

NORTHUMBRIAN UNIVERSITIES MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE (NUMEC)

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

NUMEC Activities in 2020-21

Activities were understandably curtailed by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. All service units suspended in-person activities from March 2020 and this was the case again in subsequent lockdowns, but there was a gradual return to in-person activities as public health restrictions eased.

Two formal meetings of the committee meeting were held on 7 October 2020 and 19 May 2021, both on Zoom.

NUMEC provided funding for trophies for the Northumbrian Universities Officer Training Corps (NUOTC) Inter-company Inter-platoon competition events held during lockdown.

Members of NUMEC attended the Council of Military Education Committees Annual General Meeting, held on Teams on 3 September 2020. The NUMEC representative for Sunderland University was successful in the elections to the COMEC Executive.

NUOTC Officer Cadets assisted with Newcastle University's Castle Leazes Student Village intake in September 2020, helping students move into their new homes within allocated time slots for social distancing. We received numerous compliments from parents and students who were so appreciative of the cadets' support. The University's Accommodation Services teams all commented on their professional and positive attitude, willingness to help and were thrilled to be working with such a terrific and vibrant team.

Sadly, the Newcastle University Service of Remembrance was not held in person in November 2020. Instead, the University made pre-recorded content available online, featuring readings by the Vice-Chancellor, University Chaplain and Students' Union representatives, as well as The Last Post played by a bugler.

The Chair of NUMEC attended the NUOTC change of command Handover programme session on 18 January 2021.

NUOTC Virtual Female Leadership Events details were featured on University social media channels in February 2021.

As part of the Newcastle University Insights Public Lectures programme, the Defence Lecture was given by Dr Mike Martin (King's College London) 'Why do we fight? Evolutionary neuroscience meets conflict studies' on 16 February 2021.

Academic colleagues from Newcastle University Law School delivered a successful online debate session for Trojan Squadron on 23 February 2021.

Sunderland University established a Veterans and Reservists Network open to students and staff.

A NUMEC representative for Newcastle University published a co-authored guide on Gender and Inclusivity in Peace and Security.

NUMEC funded the NUOTC Inter Section Patrol Competition and Sports Day July 2021.

Next steps

The Committee will continue with its range of formal and informal engagements with the Service Units with

a view to involving University representatives throughout the region. Another important objective remains to strengthen student engagement with NUMEC and attendant events.

Dr Simon Meacher
Executive Office and Governance Manager, Newcastle University
On behalf of NUMEC

March 2022

Background

The Armed Forces sponsor three designated University Service Units to serve the five universities in the North East:

- Northumbrian Universities Royal Naval Unit (NURNU)
- Northumbrian Universities Officer Training Corps (NUOTC)
- Northumbrian Universities Air Squadron (NUAS)

In addition, Trojan Squadron, Defence Technical Undergraduate Scheme (DTUS), was formed under Ministry of Defence contract with Newcastle and Northumbria universities in 2002.

The mission of the service units is to develop the leadership and management skills of selected university students, thereby enhancing their potential as future officers in the armed forces, or as leaders in their chosen future professions

Following the purpose laid down in the Haldane report (1908), the Northumbrian Universities Military Education Committee (NUMEC) oversees the work of the service units and represents the combined interests of the region's higher education institutions in liaising with them and providing advice and support. The primary aims of the committee are as follows:

- (i) to encourage the study of defence-related issues within the constituent universities;
- (ii) to promote the selection, instruction and training of candidates for Commissions in the Regular and Reserve Forces;
- (iii) to co-operate with the Ministry of Defence in all Service matters affecting the universities;
- (iv) to ensure that the time spent by undergraduates enrolled in a Service contingent is not to the detriment of their academic studies;
- (v) to encourage liaison between the university Service contingents and the Regular and Reserve Forces at regional level;
- (vi) to report via the Senates to the Councils of the universities, or their equivalent statutory bodies, on all matters which require their financial consideration, and all matters which affect the roles of the Service Units in the universities.

NUMEC members include the Commanding Officers of each service unit, and academic and professional service colleagues appointed by each institution. The committee normally holds two formal meetings annually. Additional informal visits to the service units are arranged on an opportunity basis. Each university pays an annual subscription of £200. The Committee is serviced by Newcastle University which is also responsible for organising the Annual Defence Lecture as part of the University's Insights Public Lectures series.