NSCG

NEWCASTLE AND STAFFORD COLLEGES GROUP



Ofsted Outstanding Provider Since 2019

Honours Programme

Your future. No limits.

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If you're achieving great results and have the ability, drive and ambition to go on to study at a highly selective university such as those in the Russell Group, our Honours Programme will help you realise your ambitions.

To study this additional programme alongside your A Levels, you'll need a profile of mainly grades 9-7 in your GSCEs and a willingness to put in the work. Good grades alone are not enough to secure a place at a top university, you have to stand out from the crowd and the Honours Programme can help you do just that.

As Staffordshire's leading college and one of the highest performing further education colleges in the county, NSCG has a long-established reputation for delivering excellent education and training and we are also the only college locally with an Outstanding Ofsted rating across all areas.

At NSCG, we endeavour to ensure all students have access to outstanding learning environments and enrichment experiences like no other, equipping you with the skills and knowledge to exceed your potential.

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For students who show particular academic aptitude and ambition, our Honours Programme can help you to submit successful applications to some of the country's most selective and prestigious universities, including those in the Russell Group and progress onto highly competitive courses such as medicine and veterinary science.

This additional pathway requires significant extra commitment. But you get out of it what you put in and the benefits far outweigh the effort.

Once accepted, you'll get involved in extra and super-curricular activities, such as visits to top universities including Oxford and Cambridge and have the opportunity to expand your thinking with additional weekly tutorials.

You will develop vital critical thinking skills, further your knowledge and expand your horizon as you improve your chances of achieving a place at a world-class university.

Your future starts here.

Craig Hodgson, Principal & Chief Executive, NSCG

Adam Pritchard

Why did you decide to join the Honours Programme?

The main motivation for me to join the Honours Programme was the opportunities it offers throughout your time at college.

I hoped to gain better understanding about competitive university courses and extra advice about my university application.

I wanted the programme to help me decide on what university and what course was right for me through the exclusive trips, sessions and guest speaker opportunities.

What opportunities has being a part of the Honours Programme given you?

Being a part of the Honors Programme has given me plenty of opportunities to explore my options after college. By going on a trip to oxford university and hearing guest speakers, I could make my decision more easily for my next steps.

I have realised that the main thing for me is that I enjoy university life and I am studying in a place that I know I will thrive in.

Speaking to lots of different people has helped me choose what is right for me. Hearing opposing opinions and seeing different institutions allowed me to weigh up my options and choose the place that I will enjoy studying the most.

What has been the biggest challenge?

The biggest challenge for me has been not knowing where I want to study in the future.

I have had a lot of different people give me advice on where I should go, but I had to weigh up all this advice and choose what was right for me; after a lot of deliberation, I know I have made the right choice.

What advice would you give to others looking to apply to the Honours Programme?

If you are considering becoming a part of the Honors Programme, I say just go for it.

Whether you are unsure about where to go or have a clear idea, the programme will help you choose what is best for you.



> “The biggest reward was the support to apply to university with the strongest application I could.”

Adam Pritchard

A member of both the honours programme and the hockey team, Adam juggled his academic and sporting commitments, alongside making the most of every enrichment opportunity.

He attended sessions with guest speakers and trips to a variety of top-level universities, including Oxford, in order to find the best destination for his next steps.

Committed to finding a place where he could thrive, Adam took the time to evaluate every possible pathway, and having successfully achieved four A*s, secured a place at the University of Sheffield to study General Engineering.

Previous School
Madeley School

Course(s)
A Levels in Maths (A*), Further Maths (A*), Physics (A*) & Chemistry (A*)

Destination
University of Sheffield to study General Engineering

You bring the ambition.

We'll bring the rest.

Aim high. The Honours Programme is an initiative specially designed to help stretch and challenge you with additional timetabled enrichment activities, workshops and lectures.

The Honours Programme is led by Dr Laura Brennan. Laura holds a PhD from Keele University and brings over 20 years of academic and pastoral experience.

