



Student Welcome Handbook

September 2026 GCU London

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Director's Welcome Professor John Connolly

Your postgraduate experience begins here

Welcome to GCU London!

I am delighted to welcome you to our vibrant and diverse community as you begin the next stage of your academic and professional journey.

Choosing to undertake postgraduate study is an important investment in your future and as your educators we take this investment very seriously. At GCU London, you will join a community of students (and staff) from across the world who are united by a desire to develop their knowledge, skills, and ability to make a positive difference in society. Our distinctive mission of delivering education for the 'common good' underpins everything we do and shapes the learning experience you will have here.

During your time with us, I encourage you to make the most of every opportunity available and I look forward to getting to know all of you.

Engage fully in your studies, participate in student life, build your professional networks, and draw upon the expertise and support of our academic and professional services staff. The relationships you build and the experiences you gain outside the classroom can be just as valuable as those developed within it.

London is one of the world's most exciting and internationally connected cities. Our campus places you at the heart of a dynamic environment rich with professional, cultural, and personal opportunities. I encourage you to embrace these opportunities and make the most of your time here.

On behalf of everyone at GCU London, I wish you every success in your studies and look forward to meeting you throughout the year.

And remember to have fun!

Professor John Connolly
Director, GCU London

Welcome to Glasgow Caledonian University London

Hello and welcome from the Student Life Team here at GCU London. We are very pleased you have chosen to study with us. This marks an important and exciting chapter in your life, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

This handbook is designed to provide you with all the information you need to start your student journey and settle into life in London. From practical advice on university services to tips on living in the city, we hope it will be a helpful guide throughout your time here.

Our Induction Week is designed to help you settle into university life. During this week, you will attend essential information sessions, meet fellow students and staff, and receive guidance to start your studies confidently.

Moving to a new city and starting university can be exciting but also challenging. Remember that many other students are going through similar experiences. We encourage you to get involved, make new friends, and participate in activities and events organised throughout the year to help you feel part of the community.

London is a vibrant and diverse city full of opportunities. With hundreds of languages spoken and communities from around the world, you will find a welcoming and multicultural environment. Living and studying here will expose you to new ideas, cultures, and experiences that can enrich your time at university and beyond.



Tanzid



Arina

Meet the Student Life Team

Our dedicated Student Life team supports you throughout your time at GCU London. They manage Induction Week and provide a wide range of support. Whether you have questions about academic or campus support, health services, or just want to know what's happening on campus, the Student Life team is here to help.

You can contact us by email or visit us at the Student Life Desk at room 1.4 on campus. We encourage you to reach out early so we can support you throughout your studies.

Our email address: studenthelp@gculondon.ac.uk





Checklist to get ready

Before you arrive to the UK

- ☐ Apply for your Student Visa
- ☐ Find long-term accommodation in London or surrounding areas.
- ☐ Get travel insurance
- ☐ Access your eVisa/digital status using the steps outlined in your email from UKVI
- ☐ Check the latest travel information
- ☐ You must prepare by reading NHS travel guidance, the [Travel Health Pro](#) website
- ☐ 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 in the UK

- ☐ Contact family and friends to let them know you have arrived safely
- ☐ Register with a doctor/GP
- ☐ 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. You can contact visa@gculondon.ac.uk if you need any assistance.
- ☐ Prepare for London weather with waterproof clothing and footwear
- ☐ Please the boarding pass of your flight to the UK

Phone apps you may download

- ☐ GCU Student App
- ☐ Safe Zone App
- ☐ Microsoft Outlook
- ☐ Blackboard
- ☐ SEAtS App





Arriving in London

We know arriving in a new country - and a global city like London - can feel overwhelming at first. Whether you're landing at Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton, or Stansted, rest assured there are clear and affordable ways to reach GCU London.

Our campus is based in East London, just a few minutes' walk from Aldgate East, Liverpool Street Station, and Whitechapel Underground stations. We recommend familiarising yourself with the Transport for London (TfL) system to plan your journey with ease.

Navigating London's Transport

London has one of the world's best-connected public transport systems. As a student, you'll mostly use:

- London Underground (Tube)
- DLR (Docklands Light Railway)
- London Buses
- Overground and National Rail

From the Airport to Central London:

Airport	Fastest Option	Approx. Cost
Heathrow	Elizabeth Line / Heathrow Express + London Underground (Tube)	£12-£25
Gatwick	Gatwick Express or Southern Rail to Victoria Station or Thameslink train to Blackfairs Station + London Underground (Tube)	£12-£20
Luton	Luton Airport Express to St Pancras or Thameslink train to Blackfairs Station + London Underground (Tube)	£12-£17
Stansted	Stansted Express to Liverpool Street	£12-£20

Tip: Use Google Maps or Citymapper app to plan your route in real-time.

Get an Oyster Card or Contactless Setup

To travel easily around the city, we recommend one of the following:

- Student Oyster Card (18+): Get 30% off travelcards - apply online via the TFL 18+ Student Oyster portal.
- Contactless (Debit/Credit Card): Most international cards work, including Apple Pay or Google Pay.

