

London, April 17, 2006

To whom it may concern,

The below is the email correspondence which preceded my speech on the Open Day event on March 22, 2006. The exchanges are between myself and George Philip, convenor of the Government Department; John Madeley, deputy convenor; and Hannah Wood, administrative assistant responsible for undergraduate programmes. The material is organised chronologically, with the earliest relevant email first.

The material conclusively shows:

- that I was highly reluctant to give the speech since I didn't feel qualified to talk to this audience in the manner required, and that I tried to have someone else, more qualified, replace me.
- that I informed the convenor and the deputy convenor beforehand that I would not use the Powerpoint presentation provided for the purpose. They assured me that this was ok.
- that I informed the convenor and the deputy convenor beforehand that I would not be able to speak as a representative of the department or provide an official sales pitch; that I would describe the undergraduate programme in my own words and to the best of my ability.

yours,

Erik Ringmar

To Erik Ringmar and Cheryl Shoenhart-Bailey from Hannah Wood, 21 March

Dear Erik & Cheryl,

Please find attached (below) the PowerPoint presentation which I have written as a guide for your talks at the UG Open day which takes place **tomorrow**. I have also saved this presentation to disk and put this in your post tray so that you can take it with you. I have put some leaflets in your post tray which you can take with you tomorrow for students to take away with them, if they so wish.

As I outlined in my e-mail last week, your talk is for 6th form students who are thinking of applying to the school. John has arranged for Andrea (from Undergraduate admissions) to attend these talks also. It is hoped Andrea will be

able to answer any queries about admissions criteria etc. John; could you please let Erik and Cheryl know if you will be attending these talks.

The times and dates of your talks are as follows:

CHERYL

Wednesday 22 March

12.00 - 12.45

Room: D502 (Clement House)

ERIK

Wednesday 22 March 2006.

14.00 - 14.45

Room: D502 (Clement House)

If you have any queries about this, please don't hesitate to contact me or John.

Kind Regards,

Hannah Wood

<<PP to use at open or visit days.ppt>>

to Hannah Wood from Erik Ringmar, 21 March, 10:49 AM

Hi Hannah,

Do I have to have a powerpoint presentation? I prefer to just talk. And, yes, what am I supposed to talk about?

Erik

from Hannah Wood to Erik Ringmar, 21 March

Dear Erik,

I don't think it's compulsory that power point is used. It's pretty much your call as far as I am aware. I suppose it is just felt that it's good to have some visual aids.

Regarding the topic of your talk, you could always use the notes page of this presentation as a guide? Basically, you should talk about the department and the Undergraduate degrees we offer. The students will be attending talks about school wide issues (e.g. the library, student services, accommodation, fees etc) in the morning. So, your talk should be Government specific.

You should have received a memo about this from the Student Recruitment Office. The booklet and memo which they send give you topics to consider (such as 'why study this subject at the LSE?' 'Course content and structure' etc). Did you receive this? If not I could photocopy the memo and put it in your post tray if you wish?

Hope this helps.

Hannah

to Hannah Wood from Erik Ringmar, 21 March, 12:10 AM

Hi Hannah,

I don't know anything about the various programmes. I'm a terrible tutor. I can't talk about any admin or anything having to do with applications on our offerings. Why couldn't John Madeley talk about that? He actually knows about it. Also I don't understand anything about the English school system.

cheers,

Erik

to John Madeley from Erik Ringmar, 21 March, 12:14 P.M.

Dear John,

I'm realising late in the day that I'm very badly suited to give this talk tomorrow. I don't know anything about our various undergrad offerings and I don't understand anything about the English school system, GCSEs, A-levels or whatever it's called. Why don't someone English with a proper understanding of our programme give this talk? I'll just get everyone confused.

sorry,

Erik

to John Madeley from Erik Ringmar, 21 March, 13:01 P.M.

Dear John,

I just started thinking about whatever I could tell the parents and it suddenly dawned on me that I know very little about our undergraduate programme. It was always Ernest who ran this in the past and I never bothered to remember any of the rules. Also, I don't know anything about the English school system — GCSEs and all that — and I'm for that reason very bad at explaining things to English parents. It's somehow really pathetic that we can't find someone better than me to do this. Why not you or George or someone who can present the programme with authority and knowledge?

Sorry, I should never have agreed to do this in the first place.

Erik

to John Madeley from Erik Ringmar, 21 March, 13:10 P.M.

Hi again,

New idea: why not ask Jonathan Hopkin or Michael Bruter to help out? I.e. the old or the incoming undergrad exam person? They actually know something about the undergrad programmes, which courses to take which years, issues of progression, and whatever else. I'm not going to recruit any students/parents with my general reflections on student life and the LSE experience. And I'll sound horribly confused since I can't answer any of the questions on any details.

I'm sorry I got to this late. I've been too busy finishing a book.

Erik

from Hannah Wood to Erik Ringmar, 21 March

Hi Erik,

Thanks for your suggestions. Unfortunately, who speaks at this event isn't my decision so I'll have to leave this up to John Madeley to decide.

Thanks,

Hannah

to Hannah Wood from Erik Ringmar, 21 March, 13:51 P.M.

Sure, I understand that. I was stupid to say yes to something I'm pretty hopeless at. John should have known. I'm likely to tell the poor parents exactly how low we prioritise undergrad teaching.

cheers,

Erik

from John Madeley to Erik Ringmar, 21 March

Dear Eric,

Have just seen your email. Your lack of familiarity with British secondary education (which quite a number of our colleagues share incidentally — including Cheryl) should not be a problem as Andrea will be on hand to provide support (she is an expert on admissions). Your role is just to be a face of the Department and to say something about political science and how it is taught at the School — having advised undergraduate tutees for ten(?) years surely gives you quite sufficient general knowledge about the different degree programmes. Of course you don't have to use Power Point if you don't want to — but the slides are there and should greatly ease the job if you are uncertain what is expected. As I indicated I don't expect to be around, I'm afraid — I have a medical appointment starting late morning.

I hope everything goes well — it really is not quite as scary as you seem to think.

All the best,

John M

to John Madeley from Erik Ringmar, 21 March, 14:38

Hi John,

Being scared is not an issue. The problem for the department is that I'm going to talk about the undergrad programme as I see it. I don't have a sales pitch and I only have a very limited view of what is going on. For example: I don't know my second year courses from my third year courses. I'm not a 'face' of anything except myself. What I'm sure you want is something far more traditional, respectable, and predictable.

cheers,

Erik

to Erik Ringmar from George Philip, 21 March, 14:38

Dear Erik,

I'm afraid that we need you because John has a medical appointment.

A member of the administrative staff will be there, and I have asked Hannah to attend in order to show moral support. I don't think that you need to know very much. All that is needed is a reassuring presence. And somebody who knows how to operate powerpoint....

Regards

George

to George Philip from Erik Ringmar, 22 March, 4:44 A.M.

Hi George,

Sure. I don't actually mind. It's just that I feel parents/prospective students would be much reassured if they met someone 1) English who comes from Barnes or Oxford; 2) who knows something about the undergraduate programme. I'm a Swede from Norflondon with a ponytail who never bothered to learn any rules and regulations (Ernest always covered for us!). Oh well. If I am the best person the department can dredge up ...

Btw, I won't use the powerpoint. I'm not paid my astronomical salary to go into meetings with other people's powerpoint presentations. I'll think on my feet (oh no!!!)

cheers,

Erik