

Space To Explore Potential (STEP) 2025



What is STEP?

STEP is a Year 12 programme for Black-heritage students, offering a range of opportunities for you to experience student life both academically and socially in an inclusive, supportive environment, find out more about Durham and get ready for university applications.



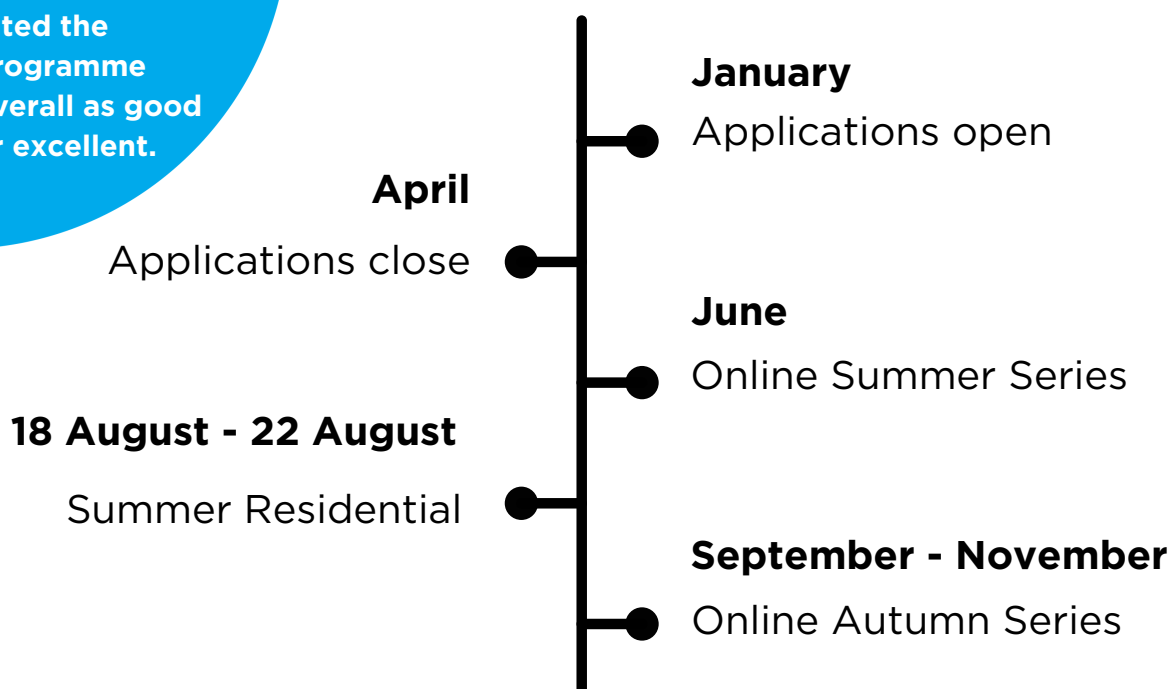
Key Benefits

- **A guaranteed, alternative offer** (typically two grades lower) from Durham University if you successfully complete the programme. (Subject specific eligibility criteria apply).
- Learn from **world-leading academics** and experience **university style** academic sessions.
- Receive **key** information, advice and guidance about the **UCAS application process**, personal statements and student finance.
- Experience **student life** in a **safe and inclusive environment** during residentials.
- Speak to our **current students** and find out what student life is like at Durham and their experiences.
- Take part in our summer and autumn **online webinar series** for curated advice and guidance.
- Connect with **like-minded people** from **different backgrounds**.

96%

rated the programme overall as good or excellent.

Key Dates in 2025



Application window: 28 January 2025 – 3 April 2025

We aim to communicate the outcome of your application by the end of April.

Why Should I Apply?

The programme will give you the opportunity to come to events and activities during Year 12 and 13 and provide an insight into what it is like to study at Durham University.



"The academic sessions were very fun and insightful, all of the content was interesting and relevant to the current political climate."
STEP 2024 Student.

What subjects are involved?

In order to fully explore their potential, STEP students will have the opportunity to take part in academic taster sessions.

Applicants will be asked to rank their **top three** academic subjects to participate in on STEP. Upon successful completion of the STEP programme, students will be eligible for a **guaranteed, alternative offer** from Durham University.

