



# WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

16+ PROSPECTUS  
2023







## A BRIEF HISTORY

Westminster is a long-established school on an ancient site. Its origins can be traced back to 1179, when the Benedictine monks of Westminster Abbey were asked by Pope Alexander III to provide a small charity school. The School's continuous existence is certain from the early 14<sup>th</sup> century. Following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1540, Henry VIII personally ensured the School's survival by statute and Elizabeth I confirmed royal patronage in 1560.

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# Welcome

Westminster's co-educational Sixth Form offers a safe, stimulating and supportive environment for learning, set within a progressive school on an ancient site in the heart of the world's most vibrant city.



The School's reputation as one of the foremost centres of academic excellence in the world is built upon our pupils' genuine enjoyment of open-minded enquiry, rigorous discussion and the search for explanation well beyond any examination syllabus. It is this atmosphere – where it is cool to be clever and where scholarly mastery is prized by pupils and teachers alike – that supports our pupils' progress.

Westminster pupils enhance their intellectual, physical, spiritual and social development by taking full advantage of the many opportunities in sport, music, drama, community service and other forms of civic engagement. Together, these opportunities help our pupils to prepare themselves for a life well lived as informed and committed global citizens.

We want every single pupil in our care to enjoy their time at Westminster, and to flourish — we take this responsibility extremely seriously. Underpinning all our work is an excellent system of safeguarding and pastoral care centred around each child — Housemasters, tutors, matrons, school counsellors, a School Nursing Sister and a Chaplain all work to guide them throughout their time in the School. Everyone is welcome, and all are valued and nurtured here.

Historically, Westminster has always been a boarding school and today roughly one quarter of our Sixth Form pupils board. Some come from other parts of the world, but most are Londoners. It is thanks to this ancient boarding tradition, unique location and distinctive atmosphere and ethos, that Westminster is very different from

a conventional school for our day pupils too. Many choose to remain on-site long after the teaching day has finished, perhaps to work in the library, take part in extra sport, rehearse for a play or concert, or attend a lecture or debate. There is never a dull moment and always plenty to get involved with, whatever the individual pupil's interests.

The A Level specifications followed by Westminster allow for the deep specialisation on which pupils really thrive, while the principle of choice fits well with the School's liberal tradition of drawing out and nurturing individual talents across the full range of academic disciplines. Pupils study four subjects that provide both breadth and depth throughout the two years of the Sixth Form. We find that the sheer intellectual enjoyment that this bespoke, individual approach brings to their learning ensures that, year after year, our authentically intellectual pupils go on to win places at some of the world's very best universities.

Academic departments are free to follow the specification they feel will enable pupils most effectively to realise their academic potential, evidenced in part by examination results: Westminster pupils routinely achieve more than 50% of their A Level grades at A\* or equivalent; indeed Westminster is the only school to have achieved this outstanding feat every year since the A\* grade was introduced – a by-product of its long-standing commitment to intellectual rigour and liberal enquiry underpinned by values of respect, empathy and kindness towards others.

Once you have read this prospectus and explored the website, I warmly encourage you to join us at an Open Day before the formal process of interviews and assessments gets under way. It is always best to gain a first-hand glimpse of what lies ahead, to put some faces to names and experience the buzz and energy of this remarkable school for yourselves. I look forward to meeting you in person, showing you the School and introducing you to the heads of the academic departments, who will be able to answer any specific questions you may have.

I know that applying to a new school can sometimes seem daunting for pupils (and, often, their parents), but I hope that, in applying for Westminster, feelings of excitement will rapidly eclipse any natural anxiety. Our hope is that by providing as much information about the School as possible at this stage, and seeking as much information as possible about you, the decisions that we eventually make will be the right ones. One thing I can say with certainty: the new pupils who join us in the Sixth Form each year settle in quickly and happily and make a terrific success of their time here.

A recent ISI inspection report describes Westminster as nurturing *"...a pupil body liberated from dogma, prejudice or unthinking conformity..."* If this strikes a chord with you, then we are the right school to choose for your Sixth Form studies. Good luck with all that lies ahead.

Dr Gary Savage  
Head Master



# A Westminster education

Central to Westminster's ethos is the rapport between teachers and their pupils.

This inspires passion for the subject, encourages confidence in learning, conveys knowledge and develops skills of rational, independent thought. Our pupils' academic success comes from their enjoyment of intellectual enquiry, debate and search for explanation, reaching well beyond published syllabuses. They delight in a huge range of opportunities to develop initiatives and to discuss their ideas. We are a happy, busy and purposeful community.

The broader ethos of the School resides in the enduring values reflected in the 1560 Charter of Westminster's Elizabethan foundation, where it is stated that: *'the youth which is growing to manhood, as tender shoots in the wood of our state, shall be liberally instructed in good books to the greater honour of the state.'*

*"Pupils express delight in how the School has encouraged them to explore beyond the boundaries of what they might have thought they could do."*

Independent Schools Inspectorate



While academic and cultural attainments are highly prized, the School is fully committed to nurturing each pupil's spiritual, moral, emotional and physical wellbeing. We seek to develop individual talent wherever it lies – and to prepare young people for fulfilled private and public lives.

## A 'halfway-house' between school and university

The Westminster Sixth Form is often regarded as a 'halfway-house' between school and university. As such, it aims to provide a safe, stable and enriching community, in which pupils are encouraged to learn about the world around them in order to engage actively with it and lead a fulfilling life beyond Westminster. With an enviable programme of outside speakers and an ever-increasing range of academic, artistic, sporting and cultural expeditions, Westminster's global dimension provides pupils with every opportunity to develop their cultural capital and understanding. Alongside this, the School coordinates a popular and thriving civic engagement programme, which encourages Sixth Form pupils to engage with the local community in a meaningful way, thus developing social understanding and responsibility.



## Our unique location

When other schools moved to the suburbs in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Westminster School remained on its original site at the very heart of London.

Some of our buildings date back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century and, while the community comprises pupils and teachers of many different faiths, we retain close links with Westminster Abbey: the Dean is a member of the Governing Body and the Abbey is the School's chapel.

Westminster School now extends beyond Dean's Yard and into the surrounding quiet streets, having expanded to include:

- the Weston Building for the Humanities;
- state-of-the-art laboratories and an observatory in the recently refurbished Robert Hooke Science Centre;
- the Sports Centre near Vincent Square;
- the Manoukian Music Centre;
- an inspiring new location for Purcell's boarding house;
- the Millicent Fawcett Hall Theatre;
- the recently opened Sir Adrian Boult Building, a new events space.



Situated between Parliament, The Supreme Court and Westminster Abbey, the School's inspirational location has always been of significant influence. Politics and the law are abiding interests among the pupil body and the importance of spiritual and moral reflection is also deeply embedded. Minutes away is the best of everything metropolitan: museums, galleries, concert halls, theatres and the energy of a great city – all of which enrich our curricular and co-curricular programmes.



There are approximately 760 pupils at Westminster School – 120 are admitted each year at 13+ (Year 9) and 80 at 16+ (Year 12).



*“As an international boarder, I fitted in nearly instantaneously thanks to the diverse range of boarders, regular boarding activities and the comfort of my House.”*

*Kaushal, Year 12 pupil*



## Boarding and day

Boarding has been central to life at Westminster since the School was founded.

The Westminster Sixth Form is unique in London as the only co-educational Sixth Form with day and boarding pupils. The boarding school ethos and structure have been central to the fulfilment of a Westminster education since the School's foundation. The School is run along boarding lines and based around a House system, where the House becomes a 'home away from home' for day and boarding pupils alike. The extended day and week enable the provision of the overall curriculum and in particular ensure depth of pastoral care and breadth of opportunity.

There are five mixed boarding houses with girls-only floors and one girls' boarding house with day boys. One boarding house is boarders-only, and all Houses have pupils from every year group. For those who board, Westminster allows for a regular home

life with the large majority returning home on Saturday afternoons.

Co-operation accompanies competition at Westminster and the School shows that high-achieving individuals working together in a climate of mutual respect create something much greater than the sum of their individual achievements. In addition to teachers, Housemasters and Personal Tutors play an important role in the rich, relational experience that Westminster offers.

Day pupils are encouraged to participate in the opportunities provided by the boarding life of the School. They can join boarders for breakfast and supper, and many choose to remain at School in the evenings too, to rehearse or to attend the evening programme of activities. The Library remains open until 9.00pm.

## Our co-educational community

The co-educational environment creates an intellectually and culturally stimulating Sixth Form experience at Westminster.

Westminster has enjoyed a co-educational Sixth Form for the last 40 years. Some 60 girls join the Sixth Form each year, about a third living in as boarders.

All pupils belong to a House. This provides them with a supportive and stable community for the duration of their time at Westminster and allows them to get to know pupils of different ages, genders and backgrounds.

Before they even arrive at Westminster, all the new pupils joining the Sixth Form enjoy a comprehensive induction programme coordinated by the Director of Upper School, and become part of the diverse social fabric that makes the School such an exciting place to live and learn. Representing one third of the Sixth Form, girls enjoy the academic challenge and debate in the classroom, an extraordinary breadth of co-curricular activities and a large number of voluntary and leadership opportunities within the School and wider community.

Further information and advice may be obtained from the Director of Upper School, Dr Tasos Aidonis, at: [tasos.aidonis@westminster.org.uk](mailto:tasos.aidonis@westminster.org.uk).





# A day at Westminster

The Westminster Day offers so much more than lessons from 9 to 5. The following timetable outlines the range of activities a pupil might enjoy on an average day.

## Before School

A typical day at Westminster might begin with a hot or cold breakfast in the historical College Hall. Some pupils also attend Music lessons before School starts and others arrive early to meet up with friends in Yard, or to head to the Library to find an all-important book or some quiet time to contemplate the day ahead. All will have registered for School by 9.00am.

## 9.00am onwards

School begins at 9.00am, but the schedule shifts depending on the day. Before lessons, pupils might attend a service in Abbey, which serves to bring the whole school together with music, readings and an address given by a range of speakers, or the community might recite Latin Prayers up School, or they may have a year-group assembly led by a member or staff or indeed one of their peers.

Alternatively, lessons begin promptly and run through until lunch time, with a break in between to regroup and catch up on the news of the day. Pupils can often be seen moving busily from building to building, from The Robert Hooke Science Centre at Smith Square to the Drama Department's Millicent Fawcett Hall on Marsham Street, to Weston's in Dean's Yard where the many humanities and languages are taught; the School's campus is sprawling and gives pupils the opportunity to really get to know the fascinating and historic streets of Westminster as their own.

## Lunchtime

From 1.00pm onwards, the School is a bustle while lunch is served in various venues on site. Pupils might be invited for a House lunch in the Chaplain's Refectory, or they may join the hordes of excited Westminsters in buzzing Grant's dining hall; and grab-n-go is always on offer for those with lunchtime commitments. There is often a foodie theme for the day, when the School is marking an observance, celebration or festival, and Friday is famously 'fish 'n' chip Friday'; all dietary needs are taken into consideration and there is always a vast array of options on offer.

A plethora of pupil-led Societies are open for all to attend and to speak at, if they so wish. Pupils might gather up House to play pool or chess, or just to lounge on a couch. At this time of the day, the School's sociable and inclusive nature is characterised by Yard, with the laughter of pupils from all year groups and the frequent bellow of birthday cheer or a football or basketball triumph. There is never a shortage of activities or events for pupils to participate in.

On a school Saturday, most pupils will leave to start their weekend after period 5 at 1.00pm, unless they are attending a Saturday sports fixture. Boarders stay on for the weekend, often participating in activities such as salsa dancing or sculpting, or joining their Housemaster and housemates for a local cinema trip followed by the School's infamous Sunday brunch the next day.



## After lunch

On full teaching days, lunch is often followed by a Tutorial or a House meeting, before pupils return back to class for the remainder of the academic day.

Tuesdays and Thursdays are Station (sports) days. Pupils finish lunch and walk to Vincent Square for some football, tennis, cricket, rounders, hockey or netball, depending on the season, or over to the Sports Centre to scale the climbing walls, play ping pong, enjoy some relaxing pilates, and much more. Rowers take the river boat to the School's Boat House in Putney for practice on the Thames, while Fives players can be heard training on the in-house Fives Courts adjacent to the Abbey walls. Many will be involved with home or away fixtures in and around London.



## Afternoon tea

No matter the day, at around 4.30pm it is time for some hotly-anticipated afternoon treats such as shortbread, flapjacks, cheese sandwiches and fruit... oh and tea, of course!

## After School

Whether it be a night-time opening of the School's observatory with the Head of Astrophysics leading the star-gazers (British weather permitting), a Maurice de Pange Lecture with an expert linguist or author, Choral Evensong in Chapel or a product design workshop, there is an abundance of goings-on alongside the many rehearsals for concerts and plays that run throughout the year. Some pupils may attend after-school MUN and inter-school general knowledge competitions too, which sometimes Westminster hosts on site.

## Supper and beyond

For boarders and those staying on to perform, supper is served from 6.00pm onwards in College Hall. Boarders then go on to do prep work in the Library where they are often joined by day pupils whose preference is to study in School.

It is a rare occasion when supper is not followed by an event such as Compline for College in St Faith's Chapel, or a Woodwind Masterclass in the Music Department's Manoukian Music Hall, or a Friday Film night for boarders or indeed a whole-school musical in the School's spectacular hall, aptly named 'School'.

## 9.00pm

Prep ends and boarding pupils socialise in their Houses, while others prefer to use the Sports Centre for some exercise before the day comes to a close and the boarding houses turn off their lights.



*“As the friendly faces of the school, peer supporters are always available for people to come to if they are facing any issues or require some help. Within the school community, having the support of a member of an older year group is beneficial for confidence and promotes social integration with other members of the School.”*

Alexander, Year 12 pupil



## A place of wellbeing

We are fully committed to the happiness, welfare and wellbeing of our pupils.

We want our pupils to flourish, to develop resilience, confidence in themselves, and sensitivity to others. We aim to do all we can to set them up for meaningful, happy and satisfying lives, at School and beyond.

The well-established community of Houses enables a strong, well-integrated system of pastoral care, which ensures that the needs of each individual pupil are addressed, and that all pupils – whatever their age, background or gender – enjoy their time at School. When issues occur, they are communicated swiftly to the Housemaster, who talks with the pupil's parents, teachers and Tutor, to devise the best way forward.

All Houses have a Matron and all pupils have access to our state-of-the-art

Health Centre, run by an experienced Nursing Sister and visited regularly by the school GP. We have the full-time support of a School Counsellor and pupils can also talk through particular problems with other members of staff who are trained in counselling and also external sources of support. The Chaplain also plays an important role in ensuring the welfare of the community. Senior pupils from each House are trained as Peer Supporters to provide additional support and advice.

To supplement pastoral care at the School, all pupils attend a weekly timetabled RSHE and Wellbeing lesson, which is overseen by the Head of RSHE and Wellbeing and their team. Often experts will be invited to speak to year groups as a whole, to provide insight and to encourage discussion among pupils.

## Academic life

Westminster provides an exceptionally strong and highly successful academic environment, which enables pupils to fulfil their intellectual ambitions and to develop life-long skills of sophisticated, independent thought.

Westminster pupils are encouraged to love academic life, to think for themselves, to question and to argue things out. Departments develop their own curriculums, which go well beyond exam specifications and stretch and challenge our pupils.

Teachers at Westminster are inspiring. They demonstrate outstanding individual scholarship and a contagious enthusiasm for their subject. We are at the forefront of developments in teaching and learning, and, as a leading

academic institution, we participate regularly in important educational research studies. Westminster teachers are best qualified, therefore, to guide and support pupils with a variety of learning styles and needs.

The love of learning and confidence to develop independent thought flourishes in pupil-led societies and initiatives. Every week, pupils give talks, which are well-attended by their peers, on a wealth of subjects, and they group together to succeed in an impressive range of

national and international competitions. As such, the community provides an exceptional learning environment, both within the classroom and without, so that Westminster pupils emerge well-informed, articulate and confident to meet the challenges ahead of them.

After Westminster, the vast majority of our pupils take up places at leading international universities, such as: Amsterdam, Cambridge, Harvard, Hong Kong, Imperial, Oxford, Sciences Po, Stanford, UCL and Yale.





# The Sixth Form curriculum

Sixth Form admission to Westminster is by competitive examination and interview in November the year before entry. Candidates select the four subjects, in which they are to be examined, based on their likely choice of courses for study.

There is a great deal of flexibility in the way in which pupils may approach their choice of courses at Sixth Form level, and that may make the choice quite a difficult one for many. It is for this reason that the choice we are asking you to make now is a provisional one. Pupils may be allowed to change their choices before September and in exceptional circumstances, some even make modifications to their choice up until the

end of the first term of Year 12. Further assessment in the new subject intended for study may be required before permission is given to change. You will understand, however, that the School does need to plan ahead and that in very rare cases late change might not be possible.

