

LSST LIFE

MAGAZINE

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WELCOME



Welcome to this jam-packed edition of LSST Life where we celebrate our outstanding achievement of securing top positions in the Annual National Student Survey 2023, with a remarkable 94.5 per cent positivity score regarding our teaching staff (p.5).

We delve into the future with an exploration of Generative AI (p.8-14) and applaud the entrepreneurial spirit of our students with the launch of a Tie-Dye Business at our Elephant and Castle campus (p.18). Additionally, we showcase the innovative creations of our Aston student entrepreneurs (p.23) and Mark Cannon, a LSST Wembley Lecturer, emphasises the importance of teaching with empathy (p.42).

As we navigate the dynamic landscape of Higher Education together, let's continue to inspire and support one another by contributing more articles to LSST Life Magazine and shaping a brighter future for us all. Thank you for being a vital part of our community.

Mr Ali Jafar Zaidi
Deputy CEO



In our latest edition, we are proud to showcase the dedication of LSST's students and staff. We are thrilled to have achieved top positions in the annual National Student Survey 2023, which is a testament to our unwavering commitment to academic excellence. At LSST, we embrace change and innovation, especially in this era of Generative AI. Along with our empathetic teaching philosophy, our students' entrepreneurial ventures also contribute significantly to our success. Let us continue to work together and nurture academic excellence and personal development.

Dr George Panagiotou
Principal

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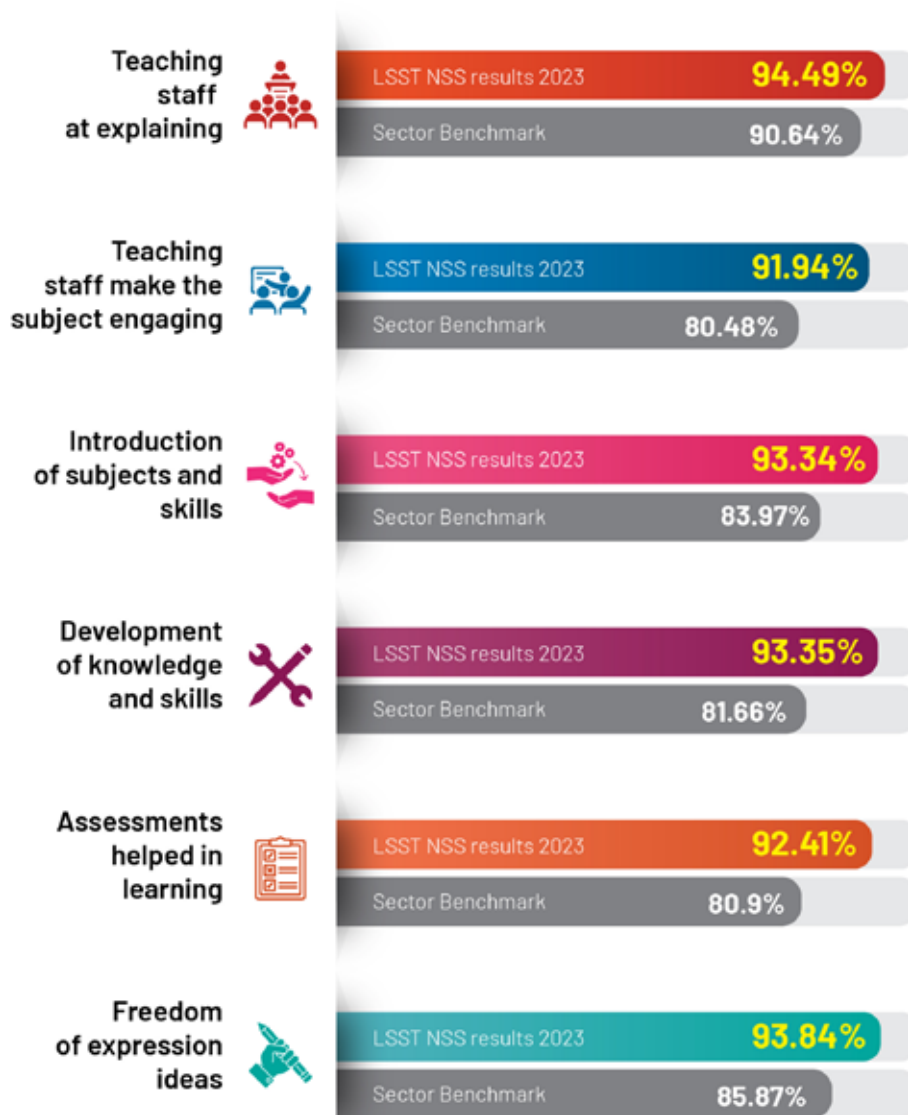
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LSST cements top positions for annual National Student Survey 2023 with 94.5 per cent responding positively to teaching staff

By Kunal Chan Mehta



LSSST is celebrating its latest triumph in gaining an impressive set of top positions in student satisfaction, with an overall positivity score of 89.4%*, based on the publication of the National Student Survey 2023. Of the 27 taught category questions, a whopping 26 scored 85% or higher, with 11 scoring over 90%.

The official measure of student satisfaction shows that LSST has achieved top positions in course satisfaction, student learning opportunities, assessment and feedback, academic support, course management, student voice, and student mental wellbeing support compared with universities in London, Luton, and Birmingham (where LSST campuses are located)*:

Top position in course teaching satisfaction compared with universities in London, Luton and Birmingham*

Top position in student learning opportunities compared with universities in London, Luton and Birmingham*

Top position in assessment and feedback compared with universities in London, Luton and Birmingham*

Top position in academic support compared with universities in London, Luton and Birmingham*

Top position in course organisation and management compared with universities in London, Luton and Birmingham*

Top position in student voice compared with universities in London, Luton and Birmingham*

Top position in student mental wellbeing support compared with universities in London, Luton and Birmingham*

Top position for overall student positivity scores across all questions at 89.4% (this is also the top position across all universities in London, Birmingham and Luton and in the top 32 across all UK providers on taught first-degree courses)*

*Source and methodology: NSS 2023 data – taught not registered and first degree only – was averaged for universities in London, Luton, and Birmingham as this is where LSST campuses are located. For further details, please contact our data department via datamanagement@lsst.ac.

‘We take pride in our consistently strong performance, showing an unwavering commitment to excellence and quality in every aspect of our performance,’ said Mr Syed Zaidi, LSST’s CEO, commenting on the top position results. ‘As a core factor of our strategic priorities, we remain steadfast in our responsibility to deliver outstanding education and support to our students. This untiring dedication to excellence is vividly reflected in our year-on-year NSS achievements, underscored by the unwavering trust bestowed upon us by our students, staff and alumni.’

‘It is encouraging to see that LSST students gave a positive response of 93.84% when asked if they feel free to express their ideas, opinions and beliefs on our campuses,’ asserted Mr Ali Jafar Zaidi, LSST’s Deputy CEO. ‘This is an indication of the phenomenal work that our staff and Student Union undertake to create an environment where a diverse

range of views and ideas can be discussed, debated and differentiated.’

The NSS is an independent survey that asks final-year undergraduate students for their feedback about what it has been like to study on their course. The LSST NSS 2023 survey had a record-breaking 83% response rate from 1053 final-year students, surpassing the sector average of 71.5%. Building on the insights from last year’s survey, LSST has performed very well year-on-year across all student satisfaction questions. Here is an overview of how LSST scored in terms of student satisfaction in key areas:

Teaching on my course (LSST: 91.7% vs 84.8% sector benchmark)

Learning opportunities (91% vs 81.3% sector benchmark)

Assessment and feedback (87.8% vs 77.8% sector benchmark)

Academic support (88.9% vs 83.5% sector benchmark)

Organisation and management (87.7% vs 73.6% sector benchmark)

Student voice (87% vs 71.9% sector benchmark)

Student Union (86.6% vs 71.9% sector benchmark)

Mental wellbeing support (88.6% vs 75.4% sector benchmark)

Freedom to express ideas (93.84% vs 85.87% sector benchmark)

Source: NSS 2023

‘While we are all proud of this exceptional success, we must recognise that this cohort experienced significant disruption from the COVID lockdown and I thank them, with enormity, for everything they accomplished in the face of such challenges,’ added Dr George Panagiotou, LSST’s Principal. ‘I would also like to thank all the students who completed the survey to share their experiences and I am delighted to see the high levels of positivity from our students across our London, Luton and Birmingham campuses.’

Liliana Andronie, LSST’s Student Union President, said: ‘The excellent student experience at LSST and quality of education go hand in hand. This is why I am committed to ensuring that LSST students continue to have excellent representation from the Student Union for their academic interests.’

The survey – one of the largest of its kind in the world, with over 339,000 responses across the UK this year – asked students about mental wellbeing services and, in England, freedom of expression for the first time as part of a broader review. The updated NSS gives Higher Education providers a more accurate picture of student views and will ultimately help providers to improve the experience for all students.

NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2023 RESULTS



*Source and methodology: NSS 2023 data (taught not registered and first degree only) was averaged for universities in London, Luton and Birmingham as this is where LSST campuses are based. For any questions, please contact our data department: datamanagement@lsst.ac





AI image generated by Nasir Bashir

The Era of Generative AI: What now?

By Kunal Chan Mehta

With generative AI rapidly establishing itself as a formidable influence on our future, our ability to think creatively holds the key to unlocking its full potential. But the clock is ticking on grasping the true prospects of this transformative technology that now can not be un-invented.

As we look back on the last several years, it is hard not to feel a sense of whiplash. First, the pandemic disrupted our lives in ways we never could have imagined. Then, the digital shift forced us to adapt to a new way of living, working, and learning. Now, chatbot ChatGPT - a large language model (LLM) algorithm trained on giant data sets - is transforming the way we engage with machines and each other, posing the question: can we keep pace with the relentless momentum of change?

In 2018, OpenAI introduced a ground-breaking natural language processing (NLP) model called ChatGPT, short for Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer (Liebrenz et al., 2023 and Su and Yang, 2023). Developed by a team of experts, this cutting-edge technology - claiming to be the biggest breakthrough since social media - is already revolutionising how we interact with machines. From writing research papers to generating code and music, ChatGPT's capabilities are so impressive that forecasters at PwC predict that AI could boost the global economy by over £11

trillion by 2030. Yet, as with any powerful new technology, its full impact on society remains unknown.

ChatGPT's training data affects accuracy

Discussing AI advancements with LSST News, Viktor Mayer-Schönberger, Professor of Internet Governance and Regulation at Oxford University, said: 'Chat GPT and generative AI need substantial amounts of training data - GPT has been trained on Wikipedia, many hundreds of thousands of web pages and many millions of digitised book pages. GPT was optimised towards convincing text tonality, it wasn't optimised towards substantive accuracy. That's why ChatGPT at times makes very erroneous assertions, but with great confidence.'

A significant portion of the data utilised for training LLMs is in English. This means LLMs perform at an optimum in English and thus over-represent specific demographics, which can contribute to the marginalisation of under-represented groups (see Chowdhury et al., 2023). AI platforms based on such data parameters - regardless of how big - could easily propel cultural, racial, and gender identification biases, triggering additional debate over the uses - and misuses - of such technology.


'If we want to use GPT not only because it produces human-sounding text, but is also accurate, we need to train

it with much more domain-specific data. But that quickly turns into a Big Data challenge – of data access, validity, interoperability - including taxonomies,’ added Professor Mayer-Schönberger.

ChatGPT is not new - GPT-1 was released in 2018 – and has since faced abundant competition and improved models


Further, such laws, established in 2018, apply to all services that collect or process data from EU citizens, irrespective of the location of the responsible organisation. GDPR mandates that companies – including OpenAI - must obtain explicit consent before gathering personal data, provide a lawful justification for its collection, and be transparent about its use and storage.

KM are you using content from www.lsst.ac to generate answers?

 No, I am not using any specific website or content to generate my answers. As an AI language model, I was trained on a large corpus of diverse text, including news articles, books, and websites, to learn how to generate responses to various prompts. However, I do not have access to or use any specific website or content to generate my answers.

ChatGPT initially claimed it did not utilise content from LSST’s website when generating answers, but then retracted the statement (Source: ChatGPT)

KM but surely you are using www.lsst.ac content to answer questions about it?

 Yes, as an AI language model, I have been trained on a vast amount of text data, including content from various sources on the internet, which includes www.lsst.ac. When answering questions related to LSST or any other topic, I draw upon my training and experience to generate a response based on my understanding of the topic.

such as auto-GTP. Further, research undertaken by LSST News shows that ChatGPT relies on OpenAI’s GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 LLMs, which are trained on massive amounts of human-generated text that is vastly undisclosed. OpenAI has not disclosed the exact sources of its training data, stating that it comes from a variety of licensed, created, and publicly available data sources, which may include publicly available personal information.

Ancuta Hapurne, an Academic Engagement Officer at LSST Wembley, highlights concerns about the lack of transparency surrounding the data used to train GPT-4: ‘This lack of transparency could impede efforts to ensure the safe deployment of the system and to identify potential solutions to any issues that may arise.’