Our campus is located in Zone 1. If you're living further out, consider a travelcard covering Zone 1-2 or 1-3 depending on your commute.

Arriving to Campus

Getting to Glasgow Caledonian University London (Fashion Street Campus)

Once you've reached central London, getting to campus is easy. GCU London is based in the heart of East London, surrounded by cultural hotspots like Brick Lane and Spitalfields Market.

Finding the Campus

GCU London Address: **40-48 Fashion Street, London E1 6PX**. Nearest stations:

- A** Aldgate East (District, Hammersmith and City) - 8 mins walk
 - B** Liverpool Street (Overground, National Rail) - 9 mins walk
 - C** Whitechapel (Elizabeth Line, District, Hammersmith and City, Overground) - 15 mins walk



Induction Week

Induction Week

Induction Week is an essential part of starting your student journey at GCU London. It is designed to help you settle into your course, understand what is expected of you, meet key staff and become familiar with the support available throughout your studies.

During Induction Week, you need to complete your face-to-face registration and attend the induction sessions listed for your programme. Your induction sessions will also help you understand your course, University systems, attendance requirements and the services available to support you.

Please take Induction Week seriously and make every effort to attend all sessions relevant to you. These sessions are planned to help you start your course confidently and avoid missing important information before teaching begins.

Before attending your sessions

Please make sure you:

- Check the timetable carefully for the date, time and room of each session
- Complete Face-to-Face registration (check page 12 for more information)
- Arrive at least 10 minutes before each session starts
- Bring a laptop, tablet or phone so you can access your GCU email and online systems
- Check your personal email and the GCU Student App regularly for any updates.



Induction Week timetable

Induction Week Timetable – TRI A – September 2026			
Tuesday – 8th of September 2026			
Time	Session	Instructor	Room
10.30 am - 11 am	Welcome from the Director of GCU London	John Connolly	3.7
11 am – 1 pm	International Management and Business Development Induction	Vivian Ikechukwu-Ifudu	3.1
11 am – 1 pm	MSc International Marketing Programme Leader Induction	Julie Man	3.2
11 am – 1 pm	Environmental Management Programme Induction	Fatima Ajia & Amy Lally	3.7
2 pm – 3 pm	Using IT Systems & GCU Learn	Maria Elfani	3.1
Wednesday – 9th of September 2026			
Time	Session	Instructor	Room
10 – 11 am	Introduction to Learning as a Master's Student	George Kowalik	3.7
11 am – 12 pm	Introduction to Library Services	Elizabeth Pinel	3.7
12 pm – 1 pm	Your Degree, Your Future, Your Career: Making the Most of Your Time at GCU London	Sandra Rhule	3.7
1 – 3 pm	Students Association Event	Beth & Ellie	2.5
Thursday – 10th of September 2026			
Time	Session	Instructor	Room
11 am - 1 pm	MSc Computer Science Induction	Hakim Mezali	3.7
11 am - 1 pm	MSc Advanced Computer Science Induction	Hakim Mezali	3.7
11 am - 1 pm	MPH Programme Induction	Abdul-Razak Abubakari	3.2
2 pm – 3 pm	Using IT Systems & GCU Learn	Maria Elfani	3.7
Wednesday – 16th of September 2026			
Time	Session	Instructor	Room
2 pm – 2.30 pm	Student Finance Q/A	Kayleigh Kyle	Online
2.40 pm - 3.30 pm	Professional Services Induction Session	Alex/Bushra, Nuruz, Lisa	3.7
3.30 pm - 5 pm	Students Association Event	Beth & Ellie	2.5
Wednesday – 23rd of September 2026			
Time	Session	Instructor	Room
2 pm - 4 pm	Welcome & Connect by Student Life and Students' Association	Tanzid, Beth, Ellie	3.7

Students' Association

Students' Association

The GCU Students' Association is here to represent you and support your student experience at GCU London. All students are automatically members, and the Association works to make sure your voice is heard and your needs are represented across the University.

You can share your ideas and feedback, get involved in student-led activities, and access support through the Students' Association. They also organise events and opportunities that help you connect with other students and make the most of your time at university.

The Students' Association includes elected student officers, including a dedicated London Officer who represents GCU London students. They work with the wider Students' Association team to raise issues, support student interests, and improve campus life.

For more information about what they offer and how to get involved, visit the [Students' Association online](#) or check their [social media channels](#) and WhatsApp: +44 (0)7385465725 (Monday to Friday, 9-5PM)



Beth Meadows
Student Belonging Co-ordinator



Ellie Neilson
Academic Representation Co-ordinator

Getting involved with Students' Association

The GCU London Students' Association doesn't just represent students, it also helps you get involved in campus life and feel at home. During the first weeks of term, the Students' Association organises a range of welcome activities to help you meet new people and explore your new city. These include welcome sessions, social events, off-campus dinners and activities around London, and opportunities to try new experiences with fellow students.

