
Congregations 2026

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WELCOME

from the Vice-Chancellor and President

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Newcastle University for today's graduation ceremony. For those of you who have travelled from overseas or are visiting Newcastle for the first time, I would also like to welcome you to our wonderful city. We hope you enjoy your time with us!

Graduation is one of the highlights in our University year. For our students, it is a joyous, colourful occasion, when they can wear with pride the robes that symbolise the award of the academic qualifications they have worked so hard to earn. It is a day to celebrate with family, friends and tutors who have supported them throughout their studies; a time to look back and reflect with pride on all they have learned and achieved; and a time to look forward to all that the future holds in store.

Graduates, today is not an end, it is a beginning. Whether you are about to embark on your career, going on to further study or planning to travel the world, I offer you my heartfelt congratulations and a wish that you will find success, happiness and fulfilment in all that you do.

Know too that you are now part of a new family, that is the global community of more than 270,000 alumni of Newcastle University. Wherever your next chapter takes you, we hope you will keep in touch and visit from time to time. Rest assured you will always receive a very warm welcome!

Go well, Class of 2026, you are our greatest achievement.

Professor Chris Day CBE
Vice-Chancellor and President



'This University has always combined the highest aspiration with the determined pursuit of social justice and opportunity for all, and a wider engagement with the community.'

Chancellor Imtiaz Dharker OBE

OUR CHANCELLOR

Poet, artist and video film-maker Imtiaz Dharker OBE became Chancellor of Newcastle University in 2020.

Her seven collections of poems include *Over the Moon* and the latest, *Shadow Reader*, all published by Bloodaxe Books UK. Themes of social justice run throughout her work, which is often concerned with major issues facing the world today, including freedom, displacement, conflict and gender. Her poems have been broadcast widely on BBC Radio 3 and 4 and the BBC World Service. She is a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry in 2014.

Imtiaz has scripted and directed more than 300 video films, many of them award-winning, for non-government organisations working in the area of shelter, education and health for women and children in India.

Imtiaz is also an artist of note. She has had 11 solo exhibitions of drawings around the world, including in Delhi, Bangalore, London, New York and Hong Kong.

'Whether she writes of exile, childhood, politics or grief, her clear-eyed attention brings each subject dazzlingly into focus. She makes it look easy, this clarity and economy, but it is her deft phrasing, wit and grace that create this immediacy. Reading her, one feels that were there to be a World Laureate, Imtiaz Dharker would be the only candidate.'

**Dame Carol Ann Duffy
(Hon DLitt 2022)**

British Poet Laureate 2009-19

NUSU

Newcastle University Students' Union President

Congratulations! On behalf of Newcastle University Students' Union, and the entire sabbatical officer team, congratulations. No degree is easy and whatever your final grade was, the hard work that you have put in over this time does not go unnoticed. The skills that you have developed on your courses will last you for a lifetime. If your family and friends haven't been able to come and support you today (and even if they have!) know that all of us at the Union are cheering you on, now and in the future.

As President of the Students' Union, I've been honoured to attend a few more graduation ceremonies than the average person. Every time, I've been struck by the sheer joy that begins in King's Hall and finds its way all the way across our campus. Newcastle graduates, today is about you and your fantastic achievements: spend today making sure the rest of the city feels that joy, whatever you decide to do after your ceremony.

Whether you are remaining in Newcastle, or heading to somewhere else in the world, I hope you remember the community you have built in Newcastle. It will always be here for you, wherever you find yourself.

Ilsa Hartley
MA Curating Art, BA Philosophy
 NUSU President 2025/26

Congratulations! On behalf of Newcastle University Students' Union, and the entire sabbatical officer team, congratulations.

Ilsa Hartley



UNIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENTS

Newcastle University has won the UK's highest national honour for universities in recognition of work transforming the understanding, diagnosis and care of people with Dementia with Lewy bodies.

The Queen Elizabeth Prize recognising the University's reputation as a driving force for research into dementia was awarded by His Majesty, King Charles III to the Vice-Chancellor of Newcastle University, Professor Chris Day and Professor of Translational Dementia Research, Newcastle University, John-Paul Taylor.

The prestigious Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Higher and Further Education are awarded by the **Royal Anniversary Trust** every two years to honour work of outstanding importance and quality in higher and further education in the UK.

Built on the visionary early work of scientific and clinical pioneers at Newcastle University, the Prize recognises more than three decades of ground-breaking research and unwavering dedication.

