly difficult (eg, because of a disability, mental health issues, or due to language difficulties). Encourage students to make you aware of such concerns, and either offer additional support if you feel able and have time, or point them to other support available in the School (eg, LSE LIFE, Disability and Wellbeing Service, Language Centre).

Giving feedback on oral presentations provides useful guidance on running presentations in class.

1 Integrating student presentations into course and class design

There are a few key questions to consider when planning to include student presentations in sessions.

- What is the overall purpose of student presentations in relation to the development of both disciplinary and broader skills?
- How do presentations contribute to the students' learning for the rest of the class session, essays, problem sheets and exams?
- What type of presentations are being used? For example, are they individual or group presentations? Are they summarising readings, opening up the subject or responding to a question? Is the intention for the student to be descriptive or does the presentation also need to include a deeper analysis and critique of the subject?
- How to ensure that feedback is provided in a timely fashion to enable students to respond to it in future assessments?

2 Preparing students for class presentations

- Discuss with students the overall purpose of student presentations both within the discipline and for their broader skills development
- Ensure that their presentations link to the class and/or rest of the course
- Consider timing and format. For instance, keeping the presentation short is useful so that it does not dominate the class session but acts as a way of structuring the class–placing it halfway through the session for 10 minutes, with five minutes for the presentation and five minutes for questions – and limiting the use of PowerPoint to four or five slides at most or one side of A4 of notes is a good discipline
- Discuss the feedback criteria with the class and, where appropriate, develop a customised feedback sheet based on the pro-forma opposite (the Teaching and Learning Centre can work with you on this if useful)
- Offer them visual aid advice – good practice in using PowerPoint, preparing handouts for other students in the class, for instance
- Suggest a meeting before the presentation. This can be useful in ensuring that the student has addressed the question and that the presentation is well integrated into the rest of the session
- Let the student/s know how they will be receiving feedback (office hours, feedback sheet, Moodle, in the class, audio feedback) and what elements of the presentation they will be given feedback on.

3 Running class presentations

- Outline the structure of the session at the start, indicating when and how long the presentation will be and how it fits into the overall class plan
- Clarify what the role of the rest of the class is during the presentation/s. Do they ask questions after the presentation? Do they give peer feedback on all or some aspects of the presentation to the student?

Helping students to develop academic writing skills

There is clearly more to class teaching than simply packaging content and delivering it to students. The School places great importance on students' abilities to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing. This section considers how to help support students with their academic writing skills. These come to the fore in the ways in which students will be summatively assessed, eg, through the essay and through written examination scripts.

This is usually an area of particular difficulty for dyslexic students. It can also cause concerns for some students for whom English is a second or third language, and for students unused to the particular writing style expected in the UK HE system, which is often more critical and analytical than they may be used to.

Class teachers can usefully devote some of their teaching time to the support of these process skills and may want to encourage their students to discuss and review their academic writing abilities. The detail of marking and providing feedback on course work and essays is tackled in detail in Section 4. In addition, class teachers may wish to consider setting aside some class time to work with students on essay writing technique, peer critique and review of each other's work, and exam technique. Here are some examples of approaches to running classes to help students develop their writing skills used by recent class teachers.

Academic writing skills

LSE LIFE offers support for academic writing skills' development through its learning development events, the LSE Study Toolkit, the Learning Development Moodle site and one-to-one sessions. A report on an innovative series of academic writing skills surgeries, taking place in LSE's Department of Social Policy, was recently produced for the LSE Education Blog.

Helping students to prepare for their examinations

Many LSE courses are assessed by end-of-course written examinations and your students will be keen to maximise their performance in these assessments. You can do much to help in their efforts and you may wish to use some class time to work with students on exam preparation.

You do need to inform yourself about the form that your students' examinations will take. How many questions do they need to answer? Do they have any choice? Has the exam format changed since last year? Previous year's exam papers are available on Moodle.

Your students may find it useful to work through old exam questions in class. You can use these in revision classes in a number of different ways. For example, you could ask students to work in small groups and answer two or three questions in class and ask them to jointly present their views for

> Last term in the revision class I asked the students to work in groups of three to tackle different past exam questions. I gave the same question to two or three groups so that they could compare their different approaches. The focus of the class was to look at how exam questions could be read, interpreted and answered differently. Our discussions were about the process of answering the questions and not on the detail of the subject.

discussion. Alternatively you could set a "mock" exam where students work independently on questions in class under exam conditions, etc.

You can mark your students' answers and give them constructive feedback but you can also invite students to mark each other's answers and encourage them to apply the assessment criteria used in the department. Such formative assessment can be a very powerful teaching tool and many students gain a great deal from making and defending judgements about the quality of their own answers, those of a peer or those presented in an anonymous answer (from last year) that you keep for teaching purposes. This can be an active and engaging way to help your students understand the quality and standards of work required by your department. It will often prompt discussion and questioning about the detail of the exam. For example "How long should my answer be?", "How many references should I include?", "Can I refer to my own experience?" etc.

You may also be able to ask the course convenor for common "errors" that students make when tackling his/her questions and discuss these during your class.

If you are teaching first-year students, it may be helpful to discuss approaches to revision with your class and encourage them to draw up realistic plans and timetables. It is probably worth reminding new students that most people work more productively in (short) timed bursts and when they are not tired, hungry or upset/worried. Your students can obtain advice and support by attending the exam preparation sessions offered by LSE LIFE You can also guide your students to look at the information and advice provided on Moodle course Learning Development, whose materials you are welcome to adapt and use with your own classes.

Here are some tips for exams. What would you add?

- Divide your time between the number of questions and try and stick to it
- Do your best question first
- Read the question very carefully, underlining key words
- Don't jump straight in – spend a few minutes noting down the most important points you wish to present and putting them in a sensible order
- Re-read the question before writing your conclusion so that you can make sure that you relate your previous discussion clearly to the question that was actually asked!

Starting such a list and inviting the class to add to it may be a useful way of encouraging all your students to plan carefully for their assessments.

Section 4

Marking work and giving feedback

4.1 The student assessment context at LSE

Students at LSE are expected to do two types of assessment during their studies. Class work or course work is submitted to the class teacher for formative assessment, to help the students develop their skills and understanding. This work may well be graded, to give students a feel for how they are progressing. (The National Student Survey identified the requirement for feedback to be provided as early as possible so that students can respond to it in future assessments.) But much more important will be the feedback you provide, which should help them to improve and develop – this is often termed "feed-forward" as it is future-focussed. In addition, students are required to produce assessed essays and projects and to take unseen written examinations for summative assessment, designed to evaluate their current level of academic achievement.

Formative course work

Normally, GTAs will only be involved in marking formative assignments, designed to help the students progress in their studies and to provide opportunities for individual feedback.

Below are examples of formative coursework required by two different departments.

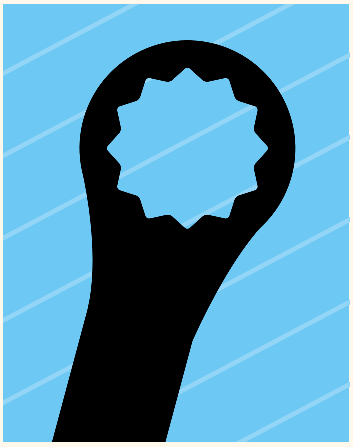
Class teachers should keep an accurate record of student grades and performance and include a summary of this information in their class reports (see **Writing class reports** in this section).

The Code of Good Practice for Undergraduate Programmes indicates (paragraphs 3.7 and 4.4) that permission to sit exams may be denied to students who regularly miss class and/or do not provide required course work. You may wish to point this out to students. However, before taking students to task, do check whether there are good reasons for their apparently poor work record (eg, disability-related reasons such as hospital appointments, or particular personal and emotional difficulties). Depending on the situation, this could be done by talking directly with the student or, perhaps preferably, through their academic mentor or the lecturer in charge of the course.

Formative essays provide an opportunity to raise and check student awareness so that they comply with the highest standards of academic conduct. For more information, see the Regulations for Assessment Offence: Plagarism in the LSE calendar. Students would benefit from having this information in advance of preparing their first assignment; but it can be reiterated and reinforced through written feedback.

Summative course work

A growing number of courses include summative assessment. This normally takes the form of essays, dissertations, projects, and more practical assignments such as conducting and reporting empirical or data analysis projects. An important point to note is that where students are working on formally assessed essays which count towards the final degree classification, you need to check with your department on the nature and extent of advice you can give the students. For example, many departments allow students to seek tutorial advice prior to getting down to writing, including advice on literature and format specifications, and possibly on the structure of an outline. However, many departments do not allow students to get feedback on draft essays that will be summatively assessed and on dissertations after the end of the Summer term. For disabled students, it is also important to be aware of the advice in the Inclusion Plan (see sample IP at Appendix 4).



The LSE Assessment Toolkit contains a range of resources on different assessment methods in use in the School:

- Annotated bibliographies
- Blogs
- Case studies
- Class participation
- Essays
- MCQs
- Objective tests
- Oral presentations
- Policy papers
- Portfolio
- Posters
- Problem sets
- Research proposals
- Simulations and games.

They may be used for formative or summative assessment.

Exams

As noted above, many courses at LSE include a closed, fixed time examination. These are usually of three hours' duration, though some are slightly longer – for instance, some Law and Accounting courses add a further 15 minutes' "reading" time for long papers – and some are shorter, such as some half units or courses where there are essays as well as exams. As mentioned earlier, most GTAs are not involved in marking exams, but some departments do involve GTAs in marking summative exams. Where this is the case, it is important that you:

- are clearly briefed to this effect, and agree to it in your contract;
- are paid for marking (usually on a "piece" rate, rather than an hourly rate);
- are properly trained and advised on marking standards, criteria and practice.

Since 2017, there has been a school-wide move to implement assessment diversification. Simply put, it is about adopting a blend of assessment methods that is both formative and summative to achieve a significant positive impact on student learning and performance. Most departments and programmes at LSE have adopted this approach and consequently there are fewer courses being assessed by a single exam at the end of the course, and more courses that feature an assessment mix. For instance, the LLB programme has moved from assessment exclusively by exam in 2017/18 to a more varied assessment diet in 2018/19 that comprises essays, exams, take-home assessments and portfolio work.

4.2 Marking students' course work

Below are some tips, guidance and prompt questions to help you with the marking and feedback process. Anyone wanting more detailed guidance may wish to find and read some of the resources recommended in Appendix 7.

Checking things out

First, there are some important preliminaries you may wish to check out if you are new to marking, or if you are new to the institution. Things to consider include:

- Learning outcomes: these are usually incorporated into course guides but you may need to check with the course convenor for the course
- Assessment regulations and requirements: see the Undergraduate section of the Calendar plus departmental handbook or relevant course outline
- Assessment criteria: in most departments there is a set of agreed assessment criteria for work, but again you may need to check with the course convenor for the course. An example is given in Appendix 3
- Inclusion Plan specifications for some disabled students will mean that there is a letter of relevant advice which should be taken into account attached to the exam paper (eg, about the impact of dyslexia on spelling)
- Syllabus: see the Calendar course guides plus departmental handbooks and course outlines
- Previous assignments/essays/exams for these students and for past students on this course. Check if there is a bank of past student work that you can check out
- Marking/feedback sheets: Check to see if the course convenor has their own, or if there is a departmental version. (NB: If you produce your own, the Teaching and Learning Centre would love to see it!)
- Likely grade distribution: it is worth checking around as to how others are grading, how last year's students did on essays, exams, etc
- How grades will be used: for example, General Course students will obtain an exam mark and a coursework mark from classes based upon their marked coursework, presentations and their participation in class. Both marks go forward to their course transcript
- The preferred grading convention for the course. Both percentages and letter grades are used at the School. From the student perspective, an important part of understanding grading conventions is to know how these might relate to grades in exams or other formal assessment. Students also prefer it when faced with one (rather than multiple) set of grading conventions.

> "Diversified assessment is the way forward: it is less stressful, more rewarding, and leaves you with a better and deeper understanding of your subject."
>
> **Bhadra Shreejith, Third year Government and Economics student writing in *The Beaver***

Getting down to marking

Marking often creates considerable anxiety amongst new GTAs, and many find it helpful to talk to colleagues, especially when starting out. Several departments now offer practice marking sessions to new GTAs, or do some moderation of class work grading to ensure that class teachers are marking to a similar standard. The course convenor for your course may also ask or offer to look at a sample and check on your grading and feedback to students.

