

Library tour transcript

1. Welcome

Welcome to the Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science, the major international library of the social sciences.

When visiting the Library there are a couple of key Library rules you need to know about. Firstly if you have a mobile phone, please switch it to silent mode and keep conversations to a minimum. This is so that you don't disturb other Library users as there are people studying around you. Secondly, food cannot be consumed inside the Library past the turnstiles, but you can eat within the Escape area at the entrance. You are welcome to bring in drinks, as long as they have re-sealable lids. There are water fountains on each of the upper floors and the water from these is perfectly drinkable. Café facilities are available just outside the Library in the John Watkins Plaza or elsewhere on campus.

You will need a Library card to get in to the Library and the LSE student card also doubles up as a Library card. The Library card is required to borrow books, however if you don't currently have a card, ask at the Reception Desk, by the entrance turnstiles. Visitors should register online in advance at the Library website.

2. History

The Library building is unusual for an academic library, in that the entire collection is housed in a single site. The Library turnstiles register an average of 4,500 visits *a day*. In addition to LSE students and staff, thousands of registered external users nationally and internationally, visit us to consult our specialist research collections.

The Library was founded in 1896, a year after the School itself, but didn't move to this site until 1978. It's called the Lionel Robbins Building, named after the prestigious economist who studied and taught here, and was a governor of LSE. There is a bust of him in the entrance area. The building covers 20,000 square metres.

The external façade dates back to 1916. It was once the headquarters and warehouse for WH Smith. If you look carefully when outside, you'll find an original WH Smith sign, damaged by shrapnel during a bombing raid in World War Two. The fact that it was a book warehouse makes this building ideal for use as a Library – as it was designed to house heavy loads. So this building has housed the School's Library since 1978. But the interior was completely transformed, in 2001, to become what you see today, following a design by the architects, Foster and Partners. Sir Norman Foster is an internationally renowned architect. His other works in London include the Millennium Bridge, the Great Court at the British Museum and the Swiss Re HQ (which is also often known as The Gherkin). Further building projects have taken place since to expand areas such as the Course Collection.

3. The Course Collection

The Course Collection is located to the right of the service counter. Only LSE students and staff can access the books in this area, with access gained by using the same card as the main turnstiles. The Course Collection contains books that have been identified by tutors as key readings for each LSE course. There are multiple copies of most of the texts, which can be borrowed for a maximum of three days. This borrowing period encourages people to consult and return them quickly, in fairness to other students who may be waiting to use them. Many of the books in the Course Collection are also available as e-books.

4. Fire or emergency

If the fire alarm sounds, you should leave the building immediately, following the green signs to the nearest available emergency exit. Please do not use the lifts, or the spiral ramp, or stop to collect any belongings. Go to the assembly point on Clare Market, outside Waterstones book store.

If you have impaired mobility, make yourself known to a member of staff wearing a yellow tabard or go to one of the designated fire refuge points in the staircase lobbies on the Grange Court or Portugal Street side of the building. Emergency exits are in the same place on every floor. But these should be used in an emergency only; the normal entrance and exit to the Library is through the turnstile area.

5. The Copy shop

The Copy Shop is located on the ground floor, in the corner opposite to the entrance. This is a room which contains a number of Multi-functional Devices that can both copy and print. Similar machines are also available on the lower ground floor and in the Course Collection.

Some of the photocopiers in the Copy Shop are for visitors only. These machines are operated with a rechargeable card, available from the Copy Shop.

The photocopying system for LSE staff is slightly different and information on this can be found in the *Academic Staff Library Guide* or by speaking to Copy Shop staff.

LSE Students can recharge their printing accounts, using one of the machines on the lower ground or first floors of the Library or online, using the "LSE Wallet". This will allow you to use the printers in the Library, elsewhere on campus and in the residence computer rooms. Copy Shop staff can also recharge printing accounts for students as an alternative to these machines and 'LSE Wallet'.

Special photocopying and printing arrangements are available for Library users with a disability. Further details on our additional facilities and services for Library users with disabilities are available in the *Information for Disabled Users* guide, or by speaking to a member of Library staff.

Further details on printing and photocopying in the Library can be found on the Library website.

6. Silent Study Areas

The Library has three Silent Study areas which are set behind closed doors, to minimise background noise. This closed access and low levels of noise make these areas particularly good for concentration. One of these areas is next to the Ground Floor Copy Shop and the other two are on the first floor, one of which is for PhD students only.

7. Collections

Over 95 per cent of the Library's collections are available directly from the shelves. The remainder - 'closed access' materials include things such as microforms; newspapers; LSE theses; pamphlets; UN documents and US Federal Government documents. We fetch 'closed access' items for you via our 'fetch service'. If you need to use the fetch service please do so via the Library catalogue, on which closed access materials are clearly marked.

Special collections are located throughout the Library, however there are a few key collections located on the Lower ground and 3rd floors.