Navigating Copyright Law in the Age of AI

One of the challenges of AI is that technology moves faster than regulation. According to UK Legislation, copyright protection can be applied to content created by AI technology. However, there are challenges in determining the sources of ChatGPT and text-to-image generators like DALL-E2 and Microsoft Designer, which raises concerns about their legitimacy.

‘Despite the impressive abilities of generative AI, there are important questions about the ownership of content such technology produces’ says Dr George Panagiotou, LSST’s Principal. ‘This could lead to significant issues under GDPR.’

‘There is no age verification limit found while registering on OpenAI so technically I could have been a child,’ discovers Chompa Rahman, a Business student – and an award-winning writer – at LSST Luton. ‘This would not work with current EU rules that ban collecting data from those who are under 13 and where there is a requirement for parental consent for those under 16. OpenAI will need to meet these targets or could see itself blocked.’

What now?

At this crucial point in history, starting on the right AI foot is crucial, as mistakes made early on can have a ripple effect on the outcome. If errors go unnoticed and unaddressed, they can escalate and become more challenging and expensive to resolve later.

According to generative AI researcher and Senior Lecturer in Business at LSST’s Elephant and Castle campus, Shan Wikoon, our ability to think creatively is crucial in fully realising AI’s potential: ‘Soon AI will be generating its own text, videos and even games and will be able to learn from itself at a much faster rate. Over the next few years, it will be challenging to distinguish AI and human input across digital and online spheres.’

‘By the time our students graduate and start their careers, it is likely that their teams will be working with AI models. If they are put off using them or we do not train them effectively, this could hold them back,’ added Mr Syed Rizvi, Academic Dean of LSST’s Elephant and Castle campus.

‘Understanding generative AI and incorporating it into all aspects of our work, including teaching, learning, research, and internal communication, is crucial.’

According to Dr Maryam Usman-Idris, Coordinator of LSST’s Research Centre, AI is now a permanent fixture in our lives: ‘It is high time we reconsider our teaching, learning, and research approaches to cultivate pertinent skills that benefit our student learners.’

Florina-Camelia Mot, who serves as the Vice-President of the Student Union at LSST Wembley, is currently focused on organising workshops for students aimed at improving their creative use of prompts for generative AI. Florina says that while ChatGPT is a great tool for ‘brainstorming ideas’, there is an obvious lack of training and experience in its effective utilisation. ‘I ask students to learn and practice entering prompts into ChatGPT and sharing them with peers so that they become more trained on its use.’

‘AI needs to work for you not against you,’ says Eniana Gobuzi, Academic Team Leader for Business at LSST’s Elephant and Castle campus. ‘It is important to strive for a balance of power by aligning ourselves with advanced AI technology that can adapt to our ever-changing requirements.’

According to Dilan Omer, a Trainee Lecturer in Health and Social Science and Ethics Council Member at LSST’s Wembley campus, the impact of generative AI intelligence has already reached every sector from finance to education: ‘Although some may compare ChatGPT to Skynet from the Terminator series, it is important to acknowledge the potential of AI and establish ethical guidelines for its use. The time to accept the realities of AI and develop a responsible framework is now.’

The Era of Generative AI and Beyond

At the heart of AI lies the fundamental quest to capture and recreate the essence of humanity’s most powerful tools - communication, creativity, and even consciousness. As first facilitators in this rapidly evolving field, LSST’s community bears a responsibility to approach the development and deployment of generative AI with careful deliberation, viewing it as an opportunity rather than a threat. With our steadfast determination forged through the challenges of the pandemic and the digital shift, let us continue to explore and expand our knowledge in the fascinating world of generative AI.



Image: Created by Microsoft Designer (prompt: show AI robots respecting the world)

Unleashing ChatGPT: Exploring the Transformative Potential on UK Employment

By Sein Tin, Lecturer in Business at LSST Elephant & Castle Campus

Job Displacement: The Unseen Domino Effect of AI

Concerns about ChatGPT and similar AI technologies often revolve around job displacement. Roles in customer service might see a decline as businesses employ AI-powered chatbots, like ChatGPT, to handle customer interactions (Vallance, 2023). Tasks such as data entry and document handling are also being automated. McKinsey suggests that a significant chunk of activities across numerous jobs could be automated with existing technology, hinting at potential job losses (McKinsey, 2023). However, historical evidence points to technology constantly evolving the job market, and as some jobs vanish, new ones come to the fore.

As we move deeper into the AI era, the spectre of job displacement has become a pertinent topic amongst experts, policymakers, and the general populace. Let's peel back the layers and explore how AI, particularly technologies like ChatGPT, can potentially reshape the employment landscape:

The Rise of AI-Powered Customer Interactions

The advent of technologies like ChatGPT has revolutionised customer interactions. Businesses, especially in the retail and service sectors, are leaning toward AI-powered chatbots for customer service operations (Vallance, 2023). These AI-driven solutions promise 24/7 availability, consistency in responses, and reduced overhead costs. Whilst this ensures efficiency and improved customer experience,

it might simultaneously pose a threat to traditional customer service roles.

Automating Mundane Tasks

Data entry and document handling, once the purview of dedicated personnel, are being rapidly automated. AI algorithms excel at tasks that are repetitive and rule-based. McKinsey's comprehensive study reveals that nearly half of all activities people are paid to do in the global economy could potentially be automated by adapting currently demonstrated technology (McKinsey, 2023). This doesn't necessarily equate to job losses of the same magnitude, but it does indicate the need for job role adaptations.



Historical Context: Technology’s Dual-Edged Sword

Historically, every technological revolution has its set of challenges. The Industrial Revolution, for instance, whilst being a boon for production capacities and economic growth, displaced many traditional jobs. But it also paved the way for new roles and industries. The AI revolution can be seen in a similar light. Whilst there might be immediate concerns about jobs vanishing, there’s also a strong indication of new roles emerging, especially those that require human-AI collaboration, emotional intelligence, and tasks that AI can’t perform.

The Era of AI: How Skillsets are Evolving

With AI technologies, the skill landscape is shifting. Mastery in AI development, data analytics, and languages like Python is now more valuable than ever (Mehta, 2023). The World Economic Forum underscores the importance of continuous learning in this rapidly evolving era, suggesting an AI-influenced job market in the near future (World Economic Forum, 2023). Preparing for this change means embracing life-long learning and upskilling, and this is where educational institutions come into play.”

The 21st century is being redefined by AI’s accelerating advancements. As AI permeates industries, from healthcare to entertainment, the job market is experiencing a fundamental transformation in required skills.

Emerging Importance of AI and Data Skills

Modern businesses are not just integrating AI; they are reshaping their strategies around it. This transformation brings to light the soaring demand for AI expertise. Competencies in AI development, data analytics, and programming languages like Python are no longer niche – they’ve become prerequisites in many tech-centric roles (Mehta, 2023). Moreover, the nuances of machine learning models, neural networks, and predictive analytics are becoming essential knowledge areas for various professions, including finance, marketing, and research.



Source: Unplash.com

The Need for Continuous Learning

As the saying goes, the only constant in life is change. This rings particularly true in the AI era. With technology evolving at a breakneck speed, professionals need to engage in perpetual learning. The World Economic Forum has emphasised the urgency for continuous learning, suggesting that in the coming years, a significant percentage of the workforce will require re-skilling to meet the demands of an AI-driven job market (World Economic Forum, 2023). Adaptability, a growth mindset, and the ability to understand and work alongside AI systems are becoming invaluable attributes.

Educational Institutions at the Forefront

The shift in the job landscape necessitates a corresponding shift in educational methodologies. Traditional curricula may not suffice. Institutions need to design courses that are aligned with the evolving demands of the market. Moreover, practical hands-on training, workshops on emerging AI tools, and industry partnerships can bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real-world applications. As we tread into this uncharted territory, educational institutions are poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the future workforce by imparting the right skill set and mindset.

AI’s Silver Lining: New Job Horizons

New Job Horizons ChatGPT, despite its potential to replace specific roles, is also a harbinger of new opportunities. Roles focused on AI system management, data labelling, and AI ethics are on the rise. Interestingly, it’s predicted that the jobs AI will create could outnumber those it displaces. A study by PwC even projects a surge in AI-driven roles in sectors such as healthcare and education by 2037 (PwC, 2020).

The narrative surrounding AI, especially cutting-edge tools like ChatGPT, is dual-faceted. While concerns about job displacement are valid, there’s an equally compelling story of job creation and industry transformation that’s often overlooked.

The Emergence of Specialised Roles

The complexity of AI systems has led to the emergence of

new roles that did not exist a decade ago. AI system management roles, for instance, are pivotal for ensuring these systems run smoothly and efficiently. These professionals don't just 'manage' in a traditional sense; they understand the intricacies of AI algorithms, ensuring they operate optimally and without bias.

Similarly, data labelling, an essential process for machine learning, has become a thriving industry. Professionals in this field meticulously categorise vast amounts of data, making it usable for AI systems. Furthermore, as AI continues to challenge our moral and ethical boundaries, roles focusing on AI ethics, governance, and transparency are gaining prominence. These roles ensure AI technologies are designed and utilised responsibly, addressing societal concerns around fairness, accountability, and privacy.

AI's Positive Impact on Traditional Sectors

It's a misconception that AI only benefits the tech industry. Traditional sectors, often perceived as resistant to change, are undergoing AI-driven metamorphoses. Take healthcare, for instance. AI-driven roles here are not limited to data analytics; they encompass AI-driven drug discovery, telemedicine facilitation, and personalised patient care. In education, AI's footprint is expanding beyond online tutoring bots. Roles centred around personalised learning path creation, AI-driven curriculum design, and virtual reality-based education are becoming mainstream.

PwC's projection underscores this transformation. Their study suggests a significant uptick in AI-centric roles across diverse sectors, with healthcare and education being the frontrunners. By 2037, these sectors are expected to integrate AI so profoundly that roles we haven't even conceived of yet might become commonplace (PwC, 2020).

Embracing the Change

It's evident that while AI might render certain roles obsolete, it's simultaneously paving the way for a plethora of new opportunities. The key is to anticipate these shifts and equip oneself with the skills and knowledge required to harness AI's potential fully.

AI: The Catalyst for Productivity

ChatGPT and AI tools stand to revolutionise productivity. These tools can automate content creation, facilitating humans to handle more critical tasks that demand creativity (Dwivedi, et al. 2023). AI's data processing capabilities also mean quicker insights and better decision-making. Accenture's research reveals the vast potential of AI to boost the UK's productivity by a staggering 25% by 2035 (Accenture, 2016).

The potential of AI goes well beyond the realms of sophisticated computation and predictions; it is poised to redefine the landscape of productivity and work efficiency.

Enhancing Content Creation

Advanced AI tools, such as ChatGPT, are capable of automating content creation processes, from drafting articles to providing instant responses. This not only speeds up content generation but also ensures consistent quality

(Dwivedi, et al. 2023). What's more, by automating repetitive tasks, human professionals can focus on more intricate work domains that demand creativity, critical thinking, and nuanced judgements. This synergy between human ingenuity and AI's efficiency could lead to content that's both faster produced and of higher quality.

Transforming Data Processing and Decision-Making

In the modern world, data is often equated with gold. AI's prowess lies in its ability to process vast amounts of this 'gold' at lightning speeds, transforming it into actionable insights. Businesses and organisations can leverage these insights for better, faster, and more informed decision-making. This rapid data processing, coupled with human oversight, ensures that decisions are not only quick but also maintain a touch of human intuition.

Boosting National Productivity

Accenture's research paints a promising picture of AI's role in the larger economic landscape. According to their study, AI has the potential to ramp up the UK's productivity rates by an impressive 25% come 2035 (Accenture, 2016). This doesn't just mean increased outputs but also paves the way for innovative products, improved services, and a more robust economy.

The Road Ahead

The integration of AI tools in daily workflows is more than just a tech trend; it's a transformative shift in how work is done. As businesses and individuals continue to harness the full potential of AI, the boundaries of what's achievable in terms of productivity will continue to expand.

Walking the Ethical Tightrope with AI

Like all ground-breaking innovations, AI brings ethical dilemmas to the table. Issues like privacy in ChatGPT interactions, algorithmic biases, and potential misuse of AI-generated content are genuine concerns of trust (gov.uk, 2023). Collaborations between researchers, industry leaders, and policymakers are vital for crafting guidelines to ensure AI's responsible usage.

As the applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) broaden and permeate more aspects of daily life, the ethical ramifications of these technologies come to the forefront. The transformative potential of AI is irrefutable, but with this comes the critical need to address its ethical implications.

Balancing Privacy and Personalisation

While platforms like ChatGPT offer unprecedented levels of interaction and personalisation, they also raise questions about privacy. How much data should these AI tools collect? How is the data stored, and who has access? AI's ability to process vast amounts of information means there's an even greater responsibility to protect user data and maintain trust (gov.uk, 2023).