If you are concerned about a piece of work (eg, worries over plagiarism (see Appendix 5), or realise, for example, that there is a problem with either the framing of the model answer or a problem set question, do seek advice from the course convenor for the course.

You may wish to keep your own records on each student. Several class teachers now use feedback templates or cover sheets and fill them out electronically. This enables them to keep their own copies, which can be helpful in building up feedback to students over time.

Marking for the first time – some pointers

When you are faced with your first set of marking, make sure you give yourself time and space to mark. It requires good concentration even at the best of times, and especially the first few times. Here are some tips:

- Sort work into sets – similar/same topic; similar approaches
- Take the first five scripts, read them quickly, do not attempt to grade them but try to get a feel for the standard and range of approaches
- Mark using marking scheme/student feedback sheets. Take breaks and monitor yourself to make sure you are applying the same standards to each piece of work fairly
- Ask yourself about any biases or preconceptions you might have. If possible, it is best to mark "anonymously", but this is not a requirement for class work. You may recognise student handwriting or points of view, so you need to be vigilant, and be prepared to reassess a piece of work before returning it to a student
- Record the grades on the online class register

4.3 Giving feedback

The fundamentals

The aim of any feedback is to inform the students about the strengths of their work and to identify areas for development in future work. So, in any kind of feedback format, focus on giving students feedback that will help them in the future and enable them to understand why they got the mark they did. (It is worth giving some thought as to whether the "future" might mean their next course essay, exam preparation or preparing detailed ideas to come through well in a forthcoming interview for getting on to a higher degree.) One question students often ask is "How could I upgrade this answer from a 2:2 to a 2:1?" If you are unfamiliar with UK university degree classifications, see the Glossary, which sets out the classification boundaries and percentage equivalents used at LSE.

Make sure that your feedback is timely. There is plenty of research evidence that indicates that the closer the feedback is to the actual doing of a piece of work, the more the student can learn from it. At LSE feedback on formative assessment needs to be turned around in three weeks and feedback on summative assessments generally within four weeks. In the case of courses using weekly problem sets, class teachers are advised to check what the expectations are, both for students to turn work in, and for it to be marked. The ideal is weekly hand-in and turnaround of marked papers, but this is often not a formal requirement.

The LSE Academic Code (see box top of next page), sets out clearly what students can expect from their lecturers, teachers and programme support staff not only with respect to assessment and feedback, but also teaching, academic support and student voice.

Good use can be made of Moodle for giving feedback through online feedback, online quizzes and Turnitin, the text matching and plagiarism prevention tool. See Section 8.1 for more about Turnitin and Moodle and contact Learning Technology and Innovation (LTI) for advice on making best use of them.

A note on data protection

It is always worth bearing in mind that under the Data Protection Act any individual is entitled to see anything written about them including job references, reports or exam feedback. When writing feedback, references or reports, be frank but fair even when a student has been difficult to work with. Ensure that what you write is what you would be prepared to say to them face-to-face with evidence to back it up. Refer to the School's Data Protection Policy for more information.

LSE Academic Code

Assessment and feedback

Feedback on formative tasks will be returned to students within 3 weeks of the submission deadline, where students submit their work on time.

Students have the opportunity to receive individual feedback on all summatively assessed tasks and exams (including resits):

- For assessments set in Michaelmas or Lent Term, feedback within 4 weeks of the date of submission/exam;
- For assessments set in the Summer Term, feedback within 4 weeks of the beginning of the following term for those whose degree programme is continuing;
- Final year graduates and undergraduates who complete dissertations within the final year of their studies, will receive feedback within 4 weeks of the beginning of the following term in which the dissertation was submitted.

For the Academic Code in full go to **info.lse.ac.uk/staff/putting-students-first/lse-academic-code**

Consult the online guidance documents, on feedback produced by the Teaching and Learning Centre on a variety of topics such as feedback on quantitative work, collective feedback on exams, feedback on oral presentations, self-assessment and peer feedback. Some of these guidance documents are accompanied by templates and pro-formas which you could use or adapt for use in your class.

> "Many students say how much they appreciate my 'feed forward', which enables them to understand why they have lost marks, how they might improve and feel confident that we will achieve this together. But other students are disinterested and simply skim over my comments to look for their marks. To motivate students to reflect on and learn from their feedback I now focus on providing feedback to unassessed draft essays, before they are submitted. Then, keen to get a good mark and with an opportunity to respond to my comments, I have their attention."
>
> **Geography GTA**

4.4 Neurodiversity

One matter on which you may wish to seek further specialist advice is where you know, through a student IP, or have an idea, through your own concerns, that a student may be dyslexic or neurodiverse. Some students have been identified as dyslexic or neurodiverse from an early age and have developed study strategies which may have been successful so far, but which may not be so effective at university. Others, faced with the greater academic challenge, or perhaps coming from a different culture, are belatedly referred and assessed. This can lead to ambivalence and some loss of confidence, which will be compounded if faced with a "dyslexia does not exist" attitude. It does and students who have made the grade and secured a place at LSE have already experienced additional barriers. It is important to celebrate neurodiversity as part of the diversity of the LSE community. Neurodiversity is associated with strengths such as originality and strategic thinking.

LSE also has many dyspraxic students who can be overlooked as they may have strong spelling skills. Dyspraxic students characteristically have difficulties with organisation, prioritising and structuring ideas and information in written work.

If you feel that a student may be neurodiverse, talk to them. Reassure them with an initial positive statement about some aspect of their work, but go on to indicate that there are certain elements in their writing/organisation/reading that might be worth investigating. Suggest that they talk to somebody in the Neurodiversity team (based in the Disability and Wellbeing Service), who can provide one-to-one consultations, a screening interview or ideas for support. It might also be worth encouraging students to take advantage of the learning development opportunities offered by LSE LIFE, via a series of events, its Learning Development Moodle site and one-to-one sessions.

Further information about supporting neurodiverse students can be found in the Staff Guides on the Disability and Wellbeing Service web pages. Students can be referred to the self-help study strategies in Dyslexia and Neurodiversity in Moodle.

Errors in writing and speaking which may be due to neurodiverse conditions

- Incorrect use of homophones (eg, hear and here, there and their)
- Omission or transposition of letters, syllables and words (eg, said for siad)
- Poorly constructed sentences
- Erratic or incorrect use of punctuation
- Inconsistent or incorrect use of tenses
- Use of a similar but incorrect word
- Restricted vocabulary.

“I use three methods to provide feedback to unassessed essays:

- Individual written feedback – to identify three key issues for each student to address so that they achieve higher marks
- Group email – to outline general problems, so that no student feels they have done uniquely poorly
- Circulation of anonymised best essay, with the author’s permission, explaining why the essay achieved a high mark.”

Geography GTA

POP QUIZ ?

What would you do if …?

Consider the questions and make notes about how you might approach these scenarios should they arise in your class. Feel free to share your thoughts with a more experienced colleague from your department or the TLC.

- What will you do if a student submits an assignment late?

- Do oral presentations have to be submitted in advance of the class they are due?

- Should you provide feedback to students on their work individually or prepare general talking points for the whole class?

- What advice or feedback can you offer a student who appears to be unclear about academic conduct expectations on the course?

Section 5

Writing class reports

5.1 What are class reports?

At the end of the Michaelmas and Lent terms, undergraduate class teachers are expected to write reports on the students in their classes, using LSE for You. For step-by-step instructions on how to use these, see the IT Services' document "How to use Class Registers", in the Online guides and FAQs section of its website. Now that the registers are online it is also possible to make some notes through the terms, but this is not a requirement.

As students can always view their individual report and also the Teacher Term Comments at the end of class reports, bear in mind the need to keep your comments fair and constructive.

Class reports are used in three main contexts:

The Committee on Student Progress

Where a student has failed an exam, the Committee on Student Progress will examine the student's class record to assess whether the reason for this is lack of ability, poor learning, or other factors (eg, disability, sudden medical emergency, etc.) For this purpose, it is crucial that the Committee has clear and accurate information on:

- the number of classes the student has attended compared with total number of classes he/she could have attended;
- the number of pieces of course work the student has completed and submitted, again compared with the number he/she should have completed and submitted;
- an indication of whether the student is generally well-prepared for class (eg, has completed weekly assignments/undertaken core reading/ contributed to class discussions– in other words, has done the expected work, or habitually comes to class unprepared).

It is also extremely useful for the Committee to have a feel for whether the student struggled more or less from day one, made steady progress through the term, was apparently strong throughout the term, started well, but seemed to face increasing difficulties as the course progressed, etc.. In other words, the report should indicate whether or not a student has improved or had increasing problems over the period.

Dependent on class reports, students may only be allowed to re-sit an exam if, for example, they substantially improve their attendance at class, and hand in all work required. Other recommendations may be made for students who have worked diligently, but still failed in the exam.

Writing job references for students

Academic mentors and departmental tutors are often asked to write references for students. If the student has made reasonable use of his/her academic mentor then (s)he will have both personal insight and the class reports to work with. However, remember that many academic mentors will come from a different discipline. As such, they may have little insight into the student's ability to cope with class work: so your report can be very important. The departmental tutors are much more reliant on the class reports, as they will often have to write reports on students they barely know. Again, remember that some students will be asking for references from a departmental tutor in another department/discipline.

Job references require a somewhat different insight into students than that required for internal purposes. Employers are often interested in attributes such as:

- punctuality
- attention to detail
- thorough and diligent work
- consistency
- ability to work under pressure
- communication skills
- honesty.

For reference writing, it is the open-ended comments that you make that will be most useful. They do not need to be lengthy, but it is worth distinguishing, for example, between the student who consistently does the work and is making steady progress, the student who is erratic, often late to class, and hands in untidy and poorly explained work, and the student who has been silent throughout, yet still does high quality written work.

Note that class reports for writing references are particularly important for second and third years, but can also be important in the first year, for example for vacation work, or summer work placements.

As a class teacher, you yourself may well be asked by students to provide references for them. It is perfectly reasonable to say no, particularly if you have any concerns about the student.

In fact, the current advice is that only full-time members of School staff should complete the references, although you as a class teacher may be requested to provide some of the detailed information. It is considered best practice for you as the student's class teacher to write confidentially to the convenor or academic mentor with your comments and for the full-time staff member to use your comments as the basis for the reference.

If you do provide a reference, it is very important that you are fully aware of the legal implications of what you are doing as you (and indeed any reference writer) have personal liability. You are also strongly advised to have the letter checked by a member of full-time faculty before it is sent off. It is sad to say that there are cases of referees being sued, by both the person for whom they have written a reference and by employers. One useful source of guidance on reference writing that you should consult is the LSE Careers' LSE staff guide to writing references in the Careers information for LSE staff page.

Academic mentor-student meetings

Class reports are reviewed by academic mentors before they meet with their students. These meetings can in theory happen at any time, but traditionally are scheduled at key points in the year (eg, when students are deciding their course choice for the coming year). The most important point that academic mentors need to know is if the student is having any serious study problems (eg, noting if a student started well but seems to be getting worse over time, or if they are routinely not submitting course work, or not keeping up with other work set). Any general comments you make about a student's standard of work must reflect these problems – a student cannot be said to be studying to a "satisfactory" standard if they are not submitting course work, for instance. If you have any such concerns about a student, it is also important to discuss this with the tutor responsible for the course, and to see whether any further support is possible or advisable.

In very extreme scenarios (eg, a student never showing at class, never handing in work), the academic mentor may decide not to allow a student to enter the exam. This is very rare.

Seven steps to writing a class report

When writing class reports:

- Provide clear information on the proportion of classes attended, compulsory work completed and a feel for whether or not the student was well prepared for classes
- Try to write something meaningful about every student (eg, "rarely contributes in class, but appears to be keeping up with the work" is much more useful to tutors and reference writers than "OK", especially if you are teaching second- or third-years)
- Wherever possible, indicate where you feel a student is on a downward trend, or is seriously struggling with the work
- Do not state that a student is studying to a "satisfactory" standard if they are routinely not submitting course work. Even if you can comment positively on other aspects (attendance, participation, etc.) anything more than occasionally missed work is not satisfactory
- Keep employer references in mind – reports may be used as evidence of a student's personal attributes such as punctuality, consistency, willingness to contribute, etc
- Keep your reports frank, but fair
- Refer as appropriate or necessary to the Inclusion Plan (IP), if the student has one, and has disclosed it to you. (Appendix 6 provides an example of an IP.)

