

**LSESU**  
Economics  
Society

# Essay Competition

An internationally top-tier essay competition for high school students, endorsed by Nobel laureates

**Eligible Grades:** 2026 / 2027 graduates recommended, open to all secondary students

**Challenge Format:** **Free** online submission

**Word Limit:** Maximum 1500 words (excluding references)

**Language:** English

**Submission Deadline:** 1 September 2026



## OFFICIAL ORGANISER

LSE's largest and most influential society - LSESU Economics Society. Exclusive support of the LSE Economics Department

Official website: <https://lssueconsoc.org>

- **Nobel Economists & LSE Professors**

Essay questions set by LSE Nobel laureates and distinguished professors

- **9 Years of Excellence**

Launched in 2017, with a strong reputation specially among UK high schools

- **Completely Free**

One entry per student. No registration or submission fees

- **Prestigious Award**

Certificates jointly signed by the question-setting professor and the LSESU Economics Society

- **60+ Countries**

Participants from over 60 countries and regions worldwide

- **Advanced Opportunities**

Top-performing students will advance to elite economics challenges and selective camp

## LSESU ECONOMICS SOCIETY INTRODUCTION

The LSESU Economics Society is the largest and most influential academic society at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). **With the exclusive support of the LSE Department of Economics**, it serves as a key platform for students to access top academic networks and embodies LSE's academic authority and heritage in the field of economics.

The Society is dedicated to advancing cutting-edge research and academic exchange. Its flagship publication *Rationale* covers research areas including macroeconomics, development economics, financial markets and behavioural economics. Selected research outputs have been cited and recognized by the external academic community, fully demonstrating the depth and value of student research.

The Society is also renowned for its high-standard academic events and international exchanges. The "Sen Club" seminar series has hosted Nobel laureates in Economic Sciences including Amartya Sen, Eric Maskin and Oliver Hart. The annual LSE Economics Symposium brings together leading academics and students worldwide to discuss the most influential economic issues of our time, and has become an important platform for dialogue between academia and industry. The LSESU Economics Society has long been dedicated to developing high-level economics academic challenges for undergraduates and outstanding high school students, and its series of economics challenges enjoys a strong global reputation among undergraduates. (<https://lsesueconsoc.org/>)

Since 2025, ASEEDER has established a strategic partnership with the LSESU Economics Society to bring the two prestigious LSE official economics competitions, which enjoy exceptionally high reputations and academic value in the UK, to students worldwide.



## LSESU Economics Society's Two Official Economics Challenges

### LSESU Economics Society Essay Competition

The **LSESU Economics Society Essay Competition** is a global academic event officially organised by the Society. All essay questions are set exclusively by current faculty members of the LSE Economics Department. Previous question-setters include **Professor Sir Christopher Pissarides** (2010 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences), **Professor Sir Tim Besley** (former President of the Royal Economic Society), and **Professor Sir Richard Layard** (LSE Emeritus Professor and pioneer of wellbeing economics). This means participants engage directly with genuine university-level economic thinking, gaining early exposure to frontier theories and pressing real-world issues. Launched in 2017, the competition has attracted students from **over 60 countries and regions worldwide**. It enjoys an exceptionally strong reputation among secondary schools across the UK. Outstanding submissions receive a **certificate bearing the dual signatures of an LSE professor and the LSESU Economics Society President**. A strong performance in the competition serves as powerful academic evidence for students applying to economics-related programmes.

**Competition website:** <https://www.lsesuesec.org/>

### Economics Society Economics Challenge

The questions of LSESU Economics Society Economics Challenge are academically reviewed by LSE economics professors. Its core positioning is to **bridge the gap between high school economics and LSE's undergraduate economics curriculum**. The challenge covers **macroeconomics, microeconomics, theoretical and applied mathematics**. This design highlights the central role of mathematical and computational skills in modern economics, with the aim of cultivating interdisciplinary talent capable of applying mathematical tools to solve economic problems. It helps students keep pace with the global trend towards a more mathematically rigorous economics discipline and equips them to engage with the frontiers of the field. First launched in the 2025-2026 academic year, the competition has already reached students in **over 20 countries and regions**, establishing itself as an international platform for academic exchange in economics.

**Competition website:** <https://www.lsesuesec.org/>

The topics for the **LSESU Economics Society Essay Competition** are exclusively set and developed by core professors of the LSE Economics Department. The themes consistently focus on cutting-edge real-world economic issues or the innovative application of classical theories, to foster students' capabilities in independent research, critical analysis and innovative thinking.

The scoring criteria are also formulated in full alignment with the academic standards of university-level economics essays. Participants are required to demonstrate accurate understanding of economic theories, sound use of supporting evidence, and competent critical analysis skills.