Subjects Offered:

- Accounting
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Biosciences
- Business (Marketing & Management)
- Criminology & Sociology
- Earth Sciences
- Economics & Finance
- Engineering
- English Literature
- Geography
- History
- Law
- Mathematics
- Philosophy
- Politics
- Psychology
- Politics
- Physics
- Theology & Religion



*Before applying we recommend that you check the specific requirements for each subject on our website or by scanning the QR code.

*Subjects offered are subjected to volume of interest. If the subject of your choice is unavailable this cycle, we may offer you a place for a different subject.

Who Can Apply?

STEP aims to support students who are typically underrepresented in higher education and particularly at Durham. As places are highly sought after, we use our eligibility and selection criteria to help us identify those applicants who we feel will benefit the most from the programme.

To qualify applicants must:

- Be in **Year 12**.
- Be attending a **state school** or **college**.
- Be currently **living in the UK** for a **minimum of three years** prior to the time of application.
- Be a **UK national** or have **“settled status”**, except those on a child student visa and student visa.
- Be a **Black-heritage student**, which includes those who identify as being of Black-African, Caribbean, Dual, or Mixed Heritage.



70.2%

STEP offer holders have applied to Durham in 2021.

Additional Criteria:

We prioritise students from underrepresented backgrounds who have achieved at least eight GCSEs or equivalent at grade 6 and have a strong level of achievement for relevant subjects.

For example: estranged students, first-generation scholars, those eligible for free school meals (FSM), attended schools or colleges with low attainment and low progression rates to higher education.

We also welcome students with disabilities and reasonable adjustments will be made to facilitate access to all events.

*Information and programme details subject to change and are correct at the time of publication.

How to Apply

Apply online by visiting durham.ac.uk/step or by scanning the QR code.

As part of the form you will also need to provide the details of a teacher at your school, who can verify the details you have provided in your application. We recommend picking a teacher who you feel knows you best and informing them that you have chosen them. This way, your teacher can keep a close eye on their emails ready to verify your application. Successful STEP applications are subject to teacher verification.

You will also be asked for a safeguarding contact; someone who we can contact in an emergency during an event.



**Applications open 28
January 2025 and close 3
April 2025.**



Applications

The application form will ask you for your details including your personal information, education details and some questions about the eligibility criteria. It should take no more than 20 minutes or so to complete. If you are unsure whether or not you meet the eligibility criteria and would like to discuss this further, we would encourage you to speak with a teacher in your school or contact us directly at step@durham.ac.uk.

*We also welcome speculative applications even if you do not meet all of the criteria.

*Guaranteed offer is only applicable for Year 13 UCAS applicants, with an option for a year deferral if needed.

Tips For Applying

- Make sure the **contact details** you provide (especially email address!) are **correct** and **up-to-date**. These are how we will get in touch about your application and throughout the programme.
- Make a note of the indicative dates for our events. **Attendance is compulsory** for all events as they are essential in assessing your success on the programme.
- Include any other **mitigating circumstances or information** on your personal background you would like us to be aware of.

99%

rated their programme mentors as good or excellent.



97%

would encourage other students like themselves to take part in the STEP programme.

**STEP 2024
Student Survey**

Unsuccessful?

If your application was not successful, this is **not** necessarily a reflection of your ability to study at Durham University and we would still encourage you to apply to the University through UCAS in Year 13. The STEP application form will ask you if you would like to receive news and updates from us regarding other relevant information and events. If you select yes to this then you will still receive these communications from us even if you are not successful in gaining a place on the programme.

*Successful applicants are not required to choose Durham University through UCAS. However as the aim of the programme is to support students in their pursuit of a place at Durham University, we ask that you take this into consideration when choosing to apply,

Other Opportunities

Summer Schools



Aside from STEP, we also run other access summer school programmes such as **SP** and **Sutton Trust**. To find out more information, visit durham.ac.uk/access-engagement.

Online Resources



Our team have created some useful resources and videos to help you find out more about **student life** here at Durham.

Futures in STEM



An academic and pastoral support programme, for **Year 12** students considering applying to study **Chemistry, Maths** or **Physics**.

Open Days



Open Days give you a chance to explore our facilities, chat with your potential future lecturers, hear from our current students and even tour our unique student accommodation. Our Open Days are held in **June** and **September** each year.

Contact Us

Schools Outreach & Widening Participation

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