- The Government Collection is on the rolling stack shelves on the lower ground floor. These shelves are operated by handwheels. For safety, always lock a rolling stack into position before retrieving a book. Simply turn the handle below the wheel to the vertical position. These stacks house most of the Library's important collection of Government material.

On the 3rd floor there are three special collections:

- The Russian Collection contains books in Russian and the Slavic languages of the former Soviet Union, excepting official publications and periodicals. It is strongest on the Soviet and Post-Soviet period.
- The Schapiro collection holds books and serials from the library of the late Leonard Schapiro, principally covering Soviet affairs and communism of the pre-Gorbachev era. New books are not added, but a number of periodical and newspaper titles are current.
- The Lakatos collection is an historical collection of books from the library of the late Imre Lakatos on the history and philosophy of science.

The Library also has an extensive electronic collection which is accessible via the Library Catalogue.

8. Computers in the Library

There are a large number of computers located throughout the Library. Computer clusters are located in the central area on the Lower Ground Floor and in the direction of the toilets on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors.

These computers are for the use of LSE students and staff only and are connected to the LSE network. They provide access to the Internet, popular applications and lots of electronic Library resources and specialist teaching and learning software.

As an environmental initiative to conserve energy some computers in the Library automatically turn themselves off after 15 minutes of inactivity. Although only a simple press of the power button is required to reactivate these, quick access PC's for short spell activities, are located on the ground floor alongside the group study rooms. These computers are permanently turned on, but automatically log off after 15 minutes of use.

9. Power and data equipped study desks

The Library has a large number of study desks which are either equipped with both power and data points, or power points only for use with laptops. The data points provide high-speed connection to the LSE network as an alternative to the wireless network available throughout the building. These types of desks can be found on all of the Library floors, usually near the perimeter of the building.

10. Group Study rooms

There are 14 group study rooms in the Library. These rooms allow up to 6 students to work together and can be booked by LSE students via the Library website.

Three of these rooms are located on the Ground floor, next to the silent study area, two of which are reserved for students with disabilities.

11. Users with Disabilities

The Library offers a number of additional facilities and services for users with disabilities.

On the ground floor there are study areas reserved for specifically for LSE members with disabilities: one area with IT workstations and a printer, and two study rooms which are equipped with IT workstations, electric height-adjustable desks, printers, specialist equipment and software. There are also reserved workstations and a printer on the lower ground floor, near to the toilets.

There are a number of book lockers reserved for users with disabilities. These can be allocated for the duration of a user's course, free of charge. There are accessible toilets on all floors of the Library. We can help you access Library materials, through our daily fetch service – which operates on weekdays. Where appropriate, we can increase borrowing allowances or extend loan periods. Also, an allocation of free photocopying and printing is available within the Library for LSE students with disabilities who have been referred by the School's Advisor. If we can help further, please talk to the Duty Supervisor at the Service Counter.

For more information on these additional services please see the *Information for disabled users* guide, contact the Service Counter on the Ground floor or email User Services Management at library.usm@lse.ac.uk

12. Opening hours

The Library has long opening hours, which vary between term time and vacation, so please check the website for details. In Lent and Summer terms (in the run up to and during exam time), LSE students and staff can access the building 24 hours a day.

13. Security

The Security desk is located by the entrance turnstiles and is always staffed by a member of the Security staff who can assist you if you ever need to report any disruption or accident. Security staff will also open the glass gate by the turnstiles if you use a wheelchair or have impaired mobility. For security reasons we would like to make you aware that if you've brought a bag into the Library with you, Security staff may ask to check this.

14. Borrowing and returning books

To borrow anything, you'll need your LSE card – the same one that you use through the turnstiles. No items can be borrowed without it.

Books can be borrowed and returned using one of the several self-service machines. These machines are located in the Course Collection for course collection books and in the area adjacent to the Service Counter for Main Collection items. The on screen instructions help

make these machines very simple to use, however if you need any assistance feel free to ask the staff on duty as floorwalkers who will be very happy to help!

Borrowing allowances vary, depending on your type of Library membership – so please check your relevant Library guide for full details. If you forget to return or renew your books on time you'll incur a fine– again details are in the main Library guides and on our website.

Items can be renewed online as long as nobody else has reserved them using the Library Catalogue. You'll need your Library user number, which you can find on your LSE card beginning with 02 along with your 4 digit security number or PIN. This PIN is available from LSEforYou on the LSE website.

Inter-Library loan requests and items fetched from 'closed access' areas can be collected at the service counter.

Further details on borrowing and returning from the Library are available on the Library website.

15. Help Desk

The Library and IT Help Desk is the large desk in front of you when you arrive on the first floor and can answer questions relating to the Library, finding resources, or help with IT. In addition to this staffed help there are copies of various free Library and IT guides, many of which can also be found on the Library and IT services websites.

16. Plasma screens

Plasma screens are located throughout the Library and display news, information on training courses and PC availability in the Library and across campus. In the Library, these screens are located in the lobby, by the service counter and behind the first floor Help Desk.

