



Northumbria University will confer honorary degrees to 11 distinguished individuals at its summer graduation ceremonies this July.

Jun 30, 2025 12:31 BST

Inspiring individuals to be awarded Honorary Degrees by Northumbria University

In recognition of their outstanding achievements, Northumbria University will confer honorary degrees to 11 distinguished individuals at its summer graduation ceremonies this July.

Lady Edwina Grosvenor, a criminologist, philanthropist and renowned prison reformer, will receive the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, in recognition of her

outstanding contributions to justice system reform. A Northumbria University graduate, Lady Edwina has spent more than two decades leading change within the criminal justice system, most recently through the pioneering Hope Street project and her charity One Small Thing. Her work reflects a deep commitment to trauma-informed support for women and children in the justice system, and she continues to influence national policy as a member of the Women's Justice Board.



Jason Cook, a celebrated comedian, writer, and charity founder, will be awarded the degree of Doctor of Letters, for his exceptional career in comedy and his ongoing support of creative talent and charitable initiatives in the North East. Best known for creating the BBC comedy *Hebburn* and founding the regionally rooted Schnoobert Productions, Jason is also the founder of the Laffs4Kids charity, which has collected over 100,000 Christmas gifts for

disadvantaged children through an annual arena comedy show.



Further notable individuals to receive honorary titles at the July graduation ceremonies include:

- Dr Beverley Prevatt Goldstein, a pioneering academic and activist whose work has championed equality and Black history in the North East.
- Mark Henderson, a visionary leader whose transformative work as Chief Executive of Home Group has reshaped housing and care across the UK.
- Nicola Elliott, an inspirational entrepreneur and wellbeing

- advocate who has transformed the wellness industry while supporting mental health, sustainability, and young innovators.
- Professor Richard Wilkinson, a pioneering social epidemiologist whose groundbreaking research has transformed global understanding of how inequality harms health and society.
 - General Dame Sharon Nesmith DCB, a trailblazing military leader whose historic career has modernised the British Army and inspired a new generation, especially women, in defence and leadership.
 - Robert Lemkin, an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose groundbreaking work—most notably *Enemies of the People*—has uncovered hidden truths, challenged global injustices, and inspired a new generation of storytellers.
 - Lucy Winskell OBE, a civic leader whose tireless work has strengthened regional partnerships and championed opportunity across the North East.
 - Caroline Paige MBE and Craig Jones MBE, courageous trailblazers who co-founded the Fighting with Pride charity, leading transformative advocacy that has helped create a more inclusive and just British Armed Forces for LGBTQ+ service members.

Each year, honorary degrees are awarded to individuals who have obtained the very highest standards of scholarship, outstanding achievement, or distinction worthy of national or international recognition in their academic or professional field.

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

--- Please contact media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk with any media enquiries or interview requests ---

Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences
rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk