



THE LONDON SCHOOL  
OF ECONOMICS AND  
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■



# Residential and Catering Services Division

**Annual Report** 2019-2020

## Look after yourself. Look after others



**Wear a mask**



**Wash or sanitise  
hands regularly**



**Avoid contact**



**Clean, and use learning  
spaces safely**



**Cover coughs  
and sneezes**



**Keep a safe distance and  
be considerate to others**

## Let LSE know if you feel unwell



**High temperature, fever,  
shaking or chills**



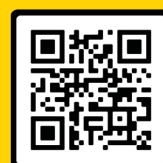
**Loss of sense of smell, taste,  
or breathing difficulties**



**Dry cough**

**Do you have symptoms?**

**Get a COVID-19 test, DO NOT go out  
and you MUST self-isolate for two weeks**



**SCAN ME**

**Thanks. Together we help make LSE COVID-secure**

Campus safety, testing information and more: [lse.ac.uk/coronavirus](https://lse.ac.uk/coronavirus)

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## Introduction from Ian Spencer, Director of Residential and Catering Services

### Executive summary

The 2019/20 academic year was not a normal year!



At the start of the year, in September 2019, we welcomed 4,390 students to our halls of residences. In the same month we opened 2 new catering outlets, the Beveridge and Fawcett Cafes and took over the running of the LSE's General Store which sells the School's range of branded clothing, memorabilia and study stationery. We had a very busy and successful Michaelmas Term.

By March 2020, the COVID pandemic had hit the UK and the School was amongst the first HE institutions to move all teaching online. The LSE campus was closed and in LSE managed residences we allowed students to terminate their accommodation contracts and return home. Around 500 students, who were unable to travel home, stayed in their accommodation during the lockdown. Our staff supported the students who remained in halls and in Bankside House we continued with our catering operation – serving a welcome daily brunch.

As all our catering outlets and some halls closed in March 2020, we had to furlough many staff over the summer period. For the staff who remained working and looking after students, their attention was focused on how we maintain our operations in a COVID safe way. The RCSD Senior Leadership Team concentrated their efforts on producing procedures for a safe return to campus based on the latest guidance published by Public Health England and informed by LSE's academic expertise.

With no Summer School in 2020 or vacation trading our financial position was hit hard. Despite the challenging circumstances we worked hard to keep services open where they were needed and to look after staff who were understandably anxious about the future.

Responding to the challenges of 2020 took an amazing amount of teamwork. Our colleagues rose to the challenges and did what was asked of them – and more. We could not have achieved this without the dedication and commitment of the teams across Residential and Catering Services.

Whilst we have spent much of the year responding to COVID-19, you can see from the report that we have also achieved a lot which we can be proud of.

My thanks to you all.

**Ian Spencer, Director of Residential and Catering Services**



## Residential and Catering Services Strategic Plan 2020-25

In March 2020 we launched the [Residential and Catering Services Strategic Plan 2020-25](#). The strategy supports the overall [School LSE 2030 Strategy](#), which was launched in 2019.

### Our vision:

“As a provider of residential and catering services, we will position ourselves to be a leading and exemplary service provider, a model of good practice and a significant contributor to the student and staff experience at LSE.

Our aim is to make our services the destinations of choice by providing an inclusive and exciting range of accommodation and food offerings that fulfil the diverse needs of our students and staff. We will be leaders in residential and catering services in the UK, providing a professional, distinctive, contemporary and innovative customer focused service”.

### For the duration of the strategic plan, the division will focus on three objectives:

- Creating a sustainable LSE
- Create an inclusive home for learning
- Investing in our community

In March 2020, we held two staff events to introduce the strategic plan, with over 120 divisional staff attending and taking part in the discussion. The events were well received and provided colleagues with an opportunity to share their ideas about implementing the strategic objectives.

In this annual report for 2019/20 we look at some of the progress we have made against the three strategic objectives above.



Shaw Cafe



## Creating a sustainable LSE

We are committed to providing a world class campus for our community.

### Applications, Offers and Allocations 2019/20

During the 2019/20 academic year, we received 7,476 applications for accommodation (359 more than the previous year) and we accommodated 4,432 students in our halls. The number accommodated was marginally lower than the previous year, as in 2018/19 we had a slightly expanded portfolio of 32 beds for one year only.

