



# A guide for parents

Key info  
about how we  
**support**  
our students.

2020-21



# Welcome to West Thames College

Ofsted described West Thames College as a place where **learners feel happy, safe and enjoy their time at college immensely.**

**This booklet outlines the support we provide and the expectations we have of our students.**

For your son/daughter to achieve their full potential, we need their commitment and your help. Please familiarise yourself with the information in this guide so that you can fully support them throughout their studies.



*T. Aust*

**Tracy Aust**  
College Principal

## Parent Portal

Our **Parent Portal** helps you stay up to date with your son or daughter's progress and access key information about their study programme, attendance & key dates.

Register via **west-thames.ac.uk** or use the QR code (below right). Hold your phone camera over the code and a banner will appear. Click on this to go to the Parent Portal. If it doesn't work, you can download and install a QR reader app on your phone.



## Standards for Success

We have high expectations for our students. They will sign a **Student Learning Contract** to help them reach their full potential.

**TERM DATES**  
see page 14

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**100+**  
**COURSES**  
IN **24** COURSE AREAS

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**HIGH**  
**ACHIEVEMENT**  
AND **PROGRESSION**  
**RATES**

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**GREAT**  
**WORK**  
**EXPERIENCE**  
OPPORTUNITIES

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**STATE**  
**OF-THE-ART**  
**FACILITIES**

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**EXCELLENT**  
**LINKS WITH**  
**EMPLOYERS**

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Premier Inn

Holiday Inn



Heathrow

Making every journey better

OTIS



London Borough  
of Hounslow



Goldman  
Sachs

sky

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**COURSES**  
TAUGHT BY  
**INDUSTRY**  
PROFESSIONALS

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Start  
here,  
go  
far

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**#StartHereGoFar**



# Programme of study

At West Thames College, students choose one core vocational subject. Alongside this, their programme of study includes:

**Employability skills**.....

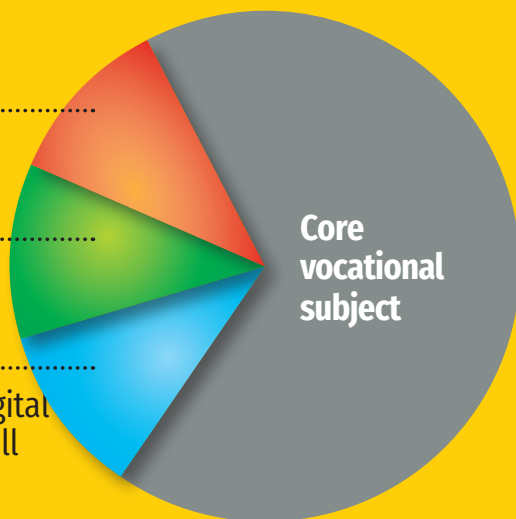
such as teamwork and problem solving to get job-ready

**English and/or maths** .....

depending on GCSE results

**iLearn** .....

learning to make the most of digital technology, an important life skill and vital for further study.



# Student success

Read about some of our former students and how their time at West Thames helped them embark on rewarding careers. For more success stories, visit [www.west-thames.ac.uk/news](http://www.west-thames.ac.uk/news)

Start  
here,  
go far



## Nadeem Chattha

Nadeem came to London from Germany in 2004. He joined an ESOL class at the college and progressed to other courses, finally leaving to study for a degree. He now works as a Senior Systems IT Engineer at the college.



## Renee Mudhar

Renee studied Travel & Tourism at the college and progressed to an apprenticeship with the London Borough of Hounslow. She found the apprenticeship valuable in helping her move towards her chosen career of becoming a lawyer.



## Francesca Sherwood

Francesca studied Beauty Therapy at the college and went on to open her own salon, True Beauty Salon & Medispa, based in Twickenham. She used the skills she learned on her course to establish her award-winning business.



## Sabina Enu-Kwesi

After studying Manufacturing at the college, Sabina embarked on an apprenticeship with the Otis Elevator Company, eventually becoming a full time employee. She is continuing her education with a degree in Business Psychology at Birkbeck, University of London.

# Benefits of BTECs VS A Levels

An increasing number of students are applying to universities with BTECs. The institutions recognise the value of the qualifications – 95% of UK universities accept BTEC students.



