



University for the Common Good

International Student Welcome Brochure

September 2024





Hello and welcome

Hello and welcome from the Student Engagement and Events Team at Glasgow Caledonian University - we are delighted you have chosen to study with us! This is an exciting time as you take the next step towards your future.

The International Welcome Programme is our way of supporting you in the opening stages of your journey at Glasgow Caledonian. It includes social events, opportunities to meet students and staff, as well as other essential information.

As you begin your studies, you may find that joining a new university - and moving to a new city or country - can be a challenging experience. We're here to help you throughout this time. Remember, other students are going through similar experiences to you, so invite your new friends along to events and activities as well.

We wish you every success in your studies at Glasgow Caledonian and hope the experience is rewarding, successful and most of all, fun.

[Read on to discover our Welcome Programme.](#)

Meet the Team

Jessica is our Student Events Coordinator and Hannah is our Student Engagement and Events Assistant. They're responsible for delivering our International Welcome Programmes, as well as Freshers' Week and other on-campus student events



Student Ambassadors

We have a team of Student Ambassadors to support you on arrival and welcome you to GCU. Just look out for their light blue hoodies!



Checklist

Before you arrive

- Apply for your Student Visa
- Find long-term accommodation in Glasgow or surrounding areas. If you require support with this contact accommodation.support@gcu.ac.uk
- Get travel insurance
- Check the latest travel information. You must prepare by reading [NHS travel guidance](#), the [Travel Health Pro](#) website and [the Safer Air guidance](#)
- Join our official [Facebook group](#)
- Register for your international [welcome activities](#)
- Prepare for Scottish weather with waterproof clothing and footwear
- Ensure your hand luggage includes your essentials and visa documents such as copies of your passport, visa, CAS and maintenance evidence
- Prepare method of transferring funds to a UK bank account in your name
- Pack a laptop or device which can connect to WiFi
- Bring a mobile phone which will work in the UK. [It may be cheaper for you to buy a pre-paid UK SIM card](#). Using a foreign SIM in the UK can increase the cost of calls/messages. You may also not be able to access the NHS out-of-hours (111) helpline from a foreign SIM.

After you arrive

- Contact family and friends to let them know you have arrived safely
- Register with a doctor/GP
- Collect your BRP (Biometric Residence Permit) if required to do so.
- Open a UK bank account
- Arrange insurance for your possessions
- Apply for a National Insurance Number to allow you to work part-time
- Ensure you are aware of your Student Visa and working conditions, Contact; visa@gcu.ac.uk for clarification

Arriving in Glasgow

(Free airport taxi service)

Make your arrival in Glasgow as stress-free as possible and sign up to our airport taxi service. We offer a free airport taxi service for international students arriving at Glasgow International Airport in September 2024.

This service is only available to new international students studying on full-time courses at Glasgow Caledonian. The registration process is simple:

All you have to do is sign up and provide details of your arrival time, flight number, programme of study, as well as select a drop-off point in Glasgow City Centre. Drop-off is only available to the points listed when registering. From here you can access public transport including buses, trains and subway, or arrange your own taxi for the rest of the journey.

When you arrive at Glasgow Airport, you'll need to report to the Taxi Information Desk, located next to Domestic Arrivals and adjacent to WHSmith and VisitScotland's information desk. Sign in with an adviser at the desk and you'll then be directed to a taxi.

The service will operate from **Sunday, 1 September 2024 to Sunday, 13 October 2024 from 7am to 11pm daily.**

If you arrive later than 11pm, there will be a sign directing you to the taxi rank. Tell the marshall that you're from Glasgow Caledonian University and they will give you a slip to give to the driver.

For more information on the service, please email studentevents@gcu.ac.uk

If your flight time or circumstances have changed, email with your name, flight details and that you are a Glasgow Caledonian University student:

- GLATaxis@glasgowairport.com
- studentevents@gcu.ac.uk

Register for the Airport Taxi Service here:

[**Airport pick-up service**](#)



Getting to Glasgow Caledonian

It is very easy to get to Glasgow Caledonian. The city has two train stations - Glasgow Central Station and Glasgow Queen Street Station and these are both within walking distance of the University. It's an uphill walk from Glasgow Central Station. We also have two airports - Glasgow International Airport (closest to Glasgow) and Glasgow Prestwick Airport. You can visit the [Induction webpage](#) for maps and travel information on [getting to the University](#).

Glasgow

University and colleges

- A Glasgow Caledonian University
- B City of Glasgow College
- C City of Glasgow College

National and regional travel

Train stations

- D Central Station
- E Queen Street Station

Bus station

- F Buchanan Bus Station

Local and regional travel

Train stations

- G Argyle Street
- H Charing Cross
- I Anderston

Subway stations

- J Cowcaddens
- K Buchanan Street
- L St Enoch



GCU Welcome App



Download our Welcome App now!

The app is packed full of helpful hints and tips about joining the University

Click here to access

Communication

We ask that you check your Glasgow Caledonian email address (...@caledonian.ac.uk) daily as this is the only account staff will use to communicate with you.

Always keep your details updated on the [student portal](#) in case we need to call you or send something important to your term-time or home address.

We also recommend that you download the [GCU Student app](#) as we send lots of notifications via the app and it's an easy way to access Glasgow Caledonian resources.

Mobile phone

We do have free SIM cards available from giffgaff that will be available during Welcome.

There are several UK phone networks - we recommend shopping around to find the best option for you.

International calls can be very expensive, especially from a mobile phone so you may want to select a provider that specialises in offering discounts on international calls. The two main payment schemes are pay as you go and contract.

- Pay as you go: you pay a one-off fee for the SIM card only or the SIM and handset and buy 'credit' which allows you to make calls up to that value. Credit can be bought easily online and allows you to keep control of your spending, but it can be more expensive if you use your phone a lot.
- Contract: pay a monthly rental fee which is debited from a UK bank account every month. The rental usually includes the cost of certain calls, texts, internet usage and the handset, however contracts are usually for 12 months in length and extra costs can be incurred. You generally need to be in the UK at least three months before you can take this option.

Make sure you know what you are committing to before you sign any contract and make sure you can afford to pay the monthly charges.

Internet and email

As a registered student, you are given access to a Glasgow Caledonian email account and internet services while on campus. We provide a free Wi-Fi service on campus called [eduroam](#). You can connect to it on any device once you are on campus, with your username and password.

Social media

We have various social media pages for you to follow or join:

Instagram - @gcu_studentlife

Twitter - @GCU_StudentLife

Facebook - @GCUStudentLife

Key student information

Student Visa

Most of you will be coming to the UK on a Student visa.

As stated on your visa decision letter, there are conditions attached to your immigration status and it is vital you adhere to these. These include working limitations and recourse to public funds. You will be given further information about your visa conditions during the welcome programme upon your arrival to GCU. If you have any queries about your visa status or conditions of your visa please contact the VISA Team, on visa@gcu.ac.uk.