Professor John-Paul Taylor, professor of Translational Dementia Research, Newcastle University who accepted the award from His Majesty The King alongside the Vice-Chancellor said: "This award reflects the power of sustained team science - built on the vision of early pioneers and driven forward by the creativity and commitment of today's clinicians and researchers at Newcastle University.

"In close partnership with patients and families, this collective effort has transformed how Dementia with Lewy bodies is understood, diagnosed and treated worldwide. We are proud of that shared achievement and determined to keep pushing the boundaries of discovery and care."

Vice-Chancellor and President of Newcastle University, Professor Chris Day said: "This award is a great honour and reflects the deep commitment of our researchers, clinicians and wider University community to improving people's lives.

"For more than three decades, Newcastle's pioneering work has helped transform how Dementia with Lewy Bodies is understood, diagnosed and managed - bringing real benefits to patients, their families and the communities we serve.



"We are proud that our research is shaping better care and healthier ageing, not just locally but around the world, and we remain dedicated to driving further improvements that support stronger, healthier communities for generations to come."

Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) is the second most common form of dementia after Alzheimer's disease, affecting an estimated 130,000 people in the United Kingdom and researchers at Newcastle University have transformed global understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of the condition.

Today, Newcastle University continues to lead the field, exploring disease mechanisms, developing stem-cell models, and investigating blood-based tests and personalised therapies to detect and manage DLB earlier and more effectively.

This progress has been underpinned by the NIHR Newcastle Biomedical Research Centre and the Newcastle Health Research Partnership and been enabled by wide-ranging support from international and national funders along with industry partners.

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

The Ceremony

Congregation is the formal name for the ceremony at which first and higher degrees, certificates and diplomas are awarded. These awards are conferred symbolically by the Presiding Officer as the graduates cross the stage past the University's ceremonial Mace.

The Mace

The Mace was commissioned to mark the formal establishment of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1963.

Academic Procession

The Procession is led by a Northumbrian piper followed by the Bedel who carries the Mace. It includes members of academic staff and governing bodies of the University, and the Presiding Officer, in full academic or ceremonial dress.

The Graduates

During the ceremony, each graduate in turn receives the hood denoting their degree from the Hooding Marshal, before being called forward to be greeted by the Presiding Officer.



Order of Proceedings

Academic Procession enters King's Hall

Welcome from the Presiding Officer

Presentation of graduates

Speech by the Student Orator

Ceremony closes and the Academic Procession leaves King's Hall

Graduates proceed from King's Hall, followed by guests

ACADEMIC DRESS



Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)



Master of Science (MSc)



Master of Arts (MA)



Master of:
Chemistry (MChem);
Mathematics (MMath);
Physics (MPhys);
Engineering (MEng);
Planning (MPlan)



Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB BS)



Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS)



Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)



Bachelor of Laws (LLB)



Bachelor of Science (BSc)



Bachelor of:
Arts (BA);
Music (BMus);
Architecture (BArch)



Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma



Undergraduate Certificate/Diploma

THE NORTHUMBRIAN PIPES

The Northumbrian pipes play an important part of our congregations.

The Northumbrian small pipes are a bellows-blown bagpipe native to the North East of England. Their modern design was refined in Newcastle and North Shields in the early 18th century. While bagpipes are often associated with Scotland, these pipes are known for their sweet, mellow tone and are deeply connected to the cultural heritage of Northumberland, with a long tradition of regional craftsmanship. They remain a living tradition of Northumberland and the wider North East, still played and made in the region today.

Our piper will lead the Procession into the King's Hall at the beginning of the ceremony. At the end, the Procession and Graduates will exit the hall to a selection of tunes and jigs chosen by the piper. The repertoire includes traditional Northumbrian tunes, dance music, and slow airs passed down through generations.

You may notice some Northumbrian pipers wearing a black and white checked fabric. This is the Northumbrian tartan; a black and white cross-weave made from wool. This traditional pattern, also known as the Border tartan or Shepherd's plaid, is associated with the rural communities of the border region, though its precise historical origins are uncertain. It is thought to date back to Roman times - pre-dating the majority of Scottish tartans.



EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



Vice-Chancellor and President

Professor Chris Day CBE

Professor Day is a consultant Hepatologist with an international reputation in medical research. He was awarded a CBE for services to Health Research and Treatment in the 2023 New Year Honours. Nationally, he is Chair of the Russell Group of research-intensive UK universities, a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, and a member of the UK Investment Council. He is also a Deputy Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Professor Nigel Harkness

Nigel Harkness is an expert in the field of nineteenth-century French literature and culture. He was formerly President of the Society of Dix-Neuviémistes, the UK scholarly association for nineteenth-century French studies, and recently chaired the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement Advisory Group for Languages, Cultures and Societies. As Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Nigel leads on the delivery of the University's strategic plan and is the academic lead for key strategic people projects.



