

Operational Research Group

Operational research has been taught at LSE for the past 50 years. It is the discipline of applying advanced analytical methods to help make better decisions. Operational researchers assess strategic or operational problems, construct solutions and often assist in managing the implementation of proposed changes. Students become skilled in tackling complex problems and develop a set of transferable skills that can prove highly attractive to employers in many job sectors.

Indeed, the terms 'Management Science' and 'Operational Research' are virtually synonymous. Management scientists may be mathematicians, statisticians, economists, philosophers, management theorists, or psychologists. Their work may be empirical or highly theoretical. They may seek to understand how decisions are (or should be) made - or they may apply that understanding to any of a wide range of real-world problems - in business, government, the environment, national defence, and so on.

Departmental Facts

Operational research attracts a multicultural student body from a wide variety of academic backgrounds, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the Group. It also has an Advisory Board composed of many of the heads of OR and other analytic groups in business and government in the London area. The advice of the Advisory Board is regularly sought on questions of direction and priorities, and its members support the Group in many ways.

LSE has come top for career prospects in The Guardian's University Guide 2010 in both the overall and Business and Management Studies rankings with 86% and 94% of graduates respectively finding graduate-level employment, or full-time study, within six months of graduation. With 30 per cent of research activity deemed 'world-leading' in terms of originality, significance and rigour in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), Business and Management at LSE is rated as joint fifth in the country.

Careers

Students of operational research obtain a portfolio of transferable skills. These include general skills such as being well organised and communicating effectively. However, the particular skills acquired through the theoretical and practical study of operational research are particularly desirable to many types of employer. Specific skills gained from studying within the Operational Research Group at LSE include:

- the ability to understand and manipulate statistical data and make decisions based on that data;
- being able to examine information critically before accepting it;
- being able to assess all aspects of a problem or situation and evaluating the possible ways of resolving it.

The broad nature of the programme allows students to apply the skills and knowledge acquired on the course to many different job sectors. LSE operational research graduates have found work in banking; financial services, consultancy and general management positions.

Operational Research Group courses available to General Course students include:

OR202 Operational Research Methods

OR307 Simulation Modelling and Analysis

OR304 Decision Sciences in Theory and Practice