As a percentage of students registered at LSE, 42 per cent are accommodated in halls – the same as the previous year:

Student type	Accommodation applications received	Students accommodated in halls	Students registered at LSE	% of registered students accommodated
First year undergraduate	2,485 (2,284)	1,387 (1,457)	1,695 (1,753)	82% (83%)
New postgraduate	3,527 (3,231)	2,177 (2,059)	4,789 (4,794)	45% (43%)
Continuing	1,137 (1,276)	541 (613)	3,557 (3,590)	15% (17%)
General Course	327 (326)	285 (303)	326 (323)	87% (94%)
Totals	7,476 (7,117)	4,390 (4,432)	10,367 (10,460)	42% (42%)

Table 1: Applications received, and students accommodated in 2019/20 (previous year in Italics)

### Implementation of self-selection for accommodation bookings 2020/21

In February 2020, in preparation for accommodation applications in 2020/21, our Residential Services Office (RSO), implemented a new self-service booking system for students. It is hoped that the new system will improve the student experience and reduce manual processing tasks.

#### Key improvements as a result of this work include:

- Applicants can see room availability in real time.
- Removal of the 28-day processing time – applicants book their own room in real time.
- Applicants shown only rooms suitable for them, according to their student category and gender.

- Applicants can make their own decisions on which room is most suitable based on their requirements and availability at the time of booking.
- Applicants requiring shared rooms or shared flats can list the names of students they wish to share with, which the RSO can then look to facilitate.
- Reduction in processing times for the RSO for third party bookings.
- Improved systems integration with the Disability and Wellbeing Service.
- Mid-year booking process allows students arriving during the academic year to make their own bookings based on their preferred arrival dates.
- Integration with LSE for You (LFY), so that students who had an LFY account could access this directly from within their existing account.

The work completed is a significant step forward in enabling applicants to LSE to book the accommodation they need, when they need it. There is more work to be done and we are hopeful that we can deliver an even better experience next year.

### **LSE Accommodation Bursary**

In 2019/20 we continued the LSE Accommodation Bursary which enabled 96 students from lower income backgrounds to receive an accommodation bursary. A total of £146,395 was awarded. The standard award for each student received between £500 and £2,500 as a contribution towards their accommodation fees.

Continuing with our financial support for students who have limited means remains one of our key strategic objectives.

## **Financial sustainability**

### **Residential Services 2019/20 Income**

The total income generated by LSE Residential Services in 2019/20 dropped significantly by just under 32 per cent to £25.9m, a decrease of £12.1m on 2018/19. This decrease was largely attributable to our halls operating at a reduced capacity due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.



