WELCOME PACK

Distance Learning at Northumbria University

ABOUT THIS WELCOME PACK.

This pack contains all the information you'll need to succeed during your online studies. It contains key information about the services we offer to support and enhance your learning, including our Student Success Team, careers, disability, wellbeing services and more. We recommend reading it through carefully, in particular the FAQs and Getting Ready to Start sections.

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WELCOME FROM THE STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM.

We're delighted that you've chosen to study a distance learning programme with us here at Northumbria University. We look forward to welcoming you.

Students at Northumbria University enjoy first-class teaching as well as the ongoing support of the Student Success Team. As specialists in online student support, we're committed to your academic success. We will be your first point of contact for any issues that might affect you on your journey. You will receive a dedicated Student Success Advisor who will support you from enrolment to graduation. Access to this support will help you to focus your attention on your studies.

The Student Success Team will help you:

- Navigate your studies
- Find advice and guidance
- Answer any non-academic questions
- Deliver fees and assessments on time

With our support, you'll enjoy a fulfilling, productive study experience.

Your Student Success Advisor will keep in contact with you via your Northumbria University email account. Please check it regularly. We'll check your progress and provide key programme information through this address.

Once again, welcome to Northumbria University.

Kind regards

Student Success Team, Northumbria University

GETTING READY TO START.

Flexibility is one of the key benefits of studying as a distance learning student. You'll be able to plan your studies around your existing commitments and study from anywhere in the world.

Before starting your programme, make sure you have internet access and a reliable laptop. We want to avoid any technical problems that could hold back your programme progress.

You will get the most out of your degree when you fully engage with all aspects of the programme. We encourage you to take part in all online activities, interactive exercises and forum discussions, as well as make use of our extra-curricular services.

If you struggle to take part in any activities, please speak to your Student Success Advisor. They will offer support and advice to help you complete your studies successfully. Your programme leaders recommend you set aside at least 15-20 hours of study time per week.

Shortly, you'll gain access to the University's eLearning platform (eLP), Blackboard. Familiarise yourself with the platform and work through the induction material. It will help you to prepare for the weeks ahead.

As part of your induction, you will receive an email invitation to attend a welcome webinar where you will:

• Engage with your academic leads
• Meet your Student Success Advisor
• Identify a selection of services available to you
• Interact with the other students on the programme
• Ask any initial questions you may have

We encourage you to make time to attend the webinar - it's a great opportunity to get your learning off to the best possible start.

ARE YOU READY TO START?

This checklist will prepare you for your first day on the programme. You'll find more detailed information about each step throughout this pack. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your Student Success Advisor.

Please ensure that you have completed the following checklist before the first module start date.

Had a welcome call with my Student Success Advisor

Registered for the upcoming welcome webinar

Familiarised myself with the Student Portal

Accessed my Northumbria University student email account

Registered for DUO, Northumbria University's Multi-Factor Authenticator

Completed the student induction materials

Familiarised myself with the academic calendar

Checked my internet connection and hardware

Marked Northumbria University as a safe sender in my personal email inbox

Accessed and explored Blackboard

Helpful Links:
Getting Started Page
Example Knowledge Based Article (KBA)

FAQs.

Here are a few quick answers to questions we're asked all the time. You can find more details about each topic further on in this welcome pack.

Q: Who do I speak to if I have a problem?
A: This depends on the nature of your issue. Speak to your Student Success Advisor first and they will point you in the right direction.

Q: I'm struggling to finance my programme. What should I do?
A: We designed your programme to be flexible to suit your circumstances. You can take a break from studying if finance is an issue. Please check the maximum study time with your Student Success Progression Advisor to ensure you won't exceed it. You can also access further information and advice through the Money and Finance section of your Student Portal.

Q: How do I pay my fees?
A: You are required to pay your fees on a module-by-module basis, i.e., when you enrol onto your first module and when you select subsequent modules (unless you are sponsored by your employer). The Student Success Team will send a payment reminder along with a payment link three weeks before the payment deadline date for each module.

Read our step-by-step payment guide.

Q: What readings do I have to do for each module?
A: Reading lists for each module can be found on Blackboard.

Q: Will there be live seminars in my modules?
A: Yes, your module leader may choose to run live seminars when relevant. Your Blackboard Module site will display the seminar information.

