

# The Common Good Award

## The GCU Skills Award



**Active and Global  
Citizenship**



**Responsible  
Leadership**



**Confidence**



**Entrepreneurial  
Mind-set**

**Handbook 2023-2024**



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## 1. What is the Common Good Award?

Glasgow Caledonian is the University for the Common Good. Our mission is to make a positive difference to the communities we serve.

The Common Good Award is a skills and personal development award which aims to encourage, support and reward students who are engaged in co and extra-curricular activity aligned to the Common Good. It will also help students to develop the skills and attributes that employers now increasingly expect in addition to a university degree.

At GCU, the Common Good is supported, recognised and embedded within all of our programmes and the broader student experience through **The Common Good Curriculum**. We want to enable our students to develop new ideas and engage in activities that address societal challenges on a local, national or global scale.





## 2. What are the benefits of the Award?

The Common Good Award has many benefits. It will allow you to develop the attributes needed to make a positive difference as a GCU student and graduate. It will enable you to develop new ideas and engage in activities that address societal challenges on a local, national or global scale.

It will help you 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 an interview. They will be looking for evidence that you have used your time at university to develop a range of skills and experience in addition to your academic studies, and the Common Good Award can provide that evidence.

The Common Good Award will also give you a formal record of your Common Good activities, providing employers with evidence of the skills and Attributes you have developed and how these will be of value in their workplace. Signing up for the Common Good Award will also help you develop as an individual and enhance your ability to speak knowledgeably and confidently about your skills and experience and how these fit with what employers are looking for in a graduate.

The Common Good Award is a flexible award that sits alongside your studies, and you potentially have up to five years to complete it (four years at an undergraduate level, and one year at taught postgraduate). It therefore, gives you time to reflect on the attributes and competencies you are gaining as your progress through your university career while at the same time enabling you to plan and work toward your career goals.





### 3. How is the Award structured?

The Common Good Award has two stages: Stage 1 is the completion of the Common Good Attribute Certificates, and Stage 2 is the full Common Good Award. See **Appendix 1** for the Award Process.

#### **Stage 1: The Common Good Attribute Certificates**

Participating students will be asked to show how they have developed the Common Good Attribute(s) they are applying for. You can use a wide range of activities and experiences to demonstrate this, such as being a Student Mentor, a Student Ambassador, or a Class Representative for instance. However, you can also use 'off-campus' activities such as volunteering, being a carer, charity work, working with youth groups, community support activities, etc. For each Attribute Certificate, you must have participated in the Common Good activity to a satisfactory level for a minimum of 25 hours, which must be verified by an appropriate person, e.g. a Project Leader or a local manager.

You will receive a certificate signed by our Principal, Professor Stephen Decent, for each Attribute you complete. You will also receive ongoing notifications of your progress toward the full Common Good Award.

#### **Stage 2: The Common Good Award**

Once you have achieved all four Common Good Attribute Certificates, we will ask you to produce a short video (approximately 5 minutes long). This should capture the positive impact of the activity(ies) you have been engaged with and demonstrate how you have made a positive difference to the individuals, groups or communities you have worked with or supported.

The video should be in the format of a 'Digital Story', e.g. incorporating web, video, photographs, blog posts, social media, testimonials, etc. More information on Digital Storytelling and applying it for the Common Good Award can be found [here](#).

#### 4. Do I have to complete all four certificates?

No, you can apply for any number of attribute certificates you wish. However, to be eligible for the full Common Good Award, you must have achieved all required Common Good Attribute Certificates. Achieving the full Award will increase the volume of evidence you have for employers and allow us to recognise and reward the breadth of Common Good activities you are involved with. If you do not achieve all required Attribute Certificates, you cannot apply for the full Common Good Award, but you will receive a certificate for each completed attribute as outlined in **Section 3**. We will also record the Attributes you have achieved on a student transcript. The transcript will be sent to you on completion of the Award and will provide further evidence for employers of your Common Good Activities.

#### 5. Can I use activity that I was involved in before I came to GCU?

Students can apply through our Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process to have relevant activity assessed. RPL is the process of recognising learning that has come from experience and/or previous formal, non-formal and informal learning. You could include relevant activity(ies) and skills undertaken at college or other universities, or outside formal learning situations such as work, volunteering or life experiences.

RPL can only be claimed as far back as the equivalent of what would have been your first year (Level 1) at GCU. For example, if you were a direct entry student from college going into third year (Level 3) after an HND course, you could claim relevant RPL up to a maximum of the previous two years. A postgraduate student could claim relevant RPL up to a maximum of the previous four years. Please note that RPL cannot be claimed for any activity that has already been formally recognised elsewhere, e.g., as credit on an academic programme or a previous certificate or award. To find out more about claiming RPL, please email us directly at [cgaward@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:cgaward@gcu.ac.uk).

## 6. How do I apply?

Applying could not be easier. Simply e-mail us at [cgapplications@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:cgapplications@gcu.ac.uk) with your name and student number, and we will take care of the rest!

## 7. What if I have any further questions?

If you have any other questions about the Common Good Award, please e-mail us directly at [cgaward@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:cgaward@gcu.ac.uk).

## 8. Where can I find opportunities to get involved with Common Good activities?

We aim to provide opportunities for all students to further develop the Common Good Attributes by participating in co and extra-curricular activities aligned to our Common Good mission. For an overview of the kind of activities that our students have been involved with, visit our [Common Good Opportunities](#) pages. Some opportunities are tailored to students across the university.

For up-to-date opportunities for student employment on campus, please visit the [Work Experience Hub](#), which provides students with a 'one-stop shop' gateway to a range of 'on-campus' paid work opportunities.

Our [CareerHub@GCU](#) database also provides various work experience opportunities, including placements, internships, part-time jobs, and volunteering opportunities.

## 9. Can anyone apply for The Common Good Award?

The Common Good Award is open to students registered on taught programmes at Glasgow Caledonian University at the time of application, and who engage in Common Good activity which is making a positive difference to the lives of others.



## 10. How long do I have to complete The Common Good Award?

As highlighted in **Section 5**, you potentially have up to five years to complete the Award, but you must complete the Award or any associated Certificates *before* you graduate. You should therefore ensure that you apply in sufficient time to complete any minimum requirements for the Attribute Certificates or to present your Digital Story for the Award.

## 11. Can I use previous awards or certificates toward the Award?

No. We cannot 'double count' activity that has already been recognised through other means such as certificates, awards or academic credit etc.

## 12. How do I get proof of completion?

As indicated in **Section 3**, you will receive a certificate for each attribute you complete. Students who achieve the full Common Good Award will be presented with their Award at an end-of-year celebration event. In addition, you will receive a Common Good transcript detailing your Common Good achievements before you graduate.

## APPENDIX 1 – COMMON GOOD AWARD PROCESS



# The Common Good Award

~ The GCU Skills Award ~





University for the Common Good

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