

Your Student Essentials Guide

It begins at
NSCG





Welcom

Stafford College

We are delighted that you have decided to study at Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group (NSCG), the college of first choice in Staffordshire, and we're excited to help you achieve and contribute during your time here.



e to

Our supportive team is keen to make sure that your transition from school to college is smooth and stress-free, so to help you settle in as quickly as possible, we've produced this Student Essentials Guide, packed with lots of useful information on life at NSCG.

The guide will give you an overview of the top-class support available here, financial hints and tips, useful information on general housekeeping, and much more. There is even a little map at the back to help you navigate around the campus in your first few weeks.

Our last Ofsted report rated the Stafford College support team **OUTSTANDING**, so if you have any queries about the information you find in this guide, just contact our Student Services team. They will be happy to help.

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Craig Hodgson
Principal & Chief
Executive, NSCG

Here to help.

Your Student Services Team

Our Student Services team are here to help and ensure all students are treated with respect. The team offers lots of support to help keep you on track with your studies and to help you stay safe and healthy during your time at Stafford College and beyond. Above all, we want you to enjoy your time with us and achieve your goals.

From extra help with your studies, through to worries about money, your course or personal life there is always someone in Student Services who can help. We can even help you to organise events or take part in extra activities during your free time.

Confidential Counsellor

Our Counsellor is trained to listen and to help you find your own answers without judging you. We have a private room where you can receive counselling support.

Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officers

Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officers are here to help. If you're struggling with any elements of your course or you have problems in your personal life that are affecting your wellbeing, we can help by speaking to tutors on your behalf, helping you to find useful coping strategies and giving you straight-talking, no-nonsense advice.

Your course will have a named Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer, so there's always a familiar face around to help.

How to get in touch

For further advice from the Student Services team or to book an appointment with a Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer, email us at help.stafford@nscg.ac.uk or call our helpdesk on **01785 275472**.



If you're concerned about your health

The College is a smoke free zone and the Student Services Team can signpost you to services should you wish to stop smoking.

They can also signpost for a range of other services, including Sexual Health, and are equipped to support you both before and during any referral.

There are opportunities provided throughout the year for you to receive information on a range of health and wellbeing topics.

Additional support.

NSCG is an inclusive college, where everyone has the chance to achieve their potential and feel valued. We are open and welcoming towards students who may have a physical or learning disability or mental health issue, and recognise the rights of all students to be treated equally regardless of disability.

The College is committed to ensuring that disabled people, including those with learning difficulties, are treated fairly. All reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure that disabled students and other disabled people are not disadvantaged.

Exam support

Some students can have additional support in exams. This may include:

- A smaller room
- Extra time
- Rest breaks
- A human reader or reading software
- A scribe or laptop
- Use of earplugs or a fidget toy

Who qualifies for exam support?

Students who have had exam support in exams at school AND have:

- A medical condition
- Physical difficulties
- A sensory impairment
- A learning disability such as dyslexia, autism, ADHD or dyspraxia
- A mental health difficulty

What you need to do

Exam support does not automatically roll forward from school. Let the Student Services Team know if you have had exam support before by emailing spldqueries@nscg.ac.uk.

We may require you to provide evidence, such as:

- Medical evidence
- Evidence from your school of your previous exam support (known as Form 8)
- You may need to complete a short assessment in College

If you need extra learning support

Our Additional Learning Support (ALS) team is here to help you achieve your true potential. We can provide tailored support to meet your needs, including one-to-one support and, in some cases, in-class support. Support includes specialist and discreet help with:

- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
- Visual or hearing impairment
- Medical conditions or hidden difficulties
- Social or emotional behaviour problems
- Controlling feelings of anger

If you need help with a physical disability in addition to the support outlined above, we can also make arrangements to provide help such as:

- Personal assistance
- Specialist equipment
- Adapting materials

We support the Sunflower Lanyard scheme for those with invisible disabilities to show that they may need assistance.

The college has an LGBTQ+ support network with our partner SAGE.

Accessing College Buildings

All the main college buildings are accessible to students with mobility difficulties.

Specialist Equipment

Depending on your needs, the College provides a range of assisted technology and specialist equipment including:

- Read & Write Gold Software to support students with dyslexia
- Dictaphones and electronic voice recorders
- Laptop computers
- Text in different formats such as braille, large text, or on tape or disk
- Magnification software/equipment
- Radio aids
- Digital photography
- Disabled parking for blue badge holders
- Accessible toilets and bathroom, including hoisting equipment

We have induction loops at all Reception points, in the Library and the Auditorium. We also have a portable loop system communicator for hearing-impaired students available for classrooms.