Throughout the year, you can also take part in events and activities run by the Students' Association and student volunteers. These include social evenings, workshops, group outings and opportunities to connect with others outside of classes. Whether it's a casual dinner at a local spot or a student meetup in the city, these activities are a great way to make friends and settle into life in London.

The Students' Association also supports student-led groups and societies, which host regular activities and events throughout the year. Joining these groups can help you build community, explore shared interests, and get even more involved on and off campus.

Upcoming events and activities

The Students' Association will be running welcome activities to help you meet other students, explore the local area and settle into life at GCU London.

A schedule of upcoming activities will be shared with you soon. Keep an eye on your email for updates from the Students' Association.



Staying connected at GCU London

Communications

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.

Tip: Make sure to turn on notifications for your Outlook app on your phone, so you don't miss any important messages.

Student portal

You can sign in to the GCU Student Portal using your Caledonian username and the password provided to you by the University. This is your central hub for accessing your student records, course information, grades and more.

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](#). We send lots of notifications via the app and it's an easy way to access Glasgow Caledonian resources.



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.

Mobile phone

We have free SIM cards available from Giffgaff that will be available during the Induction Week.

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.

Social media

Follow us on social media



Instagram - [@gculondon](#)



Facebook - [@GCULondon](#)

Student support services

Finance and tuition support

We know it's not always easy to talk about money, but we're here to help.

The Student Finance Team at Glasgow Caledonian can give you friendly, confidential advice about payment plans, tuition fees and any outstanding balances. Whether you just have a quick question or need support with managing your payments, don't hesitate to reach out.

You can:

- Book an appointment through the [appointment booking system](#) using your Caledonian email and student login
- Email the team at arstudent@gcu.ac.uk
- Call on +44 (0)141 331 8195 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).
- Pay your fees online via the Student Portal.



Support for international students

Visa Immigration Support and Advice (VISA)

The Visa team specialises in immigration advice within the University. If you have any enquiries about your visa status or immigration conditions, please contact them directly. All official visa guidance can only be provided by trained and qualified advisers within the Visa team.

You can also visit the [Visa section](#) on the GCU website for detailed information

Confidential support and advice

The VISA team offer advice and guidance on Student visas, visa conditions including working permissions and more.

They provide support to students making Student visa applications overseas or in the UK, offering advice on documents required and application submission. 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

Our Visa team offers regular drop-in sessions which usually takes place on Mondays at room 1.7 (Fashion Street campus) from 10 am to 12 pm. Please note drop-ins are subject to change- please refer to the notices outside of the office at room 1.3.

Email: advice@gculondon.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1244

If you cannot reach the team by phone during busy periods, please email us 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](#).

Student support services

Face to face registration

Your journey at GCU London begins with Induction Week - a chance to meet staff and fellow students, get to know the campus, and complete key steps like face-to-face registration and collecting your Student ID card.

You will be required to provide your passport and evidence of your visa (eVisa/digital status) when collecting your Student ID Card including evidence of your UK entry such as your boarding pass for the flight to the UK. As your visa will be accessed digitally, please be ready to provide a [eVisa Share Code](#) to provide to evidence your right to study in the UK.

Induction Registration Checklist:

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Proof of Address (any of the following):
 - UK bank account statement
 - UK tenancy agreement
 - UK utility bill
 - UK driver's license
- ☐ Share Code (from the UK government eVisa website to prove your visa status)
- ☐ Boarding Pass / Flight Ticket to the UK

A step-by-step guide on how to generate your [Share Code](#) is available to help you prepare in advance.

If you have any difficulty generating your Share Code, don't worry - our team will be available during Induction Week to assist you.

Why is it important to attend Induction

Induction is an important part of your university journey and there will be opportunities for you to engage in activities such as meeting your Programme Leader and the London Learning and Development Center (LLDC) team. It's your opportunity to familiarise yourself with your programme and ensure that you are prepared before your classes begin. It's important to attend your timetabled induction sessions to ensure you get off to a successful start on your programme.

Student Life Desk

Starting university in a new city or even a new country can be overwhelming. That's why our Student Life Team is here to make things easier.

Think of us as your go-to team for general support. Whether you need help understanding your class schedule, requesting a student status letter, resolving an attendance issue, or just figuring out who to speak to, we are here to guide you.

You can contact us by emailing studenthelp@gculondon.ac.uk or speak to us in person in room 1.4 of the Fashion Street Campus - Mon to Fri 10 am to 4pm. If we don't have the answer right away, we will point you in the right direction

We are here throughout your journey, from Induction Week to Graduation, so do not hesitate to get in touch whenever you need support.

Attendance monitoring

It's important that you register on time (including re-registering if required) and maintain an excellent attendance throughout your programme. This means attending all scheduled lectures, seminars, tutorials and personal tutor meetings, as well as completing and submitting assessments and coursework on time.

Your attendance is recorded using the SEAtS app, which you can download from both the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store. Simply log in with your Caledonian email address.

A step-by-step guide to using the SEAtS app can be found in the GCU London website.

