



School of Modern Languages
Newcastle University

Chinese @ NEWCASTLE

EDITED BY Linda Cheng & Linlin Fang & Fang Su



2025 Edition

Studying Chinese as part of your degree at Newcastle University

In the School of Modern Languages, we operate a dual entry system. You can start your East Asian language studies with us from scratch, or with a GCSE/A Level qualification.

We offer a range of undergraduate degree programmes that allow you to study East Asian languages and culture. You can study our specialised degree for Chinese or Japanese Studies, or include East Asian languages alongside other subjects on our other programmes.

Our classes are small to ensure that you are supported by our dedicated teaching team.

There is so much more to studying languages at university than just learning to speak a language. We offer a range of East Asian culture modules covering history, politics, business, film, literature and popular culture.

See below the degree programmes offered in the School of Modern Languages, where you can study Chinese as part of your degree. UCAS codes for each programme is also included in the brackets.

- BA (Hons) Chinese Studies or Japanese Studies (TT12)
- BA (Hons) Modern Languages, Translation & Interpreting (R9Q9)
- BA (Hons) Modern Languages (T901)
- BA (Hons) Modern Languages and Business Studies (TN92)
- BA (Hons) Modern Languages and Linguistics (QT19)
- BA (Hons) Modern Languages and International Relations (TL12)



You can combine Chinese studies with one or two other subjects through our **Combined Honours program (UCAS code: Y001)**. Available subjects include Business, Education, English Literature, Law, Politics, Music, Linguistics, and more. This popular program allows you to create unique combinations that reflect your interests and career goals.

Year Abroad: One of the attractions of studying Chinese at university is the opportunity to spend a year abroad. Immerse yourself in East Asian culture, while developing your language fluency. We are especially proud of the flexibility and variety we offer during the year abroad in East Asia. We offer 5 destinations in China, ranging from cosmopolitan cities to exciting rural destinations.

Teaching quality: We are a great place to study East Asian studies. Our position in global rankings demonstrates our commitment to academic excellence, teaching quality and student experience.

According to the 2024 Complete University Guide, we ranked 3rd in the UK for Asian studies with a high student satisfaction rating (78%). This means we are one of the best universities for East Asian studies in the UK. Please visit [our website](#) for more details of each degree programme offered in the School of Modern Languages, Newcastle University. If you have queries about studying Chinese with us, you can get in touch with our Chinese Language Co-ordinator, Ms Linlin Fang:

linlin.fang@newcastle.ac.uk.



The Chinese Independent Film Archive (CIFA) at Newcastle University

Students studying Chinese at Newcastle University will now also benefit from our unique resources — The Chinese Independent Film Archive — if they would like to learn about the culture, society, history, and people's lives in modern China.

The Chinese Independent Film Archive (CIFA) is the home to nearly 800 independent films, over 150 oral history interviews with a wide range of stakeholders, and other related material culture. The project explores how the relationship to the state and the market has shaped Chinese independent cinema in terms of its production, circulation, and reception.

It is the only archive of its kind in the world, established with the help of a research grant from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. CIFA aims not only to safeguard a significant but marginalised film culture for future generations, but also to act as an alternative record of social changes, historical traumas, and the lives of ordinary people in modern and contemporary China.

CIFA works closely with a large number of Chinese independent filmmakers and curators, as well as a range of industry partners and cultural institutions to raise the visibility of Chinese independent cinema and enhance the world's understanding of China's film industry and film culture in China. CIFA also works with scholars and universities around the world to advance the study of Chinese independent cinema and encourage the use of the collections at CIFA for research on, and the teaching of, modern and contemporary China.



Graduate Jack Deverson awarded an MBE



Jack Deverson, one of our previous graduates who studied Modern Languages (Chinese and German) and graduated in 2015, was awarded an MBE for services to education in recognition of the work of his Sunderland-based organisation, Evidence Based Education. Jack started learning Chinese from scratch at Level A (beginner's level), made outstanding progress during his Year Abroad in China, and was permitted to skip Level C. He successfully completed Level D Chinese (further advanced level) study with a 1st class mark.

Founded in 2015, Evidence Based Education (EBE) is a teacher development, school improvement and research organisation, and the home of the Great Teaching Toolkit, a personalised professional development platform. The organisation currently has 17 employees and more than 14,000 teachers accessing its services. In December 2023, EBE was awarded a contract to deliver training to 23,000 teachers in the UAE over the next two years. The contract will see the organisation translate courses from its popular Great Teaching Toolkit into Arabic.