At Westminster, most pupils study four subjects in Year 12. A decision on

whether to continue all four subjects to A Level is made on the basis of an individual pupil's own circumstances and ambitions: the majority continue with four subjects, but it suits some pupils to focus their studies on three. For the moment, we need to know the four subjects that pupils think they wish to study in the Sixth Form.

Departments choose the qualification which they feel provides the best educational experience and potential outcomes for our pupils and as such pupils may study towards an A Level or International A Level qualification in their subject.

In addition to their specialist courses, pupils follow the Cultural Perspectives and Options courses. Only Electronics offers an AS Level at the end of Year 12, a course offered in the Options programme, and pupils do not necessarily continue to A Level in Year 13. More details of the non-examined courses can be found in *Beyond the subject choices* and these choices can be made on arrival at Westminster.

The Sixth Form subjects are arranged in four blocks, one subject to be chosen from each block. Some subjects appear in more than one block to give a wider choice of subject combinations. The provisional blocking for September 2023 is shown here. Any changes to blocking will be reflected on the equivalent page of the School's website: [www.westminster.org.uk/admissions/sixth-form-subject-choices/](http://www.westminster.org.uk/admissions/sixth-form-subject-choices/) please check the website frequently for updates.

<b>Block 1</b> Art History English History Mathematics Philosophy and Theology	<b>Block 2</b> Art Biology Chemistry Economics English French Geography History Latin Music Philosophy and Theology Physics	<b>Block 3</b> Art Art History Biology Economics English French Further Mathematics Geography History Philosophy and Theology	<b>Block 4</b> Chemistry Chinese Economics English Geography German Greek History Physics Philosophy and Theology Russian Spanish	<b>AS Subjects</b> <i>(taken in Options lessons)</i> Electronics
Theatre Studies†				

† Theatre Studies will be taught in blocks to be decided once subject choices have been made.



## Before you decide

Please read the notes below carefully as they describe in detail what you will need to consider when choosing your Sixth Form subjects.

- 1 At this stage, we are asking pupils to choose their four entrance examination subjects; one subject must be chosen from each Block.
- 2 The subjects in each of Blocks 1 to 4 offer two-year courses leading to a full A Level.
- 3 If a candidate wants to select Further Mathematics, they must select Mathematics in Block 1 and Further Mathematics in Block 3. There will be two entrance examinations; this leads to two A Levels.
- 4 There is no formal entrance examination for Art. Candidates' portfolios are assessed on the day of the entrance exams (or online for overseas candidates).
- 5 Those selecting Music must sit the exams in the UK.
- 6 Whilst we will do our utmost to accommodate any combination of subjects, no particular combination can be guaranteed other than those listed in the blocking system on page 12.

It is important that the choice of subjects be related as far as possible to university and career plans. Advice on choosing subjects can be found on page 31; there is additional advice on thinking ahead to university and on subject courses later in this booklet.

Further information or advice about the curriculum may be obtained from Ms Clare Leech, Deputy Head (Academic), at: [clare.leech@westminster.org.uk](mailto:clare.leech@westminster.org.uk).







# Beyond the subject choices —within the timetable

We aim to ensure that pupils find the Sixth Form at Westminster an exciting but also challenging place. For this reason, the School offers a wide variety of co-curricular courses and activities, which form an integral part of every pupil's programme in the Sixth Form.

In Year 12, a great range of non-examined courses is on offer in the four weekly lessons of the 'Options Block', alongside some examined courses, including additional languages and Electronics.

Most Sixth Formers pursue a wide range of Options that do not lead to formal qualifications, but it is hoped that the interest evoked in each will add greatly to a pupil's own intellectual and personal development, and open up new and exciting possibilities for further study, research or discovery.

In three 'rounds' of eight weeks prior to the summer examination season, most pupils select three courses in each round, from a long list of choices, under three distinct headings: Cultural Perspectives, Extended Project Qualifications and General Options.

## RSHE and Wellbeing

The Head of RSHE and Wellbeing and their team deliver a relevant and engaging programme within the curriculum, addressing the experiences and challenges of teenage life. All pupils have a weekly timetabled RSHE and Wellbeing lesson, in which we promote discussion, learning and reflection, to guide pupils and to help them make constructive choices in their lives. Pupil voice is a large component in the curriculum, to ensure relevance of topics to our pupils.

## Cultural Perspectives

These courses are designed to expand cultural and critical awareness within a greater global perspective, chipping away at the comfortable sense of 'self-evidence' that can make us assume that our own way of doing things or viewing the world is the only way, and that today's society is the norm of human experience – somehow unquestioningly right and natural.

The aim is to broaden horizons in place and time, asking fundamental questions about why some behaviours or attitudes have shifted from unacceptable to normal or vice versa, how nations and communities develop and express their sense of identity, and how we ourselves can make connections with apparently alien societies.

The range of courses on offer reflects the wide-ranging and varied interests of the teaching staff. Past examples include: the psychology of fundamentalism; a history of the imagination; the constitutional future of the United Kingdom; psychogeography; facing east, a view from the west; deep time; medical ethics and changing attitudes; and the economics of nationhood. One of the great attractions of the courses is the chance they offer to range far beyond conventional examined subjects. Prizes are awarded each year for essays produced as a reflection upon the experience.

## General Options

The choice of General Options is similarly wide-ranging, and includes courses which are:

- (i) directly related to university study or applications (Anthropology, Psychology, Linguistics, the Thinking Skills course);
- (ii) supplementing or extending existing examined subjects (Conservation Science, Greek Tragedy, the Anglo-Saxons, Anglo-Irish Literature);
- (iii) of a more general academic or cultural interest for non-specialists (Western Philosophy, Art History);
- (iv) more practical, including Volunteering in the Community, or which teach and develop particular skills, including British Sign Language, the Art of Illumination, Bookbinding, Computer Programming, Knitting and Film and Video Production.

## Extended Project Qualifications

Alongside their A Levels, instead of following the Options programme, pupils can opt to take an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ): an extensive independent project often involving a dissertation and presentation. Pupils at Westminster take EPQs in subjects such as Economics or English, allowing them to develop their essay-writing skills and their ability to present their findings in a clear and concise manner. Alternatively pupils might embark on an 'Artefact' EPQ, which is a practical project focused on creating something. Westminster pupils have undertaken Artefacts in Computer Science, Electronics and Physics, among other subjects.

Pupils enjoy the freedom afforded them by EPQs, as they can choose a topic they are passionate about and select their own project title too. EPQs are well respected by universities as they showcase a candidate's individualism and an ability to research a particular subject independently and in depth.

## Study Skills

Effective study skills are essential for all successful learners. In addition to the guidance provided by subject teachers, the Learning Development Department is available to support pupils, who might benefit from some specialist input. The School should be informed of any particular needs, including details of exam concessions and copies of relevant diagnostic reports where appropriate. It should be noted that exam concessions previously agreed will not automatically transfer; regulations state that a new application must be made post-GCSE. For more details, see 'Westminster School's Protocol for Exam Concessions', available within the online registration.





## The broader curriculum

In addition to their timetabled subjects, there are many opportunities for pupils of all years to extend and enrich their academic life.

Further languages can be studied outside the timetable. In addition, pupils can take a range of short courses, ranging from Computer Coding to Journalism and Design. They take part in a range of annual House competitions such as chess and general knowledge, and are also frequently invited to participate in competitions on a national level, whether it be for debating, creative writing or another area of interest.

Pupils from all years enjoy the thriving programme of events and talks planned by pupil-led societies: the long list of which includes the African-Caribbean, Debating, Feminist, Huxley (Science), Politics and Subcontinental Societies. Departments also have their own programmes of workshops and visiting speakers, and all Year 12 pupils attend the John Locke Society lectures, which are held regularly, mainly throughout the

Play and Lent Terms (winter and spring), where they can learn from individuals at the top of their field. These lectures are also open to Year 13 pupils. John Locke speakers in recent years have included Dr Mukulika Banerjee, Damian Barr, Alain de Botton, Nick Bullock, Sir Vince Cable, Jim Carter, Reverend Richard Coles, Jean-Marc Dewaele, Baroness Evans, Tim Emmett, Dr Stuart Flanagan, Professor Anthony Grayling CBE, Dr Tristram Hunt, Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon, Robbie Lyle, Dr Fitzroy Morrissey, Femi Otitoju, Antonia Romeo, Jan Rostowski, Angela Saini, Peter Tatchell, Dr Leslie Vinjamuri and Terry Waite CBE.

Pupils are also frequently invited to attend the recently launched Horizons Lecture Series, where they can connect with global scholars on a range of academic topics.



## Adventures and Expeditions

Westminster life may be based in London, but it also extends further afield.

Westminster has an extensive Expeditions Programme, offering academic, cultural and leisure trips for pupils of all ages. Linguists are well catered for, often with visits or exchanges to Cuba, Spain, Germany, France and China. In recent years, Art Historians have been to Rome and Venice, Classicists to Greece, Historians to Jordan and Israel, and Geographers to South Wales and Iceland. On the

sporting front, skiers have been to the French Alps, the Canadian Rockies and Vermont, rock-climbers to Spain and Portugal, and rowers to training camps in Vichy and Ghent. There is an annual East Coast USA College Tour for Year 12 pupils who are interested in studying in the US, and also, in early 2020, a group of Westminster pupils attended the National High Schools Model United Nations (MUN) in New York.





# Music

## Music is central to the cultural life of Westminster School.

The standard of music-making at Westminster is exceptional by any school's standards, and the Music Department is renowned for the quality of its choirs and orchestras. With well over half of pupils playing a wide variety of musical instruments, the School prides itself on musical opportunities for everyone, from beginners to those of Diploma standard alike.

Almost every week, there are evening performances for both soloists and ensembles in the form of concerts, recitals, masterclasses, and instrumental or singing forums. Weekly lunchtime recitals give pupils the opportunity to perform in a more informal setting. Heads of Brass, Jazz and Popular Music, Piano, Singing, Strings and Woodwind, and around 40 visiting music teachers work alongside the full-time staff to deliver an extensive weekly music

programme. Regular performance venues include Westminster Abbey, St John's Smith Square, and the Barbican. In addition, each year Westminster produces a musical, a highlight for pupils of all ages.

Pupils regularly perform in national ensembles such as the National Youth and National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain, and a number of music award holders are able to attend the junior departments of London's music conservatoires later on a Saturday morning. The standard of chamber music is extremely high, and Westminster ensembles regularly participate in the Pro Corda Chamber Music Festival. In 2019, the Choir of Westminster School released their debut album 'Now may we singen', on the Signum Classics label. The recording was featured on Classic FM Drive as 'Recording of the Week',

and BBC Music Magazine included it in its Top Ten Christmas Playlist. The Choir sings twice-weekly services in Westminster Abbey, and this is also where the School's candle-lit Christmas Carol Service is held; a very special occasion for the whole community.

Accomplished musicians have opportunities to conduct or accompany ensembles and to play concerti, and all Westminsters can benefit from masterclasses with leading professional musicians. A special feature of Music at Westminster is the tradition of teaching composition; works composed by pupils are regularly featured in concerts and recitals.

Pop and Jazz are a hugely important part of the Music Department's calendar, with a pop concert, a jazz evening, and all sorts of functions and recordings taking place throughout the school year.

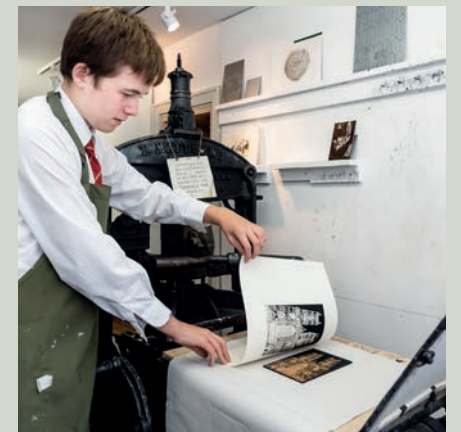
*"As a clarinettist in the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, I have performed fantastic repertoire with outstanding young musicians from across the country, but it is my experiences here at Westminster which have most opened my eyes to what the music world has to offer. I have sung choral evensong with the choir, performed jazz improv in Latin Band, and this year our saxophone quartet was lucky enough to work with saxophonist Jess Gillam."*

Phoenix, Year 13 pupil



# The Art School

In the Art Department, pupils have complete freedom to explore the media, techniques and processes that best fit their creative intentions.



Westminster's Art School is situated on Great College Street, behind Dean's Yard. Spread across five floors, each large studio space offers an abundance of natural light that enhances the creative experience for all our artists.

Specialist equipment, including a printmaking studio, a dedicated IT suite, film-making facilities and a well-stocked library are set alongside our darkroom that is equipped for black-and-white processing.

During the first term of A Level Art, pupils will be led through a range of workshops where they will explore drawing, printmaking, painting and sculpture. Beyond this, pupils independently develop their own practice, often making use of the world-class galleries that are right on our doorstep, for study and inspiration.

The Art School is available to all pupils and is open until 6.30pm every evening and 9.00pm on a Tuesday to support extended work. There is a vibrant programme of visiting artists and past

pupils who give talks and exhibit in our gallery. Past speakers have included Royal Academicians such as Norman Ackroyd, internationally renowned painter Jenny Saville and Turner Prize-winning architectural collective, Assemble. Our gallery space is in constant flux, with exhibitions curated by pupils, staff and visiting artists filling it all year round. At the end of each academic year, the studio doors are flung open to showcase the work made by our exam classes, which celebrate the achievement and diversity found in our Art School.



# Drama

## Drama flourishes at Westminster.

Most pupils will take part in shows during their time at the School – on stage, backstage or perhaps both – and some go on to pursue successful careers in the performing arts, making a name for themselves in television, theatre and film.

Regular productions of musicals and large-scale classical plays involve pupils from the whole school community. Another highlight of the theatrical calendar is a festival produced and performed by Year 12 pupils, most recently showcasing scenes from the great plays of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In addition, we produce original translations, plays in foreign languages and a lively programme of House Drama. Pupils are encouraged to write, direct and design their own productions. The School recently collaborated with the Royal Court Theatre and Harris

Westminster Sixth Form, on an exciting new project in which pupils generated ideas for new writing with early career playwrights and then went on to perform the plays at the theatre itself.

The School's drama facilities are superb: state-of-the-art theatre and studio spaces at the purpose-built Millicent Fawcett Hall; the School Hall, a traditional proscenium arch with fly tower; and Ashburnham Garden, where we often put on summer productions against the unique backdrop of the ancient Abbey Walls. Visiting companies regularly come to Westminster to perform and give workshops.

Our theatrical alumni include Helena Bonham Carter, Alfie Enoch, Imogen Stubbs, Peter Brook, Peter Ustinov and John Gielgud.



## Sport for life – and to win

All pupils at Westminster participate in a wide variety of sporting activities, known as Station.

Station takes place on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, as well as Saturdays for fixtures and competitions. We offer some 29 different sports in our Station programme, providing pupils with a wide choice. No particular sport is compulsory in any given term, although once choices have been made in the first term, those involved in major competitive sports such as Water (rowing), football, Fives or netball will participate in these on both afternoons. Others might choose one sport on Tuesday and a different one on Thursday.

### Our Facilities

Westminster's Pavilion, playing fields and Sports Centre are at Vincent Square, a ten-minute walk from Dean's Yard. Football, netball, cricket, tennis, basketball and rounders are played on Vincent Square. Officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 2014, the Sports Centre offers over 6,000m<sup>2</sup> of space for a broad range of athletic pursuits and includes changing facilities and a cafeteria. It houses a fitness suite, a multi-use movement studio, a rowing training suite, fencing pistes, six cricket nets, two climbing walls, four table tennis tables, five badminton courts, a weights room, a dojo, and courts for basketball, netball, indoor football, hockey, handball and volleyball.

On the main school site there are facilities for Fives and shooting, whilst the School's Boathouse, which was completely rebuilt in 1996, is situated on the Tideway at Putney.

Historically, the principal sports at Westminster are cricket, football and Water. All three have a long tradition at Westminster and we can rightfully claim a place in their annals. The first known cricket match between public schools was Westminster v Harrow in 1796; the Westminster colours were chosen supposedly after rowing against Eton in 1837, and we competed against Charterhouse in the first ever inter-school football matches in 1863.



# Westminster and the community

Westminster School is outward-looking.

Our pupils heed the call to be politically, socially and ethically engaged. Several hundred pupils each year, particularly in the Upper School, volunteer on a weekly basis within our Civic Engagement programme, through placements in local primary schools, health and social care settings, community organisations and environmental initiatives, and we promote this as a means for Westminster pupils to see beyond the immediate priorities of their academic, co-curricular and social lives. Our annual pupil-led Homeless Drive is aimed not just at supporting vulnerable people in our city, but also at raising awareness and understanding within the pupil body.

