

# Newchoices

The Flexible Benefits scheme from  
New College Durham 2020/21

**Create a benefits package  
as individual as you**



New College Durham

# Welcome

This is the fourteenth year of newchoices and thousands of benefits have been picked by staff in that time. This year's scheme continues to be packed full of benefits and further discounts to be enjoyed by staff at the College including Club Nissan and Dawson & Sanderson Holidays, offering exclusive discounts for our staff and immediate families.


Whether you've been with us for the whole 14 years and not yet found something that's right for you or you're a new member of staff at the College, please send us your suggestions for ways the scheme could be made better.

We're proud to remain one of the few colleges to offer a flexible remuneration package!



Andrew Broadbent  
Deputy Principal (Chief Financial Officer)

The newchoices brochure is designed to introduce you to the Flexible Benefit scheme at New College Durham. It has been created to ensure you understand the offers available to you and how to select them. If you have any questions that are not covered within this brochure, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the HR team.

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# What is newchoices?

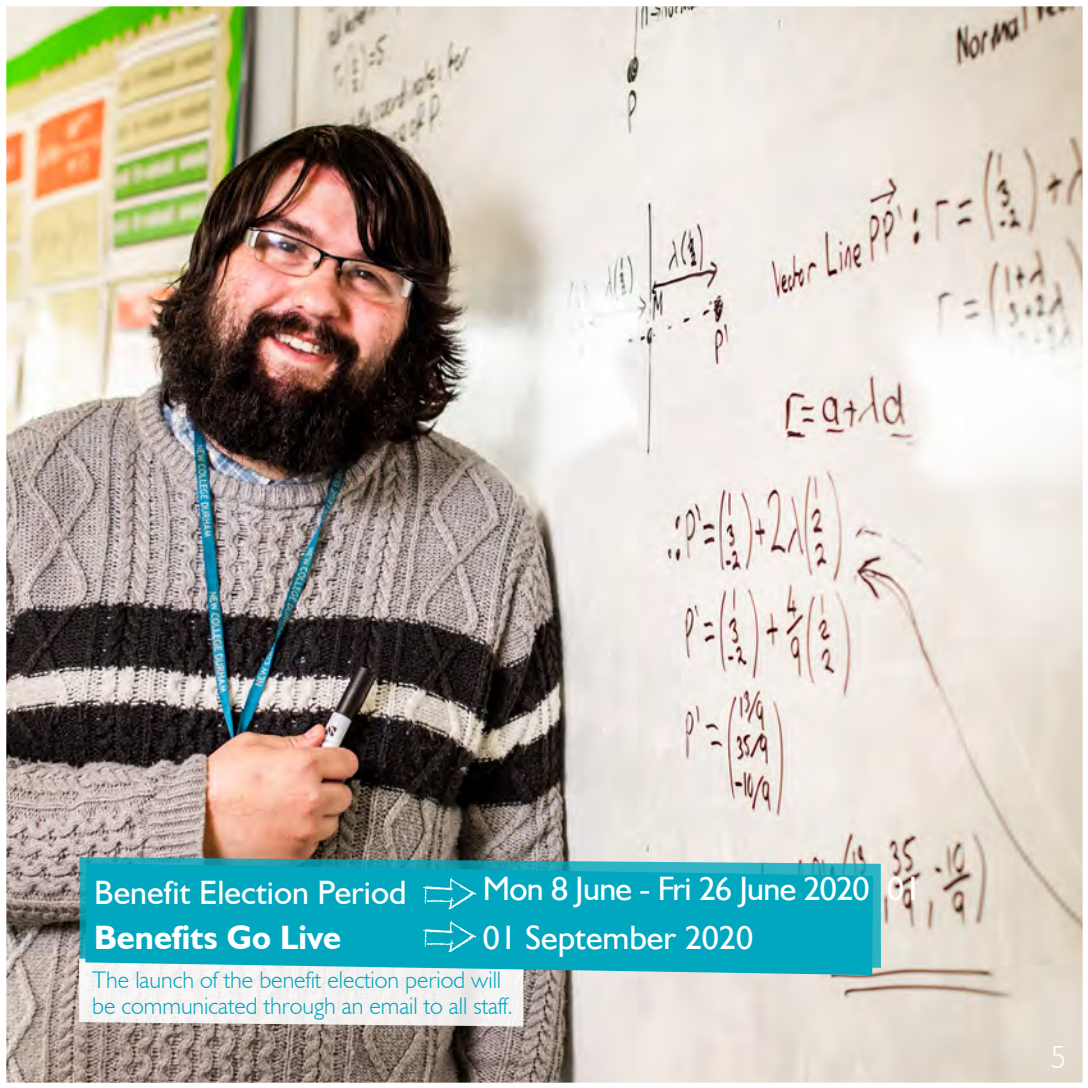
**newchoices** is the Flexible Benefits Scheme at New College Durham which allows you to choose the make-up of your individual benefits package. **newchoices** allows you to select the benefits that are relevant to your lifestyle and benefit from New College Durham's buying power. In addition, where possible we have structured benefits to be tax and National Insurance efficient.