Approved Centre from Pearson

## Employment

Employers value BTEC qualifications as courses are industry-focused, giving students industry-specific knowledge and skills, making them readily employable. The experience of real-life practical tasks and work placements really do prepare students for the real world of employment, unlike A Levels.

## Practical Assessments vs Exams

BTECs are mostly assessed on regular coursework and work experience, which makes them a better option for those who find the pressure of exams difficult.



# Careers Service

Our team of independent careers advisers helps students make the right decision for their future and identify the skills they need to succeed.

We will always try to make sure that students enrol on a suitable course. However, if during the first few weeks your son or daughter feels that they are on the wrong course, they should come and see us. We'll try to find them an alternative course, either at West Thames College or another college or training provider.



## Work Experience

We help all our students to complete work experience placements. Work experience helps them practice the skills they learn in the classroom and gives them an advantage when applying for university or a job.

We bring employers to the college for talks, workshops and our annual Aspire Careers Events so that students can learn first-hand about working life and career opportunities.

## Applying to University

We guide and support students who want to go to university. Once they have an offer, we help prepare them for the selection test and interview.

We hold an annual Higher Education Fair and information events for students, parents and guardians about going to university.

## Applying for a Job or Apprenticeship

If your son or daughter is looking for a job or apprenticeship after their course, or a part-time job whilst they are studying, we can help them develop their CV and prepare for interviews.

## Opening Times

**Isleworth:** Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

**Feltham:** Tues/Thurs, 9am-1pm

## Where to Find Us

**Isleworth:** Room A008

**Feltham:** Room T003

# Student Facilities

The college is not just a place to study. We are here to help students grow socially as well as academically. They can join one of our many sports clubs and societies, take part in fundraising and cultural events or simply relax in the Student Common Room.

## Activities and Events

Activities take place throughout the year in the Atrium, Theatre and Student Common Room at both centres, from Freshers' Fair during Induction Week to our Creative Arts Season during the summer term. Events include talent shows, charity fundraising activities, guest speakers and awareness raising events around issues that affect young people. We encourage all our students to get involved! It's fun, educational and a great way to meet new friends.

## Sport and Fitness

Whether your son/daughter wants to represent the college playing in competitive leagues, or just keep fit for fun, we've got sports and fitness activities to suit everyone – badminton, table tennis, basketball, football, netball, dodgeball, futsal, boxing, swimming, yoga, zumba – you name it! We've got a fantastic sports hall and outdoor grass and astroturf sports pitches. Students can join our gym for just £15 a year.

## Hair and Beauty Salons

Get your hair cut or a beauty treatment for a fraction of the normal cost in the Salon at Isleworth – there's also a barber shop for men. Students are entitled to discounts and special offers too.

### Opening Times

Monday and Friday: 9am-5pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 9am-9pm

Hair and beauty appointments: **020 8326 2201**

## Nursery

Our nursery is for children aged 3 months to 5 years. Funding may be available but places are limited. For more information, call **020 8326 2318** or **020 8326 6380**.

## Learning Resources Centre

The LRC at Isleworth has everything students need to help with their studies: books, DVDs, journals, e-resources, quiet study areas, drop-in IT facilities (Macs and PCs) and dedicated, helpful staff.

### Opening Times

Monday: 8.30am-4pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 8.30am-8pm

Friday: 8.30am-4pm

## Access to Computers

Students will be given an induction on how to use Moodle, the college's student learning portal, at the start of their course. They can access a computer in any area of the college with their student ID and password. Offsite access is available via the college website, **west-thames.ac.uk**.

All students must abide by the college's ICT Acceptable Use Policy, which is available under the "**Policies and Documents**" tab on Moodle.

## Student Canteen

We offer hot meals, sandwiches, snacks and drinks. Through the Parent Portal you are able to add money to your son/daughter's student ID card for use in the canteen. If your family is on a low income, your child may be entitled to free college meals. Speak to our financial support and welfare adviser to find out more.

### Opening Times

Isleworth Canteen: 8.30am-2.30pm

Atrium Café: 8.30am-2pm

Feltham Canteen: 8.30am-1.30pm

Music Technology  
students performing in  
our Endeavour Theatre  
in aid of Dementia UK.

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# Life at College

Students' success is important to us. We encourage students to take responsibility for their learning and work hard to achieve their goals.





