CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

LEARNING TOGETHER
Partnership with HMP Lowdham Grange.

GENERAL ELECTION
Why did Britain’s youth feel motivated to vote in 2017?

GRADUATION
Advice from our 2017 graduates.

EMPLOYABILITY
What can you do to get ahead?
Welcome to the new academic year. For those who have recently joined NTU, I hope you are settling in well and are looking forward to getting involved in all we have to offer. Returning students, I hope you enjoyed your summer break and are looking forward to a rewarding year.

This edition of So… has a focus on civic engagement. It is important that we all take a moment to consider the wider community and those living in it, and how we can help them. As a student, you will have a wide variety of opportunities to get involved with activities across the School and outside of NTU through volunteering, service learning, and placements. I would encourage you to take part in as much as you can as these are all extremely beneficial to both your future and the wider community.

Throughout the magazine, we will showcase some great examples of civic engagement and success stories from the School of Social Sciences and Nottingham Institute of Education. We will also catch up with some recent alumni and colleagues from across the School, and feature interesting developments and the latest research for the School and NTU.

I hope this edition of So… will inspire and encourage you to make the most of your time with us, and make you feel proud to be part of the School of Social Sciences.

We wish you every success over the year ahead.

Kathie Moore
Dean of Social Sciences
During the early hours of Friday 31 March, NTU student and off-duty Special Constable Sam Coffey, 21, was returning home following a social evening with friends when he noticed a man who appeared to be in great distress on the streets of Nottingham City Centre.

Sam quickly realised that the male was profusely bleeding from his wrist area and wasted no time in rushing to his aid – utilising his emergency first aid skills and experience in an attempt to stem the bleeding.

Speaking after the incident, the volunteer police officer said: “I think you've saved my life tonight”, the reality of what I had just done then kicked in.”

Special Constable Coffey’s actions didn’t end there – he remained with the male throughout the entire incident despite having a lecture the following morning.

Special Constable Coffey continued: “I realised I had university that same day but I was keen on ensuring the safety and well-being of the male. I remained with him until he received treatment and it was confirmed that he was well enough to leave the hospital, despite not saving the Queen’s Medical Centre until around 4 am myself.”

Sam’s actions and quick-thinking on the morning of the incident undoubtedly saved the man’s life.

Recognising such bravery and heroic actions, Chief Inspector Shaun O’Reilly, Head of the Forces’ Citizens in Policing Department, added: “The commitment of our volunteers never ceases to amaze me and there’s no doubt that Sam’s training that he received as a Special Constable kicked in on this occasion.

“Sam did a fantastic job in saving this person’s life and that is something in which he should be commended for.”

NTU lecturer scoops award for outstanding contribution to her field

Senior Lecturer Sarah Davies has won an award for her outstanding contribution to the field of design and technology education.

Sarah, who teaches on both undergraduate and postgraduate initial teacher education courses based in Nottingham Institute of Education, was presented with the Outstanding Contribution to Design and Technology Education Award at a ceremony in London on 29 March.

The award is one of 12 handed out as part of the Design and Technology Association’s annual Excellence Awards, which recognise the commitment and achievements of teachers, teacher trainers, education consultants and academics across primary and secondary schools and further and higher education.

Dr Julie Nugent, Chief Executive of the Design and Technology Association, recognised Sarah’s achievement, saying: “Sarah is to be congratulated on her well-deserved award, and celebrated for going above and beyond what might be expected in her contributions to supporting the subject of design and technology. We know that employers across the advanced manufacturing and creative industries are already concerned about the real shortage of engineers and designers and we need more people like Sarah to inspire future generations.”

Nominated and voted for by peers in the education sector, the Design and Technology Association’s Excellence Awards are open to the 11,000-strong membership and non-members across England and Wales.

Sarah said: “I am so pleased to receive the award for teacher education. I am passionate about all things to do with design and technology, and I have had the good fortune to work with an inspirational team, within the Nottingham Institute of Education.”

Dr Jane Moore, Director of Nottingham Institute of Education, added: “This is a fantastic achievement and we are extremely proud that Sarah’s superb commitment to Design and Technology education has been recognised in this way.”

NTU students win Posters in Parliament best poster prize

The fifth Posters in Parliament exhibition gave MPs an insight into the innovative research undertaken by university undergraduates across the UK.