5.2 Class grades for General Course students

The above explanation of class reports is relevant for all students in your class. In addition, by the beginning of the Summer Term, you will need to provide a class grade for the General Course students in your class.

Towards the end of the Michaelmas Term, you will receive an email from Registry with a list of General Course students in your classes. You will also be directed to guidance notes on how to formulate the class grade and how to input this via LSE for You. You will need to submit half unit Michaelmas Term grades by Week 4 of Lent Term and all remaining grades by the end of Week 2 of Summer Term.

The class grade is meant to be an overall assessment of the work the General Course student has done in the class over the course of the year. There is no fixed algorithm for this but it needs to take into account their attendance, their overall level of participation, any presentations they may have given, and the problem sets and/or essays they have completed. Given the steep learning curve that General Course students go through in adjusting to LSE and the UK higher education system, you may want to weight your assessment towards the latter half of the course.

This class grade will form part of the LSE transcript the student receives at the end of their year at LSE. It is important that the class grade be a fair and accurate assessment of the student's overall performance. It is not meant to be your prediction of how they will perform on the exam. Nor should you mark General Course students harshly as a way of incentivising them to perform well on the exam.

The table below shows the standard LSE classifications, how these map on to standard percentage grades and the equivalent letter grades for use with General Course students.

The reason this is important is because the class grade, along with the grade they receive for the end of year exam, will play an important role in determining whether the General Course student receives credit for the course at their home institution. In some cases, the class grade and exam grade may be averaged and factored into the student's GPA at their home university.

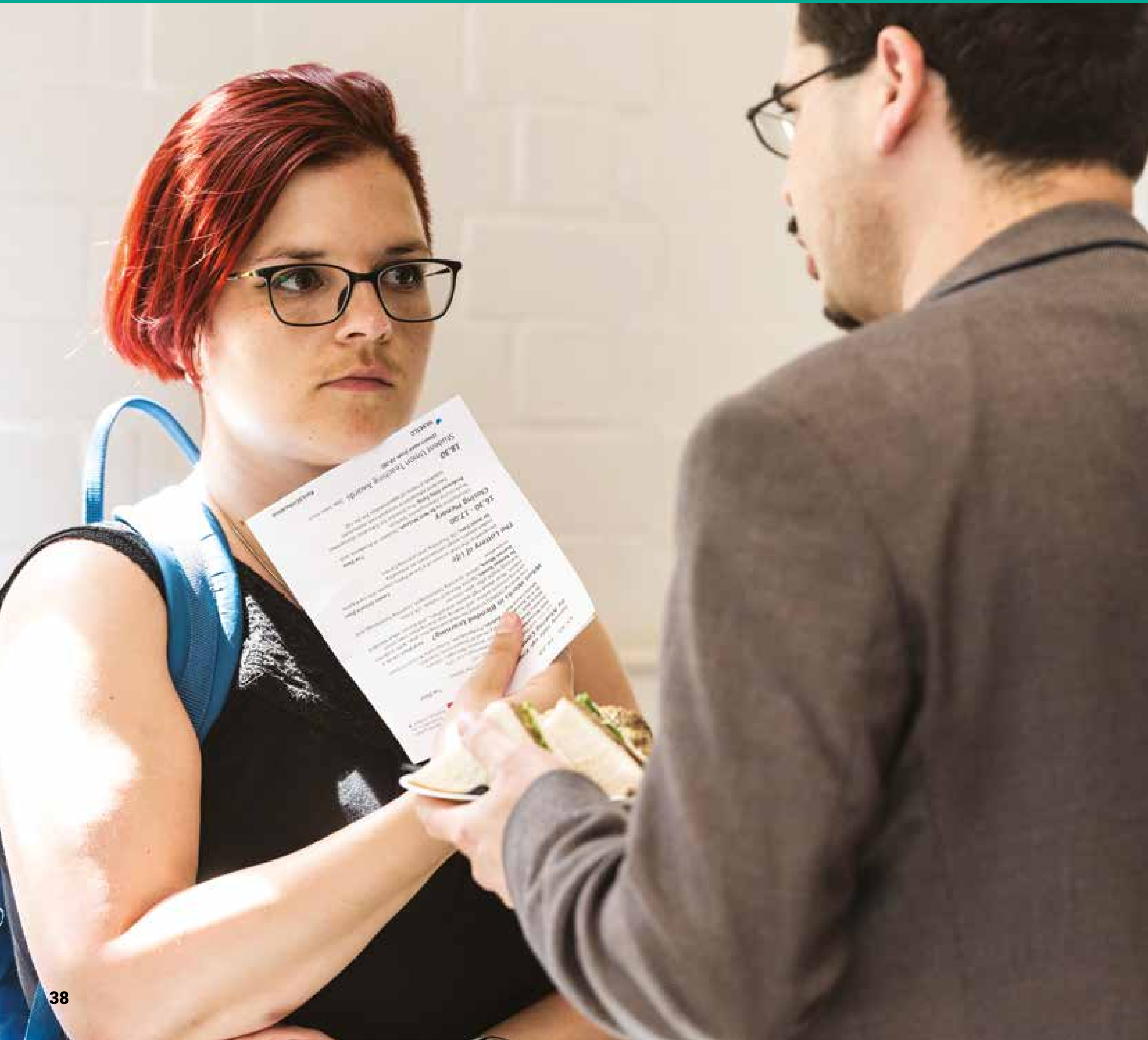
If you have any queries about grading General Course students please contact the General Course administrative team.

Class grades for General Course students

Degree class equivalent	% Mark	Equivalent	Written work	Class work
First	75+	A+	A+	A+
First	70 – 74	A	A	A
Upper Second	65 – 69	A-	A-	A-
Upper Second	60 – 64	B+	B+	B+
Lower Second	55 – 59	B	B	B
Lower Second	50 – 54	B-	B-	B-
Third	45 – 49	C+	C+	C+
Third	40 – 44	C	C	C
Fail	39 or lower	F	F	F

Section 6

Office hours and student contact outside of class time



6.1 Managing your office hours

At LSE, office hours are used as a way of providing additional support for individual students. GTA contracts now pay, as a default, for one office hour per three classes that you teach, although there may be variation across departments and at different times of the year. Most class teachers timetable a mutually convenient time with their students and stick to the same hour each week. Ideally it should be timed on the half hour (eg, 10.30-11.30am) to avoid timetable clashes for the greatest number of students. If there are still some students who are unable to make your office hour timing, you may want to check with your department what alternative arrangements can be made or, alternatively, agree a different time with individual students convenient to both of you.

Some class teachers encourage their students to contact them using email. This may be convenient for both you and your students, but do be aware that this method of communicating can be more difficult to manage – and managing your own time should be a major concern from the outset. If it is easy for students to contact you by email, and you encourage them with detailed written answers to their questions, it can result in students asking for answers rather than thinking things through for themselves first. Do not be afraid of setting clear boundaries for use of email and for the turnaround time in responding to student emails. Please check that the expectations you set are in line you're your department policy.

Moodle courses contain forums which you can use to facilitate better communication with and among your students. Revision questions that students email in might be posted here anonymously with answers from you, as is the practice in a large Economics course, for example, and the glossary function can be used to create a quick and simple FAQ bank. Contact Learning Technology and Innovation (see **Section 8.1**) who will be happy to advise you on any of this.

In the office hour, you may see very motivated and interested students who want to discuss topics in more detail, you may see students who are shy, or lacking in confidence in their spoken English to ask you questions in class or you may see students who have a particular problem.

In practice the office hour tends to be underused by students. You may wish to encourage your students to use the office hour and repeat your invitation to attend several times during the term.

6.2 Helping students to study effectively

Do think about the key differences between lectures, classes and office hours. The office hour is an ideal opportunity to develop your mentoring skills. There are two main elements involved. The first is working with individual students to encourage them to identify misunderstandings, and see what they do understand and how they can express themselves in the language of the discipline you are teaching. The second is to help them to learn "how to think" as an economist, a historian, an anthropologist, etc. and to develop detailed insight into the thinking processes of the discipline. Recognising the peculiarities of each "academic world" can be particularly important where you are working with students whose home department is different from

the course they are studying with you (for example, helping someone who is well on their way to becoming a historian to grasp how an economist thinks and works). If you want to develop your ideas on being an effective mentor, contact the Teaching and Learning Centre for further guidance.

Students are more likely to visit your office hour when they are preparing for a class assignment or when they are revising for the end-of-course examinations. Many of the questions will be about parts of the curriculum that they are struggling to understand or apply and you will be called upon to listen carefully and use probing questions to try and tease out the specific causes of difficulty or concern. You may at times also be asked to give concise explanations and respond to your students' questions. However, you should not try to do the students' work for them and your approach should be to encourage, prompt and guide students towards understanding rather than to simply "give the answers" or solve the problem for them.

Especially when it comes to revising, students may need your help in developing an effective approach to their work and methods of studying. You could recommend they visit LSE LIFE that offers workshops, one-to-one sessions and resources on developing effective study skills.

> "Gio is instrumental for me as an international student who is not familiar with LSE or British academic standards."
>
> "Gio introduced me to all the LSE services … one on one, workshops and seminars, public events, moodle and library, etc. He advised me to balance my academic life with personal by engaging in students' activities and recreational tours organized by LSE."
>
> Nominations from students for Giovanni Graglia, International History teacher and LSE LIFE Adviser who was recognised in the LSE Student Union Teaching Excellence Awards as a runner-up in the Mentoring and Personal Development category and was highly commended in the Welfare and Pastoral Support category.

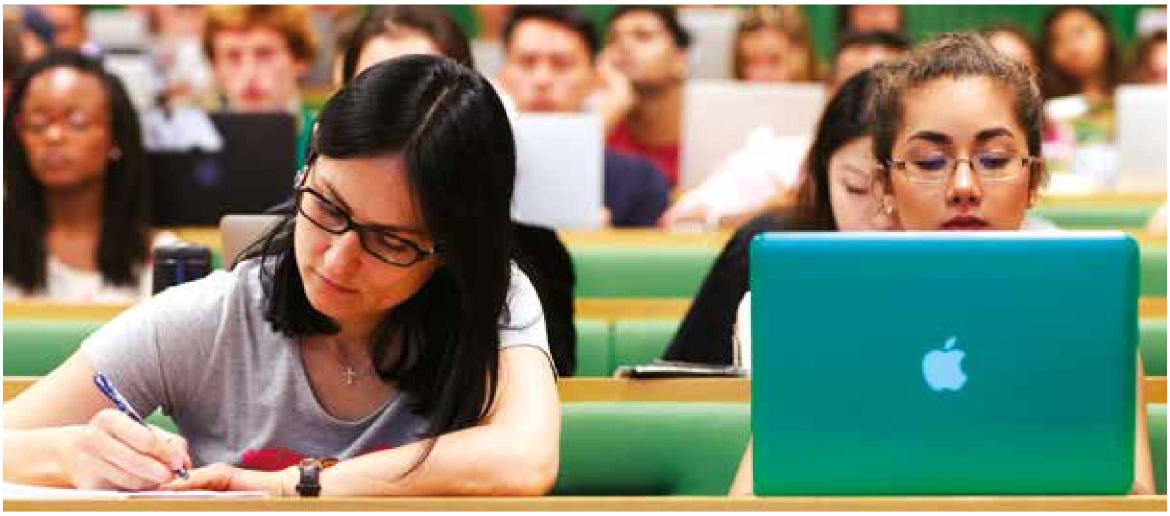
6.3 Responding to students' requests for advice on personal matters

As you get to know your students better, they may ask for your advice on academic-related matters (eg, "Should I change courses?" or "I get so nervous during exams that I can't sleep") and they may also want to talk to you about more personal concerns (eg, "I can't pay my rent," "I suspect my partner is using drugs" or "I think I am pregnant"). In such cases you may wish to offer a listening ear but you should not feel responsible for your students' choices or actions. In other words offer support but not open-ended assistance. At LSE there is a wide range of student support services and specialist sources of advice and guidance. Your role, therefore, is probably one of referral, putting the student in touch with the people at LSE who have the specialist knowledge and expertise to offer them information, help and guidance. GTAs are not expected to be trained counsellors or to offer advice in these situations and, with the best of intentions, you may actually do more harm than good.