17. Catalogue

There are a number of dedicated Library Catalogue terminals throughout the Library. These are clearly marked with a sign above the monitor marked 'Library Catalogue only' and can only be used to consult the Catalogue. The Catalogue can also be accessed via the Library website.

The Catalogue tells you which items are in stock, where in the Library they can be found, and which items are out on loan. Items can be searched by title or author name, or by particular subject. If you need help on using the Catalogue just click on the Help button on the Catalogue screens.

18. Reference Collection

On the first floor behind the Visitor PCs there are shelves containing the Library's Reference Collection. This collection contains materials such as dictionaries, directories and encyclopaedias. These can't be taken out of the Library but Help Desk staff can advise on the use of these and can often suggest more up-to-date electronic alternatives if available.

19. Library classification system

The Library's collections are divided up into categories using the Library of Congress classification system. Each item is identified by a 'classmark', which is basically a detailed subject code that appears on the item itself and also in the Catalogue. Once you've found a Main Collection item on the Catalogue, the floor plan, available in the Library and online will help you find the shelves you are looking for. Further notices on the pillars and ends of the stacks give more detail.

Colour coding is used throughout the Library. Special collections have pink stack end notices, books have blue stack end notices; periodicals have purple.

20. Study spaces and zoning

The majority of the study spaces in the Library are located behind the book stacks around the edge of the building. The book stacks create a zoning effect on each floor with the stacks absorbing a lot of the noise, maintaining quieter study areas at the perimeter.

Study spaces are split into three clearly marked coloured zones which allow Library users to work in the way that suits them best.

Red areas are the Silent Zones in which users must remain completely quiet at all times. Group work and phone conversations cannot be carried out here.

Yellow areas are the Quiet Zones in which users may have quiet conversations.

Green areas are the Group Zones and are suitable for group working and discussion. There are also group study rooms available if users want to work with their group somewhere a little more private.

In both the Quiet and Group Zones, the general rule on mobile phone usage applies meaning quiet, non-disruptive mobile phone usage is allowed.

Look out for the coloured banners on each floor indicating what Zone is on that floor.

Some study spaces can be booked by LSE students via the Library website.

Further details on study spaces and zoning can also be found on the Library website.

21. The 4th and 5th floors of the Library

The LSE Research Lab, combines a number of LSE research centres and is a working space for full time researchers with their PhD assistants. It is located on the 4th and 5th floors of the Library and is intended to bring these researchers together in the same place allowing them to have informal conversations which could lead to new ideas and thought processes.

Some of the study desks and PCs on the 4th floor are for members of the Research Lab and are clearly marked. The remaining desks are for general library use. Users are asked to ensure they use the correct area when studying on the fourth floor.

22. Book lockers

The Library offers a limited book locker facility to LSE students on a first come first served basis, for the period of an academic year. These lockers can be found on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors of the Library usually against the wall to the right as you walk out of the lifts.

Demand for lockers is high and they are allocated during the early part of the academic session through an online booking system. There is a small charge to use these lockers, however they are free to students with disabilities.

Lockers are useful if you are borrowing quite a few books and don't want to have to carry them to a lecture. However please remember, only books issued to you should be kept in the lockers. Library staff check lockers regularly to ensure everyone has fair access to Library materials and anyone found storing unissued books will lose their locker privileges.

23. Archives

The Archives and Rare Books Department is located on the Lower ground floor to the left as you walk out of the lift. On the right hand side there is the window of the supervised Reading Room where all Archives material is consulted. All Library users are welcome to work with the archive collections, and visitors come from all over the world to use our unique collections.

The Library's Archives hold over "1400" archive collections relating to British political, economic and social history, social anthropology and the history of philosophy. A taste of our collections includes the papers of the Independent Labour Party and the Labour Representation Committee; the papers of Hugh Dalton, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 1945 Labour Government; the Liberal Party and the papers of David Steel and Paddy Ashdown; the fieldwork notes and photographs of Polish anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski's work in the Trobriand Islands; the Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw's personal collection of photographs; and the Hall-Carpenter Archives of lesbian and gay activism. We also look after the Library's collections of historic pamphlets and rare books including texts on politics and economics.

The purpose-built archive unit houses almost 3km of shelving and is designed to store the collections in optimum conditions controlling temperature, humidity and light. The Reading Room offers 16 study spaces for researchers and a member of Archives staff is always on hand to help. Our Archives reprographic service can provide photocopies, photographs and microfilm of our Archive items. The Reading Room has separate opening hours from the main Library. For details, and for more about Archives collections and services, please see the Library website.

24. Training room

On the lower ground floor, turning right from the bottom of the spiral staircase or when coming out of the lifts, you will find the Library training room on the left hand side. From this room the Library runs a programme of sessions each term which are designed to help you to become familiar with the wealth of electronic information sources available and to use them effectively. The Information Skills programme also includes online courses for those who can't attend the classroom sessions. IT Services also runs an extensive programme of free IT training workshops, as well as an LSE certification scheme. To find out more about training courses across the School including Library and IT courses, visit the Training website.