All Upper Shell boys work together after their GCSEs to design and host a day of workshops – from dissection to dance – for primary school children in our partner schools. The annual Westminster Phab is a popular and, for some, a life-changing experience, where 30 Sixth Form pupils become the sole carers of people with physical and mental disabilities for a week of the summer holiday. For many of our pupils, opportunities such as these mark the start of a lifelong commitment to service in the community.

On a curricular level, we have developed academic partnerships and initiatives involving over 30 London schools. These

*“Pupils engage in service outside the School with great enthusiasm and great integrity.”*

*Independent Schools Inspectorate*

are a means by which we can support talented young people from across London in their academic pursuits at ages 10, 15 and 17, including personal support with UCAS applications via our inter-school University Preparation Classes. Individual departments within the School are also well integrated into structures and projects that allow Westminster School to support learning in a broad range of settings and contexts beyond the independent sector. We also enjoy a special and unique educational partnership with Harris Westminster Sixth Form, enabling us to run a broad range of inter-school events and courses, both academic and co-curricular.



## After Westminster

Pupils continue their studies at leading universities after Westminster – more than half at Oxford, Cambridge and Ivy League universities; almost all on top courses.

Our experienced team of Higher Education advisers guides and supports Sixth Formers through the exciting process of making decisions about the future and completing applications. University preparation classes are held at lunchtime and after School to help pupils develop skills for assessment tests and interviews. Each pupil also benefits from tutorials with a personal subject mentor specialising in the subject for which they wish to apply.

Popular careers panel events are held throughout the year, at which experts from different fields – e.g. Medicine, Law, Journalism, Engineering, Investment, Digital Media and Marketing – share

their experiences and give advice. The School also hosts an annual Gap Year Fair. This is in addition to the superb programme of visiting speakers each week. All pupils are also encouraged to take appropriate work experience, and assistance is provided where possible. The School's Head of Careers, Mr Simon Wurr, is available to advise pupils on work experience and careers: [simon.wurr@westminster.org.uk](mailto:simon.wurr@westminster.org.uk).

Our aim is that Westminster pupils should continue to live highly successful and fulfilling lives, in a full range of professional, creative, political and entrepreneurial fields.



# The admissions procedure

There is a huge amount of information in this brochure and you might decide not to read everything. It is, however, very important to read this section carefully and also the two sections that follow – *Guide to applying* and *Frequently asked questions*.

If, having read these sections, you have any further queries about the admissions procedure, please telephone our Admissions Office on **020 7963 1003** or email [sixthformadmissions@westminster.org.uk](mailto:sixthformadmissions@westminster.org.uk). If you are applying from overseas, it is essential that you read the section entitled *Information for overseas candidates*.



## Open Days

The best way to learn about entry to Westminster School at 16+ is to join us for an Open Day. In 2022, these will take place on Saturday 25 June and Monday 5 September.

## Open day timetables

### Saturday 25 June 2022

**10.30am** – Arrival and registration.

**11.00am** – Introductory Talks from the Head Master and senior members of staff.

**11.40am** – Tours of the School led by current pupils and the opportunity to talk with subject specialists, the Head Master and senior members of staff.

### Monday 5 September 2022

**4.30pm** – Arrival and registration.

**5.00pm** – Introductory talks from the Head Master and senior members of staff.

**5.40pm** – Tours of the School led by current pupils and the opportunity to talk with subject specialists, the Head Master and senior members of staff.

When you arrive, please make your way to Church House, which is located in the south side of Dean's Yard. The entrance to Dean's Yard is next to the main entrance to Westminster Abbey.

The closest Underground stations are St James's Park and Westminster. There are parking restrictions until 6.30pm, which may differ at weekends. The Congestion Charge operates until 10.00pm every day and the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

There is an underground car park in Abingdon Street opposite the House of Lords open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you are planning to attend one of the Open Days, it is essential to book online. To request a ticket please visit our website, [www.westminster.org.uk](http://www.westminster.org.uk), and follow the links for Open Days. Once we have received and processed your booking, we will email your ticket to you the day before the event. You will need to bring this with you to the Open Day.

## Registration

Registration opens on Wednesday 1 June 2022. Candidates and their parents register online. Please go to the Admissions page at [www.westminster.org.uk](http://www.westminster.org.uk) and click on the **16+ Entry Apply Online** button.

Follow the instructions step by step, but before you go online to register please read the section *Guide to applying* (page 27).

If you experience a problem, please email [sixthformadmissions@westminster.org.uk](mailto:sixthformadmissions@westminster.org.uk) or telephone 020 7963 1003.

The closing date for registration is Friday 30 September 2022.

## Candidate age

Westminster is a school for pupils under the age of 19. The date of birth of a candidate applying for admission in 2023 must be between 1 September 2006 and 31 August 2007.

## Guide to applying

Before you go online to register, please read the following information:

- Decide whether you are applying for a day or a boarding place.
- For boarders who will not be able to return home over half-term holidays and Exeat weekends, or when unwell, we require the name and address of the UK guardian, with whom they will stay. If we are not satisfied with the arrangements for a guardian, we will not accept the application.
- Parents will be asked to pay the registration fee of £200 using a credit or debit card.
- We ask to see each candidate's most recent school report, from the last 12 months, so please have this ready to upload.
- Candidates will be asked to choose the four subjects that they are thinking of taking for A Level and in which they will be examined on 5 November 2022.
- Those wishing to be examined in Further Mathematics must select Mathematics in Block 1 and Further Mathematics in Block 3. There will be two examinations.
- Candidates from overseas should read carefully the section of this brochure entitled *Information for overseas candidates* (page 30).

## Entrance examination

The examinations will be held on Saturday 5 November 2022 for all candidates. They will take place between 9.00am and 3.30pm in Westminster. All candidates will be required to bring their valid Child Oyster Card or Passport (hardcopy) as photo ID; images on their phone will not be accepted.

Candidates sit examinations in each of the four subjects selected – each lasting 45 minutes. There is information about the examination requirements for each subject in the *Course information section* (page 34).

## Interviews

Those candidates, who have performed most strongly in the examinations, will be invited to come to Westminster for interviews. Candidates not being invited for interviews will be notified in writing, via email, at the same time.

The interview day will be Saturday 26 November 2022 and all candidates who have been invited, including those from overseas, must attend 15-20 minute interviews on that day. Candidates will have interviews in each of their four examination subjects and they will have a general interview too. There will also be a 40-minute Thinking Skills Assessment.

Candidates invited to interview will be asked to write a personal statement prior to the interview day. This will be online: we will provide questions and headings to help candidates with this.

## School references

Should a candidate be invited to interview, following the entrance examinations, we will write to the Head Teacher of their current school for a reference. No exceptions will be allowed.

## Offers

Offers of places will be sent out in the first week of December. Some candidates will be placed on a waiting list – these candidates will be contacted if they are going to be offered a place.

## Entrance fee

Parents accepting the offer of a place must pay the non-refundable entrance fee of £1,500. Please note that this fee is not offset against the final term's fees.

## Acceptance deposits

Parents accepting the offer of a place must also pay an Acceptance Deposit of £3,500 (£5,000 for international boarders). Acceptance deposits will be refunded, upon request, at the start of the academic year after the pupil has left Westminster. A deposit will not be refunded if a pupil withdraws from their place before joining.

Any parent who is applying for a bursary to Westminster for their child, and feels unable to pay the registration fee, entrance fee and / or acceptance deposit, may also qualify for a waiver when being considered for a bursary.

## (I)GCSE requirement

The offer of a place is conditional on a candidate achieving a minimum of eight (I)GCSE passes at A/7 grade, of which at least four are at A\*/8, preferably in the subjects to be studied at A Level. Overseas candidates and those requiring a visa to study in the UK should refer to the section entitled: *Information for overseas candidates* (page 30).

## Child Student visa sponsorship

£1,000 will be charged for those requesting Child Student visa sponsorship.

## What happens after accepting a place

In March 2023, successful candidates will be invited to spend a day at the School. By this time, they will have been allocated to Houses, so this will be an opportunity to get to know the other pupils going into the same House and also to meet existing pupils. Candidates will also meet their Housemasters for the first time. There will be another opportunity to meet with Housemasters after (I)GCSE examinations and before the summer holidays.

## Fees

Fees are subject to annual review at the end of the academic year. The fees for the academic year 2021 / 22 were set at £14,424 per term for Sixth Form boarding entry and £10,917 per term for Sixth Form day pupil entry.



# Scholarships and Bursaries

## King's Scholarships

The King's Scholars are part of Queen Elizabeth I's Royal Foundation of the College of St Peter, which encompasses both Westminster School and Westminster Abbey. They have the privilege of attending certain Abbey services and have a variety of ceremonial duties to perform in connection with the Abbey and the Crown.

Four King's Scholarships per year are awarded to girls entering the Sixth Form at 16+, based on the overall performance in the subject exam papers and interviews.

The total number of King's Scholars is 48 and all of them are required to board in College, with the girls accommodated in their own separate area. The girls are known as King's Scholars just as the boys are and will have the post-nominal 'KS'.

## What is College like?

College is a relaxed and friendly boarding house and the King's Scholars mix with other pupils, just like everyone else. The present building dates back to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and is in Yard, at the very heart of the School.

The Housemaster is Mr Gareth Mann, also known as Master of the King's Scholars. There will be an opportunity on the day of interviews for pupils to see the House and meet Mr Mann.

The monetary value of the 16+ King's Scholarship for girls is, as of April 2022, set at 40% less than the full boarding fee. The Governing Body usually reviews school fees for the subsequent year annually by the end of the summer term, for publication in early July. **Please refer to the website for updates on fees.**

## 16+ Music Scholarships

Up to four 16+ music scholarships worth 10% of the day fee, and free tuition on up to two instruments, are awarded each year. Additionally, biennially, one 16+ pupil is awarded the Henry Purcell Organ Scholarship by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey. Applications are part of the online registration. Auditions will be held in November for those candidates, who are invited to interview. An equivalent standard to ABRSM Grade 8 Distinction on the candidate's first instrument is usually expected. The Director of Music is very happy to discuss the process with prospective candidates. For further information, please contact the Music Administrator on 020 7963 1017 or email [music.office@westminster.org.uk](mailto:music.office@westminster.org.uk).

## Bursaries

A number of means-tested bursaries (up to 100% of the day fees) are available for day pupils at 16+ entry each year. We aim to act as sensitively as possible and very few members of staff and no other pupils will be aware that a pupil is receiving financial assistance. When a full bursary is awarded, it covers the cost of uniform, equipment, travel to School and compulsory school expeditions.

Candidates who wish to apply for a bursary should ask their parents to upload their passports and complete the Bursary Part A (Initial Assessment) Form, which is available as part of the main registration process online. For assistance, please contact the Bursar's Department on 020 7963 1028 or email [bursar.secretary@westminster.org.uk](mailto:bursar.secretary@westminster.org.uk). If a candidate who is applying for a bursary is called back for interview, their parents will be invited to meet the Bursar towards the end of November.

Bursaries are available where the parents and children fall into one of the following categories:

- The child has the right to live and study in the UK on commencement of their studies at the School.
- At least one of the parents and the child have lived in the UK for at least two continuous years at the time of applying for a bursary.
- The parents live inside the M25 London orbital at the time of applying for a bursary and whilst their child is in receipt of bursary funding from School.

Parents should consult the UKVI website for a detailed explanation of the criteria established by the United Kingdom. These criteria are used by the School.

For more information about eligibility for bursaries, please refer to the website: [www.westminster.org.uk/admissions/bursaries](http://www.westminster.org.uk/admissions/bursaries).

# Frequently asked questions

**Q. If I can't make an Open Day, how else can I visit the School?**

**A.** Please email the Admissions Department – [registrar@westminster.org.uk](mailto:registrar@westminster.org.uk) – to arrange to join one of the 13+ tours of the School. You should be aware, however, that the other families on the tour will probably be interested in 13+ entry and you will not have the opportunity to speak to subject teachers. These tours also get booked up weeks in advance so do come to an Open Day if you can!

**Q. How do you set exam papers when only one year of the GCSE / IGCSE syllabus has been covered?**

**A.** Be assured that we do take this into account when we set the papers. For information about specific examinations, please refer to the *Course information* section (page 34).

**Q. I haven't studied the subject before, how will I cope with the exam?**

**A.** The exams in Economics, History of Art, and Theology and Philosophy are based on the assumption that candidates will not have studied these subjects before. They are not offered at (I)GCSE level at Westminster, so all Westminster pupils moving up from Year 11 will be starting from scratch. There is also a Russian examination for those who have never studied the language.

**Q. Are past papers available?**

**A.** No, but look carefully at the information about the examinations by referring to the *Course information* section (page 34).

**Q. What if the A Levels I want to take don't fit into your four teaching blocks?**

**A.** Read the notes on the *Sixth Form curriculum* (page 12). If your question is not answered there please email the Deputy Head (Academic): [clare.leech@westminster.org.uk](mailto:clare.leech@westminster.org.uk).

The subjects appear as they do in the blocks because these are the subject combinations that suit most Westminster pupils, and which allow most Westminster pupils to go to their first-choice universities to read the subjects, in which they are most interested.

**Q. What happens if I change my mind after selecting the A Levels I want to study?**

**A.** We expect pupils to study their entrance examination subjects when they arrive at Westminster. Pupils who wish to make changes to their choices should discuss this with the Deputy Head (Academic), who may require them to sit an examination in the relevant subject(s).

**Q. How many applications are made and places are offered?**

**A.** We usually have about 600 applicants. We interview approximately 180 candidates and we offer between 75 and 85 places, with a waiting list.

**Q. How many girls apply compared with boys?**

**A.** The great majority of candidates are girls but we have a significant number of boy applicants. Applications from girls and boys are treated in exactly the same way.

**Q. Is it easier to gain entry by selecting one or the other: boarder or day?**

**A.** No. Selection is based upon academic criteria.

**Q. Can I study more than four A Levels?**

**A.** In general the answer is no. For more information, please refer to *Before you decide* (page 13). Studying for more than four A Levels does not give pupils any advantage in university applications and may result in lower grades across the board.





# Information for overseas candidates

All candidates whose parents do not live in the UK should read this section carefully before proceeding with an application.

## Candidate age

The date of birth of candidates applying for admission in 2023 must be between Friday 1 September 2006 and Friday 31 August 2007. The School reserves the right to demand proof of a candidate's date of birth.

## English language

Candidates are expected to demonstrate fluency in both written and spoken English. Lessons at Westminster move at a fast pace and a pupil who does not speak good English will not cope. Candidates are not allowed the use of dictionaries during the entrance examinations.

## (I)GCSE qualification

There is no (I)GCSE requirement for overseas pupils, who attend schools that do not prepare pupils for (I)GCSE examinations. Candidates will be considered for a place based on their performance in the School's entrance exams and a transcript of results from their current school.

## UKiset and IELTS

All applicants who have English as their second language are required to provide a UKiset (UK Independent Schools' Entry Test) or a IELTS (International English Language Testing System) profile as part of their application.

To arrange a test you must first register online at [www.ukiset.com](http://www.ukiset.com) or [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org). This must be taken before the application closing deadline, Friday 30 September 2022.

## Entrance examinations

Overseas candidates who cannot sit the entrance examinations at Westminster School are expected to arrange invigilation at their local British Council. Parents are responsible for making the necessary arrangements and for payment of any costs incurred. Westminster School must be satisfied in advance with the security of the supervision arrangements. The examinations must be taken on the designated Examination Day, which is **Saturday 5 November 2022**. If this is not possible, permission must be obtained from Westminster School for the examinations to be taken on either Friday 4 or Sunday 6 November 2022. The examinations cannot be taken before or after those dates. Candidates offering Music as one of their four subjects must sit their entrance examinations at Westminster School on Saturday 5 November 2022; these cannot be taken overseas. Any cost incurred in the sending out and return of the examination papers must be borne by the candidate. Completed examination scripts should be scanned and mailed electronically, from the British Council by **Wednesday 9 November 2022**.

If a candidate is invited for interview they must come to Westminster School on the designated Interview Day, which is **Saturday 26 November 2022**. No exceptions can be made.

## Guardians

All pupils at Westminster School, whose parents live abroad, must have a guardian.

What is the role of the guardian?