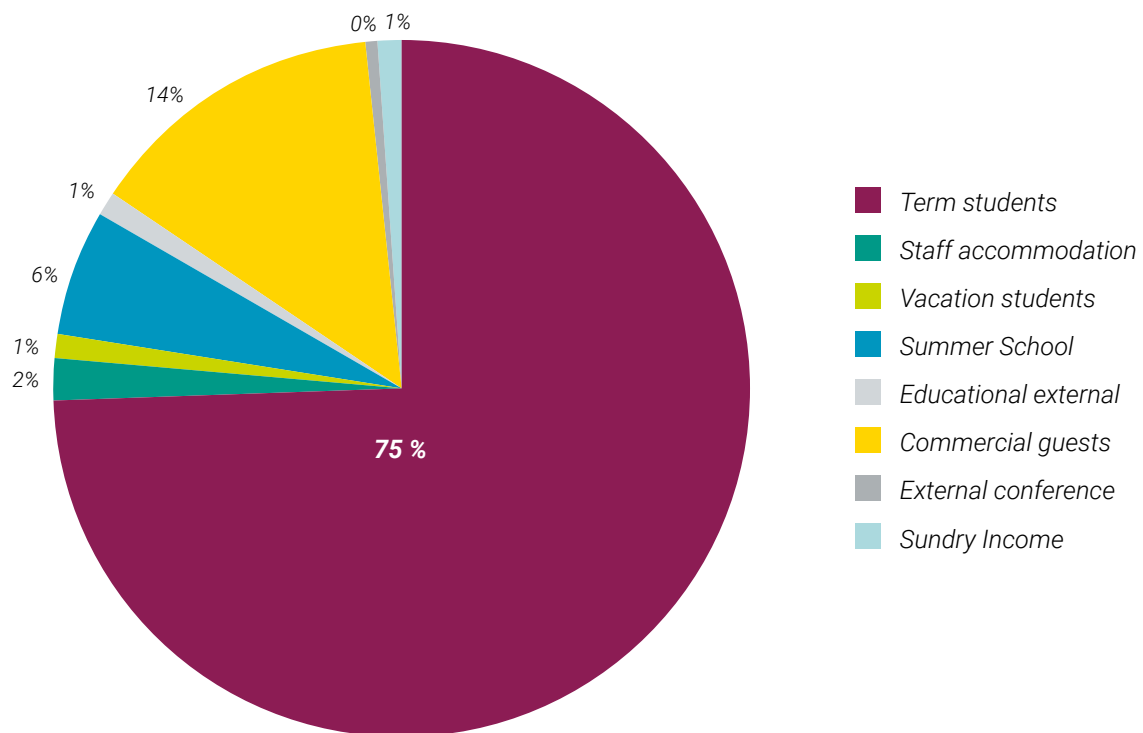


Figure 1: Residential Services income by type 2019/20

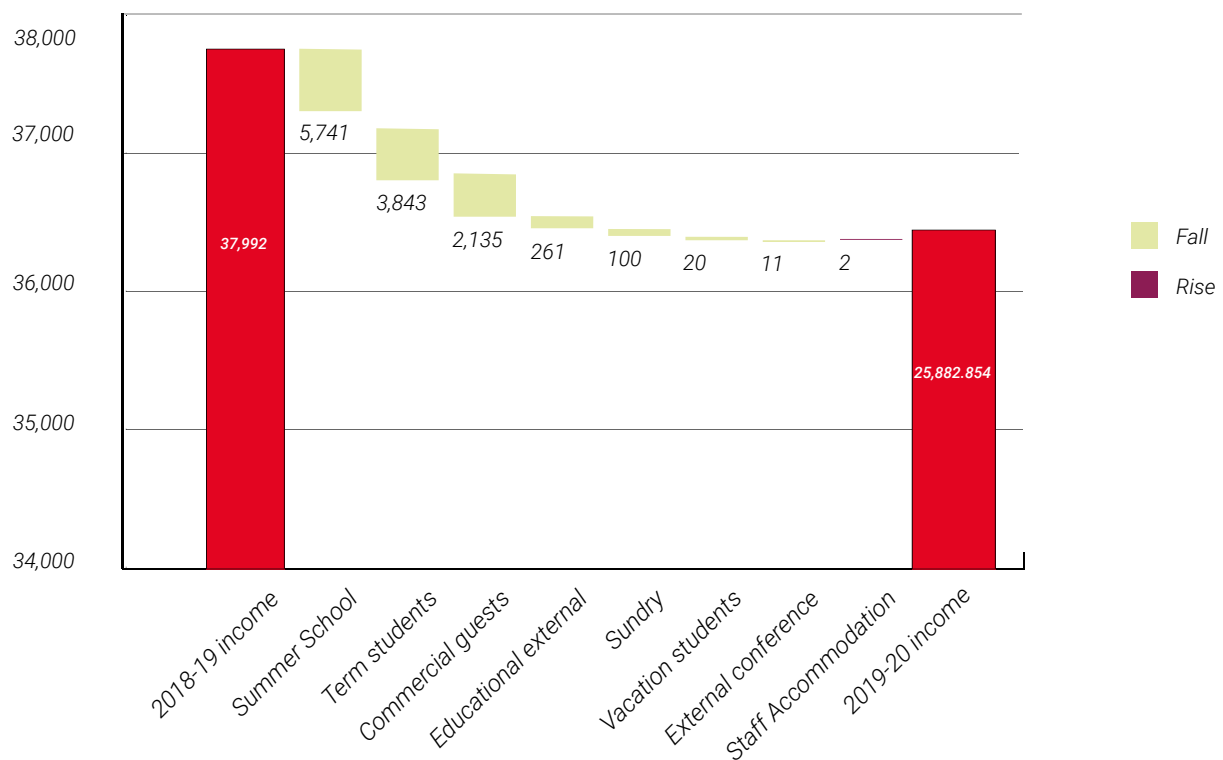


Figure 2: Residential Services movement in income by category 2019/20

## LSE Catering Services 2019/20 Income

The total income generated by LSE Catering Services in 2019/20 dropped by 17 per cent to £4.1m, a decrease of £0.85m on 2018/19. This decrease was due to the closure of catering outlets due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2019/20, income includes sales from the LSE General Store which LSE catering took over running from the LSE Students Union in August 2019.

