

## Greetings from Gina, Chair of the MPA Student Association!



Hello, congratulations and welcome to the LSE MPA!

My name is Gina and I am the Chair of the MPA Student Association (MPASA) for 2017-2018. I moved to London from New York City last summer and cannot believe how quickly time has flown by! It seems like just yesterday that I arrived on campus for our pre-session courses, dived into derivatives with my new classmates, and was shown where the George is. (FYI, the George is the postgrad pub on campus.)

I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to meet with Kerrie, my second-year “buddy”, prior to the start of the programme as she was interning at the UN in NYC. She gave me a number of incredibly helpful tips, many of which I shared with my cohort along the way and would love to share with all of you.

Here are some I found particularly useful!

- **Your first two weeks — orientation/maths bootcamp.** Your first two weeks will essentially consist of maths. A lot of it. The faculty here provide support, and every year they increase the support they offer. So even if you don't have a background in maths, like me, that's OK! You have an entire year to figure it out and we are all here to help you.
  - “Naked Statistics” is highly recommended as a good introduction to the programme, particularly re: econometrics.
  - Khan Academy has been an incredible resource for reviewing calculus.
- **Getting a bank account in London.** Setting one up may take a week or two, so make sure you have alternative means of payment methods. (Per my buddy) Natwest bank is on campus! I got a Natwest student account and not only was it incredibly simple, but also free — there are no maintenance fees, ATM fees, online or mobile banking fees, etc.
  - To open an account, you will need your passport and a letter from LSE stating your current and permanent address. You can get this letter from the student services centre. Make sure to have your current UK address changed on “**LSE for you**” before going to student services — do not change your permanent address. Your permanent address should remain your foreign address, if you're moving from overseas.
  - Consider requesting a *contactless* debit card as this is incredibly useful living in London!
  - Natwest also offers possessions insurance for your laptop, phone, etc.
  - **Transferring money:** “Transferwise” seems to be the most popular method for transferring money in your home currency to GBP. It is very transparent and cheaper than what most banks seem to offer.
- **LSE accounts.** Here is a quick breakdown:
  - **LSE for You** is your administrative hub.
  - **Moodle** is your academic hub.
  - **Careerhub** is your “career hub” — this is where you can find out about and register for a number of great events going on at LSE.

Obviously, there are a number of other recommendations to share but I think these are a good starting point for your start of the programme. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you in September!



See all of you very soon!  
Cheers, Gina

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Gina Hwang is the Chair of the MPA Student Association. She was born and raised in New York City. Prior to the MPA, she worked at a nonprofit startup in NYC for nearly six years, managing programs and operations to help post-9/11 U.S. military veterans in their transitions by providing mentoring and networking opportunities with Fortune 500 executives.

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