

Hansard Society Scholars

Academic Guidelines – Summer Term

The Hansard Society Scholars programme combines practical experience with academic training in political science. The programme is comprised of three elements:

- Internship
- Inside Westminster course
- Guest Lectures / Study Visits

Each element is outlined in the following guidelines. Please read them carefully. If you are unclear about any aspect, please contact the Programme Manager.

Internship

You are required to complete a **three-day-a-week** internship whilst in London. It is your responsibility to keep the Programme Manager or Scholars Outreach & Partnerships Coordinator (SOPC) informed if for any reason you are unable to attend your placement.

Your internship grade will be based on your reflective essay. You will receive instructions on writing this essay in a dedicated orientation session.

Guidance and marking criteria for the assessed essay are given in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

The reflective essay should be around 2,000 words in length. An electronic copy must be submitted to the Programme Manager by the due date.

Course

The academic component of the programme is delivered through the Inside Westminster course.

This is a two-part course comprised of a series of academic lectures on key aspects of British politics (Part 1) and a series of interactive workshops on issues related to careers in politics and the internship experience (Part 2). The course provides a valuable framework for your internship, and your experiences during the internship will also help to guide your academic thinking.

A reading list is provided for the course (see Course Outline) indicating both the minimum reading required to be undertaken in advance of each weekly class, as well as providing guidance on more in-depth reading for essays and other assessments. Although the supplemental readings (which will come from a range of sources such as newspapers, journals and textbooks) are not listed as required, scholars are strongly urged to explore them.

For **Part 1** of the course, scholars are required to write an essay (worth 25% of the credit for the course) and take a two-hour exam (worth 75% of the credit for the course; scholars will be expected to answer two questions out of a choice of four).

The essay should be 2,500 words in length, double-spaced and in a legible font and must include a bibliography and list of references (see Appendix 1). Please refer to the course outline for a list of essay titles. In the UK Higher Education system, there is a strong focus on answering the questions directly rather than treating it as a 'prompt' to write around. **Please do not change the titles in any way and make sure you answer the question completely.**

For **Part 2** of the course, scholars will submit a portfolio of work relating to their internship. The portfolio is comprised of two elements:

- A series of three blog posts (300-500 words each) on different themes relating to the internship and contemporary issues in British politics
- A reflective internship essay of 2,000 words

Scholars will work with the course lecturer in defining the topics of their blog posts and there will be workshops dedicated to these components of the portfolio. Appendix 2 also includes some tips on defining topics.

An electronic copy of all pieces of coursework must be emailed to the Programme Manager by the due date. Scholars who submit their coursework after the deadline will be penalised as per Appendix 5 **(unless an extension has been approved in advance by the Programme Director)**.

Submitting Assignments

(essays and blog posts)

Naming the electronic file of your assignment:

Your electronic file should be named according to your LSE ID number and the name of the course/assignment.

For example, 333222 – *Inside Westminster Part 1 Essay.doc*, where 333222 is your LSE ID number.

File types accepted:

Only Microsoft Word documents and PDFs are accepted. For example, *.doc*, *.docx* or *.pdf*.

Cover page

The top page of each assignment should have your LSE ID number, the title of your assignment and the word count. Do not include your name on the assignment.

Honour Pledge

The following declaration should be written on a separate sheet, but attached in the same email you send to the Programme Manager with your essay (you should have two documents attached to the email). **If the Honour Pledge is missing, the assignment will not be marked.** It is acceptable to type the declaration, the date and your name, or you can use an electronic signature. Please use the same format as listed above for naming your Honour Pledge (for example, 333222 – *Inside Westminster Part 1 Essay Honour Pledge.doc*).

You can simply copy and paste the Honour Pledge as it is written here:

*Plagiarism (unacknowledged borrowing or quotation) is an examination offence and carries heavy penalties. In submitting his/her essay and signing below, the student acknowledges it is his/her own work which contains no plagiarism **and that it has not been submitted previously for any assessed unit on the course, or for any other degree course at his/her home university or elsewhere.***

Scholar ID Number: _____

Course Title: _____

Scholar Signature: _____

External Examiner

All exams and essays are double-marked. This means that they are marked first by the course lecturers and secondly by a member of the Government Department at the LSE who acts as an External Examiner. The External Examiner reviews all essays and exams to ensure that the marks given by the course lecturers are fair and fit within the Hansard Society's and the LSE's grading standards. The marking criteria are outlined in Appendix 4. The External Examiner, as well as the Director of Studies, also checks the exam questions in advance to scrutinise their fairness and clarity.

