

Mental Health and Wellbeing at LSE

Student Consultation Report



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Executive Summary

This report details the results of LSESU's consultation with students on mental health and wellbeing at LSE. This consultation was designed in collaboration with the LSE in order to help inform work on developing a new mental health and wellbeing strategy. 500 responses to this consultation were received. This report provides a thematic analysis of these responses and makes a series of recommendations to address the concerns raised. A summary of these recommendations can be found on page 17.

The analysis of this data revealed two overarching themes that affected students' experiences: academic culture and lack of community. The first section of this report explains how this academic culture and lack of community are extremely detrimental to students' health and wellbeing and lead to students experiencing a profound level of stress, isolation and unhappiness.

Underpinned by these two themes, this report then describes students' experiences in three areas: promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing, prevention of mental health difficulties, and the provision of mental health and wellbeing services.

The 'promotion' section of this report details students' experience of the physical space on campus and how the lack of space can negatively affect their wellbeing. This section also explains the desire of students to see more campaigns destigmatising mental health and discusses how these types of campaigns could promote a more positive culture at LSE. The 'prevention' section of this report focuses on students' desire for a more inclusive education, which is designed to better support their health and wellbeing. Additionally, this section explores how LSE can develop learning communities and the importance of training staff about mental health. Finally the 'provision' section of this report addresses the numerous improvements students wish to see in mental health support at LSE. This section provides an in depth discussion of students unhappiness with the counselling services.

The results of this consultation are clear: students do not believe LSE as an institution supports their mental health and wellbeing. LSESU implore LSE to ensure the recommendations of this report are incorporated into the new mental health and wellbeing strategy. In the words of one respondent:

“I think you should take quick action in regards to the poor mental health at LSE. As awareness of mental health (and self worth) improve worldwide, people will eventually realise that their happiness is more important than attending a "prestigious" university that doesn't care about them at all.”

Introduction

LSESU and the LSE have been working collaboratively on a mental health and wellbeing strategy, designed to be implemented alongside the wider school 2030 strategy. Issues regarding student wellbeing, and more specifically their mental health, have become an epidemic across the sector. In 2015/16, over 15,000 first-year students in UK universities reported that they had a mental health problem, compared to approximately 3,000 in 2006¹, with 94% of institutions reporting an increase in demand for their counselling services.

This consultation was designed to inform the changes in policy and practice which the SU wishes to see in LSE's approach to mental health and wellbeing. This report will describe the analysis of the data collected, followed by a discussion of the research findings and use this to inform policy in areas we believe the School may have overlooked. Data was obtained from a consultation completed by 500 students. The responses to this consultation were collected through an online form, which was open from the 29th March 2019 to the 29th April 2019. This online form was advertised across all LSESU social media channels and was sent to LSESU club and society mailing lists. The form was also emailed to all students involved in the LSE peer support scheme. This data was then analysed to identify, describe and explore the relationship between student attitudes and the current state of the LSE's mental health provisions.

We compared service user data provided by the SWS with LSE student demographic data to identify which groups were under-accessing services. We found that international students, and students who identify as male were consistently underusing mental health provisions at the LSE. During the promotion of this consultation we attempted to specifically target these underrepresented groups, in order to gather their views. Though a representative proportion of international students responded to this consultation, we were unable to recruit a representative number of male students. The demographic breakdown of respondents to this consultation is as follows:

Level of Study:

- 66% Undergraduate
- 31.3% Postgraduate Taught
- 2.7% Postgraduate Research

International Student Status:

- 59.7% International Students

¹ Institute for Public Policy Research (2017) Not by degrees: improving student mental health in the UK's universities. Available at <https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/not-by-degrees>

-
- 40.3% Home Students

Gender:

- 63.8% Female
- 34.8% Male
- 1.4% Non-Binary

Ethnicity:

- 41.1% White
- 18.9% Chinese
- 9.9% Asian or Asian British – Indian
- 8% Other Asian Background
- 4.5% Other Mixed Background
- 3.5% Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
- 3.5% Other Ethnic Background
- 2.1% Mixed – White and Asian
- 1.8% Black or Black British – African
- 1.8% Prefer not to Say
- 1.6% Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- 1% Arab
- 1% Mixed – White and Black African
- 0.6% Black or Black British – Caribbean
- 0.6% Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
- 0.4% Other Black Background

Throughout the remainder of this report the percentages presented have been rounded to the nearest percent. Direct quotes from respondents are in quotation marks and are italicised and in bold.