Hilary Benn, Bini Bradshaw and Caroline Lucas were among the MPs who attended the event on Tuesday 14 March. The annual exhibition at Westminster is part of the British Conference of Undergraduate Research, an open coalition of universities dedicated to encouraging a national culture of research at undergraduate level.

The exhibition showcased the work of 52 students from 27 universities. Each year prizes are awarded to the best posters. The judging panel is made up of leaders in the higher education and research sectors.

The best poster prize was awarded to Robert Clark and Christopher Galvin from NTU, whose research poster focused on: Entrepreneurship in the Informal Economy: The Role of Migrant Communities. They said: “We’re delighted to have won. This prize has real personal significance to us: we both come from a military background so this has proved how we have successfully transitioned our professional experience into academia. Our research was informed by our passions and in particular the volunteering we did in the local Nottingham community so it feels incredibly important to have shared this positive impact to MPL.”

Caroline Lucas MP (Brighton) said: “Posters in Parliament is a great way of communicating complex research to a great way for MPs to interact with students’ research. I was just shown a piece of complicated research which I’m sure I would have struggled to understand without such a clear poster and explanation by the student.”

Robert Clark and Christopher Galvin
What is Nottingham Civic Exchange?

Nottingham Civic Exchange (NCE) is a new initiative for Nottingham. Housed at NTU, it is a resource to connect people and to look at social and economic issues in new and challenging ways. NCE will draw on the expertise, resources and networks of NTU to ensure our work is grounded in research and relevant to city and regional partners.

Initially NCE will focus on issues and challenges directly related to its place of origin. We will work in a collaborative way to identify solutions. This means we will act as the facilitator for conversations, projects and action on a citizen, city and regional level. We will do this by gathering evidence, providing space for debate and coalescing partners around projects and initiatives that make a difference.

Launch event

On Thursday 15 June, Nottingham Civic Exchange was launched with an event at Nottingham Trent University.

The think tank’s “Exploring the lives of ordinary working families” report was shared at its launch event.

The report revealed the average income for families “earned low to medium salaries: 16% compared to the UK average of 20%. Combined, earnings of household income. It encompasses practical matters around access to housing and education alongside less immediately tangible concerns, such as financial resilience. Although the terminology used by commentators, researchers and politicians may vary, the core issues appear similar.

Crucially, and despite headline economic growth, households on median incomes experience increased vulnerability. This combines objective shifts in the labour market with subjective feelings arising from a range of perceived threats. There is a growing realisation that the resulting impact upon the lives of ordinary working families – in terms of security of income and stability of living standards – has been neglected in government policy. The focus on the poorest and the wealthiest has, it is argued, left this group feeling excluded. As the aftermath of the Great Recession is brought to a close, this exclusion is having a pronounced influence on political discourse.

Nonetheless, the voices of those living within these families are seldom heard within the discussion.

Bringing local voices into the policy arena is one of the core contributions that NCE will make across a range of contemporary issues. As a place-based think tank, NCE will illuminate and inform national policy debates – starting with the challenges facing Ordinary Working Families – from the perspectives of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Find out more about Nottingham Civic Exchange

www.ntu.ac.uk/nce

Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families

Launched in March 2016, the Centre aims to bridge the gap between academic research and the services and experiences of Nottingham’s children and families.

We help people in our community with burning questions or ideas they want to test out or evaluate, by connecting them with NTU experts, who can then work alongside them to find funding and set-up research projects.

The Centre has approximately 100 members from across the School and has so far engaged community groups, local authorities, voluntary organisations, and charities in early years services, police outreach strategies in schools, street harassment, language development strategies, therapeutic pets, adoption, young voters and skateboarding.

Secondary School students’ experiences of street harassment: one year on

From a question by an eleven-year-old in December 2015 to a preliminary research project involving three UK secondary schools in summer 2016, the Centre for Children, Young People and Families are now organising an ESRC Festival of Social Science event, and people are getting to know about the work.

Five NTU academics (psychology, social work, law, education and linguistics) have been out to schools in the East Midlands and London areas to analyse street harassment reports from 115 young people. Two school student focus groups, and two senior school staff interviews.

The research team were also successful in recruiting a SPUR student (undergraduate researcher) to help with the analysis in summer 2016. The work has been presented at conferences in the UK, the US and Portugal, and a summary will be put to journal articles ready for peer review.

