

International Summer Schools

The big overseas programmes UK parents actually consider,
what they cost and the one rule that saves a place

From a parent who has been through it, apply early

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The programmes worth knowing

Overseas summer schools with a genuinely international mix. Every price is the residential cost, with accommodation included.

PROGRAMME		SUBJECTS & WHAT IT IS	WHERE & FORMAT	APPROX
Bocconi (High School)	★	Economics, finance, entrepreneurship, data science, ML & AI, politics, law. Pick 2 of 17 labs. The econ pick.	Milan, Italy. 2 weeks in July. 2026 already SOLD OUT.	~£4.5-5.5k
Yale Young Global Scholars (YYGS)		STEM, engineering, global affairs, economics, sustainability. One of the most international, very selective.	New Haven, USA. 2 weeks, ages 16-18. Need-based aid.	~£5.5k
Harvard Secondary School Program		Real Harvard classes, wide range, STEM, economics, humanities, AI. University credit possible.	Cambridge, MA, USA. 7-wk residential. Courses fill early.	~£12-13k
Univ of Chicago Pre-College		Discussion-based. Economics, maths, psychology, politics, computing.	Chicago, USA. 2-3 wks. Incl housing + dining. Need-based aid.	~£6-7.5k
Stanford Pre-Collegiate		Maths, computer science, engineering, humanities. Especially strong for maths and CS (SUMaC).	California, USA. Residential, incl housing and meals.	~£7k
John Locke Institute		Economics, PPE, law, history, politics, psychology. Seminars for ambitious Oxbridge and Ivy applicants.	Oxford, Georgetown, Princeton, Singapore. Also a FREE essay prize.	~£2-3.5k
Immerse Education Sydney		Medicine, engineering, economics, law, psychology, AI, business. British provider, international cohort.	Univ of Sydney, Australia. Summer.	~£4-5.5k

★ My own son did this one.

All prices are the residential cost including accommodation, what an overseas family pays. Rough GBP, they exclude flights, visa and spending money. Verify each.

What I would tell you, as a parent who has done it

1. Apply early, earlier than you think

My son did the Bocconi summer school and applied to Harvard and Chicago, so this is from experience. The big ones run rolling admissions or simply fill and the popular courses go first. When we applied to Harvard and we were early, the economics waitlist was already closed. Bocconi's 2026 school is sold out already. Treat the real deadline as months before the published one.

2. Budget for the cost and the admin

The US programmes are the priciest and rarely give credit that counts in the UK, you are buying the experience, not a qualification (Yale and Chicago do offer need-based aid). From abroad there is admin too, Harvard and other US residential places need certified proof of vaccinations (MMR) and a visa, sort it early.

3. Pick for fit, not for the name

A summer at Bocconi signals economics, Stanford signals maths and computing, John Locke signals PPE and law. Match the programme to the degree your child is heading for, the brand on its own does little.

4. The free one most people miss

John Locke is famous for its essay competition, which is free to enter and looks excellent on a form. You do not need the paid summer school to get the benefit, the essay prize stands on its own.

Quick picks

Economics, Bocconi · STEM all-rounder, Yale YYGS · Maths and CS, Stanford · PPE and law, John Locke · Australia, Immerse Sydney

Worth the flight, or a UK option instead?

An international summer school is a big spend and not always the right one. An EduStrategy session works out which programme is worth it, here or abroad, as well as the wider UCAS strategy to build the whole application around it.

Book a 1:1 at uniplan.me/shop

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