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## A pathway to university – regardless of background

**A learning centre designed to help young people from under-represented backgrounds in Newcastle progress into higher education has supported more than 1,200 students in the past year.**

Set up in 2021, the **Into**University Newcastle East Centre is a partnership between Northumbria and Newcastle Universities and [IntoUniversity](#) – the UK's largest university access charity. Based at the Monkchester Community Centre in Newcastle's east end, the learning centre provides young people aged between 7-18 with academic support, soft-skill development and

experience of the world of work – all aimed at inspiring them to achieve.

According to its 2022/23 annual report, **Into**University Newcastle East worked with 1,283 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds – providing them with advice, guidance and a way to progress into higher education or another chosen aspiration. This represents a significant increase on the 884 students supported through the Centre in its first year of operation. And impressively, the average progression rate into higher education for students supported at the Monkchester Centre is currently 74%. This compares with national average progression rates for students from local authority-maintained schools of 44% – and just 12% locally.

Professor Andy Long, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria said: “A key plank of our strategy at Northumbria is to offer life-changing opportunities through social mobility, so to see how many students we are now working with through **Into**University Newcastle East, and their positive progression rates, is incredibly rewarding. Up to 40% of our undergraduates come from traditionally under-represented backgrounds, which is a record of which we are incredibly proud. Our **Into**University collaboration, together with a number of other outreach programmes with schools and colleges in the region and beyond, clearly demonstrates our commitment to young people and enabling them to engage with higher education.”

Across the UK **Into**University centres have supported more than 52,000 young people in the past year.

In her introduction to the latest report **Into**University Chief Executive Officer Dr Rachel Carr OBE said: “Our collaborative work has become ever more important as the long-term impacts of the pandemic are becoming increasingly clear, in particular on those from the least advantaged backgrounds. The educational challenges following the pandemic are not going away for our young people; it is crucial that we continue to work with our partners to ensure that our support remains impactful and that we adapt where necessary to meet emerging challenges and opportunities.”

Maximising the value of working in partnership with **Into**University is part of the [Collaborative Newcastle Universities Agreement](#), which brings together the world-leading expertise and collective power at Newcastle and Northumbria Universities to support the health, wealth and wellbeing of our local communities.

Among a range of social mobility initiatives, Northumbria also encourages partners to donate through its [Higher Education Without Barriers Fund](#). This provides financial support, mental health and wellbeing services and community-based projects to make participation in higher education more achievable for academically talented students regardless of their social or economic circumstances.

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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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