Guide for Parents 2017 Entry
Welcome to Newcastle

Applying to university is a very exciting chapter in your son or daughter’s life and as a parent you are bound to have lots of questions.

At Newcastle University we recognise the important role you play in advising and supporting your son or daughter and to help you, we have produced this Guide.

It summarises some of the key information that you will want to know, from university applications, to sorting out financial support and choosing accommodation.

We hope you find it useful through each stage of the process.

Why higher education?

- Enhanced career prospects
  A university qualification gives your son or daughter an advantage throughout their career. Employers value the high standard of learning, as well as key skills such as communication and teamwork that a university qualification demonstrates.

- Higher earning potential
  A degree increases a student’s earning potential throughout their lifetime. Graduates often earn a higher starting salary than non-graduates and can generally expect their salary to rise at a faster rate.

- Life-changing experience
  Personal development is a very important part of university life. As well as studying a subject in depth, going to university enriches a student’s life experience and will help them become well-rounded, confident adults.

* Please note: we use the terms "parent", "son" and "daughter" throughout this Guide for simplicity, but we appreciate that many of you may be carers, legal guardians or step-parents. This information is aimed at anyone who fulfils a parenting role for a young person in the UK who is considering a university education.
A leading research institution

One of the UK’s top universities, Newcastle University today offers a first-class student experience in a world-famous student city.

Newcastle has an impressive reputation:
- joint sixth for student satisfaction (among comparator UK universities, National Student Survey 2015)
- top one per cent of world universities (QS World University Rankings 2015)
- Britain’s favourite city! (Guardian Readers’ Travel Awards 2014)
- top 10 in the UK for overall student experience (Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2016)
- top 20 most targeted university by the UK’s leading employers for the last five years (The Graduate Market, High Fliers Research, 2012–16)

One of the best records for graduate employment

The quality of our degrees, our focus on developing employability skills and our reputation among employers puts our graduates in an enviable position in the marketplace. We consistently have one of the best records for graduate employment in the UK.

The practical careers support and guidance provided by our award-winning Careers Service ensures that Newcastle graduates are in a strong position in the world of work.

World-class city and campus

Newcastle is the cosmopolitan capital of the North East and our students have culture, sport and shopping right on their doorstep – not forgetting the warm Geordie welcome and legendary nightlife! It’s no wonder Newcastle is the happiest city in the UK*. Our campus is based in the heart of the city centre, making it easy for students and visitors to take advantage of all the city has to offer.

The University is firmly part of the city’s cultural scene, offering a range of events and student societies to get involved in. We’re also known for our sporting excellence with consistently high finishes in the British Universities and Colleges Sport league (BUCS) – 11th overall in 2014–15 rankings.

**Supporting our students**

We do everything we can to make the move to university life as easy as possible. From the start, our students are assigned a personal tutor who monitors their progress and meets with them to discuss any academic or personal worries they may have.

Our Student Wellbeing team provides professional and confidential advice on many issues, including disability support. If your son or daughter has a disability or specific learning difficulty, one of our advisers will be happy to discuss any additional support they may require.

The Student Advice Centre, based in the Students’ Union, also provides independent professional support on issues such as finance, housing and academic problems.

Our first-class facilities include:

- over 2,000 networked PCs across campus
- 24-hour-access computer clusters
- social learning spaces
- a lecture recording system and a Virtual Learning Environment, across campus
- an award-winning Language Resource Centre
- a library that has been awarded the government’s Charter Mark for excellent customer services five times in a row, as well as gaining a well-respected degree.

We know that many students choose Newcastle because of its commitment to social learning spaces.

Our graduates are in demand

We work with our students to set them apart in the world of work, as well as gaining a respected degree. Our graduates have an excellent reputation among recruiters. Over 3,000 employers advertise vacancies, work experience and placement opportunities with our Careers Service, and more than 300 employers visit our campus each year to deliver presentations, hold interviews and attend recruitment fairs, ultimately to recruit our students.

**First-rate Careers Service**

As a Newcastle student, your son or daughter will receive information, advice and guidance from one of the largest and most innovative careers services in the UK. Our Careers Service was the first in the UK to be awarded the Matrix Quality Standard for the high-quality service it delivers. It provides:

- one-to-one sessions with a professional careers adviser
- drop-in CV checks
- unique online resources
- skills development workshops on topics such as succeeding at interviews

Our package of support will help your son or daughter reach their career goals in an ever-changing job market. Careers Service staff also work with academic staff to provide support specific to individual courses. For students who want to develop their entrepreneurial skills, our Rise Up team offers a free collaborative workspace and professional business start-up advice.

