

# A complete student journey – how student voice changed our student experience strategic plan

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# Our Strategic Plan: Objectives

## Welcome

→ A smooth, equitable transition and inclusive experience for all students.

## Belong

→ Support all students to feel they belong and are valued in the university community, encouraging engagement throughout their time here.

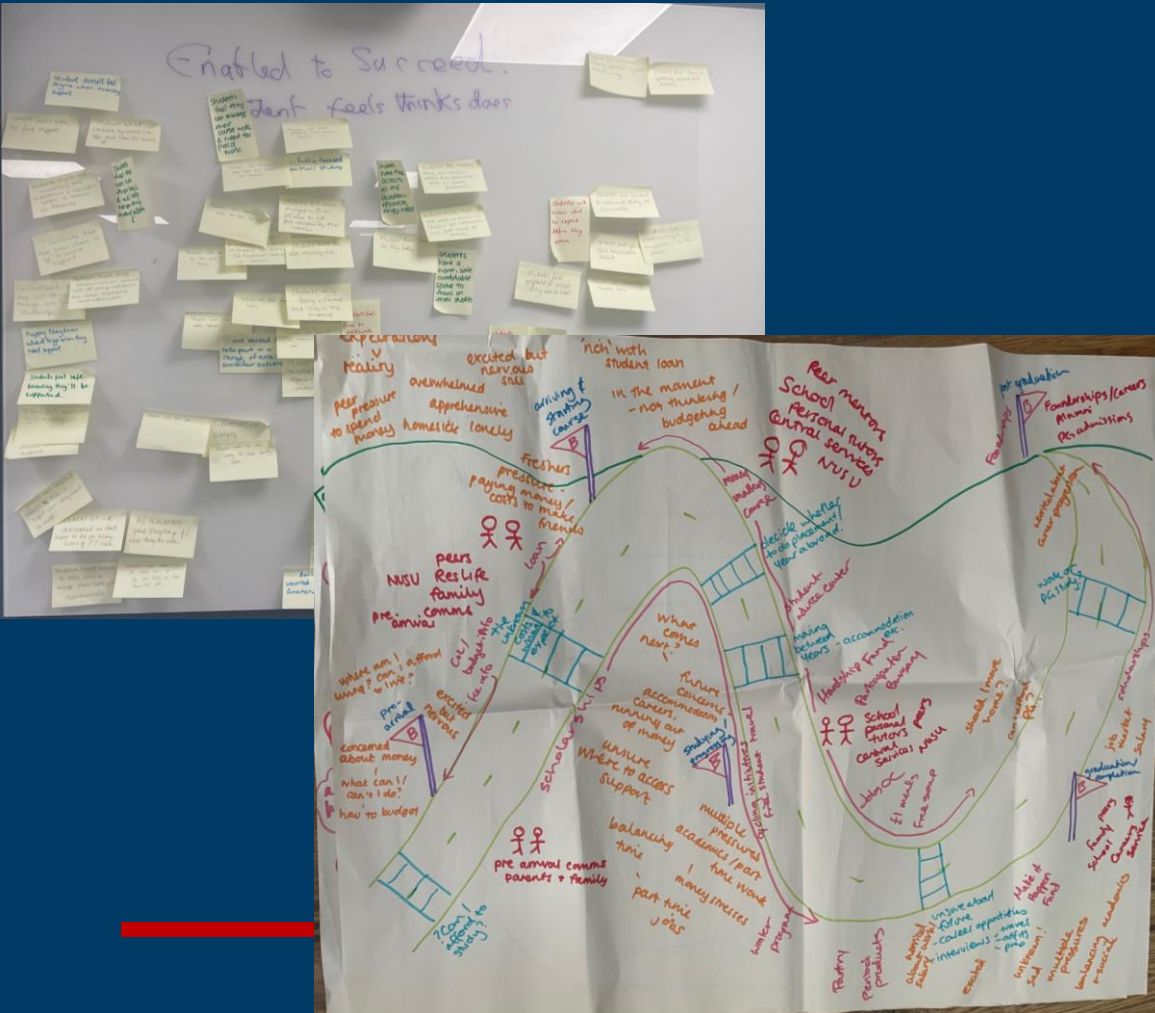
## Thrive

→ Celebrate diversity, address barriers, and support students to thrive.

## Connect

→ Collaborating with students, the Students' Union, and colleagues to showcase our diverse community and enrich student experiences.