	2018/19	% Total Income	2019/20	% Total Income	% Current Year v Previous Year
<b>Retail Outlets</b>	£2,908,976	58%	53%	£2,206,520	-5%
<b>Hospitality Services</b>	£2,082,827	42%	33%	£1,375,639	-8%
<b>General Store (Inc online)</b>	£0	0%	13%	£552,371	+13%
<b>Total Income</b>	£4,991,803	100%	100%	£4,134,53	0%

Table 2: Catering outlets and hospitality income in 2019/20

## Grosvenor House closure

Grosvenor House had been part of our portfolio since 2006 providing studio accommodation for up to 227 term time students, Summer School students and commercial business. In Summer 2020 the lease agreement with the landlord expired and we closed the doors in June 2020. To replace the lost beds, we signed a new agreement for 190 additional bed spaces with urbanest in Westminster Bridge – a very popular hall with excellent facilities.

During the decommissioning of the building, colleagues in Estates, DTS, Legal and Residences worked to ensure that the building was handed over safely. We were able to reuse furniture and fittings across our other sites and what couldn't be utilised was donated to the British Heart Foundation. Staff from Grosvenor House were redeployed to work in our other residences.

## **Developing plans for additional bed spaces**

As part of our strategic aim of providing accommodation to all first-year students and, to address the under provision of 51-week contracts for graduate students, we were extremely pleased when planning permission was granted by Southwark Council in July 2020, for a 676-bed hall of residence located next to Burgess Park.

The development received enthusiastic support from the LSE Students' Union for the design which includes generous common spaces within the hall, as well as the location next to Burgess Park, its ease of access to the School and affordable rents.

We look forward to the next stage of the project wherein it is hoped that the scheme will progress to construction with completion in 2024. The delivery of a new hall will signify an important milestone in the RCSD's long term plans to improve the quality of our accommodation so that we offer affordable, modern, inclusive, well-designed places for our students to live, where they can contribute positively to local communities.

## **Opening of new catering outlets**

### **Beveridge Café**

In 2019, LSE opened its new landmark 13-storey Centre Building at the heart of our campus on Houghton Street, home to world-class studies for the political sciences. Set on the ground floor, alongside student study and interaction is the Beveridge Café. Proudly named after William Beveridge; economist, social reformer and former LSE Director. Designed to be competitively priced, ethical, high-quality, innovative and sustainable the Beveridge Café soon became a favourite destination for LSE students and staff.

To meet the challenge of local competition and growing demand for high-quality barista coffee we sought only the best organic Fairtrade coffee and tea available from our supplier partners. With an emphasis on young student food trends, such as vegetarian, vegan, ethical, organic, low sugar and protein, we developed a range of healthy salads and breads, all freshly baked and prepared on site.

To complement our mission for excellence we sourced local award-winning pastries and sweet treats, fresh bakery and healthy fresh juices.







## Fawcett Café

The Fawcett Café opened in September 2019 to coincide with the renaming of 'the Towers' to Pankhurst, Fawcett and Pethick-Lawrences Houses. This was to mark 100 years since the extension of suffrage in Britain, when the first women won the right to vote.

As a homage to Millicent Fawcett, a key central figure in the British suffrage movement, the bijou café is the latest in our new openings to focus on quality vegetarian and vegan offerings. Ethically sourced barista coffee and teas are offered, along with locally sourced quality pastries and healthy nutritious filled breads, toasties and salads all handmade in our kitchen from fresh and seasonal ingredients.

## LSE Shop

LSE Catering were excited to take over the running of the LSE Shop from the Student Union in August 2019. The shop offers an extensive range of LSE branded clothing, memorabilia, and study stationery along with a selection of drinks and snacks. We have worked hard on expanding the environmentally friendly ranges in the shop. We aim to source sustainable products to meet the growing demands of LSE students and Alumni and we now have a dedicated eco-friendly range which is proving popular.

The LSE Shop also provides employment opportunities for LSE students, helping to provide a friendly and convenient location for our customers retail needs. For full details of what the LSE Shop offers see: [lshop.com](https://lshop.com)



## Environmental sustainability in RCSD

Creating a sustainable LSE is one of the three strategic objectives in our divisional Strategic Plan 2020-2025. Here are some of our many achievements in 2019/20:

### Reduce the Juice

In collaboration with the University of London, we continued with the “Reduce the Juice” which aims to deliver behavioral change initiatives along with Sustainability Ambassador training. 74 Reduce the Juice Ambassadors were trained, helping to lead our students at Butler’s Wharf residence towards a 44 per cent reduction in energy usage and at Rosebery Hall to a 16 per cent reduction in water usage.

### British Heart Foundation

We continued a successful partnership with the British Heart Foundation (BHF) giving new homes to unwanted items. The ‘Relove’ initiative resulted in 208 bags of items worth £2,912 being donated to the BHF. The equivalent of 1.7 tonnes of items were diverted from waste and 16,935kgs of CO2 gas emissions saved.