The House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee published correspondence about the research summer 2016, as part of their inquiry into sexual harassment and sexual violence in UK schools. Police forces in the UK have heard about the study at a Safer for Women event in September 2016, and activist groups have been asking for training to support children and young people who have experienced street harassment. The team is seeking external funding for a larger research project to continue this work. A local youth theatre group were recruited to be part of a film about the research, which will be premiered at an ESRC Festival of Social Science event on Wednesday 8 November 2017.

Visit bit.ly/ntuesrcfestival for more information on the event.

Street Harassment of School Students: awareness and risk

Come along after school for a film discussion and ‘workshop’ on why street harassment is a burning question or idea.

Street harassment is any unwanted behaviour that occurs in public. It can be sexist, racist, homophobic, agedist, physical, or verbal abuse of others. Following research by academics at Nottingham Trent University from psychology, social work, law, education and linguistics, you can help the team understand how secondary school students have experienced street harassment.

With your help, and that of students from participating schools, we will be drawing up policy recommendations for our local and national contacts about why street harassment matters. We are particularly interested in raising awareness of the harm that street harassment can do to young people, and thinking about how young people can manage street harassment situations.

This is a sensitive subject to discuss, and we are aware that there are lots of people who have experienced some form of street harassment.

We will keep the event enjoyable but recognise the seriousness of what we are exploring together.

The ESRC festival event is to present the research, watch the film, discuss the issues and draw up points to take forward to key strategic leads including politicians, police, social workers and local authority youth workers. There will also be hot and cold refreshments, so sign up early.

The event will have flyers and posters designed by young people from the participating schools for young people, and we are hoping it will also be partly run by the young people too. The NTU Progression Team have also agreed to advertise for a local young person to work with the centre during the week of the festival event to gain work experience. All this because we listened to a young person ask why she was experiencing street harassment.

Visit www.ntu.ac.uk/ncycyp to discover more.
Against this backdrop, NTU has recently engaged in a ‘Learning Together’ partnership with HMP Lowdham Grange. ‘Learning Together’ is a programme that enables people serving prison sentences and higher education students to study alongside each other. At the time of writing there are in the region of 20 prison/University ‘Learning Together’ partnerships operating in England and Wales. NTU’s first Learning Together pilot programme was delivered between January and March 2017 and brought together 12 NTU students from BA (Hons) Criminology and BA (Hons) Education and 10 prison learners from HMP Lowdham Grange to explore the concepts of criminal justice and social justice.

Students received lectures from colleagues across academia and practice, including guest lectures from Professor Nick Hardwick (Ex Chief Inspectors of Prisons and current Chair of the Parole Board), and Dr Amy Ludlow (Co-founder of Learning Together, University of Cambridge).

The end of the programme culminated in a ‘graduation’ event that was witnessed by an audience made up of internal and external stakeholders, including dignitaries, family, friends and local radio. The ‘graduating’ students had the opportunity to present the key aspects of their learning and their personal reflections of this innovative and unique project. All students received a certificate to confirm their participation in the programme.

Having completed this first pilot, what have been our academic and personal reflections? Professionally, Learning Together has been one of the most rewarding – and challenging – projects we have been involved with. By itself, however, this tells us little about the potential transformative nature of Learning Together. A key question therefore is whether or not Learning Together is worth doing, particularly in the context of citizenship and civic engagement.

As part of the programme, a parallel research study was undertaken with Learning Together students across both institutions. Analysis is ongoing, but our initial findings of the qualitative data would suggest that bringing different socially constructed groups together can promote a demystification and ‘de-othering’ of people whose worlds may ordinarily not collide. Importantly, the project has allowed us to see first-hand the power of connecting different groups of people and has reinvigorated our belief in the ability of different groups to work together collaboratively, equally and without prejudice. Moreover, it has influenced our own thoughts about what learning can deliver when done well. If good citizenship is in part about agency and autonomy, then Learning Together while by no means a panacea – is an important stepping stone towards changing the narrative about the concept of citizenship. In a penal setting and can promote better co-operation between prisons and ‘outside communities’.

