

Newcastle University Students' Union

IMPACT REPORT



21
22

WELCOME

When we reflect on our impact this year we are mindful that the country was still edging its way out of the Covid pandemic, and whilst towards the end of the year things really did seem to be returning to some sort of normality, the planning and first half of year were still fraught with uncertainty and risk, and even up to January 2022 students were asked to carry out much of their work online and away from campus; normal operations were hampered further by strike action taken by academics in the second semester and anxiety amongst students grew to an all time high.

We went into the year with a Rebuild, Reset, and Review mantra. In terms of rebuilding, we were looking to increase engagement levels lost during the pandemic and improve our commercial incomes back to historic norms; at the same time, we looked to reset certain activities using the learning gained during Covid by trialling new ideas such as running a hybrid Students' Union Council both in person and online; and then using student feedback to review our whole offer before formulating a new 4-year strategic plan. Our Officers were particularly focussed on student wellbeing and ensuring that the student voice was heard through what continued to be a difficult period.

As well as delivering our core offer, we ensured that we operated as safely as possible and in accordance with all Covid guidelines, paid particular attention to staff wellbeing, and focussed on moving back to a surplus financial position.

End of year survey figures remained relatively positive with 90% of students agreeing that NUSU positively contributed to their experience and 84% agreeing that we campaigned effectively on their behalf. However, it was clear that we still have much to do in terms of increasing overall engagement back to historic norms and some areas of activity recovered much more quickly than others.

This report will highlight impacts and achievements and demonstrate the progress we have made in trying to ensure that all students have a positive student experience.

Simon Gerry
Chief Executive

Mady Baugh
President

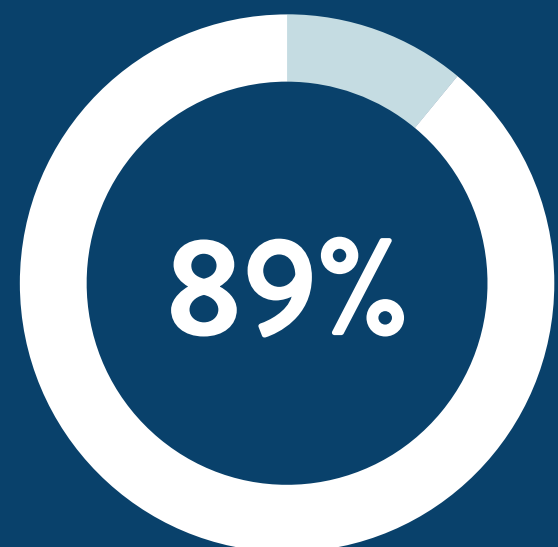




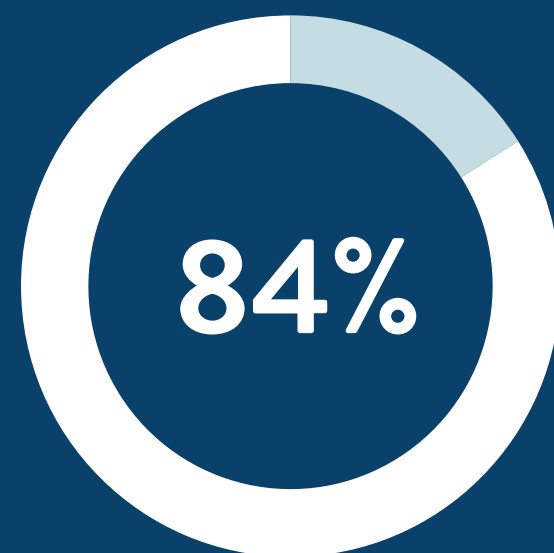
CONTENTS

- 1 Welcome
- 5 21-22 Success Snapshot
- 7 Strategic Direction
- 10 Empowering Our Students
- 19 Energising Our Students
- 27 Supporting Our Students
- 33 Exciting Our Students
- 43 Our Communications
- 44 Finance
- 45 Our People
- 46 Looking Towards 22-23

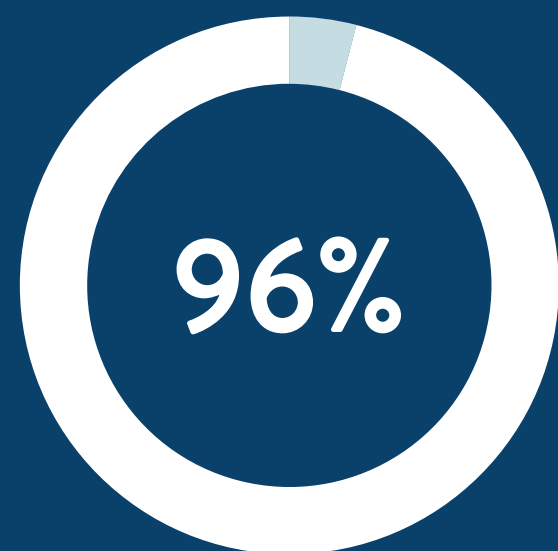
21-22 SUCCESS SNAPSHOT



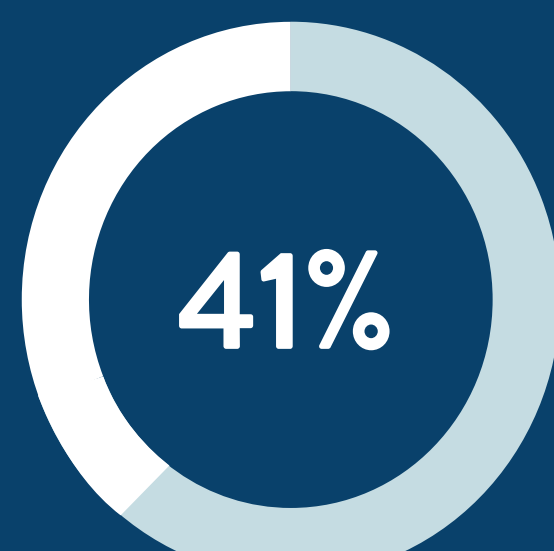
Students would recommend us to a friend



Students agree we campaign on issues that matter to them



Are happy with our communications



Of students engaged with our activities



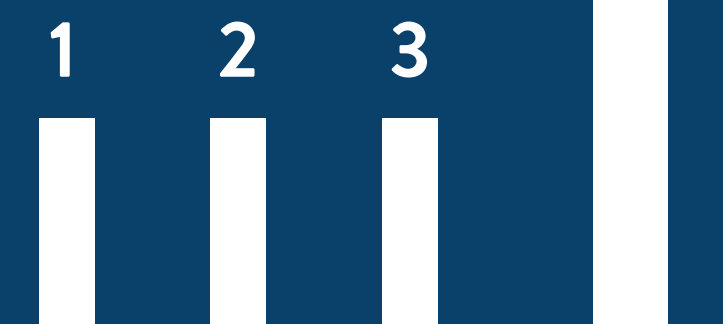
Students satisfied with the range of opportunities



1365 Go Volunteer Students



7147
GIAG Participants



Student Union of the Year for the 4th Year running at Educate North Awards



Strategic Plan Launched

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Over the past 12 months we took on board feedback and ideas from students and stakeholders to help inform our new Strategic Plan, NUSU 2026. It was clear that the student experience at Newcastle and further afield has been significantly impacted by the Covid pandemic, but whilst this had a number of negative impacts it has also provided an opportunity to refocus our work and examine how we deliver our activities and services.

Everything we do is aimed at making sure students have the best possible experience at university, be that through academic representation, social support, or the events and facilities we provide. But we recognise that there is a lot of work to be done to achieve our goals, which is why we have reflected and updated our ambition, purpose, and value statements, and developed a new strategic plan which will run for 4 years.