As part of decommissioning Grosvenor House, we were able to extend our support to the BHF by donating unused furniture and electrical items which amounted to just under £20k.

The British Heart Foundation really appreciates the LSE support in what has been a challenging year for the charity and those it supports.

### TRAID clothing donations

When the British Heart Foundation had to close their operations temporarily due to COVID-19, Butler’s Wharf and Bankside House made clothing donations of 20 bags to TRAIID.

TRAID collected 694 Kgs of clothing, saving 9535 Kgs of CO2e greenhouse gas emissions from March to May 2020 and 2379 Kgs of clothing, saving 32,687 Kgs of CO2e greenhouse gas emissions from March to October 2020.

### Green Impact

We contributed many teams to the Green Impact initiative achieving Silver and Bronze awards. LSE Catering received a Committed Contributor Award in 2020. Thanks to the fantastic efforts from all the Green Impact teams in Residential and Catering Services for 2019/20.

## Field to fork food sustainability

LSE Catering continued with their drive to embed sustainability at every step of the food life cycle, from field to fork. In collaboration with our waste contractor Bywaters, one key initiative introduced coffee cup recycling bins across campus. All cups placed in the bins are sent to a specialist processing plant to be recycled into high value paper products. To further improve the reduction of paper cups in the waste stream, we continued to promote use of Keep Cups with discounts offered to users and a levy placed on single use disposable cups.

In 2019/20 LSE Catering began offering a 50 per cent discount on any items coming near their use by date to prevent these going into the waste stream. The team continued their work with suppliers to procure locally sourced produce, delivered campus wide displays on the carbon footprint of dishes and embarked on a new initiative to investigate carbon labelling packages with a view to introduce the scheme in 2020/21.

LSE RCSD is committed to continued progress, demonstrated by joining the Public Sector 20 per cent less meat pledge in early 2020 which further improves the impact on carbon reduction.



## Creating an inclusive home for learning

### **We will continue to embrace diversity and foster belonging among our student body.**

The COVID pandemic had a huge impact on student life during the 2019/20 academic year. In Lent Term the School moved all teaching online, closed our campus and in residences we allowed students to end their accommodation contracts and return home. Around 500 students who could not return home remained in halls during the national lockdown and were supported by staff.

This inevitably affected our Residential Life programme, curtailing many events which would have taken place during Lent and Summer Terms. However, we still had lots of achievements:

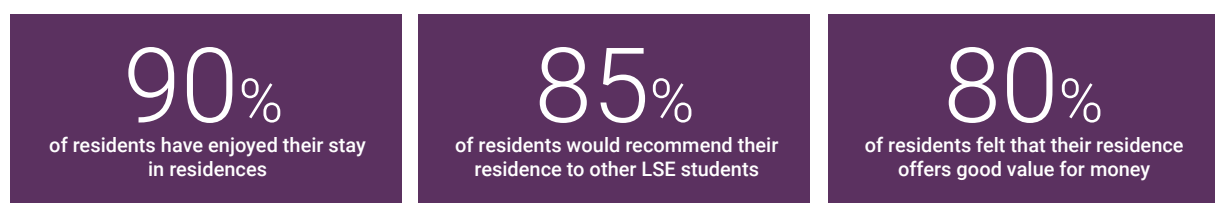
### **Annual student accommodation satisfaction survey**

In our 2019/20 annual satisfaction survey, 91 per cent of students in LSE-managed halls said they were enjoying their stay, 88 per cent said they would recommend their residence to other LSE students and 83 per cent felt their accommodation provided good value for money. Overall participation went down by five percentage points to 54 per cent, due to the survey being closed earlier than in previous years because of COVID.

For the second year running satisfaction scores from our third-party providers were close to LSE-managed halls demonstrating that the continuous drive to improve community building across all our halls is working.

Satisfaction with the laundry and WiFi service were two key areas where we saw an increased satisfaction in this year's results. This is a direct reflection of works in the last year to improve these areas.

#### **• Across all halls, including those managed by third-party providers:**



#### **• In LSE managed halls we saw that:**





## What students say about our service

"The community here at Bankside is amazing! From the wardens to the sub wardens as well as the people residing at Bankside!"

**Overseas undergraduate student, Bankside House**

"Always friendly, chats with us, always ready to help and always smiles!"

**EU undergraduate student, Northumberland House**

"Close to campus and the food is great."