Please keep your visa decision letter safe as you will be required to provide the university with this letter during face to face registration. The letter will arrive via email as an PDF attachment.

If you need to extend your Student visa, it is essential you contact the VISA Team at least 90 days before your visa expires in order for the VISA Team to check your eligibility to extend and guide you through the process if you are eligible to extend your Student visa. Please note it is not always possible for a Student visa to be extended and various checks are required including checking you have confirmed study in the UK that requires attendance and ensuring you have no outstanding tuition fees.

Please remember it is your responsibility to ensure you have valid leave to study in the UK and that you do not breach any conditions of your visa. Please refer to your visa decision email for further information.

Enrollment and Attendance Monitoring

You will be required to provide your passport and evidence of your visa (BRP or eVisa/digital status) when collecting your Student ID Card. If your visa has been granted digitally, please be ready to provide a Share Code to provide to evidence your right to study in the UK. It is important you register on time (this includes re-registering with the University as required), and maintain excellent attendance throughout your programme. This includes attending all lectures, seminars, tutorials and classes, undertaking assessments and submitting assignments and coursework on time and as required. You must inform your department of any temporary absence. Additionally, all student visa holders students and those with another visa to study in the UK must attend **VISA Checkpoints** twice per academic year to re-present passport and visa documents. Failure to engage and attend in your course as required or failure to attend a checkpoint can result in students being withdrawn and their visas being curtailed (cancelled).

Working in the UK

Your working conditions will be stated on your visa and on your visa decision email/letter. If you require clarification on your working conditions please contact the VISA Team. Most Student visa holders are permitted to undertake up to 20 hours per week during term time, and full-time hours only during confirmed vacation period as per the Academic Calendar.

You can find out how the UK Government define “full time” on the [Government Website](#). The UK Average for full time working is 40 hours per week.

Please note there are restrictions in relation to the type of work you can undertake on your visa. These will also be outlined on your visa decision email/letter. Please be aware that working more hours than you are permitted is considered a serious immigration offence. For the purposes of work, UKVI define a week as “a period of 7 days starting on a Monday and ending on a Sunday”. As a Student visa holder you are responsible for ensuring you do not breach the working conditions of your visa.

Please note in order to work in the UK you will be required to obtain a National Insurance Number (NINo) and provide this to your employer. The VISA Team can advise you on the process of applying for your National Insurance Number (NINo). It is important you check your visa to ensure you have been issued the correct working conditions i.e. hours of work permitted. If they are incorrect, this must be reported to the Home Office within 7 days of receiving your decision. Please contact the VISA Team if you are unsure.

Graduate Route Visa

Please note the Graduate Route visa is not guaranteed to students and has various eligibility criteria. These include that students must complete their eligible course and obtain their award

whilst still in the UK with a valid Student visa in order to be eligible. Students must have cleared any outstanding tuition fees.

Please note this means students undertaking resits or repeats in the last 4 months of their visa (grace period), may not be able to meet this requirement. To ensure you give yourself the best chance of being eligible for the Graduate Route visa after your course, it is vital you engage well with your Programme and ensure excellent attendance, as this will minimise the likelihood of having resits, which may then affect your ability to obtain your award before your Student visa expires.

Lost/stolen passport, visa (BRP) or Police Registration Certificate

These are all important documents that you must keep very safe. We advise you do not carry these documents with you unless absolutely necessary, to minimise the risk of losing them. If you do lose any of these documents please contact the VISA Team immediately so they can advise you on the process of reporting the loss/theft to the Police and the Home Office, and to obtain replacement documents.

Contact details

You must update the University if there are any changes to your Visa information, contact details, or term time address. You must check your student email account on a regular basis and respond to requests promptly. Please note Student visa holders must live within a reasonable commuting distance of their campus and if a term time address is provided which is not within a reasonable commuting distance of the campus you will be contacted in relation to this.

Healthcare

You must register with a doctor (also referred to as a GP), while studying in the UK. You can visit your doctor for all general medical problems. As a Student Visa holder who has paid the Immigration Health Surcharge, you and your dependants are entitled to essential NHS healthcare which includes doctor and hospital treatments.

We have close links with other medical services such as dentists, opticians, and family planning clinics. If you would like any information on these services please contact studentevents@gcu.ac.uk

- **Register for a GP and dental practice at our on-campus drop in session: Tuesday, 24 September, 10am-4pm. Further details on Eventbrite**

Opening a UK Bank Account

We advise you to open a bank account in the UK. If you need to extend your visa or apply for a new visa in the UK it is advantageous to have a bank account in the UK to verify funds and pay for the application although not required. In order to make visa requirements easier to meet, we advise you to set up to receive monthly bank statements and register for Online Banking.

Changes to passport or visa

In the event that you obtain a new passport or visa during your course e.g. if you obtain a replacement BRP, renewed passport renewal, or if you switch to another immigration route, you are required to inform the University of this so we can carry out necessary processes to update your record accordingly.



Academic expectations at a UK university

You may find that teaching and assessment methods in the UK are quite different to your home country. In addition to attending lectures, seminars and tutorials, you'll be expected to conduct independent and self-directed study. Assessment methods can take the form of assignments, exams, essays and presentations for group work, which can differ between courses.

It's important to maintain a high attendance level. Each timetabled session will provide you with valuable information necessary to complete your course successfully. It's also important for you to attend classes to ensure that you are meeting your Tier 4 visa obligations.



Academic culture in the UK places high importance on taking part in discussions, asking questions and playing a full role in group activities.

Make use of the Learning Development Centres. Each School in the University has a Learning Development Centre (LDC) which provides academic writing support for home and international students, ICT support, advice on study skills and other academic guidance.

You should also familiarise yourself with the University assessment regulations to avoid committing an academic offence. To succeed you need to maintain academic integrity and ensure you avoid plagiarism, collusion and ghost writing:

- Plagiarism - the unacknowledged inclusion of someone else's work in your assessment, or the inclusion of your own work that you had submitted for an earlier assessment.
- Collusion - working with other students to complete an assessment without group work being an explicit requirement of the assessment.
- Ghost writing - paying or asking someone to write some or all of your assessment for you. This also includes using AI, such as ChatGPT to write some or all of your assessment for you. You must write your own assessments.

Find out more about cheating and how to avoid it on the [student news blog](#) and the [GCU academic integrity page](#). The Sir Alex Ferguson Library team can also support you with [understanding referencing](#).

[Academic Calendar 2024/2025](#)

Check term dates, study periods, exam periods and public holidays at any time of year. Any changes to these dates will be communicated to students via email and updated on the website too.

