

**How-to Guide**  
for  
**Student Pantry**



## How-to Guide

This guide offers more detailed information and advice for those who may be interested in adopting or adapting the initiative in their local area.

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## How-to Guide for Student Pantry

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<b>Title</b>	Student Pantry
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	GCU Students' Association
<b>All Organisations</b>	GCU Students' Association
<b>Category</b>	Promising
<b>Poverty Impact</b>	Awareness Mitigation
<b>Introduction to the Project</b>	
<p>The Glasgow Caledonian University Student Pantry was launched by the GCU Students' Association in partnership with GCU in academic year 2023/24 in response to the cost-of-living crisis. The Student Pantry provides up to ten non-perishable food items, including pasta, rice, porridge, and tinned foods, to students struggling financially while studying at GCU. Students can book a slot online via the GCU Students Association website and collect their food items from 2-4pm on Tuesdays and Fridays. To ensure fairness, repeat bookings must be at least two weeks apart to allow everyone to access food supplies.</p>	

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### Initial Idea

<b>Who had the initial idea?</b>	The Executive Committee of 2023-24.
<b>How did the idea for the project come about?</b>	
<p>In previous years GCU offered a free breakfast service via its catering outlets for students. This service was terminated in 2023 by the university. The Full Time Officers lobbied the university to ensure a replacement service was put in place for students who were still struggling and this resulted in support from GCU to set up the Student Pantry, a Winter Warmer scheme and changes to level 0 of the Students' Association Building to locate 2 student microwaves and a hot water boiler tap.</p>	
<b>Were plans informed by any published reports / papers / research evidence or practice from elsewhere?</b>	No
<hr/>	
<b>Was anyone else involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	No
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<b>Were those with lived experience of poverty involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	No
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<b>Was funding required to support the development of the initial idea of the project?</b>	No

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<b>Were specific resources – other than funding - needed when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>		Yes
<b>Staff/Volunteer Time</b>	Staff time – Senior Student Adviser and Chief Executive worked on plan along with FTOs.	
<b>Facilities / Workspace</b>	Capital works in areas of level 0 of the Students’ Association building to repurpose for the Student Pantry hatch area.	
<b>Equipment</b>	Microwaves and hot water boiler tap; shelving for Pantry storeroom.	
<b>Local Knowledge</b>	Training for the Student Pantry part time student worker was provided in food safety, allergies and manual handling.	
<b>Food and Drink</b>	A local Glasgow wholesaler supplied food items for the pantry.	
<b>Did any barriers have to be overcome when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>		No
<b>Did anything in particular enable development of the initial idea of the project?</b>		Yes
The termination of the free breakfast programme sparked outrage amongst the Executive Committee, who asked for a replacement programme which included funding to create the new Student Pantry.		
<b>How long did it take between having the initial idea and starting the project?</b>	Roughly 6 months.	
<b>Who made the decision to introduce the project?</b>	Student Executive Committee President.	

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**Early Development**

<b>Was there a pilot project or feasibility study or test of change?</b>	No.
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### Accessing the Service and Engaging with Service Users

<b>Are potential users referred to your Service?</b>	Yes
Students book a slot online that allows them access to the Student Pantry	
<b>Are there ways, other than referral, that are used to make potential users aware of your Service?</b>	No
<b>What is the most common way through which users typically access your Service?</b>	
Online	
<b>Do you take steps to keep in touch / reach out to users?</b>	No

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**Working with People with Lived Experience of Poverty**

Are those with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>delivering</u> the project?	No
Are people with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>managing</u> the project or in project <u>governance</u> ?	No
Are people with lived experience of poverty involved <u>in any other aspect</u> of the project?	Yes
Students with lived experience of poverty have provided feedback for the project	

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### Leadership, Governance and Partnership Working

<b>Who is responsible for managing the project?</b>	
Kirsty McGregor, Senior Student Adviser.	
<b>Is this the only responsibility of the person managing the project?</b>	No
Operational management of the Student Pantry is the responsibility of the senior student adviser who is the team lead in the Advice Centre at GCU Students' Association.	
<b>What proportion of the manager's overall workload is given over to this project?</b>	
Just a small proportion of it.	
<b>Is there a Project Steering or Advisory Group?</b>	No
<b>Who is involved?</b>	
<b>How does it work?</b>	
<b>Are any other governance arrangements in place to review strategy and performance?</b>	Yes
The Trustee Board (TB) of the Students' Association has overall responsibility for the strategic direction of the Students' Association, including this project. The TB membership consists of the four full time officers, four appointed student trustees, four appointed external trustees.	

