



# WESTMINSTER TUTORS

Est. 1934



OFSTED “OUTSTANDING” ACROSS THE BOARD



## WESTMINSTER TUTORS

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Established in 1934, Westminster Tutors is one of the oldest and most respected tutorial colleges in the country. We offer A level, GCSE and retake courses, as well as revision courses, private tuition and preparation for Oxbridge and other competitive university applications.

Having celebrated our 80th anniversary not so long ago, we are immensely proud that Ofsted has recognised our ongoing pursuit of excellence by awarding us “Outstanding” in all six judgements. No other independent college in London can claim this accolade!

What makes us stand out from the crowd is our individual approach and our superbly qualified teachers. Our greatest strength is that the education of each student is individually planned and our teaching is either one-to-one or in very small groups. Our aim is to bring out the very best in our students, and to set them on the path to a happy and successful future.

Our students achieve excellent examination results in a wide range of subjects and a very high proportion go on to top universities. Small, friendly and very personal, we also offer a truly welcoming environment.

We really are a special place, so arrange a visit to find out more!





“JAMES IS HAVING THE HAPPIEST TIME OF HIS EDUCATION SO FAR, LEARNING FAR MORE THAN HE HAS EVER DONE BEFORE AND BENEFITING ENORMOUSLY FROM SUCH A FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT AND SUCH HIGH-CALIBRE TEACHING.”

## THEN & NOW

Westminster Tutors was founded in 1934 by the doughty Miss Freeston, a Physics graduate from St Hilda's College, and one of the first women to matriculate at Oxford University. She identified that young women had little chance of securing a place at Oxford or Cambridge because they lacked access to academic tutors who could help them prepare for the rigorous entrance examinations. Miss Freeston dedicated herself to Westminster Tutors for over 40 years, making the college a byword for academic excellence. AS Byatt, who taught at Westminster Tutors with Penelope Lively in the 1960s, recalls that 'the ferocious Miss Freeston created an atmosphere of eccentric precision', and describes how the two novelists 'sat together in the small staff room on sagging sofas, amid a rich and pervasive smell of old upholstery and decaying dogs'.

Westminster Tutors takes its name from the fact the college was originally based in Artillery Row, Westminster, and it continued to occupy the same Dickensian premises until 1992. By this time teaching had long since been extended to boys, and to delivering both A level and GCSE courses. In 1993 Westminster Tutors became part of the David Game Group, and since then we have occupied premises on the Old Brompton Road in South Kensington, where we continue to preserve what makes us so unique, at the same time as pursuing the highest educational standards in a rapidly changing world.

# WHO'S WHO AT WESTMINSTER TUTORS

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## **Virginia Maguire BA MA MLitt** ~ *Principal*

Virginia Maguire read English at UCL, and lectured in the English Department of Chiang Mai University, Thailand, for five years. She gained distinction in her MLitt in English Studies from Strathclyde University and has published various articles on sociolinguistics and aspects of Thai culture. More recently, she completed an MA in Educational Leadership at the Institute of Education, UCL. Virginia is also the founder and director of Uniprep, which offers specialist preparation for applications to highly competitive universities and degree courses. Her own mother took her A levels at Westminster Tutors in the 1960s, which means Virginia takes a genuine pleasure in continuing the college's long tradition of providing the quality teaching which paves the way to success at Westminster Tutors and beyond.

## **David Game MA MPhil** ~ *Proprietor*

David Game is one of the UK's foremost education entrepreneurs and philanthropists. A Mathematics scholar at New College, Oxford, he gained an MPhil in Number Theory from UCL. His enthusiasm and energy have helped him build a formidable network of independent schools and colleges both in Britain and abroad. He is a keen linguist and avid art collector: Westminster Tutors doubles up as a gallery exhibiting his varied collection of contemporary paintings. David's head office is located in the same building on Old Brompton Road as Westminster Tutors, and he is readily available if parents or students wish to see him.

## **Nick Dommert LLB LLM BSc MA PhD** ~ *Director of Studies*

Nick Dommert distinguishes himself by being our most qualified tutor. Nick completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in Law, focusing on public international law. Taking a firm interest in climate change, he moved on to Imperial, where he was awarded a first in Geology. He went on to obtain a distinction in his MA in Environment, Politics and Development at King's College, where he also completed his PhD. As Director of Studies, Nick is responsible for supporting the teachers in their professional practice, for monitoring the attendance, progress and attainment of our students and teaching both Geography and Politics.