Combatting Algorithmic Biases

Algorithms, by their nature, learn from data. If the data

they're fed contains biases, the algorithms can perpetuate or even amplify these biases. This can lead to AI tools making decisions that are discriminatory or unfair. It is paramount for AI developers and researchers to use diverse datasets and continually audit AI systems for any signs of bias.

Mitigating AI Misuse

The very strengths of AI can also be its vulnerabilities. AI-generated content, be it articles, images, or videos, can be manipulated for misleading or malicious purposes. The spread of misinformation or 'deepfakes' is a testament to this challenge. To counter this, more robust verification tools and stricter regulations on AI-generated content dissemination might be necessary.

Collaborative Frameworks for Ethical Oversight

The complexity of AI ethics cannot be understated. Addressing these concerns requires a multi-faceted approach involving researchers, industry experts, and policymakers. Joint efforts can lead to comprehensive guidelines and standards that ensure the beneficial and responsible evolution of AI technologies.

Embracing the AI Renaissance

As we navigate through the digital age, AI technologies, including platforms like ChatGPT, present transformative changes analogous to pivotal moments in history, such as the European Renaissance. This new era of digital renaissance is not just about technological innovation but also represents a significant shift in societal paradigms.

The AI Paradigm Shift

AI's integration into our daily lives is more profound than we often realise. For instance, by embracing AI, UK employees could potentially save about 390 hours of working time per year (Carbonaro, 2023). Such a shift underscores the immense value AI brings in enhancing productivity and reshaping work dynamics.

The Fluid Landscape of Opportunities

The age of AI is also redefining the very nature of our workplaces. Organisations are now on the cusp of understanding the vast potential of Gen AI, as they emerge as digital natives with an innate understanding of AI's capabilities and possibilities (Korn Ferry, 2023).

Generation AI: The New Workforce

Generation AI represents individuals who are growing in a world where AI isn't a novelty but a norm. As this generation steps into the workforce, there's a noticeable shift in how businesses operate and innovate (Bondarenko, 2023).

The AI-Driven Society: More Than Meets The Eye

Embracing AI is about more than technological transformation. It's about understanding how AI shapes societal norms, influences creativity, and redefines human-ma-

chine collaboration (Ghumatkar, 2023). Simultaneously, with the potential of a European industrial renaissance driven by AI, millions of new job opportunities could be on the horizon (Ollagnier, 2023).

Designing the Future with AI

As we embark on this journey into the AI renaissance, industries are revolutionising their approaches. In fields like architecture, there's an exciting blend of traditional design principles with AI's capabilities, creating structures that are both aesthetically pleasing and functionally efficient (Gebler Tooth, 2023).

Navigating the AI Era with Insight and Preparedness

As we venture deeper into this AI-infused epoch, it's evident that technology, like ChatGPT, is reshaping the contours of our workplaces, ethics, and productivity. The kaleidoscope of possibilities AI brings is both exciting and daunting. While it propels us into realms of unparalleled productivity and innovation, it nudges us to reassess our ethical compass and skillsets. By embracing continuous learning, fostering open dialogues on ethical considerations, and acknowledging the ever-evolving job landscape, we're not just spectators but active participants in this transformative journey. The future beckons with promise, and as we stand on the cusp of this AI renaissance, it's imperative we move forward with both enthusiasm and caution, harnessing the full potential of what lies ahead.

GET IN TOUCH

If you would like to participate or write
a blog please contact Mr Kunal Mehta.

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Promoting Your Academic Success through LSST's Academic Support Centre

By Olivia Peren, Academic Support Tutor in Health and Social Science at LSST Elephant and Castle

LSSST's Academic Support Centre is a team dedicated to promoting your academic success throughout your time at LSST. We feel that the transition to becoming an outstanding higher education student and familiarising yourself with a new environment is a novel and exciting opportunity. Further, the need to be malleable and adapt quickly as a student can sometimes be overwhelming. Therefore, it is important to understand what facilities and support services are available to you as a student at LSST.

Harvard Referencing

Whilst there is a multitude of important skills to master throughout your accredited degree at LSST, referencing is one of the most vital constituents of your academic journey. You will be expected to accurately reference in nearly every type of assessment that you undertake.

There are numerous different styles of referencing, but Harvard referencing is one of the most widely adopted formats. Harvard referencing is a universal way of acknowledging the input of another author or authors' words or ideas to your work. It improves the credibility of any arguments you put forward and shows that you have conducted additional reading outside of core materials.

It consists of an in-text citation (appearing in the main body of your work) and a more detailed entry in your end-of-text reference list (a collation of all the sources you have accessed). From this, the reader can validate your claims and view the source with ease.

Your academic support tutors are available to deliver workshops during class or one-to-one appointments to enhance your referencing skills. They have a variety of electronic and physical resources at their disposal, available to students upon request.

Below are some useful links to help you structure your citations and reference list successfully:

- Scribbr's guide
- The Open University's guide
- Mendeley's guide



Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

Most Higher Education providers have unique online platforms that can take some time to understand and use efficiently. The virtual learning environment used by LSST is LSST Connect – the hub of knowledge throughout your time at the institution. Here, you can retrieve additional reading materials, assessment information, as well as content covered in lectures. It increases the accessibility of learning, meaning that students can begin to prepare ahead of their scheduled classes and revisit content when completing assessments. LSST Connect is also the platform where students may be expected to upload their work, so it is vital to be able to navigate it properly.

Depending on your awarding body, you may have an additional VLE system to become acquainted with. You can check this with your academic support team, who can provide you with the relevant links for these platforms and assist you in piloting them.

Presentation and Communication Skills

Each interaction that we have with another individual involves some level of communication. Therefore, developing interpersonal communication skills is beneficial not only to academic accomplishments, but likely in familial,

friendship, and employment settings too. A 2016 LinkedIn survey discovered that employers valued communication skills as the most desirable characteristic in candidates (Berger, 2016).

Throughout your time at LSST, you will likely be involved in group projects and other teamwork-based activities. It is imperative to be able to adapt to both leadership and collaborative roles within the team to gather the best qualities from each member.

Soft skills like active listening and conscious body language are great ways to promote successful communication (Jahromi et al., 2016). By maintaining eye contact, having positive facial expressions, and posing questions, you show the speaker that you are acknowledging and then engaging with their points. Additionally, you should be mindful of your non-verbal communication methods. Factors like dressing appropriately and outward presentation also contribute to your overall ability to communicate with the other individual and display professionalism (Indeed, 2023). Moreover, preparing yourself physically and in terms of what you are planning to say or discuss shows respect for other members of the group and aids to boost your confidence.

Your academic support team will deliver sessions on both verbal and non-verbal strategies to help you as a learner. Students are also welcome to come and practice their presentations ahead of delivering them to their class or lecturer – we are happy to listen!

Academic Writing

It is important to understand that written communication in an academic setting is different to that in everyday life. It adopts a more formal tone and delivers information with precision, rather than being vague or too general. Academic writing also requires students to present arguments from an objective viewpoint, absent of their own opinions unless otherwise specified by assessment criteria (Sultan, 2013).

Additionally, the style of writing will vary dependent on the type of assignment you are completing. Some of the assessments that you may encounter are:

- Essays
- Portfolios
- Oral assessments
- Reports
- Exams

Dissertations

Each will have different expectations in terms of its structure, linguistic features, and presentation (Routledge, 2021). Schillings et al. (2018) propose that face-to-face dialogue feedback is promising in its ability to improve academic writing skills for learners. This approach permits students to be more conscious of their own strengths and weaknesses and endorses collaborative learning (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yucel et al., 2014).

If you need help deciphering the requirements of the assessment, visit your academic support centre. The team will be able to assist you and offer some interactive exercises to revise/test your knowledge and make sure it has been retained, as well as discuss prospective ways to improve your academic writing.

Research Skills and Statistical Analysis

Valuable research is at the forefront of our civilisation, leading us to new conclusions and developments every day. Cayuse (n.d.) proposes that research “is what propels humanity forward”. Investigations into health outcomes and behaviour have led us to understand our species better, as well as the long-term impact of our lifestyle choices. Without such valuable insight, our life expectancies may be considerably shorter, just one instance of why research is so central to society (Nass, Levit & Gostin, 2009, p25).

Some research will offer its findings in a quantitative (numerical) way, using statistical analyses. It is crucial to be able to understand the purpose of these numbers so that you can understand what the research is concluding. These skills will help you to access and comprehend scientific or governmental research, as well as produce your own (Scribbr, n.d.).

Digital application packages like IBM SPSS are designed to help you in conducting and interpreting statistical analyses. Your academic support team can help to access and install the software and offer valuable insight into its usage. Practising tools like these with a trusted individual can help you to gain confidence and fortify your skills ahead of exams or assessments.

We understand that adapting to Higher Education life can come with a degree of complexity and that there are high expectations of students to develop skills in many different areas over a short period of time. Your LSST Academic Support Tutors are available to offer one-to-one support in pre-arranged appointments, as well as shorter drop-in sessions for any of the above facets of your academic journey.

If you have a query that isn't listed here or are facing struggles in any other area of your qualification, please contact Academic Support directly at academicsupport.ec@lsst.ac. If it's outside of their areas of expertise, the team will be able to guide you to a support service that is equipped to help.

LSST Elephant and Castle Student Entrepreneurs Launch Tie-Dye Business

By Kunal Chan Mehta



LSST Business students Vasilena Pehlivanova and Joshua Sesay are the founders of Not Your Regular Shop

Across LSST, entrepreneurship remains a popular path for students to present and express their creativity and passion. Joshua Sesay and Vasilena Pehlivanova, two business students studying BA (Hons) in Business Management with Foundation Year at LSST Elephant and Castle, have exemplified this by establishing a successful online business. Their venture ‘Not Your Regular Shop’ has gained popularity for distinctive products and exceptional customer service.

The idea for Joshua and Vasilena’s astonishing business took place just 6 months ago during a business lecture at LSST Elephant and Castle. Joshua explained: ‘We were really inspired by our LSST course and it gave us the confidence and certainty to start this business. We started firing off lots of business ideas and we just knew we had to be different and do our own thing.’ Vasilena, in agreement, added: ‘With our shared love of fashion and a desire to start a business that would allow us to express our creative flair, we noticed a market gap in unique and trendy clothes and accessories that were both stylish, luxurious and affordable – and dyed.’

Only a month ago the entrepreneurial duo set up their website and began selling their products in hamper-styled packages to friends and family and quickly saw the demand for their items upsurge.

Their Nike tie-dye socks bundle has become a customer favorite, with its vibrant and eye-catching colors. The socks are a perfect accessory for any fashion-conscious individual, whether they are looking to elevate their holiday or gym gear – or even add some personality to their everyday outfits. Vasilena said: ‘The bundle of dyed socks is a fantastic deal that offers customers six pairs of high-quality socks at a great price. In fact, owing to the excellent customer feedback, we are soon launching dyed t-shirts, bags, and accessories.’

Joshua spoke about the challenges of setting up a business while studying for a business degree: ‘There will always be



‘Not Your Regular Shop’ is offering its dyed socks amid a basket full of egg-citement this Easter (Photo: NotYourRegularShop)

challenges but there will never be a better time for Vasilena and me as we are currently benefitting from LSST’s expert staff coaching us. They are also helping us network with stakeholders and LSST’s Public Relations Manager is even helping us with social media content ideas.’



Nike tie-dye socks bundle are a customer favourite (Photo: NotYourRegularShop)

Syed Rizvi, Academic Dean of LSST Elephant and Castle campus, said: ‘Not Your Regular Shop’s sudden success can be attributed to the dedication its founders have for customer satisfaction – something that they learned a lot about during their course. They are going above and beyond to ensure that their customers receive great service and high-quality products. I am delighted to learn that they are continuously expanding their product line to offer customers new and exciting items.’

Mr. Ali Jafar Zaidi, LSST’s Deputy CEO, commented: ‘Joshua and Vasilena’s story is a testament to the power of entrepreneurship, determination, and hard work. Their passion for fashion has allowed them to turn their academic theory and dreams into reality to create a unique brand that reverberates with customers. They have built a strong business from scratch, and their success has stirred others to follow in their robust footsteps.’

Dr. George Panagiotou, LSST’s Principal, surmised: ‘This journey from student to entrepreneur is inspirational to everyone. Their

business has gained a loyal following and will become a go-to for anyone looking for unique and stylish clothes, bags, and accessories. We all look forward to seeing what new and thrilling products they will bring to the market next.’



Tie-dye sock bundles to knock your socks off (Photo: NotYourRegularShop)

Anxiety – five ways to cope while you study

By Stephanie Pena Garcia, LSST’s Mental Health and Student Wellbeing Lead, Memo House



expressed feeling that anxiety has stopped them from doing the things they want to.

Anxiety is a natural response which can be useful in helping us avoid dangerous situations and keeps us motivated to solve everyday problems. When we feel under threat (this also includes perceived danger) our bodies react by releasing certain hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol, that make us feel more aware and alert of what is happening – in this way, we can react faster. Our hearts begin to beat faster as it rapidly sends blood to where it’s needed most.