Her research into barriers to realising educational aspirations informs her student lectures to help our students reach their academic potential.







NSCG Stafford student Chloe Harris celebrates her achievement of the Honours Programme Award at our annual Celebration Awards.

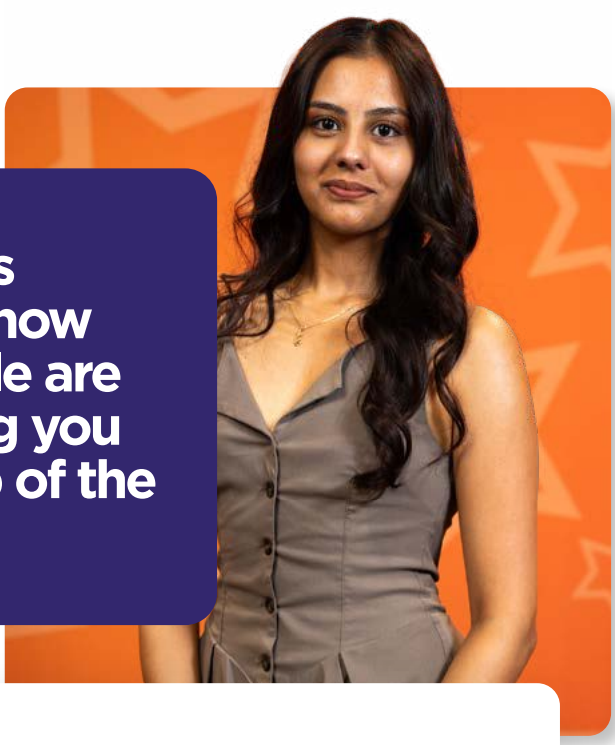


Students test their problem solving skills with team building challenges at Gradbach Mill, kickstarting their Honours Programme journey!

You can expect:

- Launch and team building event at Gradbach Mill in the Peak District.
- Participation in the prestigious Cambridge University HE+ programme.
- Subject-led initiatives such as the Chemistry and Physics Olympiads, Cambridge Economics Challenge and Cambridge Chemistry Race.
- Specialist workshops in Medicine and Veterinary Science.
- Visits to universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Warwick, Lancaster and Durham.
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Opportunity to study Latin (subject to sufficient interest and staff availability).

> “It feels good to know that people are supporting you every step of the way.”



Avani Mittal

Avani consistently challenged herself both academically and personally while at NSCG, pursuing every opportunity to broaden her knowledge, develop new skills and gain valuable industry experience.

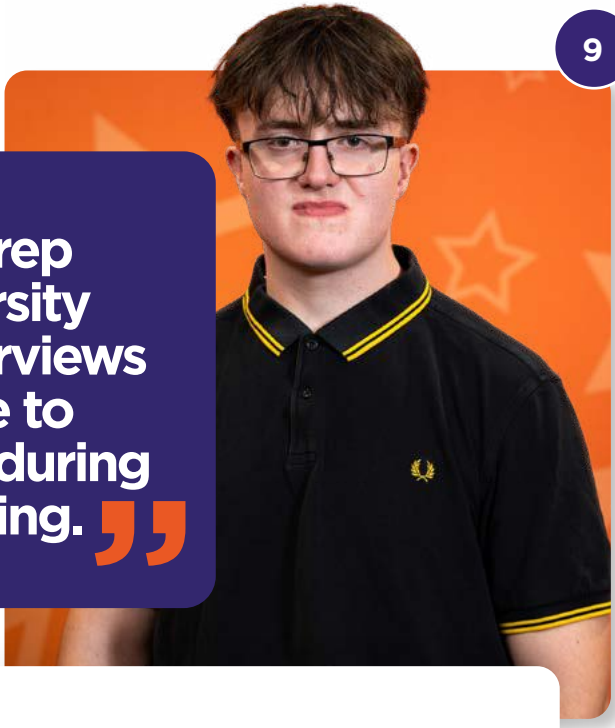
Alongside her studies, Avani independently completed an impressive range of work experience and super-curricular opportunities, including programmes with Elevate Her Aviation, Bird Bellows Plc and Airbus.