Ultimately, we would agree with Behan (2015:11) that building links between prisons and outside communities – in this case a community of HEI students via Learning Together – is an integral aspect of removing the barriers that ‘prevent prisoners from contributing to their community while inside and hinder their reintegration into society after their release from prison’.

Unsurprisingly, we are very much looking forward to the next ‘round’ of Learning Together courses in January 2018.

“...one of the most rewarding – and challenging – projects we have been involved with.”

Amidst distressing headlines of a dysfunctional prison system bedevilled by violence, drug misuse, suicide and poor mental health, the concept of ‘prisoners as citizens’ has become increasingly contested. The dominant paradigm is arguably one where the erosion of ‘prisoner rights’ is debated – and at times, legitimised – in a way that would be inconceivable for the majority of ‘law abiding’ citizens. Yet, as Behan (2015:4) points out, rather than seeing citizenship only in the ‘context of rights, responsibilities and obligations’, we should seek to reconfigure the idea of prisoner citizenship towards ideas around ‘participation, co-operation, inclusion and potentially, identity transformation’.

Just this week, the Farmer Review (2017) has highlighted the importance of ‘connectedness’ in the rehabilitation process. Accordingly, the primary focus of prison in relation to citizenship should be on the ways in which HMPS provides opportunities for ‘reconnecting and positively identifying with community and civil society’ (Behan, 2015:7).

References

Re-generated youth citizenship: youth civic and electoral mobilisation at the 2017 General Election

Matt Henn and James Hart

Now the dust has settled, how should we account for the surge in youth turnout at the 2017 UK General Election with estimates that 64% of those aged 18-24 cast a vote (Hart and Henn 2017) – representing a significant 21-point increase from the 2015 General Election and a departure from recent patterns of youth abstention? After all, our youth are often depicted as apathetic and having no sense of civic responsibility or commitment to social and collective endeavour. So when Theresa May unexpectedly called a snap election on 18 April 2017, such an outcome seemed virtually unthinkable. The Conservative lead over Labour in the pre-election polls appeared unsailable (YouGov, 2017), and the 50-day campaign period loomed long, flat and predictable. For many young people, another vote, soon after what they considered a deeply disappointing 2016 Referendum outcome to leave the EU, heralded little more than the prospect of another five years in which their concerns would remain ignored by the political elite. The likelihood that Britain’s youth would flock to the polls seemed somewhat remote.

Certainly since 1997, election turnouts have been very generational affairs, characterised by strong voting by older citizens and abstention by the nation’s youth. At the 2015 General Election (Ipsos MORI, 2015), only 43% of registered 18-24 year olds voted, over 20% below the average turnout and 35% below those aged 65 and over. However, recent voting events suggested a possible change for youth voting, and that youth could be attracted to the polls in 2017. In particular, over two-thirds (68%) of those aged 18-24 voted at the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum (YouGov, 2014) and 65% of 18-24 year olds voted at the 2016 European Union Referendum (Ipsos MORI, 2016), suggesting British youth were more motivated by the political issues at stake or feel that they can influence the result.

One early indication that we might see those 2014 and 2016 referendums’ electoral salience rates repeated in 2017 was revealed in Hansen’s Audit of Political Participation (Hansen Society, 2017) published shortly before Theresa May’s announcement. This suggested that 78% of young people said they were certain to vote, a large increase on the 36% who said they were certain to vote at a similar point in 2015.

There were other clues pointing to a possible upsurge in youth mobilisation. Nearly one million (1M) under 25s signed up to vote (Gov.UK, 2017) in the month before the 2017 registration deadline; this surpassed registration rates in the build up to the 2016 EU Referendum (179,076) and 2015 General Election (667,571). Furthermore, young people’s certainty to vote soared to 63% (Bulman, 2017) in polls before the election.

Jeremy Corbyn seemed certainly to be a factor (Fishwick, 2017) behind this surge and his openness to more direct forms of democracy (Mayer, 2017) appealed to young people who prefer their politics created from below (Gater & Mair, 2014). Labour were leading the Conservatives by a huge 57 points (Agerholm, 2017) in the 18-24 cohort according to one poll shortly before the 2017 election, whereas only 16% more of 18-24 year olds (Ipsos MORI, 2015) preferred Labour to the Conservatives at the 2015 election.