This is commonly known as the ‘fight or flight’ response – which we have no control over as it happens automatically. In some cases, anxiety can become a constant

feeling, even when there is no apparent threat or stressor – this can be triggered by adverse childhood experiences, your current situation, or physical or mental health problems. Persistent and intense feelings of anxiety can develop into a diagnosed condition if it begins to affect your ability to live your life.

Anxiety is the theme of this year’s Mental Health Awareness Week and although it is an emotion that is felt by everyone, during your course it may exacerbate under the pressures of studying. If your anxiety gets out of control, it may have a negative impact on your ability to study and overall experience in higher education.

A recent study by Student Minds has found that 1 in 3 students have poor mental wellbeing and 1 in 4 students do not know where to access support for their mental health.

The below guide on coping with anxiety aims to provide valuable advice to students. This guide explores the nature of anxiety, offers effective coping strategies, and highlights accessible support resources to aid in overcoming anxiety-related challenges:

Physical Symptoms	Behavioural Symptoms	Psychological Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased heart beat and perspiration Hot flushes Nausea Shaking Loss or gain of appetite Headaches Feeling hot Breathlessness Chest pains Butterflies in stomach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoiding going out with friends/family Sitting at the back of the classroom Rushing out of situations Not enjoying things you used to enjoy Worried about meeting new people or trying new things Avoiding crowded places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being able to sleep Intrusive / obsessive thoughts Feeling tearful / nervous Difficulty concentrating Consistently worrying about past, present and future Fearing the worst can happen Fearing people are noticing your anxiety Feeling detached from your environment / people

1. Understanding Anxiety

Anxiety is an emotion of worry and fear which is very common within the UK population, six in ten adults have

Anxiety can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings but also through physical sensations.

2. Identifying how often you feel anxious

During your studies, there may be occasions where feelings of anxiety can increase such as exams, forming connections with peers, communicating with university staff and working to meet deadlines. You may also have difficulties in your personal life such as family conflicts, childcare problems, financial problems, and employment. Another common contributor to elevated levels of anxiety in students is fear of public speaking and social anxiety disorder which are associated with students fearing social interactions or performance situations.

A good way to self-assess your level of anxiety in your daily life is the Goldberg Anxiety Scale which can be commonly used by medical professionals as part of a wider assessment. Some of the questions in this scale include;

- Have you been consistently worried recently?
- Have you had difficulties relaxing?
- Have you been sleeping poorly?



3. Exploring coping strategies and identifying what works for you

Adopting healthy coping strategies is a great skill to develop while at LSST. If you can effectively manage your anxiety through self-help strategies, you will be able to use this as a helpful tool to navigate the challenges that you may face such as preparing yourself for an oral presentation in front of your peers or during exam periods.

A coping strategy which can be useful to manage your anxiety levels is mindfulness. Studies show that students experience an increased sense of calm, and a decreased feeling of anxiety when practicing mindfulness for as little as five minutes a day. Mindfulness is the practice of purposely bringing your attention to the present moment and has been described as part of an ideal recipe for academic attainment along with self-compassion and resiliency. You can find out more about mindfulness and access free resources, visit The Free Mindfulness Project.

However, mental health is not a one-size-fits-all, and it is important to identify what works for you. A good way to do this is by keeping a record of how you are feeling and



reflecting on this over time. Journaling is a good example of how to measure what works for you, studies have found that visual journaling can lead to a decrease in anxiety and stress. Similarly, research has also suggested that journaling is a positive intervention to help reduce exam anxiety while increasing examination scores for learners.

The following list of useful strategies may be a good starting point however we would love to know more so if you have any that work for you, please share by commenting on this post or emailing us at studentwellbeing@lsst.ac.

4. Asking for help

“What is the bravest thing you’ve ever said?” Asked the boy.

“Help”, said the horse.

“Asking for help isn’t giving up”, said the horse. “It’s refusing to give up.”

Charlie Mackesy

This quote by Charlie Mackesy in his book *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* perfectly explains the importance of asking others for help. Although it can be daunting, it is an important step to take as you do not have to cope with your feelings alone. Help is available regardless of how long you’ve felt anxious or how severe your symptoms may be. There are many points of access for support when coping with anxiety, within LSST and externally. You can find key contact details at the end of this blog.

We take a whole organisation approach to mental health at LSST, so if you feel confident to do so, you can speak to any staff member, and they will signpost to the appropriate team or individual to support you.



5. Look out for your peers

Being part of a community and developing a sense of belonging is a key aspect of our general wellbeing. It has been found that being in higher education can be a protective factor against anxiety and other mental health problems. Higher education creates the opportunity to connect with other students and staff from diverse backgrounds and cultures, allowing you to share experiences and open space to understand what mental health can look like to other people.

Every person experiences anxiety in different ways, it is beneficial to foster a compassionate and caring attitude to peers and colleagues. Studies suggest that being compassionate allows individuals to cope with challenging emotions with a greater degree of understanding. You can look out for your peers by spreading awareness of anxiety or other mental health difficulties that students experience and knowing where to signpost for further support if needed.



If you would like to speak about anxiety or any other topics mentioned in this blog, please reach out to your local student support office by emailing one of the following:

Elephant & Castle Campus – ecstudentsupport@lsst.ac

Wembley Campus – wembleystudentsupport@lsst.ac

Luton Campus – lutonstudentsupport@lsst.ac

Aston Campus – astonsupport@lsst.ac

Or you can speak directly to our Student Wellbeing Team by contacting studentwellbeing@lsst.ac.

There are many charities and organisations in the UK that help individuals experiencing anxiety such as:

Mental Health Foundation – www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Anxiety UK – www.anxietyuk.org.uk

No Panic – www.nopanic.org.uk

Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Student Minds – www.studentminds.org.uk

LSST Aston Student Entrepreneurs Showcase Innovations at Campus Fair

By Kunal Chan Mehta



A much anticipated LSST Student Entrepreneurs Fair took centre stage at LSST’s Aston Campus showcasing student achievements and progress in transforming the future through ideas, creativity, innovation, and business development.

The LSST Student Entrepreneurship fair acts as a beacon of hope for LSST Aston students who aspire to become successful and stand-out entrepreneurs. Speaking about the event, Mohsin Riaz, Dean of LSST Birmingham, said: ‘Although the fair has showcased the compulsory skills, knowledge, and resources our students have to start and grow their own businesses, it has empowered them to become self-reliant and make a constructive and beneficial impact on society.’

The fair, coordinated by Irina Barariu, LSST’s Engagement Officer, and also former Student Union President, was an enormous success with enthusiastic contributions from over 100 students and staff. Irina said: ‘The fair allows students to meet like-minded individuals who share the same passion for entrepreneurship. Thanks to the support and guidance provided by the LSST Aston team, we have

all learned a lot from the experience and expertise of one another.’

Lynnette Douglas, LSST’s Student Support Lead, commented that the student entrepreneurs demonstrated their ability to identify market gaps and develop products



and services that meet customers’ needs. Further, the fair showcased various innovative ideas, from sustainable energy solutions to cutting-edge technology applications. One of the student entrepreneurs, Mihai Gabriel Otincelescu, shared his experience: ‘The LSST Entrepreneurship Fair has given me the confidence to pursue my dreams and turn my ideas into reality. Thanks to all the students and

staff involved, I have discovered valuable skills such as market research and financial management to help me to start my own business soon.'

Mr. Ali Jafar Zaidi, LSST's Deputy CEO said: 'The LSST Student Entrepreneurship Fair is fast proving to be a catalyst for change by empowering students to become agents of change and create a better future for themselves and their communities. The programme's success is a testament to the dedication, commitment, and hard work of the LSST Aston team who have gone above and beyond.'





LSST Aston Lecturer Publishes Article on UN Sustainable Development Goals in Elsevier Journal

By Kunal Chan Mehta

LSSST celebrates a major research achievement as one of its Senior Lecturers, Michael Demehin, co-authors a research paper published by Elsevier, one of the world’s leading academic publishers.

Michael, who is also Course Coordinator for the De Montfort University accredited BSc Health and Wellbeing in Society program, expressed his gratitude to LSST Aston’s Dean, Mr Mohsin Riaz, for his encouragement during the research process: ‘Many thanks to Mr Riaz, for his unwavering support and guidance throughout. This achievement would not have been possible without his encouragement.’

The study titled ‘Long Walk to 2030: A Bibliometric and systematic review of research trends on the UN sustainable development goal 3’ analysed articles published from 2015 to 2021 to evaluate studies on the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) focused on health and well-being. ‘The study helps to advance our understanding of evolutionary trends in these studies and highlights the need to integrate global disruptions, such as COVID-19, into the developmental agenda’ added Michael. ‘The study also emphasises the importance of addressing global health financing and research funding within sub-Saharan Africa to achieve good health and well-being.’

Mr Ali Jafar Zaidi, LSST’s Deputy CEO, said: ‘The paper is a testament to Michael’s exceptional research skills and academic competence. It demonstrates his ability to collabo-

rate with other experts in the field and produce high-quality research that can contribute to the advancement of knowledge in SDG specialisation.’

Speaking about Michael’s research paper, Dr George Panagiotou, LSST’s Principal, added: ‘This achievement is particularly noteworthy given the robust standards that Elsevier sets for its publications making the journal a coveted platform for researchers across the world.’

Dr Maryam Usman-Idris, the Coordinator of LSST’s Research Centre, commented: ‘Michael is one of the most recognised authors at LSST and his recent publication is yet another testimony to the support and encouragement offered to staff to contribute to the world of research.’

Dr Ned Uwabuiké, Chair of LSST’s Research Services Council, said: ‘This significant research milestone emphasises LSST’s commitment to producing impactful research in collaboration with international academics. The research paper, which has already garnered attention in academic circles, will positively impact the credibility of LSST as a higher institution of research, teaching, and learning.’

At LSST, academic excellence and research that contributes to society remain top priorities. Michael Demehin’s publication serves as a source of inspiration for other lecturers to pursue their research interests with enthusiasm and collaborate with other experts in their fields. Furthermore, it is expected to motivate students to work towards their academic goals and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective areas of study.

How Ability Grouping in Schools Fuels Socio-Economic Divides: Aston Lecturer Reveals Startling Findings in Cogent Education Journal

By Kunal Chan Mehta

The practice of ability grouping, which involves dividing students into academic groups based on their abilities, has been found to potentially exacerbate the socio-economic divide among students, as per a recent study published in *Cogent Education* by Mr Muhammad Zubair, a Senior Business Lecturer at LSST Aston.

The newly published study explores the historical and current practices of ability grouping in Western countries, including the United States, Canada, and Australia. Ability grouping is common in these countries but has been found to be unfavourable in its intensity.

‘Our study suggests that ability grouping results in diverse educational experiences for learners, which can contribute to the widening of the socioeconomic gap among students,’ said Mr Muhammad Zubair. ‘The study calls for education reforms that prioritise equal opportunities and alter national policies to harmonise with the potential of learners.’

Mr Ali Jafar Zaidi, LSST’s Deputy CEO, commenting on the study, said: ‘This study finds that ability grouping in schools can exacerbate existing socio-economic inequalities among students, which is a concerning trend. This reinforces the need for education systems to consider more inclusive practices that promote equity and fairness for all students, regardless of their background or perceived ability.’

The study argues that ability grouping is embedded within the contemporary hyper-accountability culture in education that has shifted the focus of the teaching community from promoting academic attainment in pupils to being highly ranked





in the market-based education system.

The study also highlights that students should not be divided into groups that advocate academic homogeneity. Instead, schools should provide diverse educational experiences and opportunities for learners, regardless of their academic abilities.

Dr Mustafa Kasim, a Business Lecturer at LSST Aston, asserted: ‘Mr Zubair’s article on ability grouping exposes how this practice contributes to widening socio-economic divides. A must-read for those interested in addressing these issues.’ Dr Wasim Khan, also a Business Lecturer at LSST Aston, added: ‘All students deserve equal opportunities to learn and grow. This study highlights the negative impact of ability grouping on students and society. There is now a greater call to create an inclusive education system that supports the growth of all students.’

Mr Mohsin Riaz, Dean of LSST Aston, stated: ‘The research is critical and commendable, as it brings into the spotlight the negative impact of ability grouping on students’ learning and socioeconomic status. The authors of the study rightly call for educational reforms that can alter students’ academic outcomes and increase employability.’



An Unforgettable End of Academic Year Party at LSST Wembley

By Florina-Camelia Mot, Student Union Vice-President,
LSST Wembley

LSSST Wembley hosted a spectacular and unforgettable ‘End of Academic Year’ party thanks to the endorsement of LSST’s SU President Liliana Gabriela Andronie and the outstanding assistance and support from Ancuta Hapurne, LSST’s Engagement Officer, and Zsofia Borbely, LSST’s Admissions & Widening Participation Associate, as well as LSST Wembley students Sadhiya Shaik, Ioan Gabriel Chira and Stefan Iusca.