Graduate employers target our students

Newcastle graduates have an excellent reputation among recruiters. Over 3,000 employers advertise vacancies, work experience and placement opportunities with our Careers Service, and more than 300 employers visit our campus each year to deliver presentations, hold interviews and attend recruitment fairs, ultimately to recruit our students.

For further information on the Careers Service please visit: [www.ncl.ac.uk/ careers](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ careers)

**Investing in our students’ experience**

As one of the UK’s leading universities, Newcastle continues to invest in supporting the learning needs of our students.

Our first-class facilities include:

- half a million e-books
- an award-winning Language Resource Centre
- 24/7 access to reading lists and course handouts
- a Library Service that has been awarded the government’s Charter Mark for excellent customer services five times in a row, as well as gaining a well-respected degree.

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**Work-related learning**

We regularly review our learning so that they remain relevant to the needs of the job market – and often include employers in the process. Selected programmes are developed with, and accredited by, professional organisations. Employers play an active part in a large number of degrees, delivering lectures and taking a role in professional skills modules. Many of our degrees incorporate the Careers Service’s Career Development Module, allowing students to gain academic credit for work-related study. Most degrees also offer study abroad opportunities, an experience valued by employers and students alike, and we have almost 200 exchange partners worldwide.

**Adding to their degree**

Our ncl+ initiative brings together activities from across the University, enabling your son or daughter to develop the skills and experience that will prepare them for life after university and help them to stand out from the competition. From working on the student newspaper to community volunteering, learning a language or becoming a mentor, there is a range of opportunities to suit everyone.

**Newcastle Work Experience**

The University also provides paid work experience where possible through the JobsOC (Jobs On Campus) scheme and our Student Ambassador scheme.

We offer formal recognition for extracurricular activities through the ncl+ Award, allowing your son or daughter to market their skills to prospective employers.

**Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education**

- **International Student Barometer Autumn 2015, ranked out of 13 participating institutions.**
Going to university will probably be the first time your son or daughter has lived away from home and because of this we understand how important it is for them to find the right place to live. We work hard to meet the needs and preferences of our students so that they become part of a supportive community as they settle into university life.

Guaranteed first-year accommodation

We guarantee a room in University accommodation to all first-year undergraduates who:

• are coming alone to the University for the full academic year
• accept an offer from Newcastle as their first-choice university by 30 June of their year of entry
• apply online for accommodation by 30 June of their year of entry

Check our website for the full terms and conditions at www.ncl.ac.uk/accommodation

We have a variety of University accommodation to suit all needs and budgets, including:

• Universities UK-approved student accommodation, which meets nationally recognised standards
• a choice of 4,000 rooms at 14 sites, most of which are within 10-minutes’ walk of campus facilities and the city’s bustling culture and nightlife
• catered and self-catered options, with kitchen facilities on all sites
• flexible payment terms to help spread the cost
• insurance, internet and utility bills are all included in the rent
• students are allocated with other first-year Newcastle students, and have the opportunity to meet people from diverse cultural and social backgrounds
• discounted rents and free car parking at off-campus accommodation sites
• free WiFi in all bedrooms
• a choice between en suite, washbasin or standard facilities

We take the safety of our students very seriously. Our Estate Security Officers patrol our University-owned sites. Managed-partnership sites also have night security and there are staff on call 24/7. The majority of our sites also have entryphone systems and CCTV.

How and when to apply

To benefit from our accommodation guarantee, the accommodation application must be submitted online by 30 June of the year of entry. We process applications as soon as a student’s offer of a place becomes ‘unconditional firm’, not when the application was submitted. We allocate accommodation using a randomly generated number and endeavour to allocate based on a student’s preference.

Private accommodation

The majority of our new undergraduates will be housed in University accommodation but if your son or daughter would prefer to live in private-rented accommodation, our Accommodation Service offers free help and advice on all aspects of private-rented accommodation. The University also runs NUSStudenthomes, our private-sector management service, which leases privately owned properties and rents them to student groups. There is a wide range of private-sector accommodation to choose from in Newcastle, with rents ranging from around £100 per week for flats/houses in student-designated areas of the city and £115 – £165 for purpose-built private blocks. The Accommodation Service is always on hand to offer advice to students weighing up different accommodation options.

My accommodation was self catered and the flats were very modern and comfortable. I met some incredible people there too.

