

24-25

IMPACT REPORT

Newcastle University Students' Union

WELCOME



The year, 2024-2025, has been one of change and reflection for the team of Officers and staff. Increasing costs due to inflation and external factors, coupled with declining income in some areas, resulted in NUSU having to reanalyse our finances to reduce our outgoings. Despite the disruption to our staff team, as we went through a period of review and restructure, it should be celebrated how much we have achieved, with the vast majority of our targets met and engagement levels remaining very high.

In our annual survey, 98% of students rated the Students' Union as satisfactory or above with the excellent rating rising from 28% to 35%. Engagement levels across all areas continued to increase with notable success continuing in our Give It A Go programme, clubs, societies and volunteering. Voting in the Student Elections surpassed our target, with the new format attracting more candidates and making the process easier for both candidates and voters. We are now SOS-UK accredited showing that we are leading the way in harm prevention from alcohol and drug use.

Our sports teams have continued to enjoy much success and again achieved a top ten finish in BUCS, as well as securing a fourth Varsity win against Northumbria University. For clubs and societies our team have expanded committee training and by developing new partnerships with local charities and organisations we're able to provide our volunteers with confidence and skills on many subjects including race equality and safeguarding. The Opportunities team have continued to engage students in projects in the community and recently secured additional funding to extend our N.E.S.T project to more schools in the region.

In the summer term we celebrated our Centenary year with an exhibition which explored the Union's 100-year history, from the gifting of our striking building in 1925, to the many achievements of our students in more recent years.

Our new bar franchise has reinvigorated the building with bar turnover exceeding all expectations, creating a vibrant and welcoming space for our students.

Our Officers listened to students and worked with colleagues and volunteers to represent student needs at the University and within the Students' Union. This resulted in three Action Priorities that focused on Cost of Living, Challenging Stigmas and Improving the Academic Experience. Achievements included collecting feedback on dissertation support to influence University provision, creating disability awareness training for staff with pilot sessions delivered, and working with the University to revamp the £1 meal deal scheme.

We have a year of consolidation, to realign in our staff teams and with our students' needs. We are seeing more meaningful engagement in many areas and are optimistic that as we enter our strategic review year, we will continue to build student engagement with NUSU to record levels.

Ilsa Hartley - President
Lindsey Lockey - Chief Executive

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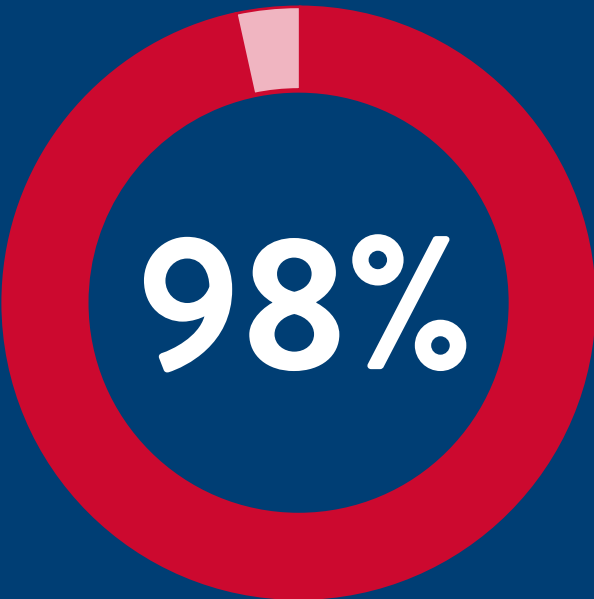
Human
Resources

78

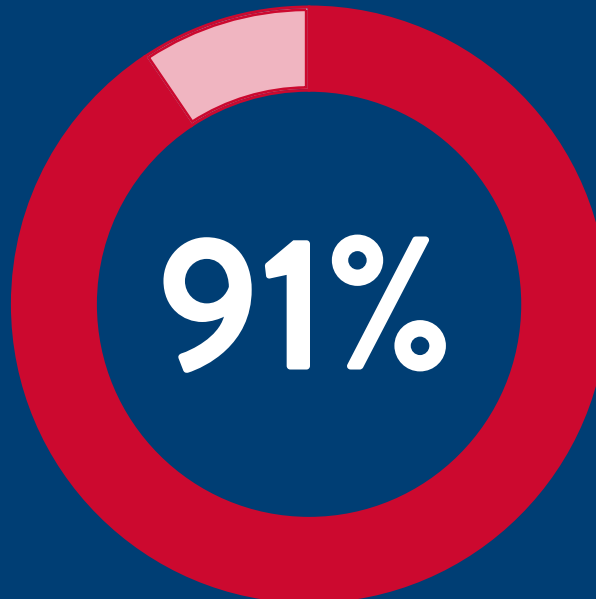
Looking to
the Future...



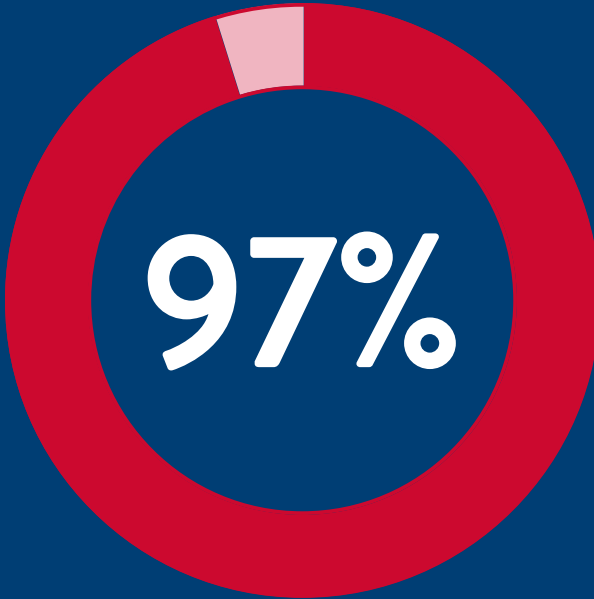
2024-25
SUCCESS
SNAPSHOT



of students
rated NUSU
as satisfactory
or above



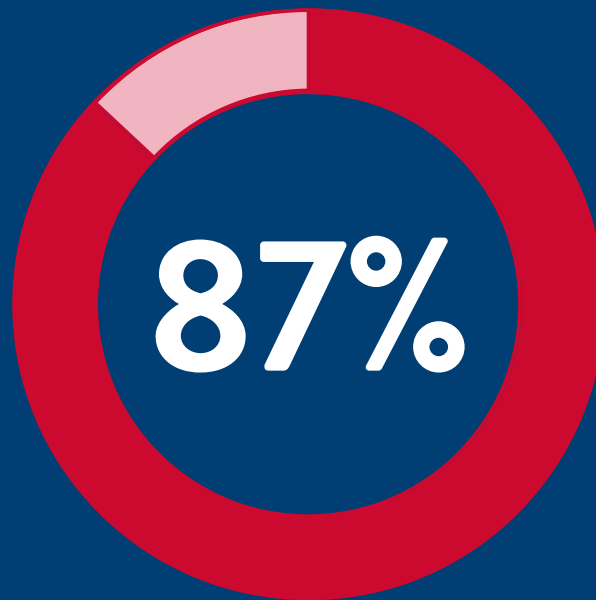
would
recommend
us to another
student



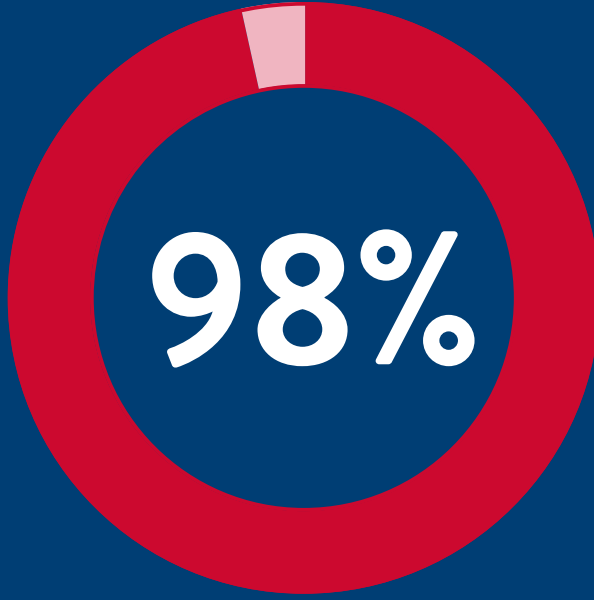
agreed that
NUSU is an
inclusive
organisation



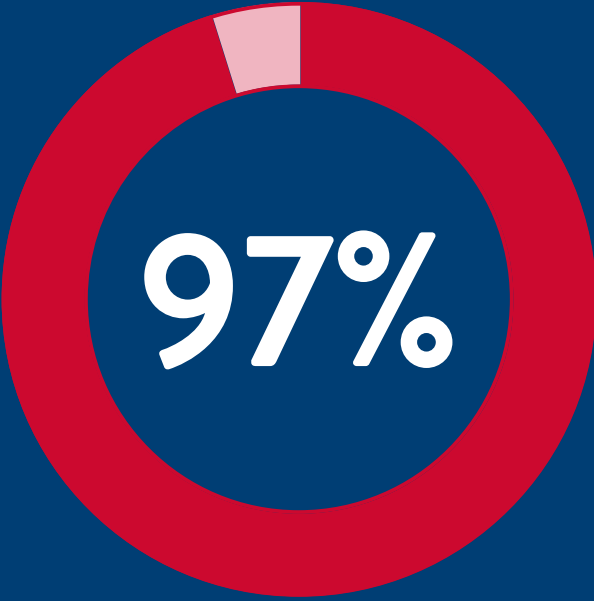
agree that
we contribute
positively to
their Uni
experience



