



NORTHUMBRIA

UNIVERSITY NEWS

Issue 19



BEDREST AND BEYOND

A 60-day 'bedrest study' will simulate how astronauts' bodies decondition while in space.

Turn to page 11 for the full story



E3 RESEARCH BOOST

£8m research project will reinvent how we design and construct buildings.

Turn to page 7 to find out more



DESIGN TALENT REVEALED

The talents of our Art, Design and Architecture students were on show at our annual degree show exhibition.

Turn to pages 30 – 31



VIRTUAL REALITY TOUR AT THE INCUBATOR LAUNCH

Champions of enterprise

The Innovation Northumbria: Incubator will open in October as a pre-accelerator for aspiring entrepreneurs. Located next to the University's City Campus in Newcastle, the state-of-the-art facility has already received financial support from Santander Universities UK, Sir James Knott Trust, North East Times Magazine, Space Group and the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Newcastle-based creative agency Gardiner Richardson has also agreed to sponsor a series of launch events to raise awareness of the new facility.

Northumbria is now looking for additional mentoring and financial

Northumbria's position as the number one top-ranked UK university for start-ups is set to reach new heights with a purpose-built incubator hub for its flourishing community of graduate and student entrepreneurs.

support from business partners. It is setting up an Enterprise Club, where members can offer pro-bono advice and expertise, and an Enterprise Fund through which they can pledge financial support to help fledgling student start-ups develop proof-of-concept and feasibility business plans.

The announcement comes as Northumbria has once again topped the UK university rankings for graduate start-ups based on turnover. In the Higher Education Business in the Community Survey for 2017/18, turnover for Northumbria graduate start-up businesses exceeded £81.4 million

– more than £34 million greater than the second ranked institution, the University of Edinburgh. Since 2009 Northumbria has supported the development of more than 200 graduate companies that now employ almost 1,100 people.

Continues on page 2.

"THE AIM IS TO OFFER THE PERFECT ENVIRONMENT TO HELP THE NEXT GENERATION OF STUDENT AND GRADUATE ENTREPRENEURS."

LUCY WINSKELL



Northumbria University
NEWCASTLE

IN THIS EDITION

SUMMER 2019



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

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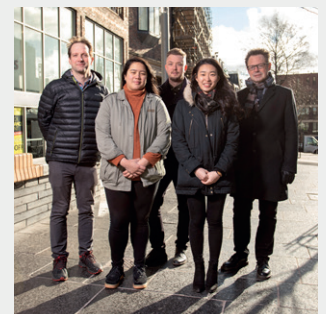
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REVEALED AT
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Champions of enterprise cont.

Building on this success, the new Incubator further reinforces Northumbria's reputation as a university that champions enterprise, both through its teaching, and the support for its start-ups through the Student and Graduate Enterprise Service. Pioneering courses such as Entrepreneurial Business Management, where students run their own businesses, and the student-led Business Clinic which requires students to provide a free consultancy to real clients, have also helped establish Northumbria as a leader in entrepreneurial education.

Lucy Winskell OBE, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Employability and Partnerships at Northumbria believes that, as the Incubator will be located next to the University's existing Business Clinic, it will also help create a healthy interaction and collaboration between current students and recent graduate entrepreneurs. There will also be spin-off benefits

as businesses grown in the Incubator expand and create jobs in the wider community and beyond. Commenting further Lucy added: "We are extremely proud of our entrepreneurial students and graduates and the significant contribution their businesses are making to economic growth, social prosperity and indeed jobs. Their success is down to remarkable creativity, drive and innovation, but it also reflects the focus we have as a university on entrepreneurship both in education and research and the support we offer our start-ups through the Student and Graduate Enterprise Service. "Our new Incubator will take this to the next level as a purpose-built workspace with access to a range of support and mentoring services. The aim is to offer the perfect environment to grow the next generation of student and graduate entrepreneurs. With a central location in Newcastle,

convenient access to transport links and hi-tech connectivity, it will offer the perfect environment and stimulation to help the next generation of student and graduate entrepreneurs." Looking further ahead, Lucy added: "Our future ambitions include creating a shared vision and facility for accelerator and scale-ups in partnership with key stakeholders across the North East." Plans for the incubator hub were revealed at launch events in London and Newcastle, during which guests were able to take a virtual tour of the new space using VR headsets.



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northumbria.ac.uk/incubator

TRANSFORMING HOW HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IDENTIFY STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES



NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY IS LEADING A SECTOR CHANGING PROJECT USING ADVANCED DATA CAPTURE AND STUDENT FACING EDUCATIONAL ANALYTICS TO GENERATE EARLY WARNING SIGNS FOR STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

The way in which student mental health and wellbeing is approached by the sector will be transformed following a bid by the University to secure funding to identify how big data, technology, educational analytics and student facing interventions can be used to recognise and support students with mental health issues. The challenges facing the sector are well-known, with the rates of students disclosing mental illness continuing to rise, and the alarming statistic that 95 students took their own lives in England and Wales in 2016/17.

To begin combatting these challenges, a £2m project supported by the Office for Students (OfS) will use innovative integration of technology, advanced educational data analytics, student relationship management and student support, to start to try and predict whether a student is already experiencing, or will have a mental health crisis. The purpose of the study is to identify insights that can be acted upon to deliver a more holistic approach to student health, wellbeing and education. This will be done in collaboration with nine partners from the Higher Education, charity and technology sectors.

By 2021, the project will provide answers to the questions the sector is asking on how best to identify and respond to students with poor mental fitness. All outputs from the project will be scalable sector-wide, giving Higher Education institutions mechanisms to make positive interventions and tools to engage their whole student community. Professor Peter Francis, project lead and Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Northumbria explained: "This project brings together the best ideas alongside cutting-edge analytical technology to support all students, with the goal of seeing how big data can support a thriving student community. We will build an understanding of how a student gets into a state of crisis, and whether joined up collected data can generate the targeted personalised support that they require."

"We are taking a pioneering and sector-leading approach to this very serious issue, and one which will provide all universities

with the mechanisms to help those most in need."

The Vice-Chancellor of Northumbria University, Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, added: "Northumbria's lead role in this project demonstrates clearly the University's commitment to tackling this key sector-wide issue. The extremely complex issue of student mental health is a strategic priority for the whole of the Higher Education sector: our lead role in this project signals our determination to improve the lives of all students by tackling this issue."

With innovative technology central to the aspirations of the project, leading Higher Education specialists have been engaged to provide their expertise. Among the specialists are world-leading experts in student data, Civitas International Learning, who Northumbria is already working with as part of its Educational Analytics project. Dr Mark Milliron, Chief Learning Officer and Co-Founder of Civitas Learning, remarked: "We help Higher Education institutions make the most of their learning data so that they know what is working for their students and can better personalise and scale student support. The Office for Students and Northumbria University are addressing the critical challenges on differential attainment and holistic support."

We're honoured to be a part of this important work."

This pioneering project builds on Northumbria's recent move to grow the size of its mental health team, and provide further routes for students to access support – turn to page 8 to read about the new mental health services available to students.



**PROFESSOR PETER FRANCIS,
PROJECT LEAD AND DEPUTY
VICE-CHANCELLOR**

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project will have three main work streams:

Suicide Prevention and Intervention

which will develop an Early Alert Tool, which could identify individual students at risk of suicide and mental health crisis.

Helping Students in Difficulties provides a new sector framework for mental health wellbeing analytics as well as using data to identify students exhibiting signs and behaviours associated with poor mental health and provide them with the mechanisms to seek help.

Supporting a Thriving Community seeks to use data analytics and student community insights to inform new sector ready communication and engagement interventions, enabling a thriving student mindset and improved engagement.

Full list of project partners:

- **Northumbria University**
Lead
- **UUK with James Murray**
Partner
- **Buckinghamshire New University**
Higher Education Partner
- **University of East London**
Higher Education Partner
- **Microsoft Education**
Technology Partner
- **Civitas Learning International**
Technology Partner
- **The Student Room Group**
Technology Partner
- **Jisc**
Technology Partner
- **Papyrus**
Charity Partner
- **Bristol University**
Beta Partner
- **Northumbria University, University of East London and Buckinghamshire New University Students' Unions**
Students' Union Partners

TACKLING TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES

At Northumbria our academics are working together to make a real and tangible impact on the world. Through their ground-breaking research they are, among other things, fighting disease, helping people live longer and healthier lives, and protecting the planet. They ask how we can shape the world we live in by reflecting on the past, understanding the present and planning for the future. Throughout 2019 we will be showcasing examples of this remarkable work through Northumbria University News – highlighting research which is literally tackling tomorrow's challenges head on. In this issue we explore how our glaciologists are predicting major changes to the Antarctic ice shelf, and how raising awareness of wildlife crime could save some of the world's most endangered species.



GREEN JUSTICE

Ornamental cacti, exotic orchids, pet reptiles, even tarantulas – all have now become reasonably commonplace in homes across the UK. But how much do we really know about where our pets and plants have come from?

This is a question Professor Tanya Wyatt has been exploring. As a green criminologist she researches the wider impact of wildlife trafficking, looking at the impact it has on the environment, and also on the people and communities involved. And with a recent report revealing that one million species are now threatened with extinction due to human behaviour, Professor Wyatt believes raising awareness of the problem is key to the survival of some of our most-loved animals, birds, fish and plants.

"The recent report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services made for very sobering reading," she explains.

"Shockingly the second biggest factor in the predicted extinction of one million plant and animal species is direct exploitation of organisms, of which wildlife crime, such as poaching, trafficking and the exploitation of different species is a significant part.

"While many of us are aware of the big issues we see highlighted in the media, we also need to look closer to home and consider where the plants and animals in our own homes have come from and what impact their journey to us might have had.

"It's not just the affect wildlife crime has on biodiversity, it's also the human consequence. This type of trafficking often is fuelled by corruption and undermines national and regional political and economic security."

As an internationally respected expert in her field, Professor Wyatt was recently invited by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

to advise on a new set of learning materials which will be used by university lecturers and school teachers all over the world. She was one of around 20 academic experts invited by the UN to advise on materials being developed by the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative. Together they reviewed the new resources, which will form a series of university modules on wildlife, forest and fisheries crime, to support lecturers with an interest in this area. The modules will be available from this month and aim to inspire and encourage students to engage in this important topic.

Professor Wyatt believes part of the challenge is educating the general public about the extent of the problem. "When people think about wildlife trafficking they might think about poaching elephants for ivory," she explains. "However, they probably wouldn't think about trafficking cacti for

ornamental gardens, or tarantulas for pets – but these are just as serious a problem."

As part of her current research Professor Wyatt is exploring how governments comply with the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) – a global treaty to protect endangered plants and animals. She aims to identify the most successful models so that other governments can learn from them.

"CITES was established 45 years ago and was designed, in part, to tackle the illegal wildlife trade," she said. "But it is clear there is still a lot of work to be done. For example, there are now only 3,000 tigers left in the world – fundamental changes need to take place to ensure the survival of some of the world's most recognisable species."

"THE SECOND BIGGEST FACTOR IN THE PREDICTED EXTINCTION OF ONE MILLION PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES IS DIRECT EXPLOITATION OF ORGANISMS, OF WHICH WILDLIFE CRIME, SUCH AS POACHING, TRAFFICKING AND THE EXPLOITATION OF DIFFERENT SPECIES IS A SIGNIFICANT PART."

PROFESSOR
TANYA WYATT

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ICE SHELF TWICE THE SIZE OF NEW YORK CITY TO COLLAPSE

Glaciology experts at Northumbria University have discovered that a large section of the Brunt Ice Shelf, home to a UK research station, is about to break off.

Over the past seven years, two large cracks have been growing across a 1,500 square kilometer iceberg in Antarctica. When these cracks meet, it is expected that the giant iceberg will break away from the Brunt Ice Shelf. In anticipation of the break, which is expected to happen in just as little as a few months, the British Antarctic Survey's Halley Research Station has been moved to a safer location on the ice shelf to protect its researchers.

Professor Hilmar Gudmundsson's, a glaciology expert at Northumbria, has been carrying out research in this area for more than 15 years, monitoring the growth of the two cracks – Chasm 1 and the Halloween Crack – since they first emerged. He explains that the ice shelf has recently gained significant public attention. "Satellite images of the changes in the ice shelf have been shared online and there has been much speculation about the cause of this movement and the impact the iceberg will have when it breaks away."

But Professor Gudmundsson's team, in collaboration with scientists from ENVO, a remote sensing company in Austria, have submitted new research which shows that the break-off is part of the ice shelf's natural lifecycle.

"What many people do not realise is that this is a natural process and something which has happened time and again. We recognise that climate change is a serious problem which is having an impact around the world, and particularly in the Antarctic. However, there is no indication from our research that this particular event is related to climate change."

"We have been tracking the movement of the ice shelf for many years and our modelling indicates that this breakaway is entirely expected. That is why in 2014 we recommended that the British Antarctic Survey moved the Halley Research Station to a new and safe location on the ice shelf."

The Brunt Ice Shelf is a large floating area of ice, around 150m to 250m thick, and is made up of freshwater ice which originally fell as snow further inland. The ice shelf rests on top of the Weddell Sea and flows off the mainland, moving outwards from the centre of Antarctica.

As ice shelves are buoyant, any icebergs that form as a result of fractures in the ice do not contribute to sea level rise. "Once the iceberg breaks away from the Brunt Ice Shelf it is likely to drift towards the west and slowly break up into smaller icebergs," explains Dr Jan De Rydt, also from the Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences at Northumbria University.

Historic evidence shows that the Brunt Ice Shelf has seen similar events in the past – known as calving. Professor Gudmundsson explains: "Maps drawn by Shackleton and Wordie during their expedition to the Brunt Ice Shelf in 1915 show that, at that time, the ice shelf was quite extended. However, by the time the Halley Research Station was established in the 1950s the reach of the ice shelf was much shorter, indicating that a large iceberg must have broken away at some point after 1915. This backs up our research that this type of event is historically consistent and part of the natural cycle of the ice shelf."

Professor Gudmundsson and Dr De Rydt are part of the Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences at Northumbria. Their team, specialising in cold and paleo environments, carry out research around the globe ranging from the tropics to the polar regions to investigate both modern and ancient environments.



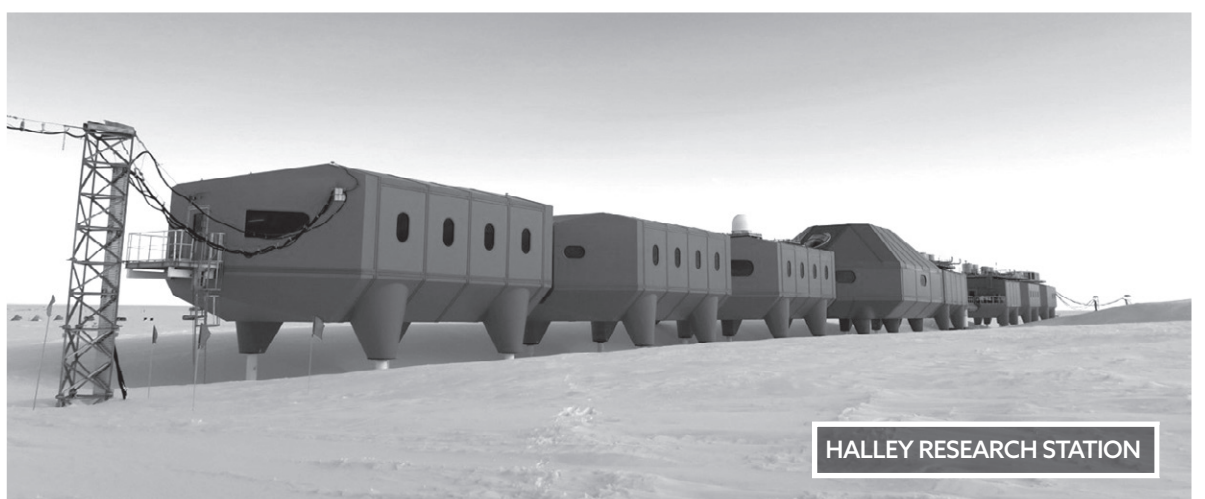
PROFESSOR HILMAR GUDMUNDSSON



THE HALLOWEEN CRACK.
PHOTO CREDIT: JAN DE RYDT/
BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY

"ONCE THE ICEBERG BREAKS AWAY FROM THE BRUNT ICE SHELF IT IS LIKELY TO DRIFT TOWARDS THE WEST AND SLOWLY BREAK UP INTO SMALLER ICEBERGS"

DR JAN DE RYDT



HALLEY RESEARCH STATION

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Double ranking success



Left:
Students at
Northumbria
University City
Campus

"OURS HAS BEEN A QUALITY-BASED STRATEGY WITH THE STUDENT AT ITS HEART AND THE IMPROVEMENTS SHOWN IN THIS YEAR'S LEAGUE TABLES ARE EVIDENCE THAT THIS APPROACH IS WORKING."