The first person you can encourage your students to turn to is their academic mentor. This may be particularly appropriate for issues around course choice, initial ideas on future careers or other course and department-related issues. For the wide range of pastoral and personal issues, you may wish to familiarise yourself with the many student services, or alternatively point students to how to find these out for themselves on the School website, or in the undergraduate and graduate handbooks.

When you work with students in this way, you should keep a careful written record of your conversations and correspondence with them and be aware of issues of confidentiality. In your dealings with your students always strive to be open and honest. As a general rule you should respect your students' privacy and keep their confidences. However, there may be some circumstances where it may also be sensible to liaise with the course convenor of the course and/or the student's academic mentor. If this is the case you should make your views clear to the student and gain their consent and permission to take things further. Even better, it may be possible to support the student in resolving their own problem or encouraging them to talk to the relevant people for themselves.

If you are uneasy about a student's personal/mental state, do seek advice even if you do not think it is yet an emergency situation. You can always speak to a member of your department or one of the specialist student support services on a no-names basis in the



first instance. It is important that you do not try and tackle difficult student problems on your own. There is now detailed advice in the booklet Cause for concern: guidance to working with students in difficulty, available to download.

Finally, there are some circumstances where it is vital that you inform others. In particular, if you suspect that a student may be at risk of harm to themselves or to others, contact either a senior member of staff in your department without delay or contact Adam Sandelson on ext. 3627 or **a.sandelson@lse.ac.uk**

To protect students' interests and to maintain a professional teacher-student relationship, it is better to avoid getting too friendly with your students or gossiping or colluding with their moans and complaints. It is unwise for GTAs to get drawn into discussions about individual members of academic staff and other GTAs or to be openly critical of the course, the department or the School. If there are issues that do need bringing to the attention of the course convenor or the department, do so tactfully but assertively. The ability of the GTA to act as a communication bridge between students and the academic staff responsible for the course is one of the enormous benefits of the class teaching system at LSE. Note that you have a formal opportunity to provide feedback on the course on which you are teaching in the Lent Term – see Section 7 for further details.

Many departments now have a member of full-time academic staff who acts as adviser to GTAs. (S)he is a useful person to go to when you have concerns. The other key person you may wish to contact is the Head of Department or Institute.

6.4 Responding to students' requests for private tutoring

On occasions, students have asked GTAs if they can hire them as private tutors. While there is no formal School policy on this, there are some fairly strong views on ethical practice. The recommendation is that the School/department/Teaching and Learning Centre do not put forward persons to act as private tutors – it is up to the student to find someone and agree terms. It would be inappropriate for a GTA to act as a private tutor to a person they teach. You may, however, wish to point the student to the free learning development opportunities available at LSE through LSE LIFE– see the Glossary for further details.

6.5 Personal relationships with students

Given that you may have supervisory, pastoral care or assessment responsibility for students, it is important to recognise that you are in a position of power. Therefore, to maintain a professional teacher/student relationship and to avoid conflicts of interest, it is advisable not to enter into personal relationships with students. In some cases, engaging in a personal relationship with a student may constitute misconduct and/or harassment. If you are in a pre-existing relationship with a student or a conflict of interest still remains, please inform their line manager or the Head of Department, and disclose the relationship by email to **ethics@lse.ac.uk**. There are other steps you would need to take with respect to small-group teaching, marking, pastoral support. Please consult the LSE Policy and Procedure on Personal Relationships for more detail.

Please note that such boundaries also need to be maintained outside of class time and office hours, such as at social gatherings in pubs and in communication via email or social media.

Section 7

Monitoring teachers' performance and ensuring quality

Class Teachers from Gender Studies being recognised for their teaching at the LSE SU Awards 2017/18

7.1 How teaching quality is assured at LSE

Academic and Student Affairs Committee reviews of departmental provision

The Teaching Quality Assurance and Review Office (TQARO) runs the School's various internal teaching quality procedures. These procedures are set by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASC) and the Academic Board.

One of the main quality assurance procedures is the ASC reviews of departmental provision. Each department and institute is reviewed every five or so years. These reviews help the School, as the awarding body, assure the quality and standards of its awards. The reviews explore departmental provision under four main headings: academic standards, quality assurance, quality enhancement and student views. They are developmental in nature and aim to identify and share good practice. Where departments identify gaps or omissions in their provision, the review team suggests examples of relevant good practice from their knowledge of other review outcomes.

Annual programme monitoring

A separate quality assurance procedure (the outcome of which forms part of the evidence base for ASC reviews) is annual programme monitoring. These in effect require departments to conduct annual mini-reviews of their taught programmes based on a range of data TQARO provides for the purpose (eg, external examiner reports, student performance data, survey results). Departments are required to complete an annual programme review template which results in the production of an action plan for each programme.

External quality review

All UK universities are accountable to their relevant funding councils (for example, the Higher Education Funding Council for England, HEFCE), and ultimately to the Government. On the research, side, there is a review system called the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and on the teaching side, is the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The TEF assesses institutions on three "aspects of quality": teaching quality, learning environment, and student's outcomes and learning gain. In 2018, the Office for Students (OfS) was established by the Department for Education. The OfS will incorporate HEFCE and be awarded legislative responsibility for quality assurance, with plans to appoint a sector-owned body capable of designing and operating the quality assessment system. This body will in all likelihood remain the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

> “Brilliant bespoke feedback targeted at both excelling in the exams, in the academic setting and also as a professional economist when in employment. Feedback always on time despite being the sole teacher in the entire course, and always of the highest detail and quality. We will always know what she and the lecturers are looking for, and in that context, what we are missing, doing well in, or could do better in....”
>
> Student nomination for Celine Zipfel, Economics GTA, winner in the Excellent Feedback and Communications category in the 2017/18 LSE Student Union Teaching Excellence Awards

7.2 Student surveys

Some departments run a brief paper-based survey of students' views about class teachers in Week 4 or 5 of Michaelmas Term. This is a quick local check, aimed at identifying any classes where there appear to be problems. These surveys are handled by the department. If they have any concerns, they will normally contact the appropriate class teacher soon after the survey to discuss the situation and see what support, advice or encouragement might prove useful. You may or may not get feedback on these surveys, but do feel free to ask if you don't hear anything.

At School level, TQARO conducts surveys of students' perceptions of teaching. Students are surveyed about the teaching they receive from both GTAs and permanent staff. These surveys provide teachers with important information about the perceived quality of their teaching. They also provide the School with a general measure of teaching standards. These surveys take place in Michaelmas Term (or Lent Term if a GTA is teaching only in Lent Term). Students are asked about their experience of class teaching as well as lecturing and other aspects of course delivery.

The surveys are conducted on paper as this produces better response rates. They usually take place in Weeks 8 or 9 of Michaelmas Term. Each teacher is given a survey pack for each class they take: the pack contains a set of blank questionnaires, a cover sheet and an instruction sheet. Questionnaires are distributed in class and teachers are asked to leave the room while the students complete them. The survey comprises a quantitative section, in which students rate their satisfaction with various aspects of the teaching, and a qualitative section that asks for written comments about the quality of their learning experience on the course in question. The qualitative comments are often the most useful part of the survey for developing and improving teaching practice and can alert you to any specific problems in your classes.

The results of the quantitative section of the survey are seen by:

- you, the individual class teacher, so that you can reflect on your own teaching and develop your skills
- the Head of Department/Institute and the departmental course convenor for the course who can quickly see if any class teachers are having difficulty with their classes
- the Director of the Academic and Professional Development Division, who uses the data to monitor general concerns in teaching in order to respond to training needs and to identify GTAs who could be nominated by their department for annual teaching prizes and
- the Pro-Director Education, who has an overview of teaching across the School.

Overall course results Teaching survey results are also made available to Teaching Committee Chairs and staff mentors, course convenors, programme directors and to relevant Heads of Department where the course is compulsory for a programme but taught outside the teacher's department. Course scores are also considered by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

In addition to producing individual reports for teachers, TQARO produces aggregated quantitative data for departments and the School. The results for 2017/18 are available on the TQARO website.

Research indicates that feedback from students is most useful when teachers take that feedback, discuss it with someone else and decide on appropriate actions for development. You may wish to discuss your results with the course convenor for the course, the departmental mentor for class teachers (if there is such a person), or the relevant departmental adviser in the Teaching and Learning Centre.

GTAs whose scores are low will be supported by the course convenor for the course and by the Teaching and Learning Centre (The average scores higher than 2.1 will be used to denote a relatively poor score, in a scale of 1-5 where 1 is the top mark). Mentors (chosen on the basis of their high

scores) may also be appointed for these GTAs from the department's permanent staff. Following a period of support and development, these GTAs will be surveyed again in the Lent Term (if they are teaching a course that runs in that term). If the scores show no improvement, the GTA may have his/her contract revoked unless there are special extenuating circumstances which would need to be approved by the Head of Department and the Pro-Director Education.

This is intended as a supportive process. The School is interested in helping teachers to develop and improve rather than trying to allocate blame. But it has a responsibility to students to take action where teaching problems persist.

You will be kept informed about the running of the surveys by staff from TQARO. Do check with other class teachers in around Week 7 of the Michaelmas Term if you have not received information, as it may mean that for some reason you have not been included in the distribution. If the office is alerted whilst the survey is still running, they may be able to add you and your students into the survey.

The survey results will be sent to you, usually a couple of weeks after the survey has closed. Please contact the TQARO office if you do not get your results within a few weeks. In some cases (where there are fewer than five respondents) you will not get any results. However, there are some occasions when the data goes astray, so it is worth asking.

The survey is also used to identify good practice. Each year, every department is invited to nominate one or more GTAs for departmental teaching prizes. Should you be nominated, you will receive the prize through your pay, plus a certificate signed by the Director of LSE. You may also be invited to contribute to the initial training sessions for new class teachers and to mentor new GTAs.

7.3 Getting feedback on your teaching

While the sections above describe the formal and informal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place at LSE to assure the quality of education the School provides, this brief section focuses on what you can do to check how things are going for yourself.

At various points in the year, you will want to assess how well you and your students are doing. Here are some suggestions to help you evaluate your classroom teaching:

Reviewing your students' progress

- Ask questions designed to monitor student understanding. This is a way to informally assess student progress
- Watch for students' reactions to your discussion questions. Take notice of body language and eye contact
- Consider using short quizzes designed to monitor students' understanding of the previous week's material. (Some of the large quantitative courses use self-assessment tests in Moodle.) Discipline-specific teaching and learning support, particularly in quantitative subjects can be found by visiting the Higher Education Academy Disciplines page or by consulting with your TLC departmental adviser
- Try out a minute paper. This is a simple technique of collecting instantaneous feedback about student learning. It does not take up much class time and is not onerous for you or the students
- Most courses require students to hand in two essays each term. Several of the quantitative courses expect students to complete problem sets each week, but may only require two of those to be handed in to you for marking. In this case, it is still worth getting a clear feel for which students are doing the work each week (eg, by looking to see who takes out notes, as opposed to blank paper at the start of the session). Don't expect 100 per cent every week, but watch out for students who only seem to have done it when it is hand-in time, and if more than half are failing to do class work on a regular basis, you need to take action (see Section 5.1 on writing class reports/academic mentor meetings).