Guest Lectures/Study Visits

Throughout the programme and during the political study visit, scholars are expected to attend all guest lectures. These sessions will be hosted by high-level political figures, including political journalists and commentators, senior civil servants, Peers and prominent academics. They provide scholars with an invaluable opportunity to learn more about the political process from within through informal presentations and Q&As. Scholars will find the speakers to be useful resources for essays, and are expected to make the most of the opportunity to ask questions. Guest lectures take place under the “Chatham House Rules”: ‘When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rules, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.’

Attendance

Attendance at all seminars, lectures and guest lectures/study visits is compulsory and, under Home Office immigration rules, **non-attendance is in breach of the terms and conditions of scholars’ visas**. More importantly, however, attendance is central to scholars’ learning outcomes and overall experience on the programme. Scholars should attempt to arrive at least 10 minutes before the start of each class (arrival 15 minutes or more after the start of class will count as an automatic unexcused absence). If you are unable to attend class for medical or other reasons, you must contact the Programme Manager or the SOPC before the class in question, where possible.

Computer and Printing Facilities at the Hansard Society Office

Computers and printing facilities are available for scholars’ use at the Hansard Society’s King Street office to augment study facilities available at the LSE and at Chapter accommodation. These facilities are available from 10:00 am - 6:00 pm Monday through Thursday and from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm on Fridays. Please try to book computer time with a programme staff member in advance to avoid congestion.

Classroom Conduct & Expectations

The lectures offer a valuable overview of topics in British politics. They give scholars the opportunity to discuss key topics in-depth with academics that are committed to giving scholars the opportunity to learn from their expertise and help to build scholars' knowledge and academic skills. In order for the lectures and seminars to be successful, it requires a reciprocal commitment from the scholars in their conduct in the classroom. In particular, we ask that scholars do not undertake any activity during the classes that may disturb your classmates, such as using social media or mobile phones, eating, leaving and re-entering the room, etc. This will help to create a productive and relaxed learning environment, which will greatly benefit the whole cohort of scholars.

Appendix 1: Referencing

There are several different referencing conventions, and it does not matter which one you adopt provided that you cite sources properly, giving all the necessary information, and keep to the same convention throughout. We recommend that you use either Harvard or footnote style references. Further details on referencing can be found at:

<http://learningresources.lse.ac.uk/24/1/L045APACitingAndReferencingGuide.doc>

Bibliography

References are scholarly acknowledgements of work referred to or quoted or of statistics or other factual information. At the end of the dissertation you must give a single list of all the references you have used. This list of references should be arranged alphabetically with full bibliographic information. The alphabetical list should include all the references which have been used (books, articles, reports, government publications, theses, etc.).

References should be set out as follows:

For books

Johnson, B., (1991) *The Art of Referencing*, London: Macmillan.

For articles

Johnson, B., (1978) 'The Harvard System', *Academic Quarterly* 28 (2), pp. 184-207.

For chapters in books written by one author and edited by another

Johnson, B., (1989) 'Referencing for Pedants', in Smith, R. and Jones, A. (eds) *Scholarly Practice*, London: Pergamon.

Where you cannot find the author's name (for example, in a government report), use the name of the issuing body:

Amnesian Ministry of the Environment (1991) *Hygiene Relating to Food Retailing*, Amnesiavill: MoE

For Internet sources

Include as much detail as possible about the site and the author. Include the web address and the date it was downloaded. Example:

Gross, N. (2001) 'Commentary: Valuing "Intangibles" is a tough job, but it has to be done', *Business Week*, 8 August, (www.businessweek.com/print/magazine/content/01_32/b3744008.htm?mainwindow) (accessed 30 July 2001).

Quotations

Short Quotations

When quoting forty words or fewer, run the quotation on in your text, enclosing the quotation in single inverted commas, Example:

As Kant argues, the concept of an international right is 'meaningless if interpreted as a right to go to war' (Kant, 1970, 105).

Long Quotations

When quoting more than forty words, break off your text with a colon, indent the entire quotation, and use single instead of double spacing. Example:

There are problems with explaining action in rational terms as Davidson has suggested:

The underlying paradox of irrationality, from which no theory can entirely escape, is this: if we explain it too well, we turn it into a concealed form of rationality; while if we assign incoherence too glibly, we merely compromise our ability to diagnose irrationality by withdrawing the background rationality needed to justify diagnosis at all (Davidson, 1982, 303).

Omissions

When you want to omit part of a quotation, use three spaced full stops. Example:

Issues become a part of the culture of group voting as Berelson *et al.* argue:

In 1948 some people were in effect, voting on the internationalism issues of 1940, others on the depression issues of 1932, and some, indeed on the slavery issues of 1860. . . so there is always an overlapping of old and new decisions that give a cohesion in time to the political system (Berelson et al, 1954, 316).

Accuracy

When quoting, be careful to copy the **exact** wording, spelling and punctuation of the original.

Appendix 2: Part 1 Essay and Blog Post Tips

Part 1 Essay

Scholars must answer one of the essay questions set in the Course Outline. Scholars may wish to consider the following general advice on essay writing.