Overarching Themes

The data used in this section was extracted from the 500 responses to the SU's consultation. The research explored the way students felt about how LSE dealt with mental health from a variety of perspectives. Discussions focused on what students thought about the institution, the spaces provided, the education they received, the events ran and the extent to which they engaged with services and how they used them. Our analysis identified emerging patterns that captured significant or interesting themes in response to the consultation questions. Using grounded theory we tagged these responses with codes, and then organised them into broader categories and concepts. From this we arrived at two predominant themes: academic culture and sense of community.

Academic Culture

Responses to the consultation highlighted the fact that LSE has an ingrained institutional culture that *“feels like a pressure cooker environment, as expectations and feelings of competition runs so high”*. Out of 500 responses, 159 commented that LSE perpetuates a culture where pressure is high due to the expectation to achieve. This culture subsequently breeds a variety of behaviours amongst the student and staff population that further aggravate the poor wellbeing of students in the institution. 100 respondents discussed that there was an atmosphere of competition between students to achieve the best grades, which prevents the genuine inter-student support that could prevent or alleviate some of the mental health issues of students. One participant stated that *“LSE is unnecessarily competitive, students don't like to collaborate because they believe that sharing their ideas will be to their disadvantage”*. In addition to a culture that encourages high pressure and unrealistic standards, students also found that LSE's workload to be unrealistic. 190 participants referred to this, with one remarking that the *“workload was so high it felt impossible to even consider taking a break”*. Students commented that they did not feel adequately supported with this workload and had to *“teach themselves”*. With this pressure to achieve (as one respondent put it, there's no *“learning culture at LSE, just a grades culture”*), a workload that feels insurmountable and an internal atmosphere of competitiveness between students it's apparent to see why mental health has become an institutional problem.

Sense of Community

“I don't feel like there is much of a community here...LSE makes it very difficult to claw your way out of feeling isolated.”

An additional theme that appeared through our analysis was the idea of loneliness amongst the student populous. 210 respondents discussed that since the start of their academic career at

LSE they had felt isolated due to a lack of university wide community. This manifests in a variety of forms, whether that be a lack of community at the university itself, at halls, or in their departments or classes. Respondents claimed that the lack of community is one of the *“biggest problems”* when it comes to mental health issues at LSE. This lack of community leads to extreme isolation, which only further aggravates the issues raised by the competitive academic culture that is specific to LSE — *“a bigger sense of community would actually help you know that you are not the only one experiencing what you’re going through while you complete your degree at LSE”*. It is worth noting that whilst this was one of the most common themes throughout the consultation, it was a much more prevalent issue amongst international students, both at undergraduate and postgraduate level. With over 50% of students at LSE coming from an international background, this directly affects the majority of the student population.

Promotion of Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing

Space on Campus

One theme that emerged from the consultation was the dissatisfaction students felt with LSE's physical campus. More specifically, with the amount of social and study spaces on campus. 15% of students felt it was very hard to find quiet spaces to study on campus and this caused them a great deal of stress. As one respondent put it:

“The uni is too cramped. It’s strange to say but this crampedness can lead to increased anxiety.”

Students consistently complained about LSE's *“terrible infrastructure”*, noting that there was *“no central place to meet”* or *“no calm place to just sit and eat your lunch”*. Students felt increased social space on campus would improve their wellbeing by encouraging people to spend time on campus and thereby increasing the level of community they would experience with their peers. Respondents also felt social space on campus would encourage students to take breaks, or at least begin to promote a break culture. Students expressed a desire to see more flexible spaces on campus where people can study, work on group projects, and eat lunch, instead of only being provided a *“cold and quiet library”* to work in.

Some of the dissatisfaction with space on campus may dissipate as new buildings are opened and construction on campus lessens. However, it remains key that student wellbeing is of central importance when planning future campus developments.

Campaigns about Mental Health and Wellbeing

Many students felt that an important part of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing at LSE was through running communications campaigns and a series of events to raise awareness about mental health. 15% of respondents expressed a desire to see more effort being made to encourage students to talk about mental health and to start a *“genuine conversation”*. Respondents also mentioned the stigma that they felt surrounding mental health. One respondent described this as a *“culture of shame for those who struggle”*. This echoes the findings of the LSESU 2016 Welfare Survey², which found that 31% of students felt there was a stigma around mental health at LSE.

