

# CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR UNDERGRADUATE, DIPLOMA AND POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES: Teaching, Learning and Assessment

*This Code of Practice is approved by the Education Committee (formerly the Academic and Student Affairs Committee).  
Last updated: August 2020*

## Introduction

This Code sets out general School practices for all undergraduate, diploma and graduate programmes. It sets out basic reciprocal obligations and responsibilities of staff and students. It should be read in conjunction with the [Academic Code](#), all other School policies, regulations, codes of practice and procedures as set out in the School's on-line [Calendar](#). The expectation is that all programmes will meet the standards set out in the paragraphs below. While the [Academic Code](#) sets out headline minimum standards, this Code explains in more detail the responsibilities that both students and staff together have in producing the learning experience on LSE taught programmes. It informs students of what they may reasonably expect and informs departments of what they are expected to provide. Each department will publish a detailed statement of its provision under this Code in its handbook and on its departmental website. These statements will provide a basis for monitoring the academic activity of departments through the School's quality assurance processes.

## Academic Advice

- 1.1 On joining the School each student is allocated a member of the academic staff in their department as an Academic Mentor.
- 1.2 Each department sets out in the relevant handbook its own detailed guidelines regarding the role of the Academic Mentor. School guidance for students is available on the [Academic Mentoring Portal](#). Among those responsibilities that an Academic Mentor is normally expected to carry out are:
  - To provide academic guidance and feedback on the students' progress and performance and to discuss any academic problems they might experience.
  - To provide pastoral support on non-academic issues and to refer students, as necessary, to the appropriate support services within the School.
  - To implement the provisions outlined in Inclusion Plans for students with long-term medical conditions, specific learning differences and/or disabilities in liaison with the School's [Disability and Wellbeing Service](#).
  - To maintain regular contact with students on academic and pastoral issues through direct one-to-one meetings and other means of communication, such as emails. The number and nature of meetings may vary between departments and programmes as detailed in the relevant handbook, although students will be invited to meet their Academic Mentor at least twice during each of the Michaelmas and Lent terms.
  - To agree students' course choices via LSEforYou.
  - To comment on and provide a general assessment of students' progress on their termly class reports via LSEforYou.
  - To inform the Departmental Tutor or Programme Director and School of any students whose attendance and progress is not satisfactory.
- 1.3 Each Mentor must have a good working knowledge of the structure and regulations of degree programmes in the department.
- 1.4 Each Mentor must have a good working knowledge of the various academic and pastoral support services within the School. School guidance for staff is available on the [Academic Mentoring Portal](#).
- 1.5 Each Mentor must publicise regular periods of time when they are available to meet with their students.
- 1.6 If the relationship between a Mentor and student is unsatisfactory, the department must have in place an appropriate process for arranging a change of Mentor.
- 1.7 For undergraduate students only; each department has a Departmental Tutor who will be responsible for:
  - Providing departmental orientation programmes for new and continuing students.
  - Monitoring the academic and pastoral care provided by members of their department, including the provision of reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.
  - Arranging regular termly meetings of a Staff-Student Liaison Committee and the nomination of a representative to the School's Undergraduate Students' Consultative Forum.
  - Providing a direct channel of communication between the School and any student who is encountering academic or pastoral difficulties.
  - Authorising, where appropriate, a student's request for course choice outside the degree regulations.
  - Authorising, where appropriate, a student's request for a degree transfer.

1.8 For diploma and graduate students; each department has a Programme Director who will be responsible for:

- Authorising, where appropriate, a student's request for course choice outside the degree regulations.
- Authorising, where appropriate, a student's request for a degree transfer.

