



**GCU**  
**Employability**  
**Award**

**Student  
Handbook**



# The GCU Employability Award

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# The GCU Employability Award



## What is the Employability Award?

The GCU Employability Award is GCU's employability and skills award that aims to encourage, support and reward students engaged in co and extra-curricular activities. Completing this award will help students to develop key employability skills that employers now increasingly expect in addition to a university degree. Students can also use this award to demonstrate to employer's key examples of where they have put skills into action which will be crucial for future job applications.



## What are the benefits of the Award?

The GCU Employability Award will help students to compete in a graduate labour market which becomes more competitive with every passing year. Employers are increasingly looking for graduates who can bring more than subject-based knowledge to interviews. They will be looking for evidence that students have used their time at university to develop a variety of skills and experiences in addition to their academic studies.

Students will receive a formal record of the various activities they have undertaken, providing employers with evidence of the skills they have developed and how these will be of value in their workplace.

The award will also help students develop as an individual and enhance their ability to speak knowledgeably and confidently about their skills and experience and how these fit with what employers are looking for in a graduate.



# What is the process for completing the certificates and award?

## Step 1

Sign up online via Career Hub to register for the award

## Step 2

To apply for each individual certificate, you must submit an application form via Career Hub which demonstrates the following:

- A description of each activity you have been involved with
- The number of hours completed for each activity and/or time sheet

*Please note - you must complete a minimum of 40 hours of activity for each individual certificate*

- Signed verification from employer or activity supervisor

## Step 3

Once you have submitted all appropriate paperwork and this has reviewed by the panel, you will be issued with each individual certificate.

## Step 4

To apply for the full GCU Employability Award, you must complete 120 hours in total, which can be achieved by:

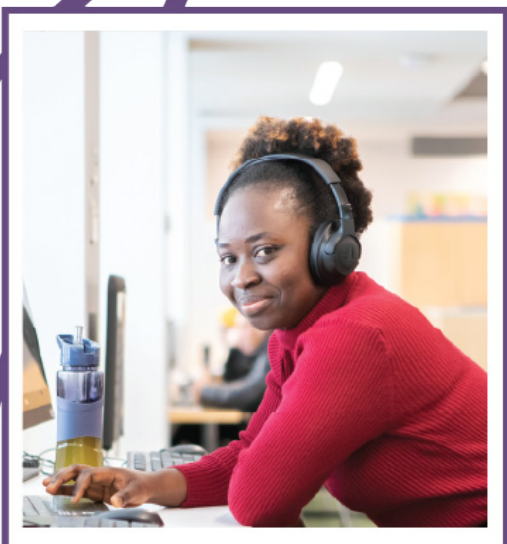
- Completing 40 hours for each of the three certificates, or
- Completing 60 hours for any two certificates

To apply for the full award, you must submit:

- A reflective impact statement detailing the outcomes for both yourself and the communities you engaged with
- An updated CV for review

This reflective process will help you build a self-awareness and strengthen your CV and ability to discuss your skills and experience when applying for jobs

Throughout the year there will be sessions run on the GCU Employability Awards where you can find out more information about what is involved and where to find opportunities to help complete them. Please take a look at the upcoming Careers Events and lookout for the GCU Employability Awards sessions.



## How long do I have to complete the certificates and award?

The award is designed to be flexible, allowing completion alongside academic studies.

Students may complete the award:

- Over the full duration of their studies (up to five years: four undergraduate and one postgraduate), or
- Within a single academic year, if preferred

Recognition of prior experience is available for:

- Students entering via direct entry or college connect pathways
- Postgraduate students with relevant background experience

Please e-mail for further information about applying via RPL.

## Do I have to complete all three certificates?

No, students can apply for as many as they wish. However, to be able to apply for the full GCU Employability Award students are required to complete at least two certificates - 120 hours total across the separate awards with 60 hours each across two, or 40 hours each across all three.

## Can anybody apply for the GCU Employability Award?

The GCU Employability Award is open to all students registered on taught programmes at Glasgow Caledonian University at the time of application.