Technology and digital learning

UK higher education uses digital technology in nearly all aspects of teaching and learning. The main online learning tool used to support your learning is the GCU Learn Virtual Learning Environment, which comes with a wide range of learning tools. All the information that you need about your programme is on GCU Learn: module handbooks, reading lists, lecture notes, seminar tasks and assessment briefs. Lecturers post announcements on GCU Learn and you can expect to get regular emails with updates on your module activities. It's therefore very important that you know how to use GCU Learn and that you check your university email regularly for updates.

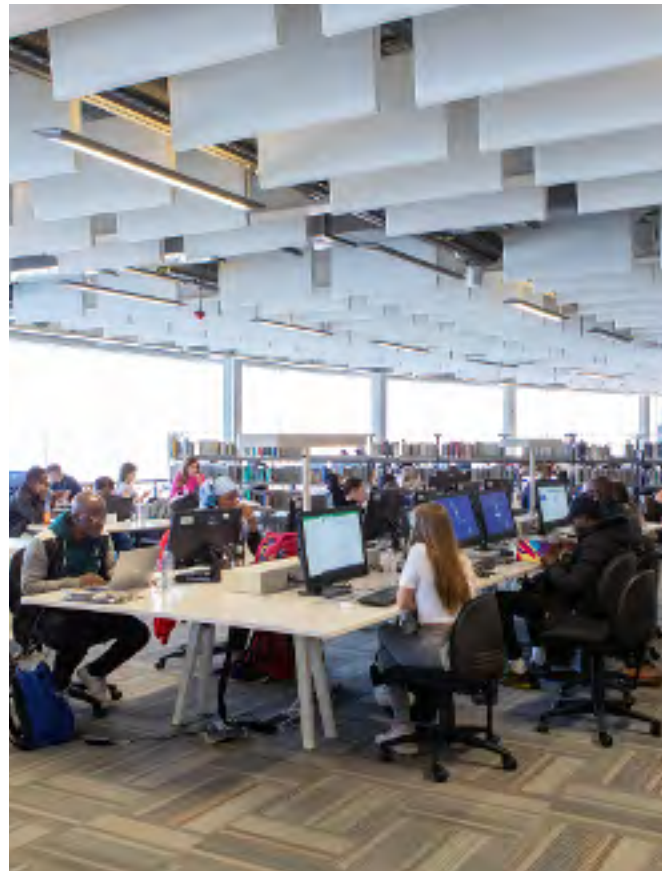
You can find out more about GCU Learn and how to use it on our [GCU GO resource webpage](#).

Some lecturers may use [MS Teams](#), an online platform used for communication and collaboration, available within Office 365. Office 365 is the email platform currently being used by the University and therefore students will have access to Teams through this. You need to use your university email address to access and use teams. If you've never used it before, download the [MS Teams guide](#).

You can find out more about the other online learning tools that may be used on the [GCU Go resource page](#).

There are computers available across campus to use, in the Charles Oakley, George Moore, Govan Mbeki, Annie Lennox buildings, Sir Alex Ferguson Library and Students' Association building. [Short loan laptops](#) (up to three hours) are also available to borrow for our students and staff. The Lapsafe laptop vending machine is located on level 0 of the Library, facing the café counter.

If you're struggling financially and require IT equipment to study your course online, you can apply to the [Digital Inclusion IT Equipment Loan Scheme](#) for a loan of a laptop.



What is expected at postgraduate study

Postgraduate study involves a lot more self-directed study, including in-depth reading of a greater range of materials at each stage of the course so that you can more deeply and meaningfully engage in subject discussion and critical thinking. You will be expected to participate and engage in tutorials, and there will be a great deal of independent learning in addition to the lectures and classes.

Postgraduate degrees will involve a higher level of expertise in the topic than undergraduate degrees. A postgraduate course often involves a much deeper analysis and involve detailed study of the subject. You will be expected to have a high level of critical thinking and analytical skills



On postgraduate taught courses at Glasgow Caledonian, students are afforded two attempts at each module.

Why is it important to attend Induction

Induction is a really important part of your university journey and there will be opportunities for you to engage in activities at a university level, school level and programme level throughout this period. It's your opportunity to familiarise yourself with your school and programme of study and ensure that you are prepared before your course begins. It's important to attend your timetabled Induction sessions to ensure you get off to a successful start, on your course.

Research Cafes

The library has been running the Research Cafés for several years, and a new series will commence in October. Research Cafés offer an informal opportunity for staff, students, and the public to meet and discuss GCU research. The Cafés provide a platform for researchers and research students to give a short talk and lead a discussion about their area of research.

The Cafés will be held in the Relax and Renew Space in the Sir Alex Ferguson Library. Dates and times to be announced

Useful terminology

Assessment - Assessment refers to a variety of methods the University uses to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress and skill acquisition of students. Assessments usually take the form of exams and coursework.

Assessment criteria - These are the descriptive statements that tell you about the characteristics of a given assignment that lead to a particular standard of achievement. You can refer to these criteria to help you improve your assessed work and they will be used by your lecturers as a benchmark against which to award you a mark.

Course/Programme - The course is your programme of study at either undergraduate or postgraduate level, for example BA (Hons) International Business Administration or MSc Biomedical Science. In some countries a course is called a major. There will be a number of modules on your course and each module will contain one or more assessments.

Class rep - Class reps seek out students' views and present them to the Academic Course Leader. They work in partnership with staff to improve their course and resolve any course-related issues as they arise throughout the year. Course Reps also work closely with the Students' Association to campaign for change and make things better for students.

Credits - If you pass a module, you will be awarded with a certain number of credits. All modules are worth a different number of credits, for example, some modules may be worth 10 credits while others may be worth 20. You will be required to pass a set number of credits to pass your overall course.

GCU Learn - A virtual learning environment (VLE) which allows staff to share information about each module to students; this includes important announcements, slides, and online learning resources. It is also used by students to submit assignments electronically. Students should check daily to keep up to date with all of their modules.

Head of School - They provide academic, strategic, and operational leadership to support the school's student experience, learning and teaching, research and engagement outcomes.

Induction - The week before the first week of teaching in the academic year. During this week, various introductions take place for new students, including to your academic course. Induction week is not optional for new students; you will find the academic sessions held in this week provide information and policies before classes begin, an important grounding for the rest of your year.

LDC - Learning and Development Centre which each school has. It provides academic writing support, advice on study skills and other academic support and guidance.

Lecture - A lecture is a formal presentation conducted by your lecturer. Your lectures will normally be held in a lecture theatre and usually last between one to two hours. Numbers may vary in size between 30 and 350 students and may include the use of hand outs, overhead slides and audio-visual presentations. There is minimal interaction between staff and students. Students are expected to listen attentively and take notes on the information.

Module - On each year of your course you'll take a range of modules. A module normally involves a specific set of classes on a specific topic and set of assignments/exams for you to complete. Each module has its own code and title and will have a formal module description, setting out details of the module (including teaching methods, assessment, etc.).