So why did Britain’s youth feel motivated to vote in 2017? One critical factor was their direct experience of recent government austerity policies. According to the Resolution Foundation (2016) and the Institute for Public Policy Research (2013), young people have faced an unprecedented attack on their socioeconomic conditions in recent years; state support has been withdrawn from them (and often transferred to older age groups), their employment positions are increasingly precarious, across home ownership is decreasing and wages are below those of previous youth generations.

Moreover, at the 2017 General Election, a number of youth-centred policies were promoted by the main parties. All but the Conservatives and UKIP backed extending voting rights to those aged 16 and 17 (BBC, 2016). Labour’s manifesto promised large increases in the minimum wage for under 25s, the abolition of university tuition fees, restoring the Education Maintenance Allowance and greater employment security. The Liberal Democrats produced a youth manifesto written in consultation with young people, although the Conservative’s manifesto commitments were somewhat limited in scope.

Another potential factor was youth disappointment following the vote for “Brexit” at the EU Referendum (Ipsos MORI, 2016). The fact that 18-24 year olds voted to “remain” (YouGov, 2016) may have motivated them to vote in 2017 to contest other generations’ preferences, which are often at odds with their political desires. Furthermore, young people have also been more inclined to vote in 2017 as they believed they could influence the result. The Conservative Party were defending a working majority of 17 seats (Aresta et al., 2017) and research from the BBC (Barford, 2017) before the election suggested young people could influence the result up to 16 seats. While Henn and Foard (2014) suggest that contemporary youth doubt their influence in politics, their importance to the result of the 2017 election may have made them reconsider the impact they could have.

The 2017 General Election will be remembered for many things. The unprecedented wave of terror attacks that formed the backdrop to the election. The stark ideological choice on offer between a very traditional Conservative party and a resurgent Labour party led to a long sociopolitical debate that ultimately only narrowly failed in defeating the incumbent Conservatives by a 24 percentage share of the national vote (BBC, 2017). The election will also be recalled as the event that also saw a new generation of civically-minded young people who announced their return to the electoral stage in a way not seen in decades.

In 2017...

44% of all 18-24 year olds voted

21% increase since 2015

Matt Henn and James Hart

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This article is based on an earlier version of the article published as: ‘The generation election: youth electoral mobilisation at the 2017 General Election’, in D. Barford, V. Aresta, J. Carter, E. Fishwick, M.Foard, J. Henn, M. Jackson, E. Thorsen and D. Lilleker (eds.) UK Election Analysis 2017: media, voters and the campaign...
Civic engagement involves "working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes" (Etzioni, 2000).

Within the School of Social Sciences, many of our students engage in activities that take them outside of the university and into communities both locally, regionally and internationally. If the purpose of this engagement is to enhance the students' employability, then this might take the form of a work placement or short placement. Students may also volunteer to enhance their employability and may work primarily to earn additional money but will also gain all sorts of transferable skills as a result.

However, it’s really important to consider all of the other benefits for the student and community when any form of work-based experience is undertaken. How do the students benefit? Students who undertake placements and other forms of work-based learning gain transferable skills that are useful in all work scenarios. Evidence shows us that volunteering has the same benefits, and civic engagement certainly seems a strong one.

What about other less obvious benefits? This is where the link to civic engagement emerges as social sciences students engage with work and volunteering in a huge range of organisations in a diverse range of communities. The benefits? Political engagement, breaking down of cultural barriers, widening participation and graduates entering the local workforce. The purpose of this engagement, breaking down of cultural barriers, widening participation and graduates entering the local workforce. The purpose of this engagement is to enhance the students' civic engagement outside of the university and into communities both locally, regionally and internationally. If the purpose of this engagement is to enhance the students' employability, then this might take the form of a civic engagement.

The highlights of the 2016/17 year included the sheer diversity of the events offered. These included sessions on postgraduate study, a whole series of ‘Careers in...’, teaching, criminal justice, health and social care, politics, international relations, events led by employers, volunteering workshops, and lots of workshops offering help with application forms, CVs and interview techniques. The Social Sciences Grand Challenge focused upon groups of students solving real world business problems set by local businesses and charities. Speakers included the Government Ministers, Prison Governors, MPs, teachers, social workers, clinical psychologists, charity managers, civil servants and other policy makers. Students were even treated to one of our Careers Consultants, Dean Penford singing a soul song. You will have to come to one of our career planning workshops to find out why! This year proves to be just as busy and exciting with a very full and varied programme with literally something for everybody. Check out what’s happening by looking at our NOW learning room, reading our events leaflet, looking out for the employability team at City Campus in Newton employability area.

