

## LSE Conference & Events Office

This briefing will hopefully answer some of the questions you may have about the role you will undertake as a steward for your event.

### Stewarding - Health and Safety

The most important aspect of your job is to maintain the health and safety of the staff, students and members of the public who are attending the event you are working at.

As such you have a responsibility to:

**1. Prevent the overcrowding of the venue:** each venue you will work in has a limited capacity, which will be the normal number of seats that are in the room. We cannot allow overcrowding as this increases the risk of major problems should an evacuation of the venue prove necessary.

- You should not let in more people than there are seats.
- Do not add more seats to the venue in order to increase capacity.
- Do not allow people to either stand at the back of a venue or sit on the floor/stairs.  
The only people who should be standing in the venue are you and your colleagues who are stewarding the event.  
Other exceptions are for camera crews or photographers in attendance, or security personnel protecting VIPs.

#### **How to prevent overcrowding:**

- If you think an event is going to be very popular and there is a chance of more people attending than there is space, then you should ticket it, or request pre-registration.
- If an event is not ticketed but the venue is filling up then it is important that as the venue is approaching its capacity, you stop people freely entering the venue. You should regulate entry by filling seats on a one by one basis, once empty seats have been identified.
- Make sure you and your colleagues are working as a team to get this task done, it's much easier to get this done as a team, rather than as a group of individuals.
- Once a venue is full, make sure you close the doors and that someone is positioned on the outside of the venue door to prevent more people from entering. It's easier to stop people getting in, than removing them once they have gained entry to the venue.
- When you have to turn people away, make sure you explain to people that we can't allow overcrowding because of the health and safety implications. If there will be a transcript, podcast or video available after the event, let them know about this facility, as this can help to placate people.

**2. Make yourself aware of fire/emergency exits:** it is important to ensure that you are aware of the location in each venue of the emergency exits, and the routes from those exits to the final exit of the building, and to the Fire Assembly Point.

- In all of the large lecture theatres (Old, Sheikh Zayed, Hong Kong and Peacock) there will be more than one emergency exit.
- Ensure that the emergency exits are always clear. It is extremely important that people do not place bags/rucksacks or any other objects in escape routes, walkways, or in a way which blocks an exit.
- Ensure that all emergency exits are unlocked. In certain theatres, such as the Old Theatre, the doors can be locked from the inside. While it may be tempting to do this if a venue is full to prevent more people from trying to enter, **you should never lock any emergency exits**. A steward should be positioned by this door to prevent unauthorised entry.

- In order to ensure that all the above requirements are achieved:
- Before the start of each lecture/event physically check that all emergency exits are open and unblocked.
- Throughout the event regularly check exits.

**3. Watch out for any other hazards:** When setting up the venue, look out for any other hazards that could cause harm to any members of the public or any other stewards. Such hazards could include:

- Broken glass
- Trailing cables
- Frayed carpet
- Wet floors

If you come across such hazards then please make the senior steward or the events officer aware of them. If the hazard is particularly dangerous then it is best to stay beside the hazard and get a fellow steward to inform someone who can sort out the problem.

### **Security Alerts – Bombs and bomb alerts**

The risk of the school being targeted by a bomber is low, but all public places must be vigilant. If you have any suspicions that either you have found a suspicious package or you have suspicions about a individual:

- the most important thing to do is to contact security, in person or using a land line(not mobile phone). In the Old Building, NAB, and Clement House there is always a security guard at the entrance to the building, and in the Peacock Theatre the front of house manager is Sam Gaid. You can always get in touch with security on 666 from an internal LSE phone.
- You should never touch, shake or poke any suspicious package.
- Do not use radios or mobile phones near any suspicious package.
- Once a security guard is at the scene they will take control. Do as instructed.

### **Fire Safety**

The School has a variety of fire detection and alarm systems installed in its buildings. In some buildings, there is only smoke detection in corridors and escape routes, while in others there is detection in every room.