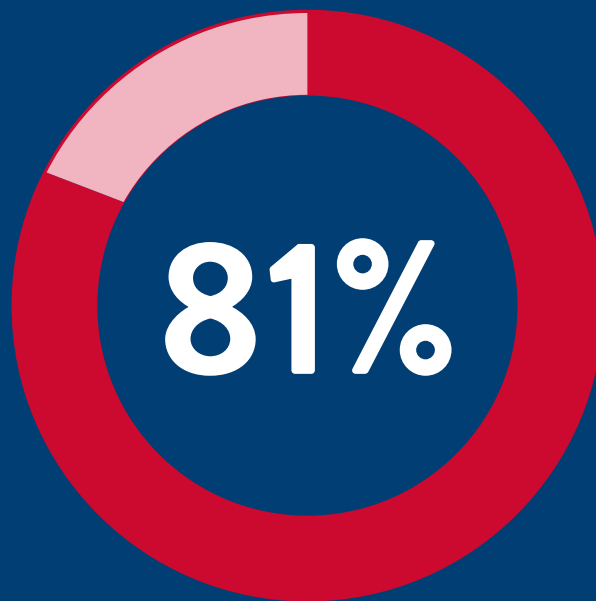
agree that we
campaign
effectively on
their behalf



rated our approach
to welfare, support
and advice as
satisfactory or above



are satisfied
with the range
of opportunities
offered



are satisfied
with the
opportunities
to develop skills



Clubs & Society
memberships purchased



Give It A Go
activities delivered



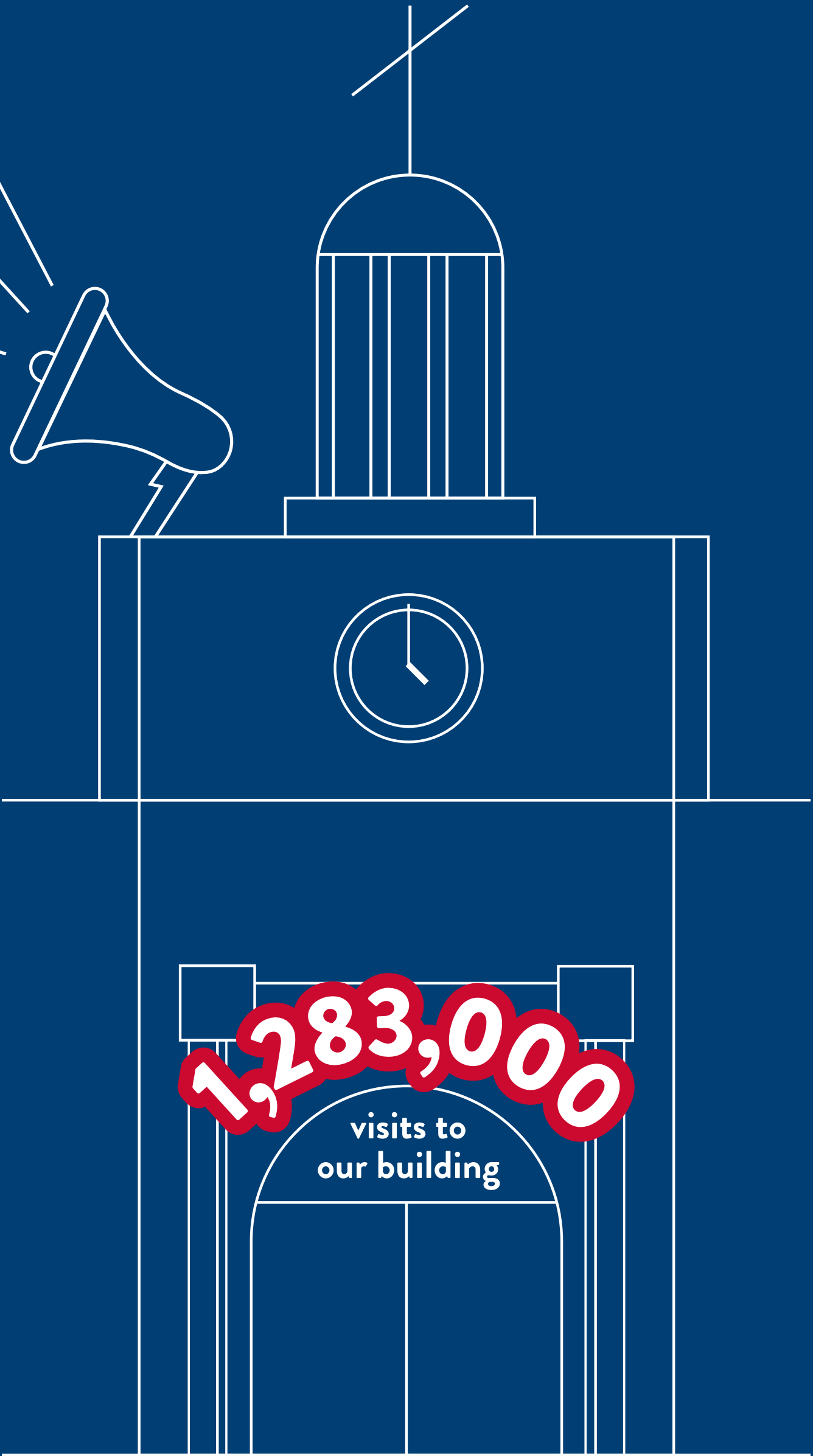
of students engaged
with NUSU activities



in BUCS
League

87%

agree that our
approach to
campaigning
is effective



97%

are happy with
our communications

4 in 5

students felt the
Student Rep system
is effective

20,512

students engaged with
NUSU activities

2027

student volunteers

774

NCL+ & Advanced
awards issued



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

OUR AMBITION

To have a **positive impact** on the experience of every student at Newcastle University.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to **represent, support, develop** and **enhance** the lives and experiences of Newcastle University students.

DELIVERING BY

1. Improving education and empowering students to make positive change
2. Creating and maintaining student communities and networks
3. Providing welfare, support, and advice services
4. Helping students personally develop and unlock their potential

OUR VALUES

Representative

We represent students' interests locally, regionally, and nationally, and empower them to create change, develop skills and unlock their own potential.

Inclusive

We support equity, diversity, and inclusion and recognise intersectionality. We adjust our services to assist and reflect the evolving, diverse needs of our students.

Exciting

We provide opportunities that create good times, positive memories, and a fun-filled vibrant experience.

Supportive

We ensure our students are supported in the best way possible and help them make connections and develop a sense of belonging.

Progressive

We look to the future, seeking new opportunities and partnerships. We are innovative, imaginative, and creative, and happy to work in collaboration with others.

Sustainable

We take all reasonable steps to minimise our adverse impact on the environment, society, and the planet; recognising that we are living through a climate crisis and emergency.

IMPROVING

EDUCATION

&

EMPOWERING

STUDENTS

SABBATICAL OFFICERS

2024/25

Lucy Bower
Student Media Officer

Hisham Salamathullah
Wellbeing & Equality Officer

Jasmine Banks
Education Officer

Leo David
President

Swati Subramaniam
Activities Officer

Alex Duggan
Athletic Union Officer

Linming Sun
Postgraduate Officer

ACTION PRIORITIES

Based on what students told us mattered to them, and what aspects of the student experience they would like to see improved in 2024/25, we identified three priorities for the year where we would be taking action. These action priorities were Cost of Living, Challenging Stigmas and Improving the Academic Experience.

Work under each action included:

Improving the Academic Experience

We focused on supporting students through assessment improvements, reducing costs, and building a stronger sense of academic community.

We influenced changes to the academic calendar to ease pressure during the resit period and allowed more time for feedback. To better understand the needs of dissertation writers, we gathered 340 student responses and presented key findings to University staff in June.

In response to concerns about the cost of studies and financial challenges, we continued to hold the University to account on its commitment to protect field trips and student job opportunities. To support postgraduate students, we hosted a PG Future Pathways event in partnership with the Careers Service.

Challenging Stigmas

We worked to break down barriers around consent, drugs and alcohol, racial inequality, and disability inclusion.

This year, we hosted BYOB - Bring Your Own Boundaries, a flagship event focused on sex, consent, and healthy relationships, featuring input from societies, charities, and external organisations. We also led the University's accreditation as a Harm Reduction institution through SOS-UK, supported by Drugs & Alcohol Awareness Week and our targeted 'Take Ket? Let's Chat' campaign. Work to address racial stigma culminated in a new report, Decolonising NUSU, based on student focus groups. In collaboration with student societies, we also launched an Accessibility Guide for clubs and ran Disability Awareness Week, while piloting new disability awareness training for University staff in partnership with Student Health and Wellbeing.



Bring Your Own Boundaries, April 2024



Jasmine Banks, Education Officer & Linning Sun, Postgraduate Officer

87%

of students agree that our approach to campaigning is effective

500+

undergraduate students supported through the Activities Access Fund

Cost of Living

We prioritised campaigning for better financial support, improving access to food and housing, and reducing barriers to extracurricular involvement.

We lobbied for funding reform through meetings with local MPs and national sector bodies, supported by the findings of our 2024 Cost of Living Survey. In partnership with the University, we replaced the £1 meal deal with a £50 food fob scheme for students most in need and relaunched Pick-Up Pasta across key campus locations. We also enhanced the Student Pantry by recruiting a dedicated intern. Our work on decent housing included support for the No More Guarantors campaign and the development of our Rate Your Landlord review site. To make student life more accessible, we supported over 500 UK undergraduates through the Activities Access Fund and secured new long-term funding to expand the scheme to postgraduates and international students.

It was brilliant to see that students recognised our campaigning work with 87% of students agreeing that our approach to campaigning is effective. A significant increase on last year.



REPRESENTING STUDENTS

This year, we worked with and supported nearly 1,000 Student Reps across all schools and campuses, and over 100 individual Student-Staff Committees to ensure that students across the University have their voice heard and their feedback acted upon. Some examples of the changes that reps have made this year have included:

- ➡ **School of Natural and Environmental Sciences (PGR) School Reps led on a PGR mentoring programme**
- ➡ **A SELLL School Rep worked with our Education Officer on a review of the Recap policy, with amendments agreed with the University**
- ➡ **A PG Course Rep from the Career Development module co-created a ‘On-Placement Package’ of support for all students.**

They have also been out and about promoting themselves to students, attending University meetings and feeding back to students the difference they have made as a collective and it was wonderful to be able to recognise them at the annual Student Rep Awards back in May. With all this hard work, it was great to see that over 85% of students felt the Student Rep system is effective, a significant increase on the previous year.

We also secured funding to complete a review of Student Representation in 2025/26 so that we can make changes to the policy and procedures in time for the start of the 2026/27 academic year.

85%

of students felt the **Student Rep system is effective.**

1000+

Student Reps supported across all schools and campuses



STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council is our key forum that allows students to steer the running of the Students’ Union, hold the Officer team to account and debate the issues that matter to them. Any student can submit a motion, and all motions can be debated at Student Council, to which every student is eligible to attend. Some examples of motions that have been passed this last year include:

- ➡ **Safeguard Peaceful Protest Rights on Campus**
- ➡ **Allowing Sabbatical Officers to run for re-election for a second year**
- ➡ **Lobbying Newcastle MPs around the student cost of living and higher education funding**
- ➡ **Creation of “Stage 1 Engagement Rep” role**
- ➡ **0% Plant Based in line with Net Zero targets**
- ➡ **Review of Representation Underrepresented Student Groups**



4774

VOTED
STUDENT
ELECTIONS

This year, we saw amazing engagement with our Student Elections, our annual event where all students can cast their vote on who should be the new Officer Team.

We received an incredible 24,600+ votes for 52 brilliant candidates running for 16 available positions.

Over the four weeks, the candidates attended training, produced promotional materials, took part in the Candidate Rally and campaigned during voting week to secure the most votes. The results were then announced at the Results Night event to an electric audience.

TEED
16ROLES



Spotlight on Student Elections Candidates Rally

As part of our plan to increase engagement in the Student Elections, we introduced a Candidate Rally.

This rally aimed to raise awareness that the elections were taking place and encourage more students to participate in voting. We wanted to create a less formal and more inclusive alternative to traditional hustling events, while giving candidates a platform to share their messages in a supportive, visible, and vibrant setting.