PROFESSOR ANDREW WATHEY CBE

Northumbria University is now ranked in the top 50 of two of the UK's leading university guides.

The University has now featured within the top 50 of The Guardian's guide for three consecutive years. This year Northumbria has also climbed an impressive six places to enter the top 50 of The Complete University Guide.

The national league tables measure the performance of universities across several categories. Northumbria improved its score in many areas in both The Guardian and CompleteUniversityGuide tables, seeing notable increases in ratings relating to spend on academic services; students' satisfaction with their course; the staff-student ratio and graduate prospects.

Confirming the quality of education on offer at Northumbria, both tables ranked a number of the University's courses – including

Architecture, Design, Education, Engineering and Nursing – as being within the top 20 available in the UK.

Northumbria's rise in the UK league tables also follows significant improvement in the University's international rankings. In the Times Higher Education's global league table last autumn, the University was placed firmly within the top 25% in the world for its strong performance for research citations. This measures how often research conducted within the institution is cited and is a clear sign of the quality of research coming from Northumbria and the impact it is having on the world.

Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said that Northumbria's improved ranking in the league tables reflected the

success of the University's focus on quality. "Ours has been a quality-based strategy with the student at its heart and the improvements shown in this year's league tables are evidence that this approach is working," he said, adding that students at Northumbria can be confident that they are learning from world-class researchers in a vibrant academic community.

Anyone interested in studying at Northumbria or working in partnership with the University for collaborative research or training, can find out more by visiting our website.

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| SUBJECT LEAGUE TABLE POSITIONS | |
|--|-----|
| Librarianship & Information Management | 2° |
| Architecture | 9* |
| Education | 9* |
| Nursing & Midwifery | 9* |
| Design & Crafts | 10* |
| Journalism & PR | 10* |
| Occupational Therapy | 14° |
| Building | 14° |
| English & Creative Writing | 15* |
| Communication & Media Studies | 16° |
| Civil Engineering | 17* |

° The Complete University Guide 2020
* The Guardian University League Table 2020

World first research hub to create Living Buildings

Experts from Northumbria and Newcastle Universities will develop new technologies to revolutionise how buildings are constructed and how they operate.

The Universities have been jointly awarded £8m from Research England's Expanding Excellence in England (E3) Fund made available through the modern Industrial Strategy to establish the world's first research Hub for Biotechnology in the Built Environment (HBBE). The investment comes as part of the E3 Fund supporting England's world-leading universities to shape new innovations in our economy and provide the skills needed for the highly skilled jobs of the future. The funding will enable the HBBE to lead a reinvention of the way we design and construct our buildings.

The aim of the research hub is to facilitate the creation of a new generation of 'Living Buildings', which are responsive to the natural environment, grown using living engineered materials, process their own waste, reduce pollution, generate energy and support a biological environment that benefits health. Hub Co-Director Dr Martyn Dade-Robertson, a Reader in Design Computation in the School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape at Newcastle University, said: "This is an incredibly exciting opportunity to create a new field of research. By bringing together architects, engineers and bio-scientists, working with industry and investing in state-of-the-art facilities we are aiming to rethink the building industry."

The HBBE will develop new microbial technologies which will act as a metabolism, that can both process a building's waste and generate energy. Using microbes (microscopic organisms), the hub will create living materials and explore how healthy environments can be



FROM L-R: DR DARREN SMITH, DR GARY BLACK AND DR MENG ZHANG OF NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

developed. This will be achieved by better understanding the way the microbiome (the combined microorganisms) of the built environment and humans interact. An experimental biological house – or living lab – The OME, will be built on Newcastle University's campus as part of the project. The OME will be used as an experimental facility to test and showcase the hub's ground-breaking research.

Included in the plans are a Micro-Design Lab, based at Northumbria University and a Macro Bio-Design Lab at Newcastle University. These will enable the team to develop new technologies from molecules up to buildings. Hub Co-Director, Professor Gary Black, a Professor in Protein Biochemistry, at Northumbria said: "We want to use the very latest biotechnologies to create living homes that are responsive to, and protective of, their environment and the

people who live in them. The current construction of buildings is unsustainable due to its carbon footprint, the hope would be to use this model in housing in the future."

More than 20 members of staff are currently being recruited ahead of the Hub's official launch on 1 August. It will be led by a multidisciplinary team across both Universities: Professor Gary Black, Dr Meng Zhang and Dr Darren Smith of Northumbria University and Dr Martyn Dade-Robertson and Dr Ben Bridgens of Newcastle University. The team is one of the 13 research units to receive the first ever investment from Research England's Expanding Excellence in England (E3) Fund, launched in 2018. This further strengthens Northumbria's growing reputation for research excellence.

Across the UK, the Government is providing the biggest boost

to research and development funding in UK history, as part of the ambition to raise the level of Research and Development funding to 2.4% of GDP by 2027. Speaking of E3, Universities and Science Minister Chris Skidmore said: "Pushing the boundaries of knowledge and conquering new innovations are what our universities are known for the world over. The Expanding Excellence in England Fund will support projects throughout England to master new and developing areas of research and industry."

Made possible through our record R&D spend delivered by our modern Industrial Strategy, the investment will support researchers to develop solutions and opportunities for UK researchers and businesses."

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"WE WANT TO USE THE VERY LATEST BIOTECHNOLOGIES TO CREATE LIVING HOMES THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO, AND PROTECTIVE OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THEM. THE CURRENT CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS IS UNSUSTAINABLE DUE TO ITS CARBON FOOTPRINT."

PROFESSOR GARY BLACK

Responding to the challenge of student mental health

Providing the right support for the growing number of students experiencing mental health issues is a strategic priority for the Higher Education sector and a challenge which Northumbria is tackling head-on.

The challenges facing universities are well-known, with the rates of students disclosing mental illness continuing to rise across the sector. Northumbria, however, is taking steps to make sure that if a student does have a mental health crisis, help is always at hand.

Positive mental health is critical to a student's overall experience and that's why the University has updated its support offering to respond to changing needs, providing more choice and personalised support across the entirety of the student's time at Northumbria.

A new Student Life and Wellbeing team, led by Sue Broadbent, Assistant Director of Student and Library Services, now includes a larger Counselling and Mental Health team. The team is now providing appointments outside of core hours, and more routes to support including telephone and Skype calls in addition to face-to-face sessions. A new service called 'Spill', which provides access to counsellors for message-based therapy through a mobile app, is also being piloted.

Commenting on the enhancements to the University's student wellbeing and mental health offering Nick Woolley, Director of Student and Library



STUDENT CENTRAL AT NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY CITY CAMPUS

"OUR EXPERT STAFF IN THE NEW STUDENT LIFE AND WELLBEING TEAM, WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP INCREASINGLY PERSONAL AND RESPONSIVE SUPPORT, INCLUDING A GREATER EMPHASIS ON PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION BY HELPING STUDENTS DEVELOP RESILIENCE AND POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH."

NICK WOOLLEY

Services, said: "How we react to the challenge of student mental health has never been more important and we are excited to be taking this forward."

"Our expert staff in the new Student Life and Wellbeing team, will continue to develop increasingly personal and responsive support, including a greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention by helping students develop resilience and positive mental health."

"Importantly, other strategic developments such as the University's cutting-edge work on Educational Analytics is providing new insight on students as individuals and new means to match support they

need. We have never had a more holistic view of the student."

Throughout the process Northumbria Students' Union has been a key partner, providing valuable insight and reflections.

Ryan Bush, Vice President Welfare at Northumbria Students' Union adds: "Mental health is a huge priority for Northumbria Students' Union and we have been championing the need for extra support for student mental health through our representation, campaigning and joint work with the University."

"Through discussions and student feedback, we have jointly identified key improvements for Northumbria's mental health

service, such as extra counselling sessions, time slots outside of class times and more online support and guidance."

"Congratulations to Northumbria and I am delighted that these changes are now in place to benefit students."

Read more about how Northumbria approaches student mental health in the Big Interview with Sue Broadbent, Assistant Director of Student and Library Services, on the opposite page.

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northumbria.ac.uk/sls



The Big Interview: Student Mental Health

Northumbria University News asks Assistant Director for Student Life and Wellbeing, Sue Broadbent, about how the University is tackling the growing issue of student mental health and what the University has done to change its approach.

How has the conversation around student mental health changed since you joined Northumbria?

I've been at Northumbria since 2009, when I was initially appointed as Head of Wellbeing. Universities have always had welfare and counselling services, but I think the biggest shift that I've seen is the way the sector has begun to prioritise mental health as part of a wider wellbeing piece. At Northumbria we have transformed from a welfare service into something much more holistic, offering a whole range of wellbeing services. Our offering is now broader and deeper. It begins before students even arrive and continues right the way through until graduation. The model we use is set-up in a way which allows us to give

the personalised support that is needed at a particular time in a student's life to respond to a whole range of issues such as money, relationship worries and academic pressure – which can all impact on mental health.

Ten years ago, we saw fewer disclosures from students about their mental health, but there has definitely been a rise in these over recent years. In the past, poor mental health was treated as a medical condition and considered as a clinical illness, whereas now society is generally much more open to talking about mental health. It is addressed in the same way as physical health and that's been the biggest change in the last decade.

What are the main mental health concerns you see in students?

We know that transitioning to university can be incredibly tough. Within the first few weeks of starting university, students encounter some fairly major new experiences such as moving home, sharing accommodation with new people, money and time management and new levels of independence. If you then add social media into the mix – and the pressure to be seen to be living an amazing student life – it can become overwhelming for some and their health and wellbeing can suffer. This all means we must get our support right for our students, tailoring services to their specific needs and engaging with them as early as possible.

How does Northumbria tailor support for students?

We have a support model that is in place 24/7, 365 days a year which offers different levels of help depending on a student's individual needs. In the first instance, our self-help model enables students to access a huge range of relevant information, as well as services and workshops covering subjects such as mindfulness. In the event that a student needs more individualised support, they can access support from our different teams including mental health practitioners, disability advisors, counsellors, finance advisors, and resilience staff to help students cope during tough times. It's our aim that every aspect of a student's life is supported here, allowing them to really achieve their potential and thrive. It's our aim that every aspect of a student's life is supported here, allowing them to really achieve their potential and thrive.

Tell us about the University's new initiative to use data and analytics to help identify students with mental health issues...

This will really be a great support for students. We already gather students' data with their consent through an opt-in model. We look

at things like how often students are accessing the library, logging on to Blackboard and if they're missing classes. This information gives us a really good picture of how students are doing. It allows us to contact the student to make sure everything is alright and see if they need any support. As part of the new project, we'll extend this further by accessing new sets of data which will enable us to engage with students even earlier and offer them the personalised support they need from our counsellors and other support services.



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Write down your happy thoughts to reduce stress and anxiety

Research into mental health provides the vital understanding needed to prevent, diagnose and treat mental illness. It has been reported that approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK experience mental health problems each year, demonstrating the need for such research. *Northumbria University News* speaks to Michael Smith, Associate Professor in Psychobiology and Health Psychology, about the mental health research landscape, and his current research projects.

What does the mental health landscape look like from a research perspective?

A number of UK Research Councils, including the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Medical Research Council (MRC) and the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) currently list mental health as one of their priority areas, and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) have just launched an ambitious £8 million strategy bringing research networks together to tackle some of the key mental health research questions. Dr Alyson Dodd, one of my colleagues in the Department of Psychology, is involved in one of these networks which intends to change the Higher Education

experience to better support strong mental wellbeing for students. While there is some very good work being carried out aimed at addressing the key mental health challenges, including the mental health of children and young people and mental health problems arising from situations such as social isolation and socioeconomic inequality, so much more good quality work is needed to genuinely influence policy and practice.

What factors have led to the increasing demand for research into mental health?

The social and economic burden of mental health problems have been widely documented by the mainstream media. Mental

health accounts for a third of disability benefits, a figure which is increasing and exacerbated by a range of factors including increasing work stress and widening inequality.

Tell us about your current research and the rationale behind it.

Together with my Northumbria colleague, Professor Mark Wetherell, I have been investigating the influence of expressive writing on psychological and physical wellbeing. Mark had done some work previously which showed that rheumatoid arthritis patients who were able to get their negative thoughts and feelings 'off their chest' by writing them down showed

an improvement in mood. In another study, Mark and other Northumbria colleagues observed that when parents of children with autism wrote about the benefits of caregiving, their levels of anxiety improved. As a person who likes to 'focus on the positives' I was keen to investigate whether writing about intensively positive life experiences could result in similar effects. Thus far, our studies suggest that positive writing may be effective in reducing people's feelings of depression, anxiety and stress – and seems to be particularly effective for people who report feelings of social isolation.

Where do you see your research going in the future?

I would like to continue investigating expressive writing, to better understand which types of expressive writing work best for which groups of people. More generally speaking, it would be great to develop a wider toolkit of simple, 'do-it-yourself' techniques with a strong evidence base that people could use to cope with the demands of daily life.

How do you think mental health research will develop?

To tackle the big challenges in this area we need more large scale and truly multidisciplinary studies to help us fully understand the origins of mental health problems and the best ways to intervene.

Dr Smith is aligned to the Integrated Health and Social Care Multidisciplinary Research Theme at Northumbria.



DISCOVER MORE

northumbria.ac.uk/MRES

Future Police Constables join Northumbria

In March this year, a new generation of Northumbria Police Officers joined the University's first ever Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) programme.

Like all degree apprenticeships, Northumbria's PCDA combines practical on-the-job training with academic theory – covering areas that are critical to effective policing in the 21st century, such as evidence-based policing, supporting vulnerable people, dealing with cybercrime and crime prevention.

Welcoming four intakes of Police Constable students a year, the new PCDA is being jointly delivered by the University and Northumbria Police and is part of a national change to how police officers are recruited. Funded by the Government's Apprenticeship Levy, all new constables who do not have a degree level qualification will begin the three-year apprenticeship by 2020.

Northumbria's world-class expertise in crime, forensics and law, combined with a bespoke new education centre at its Coach Lane Campus, meant that the University beat the competition to deliver the force's PCDA. Northumbria's Deputy Vice-



Chancellor and internationally noted criminologist, Professor Peter Francis was delighted to welcome the students onto campus for the first time.

"We are proud to partner with Northumbria Police to deliver the innovative PCDA's," he said. "Both organisations have a successful history of partnership, and this development, confirms both organisations' strategic intent to work together to co-deliver excellence in research rich learning and professional development.

"Not only will this exciting new initiative transform the lives of

students on the new programme, the benefits of it will be felt in communities in the North East and beyond for many years to come."

On the back of the PCDA launch, the University will soon introduce a new BSc Professional Policing degree programme for students interested in a career in a police-related field.

DISCOVER MORE 

northumbria.ac.uk/police



"NOT ONLY WILL THIS EXCITING NEW INITIATIVE TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF STUDENTS ON THE NEW PROGRAMME, THE BENEFITS OF IT WILL BE FELT IN COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTH EAST AND BEYOND FOR MANY YEARS TO COME."

PROFESSOR PETER FRANCIS

Isabelle Hewitt...Apprentice of the Year

Isabelle Hewitt, a Quantity Surveying student at Northumbria University, has won the Apprentice of the Year 2019 award at the Generation4Change event.

The Generation4Change Awards is an annual event which celebrates future leaders in the UK built environment industry. It brings together young professionals working in various sectors, including architecture, engineering and archaeology, and those working for SMEs, contractors, consultants or clients, to recognise their achievements with the aim of developing their careers.

Northumbria University student Isabelle Hewitt is two years into her five-year Quantity Surveying BSc (Hons)

Chartered Surveyor Degree Apprenticeship, working with Esh Group as an apprentice Quantity Surveyor while undergoing her chartered surveyor degree.

Isabelle was nominated for this award by Esh Group for the positive impact she has had on her peers, the company and across the wider industry. Talking about her experience she commented, "A degree apprenticeship is one of the best opportunities anyone could ask for. Being able to learn the theory and apply it to the physical jobs and vice versa

provides a unique perspective to my career which I may otherwise not have gained – there are skills that can only be developed at university and those that can only be developed when doing the job."



DISCOVER MORE 

northumbria.ac.uk/degreeapprenticeship

Bedrest and beyond!

Below:
Cosmonaut. Credit:
Andrejs Zavadskis

Northumbria University researchers are asking people to spend two months in bed – all in the name of science.

A 60-day 'bedrest study' will simulate how astronauts' bodies decondition while they are spending time in space. Astronauts experience this deconditioning of their bodies due to the reduced gravity environment; their muscles become smaller and weaker, and their bones lose density.