Contact us

For course information, please contact Ms Linlin Fang

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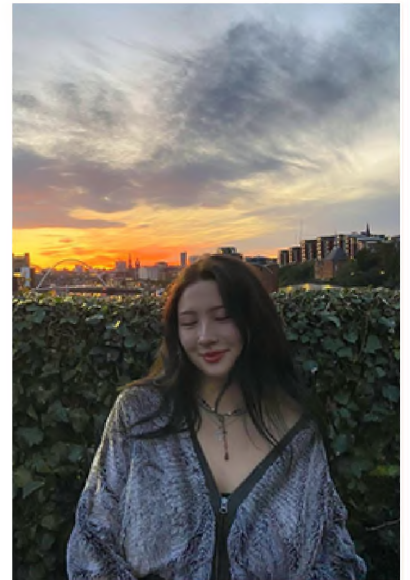
For information about admissions, please contact Sandra Salin

Tel: 0191 208 8417 / E-mail: sandra.salin@ncl.ac.uk

Visit our website at www.ncl.ac.uk/sml/



Hi! My name's Olly and I'm currently in my second year of studying Linguistics with Chinese at Newcastle University. Growing up with relatives living in China, I'd always wished to reconnect with the captivating culture and history my Chinese heritage has to offer. Especially with most of those relatives finding it difficult to communicate with me in English, I had originally chosen this language course as a means to ease that difficulty. Although I'd grown up in a bilingual household speaking Chinese, I badly wished I could read and write just as well, if not better. Upon starting university, as artistic and beautiful as the Chinese language appeared, I must admit I was scared to commit to the process of learning a language so dissimilar to English. Yet, the immediate support provided by both my teachers and course mates motivated me to excel in my studies, and still does. Being a language course, I completely underestimated how much I would also learn about modern-day China: the newest social trends, music, food, and popular day/night activities. Although I've visited China several times already, it still shocks me how amazed I am by its size, with each region flaunting its own unique culture and history.



Right now, I am looking forward to my third year abroad in China where I will be able to study Chinese in a fully immersive environment and enjoy the culture I have learnt so much about in class first-hand.

Olly Booth-Tian (Stage 2 student, Level B Chinese)

Cohen Hayes (Stage 1 student, Level A Chinese)

As a first-year student and someone relatively new to learning such a vastly different language, studying Chinese has been both challenging and incredibly rewarding. It is a fantastic feeling to recognise my own progress in learning to read, write, and speak such a beautiful language, which wouldn't be possible without the motivation and support from my teachers! I enjoyed taking part in the "blessing" (福) cultural activity we did in class. As a student also studying Chinese culture, it was an exciting way to actually engage in a foreign culture, and I was very glad we could capture that moment with a photo! While I am still trying my best to improve in areas I'm not so great at, I'm sure by the time my year abroad comes around, I will have had enough support to ensure I have a lovely time and soak up as much culture as possible!

Chinese Culture Taster

Cordy O'Sullivan (Stage 1 student, Level A Chinese)

Learning Chinese at Newcastle University has been enriching and eye-opening. From a standing start, my language skills have come on in leaps and bounds in just five short months. But the course offers so much more than just learning to speak a new language. I have learnt about China and its culture, little of which is discussed or understood in the West. I have had the opportunity to see the world differently in terms of philosophy and priorities. During Chinese New Year, one of our teachers gave each of us a blessings calligraphy (书法) that her father had written. It means receiving blessings when it is hung on your door. By seeing the differences, you appreciate the similarities, whether it be the importance of family or the hope that something symbolic can attract good fortune... (obviously, I still have the poster hanging on the door to my room – who doesn't need blessings?). I am so excited to visit China in my third year and experience it all first-hand.





Daisy Trillo (Stage 4 student, Level C Chinese)

I have thoroughly enjoyed the last three and a half years that I've spent here in Newcastle (and Shanghai) studying Chinese. Before I first arrived at the University, I felt overwhelmed by the prospect of learning Mandarin from scratch. However, after a couple of weeks, I felt settled and realised learning Chinese is not so different to learning any other language.

One of the best parts of studying at Newcastle has been getting to know my cohort. Unlike some of my friends studying different courses, we have always had small class sizes and lots of contact hours. This made it easy to get to know each other from the beginning, and the unique challenges presented by learning a new language and living abroad have only strengthened our bond. The Chinese teachers at Newcastle are fantastic and always ready to help after class if you have additional questions; they truly go above and beyond! One of the unique features of the University is the Language Resource Centre (LRC). It's a beautiful place to study and tends to be much quieter than the main library. You can take additional language lessons here, practice one-on-one with native speakers, or watch films in your target language. Our teachers also helped to introduce us to Chinese students every year, enabling us to find a language partner and make new friends while helping each other! This opportunity for cultural exchange has been such a valuable experience.



