**Client Charter and Service Standards Agreement**

This Client Charter and Service Standards Agreement will define what you (the service user) can expect from our service, as well as what we (the service) will expect from you as a service user. By completing the Client Authorisation Form you agree to abide by the Client Charter and Service Standards Agreement as outlined below.

**Service limitations**

London School of Economics and Political Science Students’ Union (LSESU) Advice Service will be available to current London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) students, who are members of LSESU.

If you have:

• withdrawn from your studies;

• been withdrawn;

• graduated;

• been expelled;

• or have chosen to terminate your membership of the LSESU;

then LSESU Advice Service will continue to offer you services up to 12 months from the date that you ceased to be a LSESU member. This period will not be extended or negotiated. If we have started advising you within the above 12 month period, but your case prolongs for longer than this, we will still continue to advise you.

**What you can expect from us and our obligations**

1. **Data Protection**

LSESU Advice Service will abide by the LSESU Data Protection Policy and [Privacy Policy](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.lsesu.com%2Fpageassets%2Fsupport%2Fadvice%2FLSESU-Privacy-Policy.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK). These outline your rights under the General Data Protection Regulations 2018

1. **Authority to Act**

LSESU Advice Service will aim to empower students to act on their own cases. However, sometimes LSESU Advice may agree with you to act on your behalf.

By signing this agreement, you agree that your Adviser may, from time to time, discuss your case with members of LSE or LSESU Advice Service staff or other authorised third parties. As far as possible, all discussion will be agreed with you ahead of time.

You also agree that in some situations your Adviser may act on your behalf. As far as possible, any action on your behalf will be agreed with you ahead of time. Such action may include but will not be limited to:

• Communicating with LSE members of staff;

• Negotiating and advocating for you in LSE meetings and panels;

• Submitting forms;

• Submitting evidence;

• Requesting information relevant to your case from LSE. When LSESU Advice Service or its Advisers act on your behalf, they will maintain a policy of confidentiality (detailed below).

1. **Representation and Advocacy**

LSESU Advice Service and its Advisers may represent and advocate for students at meetings and panels held under the Appeals against General Academic Regulations, Regulations on Assessment Offences, Complaints Procedure, Student Disciplinary Procedure, as well as some other informal and conciliatory meetings within LSE.

Such representation will be subject to the availability of an Adviser, and at least 3 working days’ notice will normally be required in order to allow time for the Adviser to familiarise themselves with the case.

Representation and advocacy will be of a supportive and advisory nature, rather than in the same capacity as a legal representative.

LSESU Advice Service may not be able provide representation in every case, based on the complexity of the case or caseload burden, even with 3 working days’ notice. In such circumstances, LSESU Advice Service will work with you to try to have your meeting postponed or rearranged, or we will provide you with advice so you feel confident in attending alone or with a friend.

1. **Confidentiality**

LSESU Advice Service will strictly adhere to our Confidentiality Policy. All information that students share with LSESU Advice Service will be treated with the strictest confidence.

An Adviser may share information with another Adviser within LSESU Advice Service but will not share any information with a third party outside the LSESU Advice Service without your full consent.

All face-to-face appointments will be conducted in a dedicated private space and any e-mail correspondence will be accessible to authorised LSESU staff only.

The LSESU Advice Service Confidentiality Policy recognises that occasions may arise where Advisers feel they need to breach confidentiality. LSESU Advice will recognise that any breach of confidentiality may damage the reputation of the service and will therefore treat any decision to breach with utmost seriousness.

Circumstances where an Adviser may feel they need to breach confidentiality may include:

• Situations involving a high risk of serious actual/potential self-harm or harm to others.

• Conflicts of interest which necessitate an Adviser informing one or more client(s) that they cannot provide advice services or that they can no longer act on the clients’ behalf. By their very nature, such conflicts will draw attention to the fact that Advisers are acting for the other parties and/or that other parties have sought advice from the service.

• Violations of the law, or situations wherein not to breach confidentiality would break the law; for example, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1989, it would be an offence to fail to give information which would help to prevent acts of terrorism or apprehend a terrorist. Breaches of confidentiality are covered in more detail in our Confidentiality Policy.

1. **A free service**

LSESU Advice Service will provide a free service to all members of LSE Students’ Union.

1. **An independent service**

LSESU is its own charitable organisation and all advice offered from LSESU Advice Service will be independent of all external or third parties including LSE.

1. **An impartial service**

Our Advisers will be independent but impartial. LSESU Advice Service will not operate a service that is unnecessarily adversarial with LSE. The Advice Service will give impartial advice to students. We will explore all options for the resolution of your case with you, while ensuring any consequences of your available options are explained without prejudicing you to a particular viewpoint. It will strictly advise on LSE policy. The Advice Service will advise on the point of view of LSE as an institution and its policies alongside exploring your options and your point of view.

