

**Note for those interested in the MRes/PhD Economics program at the LSE, research assistance or postdoctoral opportunities**

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I often receive emails from students interested in pursuing an MRes/PhD in Economics. These emails typically showcase why I may be a particularly good match as a PhD advisor and declare an interest to join the PhD program under my supervision and support. I am honoured by the consideration of such students.

Since my response to such emails is invariably always the same, I am posting this note online to preclude the need for such emails and avoid disappointment. Given this note and the frequency of the emails, I will no longer reply individually to these emails in the future.

In economics, applications to master's and doctoral degrees are standardised and handled in a centralized fashion by a committee in each department. Other professors in the department are typically not welcome to interfere with the selection process beyond writing letters of recommendation for those candidates whose research potential they know well.

The letters of recommendation are only one component of the application package (including transcripts from previous relevant degrees, GRE and TOEFL scores, a writing sample, etc.). This website page provides additional details on the application process at the LSE: [www.lse.ac.uk/study-at-lse/Graduate/degree-programmes-2023/MResPhD-Economics](http://www.lse.ac.uk/study-at-lse/Graduate/degree-programmes-2023/MResPhD-Economics).

Unfortunately, the individual emails I receive will not improve one's likelihood of acceptance into the MRes/PhD program at the LSE. I only write MRes/PhD letters of recommendation for my research assistants with whom I've had at least a one-year-long working collaboration so that I can write a well-informed letter in support of their application. I will not consider writing a letter of recommendation for a student who is not a long-term research assistant for me - such a letter would be uninformative about the student's academic potential and unhelpful for their application.

If you are interested in working as a research assistant (pre-doc) under my supervision, please email me your CV and transcripts around March. This is when I typically start the hiring process for the research assistants of the next academic year. I give priority to applicants who can work full-time as my research assistant and who have a preference for a two-year contract. Applicants must complete a timed coding test (in either Stata, R or Python) whose outcome plays a considerable role in the hiring decision. If you want to prepare well for a research assistant position with me or other professors, I advise you to improve your coding skills (coding tests are increasingly used as a screening tool for pre-doc positions).

I do not currently hire postdoctoral researchers. You might find postdoc opportunities of your interest on the CEP website ([https://cep.lse.ac.uk/\\_new/about/work/](https://cep.lse.ac.uk/_new/about/work/)).

Thank you very much for your interest in working with me, and good luck!

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<sup>1</sup>This note is an adaptation of the helpful note of Eric Verhoogen.