## Teaching

- 2.1 The detailed requirements of each programme and course are provided in the online [Calendar](#), in the relevant handbook and on departmental web pages. Students must complete all course requirements as specified in their degree regulations.
- 2.2 Teaching will predominantly be a combination of lectures and classes or seminars. The teaching method used will largely be determined by the size of the programme and the nature of the subject covered in a particular course. Teaching can be delivered synchronously in person or online, or asynchronously through recorded content, and will often include other teaching and learning activities.
- 2.3 Lectures are an important part of the teaching and learning experience. The structure and content of each course are set out in the online Course Guide. Lecturers must ensure that their teaching is consistent with this information.
- 2.4 Lecturers are responsible for organising the classes (UG) or seminars (PG) for their courses, for liaising with class or seminar teachers to ensure that the classes or seminars are properly coordinated with their lectures, and for submitting course reading lists to the Library in good time for required books to be purchased.
- 2.5 For undergraduate students, classes are a compulsory part of the teaching and learning experience. Class sizes should not normally exceed 15 students, although for some teaching methods larger group sizes may be used.
- 2.6 For postgraduate students, seminars are the core of the teaching and learning experience. The nature and format of seminars may vary depending on the subject material of the course and will be detailed in the course syllabus. Seminar sizes should not normally exceed 15 students, although for some teaching methods larger group sizes may be used.
- 2.7 Classes or seminars will normally give students the opportunity to participate in a discussion of material relevant to the course. The nature and format of these discussions will vary according to the subject matter of the course.
- 2.8 Lectures, seminars and classes normally start at five minutes past the hour and end at five minutes to the hour, although the duration and start/end times of some teaching sessions can differ and students should refer to their personal timetable for information. Staff and students should make every effort to start and finish on time.
- 2.9 Formative coursework is an essential part of the teaching and learning experience at the School. It should be introduced at an early stage of a course and normally before the submission of assessed coursework. Students will normally be given the opportunity to produce essays, problem sets or other forms of written work. The number of these pieces of work for each course will be detailed in the online Course Guide.
- 2.10 Individual departmental Assessment and Feedback Statements are the definitive source of information about departmental feedback practices. The practices set out in departmental statements are underpinned by the School-level feedback rules at paragraphs 2.11 and 2.14, below. These rules are de facto minimum feedback requirements. Departmental practices will be at or above this minimum threshold.
- 2.11 Feedback on coursework is an essential part of the teaching and learning experience at the School. Class or seminar teachers must mark **formative** coursework and return it with feedback to students normally within three term weeks of submission deadline (when the work is submitted on time). Class or seminar teachers must record the marks, or the failure to submit coursework, regularly via LSEforYou. Students will also receive feedback on any **summative** coursework and on examinations they are required to complete as part of the assessment for individual courses. Individual departments will determine the format of feedback on summative coursework, which can include provisional marks that have been both internally and externally moderated. See the [Academic Code](#) for more detail on summative feedback times.
- 2.12 Students who are required to resit an assessment will be provided with appropriate and timely feedback before re-taking the assessment.
- 2.13 Provisional marks will be made available to students via LSEforYou. Departments will not provide documentation to students confirming provisional marks for any form of assessment. At the request of the student, departments may provide provisional marks to third parties such as employers or other HE institutions only using the template document produced by the Academic Registrar's Division.
- 2.14 Some programmes require students to submit dissertations. Students will receive preliminary feedback on a draft chapter, section or detailed plan of their dissertations that they submit in good time prior to the final submission deadline. Individual departmental handbooks will set out the details of the dissertation process, including the deadline by which draft chapters, sections or detailed plans must be submitted to be eligible for feedback. A mark will not be included in this feedback.
- 2.15 12-month MSc students who complete dissertations within the final year of their studies, will receive feedback within 4 weeks of receiving their final dissertation results. Final year 9/10 month MSc students and undergraduate students who complete dissertations will receive feedback within 4 weeks of the following term from when the dissertation was submitted e.g. where a

dissertation is submitted in the Summer Term, students will receive feedback within four weeks of the start of following Michaelmas Term.

- 2.16 Class or seminar teachers must record student attendance on a weekly basis via LSEforYou.
- 2.17 Class or seminar reports are an integral part of the School's monitoring system on the academic progress of its students. Class or seminar teachers must complete, via LSEforYou, full and accurate reports, including a general assessment of each student's progress, at the end of the Michaelmas and Lent Terms.
- 2.18 All full-time members of staff and part-time and occasional teachers must have regular weekly office hours during term time when they are available to students to discuss issues relating to the courses they are teaching. These office hours should be clearly publicised to students.