² LSE Students' Union (2016) 'The Welfare Survey: Final Report'. Available at: <https://www.lsesu.com/pageassets/democracy/resources/The-LSESU-Welfare-Survey-Final-Version.pdf>

However it is important that the focus of these campaigns is not solely on destigmatizing mental health. It is equally important that these campaigns take steps to tackle the culture of intense pressure and competition at LSE. As discussed before, the responses to this consultation make clear that this culture has an extremely detrimental effect on students' mental health and wellbeing. A well planned communications campaign could help offer an alternative narrative to these students, emphasizing both the importance of collaboration and need for students to take care of their wellbeing.

The LSESU recommends that LSE works in conjunction with the SU to lead and run campaigns to encourage students to talk about mental health and to help tackle the negative aspects of LSE culture highlighted in this report.

Prevention of Poor Mental Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Education and Course Organisation

Students made a number of suggestions as to how to **make LSE a more inclusive learning environment** and how this would impact their mental health and wellbeing. 38% of respondents to our research described an unmanageable workload, referencing clashing deadlines, an unachievable amount of reading, and studying for exams and summative assessments at the same time. Students remarked that they felt the timing of their deadlines and assessments had been planned poorly by their department, to the detriment of their own wellbeing. Other respondents felt that too many of their courses were assessed by exams that counted for 100% of their grade – one student described how *“everything hinges on one event, the exam”*. In order to support students’ mental health it is essential that efforts to diversify assessments continue and are implemented by all departments. It is also important that departments take into consideration the other deadlines and pressures students face when setting coursework deadlines and exam dates.

Undergraduate students in particular felt that there was often a **lack of support and guidance from the academics** who were teaching them. Undergraduate home students felt this most acutely, with 21% of these respondents making reference to this. These students felt there was a lack of guidance about writing essays, exam strategy, making notes, prioritising reading lists and managing the heavy workload. Many respondents stated that they felt they had to *“teach themselves”* and had no examples of the type of work expected of them and little understanding of the marking criteria. One participant commented that academic staff are *“unsympathetic, do not reply often [and] do not get marks back on time”*. Other participants commented that support from LSE Life had been helpful, but many still felt that they were inadequately prepared for how to study at degree level. This sense of uncertainty about what was expected of them, coupled with the *“overwhelming”* workload greatly increased students stress levels. LSESU recommends that the LSE works to ensure basic standards of course organisation across departments. These standards should ensure that marking criteria are available to all students, and that reading lists are prioritised to indicate what texts are essential, which are recommended and which are for additional reading. LSESU also recommend that more work is done to ensure that students are able to approach academic staff in order to ask for help.

In addition to these themes, some respondents specifically mentioned the **patchy support for disabled students**. PhD respondents felt unsure of what support the DWS were able to provide to them. Undergraduate respondents felt that academics required more training around disability and that LSE as an institution did not *“value”* them. These respondents also mentioned that lecture capture and clear processes for requesting deadline extensions were of

particular importance to disabled students. LSESU recommend that academic staff are given further training about supporting disabled students and ensuring their inclusion plans are implemented.

Learning communities

“There feels no sense of an academic community so when you're struggling academically, you feel very alone.”

The respondents to our consultation indicated a number of improvements that could be made at LSE to create learning communities on campus. Many respondents, particularly at undergraduate level, made comments stating that they felt there was a need to increase a sense of community in departments. Undergraduate and postgraduate home students in particular wished for LSE to foster closer relationships between staff and students so that they would feel *“like they are able to ask for help more easily and are supported”*. Some respondents felt that their academic department did not care about them, stating that *“some teachers do not care whether you are struggling or not and that can be stressful”*. LSESU believes that the LSE should investigate ways to develop relationships between students and staff, particularly between students and their academic mentors, thereby enabling students to feel confident in approaching staff for help when needed.

In addition to relationships with academic staff, 10% of respondents asked for more academic interaction between students, requesting organised study groups and more opportunities to integrate with other students in classes and academic settings. Encouraging students to work together in a collaborative fashion may help to resolve some of the issues students feel around a lack of community and a competitive environment on campus. This ties into the ‘intrusive learning communities’ recommended in the UUK’s Stepchange Framework³. These type of initiatives, coupled with an increased amount of group study spaces on campus, would encourage a sense of community within departments. LSESU encourage LSE to incentivise departments to trial ways to develop these ‘learning communities’.

Staff Training

“...there should be a much wider knowledge about the difficulties students are presenting. Knowledge that transcends the counselling and wellbeing centre, but is in departments.”