The scheme runs annually allowing you to make selections throughout June. For 2020/21 the election period will run for a three week period commencing on Monday 8 June 2020 until Friday 26 June 2020. Benefits will then be set for a 12 month period from 1st September 2020. Each year you will be able to renew your benefits relevant to your lifestyle and also enabling you to take advantage of new benefits that may be added to **newchoices** in future years.

**newchoices** provides you with a number of benefits that you can select. Benefits are available to select at various levels, enabling you to include your partner and/or children where relevant and allowing you to pay for these on a monthly basis directly from your salary.

## Who is eligible for newchoices?

Every effort has been made to include as many staff within the scheme as possible. As a result, flexible benefits will be available to all substantive staff and fixed term staff who have a contract for more than 7.4 hours per week (ie. a full day), and who will meet the qualifying salary. If you are not eligible to participate in newchoices, but you are still interested in receiving some of the newchoices benefits please contact the HR department who will be happy to discuss your options.



**Benefit Election Period** ⇒ Mon 8 June - Fri 26 June 2020

**Benefits Go Live** ⇒ 01 September 2020

The launch of the benefit election period will be communicated through an email to all staff.

# Your newchoices

As an employee at New College Durham, you now have access to a range of benefits. Please note any elections that were made in 2019/20 will automatically be re-set to zero (ie no benefits selected). If you wish to take these benefits for the forthcoming year you will need to ensure that you notify HR accordingly using the agreed pro-forma. Some of the benefits available to you are operated via salary sacrifice, subject to HMRC approval. This means that an amount is deducted from your salary in exchange for benefits of the same value. Because your pay is reduced, you pay less tax and national insurance. Read on to find out which benefits are tax and National Insurance efficient.

## The newchoices scheme includes:

- ⇒ Buying Additional Holiday
- ⇒ Childcare Vouchers
- ⇒ Cycle2Work
- ⇒ Dawson and Sanderson Holiday Club
- ⇒ Dental Insurance
- ⇒ Gym Membership
- ⇒ Independent Financial Advice
- ⇒ Legal Services
- ⇒ My Club Nissan
- ⇒ Charitable Donation
- ⇒ Pension
- ⇒ Retail Vouchers

## LGPS Members

Where a LGP scheme member foregoes remuneration to purchase additional holidays, there is no longer a requirement for that individual to pay pension contributions on those holidays purchased. This means that anyone in the LGP scheme that purchases additional holidays will have less pensionable pay during the year, which will affect their pension as this is now calculated on Career Average Earnings. However, the individual can choose to apply to pay an Additional Pension Contribution (APC) to cover the amount of pension 'lost' during this period.

## Buying Additional Holiday

In addition to your existing annual leave you may wish to buy extra time off. All employees are able to purchase up to three additional weeks of holiday directly from their gross pay.

Holiday is calculated in line with the standard formula used by New College Durham. Before selecting this benefit employees are required to gain authorisation from their line manager to ensure that their department will be able to accommodate the request. All holiday requests will be done in line with college policy.

You make a saving on Tax and National Insurance liability



## Gym Membership (Steps2Fitness)

Gym membership is offered at a subsidised rate, allowing you to help maintain a healthy lifestyle at a reasonable cost. Gym membership entitles you to unlimited use of the Steps2Fitness facilities at New College Durham. This is paid for in 12 equal monthly payments from your salary.