Module Leader - They're responsible for the running of each module.

Personal Tutor - As part of your Glasgow Caledonian experience, you'll be allocated a named Personal Tutor. Your Personal Tutor is someone you can engage with to support you in making the most of your University experience. Personal Tutor meetings can take place in a variety of settings (for example: in person, online, in groups).

Principal - The University's most senior officer, responsible for the strategic direction and leadership of the University.

Programme Leader - Programme Leaders are responsible for the management and assessment of the programme. Programme Leaders are academics staff who are responsible for the learning and teaching alongside the assessment methodology of the programme.

Seminars/Tutorials/Workshops -

Seminars/tutorials/workshops are often quite similar and typically incorporate a lecture, perhaps with slides and hand outs, combined with significant student participation. There are generally activities and discussions which run throughout the session which encourage interaction between the students and lecturer. Students are expected to participate fully in these

classes.

Students' Association - Glasgow Caledonian Students' Association represents and supports students so they have the best university experience. It's an independent organisation run by students, for students. All Glasgow Caledonian students are automatically members.

Trimester - The current Academic Calendar is based on three trimesters of study per year. Each trimester includes a 10-to-12-week teaching period. Trimesters are referred to as Trimester A (September to January), Trimester B (January to May) and Trimester C (May to September).

Turnitin - Turnitin is an external text matching service which highlights similarities in written assignments with other work held in a vast number of databases, including the Turnitin student paper.



University services resource list

Student Support

Dedicated student support helpline staffed from Monday-Friday (9-5pm).

- Email: studentsupport@gcu.ac.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 331 3130

Wellbeing

The [Student Wellbeing](#) team provides a free and confidential advice and support service, including counselling and mental health support.

- Email: studentwellbeing@gcu.ac.uk
- Room: M136, George Moore building

Disability Services

The [Disability Team](#) provides advice, information and services to disabled students and applicants.

- Email: disability@gcu.ac.uk
- Room: M136, George Moore building

Careers Service

The [Careers Service](#) offers a range of services to prepare you for the local and international job market, as well as activities that help you on your way to a successful graduate career.

- Email: careers@gcu.ac.uk
- Room: Campus Life Lounge, George Moore building

IT Service

The [IT Helpdesk](#) acts as the first point of call for all IT enquiries, questions and problems.

- Email: ithelp@gcu.ac.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1234

Faith and Belief Centre

The [Faith and Belief Centre](#) is here for staff and students, of any faith or none to use for prayer, meditation or social gatherings.

- Email: faith@gcu.ac.uk
- Room: Ground floor of the William Harley building

Student Funding

[Student Funding](#) queries related to scholarship opportunities and student funds that may be available.

- Email: funding@gcu.ac.uk and scholarships@gcu.ac.uk
- Room: 14 and 15 Campus Life Lounge, George Moore building

Finance

For queries related to finance, tuition fees and accommodation if staying at Caledonian Court.

- Email: arstudent@gcu.ac.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1376
- Drop in sessions on campus: 12pm-2pm, Monday to Friday in the Seminar Room 2 in the Campus Life Lounge

VISA

The [VISA](#) team provides reliable advice and guidance on GCU student visa & immigration matters.

- Email: visa@gcu.ac.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1244
- Room: Campus Life Lounge, George Moore building

Security

[Campus security](#) point of call for all students and staff and those staying at Caledonian Court.

- Main Campus: +44 (0)141 331 3787
- Caledonian Court: +44 (0)141 331 3958
- Room: William Harley building, main concourse

GCU Library

Our award-winning [Library](#), the Sir Alex Ferguson Library, gives access to more than 270,000 books, 350 open-access PCs and a huge range of online resources including databases, ebooks, journals and more.

- Email: Library@gcu.ac.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1000

Accommodation

If joining Glasgow Caledonian University means living away from home, you can either apply for a place in Caledonian Court, our on-campus residences.

You can also rent accommodation in Glasgow from a private landlord. Get in touch with our Accommodation Support team to be added to our mailing list and sent our accommodation guide.

- Email: accommodation.support@gcu.ac.uk

Students' Association

[GCU Students' Association](#) exists to represent and enable students to enhance all aspects of their student experience.

- Email: hello@GCUstudents.co.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 331 3886

Students' Association Advice Centre

The [Advice Centre](#) provides a free, non-judgemental, independent and confidential service to all our students

- Email: advice@gcustudents.co.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1650



Learning Development Centres

Each School in the University has a Learning Development Centre (LDC) which provides academic writing support for home and international students, ICT support, advice on study skills and other academic support and guidance.

The LDCs are inclusive and committed to providing support for all students including those with disabilities or specific learning and teaching needs. Students are welcome to visit the centre to seek assistance related to their studies. The centres currently provide a variety of online academic support; through a combination of workshops, small group sessions, one-to-one appointments and tailored teaching within modules. The support available to students is provided in a professional and supportive environment enabling them to develop the skills required to succeed at university.

Contact your school's LDC for more information or [see their webpage here](#).

Get in touch

School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS): LDC_HLS@gcu.ac.uk

Glasgow School for Business and Society (GSBS): ldcgsbs@gcu.ac.uk

School of Computing, Engineering and Built Environment (SCEBE): askLDC@gcu.ac.uk





Peer **A**ssisted **L**earning **S**upport (*PALS*)

As a new student at GCU, we want to make your transition to university life as stress free as possible.

Signing up to our Peer Assisted Learning Support (PALS) programme connects you to students already studying on your degree programme (Senior PALS) meaning that you can gain from their experience, as well as ask questions specific to your course.

PALS also gives you the chance to get to know your new classmates in an informal environment allowing you to make vital social connections before meeting in person, in the future.

[Sign up to the PALS programme](#)

Support for international students

Visa Immigration Support and Advice (VISA)



The VISA Team specialises in visa and immigration advice within the University. If you have any enquiries regarding your visa status, please contact the team directly. All visa and immigration advice can only be given by qualified staff within VISA at the University.

Confidential support and advice

The VISA Team offer advice and guidance on Student Visas, visa conditions including working permissions, police registration and more.

They provide personalised checklists to students making Student Visa applications overseas or in the UK, assisting with completing online application forms for in-country students and providing tailored support for students both inside and outside the UK. The VISA Team are also here to help with other questions from international students and are connected with various departments across the University to ensure the international student experience including visa support is as seamless as possible. All communication is confidential and free of charge.

Getting in touch

There are many ways to contact our VISA Team, please see below for options available. Please also browse our website www.gcu.ac.uk/visa while you await a reply, where you may find the answer to your question.

Quick link to drop booking form: [Click here to book now](#)

- Email: visa@gcu.ac.uk
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1244 (If you cannot reach the team by phone during busy periods please email us or book a drop-in slot and we'll contact you as soon as possible)

FAQs for new international students

The VISA Team have collated some of the most frequent questions from new international students coming to the UK to study at GCU, you can view the [FAQs online](#).

