



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Academic Enrichment Programme



Residential: 28 August–1 September 2017

Follow-up activities: August 2017–April 2018

Closing date for applications: 10 March 2017

This programme is open to students living in the West Midlands and surrounding counties. If you live outside these areas, please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/he1

Information for teachers

This exciting and progressive programme at the University of Birmingham is aimed at supporting students to secure a place at research-led universities.

The Academic Enrichment Programme (AEP) will provide students with a greater knowledge of teaching and learning methods at research-intensive universities and an insight into university life as an undergraduate.

The programme will also instil confidence and raise aspirations and attainment during an important part of the higher education application process among gifted and talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds.



Eligibility criteria

The exacting social and academic criteria for the Academic Enrichment Programme are set in order to attract applications from the most able students who have no history of higher education in their family, but have a realistic opportunity of being offered a place at one of the leading research-led institutions in the country.

We hope that students who will be applying or thinking about applying to the University of Birmingham through the Access to Birmingham (A2B) Scheme are encouraged to make an application to this progressive programme, in order to give them a realistic view of life as a student during the summer residential, and also to take advantage of the support offered to all participants via two study support sessions and an e-mentoring programme that forms an integral part of the initiative.

Places for this competitive programme are limited and priority will be given to students who are academically high-achieving and meet the criteria for the programme.

Essential criteria – students must:

- Have parents that have not been to university (siblings in higher education are allowed).
- Have parents in non-professional occupations.
- Be taking relevant A levels (or equivalent) for the academic stream they choose to apply for on the programme.
- Attend a non-selective state school with a high proportion of free school meals and/or in inner-city areas. If students currently attend a selective state school/college, the school at which they did their GCSEs must not have been selective.
- Have a parental household income below £42,600 per annum.

Desirable criteria

- Have a minimum of eight GCSEs (Grade B and above) which must include Maths and English. A minimum of grade B in Science is required for academic streams involving Biological and Health Sciences and Physical Sciences.

Other factors that will be considered

- Students with disabilities or those who grew up in care are actively encouraged to apply.

What is involved in the Academic Enrichment Programme?

The initiative involves students participating in different elements of the programme, starting with a week-long summer residential when they are in Year 12.

This year's residential will begin on 28 August and finish on 1 September 2017. Accommodation will be provided free of charge for all the students and they will attend one of four academic streams during the day, throughout the week.

The academic streams that students choose to study must be related to their current A level studies or relevant for the degree programme they wish to apply to.

In the Autumn Term, students will attend the first of two study support sessions, the date and content of which will be confirmed nearer the time. The second study support session will take place in the Spring Term of 2018 before final A2 examinations start. During Year 13, students will also be paired up with a current undergraduate from the University and will have further support through e-mentoring on a weekly basis.

We will endeavour to match students who have a similar academic profile in order to ensure that the support offered is relevant, supportive and positive. The University will also host a celebration event for all participants at the end of the Academic Enrichment Programme in the Spring Term of 2018.



The academic streams

There will be four broad streams that students will have the option to choose from.

These academic streams must be related to the student's current studies or relevant to the degree programme they wish to study. The academic streams will include the following areas (subject to academic availability):

□ Humanities and Social Sciences

Social Policy, Sociology, Public Policy, Theology, Social Work, Psychology, Geography, Law, History, English, Politics

□ Business

Accounting, Economics, International Studies, Marketing, Business

□ Physical Sciences

Engineering, Physics, Computer Science, Maths, Chemistry

□ Biological and Health Sciences

Physiotherapy, Nursing, Medicine, Biology, Dentistry, Pharmacy

Please note: we have put a cap of 40 students maximum for any one academic stream and reserve the right to withdraw any subject stream if the numbers are not viable.



Selection of students

We would ask colleagues in schools and colleges to only put forward students who meet the academic and socio-economic criteria as set out for this programme.

This programme is designed to support students who wish to apply to research-led institutions, and we rely on our colleagues in schools and colleges to select students whom they feel have a realistic and achievable chance of being made an offer for a degree programme at one of these institutions.