Q: When and how do I submit my work?
A: You will submit your work via Blackboard. Each module assessment has a submission date. We will notify you of this via Blackboard too.

Q: Who do I contact if I need academic help?
A: Your module tutor can help you with any academic challenges you may face during a module. If you aren't sure who that is, get in touch with your Student Success Advisor. They're always happy to help!

Q: When will I receive my results?
A: Our academic leaders release provisional results 20 working days after the assessment deadline.

Q: What happens if I fail a module?
A: You will be given one opportunity to re-sit the assessment. If you fail your reassessment, you can pay to re-sit the full module at a later date.

Q: What do I do if I experience technical difficulties accessing Blackboard?
A: Please contact our IT Helpline in the event of technical difficulties.

Support is available 24/7 by calling
+44 (0)191 227 4242
+44 (0)778 148 2786,
texting +44 77 81 48 27 86 or emailing it.helpline@northumbria.ac.uk.
Contact details can be found in your Student Portal.

Q: How do I organise a break in my studies?
A: Contact your Student Success Advisor. They will discuss your options and help you plan the remainder of your modules. Remember that taking a break will impact your graduation date.

Q: What should I do if I need to confirm that I am a student?
A: You can request a **Confirmation of Enrolment** letter via your Student Portal. To make a request, please access the Student Portal. Click on the 'My Info' link on the left-hand side of the page. Select 'Menu', then the 'Letter Requests' link. Follow the on-screen guidance to make your request.

HOW TO CONTACT THE STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM.

When you enrol on your programme, you will have access to the Student Success Information Team, as well as a dedicated Student Success Progression Advisor. Whenever you have a question or query, you can call the Student Success Team, and the Student Success Information Advisors will be ready to help. You can also arrange regular support calls with your Student Success Progression Advisor. No matter your time zone, we always try and arrange calls at a time convenient to you. Our Information and Progression Advisors are happy to use video-calling software if you like to communicate face-to-face. They can also send communications and reminders via SMS.

The Student Success Team will be your main point of contact for all non-academic queries. This will include:

• Keeping you updated on key dates associated with your programme
• Offering guidance and support
• Helping you with administrative enquiries

CALL US ON

+44 (0)284 378 0293 Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm (BST/GMT)

WHO SHOULD I ASK?

The chart below illustrates who you should contact when you have a query. If you have a question but are unsure who to contact, your Student Success Advisor is the best first point of contact.

THE STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM	PERSONAL TUTOR/ PROGRAMME LEADER	MODULE LEADER	ASK4HELP ONLINE VIA YOUR STUDENT PORTAL	IT SERVICES
T: +44 (0)284 378 0293 Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm (BST/GMT) E: dlstudentsuccess@ northumbria.ac.uk	Academic advice and guidance	Module content issues	Personal Extenuating Circumstances	T: +44 (0)191 227 4242 (available 24/7) E: servicedesk@northumbria.ac.uk Or via Service Now
Your first point of contact	General programme related academic progression/ grade concerns	Academic concerns	Applications for extensions to assessment deadlines	
Assist in connecting with specialist university services		Assessment queries	Appeals/complaints and causes for concern	
Assessment deadline reminders	Programme materials	Module related progression/ grade concerns	Student Life and Wellbeing (For problems with student finance, disability, welfare, counselling and mental health.)	
Linking to academic staff	Further module reading suggestions	Further reading suggestions	Graduate Futures (For careers and employment information, advice and guidance.)	
Enrolment and progressing to next module			Academic Registry (For graduation ceremony enquiries, certificate and assessment deadline reminders, and transcript enquiries.)	
Fee payments and refunds			Results queries	
Taking a break from studying				
Administration				
Changes to personal information				

ACADEMIC CALENDAR.

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with your relevant academic years and make a note of key dates. Your academic team will make module-specific information available as your programme progresses.

The Student Success Team will communicate the exact dates and times of submissions for each module via email. You can also find a week-by-week breakdown of activity for each module on its respective Blackboard site.

If you need to take a break during your studies, you may opt out of a module and rejoin when you are ready. But remember, you are required to complete your studies within a set length of time, which varies depending on your programme. To find out more, please speak to your Student Success Advisor.