A class representative and a Student of the Month, Avani proactively pursued both university and degree apprenticeship opportunities and successfully secured a prestigious Level 6 Degree Apprenticeship with BAE Systems in Aerospace Engineering.

Previous School
Excel Academy

Course(s)
A Levels in Physics (A), Maths (A), Further Maths (A), BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Engineering (Distinction*) & EPQ (A*)

Destination
BAE Systems to study a Degree Apprenticeship in Aerospace Engineering



> “The prep and university mock interviews helped me to stay calm during the real thing.”

Caiden Yates

Fully committed to pursuing a career in Veterinary Medicine, Caiden embraced every opportunity to expand his scientific knowledge and understanding of the profession.

He explored topics surrounding animal welfare, sustainability and veterinary ethics, including a Cambridge-sponsored HE+ research project investigating thane-reducing feed additives for cattle.

Involvement in the Royal Society of Chemistry Schools Analyst Competition and a Silver Award in the prestigious Cambridge Chemistry Challenge strengthened his ambition to study Veterinary Medicine at St Catherine’s College, Cambridge University.

Previous School
The Kidsgrove Secondary School

Course(s)
A Levels in Biology (A*), Chemistry (A*) & Physics (A*)

Destination
St Catherine’s College, Cambridge University to study Veterinary Medicine

Super-Curric
Study Journ



Everything we do on the Honours Programme is about equipping you with the skills and knowledge needed to progress to the next level.

Good grades alone aren't enough so you will be expected to document your experiences in a specially designed study journal which will be provided by the College.

This ensures that you are keeping a record of each enrichment activity you take part in and that you are reflecting on and evaluating your experiences as they occur, which will provide vital support when the time comes to prepare your all-important UCAS application.

University Links HE+

As part of the Honours Programme, you'll have the opportunity to take part in HE+, a collaborative project run by the prestigious University of Cambridge.

HE+ will introduce you to super-curricular activities, academic extension classes and a research competition, as well as an opportunity to visit Cambridge at the end of the year.

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Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

EPQ is an A Level standard, stand-alone qualification designed to extend and develop your abilities beyond the A Level syllabus and prepare you for university or your future career.

Taking part in the EPQ gives you the opportunity to complete an independent project worth up to 28 UCAS points and more importantly, helps to develop the vital independent study and research skills that are valued in Higher Education.

You will plan and carry out research on a subject of your choice, which will then be used to produce a 5,000-word academic report or artefact.

The investigation, structure and composition of the project is all down to you, but you will have the support of teaching staff who will teach you research and project management skills and offer expert feedback and guidance, enabling you to fully embrace this super-curricular initiative.

There are very few limitations on the angle you can take which provides an excellent opportunity to focus the EPQ on your personal interests, future degree or career plans. Helping your university application to stand out is at the heart of the Honours Programme and being able to demonstrate a genuine passion for your subject that goes beyond the classroom will allow you to develop your personal statement when the time comes.

Completing an EPQ is highly recommended for A Level students hoping to go to Oxford, Cambridge or any of the Russell Group universities. These top institutions encourage applicants to undertake the programme as it helps to develop the critical and independent study and research skills needed for a successful transition into university.

Evie Wallace

What made you want to join the Honours Programme?

My friend told me about the Honours Programme and I had the grades required so I applied.

I thought it would mean I would recieve more support when applying to university in general, and hoped it would help my application stand out to Russell Group Universities.

What opportunities has being a part of the Honours Programme given you?

Within the first year of being on the Honours Programme I was invited onto a residential trip where I was able to stay overnight at a College at the University of Oxford.

This trip helped to inspire my final UCAS application as it was originally not a university that I was considering.

What support have you received?

I've had significantly more support with my university application as the groups are much smaller.

What has been the biggest challenge?

The biggest challenge has been the process of applying to universities.