It is important that students who apply to the scheme are committed to participating in all aspects of the programme, not just the summer residential.

The University will charge a £200 non-attendance fee for all schools/colleges that put forward students who either drop out less than four weeks within the start of the residential, or fail to arrive at the start of the week. The charge also applies for a student who fails to complete all elements of the programme. It is important to note that students who have been offered a place and then drop out, or do not show at the beginning of the residential week, are effectively denying other students the opportunity to benefit from the programme.

The University invests just under £1,000 per student for this programme. The number of applications always exceeds the limited number of places available, and we request that partner schools/colleges ensure that only students who are committed to completing ALL elements of the programme are selected and put forward.

Early applications to the programme are strongly advised. Decisions will be made on a first-come, first-served basis. A pre-residential evening will be organised during Easter 2017 for those applicants who have applied early and have been made an offer of a place.

Students with disabilities

The University actively encourages students with disabilities to apply to this programme and we would encourage you to contact us to discuss how the specific needs of students may be met.



Testimonials

'I attended the AEP programme to see how I felt about university. I was the first in my family to think about going to university, and I certainly did not think that someone with my background was capable of attending a Russell Group university. I absolutely loved my time on the programme and made some fantastic friends who are at Birmingham with me now. The activities confirmed that Birmingham was the place for me and made me fall in love with the course I am currently studying – the session on social work made me realise that was what I wanted to do and helped clarify my future career pathway. You get a huge amount of support on the programme. My mentor went above and beyond to help me with my UCAS application and personal statement – it's a huge advantage to have. It's a once in a lifetime chance to be supported with your higher education aspirations and an opportunity you should not miss.'

Sharn Loughlin, BA Social Work, first year

'The AEP was a life-changing experience for myself, as was my first opportunity to see first-hand what university is really like. Before AEP I had little knowledge of higher education, since I was the first person in my family to think about entering university; but after doing this programme it helped me broaden my knowledge and enhanced my key skills, such as the chance to make new friends and also the opportunity to take part in various activities.

The AEP team were incredibly supportive, professional and encouraging. Overall if it was not for AEP, I don't think I would have aspired to go to higher education – the programme not only allowed me to have the confidence to aspire attending university, but was also one of the key factors on why I chose to make Birmingham my firm choice.'

Abdiweli Omar, BSc Accounting and Finance, first year

'The AEP not only prepared me for university but made me into the student I am today. The programme gave me a great amount of confidence to go onto to tackle my A levels as well as my UCAS application. I was given support from a brilliant undergraduate student who was studying the course I wanted to apply for. The entire programme offers an amazing network of support from staff and student ambassadors, many of whom have been through the programme themselves when they were in Year 12. My aspirations were raised and by the end of it I wanted to be just like them. My biggest concern before applying for the programme was not knowing other people,

but this was soon overcome with the help of some fun icebreakers and social activities! The week consisted of seeing how courses are run, learning more about what is on offer and helping to enrich the knowledge you already have and it was the perfect balance between learning and having fun. The AEP gave me the skills to confidently enter a university environment and take on many opportunities. If you have dreams and aspirations of going to a Russell Group university, then this programme is ideal in helping you to achieve those goals in your life.'

Henna Elahi, LLB Law, first year

Applying and timelines

The application form has been designed so that completing it is as simple as possible, making the application process easier for the students. All applications must be endorsed by the Head of Sixth Form or a nominated teacher at the school. Once the application form is completed and endorsed, please return the form to the programme co-ordinator at the University of Birmingham (contact details listed below).

AEP is an exciting programme that we hope students can benefit from. The University of Birmingham will cover all costs including those for transport to and from the residential, cost of accommodation, all food, and social activity in the evenings. The table below shows the timelines for the various elements of this programme.

Summer 2017	Summer Residential 28 August– 1 September 2017		
Autumn Term 2017	E-mentoring	Study Support Session 1	
Spring Term 2018	E-mentoring	Study Support Session 2	Celebration Event



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Learn more

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