

STEP Eligibility and Selection Criteria 2024

All applicants should be interested in exploring Durham University and finding out about what the University has to offer. As places are limited and highly sought after, we will use the eligibility and selection criteria to help us identify those applicants who we feel will benefit the most from the programme. Successful applicants are not required to choose Durham University through UCAS, however, the aim of the programme is to support students in their pursuit of a place at Durham University and we ask that applicants take this into consideration when choosing to apply.

Essential criteria – applicants must:

- Be in Year 12, or equivalent, and attending a UK state school or college.
- Be currently living in the UK and have been for a minimum of three years prior to the time of application;
- Be a UK national or have “settled status” such as indefinite leave to remain in the UK, except where residence in the UK is wholly or mainly for the purpose of full-time education;
- Be a Black-heritage student, which includes those who identify as being of Black - African, Caribbean, Dual, or Mixed Heritage.

Additionally, we may prioritise applicants meeting some of the following (this list is in no particular order):

- Have achieved at least eight GCSEs or equivalent at grade 6 or above and have a strong level of achievement for relevant subjects. We know some students experience mitigating circumstances, which can mean their results do not show their true potential. If you feel this applies to you then you can tell us in your application form. The teacher who supports your application can provide further details of any such circumstances through their part of the process too. Therefore, you may wish to speak with them about this before submitting your application.
- Come from neighbourhoods with low overall progression rates to higher education or high levels of financial, economic or social deprivation.¹
- Have experienced significant educational disruption, for example if you have been in local authority care or under a Care Order (i.e. you are a care leaver or care-experienced) or are irreconcilably estranged from both parents/carers.²
- Are in receipt of, or entitled to, Free School Meals, Pupil Premium funding and/or discretionary school/college payments, which are directly linked to financial hardship.

- Will be within the first generation in their family to attend university.

Applicants to Durham University STEP are encouraged to consider whether or not they might also benefit from applying to Durham University's Supported Progression programme or Durham's Sutton Trust Summer School. Students are welcome to apply to more than one of these programmes. However, if you are successful in gaining a place at more than one, you may be asked to choose one programme to pursue to enable us to offer programme places to a greater number of individual students.

All of our programmes welcome applications from disabled students and make reasonable adjustments to facilitate access to events at the University.

¹ To meet this criterion, students will need to be one of 1) Quintile 1 (POLAR4); OR 2) Quintile 2 (POLAR4) AND ACORN category 4 or 5. For further information see [Young participation by area - Office for Students](#) and [Acorn - The smarter consumer classification | CACI](#). We may also refer to the Office for Students new measure of participation, TUNDRA. More information about TUNDRA can be found online <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/about-tundra/>.

² We will consider personal circumstances of care-experience or estrangement on a case-by-case basis. A supporting statement from your school or college will be required as part of the application. By irreconcilably estranged we mean that you have had no contact at all with any of your parents/carers for at least 12 months prior to starting Year 12 and that this is unlikely to change. Alternatively, you may be able to demonstrate your estrangement on other grounds e.g. exceptional circumstances.