Chair of Council and Pro-Chancellor

Mrs Pat Ritchie CBE



Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Professor David Burn

Faculty of Medical Sciences



Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Professor Stephanie Glendinning

Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering



Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Professor Matthew Grenby

Research and Innovation



Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Professor Jane Robinson

Engagement and Place



Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Professor Jo Fox

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences



Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Professor Ruth Valentine

Education



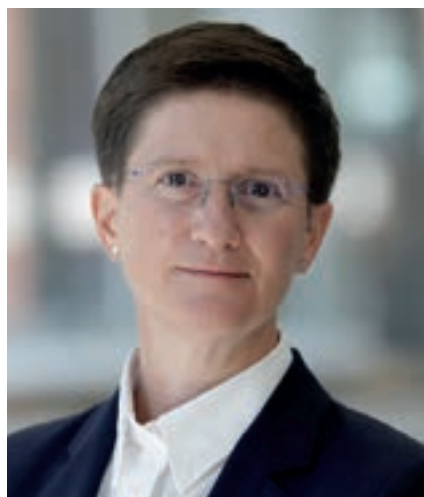
Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Professor Li Li

Global and Sustainability

HONORARY GRADUATES

The University confers honorary degrees upon those who have distinguished themselves in their chosen field – who, through talent, endeavour and determination, have made a significant contribution to society, the North East or the academic and cultural development of Newcastle University.



Dame Julia Hoggett

Chief Executive Officer, London Stock Exchange plc
Honorary Doctor of Civil Law

Dame Julia Hoggett DBE became CEO of London Stock Exchange plc in April 2021, becoming the first openly gay person to hold the role. She previously served as Director of Market Oversight at the Financial Conduct Authority and earlier was a Managing Director at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, leading fixed-income origination across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. A long-standing advocate for Net Zero and inclusive capital markets, she has helped position the London Stock Exchange as a global leader in green and transition finance. Dame Julia has been widely recognised, appearing in Financial News' Most Influential Women lists and receiving a DBE in 2024 for services to finance and business. A prominent voice for women and LGBTQ+ professionals in finance, she has championed diversity and inclusion for over two decades.



Professor Dame Lesley Regan

Imperial College London and Women's Health
Ambassador for England

Honorary Doctor of Medicine

Professor Dame Lesley Regan DBE is an internationally renowned leader in women's health, serving as Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Imperial College London and Honorary Consultant at St Mary's Hospital. A graduate of the Royal Free Hospital Medical School, she completed postgraduate training and an MD on recurrent miscarriage at Addenbrooke's Hospital before establishing the world's largest recurrent miscarriage clinic at St Mary's. She was only the second woman to serve as President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (2016-19), where she co-authored the influential *Better for Women* report. In 2022, she became England's first Women's Health Ambassador, driving the national Women's Health Strategy. Awarded a DBE in 2020, Dame Lesley continues to shape global clinical practice, research and advocacy in women's health.



Phil Scott

Director of Developer Relations for Europe, NVIDIA
Honorary Doctor of Engineering

Phil Scott is a video-game industry expert with over 30 years' experience across PC and console development, virtual reality, mobile platforms, graphics, audio and networking. He joined NVIDIA in 2000, and currently serves as the Director of Developer Relations for Europe, Middle East and Africa, and oversees strategic partnerships across the global games industry. Throughout his tenure, he has strengthened NVIDIA's relationships with global developers, studios and research partners, advancing the adoption of Graphics Processing Unit technologies across Europe. Before joining NVIDIA, Phil worked in the games industry at Rage Software – where he contributed to the award-winning title *Millennium Soldier: Expendable* – as well as in programming and design roles at Flair Software and Tynesoft. A Durham University graduate, he is also a Fellow at Newcastle University, supporting the next generation of engineers and computer scientists.

CLASS OF 2026

Welcome to your alumni network!

One community. Infinite possibilities.

Congratulations on your graduation! You are now part of an alumni community of over 280,000 members around the world. This means you are joining a huge global network of people who share your passion for Newcastle, your experience of being a student and your aspirations as a graduate.

This exclusive network offers you access to a wealth of professional and personal development opportunities and connections throughout your life.

Whether you have taken your first steps in your career or you're still thinking about what you want to do, your university community can help you reach your full potential.

Whether that's through joining an alumni network, attending one of our events held in multiple locations across the world, or accessing careers support for 3 years post-graduation, we are here to help you stay connected.

Find out more about these benefits on pages 18 and 19.

Keep in touch

To ensure you make the most of your community and keep up to date with regular news and communications, please join our LinkedIn group by scanning the QR code below, or searching for Alumni of Newcastle University on LinkedIn.



Wishing you the best of luck for the future and we hope to see you soon!



CONNECTED FOR LIFE

Your University is for life. As a Newcastle graduate you can continue to access support, as well as professional and personal development opportunities.

Develop

Enhance your skills and develop professionally with access to support services and exclusive events.

Explore your career options

Whether you want to explore different occupations, break into a sector or industry, apply for further study, or create your own opportunities, we can provide you with guidance and direction. Use MyCareer to book a one-to-one with one of our expert Careers Consultants, START UP Advisers or Information Assistants for bespoke advice tailored to you.

Be your own boss with START UP

If you want to go freelance or start a business, our START UP team can help you at every stage, from pre-idea to launch and beyond. You can access advice and coaching from our expert START UP Advisers, who run their own businesses and portfolio careers, plus workshops, socials, equity-free grant funding and further opportunities for a successful self-employed career.

Develop your skills

Whether you're looking to find work experience, enhance your CV, get application support, or prepare for an interview, there's an event for you. You can also access our online resources to get instant CV feedback, practise your interview techniques or search for overseas opportunities.

Find graduate-level vacancies

Register as a graduate on MyCareer for new work experience and graduate job opportunities – we advertise new vacancies each week and you can set up alerts to be sent directly to your inbox.

For information on how the Careers Service can support you, visit:
ncl.ac.uk/careers

To access Careers Service support, register with MyCareer:
mycareer.ncl.ac.uk

Access past event recordings at **www.youtube.com/@NewcastleUniversityAlumni**



Exclusive 20%
graduate discount
for further study.

Check website
for eligibility

Connect

You are part of a dynamic community of over 280,000 graduates across the globe offering you a wealth of opportunities to connect with like-minded people who have shared the Newcastle experience.

- Stay updated through our LinkedIn group and regular news and communications.
- Join our exclusive online and in-person events around the world.
- Make new connections with those who share your interests by joining an alumni network.

ncl.ac.uk/alumni/alumni-community

Discover

Be inspired by events and resources from world-leading researchers and sector leaders. Continue to make use of our facilities and enjoy exclusive discounts.

- Expand your knowledge and keep up to date with cutting-edge research from Newcastle University's world-leading academics.
- Gain personal development insights from lifestyle experts and alumni sector leaders through our exclusive events, resources and communications.
- Come together with your alumni community to tackle key societal issues, find out about the latest research, and access life-long learning opportunities at our annual NCL in Action programme.
- Get access to a broad range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD courses) throughout your career.

As an alumni member you can also benefit from exclusive discounts and continue to access university facilities, including library access, Sports and Fitness Centre membership and the Students' Union.

Find out more about the benefits of being part of the Newcastle University alumni community. **ncl.ac.uk/alumni**

CLASS OF 2026

Course/Section Title

GRADUATE NAME

Course/Section Title

GRADUATE NAME

Course/Section Title

GRADUATE NAME

Course/Section Title

GRADUATE NAME

Course/Section Title

GRADUATE NAME

Course/Section Title

GRADUATE NAME

YOUR NAME AND COURSE HERE

The Promise

I look at you and think of all the ways
I could say what you have done
and sing your praise. I could speak of days
when the struggle seemed impossible,
the troubles insurmountable, and yet
you raised the bar. You have come so far
to be honoured on this stage.
I want to hold you by the hand,
keep you here before you turn the page
and say the robes you wear today
are not for power, but for empowerment.
More than pomp and ceremony,
they are a promise
to those who taught you,
supported you and stood by you;
a promise that even if daily demands
are tugging at your sleeve,
you will follow the thread of knowledge
and believe there is always more to learn,
discovery at every turn, a meeting point
between the warp and weft.
In a fraying world, there is a weave
that holds us close,
you to this place, all of us
to the space we share with every cell
and insect, every living creature.
How you treat the weak
will be a measure of your strength.
How you treat the soil beneath your feet
will be remembered by the sky.
So step into the radiance of who you are.
Take your promise into the world
and start afresh.

Imtiaz Dharker OBE

Chancellor of Newcastle University



Go well, Class of 2026.
**You are our greatest
achievement.**

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The University of Newcastle upon Tyne
trading as Newcastle University.

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