1. **An empowering service**

LSESU Advice Service attempts to empower students to make their own decisions about the best way forward through any given advice. The Advice Service will support and empower you to take control of your situation. We prefer to support you to take necessary actions yourself and will not normally act on your behalf.

1. **A non-judgemental service**

LSESU Advice Service will assist and advise all students and consider all cases regardless of their current situation or how it arose. We will not pass judgement. We will not ask questions or ask for information unless we feel it is relevant to the case.

1. **Equality and Respect**

LSESU Advice Service will provide equal access to all students and not discriminate against a service user on any grounds, compliant with LSESU’s Equality and Diversity Policy.

1. **An honest service**

Advisers will provide honest advice and guidance on academic issues and LSE procedures based on experience and knowledge of the regulations. Advisers will not guarantee any outcomes for a given case. We will not unduly speculate or base advice pertinent to a given case on speculation. We will only provide guidance and advice based on criteria and rules set out in the policy of LSE. Advisers will not provide any advice on issues outside their field of competence. If an Adviser cannot give advice on any issue then they may refer the student to another source of assistance.

1. **A responsive service**

LSESU Advice Service will aim to respond to emails within five working days and will let you know if we expect to take longer to provide you with a response in busy periods. LSESU Advice Service will aim to provide you with written information within five working days of any appointment outlining the details of the meeting as well as what advice was offered. The first working day will be counted as the working day *after* the appointment is held or the email is received by LSESU Advice Service.

1. **An accessible service**

LSESU Advice Service will implement reasonable adjustments where possible to ensure your access to the service is not disadvantaged due to any neurodiverse or disability issues you disclose.

**What We Expect from You**

1. **Commitment**

LSESU Advice Service will expect you to arrive for any appointment in good time. A maximum of two appointments of 30 minutes duration will be offered per case, unless another appointment is required, which will be at the discretion of the Adviser.

Once the appointment has been offered, you will have to respond within 24 hours to confirm whether you will keep it, otherwise we cannot guarantee that the appointment slot will be held for you.

Failure to arrive within 10 minutes of the appointment time will result in the loss of the appointment and you may not be seen for a full week after dependent upon appointment availability.

For the avoidance of doubt, LSESU Advice Service will cancel any appointment if you arrive any later than ten minutes after the appointed time agreed for the meeting.

LSESU Advice Service will expect you to notify us if you know that you will be unable to attend or are going to be late. Where you are likely to be more than 10 minutes late we will not be able to hold the appointment or wait for you; it is likely you will be advised to rebook.

LSESU Advice Service may discontinue, limit, or otherwise restrict face-to-face advice if you miss TWO appointments.

You will be expected to bring any documents, e-mails, letters, and other materials that are relevant to your case as the details in these items may be central to the advice we provide.

LSESU Advice Service will expect students to carry out any course of action agreed between them and an Adviser. Failure to carry out agreed actions or to present relevant documents and information may considerably delay any further action in the case.

 **2. Responsibility**

LSESU Advice Service will encourage you to take responsibility for your studies and your case. This means we will expect you to write your own statements and correspondence and speak for yourself in meetings and hearings. However, appropriate support will always be provided to review any statements and correspondence prepared by yourself.

The ultimate responsibility for the progress of any case will rest with you.

LSESU Advice Service will expect you to submit forms and take necessary action on your case within set time limits as per LSE policy or agreement with your Adviser. You will ensure that you follow advice provided in a timely way.

The Advice Service will make sure that you feel confident to act on your case by providing you with guidance, support and feedback at every step

 **3.Honesty**

LSESU Advice Service will expect you to provide honest and accurate information pertinent to your case. In order for us to provide accurate and relevant advice, we will request you provide all of the facts and information surrounding your circumstances. We appreciate that your circumstances may include sensitive information. Such information will remain confidential. Failure to disclose all relevant information in good time may affect the outcome of your case. In cases, where a student deliberately withholds information material to their case, it may lead to withdrawal of service from you.

 **4. Communication**

LSE and other third parties may communicate with you directly. LSESU Advice Service will expect you to keep us informed of any pertinent communications from LSE or other third parties throughout the duration of your case.

 **5. Respect**

We ask that you be patient when corresponding with your Adviser, who will be managing a high number of other urgent cases alongside yours. If you are waiting for an email response or call back, please bear this in mind and allow your Adviser reasonable time to respond.

We will expect all students to treat our staff with respect. You will be expected to adhere to all relevant LSE policies around conduct when using our service.

Failure to behave in a respectful manner may result in a withdrawal of service.

**Feedback and Complaints**

We always look to improve LSESU Advice Service and welcome feedback from students. Students may write to us – su.advice-centre@lse.ac.uk , and let us know how we can improve our service.

Herewith details of our [Complaints and Disciplinary Policy](https://www.lsesu.com/pageassets/union/policies/LSESU-Complaints-Disciplinary-Procedures.pdf)