## Award Ceremony

Towards the end of each academic year, students will be invited along to an award celebration to celebrate their achievements. Please note, the deadline for submissions if students would like to attend the award ceremony will be: **May 2026**. If students have any other questions about the GCU Employability Award, please email us directly at [employabilityaward@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:employabilityaward@gcu.ac.uk)

## Work Experience & Development Certificate

This is a skills and personal development certificate that aims to encourage, support and reward students that are engaged in co and extra-curricular activities, highlighting and reflecting on the skills and attributes they have developed that employers are looking for.



This could include activities that involve:

- Both paid and un-paid work
- Part time job, internship, work experience/ shadowing, volunteering
- Involvement with a club, society or group including sport
- Attendance at certain GCU Careers Service events including GAL, BAME Festival or GRIT training.

LinkedIn learning (limit to 5 hours maximum) which could include:

- Leadership foundations
- Building/Developing/Enhancing Resilience
- Creating Success from failure
- The science of compassion
- Developing your emotional intelligence

Hours required to apply for certificate: Minimum 40 hours



## Work Experience and Development

If students are looking for part-time work alongside their studies our Careers Advisers can offer support with CV's, Covering Letter's, Application Form's and Interview skills, helping students to be in the very best position when applying.

Glasgow Caledonian is the University for the Common Good. Our mission is to make a positive difference in the communities we serve. The Common Good certificate recognises experience students have gained that have made a positive difference through involvement in activities that address societal challenges at local, national or global level.



**Common Good**

This could include activities that involve:

- Volunteering experience
- Caring Responsibilities
- Employment with a common good focus e.g. Mentors/ Ambassadors / Caring role
- Involvement with a club, society or community group, including sport
- Taking part in EDI initiatives e.g. Black History month / SA Societies
- Sustainability related activities

Hours required to apply for certificate:  
Minimum 40 hours

# Global Engagement Certificate



This certificate recognise experience where students have gained an understanding of the wider world by exploring global issues, valuing cultural diversity, and viewing challenges through multiple cultural perspectives



## Global Engagement

This could include activities that involve:

- Exchange/study abroad
- Work or volunteering abroad or in UK with a Global focus/ international communities.
- Taking part in cultural events
- Global Projects

LinkedIn Learning (limit to 5 hours maximum) which could include:

- Communicating about culturally sensitive issues
- Communicating across cultures
- Adding Value through Diversity
- Global strategy
- Inclusion in a Global Enterprise
- Best practise for managing projects across cultures
- (Learning path): Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging for All

Hours required to apply for certificate:  
Minimum 40 hours

If students are interested in studying abroad, they can find out more from the exchange and study abroad team.

# Appendix

## Guidelines for Impact Statement

To apply for the full award students are required to submit an Impact Statement which should be a review and reflection on the skills they have developed, through the various activities they carried out for each certificate. **In particular**, we will be interested to learn about areas such as:

- The activity(ies) you have been engaged with
- 
- What positive impact/difference has been made to the individuals / groups / community(ies) you have been working with?
- 
- What skills, talents and knowledge did you have to draw upon and how have these developed further?
- 
- Any challenges you may have faced and how these were overcome.
- 
- What have you learned from the experience?
- 
- How could the skills and knowledge gained be used in other situations in the future?

**The statement must be a minimum of 500 words and a maximum of 1,250 words**

An effective technique to use is the **STAR technique**:

### **Situation**

What was the situation in which you were involved? Keep your description short and get straight to the point.

### **Task**

What was the task you needed to accomplish? Briefly explain what you had to do, and what the success criteria was.

### **Action**

What actions did you take? This is the most substantial part you need to include: - What you did - Why you did it - How you did it - What skills you used.

Use **'I'** not **'we'** as this is about you.

### **Result**

What results did you achieve?



**Technique**

## CV Guidance

A CV is a personal marketing document and should be a clear and structured summary of your education, employment, experience, skills and interests. It should show the potential employer that you are a suitable candidate for the job so that you will be invited for an interview. Remember to include details of the GCU Employability Award, and the skills you gained through completing the certificates