If you have any issues or questions about your attendance, please contact the Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring (SAEM) team at saem@gcu.ac.uk or visit the [GCU website](#) for more details.

Failure to engage and attend in your programme as required or failure to attend a checkpoint can result in being withdrawn and visa sponsorship being withdrawn/ reported to UKVI.

Student support services

Accommodation

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

Commutable distances

If you are unable to secure accommodation near campus, you must live within a commuting distance of no more than **1 hour and 30 minutes**. This is a requirement under UK visa rules, and living beyond this limit could affect your visa compliance. Please refer to our [Accommodation Dossier](#) for a list of suggested areas, along with estimated travel times to central London 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 booked well in advance so are not available for this trimester.

In addition to purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA), many students in London choose to rent through websites such as SpareRoom, OpenRent, and Zoopla, or through contacts and recommendations. These options can sometimes be more flexible and affordable, but they also require extra caution.

If you are searching through these platforms, it's important to stay alert to scams. Always view the property in person or through a verified agent before making any payments. Avoid listings that ask for deposits or rent upfront without a contract or official paperwork, and be wary of offers that seem unusually cheap or urgent. Make sure to check the details of your rental agreement carefully, including what bills are included and who is responsible for maintenance.

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: studenthelp@gculondon.ac.uk

Student wellbeing service

We offer free and confidential advice and services to all students at Glasgow Caledonian. The Student Wellbeing Service provides support through our counselling service, wellbeing advisers, mental health advisers and disability service, 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? The Student Wellbeing Service 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.

In the UK it's not unusual to go and talk to a professional counsellor for help if you're struggling emotionally or psychologically. Our qualified and experienced counsellors and therapists are here to support all University students as part of the Student Wellbeing Service. Many students benefit from exploring their emotions, thoughts, and behaviours in the confidential counselling setting.

The Wellbeing Service is staffed by professional members of staff who are trained to listen and support individuals in emotional or psychological distress. We will work with you as you try to resolve your difficulties.

Information on booking

To request an initial appointment with a Wellbeing Adviser, you can complete the first [appointment form](#).

Following your initial contact with the service, you will be invited to attend a one-to-one meeting with a member of the team.

You can also visit the wellbeing service in room 1.8 or email the Student Wellbeing Adviser, Lisa McCabe, at londonwellbeingadviser@gculondon.ac.uk

Academic and digital learning

London Learning Development Centre (LLDC)

Welcome! The London Learning Development Centre (LLDC) team comprises Academic Development Tutors (ADTs), Librarian, and Learning Technologist. We work with all our students, full-time and part-time, Master's or Doctoral level. We provide face-to-face and online academic support through a combination of workshops, small group sessions, one-to-one appointments, self-teach guides, and tailored teaching within modules. The teaching and advice available to students is provided in a professional and encouraging environment, enabling you to develop the skills required to succeed at university and in your future employment.

The Academic Development Tutors (ADTs) are Dr George Kowalik, and Cathy Glover. ADTs work with all GCU London students to develop their academic skills, such as planning and writing at postgraduate level or improving your English for academic purposes and employability skills to meet the communication expectations if English is not your first language. Our campus Librarian is Liz Pinel. We are lucky at GCU London to have a vast range of library resources and our expert librarians who can offer guidance in making best use of them in your studies and they can help you develop as researchers. Maria Elfani is our Learning Technologist and can help you with using digital platforms that GCU provides for you to use in your studies, from GCU Learn to Turnitin. You will find the LDC and the library on the first floor.

In addition to workshops and classes, we also have appointments, drop-ins and self-teach materials available (materials available in GCU Learn LLDC organisation). You will receive a regular LLDC newsletter sent to your GCU student email detailing the workshops and drop-ins available for the upcoming week and how to book appointments with us.

Academic development appointments

- Ensure that you meet the expectations of postgraduate study.
- Help you make the best use of feedback from your assignments.
- Discuss plans and drafts, and offer assistance with structuring your work.
- Suggest strategies for planning your time and academic work, such as notetaking or effective reading.
- Ensure you work with academic integrity when completing assignments.
- Guide you if you're unsure whether your writing fits your assignment requirements.
- Support you if you would like to practice a group or individual presentation.

You can book appointments in the links advertised in the LLDC newsletter. Our email address is LLDC@gcu.ac.uk

English skills improvement appointments

- Improve your academic writing and spoken English language skills.
- Discuss how you can improve your English listening and reading skills for lectures and seminars.
- Help you to develop your English use in professional scenarios.
- Guide you with making notes and putting information into your own words.
- Help you to improve essential grammar or written English.

In addition to helping you with your academic development more generally, Cathy Glover is our expert in English language development for postgraduate study. You can book to see her through the booking link available in the LLDC newsletter. Add a note if you want help with your English language skills when booking.



Cathy Glover



George Kowalik



Maria Elfani



Elizabeth Pinel

Academic and digital learning

ADT Drop-ins

If you have quick questions about your academic or English skills, drop-in (up to 15 min) sessions are available throughout the week. Times may change throughout the term, so check the LLDC newsletter for details.