**PROFESSOR  
MICHAEL GMEINER**

- Assistant Professor of Economics at LSE
- Doctor of Economics from Northwest University



**PROFESSOR SIR  
CHRISTOPHER PISSARIDES**

- Regius Professor of Economics, LSE;
- Winner of the 2010 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences;
- Fellow of the Econometric Society;
- Fellow of the British Academy;



**PROFESSOR  
JOHN VAN REENEN**

- Officer of the Order of the British Empire
- Fellow of the British Academy
- Fellow of the Econometric Society



**PROFESSOR  
SILVANA TENREYRO**

- Professor of Economics at LSE;
- Fellow of the British Academy;
- Fellow of the Econometric Society



**PROFESSOR  
RICARDO REIS**

- Professor of Economics at LSE;
- A.W. Phillips Professor of Economics;
- Fellow of the British Academy;
- Fellow of the Econometric Society



## Topic 1



**Professor Sir  
Christopher Pissarides**

**Regius Professor of Economics LSE  
Winner of the 2010 Nobel Prize in  
Economic Sciences**

- Conferred the Grand Cross of the Order of –Merit of the Republic of Cyprus in 2011
- Fellow of the Econometric Society
- Fellow of the British Academy
- Member of the Academia Europaea and Lifetime Honourary Member of the American Economic Association
- Served as President of the European Economic Association in 2011
- Knighted in 2013

### ● RESEARCH AREA:

The Impact and Restructuring of Employment and Future Work Patterns Driven by Artificial Intelligence and Digitalization; Macroeconomics of Labour Markets; Macroeconomic Policy; Economic Growth and Structural Change.

### ● REPRESENTATIVE WORK:

*Equilibrium Unemployment Theory: A Canonical and Authoritative Reference in the Economics of Unemployment.*



## TECHNOLOGY & WORKER WELLBEING

Evidence shows that workers like to work from home, say one day a week, but they hate monitoring devices that the firm might use to see how they allocate their time during the home day. What do you think the firm should do, if it wants to motivate its workers by giving them something that they like, but at the same time ensure it gets its money's worth during working hours?

## Topic 2



**Professor  
Ricardo Reis**

### PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AT LSE

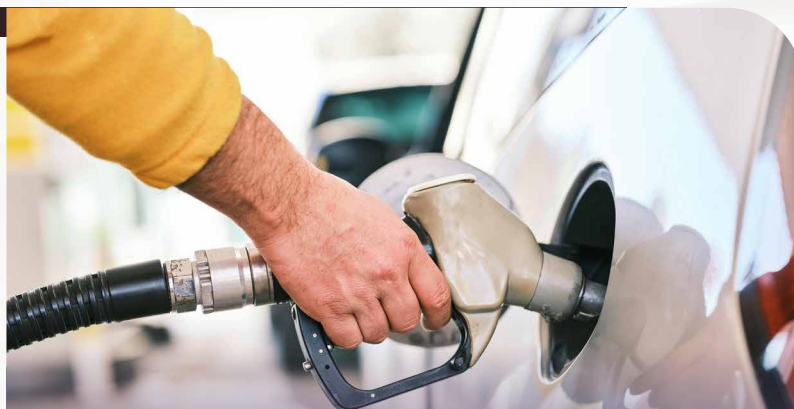
- A.W. Phillips Professor of Economics
- Distinguished Scholar at the Bank of Canada
- Fellow of the British Academy
- Fellow of the Academia de Ciências de Lisboa
- Fellow of the Econometric Society
- 2022 Carl Menger Prize
- 2021 Yrjö Jahnsson Award (the biennial highest European honour in economics)
- 2017 Banque de France/Toulouse School of Economics Junior Prize
- Former Editor of the Journal of Monetary Economics
- Serves as an advisor to several central banks, including the Bank of England, Sveriges Riksbank, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, and the European Stability Mechanism.

#### ● RESEARCH AREA:

Macroeconomics (Monetary and Fiscal Policy); Inflation; Business Cycles; Central Bank Liquidity Facilities (Swap Lines).

#### ● SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:

*Central Bank Swap Lines: Evidence on the Effects of the Lender of Last Resort; Debt Revenue and the Sustainability of Public Debt.*



### ENERGY & ECONOMICS

Following a sharp rise in UK energy prices, prepare a brief for a central bank on how monetary policy should respond. Take into account that the UK is a net importer of energy, and that the Bank of England has a mandate of keeping inflation steady at 2%.