The event took place in the Boiler House, with the stage overlooking the busy Student Forum to maximise visibility of the candidates to the student body. Students were invited to gather and watch, while

“ So much fun! The food trucks and location made the atmosphere way more effective and friendly than a debate. ”

enjoying food vans and refreshments. They could also meet with the with the Student Voice team. Behind the scenes, candidates used the Bamburgh Room as a ‘Green Room’, while student media teams from NSR, The Courier and NUTV hosted interviews.

Feedback from the candidates was overwhelmingly positive, with many praising the supportive atmosphere and lively format.

Overall, the Candidate Rally was a really positive step in delivering a more engaging approach to the Student Elections, making the whole process and the candidates more visible and accessible to the student body.



560

incredible nominations



Improving Education and Empowering Students

THE EDUCATION AWARDS

We were delighted to organise and host The Education Awards 2025. On the night, we announced 10 winners and celebrated the 33 staff who were shortlisted at a glitzy awards ceremony, hosted by our Education Officer, Jasmine Banks.

These amazing staff were recognised from the incredible **560 nominations** we received from students across the University community including the global campuses, and shortlisted by our Student Reps.



SUPPORTING

&

ADVISING

OUR

STUDENTS

SUPPORT & ADVICE HUB

Our Support and Advice Hub offers a welcoming, non-judgemental space where students can access support and advice on key areas such as academic advice, housing advice, food insecurity, harm reduction around drugs and alcohol, safety and spiking information, sexual health resources and wellbeing support.

Students have warmed up to our approach with:

98%

of students satisfied with NUSU’s approach to wellbeing, support and advice.

94%

agreed that NUSU initiatives help promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

87%

feeling that they received help & support when they needed it.



Wellbeing Support

Through the Support & Advice Hub students can drop by for welcoming and accessible wellbeing support. This year, over 600 students did just that, receiving a listening ear and signposting to further help when needed.

The Hub has also provided thousands of free wellbeing and safety resources, helping students manage health, cost-of-living pressures and their own personal safety. During 2024/25, students picked up around 18,000 condoms and lube, 900 pregnancy tests, and over 8,000 period products. Other available items included drug testing kits, personal alarms, stationery, lanyards, and sensory toys.

We expanded our harm reduction work through the **SOS-UK Drug and Alcohol Impact Programme**, achieving national accreditation in partnership with the University. The Hub also maintained our **Sexual Health Drop-In** and **Student Pantry**, with the latter now supported by a dedicated intern.

Through day-to-day support and strategic partnerships, the Hub plays a vital role in reducing stigma and ensuring students can access the help they need, when they need it.



18,000

condoms and lube
picked up from The
Hub during 2024/25

900

pregnancy tests
picked up from The
Hub during 2024/25

8000+

period products
picked up from The
Hub during 2024/25

Spotlight on **SOS-UK Accreditation**

We're proud to announce that NUSU, in partnership with Newcastle University, has officially achieved **SOS-UK Drug and Alcohol Impact Accreditation**—a nationally recognised mark of excellence in harm reduction.

Following a two-day audit in March 2025, the outcome was overwhelmingly positive. The assessors praised our strong external partnerships, inclusive and engaging communications, and the meaningful involvement of staff and students across the board. Campaigns like 'Take Ket? Let's Chat' and our ongoing work around drug testing, alcohol IBA and stigma-free support were key contributors to our success.

This accreditation reflects what can be achieved through genuine partnership working, and our continued commitment to student wellbeing.

“ *The partnership clearly demonstrates a strong willingness and understanding of the importance of promoting safe alcohol consumption and harm reduction drug policies.* ”
- Student Auditor



ADVICE TEAM

Between August 2024 and June 2025, the NUSU advice team supported 374 students through complex and varied student issues, with regards to housing and academic issues they may be facing while studying at University.

In addition, 521 appointments were successfully taken, with 63% of appointments delivered online, enhancing flexibility and reach to meet student demand. Website analytics further reinforce the demand from students for advice with over 26,000 visits, with housing and academic content being the most accessed webpages.

521

successfully taken appointments

63%

of appointments delivered online

26,000+

website visits

175
ACADEMIC

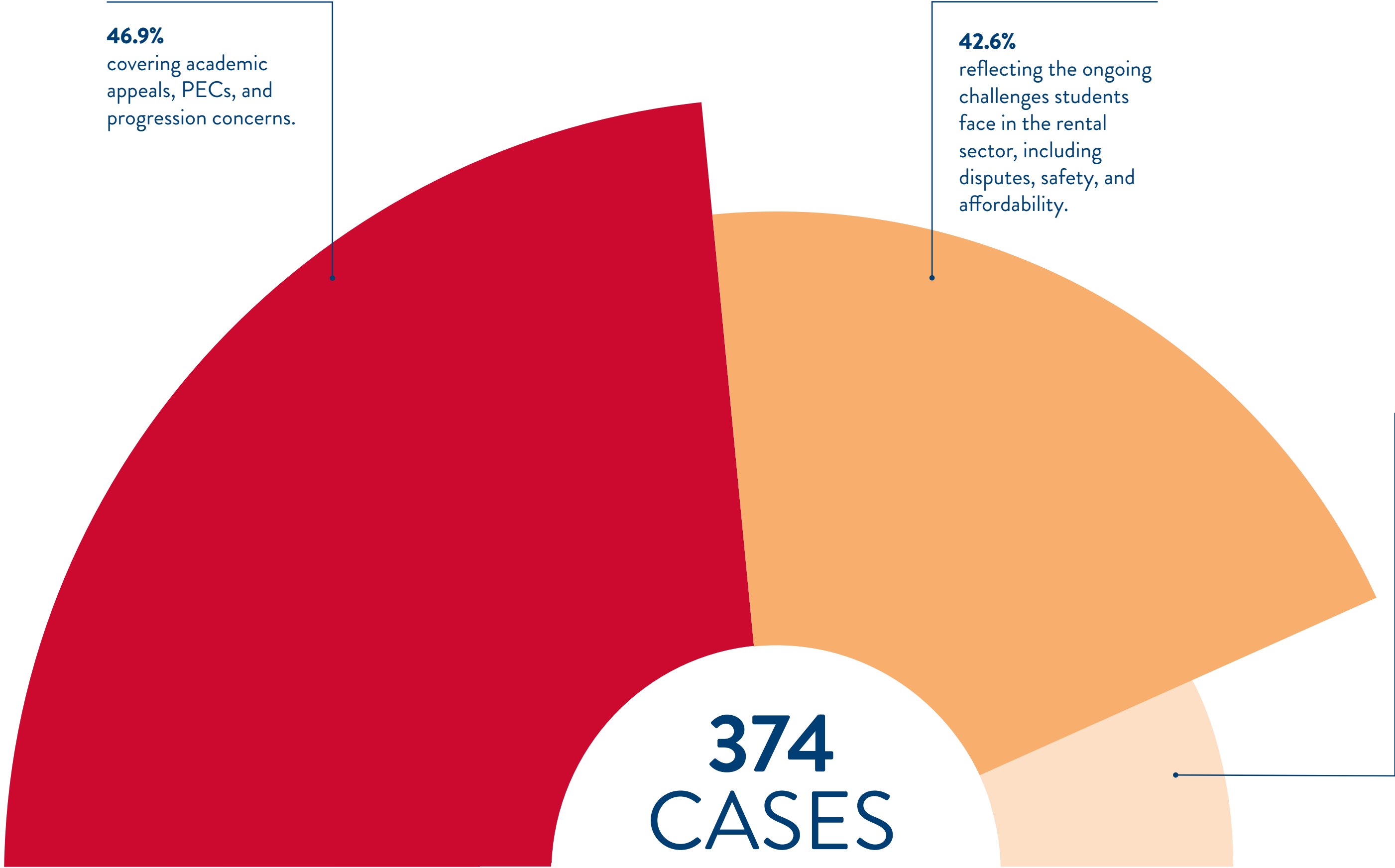
46.9%
covering academic appeals, PECs, and progression concerns.

159
HOUSING

42.6%
reflecting the ongoing challenges students face in the rental sector, including disputes, safety, and affordability.

40
STUDENT FINANCE

10.7%
covering hardship funding, tuition fee concerns, and budgeting support.





OUTCOMES & IMPACT: HOUSING WINS

Our advice had positive outcomes for many of our clients. Here are just some of our housing wins from the last year.

Supporting & Advising Our Students

1

Homelessness Support

University Accommodation Secured.

A student was declared homeless just three days before the start of term. Advisers stepped in to liaise with the university, resulting in the student being swiftly placed in university accommodation.

2

Housing Complaint

Compensation Awarded.

Following a prolonged complaint about housing conditions, advisers supported a student through the process and secured a compensation payment.

3

Property Condition Concern

Tenancy Terminated.

Due to unacceptable property standards, advisers helped the student negotiate with their landlord, resulting in a mutual agreement to surrender the tenancy and enabling them to relocate.

4

Deposit Dispute

Partial Refund Obtained.

After receiving an unfair deposit deduction, a student worked with advisers to challenge it through the relevant scheme, resulting in a partial refund.

5

Deposit Dispute Settled

Full Deposit Returned.

In a separate case, advisers guided a student through the dispute resolution process and successfully secured the return of the full deposit.

6

Tenancy Contract Release

Based on Medical Grounds.

A student with medical issues needed to be released from a tenancy. Advisers helped them provide the appropriate documentation and secure an early termination of the agreement.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT: ACADEMIC WINS

Our advice had positive outcomes for many of our clients. Here are just some of our academic wins from the last year. The impact of our advice is not just highlighted by the positive outcomes for students, but also the feedback we receive.

Supporting & Advising Our Students

1

Academic Misconduct Case Closed

No penalty.

A student accused of academic misconduct related to AI usage had their case dismissed with no penalty, thanks to adviser support in clarifying the nature and context of the issue.

2

Appeal for Resit Opportunity

Internal Study Granted.

A student was initially only permitted to resit exams externally. After intervention by advisers, they were granted the opportunity to repeat the year internally, preserving access to full student support.

3

Suspension Appeal

Student Reinstated.

A student facing suspension successfully appealed the decision with help from advisers, allowing them to continue their studies without delay.

4

Capped Marks Removed

Appeal Success.

Advisers supported a student in appealing capped marks imposed due to late submissions caused by mitigating circumstances. The appeal succeeded, and the cap was lifted.

“

Thank you for your time and effort, I definitely got through all what I wanted too just because of you.

“

Ruth helped with my next steps which saved me a lot of rent money and stress!

“

She even took the time to review my draft statement, which really helped as I was feeling overwhelmed with anxiety.

649

submitted reviews
from students

Spotlight on Rate Your Landlord

This year we have had a huge focus on asking students to submit reviews of their student housing for the **Rate Your Landlord** platform. This impartial review platform, managed by housing charity **Unipol** and supported by both Newcastle & Northumbria SUs and Universities, provides an open, fair and balanced forum for tenants to have their say, for landlords to respond and for students to learn more about the properties they could be renting.