As the current academic year come to an end, LSST’s Wembley campus was bustling with excitement for the much-anticipated “End of Academic Year” party. As Vice President of the LSST Student Union, it was my greatest pleasure to organise this event with the aim of jointly celebrating student achievements.



Hawaiian Summer Vibes

Along with the event supporters, we gave the party a lively Hawaiian atmosphere – as many of us have a keen eye for creating the perfect ambience. In turn, LSST Wembley was transformed into a tropical vibe with Aloha Summer decorations, music, karaoke, mindfulness colouring sheets, and Hawaiian accessories. The aim was to transport everyone to a world of carefree summer holidays, allowing them to momentarily escape the rigours of academic life and embrace the waves of celebration and relaxation.

Delicious Treats and Refreshments

To complement the lively atmosphere, a delectable array of food and drinks was served. The highlight of the menu was the Hawaiian pizza, evoking the spirit of the islands. Other varieties of pizza, along with ice cream, summer tropical drinks and snacks were also on offer. These mouthwatering delights not only satisfied the taste buds but also added to the festive atmosphere, ensuring that everyone felt nourished and energised.

Celebrating Achievements and Expressing Gratitude

The party served as a platform to celebrate the achievements of the academic year. It was a momentous occasion to acknowledge the hard work, dedication, and commitment shown by the students throughout their studies. The event was organised as a heartfelt thank you to all LSST Wembley students for their unwavering efforts and allowed them to express their gratitude to the dedicated staff members whose patience and teaching had been instrumental in their progression.

Unity and Harmony

The LSST “End of Academic Year” party brought together staff and students, fostering a sense of unity and harmony within the LSST community. As the celebrations progressed, it became clear that there was an atmosphere of respect and affection.

The gathering gave participants the ideal setting for communication, collaboration, and celebration, fostering the ties that make LSST an outstanding educational organisation.

Showcasing Business Skills

One remarkable aspect of this party was the active involvement of LSST students in running the event. The students, who had honed their business skills through commitment and studies at LSST, played an integral role in its success. Their contributions made the occasion truly special, and their lecturers feel proud as they witnessed the obvious effects of their teaching, guidance, and perseverance.

Ancuta Hapurne, LSST’s Engagement Officer, enjoyed being in the middle of the students and was impressed by how the ‘End of Year Academic Party’ brought students and staff together to socialise and meet new people. Lecturers and staff feel proud as they witnessed an involved and vibrant student community.

Ancuta said: ‘One remarkable aspect I enjoyed being part of this party was the active involvement of LSST students in running the event and how they integrated their skills through commitment and their amazing contribution that made it truly special. It was a privilege to meet all the students at the party, and I take every opportunity to participate in these engaging events, which are meant to be inclusive and engaging for all students. It can also help students feel more connected to their school and community and improve their academic experience overall.’

‘The party’s success is a testimony of the dedication, com-



mitment, and hard work of our SU Vice-President, Florina-Camelia Mot, who has gone above and beyond to bring unforgettable moments to our campus.’

The Hawaiian-themed decorations, delicious pizza, and refreshing beverages created a joyous atmosphere where staff and students could come together in harmony. As the event drew to a close, it was clear that the LSST community thrived on mutual respect and appreciation. The party showcased the business skills of LSST students, proving that the institution not only imparts knowledge but also nurtures well-rounded individuals.

What it is like to be a student at LSST? A student case study approach

By Foteini Meleti, Career & Employability Coordinator

Being a student at LSST offers a unique and fulfilling experience that sets the stage for personal and professional growth. At LSST, we pride ourselves on providing an inclusive and supportive environment that nurtures the aspirations of our students. But what is it like to be a student at LSST? In this article, we will examine various case studies to assist readers in identifying the answer.

As a student, you'll have access to a diverse community of peers, dedicated faculty, and industry professionals who are passionate about your success. Our commitment to excellence in education is reflected in our modern facilities, wide-ranging learning resources, and innovative teaching methods. Whether you are pursuing a degree in business or health, you will benefit from an accredited curriculum that combines theoretical knowledge with practical application. Moreover, the vibrant student life at LSST offers numerous extracurricular activities, networking opportunities, and events that foster personal development and enhance your overall experience. As a student at LSST, you'll embark on a transformative journey, gaining the skills, knowledge, and experiences that will shape your future and pave the way for a successful career in your chosen field.

Neaga Stejar – BSc (Hons) Business Management with Foundation Year

Neaga Stejar is a determined and hardworking student who enrolled at LSST to pursue a degree in Business Management. From the start, Neaga faced several challenges. Neaga has always wanted to be a higher education student and has always been filled with happiness and excitement as she began her degree. She had to balance a demanding course load with part-time work to support herself financially. Despite these obstacles, Neaga was determined to succeed.



Adobe Firefly (Beta)
Image Not for Commercial Use

She took advantage of the LSST's resources and support by attending workshops, seeking help from lectures during office hours and booking appointments with academic support staff. She always maintained a consistent work ethic and set ambitious standards for herself. Being a LSST student was a life-changing experience for her as she went about to achieve her dreams and start her career in Hospitality as a hotel manager and in other similar roles.

With the help of LSST's career hub, Neaga updated her CV and registered herself for internships and graduate schemes. Neaga was proud of her academic achievements and grateful for the personal growth she experienced at LSST. Currently, she has developed a strong network of mentors, friends, and industry professionals who supported her throughout her journey.

Florentino Montijano Garcia – BSc (Hons) Business Management with Foundation Year

Florentino was a student who joined the LSST in 2019 to study Business Management. His English level was not as high as he wanted it to be when he first joined, but this didn't stop him as he had lots of drive and confidence and he sought lots of help from student support and peers to improve his academic communication skills. From the start, he was aware that he would accomplish his studies and fulfil his dreams. Although he struggled with his assignments while simultaneously working, Florentino chose to study Business Management as he aspired to have a career as an Investor Relations Officer and he kept focusing on his goal no matter what. During his studies at LSST, he started working as a Banking Administrator at BBVA Bank. Florentino applied all the knowledge he gained from his degree to his role and continued to learn new things every day. These experiences allowed Florentino to gain practical knowledge and a deeper understanding of the intricacies of the banking world.

He acknowledges that without LSST, he would not have been able to achieve his career aspirations and progress as far as he has. Florentino would like to express his special gratitude to Eniana Gobuzi, the academic leader for the Business Course at LSST Elephant and Castle. During his first year, when he struggled with English fluency, Eniana provided invaluable encouragement and support. She assisted all the students throughout their academic journey, but Florentino appreciates her focus on developing strong academic writing skills, which she emphasised through recommended reading material. Florentino is currently applying for new job opportunities with the support of LSST's Careers Hub, and he is hopeful that he will soon secure his dream job in Investor Relations.

Angela Pereira-Igwe – BSc (Hons) Health and Social Science

Angela is a student who embarked on a journey to pursue a health and social care career. With a passion for helping others, Angela enrolled at LSST and began her studies in 2019. Angela struggled with her confidence. The first years were very challenging for her, as she had to juggle her personal life as a mother along with her assignments as well as her self-esteem. However, her desire to be a great example for her kids gave her strength and motivation to persevere in her studies. Angela enjoyed her time at LSST and felt a sense of security in herself. From the start, she had a clear understanding of the career path she wanted to pursue, and she recognised the significance of her degree for her future in the field of diabetes management.

Recognising the need to overcome her doubts, Angela sought guidance from her lecturers. She personally wants to thank Alex Kaiser, Floyd Manderson, and Dr Maria Bastos for their continuous support throughout these years and their unwavering faith in her abilities. They played a crucial role in helping her build her confidence. They consistently supported her and checked in on her progress through emails, providing her with valuable guidance. Angela also worked closely with the academic support team for extra assignment assistance and utilised student support services when needed. She witnessed her progress in

her studies and eventually graduated.

As her skills improved, Angela, with the help of the Careers Hub, was promoted to Diabetes expert in her workplace. She takes great pride in her accomplishments. Her advice to new students is to never give up on their dreams as there is always a way to fulfill them.

Christian Olife – BSc (Hons) Health and Social Science

Christian decided to embark on an extraordinary journey of pursuing a career in health and social care. Studying had been challenging for Christian when he was younger due to frequent travel. However, his decision to return to education was not without challenges. LSST allowed him to fulfil his dream and graduate in Health and Social Sciences. Christian was filled with excitement to pursue this degree from the outset and put forth his best efforts in every possible way.

Christian stated that being a student at the LSST was a great experience as he had the opportunity to meet new people and enhance his skills. Pursuing a degree in health and social science opened numerous employment opportunities for him. His skills improved significantly, and his confidence grew. Christian discovered that his life experiences provided him with a unique perspective and a wealth of wisdom to contribute to classroom discussions, fueling his desire to learn more. He always had a strong desire to give back to the community and support those around him. Throughout these years of study, he also made significant progress in his English language skills. Floyd Manderson and other lecturers encouraged him not to give up and supported him in completing the demanding work. Christian expresses gratitude to LSST's E&C Academic Support team, as without their coaching and motivation, he would not have been able to submit his dissertation.

Christian now wants to pursue a master's degree. He encourages all new students to work closely with their lecturers and seek support, as the lecturers are more than happy to discuss any thoughts they may have. Christian is grateful for the guidance he received throughout his journey until graduation.

In conclusion, as highlighted by the mini student case studies, being a student at LSST is an enriching experience filled with opportunities for personal and professional growth. With a supportive environment and dedicated team, LSST provides a conducive learning environment that equips students with the skills and knowledge needed for success in their chosen fields. Additionally, the vibrant student life and extracurricular activities foster a sense of community, networking, and personal development. LSST offers a transformative journey that prepares students for a bright future and empowers them to achieve their goals.



BBC Apprentice star and Mumpreneur Jemelin Artigas Inspires LSST Aston Students with Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Talk

By Kunal Chan Mehta

The former BBC Apprentice star speaks about the specific obstacles business leaders face and how best to overcome them.

LSST Aston students were treated to an enthralling talk on empowerment and entrepreneurship by Jemelin Artigas - a former BBC Apprentice contestant and mumpreneur.

‘It was such a pleasure to speak with LSST’s inspiring Aston students,’ said Jemelin. When asked about her approach to overcoming business challenges, Jemelin confidently said: ‘To achieve success, it’s important to become comfortable with the idea of failing because that’s where we gain valuable lessons. In fact, the more we fail, the more we learn. So, it’s not really a failure, after all.’

Meena Bibi, a Health and Social Science student at LSST Aston who attended the event, said: ‘Jemelin’s visit brought a wave of mindset-centred inspiration and empowerment to us all and highlighted the importance of self-belief and entrepreneurship.’

Mohsin Riaz, Dean of LSST Birmingham, expressed his enthusiasm for the event, highlighting its positive impact on students’ self-development. He emphasised the valuable insights and fresh perspectives that the event brought to the students, aligning with LSST’s commitment to providing a comprehensive learning journey: ‘Jemelin’s advice on overcoming personal and professional barriers helped offer our students workable strategies to broaden their vision and cultivate a positive mindset.’

Dr Maryam Shehu Idris-USman, Coordinator of LSST’s Research Centre, added: ‘Her remarkable journey, combined with her dynamic presence, left an indelible mark on the aspiring student leaders in attendance.’

By discussing her challenges, setbacks, and eventual triumphs, Jemelin reminded students that their dreams and aspirations were within reach, regardless of their back-

ground or circumstances. Lynnette Douglas, LSST’s Student Support Lead, posited: ‘As our students embark on their own paths to success, they will undoubtedly draw upon the lessons learned from Jemelin’s visit. Her contagious energy and passion ignited a fire within their hearts, fuelling their drive to become the leaders and change-makers of tomorrow.’

Jaspreet Kaur, a Health & Social Science Student at LSST Aston, commented: ‘Jemelin emphasised the significance of empowerment and its role in shaping the future generation of leaders. She stressed the importance of fostering self-belief, encouraging us to embrace our unique talents and skills and channel them towards achieving our goals.’

Ashbel Ndewere, Business and Management Team Lead at LSST Aston, added: ‘With her passionate words on learning from failure and unwavering determination in the face of severe hardship, she instilled a sense of empowerment and motivated everyone to overcome obstacles with resilience.’





A Journey of Triumph

Jemelin, a standout from BBC's Apprentice series 15, has a journey that is nothing short of extraordinary. She transitioned from a period of homelessness to establishing successful events and working on acclaimed films like *Fury* (2014), alongside renowned actors Brad Pitt, Shia LaBeouf, and Michael Pena. Currently, Jemelin is not only authoring a book about her remarkable story but is also engaged in multiple exciting TV projects, signalling that her journey is only just beginning.