**Overseas postgraduate student, Bankside House**

"Good value, quiet, good staff."

**UK postgraduate student, Butler's Wharf**

"Always so friendly and incredibly helpful about all things."

**Overseas postgraduate student, Grosvenor House**

"They are so so nice and friendly and always say hello when I am passing by, I would recommend all of the team members as I have had nothing but positive experiences with them."

**UK postgraduate student, urbanest King's Cross**

For the full report and set of statistics see: [lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents](https://lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents)



## Halls cup

Students showed great competitive and community spirit in the Halls Cup, with Rosebery Hall winning for the second year in a row. The friendly inter-halls competition continued across all eight LSE-managed halls, our four third party provider halls, and our University of London Intercollegiate halls.

Through collaboration between Residential Life, LSESU, the Volunteering Centre and the Sustainability Team our students raised £8,144, contributed over 413 hours to volunteering and had the opportunity to attend 220 wonderfully diverse events hosted across halls in the Michaelmas and Lent terms.

### What our students say about the Halls Cup

"The Halls Cup was a great motivator to engage in a range of events and activities for the student body. The Halls Cup T-shirts really do inspire team spirit!"

**Priyanka Kumar, Hall Committee President, Lilian Knowles House**

"The Hall's Cup encourages us to hold more events and do more for the LSE community."

**Wian Stipp, Hall Committee Vice President, Northumberland House**

"The Halls Cup is a great concept making halls a more fun place to live and the organization of events a game."

**Alexandre Hubert, Hall Committee Vice President, Bankside House**

"An opportunity to form a stronger bond to your hall."

**Mary Samaha, Hall Committee Events Officer, Carr-Saunders Hall**



## Customer feedback

As part of our commitment to providing a world class campus for our community, we take customer feedback seriously and we act on customer feedback. We received a total of 493 complaints in 2019/20 compared to 697 in 2018/19. The highest proportion of all recorded complaints were facilities-related (20 per cent) however this was a significant reduction from last year (59 per cent).

Refurbishing rooms whilst a building is occupied is not popular with students. We will reconsider future refurbishment plans considering this feedback.

During 2019/20, the number of recorded complaints rose slightly across most other categories.

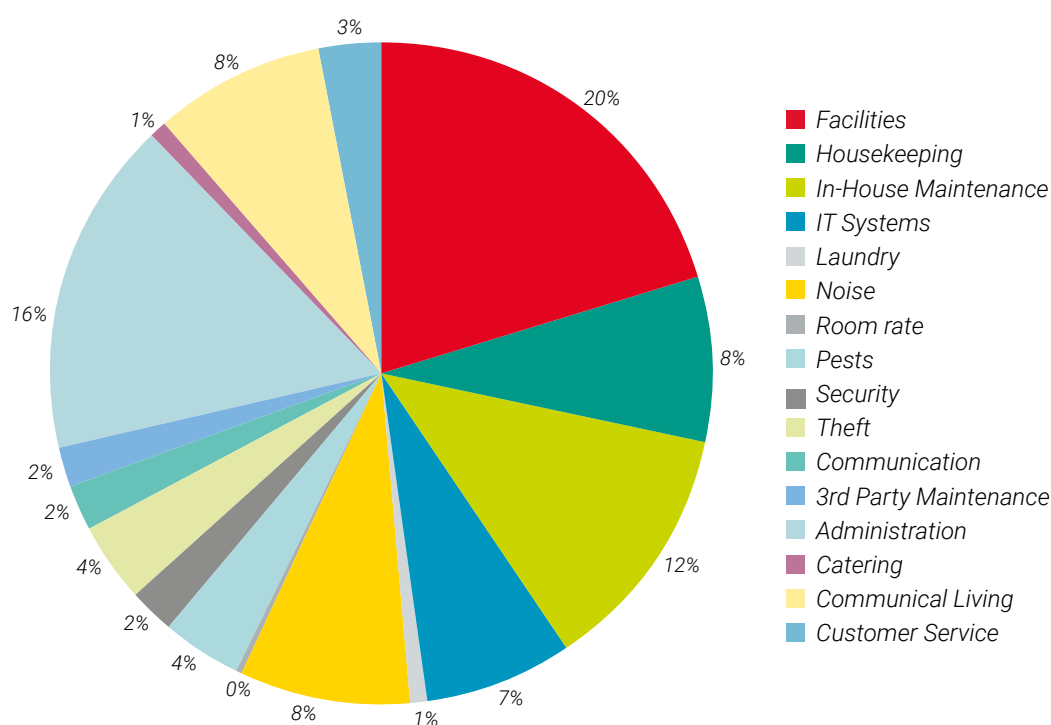


Figure 3: Residential Services complaints 2018/19

Compliments recorded in 2019/20 were from our commercial and student guests leaving positive feedback about their stay

### Compliments from our students and commercial guests

"Very good food, very pleased with it!"

