

NORTHUMBRIAN UNIVERSITIES MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE (NUMEC)

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

NUMEC Activities in 2021-22

Similar to the previous year, certain service unit activities were impeded by legacy effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. A return to normal in-person activities was achieved by the end of the academic year, with units able to proceed with overseas expeditions.

Two formal meetings of the committee meeting were held on 21 October 2021 and 20 June 2022, both on Zoom.

Services of Remembrance were held in person in the Newcastle University Armstrong Quadrangle, and at Durham Cathedral (for Durham University), on Sunday 14 November 2021.

The NUMEC Secretary attended a MEC Forum hosted by the Council of Military Education Committees on MS Teams on 26 January 2022. Topics discussed at this forum included student engagement/interaction, and this was fed into conversation at the next NUMEC meeting and continues to be an area where the committee is seeking to make progress.

Durham University hosted a public lecture by Major General (Retired) Kristin Lund on 3 March 2022. A dinner also took place. NUMEC provided funding for flights, accommodation and hospitality.

The NUMEC Secretary attended a meeting of the North East Reserve Forces and Cadets' Association at St Cuthbert's Keep, Newcastle, on 25 March 2022.

The NUMEC Chair attended the Northumbrian Universities Air Squadron annual dinner at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Durham, in March 2022.

Sunderland University, who are Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award holders, hosted the opening of a Sunderland Veterans' Garden on their city campus on Friday 20 May 2022.

Northumbrian Universities Officer Training Corps led training with Durham Leaders and Northumbria Business School, and with Newcastle University SAgE Faculty on leadership outreach.

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. Strengthening interaction with students is a primary ongoing objective.

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

November 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 scheme is in the process of shutting down over a five year transitional period, and is being replaced by the Defence STEM Undergraduate Scheme (DSUS).

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 a small annual subscription. 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.