The study, supported by the European Space Agency (ESA), NASA and German Aerospace Centre (DLR), will run until December 2019 at the German Aerospace Centre's 'envihab' facility in Cologne. In total, 24 participants will spend the allotted 60 days in bed, where they will lie in a head down tilt position. Their muscles and bones will weaken in the same way that an astronaut's would in a reduced gravity environment.

During the 60-day bedrest period, participants will be taken out of bed and exposed to artificial gravity for 30 minutes every day using the 'human centrifuge' at the bedrest facility. This piece of equipment spins the participants so that they are pulled down onto their feet, simulating the gravitational 'pull' normally experienced when standing up against Earth's gravity. The study will use the human centrifuge to explore the effectiveness of daily exposure to artificial gravity to prevent astronauts from developing spinal problems.

A team from Northumbria University's Aerospace Medicine and Rehabilitation Laboratory, led by Professor Nick Caplan, was selected as one of six ESA and three NASA-funded projects to take part in the bedrest campaign. Professor Caplan and his team are interested in spinal postural deconditioning, an issue relevant not just to astronauts, but also the general population with lower back pain or age-related problems with balance.



As well as the human centrifuge, Professor Caplan will also test the effectiveness of a rehabilitation device, which resembles a customised gym cross trainer, and is known as the Functional Re-adaptive Exercise Device (FRED). The Northumbria team has been investigating the FRED for a number of years, in collaboration with the ESA Space Medicine Team, as a potential rehabilitation tool for astronauts after they return to Earth. "The bedrest study is providing an ideal platform for us to determine how suitable our device is for use in the rehabilitation of astronauts when they have spent months aboard the International Space Station in very reduced gravity," explains Professor Caplan. "We will be using advanced neurophysiological and medical imaging techniques to understand how the spinal postural muscles

adapt to simulated reduced gravity and determine the effectiveness of a rehabilitation programme designed for use not just in astronauts, but also in populations on Earth, such as people with low back pain or those with postural instability."

Research into space health, spearheaded by Professor Caplan, gives an insight into the hostility of space as a working environment. His team's work focusses on improving the spinal health of astronauts with exercise regimes that would enable them to colonise Mars.

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/bedrest



"WE WILL BE USING ADVANCED NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL AND MEDICAL IMAGING TECHNIQUES TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE SPINAL POSTURAL MUSCLES ADAPT TO SIMULATED REDUCED GRAVITY..."

PROFESSOR NICK CAPLAN

Medieval liturgy performed after 600 years



PRAYING SINGING NUNS CA. 1400
(PHOTO CREDIT: THE BRITISH LIBRARY)

A religious script, not heard for over 600 years, was performed by Newcastle Cathedral's women's choir, Schola Cantorum, in celebration of International Women's Day. Medieval experts from Northumbria University and Newcastle Cathedral worked together to create The Liturgy of the Nails – a medieval worship service inspired by the work of Fourteenth Century female composer Constanza of Castile. Constanza's liturgy, Commemoration of the Nails of the Passion of the Cross of Christ, is an extended meditation based around Vespers, a sunset evening prayer service, and Compline, also known as night prayer. It is one of the very few examples of a liturgy written by a woman of this period and the only one from Spain. Professor Lesley Twomey, Professor in Medieval and Golden Age Hispanic Art and Literature, worked closely with Reverend Canon Clare MacLaren, Canon for Music and Liturgy at the Cathedral, to translate the liturgy. As the original music no longer exists, this posed a significant challenge. Professor Twomey commented: "Constanza de Castilla is a remarkable woman liturgist. Her Liturgy of the Nails is unlike any other liturgy in the period and also provides new insights into the history of how the Passion was celebrated in Spain." Constanza's theology of the Passion has been studied by Professor Twomey and discussed in her forthcoming book on women and the holy word, due to be released later this year. She has also published on the aesthetics of beauty in the writings of cloistered women, including the works of Constanza.

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/arts



THE ACADEMIC TEAM BEHIND THE NEW FOUNDATION AND BA (HONS) MUSIC DEGREES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: PROFESSOR DAVID J SMITH, KRIS THOMSETT, DR KATHERINE BUTLER AND DR RACHAEL DURKIN

A music degree designed for the 21st century

A brand-new music degree will launch at Northumbria University next September, giving aspiring musicians the essentials skills they need to establish a career in the industry.

Thought to be one of the first new music degrees established in several decades, Northumbria's innovative courses have been specifically created to meet the current need for creative graduates, with an additional strong focus on employability. Students will be taught the business-related skills required to forge successful careers as freelance musicians, such as tax and finance, contract management, copyright and marketing.

For those students who were unable to study music at A Level, there is an option to complete a Foundation Year course before joining the Music BA (Hons).

This new initiative bucks a trend which has seen the closure of music departments in higher education institutions in recent years, and cuts to creative subjects in schools, due, in part, to the introduction of

the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).

Northumbria's unique Foundation Year and Music BA (Hons) programme includes traditional modules, such as music history, theory and harmony, as well as performance – which includes a generous allocation of one-to-one instrument or vocal tuition. Particularly distinctive is the focus on training for aspiring instrumental and vocal teachers. From peer coaching to placements in local schools, course leaders have embedded modules in instrumental and vocal teaching within the BA (Hons) Music degree at A Level.

Professor David J Smith, Northumbria University's Founding Head of Music, explained: "What makes our Foundation and BA (Hons) degrees distinctive is the way we prepare our students for their real-life

work as musicians. In addition to performing and musicological studies, students will also learn how to teach their instrument and how to manage in their career as musicians and musical entrepreneurs."

The degree will make the most of the University's partnerships with key cultural institutions in Newcastle. Students will be given access to the Literary and Philosophical Society's historical library, as well as learning and performance spaces at Newcastle Cathedral, with which Northumbria has a long-standing relationship.

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/music



"WHAT MAKES OUR FOUNDATION AND BA (HONS) DEGREES DISTINCTIVE IS THE WAY WE PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR THEIR REAL-LIFE WORK AS MUSICIANS. IN ADDITION TO PERFORMING AND MUSICOLOGICAL STUDIES, STUDENTS WILL ALSO LEARN HOW TO TEACH THEIR INSTRUMENT AND HOW TO MANAGE IN THEIR CAREER AS MUSICIANS AND MUSICAL ENTREPRENEURS."

PROFESSOR DAVID J SMITH



Left:
The iconic
Louvre
museum, Paris

Below:
Daniela and
Adam pictured
in front of the
world famous,
Mona Lisa

Night at the museum

A lucky Northumbria University student won the opportunity to spend the night in Paris at the world famous Louvre museum.

The competition, run by the Louvre and Airbnb, asked entrants to answer why they would be Mona Lisa's perfect guest to be in with a chance to win. Conservation of Fine Art MA student Daniela Molinari was selected as the winner and she brought along her boyfriend Adam for a very special sleepover that saw the entire museum turned into their home for the evening.

The pair were accompanied by a museum host, who began by taking them on a private tour of the gallery, as previously given to the likes of the Obamas, Beyoncé and Jay-Z, before taking an aperitif in the Louvre's living room, graced by the presence of the famous Mona Lisa. As part of the experience, Daniela and Adam were then treated to an extravagant feast in a pop-up

dining room, presided over by the Venus de Milo, the Greek goddess of love and beauty.

Speaking of the evening, Daniela said: "It was an unexpected and unbelievable experience. I respect art because of what I study, but being able to experience it in such a way granted me the space to appreciate everything individually without crowds, which actually makes a big difference. It was a huge privilege to attend."

Daniela and Adam enjoyed an intimate acoustic concert in Napoleon III's extravagant apartments, before retiring to their bedroom for the evening – which was in the form of a mini-pyramid underneath the Louvre's famous glass pyramid.

"I had a fantastic night's sleep!" said Daniela. "It was a lot to take in through the evening so I fell asleep within seconds. I think my favourite part was drinking by the Mona Lisa and being able to talk to our host about art and conservation. The whole experience was enthralling. My standards for dinner dates have definitely gone up!"

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/fineart

"I RESPECT ART BECAUSE OF WHAT I STUDY, BUT BEING ABLE TO EXPERIENCE IT IN SUCH A WAY GRANTED ME THE SPACE TO APPRECIATE EVERYTHING INDIVIDUALLY WITHOUT CROWDS, WHICH ACTUALLY MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE."

DANIELA MOLINARI



DID YOU KNOW?



The museum was originally a fortress in the late 12th century



After more than two centuries as a royal palace, the Louvre was opened in 1793 as a public museum



The steel-and-glass pyramid entrance to the Louvre was designed by Chinese-born American architect I.M. Pei and was opened in 1989.



The Louvre is the biggest museum in the world with 380,000 pieces in total



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

IN THE MEDIA

Footage of the catastrophic fire at the Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris has provided some of the most recognisable images to define the year so far. Beamed across the globe on rolling 24-hour news channels the pictures provoked discussion, not only about the possible causes of the fire, but also how the building has acquired such revered status across all cultures and faiths.

It was this topic that saw Northumbria's Dr Laura O'Brien, a historian of nineteenth and twentieth-century France and a specialist in the history of Paris, lend her expert views to millions around the world across numerous news outlets.



NOTRE DAME FIRE IN APRIL 2019

"One thing I was asked about most as the fire was happening, was: why is Notre-Dame Cathedral so important?" recalls Laura talking to *Northumbria News*. "People are genuinely fascinated. It goes beyond just being a simple place of worship, it now seems to transcend religions and more secular divides."

The Northumbria historian's research interests are primarily focused on the cultural, social and political history of modern France, and Laura has spent time in Paris researching previous redevelopments of the Cathedral in the nineteenth century. "My research has taken me to the Cathedral, and I've spent a great deal of time exploring Notre-Dame's archives. It's a

central part of my research on religious culture in nineteenth-century Paris, and it's become an incredible symbol of both the city and of France," she explained.

"I was asked about all sorts of things; from the history of the building, its place in the culture of modern-day France and we even covered Victor Hugo's focus on the cathedral in *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, which have all added to its aura for people."

It was this knowledge that uniquely placed Dr O'Brien to answer questions from the media as the fire took its toll on the medieval structure. "I spoke to the BBC News channel on the evening of the fire, in an interview which went out live across the globe via its world feed, and in the

following days I appeared on the national news on RTE (Ireland's national broadcaster), national radio station LBC, as well as other local radio stations.

"It was really fantastic to be able to use my research to help others understand the significance of this building, and to let people know that our historical research can lend an expert voice to these modern real-world, live situations."

The BBC story in particular has led to further interest in her work. "After I spoke to the BBC lots of people got in touch with me directly to talk about my research interests and I've had some invitations to speak on podcasts and radio. I've also been speaking with CNBC who are telling a wider

story about the history of Paris."

Dr O'Brien said the support and media training she received from Northumbria's Corporate Communications and Reputation Management team in managing media requests had been invaluable.

"Having had training in dealing with the media from the University, it made it much easier for me, and it was great to have the support from the team to deal with the requests for comment." She added: "I would absolutely encourage my colleagues at Northumbria to get in touch with the team to see how they can maximise the reach of their research to the widest possible audience."

"IT WAS REALLY FANTASTIC TO BE ABLE TO USE MY RESEARCH TO HELP OTHERS UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING, AND TO LET PEOPLE KNOW THAT OUR HISTORICAL RESEARCH CAN LEND AN EXPERT VOICE TO THESE MODERN REAL-WORLD, LIVE SITUATIONS."

DR LAURA O'BRIEN

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/humanities

Eye-opening overseas placement

Placements in industry are a core element of many Northumbria courses and the University's strong links with a wide range of organisations – like Work the World – ensure that students graduate with the skills recruiters are looking for. Third-year Northumbria University physiotherapy student, Thomas Ayre, recently travelled to Takoradi, Ghana, on a four-week physiotherapy placement to see the differences between healthcare in the UK and in the developing world. He tells his story to *Northumbria News*.

I wanted to do an overseas placement to put into practice all that I've learned on my course while experiencing a totally new culture and healthcare system. My father was one of the main reasons I wanted to visit Ghana. During the 80s, he worked in Kumasi, in an industrialised zone of the city, known for supplying spare parts to Ghana's junker cars. I made a point of visiting the area where my dad worked when he was my age – but my experience of Ghana would be quite different. During my time in Ghana, I shared a house with healthcare students from around the world – Irish student midwives, Australian student medics and Canadian student dentists. Everyone was there for the same reason, to experience their medical specialisation in a completely new setting. We arrived at our placement hospital in the middle of a tropical storm with raindrops the size of grapes landing around us. The hospital itself sits on top of a hill overlooking the town of Takoradi and is a converted military building constructed primarily from concrete. The physiotherapy department was set apart from the



main hospital, among the dental, pharmacy and other clinical departments. I spent time with local physiotherapists to provide treatment to patients. The most common conditions I saw during my time in the hospital were strokes and paediatric cerebral palsy, but the treatment methods and care were entirely different from what would be found in an NHS hospital. Unlike British hospitals where patients are often automatically referred to a physiotherapist, in Ghana, patients are required to refer themselves for physiotherapy. During a month at the hospital there were only two instances when a physiotherapist left the department to visit a patient in the main hospital building. Both instances were to visit recent stroke patients who were receiving care on a medical ward.



Unlike British physiotherapy, treatment isn't typically offered to orthopaedics because they're deemed not suitable for physiotherapy while they remained in certain areas of the hospital. One of the many patients that stuck in my mind was a woman who had a mild case of Bell's Palsy – a type of facial paralysis often caused by an inflamed facial nerve. I had only read about the condition in the weeks before journeying to Ghana. The patient received electrical stimulation to the paralysed portion of her face for roughly ten minutes, but specific timings weren't possible as the timer was broken. This was typical of equipment in the hospital, much of it worked, but basic aspects such as timers were often either missing or broken.

I spent time with other student physiotherapists during my week with the paediatric team. I was encouraged to question and explore the treatment methods and clinical reasoning behind the patients' plans – helping me to learn more and make a real difference to patients. In the afternoons and evenings after placement, we spent time in Takoradi – taking time to explore the local areas and cultures. Weekends were fantastic opportunities to see the sights of Southern Ghana, including Kumasi and Mole National Park and I also fulfilled my lifelong dream of going on safari. My placement experience was a once in a lifetime opportunity that changed my perspective, enhanced my skills and experience and helped to give context to everything I'd learned on my course."

"MY PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE WAS A ONCE IN A LIFE TIME OPPORTUNITY THAT CHANGED MY PERSPECTIVE, ENHANCED MY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE AND HELPED TO GIVE CONTEXT TO EVERYTHING I'D LEARNED ON MY COURSE."

THOMAS AYRE

Work the World specialises in providing overseas physiotherapy placements in Asia, Africa and Latin America which provide insight into the challenges associated with delivering healthcare in the developing world.

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/careers

GLOBAL TRANSPLANT SPORTS COMMUNITY DESCENDS ON NORTHUMBRIA

This summer over 2,500 athletes and their families and supporters will descend on Northumbria's world-class £30m Sport Central for the grand Opening Ceremony of the World Transplant Games.

Staged by the World Transplant Games Federation and organised by NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI), the Games celebrate a second chance of living, showcase the success of transplant surgery and highlight the importance of signing up to the Organ Donor Register.

Athletes, who have all had transplant surgery or are living donors, will travel from 70 different countries across the world to compete in the games.

On the first day of the Games, after parading through Newcastle City Centre, athletes will arrive at the University's 3,000 seat sports arena to enjoy the opening celebrations. The ceremony will mark the official start of seven action packed days of World Transplant Games fixtures across the North East.

Professor Jon Reast, Pro-Vice Chancellor (International) at Northumbria University, said he is delighted the University is playing a major role in the Games. "It's a great honour to be hosting the opening ceremony in our own fabulous Sport Central, and to have the opportunity to showcase our University to an international audience." He goes on to reflect, "Athletes and supporters from all over the world will be visiting the campus, and this is a chance to share our research and expertise in areas such

as heart and lung transplants and demonstrate how it is having a real impact on people's lives."

Northumbria University has played a significant role in introducing heart and lung transplant surgery to the Southern Asian region in recent years. Until a few years ago, no heart or lung transplants had ever taken place in Sri Lanka or India. While the UK and other westernised countries have a vibrant transplant programme, anyone needing this life-saving surgery in Sri Lanka or India would have to travel abroad and pay prohibitively high costs. Through the work of Stephen Clark, a Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Cardiopulmonary Transplantation in Northumbria's Department of Applied Sciences, teams of surgeons in Southern Asia are now being mentored to undertake the first surgeries in these countries. Professor Clark previously led the cardiopulmonary transplantation team at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital and alongside his role at Northumbria is now establishing transplant units in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, as well as India and Sri Lanka.

DISCOVER MORE



worldtransplantgames.org

WORLD TRANSPLANT GAMES VENUES



Gateshead International Stadium

The North East's only International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) standard athletics stadium.