### Responsibilities of the student

- 3.1 Students are required to attend the School for the full duration of each term<sup>1</sup>. Students who wish to be away for good reason in term time must first obtain the consent of their Mentor. Students away through illness must inform their Mentor and their class or seminar teachers and, where the absence is for more than two weeks, the Student Services Centre.
- 3.2 Students with disabilities which might impact on their studies should contact an adviser in the [Disability and Wellbeing Office](#) in good time to negotiate reasonable adjustments. These will be set out in an Inclusion Plan. Students must also agree to the extent to which this information will be shared within the School. If the School is not informed about a disability in good time, it may not be able to make the appropriate reasonable adjustments.
- 3.3 Students must maintain regular contact with their Academic Mentor to discuss relevant academic and pastoral care issues affecting their course of study. These should include:
  - Guidance about course choice.
  - Discussion of academic progress based on termly class reports.
  - Guidance or discussion about long essay/project/dissertation.
- 3.4 These discussions should take place through direct one-to-one meetings and other means of communication, such as emails. The number and nature of meetings may vary between departments and programmes as detailed in the relevant handbook, although students will be invited to meet their Academic Mentor at least twice during each of the Michaelmas and Lent terms. Students should be able to meet their Mentor within the first week of term time, i.e. either during regular office hours or at a mutually convenient time.
- 3.5 **Attendance at classes** is compulsory and is recorded on LSEforYou. Any student who is absent on two consecutive occasions or is regularly absent without good reason will be automatically reported to their academic Mentor.
- 3.6 Students must submit all required coursework on time, whether it is summative coursework (i.e. work that counts towards the final mark) or formative work (that does not count towards the final mark).
- 3.7 Permission to sit an examination may be withdrawn from students who regularly miss classes and/or do not complete required course work.
- 3.8 Students must ensure the accuracy of the information regarding their programme of study, including their class schedule, course choice, class attendance, personal exam timetable and submission of coursework, contained in their personal LSEforYou account. Failure to report inaccuracies to the Student Services Centre, particularly in the case of course choice, may result in a student being required to take the assessment(s) in the course(s) for which they were originally registered.
- 3.9 Students must communicate changes of term time and home addresses to the Student Services Centre via LSEforYou as soon as they occur.
- 3.10 As well as the likelihood of taking action through the Courts, the School may impose relevant penalties for any outstanding debt that students fail to clear by any specified deadlines. For example, the School will normally withhold a student's academic transcript and/or certificate if they failed to pay their academic fees.
- 3.11 Students who decide to interrupt their studies or withdraw from the School must inform their Academic Mentor and the Student Services Centre in writing. Failure to inform the School could result in a demand for fee payment for the full session.
- 3.12 The School's aim, where possible, is to support our students to remain on their programme of study. However, the School's [fitness to study policy](#) recognises that in some cases this might not be possible. Some students may need to take a break from their studies ([interrupt](#)), may need to delay taking their assessments ([defer](#) or [extension](#)), or in more serious cases, may need to leave the School completely ([withdraw](#)).

### Examination and Assessment

- 4.1 All departments must publish assessment criteria. 'Statements of assessment criteria' are verbal descriptors of what a department expects from students, which distinguish between different grades. Where expectations are similar across different forms of assessment it may be sufficient to have a single set of criteria; where expectations are very different for different

pieces of work, then different sets of criteria may be necessary. Within each programme, the Chair of the Sub-Board of Examiners is responsible for ensuring the publication of assessment criteria in-line with this requirement.

- 4.2 Students must complete all components of assessed work for each course. Methods of examination and assessment for each course are set out in the on-line Course Guide. All work submitted must be the student's own. In submitting course work, students must abide with the School's policy on plagiarism as set out in the School's [Assessment Offence Regulations: Plagiarism](#) and the [Statement on Editorial Help](#).
- 4.3 Students must be given clear advance warning of any new or approved changes to assessment format.
- 4.4 When the content of a course changes to the extent that previous examination papers may not be a reliable guide to future papers, lecturers should advise students and produce sample questions for the new parts of the course. When the course is new and, there are no previous papers, a full sample paper should be produced. Where it is not possible to replicate the first format of assessment at resit e.g. a group project, an alternative method of assessment can be set. Students will be notified of any alternative method of assessment in good time prior to re-assessment.
- 4.5 Any student who requires individual examination adjustments (IEAs) must contact an advisor in the [Disability and Wellbeing Service](#) so that reasonable adjustments can be recommended. Applications for IEAs should normally be made by the published deadline given by the Disability and Wellbeing Service. Students should check the Disability and Wellbeing Service webpage for further details.
- 4.6 When a student submits an assessment, the School considers they are fit enough to do so. Therefore, any student experiencing exceptional (mitigating) circumstances in the period preceding an assessment should consult with their Academic Mentor about the deferral or extension policy. Where a student experiences exceptional circumstances during an exam or assessment period they must inform the Student Services Centre with all relevant supporting documentation, such as medical certificates, normally not later than seven days after the date of their last assessment submission. Students should check the [exceptional circumstances webpage](#) for further details.

**Notes** For the purposes of this Code, the term 'department' comprises both departments and institutes.

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See the [Calendar](#) for further information about Programme Regulations, Course Guides, School and academic Regulations.

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to additional information about 'Conditions of Registration: campus enrolment' in the [Addendum - LSE School Regulations for 2020/21](#). For Executive Masters and Atlantic Fellows please refer to the [Addendum - LSE School Regulations for 2020/21 – eMSc and Atlantic Fellows](#).