## Cycle2Work (Cyclescheme)

You can keep fit and healthy, save money and do your bit for the environment by taking advantage of the Government's Cycle2Work initiative.

You can purchase a bike of your choice and your choice of equipment. New College Durham will pay for the cost of the bike and then reclaim this amount from you in 24 monthly deductions. You will be effectively hiring the bike from New College Durham.

However you may purchase the bike at the end of your 24 month hire period for a nominal fee.

You can decide how much you want to spend on your bike and equipment up to a maximum of £1,000. You can choose your bike from a number of local bike stores.



## Salary Sacrifice

Salary Sacrifice Cycle2Work is operated via salary sacrifice. Therefore you make a saving on tax and National Insurance liability'

# Your newchoices continued

## Childcare Vouchers (Edenred)

**This benefit is only open to people who currently receive childcare vouchers. The benefit is not open to any new applicants. However, you may be eligible for Tax-Free Childcare. You can find more information here <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>**

New College Durham gives you access to money saving Childcare Vouchers enabling basic rate taxpayers to save up to an estimated £933 per year on childcare costs.\*

Childcare Vouchers enable you to pay for childcare at a host of registered and approved childcare providers. A deduction is made each month from your gross pay and is paid into an electronic account which makes it easy to manage your childcare payments.

\* assuming tax deduction of 20% and a national insurance deduction of 12%

## Salary Sacrifice

Childcare Vouchers is operated via salary sacrifice. Therefore there is no tax and National Insurance liability.



## Dental Insurance (CIGNA)



Dental Insurance enables you to cover the cost of your dental treatment providing different levels of cover to suit everyone's needs.

You are able to access your choice of NHS or private dentist and can claim back the cost for a range of crowns, fillings and other treatments depending on the level of cover you select.

You are able to select from three levels of cover and also include your partner and/or your children.

## Dawson and Sanderson Holiday Club



Dawson and Sanderson Holiday Club is a discounted holiday booking scheme available to all staff. This scheme offers a minimum of 5% discount off holiday prices but more often than not the deals on offer far exceed this as well as other added benefits (free transfers and airport lounge passes etc.) When registering for the scheme staff need to identify themselves as employees of the College, through their payroll number.



## Legal Services

When legal issues occur you just want to speak to someone in the know. Irwin Mitchell offer expert support, advice and guidance on a wide range of consumer legal matters, at a discounted rate, including:

- ⇒ Moving home services
- ⇒ Family and relationship matters
- ⇒ Making a Will



For further information and details of how to contact Irwin Mitchell Solicitors please contact a member of the HR department. Remember, to qualify for a discount you will need to quote New College Durham.

## Independent Financial Advice

To provide you with important guidance around investments and financial security. Independent Financial Advice through newchoices provides you with free access to a list of approved Independent Financial Advisers in their local area, available all year round.

Go to [www.unbiased.co.uk](http://www.unbiased.co.uk) for further information\*

\* Although access to IFA details are provided through newchoices, no specific IFA is endorsed by New College Durham. Employees must assess and choose the appropriate IFA for their own circumstances



## My Club Nissan

As a member of New College Durham staff you, or your immediate family members, are eligible to buy a new Nissan vehicle through My Club Nissan with up to 22% off the list price. This benefit applies whether the vehicle is purchased with cash, or through one of the tailored Nissan Finance packages. Whichever option you choose you will be purchasing a brand new Nissan for a price that you won't find anywhere else.

Accessing the discount is easy. Simply visit [myclubnissan.co.uk](http://myclubnissan.co.uk) and register your details, so that you can be identified as a My Club Nissan member. Once registered, select the Nissan model you are interested in and request a code. You will then be sent an authorisation email containing the unique code within two working days. The next step is to book an appointment to visit your local Nissan dealer, informing them you have a My Club Nissan authorisation code. On the day of your visit, you must take this code with you, plus your driving licence or passport and a current utility bill to prove your identity.

