



## WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

# PLATFORM<sup>+</sup>

Platform Plus is an academic programme aimed at ambitious, high-attaining year 10 students, run by Westminster School. Students participate in one of two streams:

- **STEM stream:** covering Physics, Biology, Chemistry and Computer Science
- **Liberal Arts stream** covering History, Modern Languages, Religious Studies, English, Classics, Geography and History of Art

**Programme objective:** Our aim is to provide an enriching, extending and challenging learning experience, which will enable students to develop their passions and enhance their critical thinking beyond GCSE curricula. The courses seek to inspire and prepare students for study of the relevant subjects in Key Stage 5 and Higher Education.

**Participants:** With a particular focus on disadvantaged students (for example, those eligible for the Pupil Premium), we work with academically gifted students from maintained sector schools who have a particular interest in either STEM or Liberal Arts subjects. Participating students will be in year 10 in January 2021. Twenty students take part in each pathway each year, from a range of London secondary schools

**Dates and times:** The programme will run on ten Saturdays (see below), from 9.30am to 1pm, initially on Zoom, and as soon as possible here on site at Westminster School.

23<sup>rd</sup> January – *induction and first session*  
6<sup>th</sup> February  
27<sup>th</sup> February  
20<sup>th</sup> March  
24<sup>th</sup> April  
8<sup>th</sup> May

12<sup>th</sup> June  
26<sup>th</sup> June  
11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> July – summer school  
11<sup>th</sup> September  
2<sup>nd</sup> October – *final session and graduation*

## Online provision

Owing to Covid-19 related restrictions, the programme will run online initially. As soon as we are able to welcome students on site, we will do so.

All participants will be issued with a dedicated @PlatformSchool email account, with access to the full suite of Office365 applications. Students join Zoom lessons via their Platform account. Lessons are designed to be accessible on whatever device the student is able to use – phone, laptop or tablet.

## Course Details:

- In the **STEM** pathway, participants will be able to study stretching and challenging material in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Computer Science. The course is delivered by Westminster School teachers.
- In the **Liberal Arts** pathway, Students will study the theme of 'nationalism' through the lens of a range of humanities subjects (English Lit, History, MFL, Religious Studies, History of Art, Classics). We will encourage students to consider and explore the links between these subjects and engage critically in the modes of study that these subjects offer. Academic sessions will be led by specialist Westminster teachers. No prior study of Classics or History of Art will be required, but we anticipate that all students will be studying the full complement of five EBacc subjects.

The programme is fully funded by Westminster School, and there is no cost to participating pupils or their schools.

## Benefits for students

- 10 sessions of engaging, challenging learning in their preferred subjects, designed to inspire and accelerate their progress
- A 2-day, cross-curricular summer school in July
- Access to Westminster School's programme of careers events
- Upon graduation, students receive the *Westminster Commendation*, as a formal recognition of their commitment, engagement and learning skills

## **What do students say about Platform+?**

In our 2020 programme evaluation...

- 100% of participants felt that they had learned things they wouldn't otherwise have learned
- 100% of participants felt they had been academically challenged
- 86% of participants said that they felt more confident approaching their A-level studies
- 86% of participants felt that the programme had boosted their academic confidence
- 81% said they had become interested in new or different subjects
- 73% of participants felt that the course had helped them consider their GCSE learning in different ways
- Students on average gave the teaching a rating of 4.77 out of 5
- 86% of participants said they would definitely recommend Platform+ to other students in their schools; the remaining 14% said they would 'probably' recommend it