As Helen looks back at the highlights of 2016/17, I'm tempted to look forward. Summer is drawing on, evening daylight getting a little shorter with each passing week, and people with nothing better to post reminding me on Facebook how many shopping days until Christmas! So, with a Christmas holiday theme in mind, why is employability like a brussels sprout? People older than you try to force-feed it to you because it's good for you!

Actually, there's a more serious point here, we often hear that students feel they have employability forced upon them throughout their time at NTU. I agree, that's true and must feel frustrating for students. But, if you could sit at my computer for a few days over summer and see the emails.

"Hi, Dean, I was just wanting some help in finding a job as I am really struggling to receive any positive responses."

With an application, cover letter, or CV attached that immediately upon opening I understand why that graduate hasn't had any positive responses, and isn't likely to do so. Then I recall all the events that Helen refers to in her article here... and lots of workshops offering help with application forms, CV's and interview techniques. Then you may appreciate the importance of forcing employability upon you.

I'm a career guidance professional, a career that I've enjoyed since 2003, working with social sciences students engaging in civic engagement while at university you will gain additional skills and experience that will enhance your employability skills no matter what your future paths are. There will be Get Experience Roadshow at City Campus (Newton) and Clifton Campus early in the new term, keep an eye on FutureHub events for all employability events, and try a few brussels, they're good for you, honestly!

Dean Penford

References

Volunteering

Name: Heline Reed
Title: School Employability Manager
Length of time at NTU: 21 years!

Tell us a little about your role in the School of Social Sciences
My role is to help enhance the employability of social sciences students by working closely with employers, academic staff, the employability team and the students themselves to develop exciting employability events, work experience opportunities, an employability facing curriculum and courses that help develop students’ career planning, confidence and employability skills.

What was your first ever job?
I was employed by a local butcher in my home village in Cambridgeshire to care for two huge shire horses (Victor and Oscar) that used to pull an old-fashioned butchers wagon. On Sundays, we used to go out with the wagon and visit several local pubs (always a lemonade for me). It was a great way to spend a Sunday morning.

What did you always want to be when you ‘grew up’?
I was very sure about my future career plans. Fabulously needed to attend some Social Sciences courses whilst I was at school. A key point I had was to work closely with Social Sciences events! I think I did have a focus upon becoming a ballet dancer, film star or Royal Princess. Needless to say, I didn’t achieve any of those ambitions!

What is your favourite overseas destination and why?
Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, USA. I love the scenery, the wildlife and the Old Faithful Inn.

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Tell us one thing that the School of Social Sciences students won’t know about you.
I am going to run my first ever fell race this Autumn.

What is your favourite brand and why?
John Lewis – clothes, a good café, lovely tableware, furniture and kitchen stuff! What more could I want?

For your business dream team, who would be around the boardroom table (dead or alive)?
Jamie Oliver to cook the dinner, Princess Diana for the Royal gossip, Winston Churchill to bestow order and dignity, and Freddie Mercury for the singing and dancing?

What is the most important thing you’ve learned in life?
Treat others as you wish to be treated yourself and generally your path through life will be a happy one.

What did you always want to be when you ‘grew up’?
I was never very sure about my future career plans; I obviously needed to attend several Social Sciences courses whilst I was at school. A key point I had was to work closely with Social Sciences events! I think I did have a focus upon becoming a ballet dancer, film star or Royal Princess. Needless to say, I didn’t achieve any of those ambitions!

What advice would you give students when considering taking part in extracurricular activities, such as volunteering?
My advice for students who are considering participating in extracurricular activities is that they should go for it. Facing challenges head on is important to bear in mind that they may experience challenges along the way but there are several other people who are in a similar position who are always there to support you. It has been great for me to get to know all of my fellow volunteers and build trusting relationships that have helped me throughout my time volunteering but it has also given me the opportunity to make new friends with people to socialise with outside of the university or volunteering environment. I also feel that it is important while studying to have something to take your mind off university work, and volunteering provides the chance to do something fun that you can put on your CV and speak about in detail at job interviews.

www.ntu.ac.uk/volunteering
The Grads4NottM scheme is available to anyone regardless of their level of study or age. It’s a two-week paid work placement in a job sector of your choice; healthcare, charity, sport, technology and media being some examples. There were 42 challenges advertised, and I was part of a team of four, placed in one of the healthcare challenges. If I’m honest, the fact that it was paid and short term work is what persuaded me to apply. In hindsight, it was much more valuable. Since then, I’ve been inspired to create career profiles and am building a network about work experience at the hospital in relation to Psychology.