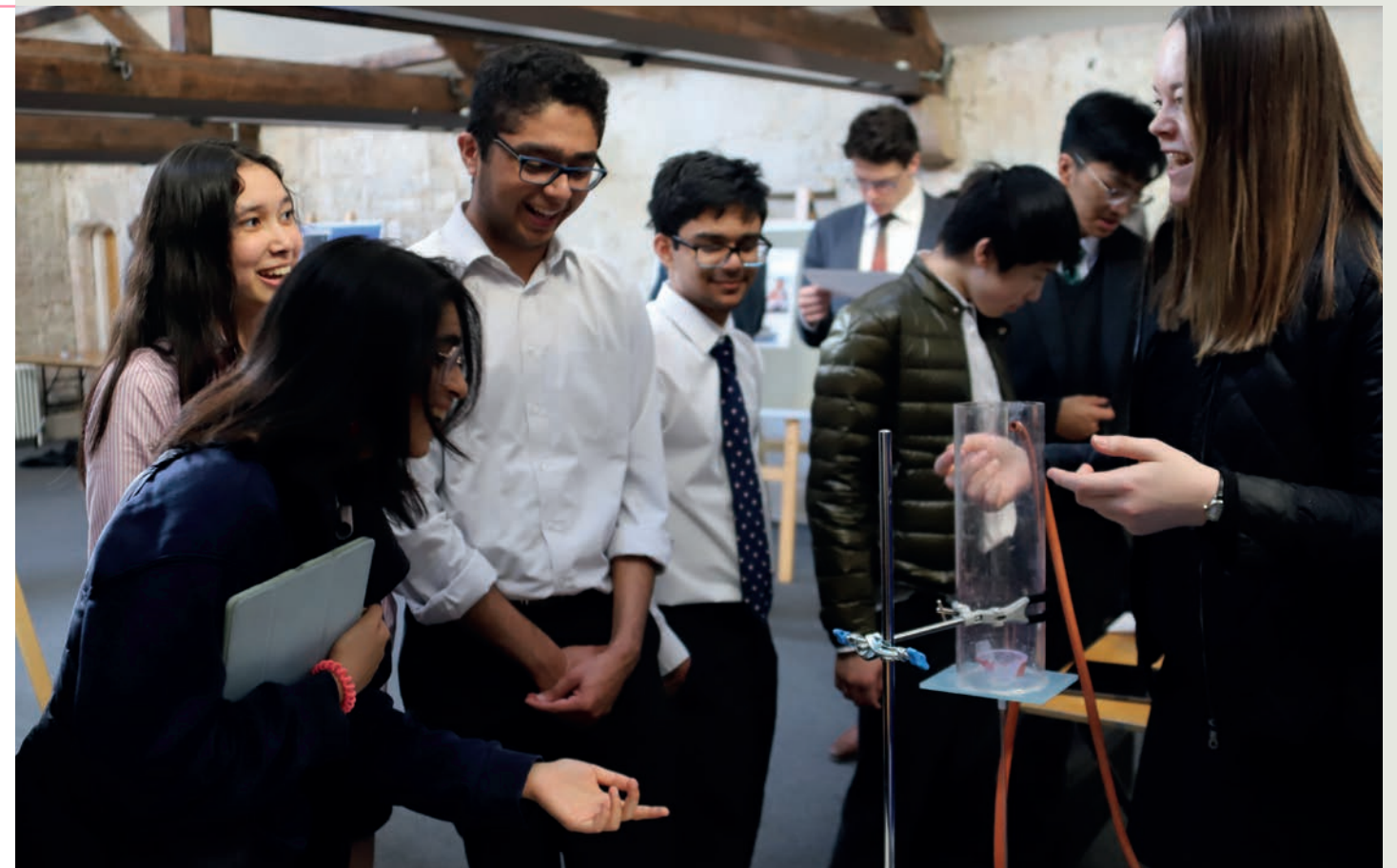
- The guardian must take the place of a pupil's parent during term time in a very real sense.
- They must be available at all times to discuss with members of staff any problems that may have arisen.
- In the event of illness or suspension from School, the guardian must take the pupil into their home.
- Westminster School is closed over half-term holidays and for two Exeat weekends each term. At these times, a pupil may not stay at School and must go to their guardian.

Candidates who are resident overseas must provide the name and address of the proposed guardian and state their relationship to the guardian.

**An application will not be accepted if the name and address of a guardian have not been provided or if, in the opinion of Westminster School, guardianship arrangements are unsatisfactory.**

## Visas

Up-to-date information on Westminster School's authorisation to issue candidates who have been offered places at the School with Certificates of Acceptance to Study (CAS) can always be found at [www.westminster.org.uk/admissions/international-applicants](http://www.westminster.org.uk/admissions/international-applicants). Please look at the [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) website to find out how you can apply to come to or remain in the UK as a Child Student on the points-based system and other related information: <https://www.gov.uk/child-study-visa>.



# Choosing your Sixth Form subjects

It goes without saying, of course, that this is an important decision, and one that deserves careful thought.

Talk to as many people as possible (parents, teachers, friends), but remember that, ultimately, this is up to you, and it is a decision best made according to the reasons you find most compelling. It might be helpful, however, to bear the following in mind:

- First and foremost, choose a subject that you find stimulating, and try to avoid the 'means-to-an-end' mentality; if the means are not attractive then there is a large chance that the end will turn out to be less appealing than perhaps it seems at the moment.
- Find out as clearly as possible what the A Level course involves, and make sure you are aware not just of its content, but also the methods, by which you will be working (e.g. number of essays, quantity of coursework, number of practicals, amount of factual learning and so on). Moreover, do not assume that the course will necessarily be similar to (I)GCSE; try to find out exactly what will be involved.
- Although it is true that your Sixth Form subjects should be ones in which you are aiming for top grades at (I)GCSE, do not choose a subject simply on the basis that you are good at it now; to be in the running for the top grades at A Level you must be willing to work very hard, within and beyond the syllabus, so make sure the subject is one with which you engage.
- Aim for a group of subjects that complement and reinforce each other, but that include sufficient breadth to keep your options open. To this end, it is important to be aware of the requirements that different degree courses may have.



University course requirements

There is a very large and exciting range of courses on offer (many of which go far beyond the subjects offered at school level). This range means that you must not assume that the course requirements are the same across all the universities. Although many universities will only make offers based on three subjects, taking four demonstrates your ability to cope with an intensive workload and as such is viewed favourably by the most competitive universities, for the most competitive courses.

What follows is a very general guide; do not assume that it will apply in every single instance, and if you think you are interested in a particular course at a particular university, the best thing to do is to go directly to their admissions guide to see precisely what they are looking for. In addition, the Westminster Heads of Departments will be able to advise you further and it is always worth emailing them to ask them for an informal meeting to discuss your personal circumstances and suitability to read their subject.

N.B. For some courses the corresponding A Level is not necessarily required; it would, however, be very unusual in most cases not to choose to do the A Level if at this stage you already know it is likely to be the focus of your degree course. Bear in mind, too, that for university admission interviews you will have to convince an academic that you have a genuine interest in their subject.

Architecture

Most leading schools of Architecture require a strong portfolio of drawings (which in practice means that Art in the Sixth Form is necessary). Mathematics A Level and / or Physics can be helpful, too.

Art History

Although Art History A Level is rarely an absolute requirement, candidates who have taken it tend to fare much better in their university application than those who have not.

Classics

Classics courses almost always require a Classics-related A Level (Latin, Classical Greek, Classical Civilisation or Ancient History). Westminster offers Latin and Classical Greek. Many universities have very well-developed Latin and Greek teaching programmes; it is increasingly common for Classics students to start learning one, or even both, of the languages as part of their university course.

Economics

Mathematics is not needed to study Economics at A Level, although most Westminster pupils who study Economics also take single Mathematics. Further Mathematics is highly advisable and at some top universities, it is increasingly a requirement.

A Level Economics is described by most top universities as 'desirable'. Cambridge University says "If your school does not offer Economics, you could take Geography or Business Studies, although the latter should only be considered if Economics is not available. The typical successful applicant has taken Economics at A Level or IB Higher Level."

Engineering

Mathematics and Physics are required for all types of Engineering; Further Mathematics is strongly recommended for the top university Engineering courses. Chemistry is required for Chemical Engineering.

English

The A Level is required.

Geography

The A Level is almost always required.

History

Usually the A Level is required.

Law

There are no A Level requirements, but very high grades are needed because competition tends to be fierce. Pupils tend to offer a broad range of subjects with at least one essay-based subject. The Thinking Skills Option might be a useful preparation for the Law university admissions test (the LNAT).

Mathematics, Computer Science

These courses will require Mathematics A Level and Further Mathematics is effectively essential for courses at competitive universities. For some computing courses, Physics may also be required.

Medicine

Requirements vary between the different medical schools, but A Level Chemistry is required, and usually two of Mathematics, Physics and Biology. Few medical schools admit pupils without Biology. The fourth subject does not have to be a science-based subject.

Modern Languages

For French, German and many Spanish courses, the relevant A Level courses will be required. Other Modern Languages can be taken up at university, but most language courses would expect you previously to have studied at least one, and preferably two languages.

Music

Requirements differ between Music courses at universities and at Music colleges. The Head of Academic Music can advise.

Philosophy, Politics and Economics

A number of leading universities now offer PPE courses, including the LSE, Durham, York, UCL, Oxford and Warwick. Most universities impose no specific requirements but state that a background in Mathematics is advantageous, if not essential. Economics itself is also useful but there is no specified subject combination. Selectors do, however, like to see that applicants possess both analytical and writing abilities.

Other Humanities subjects

Biology, Economics, Geography and History are useful for Social and Human Sciences courses, as well as for Archaeology and Anthropology. Philosophy, Theology and related subjects often have no specific requirements, although the Philosophy and Theology course is a good introduction to the central concerns of both. Prospective Philosophy candidates might also benefit from Mathematics. History is a good basis for all single and joint honours Politics courses.

Psychology

At least one Mathematics / Science subject is desirable for applications to Psychology courses. We recommend pupils include Biology and Mathematics in their combination.

Science

University Physics requires Mathematics A Level as well as Physics; Further Mathematics is strongly recommended for the top university Physics courses. Some Chemistry courses require Mathematics or Physics A Level, as well as Chemistry. Biology courses tend to require at least two Mathematics / Science A Levels: Biology A Level is essential and Chemistry A Level is highly desirable.

**Fine Art at university / Art and Design schools / Drama**  
The Head of Art and the Director of Drama can advise.

Applying to American universities

A number of Westminster pupils choose to apply to American universities. The application process for US Colleges is very different from UCAS and requires considerable forethought. To apply to US Colleges you may be required to sit SAT subject tests in addition to the SAT. It is not necessary to choose your A Levels with an eye to sitting specific SAT tests, but bear in mind that the subject choice is limited and if you are not studying a given subject at A Level and you still want to take an SAT test, some extra work will be required.

You can choose to take the ACT with Writing instead of the SAT combination, but you should note that the ACT has an additional Science component. More information on the ACT can found at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). Information on the SAT and SAT subject tests can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). In addition to thinking about A Level choices, it is important to consider co-curricular activities that will help you make a more complete application.

You can seek Higher Education advice from your Housemaster or from Dr Tasos Aidonis, Director of Upper School, who can be contacted at: [tasos.aidonis@westminster.org.uk](mailto:tasos.aidonis@westminster.org.uk).



# Art

Head of Department **Mr J L Allchin**  
Email [jim.allchin@westminster.org.uk](mailto:jim.allchin@westminster.org.uk)

Art is a popular and successful subject offering a wonderful opportunity for those fascinated by the visual world to expand and develop their creative ideas. There is ample scope for highly personal production and written response, with an emphasis on self-motivation. The department offers and supports all creative pursuits ranging from filmmaking to darkroom photography.

## Curriculum

The A Level course contains two components, a portfolio of coursework (including a written investigation, 60%) and a concluding practical project (classed as the exam, 40%). The first term of A Level comprises a series of workshops to establish a secure and confident understanding of materials, processes, and techniques. A 12-part lecture series on art since 1850 makes up the first term's programme. The unique environment of the life class, which runs during the first two terms, provides a forum for artists to engage with a long-established discipline. Beyond the first term, pupils are required to direct their work in accordance with personal motivations and enthusiasm. We have a dedicated gallery space where pupils are invited to curate group exhibitions and solo shows throughout their time here. If pupils are passionate about the visual world, and enjoy exploring creative, aesthetic and expressive activities, they will be utterly fulfilled by A Level Art at Westminster.

## Syllabus and Code

OCR A Level H60101 / 02 Art

## Enrichment

Pupils at Westminster benefit from numerous opportunities to engage with the subject beyond the studio; our central location allows for regular group gallery visits to Tate Britain and Tate Modern, The Courtauld Gallery and leading West End galleries. Our ARTISTALK programme runs throughout the academic year and welcomes artists, designers, and architects into our studios, to speak about their practice.

## After Westminster

Application to Art Foundation, a one-year diagnostic programme designed to assist the individual in deciding to which of the many disciplines they are most suited, is a favourite amongst pupils. Indeed, some pupils opt to study on Foundation as an alternative to a gap year. We also see regular direct entries for university courses such as Fine Art, Architecture, Filmmaking, and dual honour courses such as Structural Engineering and Architecture.

## Subject requirements for the course

It is desirable for pupils to be on track to achieve an 8 or 9 for Art at (I)GCSE.

## Entrance examination

As part of the online registration process, candidates are asked to submit an online portfolio and short supporting statement. On the examination day, UK-based candidates are expected to bring in their physical portfolio for assessment. The Art Department will assess the work while candidates sit examinations for other subjects. Successful candidates who are called back to interview will return with their portfolio and discuss their work with the department.



# Classics: Latin and Greek

Head of Department **Mr Duncan McCombie**  
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Classics is a truly multidisciplinary field, comprising languages, literature, philosophy, history, rhetoric, archaeology, art and architecture – the gamut of the astonishing cultural products of ancient Greece and Rome, and often much that has stemmed from it since the Renaissance.

The unique breadth of the subject provides a wonderfully enriching and stimulating intellectual experience, and a very valuable training in rigorous and flexible thought. At Westminster we approach Classics via the study of the Latin and Greek languages, and range widely through the other disciplines in a dynamic and stretching curriculum led by expert and supportive staff.

“The Classics staff are hugely supportive and bring excitement and animation to our lessons. I am now planning to study Classics at university!”

Ellen, Year 13 pupil

## Greek

### Curriculum

The curriculum comprises a language course and a literature course. In the Sixth Form (Year 12), the language course is an intensive survey of advanced syntax, underpinned by vocabulary and accidence learning and with a focus on translation from English into Greek. The literature course aims to broaden and deepen pupils’ appreciation of a range of authors and genres, such as Homer (epic), Lysias (rhetoric), and Herodotus and Thucydides (history); to build confidence in reading Greek; and to develop writing skills through essays. We also have a series of seminars on wider literary and cultural issues arising from our texts.

In the Remove (Year 13), we prepare more directly for the Classical Greek A Level. Pupils read and discuss set texts in verse (usually tragedy) and prose (history or philosophy), and practise unseen translation into English and prose composition into Greek.

### Syllabus and Code

OCR A Level H444 Classical Greek

### Subject requirements for the course

Candidates should be on track to achieve a grade 8 or 9 for Classical Greek at (I)GCSE level.

### Entrance examination

The entrance examination in Greek tests candidates’ linguistic and literary skills. It has three sections: a passage for translation into English; sentences for translation into Greek; and a short text, translated from Greek into English, for written literary discussion. We do not expect candidates to know aspects of the Greek language that are not normally covered at GCSE level: we are looking for them to deploy their knowledge and skills with precision and insight.

## Latin

### Curriculum

The curriculum comprises a language course and a literature course. In the Sixth Form, the language course is an intensive survey of advanced syntax, underpinned by vocabulary and accidence learning and with a focus on translation from English into Latin. The literature course aims to broaden and deepen pupils’ appreciation of a range of authors and genres, such as Catullus (personal poetry), Propertius, Tibullus, Sulpicia and Ovid (love elegy), Cicero (rhetoric), and Livy (history); to build confidence in reading Latin; and to develop writing skills through essays. We also have a series of seminars on wider literary and cultural issues arising from our texts.

In the Remove (Year 13), we prepare more directly for the Latin A Level. Pupils read and discuss set texts in verse (usually epic) and prose (history or rhetoric), and practise unseen translation into English and prose composition into Latin.

### Syllabus and Code

OCR A Level H443 Latin

### Subject requirements for the course

Candidates should be on track to achieve a grade 8 or 9 for Latin at (I)GCSE level.

### Entrance examination

As with Latin, the entrance examination in Latin tests candidates’ linguistic and literary skills. It has three sections: a passage for translation into English; pairs of Latin and English sentences for grammatical scrutiny; and a short text, translated from Latin into English, for written literary discussion. We do not expect candidates to know aspects of the Latin language that are not normally covered at GCSE level: we are looking for them to deploy their knowledge and skills with precision and insight.

