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1. Introduction

The London School of Economics Admissions Policy applies to all undergraduate admissions for entry in the academic year 2017/8. LSE's admissions policy is set by the Academic Board, where necessary with the agreement of the Council, which is the governing body. The Board receives guidance in this role from Admissions Tutors, Admissions Managers and the Pro Director for Teaching and Learning.

This policy provides information on principles and procedures of admission, and outlines the responsibilities of those involved in the admissions process.

2. LSE Context

2.1. Aims

LSE's admissions policy supports the mission and the vision of the School:

Our mission is to advance knowledge in social science and a range of related fields so as to inform public policy, economic decision-making, and social welfare both nationally and globally. This means nurturing creative thought and intellectual exploration and educating students from all backgrounds and around the world to be critical thinkers and skilled professionals who work for the betterment of society.

The principle aims of the School's admissions policy are:

- to admit students of the highest calibre, with the merit, potential and motivation to benefit from and contribute to and succeed in the LSE community
- to make selection decisions transparently, fairly, consistently and clearly

2.2. Widening Participation

LSE has long been committed to widening access to higher education and seeks to attract the most capable students from a wide range of backgrounds. LSE Strategy 2020 maintains the commitment to diversifying the School's intake from underrepresented groups by enhancing Widening Participation programmes. LSE's OFFA Access Agreement outlines the schools commitment to widening participation for 2017 entry.

2.3. Equality and Diversity

Equity, diversity and inclusions is a key priority in LSE Strategy 2020:

Our mission for the next five years is to build on the dynamic mix of diverse people, ideas and ways of seeing the world. We will use this resource in becoming a truly world-leading diversity champion. Fostering diversity will be recognised as being at the core of LSE's institutional viability and vitality, a core value of the academic mission, and as a priority of the institution.

Furthermore, LSE is committed to fulfilling its legal obligations under the Equality Act, which, in specific regard to the application process is to avoid discriminating against applicants on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender-reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

It is in accordance with this legal requirement, and with LSE's strong commitment to advancement of equal opportunities, that admission decisions are made holistically based on academic merit and potential.

2.4. Related regulations and policies

The admission policy and procedures comply with relevant legislation and is in accordance with the following:

- [London School of Economics Strategy 2020](#)
- [London School of Economics Access Agreement](#)
- [London School of Economics policy on supporting disability](#)
- [London School of Economics Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [QAA 'UK Quality Code for higher Education – Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admissions for higher education'](#)

3. Admissions Principles

3.1. Fair Admissions

LSE's policies and procedures for admissions aim to be fair, transparent and consistent. The admission policies and procedures are in accordance with relevant legislation affecting the admission of students and meets the expectations of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education (2013) (www.qaa.ac.uk).

The School seeks to admit candidates with the merit, potential and motivation to benefit from, contribute to and succeed in the LSE community, regardless of age, disability, race, nationality, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status or other personal circumstances.

Each applicant is considered on his/her merit and in competition with the rest of the applicant cohort in a given admissions cycle. Each application is viewed holistically; assessing the merit, potential, motivation, skills and qualities of applicants by considering all information presented on the UCAS application:

- academic achievements and qualifications (achieved/predicted), including GCSE grades (or equivalent), AS grades or marks (*where available*), A level grades (or equivalent), and/or other accepted qualifications
- personal statement
- academic reference

Applicants may be asked to provide additional information about themselves (for example, an academic reference) or the qualifications they have taken, such as an Access or Foundation course. Applicants for certain programmes (e.g. BSc Economics) may also be asked to supply the details of their unit grades.

3.2. Gathered Field

Applications received by the 15th January deadline will be considered equally. In order to give fair and equal consideration applications may be held as part of a gathered field alongside all 'on-time' applications. All decisions will be made by the 31st March at the latest.

3.3. Review

The School monitors procedures and regularly reviews and updates admissions policies and procedures.

3.4. Training

Departmental Academic Selectors, Admissions Specialists and other relevant administrative staff receive training appropriate to their roles. This training covers the relevant legislation and internal policies, procedures and guidance.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Overview

Students are admitted to the School on the authority of the Director, based on the academic judgments of suitably qualified individuals within the terms of this policy.