# Theories of Change

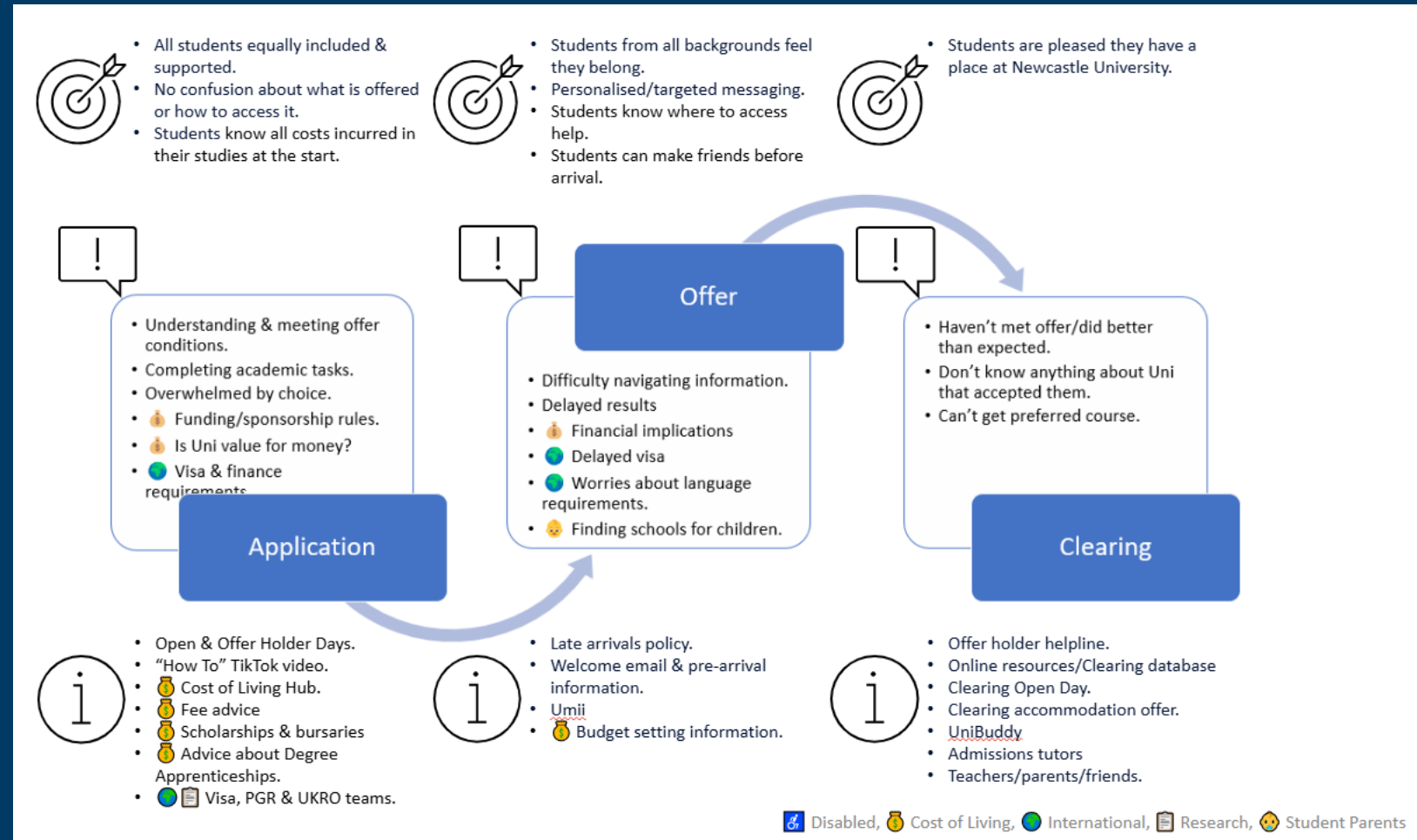


# Student groups

- International students
- Cost of living
- PGR students
- Student Parents

Next:

- Commuter students
- First in family



# Gap analysis

Student Journey	Barrier	Support available	Rank current coverage 0 - not met at all 1 - partially meets it 2 - fully meets it 3 - exceeds it
Offer	Delays in meeting offer conditions; Delays in receiving the visa;	Late arrivals policy; Welcome email; pre-arrival information	2
	Not knowing what is expected; Navigating the information;	Welcome email; pre-arrival information	2
	Worries about the language requirements;	Language Requirements page	2
	Money / banking: how to open a bank account; Cost / financial implications of studying including travel costs;	Setting budget / budget info;	2
	Anxiety about city safety; Transport to the University;	Welcome email; pre-arrival information	1
	Finding schools for children		1

# Communications

	Student Life Newsletters	Notice Boards	Social Media Posts	Canvas Announcements
Health and Wellbeing Service	16	1	4	Yes
Cost of Living Hub	4	2	2	No
Personal Tutoring	0	0	0	?

# Communications

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NSS Q26 'How well communicated was information about your university / college's mental wellbeing support services?'

- 1st in the Russell Group
- 4th in the full-service sector

Student Mental Health Study 2024: Economic crisis is the biggest worry for students. 2 in 3 (67%) respondents worry about money daily or weekly.