NSCG is here for all students of all faiths, our campus has a prayer room and an ablution station.

You can make an enquiry about Additional Learning Support (ALS) by emailing help.stafford@nscg.ac.uk or calling **01785 275472**

Our college is a safe place to be...

Sexual harassment and sexual
violence is not acceptable.

It's not okay!
It's not a joke!

Seen it? Heard It?
Let's talk.

Call 07919218684 or email
help.newcastle@nscg.ac.uk.
Alternatively, you can call the
NSPCC on 0800 136 663.

Peer-on-peer abuse

Here at NSCG, it is important that you are in an environment where you, your peers, staff and colleagues feel safe and show respect for one another. **Abuse, violence or harassment** can't be tolerated.

Peer-on-peer abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- physical abuse, emotional abuse, bullying or intentionally causing harm
- sexual violence such as rape, sexual assault or sexual harassment including inappropriate sexual comments, remarks and jokes both face to face and online
- relationship abuse - coercive or controlling behaviour, blackmail or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or video
- initiation/hazing rituals or gang related violence

If you are concerned about yourself or someone you know, talk to a tutor or drop into Student Services (Riverbank Building, Ground Floor, next to the Library) or call or text the Safeguarding Team on **07860927831**.

British

NSCG is an inclusive college, committed to equality, diversity and the promotion of British Values in everything we do.

Rule of Law

Lanyards are to be worn at all times around your neck.

Smoking and vaping are only permitted in the designated areas.

No smoking or vaping anywhere on the premises.

No eating in the corridor. Eating in designated areas only.

Do not bring takeaway fast food onto the College premises.

Bullying is not tolerated at NSCG.

Democracy

All students have the opportunity to influence decision making and have a voice.

- Students' Union
- Xtras
- Class Representatives
- Student Board
- Student Conference
- Student Governor

All students understand that they must use their voice responsibly.

Individual Liberty

Respect for student rights.

Independent thinking and learning is encouraged, alongside collaborative learning.

Be Xtra Ordinary strategy & Stand Up and Stand Out strateg

Values.

Tolerance

Community events with a focus on Equality and Diversity, Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Enrichment opportunities.

We welcome difference and diversity and understand how this adds to the richness of our community.

We respect and show tolerance to all faiths and beliefs.

We respect our multi faith room and the users of the space.

We respect our LGBTQ+ community and how people choose to identify.

Mutual Respect

Respect for yourself, your peers, staff, the College environment and local community environment.

Every individual is respected at NSCG and our actions towards one another reflect this.

We recognise the importance of not only respecting each other but also of self-respect.

We are proud of our warm welcome to visitors and guests.

We do our utmost to ensure NSCG is a safe environment for all.

A safe environment for all.

It is important that you feel safe at college and in your personal life. The prevent strategy is working together to Notice, Check and Share.

What are we trying to prevent? We are trying to prevent someone from being radicalised.

Who can be vulnerable to radicalisation?

Anyone can be vulnerable to radicalisation, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, religion, education or background. But there are some factors that can make some people more at risk of being targeted by radicalisers than others.

How can you tell someone is at risk of being radicalised?

More important than any one sign is the feeling that something is 'not quite right' with a person. It's important to trust your instincts and if you are worried, reach out for some support and advice.

In most cases the behaviours are a result of other issues and nothing to do with radicalisation, but it's important to act early and share your concerns.

There are some behaviours which we often see when someone is being led down the path to extremism. You might see one sign increasing in intensity or a combination of different signs.

Behaviours might include:

- A change in behaviour
- Changing their circle of friends
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- Unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Accessing extremist material online
- Using extremist or hate terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Writing or creating artwork promoting violent extremist messages

Safeguarding

It's important you feel safe at college, in your personal life and in the community.

✓ Notice

If you are worried that you or someone you know is at risk of harm or of being radicalised, take notice and do the following.

✓ Check

Talk to a tutor or drop into **Student Services** (Riverbank ground floor, next to the Library) or call or text the **Safeguarding Team** on **07860927831**.

✓ Share

We will seek to support individuals through our dedicated Safeguarding Team to ensure students continue to feel safe in the College environment.



Designated Safeguarding Lead
Denise Haney: 07989719140

Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Sarah Hicks: 07860927831

Money matters.

If you are struggling financially and want to know about the support available, please visit us in Student Services.

About our financial support

NSCG is pleased to be able to offer financial support to help students meet the costs of attending college.

Both bursaries provide support based on your circumstances.

There are two types of financial support: College Maintenance Allowance (CMA) or Vulnerable Student Bursary (VSB).

