

# Introduction

We are thrilled to welcome you to Durham University for the **Critical Neurodiversity Studies Conference: Directions, Intersections, Contradictions**, an international gathering designed to challenge, expand, and transform the critical neurodiversity research landscape.

While traditional theory describes the world, **critical theory** seeks to transform it—and this is the spirit that drives our conference. We aim to foster a generative space for the next generation of neurodivergent scholar-activists, building a movement that departs from narrow, medicalised models of neurodiversity and instead centres arts, humanities, and liberatory social theory.

This attendee pack is here to support you during your stay and help you get the most out of your time with us. Inside, you'll find detailed guidance on arriving to and travelling within Durham, accommodation options, recommendations for exploring Durham, and accessibility information and conference commitments that reflect our values of inclusivity.

We are committed to ensuring that this conference is not only rich in thought but also welcoming, comfortable, and fully accessible to all attendees. From step-free access and sensory rooms to hybrid participation and quiet spaces, our goal is to create a space where everyone can meaningfully engage—on their own terms.

This event forms part of the 2024/25 Critical Neurodiversity Studies takeover of the [Measurement Lab](#), co-led by Louise Creechan and Robert Chapman, and co-badged with the [Neurodivergent Humanities Network](#).

We look forward to a powerful and joyful gathering with you this June.

Warm regards,

The Critical Neurodiversity Studies Conference Team

## Getting to Durham

### Plane

#### ***Newcastle Airport (NCL)***

Newcastle Airport is approximately 20 miles north of Durham. There are connecting flights from many European hubs including London Heathrow and London Gatwick, Amsterdam, Paris and Brussels. The airport is served by a number of budget airlines.

See the [Newcastle Airport website](#) for full details.

The Metro (underground) is available from the airport to Newcastle Central Station, which takes around 20 minutes, and Metro trains run every 7 minutes. From Newcastle Central Station you can catch a train (overground) to Durham Station which takes around 15 minutes. You can find guidance on how to use the ticket machines (as well as the wider Metro system) on the [Metro website](#).

If you are arriving in the evening or departing in the morning, we recommend taking a taxi from the airport to avoid the risk of missing the last trains south (see taxi section).

#### ***Durham Tees Valley Airport (DTV)***

Durham Tees Valley is approximately 25 miles south of Durham. Although it has fewer flights than Newcastle, there are connecting flights with Amsterdam and other cities, and it is served by budget airlines.

See the [Durham Tees Valley Airport website](#) for full details.

We would recommend a taxi from this airport to Durham (see taxi section).

### Train

#### ***Durham Station***

Over 60 trains call at Durham daily from most major centres in the country, including 14 trains from London.

The high speed LNER service takes under 3 hours from London Kings Cross on the main East Coast line. First Transpennine Express offers frequent links from North West England, Yorkshire and Scotland. Cross Country trains link Durham with Yorkshire, Manchester, Nottingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Southampton and Edinburgh.

For train times and fare information call National Rail Enquiries on

+44(0)8457 48 49 50 or +44(0)207 278 5240 from overseas (note that international rates apply), or visit the [National Rail website](#).

The [Trainline website](#) is also useful for checking train times.

A taxi from Durham Station to the majority of the University venues in Durham would cost in the region of £5.00 to £8.00. There is a taxi rank at the station. You will also find a list of Durham taxis in our taxi section.

## Car

Durham is only 2 miles from the A1(M) motorway. Leave the motorway at Junction 62 on the A690 heading towards Durham. Follow the signs to the city centre.

The city is served by three Park & Ride sites on the key routes into the city. These are situated at Belmont, Sniperley and Howlands. The Howlands site is approximately a 17 minute walk from the conference venue. These sites are open 7am to 7pm daily. A direct bus service runs from each site to the city centre. The sites offer free parking for users of the Park & Ride service and unlimited daily travel into the city centre and back for around £2.00.

Park & Ride users can also use the bus to the Cathedral for free.

Further information can be found on the [Durham Park and Ride website](#).

## Taxi

There are many taxi companies and ride-sharing services in Durham. Please note that taxis are busy in the morning and afternoon when schools are opening/closing. If travelling at these times, we would recommend pre-booking in advance.