³ Universities UK (2017) Stepchange Framework. Available at: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/stepchange/Pages/framework.aspx>

11% of all respondents to this consultation requested that staff be trained in how to support students who are experiencing mental health difficulties. Amongst PhD students, the proportion of respondents requesting further training was 39%. This is particularly noteworthy as PhD students often work as GTAs and are in close contact with undergraduate students. These respondents felt they needed more training to know how to support the mental health of students and to be able to effectively signpost students to support. By no means does LSESU expect staff to be acting as counsellors for students, but we expect staff to respond to students appropriately and with sympathy. We believe that academic staff should be given training on mental health first aid, and be made aware of the relevant procedures for signposting students to appropriate support and aware of the protocol regarding extensions or exceptional circumstances.

Provision of Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

Improvements to Wellbeing Services

The most prominent theme to emerge from this research was the strength of opinion that students hold about the mental health support available at LSE, and in particular the counselling services. A few respondents did comment that they felt the support they had received was good, in particular highlighting the positive experiences they had had with mental health advisors in the DWS. However, 216 respondents (representing 43% of total respondents) made reference to improvements that they felt could be made to the counselling service.

Perception and Experience of the Counselling Service

One of the most common comments made about the counselling service was that there were **long wait times to see a counsellor**. In the responses to this consultation, 38 references to the waiting list being too long were made. The comments about the actual length of waiting varied; some respondents said that the wait was 2 weeks which they still found *“inexcusable”*, numerous students commented that they waited 3 to 4 weeks, and a few stated that waiting times were two months. As this research did not specifically ask students if they had accessed the service, we cannot assess how many of these responses are based on actual experience and how many are hearsay. However the perception of the length of waiting lists, and students hearing about the experiences of friends, affected respondents likelihood to access services. To quote one respondent *“hearing that there is a long waiting list puts me off from reaching out”*. Students felt that having to wait to access support made them feel *“forgotten”* and that it did not recognise the amount of courage it had taken to reach out. Others commented on the effect that waiting had on their academic work, saying that *“waiting just a few weeks really set [their] learning back”*. It is vital that LSE further investigate the length of the waiting lists for counselling. Furthermore LSESU recommend that LSE should identify whether there are times of the year where demand for counselling is frequently higher, e.g. during Lent term or the exam period, and should ensure that more counsellors are hired during that time in order to meet demand. LSESU also recommend that LSE ensure that no student has to wait more than 10 working days to see a counsellor.

Respondents also commented that they thought **mental health support at LSE is underfunded**, that counsellors were *“overworked”* and there was not enough support available. One respondent commented that they had been *“turned away”* from the counselling service when they needed support and that they thought this was due to a *“lack of investment”* in the service. The perception of the service as underfunded affected how likely respondents were to access support. For example one respondent remarked:

“...knowing that the wellbeing services at LSE are strained as it is, I hesitate to use the resources myself for my own mental health.”

These type of responses show that the more entrenched this image of the counselling service becomes, the more LSE students feel unable to access the support they need. Taking into account the growing number of students experiencing and disclosing mental health difficulties across the HE sector, it is vital that LSE undertake a thorough review of the funding and capacity of the counselling service. This review should also include an assessment of the needs of the LSE student body and a plan of how to manage further increases in demand.

Another common statement about the counselling service was the unhappiness students felt about the **cap on the number of sessions** they could receive. These respondents felt that they were not receiving enough sessions, even less than the 6 session cap, stating that they only received 3 or 4 sessions. Others felt that the knowledge of the 6 session cap mean they were less likely to reach out, because they didn't want to *“use up”* their sessions in case they needed them later. The LSESU recommend that LSE investigate how frequently students are receiving less than 6 sessions and why this occurs. The LSESU also recommend developing flexible ways for students to receive more follow up and continued support, including potentially increasing the number of sessions students are able to receive.

It is interesting to note that this perception of the student counselling service is not a recent phenomenon. The LSESU 2016 Welfare Survey⁴ found that there was a 'reasonable proportion of students' that felt the reputation of the Student Counselling Service was a 'barrier' to them accessing the service and that this perception stemmed from students 'receiving or being told about negative experiences or perceiving the service to be under resourced'. Additionally, the Welfare Survey found that students stated that 'the long waiting time (and) the cap on the number of sessions' also acted as a barrier to access.