**Commercial guest, Carr-Saunders Hall, January 2020**

"It's been a wonderful year so far and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Carr-Saunders. Due to the recent news about COVID-19 I will be returning home permanently today. Once again thank you so much for the amazing time."

**Undergraduate student, Carr-Saunders Hall, March 2020**

## Investing in our community

### **We will invest in supporting and developing all our staff.**

Investing in our community and supporting and developing our staff is one of our key strategic objectives. In 2019/20 we made good progress in empowering our staff to network with peers in professional associations for university accommodation and catering staff.

### **College and University Business Officers (CUBO)**

In November 2019 we organised and hosted the first CUBO London Regional Group meeting, which attracted 40 people. The event welcomed members from London Universities to exchange experiences and develop collaborations within the London regional area.

The event was organised so that residential and catering staff across London could network with one another. The timing was very fortunate as staff were able to use their new contacts during the COVID pandemic when members of the London Regional Group continued to meet fortnightly to share ideas.

### **TUCO The University Caterers Organisation**

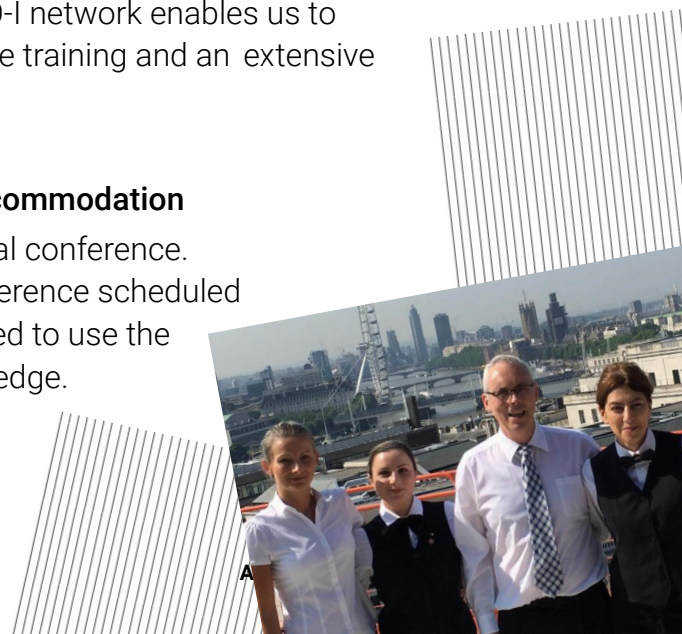
We continue to work closely with TUCO to improve training and to share knowledge and experience with colleagues in other UK universities. Staff attended the TUCO Academy sustainability workshops where there was an opportunity to share best practice and knowledge.

### **ACUHO-I The Association of College and University Housing Officers – International**

Our membership of ACUHO-I means that we are part of an association of more than 17,000 campus housing and residence life professionals representing 3.2 million on-campus students globally. Access to the ACUHO-I network enables us to share benchmarking data, research, access to online training and an extensive professional network.

### **ASRA The Association for Student Residential Accommodation**

One of the key events hosted by ASRA is their annual conference. Due to the current situation with COVID-19 the conference scheduled for April 2020 was cancelled but staff have continued to use the forums and contacts for advice and to share knowledge.





## Recruiting experienced staff

245 staff were employed in Residences and Catering Services in 2019/20, including approximately 40 LSE students.

Employing LSE students to work with us enables them to work part-time whilst studying and share their knowledge of living in halls and studying at LSE with us.

Following a review of service management in halls, a new post of Head of Residential Operations was introduced. Laura Barker was appointed in December 2019 and joined us in March 2020.

Laura joined us from the London Borough of Newham where she was Head of Resident Services. Laura was a member of the Housing Senior Management Team, responsible for ensuring the delivery of the directorate's business objectives and commissioning plan. She was responsible for the strategic lead of key elements of housing management services provided to 16,000 tenants and 7,000 leaseholders. Her remit included tenancy management, leasehold management, resident engagement, fire safety, concierge services, cleansing, new homes, Housing's emergency planning/response service and major project liaison consultation.