Following months of promotion, including giveaways, a pop-up stall and social media promotion, we were delighted that we received enough reviews from Newcastle University students alone to meet the joint review target and to launch the platform in 2025/26.



**UNLOCKING
STUDENT
POTENTIAL**

2027 WERE VOLUNTEERS

GO VOLUNTEER

This year, 2027 students participated in the Go Volunteer programme, gaining essential employability skills and enhancing their resumes. Of these, 1,233 took part in projects coordinated and run by the Students' Union. Additionally, 278 charitable and not-for-profit organisations offered volunteering opportunities, resulting in 1,136 student referrals.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

StuBrew

StuBrew is a pioneering student-run sustainable microbrewery, where passion for great beer meets eco-conscious innovation.

Run by the Student Brewing Society with full backing from the Students’ Union, the team partners with the School of Chemical Engineering to explore greener brewing practices. From creating bold new beers to handling sales, events, and even designing funky labels, students are in charge of it all—gaining real-world experience in leadership, marketing, business, and sustainability.

Over 40 students helped brew more than 10,000 litres this year alone! Fan-favourite IPAs like *Steady State*, *Loan Drop*, *Cow in a Lift*, and *Post Exam Clarity* are available from our very own Luther’s Bar, ensuring the beer is easily accessible to the wider university community in a popular and affordable social setting. They have also secured product ranges in top local spots like Five Swans and the Microbus.

Stu Brew just turned 10 and celebrated in style with five epic Brewery Bashes. These campus parties run by and for students featured amazing food from Jam Jar Jesmond, Great North Pizza, and Fat Panda Bing, plus live music from the Jazz Orchestra, Newcastle Student Radio, and DJs. Brewery Bashes will continue next academic year and check out the NUSU website at the start of term for details.

SciFair

SciFair offers local secondary school students the opportunity to participate in science experiments, workshops and campus tours and to design and present their own science projects in a university-led competition.

The event is designed to increase awareness of Higher Education and raise aspirations of North East students who may have fewer opportunities to access University.

This year the SciFair saw record engagement, with 102 school students signing up and 90 completing the full programme, the highest participation in the project’s four-year history. The event also set a record, receiving 35 competition project submissions from five schools - the highest number so far. 34 local schools were invited to apply, the widest outreach to date.

The impact on our student volunteers has been equally meaningful. Over 20 students contributed to SciFair over a 9-month period, earning hours toward the NCL+ Award, Career Service Final Year Module, and Volunteer Certificates. Following the success of SciFair25, the 2026 committee is now the largest in the project’s history, with many volunteers returning to support the initiative.

343

students volunteered across the three Student Media outlets

20+

students contributed to SciFair over a 9-month period, earning hours towards the NCL+ Award

10,000L

litres brewed by StuBrew volunteers

Student Media

Student Media has had an incredibly successful year, with The Courier being shortlisted for 4 awards at SPANC (Student Publication Association), and NSR being shortlisted for 5 Amplify Awards (Student Radio Association).

A total of 343 students volunteered across The Courier, NSR, and NUTV. During this period, 290 new WordPress writer accounts were created, 11 issues of The Courier were printed, and the online website received over 18,000 views. The ‘Weekly Bulletin’ launched this year on social media, with strong engagement and positive feedback from students.

NSR hosted over 50 live radio shows, and NUTV collaborated on major livestreams with NUSU events including Candidate Rally, Fight Night, and Elections Results Night.





minutes
of support
through the
Nighline

Nightline

Nightline is a student-led, peer-to-peer listening service providing confidential wellbeing and mental health support for students.

Despite a challenging start to the year, with the team relocating to a new office, volunteers demonstrated exceptional resilience and determination to relaunch the service. Throughout the year, 60 volunteers supported students for a total of 2,634 minutes, with the average conversation lasting 22 minutes underscoring the value of having someone to talk to.

Volunteers completed 30 hours of training to ensure they could provide safe, empathetic, and non-judgemental support. Beyond its core service, Nightline expanded its presence and impact on campus through collaborative fundraising events with student societies and distributing exam care packages. A major development this year was the launch of active listening workshops, enabling students to build confidence and improve their ability to support one another.

Nightline remains committed to promoting student wellbeing and looks forward to further strengthening the university community in the year ahead.

90

students volunteered with
N.E.S.T Schools Project

N.E.S.T Schools

N.E.S.T Schools is a three-year, £140,000 Newcastle City Council-funded project focused on supporting refugee and asylum-seeking students in local schools.

The programme aims to promote integration, improve reading comprehension, encourage friendships, and help students feel safe and welcomed in the school environment. This is delivered through a 12-week reciprocal reading intervention programme conducted in small groups.

This year, 90 university students from a variety of courses volunteered one afternoon per week to deliver the programme across 10 local schools. Over 250 school pupils engaged, with more than two-thirds making between three months and two years of reading progress, and at least eight pupils improving by three to four years.

Feedback from both teachers and university volunteers highlights the project’s powerful impact. School staff noted that, “The volunteers have a warm and calm approach, creating a nurturing environment where they are not just reading stories, but building confidence, connection and hope.”

“

Volunteering with N.E.S.T allows you to meet wonderful, like-minded people while gaining valuable teaching experience. It makes you feel part of something bigger than your degree, as it is incredibly fulfilling to work with refugee pupils and see the difference you make on an individual and group basis.



EMPLOYABILITY & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The Students' Union continued to manage the **NCL+ Award** programme this year, helping students to identify and communicate the skills they have developed as part of extra-curricular activities to future employers. A comprehensive recruitment campaign generated **1305 expressions of interest**, a year-on-year increase of 360 students. 681 students submitted work, a 52% conversion rate and **640 passed** the award. **135 students** passed one of the four **NCL+ Advanced Awards** in Leadership, Business Basics, Career Preparation and Campaigning for Social Change.

70 of our students who had completed volunteer work with Clubs, Societies, N.E.S.T, Intermural or external organisations used their experience to also complete the University's **Career Development Module** programme.



in year-on-year expressions of interest in the NCL+ Award



expressions of interest



students passed one of the four NCL+ Advanced Awards



students passed the NCL+ Award



of our students volunteers also completed the University's Career Development Module

1670

student nominations - a
record-breaking number!

CELEBRATING SUCCESS AWARDS

Award season at the Students' Union is a wonderful and special time. Students who have gone the extra mile and achieved so much for themselves, their teammates and community are celebrated and honoured.

A record breaking 1670 student award nominations were received for an award this year and the programme consisted of 7 glittering award ceremonies hosted at the Student Union, with the best of the best being celebrated at the Newcastle University Awards' held in the Frederick Douglass Centre auditorium in June.



Societies Awards

- Academic Society of the Year**
Law Society
- Representative Society of the Year**
Disability, Mental Health & Neurodiversity Society
- Specialty Society of the Year**
Running Club Society
- Collaboration of the Year**
Ella Spray
- Event of the Year**
British Sign Language Society - Deaf in Islam
- Performance of the Year**
Musical Medics Society - Legally Blonde
- New Society of the Year**
Greggs Society
- Most Improved Society of the Year**
Turkish Society
- Inclusive Society of the Year**
Swing Dance Society
- Individual Outstanding Contribution**
Jaeden Birchall (LGBTQ+ Society)
- Change Maker of the Year**
Marrow Society

Media Awards

- The Courier Writer of the Year**
Christine Soloch
- The Courier Culture Article of the Year**
‘Dancing back in Tyne’ by Bertie Kirkwood
- The Courier Current Affairs Article of the Year**
‘Inside the tents: Freedom of Information request reveals University response to encampment’ by Marcus Williamson
- The Courier Life & Style Article of the Year**
‘My Journey with Herpes: Why it’s not as bad as it seems’ by Sasha Cowie
- The Courier Sport Article of the Year**
‘Northumbria beat Newcastle in Rugby League Varsity fixture’ by Tom Wood
- The Courier Sub-editor of the Year**
Bertie Kirkwood
- The Courier Section of the Year**
Opinion
- The Courier Creative Visual Designer of the Year**
Sophie Jarvis
- The Courier Spread of the Year**
Opinion 1461
- Outstanding Contribution to The Courier**
Grace Boyle
- NSR Newcomer of the Year**
Megan Grimston
- NSR Presenter of the Year**
Megan Grimston & Emily Martin-Taylor
- Mic-drop Moment Award**
Heart 2 Heart
- NSR Show of the Year**
Heart 2 Heart
- Outstanding Contribution to NSR**
Erin Reid
- NUTV Newcomer of the Year**
Oscar Jenkins
- NUTV Crew Member of the Year**
Alicia McEvoy
- NUTV Presenter of the Year**
Callum Borkowski & Dhwani Masand
- NUTV Production of the Year**
NUSU Student Elections: Results Night
- Outstanding Contribution to NUTV**
Alicia McEvoy
- The Monica Doughty Award**
Adam Lovegrove

Community Impact Awards

- Volunteering Innovation Award**
Widening Access to Medics Society
- Fundraiser of the Year**
Movember
- Students for Students Award**
Myka Lockhart
- Sustainability Superhero Award**
Ella Spray
- Unsung Hero Award**
BrushUp
- Community Outreach Award**
Isaac Stamper
- Breaking Barriers Award**
Sohaila Marmoush
- Wellbeing Advocate Award**
Nightline
- Changemaker Award**
Hafsa Niaz

Student Rep Awards

- UG Course Rep of the Year**
Lucy Humphreys
- PG Course Rep of the Year**
Lou Sheppard & Rosie van Kesteren
- UG School Rep of the Year**
Kieron Johnson
- PG School Rep of the Year**
Emily Stevenson & Sophia Long
- Staff Facilitator of the Year**
Meg Holtom
- Student Secretary of the Year**
Ugochi Ihedilionye
- Student Chair of the Year**
Eleni Papatheofanous
- SSC of the Year**
Geography UG SSC

Athletic Union Awards

- Club of the Year**
Volleyball Club
- Team of the Year**
Sapphires L2, Non-tumble (Cheerleading Club)
- Sports Personality**
Lydia Bond
- Athlete of the Year**
Etienne Maughan
- Student Coach of the Year**
Rebecca Wignall
- Performance Coach of the Year**
Neil Baistow
- Most Improved Club of the Year**
Korfball Club
- Community Impact Award**
Ladies Hockey Club
- Contribution to Inclusivity**
Caving Club
- Sports Media Coverage**
Daniel Finch (Dance Club)

NUMed Awards

- Most Improved Society of the Year**
NUMed Medical Education Society
- Society of the Year**
NUMed ISOC
- Best Event of the Year**
The Medics Intervarsity Games 2024
- Academic Society of the Year**
MedEd Society
- Sports Club of the Year**
FLEB Ultimate
- Students for Students Award**
Rania Ezellya Binti Shamshul Baharain
- Outstanding Support to Students**
Dr Prakash Manickam Kumarasamy
- The Society's Choice Award**
NUMed ISOC
- Society Contribution to the Community**
AMSA Newcastle