Students regularly tell us that they didn't know the Cost of Living Hub existed

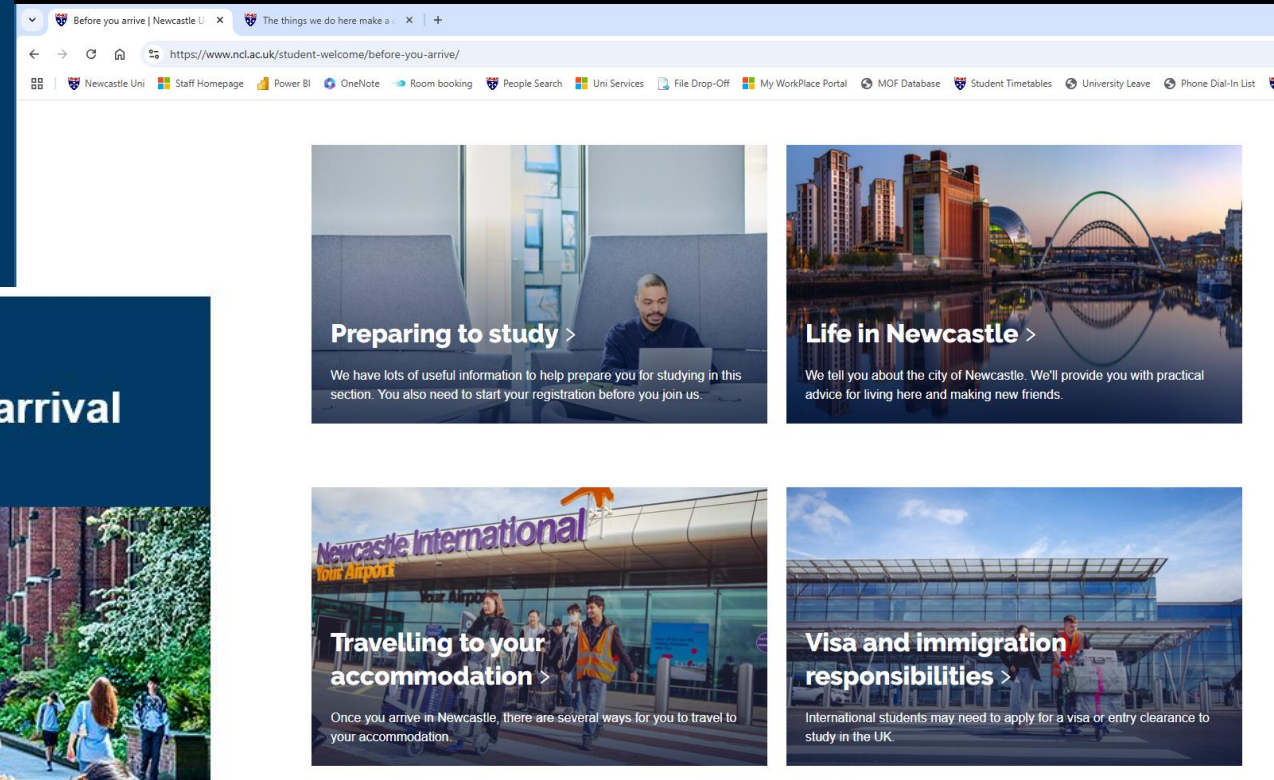
[Cost of Living Support | Student Services | Newcastle University](#)



# Pre-arrival comms 2023

Emails

Webpages



## Your guide to registration, arrival and induction



Hi {#Known as - nickname#},

There's not long to go now until we welcome you to Newcastle University. We hope you're looking forward to starting your university journey with us!

### Before you arrive

Please visit our [Student Welcome pages](#) to find helpful information about:

