



Academic Chair Guidance for LSESU Societies

What is the role of an Academic Chair

The main duty of Academic Chairs is to uphold freedom of speech within the law. This means they must adhere to [LSE's Code of Practice on Free Speech](#), by impartially facilitating the discussion with your speakers, and maintaining good order at the event.

When are they required?

An Academic Chair is required at any event on LSE Campus if:

- It's open to the public (including students from other universities)

and/or:

- Your speaker is high-profile as re our speaker profile scale, or could require extra security considerations
- The topics you're discussing could attract strongly differing views (regardless of where your society sits within these views)

Finding a Chair

How to find an Academic Chair

[This directory](#) may help, as you can add a filter to find academic staff. You can also reach out directly to staff you know from your LSE Department.

Please provide details of your **confirmed** academic chair to your SU staff lead by **10 days** before the event. Otherwise, the event will need to be rearranged.

Who is eligible to be an Academic Chair?

Full-time members of LSE academic staff, usually Professors.

Unfortunately, Visiting Professors, Associate Professors, Fellows and PhD candidates are ineligible as they fall outside of LSE's criteria.

For more information about LSE's academic chair requirements, please visit [this page](#) and scroll down to the 'Opening Events to the Public' section.

Before the Event

It is your group's responsibility to fully brief your Chair in advance of an event, including:

- Details of the Chair's arrival (e.g. their arrival time and who will meet them from your committee)
- The structure of the event
- Topics of discussion
- Details of your invited speakers
- Will there be an audience Q&A? If so, how will this work?

Please also send them [LSE's Chairnotes](#), to ensure they understand the full responsibilities of their role.

During the Event

To comply with LSE's regulations, for the entire event the Academic Chair must:

- Be present throughout
- Be on the stage
- Lead and facilitate the conversation and questions with the external speaker in an impartial manner
- Adhere to [LSE's Code of Practice on Free Speech](#)

Further details are outlined in [LSE's Chairnotes](#).

After the Event

Be sure to email your Academic Chair after the event to thank them for taking the time to be an integral part of your event! You can even buy them a small gift as a thank you, such as some flowers or a card (which can be reimbursed from your Society account).