In the event of seeing fire or smoke:

- Sound the alarm immediately by pressing a fire call point.
- Only tackle a fire if you have been trained in the use of fire extinguishers and can do so without endangering yourself or others.
- Evacuate using the nearest fire exit, directing those around you to leave.
- Never re-enter the building until told that you may do so by an LSE fire warden or Security.

**Evacuation** If the fire alarm sounds while you are on duty, then your responsibilities as a steward are to:

- Open the emergency exits, and ask people to leave in a calm and orderly fashion using their nearest exit.
- Direct people to the nearest stairs. Do not use lifts or tell others to use them.
- Direct people to the fire assembly point. For the Old Building the fire assembly point is Sheffield Street (outside the Saw Swee Hock Student Centre) For the Peacock Theatre the fire assembly point is John Watkins Plaza, outside the library. For the NAB the fire assembly point is on the corner of

- Lincoln's Inn Fields, opposite Coopers Restaurant. For Clement House, the assembly point is outside Tower 1&2 . A full list of Fire Assembly Points is on the Health and Safety webpages.

### ***NAB Evacuation***

The evacuation procedures in the NAB differ from those in the other venues

- The claxon with a voice message announces 2 different levels of evacuation - ***Evacuate or Alert***
- If you hear the ***Evacuate*** message, you must ensure that everyone leaves the building immediately by the nearest emergency stairway.
- Lifts must not be used.
- Direct any wheelchair user or persons who cannot use the stairs to the nearest fire refuge point (FRP).
- If you hear the ***Alert*** message: Do not evacuate the area, tell everyone (except those who are mobility impaired) to remain where they are until they receive further instructions
- Direct wheelchair users and other mobility impaired persons to the nearest FRP (fire rescue point)
- Check that all gangways and emergency exits are clear
- Reassure the audience that the situation is being investigated by the Security Staff.
- If the message changes to Evacuate, start an orderly evacuation as above.

### ***Evacuation – Special Considerations***

- Certain people may find it difficult to evacuate at the same speed as others, or have difficulties with stairs (e.g. women in the later stages of pregnancy, people with visual impairments, wheelchair users, people with other mobility impairments).
- It may not be obvious that someone needs assistance, but equally stewards should be careful not to make assumptions (e.g. some wheelchair users are able to make their way down stairs with assistance).
- If the fire alarm sounds, stewards should ask that anyone who may have difficulties exiting the building to make themselves known, and to wait by the side.
- If anyone does ask for assistance, the steward should ask what help they need (e.g. a blind person may ask to be escorted out of the building), and arrange for suitable help to be provided.
- Anyone who is unable to use the stairs should be escorted to the nearest Fire Refuge Point and Security alerted that someone needs assistance. Someone must stay with the individual needing assistance until Evacuation Volunteers arrive.

## **First Aid**

Stewards are encouraged to complete at least Emergency First Aid training.

If anyone attending an event hurts themselves or falls ill, then offer them first aid. If possible, do this away from public gaze (e.g. outside the venue, away from where people have gathered). If no First Aider is available locally, contact Security (ext. 666 who have First Aiders on their teams). Obviously if the situation is serious then ring for an ambulance, and then inform Security so they can assist the individual and escort the ambulance crew to the venue when they arrive.

***Remember that in any situation never be afraid to ask questions or ask for help in a task.***

## Stewarding - Other tasks/roles

You will also perform several other roles as a steward. As well as ensuring the safety of those people attending events you may also:

- Help set up the theatre, which will involve taking things such as flowers, logos, reserved signs and tablecloths over to the theatre.
- You may be provided with a briefing sheet which will give you important information about the event (title, speaker etc) and the organisation of the event (ticketing, reserved seats etc).
- After the theatre has been set up, and you have been briefed you will be allocated a particular position within the theatre. It is important that you maintain your position at all times. If you need to leave your position then please inform a colleague.