Contribution to the Workplace Awards

- Intern of the Year**
Akash Dahiya
- Apprentice of the Year (external)**
Roderick MacLennan
- Apprentice of the Year (internal)**
Laura Ritson
- Newcastle University Worker of the Year**
Sophia Long
- Placement Student of the Year (small to medium sized business)**
Tasha Fell
- Placement Student of the Year (large business)**
Samuel Carr



Newcastle University Awards

Unlocking Student Potential

Outstanding Contribution to Arts, Media & Culture

Adam Lovegrove

Outstanding Contribution to Sport

Korfball Club

Outstanding Global, Intercultural and EDI Contribution

Disability, Mental Health and Neurodiversity Society

Outstanding Contribution to Sustainability & Environmental Justice

Ella Spray

Outstanding Social & Civic Contribution

Jaeden Birchall

Outstanding Contribution to Student Voice

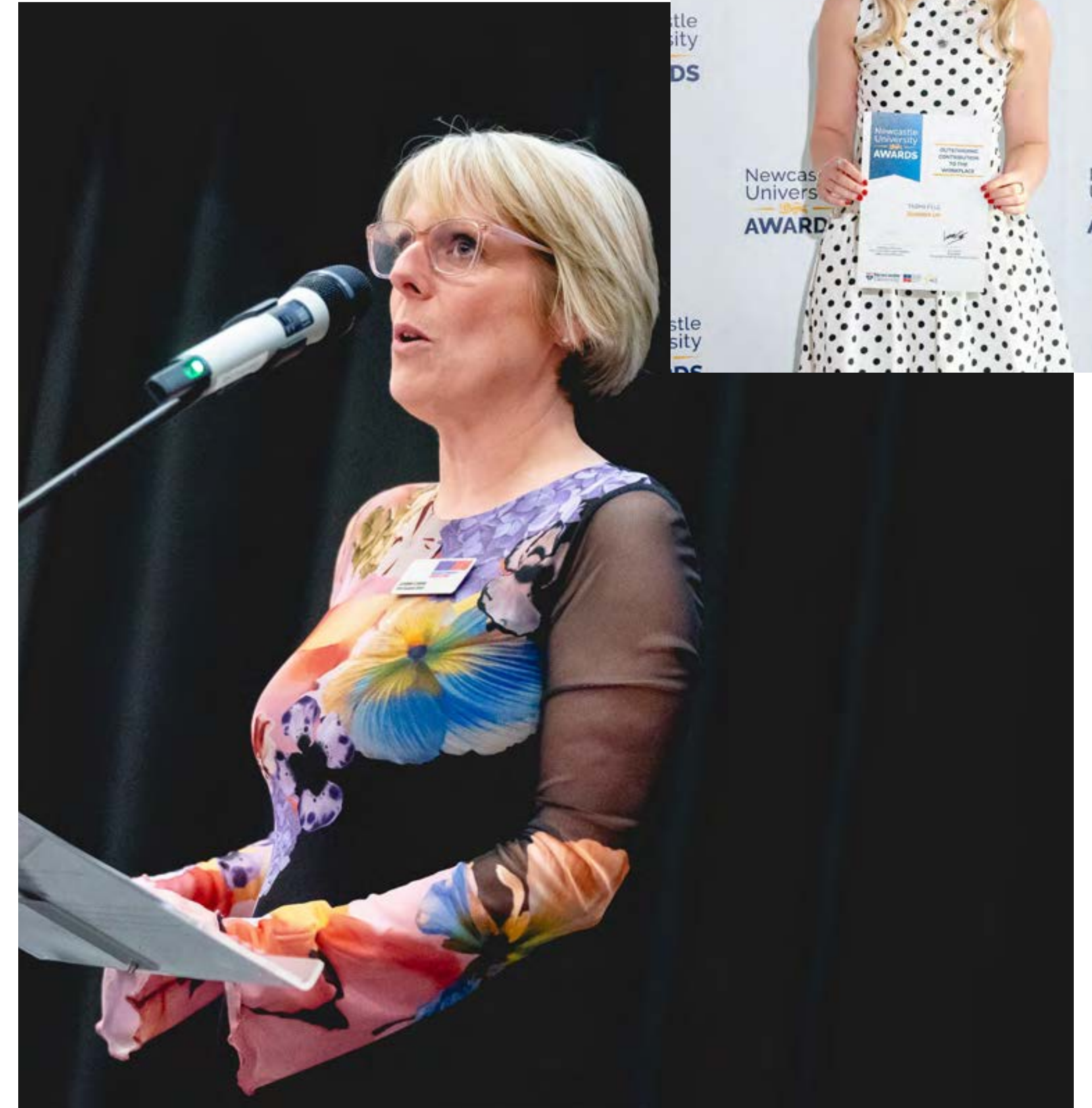
Sohaila Marmoush

Outstanding Contribution to the Workplace

Samuel Carr

Outstanding Contribution to Lifelong Health & Wellbeing

Brush Up



**CREATING
STUDENT
COMMUNITIES
&
NETWORKS**

4125 PARTI CIPANTS

GIVE IT A GO

This year there was an increase in engagement across the Give It A Go Social programme. Attendance rose by 10% across the 328 events with 4,125 students participating this year.

The first term was particularly strong, with 172 activities and 2,358 attendees, setting a positive tone for the rest of the year. Term two maintained momentum with 125 activities and 1,530 tracked attendees, while term three, though quieter, still saw 31 activities and 157 attendees. Notably, there was a substantial increase in society collaborations, with 58 activities delivered in

partnership with student societies. Term two stood out in this regard, with 42 society-led or partnered events, highlighting the benefit of the programme to Student Societies.

The Give it a Go Active program continued to provide a range of non-competitive sport activities at a reduced cost. With the cost of living still impacting many students, we ensured our program was accessible and inclusive with a lot of free activities. There were some great new additions to the timetable including e-sports, darts, street racket and padel tennis, along with

returning favourites yoga, volleyball and badminton. The program also collaborated 62 times across numerous AU Clubs including surfing, ice hockey and self defence classes ran by our martial art sports.

328
successful activities



145

participants



Black History Events

As part of the Give It a Go Programme, with funding from the University, we delivered a series of events and activities throughout the academic year where we celebrated Black History. Events included **Black History Walking Tours** across Newcastle, **African Art Workshops**, **African Drumbl workshops**, **Kizomba Classes**, **Black Hair braiding** event and a trip to a black artist exhibition at the **Talbot Rice Gallery** in Edinburgh among others. Attendance was good with 145 students taking part in the various activities celebrating Black History and Culture.



248

postgraduate participants

Postgraduate Funding

Following a successful bid from the University Disbursement Fund from the previous Postgraduate Officer, funds were allocated to a dedicated Postgraduate Give It A Go programme.

The events were designed to foster community, reduce isolation, and provide relaxed opportunities for postgraduates to connect with peers outside of academic settings. They were scheduled around postgraduates’ schedules and were free or low cost.

Over the course of 2 terms, we delivered **15 events** with a total participation of **248 postgraduate students**. These events included a mix of social and wellbeing-focused activities such as PGR Pizza Speed Friending, Breakfast Befriending sessions, a Welfare Walk & Picnic, a visit to the Dog and Scone café, and a National Trust Walk at Gibside.

The number of participants illustrated a clear appetite among postgraduate students for informal, community-building activities and the success of the programme can be attributed to the 2023-24 Postgraduate Officer’s project proposal.

75%

of postgraduate participants rated their experience 5/5

79%

of postgraduates rated the Activities Assistants delivery of the event a 5/5



“

Lovely activity to attend on my own. A nice sized group as there were only five altogether so easy to chat. And a great activity to get at a reduced price!

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

12 new Clubs & Societies were launched successfully this year including Coffee Soc, Social Lacross and Women's Football, Urology, Game Dev Soc and Greggs Soc!



24,074

Club & Society
Memberships purchased

64

Ratified Clubs

4820

Club Members

SPORTS CLUBS

£127,000

in grants given to AU Clubs



CLUB COMMUNITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHTS

★ Running Club Society

Newcastle University Running Club Society is an incredibly welcoming and inclusive society that supports runners of all levels.

From a successful Couch to 5K programme to members achieving personal bests at all distances, NURC offers something for everyone. With multiple weekly runs, a strong social scene, and collaborative charity events, the club fosters a supportive, friendly community. Some highlights included a Peak District trip, joint socials with other societies, and consistent encouragement from the dedicated committee.

★ Korfball Club

This year marks the most successful in Newcastle Korfball Club's history, demonstrating exceptional growth, ambition, and sporting excellence.

From once struggling to field a team, the club has expanded to over 60 members, three BUCS teams, and an undefeated position in the local NEKA league. The 1st team achieved its highest-ever BUCS Nationals seeding, securing 1st place at Prelims and 3rd at Regionals, while the 2nd team made history by qualifying for BUCS Shield for the first time. This remarkable transformation, underpinned by dedication, inclusivity, and competitive success, makes Newcastle Korfball a distinguished candidate for the Contribution to Sport award.

★ Ladies Hockey Club

Newcastle University Ladies Hockey Club has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to both sport and community impact.

Members volunteer weekly with N.E.S.T, coaching refugees, and have raised over £1,000 for Breast Cancer Now through their annual social. The club actively supports Newcastle Carers, raising funds through events such as bake sales and the Luni Dunk. Partnering with NCL Marrow, they helped register 40 new stem cell donors this year. Most recently, they launched a charity tournament supporting My Name's Doddie Foundation. Their dedication to fundraising, awareness, and inclusivity exemplifies their profound contribution to both sport and the wider community.



BUCS

Team Newcastle’s performance continued to be strong this year, maintaining an impressive 8th place out of more than 160 institutions in the British University & Colleges Sport tournament and 6th within the Russell Group Universities.

- ★ **20 teams finished 1st** in their respective BUCS leagues.
- ★ **5th Overall at 1st team level** across the league and knockout performance.
- ★ **14 individual medals** on the national individual based competitions – 3 Gold, 5 Silver, 6 bronze!

Team National Success

- ➡ Women’s Volleyball promoted to the National Super League.
- ➡ Men’s and Women’s Rugby competed in BUCS Super Rugby play-offs.
- ➡ Men’s Football crowned Premier League Champions.
- ➡ Rowing won the Victor Ludorum at BUCS 4’s and 8’s.
- ➡ Cheerleading won 3 national titles, and 1 grand championship title.

8TH

place in the
BUCS League

Individual National Success

- ➡ Students Joy Eze & Etienne Maughan excelled in athletics.
- ➡ Will Hughes represented Newcastle at the Winter World University Games in Cross Country Skiing.
- ➡ Louise Flockhart won silver at BUCS Climbing Championships, helping the Women’s team to a second-place overall finish.



NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

47.5

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

31.5

VARSITY
WINNERS!