## **Jane Darwin MA BLitt** ~ *Senior Tutor*

Jane Darwin graduated in English from Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, and also completed her BLitt at Oxford University. Jane has lived in London, Bonn, New York and Brussels, where her husband was working for the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. She has three children. She has taught English Literature at Westminster Tutors for 40 years, and in 1993 she became Co-Principal. In 2000 she took semi-retirement, but continues to take an active interest in the college by acting as Senior Tutor.

## **Kim Gilmore BSc PhD** ~ *Head of Science*

Kim Gilmore completed her BSc and PhD in Biochemistry at Queen Mary College, University of London, and worked as a postdoctoral research assistant in the Department of Immunology, Guy's Hospital. Kim has lectured at university level and has over 20 years' experience teaching Biology at secondary schools and tutorial colleges in London. She is also a senior examiner for the OCR Biology A level. Before joining Westminster Tutors, Kim worked as Director of Studies at Abbey College.



“THE QUALITY OF TEACHING IS OUTSTANDING AND HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN ENABLING STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE EXTREMELY WELL. THE QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS THROUGHOUT THE COLLEGE IS ANOTHER FACTOR THAT IMPACTS STRONGLY ON STUDENTS’ ACHIEVEMENTS. OFSTED 2015”

## INSPECTIONS

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While Westminster Tutors is very different from a large secondary school, we provide exactly what is expected of any other school but in our own unique way. We operate as an independent school for students aged 14+ and are inspected by Ofsted.

We were awarded “Outstanding” in all six judgements in our February 2015 inspection:

- Overall effectiveness: *Outstanding*
- Leadership and management: *Outstanding*
- Behaviour and safety of pupils: *Outstanding*
- Quality of teaching: *Outstanding*
- Achievement of pupils: *Outstanding*
- Sixth form provision: *Outstanding*

The full inspection report can be downloaded from the Ofsted website. We also feature in the Good Schools Guide.



“GOOD NEWS! SHE DID IT! WE FINALLY RANG CAMBRIDGE ON FRIDAY EVENING. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP AND PLEASE PASS ON MY THANKS TO ALL YOUR COLLEAGUES; SHE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU ALL. I'LL BE IN TOUCH WITH DAUGHTER NUMBER TWO IN DUE COURSE.”

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## OUR TUTORS

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Since 1934 we have built our reputation on our tutors and they remain our greatest asset today. Our student-teacher ratio is 1:1 and it is our policy to offer a balance of the brightest and best graduates from the top universities with highly qualified teachers who have many years of experience. This enables us to make a personal match for each student, taking into account their individual courses of study, their academic goals, and the teaching approach which will bring out the best in them.

Virtually no other school or independent college can contend with our list of tutors and we take pride in the fact that we attract and retain the best in their fields. Over a third of our teachers are graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, a third have PhDs or are PhD candidates, and almost all have furthered their studies to master's level as well as having 2:1 or first class degrees from a Russell Group university.

Students and teachers know each other by first name and build friendly, mutually respectful relationships. This is what sustains the collegiate atmosphere at Westminster Tutors which is valued and enjoyed by staff and students alike.

# SUBJECTS OFFERED

	Subject	GCSE	IGCSE	A level
<b>The Arts:</b>	Art	•		•
	Photography	•		•
	Music	•		•
<b>English:</b>	English	•	•	
	English Language	•	•	•
	English Lang. & Lit.			•
	English Literature	•	•	•
<b>Humanities:</b>	Classical Civilisation			•
	Government & Politics			•
	History	•	•	•
	History of Art			•
	Philosophy			•
	Religious Studies	•		•
<b>Languages:</b>	Chinese			•
	French	•	•	•
	German	•	•	•
	Greek (Classical)	•		•
	Italian	•	•	•
	Latin	•		•
	Spanish	•	•	•
<b>Mathematics:</b>	Mathematics	•	•	•
	Further Mathematics			•
	Mechanics			AS
	Statistics			AS
<b>Sciences:</b>	Biology	•	•	•
	Chemistry	•	•	•
	Physics	•	•	•
	Science	•	•	
	Additional Science	•	•	
<b>Social Sciences:</b>	Economics			•
	Geography	•	•	•
	Psychology	•		•
	Sociology			•

## OUR TEACHING APPROACH

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Unlike many other independent colleges, we remain true to our tutorial college origins either teaching one-to-one or in very small groups. Our maximum group size is four students, while our average group size is two. We consider each student's educational history and future goals when deciding whether he or she is most likely to flourish by being taught in a small group or one-to-one. This means that all of our students receive the individual attention and teaching approach that suits them best.