Structure

Introduction

Your introduction should do a number of things, depending upon your choice of subject. The organisation of your introduction will depend both upon your topic and upon your style of writing.

Here are a number of features, which you might want to consider.

- It should provide an engaging and interesting introduction to your topic [obvious really, but you do need to pull the reader in] you need to justify the essay, that is, say what it is about, and why it is important.
- It should tell the reader what else has been written on this topic. What have the key debates in this area? What gaps remain to be filled and how does your research help?
- What sources are you going to use and how reliable are they? Do they enable you to fully address the question you have chosen?
- How will your argument be structured? For example, in the first chapter *x*, *y*, *z* will be discussed. Chapter two will focus upon *a*, *b*, *c* etc. Do not, however, spend too much time telling the reader what they will find and where!
- Above all, you must do all this briefly, as you want to reserve most of your words for outlining your own original analysis.

Main sections

These form the body of your essay. They are the building blocks through which you develop your argument and are a vehicle for you to present your primary source material. Most essays will need at least two or three sections, although different subjects and approaches demand different types of structure. Each section should deal with a major aspect of the subject. If necessary you can also provide subsections although you should avoid making your text too piecemeal. Crucially you must not lose sight of the overall thread of your argument. To help you here, it is often helpful if you pick up the theme of the second section at the end of the first etc. Remember, you are constructing an argument, not just reporting the results of your research.

Conclusion

Your conclusion is a vital part of your essay. Try not to see it as purely repetition of what has gone before. A well-written conclusion will leave the examiner with a positive impression of your work. You should use the conclusion to draw everything together and reiterate your main argument.

References

Your essay should be fully referenced with footnotes and/or bibliography, according to the guidelines set out in Appendix 1. It is very important that you follow scholarly conventions in this way, partly so that you can demonstrate that you are immersed in the literature and immersed in current debates surrounding your chosen topic, and partly so that we can be sure that your ideas or arguments have not been plagiarised from other sources.

Further Reading

You may find it helpful to consult one of the 'how to...' books available on the subject of writing research papers and essays, especially Dunleavy, P, J, (1986) Studying for a Degree in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Basingstoke, Macmillan), Ch 5 'Writing Dissertations', pp.110-36

Part 2 Blog Posts

Writing the blog posts in the portfolio for Part 2 of the course are qualitatively different from writing the essay for Part 1 of the course. This is because in total they are longer but also because, in contrast to the Part 1 essay, Scholars are provided with the opportunity to define researchable problems which they are interested in exploring in depth and also to decide what material to read. Of course, the course leader will help Scholars with this task; but unlike a course essay, Scholars are given scope and encouragement to develop their projects with greater autonomy and independence.

NB: YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO REPRODUCE MATERIAL FROM YOUR PART 1 ESSAY IN YOUR PART 2 BLOG POSTS.

Choosing topics for the blog posts

You should choose topics that interest you. Producing the blog posts is rewarding but involves effort and personal commitment. It is hard to motivate yourself to write about subjects that you find dull. Choose topics that are manageable: remember, you are writing undergraduate blog posts, not an MA thesis or Ph.D. Your work may be based on primary research, but you will not have the time to carry out the research necessary for a major re-thinking of a substantive problem.

Be ambitious, but also realistic about what you can achieve. Look at some articles on topics that interest you in academic journals. Rather than reading them for what they say, look at how the argument has been crafted. Typically, the author locates his or her own research in the context of a much broader question. After presenting his or her argument with respect to this narrower question or set of questions, most articles conclude by relating the conclusions to these questions to the broader topic outlined at the beginning of the article. This is what you should do, too.

Appendix 3: Reflective Internship Essay Criteria

Introduction

The self-reflective essay is a chance for scholars to look back upon their internship and reflect upon the experience in a critical and considered fashion. The aim is to allow scholars to assess what they learned from being involved with their placement and what they can draw from this opportunity as they move forward in their academic and professional lives.

Process

Scholars should begin the process from the beginning of the programme, considering and noting their expectations for their internships and thinking about what they wish to achieve from this opportunity; this means not simply what the scholar hopes to gain from their internship, but what they wish to contribute to the office and placement they are given.

A prudent scholar will make notes before and throughout the course of his/her internship so that s/he can track the arc of his/her experience and what s/he has learned. This process should be one of continual assessment and reflection on the part of the scholar.

Marking

There will be a number of standard assessment criteria (below):

- Reflection – reflect on what you have learned in your placement and demonstrate the ability to apply course material to real political scenarios.
- Style – how the essay flows and reads, drawing in the reader. Spelling, grammar, punctuation are all important.
- Structure and coherence – whether the piece is coherent and logically organised. Sentences and paragraphs that maximise the space provided.
- Relevance – how closely the piece reflects the story of the internship and the intern's experience.