## Standards for Success

**We have high expectations for our students. Our standards for success state what we expect and what we don't expect, along with the support we give to help our students achieve. Your son or daughter will sign a Student Learning Contract to help them reach their full potential.**

### Homework

All full time students at West Thames College are expected to study outside of lessons. This additional study is essential for them to achieve or exceed their target grade.

Failure to work outside of lessons will disadvantage students in terms of their final grade. Homework is set in order to:

- Reinforce and consolidate work covered in lessons
- Encourage independent and reflective learning
- Develop a deeper knowledge and understanding
- Prepare students for future lessons or assessments
- Promote an interest in learning
- Enable teachers to make a judgement about a student's progress and level of attainment.

Homework should be varied in terms of tasks and relevant and rewarding for students and it may constitute ongoing work on an assignment. Please encourage your son or daughter to complete their homework on the day it is set, when the topic and tasks should still be fresh in their minds.

The full homework policy is available to students on Moodle.

### Reporting Absence

If a student is unable to attend class e.g. due to sickness, they must contact the Curriculum Administrator (see Key Contacts) before the class is due to start and must contact their Student Learning Adviser (SLA) as soon as they return to college. Students should make arrangements to catch up on any work missed during absence.

Holidays are not to be booked during term time and non-urgent appointments should be scheduled outside of college hours.

### Contact with Parents

We will contact parents/carers about attendance and progress of students aged under 19 years. You will also be invited to parents' evenings and other events throughout the year.

### 24 Hour Exclusion

If a student persistently disrupts a lesson or behaves badly, they will be excluded for 24 hours. The student will be interviewed by a senior manager before they are allowed back to class.

### Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol

Smoking is not permitted in any college building or near any entrances. It is only allowed in designated outdoor smoking areas which are clearly signposted. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone in possession of, or under the influence of, illegal drugs or alcohol on college premises.

### Religion and Faith

We are a secular college where all faiths are respected, but we do not permit the promotion of any faith. We do not have an allocated prayer room, but rooms that are free may be designated as quiet areas and can be used for prayer. To find out more, students should speak to a member of the Student Experience team in the Common Room.

### Equality

The college is committed to providing equal opportunities for all students through a supportive and challenging environment. We celebrate diversity and seek to raise the aspirations of all our students. We promote good relations between people of different religions, nationalities and racial groups and will challenge inequalities arising from race, sex, class, disability, sexuality or age.

### Changing Course

If during their first few weeks at college your son or daughter does not feel they are on the right course, please contact us. It is important that the student does not simply do nothing or drop out! Please ask for an appointment with the SLA for you and/or your son or daughter to explore the options. The SLA can also arrange a guidance interview with one of our careers advisers to help find a suitable alternative.

### Making a Complaint

If your son/daughter has a complaint, they should speak to their SLA in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved, they can make a formal complaint. Leaflets are available at the Information Centre or see our website for details.

# Support, advice & guidance

West Thames College is renowned for its friendly, welcoming atmosphere. You can rest assured that your son/daughter will be in a safe learning environment with all the support they need to enjoy their time at college and succeed with their studies.



## Tutorial Support

A Tutor/Student Learning Adviser (SLA) will monitor academic progress, attendance and punctuality to make sure students stay on track. Students meet regularly with the SLA, who is the first point of contact if there are any problems with the course or the student's progress.

## Disability Support

We welcome and support students with disabilities and learning difficulties. We will aim to meet any additional needs students have so they can participate in learning and succeed with their studies. For more information on support available, including equipment and adjustments, and support with English and maths, see the Head of Inclusion who is based on the second floor of the Learning Resources Centre, or call **020 8326 2103**.

## Careers Advice and Guidance

Our advisers help our students work toward their next step – employment, an apprenticeship, another course or higher education. They can help with CV and interview techniques and applying to university via UCAS, and they have a list of job, apprenticeship and volunteer vacancies.

## Financial and Welfare Support

If there are financial problems, questions about benefits, accommodation or immigration issues, contact the SLA or phone **020 8326 2412** to speak to our financial support and welfare adviser.