Sport Central

Northumbria University's £30m state-of-the-art sports facility, situated on the University campus, in the heart of Newcastle city centre.



Sunderland Aquatic Centre

Sunderland Aquatic Centre's has a 50m swimming pool - the only facility of its type in North East England.



Northumberland Tennis Club

Jesmond tennis facilities include clay, grass and indoor courts as well as five of the finest quality squash courts in the region.



Eagles Community Arena

Newcastle's brand new, purpose-built community sports arena home to the Esh Group Eagles Newcastle.



Close House Golf Resort

Close House is the home of the world's only two Lee Westwood golf courses to which the golfer is closely affiliated.



17 - 26 AUGUST

**AMF Bowling Washington**

Washington's AMF Bowling at The Galleries offers 26 state-of-the-art lanes.

**NAMCO Funscape**

This venue at intu Metrocentre offers 18 bowling lanes.

**St James' Park**

Better known as home to Newcastle United Football Club, this venue will be hosting the darts.

**Performance Square at Sage Gateshead & Mill Road Car Park**

Petanque, which is similar to boules, will take place in the Mill Road Car Park below Sage Gateshead.

**Hetton Lyons Country Park**

A former colliery site, this 19 hectare picturesque countryside park is part of the National Cycle Network.

**Town Moor/Exhibition Park**

The Town Moor and Exhibition Park are green spaces where the Gift of Life runs will take place.

**Gateshead and Newcastle Quayside**

The Cycling Time Trial will take place along the banks of the River Tyne, along NewcastleGateshead Quayside.

**FIXTURES AND DATES****DAY ONE:
SATURDAY 17 AUGUST:**

- Archery and Volleyball training, Gateshead International Stadium
- Petanque Training, Sage Gateshead
- Opening Ceremony, Sport Central

**DAY TWO:
SUNDAY 18 AUGUST:**

- 5k Road Race, Town Moor/Exhibition Park
- Gift of Life Run/Walk
- Volley Ball, Gateshead International Stadium
- Archery Individual, Gateshead International Stadium
- Petanque Singles, Sage Gateshead
- Golf, Close House Hotel
- Squash, Northumberland Tennis Club
- Football, Gateshead International Stadium
- Bowling Training, AMF Bowling Washington/ NAMCO Funscape

**DAY THREE:
MONDAY 19 AUGUST:**

- Swimming, Sunderland Aquatic Centre
- Badminton Singles, Sport Central
- Golf, Close House Hotel
- Squash, Northumberland Tennis Club
- Cycling TT Cycling Team, Quayside
- Petanque Doubles, Sage Gateshead
- Football, Gateshead International Stadium
- Bowling Individual, AMF Washington/ NAMCO Funscape
- Archery Team, Gateshead International Stadium

**DAY FOUR:
TUESDAY 20 AUGUST:**

- Athletics, Gateshead International Stadium
- Tennis, Northumberland Tennis Club
- Basket Ball, Eagles Venue
- Swimming, Sunderland Aquatic Centre
- Cycling 30k, Hetton Lyons Country Park
- Badminton Singles, Sport Central
- Bowling Pairs, AMF Washington/ NAMCO Funscape

**DAY FIVE:
WEDNESDAY 21 AUGUST:**

- Athletics, Gateshead International Stadium
- Table Tennis Singles, Sports Central
- Golf Team, Close House Hotel
- Swimming, Sunderland Aquatic Centre
- Tennis Singles, Northumberland Tennis Club
- Badminton Doubles, Sport Central
- Basketball, Eagles Venue
- Darts, St James' Park

**DAY SIX:
THURSDAY 22 AUGUST:**

- Athletics, Gateshead International Stadium
- Table Tennis Singles, Sport Central
- Tennis Doubles, Northumberland Tennis Club

**DAY SEVEN:
FRIDAY 23 AUGUST**

- Athletics, Gateshead International Stadium
- Table Tennis Doubles, Sport Central
- Closing Ceremony

THE CONVERSATION

The Conversation is a collaboration between news editors and academics to provide informed news analysis and commentary that's free to read and republish.

At Northumbria, our academics have been working with The Conversation to produce independent, quality current affairs journalism on some of the latest topics to hit the news.

HERE ARE SOME OF OUR TOP PICKS



Forensic science is in crisis – and this could have critical effects on UK legal system



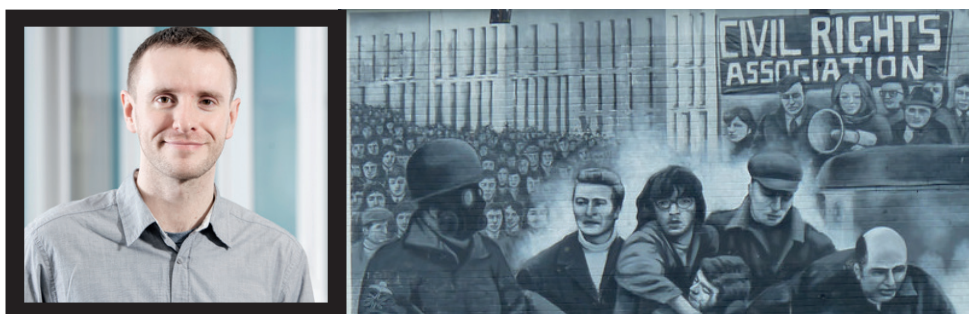
Tim J Wilson, Professor of Criminal Justice Policy at Northumbria University, discusses how UK forensic science and technology could be in a state of emergency, and how a reform of governance and policy making is fundamental to solving the crisis.



Half of transgender and non-binary people hide their identity at work in fear of discrimination – here's how you can help



Saoirse O'Shea, Senior Lecturer at Newcastle Business School and **LLaria Boncori**, Senior Lecturer at the University of Essex, discuss how transgender and non-binary people are often pressured to hide their gender identity at work, and what you can do to show that you're inclusive.



Bloody Sunday: as former British soldier faces murder charges, Northern Ireland still divided by legacy of violence



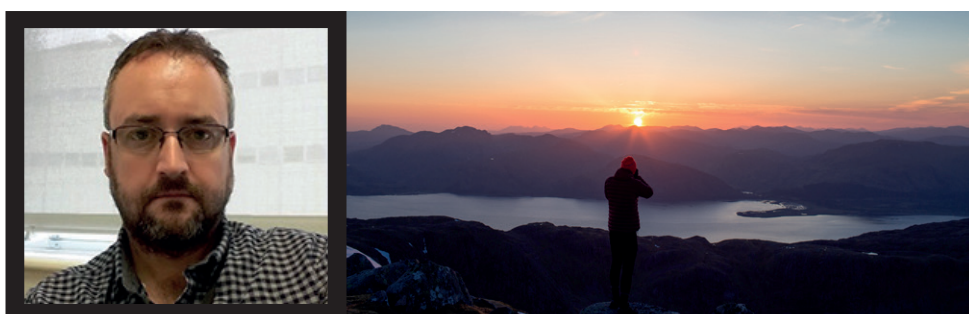
Connal Parr, Lecturer in History at Northumbria University, addresses the troubles in Northern Ireland, and why amnesty remains unlikely.



Making cities more walkable by understanding how other people influence our journeys



Ruth Dalton, Professor of Building Usability and Visualisation at Northumbria University, looks at how we are influenced by other people in the way that we get around the city and what factors contribute to this.



Climbing Scottish mountains: why 'munro-bagging' is on the up and up



Northumbria University academics **David Brown**, Senior Lecturer at Newcastle Business School and **Tom Mordue**, Professor of Tourism, look at 'munro-bagging' – a phrase used to describe climbing each of the 282 Scottish Munros mountains.



Vox: how to understand the peculiarities of Spain's hand-right movement



Carlos Conde Solares, Senior Lecturer in Hispanic Studies, looks at how Spanish political party Vox sees regional independence movements as its enemy, rather than setting itself against the EU like many other groups.



ENGINEERING STUDENTS ARE SHOWN AROUND GATWICK AIRPORT THANKS TO NORTHUMBRIA ALUMNUS STEWART WINGATE

High-flying experience for engineering students

Fourteen engineering students have enjoyed a VIP trip to Gatwick hosted by Northumbria alumnus Stewart Wingate who now runs the airport – one of the UK's main global transport hubs.

Stewart graduated from Northumbria in 1994 with a degree in electrical and electronic engineering and has maintained his connection with the University throughout his career. Now the Chief Executive Officer of Gatwick, one of the largest engineering operations in the world, he extended a special invitation to the highest achieving students on Northumbria's Mechanical, Civil and Architectural Engineering courses to visit the airport.

The bespoke, behind-the-scenes tour of the airfield and terminal provided a unique opportunity for the students to see how their engineering knowledge and skills could be put into practice after graduation. The tour included demonstrations of jet bridge controls and aircraft line-ups; a visit to the new large hangars for super jumbos and the opportunity

to go airside to watch the Airbus A380 – the largest airliner in the world – take-off.

Stewart spent time with the students where he discussed the work needed to run Gatwick's massive operation. He said afterwards that it was a delight to meet them and hoped it had given them real insight into the vast range of activities at the airport that relate directly to their learning experience.

Mechanical and Architectural Engineering student, Nathan Prosser, one of the students selected for the trip, said: "It gave me a real appreciation for the vast amount of important engineering work taking place behind the scenes at Gatwick."

Northumbria University offers courses in mechanical, civil, automotive, electrical, electronic, construction and architectural

engineering, working in partnership with employers such as Akzo Nobel, Balfour Beatty and BAE Systems.

"IT GAVE ME A REAL APPRECIATION FOR THE VAST AMOUNT OF IMPORTANT ENGINEERING WORK TAKING PLACE BEHIND THE SCENES AT GATWICK."

NATHAN PROSSER

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/engineering

Supporting science in schools



BATTLE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL CAITLYN BESTFORD TAKING PART IN ONE OF NUSTEM'S WORKSHOPS

Thousands more children will be encouraged to consider careers in scientific fields after Northumbria University was awarded £300,000 to expand its outreach work with schools.

The University's NUSTEM group, run by academics, aims to inspire future generations of scientists and engineers. It provides interesting educational sessions to engage more young people in science, technology, engineering and maths, which are known as STEM subjects.

In the five years since its launch, NUSTEM has delivered school and community-based activities to almost 40,000 school children, teachers and families. The initiative also runs training programmes to help teachers become more confident in delivering STEM-focussed sessions in the classroom.

The group has been so successful that it has been awarded more than £300,000 from the Reece Foundation – which works to improve education in engineering disciplines – and the Science and Technology Facilities Council, meaning it can double the number of primary and secondary schools it works with in the North East.

Battle Hill Primary School in Wallsend is one of the many schools that has benefitted from the workshops delivered by NUSTEM over the past five years. Its Science Coordinator, Karen Straughan, said that working with the team had been great for their school. "The workshops support all children, from our youngest to our oldest," she said. "We're working with NUSTEM to support families and teachers through workshops and staff training so we're excited that so many more schools will get to benefit from the project."

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GATWICK AIRPORT - KEY FACTS



45m

+ passengers per year



28,000

flights per year



100,000

tonnes of cargo per year

Cracking the code this summer

Software jointly developed by academics at Northumbria University and the University of Edinburgh has been selected by Google to feature in its prestigious Summer of Code mentor programme.

Google's international annual programme provides student coders with paid opportunities to work with software development companies during their summer break – developing code which will then be available globally.

This year, software developed by Northumbria academic Dr Craig Warren and Dr Antonis Giannopoulos of the University of Edinburgh, gprMax, has been selected as one of an elite group worldwide to be included in the Google Summer of Code (GSoC). Used for simulating and modelling Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), gprMax can be used across a wide variety of sectors, including archaeology, engineering, geophysics and medicine. From discovering lost Egyptian tombs and mapping the subsurface of cities, to investigating glaciers in the Antarctic, or imaging



DR CRAIG WARREN, SENIOR LECTURER WITHIN NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY'S DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

tumours in the human body, the application of gprMax is vast. Explaining its significance, Dr Warren, a Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University's Department of Mechanical and Construction Engineering, said: "The University was one of just 27 new organisations chosen to be involved in this year's Google Summer of Code."

Following Google's selection of gprMax for its highly-esteemed summer programme, two student coders – John Hartley from the University of Edinburgh, and Manish Agrawal from the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur in

India – have been granted the opportunity to work with Dr Warren and Dr Giannopoulos over the next three months. Dr Warren commented, "It is a fantastic opportunity for students from around the world to contribute their skills, and learn about developing open source code in real software projects."

"John and Manish will be bringing new features to gprMax that transform and enhance the accuracy and performance of the software, and allow it to be used for more GPR applications as well as new areas of electromagnetic imaging."

The development of the software has been supported through funding from Google Fiber in the USA and the UK Defence Science and Technology Laboratory. The Canadian firm Sensors & Software, which produces the GPR systems used in Northumbria's research, has also supported gprMax through a funded PhD.

To find out more about gprMax, visit gprmax.com.

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"THE UNIVERSITY WAS ONE OF JUST 27 NEW ORGANISATIONS CHOSEN TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS YEAR'S GOOGLE SUMMER OF CODE."

DR CRAIG WARREN

Plugging the digital skills gap

Northumbria has hosted a series of computer programming workshops as part of the University's role as a founding member of the national Institute of Coding (IoC).

The first workshops, entitled Teach the Nation to Code, were run in collaboration with IT Training company QA Consulting and focused on the computer programming language Python. The sessions, which were open to everyone, were designed to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to pursue a career in tech, in an effort to help plug the UK's digital skills gap. Participants were taught how to create

code using Python; how to use the code to process and solve problems; and how to use Python for database applications. The second series of events, Data Science for Everyone, was organised to address the growing need for data scientists to contribute towards the UK's ambitious data-driven economy target. The events covered data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning and were organised in partnership with



Fujitsu, BHGE PII Ltd and Sage Campus. In addition to these free events, Northumbria is also running a Data Analytics Club for non-computing students, helping them develop data analytics skills that can be applied to their own subject or discipline. Dr Huseyin Seker, Director of the Institute of Coding at Northumbria University, said: "As a founding member of the IoC, we are working alongside other universities, businesses and industry to develop the next generation of digital talent, at degree level and above."

The IoC aims to develop specialist skills training in areas of strategic importance, boosting equality and diversity in technology related education and careers and producing research, analysis and intelligence.

Please contact Dr Seker (huseyin.seker@northumbria.ac.uk) to explore opportunities for working with the IoC.

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northumbria.ac.uk/IoC

Law students fight for human rights of abuse victims

Below:
Staff and students from Northumbria University
pictured with solicitors from Ben Hoare Bell LLP.



Northumbria law students have been praised for their work on a campaign calling for a public inquiry into the abuse of young inmates at the Medomsley Detention Centre in County Durham.

Launched by *The Chronicle* Newspaper in Newcastle, the campaign is calling for a full and open public inquiry into the treatment of young boys and men at Medomsley in the 1970's and 80's. The move follows allegations of abuse made by hundreds of former inmates, leading to a high-profile and ongoing police investigation. Five former employees at the detention centre have already been convicted of misconduct in a public office, while others were convicted in the past of serious sexual abuse of inmates.

Solicitors from Ben Hoare Bell LLP, who represent more than 400 former inmates, believe the severity of the abuse in many cases breached Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits torture, and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Solicitors also believe the authorities failed to protect inmates. Final year students from Northumbria's pioneering Student Law Office have now been brought in by Ben Hoare Bell to carry out additional interviews and research into the allegations. The evidence gathered

by the students will form part of the legal case being developed by Ben Hoare Bell calling on the Home Secretary to grant a public inquiry.

The legal work and dedication of the students has not gone unnoticed.

Praising their contribution Helen Dalby, Senior Editor for *The Chronicle*, said: "It is impressive to see students from one of our city universities working with a local law firm on such an important project, and we will back them all the way."

Her views were echoed by Jonny Hall, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching for the Business and Law Faculty and Executive Lead for the Student Law Office. Jonny added: "I am extremely proud of the professionalism and legal knowledge demonstrated by our students. This is clearly a sensitive and often difficult case, but it is also an extremely valuable real-world learning experience for their future legal careers."

He believes that while the work is challenging, it is also essential that any breaches of the Human Rights Act in a state-run detention centre

are fully investigated. "We would say there are definite breaches of Article 3," he said. "Inmates were in the care of the state and we need to look closely at how and why this happened while in that care. These breaches of the absolute and fundamental Article 3 right not to be subject to torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, need to be investigated."

If a public inquiry is granted by the Government, campaigners would expect a full investigation of all the physical and sexual abuse at Medomsley between 1961 and 1988 to understand the full scale and severity of the abuse, why it occurred and failures to act to prevent it in future. A public inquiry would also hear evidence not only from victims but also those who were in a position of authority, including prison officers, governors and Government officials.