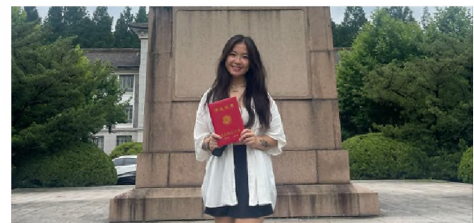
The highlight of studying Chinese here has without a doubt been my Year Abroad. Despite a lot of uncertainty due to Covid, we were very lucky to be the first cohort to have a real Year Abroad in person since the beginning of the pandemic. I studied at East China Normal University in Shanghai, where I made Chinese and international friends. Being fully immersed in Chinese culture not only expanded my understanding of the country's rich history and customs but enabled me to improve my speaking and listening skills drastically! Although classes felt intense at times, we were blessed with a two-month winter break, giving us all the chance to travel and meet up with classmates dotted around the country. My highlights included the Harbin Ice Festival, Huangshan mountain, and a ski trip in the mountains of the Tibetan autonomous region. It was a bit of an adjustment coming back to the UK after a year of cheap holidays, food, and nights out, but being supported by staff and peers and getting involved with Chinese cultural events in the UK has made the reverse culture shock much more bearable!

Learning Mandarin at Newcastle University has been an incredibly enriching and rewarding experience. The exceptional Chinese department at the School of Modern Languages has allowed students to quickly gain confidence and make steady improvements in their language skills. The lecturers are not only highly knowledgeable and passionate about teaching, but they also provide dedicated support and guidance beyond the classroom.

A variety of methods are used to ensure the learning experience is both comprehensive and engaging, ranging from interactive lessons and multimedia resources to cultural immersion activities and study abroad programmes. These diverse approaches have made learning one of the hardest languages from scratch a much more enjoyable and smooth experience.

One of the most memorable aspects of studying Chinese at Newcastle University is the opportunity to study abroad as part of the degree. This immersive experience allows students to fully engage in a Chinese-speaking environment, which not only helps improve confidence and language skills but also deepens understanding of Chinese culture. It fosters resilience and adaptability, qualities invaluable for personal growth and future careers. Newcastle University provides extensive support during the preparation stage, offering guidance on visa applications, accommodation, and cultural adaptation. This opportunity remains one of the most unforgettable experiences for students.

Abbie Mai (Stage 4 student, Level C Chinese)



In addition to formal classroom learning, the School of Modern Languages organises numerous cultural activities that complement the curriculum. These activities allow students to learn more about Chinese culture beyond the classroom and build a strong sense of community with fellow students and lecturers. Activities such as Chinese film screenings, dumpling-making workshops, and visits to local Chinese restaurants help deepen appreciation for Chinese culture and make the time at Newcastle University incredibly fulfilling and memorable.





Mae Hewe (Stage 4 student, Level D Chinese)

When I first started studying Chinese at Newcastle University, I never imagined how my degree would shape me. I still remember walking into my first class, feeling both excited and intimidated by the challenge of learning Chinese. Four years later, I can confidently say that choosing this degree has been one of the best decisions I've ever made.

Our teachers are very supportive and always strive to make language learning enjoyable. Outside the classroom, they offer many opportunities for us to practice our Chinese. Whether through language exchange sessions with the T&I postgraduate students or finding a language partner at the Language Resource Centre, opportunities are always available.

Additionally, the Anglo-Chinese Society has been a valuable part of my university experience. Through events like Chinese calligraphy workshops and Chinese New Year dinners, I've gained a deeper appreciation of Chinese culture and formed strong connections within the society.

In my third year, I had an amazing opportunity to study abroad in Xiamen, a city that quickly became my second home. I fondly recall my first week there—standing in a small alleyway restaurant, staring at the menu, feeling overwhelmed by the amount of Chinese characters I couldn't read. The fear of making mistakes held me back at first, but little by little, my confidence grew. By the end of my first semester, I was chatting with locals with ease, even picking up bits of the Xiamen dialect. My year abroad was an unforgettable experience and it has deepened my understanding of Chinese language and culture in ways I never could have imagined.

Now, in my final semester, I am in the Level D class, which focuses on learning about China's socioeconomic background. My classes are challenging, but I'm extremely proud of the progress I've made over the past four years. Studying Chinese has shaped my confidence and aspirations for the future.