For visa enquiries and appointment requests:

- Email: visa@gcu.ac.uk
- Website: www.gcu.ac.uk/visa

For information and advice on travelling to the UK, check out the VISA Team's [webpage on travelling to and entering the UK](#)



Check out the GCU VISA Team on social media



[gcuvisa](#)



[gcuvisa](#)



gcuvisa.eventbrite.co.uk

Accommodation

It's really important that you plan your accommodation before you arrive in the UK. There's a high demand for accommodation across Glasgow and it can be difficult to find once here.

Caledonian Court

[Please look on our website](#) or contact our Accommodation Office for advice and information on Caledonian Court, our on campus accommodation.

▪ Email: accommodation@gcu.ac.uk

Please note that Caledonian Court has limited availability left for Trimester B in the 2023/24 intake and is not suitable for families.



Commutable distances

If you are unable to get accommodation within Glasgow we recommend living no more than 1hr 30 mins commutable distance. See our [accommodation dossier](#) for suggested locations with time to Glasgow by train, bus and car.

Private accommodation

Should you wish to seek private accommodation, we highly recommend you secure this before your arrival.

There are a number of privately run purpose-built student accommodations in the city that provide en-suite rooms within a cluster flat and/or studio accommodation, for students living alone. Please be aware many of these are already fully booked.

Additionally, there is also traditional rentals. Should you wish to secure this type of accommodation, please ensure your landlord is registered under the [Scottish Landlord Register](#).

You can find further information on this, as well as [top tips when looking for private accommodation on our website](#) or contact our Accommodation Adviser for advice and information on private accommodation:

▪ Email: accommodation.support@gcu.ac.uk

The cost of living

Many students believe that as long as they can get into the UK, then working and/or the University will provide them with enough income to support them during their time.

In the vast majority of cases, this isn't true, especially for those travelling with families. As a result, we see students getting into financial hardship and, sometimes, having to leave the UK before they have managed to complete their studies. We don't want this to happen to anyone.

It's important that you properly know about and understand UK finances before you choose to come here. We've put together an average living expenses below but don't forget that your own budget should reflect your own priorities:

A single student will need around £17,500 to cover living expenses for a full calendar year (no children, living away from home), with a monthly total of around £1,450.

Accommodation	£500
Gas/Water/Electricity	£170
Food / Household Goods	£265
Local Transport	£215
Phone/Sim	£35
Social activities	£115
Internet	£30
Clothes, monthly subscriptions (gym, tv, spotify etc)*	£115



*These prices can vary widely and may be significantly higher

[You can find further details on our Living and study costs page](#)

IMPORTANT: Remember that the cost of living is subject to inflation and that the UK is currently seeing a significant rise in areas such as food, rent and utility bills (gas and electric etc).

Funding support

Opening a UK bank account

You'll need to open a UK bank account to make and receive payments, shop online and to receive earnings if you have a part-time job. We suggest that you make opening a UK bank account a priority. Look for a bank that gives you a debit card. Some banks have accounts specifically for international students; monthly charges may apply for these accounts, however all banks have standard accounts that are free with no monthly charges. You don't need to visit a bank in person to open a UK bank account anymore - it can all be done online.

You may need a Confirmation of Student Status letter to open a bank account, which you can [request here](#).

For lots of useful information and tips on budgeting and managing your money see [Student Funding web page](#).

Additionally, our Funding Team offers support for international students who seek financial guidance during their studies:

- Digital Inclusion laptop loan scheme
- General advice on our [Managing Your Money](#) webpage (which includes a recently added quiz for international students)
- Personalised advice via email by emailing funding@gcu.ac.uk using subject 'Funding Wellbeing Advisor'
- Personalised advice in person at funding team drop-in sessions (George Moore building, Level 1). The times for these change throughout the year so email funding@gcu.ac.uk to find out the current times for a given week/month



Careers support for international students

Careers support for international students

Career planning is so important, no matter what stage of your studies you are at or where in the world you want to work. The Careers Team can support you while you are here and help you to plan for a brighter future.

Our Careers Advisers are professionally qualified and we have careers partners working alongside Programme Leaders in each school. Workshops and presentations may be delivered as part of your course or through a series of opt-in sessions. Details about careers events and activities are regularly posted [on our website](#)

Opportunities for students and graduates

We can help you to:

- Explore internships, part-time or voluntary work while you study or during the vacation periods.
- Find out about graduate opportunities and provide job search advice and support for the UK and global markets.
- Understand the UK recruitment and application process.

[GCU Careers website](#) is a key source of information and opportunities. As an international student you may be planning to return to your home country after finishing your studies, so be sure to check out our [Global Careers section](#).

Work experience opportunities

We know that you may want to gain work experience while you are here so be sure to check out the opportunities that we have on [CareerHub@GCU](#). This includes internships, part-time and on campus opportunities as well as graduate positions.

By undertaking work experience, you will be able to gain the essential skills which employers value.

Career appointments and drop ins

You have a choice of either a 45-minute or 15-minute appointment with a Careers Adviser. It's easy to book an appointment with our [online appointment service](#). The Careers Service runs a drop-in service most days, please check the signs at the front of the Careers Service or the Careers Service blog for the latest availability.

The Common Good Award

[The Common Good Award](#) is a personal development and skills award that is open to all students. Getting involved in this award scheme will help you to provide valuable evidence of the skills, experience and Common Good Attributes you have been gaining through paid or voluntary work, giving you a competitive edge in the jobs market.

We look forward to seeing you in the Careers Centre. You'll find us on Level 1 of the George Moore building.

Medical and dental registration

Registering at a doctor's surgery

There will be opportunities on campus to register for a doctor at a nearby medical practice.

- Drop-in session date: Tuesday, 24 September
- Time: 10am-4pm

Further details on Eventbrite

Alternatively, if you'd like to register for a GP online, you can fill out an application for [Woodside Health Centre](#).