Reviewing your teaching

- Ask students how things are going when they come to see you in office hours, and if they have any suggestions for how the class can be improved
- A few weeks into term, ask students to do a stop-start-continue survey. As with minute papers, it provides you with instantaneous feedback, doesn't take much time and is not onerous for you or the students. You can also use this as an opportunity to revisit or reinforce the ground rules for the class
- Peer observation of teaching sessions can also greatly benefit the reflective class teacher. It can be very useful to agree to observe and be observed by another class teacher reciprocally to help develop teaching skills. Likewise, you could invite the course convenor for the course or a member of the Teaching and Learning Centre to observe your teaching and arrange a feedback session afterwards. (See Appendix 6 for more information about teaching observations including the feedback form.)
- You may wish to videotape your classes or use the Echo capture system available in some classrooms to review your own approach. (You would need to consult with your students about this and probably explain that it is for your benefit and therefore ultimately for their benefit.) Contact the Teaching and Learning Centre if you would like to give this a try

> “Jacob is unbelievably knowledgeable. Any question I ask, he has resources for me. He has inspirational ideas of how to push my questions further, or nuance them. Jacob strikes a unique balance between making his students feel validated in their ideas, and also gently pushed to re-think, re-imagine, and push further.”
>
> Student nomination for Jacob Breslow, Gender Studies teacher, who was highly commended in winner in the Inspirational Teaching category in the 2017/18 LSE Student Union Teaching Excellence Awards

Section 8
Facilities and resources

8.1 Technologies for teaching

Moodle

Moodle, the School's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), provides a web-based platform for courses and programmes by bringing together a range of resources and tools in one place, available at any time and from any place via the Internet. Is it available to all LSE students and teaching staff.

There is considerable variation as to how Moodle is used, but most courses will contain course materials such as handouts, reading lists, weblinks and e-packs. In addition Moodle can be used for:

- discussion boards
- online quizzes
- multimedia content
- collecting work
- providing feedback.

Using Moodle offers advantages for both students and staff:

- Instant access anytime, from anywhere
- Students can view and print materials in formats that suit their needs (large print, different font)
- Resources are always available: an online reading is never "out on loan"
- Improved student learning experience through engaging and supporting students online
- A one-stop-shop for all course-related documents, communication and activities
- Provides information on student activity and performance.

Moodle is run and supported by the Learning Technology and Innovation (LTI) team. They offer advice, support and training in how to use educational technologies, including Moodle, effectively. If you are interested in innovating your teaching with educational technologies please contact LTI.

Students experiencing difficulties using Moodle should contact the ITS helpdesk and/or their department. There are also Moodle FAQs for students accessible from the LTI website.

Library resources on Moodle

To ensure students make the best use of the resources available to them, provide them with online readings. Using Reading Lists @ LSE you can easily link to full text e-journal articles, e-books and websites, as well as to the Library's print holdings. For core readings, the Library can carry out copyright checks and then digitise the readings for you, helping to make book chapters or articles available to all your students while ensuring you are compliant with the School's Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) licence.

You should take care not to upload any content to Moodle where you do not own the copyright, unless you have permission. This includes images, text or other materials you might find online. LTI provides online copyright advice on its website.

You should also talk to your academic support librarian about the range of information skills sessions they can run for your students such as literature searching, managing information and citing and referencing. Do encourage your students to register for the Library Companion for Students, an online course available in Moodle, to help them maximise their use of Library resources.

Lecture capture

Lectures may be recorded using a system called Echo 360. The system is currently installed in the Old, New, Hong Kong and Peacock lecture theatres, as well as all lecture theatres and classrooms in the New Academic Building, and in many other rooms across campus. For full availability of the system as well as literature and more information see the LTI Lecture Capture web page.

For students whose first language is not English, being able to review lectures can be particularly helpful. Students can see the PowerPoint or other visual material as well as view and/or hear the lecturer. They can navigate through the lecture by clicking on slide icons and jump to any point to review a specific part. If Echo 360 is being used on a course you are teaching, encourage students to review those parts of the lecture they were unclear about within a day or so of it being given. They may need reminding that recorded lectures are only a supplementary resource and not an alternative to attendance! They are best used as a follow up to reinforce the points made in lectures.

Teachers can now view which parts of the lecture students review the most, making it a useful tool for finding out what students may be having some difficulty in hearing or understanding.

In rooms that do not have the Echo 360 system, LTI can help lecturers to make their own recordings or "podcasts" of lectures, for distribution to students.

Plagiarism prevention and text matching

LSE uses Turnitin text matching and plagiarism prevention service – an online service that enables comparison of students' work with electronic sources including the Internet and other students' work submitted to TurnitinUK.

Turnitin can be used to set up classes to check assignments. These can be set for students to check their own work against faulty referencing or without students having access to "originality reports". Contact LTI (**lti-support@lse.ac.uk**) to be given an instructor account, for advice on how best to use the service with your students, and instructions on how to set it up. Visit the LTI's Plagiarism website for further details.

Instant voting

Also known as PRS (Personal Response System), instant voting can be used to enable "agile teaching" and enhance communication among students and between students and teacher. Teachers create questions which can be used either directly in a PowerPoint presentation or as a standalone programme to run alongside any other presentation tool.

They can be beneficial in both small classroom settings and large lecture halls. Students can answer either with small handsets or online with their own devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops. You can borrow up to 160 handsets directly from LTI, depending on availability. To allow the use of online voting, you must contact lti-support@lse.ac.uk to be given an account. The LTI Instant Voting webpage contains further information, including a guide and screencasts on how to get started.

Other classroom technologies

LTI has a range of other technologies (voice recorders, e-beam, etc..) that can be used to enhance your teaching; if you want to borrow or discuss the use of any of these, get in touch via **lti-support@lse.ac.uk**

Innovative use of emerging technologies

LTI staff advise and teach on the use of emerging technologies for teaching, learning and research, in particular on the use of social media such as blogging, Twitter and other social networking tools, as part of its Digital and Information Literacy programme. LTI also runs the NetworkED seminar programme exploring how new technology is impacting on education. Spark and Ignite grants are available to LSE teaching staff who are interested in improving their teaching through the use of educational technologies, including using Moodle in a more innovative way. For more information see the LTI funding webpage or contact LTI via **lti-support@lse.ac.uk**

8.2 Teaching room equipment

The majority of classes at LSE take place in designated teaching rooms that are normally supplied with whiteboards and pens, overhead projectors and an internal telephone to make emergency calls.

Most rooms are now also equipped with internet access as well as data, audio and video projection facilities. If you require any additional audio-visual (AV) equipment you can book them from the Audio Visual (AV) Unit in advance.

You can also check the equipment that is provided in your allocated room before you begin your teaching. See the LSE Timetables Page and scroll down to the link to Teaching rooms. The site includes room layout, a photo of the room and details of the equipment provided.

Guidance on the use of equipment is available.

If you feel that rearranging furniture and layout would improve the running of your class, do feel free to move the furniture, but please re-set the room at the end of your class for those who will use the room after you.

Also useful are the video clips and information about teaching room technology at LTI's Classroom technologies web page.

Note that one of the most common problems you will encounter is a lack of pens or working pens. It is always worth carrying a few with you but make sure they are "dry wipe" pens, as other pens may be "permanent" and take considerable effort and special solvents to remove from the whiteboards. Pens are replaced every day by the room monitors, but they do not have time to check each pen. So when you realise a pen is dry, throw it away rather than putting it back in the box!

If you wish to use the data projection facilities, it is best to seek advice in advance, and check out the precise operating instructions for your room. You will need your LSE email user name and password to log in in the first place. You will usually need to turn the projector on via consoles on the desk or switch on the wall.

AV tips for the classroom

Two common problems that may confuse you (even if someone from AV has taken you through the kit beforehand) are:

- Laptop/computer switch.

On the control desk, there is a switch to enable people to use their laptop rather than the class PC. If this is switched in the wrong direction, the input from the PC will not show on the screen. Simply switch it over, and all should be well!

- Wrong input facility selected.

How you ensure that video, PC output or some other output is projected can be controlled in different ways in different rooms. Check you know the controls for the room you are in.

Disseminating classroom materials

Your departmental manager or course secretary will be able to help you with stationery and any materials you need for your teaching, such as photocopied handouts. These should be freely available to you, but do check if there are restrictions or departmental guidelines.

Teachers can use Moodle, the LSE's Virtual Learning Environment, to allow students online access to reading lists, PDFs of lecture slides and links to recordings of lectures (where available) and other resources. For more on Moodle see above.

As already noted, legislation requires that you anticipate a wide variety of needs and make "reasonable adjustments" to your teaching resources and handouts to ensure that your teaching remains inclusive. For example, you may need to provide handouts in large font size for students with visual impairment or to accommodate the needs of a dyslexic student who wants to audio-tape your classes. One possibility is to make handouts available via Moodle in advance of classes, so that students can print them out in a format appropriate to them. Please also check with the course convenor before teaching begins to see if you have any students known to have Inclusion Plans (IP) so that you can respond to their requirements where possible. If you have any concerns about how to support any disabled students in your classes please do consult with the Disability and Wellbeing Service.

8.3 Health and safety considerations

Teaching at LSE is not generally hazardous, but GTAs have an important role to play in safety. You should familiarise yourself with the fire safety information for the buildings in which you teach or run office hours, as you will be expected to lead the students you are teaching to the Fire Assembly Point in the event of a fire alarm being activated. Blue Fire Action Notices in every building tell you where to go, and information is also available on the Health and Safety website. Pay particular attention to anyone who needs assistance.

Should you discover a fire, don't try to put it out yourself, but raise the alarm (red break glass box near stairs) and report the location of the fire to Security as quickly as possible.

Class sizes are set in line with the capacity of the room, particularly to make sure it is easy for everyone to exit the room in the event of a fire evacuation. You should therefore never allow more people to join the class than the official capacity of the room.

Watch out for people leaving bags, coats and other items where others could trip over them, and ask for them to be moved if they are in the way.

For students who might have difficulty exiting the building (eg, due to mobility difficulties) check if they have arranged for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan with LSE Security.

Never stand on a chair on castors (wheels) or tip seat. If you need to reach an overhead projector and can't do so from the floor, contact AV for assistance (telephone numbers are in teaching rooms).

Sometimes a student may be taken unwell during a class. If this happens, call Security on ext 666, and they will send a First Aider. Keep calm, and keep everyone safe. You may need to temporarily suspend the class, or re-locate it. Contact Timetables (020 7955 6333) if you can't find a room.

LSE is a very open institution in central London, and unfortunately does experience thefts. Never tackle a thief yourself or put yourself in danger, but get as much information as you can to report to Security (ext 666) immediately. Don't leave items unattended or unsecured, and remind your fellow students to keep their personal belongings secure. Remember to log off any computers you use at the end of every session, so that nobody else can use your computer account.

Glossary

A

Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASC): The committee responsible for determining policy and strategy in the areas of quality assurance and quality enhancement in the School.

Academic Board: The principal academic body of the School. All major issues of general policy affecting the academic life of the School and its development are brought to the Board. Quality assurance issues often feature on its agendas.

Academic mentor: Every undergraduate student should be allocated an academic mentor who should be a full time member of academic staff based in the student's home department. The academic mentor has an important pastoral role, as well as one of academic guidance and personal development (eg, the academic mentor may help his/her students make choices about courses, advise them on progress, help them consider career options, offer advice and refer students to various other support services across the School, etc).

Aligning your teaching: The concept of "alignment" is about organising teaching and assessment methods such that they actively support the "learning outcomes" you've set for the students. For more detail see the work of John Biggs (references available from Teaching and Learning Centre).

ASC review of departmental provision: A review of a department/institute which is conducted on behalf of ASC every five years. The internal reviews are developmental, and are designed to assist departments in their efforts to improve the provision of their education. The review of educational provision conducted by ASC looks back at recent activity in departments, and looks forward to planned activity.

Audio-visual (AV) services: Supports teaching rooms and lecture theatres at LSE. From data projectors to visualisers, the AV support team supplies a wide range of audio/visual equipment for the LSE community.

C

Calendar: This is updated annually and contains the following information: key addresses and dates; about LSE; programmes of study; learning support and career development skills; financial matters; school services; alumni relations; examinations; Library and IT services; disciplinary and other regulations and procedures; diploma programmes; master's programmes; MRes/PhD in political science; research programmes.

Course: A unit of study, usually spread over 20-24 weeks of study (full unit) or 10 weeks of study (half unit).

Course administrator: Takes care of the administrative organisation of the course.

Course co-ordinator: Usually a member of full-time academic staff in a department who has overall responsibility for the academic direction and assessment of a particular course. See also Teacher responsible below.

D

Departmental managers: Manage the administrative functions of each academic department.

Departmental "mentor" for class teachers: A member of full-time staff designated as the guide/mentor/adviser to GTAs.