### What our student assistants think about working in RSCD

"Working for the RSO has been one of the best decisions I made during my time at university. Firstly, the rota was flexible so you could easily fit working for them around your studies. Secondly, as a student who had to work to fund my living expenses, the pay was very good. Finally, the experiences, skills gained and the people I worked with made working for the RSO an invaluable experience I would recommend to everybody."

**Ju Jeong, BSc Anthropology, 3rd year undergraduate**

"Working as a Residence Assistant was tremendously helpful for both my personal and professional development. I worked at LSE Bankside House for over 2 years including both in term-time alongside my studies and during the summer months where I was promoted to Shift Leader. I loved the customer facing role, particularly in the summer months which taught me so much about people management, organisational skills and ensuring excellent customer service."

**Eva Hadjipetrou, BSc Sociology, 3rd year undergraduate**

"The RSO was a great place to work as a student. It provided me the flexibility I needed to balance my studies and was a fantastic workplace environment. I truly felt that I was part of the team and was trained well to handle the duties of the role."

**Tracy Aliyuda, BSc Government, 3rd year undergraduate**

## **Provide appropriate training for RCSD staff**

Our staff have undertaken training across several key areas to support their professional and personal development. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training continues to be delivered to all staff in the Division and School, led by our Head of Residential Life, Victoria Frost.

One Finance training sessions were attended by colleagues to enable them to support the role out of our new finance system. EDI training, mentoring and career development workshop briefings were also attended by staff in the division.

Colleagues in LSE Catering made full use of the training on offer from TUCO. During the COVID-19 lockdown TUCO were able to continue training provision via webinars which colleagues in LSE Catering who were furloughed or working from home were able to join.

### **This included:**

- Delegation and motivation
- Assertive skills
- Vegan workshops run by the Humane Society
- Strategic and effective working
- Wellbeing, mental health and resilience

### **Sustainable Restaurant Webinars (SRA):**

- Re-open right – preparing for a safe and sustainable return to service

39 colleagues in LSE Catering achieved the Level 2 Food Safety and hygiene certificated training course for Caterers, 40 colleagues the Level 3 Award in Food Allergen Management for Caterers and 21 colleagues attended the Customer Care training.

### **In addition to that the team also carried out:**

- Food for Life Soil Association training
- Fire Training
- Bywater's Coffee cup scheme recycling training
- Level 2 Alcohol Licensing training award for Personal Licence Holders (APLH)
- LSE PCI-DSS Training

In October 2019, Rosa Gil, Minaxi Patel and Agnieszka Basza started the ILM Level 5 Management Apprenticeship. The qualification is aimed at individuals who manage teams or projects and are responsible for achieving operational or departmental goals and objectives as part of their organisation's strategy. Eyob Haile also started the ILM Level 3 Management Apprenticeship.

### **What our colleagues say about their training and development**

"The course is very intense, but I am enjoying it immensely. I have been able to put some of the theory into practice in my day-to-day job and I can already see the benefits. I believe that professionally I am achieving more awareness of my role and its impact on the division, our students and customers.

The course has helped me have greater awareness of how to develop valuable team members and help and support them to achieve and demonstrate their full potential. I am gaining a clearer view of the division and School's wider strategic plan and vision. I have a deeper understanding of the various policies and procedures which prior to the course were a bit "alien" to me! I have also gained more self-confidence and I feel that I can handle difficult situation in a better way.

**Rosa Gil, Front of House Manager, Rosebery Hall**

"This course will not only help me in my career development but will also allow me learn to better support the diverse needs of others that I am responsible for. The programme will allow me to identify my style of leadership and provide guidance and support for individuals, which in turn will help myself and others develop both within our present roles and our future roles.

I feel that the benefits of the course will effectively allow me to tap into the many talents that employees from different backgrounds, perspectives, abilities and disabilities bring to the workplace. In return, you will get the best out of them by increasing motivation, confidence, enthusiasm and productivity."

**Minaxi Patel, Front of House Manager, Carr-Saunders Hall and Passfield Hall**

## Thank you

Our thanks go to everyone who contributed to our successes in the division in 2019/20, staff, Student Union, Residences and Catering User Groups and our student community.

### Claudette Small

In August 2020 we lost a much-loved friend and colleague. Claudette Small had worked at the LSE for 22 years having started in July 1999. She was an integral part of our catering family, dedicated, loyal and always there to listen to other's problems and triumphs. Jacqui Beazley, Head of Catering said "I am privileged to have known her. She will be deeply missed by all those she has worked with at the LSE."

This report is dedicated to the memory of Claudette.





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