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**Links to Wider Policies, Strategies and Statutory Requirements**

<b>To the best of your knowledge, is the project aligned with national and/or local anti-poverty strategies and priorities (e.g., local authority or health board priorities)?</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
<hr/>	
<b>In your opinion, has the project benefitted from being part of this anti-poverty strategy?</b>	<b>No</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Is the project part of any other strategy?</b>	<b>No</b>
<hr/>	
<b>In your opinion, has the project benefitted from being part of this anti-poverty strategy?</b>	<b>No</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Is the project delivering a service that is a statutory commitment?</b>	<b>No</b>
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<b>In your opinion, what has been the impact on the project of having this statutory commitment?</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
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## Funding

<b>Is funding used to support the work?</b>	Yes
<b>Has external funding been secured to support the work?</b>	Yes
<b>Which organisation provided funding?</b>	GCU
<b>What was the specific funding stream/source/scheme?</b>	One off grant
<b>How much funding was secured?</b>	One off grant
<b>For how long has funding been secured?</b>	Classified by GCU
<b>Is future funding from the same external source a possibility?</b>	No
<b>Has a specific sum been secured from your organisation to support this work?</b>	No
<b>Is future funding from your organisation a possibility?</b>	No
<b>Is future funding dependent on achieving pre-agreed outcomes or outputs?</b>	
<b>What are these conditions?</b>	
<b>What are the future - longer-term - prospects for this work if existing funding sources were no longer available?</b>	
<p>Unfortunately, the project may be terminated once current funds (and use of SA reserves) run out. The future of the Student Pantry (along with the other “Cost of Living” activities such as Winter Warmer scheme) are currently under review to ensure that future provision provides best value and outcomes for GCU student members within our available funding.</p>	

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### Staffing and Resources

<b>Do existing staff from your organisation contribute toward the work of this project?</b>	Yes
<b>Role:</b> Wilfred Obi, Student President 2024-25, has been a driving force behind cost-of-living crisis support from Glasgow Caledonian University and is continuing to seek consistent funding for the Student Pantry	
<b>Are existing staff from the host organisation paid extra (for example, taking on extra hours) to contribute toward the work of this project?</b>	
<b>Extra hours worked:</b>	
<b>Have additional paid staff been employed to contribute toward the work of this project?</b>	Yes
<b>Role:</b> Casual student staff	
<b>Is the post permanent or fixed term?</b>	N/A
<b>Duration:</b> Casual student staff have been employed that typically work 10-20 hours per week during the 12 weeks of term time the Student Pantry is open in Trimesters A and B.	
<b>Are volunteers involved in delivering the project??</b>	No
<b>Role:</b> N/A	
<b>Are specific resources – other than staff/volunteer time and money - needed to support the delivery of the project?</b>	Yes
<b>Facilities / Workspace</b>	The pantry is in the Students' Association building on GCU campus.
<b>Equipment</b>	Storage space and donated bags for packing up pantry goods.
<b>Local Knowledge</b>	The staff hired are university students who will have local knowledge of the university, but no guaranteed local knowledge of poverty.
<b>Food and Drink</b>	Food items are mainly purchased for the pantry.



