

# PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **West Thames College Achieves Outstanding Ofsted Rating**

West Thames College, a NWL Health and Social Care Skills Academy partner, has received an [Outstanding rating in its latest Ofsted inspection](#), carried out in December 2024. This achievement marks a significant milestone in the College's Journey to Outstanding in further education and skills and reflects very positively on the partnership working in the region.

The Ofsted inspection team rated the College as [Outstanding overall](#) as well as in 7 of the 8 key judgements, with the 8th area rated as Good. The College was graded as Outstanding in: the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, leadership and management, education programmes for young people, adult learning programmes, provision for learners with high needs and rated Good for apprenticeships. In addition, our contribution to meeting skills needs was rated as strong.

### **What it's like to be a learner at West Thames College**

Ofsted highlighted the college's positive environment, noting that learners "enjoy learning and socialising in highly inclusive, calm and welcoming environments at both campuses." The report also praised the behaviour of students, stating they "*behave impeccably*" and interact with respect and harmony.

Young learners benefit from "*a broad and challenging curriculum*" which is complemented by strong employer partnerships.

The report also recognised the transformative impact of the college on adult learners, many of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Inspectors noted that adult learners “*thrive*” at the college, describing their experience as “*life changing.*”

They benefit from a “*highly relevant curriculum that equips them with the skills they need to progress in their careers and lives.*” For the apprentice provision, inspectors saw that apprentices gain “*relevant substantial new knowledge*” and “*benefit from external sector experts who teach highly technical elements of the curriculum.*”

The College’s provision for learners with high needs was another standout feature of the report. Inspectors praised the “*excellent support*” provided to these learners, highlighting that they are equipped with “*skills they need*”, they have “*extensive opportunities to develop their independence, employability and life skills*” and are “*fully included in college life.*”

“*Learners and apprentices are enthusiastic about their learning, highly motivated and ambitious to do well.*” They feel safe and secure at the college.

### **Contribution to Meeting Skills**

The report commended the College for its strong contribution to meeting regional and national skills needs. Inspectors noted that leaders and managers “*have a strong commitment to meeting skills needs*” and are “*proactive and respected partners who play a lead role in the local borough and across west London.*”

“*The well-established, strong strategic partnerships*” are used very well to “*align the content of the curriculums closely to the regional and national skills needs*” and are co-designed with employers through “*effective employer advisory boards*”, for example “*they have designed courses with a strong focus on logistics, aviation and mental health for adults who work in the social care sector, as a direct request from their stakeholders.*”

Employers and stakeholders are consistently involved in designing and teaching the curriculum. “*For example, on the healthcare T-level course, staff from health and social care services provide clinicians for masterclasses and occupational therapy events.*”

## What's next?

This achievement reflects our Journey to Outstanding which we've been on since our 2021

Inspection where we were rated as "Good". Throughout this period, we have maintained our focus on providing an outstanding student experience for each and every one of our students.

This Outstanding rating, reaffirms our position as a leading provider of further education and skills in London. We remain absolutely committed to continue to be "Outstanding", empowering our current and future students, equipping them with the skills they need whilst meeting the evolving needs of our communities, our partners and the businesses we serve.

For more information about this Ofsted report, visit [www.west-thames.ac.uk/ofsted](http://www.west-thames.ac.uk/ofsted).

**ENDS**

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### Photo Captions:

Photo 1:

West Thames College staff and students gather in the Atrium Building on 23 January 2025 to celebrate the College's Outstanding Ofsted rating. Photo: West Thames College.

Photo 2:

West Thames College staff and students gather outside Spring Grove House on the College's Isleworth Campus on 23 January 2025 to celebrate the College's Outstanding Ofsted rating. Photo: West Thames College.

## Notes for Editors

### About West Thames College

- West Thames College has two campuses within the London Borough of Hounslow: in London Road, Isleworth and in Boundaries Road, Feltham.
- Ofsted rated West Thames College outstanding in December 2024.
- The College is London's Number 1 College for student achievement for the second consecutive year.
- Our overall achievement rate for 2022-23 stands at an impressive 91%, placing us in the top 3% nationally.