AMBITION

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

PURPOSE

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

To deliver our purpose we have identified 4 strategic priorities moving forward:

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

VALUES

REPRESENTATIVE

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

SUPPORTIVE

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

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.

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.

EXCITING

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

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.

The remainder of the report will provide feedback and achievements against objectives set in the NUSU 2021 plan.

SABBS 2021/22



EMPOWERING OUR STUDENTS

At NUSU we are committed to driving forward positive change, whether that change directly relates to the student experience, wider society or is of international importance. Whether we are campaigning to change policy, procedures, attitudes or ideas, the student voice is at the heart of what we do.

2021-2022 Campaign Priorities

This year our campaigning focused around nine priorities that were determined by the Officer team at the start of the academic year:

Academic Experience

Breaking Down Barriers

Covid Recovery

Decolonising NCL

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Financial Support

Harm Reduction & Your Safety

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Personal Development

OFFICER CAMPAIGNS

Lift the Ban

Change the law to allow refugees to work whilst they await their refugee status. Students James Prowse and Sam Hoskyns lobbied NUSU and the University to join the coalition. Professor Julie Sanders, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost said, 'Becoming a member of this coalition underpins our work as a University of Sanctuary, and it is a direct result of listening to our fantastic students who made their case with passion and a powerful evidence base.'

S.H.A.G
WEEK

S.H.A.G Week

Sexual Health, Awareness and Guidance Week: promoted the importance of regularly getting tested and how to access resources and support in the Welfare and Support Centre and from local charities and healthcare providers. 688 STI tests were taken, and 81 clubs and societies were involved - a new record!

Our Black History Month

Composed of celebratory events that showcased Black talent, a BAME Blood Drive, a video series about Being Actively Anti-Racist, and a Decolonising NCL Panel. The campaign engaged over 350 students and the videos have been adopted by a local school for further learning.

OUR
BLACK
HISTORY

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TODAY?
nusu.co.uk/ourblackhistory

Climate Conscious Careers

Engaged 281 students and explored how leaders in various industries are making it their life's work to fight for climate justice, and how students can progress environmental work no matter their future career path. The campaign team used recycled banners and posters to embrace the eco-friendly ideology.

CLIMATE
CONSCIOUS
CAREERS

Active Women

Focused on breaking down the barriers to inclusion and participation in sport faced by women. We had a great selection of free social sport sessions and hosted a workshop on the barriers faced by people who menstruate, which was attended by approx. 100 students and staff.

ACTIVE
WOMEN
nusu.co.uk/activewomen

MENTAL HEALTH
IS NOT
EXTRA CURRICULAR

Mental Health is not Extra-Curricular

Feel-good events were held for students during the exam period and a report was collated and shared with the University, outlining what the University must do to better support student mental health. Recommendations included embedding mental health support into Schools.

Just for Post Grads

Events tailored to our PG community, with evening socials, including a super successful quiz night, and PG exercise classes. A PG Mental Health booklet was created to signpost PGs to mental wellbeing support. The events engaged 247 students, with a mix of PGT and PGR students involved.

JUST FOR
POSTGRADS

Leave Newcastle Happy

This end of year clean-up initiative provided opportunities for students moving out of private accommodation to dispose of rubbish. This has helped create positive relationships between students, Newcastle City Council, and residents. Our skips collected 3.5 tonnes of waste and we hosted litter picking opportunities too!

LEAVE
NEWCASTLE
HAPPY

Claiming Your Space

Led by student intern Dami Fawehinmi, this campaign encouraged Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic students to share their ideas and creativity through art. The campaign aimed to create a legacy of spaces that inspire others to feel valued in their experiences – student artwork will be displayed on campus.

11

HOME
TRUTHS

#SpeakingUpForStudentHousing

Home Truths

Housing is one of the biggest concerns students face. We asked students to submit their housing issues, with photos, and collated a report which was then presented to the City Council. We lobbied for a bespoke webpage from the City Council on all issues student related.

12

CLAIMING
YOUR SPACE

CRISIS CAMPAIGNS

2021-22 has been a turbulent year, with numerous exceptional circumstances that our Officers have reacted to thoughtfully and effectively. These have included:

Covid restrictions: lobbying the university for clearer social distancing and mask wearing guidelines and introducing a mask recycling initiative.

Strike action: lobbying the university for a no detriment safety net policy for students affected and holding SU study sessions each day of strike action.

Ukraine Crisis: reacting quickly to the ongoing war in Ukraine by releasing a series of Sabbatical Officer statements, creating a Ukraine Support Page to collate all resources and donation opportunities, and organising a vigil to gather people together and show solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

The Energy Crisis: attending HE sector talks that addressed the developing energy crisis to ensure the government are pressured to provide tailored student support and to check the information we give students is as helpful as possible. We compiled an Energy Crisis webpage with FAQs and easily digestible explanations of the situation and available help.

“I think the Education Officer has done a really great job and feel that they have demonstrated that they support important academic interests. I also think with the strikes that NUSU handled this well e.g., with the study space and encouraging people to come in and feel that they can work there and get hot drinks too.”



OFFICER SUCCESS SNAPSHOT

The Sabbatical and Liberation Officers have celebrated brilliant successes this year, here are some highlights:

- Passed new NUSU policies such as our updated Transgender Policy
- Worked on Spiking Prevention with city and University partners
- Progressed plans for the LGBTQ+ Safe Space (launching in the Frederick Douglass Building next year)
- Begun work on the Student Sex workers Policy and Toolkit
- Worked on the PGR Strategic Delivery Plan
- Lobbied the University during periods of Industrial Action
- Introduced Student Media Afternoons
- Relaunched and WON Newcastle Varsity
- Secured funding for Wheelchair Basketball chairs
- Launched £20,000 for extra funding for Academic Societies
- Launched the Festival of Arts & Culture
- Improved the PEC (Personal Extenuating Circumstances) System
- Represented student issues and concerns at COP 26



STUDENT COUNCIL

6 Student Councils

29 Motions

99 individual students attended council

21-22 Motions Highlights:

Sabbatical Officers to conduct a cross-campus poll on proposed industrial action to inform NUSU’s stance. 53.3% of students supported the strike action. The Sabbatical Officer team attended the picket line on various occasions and spoke in support of UCU in meetings with university leaders.

NUSU recognises student sex workers as a marginalised group that may be disproportionately affected by their engagement with sex work; NUSU will collate support services and disclosure guidelines for students and staff and will lobby the University to adopt a sex worker policy and improve their support.



ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION

1,000+ Student Academic Reps active across all schools and campuses

Selection of Student Rep wins:

Biomedical, Nutritional & Sports Sciences Reps increased the maximum auto renewal date for library books on loan to 20 weeks.

Computing Reps introduced a Computing Blog, designed to improve communication between students and school management.

GPS Reps reviewed the process for referring to Student Wellbeing in their school, resulting in drop-in sessions being extended, improving access to wellbeing services, and encouraging student agency.

HCA Reps helped launch a PGT/PGR mentoring system to better connect PGs better as well as offering beneficial experience for both mentors and mentees.

Psychology Reps have worked with staff to include trigger and content warnings in module outline forms based on student feedback - this has been well received by students.

Pharmacy Reps helped to arrange stage 2 Hepatitis B vaccinations, after surveys highlighted that roughly half the cohort did not have this required vaccine.

“My course rep always listens to our concerns and feeds them back to the relevant parties”

“As a student rep and working with the Sabbatical Officers, I have found the academic representation system a useful and important tool for improving the student experience.”