Our sports clubs stormed home with our 4th consecutive victory against Northumbria University since the Varsity competition was launched in March 2022. This year the final score was 47.5 to 31.5 points! A fantastic performance!

4TH

consecutive victory
against Northumbria



CAMPUS LEAGUES

This year we hosted three 5-A-Side football competitive league's and two 7-A-Side football competitive leagues engaging a total of 290 students. This program is very social and provides an opportunity for those who are unsuccessful in our BUCS teams and Intramural programme to still play the sport they love, with their friends.

290

students engaged

210

Ratified Societies

£22,116

in special grants issues

SOCIETIES

9243

Society Members

SOCIETY COMMUNITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHTS

Creating Student Communities & Networks

★ Disability, Mental Health and Neurodivergence Society

The Disability, Mental Health and Neurodivergence Society went above and beyond in representing and uplifting marginalised voices on campus this year.

Run by disabled students for disabled students, the society created a welcoming and accessible space through the running of low-effort yet enjoyable socials such as coffee mornings and craft events. They expanded representation by adding a Mental Health Rep, Physical Disability Rep and Neurodiversity Rep to their constitution. Their impactful campaign to destigmatise OCD, Bipolar, and Schizophrenia reached students and staff across campus and encouraged students to find community within the society, while fundraising for charity.

★ British Sign Language Society & Pole and Aerial Club

The British Sign Language Society and Pole and Aerial Club collaborated on *Flex Like Nobody's Watching*, a flexibility and contortion workshop led by blind circus artist Rachael Storey, aka Blind Fury.

They created an inclusive space which brought students of all backgrounds and abilities, including many with disabilities as well as individuals with no prior experience together, and invited them to focus on self-acceptance and celebrating sensory differences. Due to overwhelmingly positive feedback, they are already planning future events together.

★ Newcastle Marrow Society

Newcastle Marrow Society is truly doing groundbreaking work, making a real, life-saving impact.

Since September, they have recruited 825 potential stem cell donors, raised over £2,500 for the Anthony Nolan charity, and supported urgent patient appeals. They partnered with other clubs and societies to run their collaborative Swabathons, as well as awareness campaigns, especially highlighting the need for ethnic minority donors.



ACADEMIC SOCIETY FUNDING PROJECT

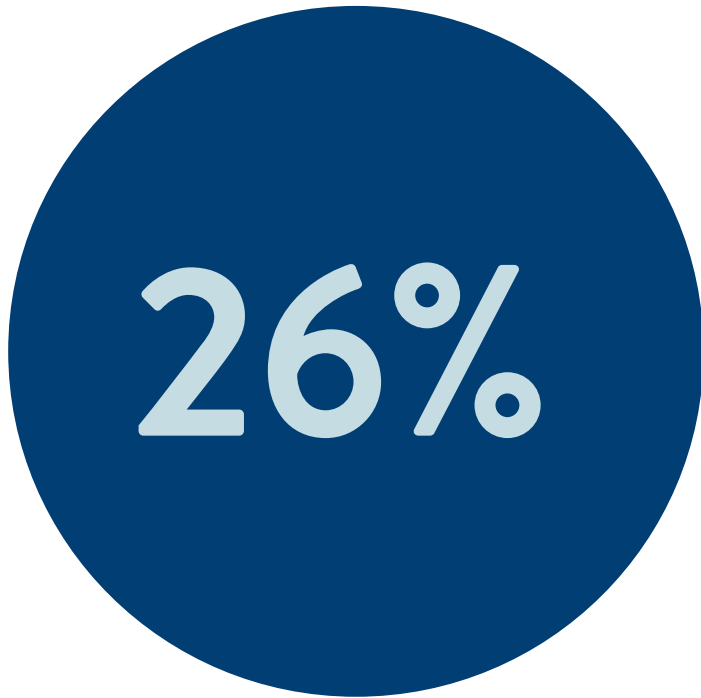
Now in its third year, the scheme has continued to foster community, inclusion, and student engagement through targeted funding for academic societies.

This year, over 2,400 students participated in the 6-week free membership trial, resulting in more than 4,000 memberships and a strong 26% conversion rate to full memberships. The funding enabled 55 academic societies to host a wide range of inclusive events, from pizza nights and pottery painting to academic workshops and yoga sessions, that helped students, particularly those from underrepresented and international backgrounds, feel welcomed and connected.

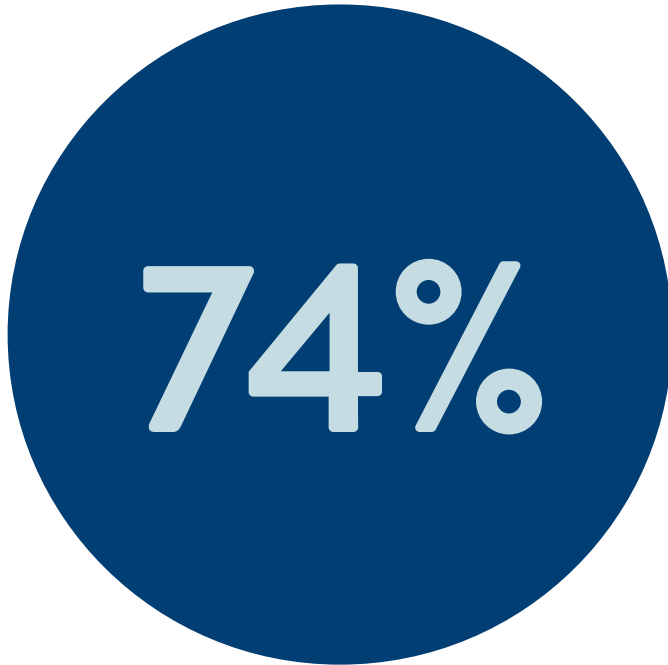
Survey responses and focus group feedback consistently praised the scheme for helping students form friendships, engage across year groups, and

feel more confident in their academic and social environments. Notably, 74% of respondents said the 6-week trial influenced their decision to join a society, and 81% of committee members agreed that the scheme boosted membership numbers. Events were especially impactful for first-generation university students and those from low-income or minority backgrounds, who reported feeling more supported and included.

The scheme also strengthened relationships between societies and academic schools, with societies that had strong school ties seeing higher engagement and membership conversion rates. Overall, it has proven to be a vital initiative in enhancing student belonging, supporting academic integration, and building a more inclusive university community.



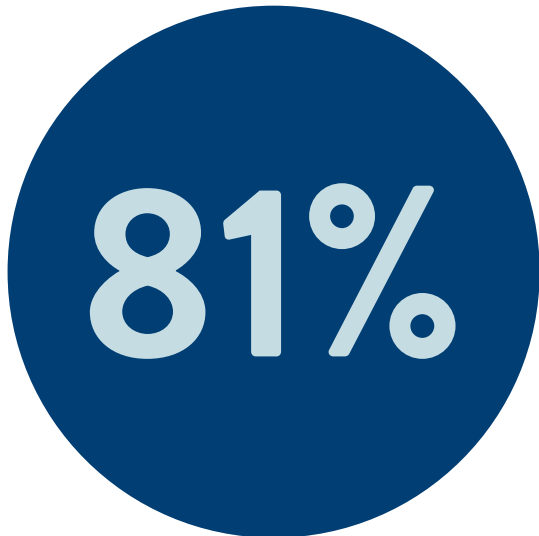
conversion rate



said the 6-week trial influenced their decision to join a society



students participated in the 6-week free membership trial



of committee members agreed the scheme has boosted membership numbers



societies were enabled to offer a range of activities due to funding

CLUBS & SOCIETIES TRAINING

All Club and Society student leaders receive a wide range of training at the start of the year, including sessions on first aid, hate crime, dangerous behaviours, active bystander and gambling awareness.

Clubs & Societies Anti-Racism Training

This year Student Club & Societies Anti-Racism Training project was launched to equip them with the skills and confidence to address racism and foster inclusive environments within their groups.

Funded by a £5,000 grant from the University’s EDI Fund, the project delivered six workshops across the academic year, three introductory sessions in Term 1 and three advanced sessions in Terms 2 and 3. The training was developed in collaboration with Every Future Foundation and primarily targeted Principal Committee members, especially Welfare Officers.

The programme saw strong engagement, with 103 committee members from 62 clubs and societies participating. These individuals represented a wide range of leadership roles and collectively impacted over 6,250

students. The sessions covered key topics such as racial equity, microaggressions, allyship, and institutional racism, and included interactive elements like case studies and action planning.

Feedback was largely positive, with participants appreciating the open discussions, safe environment, and thought-provoking content. Many found the training informative and advocated for it to become mandatory. It was a significant step towards embedding inclusive practices in student leadership and laid a strong foundation for future development and demonstrated the value of continued investment in EDI-focused training for student groups.



Naim Zuki Photography



COMMERCIAL

INITIATIVES

&

PARTNERSHIPS

FRESHERS



FRESHERS 2024

The 2024 cohort of new students were welcomed onto campus with a 10-day Freshers programme.

Hundreds of free and discounted events were offered on the Students' Union and across the city. The programme was designed to give students the maximum opportunities to meet others with shared interests and forge new friendships.

Based on the previous years' student feedback, we moved away from a single purchase wristband and instead offered the flexibility of individual event tickets, allowing students to select a programme that fitted their needs, time and budget.

In response to requests for more no-alcohol, and smaller experiences, the programme included visits to the Cat and Dog cafes, Escape Rooms, Ghost Walks, Paint & Sip, Bubble Tea Making and Craft Sessions, which proved to be incredibly popular, with all 2760 tickets being sold out before the programme begun.

Alongside the ticketed events, the large-scale, free to attend Fairs also took place, with the 2-day Clubs & Societies Fair at the University Sports Centre kicking us off. It was followed by a huge poster sale, plants sale and the ever-popular Freebie Fair, which this year was attended by over 4500 students.



10-day
programme

2760
tickets sold out before the
programme begun

4500
students attended the
Freebie Fair

COMMERCIAL INITIATIVES & PARTNERSHIPS



Live Music & Events

NUSU’s commitment to providing a vibrant student experience is demonstrated through its diverse programme of live music and events.

Throughout the year, the Students’ Union has hosted an impressive array of concerts, open mic nights, club events, and cultural celebrations, drawing the interest of thousands of students. Artist performing in the last academic year included, Royel Otis, ARXX and The Royston Club. NUSU is proud to serve as a vital platform for emerging local talent and supporting grassroots music.

Co-op

Now in its 5th year of trading, NUSU’s Co-op continues to contribute to the student community at Newcastle University, offering accessible and affordable essential goods throughout the day.

While operations have generally been smooth, the recent cyber-attack on the broader Co-op Group in April 2025, which saw the theft of data from 6.5 million members, has presented huge challenges for the NUSU Co-op and the team. Despite such external pressures, the NUSU Co-op continues its dedication to supporting students and the university community.



Media Sales

In the past year, the Students’ Union has significantly expanded its commercial reach through robust media sales and engaging experiential marketing events.