# Your newchoices continued



## Charitable Donation (Give As You Earn)

Give As You Earn provides you with the opportunity to make regular donations to a worthy cause in a tax efficient way. Tax free contribution to a good cause through your salary. You can select from any of the listed charities to donate to on a monthly basis, including:

- ⇒ Against Breast Cancer
- ⇒ Age Concern
- ⇒ Alzheimer's Society
- ⇒ BLISS
- ⇒ British Heart Foundation
- ⇒ British Red Cross
- ⇒ Children with Leukemia
- ⇒ Cancer Research
- ⇒ Disability North
- ⇒ Durham Wildlife Trust
- ⇒ Marie Curie
- ⇒ NSPCC
- ⇒ National Trust
- ⇒ Oxfam
- ⇒ Prostate Cancer
- ⇒ Pure Trust
- ⇒ RNLI
- ⇒ RSPCA
- ⇒ St Cuthbert's Hospice
- ⇒ WWF



**Tax free contribution to a good cause through your salary**

## Retail Vouchers (The Voucher Shop)

Retail Vouchers enable you to save money whilst shopping at a number of the UK's most popular retailers. You are able to purchase shopping vouchers at a discounted rate, with discounts ranging from 3.5% to 8%.

At the start of the benefit (01 September) you will be issued with a reloadable card (one card per retailer). The card will then be loaded remotely each month with the amount that you have selected to purchase.

Your purchase selection will be set for a 12 month period (unless you experience a life event).



## Pension

It is never too early to start planning towards your future. We provide you with the opportunity to pay into a Pension Scheme, which depending on your role at New College Durham, will either be the Local Government Pension Scheme or the Teachers Pension Scheme.

We encourage our employees to plan ahead. All staff are encouraged to join a Pension Scheme, which provides a great opportunity to save towards retirement. New College Durham makes employer contributions in addition to the contributions you make into your pension.



# Tax and national insurance

The benefits within the **newchoices** scheme have differing tax and National Insurance treatment. Some are free of liability whilst some are directly liable.

The majority of benefits provided through **newchoices** are purchased via net pay and consequently have no further tax or NI liability. Holiday Buy, Childcare Vouchers and Cycle2Work scheme are operated through salary sacrifice. This means that you exchange part of your gross pay in return for the employer's agreement to provide the benefit.

To see which benefits are operated through net pay and which are operated through gross pay please see the table. Remember benefits operated through gross pay save you on tax and National Insurance contributions.

| Newchoices benefit                | GrossNet |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Buying Additional Holiday         | Gross    |
| Childcare Vouchers                | Gross    |
| Cycle Scheme                      | Gross    |
| Dental Insurance                  | Net      |
| My Nissan Club                    | n/a      |
| Dawson and Sanderson Holiday Club | n/a      |
| Gym Membership                    | Net      |
| Independent Financial Advice*     | n/a      |
| Legal Services*                   | n/a      |
| Charitable Donation**             | Net      |
| Pension**                         | Net      |
| Retail Vouchers                   | Net      |

\* These benefits are not charged through newchoices.

\*\* This benefit although taken from your net pay receives tax relief.

# Your questions answered

## **Q What is Salary Sacrifice?**

**A** Salary Sacrifice is an agreement whereby your salary is reduced by a given amount in return for New College Durham providing a benefit of equivalent value. The reduction in salary means you pay less tax and National Insurance and actually save money on the cost of the benefit compared to paying from your net pay.

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## **Q When benefits are taken as a reduction of the salary, does this affect other rights based on salary including my pension?**

**A** Although benefits such as Childcare Vouchers, are provided through salary sacrifice, any other rights based on salary will remain unaffected and will be based on your 'Notional Salary' (ie. your salary before salary sacrifice deductions).

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## **Q Will my benefit simply continue if I don't do anything?**

**A** Your current benefits will all be reset to zero (ie. no benefits selected). if you want your benefits to continue you will need to ensure that you notify HR accordingly using the agreed pro-forma.

## **Q If I don't opt in, when do I have the next opportunity to join?**

**A** If you do not opt in during the election period, you will have to wait until the next annual enrolment (typically in June each year) to select your benefits, unless you have a life event.

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## **Q Will New College Durham introduce a flexible working scheme?**

**A** The College has already established policies to promote a work life balance which includes a job share policy and flexible working procedures. It seeks to allow individuals some flexibility to respond to urgent domestic issues and will by negotiation (where service permits) allow some flexibility on the start and finish time of staff. The existing contracts of employment for support staff allows for recognition of time accrued.