Polly, Mathematics MMath Honours

For further information on the application process please visit: www.ncl.ac.uk/accommodation/students/apply

For further information about private-sector accommodation please visit: www.ncl.ac.uk/accommodation/private
Choosing and applying to university: a step-by-step guide

### December 2016

#### Research

Start researching options. If possible, attend a higher education convention to gather more information.

These take place from March onwards. See the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) for details.

#### Attend open days

**April–September 2016**

Narrow down the choices of courses and institutions.

Attend open days at the shortlisted institutions to help inform your decision-making process.

#### Finalise choices

**September 2016**

Finalise choices and think about information to include in the UCAS application.

All applications for undergraduate degrees are made online through the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

### January 2017

#### Application deadline

**15 October 2016**

Application deadline for courses in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science.

Application deadline for Oxford and Cambridge.

UCAS will then send the application to each chosen university for consideration.

### February 2017

#### Application deadline

**15 January 2017**

Application deadline for most courses.

UCAS will then send the application to each chosen university for consideration.

### March 2017

#### Application deadline

**15 January 2017**

Application deadline for most courses.

UCAS will then send the application to each chosen university for consideration.

### April 2017

#### Application deadline

**15 January 2017**

Application deadline for most courses.

UCAS will then send the application to each chosen university for consideration.

### Decide

Official decisions from universities will be sent through UCAS, by April in most cases. If your son or daughter has applied to Newcastle, they may be invited to a post-application visit day specific to the subject that they have applied to. This provides the opportunity to meet staff and students and to ask questions.

There is usually a range of dates to choose from between November and April. See [www.ncl.ac.uk/visit/visit-days](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/visit/visit-days) They may also be invited to attend an interview; however this is not required for most subject areas.

### Types of response

- **Unconditional offer**: a place has been offered with no conditions.
- **Conditional offer**: a place has been offered provided that certain conditions are met (eg certain grades obtained).
- **Unsuccessful application**: the institution has decided that it is unable to offer a place.

### Final choices

After decisions from all universities are received, it is time to make a firm choice and an insurance choice. If an offer is not made by any of the five choices, UCAS Extra provides the opportunity to make further course choices (one at a time) through UCAS.

#### Firm choice

This should be the offer that the student would most like to accept.

#### Insurance choice

This may be used as a back-up to a firm choice. The conditions of offers accepted as insurance are usually easier to meet than those of offers accepted firmly.

If an applicant is not accepted onto the firm choice course but meets the conditions of the insurance choice course, the insurance choice course will accept the applicant.
Getting to know our students

We chatted to some of our past and present students and their parents to find out what they think about life at Newcastle University.

Phillip (studying Electrical and Electronic Engineering BEng Honours) and his Dad, Neil

When choosing a university, what were the most important considerations?
Phillip: Entrance requirements, league table ranking and the quality of the course. It was important to me that the course had professional accreditation.

What did you want to get out of your degree course?
Phillip: I really wanted to study an interesting subject but I also wanted good job prospects at the end of it.

What are your hopes for the future?
Phillip: To progress in my career and achieve chartered status. I have a job lined up at BAE Systems and can’t wait to get started!

What do you think the university experience has done for Phillip?
Neil: I think it has helped him mature into a hardworking, intelligent, adventurous and independent person who knows where he wants to go in life. I hope it has given him the confidence to face life’s challenges, successes and failures.

Nic (studying Biomedical Sciences BSc Honours) and his Mum, Annette

What advice would you give to someone applying to university?
Nic: If you aren’t enjoying your time at university you’re less likely to succeed, so make sure you choose both a course and a university you think you’ll enjoy.

What has been the most enjoyable thing about coming to university?
Nic: I’ve really enjoyed the freedom and independence of living away from home. Although at times it can be challenging, I’ve found taking care of myself very rewarding.

Any tips for managing your money?
Nic: Learn to say no to some things; if you’re out every night you’ll burn through your money in no time.

What advice would you give to parents of students applying to university?
Annette: All parents worry about whether their son or daughter will be able to cope with being away from home for the first time but there is really nothing to worry about; Nic seems to have coped very well. We went to an Open Day which was really useful as you get to see where your son or daughter will be studying and get a feel for the atmosphere and how they will fit in.

How do you feel the University supported Nic as he settled in?
Annette: They sent a lot of information in the lead up to Nic starting university, which was great. There were lots of people around on the day. Nic moved into his room which was a real help, if only to get everything from the car to his room! Life also has a tutor and a student mentor which means he has the support he needs when he has any queries.

