

Destination Durham 2026



What is Destination Durham?

Destination Durham supports students from the North East of England who are typically underrepresented in higher education, particularly at Durham, to apply to Durham University. Destination Durham gives you multiple opportunities in Year 12 and 13 to come on-site, visit departments, Colleges, and the city whilst benefitting from several online activities across the year. As a non-residential programme we will cover the cost of travel to the University, and all events are fully catered free of charge. Find out more about university life in a flexible, unique programme which lets you select activities most relevant to you and your higher education journey.

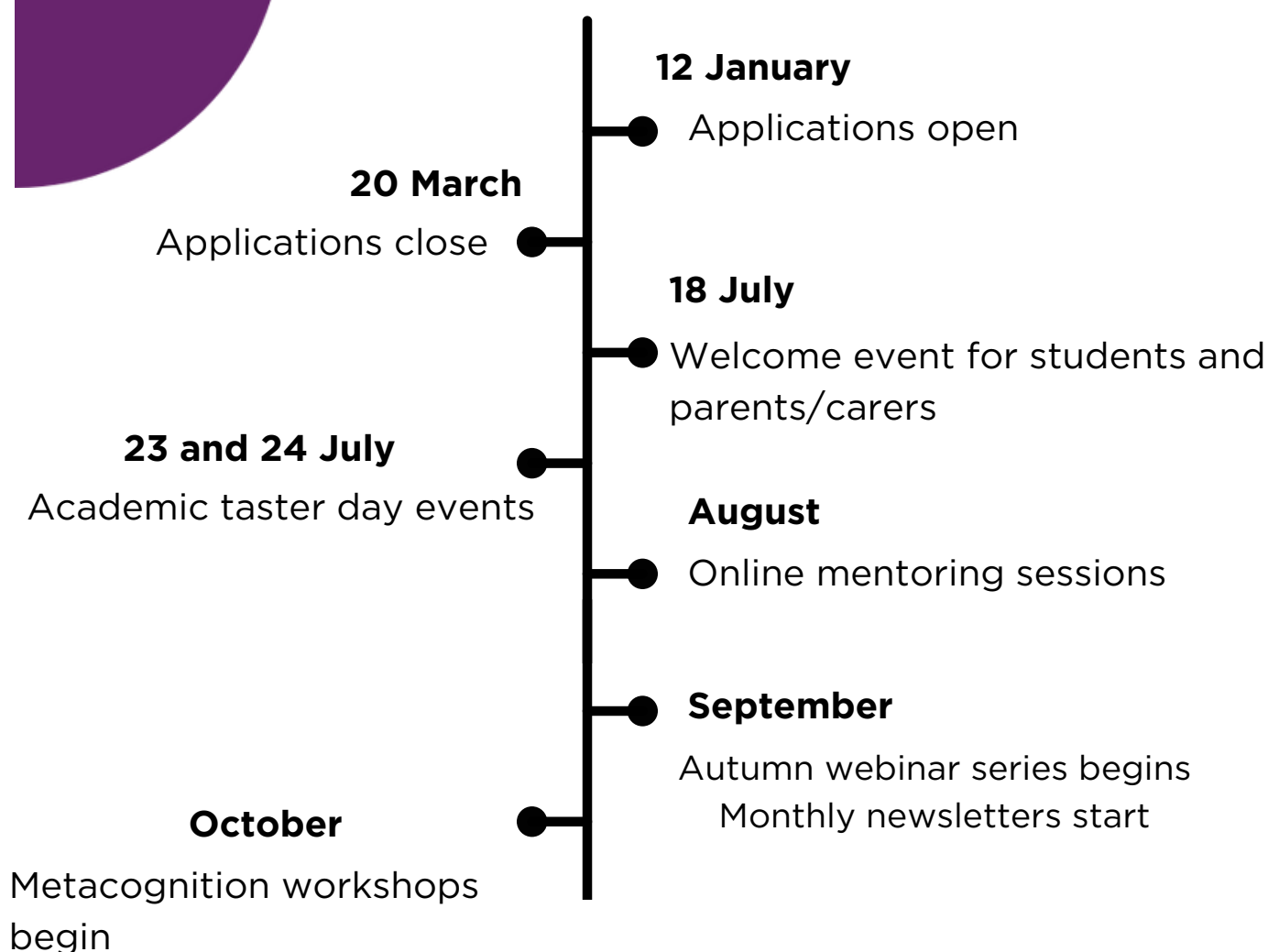
Key benefits

1. **A guaranteed, alternative offer** (typically two grades lower) from Durham University if you successfully complete the programme. Subject specific eligibility criteria apply.
2. Learn from **world-leading academics** and experience **university style** academic sessions.
3. Receive **key** information, advice and guidance about the **UCAS application process**, personal statements and student finance.
4. Experience a taste of **student life** in a **safe and inclusive environment** at our day events.
5. Engage with our **current students** and find out what student life is like at Durham.
6. Discover more about our **supportive College communities**.
7. Connect with **like-minded people** from **different backgrounds**.





Key dates in 2026



Application window: 12 January 2026 – 20 March 2026

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

Key dates in 2027

Dates to be confirmed, but activity is likely to include:

- Spring 2027 - Uni prep webinars provided by our partners, The Brilliant Club.
- Spring 2027 - Post-offer Visit Days.
- Spring/summer 2027 - on-site College visits.

Subjects

In order to fully explore your potential, Destination Durham students will have the opportunity to take part in academic taster sessions.

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



Subjects offered:

- Accounting
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Biosciences
- Business (Marketing & Management), Economics, Finance
- Classics & Ancient History
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Criminology & Sociology
- Earth Sciences
- Education Studies & Primary Education
- Engineering
- English Literature
- Geography
- History
- Law
- Mathematics
- Modern Languages & Cultures (French, German & Spanish)
- Music
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sport & Exercise Sciences
- Theology & Religion



*We recommend that you check the specific requirements for each subject before applying on our website.

*Subjects offered are subject to change.

*Subjects offered are subject 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?

Destination Durham 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 based in the **North East of England**.
- Have achieved a **total** GCSE score of at least 48 from your top 8 GCSEs, this must include English Language and Mathematics.
- 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 or student visa.
- Attended schools or colleges with low attainment and low progression rates to higher education.



We have additional opportunities that may interest students of Black-heritage including African, Caribbean, dual or mixed heritage. For further details follow the web link in the 'Other opportunities' section on the back page of this brochure.



Additional criteria:

We prioritise students from underrepresented backgrounds. For example: Looked After Young People, estranged students, first-generation scholars, or those eligible for free school meals (FSM).

We 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 in January 2026.

How to apply

Apply online by visiting durham.ac.uk/visit-us/schools/access-engagement/destination-durham/ 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 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 and who can give permission for you to take part in the programme.



**Applications open 12
January 2026 and close
20 March 2026.**



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 25 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 destination.durham@durham.ac.uk.

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

*The 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.
- In your application form, include any **mitigating circumstances or information** on your personal background you would like us to be aware of.



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 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 Destination Durham, we also run access summer school programmes (residential) such as **STEP** 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. Visit durham.ac.uk.

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

Durham University
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