**Seating people:** As has been mentioned above, preventing overcrowding is of the utmost importance. However, as you will quickly find, for many events, there is a shortage of space as they are so popular. This makes it imperative that you try and fill all the seats in each venue. In order to do this:

- Make sure you and your colleagues work as a team.
- Encourage people to sit at the front, and to move right to the end of the rows.
- Stop people freely entering the venue. This will help to prevent overcrowding.
- Use yourself and your colleagues to funnel people into the empty seats. Don't allow people to choose where they sit as they tend to sit all over the place therefore making it a lot harder to fill the theatre.
- Identify the empty seats and fill them on a one by one basis.
- Once the theatre is full, position a steward on the outside of the event venue to prevent others from entering.

You will find that people sometimes make it difficult for you:

- Some people will say they are reserving seats for friends. LSE policy for non-ticketed events is first come, first served, and therefore if there is a long queue of people waiting to get in simply inform people that they cannot do that and send someone from the queue to take that seat.
- People will sit on the end of rows and give all the reasons under the sun why they have to sit on the end of a row. Don't argue with them, just ask them to stand up while you fill the rest of the row and then they can retake their seat.
- Explain to people that you are only acting in this way to get in as many people to the venue.
- When an event is full you will have people asking to stand at the back. This cannot be permitted.
- On some occasions there will be a videolink, or a transcript, podcast or video will be produced. Make sure you know in advance of the event whether these options will be available, as this can often placate people's complaints.
- People will try to pull rank by saying they are LSE staff or that someone promised they could get in. In all cases if the venue is full do not let them in. If people continue to pester you, then get in touch with the event's organiser who will deal with the matter.

**Ticketed Events:** Your event may be ticketed or require pre-registration. This would be to prevent many more people turning up to a lecture than there is space.

- If an event is ticketed in the Old Theatre/Sheikh Zayed Theatre/Hong Kong the seating is unreserved. For events in the Peacock Theatre, people have a specific seat to sit in, the seat number is on their ticket.

(Please note: the following information may not be applicable to your event.)

- The tickets may state that ticketholders are only guaranteed entry to the event if they arrive 10 minutes before the start time.
- If an event is ticketed but not sold out then we hand out the remaining tickets to those people who turn up without a ticket. Once all these tickets have gone then a returns queue will be set up. Stewards must ensure that returns queues do not obstruct the venue's emergency exits.
- If an event is sold out, then we will set up a returns queue which will allow non-ticketholders to fill the seats of those ticketholders who do not show up. We normally fill these seats about 5 minutes before the event begins.
- If a ticketholder turns up after the event has begun and there is no space then we can justify not letting them in on the basis that their ticket tells them they are not guaranteed entry if they arrive less than 10 minutes before the event begins.

**Reserved Seats:** For either ticketed or non-ticketed events sometimes there are some reserved seats for special guests.

- Reserved seats tend to be in the 3/4/5 rows in the Old Theatre, in the 1/2/3 row in the Hong Kong and Sheikh Zayed.
- Signs should be provided to put on the seats.
- If available you should have names of the people who are supposed to occupy the reserved seats.
- We encourage departments to inform people they are meant to be sitting in the reserved seats and that the seats are only reserved for them until the event starts, especially when we think the event will be popular.
- If there are lots of unfilled reserved seats just before an event begins then liaise with the event organiser to see about removing some or possibly all of the reserved signs. It can be a good idea to keep a few reserved seats if there is still space, as more often than not there are latecomers, especially if they think they have a reserved seat.

## **Freedom of Speech**

LSE hosts a wide variety of speakers, from Nobel prize winners to Prime Ministers and Presidents and chief executives of worldwide corporations. Inevitably, on some occasions, there are some people who wish to protest about individual speakers. This can range from peaceful protest in the form of leafleting delegates who attend the lecture to protesting outside the lecture venue, as well as more extreme action such as trying to storm the venue or shout the speaker down from inside the lecture venue.

The School has an obligation to uphold Free Speech in all meetings held at LSE. This is set out in the Code of Free Speech. You can read the [Code of Practice on Free Speech here](#).