In addition there are a number of things that the marker will be looking for in particular:

1. How the intern used the opportunities presented by this unique experience e.g. did the intern fully avail him/herself of the chance to learn about parliament, to assist the office in which they were placed, to experience and learn above and beyond what was the minimum required? This essay is assessed not merely on your *description* of your internship but on what you actually *achieved*.

2. Every internship is different and assignments are often beyond the intern's control. Therefore you will NOT be graded on what you have done as much as on how you react to the limitless opportunities that your internship and Westminster provides for you. For instance, if you are in an administratively-heavy internship, do you visit committee meetings and debates in the Chamber to make up some of the policy shortfall?
3. How the scholar used the whole of the Hansard Scholars Programme to enrich their internship experience. In particular the academic portion – using the theory you learn in the two courses to inform and improve your performance - but also the guest lectures, the study visits, your time in London.
4. How the scholar has grown through their experience. Looking at how they came into their internship – strengths, weaknesses, abilities, experiences - and how they are now leaving it. Remember: most crucially, you are not simply recounting the events of your internship but rather you are *evaluating* your experiences and your development.

Appendix 4: Marking Criteria

Essay & Blog Posts

Mark (%)	Characteristics
0-39	<p>Little information presented or information that is wholly descriptive and flawed by omissions and significant errors.</p> <p>Some understanding may be evident but no original thinking or critical analysis beyond the very routine.</p> <p>Use of concepts is flawed and disorganised.</p> <p>Limited or no evidence of reading of an appropriate nature.</p> <p>Disorganisation in structure and lack of clarity of expression.</p>
40-49	<p>An acceptable and basic understanding of, and competence in, the subject is shown.</p> <p>A basic range of information and knowledge is displayed, although it may contain some inaccuracies or factual errors.</p> <p>Basic critical analysis and understanding of concepts is displayed, although arguments and analysis are not fully developed.</p> <p>Evidence of required reading and basic knowledge of material covered in lectures, but with limited critical reflection.</p> <p>A mostly coherent and relevant answer to the question.</p>
50-59	<p>A reasonably good understanding of the subject.</p> <p>A standard, and largely accurate, range of information and knowledge is deployed.</p> <p>Reasonable analysis and understanding of central concepts, although may rely more on knowledge than on argument or analysis, but some ability to combine factual knowledge with logical argument is evident.</p> <p>Good knowledge of relevant reading.</p> <p>Satisfactory quality of presentation with clear and logical structure.</p>
60-69	<p>A good and accurate understanding of the subject and competent application of relevant knowledge throughout.</p> <p>Good analysis of central concepts.</p> <p>Comprehensive command of the central literature, its theories and empirical findings.</p> <p>Clear argument which demonstrates some degree of independent thinking or critical insight.</p> <p>High quality of presentation with clear and logical structure.</p>

70-74	<p>A thorough understanding of the subject with strong application of relevant knowledge throughout that is consistently accurate.</p> <p>Extensive analysis of central and other important concepts.</p> <p>Clear argument which demonstrates a high degree of independent thinking or critical insight.</p> <p>Evidence of a critical approach to the essential literature and an ability to apply this with, additionally, some evidence of wider reading.</p> <p>Excellent presentation and structure.</p>
75+	<p>A comprehensive and deep understanding of the subject and excellent application of relevant knowledge.</p> <p>Mastery of relevant concepts and an ability to deploy them with flair.</p> <p>Exceptional analysis, synthesis and insight with considerable evidence of extensive wider reading of an appropriate nature and its application in context</p> <p>Lucid and convincing argument which demonstrates an exceptional degree of thinking and critical insight.</p> <p>Outstanding presentation and structure.</p>

Reflective Internship Essay

Mark (%)	Characteristics
0-39	<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>Little information presented or information that is wholly descriptive and flawed by omissions and significant errors.</p> <p>Some understanding may be evident but no original thinking or critical analysis beyond the very routine.</p> <p>Cognitive skills</p> <p>Experiential evidence is absent.</p> <p>Uncritical and descriptive, with some sections being derivative of other sources, and no self-awareness or reflection.</p> <p>Transferable skills</p> <p>Poor structure/organisation.</p> <p>Unfocused/irrelevant and/or incoherent in many/all sections.</p> <p>Shows problems with standard of expression in English, with frequent errors.</p> <p>Incompletely and/or inconsistently references sources, not in line with guidelines.</p> <p>Uses inappropriate format/style of presentation.</p>