"THIS IS CLEARLY A SENSITIVE AND OFTEN DIFFICULT CASE, BUT IT IS ALSO AN EXTREMELY VALUABLE REAL-WORLD LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR THEIR FUTURE LEGAL CAREERS."

JONNY HALL



The Student Law Office at Northumbria Law School provides final year students with the opportunity to work on live legal cases. Operating in supervised teams they offer free services to the public and have represented more than 3,000 clients since 2005.

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A new route into nursing



THE FIRST COHORT OF NURSING DEGREE APPRENTICES

England's first ever Registered Nurse Degree Apprentices are now well on their way to qualifying after reaching the half-way point of their landmark 18-month course.

After the government announced a Registered Nursing Degree apprenticeship scheme in 2016, Northumbria University and the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust joined together to design a programme to train apprentices who already worked within the Trust. Students applying for the course were selected due to their relevant background experience and existing qualifications, which meant that the course could be delivered in just 18-months.

Wendy Parry, who currently works as an Assistant Practitioner, was one of eight students selected to be on the first cohort of the Nursing and Midwifery Council approved course. She said it gave her "the chance to learn the underpinning knowledge behind the things we already do in practice."

Northumbria's collaboration with the Trust builds on a long history of successful partnership working in the undergraduate and postgraduate education of nurses and other health professionals.

Northumbria University offers a range of degree apprenticeship courses in other roles and professions, including Quantity Surveying; Risk and Compliance; Police Constable and Solicitor.

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ADULT NURSING STUDENT FLORENCE POBEE WITH SENIOR LECTURER BARRY HILL

Northumbria's inspirational nurses recognised

Outstanding staff and inspirational students from Northumbria were shortlisted for four prestigious national awards by the *Student Nursing Times*.

Not only was the University shortlisted for the national Nurse Education Provider of the Year (post-registration) award – having previously won the title three years running between 2012 and 2014 – but some of its inspirational lecturers and students also received national recognition.

Senior Lecturer in Adult Nursing, Barry Hill, who was shortlisted for Educator of the year, is no stranger to accolades having recently won the Best Lecturer Award at Northumbria, as voted for by the University's nursing students. Speaking about his shortlisting Barry said: "I feel honoured to be nominated for this award, I have always tried to be as dynamic as I can in the classroom."

Adult Nursing student, Florence Pobee, who was described by

her tutors and fellow students as "a true inspiration to others", was shortlisted in the Most Inspirational Student Nurse of the Year category. While Student Midwife, Kerrie Page, was shortlisted for the Student Midwife of the Year Award as a result of her passion for development of care for women accessing maternity services. *The Student Nursing Times* Awards recognise and reward institutions and individuals who are committed to developing new nursing talent, as well as student nurses who demonstrate the academic achievement, clinical skills and personal qualities that will make them exceptional nurses. Joanne Atkinson, Northumbria's Associate Head of Department, Nursing Midwifery and Health, said: "We were shortlisted for the Nurse Education Provider of the

Year Award because of our diverse offer. We have a strong reputation nationally for nursing education, partnership working with health trusts and developing a workforce that is fit for purpose in a landscape that is ever changing in the NHS."

Northumbria's nursing programmes were the first in the country to be accredited by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and are ranked 22nd in the UK in *The Times* and *Sunday Times* Good University Guide 2018.



"I FEEL HONoured TO BE NOMINATED FOR THIS AWARD, I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO BE AS DYNAMIC AS I CAN IN THE CLASSROOM."

BARRY HILL

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Tackling mobility loss in lung disease sufferers



CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD) CAN AFFECT AN INDIVIDUALS' MOBILITY

Rehabilitation specialists from Northumbria are taking part in a major £43 million Europe-wide study to help people suffering from the debilitating side effects of a progressive lung disease.

The way that someone walks is considered a vital sign of health. Research has proven that poor gait, especially walking slowly, is associated with earlier death, greater risk of disease, cognitive decline, dementia and an increased risk of falls. To help tackle mobility loss in people affected by chronic diseases, the European Union's Horizon 2020 research fund and the European Innovative Medicines Initiative have commissioned a huge collaborative research project. The Mobilise-D study brings together 34 international research partners including universities, pharmaceutical and technical companies to develop new tools, such as wearable sensors, to help people with mobility issues arising from chronic disease. As one of the consortium's collaborators, Northumbria academics are working on a project to understand how the debilitating lung condition, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) can affect an individual's mobility. COPD is a smoking-related condition that causes the lungs to become inflamed, damaged

and narrowed. It mainly affects middle-aged and older adults, leading to breathing problems that significantly worsen over time. This makes everyday activities, such as going for a walk or doing housework, very difficult. A member of the team studying mobility issues in COPD sufferers, Professor Ioannis Vogiatzis of Northumbria's Department of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation, explains the rationale behind the research: "Ageing people with COPD experience profound mobility limitations, consequently leading to pulmonary and locomotor muscle function impairments,

thereby increasing their risk for hospitalisation." The results of the project will lead to the introduction of new tools that will help to identify, categorise and monitor and assess disability in patients. The end-goal is to develop personalised healthcare solutions to clinically manage mobility on a widespread basis.

To learn more about the MOBILISE-D study, visit mobilise-d.eu/

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"AGEING PEOPLE WITH COPD EXPERIENCE PROFOUND MOBILITY LIMITATIONS, CONSEQUENTLY LEADING TO PULMONARY AND LOCOMOTOR MUSCLE FUNCTION IMPAIRMENTS, THEREBY INCREASING THEIR RISK FOR HOSPITALISATION."

PROFESSOR IOANNIS VOGIATZIS

Off duty student nurse saves man's life

Northumbria University student, Anica Gray, helped to save a man's life on her way into university.

Adult Nursing student, Anica, was in the second year of her degree when she saw a man collapsed unconscious by the side of the road. Having recently finished one of her course placements in a critical care unit, she called on her recently acquired knowledge to attempt to save his life.

First at the scene, Anica acted fast and rushed to his aid immediately implementing the life-saving techniques she had learnt throughout her degree. Thankfully, a team of firefighters from the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service were close by and were able to call for more support from the police and paramedics while also helping Anica.

Using skills she had learned during her studies, Anica, worked with the Fire and Rescue Service to keep the man alive until paramedics arrived at the scene. Responding paramedics stabilised the man and took him to hospital to continue his care, and commended Anica for the role she had played in helping to save his life. Responding to an emergency on a normal day without any warning to prepare herself made her realise how far she had come since beginning her degree two years ago.

"I would not have been able to put my skills into practice without the knowledge I had gained from my studies at Northumbria University. I was able to work alongside the Fire and Rescue Service and as a team we were very calm

and organised. I felt confident and proud of my work and involvement in saving a man's life," she said.

After hearing about her actions, Anica was praised by her tutors for playing a leadership role in co-ordinating life-saving, compassionate care, and for her confidence in controlling the situation until paramedics arrived.

Professor Alison Machin, Head of Department for Nursing, Midwifery and Health at Northumbria University, said: "We are very proud of Anica. As well as using her recently learned life-saving CPR skills, she acted in a highly professional manner, was calm under pressure and displayed excellent interprofessional team-working skills. To be able to effectively apply her knowledge to practice and manage this experience while still a student is outstanding. I'm sure the future will hold great things for Anica when she graduates next year."

Northumbria University's Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Health, has an international reputation for delivering high-quality, research-rich, clinical skills teaching to prepare nursing graduates who are highly valued by NHS and other healthcare employers.

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"WE ARE VERY PROUD OF ANICA. AS WELL AS USING HER RECENTLY LEARNED LIFE-SAVING CPR SKILLS, SHE ACTED IN A HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL MANNER, WAS CALM UNDER PRESSURE AND DISPLAYED EXCELLENT INTERPROFESSIONAL TEAM-WORKING SKILLS."

PROFESSOR ALISON MACHIN

Breast milk may protect babies from life-threatening illnesses



Left:
Premature baby in
hospital

Researchers at Northumbria University are studying the components of breast milk to find out more about its protective effects, which are believed to reduce the risk of potentially fatal infections in premature babies.

"OUR WORK COULD SHED NEW LIGHT ON HOW WE MIGHT HELP PROTECT PRETERM BABIES FROM LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES, WHICH WE HOPE WILL ONE DAY LEAD TO IMPROVEMENTS IN NEONATAL CARE AND TREATMENT."



DR DARREN SMITH

Each year around 10,000 babies are born 'very prematurely,' before 32 weeks of pregnancy, in the UK. Despite huge advances in neonatal care, estimates suggest that up to 4,000 will develop a serious bowel disease or a blood infection known as sepsis, or both conditions, after birth.

Tragically, many babies die due to a bowel disease called necrotising enterocolitis (NEC) and sepsis, the biggest threats to very premature babies after the first week of life. Babies that survive these conditions can be left with complications such as lifelong disabilities including cerebral palsy.

Sepsis and NEC are thought to be linked to imbalances in the community of microorganisms

living inside the baby's gut – the microbiome – and breast milk may play a part in shaping and maintaining a healthy microbial gut community to prevent these diseases.

Evidence suggests that the immune-boosting factors in breast milk, rather than the nutrients, can help to treat and prevent these life threatening infections. With funding of over £175,000 from children's charity Action Medical Research, Dr Darren Smith, Associate Professor at Northumbria University, and his team, will study certain types of viruses within breast milk.

"Developing a better understanding of what components of breast milk

provide these protective effects and how they work could lead to new ways to prevent or treat these complex, life-threatening illnesses in vulnerable babies," explains Dr Smith.

"Our aim is to investigate if viruses – known as phages – in breast milk play a part in protecting very preterm babies from serious illnesses."

Phages are viruses that infect and kill bacteria – and the team believes that they may help to support babies' inexperienced immune systems and to shape and maintain a healthy microbial gut community.

"We will first carry out a detailed census of the phages in breast milk samples collected from the mothers of very

preterm babies," says Dr Smith.

The team will then investigate the influence of breast milk phages on bacterial communities in the guts of newborn babies. They will also determine how phages are carried in breast milk, which could have implications for its handling and storage in special care baby units.

The team will analyse up to 100 'paired' samples of breast milk and stools from mothers and their very premature babies that have been stored, with parental consent, in the Great North Neonatal Biobank. During the two year study, they will also analyse fresh samples from mothers and their very premature babies.

"Our work could shed new light on how we might help protect preterm babies from life-threatening illnesses, which we hope will one day lead to improvements in neonatal care and treatment," adds Dr Smith.

This research could shape the role breast milk plays in preventing deadly infections in premature babies and change the way their care is delivered in the future.

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Academic elected to the Council of Deans of Health Executive



PROFESSOR ALISON MACHIN

A Northumbria University academic has been elected to the Council of Deans of Health Executive leadership team to drive the policy agenda for health workforce education delivered by universities across the country.

Professor Alison Machin, Head of Department for Nursing, Midwifery and Health at Northumbria, has been appointed as Executive Member for Workforce with the Council. The organisation represents UK university faculties engaged in education and research for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and operating department practitioners.

The healthcare landscape is rapidly changing due to population changes, and advances in research, knowledge and technology. Amid this turbulent environment however, the healthcare workforce needs to be able to deliver safe, high-quality care. In her new, three-year role, Professor Machin will advise policy makers on issues impacting on universities working in this field.

Of her appointment Alison reflects: "I am delighted to have been elected for this position by academic peers working in health faculties

of other universities. I'll be working collaboratively with the Council's Executive team, representing the interests of all member universities across the four nations of the UK, including Northumbria University, which has an international reputation as a provider of the highest quality education to health and social care professionals, both undergraduate and postgraduate."

Professor Brian Webster-Henderson, Chair of the Council of Deans of Health, said: "I am delighted to welcome Alison onto the Council's Executive to lead the workforce portfolio. Workforce is one of the busiest and most important agendas across the UK for the Council and I look forward to working with Alison in this role."

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Celebrating World Autism Month

Northumbria joined the world-wide campaign, helping to raise awareness and understanding of Autism in April, as the University's experts shared the things every child with autism wishes you knew.

PhD Researcher in Autism, Family and Communication, Helen Driver, and Senior Lecturer in Child and Family Wellbeing, Dr Joanna Reynolds, found that we are often quick to make judgements, especially about children's behaviour. But when a young person with autism is struggling to cope with the world, the last thing they need is criticism.

By combining their research, experience and close engagement with autistic children, Helen and Joanna developed a number of tips to help people to engage more effectively with them. They feel that if we take time to respect and understand people with autism our communities will become more enriching and inclusive for everyone.

Their top tip is to see a child for who they are. Every child with autism is unique. Love and

acceptance from family and friends is the best way to help them grow and thrive. Secondly it is important to recognise that a child with autism may hear, see and feel the world differently to you. Helen and Joanna encourage people to read books written by people with autism to learn more about how the world can feel for them.

Thirdly, some children with autism use non-verbal communication rather than spoken word. Northumbria University academics encourage people to observe them and try to learn how they communicate.

The behaviour of autistic children can sometimes be seen as difficult, naughty or deliberately challenging. However, in many cases this behaviour is simply a form of communication, and Helen and Joanna encourage people to not exacerbate these

outbursts and instead try to help the child express themselves. Finally, they encourage people to interact in ways the child will understand by slowing down and being clear about what we say. It takes up to 10-15 seconds for the child to process what is said so it's important to give them time. Northumbria's Department of Social Work, Education and Community Wellbeing has a number of courses focusing on the study and support of young people, including an MA designed to support professionals and carers to develop their knowledge and critical thinking around the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders.

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Healthy future for GP practices

A Northumbria University academic has been praised by a health and social care watchdog for her work in inspiring the next generation of healthcare professionals as she helps to spearhead innovative research into new roles paramedics are playing in GP practices.



DR CAROLINE AND ADVANCED PARAMEDIC WES IN CONSULTATION WITH A PATIENT AT CHEVELEY PARK MEDICAL CENTRE

With an aging population and a rise in the number of people with more than one long term condition, the NHS is busier than ever and must find new ways of working to survive. It is well documented that the GP workforce across the UK is experiencing a national shortage whilst at the same time doctors are seeing increasing numbers of patients with far more complex conditions.

A Northumbria academic is now championing a key research project studying a new model of paramedics working with GPs to treat patients in practices. Dr Caroline Jeffery, a Senior Lecturer in Advanced Clinical Practice at Northumbria and managing GP

partner at Cheveley Park Medical Centre, is working closely with Advanced Paramedics who are on placements at her practice, which teaches students. This relatively new initiative for the North East is part of pioneering research to support the development of these roles in primary care.

Dr Jeffery, who was praised in a report by the Care Quality Commission which rated her practice 'outstanding', said: "Advanced paramedics have the skills to go on home visits and can alleviate some of the work for GPs, offering different perspectives."

Wesley Scaife, a student on the Advanced Paramedic Master

Course at Northumbria, has worked as a paramedic for 14 years. During his placement at the practice in Belmont, Durham he sees patients independently, supported by the practice.

"Working within a GP practice has helped me to develop my knowledge and skills within a primary care setting," he said. "It gives me a rounded view of the NHS healthcare system and also enables me to be part of research which could change the way healthcare is delivered to patients."

The research, which looks to gain an understanding of the paramedic model at Caroline's practice, takes the form of interviews with the GPs and

students to understand their roles in working together and is led by Senior Lecturer Daniel Monk, Programme Leader for Urgent and Unplanned Care. He explained: "There is a notable gap in this research area both nationally and internationally and our research will begin to develop an understanding of how the GP and Paramedic relationship and roles function in the general practice environment."

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"THERE IS A NOTABLE GAP IN THIS RESEARCH AREA BOTH NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY AND OUR RESEARCH WILL BEGIN TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE GP AND PARAMEDIC RELATIONSHIP AND ROLES FUNCTION IN THE GENERAL PRACTICE ENVIRONMENT."

DANIEL MONK

A global perspective for student physicians

Northumbria University and St George's University of Grenada's School of Medicine have announced the expansion of a joint medical training programme which will double the amount of time that medical students from Grenada spend in the UK.

The Diploma in Higher Education in Medical Sciences was founded in 2007 to create a route for highly qualified international students to pursue a world-class western medical education. Under the partnership, St George's students spend one year studying their pre-clinical and medical education at Northumbria University. Since the launch of the collaboration, more than 1,700 students have started their physician training with St George's at the Northumbria campus.

Students on the five-year programme will now have the opportunity to spend up to two

years at Northumbria, extended from the original one year. They will develop an understanding of the principles of clinical medicine, qualifying with a Diploma in Higher Education in Medical Sciences from Northumbria. In addition to the two years studying they also have the opportunity to spend up to six months on rotation in the United Kingdom, with the remainder in the United States or Canada.

Professor Peter Francis, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Northumbria University, said: "We have a long-standing relationship with St George's University, and we are

incredibly excited to be working with them to offer an innovative new joint medical programme, which will involve educating the doctors of tomorrow.