Apply for financial support at nscg.ac.uk



College Maintenance Allowance (CMA)

The College has its own means-tested allowance scheme called CMA for anyone with a household income of £30,000 or less per year. Financial support awards are based on individual circumstances and are allocated to best suit individual needs. Payments may be direct or indirect.

Bursary support will be based on financial need of individual students to cover college related costs such as transport, meals, course equipment and uniform (depending on course). There is also a range of support available to help with childcare costs.

Vulnerable Student Bursary (VSB)

VSB is available to students aged 16-18 who are in care, are a care leaver, living independently and claiming a qualifying benefit or claiming qualifying disability benefits in their own name. Eligible students can receive up to £1,200 per academic year.

Please speak to the Student Finance Team for details of how VSB will be paid.

The Application Process

You need to complete an application form for financial support, which can be found on our website.

You will need to provide supporting evidence with your application. Once your application has been approved, you will receive a letter of approval outlining your award.

Free Breakfast

If you arrive at the College bright and early, you can get free toast and a hot drink between 8 and 9am in the Food Hall.

Get in touch

For more information about financial support, please contact the Student Finance Team or visit our website: nscg.ac.uk/finance

E: studentfinanceteam@nscg.ac.uk
T: 01785 275494

Student Discount

Show your student ID card in certain shops to receive up to 25% discount. You can get additional discount by purchasing a TOTUM card.

Visit www.nus.org.uk for more information.



Making payments.

To make a payment to the college, for example when purchasing items at one of our food and drink outlets, you will be asked to pay using your student ID card.

You should have received your ID card during enrolment. This also doubles up as your payment card, which you can easily top-up at one of the top-up stations within the College.

Our food and drink outlets also accept contactless payments.

Parents or guardians can also top-up your card for you by using the WisePay system. There will also be the need to use WisePay to pay for college trips or activities that incur a cost.

For more information and to access WisePay, visit nscg.ac.uk/wisepay



Hairdressing & Beauty Salon

Whether you're looking for a quick manicure, a new hairstyle or a relaxing massage, the College's state-of-the-art hair and beauty therapy salon offers a wide range of services in sophisticated surroundings at a discounted price for Stafford College students.

The trainees working in the salon are fully supervised at all times by qualified tutors with vast industry experience. The salon is equipped to the highest standard in order to give you a great service in a modern environment, while providing great value for money. All salon services are open to the general public, as well as Stafford College staff and students.

For more information or to see our price lists, pop into the Hair Salon reception.

To get started, it takes just three simple steps to make a payment.

- 1.** Register your student ID card at one of the top-up stations.
- 2.** Top-up your card at a top-up station using cash or online by going to **nscg.ac.uk/wisepay**
- 3.** You're done! Your ID card will now be accepted when making payments.

Find out more at
nscg.ac.uk



Get invo

Your time at NSCG

To enhance your wider experience of college life, there is a diverse programme of events including fundraisers and college day trips. There is also a range of activities to help you with your development and next steps.

Guest Speakers

During your time in college, you will see a range of guest speakers covering a range of topics. We have regular speakers covering Driver Awareness, Knife Crime and Gangs, Motivation and Resilience and Money Management, Bullying and Harassment. You will also have course specific speakers. As well as this, we have regular drop-ins from the Sexual Health Team and advice on substance misuse.

Academy of Sport

Want to flex more than your mental muscles? Indulge your sporty side while you study with the incredible facilities in our Academy of Sport, available for all students.

With the opportunity to become a member of TEAM:NSCG, you could be representing us in the Association of College (AoC) regional and national competitions, leagues and cups.

Contact sport@nscg.ac.uk for more information.

Equality & Diversity

We celebrate Equality and Diversity Day annually in April. We celebrate culture and pride with a carnival atmosphere led by our Students' Union. On these days we have guest speakers, workshops and drop-ins to celebrate equality and diversity. The college has an LGBTQ+ support network with our partner SAGE.

Next Steps Fayre

The Next Steps Fayre is an annual event taking place in March, where we have over 50 Universities and 40 Employers attend to discuss your next steps after college. All Universities and employers have stalls where you can discuss the range of courses, apprenticeships and careers on offer. We also have a timetable of talks that you can attend.

Careers Advice

You can get careers advice by arranging an appointment with one of our Careers Advisors.

Book yours now by emailing:
help.stafford@nscg.ac.uk

olved.



Here for You

If you feel like you've made a wrong course choice, we are here to listen and help. The Student Services Team can help you decide on your next steps, with course advice, how to change courses and providing 1-to-1 support.

Have a chat with your Personal Tutor or member of teaching staff to talk about your options. They'll be happy to help and are there to support you.