Decisions on fee status are taken by the Undergraduate Admissions team, following UKCISA guidelines.

The Head of Admissions controls the numbers admitted according to the target number of places set by the School. S/he makes an annual report to the Academic Board on the conduct and outcome of the year's admissions activity, highlighting any issues that may need resolution.

The Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning approves the standard entry criteria for all degree programmes.

4.2. Undergraduate Admissions Office

The Undergraduate Admissions Office ('the Office') is responsible for:

- providing clear and concise information about qualifications, entry requirements, application procedures and the admissions process
- upholding the principles of fairness, transparency and consistency that underpin the admissions process.

In order to fulfil these responsibilities the Office:

- advises on admissions procedures, offer numbers and academic qualifications;
- assigns Home UK/EU or Overseas fee status;
- checks that admissions decisions are lawful, fair, equitable, procedurally sound and in accordance with the permitted numbers;
- corresponds with applicants within UCAS rules and advises on registration;
- administers key processes such as verification of qualifications and visa/CAS processes;
- keeps a record of all transactions.

4.3. Admissions Specialists

LSE operates a centralised admissions process with Admissions Specialists acting as selectors by delegation from departmental Academic Selectors. Their role is to:

- advise on the creation of, and changes to, standard entry requirements and selection criteria;
- make admissions decisions (offer, reject) on all candidates passed to them by the Admissions Administrators against agreed selection criteria;
- liaise with Academic Selectors on complex cases.

5. Admissions and registration targets

The number of student places at the School is determined through the School's capacity to teach them. The School meets this requirement by setting caps on the number of UK/EU and non-UK/EU students on each programme of study. This system therefore involves two selection processes for each programme (i.e. one for UK/EU students, and another for non-UK/EU students) although it is important to note that the entry requirements are the same for both groups of applicants.

The number of undergraduate places available each year at LSE for students from the European Union (including the UK) is usually approximately 950. The number of undergraduate places available each year to overseas (non-EU) students is usually between 500 and 600.

LSE receives many more applications from highly qualified candidates than there are places available. In 2016 over 18,000 applications were received with approximately 9,500 from EU applicants and over 7,500 from non-EU applicants. The level of competition for places is intense, and therefore, the School is unable to make offers to many of these highly qualified candidates.

6. Enquiries

The School is committed to providing clear and concise information about qualifications, entry requirements, application procedures and the admissions process. This includes ensuring detailed and up to date information is provided in the prospectus and on the LSE website.

The printed prospectus is produced approximately 21 months before the point of registration for the group of students concerned and is correct at the time of going to print. Information contained in the printed prospectus regarding the admissions process remains relevant throughout the admissions cycle to which it relates. In the event that information changes (due to circumstances beyond our control) the School communicates these changes through the website and where necessary by direct communication to applicants affected.

6.1. Enquiries to the school

The office responds in a timely manner to enquiries from applicants and prospective applicants made by phone, email or post.

Prospective applicants with enquiries relating to undergraduate study should contact Student Recruitment and Marketing in the first instance.

Website: [Meet, visit and discover LSE](#)

Email: Stu.Rec@lse.ac.uk

Phone: (0044) 20 7955 6613

In Person: Prospective applicants, applicants and their families are welcome to visit the campus, either at a formal open day or by taking a self-guided tour. Further details can be found [here](#).

Applicant enquires, once an application has been made, can be made directly to Undergraduate Admissions.

Website: [UG Admissions](#)

Email: UG.Admissions@lse.ac.uk

Phone: +44 (0) 20 7955 7125

During busy periods there may be a delay in responses, however we endeavour to respond to all enquiries within 5 working days.

Enquiries regarding support for students with disabilities and specific learning needs can be made to the Disability and Wellbeing Service.

Website: [Disability and Wellbeing Service](#)

Email: disability-dyslexia@lse.ac.uk

7. Applications

Note that this section should be read in conjunction with all other relevant sections in this Policy.

LSE is committed to:

- processing applications efficiently;
- maintaining clear and regular communication with applicants throughout the application process;
- assessing applications equally, consistently and fairly based on the information in the application form, and as part of a gathered field.

