



: Six of the seven successful EBM Students: Front L-R - John Nichols and Lydia Willis. Mid row L-R - Alex Colby and Samantha Bright. Back L-R - Georgie Smith and Sam McDermid.

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Aspiring entrepreneurs accelerate towards success

Seven Northumbria University students are celebrating after securing places on three of the UK's most competitive business accelerator programmes to help their fledgling enterprises thrive.

The group of undergraduates are currently studying Entrepreneurial Business Management (EBM) at Northumbria. The course focuses on independent, real world learning, with teams working together to launch their own businesses

and learn from their successes and mistakes.

Commercial ideas are developed as a central aspect of the course and the students are encouraged to explore how to manage and grow their businesses independently.

They have recently been also introduced to local accelerator programmes. These are independent organisations and schemes geared up to support aspiring entrepreneurs to launch their own businesses in the local area.

Competition for places is fierce. To win one of the hotly contested spots Northumbria's EBM students had to pitch their business plan to a selection committee and demonstrate they had the commitment, ambition and drive to make the most of any opportunity presented, and that the business idea they were responsible for had solid prospects for growth and success.

Peter Pease, part-time entrepreneurship coach, lecturer and entrepreneur in residence says: "An accelerator programme is like an intensive boot camp for business start-ups. As the name suggests, they are aimed at helping accelerate the development of a new company.

"We are thrilled that so many of our student entrepreneurs used their initiative and successfully applied to these programmes and are getting involved with the North East's thriving start-up community. Budding entrepreneurs need access to finance, mentoring and essential resources in order to succeed. Through the accelerator schemes, they will be connected with experienced entrepreneurs in their area and link to other resources and guidance that give ventures the fuel that they need to thrive.

"The programmes are very competitive, so to see our students so well represented in terms of intake is very exciting. Their experiential learning on the EBM course combined with the support of their coaches meant they were able to demonstrate to the selection panel that they had all the required qualities and knowledge to stand out against the competition. I am looking forward to hearing about their experiences and wish them every success."

The successful students are joining programmes organised and run by Ignite and Entrepreneurial Spark. Ignite is a nationwide start-up support and investment network. Its Newcastle base is Campus North, considered one of

the best co-working and event spaces for tech meetups, start-ups and established businesses in Europe.

Entrepreneurial Spark, which also has hubs across the country, is the world's largest free people accelerator for early stage and growing ventures.

Samantha Bright, 23, from Durham, is an EBM student who has secured a place on two different programmes, the Ignite pre-accelerator at Campus North and Entrepreneurial Spark. Her business, 'Alco-pop' (www.alco-pop.co.uk) is in its initial stages and will offer a range of alcoholic lollies and humbugs as a unique sweet treat for adults.

She was thrilled to find that her application had been so successful. She says: "I didn't want to start a business and feel isolated; I wanted to have access to help whenever I felt that I needed it. My course has been invaluable as I have worked through the early stages with my company and my long-term objective is to build it up and continue it way beyond graduation. The connections I make and experience I gain through these programmes will help this happen for me."

Jonny Forsey, 22, originally from Somerset, has won a place on the Entrepreneurial Spark Sprint programme. His idea, an exclusive club targeting founders of companies and aimed at establishing a worldwide network and instantly recognisable brand, is something he has complete faith in and is developing on his University Course. He says:

"This is just one more exciting opportunity that I've accessed through the EBM course thanks to the support of the incredible mentors and coaches we get to work with."

The Entrepreneurial Business Management (EBM) course at Northumbria University is ideal for students who are keen to start and run their own business or businesses of all shapes and sizes. The programme is based on a Finnish model of education, called Team Academy, and Northumbria was one of three UK universities to pioneer this approach in the UK.

The EBM course is part of Northumbria's award-winning Newcastle Business School; recognised as Business School of the Year in 2015 and more recently, the first North East Business School to win the Small Business Charter for

services to SMEs. Newcastle Business School at Northumbria University is globally recognised for delivering some of the best business management education in the UK. You can learn more about available courses, including the EBM course, at www.northumbria.ac.uk/study-at-northumbria.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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