### Our Courses

- The college offers a wide range of full-time and part-time courses and apprenticeships – from basic/introductory level courses right up to higher education courses – for school leavers, adults and employers.
- Students have access to state-of-the-art industry-standard facilities, workshops, salons and studios.

- Teachers are industry professionals who pass on their knowledge, skills and contacts to the students.
- We ensure students gain employability skills. Courses include: work placements, trips and visits to exhibitions, trade shows and organisations; talks and workshops led by industry professionals, and students take part in, and often win, national and international industry-led competitions.
- Subjects offered include: Accounting, Art & Design, Beauty Therapy, Business and Administration, Childcare, Computing and ICT, Construction, Engineering, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Hairdressing, Health and Care, Makeup, Media and Music, Motor Vehicles, Performing Arts, Science, Sport, Supported Learning, Teacher Training, Travel and Tourism, Uniformed Public Services.

### Isleworth Campus

- The main campus is based in London Road, Isleworth and had been transformed over a decade ago following a £70 Million rebuild project.
- The Atrium building opened to students in 2010 and includes: a professional theatre, dance and performance studios, TV studio, music recording and editing suites, hair and beauty salons and makeup studios, a three-storey Learning Resources Centre, state-of-the-art gym and sports hall, canteen and common rooms.
- The new Sir Joseph Banks Building opened in September 2011, with state-of-the-art classrooms using the latest in new technology, IT suites, art and design studios and science laboratories.
- The campus is surrounded by landscaped lawns, a full-sized sports pitch and an astroturf pitch.
- The centre piece of the Isleworth Campus is the beautiful grade II listed Spring Grove House which was also carefully restored and refurbished in 2011-12.

### Feltham Skills Centre

- The Feltham Skills Centre is a small centre based at the end of Boundaries Road in Feltham within the former De Brome school building. The Centre trains students specialising in practical, vocational skills such as construction, catering, engineering and motor vehicle maintenance. The centre has purpose-built workshops and training kitchens.
- We started to offer part-time evening courses for adults at the Skills Centre from September 2013.
- The Feltham Skills Centre was officially opened in 2003 by former PM Gordon Brown (then Chancellor of the Exchequer). The Skills Centre was set up by West Thames College working in partnership with Hounslow Council, the two Feltham secondary schools, BAA and other agencies to tackle the low levels of employability skills and poor academic achievement prevalent in the area at the time.
- The Skills Centre has good links with employers and most students progress into employment, apprenticeships or higher level study.

### History

- The college became known as West Thames College in 1993, but it has been an educational institute since 1922 when it was bought by Middlesex County for use as Spring Grove Secondary School (later Spring Grove Grammar School). The school moved to Lampton in 1959 and the premises were taken over by Isleworth Polytechnic, becoming Hounslow Borough College and finally West Thames College in 1993.
- The centre piece of the Isleworth Campus is the beautiful grade II listed Spring Grove House, once home to the world renowned botanist and explorer Sir Joseph Banks (from 1779-1820), who sailed on the Endeavour with Captain Cook on a voyage of discovery to the 'new world'. He was also president of the Royal Society and the first 'director' of Kew Gardens.
- In the Victorian era, Spring Grove House was also home to the Pears family of Pears soap fame who provided employment for many local residents. One of Andrew Pears' sons was tragically killed on the Titanic in 1912.
- Spring Grove House was used as a private convalescent home and a military hospital during World War I.
- In the late 1960s, modernist concrete blocks were erected in the college grounds and Spring Grove House was about to be demolished, but it was thankfully saved at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour.
- The redevelopment of the West Thames College campus, with Spring Grove House as its central focus, was completed in 2012.

### Famous alumni

- Freddie Mercury – lead singer/musician for rock group Queen
- Rufus Sewell – award-winning actor
- Ann Marie Duff – actor (Shameless, Elizabeth)
- Martin Hancock – actor (Coronation Street, Holby City)
- Mark and Scott Morris – 1990s indie band, The Bluetones
- Celena Cherry – 1990s girl band, The Honeyz
- Rizwan Shebani – (Little Chris in EastEnders, 2013)