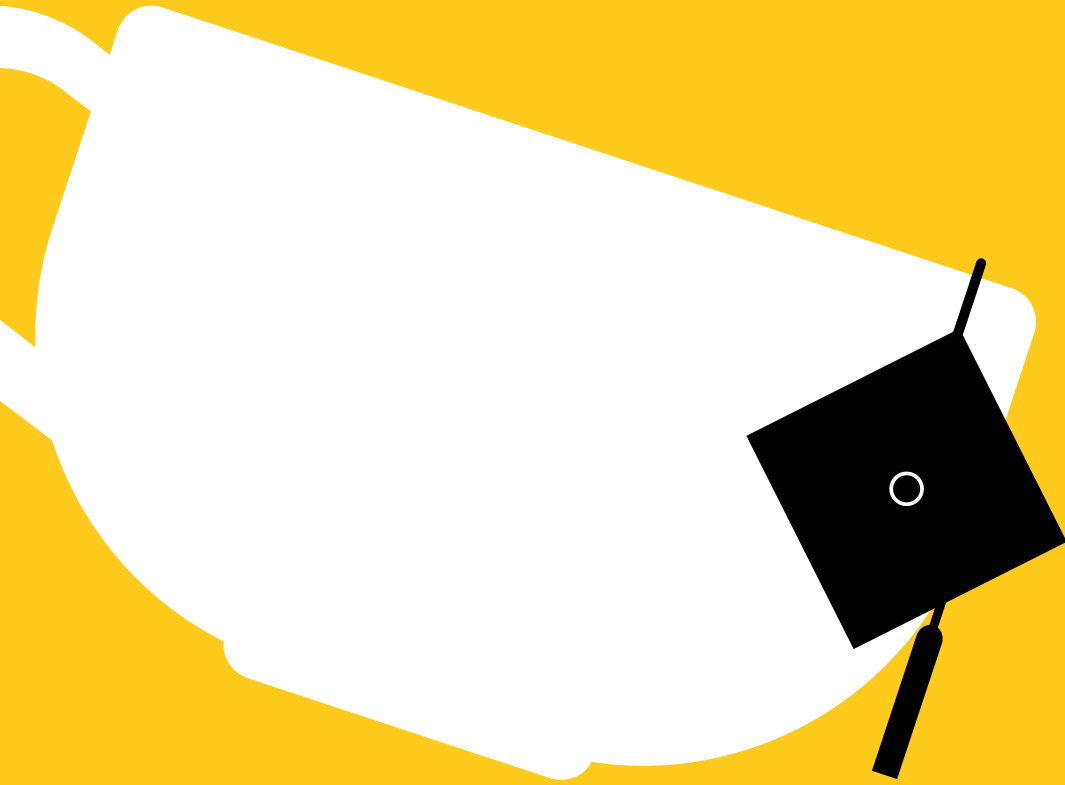
TEAS AWARD

We were delighted to host The Education Awards in person for the first time in two years!

We celebrated with the shortlisted staff by indulging in afternoon tea and live music from talented students.

A massive 459 nominations were submitted, many of which went into detail about why students rate these members of staff so highly.

A report highlighting ‘best practice’ examples was created and shared with university staff.



2022 OFFICER ELECTION

2022 saw the return of face-to-face NUSU Student Elections for the first time since 2019 and it was great to be back! The candidates worked incredibly hard over voting week as they received 4,103 votes: the second highest number of votes in the last five years.

The 2022 Student Elections were also one of the most diverse with a greater proportion of international and postgraduate students nominating themselves and voting in the elections than ever before: better reflecting the make-up of the University’s student body.

The Student Elections also included a referendum on whether NUSU should re-affiliate with the National Union of Students (NUS), with over 70% of voters agreeing that we should.

Student Media played a huge role during the elections this year, covering all the key events from the Student Media Debates to Results Night, making sure that the student body was well informed throughout the process in an entertaining and insightful manner.

Plans are now in place to make sure the NUSU Student Elections are bigger and better for 2023.



ENERGISING OUR STUDENTS

We aim for students to feel they can embrace personal development and career preparation while studying. Our Go Volunteer and Employability departments work together to ensure all our students feel prepared for their future careers when they finish their studies.

GO VOLUNTEER

Our Go Volunteer and Employability teams have worked together this year to offer a wide range of personal development and career preparation opportunities to our students. Go Volunteer fostered relationships with 112 external organisations and along with many internally managed projects, offered an extensive range of opportunities to students. Across the year 1365 individual volunteers participated specifically in the Go Volunteer programmes and to booster awareness and engagement of the programme post pandemic, an additional 72 micro volunteering and info session were held on campus.

"I have had volunteering opportunities provided by NUSU, and I have engaged in lots of GIAG activities. This has had a positive impact on me, both personally, and in terms of employability."



1365
individual Go
Volunteer students

457
volunteers
supporting
over 500
asylum seekers

PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

North East Solidarity and Teaching Project (N.E.S.T.)

Over the last 12 months N.E.S.T continued to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of Covid-19 restrictions, supporting refugees, asylum seekers and student volunteers alike. Achievements include:

Over 750 online English lessons were delivered to over 500 asylum seekers and refugees by 457 volunteers. In Summer 2021 a responsive campaign to support asylum seekers fleeing Afghanistan raised £4131 and provided 450 care packages consisting of clothes, food, toiletries, and bedding for those in need and the winter donation appeal in December 2021 raised over £6,000 with volunteers creating personalised gift packages for 329 children and care packages for adults.

The community impact generated by the N.E.S.T. project was recognised when it was awarded the Community Engagement Award – University Sector at the Educate North Awards ceremony in April 2022.

N.E.S.T. Schools Project

In October 2021 we launched a three-year £90,000 funded project funded by Newcastle City Council to support young members of the forced migration community in the region with their schoolwork through lunchtime and after school clubs. 38 student volunteers worked in 5 local schools, supporting 127 children of which 65 were from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds. The students also delivered:

- SATs interpretation for Year 6 pupils
- Parent's Evening interpretation for 10 parents attending evening meetings
- Translating letters and school information for parents
- Accompanying high school students on a college visit

"I popped up to take some photos and was met by our family support worker who couldn't believe that all of her vulnerable pupils were in lunch club having the time of their lives with huge smiles on their faces. We are talking about pupils that struggle with anxiety, looked after pupils, children on child protection and various other vulnerabilities. Not to mention our refugee children who were also having so much fun. The staff have noted the positive impact this has also had on behaviour on the yard." School Teacher



£90,000 N.E.S.T.
funding from
Newcastle City
Council

Newcastle University First Responders

The project, which has recently completed its third year of service, offers a team of dedicated medical students the chance to gain real life experience by volunteering with the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS). This year alone they have completed over 120 shifts, 1000+ hours on call and responded to 999 medical emergencies with each volunteer receiving a minimum of 45 hours training with the service.



SciFair 2022

Back in 2020, Newcastle University student, Freda Tuor, was awarded a grant from the Go Volunteer Grants Scheme to set up the first university-run secondary school science fair. Along with her team, she worked tirelessly over the next year to create an event that would inspire children from all backgrounds across state schools in Newcastle into STEM subjects. SciFair took place during this year’s British Science Week. In total, over 100 children from 7 local schools took part, completing projects based on topics of their choosing and presenting their findings to a judging panel. After the fair, pupils made their way over to Kings Hall for speeches from the Newcastle University Outreach Team and MP, Chi Onwurah, followed by a prize giving. SciFair22 won runner up in the New Volunteer Project of the Year category at this year’s Community Impact Awards and planning has already begun for SciFair 2023.