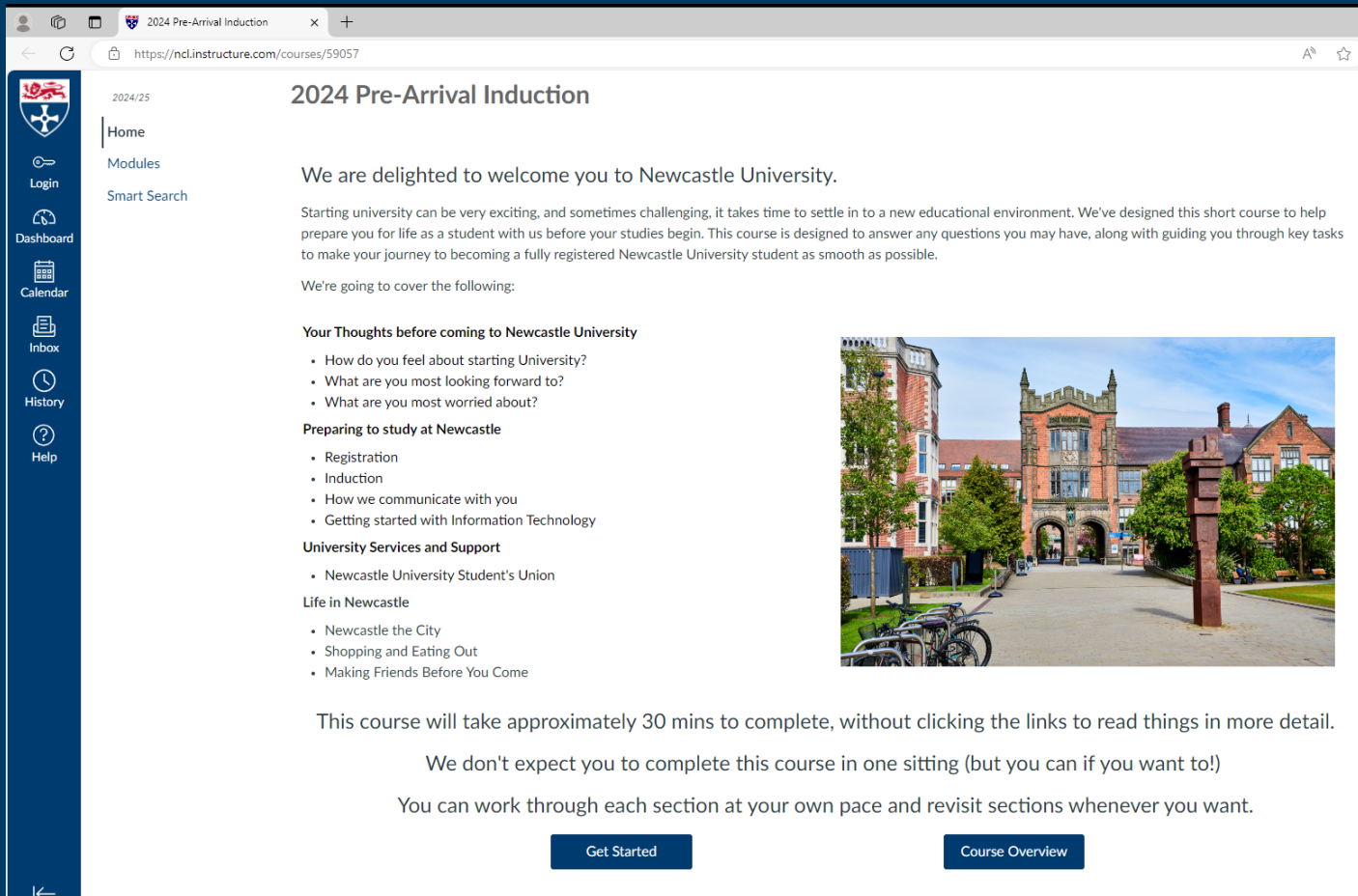
- Preparing to study
- Life in Newcastle



# Student feedback

- When shown the Welcome pages students unanimously said that they wish more pages had been linked
- Many students only access the linked page and don't explore web content further

# Pre-arrival Canvas course



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the '2024 Pre-Arrival Induction' course page on the Canvas LMS. The browser's address bar shows the URL 'https://ncl.instructure.com/courses/59057'. On the left, a dark blue sidebar contains the university logo and navigation links: Home, Modules, Smart Search, Login, Dashboard, Calendar, Inbox, History, and Help. The main content area has a white background. At the top, it says '2024/25' and '2024 Pre-Arrival Induction'. Below this, a welcome message states: 'We are delighted to welcome you to Newcastle University. Starting university can be very exciting, and sometimes challenging, it takes time to settle in to a new educational environment. We've designed this short course to help prepare you for life as a student with us before your studies begin. This course is designed to answer any questions you may have, along with guiding you through key tasks to make your journey to becoming a fully registered Newcastle University student as smooth as possible. We're going to cover the following:'. A list of topics follows: 'Your Thoughts before coming to Newcastle University' (How do you feel about starting University?, What are you most looking forward to?, What are you most worried about?), 'Preparing to study at Newcastle' (Registration, Induction, How we communicate with you, Getting started with Information Technology), 'University Services and Support' (Newcastle University Student's Union), and 'Life in Newcastle' (Newcastle the City, Shopping and Eating Out, Making Friends Before You Come). To the right of the text is a photograph of a large, historic red-brick building with a central tower and arched entrance, surrounded by greenery and a paved courtyard with a large wooden sculpture. At the bottom, a message states: 'This course will take approximately 30 mins to complete, without clicking the links to read things in more detail. We don't expect you to complete this course in one sitting (but you can if you want to!) You can work through each section at your own pace and revisit sections whenever you want.' Two buttons are at the bottom: 'Get Started' and 'Course Overview'.

2024/25

## 2024 Pre-Arrival Induction

Home  
Modules  
Smart Search

We are delighted to welcome you to Newcastle University.

Starting university can be very exciting, and sometimes challenging, it takes time to settle in to a new educational environment. We've designed this short course to help prepare you for life as a student with us before your studies begin. This course is designed to answer any questions you may have, along with guiding you through key tasks to make your journey to becoming a fully registered Newcastle University student as smooth as possible.

We're going to cover the following:

**Your Thoughts before coming to Newcastle University**

- How do you feel about starting University?
- What are you most looking forward to?
- What are you most worried about?