What did you want to get out of your degree?
Emma: I wanted a thorough preparation for work and I knew the work placement would really help on my CV. Gaining a sound understanding of marketing was important, to enable me to find work at home or overseas.

Do you have any financial advice?
Emma: You need to budget carefully and know exactly what you have to spend on nights out. Don’t go wild when you get your loan. It does help if you are able to have a part-time job but don’t do too many hours so you still have time to enjoy yourself.

What is your advice for new students settling into university life?
Emma: Enjoy the Freshers’ Week events, they help you find new friends. Living in halls is also a great experience and you make so many friends there.

Emma (studying Marketing BSc Honours) and her Mum, Ali

Why did you choose to study at Newcastle University?
Emma: The content of the course, the opportunity to undertake a work placement, and studying at a Russell Group university were really important to me.

What did you want to get out of your degree?
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How do you think the experience at Newcastle University has benefitted Emma?
Ali: She has definitely matured and become more independent; a year away in London on her work placement will increase this too. She has set herself specific goals and works harder to achieve them. I know Emma has really enjoyed University so far (apart from the exams!) and it has provided her with some great experiences.

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Money, money, money...

Key facts

• No upfront costs as students do not have to pay any fees either before or during their studies.
• Student loans are available to all students and they only start to pay back the loan after they have graduated, are in employment, and are earning over £21,000 a year.
• Repayments are based on what graduates earn, not what they owe, and all outstanding payments will be written off after 30 years.
• Loans to cover study and living costs are available to all students, regardless of family income.

Tuition fees

Newcastle University will be changing a tuition fee of £3,000 per year for new UK and EU undergraduate students entering the University in 2017. Students will not have to pay any tuition fees up front or while they are studying.

Support from Newcastle University

We invest millions of pounds in financial support for UK students who choose to study at Newcastle. You can find further information on our main scholarship schemes as well as subject scholarships and sports scholarships in our Guide to Student Finance brochure or on our website at www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/finance.

Key facts

• The information provided relates to the level of support for 2016 entry but could be subject to change for 2017 entry. Check our website for the most up-to-date information available.

Support from the government**

There are two types of loan to help new students cover the costs of university: tuition fee loans and living cost loans. Both are available to all students, regardless of their family income. Graduates will start to pay back their loan once they are earning over £21,000. Repayments will be calculated at nine per cent of any income above £21,000 and will stop if their salary dips below that level. Eligible students may also be able to benefit from additional financial support from the government.

For more information on general student finance arrangements, what government support is available and how to apply through Student Finance England, visit: www.gov.uk/student-finance.

Students from Scotland, Northern Ireland or Wales will need to apply to their own funding body for loans and grants.

Money management

This checklist will give your son or daughter (and you!) a rough idea of how much money they will need over an average month at university.

There are also many ways students can make their money go further. The University provides free or low-cost facilities including: excellent libraries; over 2,000 networked PCs with internet access; language learning facilities; extensive sports facilities; and the outstanding Students’ Union. Students may also want to consider a part-time job in one of the restaurants, bars or shops that regularly employ students or they could access the work experience opportunities available at the University.

Our website provides lots of advice and information to help students manage their budget. www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/finance.

Top tips on stretching the student pound...

Go to supermarkets (especially the larger ones) for reduced food. Deals are especially good around evening time when shops are closing. I’ve gotten a loaf of bread for 50p and 10p sandwiches which are good for lunch the next day!

Make use of your student card! Many restaurants have student discounts. You can get student discounts in main retail shops, but do try second-hand thrift shopping. You can get branded stuff for a fraction of the price and there’s really a great range of charity shops around the city centre.

It’s easy to find a part-time job around Newcastle as there are so many retail shops. The Uni also sends out weekly e-mails to advertise opportunities. I worked as an accommodation tour guide for the Uni last year. Talking to people from all walks of life really helped my confidence.

Budget planner

Accommodation

(£200–£250 per month based on a 12-month contract)

First-year students are guaranteed a place in our University accommodation, with both catered and self-catering rooms available. Energy and water bills will usually be included.

Food

(£140–£200 per month)

Don’t forget, if you live in catered accommodation, Monday–Friday breakfast and evening meals will be included in your rent.

Clothes/toiletries

(£50–£70 per month)

Costs will vary depending on your personal tastes, how much shopping you do, and where you shop!

Travel costs

(£26–£56 per month)

Depending on where you live, you may need to budget for daily bus or Metro journeys. Don’t forget the cost of travelling to and from the University at the beginning and end of term!

