

Tutor Profile



David Watkins

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Think of me as a teacher in a real classroom – someone who is approachable and ready to listen and help. Of course we're not face-to-face in a classroom, but, thanks to the Internet, you have got my full attention. That would not be the case in a classroom. We'll be working together one-to-one, and that is a definite advantage of the course you are starting.

I studied from home myself, A-level History and English Literature in the 1990s, and in those days assignments went back and forth by post. Things are different now. The Internet gives you close contact with your tutor, so please take advantage of that. As a former home student, I hope I can see things from your point of view. Studying at home is sometimes difficult and studying on your own takes a little extra perseverance. In a school or college you are one of a group, and they support and encourage you. On your own, your problems can seem bigger than they really are. Don't be shy to raise any that crop up.

My degrees include a B.A. in History from the University of Bristol, and an M.A. in Imperial and Commonwealth Studies from Birkbeck College, part of the University of London. I also hold a PGCE.

After having been to university as a mature student, I became a teacher. Prior to university I was a newspaper reporter on various English weekly, evening and daily papers. I also worked as a reporter on papers in the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain and for a news features agency in India.

Now I teach History for Key Stage 3, IGCSE and A-level. I have taught in Further Education colleges in Kent and Greater Manchester, and given History home tuition to KS3, IGCSE and A-level students. I have also taught History at an International school in Tajikistan, in Central Asia, for eight years. The school followed the English National Curriculum. Quite a few people have never heard of Tajikistan: it's a small mountain state wedged between Afghanistan and China. To reach the sea from Tajikistan, you must cross at least two other countries. Another claim to fame is a mountain of solid salt that Marco Polo saw on his way to China!

My wife comes from Tajikistan and we have two children. My home is in Oldham, Greater Manchester, on the edge of the Peak District National Park. At present I'm back with my family in Central Asia, this time in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan (look it up in your atlas), teaching History at another international school. But although I may be a few thousand miles away, it'll seem like we're in the next room when we're connected via Skype.

Studying at home not only offers you flexibility and allows you to work at your own pace; it gives you the chance to work in a more focused way than you might amid the distractions of school or college. So make the best of the time you have for this course, use your potential and show what you can achieve. Good luck with the course and please don't hesitate to contact me when you need help.