**Preparing to study at Newcastle**


- Registration
- Induction
- How we communicate with you
- Getting started with Information Technology

**University Services and Support**

- Newcastle University Student's Union

**Life in Newcastle**

- Newcastle the City
- Shopping and Eating Out
- Making Friends Before You Come



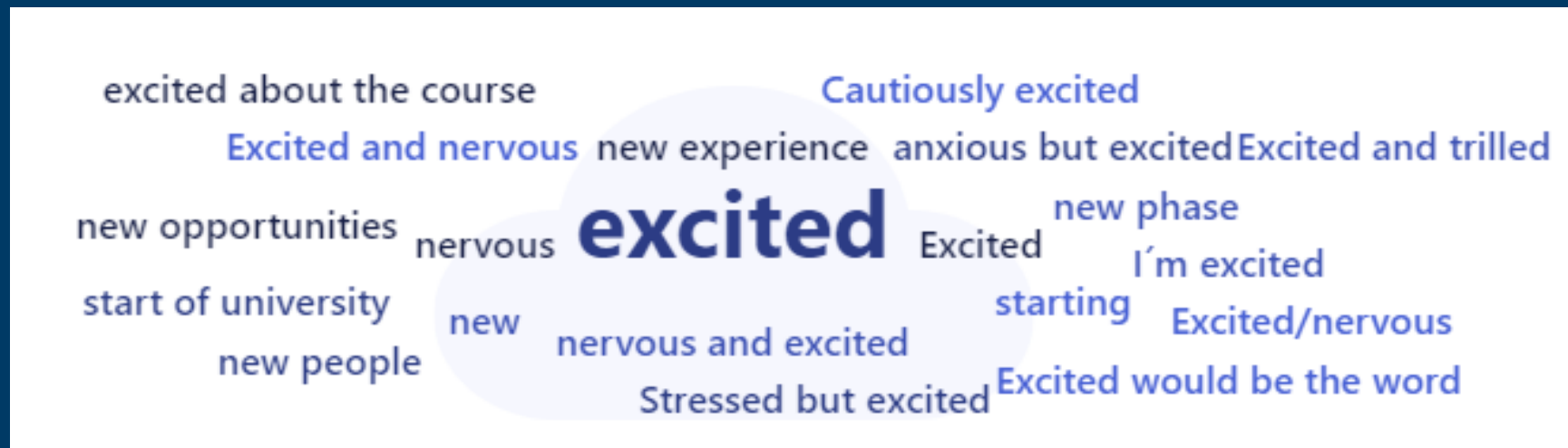
This course will take approximately 30 mins to complete, without clicking the links to read things in more detail.

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You can work through each section at your own pace and revisit sections whenever you want.

[Get Started](#) [Course Overview](#)

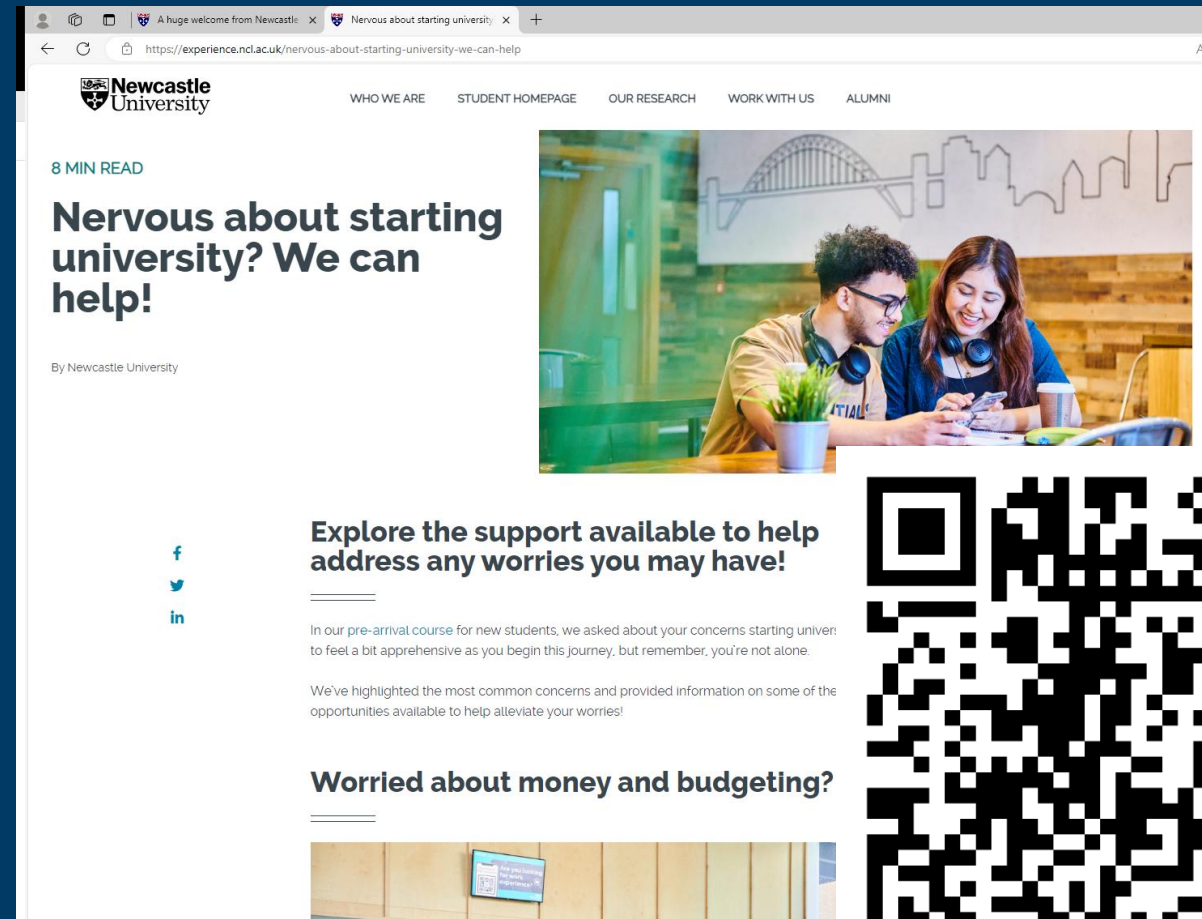
# What word describes best how you feel about starting University?