Into Schools

The Go Volunteer Into Schools programme came back with a bang this year, with over 50 pupils and 5 societies delivering in-person workshops or study support sessions in schools across the North East. From BrushUp educating almost 250 children about oral hygiene, diet and visiting the dentist, to It Happens Here responding to a request from sixth formers wanting to discuss the spiking epidemic with those closer to them in age, Newcastle University students have truly shown great initiative in inspiring and empowering the next generation. BrushUp, It Happens Here and Sexpression Newcastle were all victorious at this year’s Community Impact Awards, with new Into Schools Coordinator’s being elected on society committees for the new academic year.



EMPLOYABILITY



356 students completed ncl+

NCL+ Award

356 students completed the ncl+ award this year. During the virtual programme each student logged 40 hour of extra-curricular activity which could have been volunteering, a part time job, learning a new skill or hobby, or taking part in clubs or societies. Students also took part in 2 virtual workshops learning about goal setting action planning and reflection, and articulating their ncl+ Award achievements, finishing off by completing answers to three competency-based questions, demonstrating what they had gained from their experiences.

Feedback from the participating students were collated and have been used to improve the award for the coming year including an award rebrand and the return of person workshops.

81% of students feel more empowered to shape their own futures

83% of student agree that they develop skills appropriate to meet their career aspirations

NCL+ Award Advanced

We also hosted 3 ncl+ Advanced Awards in Leadership for those who hold a leadership position within NUSU; this Advanced Award is for those who want to learn key concepts behind successful leadership and run their own project to consolidate and demonstrate their learning.

Ncl+ Advanced Award in Business Basics is a programme for any student (not taking a business degree) who wants to expand their skillset, knowing that the world of work will require them to have knowledge of finance, budgets, VAT, marketing, organisational structures, trustees and directorship, business theory and innovation & creativity.

Ncl+ Advanced Award in Career Preparation is for those who want to develop their self-awareness, identify key strengths and work on their personal brand. The advanced awards attracted students from Newcastle, Malaysia, and Singapore due to the awards having a blended approach, most workshops taking place online but with the ability to catch up after. Across all three formats, 125 students were awarded their NCL+ Award Advanced.



“I’ve joined Societies, participated in a range of Volunteering activities, and been involved with Give it a Go. These have all contributed positively to my university experience, allowing me to try new things, meet new people, achieve the NCL+ Award, boost my employability and more. Overall, I am very satisfied.”



This year we were able to celebrate the Celebrating Success Awards in style, as in person events returned. The awards took place across 2 weeks in May to honour the amazing work and achievements of students involved in extra-curricular activities which was made even better by being able to come together on campus. An impressive 998 nominations across 8 award ceremonies and 79 award categories were received. Selected winners were then put forward and nominated for the Pride of Newcastle Awards, our black-tie awards ceremony held in the majestic Newcastle Civic Centre banqueting hall and marked the outstanding achievements of our students.



STUDENT REP AWARDS

Course Rep UG of the Year
Isac Fiorotti

Course Rep PG of the Year
Michail Koukouzas

Staff Facilitator of the Year
Dr. Luisa Wakeling

Student Secretary of the Year
Lula Goldsmith

Student Chair of the Year
Chloe Wood

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Rep
EDI reps for the School of Biomedical, Nutrition and Sports Sciences: Naomi Buadee, Frankie Hadrill, Jasmin Gill, Nicole Kowzloska, Kate Jervis and Aoife Lunt.

School Rep UG of the Year
Mackenzie Marshall

School Rep PG of the Year
Wenwen Zhang

Student-Staff Committee of the Year
It Happens Here

Change Maker of the Year
Madeline Baugh

AU SPORTS AWARDS

Team of the Year
Basketball

Administrator of the Year
Jade Yip

Sports Writer of the Year
Gauthier Meley and Joe Warn

Most Improved Club of the Year
Boxing Club

Contribution to Inclusivity
Athletics and Cross-Country Club

Community Club of the Year
Newcastle University RFC

AU Club Member of the Year
Micha Newman

Club of the Year
Boat Club

Coach of the Year
Edward Robertson

Performance Coach of The Year
Mark Elderkin

Individual Contribution to University Sport
Brandon Few

SOCIETY AWARDS

Best Department Society
Archaeology Society

Best New Society
DJ Society

Angel of the North – Best Fundraising Event
Wind Band Society

Best Performance Event
Malaysian Society

Best Society Campaign
It Happens Here

Best Society Event
Feminist Society

Best Inter-Society Collaboration
Zumba Society

Most Improved Society
Zumba Society

Society Contribution to the Community
Arab Society

Individual Award for Outstanding Contribution to Societies
Chiara Blows

Society of the Year
It Happens Here

Contribution to Inclusivity
Rachel Swift

Contribution to Diversity
Bollywood Dance Society

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARDS

Youth Volunteering Award
N.E.S.T.

Unsung Hero Award
Erfan Lessan

Cultural Diversity Champion
Jemma Willins

Students for Students Award
Nightline

Sustainability Champion
Feminist Society

Social Inclusion Award
N.E.S.T.

Volunteering Innovation Awards
Sexpression Newcastle
Student for Health Award
BrushUp

Community Outreach Award
Newcastle University First Responders

Student Leadership Award
Sunny Sudera

Fundraiser of the Year
N.E.S.T.

New Volunteer Project of the Year
It Happens Here

STUDENT MEDIA AWARDS NUTV

Tech Crew Member of the Year
Thomas Wrath

Presenter of the Year
Kayleigh Fraser

Show of the Year
Fight Night – 21st March

Outstanding Contribution to NUTV
Thomas Wrath

NSR

Newcomer of the Year
Rosie McCallum

Show of the Year
Time Waste Game Show – Matthew Griffiths

Presenter of the Year
Elliot Kilby

Broadcast of the Year
The Tory Cost of Living Crisis with Kayleigh Fraser and BBC Radio 4’s David Cornock

Outstanding Contribution to NSR
Isabel Ellis

THE COURIER

Current Affairs/Sport Writer of the Year
Hannah Ross

Life & Style Writer of the Year
Annabel Hogg

Culture Writer of the Year
Joe Milward

Article of the Year
‘SSD Allegations: Six months on in the Newcastle music scene’ Evie Lake

Creative Designer of the Year
Gabbi de Boer

Spread of the Year
Gaming – Issue 1423

Sub-Editor of the Year
Joseph Caddick

Section of the Year
Film

Outstanding Contribution to The Courier
Harriet Metcalffe

The Monica Doughty Award
Haaris Aytishaam Mahmood Qureshi

PRIDE OF NEWCASTLE AWARDS

Alumni Achievement Awards: Alumni Impact
John Cooper QC

Alumni Achievement Awards: Rising Star
Abdulaziz Alsaeed
Bridget Stratford

Outstanding Contribution to Arts, Media & Culture
Harriet Metcalf

Outstanding Contribution to the Community
N.E.S.T

Outstanding Contribution to Diversity & Cultural Awareness
Jemma Williams

Outstanding Contribution to Global Outlook
N.E.S.T.

Outstanding Contribution to Lifelong Health & Wellbeing
Brush Up

Outstanding Contribution to Sport
Men’s Basketball 1st team

Outstanding Contribution to Student Life
NUMed Islamic Society

Outstanding Contribution to Student Voice
Madeline Baugh

Outstanding Contribution to Sustainability & the Environment
Feminist Society

Outstanding Contribution to the Workplace
Alice Casey

Vice Chancellor’s Award for Excellence
Sunny Sudera

SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS

We believe that being part of a supportive community is vital in students reaching their full potential and we understand that studying at university and living a student lifestyle can affect their wellbeing. In response to listening to the student voice and understanding their needs, we created the Support and Advice Hub as a physical and digital space, specifically designed for students who seek information, advice, and guidance.

