

# UNIFEST 2026

Year 10 Summer School

A Higher  
Education  
Experience





# What Is Unifest?

UniFest Summer School gives you the chance to explore university life, meet current students and staff and make new friends. With six summer school events to choose from at different universities across the West Midlands, you will have an action-packed, fun experience.

## WHO IS UNIFEST FOR?

UniFest is for students in Year 10 at state-funded secondary schools in the West Midlands who are from backgrounds and communities that are less likely to consider university as an option. To apply for a place, you will need the support of your school and the consent of your parents or carers, and you should be able to answer “Yes” to at least one of the following:

- I live in an area where not many young people go to university
- I am a young carer / I have a disability or learning difficulty
- I am in the care of my local authority
- I receive Free School Meals / FSM6/ Pupil Premium
- My parents or carers did not go to university

## WHAT WILL I DO?

That depends on which UniFest event you choose! Some events explore university life and study in general, and others focus on specific careers or study options. All UniFest events include lots of hands-on sessions and a fun programme of social activities.



## IS UNIFEST FREE?

Yes! UniFest is funded by universities and schools and is totally free of charge. For residential UniFest events, your meals, accommodation and activities are all paid for (although you may want to bring a little pocket money with you). The universities will help you plan how to get to and from events. If travel costs will make it difficult for you to attend, please get in touch by emailing [aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk).

“

The activities were engaging and it helped me improve my understanding of university

## HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

You will need to complete an online application form telling us about you and your career interests. Your parents or carers will need to complete parts of the form and your school will need to approve your application. You can access the application form by visiting [www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest](http://www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest)



## WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ARE MORE APPLICANTS THAN PLACES?

UniFest is very popular and there are often more applicants than places. We ask for information about your family background and advise you to choose several events so that we can offer places as fairly as possible. If you have any questions about eligibility, you can email us: [aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

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The student ambassadors made me feel really comfortable and at home. I also learnt about subjects I've never heard of.



# STEPS TO UNIFEST

## 1. Apply

December - March

Talk to your parents/carers and show them this brochure. They will need to agree to your application and give us information about their education and work background (see "Who is UniFest for?"). Think about your interests and future plans. Look at the events in this brochure and the subject areas they cover. If you have a clear idea of the career you want to follow, a specialist event might be right for you. If you don't have a specific career in mind yet, a more general event will give you the chance to try different subject areas. Check out the universities' websites and ask your teachers about it. Do they think going to UniFest will help you? Perhaps they know some older students in your school who went to UniFest last year and could tell you more about it? Either way, you will need your school to support your application, so the sooner you ask, the better!

**To apply, complete the online application form with your parent or carer and let a teacher know that you're applying. Don't forget to make a note of dates of your selected events and keep them free! Apply by visiting [www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest](http://aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest). We will send you an email confirming that we have received your application. We will contact you if there is any information missing or if you have informed us of any additional support needs.**

## 2. Result!

April

If you are offered a place, you will be contacted in April 2024. We will tell you which event you are going to and give you the contact details of the university hosting your visit. Make sure you tell your parents/carers and your teacher straight away so that they don't plan anything that clashes with UniFest! If your application is not successful, we will write to you with the reasons and provide our contact details if you would like to request more feedback.

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I enjoyed working with new peers and experiencing a university environment. It has increased my knowledge about what life would be like going to a university.

# STEPS TO UNIFEST

## 3. Get Ready

### April - June

Your host university will be in touch with further information about the event and to ask if you need any special arrangements to look after you during UniFest. They will tell you more about travel arrangements and meeting points, as well providing you with the contact details of people you can talk to if you have any queries in the run up to UniFest

## 4. Go!

### July

UniFest begins, with events taking place throughout July.



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I had a really good time and made lots of friends.





## Beyond The Field - Pathways in Sport

 **Tuesday 7 – Thursday 9 July**

### Residential

Perfect for anyone passionate about sport - on or off the field!

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It's shown me that higher education is for people like me.