Topic 3



Professor  
Silvana Tenreyro

Professor of Economics at LSE

- Former External Member of the Monetary Policy Committee, Bank of England
- Former President of the European Economic Association
- Fellow of the British Academy and the Econometric Society
- Former Director of CEPR International Macroeconomics and Finance Programme
- Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)
- 2021 Yrjö Jahnsson Award (the highest European honour in economics)
- Associate Editor of Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Monetary Economics

● RESEARCH AREA:

Macroeconomics (with a particular focus on monetary policy), International Economics, Macroeconomic Development.

● SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:

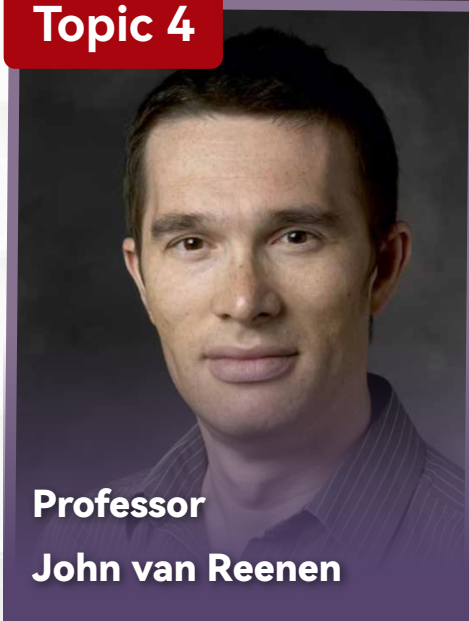
*Dollar Dominance and the Transmission of Monetary Policy; Trade Fragmentation, Inflationary Pressures and Monetary Policy; Negative Rates and the Effective Lower Bound: Theory and Evidence.*



AI & EMPLOYMENT

Suppose AI reduces the number of people needed to perform a large fraction of jobs, threatening to cause high unemployment. What measures should be put in place to limit inequality in pay (and, ideally, also in hours worked)?

## Topic 4



Professor  
John van Reenen

### PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AT LSE

- Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)
- 2009 Yrjö Jahnsson Award
- Former Associate Editor of the American Economic Review, Quarterly Journal of Economics, and Econometrica
- Fellow of the British Academy (FBA)
- Fellow of the Econometric Society

#### ● RESEARCH AREA:

Economics, Public Policy, Competition Policy.

#### ● SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:

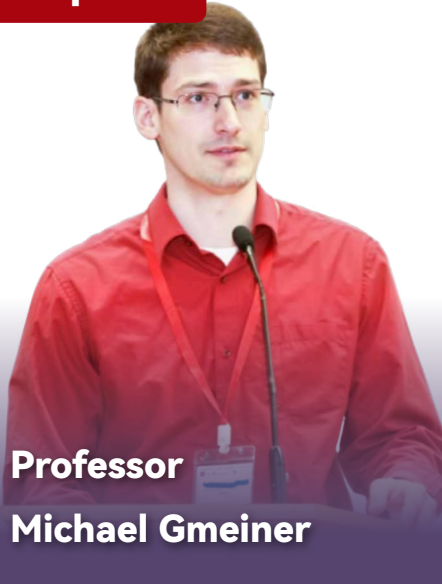
*The International Empirics of Management;*  
*OPENing up Military Innovation: Causal Effects of Reforms to U.S. Defense Research;*  
*The Impact of Regulation on Innovation;*  
*The Fall of the Labor Share and the Rise of Superstar Firms.*



### TAXATION & FAIRNESS

Is it possible and desirable to raise taxation on the top 1%?

## Topic 5



**Professor  
Michael Gmeiner**

### Professor of Economics at LSE

- PhD in Economics, Northwestern University
- Deputy Undergraduate Programme Director

#### ● RESEARCH AREA:

Health Economics, Industrial Organization.

#### ● SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:

*Comparing the cost of cirrhosis to other common chronic diseases: A longitudinal study in a large national insurance database;*  
*Can patterns of household purchases predict the outcome of US presidential elections?;*  
*Qualitative, rather than quantitative, differences between HLA-DQ alleles affect HLA-DQ immunogenicity in organ transplantation;*  
*Estimating the employment effect of the minimum wage through variation in compliance: Evidence from five US states.*



## GREEN TECHNOLOGY

How will development and adoption of climate-friendly technologies affect inequality and the distribution of wealth?

## Detailed Scoring Dimensions

Scoring Criteria	Marks	Key Assessment Focus
Argument and Originality	25	Is the argument well-articulated, logically consistent, and innovative? Does it go beyond textbook answers and provide original insight?
Application of Economic Theories	20	Are relevant economic models, frameworks, or concepts used correctly and effectively to support the argument?
Evidence and Examples	15	Are claims supported by empirical studies, historical examples, case studies, or credible data?
Critical Analysis	15	Is there engagement with opposing views, trade-offs, limitations, or alternative explanations? Are counterarguments addressed thoughtfully?
Structure and Clarity	10	Is the essay clearly structured with logical flow? Are the introduction and conclusion effective? Is the language precise?
Citations and Sources	10	Are high-quality sources used (academic, institutional)? Are references cited correctly and consistently?
Topic Relevance	5	Does the essay stay on topic and directly answer the question asked?