A further trend that was revealed in this analysis of responses was the **dissatisfaction students feel with being referred away** from the counselling service, or as one respondent phrased it, *“sending unhappy students elsewhere”*. Some stated that after seeing the counselling service they were provided with a list of private therapy providers but that these were not affordable for them. Others said they were told to seek help from their GP but felt that there were no links between LSE wellbeing services and NHS services. There was a wish from these respondents for someone to *“explain the process of trying to get help [or] therapy through the NHS”*. Additionally some students felt they had been turned away from the service

⁴ LSE Students' Union (2016) 'The Welfare Survey: Final Report'. Available at: <https://www.lsesu.com/pageassets/democracy/resources/The-LSESU-Welfare-Survey-Final-Version.pdf>

without any suggestions of other avenues of advice or support. One respondent described they had seen their friends turned away because there was *“nothing [the counselling service] could do”*. Another respondent reported that a member of the Student Wellbeing Service had told them *“not to bother”* with seeking support from the counselling service as the service would not be able to help.

It is vital that LSE investigate how many students are being referred away from the counselling service and why. Where it is in the best interest of the student to receive support from a different service, the reasons for this should be explained clearly and guidance should be given to students about their options. Furthermore wellbeing services need to develop better links to NHS to help prevent students experiencing *“a long winded process of waiting”*. Establishing this type of partnership is recommended in the UUK Stepchange Framework⁵ which states: ‘It is essential to establish links with NHS commissioners and services to support access into care and better coordination of care’. The results of this consultation also make clear the need to manage the expectations of students - what help can students reasonably expect the counselling service to provide? It is evident that students’ expectations of the counselling service are not matching up with what is provided – and this mismatch is contributing to the negative perception of the service.

Promotion of Wellbeing Services

Beyond students’ comments about their experience and perception of wellbeing services, a common trend was that respondents thought these services needed to be better promoted. Respondents felt they didn’t know what support was available to them or that the support didn’t feel accessible. For example when asked what mental health support they would like at LSE, 23 respondents stated they would like to see drop in sessions with counsellors. The counselling service already provides a daily drop in service yet it is clear that not all students are aware of this. This lack of awareness extends beyond the drop in sessions to the other types of services provided. One student commented that they knew very little about the student wellbeing services – stating that they *“just know it is hidden somewhere in the towers”*. This sentiment was echoed by many other respondents who felt it was *“difficult to know who to turn to when you need help”* and also *“hard to know how to advise and direct friends to services”*. There was also a number of comments that students felt there should be better links between academic departments and the wellbeing service, as academic staff they had spoken to were unsure where to signpost them.

⁵ Universities UK (2017) Stepchange Framework. Available at: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/stepchange/Pages/framework.aspx>

LSESU recommend that LSE run an awareness campaign to promote the wellbeing services and advertise the support that is available to students there. As stated in the staff training section, LSESU also recommend that this information is promoted to academic staff, so they are able to effectively signpost students.

International Student Experience of Services

When analysing the responses to this consultation, a trend in the responses of international students was identified. Many international students felt that they were very unfamiliar with the type of support services available in the UK. These respondents felt that the support offered by LSE was very different from the services provided at universities in their home country and that there was not enough information available about the support available on the NHS, or how to access this support. International students also identified a need for greater cultural understanding from wellbeing services, and that respondents who had used these services felt that their problems were taken out of **“context due to cultural differences”**. Language difficulties were also raised as a barrier to accessing support, with some respondents stating they felt that counsellors didn't have enough patience to understand their English and others expressing a wish to receive support in their native language.

Given the high proportion of international students at LSE it is vital that action is taken to address these concerns. LSESU recommends that more tailored information is provided to international students, particularly during the welcome period, to help them better understand the support available at LSE and through the NHS. The SU also recommend that LSE employ counsellors and wellbeing staff from a variety of cultural backgrounds in order to help students feel better supported.

Wellbeing Activities

In addition to requests for improved services, 22% of respondents wished to see more wellbeing events provided at LSE. Suggestions for the types of events included yoga sessions, meditation and mindfulness classes, picnics, film nights, and bringing dogs on to campus.

The importance of these events lies both in their ability to help build community, as well as offering a counter to the culture of stress and high pressure at LSE. Respondents felt that these type of informal events would enable them **“to meet more of the student body”** and would help **“create a community spirit”**. Others stated that they thought that these type of activities would **“actively encourage downtime”** and would help students feel like they were **“allowed”** to take a break. There was a desire from respondents to see these type of events happen throughout the year, rather than only during exam time. However some respondents expressed

concern that these activities were being offered instead of *“focus[ing] on the structural issues”*.