Our media sales initiatives, including digital advertising and promotional space, have generated substantial revenue, directly contributing to the funding of student services and activities. We’ve set up some great experiential marketing events this year, that has allowed brands such as Lynx, Boux Avenue, Amazon Prime, Byoma and Pringles to connect directly with students. These events not only create memorable moments and provide genuine value but also help make the Students’ Union feel more vibrant and dynamic.

Wetherspoon

The Union’s Wetherspoon franchise, (*image above*) operating as Luther’s Bar has proven to be a significant success since opening in September 2023.

This collaboration, only the second of its kind for Wetherspoon on a university campus, has been well-received by students, largely due to its value-for-money food and drink offerings, a crucial factor amidst the cost-of-living crisis. Beyond affordability, the partnership has also expanded job opportunities suitable for students and satisfying the overwhelming student demand for affordable and accessible amenities, as evidenced by positive feedback and high footfall, underscores the practical success of this unique on-campus Wetherspoon.

King’s Gate

We’re excited to report on our new dual-purpose retail space in the newly redeveloped King’s Gate ground floor. This Innovative Hub, featuring a Costa Express vending machine and a curated selection of university-branded merchandise launched in the summer of 2025.

Students will benefit from convenient and affordable hot drinks, alongside an expanded range of university apparel and gifts, significantly enhancing their daily campus experience. Beyond convenience, this initiative is a vital source of revenue generation for the Students’ Union enabling us to reinvest directly into student services and activities. The space provides valuable employment opportunities for our students while simultaneously increasing brand visibility for both NUSU and Newcastle University across campus and beyond.





Commercial Initiatives & Partnerships

Media Sales: Amazon Prime activation for students

CROSS-CUTTING INITIATIVES

ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

To support our organisational values of accessibility & inclusion, we have continued to develop and run related initiatives.

Colleague Training Matrix

A significant achievement was the roll-out of the Colleague Training Matrix. This new matrix highlights the key training sessions all colleagues need to complete. It also has a significant accessibility & inclusion focus and featured training sessions on disability awareness and tackling hate crime and Islamophobia and antisemitism.

Recruitment Advertising Review

We’ve also completed a review of our job vacancy advertisements to ensure they are accessible and inclusive. These improvements have looked to reduce bias and support our performance against key metrics including the gender pay gap and ethnic diversity within the NUSU staff team.

Crucially, we’ve seen strong progress in student-facing inclusivity. In our latest survey, 97% of students agreed that we are an inclusive organisation a 3% increase on last year and well above our 80% target.

Activities Fund

We’ve significantly invested in initiatives that improve access for marginalised student communities.

The Activities Access Fund, formerly known as Participation Bursaries, made £150,000 available to home / undergraduate students. 539 students from underrepresented backgrounds were given financial support to enable them to actively participate in extracurricular activities and for the next three years we have increased support by £30,000 to include support for postgraduate and international students.

Ethnic Diversity Fund

The Ethnic Diversity Fund, formerly BAME Community Fund, has supported 14 projects this year, with 18 applications received in total. This fund continues to empower students to lead cultural and community-based activity.

Our Black History Series of Give It A Go events have been a success, with good attendance across the year. More information on this programme can be found on page 42.



97%

agreed that we are an inclusive organisation

£150k

made available for marginalised student communities through the Activities Access Fund

14

projects supported by the Ethnic Diversity Fund



Inclusivity Award

This year 16 clubs participated in the Inclusivity Award which acknowledges the work they do to create the best possible environment for all new and returning students.

Their efforts this year have been inspiring and the increase in student wellbeing is evident of its impact. Clubs connected with national representation campaigns, hosted large scale events for charity and partnered with internal programs such as N.E.S.T and Give It A Go. Both Dodgeball and Athletics & Cross-Country Clubs achieved the highest standard and received Gold Awards.

Awards Achieved:

 **GOLD**
Dodgeball | Athletics

 **SILVER**
Korfball | Taekwondo | Cheer | Women's Rugby | Ladies Hockey | Pole and Aerial

 **BRONZE**
Swim | Caving | Polo

Liberation Officer Review

Plans are in place to elect four new Liberation Officers next year. Alongside this, we will conduct a wider review of how we represent underrepresented student groups, ensuring our structures remain inclusive and reflective of our student communities.

Festival of Culture

Cultural Societies, supported by the Societies Officer, presented The Festival of Culture, a yearlong programme of events which showcased the incredible diversity of heritage within our student community. Everyone was invited to join the Anglo-Chinese Society and Chinese Dance Society's 'Experience Chinese New Year' craft event, the South Asian Society's 'Experience Diwali,' and 'The Iftar Night,' hosted by our Muslim societies.



SUSTAINABILITY



100%

success in diverting all of
our waste from landfill

Build Operators

Whilst the plans to refurbish the building have been delayed, our efforts to enhance the sustainability in our building operations continues, and phase 1 of our planned maintenance programme to reduce our overall energy consumption is in full swing with our LED light switch over. Our gas and electricity consumption has maintained at 2305 kWh leading to CO2 emissions of 511 tonnes for 2024/2025. By working closely with our franchise partners and waste collection company, for 24/25 we have again successfully diverted 100% of our waste from landfill.

66%

of food at ticketed events
will be plant-based

Cross-cutting Initiatives

Plant-Based Food

Following the passing of a Student Council motion in May, the Students’ Union agreed to increase the proportion of plant-based food served at ticketed events to 66%.

The President and Ethics & Environment Rep also lobbied the University to increase the presence of plant-based food on campus and as a result The Courtyard, the biggest and busiest café on campus is now serving an extra vegan special meal every Wednesday. We will continue to push the University to transition to at least a 50% plant-based food offering in all their venues and for them to become Carbon Net Zero by 2030.



COMMUNICATIONS

2.5m

website page **views**

↑ 26%

Instagram Followers **increase**

**MAIN
COMMUNICATION GOAL:**

To improve **collaborative working**
and **increase our use of data** to
inform decision making.

2.3m

student emails **sent**

97%

satisfaction in our communications



Student Elections

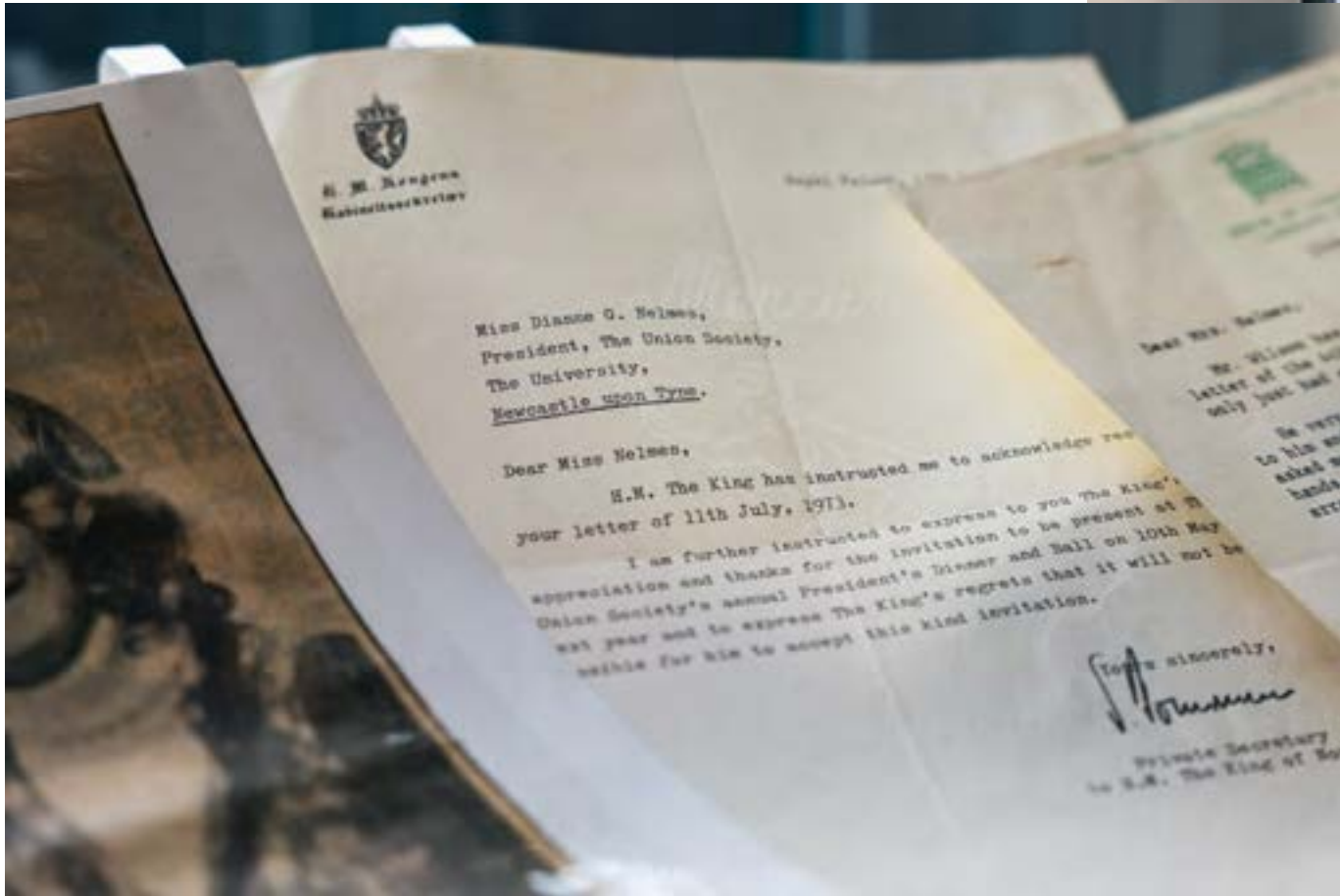
Cross-department working practises were introduced for large communication campaigns such as Student Elections.

This included an internal communications campaign to increase colleagues' knowledge of the Election process, key messages and event details, enabling them to improve communications with students at a variety of engagement touch points.

We also partnered with Student Media whose presenters became the face of the campaign across our website and social media and culminated in co-producing and hosting the highly successful election rally and results night. This approach positively impacted on the number of students who engagement with the elections this year.

Students' Union Centenary Year

In the **early 1900s**, two colleges of Durham University located within Newcastle, The College of Medicine and the College of Physical Sciences, also known as the Armstrong College, merged to form King's College. In 1925, to provide a dedicated recreational space for the 800 or so students, a 'Students' Union' was introduced, known as The Union Society. It was gifted the newly built neo-Jacobean building on King's Walk, which we still use today, by Sir Cecil Cochrane, the then chairman of Armstrong College.



Volunteers from the student newspaper, The Courier, worked with the Union Communications and University Alumni teams to develop an exhibition which explored the Union history and the developments of this landmark building. The exhibition opened on 6 March with a drinks reception for the students and alumni who contributed to the project. It can still be viewed in the Union reception space.