The Support & Advice Hub opened in summer 2021. Located on the ground floor of the NUSU building, the Hub houses the existing Student Advice Centre and the newly formed Welfare and Support Centre. The Student Advice Centre provides free confidential advice on anything academic, financial, personal, or housing related, as well as employment and consumer issues too. Alongside this the Wellbeing & Support Centre takes an intersectional and holistic approach to wellbeing; students can use the Welfare and Support centre for any welfare related concern they may have. Here they can find an array of resources, friendly faces and people who can point them in the right direction should they need support elsewhere.

The space is open weekdays and students are free to drop-in where colleagues are on hand to listen and help. The physical space is currently being re-developed with new welcoming furniture and decoration planned for installation before the start of the new academic year, ensuring that students feel confident in visiting and accessing the support or advice they will find helpful.



WELLBEING & SUPPORT CENTRE

The new Wellbeing and Support Centre opened in the summer of 2021 which was perfect timing for students returning to campus. As the country came out of lock down, we were unsure how students would react to being back in the city and on campus. We aimed to give them as much support as possible and with this in mind we added an extra layer of welfare to the Freshers' period with welfare stations, harm reduction flyers and communications and face to face support.

The increase in spiking cases during the year was also a big concern and we worked alongside the University and other regional partners to help make the city safer and communicate the reporting and support routes available for those affected. Throughout the year we delivered welfare related campaigns and projects and a record 688 STI tests were taken throughout S.H.A.G Week. Alongside this, the HIV+ testing and Sexual Health Monthly Clinic was well attended, and students made good use of being able to pick up sexual health resources throughout the year at a time that was good for them.



SUPPORT & ADVICE CENTRE

The Student Advice Centre (SAC) continued to offer a full service across the year despite unpredictable Covid restrictions being applied throughout the year. With a well-established mix of in-person and online appointments, the centre was well positioned to flex their service as and when needed.

Students were also directed to ever evolving information on a selection of Covid related FAQs located on the NUSU website, which helped stem the demand for appointments. As campus returned to being open and welcome, the number of case appointments being taken up started to move back to pre-pandemic levels.

Digital Advice:

- 42,000+ Student Advice Centre website page views
- 10,000+ page views on Housing related advice pages or news articles
- 8,000+ page views on academic related pages or news articles
- 3,900 page view on SAC news articles
- 2,000+ page views looking at energy crisis and money saving tips



MAKING AN IMPACT

209 Academic Cases: 98 academic appeals / 28 Assessment Irregularities / 19 change of course / 31 academic complaints / 33 progression or assessment issues.

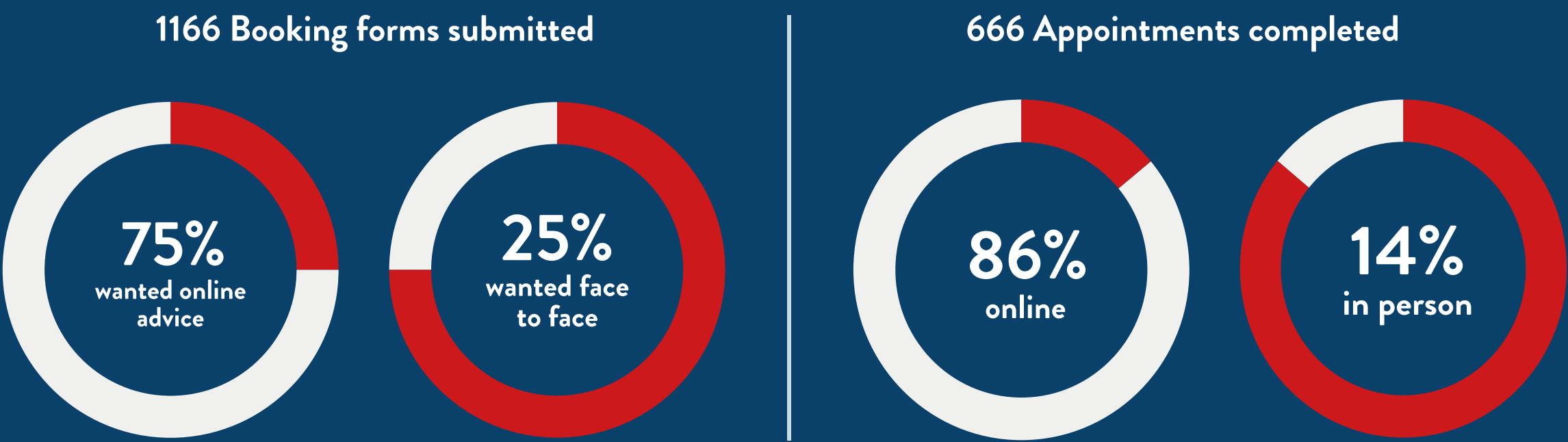
371 Housing Issues: 32 transferring their tenancy / 48 housing complaints / 70 contract advice / 21 council tax issues / 15 mould cases / 25 deposit cases / 40 disrepair / 72 issues involving landlords or agents and 48 management related issues.

161 Finance issues: 36 student funding / 24 UK tuition fee / 46 Student Finance England / 13 Compelling Personal Reason (CPR) requests / 41 non-UK student finance matters / 1 case reported to Trading Standards for Misrepresentation & Breach of the Tenant Fee Act.

15 students trusted us with Report and Support issues

1375 appointments and 1166 student booking requests were submitted, and 45% of those were received from February 2022, when face to face appointments resumed. 666 appointments were completed of which 86% were held online.

ONLINE VS FACE TO FACE APPOINTS:



Multiple appointments are often required for each case and in total 5578 appointments were taken up by students, with 555 new cases completed, with some remaining open to be handled in the next academic year.

WIN, WIN, WIN!

Here is a small sample of some of the wins the student wins that SAC helped achieve this year:

- Helped a student with liability for 2 tenancies saving them £5500
- £3000 awarded to student after a housing complaint was agreed
- Method to report HMOs for students was improved on council website due to SAC’s input
- Student Loan Company fraud issue resolved for student full funding restored
- Supported student in applying for a student hardship fund, resulting in a payment of over £1000.
- Student saved £2800 after being released from a tenancy agreement.
- Tenant wins release from contract with full deposit returned
- Council tax liability removed amounting to £1035 saving

*“The Adviser is the **BEST!** She gave me very professional opinions and supported me with her compassion which really means a lot to me! I really appreciate all the work she has done to help me! A big **THANKX!**”*

*“Fantastic; the appointment was informative, and I felt genuinely listened to, with excellent unbiased advice given. **Thank you**”.*

“I’m very grateful for the Advisers help, her advice to refer the landlords to the Property Ombudsman was very helpful in pushing them to solve matters after a few weeks of them threatening me, and I think is a big part in why I was able to get them to settle on £20 rather than £170”.

*“The Adviser was very helpful in reassuring us as to where we stood regarding our issue and suggested practical actions that we were able to carry out which helped us resolve our issue. This is the second time I have used the SAC, and I have been very satisfied both times - **Thank you very much!**”*



EQUALITY DIVERSITY INCLUSION

Accessibility & inclusion is the heart of everything we do and over the past year we have made great strides in this area. At the start of 2021/22 we launched our EDI Strategy and put the mechanisms in place to achieve this. We equipped our staff with five all-staff training sessions covering topics such as Unconscious Bias, Microaggressions and Cultural Sensitivity. Appreciating that everyone is on a journey in this area we also developed spaces for staff to reflect on what they had learnt.