### ***Useful taxi numbers***

AirPort Express +44(0)191 371 2352 (9am to 8pm)

After 8pm +44(0)793 658 5799 / +44(0)786 761 7266

Email: [airport365@live.co.uk](mailto:airport365@live.co.uk)

Airport Taxis Durham +44(0)191 394 2468

Mac's Taxis +44(0)191 384 1329 or +44(0)191 372 3786

Paddy's Taxis +44(0)191 386 6662

Polly's Taxis +44(0)709 330 2572

Pratt's Taxis +44(0)191 386 4040 or +44(0)191 386 0700

Sherburn Taxis +44(0)191 372 3388

## Accommodation

### Durham

The conference is taking place in the city of Durham, a historic university town with a compact, walkable centre and a range of accommodation options. As this is a busy time of year due to the end of term, we strongly encourage attendees to book accommodation as early as possible to ensure availability.

Below, we have compiled a list of local hotels with information about their distance from the venue, the train station, and some relevant transport links.

#### **Premier Inn | Durham City Centre (Walkergate) Hotel**

Freemans Place, Walkergate, Durham, DH1 1SQ

Durham University Palatine Centre 0.9 miles

Durham Railway Station 0.5 miles

#### **Travelodge | Durham Hotel**

Station Lane, Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 1LJ

Durham University Palatine Centre 1.1 miles

Durham Railway Station 0.9 miles

#### **Premier Inn | Durham (North)**

Rotary Way, Arnison Retail Centre, Pity Me, DH1 5GB

Durham Sainsburys Bus Stop 2 min walk

Durham Train Station 2.4 miles

#### **Premier Inn | Durham (East)**

Belmont Industrial Estate, Broomside Park, Durham, DH1 1HP

Durham Belmont Link Road Bus Stop 9 min walk

Durham Train Station 3 miles

#### **Victoria Inn, Durham**

86 Hallgarth Street, Durham, DH1 3AS

Durham University Palatine Centre 9 min walk

Durham Railway Station 1 mile

### **Delta Hotels by Marriott Durham Royal County**

Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3JN

Durham University Palatine Centre 13 min walk

Durham Railway Station 15 min walk

### **Hotel Indigo | Durham**

9 Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HL

Durham University Palatine Centre 14 min walk

Durham Railway Station 16 min walk

### **Farnley Tower Guesthouse, Durham**

The Avenue, Durham, DH1 4DX

Durham University Palatine Centre 1.1 miles

Durham Railway Station 15 min walk

### **Ushaw Historic House, Durham**

Woodland Rd, Durham, DH7 7DW

Durham Aged Miners Homes Bus Stop 19 min walk

Durham Railway Station 4.7 miles

## Newcastle

Durham's hotels are often busy at this time of year due to the end of term, so we have also put together a list of hotels in nearby Newcastle. Newcastle is a ten-minute train ride from Durham, with trains running every ten minutes or so.

To support those staying outside the city, we will be arranging a daily shuttle bus between Durham train station and the conference venue (running at 9:15am and 5:30pm).

### **Premier Inn | Newcastle City Centre (The Gate)**

95 Newgate Street, Newcastle, Tyne And Wear, NE1 5RF

Newcastle Central Station 0.8 miles

### **Travelodge | Newcastle Central Hotel**

Forster Street, Quayside, Newcastle, NE1 2NH

Newcastle Central Station 0.8 miles

### **Travelodge | Newcastle Quayside Hotel**

Riverview Buildings Close, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 3BE

Newcastle Central Station 0.9 miles

### **Travelodge | Gateshead Hotel**

Clasper Way, Swalwell, Gateshead, NE16 3BE

Newcastle Central Station 4.4 miles

### **Premier Inn | Newcastle Metro Centre Hotel**

Derwent Haugh Road, Swalwell, Gateshead, NE16 3BJ

Newcastle Central Station 4.6 miles

### **Travelodge | Newcastle Whitemare Pool Hotel**

A194 Wardley, Whitemare Pool, Nr. Gateshead, NE10 8YB

Newcastle Central Station 5.3 miles

## About Durham

During your trip to Durham for the Critical Neurodiversity Studies

Conference in June, you may wish to explore treasures and attractions

County Durham has to offer in your spare time! From breathtaking landscapes to local festivals, there's plenty going on which doesn't cost anything.

We have compiled a list of some of the things to discover around Durham:

## Durham University

Durham University is home to internationally important collections from across history and around the globe. We welcome visitors to our museums and galleries and garden. Located in two clusters, at the heart of the UNESCO World Heritage Site and to the south of the city, our venues are open year-round and are open to all. Please visit the [Durham University website](#) to find out more about these venues. Some of our top attractions include:

- Durham Castle
- Oriental Museum
- Botanic Garden
- Museum of Archaeology
- Historic Libraries at Palace Green
- World Heritage Site Visitor Centre

You can also use our [Events Calendar](#) to find out what's happening on the dates you are in Durham, or search by event type, venue, or theme.