INTAKE	ENROLMENT & PAYMENT DEADLINE (NEWS STUDENTS	RETURN TO STUDY DEADLINE	MODULE SELECTION & PAYMENT DEADLINE (CONTINUING STUDENTS)	TEACHING START DATE
January 2025 **(Dates slightly different due to New Year/Christmas)**	Friday 20th December	Thursday 28th November	Monday 6th January	Monday 13th January
April 2025	Friday 4th April	Thursday 13th March	Thursday 10th April	Tuesday 22nd April
July 2025	Thursday 26th June	Thursday 12th June	Wednesday 2nd July	Monday 14th July
October 2025	Thursday 18th September	Tuesday 2nd September	Wednesday 24th September	Monday 6th October

FINANCE.

Paying per module is an integral feature of Carousel Distance Learning programmes at Northumbria University. You will normally be required to pay for your first module during your initial enrolment task, and subsequent modules during each module selection and payment task.

Before the start of each module, you will be made aware of payment deadlines. You must ensure that you pay on time. Failure to do this will prevent you from accessing the module and will impact programme completion. It is therefore essential that you speak to your Student Success Progression Advisor in the first instance if you are experiencing financial difficulties. They will be happy to discuss your options and any implications of taking a break in study. Possible methods of funding include:

- Employer sponsorship
- Student Loan Company funding
- Self-funding
- Enhanced Learning Credits Administration Services (ELCAS)

Northumbria University's Financial Regulations apply.

Further support for students is available in the Money and Finance section of the Student Portal.

UNIVERSITY SERVICES.

Library Services

As a Northumbria University student, you have full access to all University Library resources.

The Library collection encompasses both print and online resources, including almost 843,000 ebooks and an extensive ejournal collection of over 110,000 titles.

The Library works in partnership with your module tutors to ensure you have access to the materials you need. As part of this work we purchase material in ebook and print format and digitise articles to give you easy access to reading list material. You can find such material through your readings lists on Blackboard.

Library Search provides a search box through which you can access resources. Find millions of books, journals, newspaper articles, audiovisual material, datasets and other scholarly resources in Northumbria University's Library Collection and beyond. You can use Library Search to find books and ebooks. Search for the book title, by author or by keywords. If you would like to borrow physical items from the Library, we provide a postal service for books and journal articles which can be sent to students worldwide.

If you would like to visit our Newcastle Campus, you have full access to the City Campus Library and Coach Lane Campus Library. Please remember to bring photographic ID with you as we will be unable to permit entry without it.

Skills Plus is the Library's collection of online learning materials for digital literacy and study skills. Use these resources when you need help with studying or online learning.

Skills Plus has a range of online tutorials with quizzes, video demonstrations and printable help guides. Choose the type of help you need and your preferred format from the available options.

Find out more about Library Services by visiting University Library online.

Specialist Student Support

The Specialist Student Support Team is there to help you keep on track with your studies.

We can provide a range of support and administrative help, as well as keyinformation. For example, if you experience extenuating personal circumstances affecting your work, the Specialist Student Support Team can help you request additional time for assessed work. We will also support you if you are considering taking time out, transferring programmes or leaving.

The Specialist Student Support Team will work with you and your Faculty to ensure that Student Accessibility Plans are implemented. Additionally, we provide advice, guidance and case management for student appeals, complaints or disciplinary issues.

Information relating to the Specialist Student Support Team is available through your Student Portal.

IT Helpline

If you have an IT problem, you can contact the 24-hour IT Helpdesk.

- Tel: +44 (0)191 227 4242
- Text: +44 (0)778 148 2786
- Email: it.helpline@northumbria.ac.uk
- IT Chat: northumbria.ac.uk/itchat
- Online Search: northumbria.ac.uk/knowhow

Student Life and Wellbeing

The Student Support and Wellbeing Service is here to help students with a range of issues. We can help with disability and dyslexia needs, counselling and mental health support, faith advice, finance, welfare issues and international support. You can visit our website for further information, or contact us via the Student Portal.

Once you have enrolled, the Student Portal can provide you with a range of information, guidance and support.

Counselling and Mental Health

If you feel you need help with a personal, emotional or mental health issue, you can access support through our Counselling and Mental Health Team.