"By studying for longer with us, students will benefit from our world-leading academic staff, research-informed teaching, outstanding facilities and the exciting city life which Newcastle offers."



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Living with and beyond cancer



*Left:
Taking regular
exercise
can help to
prevent cancer
recurrence*

Research at Northumbria University is investigating the important role that structured exercise programmes can play in living with and beyond cancer.

“PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND STRUCTURED EXERCISE HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN ALLEVIATING THE PHYSIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF CANCER AND ITS TREATMENTS.”

PROFESSOR JOHN SAXTON

Cancers of the breast, prostate, and colon are among the most common in western societies and although survival rates are increasing, the physical and mental impact of these cancers and their treatments are long-lasting. Macmillan Cancer Support predicts that aftercare and support for people with cancer beyond their initial treatment will cost the NHS at least £1.4 billion every year by 2020.

John Saxton, Professor in Clinical Exercise Physiology and Head of the Department of Sport, Exercise & Rehabilitation at Northumbria, is leading research in collaboration with clinical colleagues from the Newcastle, Norwich, and

Sheffield NHS Foundation Trusts.

“Physical activity and structured exercise have an important role to play in alleviating the physiological and psychological impact of cancer and its treatments,” explains Professor Saxton. “Cancer is now considered a chronic condition because more people are living longer after a cancer diagnosis. This research is about using physical exercise as part of lifestyle interventions to improve the health of people living with and beyond cancer.”

Current research is focused on the role of exercise and a healthy diet in reversing increased fat mass and reduced lean body mass for patients recovering

from hormone-receptor positive breast cancer in Newcastle and Sheffield.

Patients of Newcastle, Gateshead and Northumbria NHS Foundation Trusts are taking part in the North East.

In addition, a UK-wide trial is investigating how exercise programmes prior to surgery can be used to improve fitness and treatment outcomes in colorectal cancer patients across the country.

In the North East this includes patients at Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Other work is ongoing developing exercise programmes to alleviate the side-effects of prostate cancer and its treatments.

“We know that common cancers, such as cancers of the breast, prostate and colon are linked to excess body weight and if patients continue to put weight on after treatment, this is linked to poorer outcomes,” explains Professor Saxton. “There is a real need to provide sustainable lifestyle support, including regular exercise, healthy eating and maintenance of a healthy body weight. This isn’t just about quality of life, as it can also benefit long-term disease outcomes, such as risk of cancer recurrence and the development of cardiometabolic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular conditions.”

While structured exercise interventions will never

replace the traditional cancer treatments of chemotherapy, radiotherapy, surgery and hormone treatments, Professor Saxton is seeing structured exercise programmes increasingly being used as part of cancer treatment in the NHS. His research is closely aligned with NHS treatment plans and is helping to build a solid evidence-base to support the use of exercise in holistic management of people living with and beyond cancer.

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FROM L-R JOY YOUNGMAN, DR CLAUDINE VAN HENSBERGEN AND ANNE FOUNTAIN, IN FRONT OF THE PIECE ISABELLA AND THE POT OF BASIL BY WILLIAM HOLMAN HUNT.

Out of the classroom: into the gallery

A new project will bring literature to life for GCSE pupils by taking them out of their classrooms and inviting them into two North East art galleries.

From September this year, artwork at the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle and Shipley Art Gallery in Gateshead will be used to provide English Literature students with rich political and social context of the literature they are studying. The project, entitled Learning through the Art Gallery: Art, Literature and Disciplinarity, is being led by Northumbria's Dr Claudine van Hensbergen, a Senior Lecturer in eighteenth-century English Literature. The initiative is funded by more than £235,000 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Dr van Hensbergen comments: "In the same way that libraries are not just for those studying literature, art galleries are not just for those studying art." The initiative follows a successful pilot in 2017, which saw 100

pupils and their teachers attend a series of workshops led by Laing Art Gallery staff, Northumbria academics and students.

One of the paintings explored during the workshops was *Isabella and the Pot of Basil* by William Holman Hunt, finished in 1868 and inspired by the poem *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil* by John Keats. "Exploring the poem and the painting together allowed pupils to put the poem in context, exploring both the political situation at the time it was written and the wider social context," Dr van Hensbergen explains.

Dr van Hensbergen is now working with Anne Fountain, Learning Officer at the Laing and Shipley art galleries, to recruit English Literature teachers from up to 40 local secondary schools. The teachers will act as ambassadors for the two-year project, advising on which texts students will be studying and informing the development of learning materials.

"EXPLORING THE POEM AND THE PAINTING TOGETHER ALLOWED PUPILS TO PUT THE POEM IN CONTEXT, EXPLORING BOTH THE POLITICAL SITUATION AT THE TIME IT WAS WRITTEN AND THE WIDER SOCIAL CONTEXT."

DR CLAUDINE
VAN HENSBERGEN

DISCOVER MORE

learningthroughtheartgallery.wordpress.com/

Double success for Helen



DR HELEN WILLIAMS

DID YOU KNOW?

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funds world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects from history and archaeology to philosophy and languages. It also funds more contemporary research including the design and effectiveness of digital content and the impact of artificial intelligence.

A literary expert is celebrating after winning two major awards which will allow her to explore the role of the novel and the printing press during the eighteenth century.

It has been a successful few months for Northumbria's Dr Helen Williams. Not only has she been awarded more than £200,000 to lead a project to make a collection of rare books available online, she has also been named as one of the British Academy's 2019 Rising Star Engagement award winners.

Facilitated by funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Dr Williams will work with Cambridge University Library and the Laurence Sterne Trust to establish a digital library dedicated to sharing and preserving the work of eighteenth-century writer and clergyman, Laurence Sterne. Sterne rose to fame following the publication of his comic and controversial novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, which sold widely throughout Europe and

inspired a variety of adaptations and spin-off works, dubbed 'Sterneana'. During the twentieth-century these were collected and preserved by librarian John Claude Trewinard Oates. They will now be uploaded to the new Sterne Digital Library, alongside Sterne's original work, so they can be accessed for free anywhere in the world.

Dr Williams was also recently one of just 23 academics selected by the British Academy to receive its 2019 Rising Star Engagement award. The award recognises some of the most promising and talented academics in the UK and aims to encourage wider engagement within the humanities and social sciences, through events, training, and mentoring activities.

As part of the award, Dr Williams has received funding for her

project 'Novel Impressions', which will bring together a network of early career researchers, printing professionals and curators to explore the history of eighteenth-century literature and print. The group will focus on the history of the hand press through a series of workshops. These will be open to the general public and held at seven print houses and museums across the UK and Ireland, including Northern Print in Newcastle, The National Print Museum in Dublin, and Hurst Street Press in Oxford.

Find out more about Novel Impressions at www.novelimpressions.home.blog

DISCOVER MORE

northumbria.ac.uk/humanities

Big screen success for animation expert

When film maker Iain Cunningham set out to explore the death of his mother through a new documentary, he turned to Northumbria Animation expert Ellie Land to create and direct a series of animated scenes that would bring his vision to life.

The documentary film Irene's Ghost tells the story of director Iain Cunningham's mother Irene, who died when he was just three years old. Featuring interviews with Irene's friends and family, the film pieces together fragments of Irene's life to uncover a long-held secret about her battle with mental illness.

With much of the film based on memories of Irene, animation was used to sensitively depict scenes from the past. And it was Northumbria Senior Lecturer and award-winning animation director Ellie Land who was asked to help director Iain to tell

Irene's story.

Having previously directed a number of animated films focusing on issues such as health, body confidence, and mental illness, Ellie was perfectly placed to lead the team of animators involved in Irene's Ghost. As she explains: "Iain first contacted me about five years ago after seeing an animated film I had made called Centrefold and asked if I would be involved in Irene's Ghost. Animation is integral to the film and he had a clear vision of the role it would play. We had a team of around eight people working on the animation for the film, here in



AN ANIMATION STILL FROM THE FILM IRENE'S GHOST

the North East and in Australia and Sweden, so it was a real team effort and great to see the creativity on show."

Ellie's involvement in the film has also benefitted students studying on Northumbria's Animation BA (Hons) and Animation MA programmes. "My directing work informs my research and teaching. Having links within the animation industry means I can support students looking for placements and provide advice when it comes

to interviews and employment after University."

The UK premiere of Irene's Ghost took place at the BFI London Film Festival last year and it has since been shown at a variety of international film festivals. In May the film was screened at Newcastle's Tyneside Cinema as part of a UK tour.

DISCOVER MORE

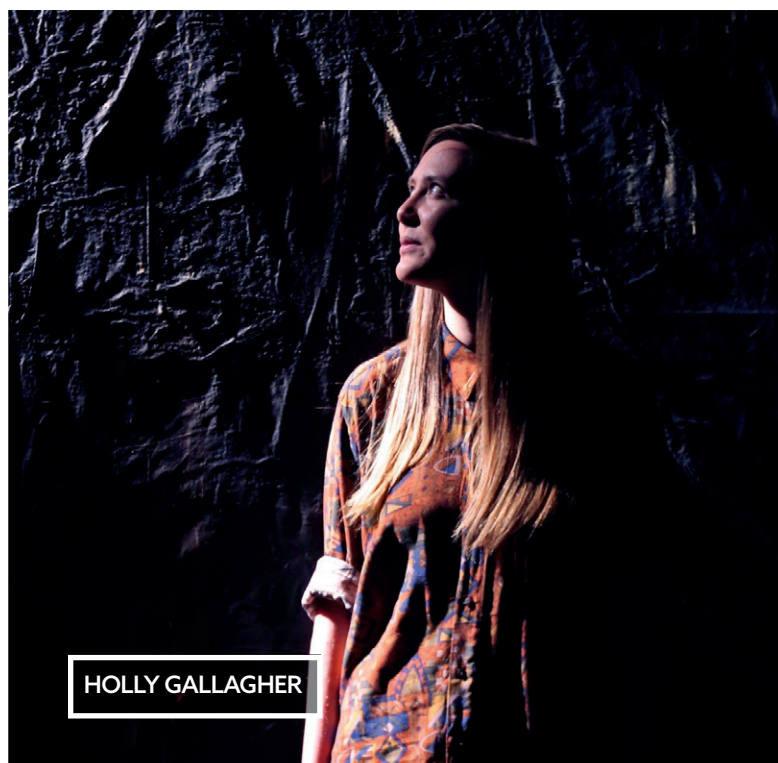


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"HAVING LINKS WITHIN THE ANIMATION INDUSTRY MEANS I CAN SUPPORT STUDENTS LOOKING FOR PLACEMENTS AND PROVIDE ADVICE WHEN IT COMES TO INTERVIEWS AND EMPLOYMENT AFTER UNIVERSITY."

ELLIE LAND

Northumbria graduate puts mental health centre stage in solo tour



HOLLY GALLAGHER

Recent Northumbria MA Theatre and Performance graduate, Holly Gallagher, toured the UK in a performance exploring ideas around stress and how we deal with it in modern day society.

Northumbria alumna Holly, who is also an Associate Artist at multi-art form performing arts centre ARC Stockton, began her tour of Tensile Strength (or How to Survive at Your Wit's End) in Edinburgh in February this year and delivered her final performance at Northern Stage, Newcastle, in May. A discussion of mental health and the effects of stress, the show was inspired by her own personal experiences after finishing university.

The piece follows a storytelling format, directing the audience into thinking about their relationship with stress and focuses predominantly on three characters: He, She, and They – three people who are leading stressful lives.

In order for Holly's show to feel relevant, she interviewed participants from around the world, asking people about their own experiences of stress, their coping mechanisms, and what helps them to relax. From these interviews, she was able to form a series of narrative events and build characters.

She said: "I had the idea for this show in the first year after I graduated from my MA at Northumbria. I'm quite a stressed out person and I ended up going through a patch of unemployment, followed by taking on far too much work and wearing myself too thin.

"I wanted to make something that explored the pressures that people feel in life, as well as why so many

people seem to describe themselves as stressed or worn out. I want to make work about the world we live in now, and so stress felt very apt in 2017 when I first started developing the show."

Praising Holly's work, Liz Pavey, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Arts at Northumbria, said: "It's always brilliant to see our MA graduates reaching audiences nationally with their work. She is a very gifted scriptwriter, theatre maker and performer."

DISCOVER MORE



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REVEALed the next generation of creative talent

Work by final year students from Northumbria's Art, Design and Architecture courses wowed audiences in Newcastle and London as part of the University's annual end of year degree show programme.

One of the highlights of the North East's cultural calendar, Northumbria's REVEAL exhibition once again celebrated the very best creative talent from artists, filmmakers, designers and architects of the future.

Taking place across Northumbria's city centre campus over 10 days, REVEAL 2019 was a celebration of work by final year students in Animation, Architecture, Interior Architecture, Fashion, Fashion Design and Marketing, Fashion Communication, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Interactive Design, 3D Design, Design for Industry, and Interior Design.

This year the exhibition also provided an opportunity to showcase the University's new Architecture Studios – which recently won a Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) North East Award. The innovative extension to the University's historic Grade II listed Sutherland Building has been specifically designed to create flexible exhibition space for students and staff, as well as state-of-the-art architecture studios.

Final year Architecture BA (Hons) student Will Fraser said the new space provides the perfect inspiration for students' designs. The 22-year-old chose Northumbria's RIBA validated Architecture BA (Hons) degree course after attending a workshop while still at school. He explained: "One of the tutors here was running the workshop which was about exploring dead spaces in Newcastle. It opened my eyes to what was possible through architecture." Commenting on the new facilities on offer at Northumbria, Will said: "We have access to concrete laboratories, workshops, 3D printers and modelling equipment, plus the desk space we have is fantastic. I didn't realise just how helpful all the free materials and resources we receive would be, but it has been such a help."



CENTRE STAGE



STUDENTS PERFORMING AT LIVE THEATRE

Drama BA (Hons) students gave a debut performance of award-winning playwright Chino Odimba's new work, *Land: Beating the Bounds* as part of their final year showcase. The play was performed at Live Theatre, one of Northumbria's key cultural partners. The two organisations run an annual Writer in Residence programme, which Chino was selected for in September 2018. She worked closely with the students to write the play, taking inspiration from her time spent visiting Newcastle.

As she explains: "Most of the time I write without knowing who is going to be performing

my work, so this project was great as I got to meet the students before I started writing and really get to know them. I quickly realised they were quite capable of taking on a big piece of work and wanted to present them with something exciting and challenging."

Students found the experience extremely valuable in their final year of study. As Kyla Dean, 21, comments: "Working with Chino has been an amazing opportunity. There are not many students who get the chance to be involved in a new play from the very start. Being able to share our ideas with Chino and see these being

incorporated into the final play was really amazing."

This is the first time students on the Drama BA (Hons) course have worked with the Northumbria and Live Theatre's Writer in Residence, and the play's director and Associate Head of Arts at Northumbria, Steve Gilroy believes it has been a valuable experience. He said: "It's a tremendous and rare opportunity for students to work on a new piece of writing and they have embraced the process with openness and enthusiasm. The resulting production is the culmination of their sincere commitment and hard work."

GFW AWARD SUCCESS

Once again, Northumbria's talented students from Fashion BA (Hons), Fashion Communication BA (Hons) and Fashion Design and Marketing BA (Hons) courses were recognised, with eight students shortlisted for awards at Graduate Fashion Week 2019, and three going onto win.



ABOVE AND LEFT: Steph Starkey's collection on the Graduate Fashion Week catwalk.

RIGHT: Fashion student Steph Starkey



FASHION FORWARD

Students from Northumbria's Fashion programmes presented their work to industry experts during the annual Graduate Fashion Week (GFW) showcase. Held at the Truman Brewery in London, the four-day event provides an opportunity for graduating students from across the UK to network with some of the biggest names from the world of fashion, with top designers and fashion house representatives attending. One of the highlights of the event was the Northumbria catwalk show, which saw 17 Fashion BA (Hons) students launch their debut collections down the GFW runway. Among them were designs by Steph Starkey, inspired by her father's Alzheimer's Disease diagnosis. Her work sensitively reflects

the positive approach her family took to the situation, with design details inspired by some of the side effects of her dad's Alzheimer's. These include putting clothes on inside out and back to front and jumbled speech, reflected in mixed-up letter beading and embellishments. Her work attracted national attention ahead of the Northumbria catwalk show after she was interviewed live on Sky News about the inspiration behind the designs. This led to her collection being selected for the Gala Award Show on the last night of Graduate Fashion Week – a showcase of some of the most influential designs from the entire event. She was also shortlisted in the People's Choice Award. Speaking about her time at Northumbria, Steph said: "I like

designs that are quirky and bold – fashion that isn't too serious. My university tutor has been amazing and fully supports the kind of designer I want to be." Students from Northumbria's Fashion Communication BA (Hons) and Fashion Design and Marketing BA (Hons) courses also had the opportunity to exhibit their work during Graduate Fashion Week at the University's stand. Attracting thousands of visitors over the four days, the Northumbria exhibition stand featured photography, portfolios, magazines and designs, highlighting the range of talent on show among this year's graduating students.