Departmental handbooks: Most departments will have separate student handbooks for undergraduate programmes, MSc programmes and PhD programmes. These vary considerably from one department to another and one programme to another, but often include administrative and other information about the programme, codes of practice, advice on study skills, information about course and assessment deadlines, and other interesting departmental and School information that should help students find their way around the School and their particular department/programme.

Departmental tutor: Oversees all undergraduate programmes within his/her department.

Director of LSE: Dame Minouche Shafik

Dissertation supervisor: Guides students through the process of writing the dissertation (a common feature of many MSc programmes). Note that on many MSc programmes, students will have an academic mentor and a dissertation supervisor (often different people). The academic advisor has a more general academic advisory and pastoral role.

E

Echo lecture capture: The system which enables recording of lectures in some LSE teaching rooms and lecture theatres. This can be useful both as a reviewing/learning tool for new teachers and as a way for students to listen again to your talk or lecture.

Equality Act 2010: The Act which replaces and strengthens previous equality legislation and which is supported by a Public Sector Equality Duty.

Ethics Code: LSE's Ethics Code sets out the principles by which the whole LSE community – including all staff, students and governors of the School – is expected to act. See lse.ac.uk/ethics for the full Code.

F

Formative assessment: Involves setting assignments that are designed to help students with their studies and provide opportunities for individual feedback. This work may well be graded, to give students a feel for how they are progressing, but much more important will be the feedback provided, which should help them to improve and develop. In most cases, the grades on formative assessment do not count towards the students' final degree results.

Full unit course: A unit of study, usually spread over 20-24 weeks of study.

G

General Course students: Students on LSE's Study Year Abroad Programme visiting LSE in their second or third year from another university overseas (mainly, though not exclusively, from the US). It is not a separate programme of study but a fully integrated undergraduate year. Each student is assigned to one of the School's academic departments, in which they will pursue at least one of their four courses.

Graduate handbook: Part of the School Calendar that is relevant to graduate students. See Calendar above.

Graduate teaching assistant (GTA): A member of teaching staff paid by the hour, who is also registered as a PhD student.

H

Half unit course: A unit of study, usually spread over 10 weeks of study.

Head of Department: Every academic department has a Head of Department (until recently known as the convenor), responsible for the academic management of his/her department and its relationship to the rest of the School, Institutes have "directors", who have a similar remit.

Higher Education Academy: Works with institutions, discipline groups and individuals, to provide the best possible learning experience for all students. They provide an authoritative and independent voice on policies that influence this such as quality and standards, pedagogic research, teaching standards, e-learning, performance indicators and the evaluation of teaching and learning programmes.

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE): Distributes public money for teaching and research to universities and colleges. In doing so, it aims to promote high quality education and research, within a financially healthy sector. The Council also plays a key role in ensuring accountability and promoting good practice.

Home department: The department within which a student is registered for his/her programme of study. A student may choose courses from departments other than his/her home department.

I

Inclusion Plan (IP): A School IP is a summary of the adjustments and resources the adviser to students with disabilities has agreed are necessary to meet the individual needs of a student, based on documentary evidence, in consultation with the student and key academic and administrative personnel. See **Appendix 4** for an example.

Institute of Education (IoE): Founded in 1902, the Institute of Education (now part of MCL) has an international reputation for high quality research, teacher training, higher degrees, consultancy in education and the related aspects of professional practice and the social sciences.

L

Lent Term: The second term in the academic year running from around the second full week in January until the fourth week in March. For the 2018/19 session term dates are 14 January 2019 to 29 March 2019.

LSE degree classifications

Undergraduate degree: The examiners for each course will determine a numerical mark for each candidate based on the following scale of honours class or division, pass and fail grades:

First Class Honours	70 – 100
Upper Second Class Honours	60 – 69
Lower Second Class Honours	50 – 59
Third Class Honours	40 – 49
Fail	0 – 39

The final degree classification is based on a somewhat complex compilation of individual course results, details of which are given in the Calendar and on the School's website.

Taught masters: Each paper is given a result as follows:

Distinction	70% and over
Merit	60 – 69%
Pass	50 – 59%
Fail	X – 49%
Bad Fail	0 – X

LSE for You: An online web environment which contains personal information such as pay information, emergency contact details, and also contains class registers and photographs of students in your class(es).

LSE Library: Founded in 1896 as the British Library of Political and Economic Science, LSE's Library is the largest in the world devoted exclusively to the social sciences. It has been recognised by the Higher Education Funding Council as one of only five National Research Libraries in England and its collections have been designated by the Arts Council as being of outstanding national and international importance. Library services aim to support the needs of LSE students, researchers and staff in their course of study, research or teaching. Of particular interest to teachers will be Academic Support Librarians who offer specialised support and assistance to academic departments and research centres (see **lse.ac.uk/library/services/liaison/home.aspx**) and Library Search, the Library's primary system for finding books, journals and articles within its collections, and where users can also manage Library loans and requests.

LSE LIFE: LSE LIFE is the School's academic, personal and professional development centre for undergraduate and taught master's students. Housed in bespoke space on the ground floor of the LSE Library, LSE LIFE integrates the many opportunities offered by different LSE departments and services, making available a range of one to one, workshop and large group learning events and courses running throughout the year. Students can come to LSE LIFE to develop academic, communication and research skills, learn languages, get advice on personal effectiveness and in making life choices, and gain insights into graduate recruitment and career paths, as well as to participate in intensive activities such as coaching events and experiential learning programmes with external organisations.

LSE Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education: A Higher Education Academy (HEA) accredited programme offered by the Teaching and Learning Centre. Participants who successfully complete the programme will receive a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education, which is externally recognised in the UK.

M

Mentoring: One-to-one support preferably in a situation where no obvious power relations exist. At LSE there are various student mentoring schemes in place, whereby students volunteer to act as mentors to each other (usually second and third years acting as mentors to first years). Similar systems are in place for staff. New full time academic staff should be allocated a mentor who is a more established colleague and can advise on a diverse range of School-related matters. Some departments now also have a designated mentor for graduate teaching assistants.

Michaelmas Term: The first term in the academic year running from around the third week in September until around mid-December. For the 2018/19 session it runs from 27 September 2018 to 14 December 2018.

Moodle: The School's Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle is a web space that contains course materials, announcements, electronic readings, quizzes, assignment submissions, discussion areas and other tools.

O

Office hour: Weekly or fortnightly hour of support for each course on which GTAs teach, used as a way of providing additional support for individual students. Most class teachers timetable a mutually convenient time with their students and stick to the same hour each week. Ideally it should be timed on the half hour (eg, 10.30-11.30am) to avoid timetable clashes for the greatest number of students.

P

Pigeon hole: A small open compartment for keeping letters or documents, based in the department where you teach. Each GTA will either have their own pigeon hole or might have a shared GTA pigeon hole. Check this regularly for post, student work or other communications from the department.

Programme: Each student is registered on a programme either leading to an undergraduate or masters degree, or involving study at the School for a set period, eg, the one-year General Course. This is the total combination of courses taken.

Programme co-ordinator: Oversees a single masters programme (rather than the one departmental tutor who oversees all programmes in a department at undergraduate level).

Q

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA): In 1997, the QAA was established to provide an integrated quality assurance service for UK higher education. It is an independent body funded by subscriptions from universities and colleges of higher education, and through contracts with the main higher education funding bodies. The Agency's mission is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to encourage continuous improvement in the management of the quality of higher education.

R

Research Excellence Framework (REF): This replaced the RAE (Research Assessment Exercise) as the mechanism for enabling the higher education funding bodies to distribute public funds for research selectively on the basis of quality. For more information see the REF section of the HEFCE website (**ref.ac.uk**).

S

Senior Advocate to Students: This role has been established to replace the previously separate roles of the UG and PG Deans. It is currently held by Dr Peter Evanson (**p.evanson@lse.ac.uk**)

The Senior Advocate is available to see any undergraduate or taught graduate student. In addition to providing support on academic and pastoral matters, the role will act as a mediator between students when seeking early, informal resolution of complaints; works in collaboration with the Chaplain and Interfaith Adviser and the Pro-Director for Education in promoting good campus relations; will act as a point of contact between the Students' Union and the School for matters of welfare and support; and can provide AAs and DTs with advice when their students have relatively complicated circumstances and the appropriate course of action is not necessarily clear.

Alternative contact: SSC Advice Team, tel +44 (0)20 7955 6167, email: **ssc.advice@lse.ac.uk**

Student feedback questionnaires: Each year the Teaching Quality Assurance and Review Office (TQARO) conducts two main surveys of students' opinions of teaching. The Michaelmas survey considers teaching by hourly-paid class teachers, and is conducted in Week 7 or 8 of the Michaelmas Term.

Summative assessment: Takes place after a period of teaching and is designed to evaluate the student's current level of academic achievement. Each LSE course will be summatively assessed or examined, most often by sit-down two- or three-hour examination, though some departments use some more varied assessments, including essays, projects, dissertations, portfolios and practicals of various kinds.

Summer Term: The third and last term in the academic year running from around the fourth week in April until around mid-June. For the 2018/19 session it runs from 29 April 2019 to 14 June 2019.

T

Teacher responsible: A member of full-time academic staff in a department who has overall responsibility for the academic direction and assessment of a particular (usually undergraduate) course. See also Head of Department and Course co-ordinator above.

Teaching observation: Teaching in HE is often a very "private" affair between the tutor and students. The main feedback staff get is from students. Teaching observation brings in a new perspective, and also can trigger off ideas both within the observer and the person being observed, focused on teaching process – the "how" of teaching, rather than the content. It enables individuals to identify strengths and weaknesses, and highlight areas for development. Where colleagues observe each other both within and across departments, this can promote sharing of good practice, and can increase awareness of teaching/learning approaches – and course content.

TQARO: Teaching Quality Assurance and Review Office, which is the support office to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASC). TQARO works closely with the Teaching and Learning Centre, runs teaching surveys and manages, the School's portfolio of taught programmes and courses.

V

Voice coaching: The Teaching and Learning Centre offers one to one voice coaching with two experienced voice coaches, along with a small group workshop for those who speak to large audiences. The Language Centre offers longer small group courses, tailored to specific needs.

Appendix 1: GTA Contract: Ts and Cs

Recruitment and selection of GTAs is the responsibility of academic departments within LSE. Departments take somewhat different approaches to recruitment and appointment and to the details of the contracts they offer, according to their specific requirements.

Once appointed, you should receive a formal contract of appointment from the School's Human Resources Division. Every individual appointed to work in the School is expected to provide necessary evidence of eligibility to work and to sign and return their contract before starting work.

If you are planning to work on a Tier 4 student visa, please bear in mind that it is a condition of your visa that you do not work more than 20 hours per week during term time and it is your responsibility to ensure that you do not breach this condition.

Before starting work, you should ensure that you have received a contract, signed and returned it, and taken evidence of your eligibility to work in the UK, such as original passport and/or visa to the Human Resources Division. If you have any queries about your eligibility to work in the UK or what documents you need to provide, please contact the Human Resources (HR) division.

Most GTA contracts are in place before the start of the new academic year (or appropriate term, should you be teaching a half-unit course). However, due to the high workload faced by HR and academic departments at the start of the academic year, there may be some delay. If you have not received a contract or are concerned about your contract, contact the departmental manager in the department in which you are teaching in the first instance.

For more information, visit the Right to Work process on the LSE HR website.

Appendix 2: How I run my classes: examples from GTAs

Here are a range of practical examples from current and recent LSE class teachers.

Using student presentations: an example from International Relations

My department has very clear and detailed guidelines on what is expected of class teachers and I don't think I can change the format. The class "aims and objectives" are given by the department and the topics covered support those given in the lectures. The students must each give a presentation at least once during the course, but it is up to the teacher to set the standards for these and organise their delivery. This year I allowed the students the freedom to design, prepare and deliver their own presentation. This did lead to a wide variety in the quality of the presentations. Some of the reading lists are a bit overwhelming and students needed some help to prioritise their reading and focus on key texts. I have noticed a great variation in the three classes I teach. The groups are very different and my quiet Monday morning class is the most difficult to run. I have found it helps to give the students a short list of the questions that will be discussed that session before the presentation starts. This is to focus their attention on the most relevant issues and to diminish the chances that they will become less attentive during the presentation and just wait for my final summary. In a class where shy, introverted students would like to participate but find it difficult to do so, it is a good idea to ask them to discuss the questions in pairs or threes before starting the whole class discussion. I also encourage the shy students to get feedback from their small group. This does seem to give them confidence and makes it more likely that they will take a more active role in upcoming sessions.