Studying Chinese at Newcastle University has been a fantastic experience. Over the first two years in Newcastle, we covered a huge range of content, from current issues and trends in China to everyday language use and formal writing in Chinese. The third year, spent studying in China, was an amazing opportunity to immerse myself in cultural differences, make new friends, and travel around the country. A personal highlight of the Year Abroad was climbing a 5,000m mountain in Sichuan province. Returning to Newcastle for the final year was comforting, and it was great to see how much my peers and I had advanced our Chinese skills. The fourth year has been my favourite yet, as we are learning business terminology, interpreting and translating skills, alongside writing CVs and letters. These skills have left me feeling prepared to enter the working world, whether in China or the UK.



Charlie Rutnam (Stage 4 student, Level D Chinese)

Recently, there was an alumni event where previous students of Chinese shared their experiences, providing great insight into the possibilities that lie ahead with a degree in Chinese. The teachers are very attentive and knowledgeable about different career options and have provided a lot of guidance on what can come next. I highly recommend studying Chinese at Newcastle University; it is a close-knit community where we are truly encouraged to thrive!



Dr Fang Su (Lecturer in Chinese)

Welcome to Newcastle University, where students from across the UK come to study Chinese language and culture! Our outstanding courses and services ensure satisfaction for all students.

We celebrate every achievement, fostering a family-like environment with strong connections between students and teachers. Regular communication creates a sense of belonging, resulting in consistently high student satisfaction.

Our four-year Chinese language programme offers a comprehensive learning experience. In the first two years, students build a solid language foundation and explore Chinese culture. This prepares them for their third-year study abroad in China.

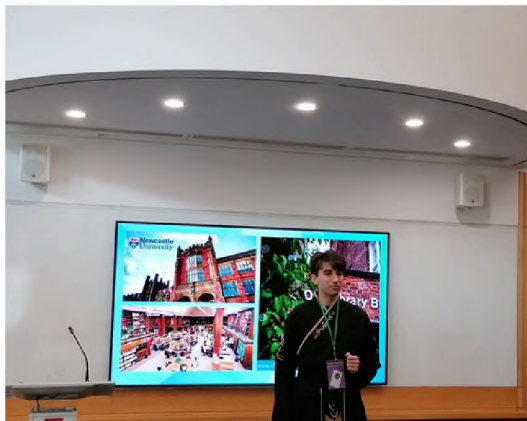
In the final year, the specialised module "Historical and Cultural Interpretations of China through Classics and Newspaper Reading" allows students to delve deeper into Chinese society. This module focuses on three key aspects:

1. Exploring classical Chinese literature, especially Tang and Song poetry.
2. Examining significant philosophical and religious doctrines to understand China's cultural and political systems.
3. Critically evaluating policy discussions related to China's current situation and globalisation challenges.

From language to culture, from the UK to China, our students become emerging leaders and experts. Enjoy your time with us, where possibilities are limitless, and life is extraordinary! We can't wait to welcome you into our Newcastle family, where dreams take flight and possibilities are endless!



Alexis Cunningham (studied Level D Chinese and Graduated in 2024)



My name is Alexis Cunningham, and I majored in Chinese studies at Newcastle University. Last year, I represented Newcastle University in the Chinese Bridge Competition UK Regional Finals and would like to share my experience with you.

The Chinese Bridge Competition is an annual international contest for non-Chinese university students to showcase their passion for the Chinese language and culture. For those fascinated by traditional and modern Chinese culture and history, this competition is a fantastic opportunity.

From my own experience, I spent weeks preparing a three-minute speech, studying Chinese language, culture, and history, and practising a Chinese song for the talent segment. It was challenging, but the weeks of rigorous practice and studying were worth it. Throughout the preparation and competition, my teachers and the staff at the Confucius Institute provided invaluable guidance and support. The School of Modern Languages also offered tremendous support, ensuring we had everything we needed.

This unforgettable experience has motivated me to continue my journey of studying Chinese in China. After graduating last year, I went to China to further my Chinese studies and immerse myself in the culture. In February, I found a teaching job in Beijing, which has been an incredible opportunity to deepen my understanding of the language and culture.

I hope my story has sparked your interest in learning Chinese and highlighted the opportunities the Chinese Bridge Competition offers for mastering the language and culture.

So, what are you waiting for? Are you ready for the challenge? Hundreds of university students from around the world participate in the Chinese Bridge Competition annually. You could be the next to earn a spot in the Global Finals in Beijing. Seize the opportunity and good luck on your learning journey!