847 responses

# Tell us what worries you about starting university

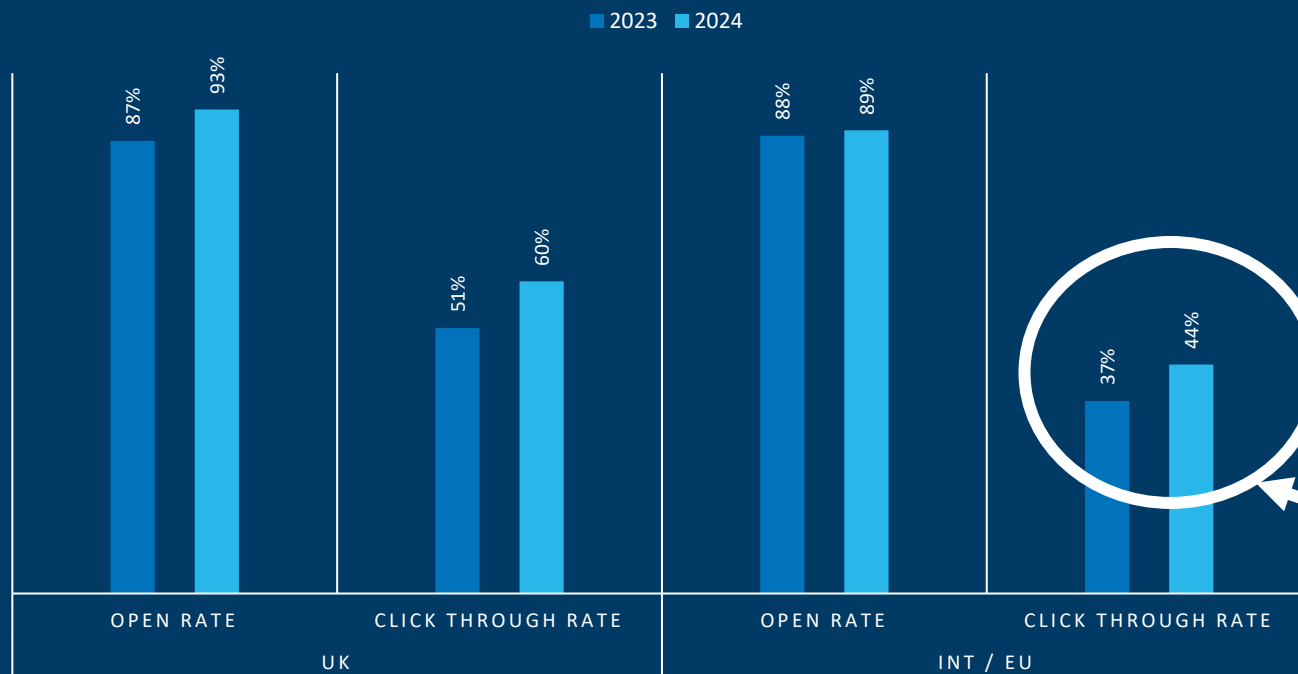
Themes	%
Home sick	19
<b>Not making friends</b>	15
Workload / time management / work-life-balance	12
<b>New life / living independently</b>	9
Technical / academic ability	9
Overwhelmed	9
<b>Cost of living / budgeting</b>	6



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a Newcastle University article. The article is titled "Nervous about starting university? We can help!" and is categorized as an "8 MIN READ". It features a photo of two students, a man and a woman, sitting at a table and looking at a laptop. The article text discusses the support available to help address any worries new students may have, mentioning a pre-arrival course and common concerns like budgeting. A large QR code is overlaid on the right side of the article, intended for students to scan and access the support resources.