I noticed this opportunity mentioned in various emails sent by the NTU Employability Team. A trip in the Ashfield District was then obviously advertised and I applied to take part. The NTU had set up this scheme to help encourage and attract young people to work in the local area, the New Cross area in Sutton in Ashfield covers approximately 1,200 properties. It is in the top 10% of most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK (Department for Communities & Local Government, 2015). Therefore, the New Cross area was chosen to be used for a pilot project in the Ashfield District introducing a new way of working across services.

The Grads4NottM scheme is a new way of working in areas of deprivation across Nottinghamshire. One of the main goals of implementing the Grads4NottM scheme is to reduce unnecessary demand and duplication of service delivery. By targeting residents in the local area, the New Cross Support Team sought to provide them with a single point of access for services that would in turn:

- Reduce unnecessary demand and duplication of service delivery.
- Prevent individuals and families with complex needs entering further into crisis.
- Support individuals and families already in crisis to ‘engage and rebalance’ their lives to be less dependent on services.

In April 2016, I founded the non-biased Politics and International Relations society along with two friends, Luke Witham and Adam Hope. It’s open to any student from any course background, who wants to know more about current affairs, and national and international political issues.

The society holds regular events, bring in politicians and guest speakers, hold debates, as well as organise social events and rights out. Previous events have included:

- “In Conversation With...” – a topical talk with MPs, Lords or guest speakers about what their interests are, as well as topical discuss the events of the week. In 2012, Norman Lamb MP visited NTU the day after the Westminster attacks and told us of his experiences of that day.

- Tuition fees: value for money? – a meeting with Pro Vice Chancellor Eunice Simmons to debate on whether tuition fees bad or good. Some members attended a march on Parliament in London.

- Wall or Wall Street – a US Election debate between students and lecturers about Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton.

The society was awarded ‘Best New Society’ 2017 at the NTU awards.

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The BA (Hons) Sociology team has been working on an alumni case study project. The idea of the project is to promote the discipline of Sociology and embrace the notion of ‘A Community of Practice’. Many BA (Hons) Sociology graduates go on to work in areas of civic engagement, where sociology provides excellent theory and knowledge to aid such work. This project is a means of capturing such engagement and promoting the excellent sociologically informed work that occurs via our graduates.

Alumni involved in the project have varied and useful experiences to showcase how the study of sociology can be of future benefit. Alumni involved in the project have gone on to do wonderful things such as studying Sociology at Masters level, studying at PhD level, working with Nottinghamshire Police to train police officers on how to counter misogyny as a hate crime; setting up their own ethical media promotion agency; and working as a project manager in graduate employment scheme.

New Postgraduate and Professional Certificate in Critical Care

In partnership with Nottinghamshire Health Care Trust, 25 students joined NTU as the first cohort to take the new and leading edge post qualifying award in Critical Care.

The award is bench marked against demanding National Standards for Critical Care Practice. The new Professional Certificate in Adult Critical Care (Post Registration) has been co-produced with Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUHT) Critical Care team, with a wide range of colleagues NTU. In developing and delivering this framework, NTU has clearly demonstrated it can work responsively, flexibly and in partnership with major health partners such as NUHT. It represents for the Trust a major commitment to the development and enhancement of higher level Critical Care nursing knowledge, skills and values.

NTU’s and NUHT’s ambitions in developing this programme is to ensure our health professionals have the core attributes required to develop a professional workforce, with the capabilities to deliver a safe and world-class service to Critical Care patients in Nottinghamshire.

BA (Hons) Policing

We are delighted to announce the launch of the new BA (Hons) Policing course. After several years of delivering the BA (Hons) Criminology with Policing Pathway, we have developed this exciting new course.

The course has been influenced by our strong ties with Nottinghamshire Police. This, along with real-world work experience will prepare students for a successful career in policing.