**Q How does the Retail Voucher Scheme work?**

**A** Retail Vouchers provide discounts in a variety of UK retail outlets including, Marks and Spencer, Sainsburys etc. Vouchers are available in denominations of £10 for each specified outlet but you only have to pay the discounted rate, eg. a £10 voucher for Argos would only cost you £9.60 as a deduction from your salary (based on a discount of 4%).

At the start of the benefit year (01 September) you will be issued with one card per retailer. The card will then be loaded remotely each month with the amount that you have selected to purchase.



**Q What happens if I leave?**

**A** If you leave New College Durham all benefit entitlements and cover will cease on the date of termination. However some benefits may have been taken before you leave and if this occurs the company will deduct any outstanding amount from your final salary.



# Life events

You will be able to modify certain benefits during the **newchoices** scheme year if you experience a 'Life Event'.

A 'Life Event' is the term used to describe a significant event in your home or work life. Such events would include marriage, the birth of a child, promotion or military mobilisation. The benefits you are able to change as a result of a Life Event are dependent on the specific event.\*

If you experience one of the following Life Events and you wish to make changes to your **newchoices**, please contact the HR department on extensions 4021/4024 or via email at [human.resources@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:human.resources@newdur.ac.uk).

Once confirmed, an election period will be opened for you to amend your benefits on the 1st of the following month. Any changes you make will take effect from the 1st of the month thereafter.

## Examples of Life Events

- ⇒ Marriage/Civil partnership
- ⇒ Divorce/Legal separation
- ⇒ Becoming pregnant
- ⇒ Death of child
- ⇒ Birth/adoption of a child
- ⇒ Death of spouse/partner
- ⇒ Promotion/demotion
- ⇒ Child passes eligibility age for a benefit
- ⇒ Moving home
- ⇒ Military Mobilisation

\* The amount of change you can make will vary dependent on the life event and the rules of each benefit provider

# New employees

All new employees to the College will automatically gain access to **newchoices**. New employees will be able to enrol from the 1st of the month following their start date (where practicable). They will then have two weeks to submit their benefit selection in time for their benefits to become effective on the 1st of the following month.

Benefits will remain fixed until the next annual enrolment. Due to contractual agreements with benefit providers, some of the benefits may be unavailable to all employees all year round.

## Further Information

If you have any questions regarding the newchoices scheme please contact a member of the HR department. We are also keen to hear of your feedback and views. If you have any positive comments or suggested improvements you would like us to consider then please contact a member of the HR team

# Key dates

Annual enrolments will typically take place in June. Benefits will go live from 1st September - the start of the **newchoices** flexible benefits year.

**Benefit Election Period** ⇨ 8 June to 26 June

**Benefits Go Live** ⇨ 1 September 2020

**Disclaimer**

Whilst every effort is made to maintain the accuracy of this brochure, it is only intended to act as a guide to the scheme. In the event that there is inconsistency between the brochure and the provider's terms and conditions, the provider's terms and conditions will prevail.

Once accepted into the New College Durham newchoices scheme you will be subject to the rules of the scheme and the provider's conditions and requirements for provision of each benefit.

No information in this brochure should be taken as a personal recommendation or advice on the part of New College Durham or any of its suppliers or partners. You are advised to seek independent financial advice if you need further guidance about the suitability of these products and services in relation to your personal circumstances. New College Durham reserves the right to change, remove or add to the products or services listed within this flexible benefits scheme or to change the provider of any benefit. New College Durham may withdraw a benefit and provide a suitable alternative or cash substitute (this may happen where a provider is unable to provide a benefit, or the cost of provision is no longer viable). New College Durham may exclude an individual from a particular product or service due to reasonable employment, legal or health and safety reasons. An individual may be excluded from a benefit if the provider refuses to provide the product or services. If an individual risk profile is assessed by a provider as being exceptionally high, any additional cost of the benefit may be passed on to the individual. While New College Durham has secured agreement of the companies listed within this benefit brochure to provide a range of goods and/or services for the benefit of New College Durham, New College Durham does not accept any liability for any goods and/or services received.

New College Durham is committed to using providers of a high quality and if you should have any problems with any of the providers please contact the HR department on extensions 4024/4021