# What the data say now

## PRE-ARRIVAL EMAILS



### Umii app:

*Newcastle University had the highest number of sign-ups of their partners over the pre-arrival period and there were clear spikes in registration when we sent out messages to students about the app.*

#### Top clicked link:

- 2023: Student Self Service Portal
- 2024: Student Welcome pages

# Induction

## Essential Content

The Student Charter

Attendance & Commitment

Staying Safe

Student Health & Wellbeing – an Introduction

Bystander Awareness Training

Drug Safety Awareness

Alcohol Safety Awareness

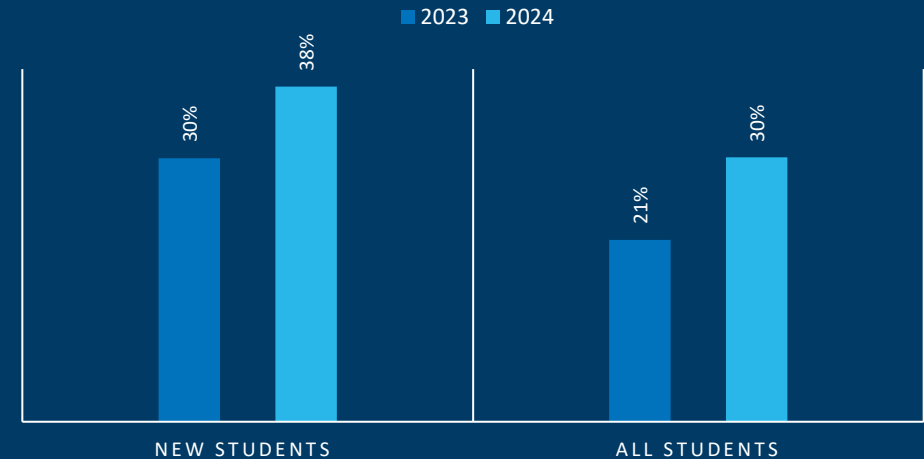
Suicide Awareness

Gambling Awareness

Consent Awareness

Mental Health Awareness


## INDUCTION






# Changes in the academic year: (n = 180)

## Changes associated with poorer wellbeing:



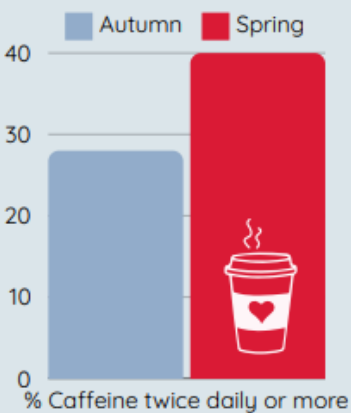
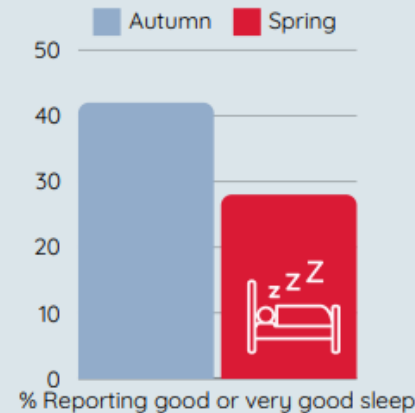
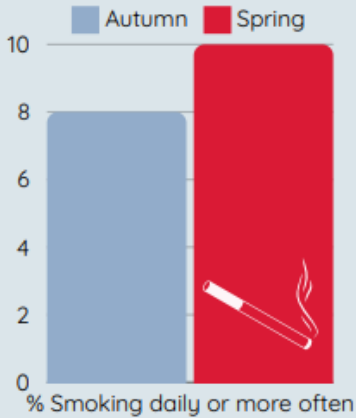
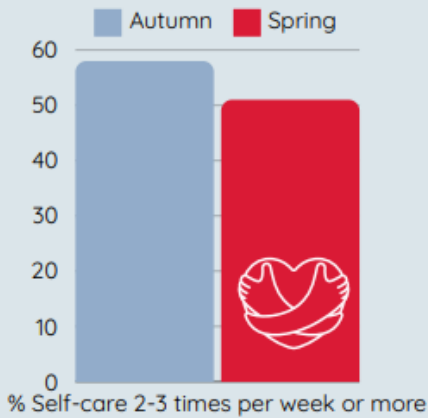
### Reductions in

- wellbeing
- emotional clarity
- frequency of self-care
- sleep quality



### Increases in

- depression
- smoking
- drinking caffeine



[← Back](#)

## Top Tips for Better Sleep

Published: 21 October 2024 | Updated: 21 October 2024 | By: Angelina Hutchinson | 3 min read



### Why Is Sleep So Easy in Class but Hard at Night?

It's 1:38 A.M., and you're mindlessly scrolling through TikTok, mesmerised by every entertaining video. You have a 9 A.M. class, but sleep won't come, so you keep scrolling. Suddenly, it's 3 A.M., and you finally drift off, only to wake up feeling terrible and decide to skip class. Sound familiar? Here are some tips you can start incorporating into your life.