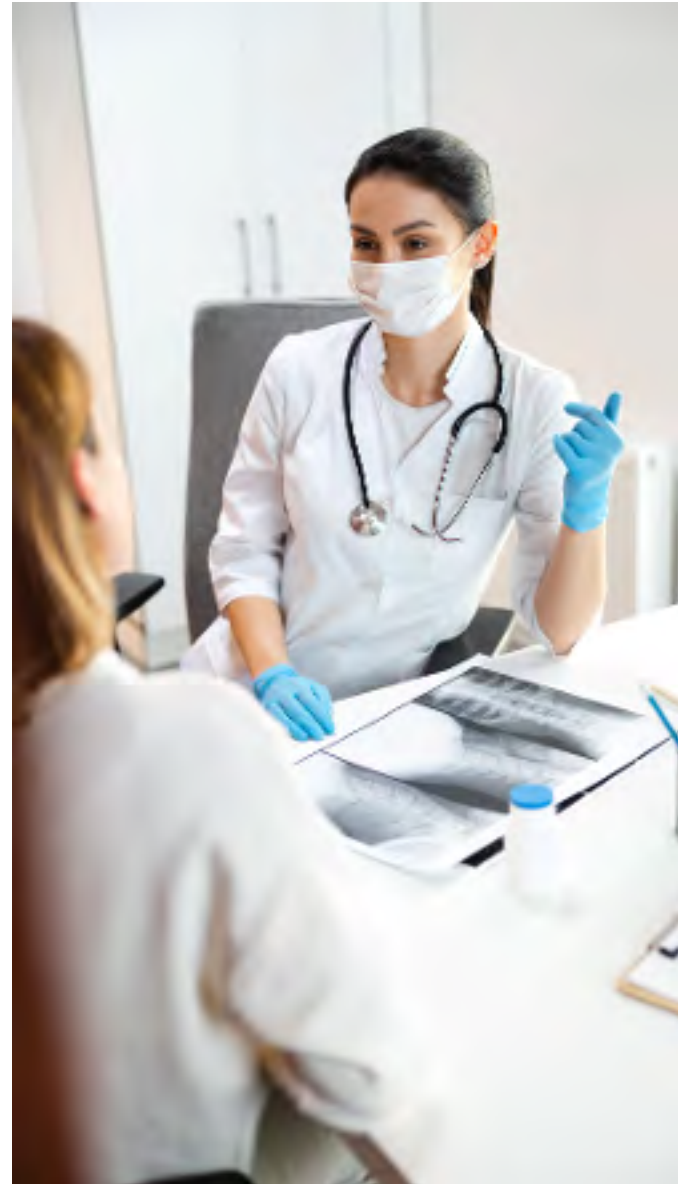
If you require any medication, we recommend you bring at least two weeks supply as you may not be able to access this instantly. Alternatively, register for a local Glasgow-based doctor below.

- Website: www.drleslieandpartners.com
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 201 5560

Registering for a dentist

We've worked with Woodside Dental practice for a number of years now and many of our students choose to register with them. Come along to one of our drop in sessions or visit their website for more information.

- Website: woodsidedentalpractice.com
- Telephone: +44 (0)141 332 0793



Student Wellbeing Service

We offer free and confidential advice and services to all students at Glasgow Caledonian.

The Student Wellbeing Service offer support through our Counselling Team, Wellbeing Advisors and Mental Health Advisors. There is also a Disability Team, alongside other resources including online information, wellbeing workshops and more.

Disability

Do you have a long term health condition or disability which might affect your studies? Our team of Advisers can offer you advice and support so that you are able to fully participate in university life, and perform to the best of your ability. In the UK, we have a culture and laws which ensure that disabled people are treated equally to those without a disability. [For more information see our website.](#)

Wellbeing and mental health

To get the most from your time at the University, it's important that you're happy and healthy. However, it is not uncommon to feel sad and lonely when you are away from your home, friends and family - especially if this is the first time you have experienced living independently. The Student Wellbeing Service runs an informal programme of activities for students to take some time out to focus on their health and wellbeing, including free yoga sessions. This is a good opportunity to meet people, explore the city and develop new skills in a relaxed and friendly environment.

[Visit the Wellbeing Service website for further information.](#)

In the UK it's not unusual to go and talk to a professional counsellor for help if you're struggling emotionally or psychologically.

We want to reassure you that the Student Wellbeing Team is able to offer support to you. All of our Counsellors and Advisers are qualified and experienced in working with international students and understand some of the cultural issues that students experience.

[For more information see our website.](#)



Cultural differences in the UK



- **Time keeping** - In the UK arriving on time is very important, especially in academic life and business. You should always be on time for lectures, classes and meetings with academic and support staff. If you are running late, you should contact the person you are meeting to let them know. If you're late you may be told to make another appointment to be seen on another day.
- **Being polite** - Being polite is considered to be an important part of British culture. If you need to ask for someone's help, it is polite to use the words 'please' and 'thank you'. Say 'excuse me' when you would like someone to move out of the way and 'sorry' if you accidentally bump into someone.
- **Queuing** - In the UK, it's considered polite to queue and wait for your turn. You'll find that this is common practice and part of your daily routine. This includes bus stops, shops, train stations, etc. 'Queue jumping' (moving to the front of the queue without waiting) is considered impolite.
- **Gender** - Men and women play an equal role in society in the UK. There are no rules or regulations which prevent men or women doing specific jobs - both men and women alike carry out all roles at all levels.
- **Equality** - When you're talking to someone or are requesting a service from them, no matter whom they are and no matter what role or status they have, you must be courteous and not demanding. It's illegal to discriminate against anyone according to their race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation or disability.
- **Smoking** - Smoking is banned from enclosed public places in the UK. This means that people can only smoke in designated areas where there is a smoking sign. This also includes e-cigarettes (vapes). This ban affects most public premises such as restaurants, pubs, bars, shops, cinemas, shopping centres, and public transport. Glasgow Caledonian has been a non-smoking university for many years. If you are a smoker, please ensure that you only smoke in the designated areas. Anyone who does not abide by these rules could face criminal charges and a fine.
- **Alcohol** - You must be over the age of 18 to buy and drink alcohol in pubs, bars and nightclubs in the UK. You may be asked for ID - rather than carry your passport, apply for a ISIC card. If you don't drink alcohol, you may be slightly worried if you're invited to a pub, bar or nightclub. Don't worry, these places are popular and sell non-alcoholic drinks too, and it's acceptable to go into a bar, pub or nightclub and not drink alcohol.
- **Weather** - UK weather is very changeable. Our summers are mild with temperatures rarely exceeding 25°C, while in winter temperatures can drop to -5°C. Wet and windy weather can occur throughout the year.
- **Daylight saving time** - The UK has daylight savings time. On Sunday 27 October 2024, clocks go back one hour, on Sunday 30 March 2025, clocks go forward one hour.
- **Recycling and waste** - Recycling is encouraged in the UK, and you will find recycling bins on campus. Different local councils will use different coloured bins and may have different rules, but materials such as cardboard, paper, glass, cans, and some plastics will be recycled by all local councils.
- **Water fountains** - There are water fountains around campus and Glasgow but you will need a refillable water bottle to use them - cups are not provided. Refillable water bottles are popular as they reduce plastic waste, save money over time, and encourage regular hydration by making it easy to carry water on the go.