## Overall Grade Rating and Assessment

Grade	Mark Range	Standard Description
High Distinction	70-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers a rigorous, original argument informed by advanced economic theory and evidence.</li> <li>Shows excellent structure and clarity, with each section logically building on the previous.</li> <li>Critically engages with competing views and policy trade-offs.</li> <li>Demonstrates wide reading and proper referencing (e.g., peer-reviewed articles, institutional reports).</li> <li>Sophisticated use of data or case studies.</li> <li>Strong integration of interdisciplinary insights (where relevant).</li> <li>Clearly answers the question posed</li> </ul>
High Commendation	55-69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents a coherent and mostly well-structured argument.</li> <li>Applies relevant economic concepts with reasonable accuracy.</li> <li>Engages with some empirical or historical examples.</li> <li>Displays effort at critical engagement, though limited in depth or scope.</li> <li>Mostly accurate referencing, though with some inconsistency.</li> <li>Some minor misinterpretations or superficial coverage of certain key aspects.</li> </ul>
Commendation	40-54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempts to engage with the question, though may deviate slightly or show limited structure.</li> <li>Uses economic terms or data, but not always effectively or accurately.</li> <li>Makes a reasonable but underdeveloped argument.</li> <li>An attempt at referencing correctly.</li> <li>Lacks depth in critical analysis or fails to engage with counterarguments.</li> <li>Descriptive rather than analytical in tone.</li> </ul>
Participation	<40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fails to address the question directly or substantially.</li> <li>Contains major factual or conceptual errors.</li> <li>Lacks economic reasoning or misuses key terms.</li> <li>No clear structure or argument.</li> <li>References are missing, incorrect, or not credible.</li> <li>Language may be unclear or disjointed.</li> </ul>

\* For student self-assessment.

## Awards and Honours



### Award Structure

Award Category	Proportion / Number of Winners	Prize Details
High Distinction	Top 5%	Certificate signed by the President of the LSESU Economics Society
Top 3 Award	Top 3 entries per essay question	Award certificate jointly signed by the President of the LSESU Economics Society and named professor
Question Winner	1 winner per essay question	All of the above certificates, and additional £50 Amazon gift card
Overall Champion	1 winner across all entries	Certificate jointly signed by the President of the LSESU Economics Society and the LSE Head of Department of Economics, and a £100 Amazon gift card

\* Only winning students receive certificates. Participation certificates are not available.

\* Award winners will advance to elite economics challenges and selective camp

## Eligibility and Requirements

● **Eligibility:** 2026 / 2027 graduates recommended, open to all secondary students

### ● Key Dates

• **Submission Deadline:**

1 September 2026, 23:59 (GMT+1, UK Time)

\* Late submissions will not be accepted.

• **Results Announcement:** November 2026 (Tentative)

● **Registration Fee:** Free

### ● Essay Requirements

• **Language:** English

• **Word Count:** Maximum 1500 words (excluding references)

• **Citation Format:** Harvard referencing style is recommended

• **Topic Selection:** Entrants can only submit **one response to one of the 5 questions.**

• **Originality:** Plagiarism and AI-generated content are **strictly forbidden and adequate referencing is vital.** All essays will be screened and any found to be in breach of these requirements will be immediately disqualified.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



### 1 How do I register?

You may directly select a topic, complete your essay writing in line with the requirements, and submit your work by the specified submission deadline. No prior registration is required.



### 2 Can I use AI tools for my essay?

No. The Organising Committee will conduct AI detection and plagiarism checks on all submitted essays prior to the judging process. Please ensure the full originality of the content and viewpoints in your essay. Students are encouraged to think independently and express their own insights. Plagiarism or reliance on AI-generated content is strictly prohibited. Any essay found to be in violation of the rules will be disqualified from the judging process immediately.



### 3 Can I submit after the deadline?

There is only one official submission deadline for the LSE economics essay competition. No late submissions will be accepted. Please plan your time carefully and submit your work before the deadline.



### 4 Are there any requirements for the submission format?

It is recommended that you use the Harvard referencing style, with 12pt Times New Roman font, 1.5 line spacing, and page numbers added throughout the document. The file should be named in the format of "FORENAME SURNAME (UPPERCASE) + QUESTION X", for example, "PETER SMITH + Question 1".



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