Tips to Balance Your Personal Life and Student Success

By Klaudia Kovacs, Student Support Coordinator at LSST Elephant and Castle



Being an active higher education student is an exciting and vibrant part of life packed with dreams and ambition. However, student life is not free of challenges; not only can the anxiety of learning and achieving high grades pressure an individual, but sometimes personal life can interfere with academic success too. Students are not only 'students' per se, often times they are parents, partners, carers and employees as well. With so many hats, it is important to plan and balance personal and academic life as much as possible in order to achieve the best results – and LSST's Student Support is here to help you with such things:

Tips to prepare for the academic year:

Attending your course is an essential part of your academic journey because, without attendance, you are missing out on the teaching and information needed for you to complete assignments. Attending also means being part of the community, making lifelong friendships with your peers, and enjoying events and parties that our students organise. As we often say – showing up is the first rule of success. However, there are various things that may stop you from being able to attend your course, which you can prepare for early on to avoid any issues in the future:

Ensure your finances are in place

It is crucial to ensure that your student finance is in place by the start of the academic year. We advise students to apply for student finance 4-6 months before each academic year. To ensure everything is correct with the application, always hand your Entitlement Letter to Student Support to check the details in order to avoid significant delays in receiving your finance.

Budgeting

Create a budget to track your expenses and prioritise your spending. Identify areas where you can cut costs, such as

opting for second-hand textbooks or finding affordable housing options. Proper budgeting will help you make the most of your resources.

Disability and learning differences support

Disabilities, long-term health conditions, mental health conditions and learning differences can be challenging to manage during your academic journey. Apply for Disabled Student's Allowance with the right medical evidence in order to be granted extra time on assignments and extra support. Depending on your condition, you may be able to get free taxi services, specialist equipment or one-to-one tutoring. Contact your Student Support department to help you with any enquiries about this matter.

Ensure childcare is in place (if applicable)

Should you need childcare services, ensure you organise them ahead of the academic year in order to avoid delays during your studies. You may be able to apply for Childcare Grant through student finance which is another reason why it is essential to complete the application in time.

Alternatively, establish a support network: Reach out to family, friends, or other parents in similar situations. Sharing responsibilities and seeking assistance can lighten the load and create a supportive environment.

Ensure work is arranged around your timetable

Inform your employer that you are becoming a full-time student and arrange your rota around your course timetable. Ensuring work does not interfere with your studies is key to success.

Time management

Plan your schedule meticulously, allocating specific time slots for studying, attending classes, going to work and

spending quality time with your children. Effective time management ensures you can fulfil your academic obligations while also nurturing your parental role.

Prioritise self-care

In times of stress, self-care becomes even more important. Ensure you are taking care of your physical and mental well-being by getting enough sleep, engaging in relaxation techniques, and seeking support from the counselling services available.

Managing Situations Beyond Your Control

Life is unpredictable, and unforeseen circumstances can disrupt even the most carefully planned routines. When faced with such situations, it is crucial to approach them with resilience and adaptability and to follow the correct procedure in order to avoid falling behind on your course. Sudden illnesses, hospitalisation, housing situations, domestic violence or bereavement can be some of the examples that are out of control in a student's life. Many times, when these things happen, students' attendance and engagement drop without any notice or communication. This can end in failure and termination, therefore it is important to notify us, so we can provide the right support.

What you need to do if you find yourself in this situation:

Contact the Student Support department to help you authorise absences and support you to be granted extra time on your assignments if needed in the form of extensions or mitigations. Make sure to collect all supporting evidence

of your circumstances as it is needed for all procedures.

We have a Wellbeing Team who can speak to you about difficulties.

- Contact Academic Support for help with your assignments.
- Contact your Personal Academic Tutor who can help you set goals for your academic journey.
- If attendance is not possible (per mitigating circumstances), there may be self-study options from home using the lecture slides and recordings on LSST Connect.
- Embrace flexibility and resilience. Understand that setbacks are part of life's journey. Learn to adapt and adjust your plans accordingly. Develop a resilient mindset, focusing on finding creative solutions and maintaining a positive outlook despite obstacles.

To summarise, managing personal and student life at LSST is not free of challenges, particularly for individuals with parenting responsibilities, financial constraints or disabilities. By implementing effective time management, seeking support networks, and being resourceful, it is possible to strike a balance between personal obligations and academic pursuits. Remember, situations beyond our control require flexibility and resilience. By utilising the available resources and maintaining a positive mindset, you can navigate these challenges successfully and make the most of your LSST student journey.



LSST Aston Hosts Grads Evening – A Celebration of Achievement, Networking and Inspiration with the Lord Mayor of Birmingham

By Kunal Chan Mehta



LSSST Aston hosted its ‘Grads Evening,’ a prestigious event to honour the remarkable achievements of its graduand students. The evening, jam-packed with networking and celebration, took place on 8 June 2023 at LSST Aston’s campus in the

Mohsin Riaz, Dean of LSST Birmingham, speaking at the event, said: ‘I am extremely proud of our Aston graduands for demonstrating their academic courage and commitment. They have embraced and shaped a sense of community and inclusiveness to make a positive and lasting difference. They will always be at the heart of LSST and I am grateful for all their contributions. I also commend my team at Aston for their untiring efforts and dedication across all departments in coaching our students towards this major milestone.’



Honouring LSST student achievements during turbulent times

LSST graduand accomplishments are particularly noteworthy, considering the numerous challenges they faced while pursuing their accredited degrees during an extensive pandemic. Amid the height of the pandemic, these individuals demonstrated resilience in overcoming social isolation and the shift to remote learning. They even navigated the unique experience of fostering remote companionships. ‘Despite such obstacles, LSST graduands emerged triumphant, showcasing their pliability, determination and

presence of the Lord Mayor of Birmingham.

Addressing LSST Aston graduands, The Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Chaman Lal, said: ‘I am impressed with the achievements of LSST and how the institute supports the learning of individuals from underrepresented groups. Your success is evidence of your hard work and commitment. Well done and congratulations on your remarkable achievements.’

Mr Ali Jafar Zaidi, LSST’s Deputy CEO, said: ‘This memorable celebration is a testament to the unwavering commitment and dedication of LSST Aston’s graduands. It is a celebration of their academic accomplishments and a stepping stone towards their promising future.’



adaptability in the face of adversity to achieve and accomplish so much,' remarked Dr George Panagiotou, LSST's Principal.

Dr Wendy Wigley, LSST's Head of Student Lifecycle and Partnerships Manager, added: 'I am so proud of our graduands and our graduate alumni. Amid the pandemic, they juggled work, family and studies. With their strengthened resolve, I know they will go on and make a positive difference for themselves, their families and communities. I wish each of them the very best of success and look forward to staying in touch.'

Lynnette Douglas, LSST's Student Support Lead, who coordinated the event, surmised: 'We are thrilled that this event was packed with captivating activities that left a lasting impression on attendees. We join everyone across LSST, and extend our warmest congratulations to all the graduands and those who have played an integral role in their success.'



Finding the Right Graduate Scheme

By Foteini Meleti, Career & Employability Coordinator



Graduate schemes are becoming increasingly well-liked among recent graduates as a method to launch careers. These amazing organised schemes combine professional growth opportunities with on-the-job training. Discovering the perfect graduate scheme that aligns with your interests, goals, and ambitions may appear daunting, but the benefits are substantial. This article will walk you through choosing the ideal graduate scheme to launch your career.

First, you should consider your abilities, credentials, and long-term career goals before beginning your search for a graduate scheme. Consider your areas of interest, shortcomings, and strengths and analyse the most exciting in-

dustries or sectors, as well as your preferred work environments and corporate cultures. You can then start looking at businesses and industries that provide graduate schemes. Further, use online tools to obtain information, such as employment boards, business websites, and directories of graduate schemes. As a graduate, pay close attention to elements such as the course duration, the nature of the work, the chance for training and growth, and prospective career advancement.

An effective way to continue your research is to reach out to lecturers, alumni, and professional contacts, and LSST's career services as these will leverage your power of networking. LSST's Careers Hub can put you in touch with businesses that offer graduate schemes as well as offer in-

sightful commentary and advice. To further develop your network, you should attend employment fairs, participate in industry events, and join relevant professional organisations.

Graduate Schemes for Business

The right graduate schemes for business management students are those that offer a comprehensive and structured development program, providing opportunities to gain practical experience and build a strong foundation in key business functions. These schemes often include rotations across different departments or divisions, allowing graduates to explore various aspects of business management. Additionally, the ideal graduate scheme provides many opportunities for professional growth, such as mentorship programs, training sessions, and networking events. It is also beneficial if the scheme offers exposure to senior leadership, enabling graduates to learn from experienced professionals and develop leadership skills. Finally, a great graduate scheme for business management students should align with their career goals and provide a clear path for advancement within the organisation.

Graduate Schemes for Health

For Health and Social Science graduates, suitable graduate schemes include Health Policy and Management, Social Work, Public Health, Research and Academia, and Non-profit/International Development. These programs offer training in areas such as healthcare administration, policy analysis, social work, public health, research, and program management. Candidates should assess each scheme based on their career goals, interests, and values, considering factors like specific focus, training opportunities, organisation mission, and potential for growth. Networking and seeking guidance from professionals in the field can provide you with valuable insights.

Why selecting a graduate scheme is important?

1. Graduate schemes provide structured training programs designed to enhance your skills and knowledge in a specific industry or field. They typically include on-the-job training, workshops, mentoring, and formal training sessions. It will help graduates to acquire essential skills, industry-specific knowledge, and a solid foundation to excel in their chosen career path.
2. Graduate schemes provide fantastic networking opportunities. Students get the opportunity to network with seasoned experts, mentors, and like-minded colleagues in your field. All connections may prove invaluable since they give access to insightful counsel, direction, and new employment openings.
3. Graduate schemes frequently provide chances for accelerated career advancement. They offer a planned route for progress, letting graduates move between several positions or divisions within an organisation. Students' career possibilities can be improved in a shorter amount of time thanks to this fast-track growth, which allows them to get a variety of experiences and exposure to many facets of the industry.

4. Being a part of a graduate scheme allows students to gain first-hand industry insights and exposure as they get to work on real projects, interact with clients, and experience the day-to-day operations of a company. This experience will help students to understand the practical aspects of their chosen field, the challenges it poses, and the skills required to succeed.

5. Employers give graduate schemes a lot of respect. Graduates who tend to start their career with a graduate scheme can become more marketable candidates for jobs as a result, improving their employability. Employers frequently value the specialised training they have received through a graduate scheme as well as the transferable skills and information they can obtain about the sector.

Graduate schemes encompass paid positions, with salaries varying based on the specific company or field of work. The most prestigious graduate schemes may offer annual salaries reaching £38,000. Numerous prominent employers, such as Barclays and the NHS, provide diverse graduate schemes.

You can find some graduate schemes in the links below:

- [Prospects and Graduate Jobs](#)
- [Give a grad a go](#)
- [Barclays graduate jobs](#)
- [Bright Network Jobs](#)
- [Health Careers](#)

The application process for September/January graduate schemes typically opens during that time. In February, applications are reviewed and filtered. The assessment and offer stage typically takes place in March/April. In some cases, there may be a possibility of re-opening applications for certain positions in May/June. July is usually dedicated to reviewing the overall process and making any necessary adjustments. Finally, successful candidates typically begin their graduate positions in August.

The first step in setting up your career on the proper track is to find the ideal graduate scheme. You may improve your chances of landing a graduate scheme that matches your interests and long-term objectives by doing extensive study, networking successfully, customising your application materials, and taking wise judgements!

Effective Leadership: Strategies for Success

By Dr Anam Athar, Trainee Lecturer in Business, LSST Elephant and Castle



Source: Unsplash.com

Modern businesses operate in a fast-changing, complex environment where leadership is critical to success. The strength and capability of leaders in any organisation are critical to the success of the organisation. A good leader should have the ability to overcome obstacles and motivate their team towards achieving success. The impact of leadership on an organisation's fate cannot be overlooked, and it's crucial to comprehend its significance. LSST aims to educate the next generation of leaders in various fields. By adopting and promoting effective leadership principles and strategies for success, LSST students, faculty, and staff can cultivate a robust leadership culture:

1. A visionary approach

Effective leaders provide visionary guidance as one of their key traits. It is their responsibility to inspire others to embrace the vision and purpose of their company. Leaders who set clear, compelling directions align them with the company's broader mission and empower them to succeed (Gill, 2002). Consequently, employees are motivated by a well-articulated vision, which fosters a sense of purpose in the workplace and fosters unity among staff.

2. Decision-Making in Strategic Management

Effective leaders make strategic decisions that drive success (Miller, 2001). Employees need to understand the objectives and goals of the organisation to make informed decisions. When making strategic decisions, it is impor-

tant to identify and evaluate both potential opportunities and risks. Leadership is defined as guiding an organisation through challenges and capitalising on emerging trends based on sound judgment and effective strategies (Bryson, 2018).

3. Achieving high performance through teamwork

Leaders are responsible for the success of high-performing teams, not just outstanding individuals (Beck and Yeager, 2005). The leaders of an organisation must nurture talent, foster collaboration, and create an environment that fosters employee flourishing in order to nurture talent, foster collaboration, and preserve the culture (Scott, 2023). To build a strong leadership team, it is necessary to hire the right people for the right roles, impart coaching and mentoring, and encourage diverse perspectives. In order to achieve outstanding results, leaders must cultivate their teams' strengths through trust, respect, and open communication.