7.1. The application process

All applications to LSE's undergraduate programmes must be made via the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

- Once an application has been received, the applicant is assigned to an *Admission Assessor* who acts as the main point of contact throughout the application process.
- The *Assessor Team* make a preliminary assessment of applications to identify and respond quickly to applicants with no prospect of success (i.e. those that do not meet the minimum programme entry requirements).
- Following the preliminary assessment, the remaining applications are passed on to the *Admissions Specialists* for further consideration.
- The *Admission Specialists* consider the remaining applications, consult with departmental *Academic Selectors* where necessary, and make the final admissions decisions.
- Once made, decisions are communicated quickly to applicants via UCAS track and email.
- Should any information on the completed application form be unclear, the applicant will be contacted directly.
- Throughout the application process applicants receive regular email updates regarding the status of the application.

7.2. Entry requirements

As a minimum requirement applicants are expected:

- to have achieved a minimum grade B in both English and Mathematics GCSE (or equivalent), with the exception of Actuarial Science, which requires a minimum grade A in Mathematics;
- to fulfil the standard entry requirements for specific courses, including any pre-requisite subject areas.

LSE's [Undergraduate Prospectus](#) and [website](#) provide detailed information on entry requirements and admissions procedures, including:

- the entry requirements for each individual degree programme
- the suitability of A level subjects, individually and in combination
- the suitability of overseas, vocational and non-traditional qualifications

- the acceptability of English language qualifications (for non-English language speakers)

The School does not use the UCAS tariff in terms of admissions criteria and procedures. It continues to require specific grades in particular subjects in acceptable academic qualifications.

7.3. English Language Proficiency

Applicants for whom English is not their first language will need to provide evidence of English language proficiency as a condition of their offer. The Undergraduate Admissions Office follows Home Office guidance when determining whether an English language qualification is required.

Further details and acceptable English language qualifications can be found [here](#).

It is not necessary for candidates to have the required grade in an acceptable English language qualification prior to application, however if an English language qualification is a condition of an offer the applicant will have to have achieved the required qualification prior to registration and before the end of August in the year of admission.

7.4. Retakes

The School prefers applicants who have achieved high grades in their AS and A level studies (or equivalent) on their first attempt. Examination resits are normally considered as less competitive although extenuating circumstances are taken into consideration.

7.5. Multiple applications

Applicants who make applications to more than one programme at the School within the same cycle will be considered for all programmes applied to. However an applicant would receive only one offer from the School.

Applicants who make repeat applications across different cycles will be considered independently without influence of previous admission decisions.

7.6. Deferred entry – applications

The School accepts applications for deferred entry limited to a single year. Equal consideration is given to deferred entry applicants. Two year requests for deferred entry will not be considered.

7.7. Second year entry

Direct entry to the second year of an undergraduate programme at LSE are highly unusual due to the specialised, and progressive structure, of the School's programmes of study. Several departments do not accept any students into the second year of undergraduate degree programmes, whilst other departments may consider applicants requesting direct

entry to the second year on an individual basis. Further information about second year entry criteria can be found [here](#).

Applications for direct entry to the second year should be made through UCAS by the 15 January. In addition to meeting the entry criteria for second year entry a place can only be offered if there is space on the programme in question.

The School does not permit direct entry into the third year of any LSE programme.

7.9. Contextual information

Please note that this section applies to UK students only.

The School uses contextual information to allow for fair and equal consideration of applications. In addition to qualifications, personal statement and reference contextual information is used to assess academic merit and potential. This information allows selectors to assess academic performance within a wider educational and social context, to identify and compare similar applicant cohorts, and to identify applicants with Widening Participation (WP) indicators.

The following educational and social contextual information is flagged for Home UK applicants and is considered holistically alongside all other application data:

- Low participation neighbourhood – if the applicant lives in POLAR 3 quintile 1 or 2. This information is sourced from publicly available POLAR3 data linked to the applicant's home postcode.
- Low performing GCSE School – if the applicant attended a GCSE school which performed below the national average. This information is sourced from the Department for Education's School performance data.
- Low performing A level school or college – if the applicant attended an A level school/college which performed below the national average. This information is sourced from the Department for Education's School performance data.
- Time spent in local authority care – if an applicant declares on their UCAS application that they have spent time in local authority care.
- Participation in an LSE Widening Participation programme – if an applicant has attended one of LSE CHOICE, LSE Pathways to Law, LSE Summer School or LSE Alison Wetherfield Programme.
- Other factors – if an applicant reports any other factors that may be relevant, e.g. medical issues, family issues, disrupted education experiences, etc.