Student of the Month

The college holds a monthly Student of the Month awards presentation. Each faculty nominate one student as their Student of the Month. Presentations are made in the Boardroom with the Principal and Management Team and

Student Mentors

Student Mentors are second/third year students who are here to support first year students with their transition to college life.

Mentors can support you with helping to make friends, taking part in activities, low level mental health such as anxiety, and helping with your studies such as how to structure assignments. If you would like a mentor, either speak to your Personal Tutor, come to Student Services or speak to one of our mentors in the grey hoodies.

Core Planning Team as well as special guests. Staff members present their Student of the Month by explaining why the student was nominated. All Student of the Month award winners receive a certificate and voucher.

The Apprenticeship Hub

The Apprenticeship Hub is a free service available to Stafford College Students.

Visit the team on the ground floor (located in the main reception) where you can find an apprenticeship and get advice on all aspects of employment, including writing a CV, interview preparation tips and how to find the right apprenticeship for you.

We work with over 850 employers across Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire, with key employers such as Michelin, Siemens, NHS and more.

We offer a wide range of apprenticeships including Accounting, Business & Administration, Construction, Customer Service, Digital Marketing, Digital Software/Technician, Early Years, Engineering, Health Care, Hospitality and Catering, Motor Vehicle, Plant Maintenance and Teaching Assistance.

For more information, call **01785 275660** or email **apprenticeships@nscg.ac.uk**

Find out
more
about the
team at
nscg.ac.uk



Become an Xtra

Volunteer as an Xtra (Student Ambassador) for the College and you will help your fellow students settle into college life.

There is also a wide range of benefits to being an Xtra. Not only will you get to meet lots of new people, but it's a great opportunity to boost your CV or university application.

Xtras can take part in lots of different activities, including:

- Helping at open events which could involve talking to prospective students and their parents about your experience at the College or developing digital content for events.
- Improving the College community and utilising the facilities available.
- Offering support to new students.
- Taking an active role in fundraising events.
- Visiting your old school to tell potential students about your experiences.

Event

Date

Freshers Fayre

11, 12 September

Xtras, Students' Union & Student Mentor Applications Open

9 September

Xtras & Students' Union Applications Close

20 September

Student Mentor Applications Close

27 September

Remembrance Service

11 November

Christmas Carol Service

19 December

Student Conference

30 January

Equality & Diversity Day

30 April

Mental Health & Wellbeing Day

13 May

Your Students Union.



Stand for election in the Students' Union and spend your spare time representing the views of your fellow students by attending meetings with college managers and campaigning for relevant issues.

Represent your peers

The Students' Union is a student run group that dedicates it's time and resources to give the whole college student community opportunities, events and to lead the student voice strategy. There are a number of roles within the Union:

- President
- Vice President
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Officer
- LGBTQ+ Officer
- Gender Equality Officer
- Marketing & Social Media Officer
- Black & Ethnic Groups Officer
- Sports & Activities Officer
- Environment and Sustainability Officer
- Mature Student Officer
- Students with Disabilities Officer



Class Reps

Class Reps are voted for by their fellow classmates. A Class Rep is student who represents the views of their class on academic and college matters to their tutors, department and faculty. Class Reps may also be chosen to be part of the Student Board or attend the annual Student Conference.

Student Board

The Student Board is a group of selected class reps from each curriculum area that meet termly to discuss college life and issues with a member of the Senior Management Team and a College Governor. These meetings are chaired by the Students' Union President.

The Student Conference

The Student Conference is an annual event that takes place at the beginning of February each year. Around 100 class reps are invited to take part in the conference where they take part in 8 x 10 minute workshops hosted by staff members to gain feedback on a range of college life topics. The feedback is then actioned by relevant staff to improve the student experience of college life.

Outside the classroom

Lanyards

Student safety is our priority and we insist all students visibly display their student ID card at all times when in or around any of the College's buildings. You should use your student lanyard that you were provided with when you were issued your ID card. You'll need your student ID card on you at all times anyway, otherwise you won't be able to enter the College building. The card also doubles up as your cashless payment card, which you will need to buy items from Costa Coffee and the Food Hall. Everyone on campus has a responsibility to wear their lanyard and ID card at all times.

Here is a guide to the College's lanyard colour coding:

● Student ● Staff ● Visitor ● HE Student

Taking care of your facilities

We continue to invest in our facilities to ensure students have a stimulating working environment. We are very proud of our College and we expect you to treat the building and facilities with the respect they deserve.

Safeguarding

Stafford College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Tutorial Newsletter

You can keep up to date with the news and events from Stafford College via the weekly tutorial newsletter which will be delivered by your personal tutor each week, as well as updates on the College Facebook and Instagram. This will include information on events happening that week or in the coming few weeks and will tell you how you can get involved.