40-44	<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>Partial answer and narrow in scope.</p> <p>Weak understanding of placement issues and context and considerable confusion with no evidence of independent thought or learning.</p> <p>Cognitive skills</p> <p>Experiential evidence is lacking or not relevant or of very poor quality.</p> <p>Uncritical and descriptive, with some sections being derivative of other sources, and little/no self-awareness or reflection.</p> <p>Transferable skills</p> <p>Poor structure/organisation.</p> <p>Poorly focused/irrelevant and/or incoherent in many/all sections.</p> <p>Shows problems with standard of expression in English, with frequent errors.</p> <p>Incompletely and/or inconsistently references sources, not in line with guidelines.</p> <p>Uses inappropriate format/style of presentation.</p>
45-59	<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>Fair answer to question/task with some understanding of the placement issues and context, but perhaps with some confusion.</p> <p>Little independent thought or learning.</p> <p>Cognitive skills</p> <p>Experiential evidence may be relevant, but not substantial, with little critical analysis, but mainly description of activities/problems, with little self-awareness/reflection.</p> <p>May cite some literature.</p> <p>Transferable skills</p> <p>Fair structure/organisation, but may lack focus/coherence in some sections.</p> <p>Reasonable standard of expression in English, but some errors.</p> <p>May have inconsistent and/or incomplete referencing (if sources used), not in line with guidelines.</p>

60-69	<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>Good coverage with broad understanding of placement issues, context and interrelationships.</p> <p>Shows some independent thought/research and learning.</p> <p>Cognitive skills</p> <p>Experiential evidence is relevant and generally of good quality, with some critical analysis of the role of the student, of other people and of the environment in the placement and some self-awareness and reflection.</p> <p>May cite some literature.</p> <p>Transferable skills</p> <p>Good structure/organisation.</p> <p>Generally focused/relevant and coherent in most sections.</p> <p>Good standard of expression in English, that accurately and clearly communicates key points, with few errors.</p> <p>Mostly references sources (if used) in line with guidelines.</p>
70+	<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>Impressive answer to task with in-depth understanding of placement issues, wider context and interrelationships.</p> <p>Shows some innovation and/or originality in learning and self-development.</p> <p>Cognitive skills</p> <p>Experiential evidence is highly relevant, substantial and of very good quality, with excellent critical analysis of the role of the student, of other people and of the environment in the placement and very good self-awareness and reflection.</p> <p>May draw on good quality literature.</p> <p>Transferable skills</p> <p>Excellent structure/organisation.</p> <p>Very well focussed/relevant and coherent throughout.</p> <p>Very good standard of expression in English, that communicates accurately and clearly with few errors.</p> <p>Consistently references sources (if used) in line with guidelines.</p>

Appendix 5: Final Grades

Each examination and essay is double-marked - which is to say that all exams are marked anonymously by the course lecturer and also by an External Examiner. The External Examiner is a permanent member of the LSE Government department faculty. This is to ensure fairness but it is also to make sure that the academic standards set by the Hansard Society and the LSE are upheld. The External Examiner therefore acts as an independent judge not only of the scholar's work but also of the first marker's opinion of that work. The marking procedure is consequently very rigorous.

The Programme has confidence in the fairness and accuracy of its dual layer grading system and thus does not entertain appeals for actual marks. However, if a scholar wishes to dispute *the process* by which a mark was awarded, he or she can do so within three months of the programme's completion date and in accordance with the Hansard Society Scholars programme's official complaints and appeals procedure, as detailed in Appendix 6.

The Hansard Society reserves the right to give a mark of zero in exceptional circumstances (e.g. missing deadlines, plagiarism or other assessment offences, see separate plagiarism policy, Appendix 7).

Late submission of coursework / failure to submit coursework

- If a scholar believes that he or she has good cause (e.g. illness) not to meet the deadline, he or she should first discuss the matter with the course lecturer and seek a formal extension from the Programme Director (or, in her absence, the Programme Manager).
- If a scholar misses the deadline for submission but believes he or she has had good reason which could not have been alerted in advance, he or she should first discuss the matter with the course lecturer and seek a formal extension from the Programme Director (or, in her absence, the Programme Manager).
- Extensions will normally only be granted where there is a good reason backed by supporting evidence (e.g. medical certificate). Any extension must be confirmed in writing to the scholar.

- If a scholar fails to submit by the set deadline (or extended deadline as appropriate), the following penalties will apply: 5% will be deducted for coursework submitted within 24 hours of the deadline and a further 5% will be deducted for each subsequent 24-hour period until the coursework is submitted. Computer malfunction is not an excuse for late submission; scholars must plan ahead and prepare for this possibility! Scholars should back up all academic work as they go along.
- Scholars are required to complete and submit **all** course assignments and examinations. If a scholar has an extenuating reason for not doing so, he or she must document the reasons and seek a meeting **in advance** with the Programme Director (or, in her absence, the Programme Manager) and course lecturer. Credit-granting institutions will be informed and the issue could potentially be reported to UKVI because there might be visa implications.