Anyone can come to a drop-in; no appointment needed! But if you want us to look at your work you will need to book an appointment instead.

Librarians

- Help you search for high-quality information accessible to GCU students to help you complete your assignments.
- Support you with Harvard referencing.
- Offer help with using GCU Cite Them Right for referencing.
- Provide guidance for using RefWorks.

You can either book an appointment using the link advertised in the LLDC newsletter, or email a question about the library and its resources:

gculondonlibrary@gcu.ac.uk.

There is also extensive help on the library [homepage](#) and our [Libguides \(subject guides\)](#), including this video on [searching Discover for academic journal articles](#).

Module content

For support with module content, contact your Module Leader or check the module information on GCU Learn. The contact details for your Module Leader are in the module handbook in GCU Learn. Contact your Module Leader:

- If you need assistance or want a deeper understanding of topics within a module.
- If you feel unsure or would like more clarity about assessments or assignment briefs.

Technology and digital learning

Starting your journey at GCU means you will need to navigate various IT systems. Getting to know these IT systems in advance will make your learning journey much easier. You will be given a username and password when you register online. You will then need to use this username and password to access all GCU IT systems. Below is the summary of key IT systems that you need to familiarise yourself with.

GCU Learn

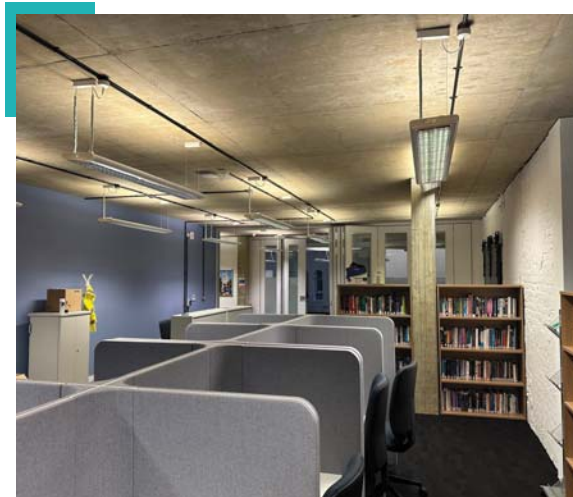
GCU Learn is GCU's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). GCU Learn uses Blackboard as its core system and is where you find information about your modules, your assessments, learning materials, and Class Collaborate Ultra for accessing Online Lectures.

- Log in here to access [GCU Learn](#) and please check your GCU Learn pages regularly.
- You should expect to see Announcements, Module Handbooks, weekly learning materials, lecture recording (via Class Collaborate Ultra), and assessment rubric and submission links.

Office 365

You have access to various Microsoft products through Office 365. Simply log in to [Office 365](#) using your student email, choose Apps, then you will find Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneDrive, Forms, OneNote, and Outlook (your student email).

Our Learning Technologist, Maria Elfani, can help you with these systems. You will find her in Room 1.4 (Student Life Hub) or at the library desk. You can email her at Maria.Elfani@gcu.ac.uk



Student support services

Careers support

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 Service 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. Workshops and presentations may be delivered as part of your programme 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.

We offer access to a wide range of resources, including guidance on CV writing, interview preparation, job applications, and searching for part-time, placement, and graduate roles.

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](#).

To book an appointment or access the full range of services, you'll need to register with [CareerHub](#). Once registered, you can book sessions, browse job opportunities, and explore tailored advice for international students.

Career appointments and drop ins

Come along to our fortnightly Career Success Workshops or book a one-to-one appointment for tailored advice and guidance.

You can choose between a 45-minute in-depth session or a 15-minute quick consultation with a Careers Adviser. These sessions are usually led by Sandra Rhule, GCU London's dedicated Careers Consultant and Adviser.

To book a workshop or appointment, visit: [GCU Careers Services](#)

Working in the UK

Your working conditions will be stated on your visa and on your visa decision email/letter. As a Student Visa holder you are responsible for ensuring you do not breach the working conditions of your visa. 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 are only permitted **full-time hours during the confirmed vacation periods** listed on the [University Academic Calendar](#). The UK average for full-time working is 40 hours per week. For the purposes of work, UKVI define a week as 'a period of seven days starting on a Monday and ending on a Sunday'. Please be aware that working more hours than you are permitted is considered a serious immigration offence.

Please note there are also 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 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. 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 seven days of receiving your decision. Please contact the VISA team if you are unsure on this process. For more information regarding [working permission](#), check out our website.

GCU Employability Award

The GCU Employability Award is a University-wide award run by the Careers Service, designed to help you develop and evidence key employability skills alongside your studies. It recognises the skills and experience you gain through work experience, volunteering, and other activities, helping you stand out to employers.

The award has two stages. Students can first complete individual certificates in areas such as work experience, community engagement, or global activities, and then progress to the full GCU Employability Award.

The award is flexible and can be completed alongside your programme. It is open to all students registered on taught programmes at Glasgow Caledonian University.