### What Will I Do?

- Try out coaching, exercise science, and sports teaching
- Explore the business and media sides of sport
- Build teamwork, communication, and leadership skills
- Work with expert academics and discover career pathways in sport
- Enjoy fun evening social activities and stay in BCU halls with your own room and bathroom
- What you'll learn:
- What university life is really like – studying, living, and socialising on campus
- How to apply to university and the support available for students

### How Will I Get There?

You will need to make your own way to and from Birmingham City University at our City Centre Campus (address in 'location' section). There will be university staff and student ambassadors ready to meet you at the key meeting points. Parents/carers will be contacted in advance of the residential visit to confirm if they will be dropping off/collecting you, or if you need alternative transport. You will also be contacted to share any additional requirements in advance of the visit, so any accessibility requirements will be considered in travel arrangements..



## Inside Health Careers

 **Wednesday 8 – Friday 10 July**

## Non-Residential

Explore the world of healthcare through hands-on workshops and real-world experiences.

### What Will I Do?

- Try interactive sessions in Physiotherapy, Paramedic Science, Nursing, Psychology, and Dietetics
- Learn from the Allied Health team about different healthcare careers
- Experience a hospital-style environment using life-like medical dummies
- Discover university and apprenticeship pathways into health professions
- Get guidance on how to study and work in healthcare
- Chat with current university students about life at UCB and your next steps

### How Will I Get There?

If you're travelling independently or via public transport, arrangements can be made for you to meet our ambassadors at the central point of New Street station each day, to then take a coach to our campus. We will also take you back to New Street station at the end of each day. Our staff will be on hand to guide those of you who will be dropped off to our campus by parents/carers.

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It was very fun and made uni seem less scary



## The Mind of a Criminal

 **Monday 6 – Wednesday 8 July 2026**

 **Non-Residential**

Step inside the world of crime, justice, and psychology.

### What Will I Do?

- Explore subjects like Law, Forensic Biology, Criminology, and Policing
- Take part in a mock trial in a real courtroom setting
- Learn from experts about court procedures and crime scene investigation
- Discover what motivates criminals and how criminal psychology works
- Gain insight into careers in criminal justice
- Talk to university students about life at Worcester and career journeys

### How Will I Get There?

We recommend travelling to the university by train if possible. Upon arrival, you will be met by our Summer School Ambassadors who will guide you to and from campus. If you are offered a place at UniFest and require financial support for travel in order to attend the event, please let us know as soon as possible.

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I enjoyed everything and the whole experience has boosted my confidence.



## STEM

 **Tuesday 7 – Thursday 9 July**

## Residential

Discover your potential in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths.

### What Will I Do?

- Join STEM taster sessions led by Aston's expert academics
- Learn about career options in STEM fields
- Get advice and guidance on your next steps
- Stay in student accommodation with your own room and bathroom
- Take part in evening socials and meet new friends
- Chat with current students about life and learning at Aston

### How Will I Get There?

Based in Birmingham city centre, there are many transport options available for you to make your own way to and from the Aston University Campus. When you arrive in the morning of the first day, there will be student ambassadors located all around campus and ready to show you to the Main Building reception

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Every day was different and interesting which kept me engaged the whole way through.



## Business and Beyond

 **Sunday 12 – Tuesday 14 July**

## Residential

Explore the world of business and build skills for your future.

### What Will I Do?

- Work as a team to launch your business, from logo to production. Create the next big thing with industry experts to guide you.
- Stay in halls of residence and attend university workshops
- Join evening activities and make new friends
- Be supported by student ambassadors throughout
- Experience campus life first-hand
- Explore study pathways and discover what university can offer you

### How Will I Get There?

You will need to make your own way to the University. Student ambassadors will be on hand to meet you at our very own train station - University (Birmingham) and at the designated drop-off point for those travelling by car or bus.

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This has been an amazing experience, I've made so many friends. This experience has changed my mind about university.



# Frequently Asked Questions



## Parents & Carers

### WHY SHOULD MY CHILD ATTEND?

UniFest gives your child a great opportunity to find out what university is all about so that they can make informed decisions about their future. The experience is exciting, fun and really motivates young people to do their best at school.

### WILL MY CHILD BE SAFE?

Yes. UniFest universities have a duty of care towards young people that starts from the moment they are with us. Your host university will give you details of hand-over points and travel support arrangements at the start and end of each event. It is important you read and understand this information so that we can keep everyone safe, especially at the start and end of events. All UniFest activities are risk assessed and supervised by staff and students who are checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). DBS approved staff and students stay overnight to supervise the residential summer schools.

### BEHAVIOUR

The universities expect everyone to behave responsibly and follow

instructions. All students must sign a Code of Conduct which makes it clear that they may be sent home if they do not behave as expected. If there are problems, you will be kept informed throughout.

### HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

UniFest is FREE!

### WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MY EDUCATION AND WORK BACKGROUND?

Young people from families where no one has been to university are less likely to go into higher education and the professions. We need to find out about your background so we can offer places to young people who need extra support to decide if university is right for them.

### HOW WILL YOU PROTECT OUR PERSONAL DATA?

To take part in UniFest, we need to share information about you and your child with Aimhigher universities so they can run the programme. The forms you will be sent if your child is offered a place are important, and we will not be able to accommodate anyone who does not complete them in full and return them on

time. The application form also asks your permission to use data to help us see if young people attending UniFest go on to apply for university. Any information we publish will not refer to you or your child individually. Full details are on the application form.

### WHAT IF MY CHILD BECOMES ILL?

We will contact you if your child becomes ill using the details you have provided on the application/consent form. It is important that you tell us if these details change before the event.

### HOW CAN I CONTACT MY CHILD?

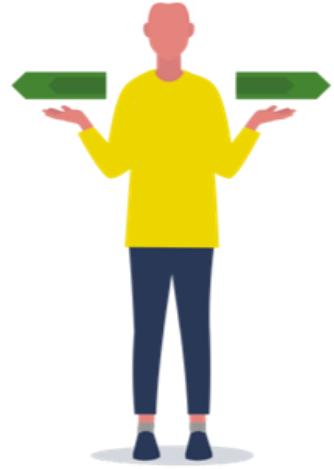
You will be given emergency contact details for the university in the run up to the event. Young people can bring mobile phones but do so at their own risk.

### WHAT WILL MY CHILD NEED TO BRING?

The universities will give you details of the type and amount of clothing they will need, as well as any other personal belongings they may want to bring.

# Frequently Asked

## Questions



### Young People

#### WILL I HAVE TO DO REAL WORK?

UniFest is your chance to see what being a student is all about. So yes, you will be expected to take part in all planned sessions – we ensure all sessions are exciting and interesting.

#### WILL I BE WITH MY FRIENDS?

Sometimes friends from the same school go to the same event, but a big part of UniFest is meeting new people and making new friends.

#### WHAT SORT OF CLOTHES SHOULD I WEAR?

Casual clothes are appropriate most of the time. You may want to take sportswear and something a little smarter for evening activities. If you need any special clothing, we will let you know before the event.

#### WHERE AND WHAT WILL I EAT?

All your meals will be provided and we will cater for any dietary requirements.

#### WILL I NEED TO BRING ANY MONEY?

You can bring a small amount of money for snacks or drinks, but you will be responsible for it at all times.

#### HOW MUCH WILL IT COST MY SCHOOL?

UniFest is free of charge.

#### HOW DOES ATTENDING HELP YOUNG PEOPLE?

The Sutton Trust has evaluated summer schools as a high impact intervention as part of their Pupil premium toolkit. Attending can raise aspirations, improve attainment and contribute to your duty to provide impartial careers education and guidance.

#### WHICH LEARNERS SHOULD APPLY?

Young people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and those in or leaving the care system will be given priority. Applications from young people receiving Free-School Meals during the last 6 years will be looked upon favourably. We also welcome applications from young carers and those whose parents/carers do not have graduate-level qualifications.

### School Staff

#### WILL WE NEED TO ATTEND EVENTS TO SUPERVISE OUR STUDENTS?

You do not need to supervise young people on UniFest events. Full details of the safeguarding arrangements for UniFest are on our website.

#### I'M INTERESTED BUT NEED TO KNOW MORE.

More information can be found on our website: [www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest](http://www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest) You can also email us with any specific questions: [aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk)





# Aimhigher

West Midlands

Aimhigher West Midlands is a partnership of universities, schools and colleges who work together to help young people to:

- Become motivated and confident about their learning and career progression.
- Explore the world of higher education and what it might mean for them.
- Make informed decisions about their future.

Higher education changes the lives of students, strengthens our economy and enriches our society. We want to ensure that everyone with the potential to benefit from higher education has the opportunity to do so.

If you require more information, go to [www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest](http://www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest) or contact Aimhigher at [aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk)



**@AimhigherWM**

All information correct at time of printing (January 2026). UniFest events require a minimum number of applicants in order to run. Aimhigher will make every effort to inform applicants, their families and schools of any changes to the programme as published