### Enrichment in Classics

The Classics Department runs an extensive co-curricular programme. We also run a Remove university preparation trip to the School’s house in Nenthead (close to Hadrian’s Wall), and often a Sixth Form trip, for example to Sicily or northern Greece.

We have a thriving Classics Society, focused on lunchtime presentations by pupils of all years but also hosting external speakers. Other recent activities have included: attendance at a moot trial of the ancient British queen Boudicca, presided over by a Law Lord at the High Court; visits to the British Museum; trips to West End theatres, Oxford, and to King’s College, London, to watch plays performed in ancient Greek; Lower School Expeditions to walk and study Hadrian’s Wall; Upper School excursions to hear lectures by Oxford and Cambridge academics; the production of a Classics magazine, *Editio*, entirely by pupils; the running of a Latin club at a local primary school, by Sixth Form volunteers; performances of Greek and Latin plays by A Level pupils, in their own translations; and the hosting here of the London Classical Reading Competition, supported by the Classical Association.

### After Westminster

Every year a considerable number of pupils go on to study Classics (or Classics joint with English, Modern Languages or Oriental Studies, or Ancient and Modern History) at the most prestigious universities, supported by our outstandingly successful university preparation programme.

Their degrees are highly respected in the labour market. Classics graduates apply transferable skills of analysis, communication and creativity with great success in a diverse range of careers, in law, the financial services, the civil and diplomatic services, IT and gaming development, management consultancy, international industry, politics, thinktanks, NGOs, journalism and broadcasting, the creative industry, and so on.



# Drama and Theatre Studies

Head of Department **Mr Paul Tully**  
Email [paul.tully@westminster.org.uk](mailto:paul.tully@westminster.org.uk)

Drama is a creatively fulfilling and intellectually demanding subject that is highly valued at Westminster. The course develops practical, creative and communication skills and offers the pupils the opportunity to extend and refine their individual performance skills. Ensemble work is essential, as it hones and develops their understanding of what it takes to work with others and become a team player. Drama is both challenging and immensely rewarding, and it allows pupils to extend their ability to create drama, in both performing and production roles. Former Westminster pupils who have entered the world of Drama include Helena Bonham Carter, Peter Brook, Alfred Enoch, Sir John Gielgud, Stephen Poliakoff, Imogen Stubbs and Sir Peter Ustinov.

## Curriculum

A Level Drama pupils take three modules: *Drama and Theatre* (40%), *Creating Original Drama* (30%) and *Making Theatre* (30%). During the two-year course, pupils learn to collaborate with others, to think analytically, and to evaluate effectively their own creative processes and the work of theatre makers. They gain the confidence to pursue their own ideas by creating an original theatre piece inspired by the methodologies of a theatre practitioner, to evaluate live theatre, and to approach two set texts from the perspective of an actor, designer, and director, developing a strong understanding of the playwrights' original intentions and the social, historical and cultural contexts of the plays. Additionally, they explore and workshop extracts from three contrasting plays, performing one of these extracts for an external examiner and writing coursework chronicling their practical processes for all three extracts. Pupils also practically study the techniques of many theatrical practitioners, and they attend many live performances in both the West End and on the fringe to develop their understanding of the different genres of theatre.

## Syllabus and Code

AQA A Level 7262 Drama and Theatre Studies

## Enrichment

The whole-school musical performed in the spring term is a fantastic opportunity for pupils to be involved in Drama. The department also runs a variety of plays throughout the year and each year we hold a Sixth Form Drama Festival for Year 12 pupils to be involved in.

## After Westminster

The A Level can lead to further study of Drama at university, or to a vocational course at Drama School in Acting, Stage Management or Direction. Each year, one or two Westminster pupils go on to Drama Schools, with a view to entering the theatre, film or television professions, and a number have gone on to make very successful careers. A Level Drama and Theatre Studies pupils at Westminster School have also gone on to study Law, English, History, Theology or Classics at university, subjects that draw upon and link to skills and knowledge developed on the A Level course. Drama and Theatre Studies complements a range of subjects and is useful in building confidence and developing excellent presentation skills for any career. It allows for active analysis of human behaviour and experience, through improvisation, devised performance and study of dramatic texts. There are single or combined honours courses in Drama at many high-ranking universities, commonly in conjunction with English.

There is a very good course at Cambridge called English and Drama with Education Studies, which has a strong practical Drama component.

## Subject requirements for the course

It is desirable for pupils to have taken the (I)GCSE in Drama and be on track to receive a grade 8 or 9. That said, pupils who do not have the (I)GCSE will still be considered. In this respect, the main requirement is a real interest in and passion for all aspects of theatre and a willingness to work as a team player, to take direction and to invest in taking risks with performance.

## Entrance examination

Prospective pupils will be asked to write a live theatre evaluation addressing performance or design skills. The performance can be one in which they were involved, either on stage or backstage. Successful candidates will be asked to attend an interview, to discuss their ideas and thoughts on Drama as well as sight read from a play.

*“It is such a joy to witness the transformation of pupils as they thrive through experiencing the world of Drama and Theatre.”*

*Mr Peter Chequer, Director of Drama*

# Economics

Head of Department **Mrs Lisa Newton**  
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Economics is a living, breathing, dynamic subject that offers many new perspectives on the modern world. It is a subject that influences our everyday decisions. Which job offer to accept, where to live, what to buy and how to pay for it. If you ever think that governments over or under tax people, or what an interest rate is and how it will impact your life, then economics is the subject for you. If you have ever wanted to know why we cannot just print money to help poor people, whether tech giants such as Facebook, Google and Apple do more harm than good, what the best pricing strategy for the new iPhone is, how the government should best tackle global warming or the illegal drug trade, then Economics can set you on the road to finding answers.

## Curriculum

The Edexcel A Level offers the chance to explore real-world issues using a combination of written arguments, diagrams and data, helping you develop the key skills necessary to succeed in an ever evolving and dynamic working environment.

In class pupils have been immersed in topics such as Brexit, the demise of the high street and the impact of AI on growth and jobs. The aftermath of pandemic on global economies, including the obvious debate as to how we will pay for it as well as the behavioural impact on consumer habits – will mask wearing become the norm, will air kissing become a thing of the past – remains a hot topic. The subject considers key policy debates including the control of inflation; economic growth; inequality; the regulation of big business and environmental economics.

## Syllabus and Code

Edexcel A Level 9EC0 Economics

## Enrichment

Pupils of Economics pursue their passion beyond the classroom. The Economics Society is pupil-led and is one of the most popular in the School. Topics discussed have ranged from the economics of FIFA to the use of game theory in police reform, to ‘Raponomics’ – a competition in which pupils rapped on an economic or political issue of the day.

In addition, external speakers addressing the pupils have included Charlie Bean from LSE and leading lights from global institutions. The department hosts film nights too.

The Economics Society Committee recently launched *The Westminster Economist*, a magazine with articles on current affairs and which has enjoyed great critical acclaim. Westminster’s Economics Instagram keeps pupils up to speed with events and news too.

In addition, pupils have achieved much success in external competitions, winning prizes from prestigious institutions including LSSE and Cambridge.

## After Westminster

60% of A Level Economists go on to read Economics or an Economics-related subject at university. There is an enormous range of options available: PPE, Economics and History, Economics with a Modern Language, Economics and Management. The department runs a very successful Oxbridge preparation programme. An Economics degree is highly valued in the workplace, and Economics graduates pursue careers in a variety of areas including finance, business, and law.

## Subject requirements for the course

No prior knowledge of Economics is assumed for this course but a top grade in Mathematics (I)GCSE is highly

desirable. While numerical ability is an advantage, it is by no means essential to being successful in Economics at A Level. For those who wish to pursue Economics at University, however, it is essential that pupils have at least A Level Mathematics if they later want to read for a single honours degree in Economics. Further Mathematics is strongly recommended for the top university Economics faculties in the UK.

## Entrance examination

The entrance exam contains no Economics! It consists of two parts. Part one contains some current affairs questions: multiple choice questions to test logic and thinking and some graph / data analysis questions. Part two is an essay designed to test a pupil’s ability to develop an argument, for example ‘Should you be able to sell your kidney?’.

*“Economics is an immensely fun, exciting, and fascinating subject to do for A Level. Drawing in skills from across the sciences and humanities, there is never a mundane moment, with every lesson bringing with it topical subject matter that relates to the real world and what we read on the news every day.”*

*Aryan, Year 12 pupil*



# Electronics

Head of Department **Mr Michael Collier**  
Email [michael.collier@westminster.org.uk](mailto:michael.collier@westminster.org.uk)

Electronic engineers work at the forefront of practical technology, improving the devices and systems we use every day. From solar-energy systems to mobile phones, they innovate to meet society’s communication, tech and energy needs. Within Electronics at Westminster, we encourage pupils to think in inventive ways and to challenge existing practices within a very well-equipped, dedicated Electronics Department with two teaching rooms, each with distinct theory and practical areas. Each pupil has their own practical workstation, equipped with a power supply, networked desktop computer, oscilloscope, signal generator, and other bespoke test equipment. The department is well provisioned with all standard components; CMOS digital IC’s, operational amplifiers, Genie microcontrollers, PIC microcontrollers, and a wide range of passive and active components, and has the hardware for pupils to programme either in assembler or via the Genie graphic interface. The primary subject-specific software used is the suite of programs from New Wave Solutions including Circuit Wizard and Genie for designing, simulating, and programming electronic systems.

## Curriculum

The Eduqas A Level in Electronics provides a broad, coherent, satisfying, and worthwhile course of study. It encourages pupils to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, Electronics and to recognise its importance in their own lives and in today’s technological society. The course is designed to ensure that pupils have the electronic and mathematical knowledge, and the electronic engineering skills to solve problems. Pupils will learn to appreciate how many challenges in society can be tackled by the application of scientific ideas in the field of Electronics, using engineering processes. The practical work enables learners to appreciate the theoretical knowledge required within the specification through a hands-on context.

At both AS Level and A Level, the course is a mix of theory and practical application sessions, although there is a strong emphasis on understanding the theory by the building of practical circuits. Assessment at AS Level requires each pupil to complete three coursework projects in programming, digital systems and analogue systems, as well as a written exam (principles of Electronics) at the end of the Sixth Form (Year 12). AS Electronics is taken as a fifth subject

in the School’s Options Programme and any pupil who wishes may take the course. Commitment is initially to the AS course, which is completed in the Sixth Form, although many pupils choose to continue to study the A2 course in the Remove (Year 13).

In the Remove, assessment is through two written examinations (principles of Electronics and application of Electronics) and two coursework tasks (an integrated design and realisation task and a design and program task to create a microcontroller system).

Electronics course topics include: electronic system synthesis; DC electrical circuits; input and output subsystems; energy and power; semiconductor components; logic systems; operational amplifiers; timing circuits; sequential logic systems; microcontrollers; mains power supply systems; signal conversion; AC circuits and passive filters; communications systems; wireless transmission; instrumentation systems; optical communication; high power switching systems; and audio systems.

## Syllabus and Code

Eduqas AS Level B490QS Electronics /  
Eduqas A Level A490QS Electronics

## Enrichment

Numerous pupils use the labs and expertise of the staff to work on personal projects during their own time. This may include John Locke project work (a school-specific Science competition), and EPQ and Physics practicals.

## After Westminster

Many pupils go on to study Engineering at university, and their experiences of studying Electronics at Westminster provides a framework for this. There is now a wealth of diverse and interesting courses on offer at university, which complement the study of Electronics, including: Aerospace Engineering; Automotive Engineering; Bioengineering; Communications / Telecoms / Network Engineering; Manufacturing Engineering; Marine Technology / Naval Architecture / Ship Science; Computer Systems Engineering; and Robotics.

## Subject requirements for the course

The course builds on the knowledge, understanding, and skills established at GCSE. Prior knowledge of Electronics is not, however, a pre-requisite for undertaking the course although a strong grasp of Mathematics is recommended. As such, there is no entrance examination requirement.

## Entrance examination

There is no entrance examination for Electronics at A Level, as it is a fifth subject that pupils can choose as part of the General Options Programme.

*“Engineers are the ultimate problem-solvers, finding solutions to knotty situations and aiming to improve the design and production of practically anything you can think of, from artificial hips to aeroplanes, staplers to cameras, racing cars to power stations.”*

Mr Michael Collier,  
Head of Electronics

# English Literature

Head of Department **Mr Tom Durno**  
Email [tom.durno@westminster.org.uk](mailto:tom.durno@westminster.org.uk)

The English Department at Westminster values cutting-edge writing and canonical texts. Pupils study everything from medieval works to contemporary poetry, responding critically and creatively to writing that means something to them. We are as interested in the intricacies of expression as we are in the human heart of literary writing: we teach our pupils to be rigorous readers, scholarly analysts and open-minded individuals.

## Curriculum

A Level English Literature at Westminster is an exciting and challenging course at the heart of the humanities.

While pupils hone their critical skills in studying the Eduqas A Level, they are taught many works alongside this: off-syllabus choices have included works by Aphra Behn and Jez Butterworth, Andrew Marvell and Claudia Rankine, and George Eliot and Ian McEwan.

A Level pupils study three plays, including one by Shakespeare, three poets (one working before 1900) and a wide range of prose texts written in the years 1880-1910 and 1919-1939. Pupils also complete a coursework essay comparing two novels of their choosing: their choices are diverse, enterprising, and imaginative.

Creativity and criticism sit side by side in the course: all A Level pupils participate in the School’s creative writing competition, the ‘Gumbleton’, and imaginative writing is a regular component of lessons.

## Syllabus and Code

Eduqas A Level A720QS  
English Literature

## Enrichment

The English Department makes the most of the School’s enviable location and regularly arranges trips to local theatres and museums, including the National Theatre, Shakespeare’s Globe, Tate Modern, Tate Britain and the British Museum.

There is a rich tradition of creative writing at Westminster, with weekly workshops and school prizes on offer. In recent years, pupils have seen success in the Tower Prize, Foyle Young Poets Prize, and the Keats-Shelley Memorial Prize.

We are proud of our pupil-led publications, including *YARD*, a creative-writing magazine, and *Voce*, a journal celebrating the School community’s diverse identities.

Our weekly Literary Society brings together our pupils’ eclectic tastes and sense of curiosity, with recent sessions on Nabokov’s metafiction, *Bioshock* and video game narratives, and the poetry of protest.

## After Westminster

Those who study English at university are creative thinkers, skilful communicators, incisive analysts, and empathetic individuals. Every path requires these skills, and around 20 Westminster pupils choose to step forward with English each year at university. Those who go on to study English at university, both singly or as part of a combined honours course, achieve successful careers in the media, law, creative arts, business, third sector and education.

## Subject requirements for the course

Candidates should be on track to achieve a grade 8 or 9 in their English Language and Literature (I)GCSEs.

## Entrance examination

The entrance examination requires candidates to write a single essay in response to an unseen passage of prose, providing a thoughtful, critical response.

The examination assesses skills that are at the heart of the English Language and English Literature (I)GCSEs, and no specialist knowledge is required. Adventurous readers who are used to responding to a wide variety of interesting texts are, however, most likely to be successful.

*“I have really enjoyed how our lessons have been so stimulating and full of debate; the classroom environment feels like a very safe one in which to pose ideas and suggestions in class discussion.”*

Amelia, Year 12 pupil



# Geography

Head of Department **Ms Julia Hughes**  
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If you have an interest in issues such as climate change, migration, environmental degradation, spatial epidemiology and inequalities, Geography is one of the most relevant courses to study. Geography helps us explore and understand space and place; it develops our understanding of the differences in cultures, political systems, economies, landscapes and environments across the world. The subject offers many opportunities to travel through fieldwork and expeditions, and to develop a wide range of skills and apply them to real-world problems.

### Curriculum

For A Level Geography there are four papers, all taken at the end of the second year. There is no coursework at A Level.

In Papers 1 and 2 the answers require responses to stimulus material, allowing pupils to demonstrate wider knowledge and to explore one theme in detail in a short essay. The Papers look at the key elements of the physical and human environment, and include core topics on atmosphere and weather, river processes and the lithosphere, as well as population and resources, migration and settlement dynamics.

Papers 3 and 4 are both essay-based and allow a deeper exploration of issues, drawing on the synoptic links between different topics. There is in-depth treatment of a selected number of themes, taken from both the physical and socio-economic elements of the subject. There is also greater emphasis on the interplay of the natural and human environments and how they shape contemporary issues. These units include themes such as globalisation, trade and the global economy, geopolitics, social justice, tourism, sustainable development, hazard management and desertification.

### Syllabus and Code

CAIE A Level 9696 Geography

### Enrichment

Fieldwork is an integral part of any geographical study and all A Level pupils currently attend a four-day fieldwork course in Nenthead, Cumbria. This offers the chance for first-hand investigation and the opportunity to apply theories and key ideas to a new location. There may also be opportunities to take part in an optional overseas expedition; recent destinations have included Morocco and Jordan.