Having to balance admissions tests, personal statement drafts and all other areas of my application, all whilst mocks were happening has been particularly challenging, but securing my place at Wadham College has been the biggest reward.

What advice would you give to others looking to apply to the Honours Programme?

Absolutely apply for it! It's extremely useful in many different aspects, especially if you're considering applying to top universities such as Oxbridge or Russell Groups.

It gives so many unique opportunities to put on your personal statement and plenty of time for 1:1 feedback on university applications.

Whatever you choose, the Honours Programme allows you to apply with the best and strongest application you can.



> “The Honours Programme gave me an insight into life at Oxbridge and helped me set a target to aim for.”

Evie Wallace

Evie distinguished herself as one of the most academically gifted students at Stafford College, and strived to make the most of every enrichment opportunity at NSCG.

Her exceptional aptitude for critical thinking consistently impressed tutors, and her EPQ which explored the impact of smart materials on engineering practice further highlighted her analytical ability.

Evie's passion for engineering has driven her to embrace a wide range of enrichment opportunities and her dedication, intelligence and passion for learning have secured her progression to Wadham College at the University of Oxford, to study Chemical Engineering.

Previous School
The Hart School

Course(s)
A Levels in Maths (A*), Physics (A*), Chemistry (A*) & EPQ (A*)

Destination
Wadham College, University of Oxford to study Chemical Engineering

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As part of the Honours Programme, we're all about providing experiences to give you the best skills and help you stand out from the crowd.

We're here to push you to be the best you can be - take a look at just a few of the many things that our students enjoyed during their time with us on the Honours Programme.

Honours Programme students hear presentations about the benefits of studying at Oxford and Cambridge.





Our A Level Honours Programme students this week visited the brand new Harper & Keele Veterinary School.

Search for 'NSCG Newcastle' or 'NSCG Stafford' to find us on socials.

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Honours Programme students become 2026 Celebration Award winners!



High-flying Honours Programme alumni returns to inspire students.



Honours Programme student Adam Pritchard, named Young Hero at Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Borough Hero Awards.



Four lucky Honours Programme students celebrate a big win in our annual essay writing competition.



Select A Level and Honours Programme students gained exclusive access to the Question Time set to take part in an exciting Q&A with host, Fiona Bruce.

Propel you

Honours Programme students realise their ambition to achieve a place at high performing universities.

The Honours Programme can help you stand out from the crowd, many of our Honours Programme students step up to top universities or move into a competitive programme, making it the perfect pathway for ambitious and high-achieving students.

Everything we do in the Honours Programme is about equipping you with the skills and experience that will really make the difference as our consistently high success rates with Oxbridge, medicine, law and veterinary applications prove.



Holly Smith

Previous School: Madeley School
Course(s): A Levels in Biology (A*), Psychology (A*) & Chemistry (A)
Destination: Keele University to study Medicine

" The Honours Programme gave me some of my best NSCG memories. "

r potential.



Emily Platt

Previous School: Trentham Academy
Course(s): A Levels in Maths (A*), History (A*), Poltics (A) & Further Maths (B)
Destination: University of Cambridge to study Law

" The standard of teaching is so high and tutors provide an excellent work environment. "

Daryan Othman

Previous School: Madeley High School
Course(s): A Levels in Computing (A), Maths (A*), Further Maths (A), Physics (A*) & EPS (A)
Destination: Mansfield College, University of Oxford to study



" The Honours Programme staff have really gone above and beyond to support me. "

How to apply.



Places on the Honours Programme are strictly limited. If your GCSE results identify you as a qualifying student, you will be contacted and invited to apply just before the autumn half-term and the programme begins immediately afterwards.