It is important to note that many of these wellbeing activities already exist at LSE. The Students' Union and some academic departments run events where dogs are brought on to campus. The SU run a series of de-stress events during the exam period and also run an Active Lifestyle programme throughout the year where students can participate in yoga classes and other exercises classes at a low cost. Similarly the Faith Centre facilitate Tai Chi and yoga classes, as well as running mindfulness sessions. There are numerous wellbeing activities and initiatives across the School. However it is clear from the responses to this consultation that not all students are aware of these activities. LSESU recommend that more is done to co-ordinate these activities better across all LSE department, and more effective ways of communicating them to students are found.

Summary of Recommendations

This list is a summary of all the recommendations LSESU are making to the LSE in the forming of their mental health and wellbeing strategy. It is not exhaustive and much more can be done to ensure LSE become a leader in the HE sector in embedding a culture of positive mental health and wellbeing for its' students.

Promotion of Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing

LSESU recommend that:

- LSE ensure student wellbeing is of central importance when planning future campus developments.
- LSE works in conjunction with the SU to lead and run campaigns to encourage students to talk about mental health and to help tackle the negative aspects of LSE culture highlighted in this report.

Prevention of Poor Mental Health and Wellbeing

LSESU recommend that:

- Efforts to diversify assessments continue and are implemented by all departments.
- Departments take into consideration the other deadlines and pressures students face when setting coursework deadlines and exam dates.
- LSE works to ensure basic standards of course organisation across departments. These standards should ensure that marking criteria are available to all students, and that reading lists are prioritised to indicate what texts are essential, which are recommended.
- Academic staff are given further training about supporting disabled students and ensuring their inclusion plans are implemented.
- LSE should investigate ways to develop relationships between students and staff, particularly between students and their academic mentors.
- LSE should incentivise departments to trial ways to develop 'learning communities', for example through organised study groups.
- Academic staff are given training on mental health first aid, and are made aware of the relevant procedures for signposting students to appropriate support and are aware of the protocol regarding extensions or exceptional circumstances.

Provision of Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

LSESU recommend that:

- LSE further investigate the length of the waiting lists for counselling.
- LSE should identify whether there are times of the year where demand for counselling is frequently higher and should ensure that more counsellors are hired during that time in order to meet demand.
- LSE should ensure that no student has to wait more than 10 working days to see a counsellor.
- LSE should undertake a thorough review of the funding and capacity of the counselling service which includes an assessment of the needs of the LSE student body and a plan of how to manage further increases in demand.
- LSE should investigate how frequently students are receiving less than 6 sessions and why this occurs.
- LSE should develop flexible ways for students to receive more follow up and continued support, including potentially increasing the number of counselling sessions students are able to receive.
- LSE should investigate how many students are being referred away from the counselling service and why, and that better guidance is given to those students that are referred away from the counselling service.
- Wellbeing services should develop links with the NHS to support better access and coordination of care.
- LSE should run an awareness campaign to promote the wellbeing services and advertise the support that is available to students there, with special attention being paid to promoting this information to academic staff.
- Tailored information is provided to international students, particularly during the welcome period, to help them better understand the support available at LSE and through the NHS.
- LSE employ counsellors and wellbeing staff from a variety of cultural backgrounds in order to help students feel better supported.
- Wellbeing activities are co-ordinated better across all LSE departments, and more effective ways of communicating these activities to students are found.

Appendix A

Consultation Questions

Basic Information:

What is your level of study?

- Undergraduate
- Postgraduate Taught
- Postgraduate Research

Are you an international student?

- Yes/No

Please specify your ethnicity:

- Arab
- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British – Indian
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
- Black or Black British – African
- Black or Black British – Caribbean
- Chinese
- Mixed - White and Asian
- Mixed - White and Black African
- Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
- Other Asian background
- Other Black background
- Other Ethnic background
- Other mixed background
- Prefer not to say
- White

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to Say
- Other

Is your gender the same you were assigned at birth?

- Yes/No

Mental Health and Wellbeing at LSE:

- What do you think is stressful about studying at LSE?
- Do you feel a sense of community at LSE? How does this community/lack of community affect your mental health and wellbeing?
- How can LSE become a more inclusive learning environment?
- How can we promote positive mental health at LSE?
- What mental health support would you like to see at LSE?
- Please only answer this question if you are an international student: Do you feel that there are any barriers to support that arise due to your status as an international student?
- Please only answer this question if you are a PhD student: Do you think there is anything unique to the PhD experience that affects your mental health and wellbeing?
- Please use this space to give any other feedback you think is relevant:

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Written on behalf of the elected officers of LSESU by:

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