The John Stace Geography Society is a flourishing pupil-led society, with a remarkable range of external speakers as well as talks and presentations by senior pupils. This complements the central location of the School, allowing pupils the opportunity to attend lectures and events at the Royal Geographical Society and benefit from a range of close connections that the department has with a variety of business, environmental, geopolitical and civic organisations.

### After Westminster

We have an outstanding record of academic success, with all Westminster candidates achieving the equivalent of an A\* at A Level in 2018 and 2019 (the most recent year of formal examinations), and A Level pupils regularly go on to study Geography at top universities. And many have gone on to study Masters and PhDs.

Geography A Level is a versatile and broad-based qualification and is, therefore, an outstanding steppingstone to a career in business, law, diplomacy and the arts, as well as in the fields of

science, technology and engineering. Alumni proceed to successful careers in a host of different field.

### Subject requirements for the course

The major requirement for any prospective pupil of Geography is an interest in society, the world around us, and the issues at the forefront of political, economic, environmental and social debate. Those taking the course should have taken Geography at (I)GCSE level and should be on track to score a grade 8 or 9.

### Entrance examination

The examination lasts 45 minutes and comprises two sections. The first section requires candidates to read and interpret material, which could be a graph, diagram, map or image, and in the second section they will be asked to write a short essay from a choice of titles on key geographical themes. These titles are designed to allow candidates studying any GCSE specification to attempt an answer. The principal aim of the exam is not to test knowledge, but rather to provide candidates with the opportunity to display their geographical interest and understanding.

*“Geography lessons at Westminster are hugely stimulating, not just focusing on content covered by the syllabus but also on pertinent current events and other relevant topics which are freely discussed – the subject gives you the freedom to formulate and challenge viewpoints on a wide range of pressing issues.”*

Joseph, Year 12 pupil

# History

Head of Department **Dr Richard Huscroft**  
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Westminster pupils are instinctively curious, inquisitive and sceptical. This is why so many of them love studying History here. Knowledge about the past is empowering and energising, as is an understanding of how to scrutinise and question received wisdoms. Historical study provides all these things and at Westminster this happens in an environment where expectations of scholarly rigour are combined with vigorous debate and robust argument.

Westminster’s History teachers are all experts in their different fields, but they share with their pupils an enthusiasm for the diversity and complexity of the past. Pupils will encounter some challenging concepts - colonialism, fascism and the brutalities of war, for example – but through learning how to interpret historical sources, construct written arguments and justify their opinions, they will be encouraged to discuss, analyse and think critically about them. And by making historical connections they will be equipped to understand the range and depth of human experience and benefit from the emotional awareness that flows from this. Our aim is for pupils to leave us with the ability to evaluate more effectively both their own lives and modern societies through reference to those of the past.

We are also uniquely fortunate in offering our subject in such beautiful and historic surroundings. Our very environment offers both setting as well as inspiration for the study of History at Westminster School.

### Curriculum

Pupils in the Upper School follow the OCR A Level syllabus. Individual pupils each have two History teachers who between them teach three options from the OCR syllabus across two years. Pupils also complete a piece of coursework in the Remove (Year 13): a 3000 to 4000 word essay on a topic arising out of their taught units.

There is no single A Level curriculum taken by all pupils. Pupils will study those three topics from within the syllabus that their teachers choose to teach. Between them, therefore, our A Level historians study a wide range of historical areas ranging from Charlemagne in the eighth century to ‘Appeasement’ and the Vietnam War in the twentieth. Our preferred practice is to arrange the teaching so that the three topics delivered to all pupils are both chronologically and geographically apart. The richness of this provision enhances the vitality and variety of historical study at Westminster, as our young Historians come to appreciate the similarities, differences and resonances between the

different periods they study and between those and the present day. Pupils gain a general historical awareness, as well as a strong foundation for historical study at university.

### Syllabus and Code

OCR A Level H505 History

### Enrichment

There is a weekly History Society in which pupils give talks about their own areas of historical interest. We also welcome visiting speakers regularly throughout the year. A history magazine, *LJR*, is published twice a year and the pupils’ appreciation of the past has been enhanced by visits to Berlin, the Middle East, Russia and Paris.

### After Westminster

A relatively large number of Westminster pupils choose History as an undergraduate subject, either as a single honours course or in combination with another subject. Pupils are supported in their preparation for the challenges of admissions tests and interviews.

A History degree is widely regarded by employers as one of the best general intellectual trainings available. Trained historians are valued for their independence of thought, critical awareness, flexibility of mind, multi-cultural sensitivity and communication skills, and go on to a very wide variety of careers in finance, law, government, the media and the arts.

### Subject requirements for the course

We regularly accept pupils in the Sixth Form (Year 12) who have not previously studied History in any formal way. Enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to work hard and join in the debate are all we require.

### Entrance examination

The History examination for applicants to the School in the Sixth Form takes the form of an hour-long source exercise. There is one question on one extended text. The aim is to set the source analysis on a period or topic of history that no candidate will have formally studied at school. This provides a level playing-field for candidates and gives them the chance to show how they can read historical sources with care and discrimination and respond critically to unfamiliar material. We are looking for candidates who can communicate their interest and commitment to the past through informed analysis.

*“We are encouraged to think critically and independently and inspired to expand our understanding of the world around us.”*

Freya, Year 12 pupil



# History of Art

Head of Department **Ms Rosa Goodman**  
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History of Art is an ambitious and highly exciting subject. We live in an increasingly visual world and global society, and History of Art will equip pupils with the tools to decipher the meanings of images and to find significant links between different cultures and periods of history.

Westminster offers an excellent opportunity to study History of Art in unique surroundings in the centre of London. Pupils frequently visit major collections such as the Tate Galleries, The National Gallery, the V&A, the British Museum, The Wallace Collection and the Royal Academy of Arts (RA), to bring the history of painting, architecture and sculpture to life. All members of the department are specialists and have previously worked in commercial galleries and museums.

“London has the greatest range of galleries and museums in the world. Art History gives you the opportunity and skills to make the most of them.”

Mr Benjamin Walton,  
Teacher of History of Art

## Curriculum

The study of History of Art requires pupils to develop analytical skills that can be applied to many walks of life, as well as tools to understand how images and objects shape our social and political identities. If you enjoy writing and looking at works of art or if you are curious about the value and status of art in society, you will find this subject stimulating and very rewarding. Classes are intimate, discursive and fun, and are treated like university seminars and tutorials. Courses are structured around discussions, presentations, note taking, visual images and trips to examine art and architecture in the flesh.

At Westminster we take the Edexcel A Level course, which spans over 2000 years, specialising in Western works, but also looking well beyond the European tradition. Pupils will sit two final examination papers. Paper 1 includes a visual survey of western art: painting, sculpture and architecture from the Classical world to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, testing visual literacy in an unseen paper. Paper 1 also includes the course’s two ‘Thematic Topics’: *Nature* encompasses man’s relationship with his environment, from landscape to land art; *Identity* considers gender, nationality, divinity and ethnicity, with particular focus on portraiture and propaganda. The majority of our case studies for Paper 1 are in London.

There are two historical topics in Paper 2: *The Renaissance in Italy*, which considers the art and architecture of 15<sup>th</sup>- and 16<sup>th</sup>-century Rome, Florence and Venice; we also study *Modernism in Europe 1900 – 1939* looking at the machine age and the art of war, and their effect on the avant-garde. There are currently two trips on which all pupils are encouraged to go, one to Florence in the Sixth Form (Year 12) and one to Paris in the Remove (Year 13), alongside a voluntary trip to Rome or Venice to help with Paper 2.

## Enrichment

History of Art Society is very busy for a relatively small department. Every year we host ARTiculation, a National Art Debate, judged by Art World experts. Many pupils also enter SPoKE, which is an art historical documentary film competition, alongside essay competitions. We have a pupil-led zine called *WHAM!* that includes articles and artistic responses to visual and material culture. We also have lunchtime lectures organised and delivered by pupils.

Every term the department hosts excellent speakers from all walks of art-related life that push beyond the syllabus, including from The National Gallery, the Isabella Stewart-Gardner Museum, Christie’s, Art History Abroad, Oxford University and the RA. As part of the Options Programme for A Level pupils, the department offers various topics including The Art Market, which involves visits to St James’s auction houses and Mayfair galleries. The highlight of the Remove year is always GAS (Gastronomic Art Society), where we recreate mise-en-scène banqueting paintings, and then feast together.

## Syllabus and Code

Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE 9HT0  
History of Art

## After Westminster

History of Art is a rigorous academic subject, and every year some pupils go on to read it at university. The subject can be studied alone or in combination with a variation of other subjects at the top universities. Pupils go on to further study in a wide range of other subjects related to the History of Art, such as PPE, HSPS, Archaeology, Anthropology and Architecture, as well as many other Humanities and Social Sciences.

The commercial world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is highly visual. The cultural and creative industries form part of the UK’s greatest selling points and fastest growing sectors, worth well over £100 billion per annum, and visual literacy is more valuable than ever. History of Art’s unique combination of visual sensitivity and intellectual rigour has proved valuable in areas such as journalism, marketing, advertising, publishing, law, and film and television work. More directly-related careers include those in lecturing and research, conservation and restoration, museum and gallery administration, commercial galleries and auction houses.

Well-known Art Historian Andrew Graham-Dixon attended Westminster, as did art critic Alistair Sooke (The Telegraph), curator Imogen Tedbury (Royal Museums, Greenwich), broadcaster Katy Hessel (*The Great Women Artists Podcast*) and author Alice Procter (*The Colonial Story of Art in Our Museums*).

## Subject requirements for the course

There are no subject requirements to study History of Art at A Level. This subject is, however, recommended to those who enjoy History, English and Philosophy but who also wish to explore visual culture and language. It is equally enjoyable for linguists, classicists and artists and combines well with most other subjects. Indeed, a typically forensic approach to observation and research taken by scientists is of great value in History of Art.

## Entrance examination

Pupils are not expected to have prior knowledge of the subject for the entrance examination, just a thirst for the subject. Pupils are asked to compare images and write a brief essay either about an exhibition they have seen or a response to a given article. We are looking for clarity of thought, enthusiasm and visual awareness.



# Mathematics

Head of Department **Miss Polly Brownlee**  
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**Mathematics is a flourishing subject at Westminster. Our aim is to make Mathematics lessons opportunities for the collaborative development of ideas, not simply for instruction in set methods or preparation for examinations.**

**Most pupils at Westminster relish a challenge and enjoy Mathematics for this reason: our hope is for them all to tackle problems that they find demanding and to learn to deal independently with them, and our intention is to offer them the opportunity to do so as an integral part of our lessons.**

## Mathematics Curriculum

The best reason for taking Mathematics at A Level is that is enjoyable: that is, that pupils find satisfaction in stretching their intellect to understand abstract ideas and tackle taxing problems. The A Level also compliments the Physics A Level, to which it is often studied alongside.

Mathematics is a very popular A Level subject at Westminster, studied by about three quarters of the Sixth Form (Year 12) and with every possible combination of other subjects. The department teaches six sets each year the single Mathematics A Level: all follow the same course, studying both pure mathematics (algebra, calculus, geometry) and applied mathematics (mechanics and statistics – there is no choice of specialisation) and are taught by two different teachers. Those who are able to are, as a matter of course, taken beyond the A Level syllabus both by covering extra material and by developing their problem-solving abilities.

There are in addition seven or more sets each year studying for two A Levels in Mathematics – Mathematics and Further Mathematics – in which the subject is investigated in a more rigorous and sophisticated way. These sets are taught separately from the single-subject mathematicians, by three teachers who cover between them pure mathematics, mechanics, statistics and discrete

## Further Mathematics

The best reason for taking Further Mathematics, however, is simply that for those who are reasonably good at and get pleasure from Mathematics, the course is more stimulating, more challenging and, therefore, more enjoyable than the single A Level course. At Westminster, many more pupils take Further Mathematics than at most other schools: and for those who love Mathematics, Further Mathematics makes for the perfect pairing.

Those who are thinking of reading Mathematics, Computer Science, Physics or Engineering at university ought to take Further Mathematics and it is very strongly recommended for those who wish to take Economics at university.

## Syllabus and Codes

OCR A Level H240 Mathematics  
OCR A Level H245 Further Mathematics

## Enrichment

One of the unique aspects of the Westminster course is the emphasis on problem solving within the curriculum: there are lessons dedicated to developing problem-solving skills and learning specific techniques. Many will also have the opportunity to take part in the National Mathematics Challenges, in which our pupils in the past have done very well.

There is a thriving Mathematics Society run by pupils who deliver talks to their peers, and there are also popular Bridge and Chess Societies that meet frequently and compete in School and in external competitions too.

In the Election Term (summer term) of the Sixth Form and during the Remove (Year 13) year, there is a process of preparing pupils for university entrance examinations. This covers the MAT, TMUA and mentoring for those who receive STEP offers.

## After Westminster

The department prepares about 20 pupils each year for entrance examinations in Mathematics and Computer Science. Many of these pupils go on to study these subjects at top universities including Oxford, Cambridge, Warwick, Imperial College, St Andrews and UCL. The skills and determination demonstrated by pupils of Further Mathematics are much sought-after by universities worldwide.

Pupils go on to study Mathematics, Computer Science, Physical Sciences, Engineering, Economics, Management and PPE at University, for which Mathematics A Level is a requisite. The subject is especially a good indicator of an individual’s ability to cope with the logical aspects of Philosophy at University.

## Subject requirements for the course

Ideally, pupils looking to study Mathematics or Further Mathematics in the Sixth Form will be on track to get a grade 9 in (I)GCSE Mathematics.

## Entrance examination

There will be two 45-minute papers: a multiple choice paper for Mathematics and a written paper for those who wish to study Further Mathematics. Prospective Further Mathematicians will sit both papers. The content of the papers will be focused on topics that we are sure pupils will have studied by the end of year 10.

# Modern Languages

Head of Department  
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The study of Modern Languages and their cultures thrives at Westminster, and it is our aim to be the very best Languages Department in the country. Our specialist teachers offer no fewer than nine languages, both within and beyond the formal curriculum. Outcomes in the department at A Level are outstanding, and many of our pupils choose to pursue their linguistic studies at the most prestigious universities, at home and overseas. Our curricula are rich, culturally embedded, and challenging. We cherish opportunities to take pupils overseas on Expeditions and exchanges and to deliver our programme of study from dedicated, well-resourced facilities on the central school site.

Within the curriculum, the Modern Languages Department offers French, German, Chinese (Mandarin), Russian and Spanish. Outside of the formal curriculum, pupils have the opportunity to study Arabic, Japanese, Italian and Modern Greek, as part of the General Options (Sixth Form) programme.

General Options language courses are mainly designed for beginners, although provision can sometimes be offered for those with some knowledge of the language or for advanced learners. It is an excellent opportunity to develop an understanding of a language that a pupil might wish to study at university. Provision may on some occasions be made for native or near-native speakers of these languages to take a one-year intensive A Level course, if there is sufficient demand and capacity. There is a steady stream of Westminster pupils who go on to read, for example, a Middle Eastern or South East Asian language at a top university, having started the language in the Sixth Form (Year 12).

# French

Head of Department  
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French is, as a core subject in the Lower School, not just a vehicle to communicate information on a basic level. It is a platform where one engages with critical thinking, history, wellbeing, politics, using ever-developing listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. The cross-curricular approach is part and parcel of its DNA and the way it is taught at Westminster. French is also a key component of any Upper School combination of subjects.

Taught and spoken worldwide, French is truly international and a key language of global diplomacy; it provides an insight into many different cultures and is a good foundation for learning and improving an individual’s command of other languages too. About 50% of English words derive from French, which has fed into English since William the Conqueror.

## Curriculum

The Edexcel A Level course in French is both an exciting and successful way of building up critical faculties, whilst preparing for Higher Education in developing initiative and independent study. A wide range of contemporary topics is offered and serves as a platform for a vibrant discussion of current affairs. The course encourages pupils to combine cultural background and experience. It builds upon the knowledge gained at (I)GCSE and promotes both the quality and accuracy of the four language skills (speaking, reading, listening and writing). One of the key features of the course is the inclusion of cultural topics. They include, for instance, Perspectives on World War II, Artistic Trends in the Francophone world, and Multicultural France and Representations of Women. These, and others, will be explored through film, text and other media. Literary texts are also studied.

## Syllabus and Code

Edexcel A Level 9FRO French

## Enrichment

In the Sixth form (Year 12), pupils studying French are strongly encouraged to spend time working in a francophone environment.