Application data will be used in the selection process for the purpose of comparison and as part of the holistic assessment of applications.

The School will not take into account information regarding the parental experience of Higher Education of the candidate, should this be disclosed on the UCAS application.

7.10. Applicant extenuating circumstances

Extenuating circumstances affecting applicants should be declared by the referee in the reference or sent separately by email. LSE may request further information and evidence to confirm the extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances should detail how the circumstances have affected previous academic achievements or exam performance. Unsuccessful applicants are welcome to send in extenuating circumstances following a decision; however we cannot guarantee that the original decision will be overturned. Please see the appeals section for further information.

7.11. Admissions Tests and interviews

The School does not usually require applicants to undertake additional assessment or to attend an interview.

In some cases we will ask applicants offering some international qualification and some non-traditional qualifications, to take the LSE's [Undergraduate Admissions Assessment](#).

The Undergraduate Admissions Assessment is used to assess applicants from non-traditional backgrounds. The UG Admissions Assessment gives the Admissions Selector the opportunity to see a sample of the applicant's original work, produced under examination conditions, and seeks to assess applicants from a variety of backgrounds in a fair and equitable manner.

The UG Admissions Assessment is held at LSE in March, but may be taken in any approved examination centre abroad. The assessment is designed to test literacy and numeracy and consists of three sections, a précis of an English language text, an essay and tests of mathematical understanding. No special preparation is required. Past papers and further guidance can be found [here](#).

To be considered further applicants should meet the minimum pass mark in each of the three sections. Selection is based on holistic assessment and therefore the full range of information presented by the applicant is considered in the decision making process. This means that applicants who perform well on the entrance examination are in competition not only with other similar applicants but also with the entire applicant pool.

7.12. Feedback

Applicants who are unsuccessful in securing an offer of a place at LSE are provided with basic feedback on the reason(s) for their rejection. Feedback is provided to the applicant directly and the School is unable to respond to feedback requests from third parties.

8. Age on entry

The School will assess applicants on their individual merits against the programme entry criteria and in accordance with this Policy, regardless of their age on entry.

The Office will send a list of successful candidates who are under 18 at the time of registration to the Senior Adviser to Students and the relevant academic departments. This action enables the School to consider putting in place reasonable adjustments or conditions

of study to protect the interests of one or more parties, including those of the applicant. Notification of the School's policy for under 18s is included as part of the standard offer letter.

The School welcomes applications from individuals who are returning to study. Applicants are assessed on their individual merits against the entry criteria for the chosen programme. Applicants are normally expected to have had direct experience of study in the three years leading up to their desired programme of study. Relevant study could consist of two subjects from the generally preferred list of A levels, technical or vocational qualifications, Open University credits, Access or Return to Study courses.

Further information for mature applicants can be found [here](#).

9. International applicants

LSE accepts a range of international qualifications, which are deemed comparable and meet the equivalent level for entry to the degree programme applied for. Guidance as to the range of international qualifications accepted for entry can be found on the [Country Pages](#) of the LSE website. Additional information regarding the comparability of international qualifications can be found on the [National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom](#) (UK NARIC) or the British [Council](#) websites.

Some applicants offering some international qualifications may be asked to sit the UG Admissions Assessment (UGAA). Details of whether this is required can be found in the relevant country pages.

9.1. Tuition Fee status

On receipt of an application the School carries out an assessment of fee status. The decision is based on the guidelines provided by the Department for Education: Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 2007.

There are two categories of fee status, Home and Overseas and assessments are based on the information and affects provided at the time of application. In addition to information supplied in the application form, applicants may be asked to provide additional information about themselves and their family to help up assess fee status. If this is necessary applicants will be asked to complete a Fee Assessment Questionnaire and to provide relevant documents to support the information provided.