To find out more and apply, register via [Career Hub](#)

Life around campus

Food and drink

At the Fashion Street Campus, students are welcome to use the student café space located on the second floor. It's a relaxed and friendly environment where you can bring your own meals, take a break between classes, and spend time socialising with your classmates.

Whatever your dietary needs or preferences, from halal and vegetarian to budget-conscious options, you'll find something to enjoy just minutes from campus.

Brick Lane

There are also plenty of great food options in the surrounding area. Just a short walk away, Brick Lane is known for its vibrant mix of street food, curry houses, coffee shops, and independent bakeries. You'll find a wide range of international cuisines, including several halal-friendly options.

Spitalfields Market

Nearby, Spitalfields Market offers a variety of food stalls and vendors serving dishes from around the world. Whether you're in the mood for freshly made pasta, vegan meals, or sweet treats, there's something for everyone. Plus, it has halal options as well!

Petticoat Lane

Just across the road, Petticoat Lane Market is another popular spot for students looking for a quick and affordable bite. On weekdays, the area comes alive with food stalls offering freshly prepared street food, including wraps, noodles, burgers, and hot rice boxes. It's a great place to grab lunch between classes, with a variety of flavours and generous portions at student-friendly prices.

Religious and faith support

GCU London welcomes students of all faiths and beliefs. Our campus is located in one of the most diverse areas of London, with a range of places of worship nearby.

You'll find mosques, churches, temples, gurdwaras, and other places of worship within walking distance or a short journey from campus.

Notable nearby locations include East London Mosque, Brick Lane Mosque, and St Botolph's Church in Aldgate, along with temples and faith centres across Whitechapel and East London.



Fire safety information

A test fire alarm takes place every Tuesday at 08:30am.

If you hear the fire alarm at any other time, please make your way calmly to the designated muster point (red circle) at the Fashion Street/ Brick Lane corner. Remember not to use the lifts or stop to collect your belongings.



Student responsibilities

Key student information

Contact and accommodation details

You must update the University if there are any changes to your visa information, contact details, or term time address. You should check your student email account on a regular basis and respond to requests promptly.

Please note: Student visa holders must live within 1.5 hours commuting distance of the campus or within Greater London. If you provide a term-time address that is not within a reasonable commuting range, you may be contacted by the University to review or clarify your accommodation details.

Healthcare

You should 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.

To register with a GP near your term-time address, visit the [NHS GP Registration Portal](#). Simply enter your postcode to find nearby surgeries and follow the instructions provided.

If you're unable to register with a GP close to where you live, you can register with our partner practice, the Holborn Medical Centre, located in Central London. They are experienced in supporting international students and can assist with general medical care during your studies.

Lost/stolen passport

If your passport or any immigration documents are lost/stolen this must be reported to the Police and other relevant officials. Please contact the VISA team immediately for any assistance required with the process of reporting the lost document and securing a replacement.

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 renewed passport, 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.

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.

We are here to support you throughout your course. Any time during your studies, if you have queries about your visa including related academic matters, please contact the VISA Team to discuss your situation. If you have any queries about your visa status or conditions of your visa please contact the VISA team, on advice@gculondon.ac.uk.

Please keep your visa decision letter safe as you may need to refer to it throughout your studies. The letter will arrive via email as a PDF attachment.

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.

Additionally, all student visa holders and those with another visa to study in the UK must attend **VISA Checkpoints** twice per academic year to re-present their passport and visa documents.

[GCU VISA team website](#) for more information.

Graduate visa

Please note the Graduate visa is not guaranteed to students and has various eligibility criteria, including that students must complete their eligible programme and obtain their award whilst still in the UK with a valid Student visa. Students must also have cleared any outstanding tuition fees. Please note this means students undertaking resits or repeats in the last four months of their visa (grace period), may not be able to meet this requirement.

To give yourself the best chance of being eligible for the Graduate visa after your programme, it is vital you engage well with your Programme team and ensure excellent attendance, as this will minimise the likelihood of having resits, which may affect your ability to obtain your award before your Student visa expires.

Life in the 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. London is one of the most vibrant cities in the world - but it's also one of the most expensive.

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 to budget carefully and plan ahead.

It's important that you 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 £17,796 to cover living expenses for a full calendar year (no children, living away from home), with a monthly total of around £1,483.

Areas of expenditure	Monthly cost
Accommodation	£800-£1,500
Gas/Water/Electricity	£150-£300
Food/Household goods	£160-£480
Local Transport	£170-£320
Phone/Sim	£10-£40
Social activities	£100-£200
Internet	£20-£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 webpage](#)

IMPORTANT: Remember that the cost of living is subject to inflation and that the UK is currently seeing a significant rise in costs 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 no longer need to visit a branch in person to open an account; many banks now allow you to apply online.

You may need your original passport and a copy **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 webpage](#).