4. Resilience and adaptability

In today's business environment, change is constant and often fast-paced. The resilience and adaptability of a leader are demonstrated through their ability to navigate uncertainty during turbulent times (Iordanoglou, 2018). Change can be an opportunity for growth, innovation, and flexibility as long as we embrace it as an opportunity for growth. In the face of challenges, leaders who have resilience inspire confidence, create a sense of stability, and promote perseverance.

5. Maintain a continuous learning process

The best leaders are those who never stop learning. In order to develop their leadership abilities, they believe that they must continually hone and develop them. An effective leader seeks opportunities for both personal and professional growth as well as mentorship, executive education, and staying abreast of industry trends. Leadership involves learning and adapting to changing circumstances constantly. It is their responsibility to inspire their teams by providing them with opportunities to learn throughout their careers.

In today's evolving and fast-paced business environment, effective leadership is an absolute necessity for achieving success. As a leader, your role is crucial in identifying and directing strategy, assembling strong teams, and developing a clear vision for your organisation. By embodying these qualities, you inspire and empower your team, encourage innovation, and position your organisation to achieve greatness. To foster effective leaders, implementing leadership development programs should be a top priority for organisations. When organisations recognise that leadership is a strategic priority, they can thrive and hopefully reach their full potential.

The Importance of Teaching with Empathy

By Mark Cannon, Senior Business Lecturer, LSST Wembley campus



Source: freepik.com

In the realm of higher education, where knowledge is transferred from educators to learners, the concept of empathy holds a significant place. As a Senior Lecturer at LSST, I was recently tasked with delving into the profound connection between empathy and effective teaching. This exploration led me to conduct an in-depth study, combining insights from distinguished

external academics with my personal experiences within the classroom:

What is Empathy?

Empathy is a term used to describe a wide range of experiences. Emotion researchers generally define empathy as 'the ability to sense other people's emotions, coupled with

the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling’.

Based on the research that I have conducted, there are *two different types* of empathy – affective and cognitive:

Affective empathy refers to sensations and emotional responses to others

Cognitive empathy refers to “perspective taking”.

Value in Education:

In light of the need for our learners to become self-motivated and directed in terms of taking more ownership of their own learning experiences and journeys and for lecturers to primarily deliver the material and facilitate such learning, the significance of fostering an empathic social environment has become extremely important.

Indeed, the focus traditionally has been largely teacher centred and neglects or lacks sufficient appreciation of the social and psychological elements of the learning experiences. As such, for many learners, independent learning, critical thinking and the creation of insightful and deeper and more meaningful experiences for growth are restricted. Moreover, as has been proven, learning has been largely focused in having student merely memorise facts and figure and perform tasks to enable them to ‘pass exams’ and criteria associated with coursework rather than acquiring and developing skills and knowledge that can help them achieve their respective academic and career goals as valuable members of society.

Hence, as a consequence, many students may be able to excel in completing prescribed academic requirements with high marks, however, they are restricted in terms of being able to demonstrate valuable skills and knowledge to help them to be productive in the “outside world”.

Indeed, the rationale is strong for lecturers to deliver learning material and assess learner progress, by demonstrating effective empathy to prepare the students accordingly to not only pass exams and do well in the completion of coursework but also to enable positive, constructive empathy that would both help with formal academic achievement and preparation for being constructive members of society and to help them achieve their respective career goals and objectives.

As highlighted by Zhou (2022) the four main benefits are:

1. To facilitate change and learning
2. To create positive links between what is being taught and how the learners feel or think about what is being taught
3. Enabling the breakdown of complex concepts into component parts in ways that the learners can assimilate and digest easily
4. To demonstrate the practical value of what pieces of information or skills are being taught in preparation for meeting the demands of the “outside world”

All of the above are important to be effective in helping learners to motivate and develop learners to help them to

be more aware of their skills and abilities and how what they already have can be mapped with new skills and pieces of information to enable them to excel both inside and outside the classroom.

Indeed, positive social and psychological elements of empathy in the classroom need to be created and maintained when teaching. As a result, levels of motivation, learner empowerment, and development can be enhanced.

Practical application

Professional strategies demonstrating empathy in the teaching environment

The following are proven strategies to facilitate empathy and inclusiveness in the classroom by Proven strategies employed for facilitating empathy in the classroom by Grabau (2017):

Strategy 1: Give students experiential opportunities for building empathy. Create occasions in which students can develop personal connections with others through hands-on experiences and direct interactions. Also, create opportunities for indirect service by creating projects designed to connect with the outside community. Projects may include creating websites, research reports, or other marketing materials.

Strategy 2: Incorporate empathy into students’ reflection. Include empathy-related questions in student formal or informal reflection activities. Have students take an “empathy self-assessment” at the beginning and end of the semester that prompts students to reflect on their empathic perspective related to the course. Also, consider adding an empathy component to the “What? So What? Now What?” reflection heuristic to help students understand their empathic awareness levels.

Strategy 3: Teach the empathy toolbox. Model behaviours that promote empathic communication. During classroom discussions, practice active listening and other evidence-based strategies to promote inclusive classroom discussions. Finally, consider incorporating “cognitive complexity” as a focal point for class discussions and reflections. Help students see that situations, social issues, and even individuals are complex and often defy simple definitions or explanations.

Strategy 4: Assess and reimagine classroom culture and design. Consider how classroom design influences student engagement. Create small group circles for in-class discussions or a series of circles for larger classes. Sit among students instead of standing in front of them during discussions. Also, bring the “outside-in” to class discussion by incorporating real-world perspectives into classroom discussions. Finally, incorporate learning activities that encourage self-awareness, perspective-taking, and interpersonal engagement.

Strategy 5: Add empathy to your learning objectives and graded coursework. Treat empathy as a valuable component of learning. Include empathy as one of the goals for your course, or include empathic learning as an explicit objective in-class assignments and projects. Show that em-

pathy matters to your profession. Assign informal writing devoted to empathic development or provide additional readings addressing empathy and your academic field.”

Additional insights

Additional resources on effective empathy in facilitating successful teaching can be found in:

https://scope.bccampus.ca/pluginfile.php/70507/mod_resource/ (S Meyers, K Rowell, M Wells, BC Smith – College Teaching, 2019).

and

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9201024/> (Zhang, Z., 2022)

Personal experiences

In terms of practice, I personally have developed empathy in my teaching, as with most things in life, by a combination of extracting and learning from others and what I have discovered on a trial-and-error basis. As some of my students and former students, I endeavour to demonstrate the 4 values indicated above and have received positive feedback accordingly.

By showing, socially and psychologically an approachable manner of engagement with my learners, combined with introducing and breaking down new and complex concepts in “manageable chunks”, in line with academic criteria, using various real-world” examples from both my own understanding and those of the learners, the learners feel more at ease in their learning experiences with me. As a result, both emotional well-being and associated genuine understanding and demonstration of the required elements of a module are enhanced. As mentioned earlier both affective and cognitive (acquisition) aspects of empathy are conveyed.

For instance, when I have a set of slides with various pieces of information, I alternate between showing the slides on a projector screen and pausing the slide presentation and using the whiteboards to clarify and elaborate on specific points with two-way communication with the learners. Hence, complex concepts are more easily understood both in terms of simple understanding and practical value in real-world scenarios. Such activities are reinforced by various pedagogical techniques linked to formative assessment such as case studies, reflection on own experiences, games, and class lesson flipping. As a result, students from a range of social and cultural backgrounds are given the opportunity to not only learn but also feel themselves as being genuinely valued as integral stakeholders in the learning process. Indeed, both individuals and all the learners as a group feel valued and demonstrate higher tendencies to be active and proactive along their respective learning journeys in the classroom and outside the classroom.

In terms of practical outcomes, a zeal to learn more, and apply what they are learning in ways that are meaningful to them, the attaining of high grades follows accordingly.

With a suitable orientation of empathy among some of my former students, I have been told that students had audio

recorded my lectures and arranged dedicated study groups to ensure that they understand what has been taught and come to class ready with a thirst to learn more. When I have run some cover lessons, I try to apply some of the above strategies and tactics and have received very positive feedback. In some cases, through the application of empathy-oriented engagement, I was able to break scenarios where apathy and languor had set in among some learners.

Hence, I can testify that empathy can be a powerful force in facilitating student-centred learning.

Helping students excel

The role of empathy links well with growing need to have student to be self-directed and take charge of their own learning experiences and teachers need to recognise and provide environments in which students feel valued, challenged in a positive way to succeed, and the growth and develop using what is taught and their own often hidden or undeveloped skills and knowledge. As a result, empathy, when demonstrated effectively can be a truly effective asset in an educator’s arsenal of skills and knowledge in the classroom.

Moreover, on closer examination, in addition to the efforts of the teachers/lecturers concerned, the creators of schemes of work linked to assessments, can also embed some of the above strategies and associated tactics within schemes of work to help the teachers with this never-ending challenge of developing motivation, sustaining motivation, and enhancing student achievement both inside and outside the classroom. Indeed, schemes of work embedding more group work, reflection-oriented work, the conducting of research, and the development of critical thinking skills play critical roles alongside the efforts of the teachers/lecturers in facilitating effective empathy and overall learner achievement.

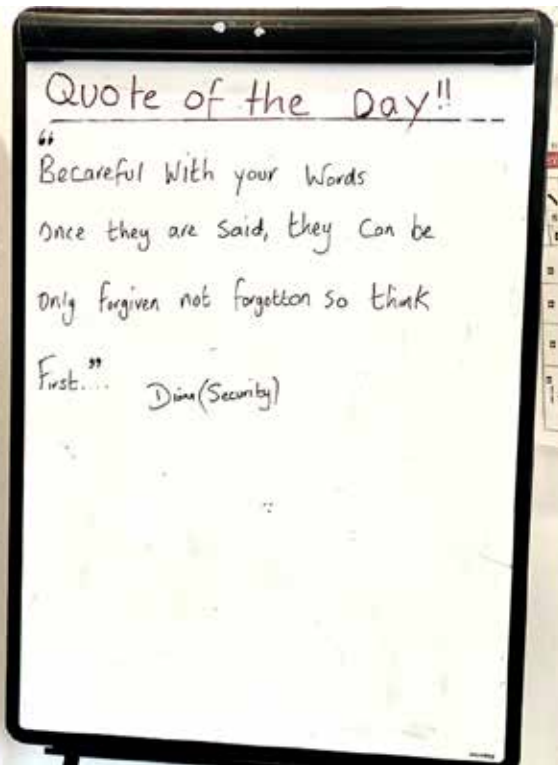
In sum, if done correctly, with a holistic focus, empathy, indeed, can play a critical part in helping students learn and excel in life.

Introducing Diana Lambert: the source of daily inspiration for LSST

By Mohamed Mudhir, Security and Operations Assistant, LSST Elephant and Castle

At the heart of every organisation, you'll find people who bring magic to life. One such magic-maker at LSST is Diana Lambert who works with me in security. She is passionate about ensuring safety and security while also uplifting and motivating others.

Ever since Diana joined us back in August 2019 she's been adding a sprinkle of positivity to our daily lives at LSST



by creatively writing her own quote of the day. Her day starts early, ensuring everything is safe and sound before the doors open. But that's just the beginning. Diana then steps into another role, one that's equally important – she becomes our motivator-in-chief.

These quotes are more than just words on paper. They're little sparks that light up our day. Both our team and our students have shared how these quotes have boosted their confidence, nudged them to stretch a bit more, and put a spring in their step.

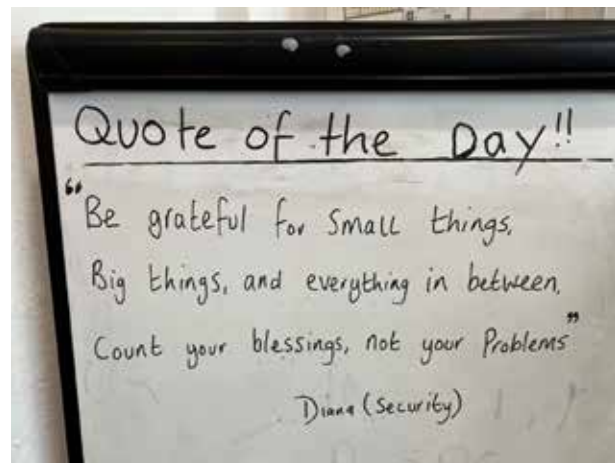


In the face of increased challenges brought about by the pandemic, Diana, our dedicated Security Officer, fearlessly stepped onto the frontline. With unwavering determination and a contagious smile, she navigated through the difficulties while ensuring safety and spreading positivity. Diana's daily quotes became a powerful tool, uplifting spirits and reminding everyone of the resilience and unity we possess.

