

MEDIA RELEASE

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Further information: dsalmon@myercough.ac.uk or 01995 642241

Details confirmed of future of land-based study for Cumbria

Updated details of an exciting, new, land-based educational offer for Cumbria can now be revealed.

Following weeks of discussions between stakeholders, Myerscough College, Ullswater Community College and Kendal College, there is now a finalised land-based offer for the whole of the county. This offer will provide an essential lifeline, clarity of offer and continuity of study for existing and prospective students in the land-based sectors.

The collaborations recognise the importance of the future of the land-based sector, and in particular, the agriculture, animal management and arboriculture sectors to the county, and how vital it is that the next generation have the best possible opportunity to obtain high level qualifications locally.

The offer aims to assist learners affected by the forthcoming closure of Newton Rigg College whilst the county tries to secure a long-term future for the Newton Rigg site. In addition, the programmes provide a genuine and exciting solution for any other students from across Cumbria, who had perhaps previously felt full-time study so far from home was too much of an obstacle. The plans have already been welcomed by leaders and high-profile figures in all sectors.

From September, agriculture, animal studies and arboriculture programmes, at Levels 2 and 3, are being run as a partnership between Myerscough College and Ullswater Community College. They will follow a blended learning model where learners can still live at home, while enjoying the benefit of quality, local, academic study, with theory and classroom sessions in Penrith, combined with additional weekly travel to Myerscough College, where practical elements will be taught in state-of-the-art, sector leading facilities, as well as the opportunities to study in the workplace or residentially at Myerscough.

Applications for September 2021 entry are open immediately.

The new programmes available also compliment Myerscough's flourishing animal management partnership with Furness College, in Barrow, which follow the same model. The initiative has had a highly successful inaugural year, with student numbers already strong for the next intake, also at BTEC Levels 2 and 3.

Meanwhile, Kendal College will continue to offer a Level 1 programme in land-based studies, and animal care programmes at Levels 1-3.

Full details of everything on offer can be found in the notes below.

Alison Robinson, Chief Executive & Principal of Myerscough College, said: “*In 1980, there were 50 land-based colleges across the UK, but this has fallen to just 11 specialist land-based colleges and 22 other general FE colleges with specialist land-based facilities.*

“*Now, more than ever, it is critically important that we continue to preserve land-based education in our communities. Myerscough College wants to see land-based education flourish in Cumbria to meet the skills needs of the county and the aspirations of young people, and we are delighted to be working with our partners to ensure the success of the programmes.*

“*We believe that this continuity of provision will provide clarity for new students and a number of students progressing with their studies, and will be a platform for the continuation of land-based education within Penrith and the wider county, which is so critical for both young people and employers in the Cumbrian community.”*

Stephen Gilby, Headteacher of Ullswater Community College, said: “*Ullswater Community College is at the heart of the community in Penrith and we firmly believe that this partnership can be built upon to sustain land-based education for the benefit of Penrith, Eden and the wider Cumbria community.*

“*Newton Rigg College has been an important part of our community and destination for significant numbers of our pupils. We are very happy to be involved in this innovative proposal to support the young people of Cumbria.”*

Kelvin Nash, Principal and CEO of Kendal College, says: “*Whilst we were saddened by the closure of Newton Rigg College, is it an exciting time for Cumbria as we all look to secure a revised land-based offer for the county.*

“*This fresh offer is one that will really work, and we will now work with our partners to collaboratively meet the needs of Cumbria as a whole.”*

Dr Neil Hudson, MP for Penrith and The Border, added: “*Our recent Commons EFRA Select Committee Inquiry session on land-based education both nationally and in Cumbria very much confirmed the importance of local provision for learners here in Cumbria.*

“*I am really pleased that Myerscough College, Ullswater Community College and Kendal College have come together to provide a coherent, collegiate educational offering and therefore secure local educational provision here in Cumbria. I look forward to continuing to work with the three Colleges and other local stakeholders as we look to build on this lifeline and develop the offering for the young people in our area as we move into the next chapter of trying to secure a future for a new Newton Rigg.”*

ENDS

Notes and additional information:

Cumbrian Land-Based education offer for September 2021 onwards:

Myerscough College / Ullswater Community College (Penrith)

Agriculture – Level 2 and Level 3 Technical Certificate

Animal Care / Animal Management – Level 2 and Level 3 Technical Certificate

Arboriculture and Forestry – Level 2 Technical Certificate

More information here: <https://www.myerscough.ac.uk/cumbria>

All of the above programmes will follow a model where learners can still live at home, while enjoying the benefit of high quality, local, academic study, with theory and classroom sessions in Cumbria, combined with once per week travel to Myerscough College during term time, via a free, dedicated bus service, where practical elements will be taught. A pick-up point will also be available for students living south of Penrith (just off the M6) for transport to Preston.

Students will be taught in state-of-the-art, sector leading facilities, which have recently benefited from a £35m investment in the past few years. This work includes the opening of a state-of-the-art, multi-million-pound Food and Farming Innovation & Technology Centre ('FFIT'), the only one of its kind in the UK, incorporating Afifarm 5.2 dairy technology and a new Livestock Innovation Centre incorporating Growsafe feeding technology.

Myerscough College has three farms (totalling more than 300 hectares of farm and woodland), livestock and cereal enterprises (including 220 commercial Holstein dairy cows, 150 dairy heifers, 1000 ewes, 1800 fattening lambs, a beef enterprise and 40 hectares of cereals), a specialist rural skills centre and an off-road driving course for developing skills with tractors, trailers, 4WD vehicles and quadbikes.

The Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB) recently made Myerscough's Lodge Farm a Strategic Dairy Farm, adding the farm to the AHDB's Farm Excellence platform, a network of inspirational farmers who share and create new ideas to drive innovation and productivity and share good practice nationally.

Our Animal Studies Centre has recently tripled in size after the completion of a £3 million extension and major refurbishment. Myerscough's Animal Studies Centre houses the following specialist facilities: an aquarium of tropical and cold water amphibians and crustaceans, herpetology room housing species from all continents, a cattery – working in partnership with Blue Cross, a brand new lemur enclosure due to open summer 2021, dog day-kennels, a tortoise enclosure, farmyard animals, including goats, sheep, geese, ducks, alpacas and emus, fully equipped grooming parlour and canine hydrotherapy unit, international equine arena, housing for over 50 horses and equine hydrotherapy, aviaries housing birds from around the world, specialist veterinary and veterinary nursing staff and facilities including x-ray facilities, intensive care beds, operating theatres and patient referral rooms, an exotics rooms (including Gambian pouched rats and sugar gliders), free range poultry paddocks, rabbits and guinea pigs enclosures, ferrets enclosures and Scottish Wildcat enclosures (part of national conservation programme).

Myerscough also boasts fantastic arboriculture facilities, with an international reputation for excellence and is home to the purpose-built National Centre for Arboriculture.

Myerscough are currently exploring the options available to some Newton Rigg students (on part qualifications), where there is no immediately identifiable progression route. We will work with students on an individual basis to provide course advice and guidance. Daily transport to Ullswater Community College will be the responsibility of the student, either utilising existing public transport to Penrith or the possibility of accessing UCC daily service buses.

Students will not be required to wear UCC school uniform whilst on the UCC site but will wear Myerscough attire e.g. fleece and polo-shirts, and will be able to leave the sixth form site during the College day to access local facilities. A list of required additional kit/clothing will be made available to applicants.

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Myerscough College / Furness College (Barrow)

Animal Studies / Animal Management – Level 2 and Level 3

Students receive classroom-based teaching on site at Furness College in Barrow, with transport provided for practical teaching at Myerscough's Preston campus one day per week.

More information here: <https://www.furness.ac.uk/courses/16-18/full-time/3167/Animal%20Care%20Courses>

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Kendal College

Land-based studies - Level 1

Animal Care / Animal Management – Level 1, 2 and Level 3

More information: www.kendal.ac.uk/animalcare

Land-based apprenticeships are available from Kendal College at Levels 2 and 3 in Animal Care and Agriculture (Stockperson, and Livestock Unit Technician/Manager*) *pending release from the Institute of Apprenticeships.

The College also offers a full range of general vocational, technical and academic courses including A-Levels. More information: www.kendal.ac.uk

Kendal College is home to the UK's first Animal Rescue & Rehabilitation Centre alongside its teaching department. Facilities include an intensive care and treatment room with industry-standard surgical equipment and digital x-ray facilities. Courses are headed up by experienced veterinary staff who give wildlife care to a range of animals including hedgehogs, seals and a variety of birds.

Kendal College is situated on the edge of the Lake District National Park. Ranked as the #1 college in the country by FE Weekly, they are proud to have high levels of student satisfaction & strong links with local employers.

The College is a partner college of the University of Cumbria and the University of Central Lancashire and offers an ever-growing number of higher-level courses, including a HNC in Animal Management and a Foundation Degree in British Animal Management & Wildlife Rehabilitation.

All enquiries, images and further information: kelvin.nash@kendal.ac.uk or 01539 814731

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Myerscough College land-based apprenticeships in Cumbria

Myerscough College is the largest land-based apprenticeship provider in the UK delivering to apprentices in their local communities through a national network of specialist apprenticeship tutors who live and work in their local community.

Apprenticeships are available at Level 2 and 3 in a range of land-based subjects in Cumbria including in Agriculture, Animal, Equine, Horticulture, Agriculture Engineering, Arboriculture, Greenkeeping, and Sportsturf.

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Myerscough College (Preston campus)

Myerscough's new Cumbrian offer also includes the opportunity for full time residential study at the College's main campus at Bilsborrow, near Preston, for learners who wish to do so or who struggle to travel to learn within the county. The College's main campus is North of Preston, a few minutes from junction 32 of the M6, where a £35 million campus development programme has recently been completed.

Myerscough College is one of the leading institutions in the UK within the land-based sector, teaching more than twenty different subjects, all of which give learners the hands on, practical skills required to secure dream jobs and make a difference to people's lives.

Myerscough is OFSTED rated GOOD with 'highly effective teaching, setting high expectations and clear priorities to improve quality of provision, and delivering high quality vocational learning that responds to local, regional and national needs.' The College is proud of its 127-year heritage in teaching agriculture and other land-based education.

Programmes on offer full time as a residential student include Agriculture, Animal Care / Management, Agricultural Engineering, Motorsport, Land and Wildlife (Gamekeeping and Countryside Studies), Veterinary Nursing, Equine Studies, Arboriculture, Farriery, Floristry, Horticulture, Landscape, Motorsports, Photography, Greenskeeping, Sportsturf, Sport and other science based vocational subjects.

Apply for all programmes at all levels at www.myerscough.ac.uk



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