The Maurice de Pange Lecture Series is a platform for scholars to come and talk about their area of expertise. The French Society is entirely pupil-led and meets once a term. It also hosts debating events in French. Pupils have been extremely successful in the *Joutes Oratoires* debating competition and have regularly qualified for (and won) the National Finals at the Institut Français. Since 2019, Sixth Form pupils have been taking part in the Public Speaking Competition organised by Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle.

## After Westminster

A very high number of applicants each year take up places at top universities to read French or a subject combination involving French, whether it is with another modern language or with subjects as varied as Law, History or Philosophy. French is a fantastic asset for a graduate as it widens one’s opportunities and perfects one’s employability in fields as varied as journalism, diplomacy, business, research and science. French can be a crucial component in a US application as part of the liberal arts approach; it is also prized by highly competitive university courses, such as PPE and Law, which can favour an international outlook.

## Subject requirements for the course

Pupils generally are required to hold an (I)GCSE grade 8 or 9 to study the A Level at Westminster, but it is absolutely not a requisite to have sat an AS (or the DELF) beforehand. We will consider applicants predicted on grade 7 or above and will review the candidate’s individual merits and potential during the application process.



Entrance examination

The entrance examination lasts 45 minutes and consists of two parts. Part one is a gap-fill and reading comprehension task and part two is a writing task. The latter requires a pupil to write an 180-word composition in French from a choice of three titles, all of which fall within topic areas defined by the (I)GCSE boards.

Chinese (Mandarin)

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**Chinese (Mandarin) is very different from the other languages on the curriculum: while straightforward in some respects, its structure and writing system offer a good intellectual and academic challenge. Pupils enjoy the sense of cultural discovery involved in learning Chinese. Pupils at Westminster embrace the subject with enthusiasm and success.**

Curriculum

In the Upper School we follow the Edexcel A Level specification. This is a challenging qualification, but a rewarding one. Linguistic proficiency is developed through the exploration of a range of contemporary themes, all anchored in the context of China itself, but also through the study of two Chinese literary texts (or, alternatively, one film and one book). In the Remove (Year 13), pupils complete an Independent Research Project, which they then present in full in the oral exam.

Syllabus and Code

Edexcel A Level 9CN0 Chinese

Enrichment

Besides marking important Chinese cultural occasions here in School, we regularly accompany pupils on visits to the cinema, museums and galleries and to other cultural institutions, to enrich their learning in the classroom.

After Westminster

Oriental studies degrees at top Universities, such as SOAS, Oxford and Cambridge, are highly valued and respected across the UK and indeed around the world. Oriental studies can also be combined with a European language, Theology, Classics and a range of other subjects. That said, many pupils of Chinese at Westminster go on to study a full range of other degrees, including STEM subjects, for which a fourth A Level in a Modern Language is held in great esteem.

Subject requirements for the course

Candidates require a grade 8 or 9 in Chinese (Mandarin) at (I)GCSE level. The department will consider applicants predicted on grade 7 or above and will review a candidate’s individual merits and potential during the application process.

Entrance examination

The entrance examination includes reading comprehension and writing tasks based on the knowledge and proficiency that we expect successful (I)GCSE candidates to have acquired. In the interview, there will be a brief conversation in Mandarin.

German

Head of Department  
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**German is a wonderfully rich, malleable and important language. It is spoken by over 100 million people – the most widely-spoken mother tongue in Europe – and is one of the key languages for the worlds of science, technology, philosophy, music and more. It is logical but flexible, structured but not staid. Within the department, we aim to allow pupils to discover this great language for its own sake, but also as a portal to the broad cultural heritage that goes with it: a fascinating array of music, literature and film, which in turn allows us to explore the history and present-day societies of German-speaking countries.**

Curriculum

The Edexcel A Level German course allows pupils to develop advanced language skills and to engage with the literature and cultures of German-speaking countries. Language lessons cover a range of social, political and artistic themes, such as media, music, immigration, and the reunification of Germany in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century following its post-war division between East and West. The course also includes study of – and response to – literary texts and films. The speaking component includes an independent research project, allowing pupils to engage with a topic that interests them personally.

Syllabus and Code

Edexcel A Level 9GN0 German

Enrichment

We run an exchange programme with a school in Munich for Sixth Form (Year 12) Germanists. The programme, which has been running since 1964, is a genuine highlight for pupils, as it offers a great deal of linguistic and cultural richness. There is a thriving German Society that runs events ranging from

food tasting and film screenings to debates and talks on aspects of history, culture and language. We also arrange trips to films, exhibitions and plays throughout.

After Westminster

German can be studied to degree level either sole or in combination with another subject, be it another language, History, English, Economics, Biological Sciences, or Law. It can be studied at virtually all Russell Group universities in the UK, or indeed in the USA. Courses draw on the language, literature, history and cultures related to German. Language graduates are highly sought-after, and German is in high demand amongst employers both in the UK and globally. Graduates of German typically progress to careers in law, finance, public policy, international organisations, the arts and journalism.

Subject requirements for the course  
Ideally pupils will have a grade 8 or 9 in German at (I)GCSE level. We will consider applicants predicted on grade 7 or above and review the candidate’s individual merits and potential during the application process.

Entrance examination

The entrance examination lasts 45 minutes and consists of three main parts.

Section 1 is a reading comprehension and grammar assessment (word order and tenses, for example) and Section 2 a writing exercise of no more than 200 words from a choice of questions. Section 3 is optional and will not count against any candidate: it is an opportunity to provide a commentary in English on a short passage in German, for those that wish to do so.

Speaking skills are tested at interview. There is no expectation that pupils should have covered aspects of the language that are not normally part of the (I)GCSE course.

Russian

Head of Department  
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**Russian is the largest native language in Europe, with around 144 million speakers in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and many other eastern European countries. It is the fifth most spoken language in the world, and is used all over ethnically diverse Russia and the former Soviet Union as a lingua franca and language of business.**

**Russian is not just a highly rewarding language to study; it is also a gateway to some of the most influential thinkers, writers and artists of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Competence in the Russian language enables you to read Chekhov’s short stories, Akhmatova’s poetry and – eventually – the ‘thick novels’ of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. Contemporary Russian culture is equally fascinating, and much can be learnt about post-Soviet politics and everyday life from the films of Balabanov, Serebrennikov and Zvyagintsev.**

Curriculum

The Edexcel A Level is designed to familiarise pupils with social, political and cultural themes relating to the Russian language, its culture and communities. It covers such topics as youth culture, education, the world of work, the media, mass culture and festivals. Pupils also analyse a contemporary Russian film, and later explore historical topics such as urban change in Russia and the collapse of the USSR. We also undertake close analysis of a literary text, enabling pupils to put their advanced reading ability to use and to develop their comprehension skills.

Syllabus and Code

Edexcel A Level 9RU0 Russian

Enrichment

Trips are arranged to films, exhibitions and the theatre. A visit to Russia during the Easter holidays in the Sixth Form (Year 12) is valuable and exciting linguistically and culturally: a language course combined with accommodation in a Russian family provides both academic stimulus and an opportunity for closer acquaintance with the Russian way of life. Pupils are encouraged to take part in the events of Slavic Society, which include regular pupil-led talks, guest lectures and cultural visits.

After Westminster

More than a dozen top British universities offer courses in Russian and are very keen to recruit pupils with a good prior knowledge of the language. We have an excellent record in placing pupils at Oxford colleges in particular. Russian (usually language and literature) can be studied in higher education with another language, on its own or in a variety of more broadly based combinations such as Russian and English, Russian and History, Russian and Philosophy, and Russian Studies; it can serve as an introduction to the other Slavonic languages, too.

Subject requirements for the course  
Candidates require a grade 8 or 9 in Russian (I)GCSE. We will consider applicants predicted on grade 7 or above and will review a candidate’s individual merits and potential during the application process. Absolute beginners can also apply, and will follow a slightly different course in the Sixth Form. Candidates admitted on this pathway sit an Aptitude Test.

Entrance examination

The examination consists of a 45-minute paper comprising: Section 1, a mix of reading, grammar, translation and gap-fill exercises; Section 2, an essay of 160-200 words; and Section 3, an optional commentary on a short passage.

Questions are based primarily on GCSE content, vocabulary and grammar, enabling candidates to perform to the best of their ability.



# Spanish

Head of Department  
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Spanish is an invaluable international language, with over 550 million native speakers in 20 countries, including over 50 million in the USA. Scientists have found that fluency in more than one language improves your memory, enhances your intelligence, delays the onset of Alzheimer’s, and makes you much more marketable. The Hispanic world, especially, has a dazzlingly diverse cultural heritage. Whether you choose to read García Márquez’s incomparable magic realism, or Lorca’s ground-breaking theatre, Borges’s short stories or Neruda’s poetry, there is a wealth of literature to explore. Hispanic painters – Velázquez, Goya, Picasso, Dalí, Miró, Kahlo, and filmmakers – Buñuel, Almodóvar, Guillermo del Toro, Alejandro González Iñárritu among others – all add to the attraction of learning this largely phonetic, relatively straightforward and most useful of languages.

## Curriculum

The Edexcel A Level syllabus covers the following main themes: the evolution of Spanish society; political and artistic culture in the Hispanic world; immigration through the ages; Franco’s dictatorship and the transition to democracy. The four language skills are tested in the traditional way, including translations into and out of the target language. The speaking exam involves the preparation of an independent research project. There is also the opportunity to study texts and films and write about them in Spanish.

## Syllabus and Code

Edexcel A Level 9RU0 Russian

## Enrichment

Opportunities to use Spanish in London abound. The department organises regular trips to see plays, films, art exhibitions, and to dine in Spanish restaurants. All pupils are invited on cultural and linguistic sojourns to Cuba and Spain during their two A Level years. These are optional, but highly recommended.

## After Westminster

Spanish can be studied to a BA qualification, either single honours or joint honours, at virtually all the Russell Group universities in the UK. Most pupils combine it with either another language, another humanities subject (Classics, English or history, for example), Law or Business Studies. It can also form the basis of a course in Hispanic or Latin American Studies. Furthermore, if planning to study a Liberal Arts degree in the USA, Spanish is naturally the most useful and relevant language to choose.

Subject requirements for the course Grade 8 or 9 in Spanish (I)GCSE is required. We will consider applicants predicted on grade 7 or above and review the candidate’s individual merits and potential during the application process.

## Entrance examination

Candidates wishing to study Spanish in the Sixth Form (Year 12) should, ideally, be on track to achieve an 8 or 9 at IGCSE level, to cope effectively with the course’s grammatical content. The main qualities required are, however, commitment and enthusiasm. The examination paper for new entrants is based on GCSE-type material, with which candidates should already be familiar; as such, no specific preparation is required.

The test consists of three sections. The first is focused on grammar and requires a candidate to translate sentences, involving a variety of tenses and basic-level subjunctive and GCSE-level vocabulary, from English into

Spanish. The second section is an essay of approximately 250-300 words in Spanish on a topic that a candidate should be able to relate to. The final section is an extension option, requiring a candidate to give a commentary in English on a Spanish literary text. Native or near-native speakers of Spanish are strongly encouraged to do this part of the test; regular candidates can attempt it in the knowledge that what they write will not count against them.

*“Spanish at 16+ is a rich experience. Lessons are certainly discursive, and debating arises often around topics such as inequality or the gender gap. The materials covered in class are then supplemented by visits to the theatre, cinema, restaurants and trips, to Spanish speaking countries, such as Cuba.”*

Ms Gema Franco, Teacher of Spanish

# Music

Head of Department **Mr Michael Heighway**  
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Music plays an integral part in life at Westminster, and the academic courses offer a rigorous and stimulating perspective on the excellent and wide-ranging musical activities across the School. Many internationally renowned musicians have been educated at Westminster including Henry Purcell, Adrian Boult, Roger Norrington, Ian Bostridge, George Benjamin, Julian Anderson, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Christian Mason, Mika, Dido and members of the band Clean Bandit.

## Curriculum

The A Level Music course comprises three modules: performance, composition, and listening / analytical skills (30%, 30% and 40% of the examination structure). Through these activities, pupils develop a more informed appreciation of how and why a very wide variety of music has been written and performed; this, in turn, improves pupils’ skills in performing and composing across a range of styles.

Alongside the teaching of the formal examination syllabus, the course includes an introduction to: Baroque Figured Bass, Harmony and Counterpoint, Composition, Aural Skills, Improvisation, Repertoire, Analysis and History, Musicianship Skills and Instrumental Studies.

The School’s proximity to several of London’s leading music venues allows for frequent trips to concerts and operas to hear world-class performers. Participation in the School’s orchestras, choirs, chamber music ensembles and jazz bands, if appropriate, is expected. Every year there are masterclasses, workshops, competitions and concerts featuring pupils’ own compositions, often featuring a number of international guest soloists.

## Syllabus and Code

Edexcel A Level 9MU0 Music

## Enrichment

Musicians at Westminster benefit from numerous opportunities to engage with the subject beyond the classroom; our location in the centre of London allows for regular trips to the Southbank Centre, the West End theatres and the Royal Opera House. Pupils enjoy a wide range of masterclasses delivered by world-renowned musicians, and we host composition workshops and academic talks from university lecturers. Our musicians perform in some of London’s leading venues, including St John’s Smith Square and the Barbican. Our instrumentalists are regularly finalists in the national Pro Corda chamber music competition, and each year the winner of the School Concerto Competition performs a full concerto with the Symphony Orchestra in St John’s Smith Square. There are three orchestras, numerous jazz groups, four choirs, and myriad other musical groups of all styles and genres that pupils can join.

## After Westminster

The decision to study Music is usually taken by those who need music to be at the centre of their lives. Beyond university, employers consider music graduates to have excellent skills in teamwork, self-management, problem-solving, data analysis, creativity, and communication. As such, Music graduates are highly prized across a very broad range of industries. A wide choice of courses is available, ranging from the almost entirely practical to the mostly academic.

## Subject requirements for the course

It is desirable to have achieved a distinction or merit at Grade VI-VII (or equivalent standard) on a principal instrument before starting the course in the Sixth Form (Year 12). Some degree of elementary keyboard proficiency, and at least Grade V Music Theory (or equivalent) are prerequisite, and those taking the course should have taken music at (I)GCSE level and be on track to score a grade 8 or 9.

## Entrance examination

As part of the online registration process, candidates are asked to submit a video recording of two contrasting pieces of their choice played on their first-study instrument. On the examination day, they are expected to take a written assessment, which tests aural perception, music theory and musical literacy. Successful candidates will be called back for a brief interview, which will include listening tests.

*“I can’t imagine life at Westminster without music!”*

Claire, Year 13 pupil



# Sciences

Head of Department **Mr Charles Ullathorne**  
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Science at Westminster aims to inspire and foster curiosity, creativity, collaboration and communication. The principles describing how the universe functions, and the elegant and beautiful patterns of its behaviour, provide an absorbing course of study that will challenge a pupil's imagination and will enhance and refine powers of observation, collaboration and communication. Science teaching at Westminster has a significant practical flavour, capitalising on the well-equipped laboratories and the essential nature of science. The courses are challenging, but are very rewarding indeed; they follow features that are independent of the examination board specifications. The Robert Hooke Science Centre, in which all Science lessons are taught, has recently been refurbished and had an extra floor added, including an astronomical observatory, so is an incredible place in which to learn.

### Enrichment

There are many opportunities for pupils to become involved with scientific projects beyond the formal curriculum, including the Huxley Society (the School's Science society), a lecture series given by renowned speakers, research groups, competitions, and the writing and production of the department's high-quality *Hooke Magazine*. In the Upper School there is the opportunity to take on extended project work via the Science EPQ.

### Subject combinations

If pupils are considering a Sciences / Arts combination in the Upper School (Years 12 and 13), they need to be clear about what they might want to study at university and to consider carefully whether their options really are as open as they might seem. The Head of Science is always pleased to advise on subject choices involving Sciences and their implications, including Medicine.

# Biology

Head of Department **Dr Paul Hartley**  
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Biology is an expansive science that often draws upon an understanding of Chemistry and concepts in Physics and Mathematics to construct theories and models of all aspects of life on earth. Recent decades have seen significant advances, not least in molecular biology and gene technology with their increasingly important applications in medicine.

From quantum biology to ecology, Biology at Westminster equips pupils with a comprehensive understanding of the core principles of this science. Pupils can expect to study recent discoveries such as CRISPR cas9 alongside long-established theories such as evolution by natural selection. Creativity, communication skills, practical skills and the application of the scientific method are all highly valued by the department.