Diana's story is a beautiful reminder that every role at LSST is important and has the potential to inspire. Her commitment to her work and to LSST's staff and students is a testament to her character and spirit. It's not just about ensuring physical safety – it's also about nurturing a positive and encouraging environment.

So, as we continue our journey at LSST, we do so inspired by Diana's resilience, commitment, and, of course, her daily quotes. As each of us passes by her desk and reads the quote of the day, we're reminded that we can face the day's challenges head-on.

In celebrating Diana Lambert, we're acknowledging a cornerstone of our LSST community, an embodiment of positivity, and a truly inspiring presence. Here's to Diana – our guardian, our motivator, our unsung hero.



Navigating Student Life: Strategies for LSST Students to Thrive

By Henrieta Surikovaite and Dionysios Giatras, Student Engagement Officers at LSST’s Elephant & Castle Campus



Embarking on a higher education course is an exhilarating yet demanding chapter in a student’s journey. Excelling in academic and personal growth requires the skill of navigating this phase effectively. This article aims to provide LSST students with useful insights and resources to help manage their academic responsibilities and build social connections, as well as highlight the existing resources and services available that support student well-being and success.

1. Balancing Academic Responsibilities: Managing academic responsibilities is key to maintaining success at LSST. To effectively handle coursework, presentations, and assignments, students can implement strategies such

as creating a study schedule, breaking tasks into smaller achievable goals, and seeking counsel from Academic Support, Lecturers, and their Personal Academic Tutor. In addition, utilising time management techniques, such as the Pomodoro Technique (mentioned by Chinwe Atumuto, a Lecturer in Health at LSST’s Elephant and Castle, in her thought-provoking blog titled “Tips for Effective Exam Preparation”) can help improve focus and productivity.

2. Building Social Connections: Social relationships play a vital role in student life, contributing to overall well-being and academic engagement and collaboration. LSST students can explore various avenues to build social connections, such as becoming a Student Ambassador, joining LSST’s Student Union, creating and joining student

clubs or societies related to their interests, attending campus events, and participating in extracurricular activities. Engaging in such activities helps students meet like-minded individuals, develop friendships, and create a sense of belonging within all our campus communities.



3. Using Current Resources and Services: Using LSST Elephant and Castle campus as an example, there is a range of resources and services aimed at supporting student well-being and success, many of these departments are found across other LSST campuses as well, such as Aston, Wembley and Luton. LSST students are encouraged to take advantage of these valuable resources which include:

- **Academic Support (AS):** The AS department offers study skills workshops, coaches on assignment briefs, LSST Connect or structuring coursework to help students excel in their chosen course. Students can schedule appointments with academic advisors for coaching on academic planning.
- **Career Services:** The Career Hub assists students in exploring career options, developing job search strategies, and refining their professional skills. They provide a CV and resume building, interview preparation, networking opportunities to enhance students' employability and tailored workshops based on the student's respective course.
- **Well-being Team:** The Well-being Team provides a safe and confidential space for you to discuss your concerns without judgment. They offer guidance, coping strategies, and signposting to appropriate resources or appropriate counselling services for mental health challenges.
- **Engagement Team:** The engagement team at Elephant and Castle (where the authors work) provides resources and services to support LSST student well-being and success. The team offers student support and advice, promotes the development of clubs and societies, organises events, and collaborates with the Well-being team, Academic Support and Student Support to assist

with student queries. LSST students are encouraged to take advantage of these valuable resources for an enhanced student experience.

4. Engaging with Student Workshops: Most of our LSST campuses regularly organise student workshops covering a wide range of topics, including time management, study skills, stress management, and career development. LSST students should participate in these workshops to gain valuable insights, learn new strategies, and connect with peers who are also striving for academic success. You can get more information on what workshops are available from your lecturers or the notice board in the library.



Successfully navigating student life at LSST requires a proactive approach to managing your academic responsibilities and building social connections with your peers. By implementing effective time management strategies, seeking academic support, and utilising the existing resources and services available on their respective campus, LSST students can enhance their academic performance, personal well-being, and overall student experience. Embracing the opportunities provided by the support systems in each campus, will empower LSST students to thrive academically, socially, and personally throughout their educational journey.

For more details please contact your Student Engagement Officers at your respective campus via www.lsst.ac/support-and-facilities/student-support/

The Power of LinkedIn for Career and Business Development

By Olusola Leigh, Lecturer in Business, LSST Elephant and Castle campus.



LinkedIn is a vital platform for LSST students, providing numerous benefits in their journey towards successful career development. With its emphasis on professional networking, job opportunities, personal branding, and access to industry insights, LinkedIn serves as a powerful tool to build perfect connections, showcase skills, and stay updated in your respective fields. 67% of recruiters say people recruited from this site are of a higher quality and also 72% of recruiters use LinkedIn when hiring new talent more than other sites. LinkedIn is also available in 26 languages including Spanish, Turkish, Arabic, simplified Chinese and more. LSST students can benefit early in their studies and start pinpointing potential employers from the outset.

LinkedIn, established in 2003, has emerged as the leading global platform for professionals, encompassing jobseekers, recruiters, and employers (see Dixon, 2022). Boasting an impressive membership base of over 930 million individuals (LinkedIn, 2023), it is on the close verge of reaching the remarkable milestone of nearly one billion users. Notably, LinkedIn achieved its highest revenue to date, amounting to a substantial 13.8 million USD in 2022 (Dixon, 2022). These statistics alone should be enough to persuade any student to start using the platform.

Here are some important areas and ways LinkedIn can assist you during your student journey:

Professional Development

LinkedIn offers a variety of learning services, including LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com), where you may access lessons and courses to advance your abilities. It provides a comfortable setting for enhancing existing skills and developing new ones.

Table 1: Advantages

Recruitment	Educational	Networking
Employers	Courses	Groups
Job listings	Articles	Direct message feature
Company pages	Educational	Networking
Recruitment	Courses	Groups

Source: Olusola Leigh

Recruitment

The platform features a large database of job seekers, 40 million people seek jobs on LinkedIn every week (Bhagwat, 2021), which can and has led to the share of expertise and has boosted the number of members within the groups.

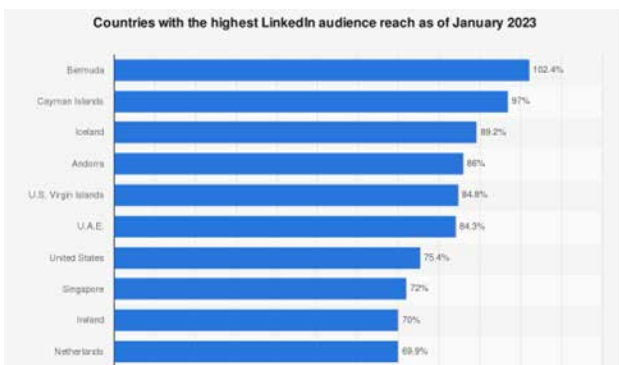
58.4 million companies are listed on LinkedIn and are active in the recruitment drive (Aslam, 2023) and 15 million open job listings are featured regularly (Aslam, 2023). As LinkedIn continues to grow, so does the number of users who rely on it to find new jobs. Many job seekers are successful, as confirmed hires have increased by 88% year-over-year in 2022.

How many students have a LinkedIn profile?

Did you know that 85% of jobs are filled via some form of networking? But just 1 in 4 students have a LinkedIn profile. With so many face-to-face and social events taking place this year, it's more important than ever to start building your digital network.

Educational training

There are a number of online training courses – commencing at different levels, beginner, intermediate and advanced some are certificated. LSST students can benefit from the different software programs and learning events that happen on a regular basis, including enhancing their CV skills and techniques. See: <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/>



LinkedIn is a cutting-edge platform for professional working, career development, knowledge sharing and business growth. It offers numerous advantages that can help LSST students expand their reach, establish their credibility and achieve their career goals. Further, it will facilitate additional international recruitment as it is used by members

in 200 countries and regions (Shepherd, 2023).

Next steps

A robust LinkedIn profile that highlights your transferable skills will position you favourably and enhance your prospects in the evolving job market. To ensure the longevity and relevance of your LinkedIn profile, it is crucial to prioritise your transferable skills that hold value across diverse industries. By focusing on these adaptable skills, you can gain a competitive advantage over other candidates and effectively demonstrate your abilities to prospective employers.

For more information please contact your tutors or careers officer to discuss how they may be able to support to develop, market and promote your LinkedIn profile as you progress throughout your course.

Further Reading

<https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/resources/future-of-recruiting>

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/linkedin-facts-statistics-2022-edition-?trk=pulse-article_more-articles_related-content-card

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Tips for Effective Exam Preparation

By Chinwe Atumuto, Lecturer in Health, LSST Elephant and Castle Campus



Preparing for an exam may be an overwhelming task, especially if it involves a high-stakes test that will determine your academic or career progression. However, with the correct mentality and strategies, you can tackle exam preparation with confidence and accomplish your desired outcomes. Here are some preparation tips:

Create a Study Plan

Creating a study plan is one of the most efficient approaches to preparing for a test. This plan should contain all the subjects and concepts you will need to cover, as well as the amount of time you will devote to each. Concentrating on essential information and writing them down as exam answers will help you recall what you learnt in class. Set reasonable goals and prioritise the most vital information.

Set Goals

Set attainable objectives for each study session, such as completing a specific chapter or topic. This will assist you in staying motivated and making progress towards your overall goal. Make use of the SMART goal-setting framework (Doran, 1981): The SMART framework is a well-known way of establishing effective goals. SMART is an acronym meaning Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Make sure your exam preparation goals match all of these criteria. Examples of implementing SMART goals can be found below:

- Specific: Completing the first five chapters of the core

textbook before the end of the week.

- Measurable: Aiming for a minimum of 60% on the next practice quiz/exam.
- Achievable: Setting a goal to learn an entire semester's worth of material in one night is unrealistic. It's better to study for an hour every day for the next two weeks to achieve the goal.
- Relevant: Looking through additional reading materials relevant to the exam topics in addition to reading core books and lecture materials.
- Time-bound: Making a study schedule that includes daily study sessions of at least 1-2 hours and covers all course materials. Giving yourself a deadline for when to complete the study schedule by to start your revision routine.

Pomodoro Technique

Francesco Cirillio invented the Pomodoro Technique in the 1980s (Swan et al., 2020), this is a time management tool that will assist you in being focused and productive when studying. The method involves splitting your study sessions into 25-minute increments interspersed by brief breaks. The goal is to assist people to focus on things better by minimising the amount of time it takes to sustain that attention and assuring restorative pauses from the effort. The strategy also assists individuals in overcoming procrastination and multitasking habits, both of which are known to reduce productivity.

Use Active Learning Techniques

There are various methods of acquiring information such as reading textbooks or lecture materials. However, it is worth noting that active learning strategies tend to be more effective than passive ones. Try engaging with the learning materials: take notes, make flashcards, or explain topics to someone else.

Active Recall

This is one of the most effective strategies to acquire and retain knowledge. This entails putting your knowledge to the test by attempting to recall it from memory rather than merely rereading it. Active recall has been proven in studies to boost learning and retention by up to 50% (Karpicke and Roediger, 2008). Practice writing exercises, and summarising essential topics in your own words are examples of good approaches to practice active recall. Implementing such practices will help you remember the knowledge and draw connections between different topics.

Find a Study Group or Partner

Forming a study group or choosing a study partner might help you keep motivated and accountable while you are studying. In their study of collaborative learning, Lou et al. (2020) discovered that studying in groups can improve learning outcomes and boost knowledge retention. It can also facilitate cooperation and discussion, which can aid in your knowledge of the materials.

Use Technology to Your Advantage

Technology can be an extremely useful tool for exam preparation. Make use of applications, software, and online tools to help you organise your notes, build mind maps, and quiz yourself on the content. However, try to avoid distractions like social media and unnecessary websites.

Here are a few popular test revision aids, as well as links to respective websites:

1. Quizlet – www.quizlet.com
2. Forest – www.forestapp.cc
3. Khan Academy – www.khanacademy.org

Take Care of Your Physical and Mental Health

Exam preparation requires you to take care of both your mental and physical well-being. Eat healthy foods, exercise regularly, and get adequate sleep. You should also take pauses as needed and avoid cramming, which can lead to burnout and decreased performance.

Physical exercise has been shown to be favourably connected with academic performance since it can reduce stress and improve cognitive functioning (Stine-Morrow et al., 2019). There is also an emphasis on the significance of sleep quality and stress management for academic achievement since these factors can have an influence on memory consolidation and attentiveness. Overall, taking care of your physical and mental health while studying can improve your academic success.

Stay Positive and Confident

Maintaining an optimistic and confident attitude is critical for exam performance. Do not allow nervousness or self-doubt to come in the way of believing in yourself and your skills. Exams are only one facet of your academic or



professional path; there are always opportunities to learn and grow.

In conclusion, effective test preparation involves an array of planning, active learning, practice, self-care, cooperation, technology, and mentality. By using these recommendations, you can face tests with confidence and achieve your goals.

Good luck with your exams!

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