We also offer an exceptional degree of flexibility in what we teach. All GCSE/IGCSE and A level exam boards are taught and, with the guidance of their teachers, students are able to select the syllabus and units that best match their abilities and personal interests. We can also teach Pre-U and it is possible for A level students to take the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) in place of offering a fourth AS level.

For students joining us midway through a course or for retakes we offer a seamless transition continuing them on the same syllabus, and we never put students studying different exam boards or units in the same group.

### MONITORING AND REPORTING

As well as working hard within lessons, doing sufficient homework and developing independent study habits are vital to success. Students of compulsory school age have supervised study periods incorporated into their timetable, and if either GCSE or A level students need assistance with balancing their workload, subject-specific study periods are included in their timetable. When necessary we also monitor homework diaries to ensure students are completing their work on time.

Every student's academic progress is closely monitored. Teachers keep careful records of ongoing assessments made throughout the term, and mock exams are held at the end of the autumn and spring terms. Our Director of Studies is responsible for tracking the attendance, progress and attainment of each student, and he will highlight any areas for concern both to the Principal and the student's parents or guardians.

In addition, the Principal acts as personal tutor to all students in the upper sixth so that she can ensure they are meeting academic targets necessary for their university applications, and our College Administrator (a qualified teacher) acts as personal tutor for all students of compulsory school age.



AS HELEN PREPARES TO LEAVE FOR UNIVERSITY WE WANT TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK YOU. HELEN HAS GROWN IN CONFIDENCE AND IS NOW A VERY DIFFERENT, OPTIMISTIC PERSON AS A RESULT OF THIS. WITHOUT THE INDIVIDUAL TIME AND DEDICATION THAT YOU INVESTED IN OUR DAUGHTER THIS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE.







### **EXAMINATION SUCCESS**

As you would expect, Westminster Tutors is exam-focused and our goal is for each of our students to achieve to the very best of their academic ability. Mock exams are held both at the end of the autumn and spring terms, and teachers aim to complete their courses by the end of the spring term so that the summer term is given over to revision and sustained exam practice with each student receiving detailed individual feedback.

The success of this approach is borne out by our results, and The Good Schools Guide notes that 'exam results are highly creditable for such a mixed, totally non-selective intake'. Unlike many schools and colleges, we accept students of all abilities and educational backgrounds, and yet in recent years over 40% of our A level grades have been A\*-A, and over 75% have been grades A\*-B.

### **CLOSE CONTACT WITH PARENTS**

In a small college such as ours we are able to maintain very close contact with parents and guardians on a day-to-day basis. They are immediately informed if their child is late or absent for a lesson, and we often work closely with parents to co-ordinate work which needs to be done at home. Parents and guardians receive detailed termly reports for each subject, including attendance statistics, mock exam results and individual targets their child needs to work towards. They can also request feedback on their child's progress at any point in the academic year, and they can meet with the Principal whenever they have concerns or would like to discuss their child's progress.

Our parents are always immensely grateful for the individual care and attention we give to their children, and we in turn find clear, regular communication with parents yields impressive results!

# COURSES & INDIVIDUAL TUITION

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## GCSE/IGCSE COURSES

Each year a small cohort of students take their GCSEs at Westminster Tutors. GCSEs are normally taught over Years 10 and 11, and students receive two hours of tuition per subject per week if being taught one-to-one, or three hours if being taught in a small group. If required, we teach GCSEs over one year or less by devising an individual programme and increasing the number of hours.

Each GCSE student's course is personally planned to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which lays the strongest foundation for further study at A level and university. We offer an unparalleled degree of flexibility in the choice of subject and examination board, including studying IGCSE (International GCSE) syllabuses when we feel that the means of assessment or depth of study most suit a particular student's strengths.