### Curriculum

In the Sixth Form (Year 12), pupils have two double lessons, two single lessons and one seminar class per week. Many of the double lessons involve practical work. For example, pupils prepare garlic root tips to observe mitotic cells under

a light microscope and immobilise yeast cells in alginate beads when exploring the biochemistry of enzymes. The Sixth Form Biology curriculum reaches far beyond the syllabus, and a weekly seminar enables pupils to develop knowledge and skills that are particularly valuable at university. These include, for example reading books and scientific papers and writing essays tailored to a pupils' own interests (be that molecular biology, medicine or psychology etc.), and developing statistical skills pertinent to Biology and exploring the scientific method, including how to devise and construct a research project. During the second term pupils independently plan their own research project, which they carry out in the third term. This is an immersive and especially rewarding component of our curriculum.

The depth and breadth of the A2 Biology course is demanding. Remove (Year 13) pupils have three double lessons and two single lessons per week. One of the three double lessons involves a weekly practical. During A practical pupils might, for example, employ thin layer chromatography to separate photosynthetic pigments and work with fruit flies to explore inheritance. With support, guidance and feedback, pupils are expected to work independently beyond lessons in preparation for both public examinations and university application.

### Syllabus and Code

CAIE A Level 9700 Biology

### Enrichment

In addition to the Sixth From Biology research project and essay writing, pupils will often prepare and deliver talks at Huxley, the pupil-led science society, and attend external talks such as those offered by the Royal Institution. Some pupils write articles for our school science magazine, Hooke, and many participate in the Intermediate and British Biology Olympiads. All pupils are required to read popular science books and magazines and to watch relevant videos that pertain to Biology.

### After Westminster

A substantial number of our pupils go on to read Medicine or a life science, such as Natural Sciences (Bio), Biology, Biochemistry, Neuroscience or Biomedical Science, at university. Some pupils also take degrees in Psychology, Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry.

### Subject requirements for the course

Candidates should ideally be on track to achieve a grade 8 or 9 at (I)GCSE in Biology and Chemistry (or Double Award), and in Mathematics too.

### Entrance examination

The Biology examination is a written exam that assesses knowledge, problem-solving skills, communication skills and a pupil's interest in the subject. Candidates are not expected to have knowledge beyond (I)GCSE level. Candidates are encouraged to read regularly and to watch relevant documentaries or videos.

# Chemistry

Head of Department **Mr Ed Coward**  
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The principles of Chemistry underpin our understanding of the world around us and are relevant to all areas of science, from the chemical processes in living organisms to the formation of stars millions of miles away. The core concepts introduced in Chemistry form an important part of any professional scientist's toolkit, regardless of their specialisation. Pupils at Westminster study Chemistry for a variety of reasons: many study it in conjunction with other Sciences and Mathematics, and go on to study Science at university; many hope to study Medicine at university; and a handful study Chemistry on its own because they simply enjoy it.

The subject has exploration at its core and practical investigation is central to its practice. Development of skills is important, but so too is an inquisitive mind and the ability to problem-solve. Chemists draw on an array of disparate concepts to try to explain fundamentally why it is that things happen.

### Curriculum

Chemistry beyond GCSE is conceptually challenging and requires good factual knowledge. While the need for the memorisation of facts remains important, much greater emphasis is placed on the understanding of the principles underlying the material and in relating this to laboratory experience. Indeed, considerable time is devoted to practical work and the department has four large, well-equipped teaching laboratories as well as a research laboratory.

In the Sixth Form and Remove (Years 12 and 13), we use the CIE International A Level as a guide to teaching, but much of what is done in class goes beyond this and tries to develop a problem-solving toolkit for tackling ideas in unfamiliar contexts, including the challenge that comes in the form of a practical exam.

### Syllabus and Code

CAIE A Level 9701 Chemistry

### Enrichment

There are many opportunities to study Chemistry outside the timetable, for example via the Options programme or by participating in the Chemistry Olympiad, where Westminster has in the past ranked as the top school in the country. Every year, the Sixth Form is invited to take part in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, and a handful of pupils in each of the recent years have ranked in the top 1% nationally.

The Huxley Society (Westminster's science society) gives pupils in all year groups the opportunity to attend, and host, talks on the whole range of sciences and technology. This helps to develop cross-curricular interests, which some then expand on for research competitions such as the UK Junior

Water Prize – a national STEM competition aimed at solving environmental challenges with a link to water.

In the Election Term (summer) all Sixth Form Chemists take on an independent research project, aimed at developing practical skills outside of the syllabus. In recent years, pupils have synthesised aspirin, paracetamol and a range of complex organometallic and transition metal compounds.

### After Westminster

A very high number of applicants each year take up places at top universities to read French or a subject combination involving French, whether it is with another modern language or with subjects as varied as Law, History or Philosophy. French is a fantastic asset for a graduate as it widens one's opportunities and perfects one's employability in fields as varied as journalism, diplomacy, business, research and science. French can be a crucial component in a US application as part of the liberal arts approach; it is also prized by highly competitive university courses, such as PPE and Law, which can favour an international outlook.

### Subject requirements for the course

Candidates should ideally be on track to achieve a grade 8 or 9 at (I)GCSE in Chemistry (or Double Award) and Mathematics.

### Entrance examination

The entrance examination for Chemistry contains a choice of questions in order not to disadvantage pupils who take different GCSE courses. The core fundamentals are assumed (e.g. formula and equation writing), but much of the paper assesses a candidate's ability to apply their chemical knowledge in a new context. An example of this might be a question on azanes (homologous series of hydronitrogen), which candidates are not expected to have met, but which then draws on knowledge of alkanes, which they have. Application, rather than regurgitation, of an idea is the key.



# Physics

Head of Department  
**Dr Helen Prentice**  
Email [helen.prentice@westminster.org.uk](mailto:helen.prentice@westminster.org.uk)

Physics is a tremendous subject that combines numeracy in mathematical problem-solving with clear-thinking logic and communication. It encompasses the study of the universe from the largest structures to the smallest particles, from the start of time to predicting probabilistic futures, from pen and paper theory to hands-on laboratory work. No one specification or examination can test all of these wonderful skills. Our department of specialist physicists and technicians bring their love for the subject to the classroom and our internal scheme of work allows us to prepare pupils for examinations, for university and for life with our wide-ranging suite of opportunities to learn independently and to develop a powerful skillset.

## Curriculum

Sixth Form (Year 12) physicists follow an internal specification that includes applied topics, such as electricity and material science, but also introduces gravitational fields and quantum physics. Teachers will go beyond the specification where appropriate and where interests lie to explore extension topics that include special relativity, optics, signal processing and rotational dynamics. We value practical and independent work, and all pupils pursue exciting internal coursework opportunities. We also ensure that all pupils are introduced to or develop their understanding of using code in computational physics. In the Remove (Year 13), topics include modelling, astronomy and particle physics alongside thermodynamics and electromagnetism.

Throughout the course, pupils will have opportunities to develop practical skills, practise data handling, use their imagination, use ICT as a research tool, increase their understanding of the importance of Mathematics in Physics and to see Physics in social and historical

contexts. There will be internal coursework elements that will focus on using and developing instrumentation, and on collating and presenting information. The often deliberately open-ended nature of the investigative work reflects the emphasis on experiencing Physics as it really is.

## Syllabus and Code

CAIE A Level 9702 Physics

## Enrichment

Physics offers a wide range of enrichment activities both as extra-curricular opportunities and integral to the internal course. These include lectures, independent projects, problem-solving competitions, engineering club, robotics competitions, presentations, seminars and astronomy evenings to name but a few. The department is exceptionally well equipped with a seismometer, solar telescope and up-to-date data-logging equipment, and there are opportunities to use the facilities for research. Indeed, some pupils have had their work published in journals. Our observatory offers incredible possibilities in Astronomy and we plan to develop a workshop to enhance pupil independence in practical project work. Pupils are also offered the opportunity to compete in Physics competitions throughout the year.

## After Westminster

Those thinking of pursuing Physics, Physics with Mathematics, Theoretical Physics or Engineering at university should consider taking physics, Mathematics and Further Mathematics plus a fourth arts or science subject. It is extremely helpful to study further mathematics if a pupil is considering Physics or Engineering at one of the top universities. Without Mathematics, Physics cannot be taken beyond school level. Physics as a subject is well regarded by medical schools, so it is worth considering it with Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics. Many universities now offer degree courses in Physics or Engineering with a foreign language, so it could be worth combining Physics with a modern language. Beyond university, graduates with physics-linked

degrees have skills (including numeracy, problem solving, data analysis and communication of ideas) that are in high demand in diverse sectors.

## Subject requirements for the course

Candidates should be on track to achieve a grade 8 or 9 in Physics (or Double Award) at (I)GCSE, as well as a good grade in Mathematics. Whilst it is not compulsory to take A Level Mathematics when opting for Physics, it is strongly advised to do so; in most years, nearly all A Level Physics pupils take at least one A Level in Mathematics.

## Entrance examination

Whilst the entrance examination consists of some short-answer questions designed to test basic knowledge and recall, the emphasis is on testing a candidate's ability to encounter a new idea and run with it quickly. The exam combines a variety of questions, some for which pupils are expected to perform calculations – for example, a question might require a candidate to calculate the acceleration of a rocket of a certain mass, with a certain combination of forces on it. Other questions may introduce an area of physics they have not seen before and ask them to think critically about it – for example, a question might give some information about a recent experiment they will not have come across, perhaps at CERN or NASA, and the candidate will have to demonstrate that they can analyse what the data are showing.

The exam is not based on any particular (I)GCSE course and, as such, no particular knowledge is assumed beyond Key Stage 3 (i.e. Year 9). Extensive revision is not required but problem solving is a skill that requires practice; Isaac Physics or Intermediate Olympiad style questions might be a useful resource for a pupil to decide if Physics is right for them.

# Theology and Philosophy

Head of Department **Mr Stephen Bailey**  
Email [stephen.bailey@westminster.org.uk](mailto:stephen.bailey@westminster.org.uk)

The Theology and Philosophy Department is a centre of robust exchange of ideas, historic and contemporary, in which pupils are taught to scrutinise ideas, explore systems of thought and ask what it means to believe. We attest to the rigour of strong philosophical training and the ability to think, speak and write with clarity, care and at times creativity. We seek to mine the intellectual foundations of Western philosophical thought and the subsequent Judaeo-Christian culture, but not at the cost of more expansive thought around different cultures, ideas and theories. We are a home to charitable and open learning, and Theology and Philosophy teachers at Westminster seek the wholistic good of the pupils who pass through our classrooms.

## Curriculum

In the Sixth Form and Remove (Years 12 and 13), we use the OCR Religious Studies A Level to provide a spine for our academic outcomes, but we leave much room for exploring the deeper territories of Theology and Philosophy, which includes core texts like Jean-Paul Sartre's *Existentialism and Humanism*, and other additional non-specification material like Virtue Ethics, Free Will and Determinism, and moral psychology. We seek to ensure pupils understand the historic harmony between Theology and Philosophy, and the points at which modernity signifies abrupt ruptures and movement in philosophical thought. Our teaching is discursive, pupil- focused, and the pupils who thrive make utmost use of the classroom as a place to form, refine and shape ideas, ready for excellent critical essay writing. For A Level pupils, the department is a place in which political and legal philosophy, medical ethics, artificial intelligence and genetic technologies can all be explored in a cross-disciplinary way.

## Syllabus and Code

OCR A Level H573 Religious Studies

## Enrichment

Each year, we aim to host an in-house Conference with a combination of pupil and external academic expertise on offer. We have worked with the Anscombe Bioethics Centre in recent years. Pupils are frequent attendees and presenters at the Young Philosophers Conference held in association with the Royal Institute of Philosophy. Pupils often pursues independent work for awards such as the New College of Humanities Prize. Academic Law sits within the department too, and pupils who wish to can pursue the Neuberger Law Prize with guaranteed publication in the New Law Journal for the winning prize.

A number of our pupils become members of the team for the Independent Schools Mock Trial Competition. The department's close connection to the Horizons Lecture Series at Westminster School, the aspiration for which is to expose our pupils to global best practice with the fullness of interdisciplinarity, drives our relationship with international universities.

## After Westminster

Theology and Philosophy is a relevant course for those pupils considering reading Philosophy (and related courses such as PPE), Social Sciences or Law at university. Equally it complements those following more analytic disciplines and offers space for developing coherence and cogency in argument – future medics, for example, can find room to deal with complex medical ethical questions.

## Subject requirements for the course

Candidates should ideally be on track to achieve a grade 8 or 9 at (I)GCSE level in Humanities, which might include Religious Studies. There is, however, no prerequisite to have a (I)GCSE in Religious Studies to embark on the A Level.

## Entrance examination

The entrance examination for Theology and Philosophy does not presume any prior philosophical or theological knowledge. The exam consists of a passage from a philosophical or theological text and questions related to that passage. There is also an essay-type question on a general topic related to philosophy or ethics. Successful candidates will demonstrate a high level of engagement with the questions and a clarity and originality of thought.

*“The standard of my written work across all my subjects has benefitted extraordinarily from the rigour of our writing in Philosophy and the support of the teachers to expand us beyond the scope of the syllabus to a wide range of intellectuals, inheriting and engaging with debates as scholars ourselves.”*

*Amia, Year 13 pupil*



## How to find your way around



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Liddell's House                           | 9 Common Room and Head Master's Study  |
| 2 The Sir Adrian Boulton Building           | 10 Hakluyt's House                     |
| 3 Ashburnham House Library and Lecture Room | 11 College Hall (medieval dining room) |
| 4 School (the School Hall)                  | 12 The Weston Building                 |
| 5 Dryden's and Wren's House, College        | 13 Milne's House                       |
| 6 Grant's House                             | 14 Ashburnham House                    |
| 7 Rigaud's House                            | 15 Purcell's House                     |
| 8 Busby's House                             | 16 Sutcliff's (the Art School)         |
| 9 Common Room and Head Master's Study       | 17 Manoukian Music Centre              |





## 1300s

1370 First references to the School in Westminster Abbey's records

## 1400s

1461 The School moves from the Monastic Almonry to Dean's Yard

## 1500s

1540 Dissolution of the Benedictine Monastery, Henry VIII ensures the School's survival by statute

1560 New charter for the 'College of St Peter' from Elizabeth I with provision for 40 scholars

1561 Links established with Christ Church, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge

1562 First Election Dinner

1564 Elizabeth I attends the Latin Play, performed in College Hall

1599 Former Monks' Dormitory first used as the schoolroom

## 1600s

1638 Dr Richard Busby becomes Head Master, serving until his death in 1695

1649 Busby leads the School in prayers for Charles I on the day of his execution

1659 Busby Library built

1666 The Great Fire of London, Dean Dolben and Scholars save St Dunstan's in the East

1679 The King's Scholars receive the Royal Pardon for their murder of a bailiff

1685 Westminster pupils' first formal attendance at the coronation

## 1700s

1733 The New Scholars' Dormitory, designed by Lord Burlington, is completed

1746 First recorded cricket match – Old Westminsters v. Old Etonians

1750 The Grant family begins to manage a boarding house in Little Dean's Yard

1753 First recorded 'pancake grease'

1786 Rebellion in the School – Francis Burdett felled by Head Master's cudgel

## 1800s

1810 Vincent Square secured as the School's playing field

1813 The School's Rowing Ledger begins

1837 Westminster's victory over Eton at rowing hastens death of William IV

1855 Last wholly oral 'Challenge' scholarship examination

1858 Prince Albert and the Prince of Wales attend the Latin Play

1868 Public Schools Act gives Westminster independence from the Abbey

1877 First House for day boys 'Homeboarders' House' is established

## 1900s

1906 Science laboratories built in Great College Street

1939 Outbreak of the Second World War, School evacuated from London

1940 The Blitz: Busby Library destroyed

1941 School and College destroyed in an air raid

1943 Under School opened in Little Dean's Yard

1950 George VI reopens College

1960 HM Queen Elizabeth II reopens School, marking Westminster's Quatercentenary

1967 First female pupil joins the School

1973 Girls first become full members of the School

1988 Robert Hooke Science Centre opened by The Queen

## 2000s

2001 Opening of Millicent Fawcett Hall (the School's theatre)

2005 Opening of the Manoukian Music Centre and Weston Building

2010 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Elizabethan foundation: HM Queen Elizabeth II visits the School and unveils a statue of Queen Elizabeth I, by sculptor Matthew Spender

2014 New Sports Centre at the Royal Horticultural Hall opened by The Queen

2017 First female Queen's Scholars join College

2018 Launch of The Westminster School Campaign – the School's major Bursary campaign

2019 Opening of the rebuilt Sir Adrian Boult Building

2022 Redevelopment and refurbishment of the Pavilion at Vincent Square due to be completed in September



## WESTMINSTER ABBEY

The Abbey is a breathtaking place and it's a huge privilege to have it as the School's chapel. All pupils attend services twice a week and the School holds concerts and special services in the Abbey throughout the year, giving everyone a chance to speak and perform in this beautiful and historic building.





## WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

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