We also ran a number of initiatives in this area to support students. We ran campaigns such as Black History Month and Claiming Your Space. We supported our volunteer groups with opportunities to demonstrate how inclusive they were and we handed out a record amount of participation bursaries, providing more students with the financial support to access our opportunities. For 2022/23 we also secured funding for clubs and societies to put on events and activities that helped increase accessibility & inclusion.



EXCITING OUR STUDENTS

VARSITY SUCCESS

2022 saw the return of Varsity, the annual, sports tournament between Newcastle and Northumbria Universities. Competitors and spectators watched Newcastle lift the tournament trophy and celebrate the final result of Northumbria 50.25 points versus Newcastle's superior 60.75 points at Cochrane Park. 33 games were played in total with Newcastle notching up 19 wins.



BUCS

This year we finished an impressive eight out of 150 Universities in the British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) league. 88 Teams took part from 26 Clubs, with 1082 students participating in weekly fixtures across the region and country. We achieved 22 League wins; six teams reached the finals in Big BUCS Wednesday with two teams awarded overall winners. Teams also participated in thirteen knockout finals with seven victories, a record in recent years and five Clubs, containing 69 students, competed at BUCS Nationals.

CAMPUS LEAGUES

We saw the return of semi-competitive games during Term 2 and 3 with 1,658 students engaged across the academic year in 5 and 7 a side Football and Badminton.



62
Athletic Union
Clubs ratified

£149K
grants given to
Athletic Union
Clubs





GIVE IT A GO

Give It a Go was back in full swing this year with an action-packed programme from September with in-person activities returning, alongside virtual activities to support students who had not yet returned to campus. We started off the year by welcoming new international students with fun activities and supporting the Freshers' Week programme. Students experienced new activities with benchball, tarot reading, face mask making, virtual spin, and an Explore Northumberland series of trips added to the programme. These were accompanied by long-time favourites including surfing, yoga, and visits to the Dog & Scone Café.

Once again, the team supported students who stayed in Newcastle over the winter break with activities to help reduce loneliness and isolation. We kicked off term 2 by supporting the Just for Post Grads campaign with some great activities. More campaigns followed and Give It a Go played a key role in delivering activities for the Festival of Arts and Culture, Active Women in Sport, and Mental Health Is Not Extra-Curricular.

It's been great for students and colleagues alike to offer a full activities programme again, and to date we've delivered 655 activities, engaged 7,147 participants, and received an average rating of 5/5 for these! We ended the year with 3 Activities Assistants shortlisted for the Newcastle University Workplace Award – recognising the amazing work of the team.

"It definitely allows me to get more friends. I always find it hard to make friends in lectures but when we go on trips or join Give It a Go programmes, it's very easy to talk and make friends"

Average satisfaction rating: ★★★★★

GIAG Social Delivered 377 activities and engaged 3,985 participants

GIAG active: delivered 278 activities and engaged 3,162 participants

CLUB & SOCIETY INCLUSIVITY

In line with our values, championing inclusivity within our Clubs and Societies is a significant priority. Earn Your Stars is an initiative to increase inclusion within societies & Earn Your Stripes is an initiative to increase inclusion within our Athletic Union sports clubs. Both clubs and societies are encouraged to apply for a Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award throughout the year to showcase how they proactively work to increase inclusivity in their groups. This application process allows them to achieve criteria focusing on the three key themes of well being, diversity, and sense of belonging, which are all themes' students have highlighted are key factors contributing to inclusion. Within an application, they can apply for funding to help them meet the criteria.

Earn Your Stripes: This year we received 9 Earn Your Stripes applications with 6 receiving Gold and 2 achieving Silver status. Some of the clubs have excelled with their inclusivity this year, linking with N.E.S.T Projects and joining in with National Campaigns such as Active Women in Sport.

Earn Your Stars: Societies have been working pro-actively to increase inclusivity. 36 applications were made with 19 Societies achieving Bronze Awards, 3 Silver Awards, and It Happens Here and Speech and Language Therapy Societies achieving the prestigious Gold Award. It Happens Here were the first society to achieve this in Term One and they have been working with us to share best practice amongst other societies since.



SOCIETY SPECIAL GRANTS

The Societies Executive Committee aimed to support as many societies as possible with extra funding through the Special Grants funds and allocated £45,000 in this academic year (as well as the £50,000 initial grants). 111 societies applied and 80% of these were awarded either the full amount or a contribution to allow them to deliver some great events and projects for their society members. After a disappointing 2 years with Covid, many societies wanted to host large scale in person events like balls and awards evenings, and the Special Grants funding enabled this to happen for several societies.

The Special Grants also enabled societies to enter and travel to competitions across the country such as Bollywood Dance Society and A Cappella Society. Special Grants funding enabled societies to invest in their equipment and successful applications included safety equipment and footwear for Fellwalking Society, new equipment for Newcastle University Jazz Orchestra and the DJ Society so that more members could participate, kit to enable societies to participate in intra-mural and local sports leagues, and a new training defibrillator for the First Aid Society.

Several societies were successfully awarded funding to organise and deliver workshops including Radiology Society (who won an award for the best Radiology Society nationally because of this!), and It Happens Here. It also allowed societies such as Islamic Society and Christian Union Society to host activities over a whole week to engage members, students, and the wider community in educating about their societies and fun activities. In addition, the Special Grant enabled many societies to celebrate important cultural events, like Kuwait for their national day, Diwali, Holi and Qawwali Night.



FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CULTURE 2022

The 2022 Festival of Arts and Culture organised by the Activities Officer was a fantastic 3-day event that celebrated a diverse range of cultures through food, workshops, and performances. 11 Societies supported the event including the Turkish, Tamil & Malayali, Creative Writing, Polish, Jewish, Fashion, Bollywood Dance, Hindu & Sikh, Afro-Caribbean, and Brunei Societies and the DJ Society provided the music and entertainment for all 3 days. Hundreds of students enjoyed the food and activities and learning about different cultures. Activities included henna painting with the Hindu & Sikh Society, learn to Bollywood dance workshops, Polish language lessons, creative writing workshop with the Creative Writing Society, and Give It a Go delivered plant pot decorating – with the help of Grow Volunteer supplying plants for our pots, language lessons, and cultural art socials.

“The opportunities, especially through Societies, has definitely changed my life for the better. It’s given me so much confidence, I’ve made friends for life, and I feel like it’s made university a very enjoyable experience”.



A SOCIAL HUB

FRESHERS' AND WELCOME WEEK

Planning for Freshers' 2021 was challenging due to the uncertainty around Covid rules and recommendations for social gatherings during the summer months. Understanding that some students would still be hesitant to socialise indoors and in large groups a varied and safety-first programme was developed. A large outdoor festival-style Welcome Village was created on campus, ideal for those who were anxious about being in the city, it included themed bars, food vendors, a tepee, stage, and chillout-zone festooned with fairy lights. It hosted a fun week-long programme of quiz nights, Massaoke, Bingo Revolution, Silent Discos, and live music. This was accompanied by trips into Newcastle's famous nightlife with events in the Bigg Market and The Gate for those students seeking the party scene. The daytime programme consisted of hundreds of small-scale, Covid appropriate food and activity-based events such as trips to the city's cat and dog Cafés, Hackett Harry's Axe throwing, Bubble Football, YuMe gaming arcade, Escape Rooms, and Yoga to name just a few! A great time was had by all who took part. In total 14,000 daytime and thousands of night-time opportunities were available.