Special Needs Policy

Any scholar with a disability or special circumstances is encouraged to meet with the Programme Director or Programme Manager privately during the first 2 weeks of class to discuss accommodations. Official documentation must be submitted to substantiate requests for special measures or accommodations.

Please note that if you do not notify us of your special circumstances/accommodation requirements within the required period (first 2 weeks of the programme), any special accommodation request will be left to the discretion of the Programme Director and respective course lecturer.

Quality Assurance Learning Outcomes and Evaluations

(QALO)

The programme staff is committed to continual and rigorous review of all components of the Hansard Society Scholars programme, particularly academic and internship components, and to the ongoing assessment of learning outcomes. To this end, it conducts midterm and end-of-term evaluations on the academic courses, internships and related activities. This process, known as QALO, includes written evaluation forms and a moderated verbal feedback session roughly midway through the programme, at which attendance is mandatory. Reflective internship essays and portfolios also play an important part in QALO. All scholars are expected to fully participate in all aspects of the QALO process. Evaluation forms are submitted online via SurveyMonkey.

Appendix 6: Complaints Procedure

I. COMPLAINT

The staff of the Hansard Society Scholars is dedicated to providing a programme of the highest possible quality in terms of its academics, internships and general service provision. It is expected that everyone associated with the programme - programme and academic staff, internship and various service providers - will carry out their duties with integrity, exercise sound judgment and make decisions that are in the scholars' best interests at all times. The staff is also committed to responding to scholars' complaints. In the event a scholar wishes to file a complaint, the following procedure should be followed. Variations and adaptations to this process may be necessitated by the specific nature of a complaint or appeal; these adaptations will be discussed with the scholar concerned before or as they are applied. The Hansard Society undertakes to handle complaints and appeals in a fair, transparent, effective and timely manner.

Definition of Complaint

A complaint is an expression of a specific concern about the provision of a programme service or activity, of an academic course, of academic supervision or of an internship. Scale and magnitude are important factors in determining if an issue merits an official complaint. A complaint should not be confused with a problem that can be addressed and resolved in a fairly easy and straightforward manner. For example, concern about the level of work in an internship should be the subject of a discussion between the scholar, the internship host and possibly the programme staff; it should not merit an official complaint unless the issue is not addressed. Furthermore, a formal complaint is different from negative or critical feedback; scholars are encouraged to give constructive feedback at various points both during and upon completion of the programme.

Statute of Limitations

Complaints should be raised as quickly as possible after the event as this will help to facilitate a more accurate and meaningful investigation. A complaint must be submitted **within three months of a programme's completion date.**

Who can file a complaint?

Any scholar enrolled (within the 3 month time limit) on the Hansard Society Scholars programme is entitled to make a complaint. Complaints made anonymously or through a third party will not be accepted.

Process

Due to the very wide range of possible complaints, the procedure is deliberately informal and flexible in its early stages. The steps are as follows:

1. Preliminary meeting. Make an appointment with the Programme Director* to discuss the issue and signal the possibility of making a formal complaint.

*Although the process will normally begin with the Programme Director, if s/he is the subject of the complaint, this discussion should take place with the Programme Manager. Minutes of this meeting will be taken, written up and signed off by both parties.

2. Follow up exchange of communications. a) If, on the basis of the initial discussion, it is decided that *no further action* is necessary, the scholar may be asked to submit a written confirmation that the issue has been adequately addressed and resolved to the scholar's satisfaction. b) It may be that the initial discussion will result in *limited* further action, such as a meeting with other parties to *informally* resolve the issue without an official process being instigated. In such instances, the written confirmation of successful resolution will not be requested until all such meetings and discussions have taken place.

Written notice of complaint. If, however, on the basis of the initial discussion, the scholar wishes to proceed with a formal complaint, s/he will be instructed to submit a written notice of the complaint explaining the reasons and grounds for it. As much supporting evidence as is available should be attached to the notice. If possible and appropriate, the scholar should specify the remedy s/he is seeking, such as an apology or some other form of redress. The Hansard Society will not normally provide any sort of financial compensation or reimbursement.

3. Reporting upwards/confidentiality. Once a formal complaint process has been instigated, it will be reported to the Director of the Hansard Society, the Director of Studies and at a later stage, the Academic Governance Board, all of whom may be kept apprised of its progress unless sensitivities dictate a more limited number of confidants. Beyond these individuals, both the scholar making the complaint and the subject of the complaint can be assured of complete confidentiality. If, in order to progress the case, additional persons need to be informed of the circumstances of the case, both the scholar and the subject of the complaint will be advised in advance.