Modern University of the Year 2018

Nottingham Trent University has been named Modern University of the Year in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018.

The award recognises NTU for its strong student satisfaction, its quality of teaching, the overall student experience and its engagement with employers.

The announcement comes just two weeks after the University was shortlisted for the prestigious ‘University of the Year’ title in the forthcoming Times Higher Education Awards.
**International opportunities**

The Nottingham Institute of Education provides those students on eligible courses with the opportunity to visit and study in another country through its range of international opportunities such as the Erasmus + scheme, international placements and the International Student Exchange Programme (ISEP).

Read on to find out more about some of our BA (Hons) Childhood Studies students’ experiences.

*Siena Carter*

“In my second year – I went to Morocco for three weeks on an international placement. It was amazing. I worked in an underprivileged nursery where the practitioners and children only spoke Arabic or French. Speaking barely any French myself, this was very daunting but we found ways of communicating through hand movements etc. One of the main things that helped me to feel confident in this situation was to remember that the practitioners wanted our help as much as we wanted to give it. We had a shared understanding and this encouraged me to be confident throughout the experience. When we weren’t spending the day teaching the children English words, playing with them or colouring, we were exploring Morocco. Every aspect was enjoyable. I stayed in a riad with about six other people who were doing similar volunteering placements. The best part about doing it abroad was the people, everyone was so different and so interesting. We just had so much fun. If you have the chance to go abroad or stay in the UK, I would most definitely recommend abroad.”

*Lauren Busby*

“In my second year, I was able to take up the opportunity of an international placement. With the freedom to choose anywhere in the world, I jumped at the chance of volunteering in Thailand. The university supported me to make this decision as they organised for external organisations to come in and inform us about the types of programmes they offered. I organised the placement with a group of students on my course, independently from the university. The experience of volunteering in a school in Bangkok was amazing. I was able to witness first-hand the differences in education in a different country and as a result my understanding of international approaches to children and education was widened greatly. Whilst there I was also able to travel Thailand, visiting different areas of the country which was an incredible experience.”

*Duncan Crawley*

“In my second year I worked in a Special Educational Needs school in Romania. It was challenging but very rewarding and gave me an insight into different teaching approaches in the UK and Romania.”

“If you have the chance to go abroad or stay in the UK, I would most definitely recommend abroad.”
Events Calendar

OCTOBER
2
Term One starts
25
Placement and Graduate Recruitment Fair
10 am – 3 pm
Newton building

NOVEMBER
8
Postgraduate and Professional open event
12 pm – 3.30 pm
Newton building

13 – 17
ACE Week
See www.ntu.ac.uk/aceweek for a full list of events.

DECEMBER
6
Student Forum
1 pm – 2.30 pm

8
End of Term One

JANUARY
8
Term Two starts
17
Student Forum
1 pm – 2.30 pm

24
Postgraduate and Professional open event
12 pm – 3.30 pm
Newton building

FEBRUARY
19 - 25
Volunteering Week
See www.ntu.ac.uk/volunteering for further information.

MARCH
7
Student Forum
1 pm – 2.30 pm

21
Postgraduate and Professional open event
4 pm – 6.30 pm
Newton building

29
End of Term Two

Get involved

Do you want to be a contributor?

So... aims to showcase the excellence of our students and staff, and content for future editions is welcomed from all. If you’d like to submit an article for the next edition of So... please email s3.enquiries@ntu.ac.uk.

Do you want to be a student ambassador?

By becoming a Student Ambassador you can gain

- Extra cash
- Valuable work experience
- A chance to stand out from the crowd after graduating
- Personal and professional development
- Networking opportunities

The Student Ambassador scheme is managed by Unitemps. Search for opportunities at www.ntu.ac.uk/jobshop

Want to get your work and achievements out in to the media?

Academics across the School of Social Sciences regularly feature in the local, national and international media. The NTU press office is very keen to hear about colleagues’ research, expertise – or any newsworthy projects or initiatives – so that they can identify suitable opportunities moving forward.

Whether it’s press releases pegged to newly-published research, expert comment or analysis on breaking news stories, or opinion led articles for The Conversation or other major outlets, the press office can help. To get in touch with the press office please contact Dave Rogers via dave.rogers@ntu.ac.uk or call 0115 848 8782.