Also included in the Welcome Week celebrations was the return of an in-person Clubs & Societies Fair and Discover Newcastle promotions Fair, both of which were well attended.



"The welcome party at Freshers' was perfect for what my flatmates and I wanted to do to get to know each other during Freshers' week.... I have made valuable memories with my new friends thanks to the welcome party"

"I felt very welcomed by all the fresher's activities NUSU had to offer. I especially found the freshers fair and sports fairs useful as I was able to gain a deeper insight into the clubs and societies that NUSU had to offer and which trial sessions I could attend."

LIVE MUSIC + EVENTS

81% of students agree that NUSU has had a positive impact on their social life

Live Music came back with a bang and we held 60 live music events with huge artists including, Dappy, Sherlocks, Mae Muller, Beabadoobee, Wet Leg, Newton Faulkner, Aurora, and Mimi Webb just to name a few...

We hosted 26 conferencing and awards ceremonies over the year including our prestigious TEAs, Celebrating Success Awards, British International Studies Association Conference and Student Radio Association Conference which saw students from all over the country arrive for a two-day event within our student union.

26 student society live production shows were held including, Raising and Giving (RAG)'s Strictly Come Dancing, Newcastle University Theatre Society (NUTS) productions, Pole and Aerial showcases, Frank Morten, a national Chemical engineering event to name a few.



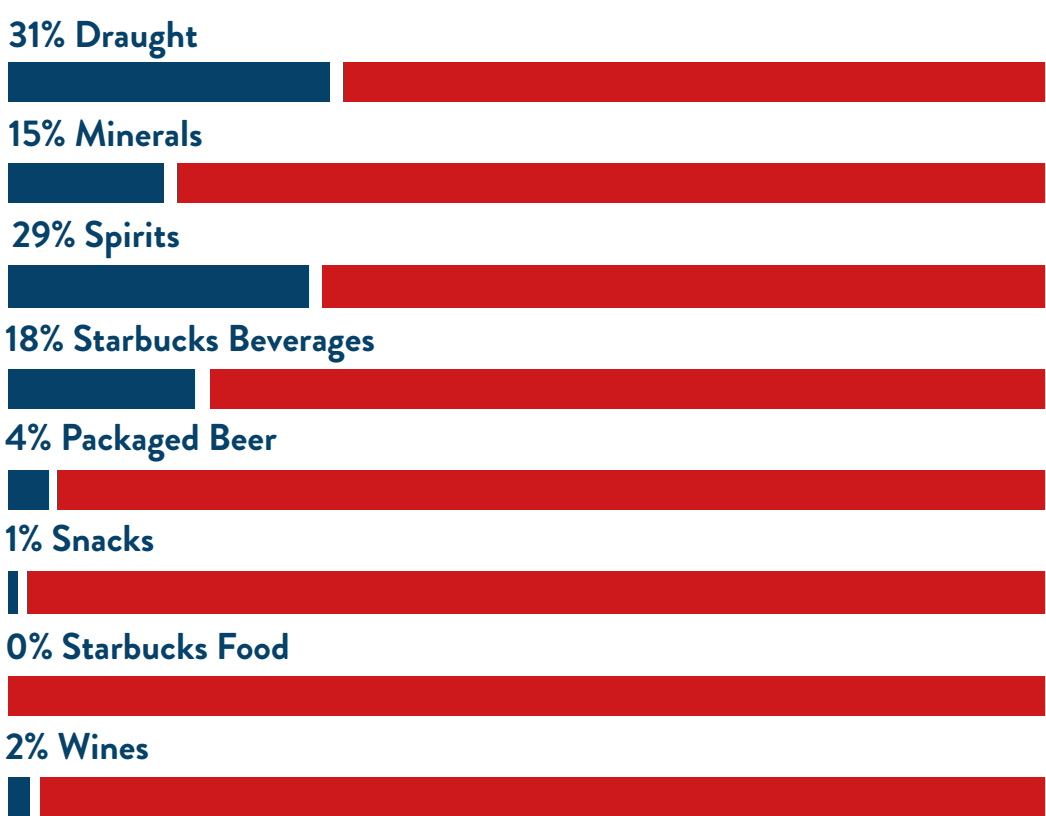
88% of students have used the Student Union Co-op

LUTHERS



Luther’s Bar was eventually back to its usual bustling self with 22,100 Starbucks drinks served and 39,200 pints poured across the year.

Luther’s Bar - Product Split



98% of students who used the facilities are satisfied

“Facilities are really nice and welcoming. Lots of opportunities to get more involved.”



Total footfall into the building amounted to 810,978, compared to pre-pandemic levels of 1.1 million.

MERCHANDISE



Our Merchandise store found a new home on level -1 and over 11,700 branded products were sold in our store.

Memorabilia Sales Mix



“I have had many opportunities to connect with existing friends and to make new ones, all in a fun, welcoming, and varied place.”

OUR COMMUNICATIONS

96% SATISFACTION RATE FOR OUR COMMUNICATIONS.

As we emerged out of the pandemic, the Students' Union had to respond to a succession of crisis moments all of which required urgent communications support. Working closely with the Sabbatical Officers communications relating to the Ukraine War, Industrial Action and the Energy Crisis were carefully rolled out. We increased the number of news stories issued, heightened the profile of the Officers across our channels and boosted the use of video content, all of which had a positive effect as we maintained a 96% satisfaction rate for our communications.

INCREASED OPEN RATES BY 10%

Email remains the student's preferred method of communication for NUSU, and in response we introduced a targeted and stranded What's On email based on our segmentation model this year. Three versions of each newsletter were produced weekly, carrying a refined look and tone of voice in line with the students' preferences, this generated an increase in open rates from the beginning of year by 10%.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The roll out of new personal devices for all staff was completed and a long-term commitment from the University was agreed to ensure that NUSU's IT systems remain up to date and secure. This year 96% of colleagues stated that they have the equipment and resources they need to do their job properly, a 10% increase from last year.

A new central management system, SUMS, which facilitates the work of many NUSU departments and hosts the organisation website, was launched in August. This new system offers enhanced profile and engagement opportunities for Student Representation, as well as flexible and accessible reporting, which will enable us to gain a better insight into how students engage with the Students' Union in the future.

FINANCE

Financially, we remain stable following the disruption caused by the pandemic. Whilst our end of year accounts reflected a relatively small group general fund profit, the Co-op was running at a planned deficit budget with a view to return to profit once University life is back to pre-pandemic norm. The Government job retention scheme utilised to support our student staff members and alleviate short term financial pressures ended in the year.