Debate and discussion: an example from Law

In my classes, I divide the students into two groups that usually consist of six students per group. I prepare two essay questions, one giving a particular standpoint and the other with the opposite standpoint. The idea behind the two questions is that each group must defend their particular standpoint. I ask all the students individually to pre-prepare four or five points that will illustrate their argument. At the beginning of the class I leave the students for about 10-15 minutes to discuss the question they have been allocated and to come up with four or five points collectively to argue their standpoint. I have found that this works much better if I leave the room as the students are less inhibited and more inclined to talk. This also works well because even if a particular student has not prepared, he or she can get some ideas from the other students. I have also observed an additional benefit – the other students pressure the student who does not prepare to do some work as the rest tire of someone who consistently does not do any work themselves. We then come together as a whole group and debate both questions. I summarise at the end with a vote on which of the questions and standpoints they most agreed with and I highlight key learning points.

Experimenting with a simulation exercise: an example from International Relations

I wanted to use a simulation in one of my classes this year as I have attended very useful, but longer running, simulated exercises myself. I have found them to be very helpful in understanding decision-making processes and in developing my own skills of negotiation and debate. However, I must stress that this is just one class from a set of more traditional, student-presentation-based classes. The preparation time cost for this exercise would preclude the widespread use of this method to many more of my classes. The simulation I wrote was text-based and asked students to work individually or in pairs to prepare their allocated country's position in an EU decision-making forum. I found that the students really did prepare well and all but one student reported that they enjoyed the simulation exercise and felt that they had gained from it. The students were asked to put forward their country's viewpoint following a written brief and to negotiate with their peers – I let this part of the class run for about 40 minutes. I then concluded the class by describing the outcomes of the real meeting on which the simulation was based. I also tried to draw out the main learning points for the students, not only in terms of the knowledge gained, but also in terms of their skills development and their greater appreciation of how negotiated settlements are reached internationally.

Appendix 2 continued

Working through the problem set: an example from Economics

My subject is very quantitative and my students usually have six numerical problems to solve each week. They are given these before the class and are expected to have tried to solve them on their own before we meet. In practice some have and some haven't. I have found that the students want me to go through the solutions to all the questions on the board but I am told by the lecturer that these classes should be interactive and a place where students think and can ask questions. There isn't enough time to go through all the solutions either. So I begin by asking which problems the students have had difficulty with and write up a list of questions on the board. I then use this to structure the class. I try to get the students to answer my questions as I work through the problems. I usually sit next to the visualiser and write as I talk on a piece of paper. This way I am facing the students and going at the right pace for them to take notes. Some of the students are under-confident and I never pick on students to answer my questions as this can cause embarrassment – and they hate it. Occasionally I ask for a volunteer to take us through their solution on the board and I may try doing a "spot the mistake" solution on a handout in one of my classes this year to give a bit of variety.

Appendix 3: Example of Department Assessment Criteria

Good practice at the school and in the sector dictates that assessment criteria should be course-specific, easily available and accessible to students, and explained and discussed with them.

Undergraduate Mark Frame

First Class Honours (70- 100%) This class of pass is awarded when the essay demonstrates clarity of analysis, engages directly with the question, and **shows** an independent and critical interpretation of the issues raised by it. The essay shows exemplary skill in presenting a logical and coherent argument and an outstanding breadth and depth of reading. The essay is presented in a polished manner, and all citations, footnotes and bibliography are rendered in the proper academic form.

(>80%) **Answers in the upper range will be outstanding in terms of originality, sophistication and breadth of understanding of relevant themes and material.**

Upper Second Class Honours (60-69%) This class of pass is awarded when the essay attempts a systematic analysis of the issues raised by the question and **demonstrates** independent thought. The essay shows **appropriate** skill in presenting a clearly reasoned argument, and draws on a good range of relevant literature. The essay is well-presented and citations, footnotes and bibliography are rendered in the proper academic form.

Lower Second Class Honours (50-59%) This class of pass is awarded when the essays shows an **understanding** of the issues raised by the question, **and demonstrates some engagement with relevant literature. The discussion may rely more heavily** on description than on **independent** analysis. There may be some inconsistencies, irrelevant points and unsubstantiated claims in the argument. Presentation and referencing is adequate but may contain inaccuracies.

Third Class Honours (40-49%) This class of pass is awarded when the essay **shows a limited** understanding of the question and demonstrates a partial familiarity with the issues raised by it. The essays contains a minimal attempt at analysis and argumentation and **demonstrates** limited knowledge of the relevant literature. Presentation **may be** poor and referencing incomplete.

Fail (20-39%) **The essay shows little understanding of the subject and does not adequately address the question. It may be based entirely on lecture material, poorly structured and contain significant errors of fact. The essay may be poorly presented with inadequate referencing, and fail to demonstrate knowledge of the relevant literature.**

Bad Fail (0-19%) **A bad fail is awarded to essays that demonstrate no understanding of the question nor of the relevant literature. The essay may be incomplete, and is likely to be poorly presented with little or no referencing.**

Appendix 4: Example of an Inclusion Plan

CONFIDENTIAL

Inclusion Plan

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Name	PADDINGTON BEAR	**Student ID**	201710626
Department	Geography		
Programme	MSc Human Geography and Urban Studies	**Year of Programme**	1
Email	p.a.bear22@lse.ac.uk	**Contact number**	07845 546532

Summary of information

Paddington has been identified as having dyslexia, a Specific Learning Difficulty. Dyslexia is a condition that impacts upon the efficient processing of information, especially when a student is placed under time pressure. It is described as a Specific Learning Difficulty because the difficulties with learning that are experienced by a student are contextually specific and dependent upon the type of activity being carried out. Dyslexia directly impacts upon literacy-based tasks because the student is likely to have difficulties with aspects of phonological processing, which is a fundamental, underpinning skill required to build good literacy skills in order to achieve accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Students with dyslexia often also experience some difficulties with aspects of working memory.

Academic Adviser: Dr I. Kant

NB. This IP is for the duration of a programme unless there is a change in the student's condition or programme. Each IP will vary according to the nature of the disability, the kind of adjustments required, the programme being followed and individual preference. **It is very important that information is handled carefully and adjustments put in place with discretion and sensitivity.**

Area of Action	**Support and Adjustments**
Academic Department Adjustments This relates to the support that will be arranged with the Department	Lecture slides/notes provided in advance, Allow student to record lectures/seminars/ meetings, Clear unambiguous feedback on submitted work, Directed reading lists, Extensions to deadlines may be required
Disability and Wellbeing Service This relates to the support that can be facilitated by DWS	Loan of recording device, Access to Assistive technology room, 1-1 Study Skills Tuition, Letter of notification
Library Services	Subsidised Photocopying, Access to Priority PCs, Extended Loans
Mental Health and Wellbeing	
Residential Services Office	
Security Provisions	
Student Actions	Check programme handbook if extensions are needed and liaise with Department as necessary
Circulation **Sent to those listed below to disseminate as required & with the agreement of the student**	**Documentation**
Academic Adviser, DM, Prog Admin, Module Teachers & Lecturers, Library / IMT	Diagnostic Assessment Report
Disability Adviser	Helen Arkell
Date	August 16, 2017

Original retained in a confidential file in the DWS.
This information will be recorded in a restricted code on SITS.

Disability and Wellbeing Service | LSE | Houghton Street | London | WC2A 2AE
Email: disabiltiy-dyslexia@lse.ac.uk | Telephone: 020 7955 7767

Appendix 5: Teaching Observation

Teaching observation feedback form		
Name of teacher:		**Name of observer:**
Course code:	**Room no:**	**Time:**
Subject:		**No.of sts:**
Subject:		
Teaching aim of the class:		
Comment on the following:		
Structure and timing of the class (Did the stages of the class follow logically, did they combine in variety of focus and tasks, was the timing for each stage appropriate?)		
There was a good positive friendly atmosphere to this group – evidenced by a number of students talking to you before class. You started on time and it was good to comment about resources on Moodle for them. The green screen was not much fun for you but well managed. It was good to get the late student to sit in with the group. The session had a positive start with the group activity mini quiz. You had made really clear handouts for the session – supportive and provided a structure for the session. There was good noise in the room during the tasks and this is something to be listening for when setting tasks. During the first task it would have been useful for you to walk round the groups and ensure they are doing the task. This was a great group exercise but you were doing more work than they did – something we talked about when we met. Good introduction to the presentation and setting it up for the class. Do you give feedback to students on the design and delivery as well as the disciplinary content of the presentation afterwards? Did you have a class about presentations – did you give any guidance, structure, timings, etc? What did you want the students to learn/do in the presentation? The presentation took up a lot of the session – they are useful to have in a session but, as we talked about, they need to work with your session plan. It can help to limit the number of slides, say 4-5 slides for 10 minutes. Excellent positive affirmation of presenter throughout. Very positive that all the students applauded the presenter. I think you could push the students more on the asking of questions – maybe give them time to write one down during the presentation (the handout could be used for this) and then select people to ask from around the room – all this encourages them to be more active listeners. At 1630 you set a paired work task on a question for seminar – this was done well with clear instructions. You demonstrated throughout the session calm, confident classroom management and made use of the board and projector – although be careful with the written part of the board work as it becomes a little messy during the session. Good to set board up when pair work going and the importance of you listening to their conversations even though your back was turned. It would add to the group work to go round the groups and work with them a little and be less distant from them and hear more of what their conversations are about and thus allow you to evaluate how their learning is developing in the session and any misconceptions that need to be addressed. You provided positive affirmation of students' contributions with good management of		

input. When asking about policy networks there was an opportunity to ask for someone to contribute who hadn't spoken up yet; you asked then silence – here get them to do this in a quick buzz group moment – make them work. As we talked about, it became apparent they hadn't done the reading and you let them off the hook a little – very easy to do but we discussed some approaches to getting them to undertake the readings and reiterating the importance of them doing the work. On the whole though you facilitated class discussions well. At the end you did well to ask someone who hadn't spoken to wrap up. Maybe give them a minute in pairs to talk about this then ask the quieter people to speak up. Given this is not a first year group you can then ask the non-contributing students to speak up with a "let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken today". Some rearrangement of the room and you sitting more with them would allow you to have more control of the group. You provide a lot of energy in the session and we talked about if anything calming down a little. With the students doing more tasks the pressure will be taken off you to be "on" the whole time and more importantly makes them engage in their learning and allows them to work in different ways, and for some it will give them a bit more time to work/think the questions through.
Student participation (Did the students have to work during the class, did this work increase their understanding of the class topic, did they develop the skills they will need for the exam/real world, did the tasks mean they are more likely to prepare for the class or can they just sit and not participate?)
On the whole this was a very friendly and engaged group – a few students tended to dominate the session as discussed above and a few students did not speak all session. It is clear they respect your knowledge and they see you as an expert. Maybe with some of the suggestions above regarding readings and group work they can all be involved and contributing based on readings.
Teaching manner (Did the teacher look in control, confident etc?)
Good clear voice and enthusiasm throughout the session. You have a nice friendly rapport with the students and approach your teaching in a confident manner. There is no doubt that the students see you as the expert in the room. You made good use of names throughout the session. It is evident you want your students to do well and this positive, supportive attitude to teaching is to be commended.
Visuals (Did the use of the white board, projector, OHP, etc, help with the clarity of the information/flow of the class?)
Board was used well – but be careful with red pen and handwriting.
Other comments/recommendations
Overall, did the teacher achieve his/her aims? How do you know?

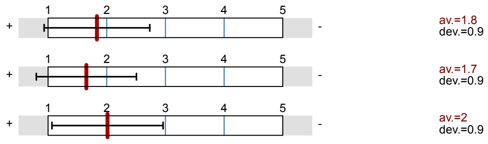
Appendix 6: Schoolwide GTA Class Survey 2017/18

Below is the latest Schoolwide GTA Class Survey, published in August 2018 by the Teaching Quality Assurance and Review Office (TQARO). For more Department-specific results and breakdowns, please visit the TQARO website.