## County Durham

With places for a relaxing stroll or cycle, brushing up on your history, and days out with the kids, many of the attractions are within walking distance of the centre of Durham or accessible by public transport from the city.

- Seaham: On Durham's coast, there's lots to do in Seaham over the summer. The historic [Seaham Harbour Marina](#) is the only one in County Durham and boasts several local businesses including cafes. Seaham Beach is also a great spot for a day out.
- Durham's stunning coastline: Stretching all the way from Sunderland to Hartlepool, running through Seaham, the [Durham Heritage Coast](#) is a dramatic landscape of beaches, rugged cliffs and imposing headlands.
- [Durham Cathedral](#): Entry is free (with a donation suggested) and you can explore the almost 1,000-year-old building and discover its hidden histories.
- Penshaw Monument and Herrington Country Park: One of the landmarks of the North East, the 21m-tall [Penshaw Monument](#) is a replica of an Ancient Greek temple and visible from 50 miles away. Standing on top of a hill, it has panoramic views across County Durham and Wearside.

Additionally, here are links to [a map of changing rooms, defibrillators and accessible toilets](#) around the university, [a campus map](#), and [walking biodiversity routes](#) around the campus.

We hope you enjoy your time in Durham!

## Getting about Durham

### Walking

Durham's compact city centre and university campus are highly walkable, offering both convenience and picturesque views. The city is famously hilly, with lots of cobbles, so please do bear this in mind.

**City Centre to Durham University:** The route from the city centre to the conference venue on the Durham University Science Site is approximately a 15-minute walk.

### Bus

Durham's bus network is reliable and well-connected, ensuring comfortable travel throughout the city and surrounding area. [Arriva Bus Services](#) operates the majority of routes in Durham, with many buses equipped with low floors for easy access.

Key buses connecting the city centre with Durham University Science Site (the conference venue) include the **56, 58, X12** and the **6**. These run approximately every 10-15 minutes during peak times.

### Taxi

Taxis and ride-sharing services like Uber are readily available in Durham. A list of local taxi companies can be found on page 4 of this Durham Visitors' Pack.

## The venue

### **The Palatine Centre**

#### **Stockton Rd, Durham DH1 3LE**

Situated on Stockton Road within Durham University's Lower Mountjoy site, the Palatine Centre offers modern facilities designed with inclusivity in mind:

- **Step-Free Access:** The building offers step-free access throughout, ensuring ease of movement for wheelchair users and those with mobility impairments.
- **All-gender and Accessible Toilets and Changing Facilities:** Accessible and all-gender toilet facilities are available on the ground floor. A Changing Places toilet is located on the ground floor, equipped with an adjustable changing bench and a powered overhead hoist.



- **Hearing Assistance:** A fixed hearing loop system is installed at the reception desk to assist attendees with hearing impairments.
- **Lift Access:** Standard lifts provide access to all floors, featuring tactile markings and audible floor indicators to assist visually impaired users.
- All seminar rooms and lecture theatres have dimmable lights, with considerations for acoustics and space to ensure comfortable movement for all participants.
- Access to green space (e.g., woodland and river walks) within close proximity.

In addition to the lecture theatres and seminar rooms where the conference papers will be presented, we will be offering the following dedicated rooms within the venue as part of our commitment to meet the access and inclusion needs of as many potential attendees, whether in person or online, as we possibly can.

### **Networking Room**

A space with room for movement and ample seating designed to foster connection and conversation, with optional prompts provided by our Creative Facilitation Unit to support accessible social engagement.

### **Sensory Room**

### **Dark/Quiet Room**

### **Virtual Attendance Rooms for Keynotes**

Designated spaces within the venue where attendees can attend the hybrid keynote sessions in a separate setting, offering greater flexibility and comfort while staying connected to the main event. Attendees will still be able to participate in the question-and-answer sessions virtually.

You can find out more about the provisions as part of our commitment to access and inclusion on the [\*\*Neurodivergent Humanities Network website\*\*](#).

These commitments are just the starting point. We are constantly looking at how we can enhance our offerings for the conference within the resources available to us, and we will be regularly updating this page to share all the ways we will be making our conference the most comfortable and accessible event possible.

Travelling to Durham (plane, train, car)

Accommodation (in Durham, in Newcastle – mention shuttle)

About Durham

Things to do in Durham

Getting about Durham (taxis, buses, walking)

The venue (location, layout, ability to visit on the Monday evening)