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

- General advice on our [managing your money](#) webpage (which includes a quiz for international students)
- Personalised advice via email by emailing financialwellbeing@gcu.ac.uk using subject 'Funding Wellbeing Advisor'



Life in the UK

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 famously unpredictable. In London, summers can reach up to 35°C, so staying hydrated is important. Winters are colder, sometimes dropping to -5°C, with rain common throughout the year. Keep an umbrella or waterproof jacket handy.
- **Daylight saving time** - The UK has daylight saving time. On last Sunday in March, clocks go forward one hour, and on the last Sunday in October, clocks go back 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 dispensers** - There are water dispensers around campus and you will need a refillable water bottle to use them. 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. Tap water is also safe to drink throughout the UK.
- **Public Transport Etiquette** - Always tap your card or ticket when entering and exiting buses or trains. Give up priority seats for those who need them, and avoid playing music or videos out loud. It's polite to let others off the train or bus before boarding.
- **Mobile Phone Etiquette** - Keep your phone on silent during lectures, meetings and in quiet zones like libraries. It's considered rude to answer calls in these settings, so step outside if needed.
- **Booking and Appointments** - Many services, from healthcare to restaurants, require bookings in advance. Arrive on time and notify them if you can't attend. Missing appointments without notice might mean a long wait for another one.
- **Volume in Public Spaces** - People in the UK usually speak in lower tones in public areas. Loud conversations or phone calls in places like cafés, trains or libraries are seen as disruptive, so it's best to keep your voice down.
- **Personal Space** - People tend to value personal space in the UK. Avoid standing too close in queues or when talking. Physical contact like hugs or touching during conversations may not be expected unless you know the person well.

Life in the UK

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.
- 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.
- Take regular exercise and maybe join a sports club or a 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.
- London is famous for its diverse food culture, and you can find ingredients and dishes from many countries in large supermarkets as well as specialist ethnic shops across the city. Exploring these familiar and new foods can be a comforting way to connect with your culture and meet others with similar tastes.

Your new home from home

Coming to university in London is a life-changing opportunity - not only to study and grow, but to explore one of the most exciting, diverse cities in the world. Whether you're living here for the first time or already familiar with the city, there's always something new to discover.

Life in the Capital

London is home to over 300,000 university students, from all over the world. At GCU London, you'll be part of a vibrant community in the heart of the city, surrounded by culture, food, history, fashion, and endless possibilities.

From Shoreditch and Brick Lane near the campus to Camden, Westminster, and beyond, London has a huge range of things to see and do. You can visit world-famous landmarks, explore different neighbourhoods, try food from all over the world, and enjoy everything from local markets to museums, galleries, and live music venues.

Things to do in London

There's always something happening in London. Whether you want to explore the city on a budget, discover new food, or just unwind on the weekend, you'll find plenty of options nearby or a short journey away.

Free attractions

Many of London's most famous sights and activities are free to visit.

- Walk along the South Bank for views of the Thames, Big Ben, and Tower Bridge
- Visit Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus, or Covent Garden
- Explore Sky Garden
- Spend a sunny day at Hyde Park, Regent's Park, or Greenwich Park
- See the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace

Museums and Galleries

Most major museums in London are free to enter.

- British Museum – Ancient artefacts including the Rosetta Stone
- Tate Modern – Contemporary and modern art
- Natural History Museum – Dinosaurs, geology, and wildlife
- Science Museum – Hands-on exhibits and tech history
- National Gallery – Famous European paintings
- V&A Museum – Art, fashion, and design collections

Food markets

Explore different cuisines and try street food from around the world.

- Spitalfields Market – Close to campus, with food and fashion stalls
- Borough Market – Popular for international street food and fresh produce
- Brick Lane – Known for South Asian cuisine, bagels, and vintage shops
- Camden Market – Great mix of food, music, and quirky shops
- Mercato Metropolitano – Indoor food market with global dishes.

Life in England

Weekend activities

Use your free time to relax, explore, or try something new.

- Take a riverboat from Tower Pier to Greenwich or Westminster
- Visit Columbia Road Flower Market on Sundays
- Watch the sunset from Primrose Hill
- Join a walking tour (some are free or pay-what-you-like)
- Discover local festivals, street performances, or pop-up events

Cinemas and theatre

From blockbusters to indie films, or affordable live shows.

- Genesis Cinema (Mile End) – Student-friendly prices and discounts
- BFI Southbank – Classic and international films
- Prince Charles Cinema – Cult films, sing-alongs, and themed nights
- West End theatres – Look out for discounted student tickets or matinees
- Shakespeare's Globe – Standing tickets are budget-friendly

Fashion and shopping

London is one of the best cities in the world for shopping. Whether you're into fashion, vintage finds, or budget-friendly essentials, there's something for every style and every budget.

- Oxford Street – One of the busiest shopping streets in Europe, home to big-name brands like Zara, Adidas, H&M, Uniqlo, and more. You'll also find flagship stores and seasonal sales here.
- Westfield Stratford City – A large indoor shopping centre in East London with high-street brands, restaurants, and a cinema. Easy to reach on the Central or Jubilee Line.
- Westfield White City (Shepherd's Bush) – Similar to Stratford, but in West London. Offers a mix of fashion, tech, food, and entertainment in one place.