Eating & Drinking

There are designated areas within the College for you to eat and drink. We have in-house catering facilities which are open daily from 8am to 2.15pm (Food Hall) and 8am to 6pm most days (Costa Coffee Shop).

The Food Hall provides breakfast options until 11am daily – you can grab anything from a slice of toast to a full English breakfast at reasonable prices. The lunchtime menu is available from 11.15am to 2.15pm, with snacks, healthy options, daily specials and loads more.

Get social

We of course want you to engage with us on social media but also know you'll probably want to share your college experiences with your family and friends too.

In general, you should avoid posting the following:

Special dietary requirements can be discussed with the catering team.

Our Costa Coffee Shop, which is open from 8am to 6pm daily, sells all the drinks that you would find in any high-street Costa Coffee. You can also find breakfast snacks and daily meal deals. Costa Coffee is accessible to our evening students and a special evening menu is available.

Students are kindly asked not to bring in food purchased from outside retailers to eat on the premises.

- Negative comments, posts or messages
- Questionable or compromising photos of yourself or others
- Offensive jokes, photos or material
- Highly emotional content



Travelling to college.

Travelling to college has never been so easy! Whether you are cycling, taking the bus or the train, there are plenty of options and discounts available to you.

Travelling via bus

If you are catching the bus to college, the bus operators offer discounted weekly and monthly tickets for students.

Purchase your tickets directly from the operator to get the best price.

Cycling to college

Special facilities are provided for the parking of bicycles and motorcycles – please use designated areas only. You are strongly advised to use a high-security lock on your cycle, which must not be left secured to fences or railings around the site.



16 - 17 Railcard

If you are aged 16 or 17, you can enjoy 50% off standard Anytime, Off-Peak, Advance and Season Tickets, helping you to save money. A 16-17 Saver is £30 and is valid for one year or until your 18th birthday, whichever comes first.

For more information, FAQs and how to apply, please visit www.16-17saver.co.uk

16 - 25 Railcard

The 16-25 railcard will give you 1/3 off rail fares when travelling by train. The railcard costs £30 and you can save money on a wide range of tickets. You can also buy a railcard if you are a mature student. Railcards can be used all day, with a £12 minimum spend during peak times.

For further information, FAQs and how to apply, please visit www.16-25railcard.co.uk or www.26-30railcard.co.uk

Network West Midlands

If you are 16-18 in full time education and travel with Network West Midlands, you may be eligible to apply for a 16-18 Photocard. The Photocard allows you to buy child single, return and day tickets, as well as term and season tickets for the bus, tram and train.

For further information, please visit networkwestmidlands.com

Get in touch

For more information about Financial Support or travel, please contact the Student Finance Team or visit our website: nscg.ac.uk/finance

E: studentfinanceteam@nscg.ac.uk
T: 01785 275494

Term dates

Autumn Term 2024

Monday 2 September
CP Day (Non-Teaching Day)

Tuesday 3 September
Start of Term
Teaching Commences

Friday 25 October
CP Day (Non-Teaching Day)

Monday 28 October - Friday 1 November
Half Term

Monday 4 November
Teaching resumes after Half Term

Wednesday 6 November
CP Day (Non-Teaching Day)

Friday 20 December
Last Day of Term and Teaching

Monday 23 December - Friday 3 January
Christmas & New Year Break

Spring Term 2025

Monday 6 January
Start of Term
Teaching Commences

Tuesday 28 January
CP Day (Non-Teaching Day)

Monday 17 - Friday 21 February
Half Term

Monday 24 February
Teaching resumes after Half Term

Friday 11 April
Last Day of Term and Teaching

Monday 14 April - Friday 25 April
Easter Break

tes.

Summer Term 2025

Monday 28 April
Start of Term
Teaching Commences

Monday 5 May
Bank Holiday

Thursday 15 May
CP Day (Non-Teaching Day)

Monday 26 - Friday 30 May
Half Term

Friday 20 June
End of Teaching

Term dates are correct at the time of printing. Please ensure you check nscg.ac.uk/termdates for the most up to date information regarding term dates.

It begins at:
nscg.ac.uk



Stafford College

Victoria Square
Stafford
Staffordshire
ST16 2QR

T: 01785 223800

E: info.stafford@nscg.ac.uk

Part of the

NSCG

NEWCASTLE
AND STAFFORD
COLLEGES GROUP

The small print:

All our course information was correct when this brochure was printed. But sometimes things change at the last minute. For all the latest info it is always best to check our website.