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Prestigious award win for top health and safety talent

A Northumbria University student has been named the best in the UK for occupational health and safety studies at the highly competitive and prestigious NEBOSH awards.

NEBOSH – the National Examination Board for Occupational Safety and Health – provides a wide range of professionally recognised qualifications for those working in the health and safety, environmental awareness and management sectors, as part of their continuing professional development.

Northumbria University has offered NEBOSH courses for almost 30 years, training hundreds of students on the latest developments in these vital areas.

Sophie Donnison was awarded the national Best Candidate award after completing the two-year NEBOSH National Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety at Northumbria.

When Sophie first enrolled on the course, she was a Health and Safety Supervisor at Cummins - a global power technology leader in manufacturing engines and generators. Following her successful completion of the course, which was fully funded by her employer, she was promoted to the position of Health and Safety Lead.

She said: "Without this diploma, I wouldn't have been able to progress to the role I'm in now and I'm so grateful to have been given the opportunity to advance in my field. I have been working towards this since joining Cummins in 2015 and, like many of my colleagues who have also gained this qualification, it was a natural progression for me."

This was Sophie's second time studying at Northumbria, as she first obtained her undergraduate degree in Environmental Health from the University in 2013.

Commenting on her experience, Sophie said: "Studying for the diploma was challenging. You have to fully commit to the work, but the support from Northumbria was fantastic. My tutors were always happy and willing to help, and the course materials went a long way.

"I couldn't believe it when I found out about the award. It is the highest accolade you can achieve in the health and safety field, and there were thousands of people on the course. It is a really proud moment of mine."

Mick Cairns, Health, Safety and Environment Leader at Cummins added: "Having completed this qualification myself I know it is a very tough course, but Sophie's hard work, dedication and determination led to her Best Candidate award. I am very pleased and proud of her achievement."

Sophie Donnison and Head of NEBOSH programmes at Northumbria University, Dr Michael Deary.

[Dr Michael Deary](#), Associate Professor in Northumbria's [Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences](#), and Head of NEBOSH Programmes at the University congratulated Sophie, saying: "I have witnessed Sophie's remarkable academic journey, beginning with her outstanding performance in our BSc Environmental Health degree programme where she achieved a first-class degree. Enrolling on our NEBOSH Diploma course, Sophie continued to demonstrate exceptional ability, particularly in the 'Hazardous Substances' unit, where she achieved a remarkable 93%.

"The entire course team is absolutely delighted for Sophie and it has been a pleasure to have her as a student at Northumbria. Her dedication, resilience, and academic excellence sets an inspiring example for all, and also demonstrates the tangible rewards that come from a steadfast commitment to learning.

Northumbria University began offering the NEBOSH Certificate in 1996 and has since expanded its range to include the NEBOSH Diploma. The courses are offered in a variety of attendance modes, including part-time, distance learning and block study. Northumbria also offers IEMA Approved courses in Carbon Accounting, and the IEMA Certified Foundation Course in Environmental Management.

For more information on the full range of NEBOSH courses offered by Northumbria University, please visit the [Continuing Professional Development page](#).

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

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