For more information visit **nscg.ac.uk/honours** or email **honours@nscg.ac.uk**

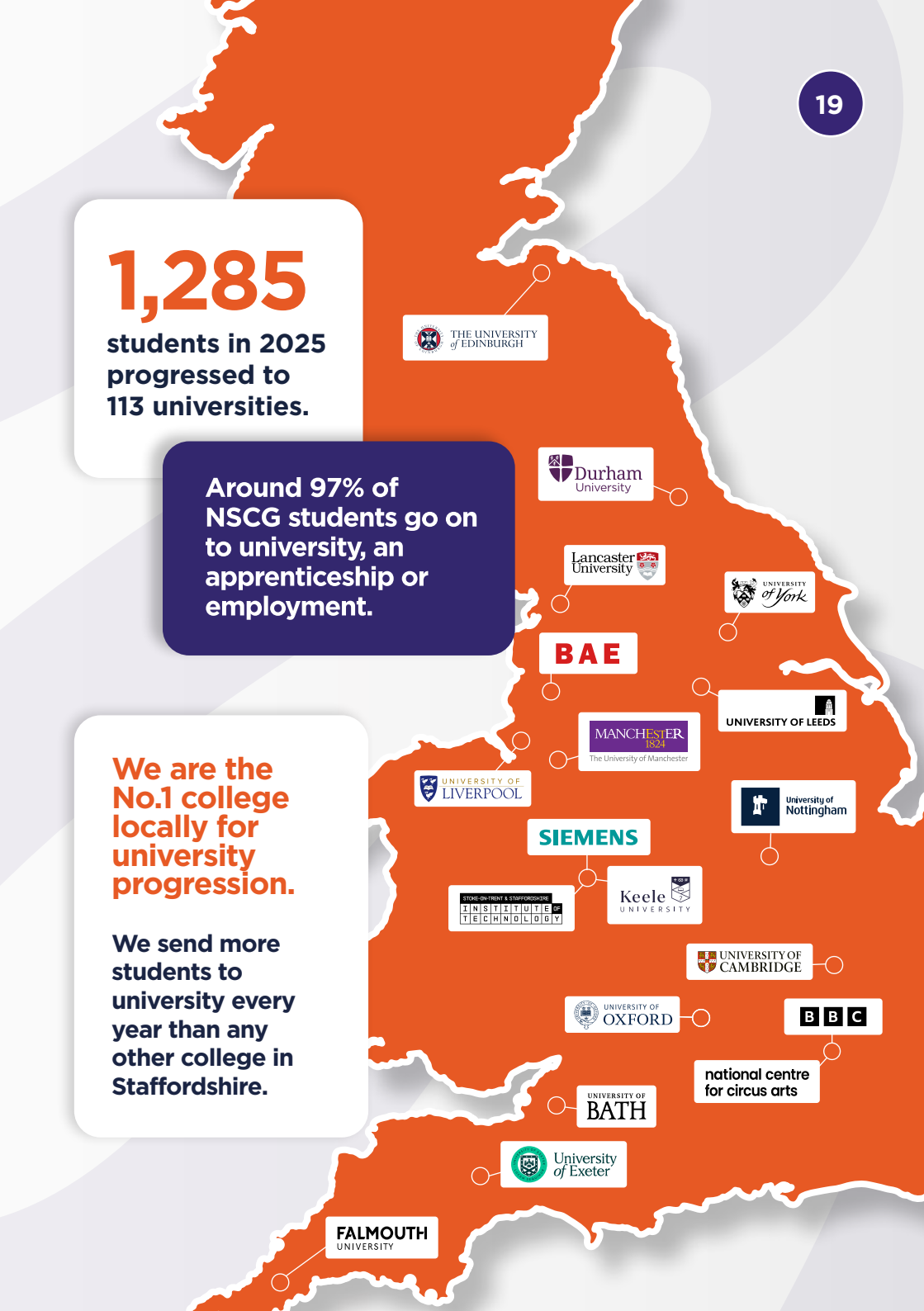
1,285

students in 2025 progressed to 113 universities.

Around 97% of NSCG students go on to university, an apprenticeship or employment.

We are the No.1 college locally for university progression.

We send more students to university every year than any other college in Staffordshire.



nscg.ac.uk

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The small print: The information contained within our prospectus is correct at the time of going to print. For all the latest information it is best to check our website.

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