INCOME

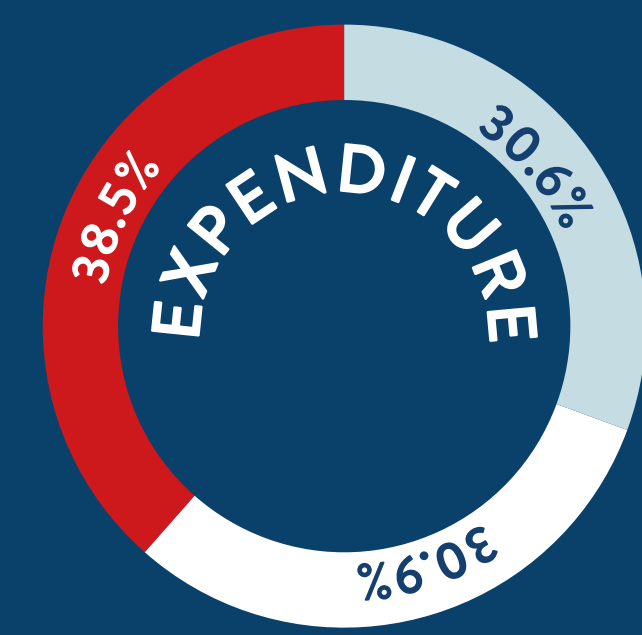
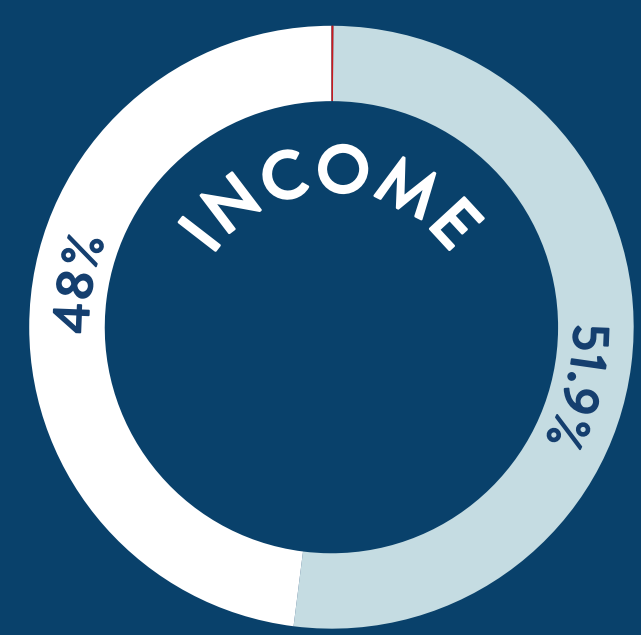
- 48.0% | Non trading, £2,759k NUSU
- 51.9% | Trading £1,186k NUSU + £1,802k NUSU Trading Ltd
- 0.1% | Government Schemes Support 8k

COST OF SALES

- 30.5% | Direct costs £487k NUSU + £1,405 NUSU Trading Ltd

EXPENDITURE

- 38.5% | Costs of staffing £2,142k NUSU + £8k Furlough + £241k NUSU Trading Ltd
- 30.9% | Costs linked to service activity and delivery £1,762k NUSU + £158k NUSU Trading Ltd



OUR PEOPLE

The improvements in our IT provision and working from home during the pandemic presented opportunities for long term blended working. Since the lifting of restrictions, we have enabled 27% of our colleagues to continue this new approach to achieve an enhanced work / life balance.

We made improvements to internal communications with the introduction of a new monthly Colleague Newsletter, a redesigned Colleague Intranet, re-launch of the Student Forum and new feedback processes including listening groups, colleague forum representatives listening to feedback within their department, comment boxes, open door policy. As a result, 96% of colleagues stated that they were satisfied with the information they receive about what is going on in the organisation, a 15% increase from last year.

We achieve maximum 100% scores in the Staff Survey for colleagues having confidence in Senior Management Team, receiving feedback from managers and information needed for their role, getting help and support from their team members, understanding the organisational vision and willingness to recommend NUSU as a good place to work, all indicating the positive and supportive engagement experienced throughout the organisation.

96% of colleagues were satisfied with the information they receive about what is going on in the organisation

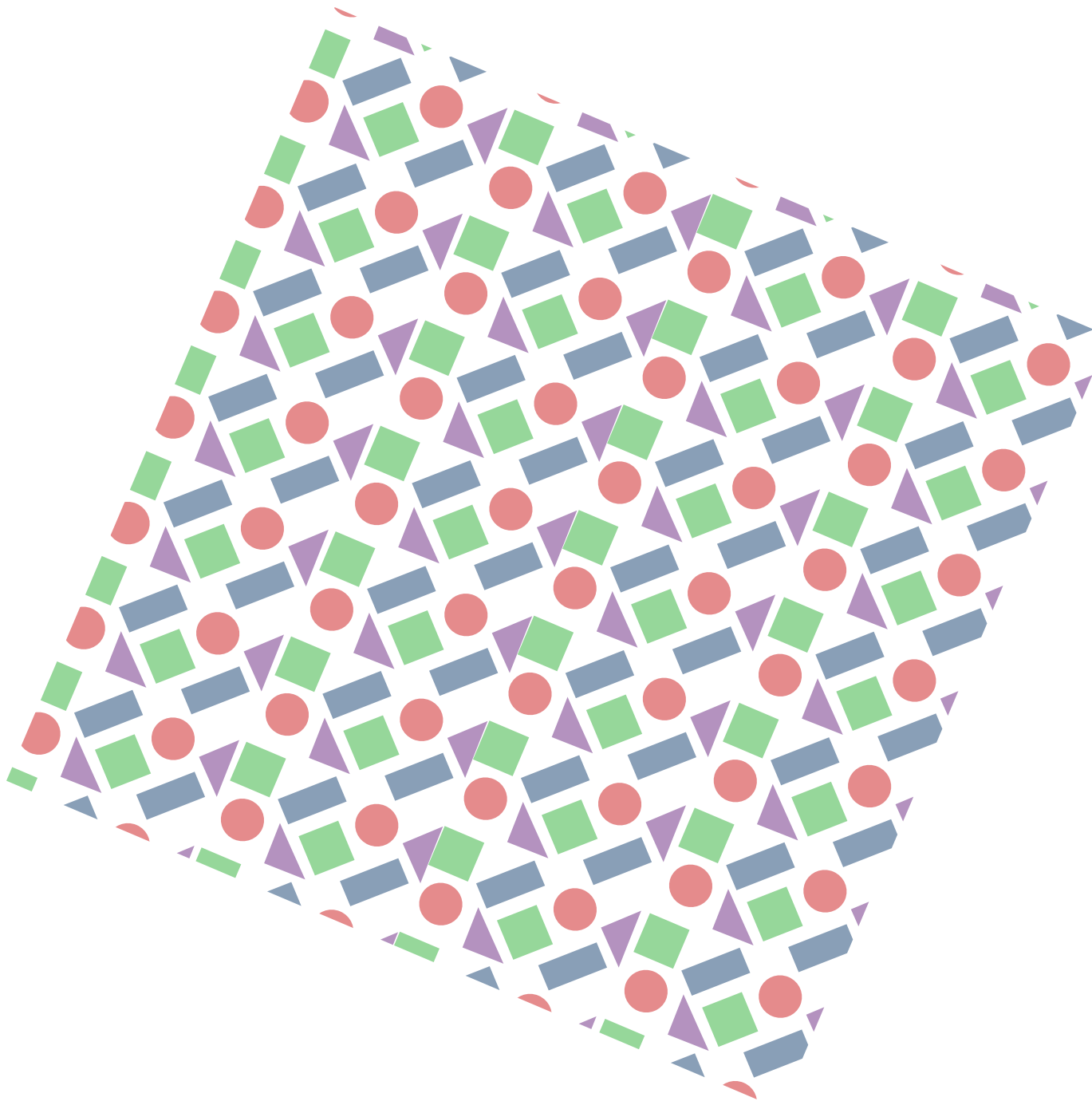
96% of colleagues stated that they have the equipment and resources they need.



LOOKING TOWARDS 2022-23

As we move into academic year 22/23, as well as delivering our core offer, we will be particularly focussed on student wellbeing, diversity and inclusion and sustainability which we will be looking to embed into all aspects of our work. We recognise that these are all integral to a positive student experience and this along with our focus on re-engaging students who may not have used our services will be primary drivers of our success.





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