We can offer:

- Online self-help support (available via the Student Portal)
- Appointments with counsellors
- Appointments with mental health practitioners (which can include identifying possible mental health issues)
- Guided self-help appointments

- Eye Movement Desensitsation and Reprocessing (EMDR) appointments
- Ongoing individual support
- Referrals to other support services inside and outside the University (where available)

Students' Union

Northumbria Community: Be part of it

Your Students' Union is here to make sure that your time at Northumbria University is the best it can be. It's our mission to have a positive impact on the lives of all our students.

Northumbria Students' Union (NSU) is run by a team of students elected by the student body. They represent their fellow students and speak up on your behalf to the University and beyond.

If you have any issues with any part of your University experience, tell them and they'll work to make the changes you want to see. You can also get involved directly by becoming a programme rep.

You can access independent advice through the NSU Advice Centre. Highly trained, experienced, and friendly staff from the NSU Advice Centre provide support, information and guidance to students.

If you'd like to get involved or access support, please take a look at our website.

Student Accessibility Team

Our Student Accessibility Team can provide support to all students with a condition that meets the Equality Act (2010) criteria.

This includes physical conditions including sensory impairments, specific learning difficulties (SpLD) including dyslexia and ADHD, a social or communication difficulty such as an autism spectrum condition, or long-term mental health conditions.

Support is available through the agreement of a Student Accessibility Plan and may include:

- Notifying your tutors of your disability
- Recommending teaching adjustments
- Alternative exam arrangements
- Arranging human support (also known as non-medical help)
- Access to Library support
- Applying for Disabled Students Allowance (UK students & eligible programmes only)

To agree a Student Accessibility Plan (SAP) you need to register with the Student Accessibility Team via the Student Portal.

You will be asked to complete a Registration form and provide medical evidence of your condition. If you require further support with the process, please telephone Ask4Help on +44 (0)191 227 4646 and they will be happy to help.

Congregations

Northumbria University warmly invites eligible students to attend their graduation ceremonies at the University campus. You can choose which ceremony you wish to attend so that is can be organised around their other commitments. Graduation ceremonies take place twice a year, usually in December and July. Graduates who cannot attend their ceremony for personal reasons can apply to defer to a future ceremony.

The Congregations Office at Northumbria University will be happy to work with you to help you decide which ceremony to attend. If you have any questions relating to your ceremony, contact the Congregations Office at rg.congregations@northumbria.ac.uk

Graduate Futures

(Careers and Employment Information, Advice and Guidance)

Achieving your ambitions and ensuring you get on the right career path for you is important to us at Northumbria University.

Our Graduate Futures Service provide a range of support in various areas, designed to help you plan your career and boost your employability.

These include:

- Careers advice and guidance
- Job-searching
- Researching employers
- Applications and CVs
- Interview tips and techniques

Online resources are available through our exclusive employability hub Careers Online. You can also book a one-to-one online appointment with a member of the Graduate Futures Team through our website.

Careers fairs and workshops take place throughout the year. Details of upcoming online and campus careers events that you can book onto can be found on our website.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS.

Here's a list of basic computer system requirements to use Blackboard. We recommend you always use the most up-to-date browsers and the best internet connection you can. Blackboard will still run with the minimum specifications, but you may experience slower loading times.

Screen size

Blackboard is best viewed at a minimum resolution of 800x600.

Computer speed and processor

- Use a computer 5 years old or newer if possible
- 1GB of RAM
- 2GHz processor

Operating systems

- Windows 7 and newer
- Mac OSX 10.6 and newer
- Linux – chromeOS
- Mobile - iOS 7 and newer/
- Android 4.2 and newer

Internet speaed

- Minimum of 512kbps

Your Student Success Team will invite you to join webinars and online meetings. You won't have to pay a subscription fee to communicate with the team through these platforms.

You don't need to be a computer expert to take part in your programme, but we do expect all students to have a basic level of computer literacy. Support is available for students that encounter any problems. Please contact your Student Success Advisor if you have difficulty accessing your learning and assessment activities or materials.

Northumbria University
NEWCASTLE

NEXT STEPS.

Before your programme start date, please complete your student induction module and attend your welcome webinar (you will receive a reminder 48 hours beforehand). If you have any questions during your induction period, please do not hesitate to contact us. We can also support you if you require access to any of the services mentioned in this pack. The Student Success Team wish you all the best for your studies and look forward to helping you along the way.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE PROGRAMME.

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM

T: +44 (0)284 378 0293 Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm (BST/GMT)
E: dlstudentsuccess@northumbria.ac.uk