Tip: Many stores offer student discounts (usually 10% off) with a student ID or through apps like UNiDAYS and TOTUM, so be sure to check before you pay.

Sport and recreation

Staying active is a great way to support your physical and mental health, especially when adjusting to life in a new city. While GCU London doesn't have its own sports centre, there are plenty of ways to get involved in fitness and recreation across the city.

- Fitness First – GCU London students can access discounted memberships through our partnership with Fitness First, located close to campus.
- Local gyms – You'll find many affordable gyms across London, including PureGym, The Gym Group, and Better Leisure Centres. Some offer flexible contracts or student rates.
- Parks and open spaces – London has hundreds of green spaces where you can run, walk, or work out. Victoria Park, Mile End Park, and Greenwich Park are all popular for outdoor exercise.
- Walking and cycling – Walking is often the fastest way to explore London. Santander Cycles (bike hire) are also available across the city, including near campus.

Places to visit outside of London

There is plenty to explore beyond London, and many destinations can be visited in a day or over a weekend. Whether you are interested in history, nature, or just a change of scenery, the UK has a lot to offer. Public transport makes it easy to get around.

Day Trips and Weekend Getaways

- Oxford – A historic university city with beautiful colleges, museums, and riverside walks.
- Cambridge – Another famous university town, known for punting on the river, green spaces, and traditional architecture.
- Brighton – A seaside city with a pebble beach, vintage shops, cafés, and the well-known Brighton Pier.
- Bath – Known for its Roman baths, Georgian buildings, and peaceful atmosphere.
- Canterbury – A small city with a medieval cathedral, cobbled streets, and literary history.
- Seven Sisters Cliffs – A great spot for walking trails and coastal views, ideal for nature lovers.

How to Get There

- Trains – National Rail services run from major London stations including King's Cross, Paddington, and London Bridge. Booking early usually means cheaper tickets.
- Coaches – National Express and Megabus offer low-cost travel to many UK cities.
- Student Travel Discounts – Consider buying a 16-25 or 25-30 Railcard or Coachcard to save money throughout the year.

Supporting you

University services resource list

- **Student Life Desk:** Dedicated student support desk staffed from Monday-Friday (10-4pm) at Room 1.4.
Email: studenthelp@gculondon.ac.uk
- **Finance** - For queries related to finance, tuition fees and payment plans. The finance department is based in Glasgow. Book an appointment: [Finance Department](#)
Email: arstudent@gcu.ac.uk Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1376
- **VISA** - The [VISA](#) team provides reliable advice and guidance on GCU student visa and immigration matters.
Email: advice@gculondon.ac.uk , visa@gcu.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1244
- **IT Service** - The [IT Helpdesk](#) acts as the first point of call for all IT enquiries, questions and problems. You can also find them at the Student Life Hub at room 1.4 of the campus.
Email: ithelp@gcu.ac.uk Telephone: +44 (0)141 273 1234
- **Careers Service** - The GCU London Careers Service provides guidance on job applications, interviews, and planning your next steps. You can book an appointment with our Careers Consultant, Sandra Rhule and can also access job listings and resources through [CareerHub](#) in the [GCU Careers website](#).
- **Students' Association** - Works to represent students' interests and provide opportunities that enhance academic and campus life. They are based in the campus at room 2.5. Find out more in the [website](#).
Email: alice.putter@gcu.ac.uk , ellie.neilson@gcu.ac.uk
WhatsApp: +44 (0)7385465725 (Monday to Friday, 9-5PM)
- **Wellbeing** - The [Student Wellbeing](#) team provides a free and confidential advice and support service, including counselling and mental health support. You can find them at Room 1.8.
Email: londonwellbeingadviser@gculondon.ac.uk
- **Accommodation** - If you are experiencing any issues with accommodation or need guidance on finding housing in London, please contact the Accommodation team at accommodation@gculondon.ac.uk for support and advice.
- **Disability Services** - The [Disability team](#) provides advice, information and services to disabled students and applicants.
Email: disability@gcu.ac.uk
- **GCU Library** - The GCU London Library and Learning Development Centre (LLDC) are located on the first floor of the campus. You'll find books, journals, and online resources to support your studies, with friendly staff available to help you navigate them. You also have full access to digital resources and support from our award winning, Sir Alex Ferguson Library in Glasgow using your domain login.
Email: LLDC@gcu.ac.uk , gculondonlibrary@gcu.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)141 331 8907
- **SEAtS App**- SEAtS is the app used to register your attendance in class. The Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring (SAEM) Team manages the system, so if you have any issues, feel free to reach out.
Email: saem@gcu.ac.uk.
- **GCU Learn (Blackboard)**- GCU Learn is your online learning platform where you'll find lecture notes, assignments, announcements and more. If you have any questions or run into issues, contact Maria Elfani for support.
Email: Maria.Elfani@gcu.ac.uk
- **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



/GCUstudents



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Student Life Team

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