Discovering Newcastle

A new Discover Newcastle online space was created for the start of the academic year to help students navigate their adopted city and introduce them to the fantastic selection of food and leisure services available within the Newcastle and surrounding area. It offers recommendations and listings for international food, arts & cultural venues and events, and locations of natural beauty and the year concluded with a range of beach and picnic recommendations.



Digital Transformation

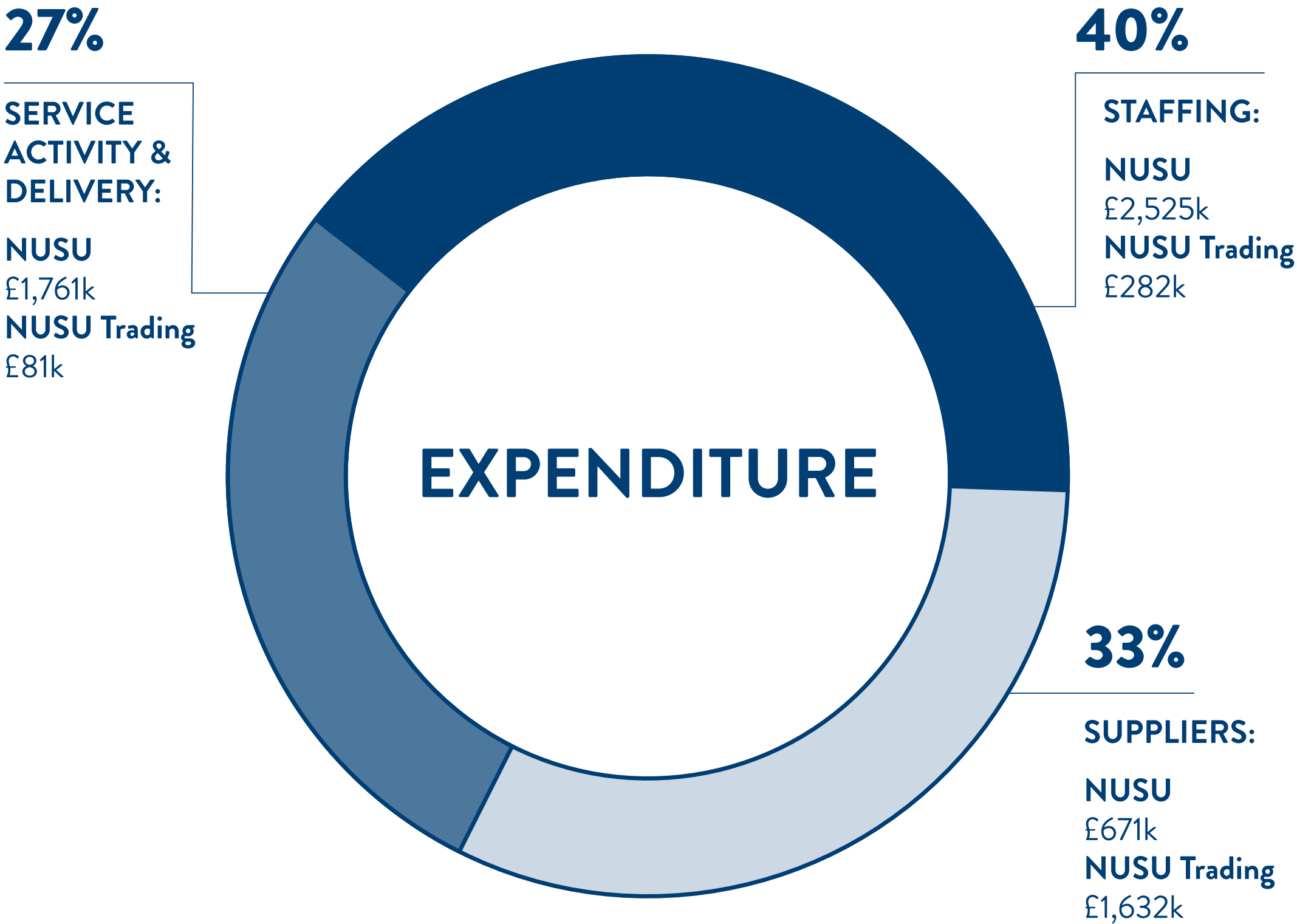
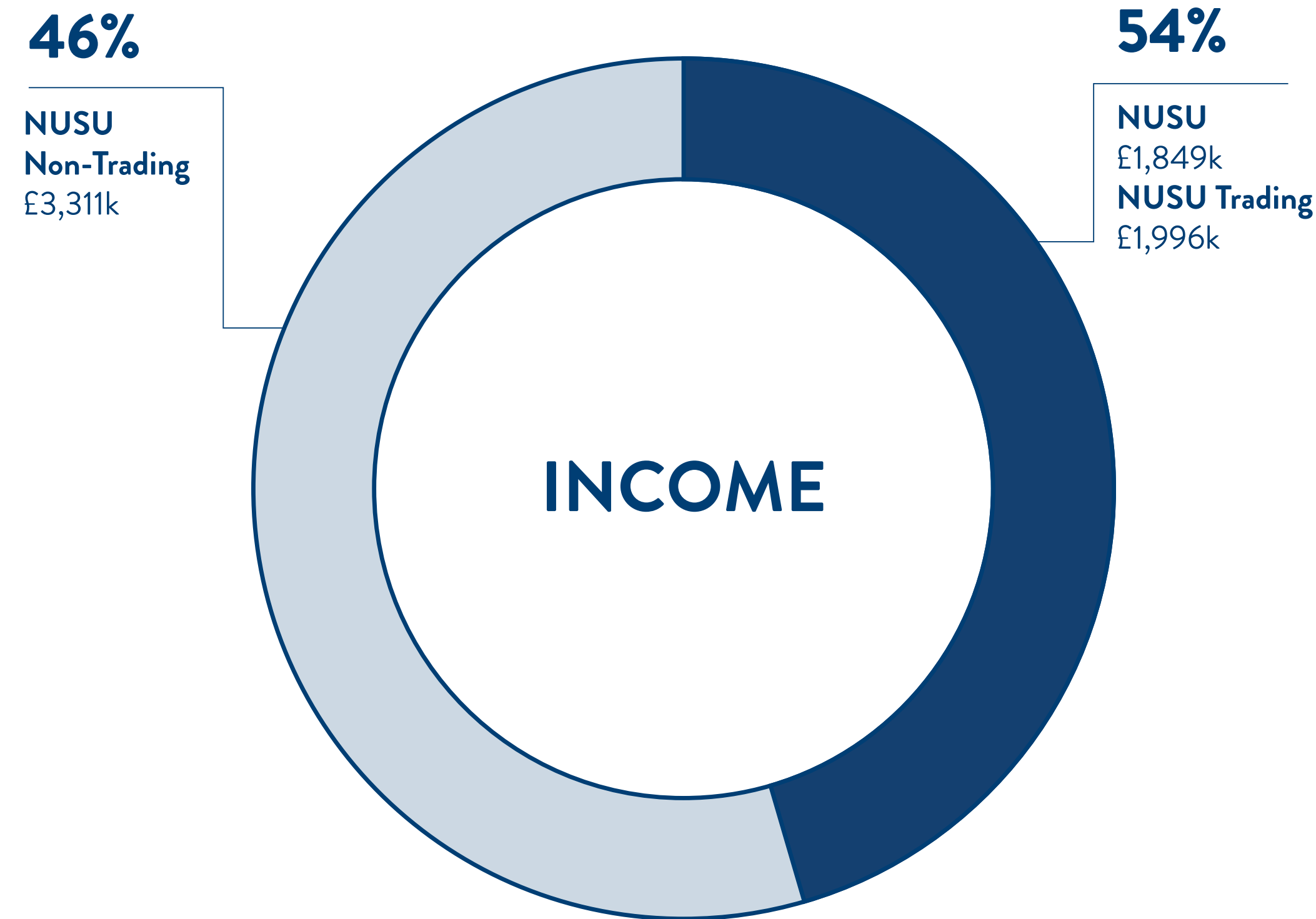
We have increased the use of Business Information systems to deepen our understanding of student engagement data. With a raft of dashboards now available to departments, they can explore engagement crossover, audience gaps and demographics. This depth of information is directly impacting audience development and programming choices.

To improve efficiencies across the organisation and to give colleagues more time to engage directly with students, we have continued to invest in new systems with the creation of a new Transport Booking Database for Clubs & Societies and increase the level of system integrations by using MS Power Automate.



FINANCE

Finance



We closed the year in a strong financial position and have begun the process of rebuilding our reserves following a period of financial challenges.

As part of our commitment to long-term sustainability, we undertook a full organisational restructure during the year which included a comprehensive review of our pay and reward framework. While this process brought some challenges, it was a necessary and strategic step to strengthen our organisation for the future. These changes have positioned us well as we enter a new strategic planning phase for 2026-2030.

Our year-end financial performance exceeded expectations, with a group surplus of £203k compared to the planned surplus of £42k. The key contributors to this positive outcome included savings on staff costs, stronger than anticipated media sales and higher returns on bank interest.

Looking ahead, we remain mindful of ongoing uncertainty in the wider sector, particularly in relation to international student trends and their potential impact on grant funding. It is essential that we continue to monitor these risks closely as we plan for the future.

HUMAN RESOURCES



Human Resource

This year has brought some exciting progress! Joining the **National Union of Students (NUS)** staff survey has given us valuable, sector-specific insights that are helping shape our people strategy to better support our unique student-focused community.

We successfully completed a **major restructure**, managing transitions smoothly and addressing early challenges quickly. While there was a brief period of uncertainty, teams adapted well, helping the Union become more flexible and cost-effective—an important step to ensure we save money and remain sustainable.

The introduction and trial of our **new hybrid working policy** has been a major step forward, improving wellbeing and engagement while also making the Union a more attractive place to work for future talent.

In addition, a full **overhaul of the recruitment process** is set to launch in August/September, designed to streamline hiring and strengthen our reputation as an employer of choice in the student sector.

Internal communications have also been streamlined, with lots of positive feedback on how much they’ve improved. There’s still more to do, and we all need to play our part to keep making communication clear and effective.

Finally, a comprehensive **review of family-friendly policies** ensures ongoing support for colleagues balancing work with life’s demands.

Together, these achievements show the Union’s commitment to being a supportive, dynamic workplace where people can develop their skills, feel valued, and enjoy being part of the team while making a real difference for our students.

91%
of colleagues said they
trust and respect their
manager

88%
said that they are familiar
with the organisation’s
policies and procedures

85%
agreed that they
receive support and
encouragement from
colleagues at work

76%
of colleagues said they have
a good work-life balance

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE...



2025-2026 is an exciting year for NUSU, as we reflect on our offer for students, and conduct a large-scale research project with our students, our future students and other stakeholders to consider what we need to change, adapt and provide to ensure students at Newcastle University have the best possible experience.

Our students, and the world around us, is changing at an incredible pace, and if we truly want to provide what our students need, we need to listen and be prepared to respond to those needs. By June 2026, we aim to launch our new, bold strategy for providing, supporting and developing our students.

2024/25