## A LEVEL COURSES

The majority of students at Westminster Tutors are studying for their A levels. We offer a very wide range of A level options and each student's choice of subjects is unrestricted as timetables are individually planned. A level examination boards are selected according to students' areas of interest and our teachers' areas of expertise, and for subjects such as English and History students are able to select the texts or periods they would like to study. This allows our students to embark on lively and engaging programmes of study, and develops the academic autonomy which is more typically only offered at university.

A levels are normally studied in Years 12 and 13. In the first year students may sit the free-standing AS (Advanced Subsidiary) level exams and many will take four subjects. In the second year students continue three of their subjects on to the higher A level, for which they will sit separate exams at the end of their A level courses. Almost all British universities require three subjects at A level, and some may require either a fourth AS level or an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification). We provide each student with personal advice on the most appropriate course of study in relation to their specific academic goals, and can offer the freedom of choice which is not generally available in schools or larger colleges.

A level students are taught three hours per subject per week if studying one-to-one and four hours per subject if studying in a very small group. Students are also able to complete A levels intensively over one or one and a half years and we increase the number of taught hours and fees proportionately.

## REVISION

A large number of students join us over the half-terms and holidays for revision for GCSE/IGCSE, A level, and Pre-U examinations. Our revision students may not be receiving the individual attention they need at their schools, or they may be very high-achieving students who wish to leave no stone unturned in securing the highest grades or best university places. All of our revision courses are individually planned and taught one-to-one to maximise exam success.



“MY TUTORS HAVE BEEN FANTASTIC AND A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION. I HAVE TRULY ENJOYED EVERY CLASS I HAVE HAD. YOU HAVE GOLD IN YOUR HANDS AND I HOPE WESTMINSTER TUTORS WILL REMAIN SMALL AND PERSONAL.”

### **RETAKE COURSES**

We offer a flexible range of A level retake courses which run from September to June and also from January to June. Our teaching on these courses is almost always one-to-one as each student's programme is individually planned to go back over the specific areas where help is most needed. Students who join us for A level retake courses have generally narrowly missed securing a place at a top university and, despite their concerns, we are extremely successful in ensuring that their time with us is rewarded with a place at their chosen university.

We also offer GCSE retake courses for people of all ages who need to improve grades in certain subjects, and it is often possible for students to embark on their A level courses at the same time as improving GCSE grades in essential subjects such as Mathematics and English.

### **PRIVATE TUTORING**

Westminster Tutors provides one-to-one tuition in all subjects and at all levels. Private tutoring is always delivered at the college and may be for as little as a couple of hours, although most book a block of 10 hours or more. GCSE and A level students also come to us for extra help after school, or to study for a subject that is not offered by their own school, and we are able to draw upon our extensive list of highly qualified tutors to provide university level tuition in many subjects.

# UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS

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Each year around 95% of our A level cohort go on to higher education, and our aim is to inspire but not force students in this direction. The collegiate atmosphere and the academic calibre of our tutors make the college an ideal stepping stone to university, and providing the best personal guidance on careers and university applications is a central aspect of the support we provide at each stage of study. When they join us, both GCSE students and A level students are individually advised on subject choices appropriate to their goals, and if they are unsure about their future direction we provide advice which will keep their options as open as possible.

The Principal specialises in providing careers and higher education guidance, and students of all years receive personal advice on careers, gaining appropriate and relevant work experience and university options. Students begin their UCAS preparation in their AS level year by completing a Centigrade assessment which matches their stated interests and abilities with potential higher education courses. Each student's Centigrade report then provides the basis for an individual consultation with the Principal about degree course options, target A level grades, and any research or preparation that will need to be done over the summer.

Students are therefore well-prepared for their UCAS applications by the time they enter their final A level year. In this year, the Principal acts as personal tutor to all university applicants, providing support through every step of the process: from choosing courses and a strategic range of universities; to writing the personal statement and interview preparation if needed; and finally to making the best choices of first and insurance universities. Students' teachers are also involved, providing subject-specific guidance as well as personal and inspiring insights into studying at the top universities.

## OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE

Westminster Tutors was founded to provide preparation for entrance to Oxford and Cambridge, and to the present day this plays a significant part in what we offer. Many of our tutors are Oxford and Cambridge graduates, and each year students come to us in the autumn term to strengthen their Oxbridge applications either by embarking on a short rigorous programme of study, or for admissions test and mock interview preparation.

## UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS TESTS

An increasing number of university admissions tests are being introduced as a means of selecting the strongest candidates for the most competitive courses. We specialise in providing preparation for the full range of university admissions tests, including BMAT (for certain Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Science courses); GAMSAT (for graduate Medicine courses); ELAT, HAT, MAT and PAT (for English, History, Mathematics and Physics and other courses at Oxford); STEP (for Mathematics at Cambridge and Warwick); LNAT (for Law); and the Thinking Skills Assessment or TSA (for a variety of courses at Oxford, Cambridge and UCL).

Each autumn a large number of students come to us for one-to-one test preparation or to attend a one-off intensive Uniprep seminar. Uniprep specialises in providing support for applications to the most competitive universities and degree courses, and was set up by the Principal in response to the proliferation of university admissions tests. All Uniprep courses are held at Westminster Tutors and are open to students at the college.



“THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP AND ADVICE BEFORE MY MEDICAL INTERVIEW FOR IMPERIAL. I WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW I GOT THE OFFER AND THEY RECOMMENDED I APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP BASED ON MY INTERVIEW. RIGHT NOW I AM JUST PUTTING MY HEAD DOWN TO MAKE SURE I GET THE GRADES. I AM REALLY PLEASED!”

### **MEDICINE & DENTISTRY**

Westminster Tutors specialises in providing guidance for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine applicants. The process of making a strong application for these courses is lengthy and complex: it involves gaining sufficient work experience; obtaining the necessary grades; selecting which courses to apply for and sitting the appropriate admissions tests; as well as writing a strong personal statement which is vital to securing an interview.

Mock interview practice is also crucial as it is only after this stage that the strongest medical applicants receive an offer of a place. Many students from other schools come to us for interview preparation which is adapted according to the approach of the medical school they are being interviewed by, and a very high proportion of the applicants who do mock interview practice with us secure their offers.

Mature students intending to apply for Medicine also join Westminster Tutors to take intensive A levels in Biology and Chemistry, and for specialist support in making graduate applications to Medicine. In recent years, all of these applicants have been successful.



## LIFE AT WESTMINSTER TUTORS

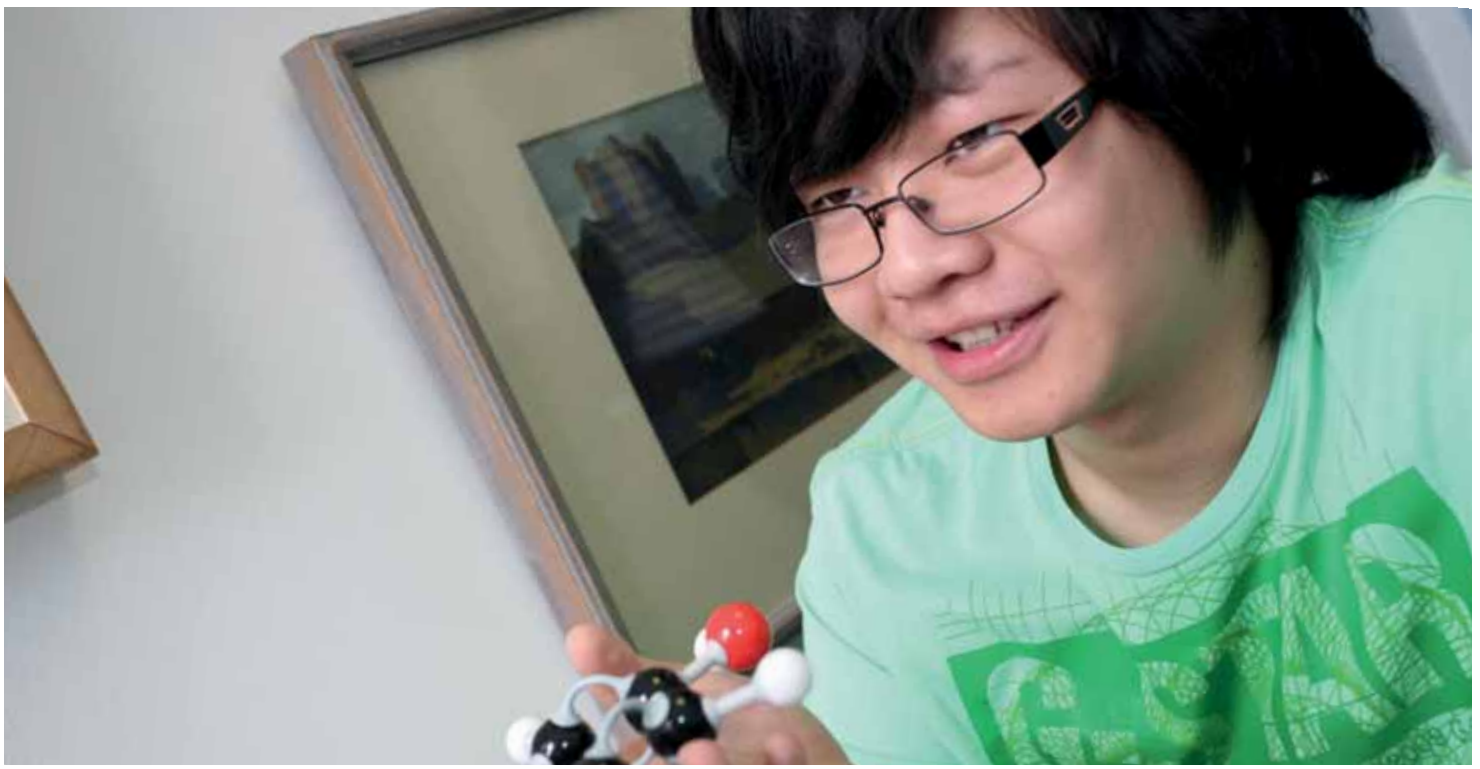
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College life at Westminster Tutors is friendly, lively and inclusive. New students are warmly welcomed by those already at the college, and students across the years engage in a variety of activities together. The head boy and head girl, who are annually elected by students and staff, take responsibility for arranging student events and activities, as well as ensuring that the views of all are heard and taken into account.