Culture shock

Coming to the UK may be a new cultural experience for you, with many things which are very different to what you are used to in your home country. You may experience 'culture shock' which is a very common feeling. Culture shock can be the shock of living in a new environment, meeting lots of new people, getting used to a different climate and food, being away from your family etc. It's very normal to feel culture shock not long after you have arrived in the UK. Here are some ideas which might help you settle in :

- Remember that it's perfectly normal to feel homesick .
- Keep in touch with your family and friends back home, and have familiar things around you from home such as photographs.
- Get involved! Come along to our International Welcome Programme events so that you can meet other students and make friends.
- Join one of the societies run by the Students' Association. This is an excellent way of meeting new and current students with similar interests or of similar backgrounds.
- Find a supplier of familiar food if you can. Make sure you eat a balanced diet with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables. We have a list of some of the many world food shops in Glasgow in this brochure.
- Take regular exercise and maybe join a sports club or our on-campus gym. As well as being good for you, sports and exercise can be a great way of meeting people.
- Make use of the university services, including the Wellbeing Service and the Students' Association Advice Centre.



World food shops



World foods

- Madina Store – 15 Kennedy Path, Glasgow G4 OPP
- Zad Foods – 73 Lister St, Glasgow G4 0BZ
- All in One International food and grocery store -269 High St, Glasgow G4 0QS
- River Nile Supermarket – 23 Paisley Rd W, Glasgow G51 1LF

African

- JAH African SUPERMARKET – African - 184 Gallowgate, Glasgow G1 5DR
- Selam grocery – African - 204 Gallowgate, Glasgow G1 5DS
- The Asante’s African Food – African - 381-383 Great Western Rd, Glasgow G4 9HY

Asian food

- Chung Ying – 254 Dobbie's Loan, Glasgow G4 0HS
- Oaka Supercity George Street – 130 George St, Glasgow G1 1RG
- The Philippine Store – 89 Cambridge St, Glasgow G3 6RU
- AHA Grocers (Keystore Express) – 77 Union St, Glasgow G1 3TA
- Oriental Food Store and Halal Butchers – 307 Great Western Rd, Glasgow G4 9HR
- Foodasia – House of Sher Shopping Mall, 201-211 Wallace St, Glasgow G5 8NT
- Matthew’s Foods Glasgow 萬富行 – Chinese - 230-260 Garscube Rd, Glasgow G4 9RR
- iMart Oriental City Center – Chinese - 217 Hope St, Glasgow G2 2UW
- Tu Quynh Oriental Supermarket – Vietnamese - 25 King St, Glasgow G1 5QZ
- Viet King Vietnamese Supermarket - 17 Union St, Glasgow G1 3RB

Eastern European

- Beryozka shop and online store – Eastern European - 93 High St, Glasgow G1 1NB

Indian

- Ganapathy Store – Indian - 279 Maryhill Rd, Glasgow G20 7YA
- KVR Food City – Indian - 157 -159 Maryhill Rd, Glasgow G20 7XL

Mexican

- Lupe Pinto's – Mexican - 313 Great Western Rd, Glasgow G4 9HR

Middle Eastern

- El Baraka – Middle Eastern and Asian - 335 Great Western Rd, Glasgow G4 9HS
- Aladdin Supermarket – Middle Eastern and Asian - 45 Commerce St, Glasgow G5 8AD
- Miral Food Store – Arabic - 57 Commerce St, Glasgow G5 8AD



Find support and friendship with

GLOBAL BUDDIES



- Invited to monthly social events,
- Global Buddy Social group chat on WhatsApp to connect with others
- First to hear about day trips and other student events

- Matched with a Senior Global Buddy - current GCU student
- Welcoming face on arrival with common interests
- Help settle in and go to for advice



Join now and make Glasgow feel like home:
gcu.ac.uk/currentstudents/getinvolved/globalbuddies

Your new home from home

Coming to university is a chance to discover new interests and make new friends – and there will be plenty of opportunities to do both, on and off campus. Glasgow is home to over 130,000 students, so whether you're a local or new to the city, you'll be in great company.

People make Glasgow!

Glasgow is a great place to live – and it's just small enough that you'll feel at home right away. It's bursting with cafés, museums and galleries, bars and clubs, world-class sports facilities, shopping and theatres. There's definitely something for everyone, and you'll find plenty of student discounts and offers.

A compact city that's easy to explore from GCU's city-centre campus, Glasgow boasts world-famous architecture and plenty of green spaces. Plus, our great air, rail and

coach connections make it easy to explore Scotland's stunning countryside and cities, the rest of the UK or even Europe.

Scenic Scotland

With a beautiful landscape filled with mountains, hills, lochs and rivers, Scotland is the perfect place for getting outside. You'll never be short of things to do when you're not studying.

Things to do in Scotland

- Experience the world-famous Edinburgh Festival and Hogmanay

(New Year) festivities.

- Explore breath-taking scenery and test your nerve with adventure sports.
- Investigate our colourful history of epic battles, castles, myths and legends.
- See global music artists or discover up-and-coming bands at world famous venues such as King Tut's or Barrowlands.

Get to know Scotland
peoplemakeglasgow.com
visitscotland.com
gigsinscotland.com



Sport and recreation

Glasgow Caledonian has a vibrant sports scene, much of it focused on the Arc, the on-campus health and fitness centre. The Arc has two sports halls and three gyms and is home to 35 sports clubs and the base for activities organised by the Students' Association – from badminton and basketball to riding, swimming, martial arts, hockey and football.

Fashion and shopping

Glasgow's been rated the best place to shop in the UK outside London's West End, so it's ideal for students

with a passion for fashion. Glasgow's 'Style Mile' showcases designer labels and high-street brands, and there's also a great range of independent and vintage shops, cementing the city's growing global profile as a leading retail, cultural and style centre.

Things to do in Glasgow

- Go shopping! Glasgow is the second largest retail centre in the UK.
- Visit one of the city's 13 free museums.
- Experience one of Europe's richest art collections in the city's many

galleries.

- Watch a sporting event at Hampden Park stadium.
- Enjoy a famous band at one of the city's music venues.
- Admire the elegant "Glasgow style" architecture across the city centre.
- Visit one of the dear green place's 90 stunning green spaces, - more per head than any other European city.
- Join one of the many walking tours offered around the city.



International Student Welcome Programme

Further information on how to book these events will be available on the [September 2024 \(GCU International Welcome Group\) on Facebook](#) and our [GCU Student Events | Eventbrite](#).



Welcome Night with the Students' Association Friday, 20 September - 5pm to 8pm
Re:Union Bar and Grill

Our Students' Association and Student Events Team invite you to our Welcome Night. The full-time officers will be hosting an interactive quiz and tell you all about our Students' Association - including the services that they offer and their great societies that you can join.

Day trip to Loch Lomond
Saturday, 21 September - 9am- 5pm

See Scotland at its beautiful best with a boat cruise on Loch Lomond and a stop in the picturesque village of Luss. We will also stop for a short hill walk that offers fantastic views of Loch Lomond and its islands. Tickets cost £12, [Buy Tickets on the GCU online store](#)

Welcome BBQ
Sunday, 22 September - 1pm-3pm
George Moore canteen

Join us for a free BBQ - with vegetarian options available - in our restaurant and garden space. There will also be fun and games with a Country Western theme!