The [UK Council for International Student Affairs](#) (UKCISA) provides advice and information regarding fees, funding and student support.

9.2. Points-based Visa System

International students requiring further information on visas and immigration can contact the [International Student Visa Advice Team](#).

10. Applicants with disabilities or specific learning needs

The School welcomes applications from students with disabilities or specific learning needs. Applicants who declare a disability are given equal consideration and are assessed according to the same principles as other applicants.

Assessment of the application is sensitive to the different experiences of disabled students and takes into account their response to the opportunities and challenges they have encountered.

While the application process is sensitive to the experiences of disabled students, it will not involve the lowering of academic standards as a reasonable adjustment. The process of putting in place reasonable adjustments is separate to that used to assess applications.

The School encourages applicants to declare specific learning needs or disability on the UCAS form in order to identify support needs should the applicant be made an offer. The Office may ask them to discuss their likely requirements with advisors in the School's Disability and Well-Being Service at an early stage.

Further information can be found at the [Disability and Well-Being Service \(DWS\) page](#).

11. Applicants declaring criminal convictions

Selectors disregard criminal convictions that are spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, unless the programme of study is subject to an exemption under that Act, as that may be the case, for example, if a student is likely to come into contact with children or vulnerable adults.

An applicant declaring a criminal conviction will first be considered on the basis of the criteria for assessment set out in the sections above. If the selector wishes to make an offer to an applicant with an unspent (or, in relevant cases, spent) conviction, the School will first gather additional information from the applicant and, where appropriate, from the appropriate bodies (for example, the probation service, the youth offending team or relevant academic institution).

If, after considering the additional information about an applicant's criminal conviction/s the School considers it appropriate to offer a place of study, it will consider wider issues, including the safety and interests of all members of the School's community, to ascertain whether any additional measures need to be in place.

The final decision of whether to offer a place to an applicant with an unspent criminal conviction or (where relevant) a spent conviction is made by a group of relevant senior members of staff, normally convened by a Pro-Director of the School. For such an applicant, if admitted, the School reserves the right not to make the applicant an offer of a place in its halls

12. Refugees and Asylum seekers

LSE welcomes applications from refugees and asylum seekers. The School makes financial support available for refugees and asylum seekers who are made offers of a place at the School. Further information can be found [here](#).

13. Care leavers

Care leaver status is used for contextual admission purposes in order to provide more information to better assess previous qualifications and achievements. Care leaver status is self-declared by the applicant in the UCAS form, however confirmation may be requested by the Admission Selector.

14. Decisions and offers

Application data will be used in the selection process for the purpose of comparison and as part of the holistic assessment of applications. LSE reserves the right to assess prior attainment within the context of academic judgement and discretion, but remains committed to fair and consistent consideration of all applicants

The undergraduate admissions office communicates decisions to applicants quickly and clearly. All decisions are made and communicated no later than 31 March, although the School endeavours to reach and communicate decisions within 12 weeks of receipt of the application.

14.1. Standard offers

Offers are communicated to applicants via UCAS. The conditions of the offer are normally in line with published information although Admissions Selectors reserve the right to use their academic judgement and discretion to make 'non-standard' offers, for example in cases where candidates are taking exams in two separate sittings over two years the offer may stipulate specific grades in specific subjects. The Office checks all offers to ensure that they are in accordance with this Policy and other relevant procedures.

The offer of admission and acceptance of a place applies to a specific degree programme that is named in an offer. The School will not allow a successful applicant to transfer from one programme to another, unless it considers that exceptional circumstances apply.

14.2. Offer holders

Applicants receiving an offer will be sent an offer guide and invited to attend LSE's offer holder day. Further details can be found [here](#).

By accepting an offer of admission, the applicant agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the School, and accepts that his/her relationship with the School is governed by English law and that the English courts have sole jurisdiction. Copies of the regulations can be found on the School's website [here](#).

15. Confirmation

Applicants who have accepted and met all the conditions of an offer will be informed of procedures and requirements for registering as student of LSE. Information about registration at LSE can be found [here](#).