Weekly sport sessions are compulsory for GCSE students and almost all full-time A level students also take part. We also participate in five-a-side football matches with other local colleges, and we hold annual table tennis and chess tournaments in college. Chess is particularly popular with both students and staff, and games are often ongoing throughout the college.

Weekly PSHCE (Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education) sessions are an opportunity to bring students together for a spirited and diverse exchange of ideas and opinions about the pressing issues of the day, as well as offering sessions on a wide variety of topics including independent study skills, personal safety and university applications.

Each year we arrange at least one theatre trip to a critically acclaimed production, as well as more informal social events such as going bowling. For students learning a musical instrument, lessons can be arranged with visiting teachers from the Royal College of Music, and the Art, History of Art and Classical Civilisation teachers deliver sessions in the London museums and galleries. Teachers also make use of the South Kensington museums, arranging visits for their students as appropriate and our students of compulsory school age are able to enjoy outdoor recreation at the Natural History Museum gardens.



## COLLEGE FACILITIES

We have a sociable Common Room where students can eat their meals and make hot drinks. There is also a Study Room and small library where students can work quietly. The college has wi-fi throughout, and we are well-resourced with both Macs and laptops for students to use. For Music students, there is a piano and industry-standard software is installed on the Macs. We are fully equipped to deliver all Physics and Biology practicals, and Chemistry students use the laboratory at our sister college David Game College in Notting Hill Gate. We also use the studios and darkrooms at David Game College to teach Photography, and sport sessions are held at the Chelsea Leisure Centre on the King's Road.



## LOCATION

Westminster Tutors is situated in two London townhouses on the Old Brompton Road, five minutes' walk from South Kensington underground station. The many street cafés lend the area a vibrant continental feel, and students have a very wide choice of where to get their lunch. The V&A, Science and Natural History Museums are on our doorstep, and Kensington Gardens is a short walk away.

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86 Old Brompton Road  
 South Kensington  
 London SW7 3LQ  
 Tel: 020 7584 1288



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South Kensington  
London SW7 3LQ**

**Tel: 020 7584 1288**

**Fax: 020 7584 2637**

**[info@westminstertutors.co.uk](mailto:info@westminstertutors.co.uk)**

**[www.westminstertutors.co.uk](http://www.westminstertutors.co.uk)**