Speed flatmate finding
Tuesday, 24 September -
Re:Union Bar and Grill

Looking for other students to share a house with this year? With lots of games to help you meet others, it'll be a great chance to meet potential flatmates.

International Induction
Friday, 27 September - 9.30am to 11am
C001, Carnegie Lecture Theatre, Charles Oakley

Find out about the different support services at Glasgow Caledonian and more about the International Welcome Programme.

Scavenger Hunt
Friday, 27 September - 11.30am to 1pm
C001, Carnegie Lecture Theatre, Charles Oakley

Join us for an orientation challenge, giving you the chance to familiarise yourself with GCU and the city of Glasgow. Prizes to be won!

Taste of Scotland with Student Funding
Tuesday, 1 October - 12pm - 2pm
Re:Union Bar and Grill

You might have heard about some of the weird and wonderful things we eat here in Scotland. This is your chance to try our traditional dishes, while getting some tips from our Student Funding Wellbeing Adviser to help you make your money go further. Vegetarian options will also be available.

Mural trail
Wednesday, 2 October - 11am-12.30pm

Glasgow is home to breathtaking murals, and this is your chance to experience them. Join us on our mural trail and see how these masterpieces are brightening up the city centre. It's also a great way to get to find your way around Glasgow city centre!



Day trip to Loch Lomond!

Saturday, 5 October - 9am- 5pm

If you can't make it in September, this is your second chance. See Scotland at its beautiful best with a boat cruise on Loch Lomond and a stop in the picturesque village of Luss. We'll also stop for short hill walk that offers fantastic views of Loch Lomond and its islands. Tickets cost £12, [Buy Tickets on the GCU online store](#)

Gateway to jobs and careers with GCU

Monday, 7 October - 5pm

Supporting you to find part-time work in Glasgow. As well as a chance to find out how you can further develop your employability skills here at GCU to help set you apart from other job applicants. Your future self will thank you!

Glasgow Tales: Meet New People, Hear New Stories

Tuesday, 8 October - 10.30am, 1pm and 5pm

Join Gary, the Keltic Ginger, for a short walk through central Glasgow. Meet fellow university newcomers and hear captivating stories, myths, and legends about Glasgow and Scotland. You can simply enjoy the walk or take part in a game to meet new faces along the way.

Scavenger Hunt

Wednesday, 9 October - 1pm to 3pm

Re:Union Bar and Grill

If you missed out on the first one, this is another chance to join us for an orientation challenge giving you the chance to familiarise yourself with Glasgow Caledonian and the city of Glasgow. Prizes to be won!

Ceilidh

Thursday, 10 October

Time: 6.30pm doors, 7pm-10pm

Where: The National Piping Centre

A Scottish ceilidh is a lively social gathering featuring traditional music, dancing, and lots of fun. Our live ceilidh band is guaranteed to get you up on your feet as we celebrate one of Scotland's most time-honoured traditions. A haggis buffet will also be provided.

Tickets £15 each. [Buy Tickets on the GCU online store](#)

Learn the Lingo with the Careers Team

Tuesday, 15 October - 6pm-8.30pm

Re:Union Bar and Grill

The Scottish accent can be difficult to understand. In this interactive workshop, you'll learn some basic words and phrases to get you started, as well as the famous Glasgow humour and give you advice about living here. You'll also hear from the Careers Team, who will share tips and advice for working during your studies and post graduation in the UK.

Enchanted Forest Trip

Friday, 18 October - 2pm-11pm

Join us for a visit to the Enchanted Forest in Pitlochry – a spectacular music and light show set deep in the heart of the Scottish Woods. You'll have free time before the show to explore the charming town of Pitlochry before the evening's Enchanted Forest experience. This is not to be missed! Tickets cost £26,

[Buy Tickets on the GCU online store](#)

Meal Out at the Bier Halle

Tuesday, 22 October - 5.30pm-8pm

A great way to meet and chat with other new students over a meal in a popular German bar and restaurant in Glasgow city centre. Enjoy a pizza and drink on us!

British Afternoon Tea: Butterfly and the Pig, with VISA

Tuesday, 8 October - from 2.30pm

Britain is well-known around the world for being masters of afternoon tea. Join us at one of Glasgow's most famous tea rooms, The Butterfly and Pig, for the chance to sample the tradition. You'll receive tea/coffee and a selection of cakes. It doesn't get more British than this! Plus the VISA Team will be there to offer advice.

Our full list of events and activities can be found on our GCU Student Events Eventbrite page which will be updated throughout the year:

[GCU Student Events | Eventbrite](#)

For more information about our student events, contact studentevents@gcu.ac.uk



Food and drink

Food and drink around campus is supplied by Baxter Storey, a fresh food company that value quality ingredients, great people and exceptional service.

George Moore restaurant

Start your day in the restaurant and choose from a selection of hot filled rolls, yoghurt, cereal bar, porridge, freshly baked pastries and fairtrade tea and coffee. At lunchtime you'll find an array of hot main meals, a full salad bar, homemade soups and a selection of fresh, tasty sandwiches.

As well as this, the George Moore restaurant will have a fresh rotational menu with shawarma, chicken selectors and ramen all making an appearance.

Grab 'N' Go

Need a quick snack between classes? The Grab 'N' Go can be found in the George Moore building - offering a selection of hot and cold snacks and drinks.

Sir Alex Ferguson Library

Located on the ground floor of the Sir Alex Ferguson library, our cafe offers a wide range of hot food, snacks, and drinks. We are also now serving Starbucks coffee which can be purchased at the cafe.

Re:Union Bar and Grill

Found in the GCU Students' Association building, the Re:Union Bar and Grill is a place to grab a drink, food, play pool or socialise with classmates and friends.





GCU FOOD CARD

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING
YOUR OWN PRE PAID CARD TO
USE ON CAMPUS?

Then please ask a team leader in the
George Moore Dining Room for details

Instructions

FOR YOUR NEW GCU FOOD CARD

1. Scan the QR code.

2. Create an account.

3. Verify your email address.

1. Follow the QR code.

2. Log back into your account.

1. Go into account details.

2. Click “payment cards”.

3. Add your payment card.

4. You can use “quick top up” to add funds.

5. Then use your card at any outlet to purchase food or drinks. (not valid for purchases of alcohol)





Be part of something...
Bigger



/GCUstudents



@GCUstudents



/GCUstudents



@GCU_students

www.GCUstudents.co.uk



University for the Common Good

Campus Life Team

Glasgow Caledonian University
Cowcaddens Road
Glasgow G4 0BA

Contact: **Student Events Team**

Email: studentevents@gcu.ac.uk



Connect: **GCU Student Life**



Website: gcu.ac.uk/students/studentlife/events