4. Scholar's advocate. A programme or Hansard Society staff member who is not party to the dispute will be appointed to act as the scholar's advocate for the duration of the proceedings. At any stage, the scholar may request to involve an alternative impartial 3rd party supporter; this individual must be approved by the programme staff or Director of Studies.
5. Response by subject of complaint or appeal. The subject of the complaint will be asked to respond in writing to the complaint, including all available supporting evidence, within two weeks of being informed of the complaint. The subject of the complaint may request an informal meeting with programme staff and/or the Director of Studies. This meeting will be minuted.
6. The Programme Director or Manager will advise the scholar of any next steps which would likely include:
 - a. A meeting between the scholar, the subject of the complaint, the relevant programme staff and the Director of Studies to take place within two weeks of receiving the response to the complaint. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the most appropriate way forward. Minutes will be taken and subsequently written up and signed off by all parties.
 - b. If it is decided at this meeting that the formal procedure should take place, a date for a formal hearing will be agreed and further written evidence will be invited. This meeting will take place within two weeks of the decision to proceed with the complaint. The written statements and supporting evidence from both sides will be distributed to all members of the hearing panel (see point 7).
 - c. In addition to the advocate or impartial 3rd party supporter referenced above, the programme staff will provide adequate support to the scholar at every stage, including, but not limited to, gathering and preparing evidence, contacting relevant student or professional organisations and the provision of special needs facilities or assistance.
 - d. The scholar may withdraw a complaint at any stage. The scholar must confirm the withdrawal and reasons for it in writing and sign and date this document.
 - e. In consultation with the scholar, his/her home institution may be notified of the complaint.
7. Panel for formal hearing. The Panel will consist of the Director of Studies, at least two members of the Academic Governance Board including at least one of the independent Board members and relevant programme staff, normally the Programme Director and Programme Manager (unless they are the subject of or party to the complaint).

8. Formal hearing before the Panel at which all parties will be heard with all evidence to have been read in advance. The Panel will hold a private discussion at the end of this hearing with neither the scholar nor the subject of the complaint present, though either or both may be called in to answer further questions.
9. Resolution of complaint. Once the final decision whether to uphold or reject the complaint has been made by the Panel, any agreed remedy will be implemented and a written report will be produced and signed off by all parties. The scholar who made the complaint will be asked to write and sign a statement confirming his/her acceptance of the decision/remedy.
10. The official report will be submitted to all members of the Academic Governance Board, the Hansard Society's Director and possibly to the Board of Trustees.
11. The Hansard Society will maintain records of each complaint proceeding, including minutes of all meetings, correspondence and supporting evidence and documentation.
12. The Hansard Society undertakes to assess and monitor its complaints and appeals procedure on an ongoing basis and make refinements and improvements as deemed necessary and appropriate.

II. ACADEMIC APPEAL

Definition of Academic Appeal

An appeal is a request for a review of the process that was used to determine a grade or other form of assessment.

Hansard Society Scholars' examinations and dissertations are blind-marked, i.e. identified by LSE ID number rather than by name, and externally examined (second marked) by a senior member of the Government faculty of the London School of Economics and Political Science, so there is already a mechanism in place to militate against error or bias in the grading process. Nevertheless, scholars concerned about the fairness or validity of the process through which a grade was reached can file an appeal. As above, scale and magnitude should be considered before an appeal is launched; an informal conversation with the lecturer concerned might be the most appropriate first course of action.

Statute of Limitations

Appeals should be raised as quickly as possible after the event as this will help to facilitate a more accurate investigation. An appeal must be submitted within three months of a programme's completion date.

Who can make an appeal?

Any scholar enrolled, or recently enrolled (within the 3 month time limit), on the Hansard Society Scholars programme is entitled to file an appeal.

If an informal discussion with the lecturer concerned does not resolve the issue, the scholar should take the following steps:

1. Seek a review of the process through which the grade was reached by the Internal Examiner by the programme's External Examiner if the External Examiner has not already examined the examination or paper; if he has, step 1 is skipped and the review begins with step 2, the Director of Studies. This review will be facilitated by the programme staff, so a written request as well as supporting documentation (normally the piece of work in question) should be submitted to the programme staff who will likewise convey the External Examiner's response back to the scholar.
2. Depending on the External Examiner's response or whether he has already reviewed the work in question, the next stage of review will be by the programme's Director of Studies. As above, this review will be facilitated by the programme staff, so a written request as well as supporting documentation should be submitted to the programme staff who will likewise convey the Director of Studies' response back to the scholar.
3. Depending on the Director of Studies' response, the final stage of review is by two members of the Academic Governance Board, including at least one independent member (that is, a member not in any way associated with the operation of the programme). Again, this review will be facilitated by the programme staff, so a written request as well as supporting documentation should be submitted to the programme staff who will likewise convey the Board members' responses back to the scholar. If numerical grade computations are involved and the two Board members' computations are different, they will be averaged. The decision of the Board members is final and no further stages of review are open to the scholar.
4. Once an examination of the process through which the grade was reached is concluded and the original grade is either upheld or changed, the final grade will be posted on the scholar's Hansard Society Scholars transcript.

