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## **Northumbria shortlisted for best university in the UK**

**Northumbria University, Newcastle, has been nominated for the prestigious University of the Year award in Times Higher Education (THE) Awards 2017.**

Described as the ‘Oscars of UK higher education’ the awards attract hundreds of entries each year that exemplify talent, dedication and innovation across all aspects of university life. Northumbria is one of just six institutions to be shortlisted for the award, which recognises exceptional performance as well as bold, imaginative and innovative initiatives that have advanced the institution's reputation during the academic year 2015/16. The nomination is

a clear acknowledgment of Northumbria's continued focus on quality which has enhanced the University's global reputation for academic excellence.

Progress was notable in 2015/16 with significant investment in research and teaching. Strong results in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework propelled Northumbria into the top 50 in the UK for research power. Northumbria University's research reputation was further enhanced through a significant investment in new multi-disciplinary research themes to facilitate ground-breaking research with real global impact.

Experiential learning is a stylistic trait of Northumbria University and this was further demonstrated with launch of the Business Clinic in 2015/16, where student teams enhance their learning and career prospects by providing free consultancy advice to real business clients. This pioneering initiative previously contributed to Newcastle Business School at Northumbria securing the THE Business School of the Year award in 2015. A nursing scheme with Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust allowing those with healthcare experience to become nurses in just 18 months was a UK-first, and an example of Northumbria responding to demand and leading the sector. Following the success of this initiative, a number of similar courses have been launched across the country by other institutions.

Growth in the reputation of Northumbria's post-graduate offering, alongside investments in scholarships, saw a 44% increase in students choosing the University during this period, double the market growth. The institution was also among the few universities to see the entry tariff points for undergraduate students rise as more highly qualified students applied. At the same time, a successful initiative to widen participation in higher education saw more students join Northumbria from low income households, with the gap between areas with the lowest and highest young participation rates dropping from 18% in 2011/12 to 5% in 2015/16.

Further acknowledgement of the University's innovative approach to learning and teaching has seen BIM Academy, a joint venture with Ryder Architecture, recognised with a nomination in the Innovative Contribution to Business - University Collaboration category. The unique partnership sees Northumbria's students and academics, alongside Ryder, offer construction digital services and has seen commissions in the UK and Europe, Middle East, Far East and Australasia. High-profile projects include the Sydney Opera House and the M+ Museum in Kowloon, Hong Kong.

Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said: “To be shortlisted for these highly coveted awards is a hugely significant achievement for everyone at Northumbria, and a clear testament to the hard work and commitment of staff across the entire University. Our nomination is a clear acknowledgement of the significant progress we are making in delivering our strategic vision as a new kind of excellent university.”

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## UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

Northumbria is a research-intensive university that unlocks potential for all, changing lives regionally, nationally and internationally.

Two thirds of Northumbria's undergraduate students come from the North East region and go into employment in the region when they graduate, demonstrating Northumbria's significant contribution to social mobility and levelling up in the North East of England.

Find out more about us at [www.northumbria.ac.uk](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk)

--- Please contact [media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk) with any media enquiries or interview requests ---

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