WINNERS

BOUX AVENUE SWIMWEAR AWARD:

Jasmine Bennett –
Fashion BA (Hons)

CHILDRENSWEAR AWARD SPONSORED BY MOTHERCARE

Bethany Dodd –
Fashion Design and
Marketing BA (Hons)

TU SCHOLARSHIP:

Josephine Roberts –
Fashion Design and
Marketing BA (Hons)

SHORTLISTED AND FINALISTS:

NEW FASHION MEDIA AWARD:

Holly Jackson –
Fashion Communication
BA (Hons)

FASHION COMMUNICATION PORTFOLIO AWARD

Megan Houska –
Fashion Communication
BA (Hons)

FASHION PUBLICATION AWARD SPONSORED BY DRAPERS:

Grace Brown –
Fashion Communication
BA (Hons)

CHILDRENSWEAR AWARD SPONSORED BY MOTHERCARE:

Emily Jagger –
Fashion BA (Hons)

FASHION STYLING & CREATIVE DIRECTION AWARD SPONSORED BY SIZE?

Chloe Greenaway –
Fashion Communication
BA (Hons)

TU SCHOLARSHIP

Emma Rigby –
Fashion BA (Hons)



FROM L-R: LIZZIE GILHOLME, LUCY WILSON-GREEN AND SARAH TALBOT

Award success for Film and TV graduates

Graduates from Northumbria University were recognised for their gold standard achievements in TV and film production after winning two awards at the prestigious Royal Television Society (RTS) awards.

The RTS awards celebrate some of the best talent from the North East's television and media industry, attracting over 400 guests at a star-studded, red-carpet ceremony.

The Sycamore Gap was written, directed and produced by TV and Film Production BA (Hons) graduates Lucy Wilson-Green, Sarah Talbot and Lizzie Gilholme in their final year of study. The film won student categories for Best Drama and Best Writing, whilst another film *Secretion*, also written and directed by Sarah Talbot, was shortlisted in the top three for the Best Drama award. The short film follows the story of a maid, the lady of a stately home and her husband, focusing on the power dynamic between the three characters.

Speaking of their win, Lucy said: "We were overwhelmed to have been nominated for the awards, let alone to come

away having won two. It was so humbling to be recognised amongst such an esteemed group of individuals for our hard work."

Presenting the awards was North East comedian and writer Jason Cook, with a host of famous Northern faces in attendance including actress Kristel Buckley, Brenda Blethyn who is best known for her role in ITV drama *Vera*, and actor Bill Ward, along with TV presenters Pam Royle, Jeff Brown, Ian Payne and Simon McCoy.

James MacDonald, Senior Lecturer in Cinematography at Northumbria, said: "We were delighted to see Northumbria Film and TV Production films nominated for RTS awards this year. It's always encouraging to see very good creative and technical work with high production values being produced by graduating students. As a university we endeavour to help students develop their critical, creative and imaginative skills so that they're able to produce really high quality work, as evidenced by our success!"

"WE WERE OVERWHELMED TO HAVE BEEN NOMINATED FOR THE AWARDS, LET ALONE TO COME AWAY HAVING WON TWO. IT WAS SO HUMBLING TO BE RECOGNISED AMONG SUCH AN ESTEEMED GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS FOR OUR HARD WORK."

LUCY WILSON-GREEN

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Northumbria alumnus directs Cornish Fisherman's Friends tale



PORT ISAAC IN CORNWALL

Northumbria University Film and TV Production graduate, Chris Foggin, was in the director's chair for the recent UK Box Office hit film, *Fisherman's Friends*.

The film *Fisherman's Friends*, inspired by true events, tells the tale of a group of singing fishermen who perform in their village harbour and secure a multi-million pound record deal.

Chris Foggin, who worked on a number of successful short films with high profile stars before his latest production, was first approached about the film by producer James Spring, who he had worked with on a previous project.

"I remember reading the script for *Fisherman's Friends* a few years back, so I was delighted to hear from James when he came to me with the project," explains Chris. "It's a wonderful universal story that is full of heart, warmth and charm, set in an idyllic location that allows cinema goers to escape for a couple of hours. We were also incredibly lucky to have a wonderful cast and crew, and I loved the collaboration throughout the process. It was fun from start to finish."

Chris graduated from Northumbria in 2008 but has maintained a close relationship with the University. His success has been celebrated by his former tutors within Northumbria's Department of Arts, including Principle Lecturer and Teaching Fellow, Neil Percival. "It's brilliant to see Chris doing so well," said Neil. "He's kept in touch with us since graduation, and this is an inspiring story for our current undergraduates. He joins a growing number of alumni who have gone on to make a career in feature films."

Speaking of how his time at Northumbria helped to prepare him for his career, Chris recalls fondly: "Northumbria was a great place to learn. It allowed me to meet like-minded people that I still work with today. I found the tutoring, facilities and support network to be fantastic. I'm now developing my next projects for both film and TV."



"NORTHUMBRIA WAS A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN. IT ALLOWED ME TO MEET LIKEMINDED PEOPLE THAT I STILL WORK WITH TODAY."

CHRIS FOGGIN

DISCOVER MORE


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Shakespeare Club takes to the road



ST MARY'S LIGHTHOUSE IN WHITLEY BAY

Iconic buildings and locations across the North East have played host to a series of discussions exploring some of Shakespeare's most famous plays.

A lighthouse, an eighteenth-century stately home and a charity kitchen for the homeless. These might not seem like obvious places to explore the work of England's most famous playwright, but they were all locations for a recent tour of the Shakespeare Club.

Established by Northumbria academic Dr Adam Hansen in 2014, the club provides an opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds to explore what Shakespeare means to them in a friendly and informal environment. Over the last four years members have met monthly at Newcastle's Lit and Phil, working their way through The Complete Works of Shakespeare. Having completed the final play, and in search of a new challenge, Dr Hansen decided to take the club on the road.

Seaton Delaval Hall at Seaton Sluice, St. Mary's Lighthouse at Whitley Bay, The Word in South Shields and St. Nicholas' Cathedral and The People's Kitchen in Newcastle were all part of the five-week tour. Each of the venues had a specific connection with the play being discussed there. For example, Seaton Delaval Hall has close links with the play Othello, with Sir Francis

Blake Delaval hiring the Drury Lane Theatre in London in 1751 to stage his own production of the play, in which Delaval family members took the leading roles. St Mary's Lighthouse was chosen as the venue for The Tempest as it is situated on an island, just like Shakespeare's tragicomedy featuring Prospero, Miranda and Caliban. And the People's Kitchen provided the backdrop for King Lear – a play in which the main character finds himself homeless, providing a poignant message about the redistribution of wealth in an unequal society.

Dr Hansen believes Shakespeare's work is as relevant today as it was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that it can provide a robust starting point for wider discussions about modern-day issues. As he explained: "We live in very divided times and it is possible to use literature like Shakespeare as common ground to allow people to talk about the big issues affecting them, and the world, which are reflected in his work and linked to modern times."

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LEFT:
Andrew Richardson,
Franz Pancho, Alex Slack,
Chang Shi Qian
and Lars Erik Holmquist

THE STUDENTS GET TO EXPERIENCE WHAT IT IS LIKE TO WORK ON A REAL BRIEF WHICH BENEFITS THEM WHEN THEY GRADUATE, AND THE CLIENT, BENEFITS FROM THE STUDENTS' CREATIVITY AND FRESH IDEAS, INSPIRED BY THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH."

PROFESSOR
LARS ERIK HOLMQUIST

Future of Bigg Market reimaged

A famous - often infamous - area of Newcastle City Centre could be set for a wild transformation thanks to the esteemed creative skills of Northumbria's Design students.

Tigers, lions, giraffes and even an elephant – the Bigg Market, which was historically a thriving marketplace and even home to exotic animals, has in recent years become better known for its bustling nightlife. But with the vision of Northumbria's Design students some of the squares' hidden gems could soon be brought back to life. As part of a £3.2 million National Lottery Heritage Funded Bigg Market regeneration scheme, run by NE1 (Newcastle's Business Improvement District company), final year students from Northumbria's Interaction Design BA (Hons) were given a live brief, inviting them to come up with ideas for digital installations which would reflect the area's historic past, and attract new audiences. The winning proposal, by students Franz Pancho and Chang Shi Qian, took inspiration from the historic Winter Zoo, which saw sub-Saharan animals housed within the Bigg

Market's now demolished Town Hall during the 1960s. Their innovative proposal would see the animals return to the Bigg Market in the form of holograms, projected onto street furniture using their unique Virtual Hologram Box (VOX). Alex Slack, Bigg Market Project Manager at NE1, said the students had been able to bring new ideas and a fresh perspective to the challenge of changing perceptions of the Bigg Market and bringing a daytime audience back to the area. "It was evident that the students were not entrenched in their own views of the area which gave them the freedom to think differently and creatively. All of their projects used innovative digital technology to look back at the history of the Bigg Market, combining the old with the new to give people a real sense of Newcastle's historic heart, which is exactly what we are aiming to achieve through NE1's Bigg Market regeneration project."

The live brief was led by Professor of Innovation Lars Erik Holmquist and Senior Lecturer Andrew Richardson, of the Northumbria School of Design. Professor Holmquist explained: "This type of collaborative working is beneficial for everyone – the students get to experience what it is like to work on a real brief which benefits them when they graduate, and the client, in this case NE1, benefits from the students' creativity and fresh ideas, inspired by the latest technology and research." Students from Graphic Design, Fine Art and Fashion Communications have also had involvement in the Bigg Market regeneration scheme, helping NE1 to transform the Bigg Market after decades of under investment and neglect and to give a historic heart back to the City Centre.

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northumbria.ac.uk/design



Global hallmark of excellence for Business School

Newcastle Business School at Northumbria cements its position among an elite group of business schools worldwide after retaining the coveted AACSB International accreditation.

The Association to Advance Collegiate Business Schools (AACSB) is widely regarded as the leading international accreditation body for business schools. Synonymous with the highest standards of excellence since 1916, AACSB aims to connect students, schools and businesses in order to develop the next generation of leaders. And with many major companies reporting to the AACSB that they recruit exclusively from AACSB institutions, accreditation also provides Northumbria students with a powerful career edge.

In 2014 Northumbria's Newcastle Business School became the first business school in Europe to gain accreditation in both its business and accounting programmes – joining an elite group of institutions worldwide. After a rigorous process of review and evaluation by an AACSB Peer Review Team, Northumbria has just regained the double accreditation for an additional five years, further enhancing the University's global reputation and

appeal to students.

The AACSB Review Panel praised a "highly engaged leadership within both Business and Accounting units," and acknowledged the dedication and effort required to maintain the double accreditation. The panel also noted strong relationships with employers and the number of opportunities this presented for students through careers networking events, guest lectures and a mentoring programme with accounting firm Deloitte. The Business Clinic, where students offer a free consultancy service to businesses and other client organisations, was also singled out for its innovative learning experience.

Professor John Wilson, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Business and Law at Northumbria, said AACSB-accreditation was recognised and valued by major employers and therefore offered enhanced career prospects for students studying at Newcastle Business School. It also helps Northumbria develop partnerships with other leading

institutions around the world, which has opened greater overseas study opportunities for students. Praising the professionalism and dedication of colleagues. He added: "To yet again achieve AACSB accreditation for both Business and Accounting is a terrific accolade for a great team that constantly strives to improve and innovate. No other business school in Europe has achieved this."

"THIS IS A TERRIFIC ACCOLADE FOR A GREAT TEAM THAT CONSTANTLY STRIVES TO IMPROVE AND INNOVATE."

PROFESSOR JOHN WILSON

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northumbria.ac.uk/nbs

A first in Qatar with new graduates

**QATAR
FINANCE
BUSINESS
ACADEMY
TOWER**



Northumbria's partnership with the Qatar Finance Business Academy (QFBA) reaches a key milestone this summer with the graduation of the first cohort of Northumbria/QFBA students. Newcastle Business School at Northumbria began working with QFBA in 2016 to offer a range of professional and academic programmes. The partnership comes as Qatar progresses its strategic Vision 2030 to become an international centre for finance and a leading player in the Middle East.

This year up to 23 students will graduate in International Banking and Finance. As well as strengthening Northumbria's international reputation for academic and teaching excellence, the students' success will help drive Qatar's growing profile as a global financial hub.

Commenting at the time of the partnership announcement, QFBA's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Khalid Al Horr, said: "The partnership with Northumbria will help power the financial sector in Qatar and the region with a generation of well qualified professionals, capable of elevating the profile of their organisations as well as Qatar as a financial hub that attracts investments and businesses."

Professor John Wilson, Pro Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Business and Law at Northumbria, says celebrating the first cohort of Northumbria/QFBA graduates reflects Northumbria's growing international reach. He added: "This is an exciting time for both Qatar and QFBA as the country establishes itself as a global financial hub. We are delighted to be working alongside them and with such talented students who are now ready to make their mark. While this is our first cohort of graduates, the programme continues to grow. We already have more than 150 applicants for next year, which is a clear measure of success."

"And it's not just about teaching at QFBA. We now have a growing doctoral community, and academics engaging in joint research projects. In collaboration with QFBA we are also developing professional development courses so that we can work with the business community in the region."

As well as Qatar, Northumbria's global footprint includes operations in London, Malaysia, Singapore and Amsterdam.

DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/qatar

How reliable is forensic science?

Academics from Northumbria have been advising the House of Lords on how to improve the accuracy and reliability of forensic science in the UK legal system.

Many of the recommendations made by experts at the University have now been included in a hard-hitting report - *Forensic Science and the Criminal Justice System: A Blueprint for Change* - by the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee. The report identifies numerous challenges, including poor leadership, inadequate funding, insufficient regulatory powers and a lack of access to forensic science experts for defence lawyers. Dr Gillian Tully, the Forensic Science Regulator, has also warned that the system in England and Wales was reaching crisis point following sweeping budget cuts.

As a focus for research in expert evidence, academics from Northumbria have already been working closely with the Forensic Science Regulator and



FORENSIC SCIENCE IN ACTION

providing training to help legal professionals better understand scientific methodology and statistics. Sophie Carr, Associate Head of Applied Sciences at Northumbria, believes this experience has put the University in an ideal position to assist the House of Lords Select Committee. She adds: "The House of Lords' report calls for the Forensic Science Regulator's role to be reformed, expanded, better resourced and given stronger powers. Our recommendations

support this. We also agree with the Report's concerns for the trustworthiness and resilience of forensic science provision."

Professor Carole McCartney, from Northumbria Law School and a lead member of the University's Science and Justice Research Interest Group, gave oral evidence to the House of Lords Committee. She says: "The Report also recommends the creation of a Forensic Science Board, increasing funding for research and Legal Aid, and the

creation of a National Institute for Forensic Science. Much of these recommendations are based on our evidence. Research from Northumbria is having a real impact and helping to shape policy in this area."

DISCOVER MORE



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"RESEARCH FROM NORTHUMBRIA IS HAVING A REAL IMPACT AND HELPING TO SHAPE POLICY IN THIS AREA."

PROFESSOR CAROLE MCCARTNEY

Northumbria helps regulate the Internet

A House of Lords Select Committee is using evidence provided by Northumbria University academics to help shape policies to regulate the Internet.

In a Parliamentary report, *Regulating the Digital World*, the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications cites evidence submitted by Northumbria 18 different times. Academics at the University made the submission following a call for evidence on how regulation of the Internet

can be improved, whether online platforms have enough accountability and transparency, and if adequate processes are in place to moderate content effectively.

A collaborative response was prepared as part of The Northumbria Internet and Society Research Interest Group (NINSO) - a multi-disciplinary team of researchers at the University analysing the impact on society of the Internet and other related technologies. Key themes highlighted by NINSO included better education for users, the power imbalance between website owners and users, and the issue of long and opaque Terms & Conditions that nobody reads, let alone understands.

Dr Guido Noto La Diega, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria Law School and co-convenor of NINSO, warns that regulating a technology like the Internet, with such a multi-layered and prevalent influence on society, is a significant challenge. But he adds: "Our research group includes lawyers, economists, business scholars, social scientists, architects, computer scientists, engineers and students - so we are able to tackle these difficulties and come up with a genuinely holistic approach."

In recommending a comprehensive and inclusive strategy for regulation, the House of Lords has clearly taken Northumbria's advice into consideration."

"TO BE CITED 18 TIMES REFLECTS THE STRENGTH AND DEPTH OF OUR RESEARCH AND THE IMPACT IT CAN HAVE ON AN ISSUE THAT REACHES THE WHOLE OF SOCIETY."