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<b>Are any of the resources needed to deliver the project provided in-kind, rather than budgeted from project funds?</b>	Yes
<b>Who provides:</b> Facilities and equipment have been provided by Caledonian University, as well as some food donations from staff.	
<b>Were new IT systems, additional software, or upgrades existing software (databases, Apps) required to deliver this project?</b>	No
<b>Was additional training – for staff or volunteers - required to deliver this project?</b>	Yes
Staff are trained on site on taking deliveries, basic food hygiene, manual handling, and allergy training as well as packing up the bags of food for the service users. Senior Student Advisers conduct IT/ticketing admin and support.	

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## Monitoring and Evaluation

<b>Do you – or other organisations - collect data on the project for monitoring or evaluation purposes?</b>		No
<b>Is there baseline data to describe what things were like before the start of the project?</b>		Yes
Not specified.		
<b>Is the difference that the project is making measured or monitored by the host organisation?</b>		Yes
<b>Who within the host organisation is responsible for monitoring the impact of the project</b>	Kirsty McGregor.	
<b>How often is the impact of the project monitored or measured by the host organisation</b>	Each trimester.	
<b>What methods, techniques or strategies are used by the host organisation to impact of the project</b>	Use of the pantry is via a ticketed system allowing the number and demographics of individual students who have used the pantry to be recorded. How many bags of food have been handed out is also recorded and reported on. In first trimester a user survey was conducted with fifty-one recorded replies of student who had used the service.	
<b>What information is collected by the host organisation about the project?</b>		
	<b>Number of users</b>	Yes
	<b>Profile of users</b>	Yes
	<b>Experience of users</b>	Yes
	<b>Outcomes for users</b>	Yes
	<b>Anything else</b>	No

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<b>Has the data that has been collected by the host organisation been used to adapt the way the project works?</b>		N/A
<b>Has an external organisation been employed to formally evaluate the project?</b>		No
<b>Who conducted the evaluation</b>		
<b>Details of the evaluation</b>		
<b>What were the key findings from the evaluation</b>		
<b>Has the data that has been collected from this evaluation been used to adapt the way the project works?</b>		N/A
<b>Is there an intention to employ an external organisation to evaluate the impact of the project in the future?</b>		N/A
<b>Is there an intention to undertake your own formal evaluation in the future to estimate the impact of the project?</b>		No

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## Impact

<b>To what extent have the aims of the project been achieved?</b>		Making Progress towards meeting Aims
<b>What difference has the project made?</b>		
The Project has mitigated the negative impact of food poverty and hunger for the students who have accessed the service with the potential to help more students who may be struggling with food poverty.		
<b>Have conditions or demand changed since the project was introduced?</b>		No
<b>Has the project had the capacity to meet these changing conditions and demand?</b>		N/A
<b>Has the project changed through time?</b>		No
<b>What changed</b>		
<b>Why has it changed</b>		
<b>Has the project had any unexpected or unintended outcomes?</b>		No
<b>In your opinion, is the project having an impact on tackling poverty?</b>		Yes
The project is still new, but it is sparking conversations amongst gcu and tge students associations about tackling student poverty and how to provide them with support. Usages are concentrated amongst mature, international students, overwhelmingly studying on postgraduate taught programmes which have little other financial and living cost support.		

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## Learning from Experience

### What is working well?

The ticketing system is working well; students can book a ticket slot every two weeks for Pantry support access.

The choice of food stock: Food supplied has been chosen for its long shelf life and purchased with allocated semester Association funds. Food stock in the Pantry is carried over from Semester to Semester ensuring no food is wasted.

### What, if anything, is working less well?

The Pantry has not been successful in bids for continuation funding and may not be sustainable in its current mode of operation.

### What are the key learning points that you'd like to share with other practitioners?

Ongoing funding is essential to keep the Pantry open-in its current form. Changing the model to one based on donations would require more resources in terms of staffing.

### Are there plans to develop or expand the project in the future?

No

### How easily do you think this project could be replicated in another setting?

Depends on the setting, the pantry system is ideal for GCU students who may have additional funding/benefits such as SAAS (Students Award Agency Scotland), but the pantry will not be suitable for people who are fully reliant on foodbanks because the pantry is unable to provide two weeks' worth of food including fresh items, toiletries etc.

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