Reading Ex. > West Thames College Background Information for Candidates

West Thames College (*initially known as Hounslow Borough College*) came into existence in 1976 following the merger of Isleworth Polytechnic with part of Chiswick Polytechnic. Both parent colleges, in various guises, enjoyed a long tradition of service to the community dating back to the 1890s. The college is located at London Road, Isleworth, on a site occupied by the Victorian house of the Pears family. Spring Grove House. An earlier house of the same name on this site had been the home of Sir Joseph Banks, the botanist who named Botany Bay with Captain Cook in 1770. Later he founded Kew Gardens.

Situated at the heart of West London, West Thames College is ideally placed to serve the training and education needs of local industry and local people. But its influence reaches much further than the immediate locality. Under its former name, Hounslow Borough College, it had already established a regional, national and international reputation for excellence. In fact, about eight per cent of its students come from continental Europe and further afield, whilst a further 52 per cent are from outside the immediate area. Since 1 April 1993, when it became independent of the local authority and adopted its new title, West Thames College (WTC) has continued to build on that first-class reputation.

These days there is no such thing as a typical student. More than half of West Thames College's 6000 students are over 19 years old. Some of these will be attending college part-time under their employers' training schemes. Others will want to learn new skills purely out of interest, or out of a desire to improve their promotion chances, or they may want a change in career.

The college is also very popular with 16–18-year-olds, who see it as a practical alternative to a further two years at school. They want to study in the more adult atmosphere the college provides. They can choose from a far wider range of subjects than it would be practical for a sixth form to offer. If they want to go straight into employment, they can still study at college to gain qualifications relevant to the job, either on a day-release basis or through Network or the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme.

Look at the introduction to West Thames College (WTC) and the statements (1-7) below. Write

YES	***if the statement agrees with the claims of the writer***
NO	***if the statement contradicts the claims of the writer***
NOT GIVEN	***if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this***

1. Chiswick Polytechnic was closed at the same time West Thames College was opened. _____

2. Most of the students at the college come from outside the local area. _____

3. The college changed its name to West Thames College in 1993. _____

4. There are currently 6000 students over the age of 19 attending the college. _____

5. Students under the age of 16 cannot attend any of the courses offered by the college. _____

6. The college offers a more mature environment in which to learn than a school. _____

7. There are fewer subjects to study in the sixth form of a school than at the college. _____

Level B2

Text taken and adapted from Cambridge (2000) Cambridge IELTS 2. 2nd Ed. CUP. UK.
Exercises adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Reading Ex. > West Thames College Services For Students

A - As a full-time student at WTC you will have your own Personal Mentor who will see you each week to guide you through your studies and discuss any problems which may arise. We take a co- operative approach to the assessment of your work and encourage you to contribute to discussion.

B - This service provides specialist assistance and courses for those who need to improve their writing, oral, and numeracy skills for the successful completion of their college courses. Help with basic skills is also available.

C - This service is available to anyone who is undecided as to which course to follow. It is very much a service for the individual, whatever your age, helping you to select the best option to suit your circumstances. The service includes educational advice, guidance and support, including a facility for accrediting your previous experience – the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). The Admissions Office is open Monday to Friday 9 AM to 5 PM. All interviews are confidential and conducted in a relaxed and friendly way. Evening appointments are available on request.

D - The College Bookshop stocks a wide range of books, covering aspects of all courses, together with a good selection of stationery. It also supplies stamps, phone cards, blank videos and computer disks. The shop is open at times specified in the Student Handbook.

E - When students are weary from study and want to relax and enjoy themselves, they may participate in several recreational activities. Depending on demand, we offer a range of sporting activities including football, badminton, basketball, table tennis, volleyball, weight training and aerobics. For the non-sporting students, we offer a debating society, video club, hair and beauty sessions, as well as a range of creative activities. Suggestions for activities from students are always welcome.

F - This confidential service is available if you have practical or personal difficulties during your course of study, whether of a financial or personal nature. Our Student Advisors can help you directly or put you in touch with someone else who can give you the help you need.

G - The College Nurses are there for general medical advice and for treatment of illness or injury. All visits are confidential. First aid boxes and fully trained First Aiders are also on hand at various locations around the college.

H - West London employers have a permanent base in the center of college, with access to a database of more than 24,000 jobs available locally and in Central London. They will also help you with job applications and interview techniques.

Look at the WTC's Services for students. Each paragraph A-H describes a specific service provided by the college. From the list below (i-xi) choose the most suitable summaries for each paragraph (A-H). *NB There are more summaries than paragraphs, so you will not use them all.*

i. A shop for the books and stuff needed to study
ii. Counselling and welfare willing to listen, offer advice or arrange a referral
iii. An Examinations Office arranging exams and issuing certificates
iv. A Registrar's Office handling all fee payments and related enquiries
v. A Medical Service offering on-site assistance with health-related problems
vi. A tutorial system for regular one-to-one guidance, support and feedback.
vii. Careers Advice helping students into employment
viii. An Admissions Service aiding in choosing and applying for higher education courses
ix. A Student Union representing students on college committees
x. Clubs and societies for students' free time
xi. A Learning Support Service supporting students in studying, presenting information and handling numbers

8. Paragraph A _____
Example: **Paragraph B** *xi*
9. Paragraph C _____
10. Paragraph D _____
11. Paragraph E _____
12. Paragraph F _____
13. Paragraph G _____
14. Paragraph H _____

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