5. The Hansard Society undertakes to assess and monitor its complaints and appeals procedure on an ongoing basis and make refinements and improvements as deemed necessary and appropriate.

Appendix 7: Unfair Means - Plagiarism Policy

Definition of plagiarism:

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, plagiarism is **“the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own.”**

The Hansard Society has a zero tolerance approach to plagiarism. All work that you submit in your Hansard academic courses must be your own work. Trying to pass off the work of others, even “others” who seem fairly anonymous, such as “wiki”- type sources, constitutes plagiarism.

Since the Hansard Society Scholars is operated in conjunction with the London School of Economics and Political Science and the programme’s external examination is provided by an LSE Government faculty member, the programme adheres to the LSE’s Plagiarism Policy as explained below, with non-applicable sections deleted. Scholars must submit an honour pledge with each piece of written work - essays, dissertation and examinations.

Hansard lecturers sometimes utilise plagiarism detection software programmes. If instances of plagiarism are suspected, a full investigation will be launched following the process described at the end of this appendix.

London School of Economics and Political Science School Plagiarism Policy with non-applicable sections removed.

‘All work for classes and seminars as well as scripts (which include, for example, essays, dissertations and any other work) must be the student's own work. Quotations must be placed properly within quotation marks or indented and must be cited fully. All paraphrased material must be acknowledged. Infringing this requirement, whether deliberately or not, or passing off the work of others as the work of the student, whether deliberately or not, is plagiarism.

Plagiarism refers to any work of others, whether published or not, and can include the work of other candidates. Any quotation from the published or unpublished works of other persons, including other candidates, must be clearly identified as such and a full reference to their sources must be provided in proper form. A series of short quotations from several different sources, if not clearly identified as such, constitutes plagiarism just as much as does a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source.

What does plagiarism look like?

The most obvious form of plagiarism is to use someone else's words without any acknowledgment whatsoever. However, inadequate referencing can also result in plagiarism. For example, inserting a section of text (of any size) from someone else's work in to your own without quotation marks would be plagiarism even if the source were acknowledged in a precise reference. If you use verbatim material from other sources it must both be in quotation marks or indented and precisely referenced with page numbers. When the work of other people is referred to, there should always be an acknowledgement.

For example, this constitutes plagiarism:

In my essay, I will be analyzing the rise of NGOs. Since the 1980s, NGOs have moved to the forefront of development policy and practice. There are many different types of NGOs, as I will show in the next section ...

This does not (because it is properly quoted):

In my essay, I will be analyzing the rise of NGOs. As Smith has written (1998:17) "since the 1980s, NGOs have moved to the forefront of development policy and practice". There are many different types of NGOs, as I will show in the next section ...

Nor does this (because it is properly referenced and summarised in your own words):

In my essay, I will be analyzing the rise of NGOs. Smith (1998) points out that from the 1980s onwards NGOs have become more important actors in the field of development. There are many different types of NGOs, as I will show in the next section

Please note that plagiarism can arise from failing to source material obtained from Internet sources as well as from books, articles, etc.

Self-plagiarism

A piece of work may only be submitted for assessment once. Submitting the same piece of work twice (or a significant part thereof, as determined by examiners) will be regarded as an offence of 'self-plagiarism' and will be treated as plagiarism. However, earlier essay work may be used as an element of a dissertation, provided that the amount of earlier work used is specified and the work is properly referenced.

Avoiding plagiarism

The appropriate citation of sources is an important tool for scholarly work and the responsibility for learning the proper forms of citation lies with the individual student. (If you need some guidance, ask your course lecturer to direct you to the best sources of help.)

Further useful sources of information (external):

- plagiarism.org
- plagiarismadvice.org

Process if plagiarism is suspected

1. The lecturer who suspects plagiarism makes a case to the Committee on Unfair Means (comprised of three members, including at least one external member of the Academic Governance Board).
2. The Committee reviews the evidence and conducts an interview with the scholar and the lecturer in question, if needed. The Committee makes a decision and determines the sanction based on a sliding scale so that the penalty is proportionate to the offence in terms of nature and intent. The scale ranges from recognition of guilt but no further action to failure of course with no credit awarded.
3. If the scholar wishes to appeal the Committee's decision, the case would go to the full Academic Governance Board for a complete review of the evidence and the scholar and the lecturer would again be interviewed. If the full Academic Governance Board upholds the Committee's decision, it will normally also uphold the sanction imposed.
4. All interviews are recorded and a written transcript is given to the scholar.
5. If the scholar wishes to dispute the decision of the full Academic Governance Board, s/he should refer to the separate Hansard Society Scholars Academic Appeal policy.