Social life

(£100 per month)

This is an important part of university life, so it’s important you budget for it. How much you actually spend will depend on you.

Insurance

(£20 per month)

In University accommodation, contents insurance is often included in your rent. However, you may want to consider additional insurance if you are bringing any items of particular value with you.

Mobile phone

(£40 per month)

The amount you spend will depend on how much talking and texting you do.

Television

(£13 per month)

If you decide to have a television in your room, you are required to have a television licence. Some University accommodation includes the cost of a licence in the rent.

Miscellaneous

(£60 per month)

You should budget for occasional expenses such as haircuts, gifts and medical or dental costs.

Please note: these costs are approximate, based on a 38-week period, which covers a normal academic year, and should be used as a guideline only.
Newcastle: a global city with a local welcome

Newcastle’s popularity with students isn’t just down to the warm welcome from the locals and the exciting nightlife. Newcastle is a vibrant, cultural city, with a low cost of living and enviable proximity to the coastline and spectacular Northumberland countryside.

Undoubtedly one of the best university cities in the UK (if not the world!), Newcastle is friendly and dynamic, and there is always something to do.

The iconic Quayside brings together a range of cultural and architectural developments, including the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art (the biggest gallery of its kind in the world) and the Sage Gateshead music centre, which draws musicians from around the globe. With a fantastic range of restaurants, bars, music, cinema and theatre venues, as well as festivals and events throughout the year, it’s not surprising that Newcastle’s social life is top-rated by students.*

Newcastle is also one of the best shopping destinations in the North of England, with Eldon Square, one of the UK’s largest city-centre shopping complexes, and the Metrocentre, which is just a 10-minute bus/train ride away. For a more leisurely pace, visit the breathtaking, unspoilt Northumberland countryside, ancient castles and market towns that lie the coast and spectacular beaches close to the city. These offer the ideal opportunity to escape the crowds and take in the beautiful scenery.

Getting around

Newcastle is a compact city and the main shopping area and nightlife are within walking distance of the University campus. The quickest way to get around is via the Metro rail system, which has a station near the University and connects the city to nearby suburbs and coastal towns. We also have excellent links to the rest of the UK, with easy access to major cities such as London, Manchester and Edinburgh via train or fast motorway links. Newcastle International Airport is a 25-minute Metro journey from the city centre.

While Newcastle is an exciting place to be a student, it’s also a great weekend break for parents visiting from further afield.

A warm welcome

If your son or daughter is accepted onto a course at Newcastle, we will do everything we can to help them adjust to university life as soon as possible.

In August 2017, they will receive a copy of our Welcome booklet which details everything they need to know about registering as a student at Newcastle University. They will also receive information about the range of social activities that are available to help them settle in. We even have an interactive website for new students to help them meet future course mates and make friends before they arrive.

Student safety is our priority

Newcastle is a safe city but safety of our students is still of paramount importance to us. We operate cross-campus CCTV and security staff are on duty on campus at all times.

Setting in

We have a number of ways to ensure our students settle in to their course and really get the most out of university life.

• Peer mentoring – we aim to enable all students to be fully integrated into the University through the advice and support of an experienced student ‘peer’
• Personal tutor – all students have a personal tutor to oversee their academic and personal development
• Clubs and societies – our Students’ Union supports more than 200 student clubs and societies, helping our students to make new friends, gain valuable skills and add experience to their CV

Freshers’ Week

We want our students to feel at home as soon as possible, and the social activities that take place during the first week aim to do just that. Freshers’ Week, organised by students, is an excellent introduction to student life at Newcastle. With a variety of events to suit everyone’s taste, it is a great way of making new friends.

Over 300 student volunteers are involved in looking after new students, ensuring they’re included in what’s going on, and helping with any concerns or queries they may have. Our student volunteers will ‘meet and greet’ new students arriving in Newcastle and at their University accommodation, to make sure they know where to go.

During Freshers’ Week new students have time to register at the University, attend induction sessions, and familiarise themselves with the range of academic and support services that we provide. Academic schools also hold sessions so that new students can meet other students on their course. This friendly, supportive welcome ensures that our students are relaxed and settled in before teaching starts, and looking forward to their university experience.

If your son or daughter is accepted onto a course at Newcastle, we will do everything we can to help them adjust to university life as soon as possible.

Visit our dedicated web pages for parents: www.ncl.ac.uk/parents/support

‘An amazing city with a great family feeling on campus. I’ve been made to feel really welcome, making the move away from home much more comfortable.’

Emma, History and Archaeology BA Honours