Unplug before bed

# Co-created content

[Get Registered to Vote! A Step to Step Guide](#)

[Reporting Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct](#)

**Beware:** this video discusses acts of sexual violence



**Reporting Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct**

Unlisted



**Newcastle University**  
20K subscribers

Subscribe

128 views 30 Jan 2025

If you experience or witness sexual violence, tell us in confidence:

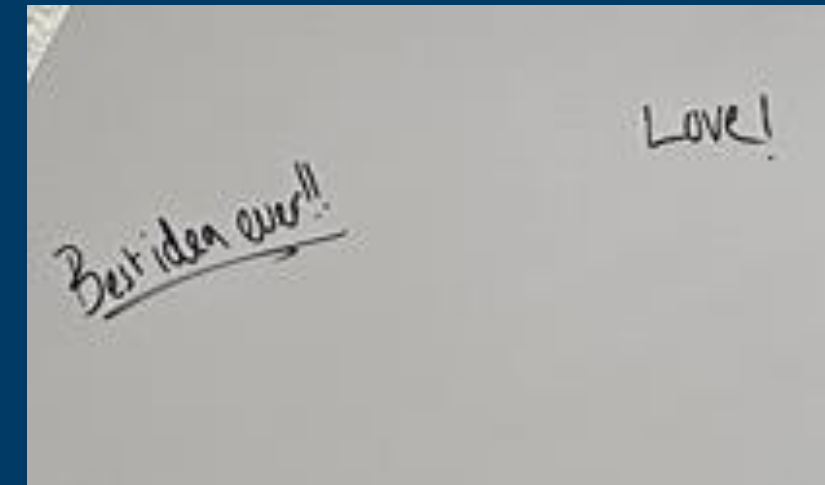


# Cost of living

NUSU Cost of living survey (2024): 30% have considered dropping out of university due to the cost of living (down from 44% in 2023)



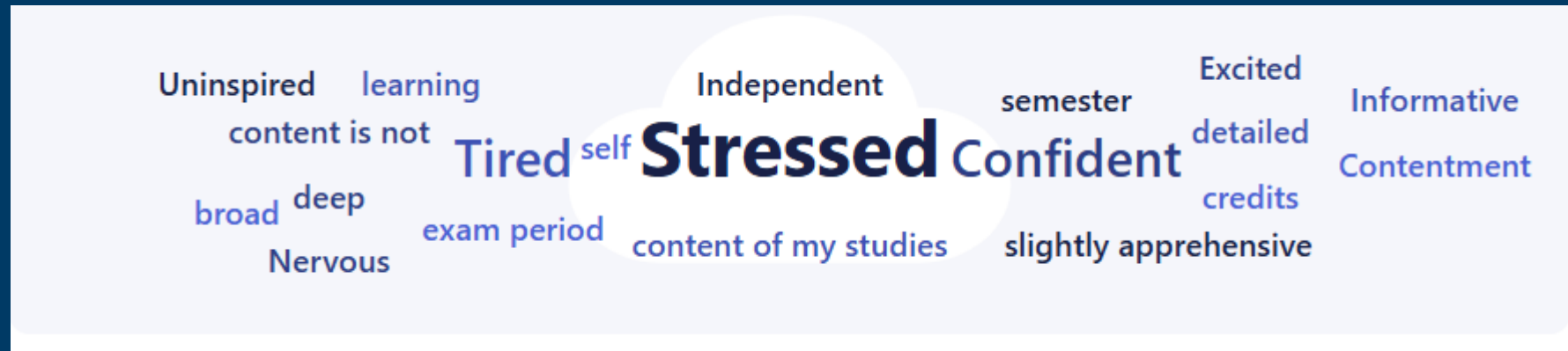
“I would like to express my gratitude towards this **[Food fob]** pilot scheme. It sounds like an amazing idea, and I hope it becomes a long-term scheme to help more students like myself. Thank you for this opportunity.”



# Building our Student insight group

- 40 students
- Open to all but aiming to amplify the voices of under-represented students
- Activities will be focus groups, surveys, design thinking workshops
- Employed and paid through our Student Jobs on Campus

# What word best describes how you are feeling about your studies at this time?



33 responses by Student Insights Group

# Sense of belonging and loneliness

- 26% of UK undergraduate students report feeling lonely 'most or all of the time' (AdvanceHE, 2023).
- Compared to the general population, students are twice as likely to report that they feel lonely (Jopling & Valtorta, 2018).
- Loneliness is the perceived discrepancy between desired and actual social relationships both in quality and quantity (Peplau & Perlman, 1998).
- Students often link a sense of belonging and their sense of identity as a student within their School and academic discipline.

**Discussion:** What activities are you aware of that strengthen the sense of belonging for students from all backgrounds?

<https://padlet.com/yvonnehuebner/sense-of-belonging-and-loneliness-eqz367aiyi6xdzn3>





# Thank you very much for your time!

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