

ST115 Project: What is the 'best' LSE department?

In my project, I would like to answer this question since there is a lot of friendly debate over this subject, and I enjoy the prospect of seeing whether the data does produce some sort of answer. There are many avenues I can choose to try and answer this question, such as using the average salary upon completion of a degree from that department or even analysing what skills most in demand are, and then comparing these to what is on offer in each department. The question's significance lies not within the answer but instead in the number of different answers that will arise, which will hopefully go some way to discourage the elitism that is present within some LSE departments, I hope to prove that no one department is better than the other and it depends more on who you are as a person, and what your plans are.

I intend to use a selection of different metrics that I feel give a good balance as to what you could define as a 'good' department. Some of these I have listed above, along with others such as what department produces the most master's students, and then PhDs, and even Nobel laureates!

To acquire the data, there is a plethora of salary data relating to departments on the internet. So, for this potential question, I could download a dataset and then proceed from there.

To find what the most in-demand skills are, I could web-scrape several big firms' websites to identify key skills that they look for in applicants. These skills could then be assigned to degrees, which could in turn provide an insight into what department has the most of these 'useful degrees'

Again, there is a lot of data online regarding master's retention rates, and to gain data on Nobel Laureates I could use a dataset on all historic winners and then use data regarding their alma mater to match up a degree.

As a more left-field metric, I could analyse where people from different departments when after graduating from LSE, and even how 'happy' that country is deemed to be. Most degree programmes give data on various companies that they ended up at, these companies can then be traced to locations, and I could match this up to departments. Then, I could use the World Happiness Report to map out what degrees produce the 'happiest' people.