Schoolwide GTA Class Survey 2017/18

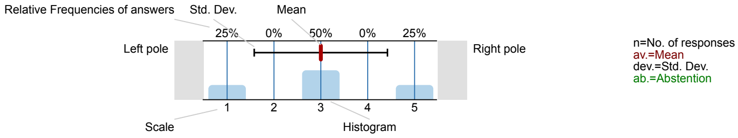
No. of responses = 30167

Overall indicators



Legend

Question text



1. Class/Seminar Teacher Evaluation

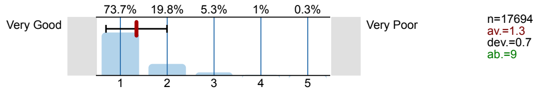
This survey requests your feedback on two separate aspects of your learning experience, split into three sections. The first section asks for your views on your teacher's class/seminar teaching. The second section (overleaf) asks for your views on the course as a whole *at this point in time*. Finally, the third section asks for some information about you, to aid analysis.

Your responses will be used to identify areas of good practice. They will also be used to help improve the teaching and learning experience for you and your peers. Please complete the survey thoughtfully and constructively, marking one box for each question unless indicated otherwise.

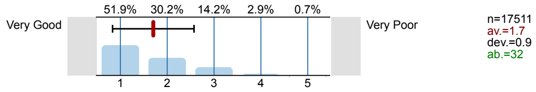
Please rate your class/seminar teacher on the points below using the following scale:
(1 – very good, 2 – good, 3 – average, 4 – poor, 5 – very poor, not applicable)

Average

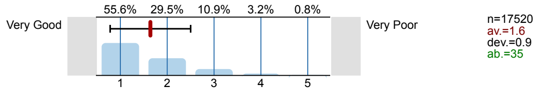
1.1) Spoken English



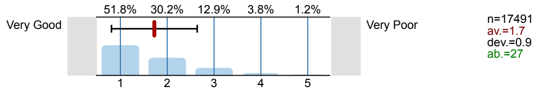
1.2) Skill at involving members of the class



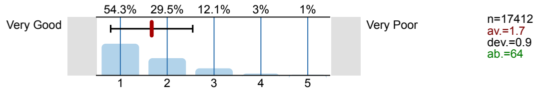
1.3) Clarity in presenting course material



1.4) Made the classes intellectually stimulating for you



1.5) Communicated a structure to the topic of each class meeting



Appendix 6 continued

			1	2	3	4	5		
1.6)	Provided helpful feedback on your work/performance	Very Good	49.3%	31.2%	14.6%	3.6%	1.3%	Very Poor	n=15719 av.=1.8 dev.=0.9 ab.=1646
1.7)	Improved your understanding of the course material	Very Good	52%	32.9%	10.9%	3.1%	1%	Very Poor	n=17393 av.=1.7 dev.=0.9 ab.=25
1.8)	Please rate your own contribution to classes/ seminars using the same scale	Very Good	18.4%	38%	35.1%	6.7%	1.7%	Very Poor	n=17242 av.=2.4 dev.=0.9 ab.=156
1.9)	In general, how satisfied have you been so far with the class teaching on this course by this teacher?	Very Satisfied	50.1%	34.7%	10.5%	3.4%	1.2%	Not Very Satisfied	n=17460 av.=1.7 dev.=0.9

2. Course Evaluation

			1	2	3	4	5		
2.1)	How do you rate the reading list(s) provided for this course?	Very Good	27.7%	41.8%	23.1%	5.4%	2%	Very Poor	n=15543 av.=2.1 dev.=0.9 ab.=1560

2.2) How many hours of independent study do you put into this course each week?

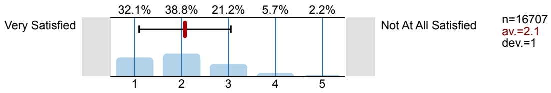
n=17255

More than 10 hours	3.3%
6-10 hours	25.8%
2-5 hours	59.2%
Less than 2 hours	10.2%
None	1%
Not applicable	0.5%

			1	2	3	4	5		
2.3)	How useful have you found the Moodle and/or any other course materials?	Very Good	35.4%	42.1%	17.7%	3.5%	1.3%	Very Poor	n=14854 av.=1.9 dev.=0.9 ab.=131
2.4)	How satisfied have you been with this course content as a whole to date?	Very Satisfied	33.7%	44.4%	15.9%	4.6%	1.4%	Not At All Satisfied	n=17342 av.=2 dev.=0.9
2.5)	How satisfied have you been with the lectures as a whole to date?	Very Satisfied	35.2%	36.1%	18.5%	7.5%	2.6%	Not At All Satisfied	n=17255 av.=2.1 dev.=1
2.6)	How satisfied have you been with the integration of classes with lectures?	Very Satisfied	38.5%	38.9%	16%	5%	1.6%	Not At All Satisfied	n=17180 av.=1.9 dev.=0.9
2.7)	How satisfied have you been with the amount of contact time with teachers for this course?	Very Satisfied	33.6%	39.2%	20%	5.5%	1.6%	Not At All Satisfied	n=17233 av.=2 dev.=1

Schoolwide GTA Class Survey 2017/18

2.8) How satisfied are you that the feedback received on this course will be helpful in preparing you for the final course assessment?



2.9) Would you recommend this course to other students?

n=16957

Yes	65.6%
Maybe	28.2%
No	6.2%

3. Your Information

3.1) Which category of student are you?

n=17135

First Year Undergraduate	25.3%
Second Year Undergraduate	18.5%
Third Year Undergraduate	13.1%
General Course	4.7%
Intercollegiate	0.1%
Certificate	0%
Diploma	0.4%
Masters	37.4%
Socrates or Erasmus	0%
Research	0.4%
Other	0.1%

3.2) Which of the reasons given below describe why you are taking the course? *(Please select all that apply)*

n=18696

It is compulsory for my degree programme	54.1%
I am interested in the subject matter	38.8%
It was recommended to me by other students	5%
It was recommended to me by a tutor	1.6%
Other	1.2%

Appendix 6 continued

Profile

Compilation: Schoolwide GTA Class Survey 2017/18

Values used in the profile line: Mean

1. Class/Seminar Teacher Evaluation

1.1)	Spoken English	Very Good	Very Poor	n=17694	av.=1.3
1.2)	Skill at involving members of the class	Very Good	Very Poor	n=17511	av.=1.7
1.3)	Clarity in presenting course material	Very Good	Very Poor	n=17520	av.=1.6
1.4)	Made the classes intellectually stimulating for you	Very Good	Very Poor	n=17491	av.=1.7
1.5)	Communicated a structure to the topic of each class meeting	Very Good	Very Poor	n=17412	av.=1.7
1.6)	Provided helpful feedback on your work/performance	Very Good	Very Poor	n=15719	av.=1.8
1.7)	Improved your understanding of the course material	Very Good	Very Poor	n=17393	av.=1.7
1.8)	Please rate your own contribution to classes/ seminars using the same scale	Very Good	Very Poor	n=17242	av.=2.4
1.9)	In general, how satisfied have you been so far with the class teaching on this course by this teacher?	Very Satisfied	Not Very Satisfied	n=17460	av.=1.7

2. Course Evaluation

2.1)	How do you rate the reading list(s) provided for this course?	Very Good	Very Poor	n=15543	av.=2.1
2.3)	How useful have you found the Moodle and/or any other course materials?	Very Good	Very Poor	n=14854	av.=1.9
2.4)	How satisfied have you been with this course content as a whole to date?	Very Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied	n=17342	av.=2.0
2.5)	How satisfied have you been with the lectures as a whole to date?	Very Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied	n=17255	av.=2.1
2.6)	How satisfied have you been with the integration of classes with lectures?	Very Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied	n=17180	av.=1.9
2.7)	How satisfied have you been with the amount of contact time with teachers for this course?	Very Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied	n=17233	av.=2.0
2.8)	How satisfied are you that the feedback received on this course will be helpful in preparing you for the final course assessment?	Very Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied	n=16707	av.=2.1

Appendix 7: Further reading and resources

LSE resources

- LSE Library
  - Education subject guide **lse.ac.uk/library/subjectGuides/Education/home.aspx**
  - Library's collection of bookmarks via Delicious **delicious.com/lselibrary/education**
- Teaching and Learning Centre website **lse.ac.uk/TLC/Resources**

Class teaching

- General hints and tips for teaching
  - Gibbs, G and Habeshaw, T (1992), **Preparing to teach: an introduction to effective teaching in higher education**, Technical & Educational Services Ltd, Bristol, pp255. *LB2393 G43*
  - Habeshaw, S, Habeshaw, T and Gibbs, G (1992), **53 interesting things to do in your seminars and tutorials**, Technical and Educational Services, Bristol, pp136. *LB1032 H11*
  - SEDA, the Staff and Educational Development Association, is also publishing Gibbs's "53 Powerful Ideas All Teachers Should Know About" on its website (**seda.ac.uk/53-powerful-ideas**)
- In-depth reflections on teaching in higher education
  - Moore, S, Walsh, G and Risquez, A (2007), **Teaching at College and University (Open Up Study Skills)**, Maidenhead: Open University, pp168. LB2331 M82
  - Fry, H, Ketteridge, S and Marshall, S (eds) (2009), **A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Enhancing Academic Practice**, London: Routledge, pp544. LB2331 H23
- Running discursive classes
  - Brookfield, Stephen D and Preskill, Stephen (1999), **Discussion as a way of teaching: tools and techniques for university teachers**, Open University Press, Buckingham, pp191. *LB2393.5 B87*
- Assessment, in particular, essay-marking
  - Brown,G, Bull, J and Pendlebury, M (1997), **Assessing student learning in higher education**, Routledge, London, pp317, in particular Chapter 5, "Assessing Essays". *LB2367.G7 B87*
  - Campbell, A, and Norton, L (2007) **Learning, Teaching and Assessing in Higher Education: Developing Reflective Practice**, Exeter: Learning Matters Ltd, pp 176. LB2331 L43

Learning development for students

- LSE LIFE's Moodle site Learning Development **moodle.lse.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=698**
- Available from LSE Library (which can be checked out by students too)
  - Dunleavy, Patrick (1986), **Studying for a degree in the humanities and social sciences**, Macmillan, London, pp213. *LB2395 D92*
  - Levin, Peter (2004), **Write great essays! Reading and essay writing for undergraduates and taught postgraduates**, Open University Press, Maidenhead, pp136. *LB2369 L66*
  - Levin, Peter (2004), **Successful teamwork! For undergraduates and taught postgraduates working on group projects**, Open University Press, Maidenhead, pp136. *LB1032 L66*
  - Levin, Peter (2004), **Sail through exams! Preparing for traditional exams for undergraduates and taught postgraduates**, Open University Press, Maidenhead, pp112. *LB2367.G7 L66*
  - Levin, Peter (2005), **Excellent dissertations! Planning, managing and writing a dissertation project for undergraduates and taught postgraduate**s, Open University Press, Maidenhead, pp136. *LB2369 L66*

Weblinks Index – A-Z

Notes

Notes

The Teaching and Learning Centre supports and complements the work of Graduate Teaching Assistants in many ways:

GTA induction – school-wide induction programme for GTAs that begins before Michaelmas term

Atlas – a programme of teaching and learning workshops and events for LSE academic staff

Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education – a teaching qualification for those relatively new to teaching that is widely respected in the sector

Resources – multimedia teaching and learning resources (guidance, tip sheets, templates, videos, etc.) on the TLC website

Teaching and learning community – Attending and contribute to our forums, talks, blogs and discussions where you can showcase or get up to speed with the latest developments in teaching and learning practice across the School. Get in touch to join our mailing list.

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Dr Kate Exley, David Faggiani, Jane Hindle, Dr Colleen McKenna, Dr Claudine Provencher, Lee-Ann Sequeira and the LSE Graduate Teaching Assistants and LSE departments and units that have contributed to this handbook over the years

The ***Graduate Teaching Assistant's Handbook*** brings together a wealth of information that will help you to enjoy and get more out of your teaching at LSE.

It aims to provide you with practical information and insight into teaching and the support of student learning, covering topics such as:

- planning and delivering class teaching
- marking work and giving feedback
- office hours and responding to students' requests
- facilities and resources.

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