To drastically summarise the code it says that LSE is obliged to take all reasonable steps to make sure that a speaker is safe from when they arrive at LSE till they leave and that they can say what they have come to say without being shouted down, intimidated or otherwise prevented from speaking (irrespective of what we may think of them or what they have come to say). However, this does not mean that individuals cannot show dissent: audience members are allowed to heckle a speaker but are not allowed to prevent a speaker from delivering their speech.

At public lectures, the person in charge of the meeting is the chairperson, and as such they have a formal procedure to follow in the case of constant shouting/barracking/interruption from one or more members of the audience. The chair will give up to 2 warnings to the offending person/s and following a third warning they will ask security to remove them from the venue. Neither LSE security or you can unilaterally decide to remove someone: this order can only come from the chairperson.

## Public Behaviour

Working with the public in a service capacity occasionally means that you will meet people who are difficult, argumentative, and occasionally over assertive, or even aggressive. This is particularly the case where an event attracts more people than can be accommodated and people have to be turned away. Managing this can lead to disagreements where people become heated and angry. You are not obliged to submit yourself to abuse or threats. The School's Ground Rules for attendees at public meetings make it clear that the School encourages reasoned debate but will not tolerate abusive and threatening behaviour.

Try to enlist the help of a nearby colleague. Try also to bring the situation to the attention of the person in charge of the event - if you cannot do this yourself, ask someone else to do it on your behalf.

The best way to handle such behaviour is to be calm, reasonable and unthreatening. Do not get in an argument with the individual. Ask for help from fellow stewards, the event organiser or Security.

If you have suffered physical or verbal abuse in the course of your work as a steward, you must report this to the event organiser, and to Health and Safety using the Violence at Work form ( at <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/healthAndSafety/policy/violenceAtWork.aspx>)

## Lecture Theatre Information

### ***Old Theatre, Old Building:***

Seats 449

- Ground level: 168
- First level: 281

Entrances/Emergency Exits:

- Ground level – 2 main entrances plus two more exits
- First floor level – One entrance/exit plus one emergency exit

Specific stewarding details:

- The ground level should always be filled up first with stewards on the first floor level ensuring no one enters upstairs
- Once the ground level is nearly full the balcony can be opened – check with a senior steward or staff member and advise the stewards upstairs before allowing people onto the balcony.
- Balcony stewarding is extremely important: the far side of the seating needs to be filled first. In addition one of the back middle rows needs to be kept clear until the start of the event (or if only one microphone for upstairs one row should be clear for the whole event).
- Disabled Access: 2 Wheelchair places at ground level

### ***Sheikh Zayed Theatre, New Academic Building:***

Seats 400

Entrances/Emergency Exits:

- Lower Ground level - 2 main entrance doors
- Basement level – 2 fire exits

Specific stewarding details:

- The rows of seats are quite narrow, so try to ensure people sit next to each other right from the start

Disabled Access:

- 2 at Lower Ground Level, 2 at Basement Level (service lift used)

- Wheelchair Places: 4 in total

***Hong Kong Theatre, Clement House:***

Seats 230

- Ground level: 180 seats
- Balcony: 50 seats

Entrances/Emergency Exits:

- Ground level: 1 main entrance plus one more exit at far side (which can be used for latecomers)
- Balcony: This is entered via the ground level at the back left of the theatre. There is also an emergency exit at the bottom of the stairs.

Specific stewarding details:

- The ground level is to be filled up first **however** it is best to leave approx. 15 seats on the right hand side on the ground floor for latecomers who can gain access via the far door to the lecture theatre causing less disturbance.
- Once the event starts it is difficult to seat people upstairs due to the access via the ground level.
- Disabled Access:
- Main entrance of Clement House. No access to balcony.

***Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building***

Seats 130

Entrances/Emergency Exits:

- 2 entrances/exits –Lower Ground level.

Specific stewarding details:

- The rows of seats are quite narrow, so try to ensure people sit next to each other right from the start

Disabled Access:

- 2 at Lower Ground level

**Fire Assembly Points on Campus**

Please refer to:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/healthAndSafety/pdf/FireAssemblyPoints.pdf>