DR NOTO LA DIEGA



DISCOVER MORE



northumbria.ac.uk/law



Student Business Clinic in Amsterdam

Northumbria has taken its student-led business consultancy service overseas by extending the programme to its Amsterdam campus - with excellent results.

The Amsterdam Campus Business Clinic opened in February this year. It involves students and staff from both Northumbria and partner institution Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) working together to provide free business consultancy to companies from the UK, the Netherlands and beyond. The first cohort have now completed their consultancy projects, with students working to briefs from four Dutch businesses including a recruitment agency, a coach hire business, and two social enterprises. After carrying out detailed market research and compiling a report, the students presented their findings and recommendations to the clients.

Client William Lanser, from Finest People Digital Recruitment in the Netherlands, said the students were very eager right from the beginning. "We'll definitely take forward some of their recommendations made in their report", he added.

Joris Beemsterboer, from Amsterdam-based social enterprise The Good Roll, was equally positive. "I was really impressed by the depth of research. This project has

given me some excellent tips to consider as we develop", he explained.

Programme lead and senior lecturer at Northumbria, Ronnie Das, believes offering the Business Clinic approach in Amsterdam is a clear example of successful collaboration between Northumbria and AUAS. He added: "The group consultancy project has been a phenomenal success in its first year, strengthening the partnership between Northumbria and AUAS and adding to the learning experience for our students."

The Business Clinic in Amsterdam is delivered as part of the Year in International Business course, which is open to undergraduate students from both Northumbria and AUAS, and from any discipline. The first cohort included a mix of UK and International students studying a variety of courses, including Sports Science, Geography and Business Management. The course is also taught by lecturers from both Northumbria and AUAS.

DISCOVER MORE 

northumbria.ac.uk/businessclinic

"THE GROUP CONSULTANCY PROJECT HAS BEEN A PHENOMENAL SUCCESS IN ITS FIRST YEAR. IT HAS STRENGTHENED THE ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN NORTHUMBRIA AND AUAS AND GIVEN STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK TOGETHER TO DEVELOP SOLUTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL CLIENTS."

RONNIE DAS, PROGRAMME LEAD

Leading the blockchain revolution



PROFESSOR YU XIONG WITH DELEGATES AT THE BLOCKCHAIN FORUM ON MAGNA CARTA ISLAND

"I WAS DELIGHTED TO CHAIR THE EVENT FROM THE HISTORIC AND FAMOUS MAGNA CARTA ISLAND - THE FIRST TIME AN INNOVATION-INSPIRED SEMINAR HAS BEEN HELD HERE."

PROFESSOR YU XIONG

Innovations in blockchain technology are creating exciting opportunities for UK and Chinese businesses to collaborate - and Northumbria aims to be at the heart of many of the new partnerships.

Blockchain is an emerging technology that is revolutionising the financial industry by allowing digital information to be distributed, but not copied, and changing the way transactions are made and recorded.

Professor Yu Xiong from Newcastle Business School recently led the China UK Blockchain Application Forum, bringing together high-profile delegates from both countries. It was attended by Chinese businesses and investors, business support body Innovation UK, cross-party parliamentary innovation groups and leading academics from universities including UCL, London School of Economics, Durham and Northumbria.

Professor Xiong believes Blockchain is fundamentally changing the way we make financial transactions. He explains: "Blockchain has the potential to entirely reshape behaviour displayed in financial transactions. Its applications also stretch beyond economic considerations and will inevitably have wider impacts and benefits on society. This presents significant opportunities, which is why bringing high profile Chinese and UK delegates together is so significant. China is the world's second largest economy and is seen by the UK Government as a natural innovation partner."

The forum was held at the historic Magna Carta Island, near Windsor, widely regarded as the

site where King John signed the Magna Carta more than 800 years ago.

Commenting on the venue, Professor Xiong adds: "The UK has a rich history and an impressive record of innovation, so holding the forum in such a historically significant setting was symbolic and would have resonated with those present. I was delighted to Chair the event on behalf of Northumbria University."

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Is the legal profession still doMENated?



Left:
Alexia Savar, Northumbria
student and Paralegal at
Bailoran Solicitors

**"I FEEL
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ALEXIA SAVAR

In a *Northumbria News* exclusive, Paralegal and Northumbria MLaw student, Alexia Savar, explores the gender balance within the profession and asks, "what is affecting women's legal careers?"

"The Law Society's 2017 Annual Statistics Report revealed that there are now more women than men qualified and practicing law in the UK. However, the same report revealed that only 28% of partners in the UK are female. As a woman starting out in my legal career, I was interested to find out more. Over the last year I have spoken to both men and women in successful practices to gain an insight into the structure of a solicitor's workplace in an attempt to discover why the statistics don't correlate.

Ann Page, a motivational trainer and coach at Yorkshire Courses for Lawyers, believed that in her first role, she "was not promoted because [she] was a woman". She believes one of the reasons there is a higher proportion of

male partners could be due to the culture of the legal profession, which can sometimes be seen as lagging behind the times. That culture is one where women are encouraged to stay at home and raise children whilst men continue to work and progress their career. Nevertheless, the statistics may also partly be due to the needs of a legal business. Gender can create a situation which is costly for a business. If a woman wants a family it normally involves her taking a career break, which in turn means no fee earning whilst still remaining a cost as an employee.

This said, Laura Clapton, solicitor and director at Consilia Legal, explains that struggles within her legal career have not been due to gender but due to

her youth, and she is proud that "more women are reaching the top". But are women having to set up by themselves to achieve this? Are they forced to create an environment that encourages working remotely and flexibly in order to continue to progress their career?

Marie Walsh, director at Consilia Legal, chose to set up her own private practice for "more freedom" in her personal life. By doing so she was able to set her own limits and make her colleagues feel valued. As a result, this afforded her more time to dedicate to her family. This suggests that women are in fact setting up their own practice because it is more innovative and flexible, which is also advantageous for family life.

'Technology' was suggested by Rachel Roche, solicitor and managing director at Roche Legal, as a big game changer in future because it allows "more flexible working arrangements." Such rapid technological advancement enables new parents to potentially continue practicing and work largely remotely if needs be. There is now little need to be in the office as everything is accessible from home thanks to technology.

Similarly, John Baines, solicitor and managing director at Bailoran Solicitors, promotes a different business model to the traditional law firm and one that "encourages mothers returning to the legal profession and does not stifle them with the traditional 9-5 environment." Bailoran offers remote working, flexible hours and encourages solicitors to be self-employed using a consultancy model.

It is clear to me that the profession is in the midst of unprecedented change as the incredible growth of and

reliance on technology provides opportunities for parents to continue practicing law that were just not available to previous generations. Although family life may have historically created barriers for women in the legal profession, it is evident that attitudes in the sector are rapidly changing. I feel privileged to be entering the profession at a time where equality is championed and there are many visibly successful female partners and role models to inspire and challenge stereotypes."

Are you a current student and interested in writing an article for *Northumbria University News* related to your area of study? Email media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk with your idea.

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Left: Faye Mullen, Vice-Captain of Northumbria University's Women's Football Team, joins other leading figures in women's football clubs across UK universities at Camp Nou.

Mixing with Messi

A Northumbria student scored the trip of a lifetime to Barcelona's legendary Camp Nou stadium as part of an initiative by Santander UK to support female talent in both their sporting and professional lives.

Faye Mullen, Vice-Captain of Northumbria University's Women's Football Team, was selected to join a cohort of leading footballers from women's football clubs across UK universities. Organised by Santander, the trip to Barcelona involved a programme of events, tours and training designed to help build critical thinking and management skills.

Matt Hutnell, Director, Santander Universities, said "We are thrilled to offer this opportunity to top female football talent from across the UK. We are committed to supporting higher education and we know that those selected for this programme are equally committed to their sport, investing hours into training and are an inspiration to their peers both on and off the pitch."

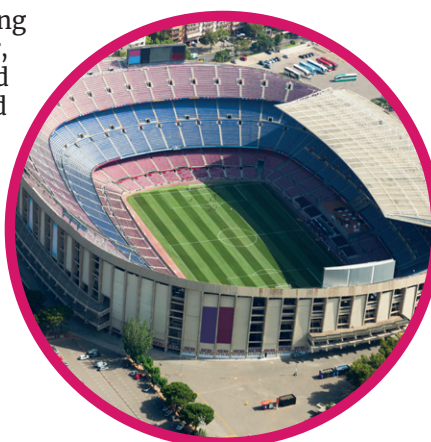
The female focused programme included a panel discussion on women's leadership with contributions from Maria Teixidor, Board Director & Company Secretary

of Barcelona FC; Laura Ràfols, FC Barcelona; Matias Rodriguez Inciarte, Vice-Chairman Banco Santander & President of Santander Universities; and Susan Allen, Head of Retail and Business Banking, Santander UK. The session was moderated by Manroop Khela, Head of Transformation & CEO's Office for Santander UK.

Faye also took part in a training session alongside Chapi Ferrer, professional football coach and ex-player for FC Barcelona and Chelsea FC. In celebration of Santander's sponsorship of the UEFA Champions League, she also had the opportunity to watch Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez, Gerard Pique and the rest of the world-famous Barcelona team play against Olympique Lyonnais.

Feeling empowered by the unique opportunity, Faye said "The trip to Barcelona was a fantastic opportunity to meet other players from women's football teams and hear from inspirational figures from the

football and business worlds. Santander's commitment to promoting female leadership is not something I was aware of before and I have really enjoyed learning more about what they do to support women in this area. I'm very grateful to have had such a fantastic experience."



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Northumbria Paralympian smashes world record

Northumbria student and Paralympic gold medallist, Taka Suzuki, has added a world record to his long list of accolades.



PARA-ATHLETE AND NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY STUDENT, TAKA SUZUKI

Taka enjoyed huge success at the World Para Swimming Series in Glasgow in April. The event brings together the world's best swimmers, and saw a number of world and national records broken across the many classifications during the series.

Northumbria student Taka Suzuki built on his recent sporting successes, including five gold medals and five new Para-Asian records in the Asian Para Games 2018, by winning five medals and breaking a world record in the multi-classification event. Head of Aquatics at Northumbria, Louise Graham, described the achievement as "remarkable".

Taka secured world record in his first event of the series, the S4 100m Freestyle. He continued his successful run throughout the series, going on to win gold medals in the SM4 150m Individual Medley, SB3 50m Breaststroke and S4

50m Freestyle, as well as Silver medals in the S4 200m and 100m Freestyle.

Following his success, Taka is now ranked Number 1 in the World for 50m Freestyle, 100m Freestyle, 200m Freestyle in the S4 class. He is also ranked Number 2 in the SB3 50m Breaststroke, as well as holding a number 2 ranking in the SM4 150 Individual Medley.

Taka graduated from Northumbria in 2018, with a degree in Sport Management and is now studying for a Masters in International Sport Management. He will be competing at the IPC World Championships in London in September 2019. If he wins a gold medal, he will qualify for the 2020 Paralympic Games on his home turf in Tokyo.

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DID YOU KNOW?

The para-swimming classification system is designed to allow for fair competition in disability swimming.

The classes are prefixed with "S" for freestyle, butterfly and backstroke events, "SB" for breaststroke and "SM" for individual medley events.

The classifications; S4; SB3 and SM4 reflect a swimmers level of disability. Swimmers in this class have coordination problems affecting all four of their limbs, with coordination problems being more severe in their legs.



"I STOPPED ROWING AFTER I WAS FIRST DIAGNOSED. THE SHOCK OF FINDING OUT I HAD THIS DISEASE, AND COMING TO TERMS WITH IT, HAD A PROFOUND EFFECT ON ME."

ELLEN BUTTRICK

*Left and below:
Ellen Buttrick (far right in the photo to the left and front row far left on the image below) pictured with her team mates.*

Oar-some Ellen's Paralympic journey

When 24-year-old student athlete Ellen Buttrick was diagnosed with an incurable eye disorder, she thought her dreams of rowing for her country were over.

After seeing people row on her local river near her home in Leeds, Ellen first took to the water thanks to a learn-to-row course during the opening week of the London Olympics in 2012. From here, her love for the sport took off and Ellen proved to be a real rowing talent, winning national competitions while studying for a Geography degree at Northumbria University. But while studying for her degree, Ellen was diagnosed with juvenile macular degeneration, an inherited eye disorder which results in a gradual loss of vision and is currently incurable.

"I stopped rowing after I was first diagnosed," she said.

"The shock of finding out I had this disease had a profound effect on me. I focussed instead on my university work. My lecturers were so supportive and made sure I had all the equipment I needed to make the most of my degree and be equal in opportunities to everyone else on my course."

After coming to terms with her diagnosis, she was determined not to let the incurable eye disorder stop her from competing on a world stage. Instead, she confronted her challenges head-on, earning a place in the Great British Paralympic rowing squad whilst completing her degree. Her rapid progress into the GB Para-Rowing squad was made possible

thanks to the support of her coaches, who helped her improve her technique and performance. Ellen won gold as part of Team GB's mixed coxed four event at last year's World Championships. The team hope to maintain the title at this year's Championships in Austria in August which is the qualifier regatta for the 2020 Paralympics.

Alongside her rowing achievements, Ellen is looking to use her Geography degree in human rights work. She undertook a placement year at neighbouring Gateshead Council while studying at Northumbria and since graduating in 2017, she has worked at the Refugee



Council, and completed internships with a London council and a political think tank in Prague.

Ellen would eventually like to work for a non-governmental organisation in public policy following her rowing career. "For a while, I worked three days a week as an office coordinator for the resettlement programme at the Refugee Council in Leeds, while also training with the Para-rowing squad nearly 200 miles away in Reading," she said. "I feel privileged to have the opportunity to represent my country at international competitions, which I see as making the most out of an unfortunate situation."

Northumbria's Geography students have gone on to take up roles in government and local authorities in countries across the world, as elected MPs, heads of government departments and with non-governmental organisations such as Oxfam, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and World Vision.

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WORLD RECORD FOR TAKA

Student and Paralympic gold medallist Taka Suzuki wows at the World Para Swimming Series.
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NORTHUMBRIA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM CELEBRATE THEIR WIN AGAINST DURHAM

"IT IS AN OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AND THE COMPETITION JUST KEEPS GETTING STRONGER AND STRONGER."

HEATHER STEEL

Sporting Success at Big BUCS event

Northumbria student athletes have enjoyed another year of sporting excellence having secured four national sporting titles at this year's British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Big Wednesday event.

The event hosted this year by the University of Nottingham, is the pinnacle of the student sporting calendar with over 60 of the UK's top university teams battling it out for National BUCS Championship and Trophy titles across 14 sports. Northumbria was represented by six teams across five sports, taking home national titles in men's rugby league, women's football and women's basketball.

One of the highlights of the event was the men's rugby league where Northumbria's 2nd team secured a place in the National Trophy final while the University men's 1st team secured a place in the final of the National Rugby League Championship. This success meant it was the first time a UK university has had representation in both a National BUCS Championship and Trophy final in rugby league.

It was not plain sailing for the 2nd team in the Trophy Final, with opponents Oxford University being quick to respond following Northumbria's early try. However, the Northumbria squad proved to have the better strength, depth and quality and secured a convincing victory of 42-10.

Meanwhile in the National Rugby League Championship Northumbria's 1st team lined up against long-term rivals Leeds Beckett, a team who have been a powerhouse in university rugby league. The game began tense as expected, but it was Northumbria who broke through first to secure the first try of the game. The team led from thereon with Northumbria clinching the championship 36-18.

In women's football, the team faced fierce competition from Loughborough University. Despite

early delays in the match due to injury, the team demonstrated their top class skills and scored two goals to take a commanding lead. Northumbria again proved to be the stronger side in the second half scoring the only goal early on with the final score being 3-2 to Northumbria.

Finally, Northumbria women's basketball team were up against Durham who were quick out of the blocks and took an early lead. However, Northumbria came back fighting, outscoring Durham to end the third quarter. The final quarter swung both ways with both teams leading at different points but after a tense final two minutes, the team persevered beating Durham 86-80 to be crowned national champions. Northumbria's third team to secure a league and cup double on the day.



Speaking about the event, Northumbria Performance Sport Manager, Heather Steel said, "I am incredibly proud of all our student athletes and coaches who have worked so hard to secure a place in the BUCS finals,"

She added, "It is an outstanding achievement and the competition just keeps getting stronger and stronger. We had an extremely successful season last year with three wins; it is fantastic to improve on this with four wins across championship and trophy finals."

Northumbria University is a major player in BUCS, competing across a multitude of levels and with opportunities for all students. Team Northumbria enjoys some of the best coaches and facilities in the UK, including a £30m sport facility, Sport Central, which provides hundreds of student athletes with a state-of-the-art base for competing and for training.

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