## Counselling

If students are experiencing any personal problems, emotional issues or difficulties, they can talk in confidence to one of our qualified counsellors. Students can either drop in to the office, call **020 8326 2484** or email [counsellor@west-thames.ac.uk](mailto:counsellor@west-thames.ac.uk). At the Skills+Logistics Centre, Feltham students can ask at Reception or speak to their SLA.

## Sexual Health and Relationships

Sexual health and relationships advice and free condoms are available from the Student Common Room at Isleworth or Feltham or from the SLA.

## Keeping Safe

Students are issued with an ID card which they should wear at all times when in college. Students are not allowed into college without an ID card and must show it when asked by a member of staff.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding can help to deal with problems such as bullying, domestic violence, gangs, forced marriage, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse or anything that affects students' safety.

If students feel unsafe, whether inside or outside of college, please ask that they speak to their SLA or a member of the Student Experience team based in the Student Common Room at Isleworth or Feltham.

## Safeguarding Contacts

**Isleworth:** Samantha Louisy, Head of Student Experience and Safeguarding, A007 Student Common Room, 020 8818 6827

**Feltham:** Bev McGuire, Director of Skills+Logistics Centre, **020 8818 6850** or Student Enrichment Officer, Common Room, **020 8326 2130**

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# Dates for your diary 2020-21

## Autumn Term

Monday 7 September 2020 – Friday 18 December 2020

Half Term:	Monday 26 October – Friday 30 October
Parents' Welcome Evening:	<b>Isleworth</b> Monday 14 September <b>Feltham</b> Thursday 17 September
Parents' Evening:	<b>Isleworth</b> Monday 19 October <b>Feltham</b> Thursday 22 October
Staff Development Day (college closed):	Monday 2 November
Christmas Break:	Wednesday 23 December – Friday 1 January

## Spring Term

Monday 4 January 2021 – Thursday 1 April 2021

Half Term:	Monday 15 February – Friday 19 February
Parents' Evening:	<b>Isleworth</b> Monday 1 March <b>Feltham</b> Thursday 4 March
Staff Development Day (college closed):	Friday 12 February
Easter Break:	Monday 5 April – Friday 16 April

## Summer Term

Monday 19 April 2021 – Thursday 1 July 2021

Half Term:	Monday 31 May – Friday 4 June
Bank Holidays:	Monday 3 May and Monday 31 May
Staff Admin (college closed):	Friday 2 July – Thursday 8 July
HE Graduation Ceremony:	Wednesday 9 June
Student Awards Ceremony:	Thursday 17 June

# Key contacts

For all general queries, for information on enrolment and fees or to arrange an appointment with a careers adviser please call the Information Centre on **020 8326 2020**.

Counsellor: **020 8326 2484**

Head of Inclusion: **020 8326 2103**

Exams: email **[exams@west-thames.ac.uk](mailto:exams@west-thames.ac.uk)**

Financial Support & Welfare: **020 8326 2412**

Nursery: **020 8326 6380**

Safeguarding: email **[safeguarding@west-thames.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@west-thames.ac.uk)** or call **020 8818 6827**

Security: **020 8326 6300**

Skills+Logistics Centre, Feltham: **020 8818 6800**

For the latest information about what is happening at the college see the website [west-thames.ac.uk](http://west-thames.ac.uk) or follow us on social media.

## Curriculum Administrators

To report absence and for curriculum issues, term time only.

Business, ICT: Siobhan Fitzgerald **020 8326 6402**

Childcare, Health & Care, Science:  
Lisa McCarthy **020 8326 2286**

Art & Design, Media, Music, Performing Arts:  
Preeti Sood **020 8326 2455**

Beauty, Hairdressing, Makeup:  
Sandra Hale **020 8326 2219**

Public Services, Sport, Travel & Tourism:  
Loretta Pamment **020 8326 2436**

Construction, Engineering, Motor Vehicle:  
Wendy Lunn **020 8818 6800**

ESOL Threshold (16-18s):  
Roksana Dzik **020 8326 2083**

Supported Learning, FreshStart & all Level 1 courses:  
Parmeen Sarda **020 8326 6492**

Core Skills (English & Maths)  
Meriem Amirouche **020 8326 2456**

West Thames College  
London Road  
Isleworth  
Middlesex  
TW7 4HS

**020 8326 2020**  
**[west-thames.ac.uk](http://west-thames.ac.uk)**