15.2. Marginal Fail

Applicants who narrowly miss the conditions of their offer are considered as a marginal fail. Their application is automatically referred back to the Admission Selectors for reconsideration and is assessed in competition with all other marginal fail offer holders. There is no guarantee that a place will be confirmed at the School. The number of marginal fail offer holders to be offered a place will depend on the number of places available in any given year.

Decisions on marginal fail offer holders and the confirmation of places will be carried out during the week prior to the release of A Level results.

15.3. Re-marks

If an offer holder meets the conditions of their offer following a re-mark, the offer made to them will be honoured and their place reinstated. This decision is subject to grade changes due to a re-mark being communicated to the School by the stated deadline.

15.4. Offer Holder extenuating circumstances

Offer holders affected by extenuating circumstances must submit details by the stated deadline. These will then be taken into consideration by the Academic Selector during Confirmation.

15.5. Clearing and Adjustment

The level of competition at the School means that LSE does not typically accept applications in the adjustment period. This will be confirmed on the LSE website during the adjustment period. The School would welcome new applicants for admission in the following year from those applicants who have done better than expected. LSE does not typically participate in Clearing.

15.6. Offer-holders deferred entry

Offer-holders wishing to defer entry to the next year should contact the undergraduate admissions office outlining the reasons for deferring. Deferral requests must be received by the end of July and approval is not guaranteed.

15.7. Document verification and fraud

Offer holders are required to provide officially verified copies of qualifications, either as part of an offer or to verify previous study. Summer IB, A level, Pre-U and Scottish Higher results are typically verified through UCAS. For other qualifications, applicants are required to provide certified copies. Offer letters will state if certified copies are required and provide a deadline. Information on how to correctly certify copies of your qualifications can be found [here](#).

The School reserves the right to reasonably refuse an application; lay down such conditions as it sees fit for admission; and terminate, with immediate effect and without appeal, the registration of an individual who is subsequently discovered to have omitted or falsified relevant facts or information concerned with his/her application. The School also reserves the right to pass information to interested parties such as UCAS and UKVI where an application is deemed fraudulent.

Information about UCAS's policy on fraudulent or misleading information can be found [here](#).

16. Changes to and discontinuation of Programmes

In compliance with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) [guidance](#) the School publishes information on all changes to and discontinuation of programmes on its' website [here](#).

17. Appeals and Complaints procedures

The School is committed to the fair and professional and handling of complaints. The School will consider appeals if it has reason to think that the decision in question:

- is based on a flawed procedure; or
- is in some way unlawful; or
- did not take account of exceptional circumstances, which had not previously been brought to the School's attention for a good reason at the time of application.

An applicant cannot challenge the academic judgement of an Admissions Selector, or other suitably qualified person who, under this Policy, can assess an application.

The responsibility for providing accurate information regarding qualifications (grades and/or levels) and other details in relation to their application lies with the applicant and their

previous place of education. The School cannot accept responsibility or compensate for incorrect information submitted through UCAS by the applicant, unless it is advised of such errors before it has made its decision.

An appeal must be made in writing to the Office within 10 working days of an applicant receiving an admissions decision. It must set out the grounds for the appeal. The Head of Admissions, or suitably qualified nominee of the Head of Admissions will consider these grounds and inform the appellant of his/her decision in writing.

18. Data protection

All applications made are subject to the 1998 Data Protection Act (DPA) up to 24 May 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation from 25 May 2018.

The information provided in the application will only be used for admissions purposes within the School and will form part of the student's record if they accept a place. The information will be confidential between the applicant, LSE and any other parties where the School is legally obliged to provide the data or the applicant has consented to release of the data. As part of the application process LSE will sometimes have to release information to authorised outside agencies, such as the police or the Home Office, to prevent or detect fraud or to bodies like HESA who provide statistics on applications based on data from all UK universities.

Communications between the applicant and LSE undergraduate admissions are conducted by staff who have received relevant training.

In accordance with the Data Protection law an applicant may request to see any personal data held by us. Under the Data Protection Act, an applicant must submit a formal request, a fee and proof of ID. The School will release the data within 40 days of the request. Under the General Data Protection Regulation, there is no fee and the response will be within one month. Further information is available here:

lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/Legal%20Team/dataProtection/Home.aspx