



Student Disability Service

Student Leavers Guide (ASC)

Congratulations on reaching the end of your university experience! You may be wondering where the time has gone and excited for what the future holds. Whilst there may be a few more exams and some coursework left to complete, it is now time to begin thinking about life after university and to be aware of the practical responsibilities that need to be tackled before graduation. This guide was created to provide you with information about leaving university and how to access services you may need in the future.

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Graduation

Even though graduation seems a long way off, you must register your interest in graduating either in person or in absentia before the deadline. Absentia means that you do not physically attend the ceremony but will still receive your certificate by post. Below is a list of steps you must take to graduate.

1. You must register your desire to graduate either in person or in absentia:

- Even if you do not wish to attend the ceremony you must pay the graduation fee to receive your certificate.
- Do not wait to see if you have passed your modules first, you must complete registration before the deadline. To see this year's registration deadline, [click here](#).

2. You must clear any debt to the university before graduating, this includes:

- Making sure tuition fees are fully paid.
- All library books are returned, and any fines paid off. To check your library account and make sure you have no outstanding books or fines, [click here](#).

3. Order your academic gown and hood from [Ede & Ravenscroft](#). To find out this year's gown hire deadline, [click here](#).

- For general dress code guidelines, [click here](#).

4. You must pass all modules and have your award results confirmed by an Assessment Board before you can graduate for either the Summer or Winter ceremonies.

If you have any questions regarding graduation, you can email graduation@gcu.ac.uk who will be able to provide you with more information and guidance.

After Graduation

Find information about what happens after graduation [here](#).

Moving out of your accommodation

If you have been living in the halls of residency or elsewhere during term-time, you will need to be aware of when your tenancy runs out, and what date you need to move out by. Moving out can be stressful and you should give yourself plenty of time to make sure you have packed everything you need, organised for someone to come and pick you up and finally, made sure you have enough time to clean as you may lose your deposit if you leave things unclean or broken.

Moving out to-do list:

1. Give yourself plenty of time to organise the items you want to take with you and items you want to throw away.
2. Remember to redirect your mail to your new address.
3. Organise someone to come and collect you and your things in advance.
4. Remember to hand your keys back.

If you are unsure about anything regarding moving out, you can contact the Accommodations Office who will be happy to assist you on: Tel: 0141 331 3980 or Email them on: accommodation@qcu.ac.uk. If you are renting privately, you should check your tenancy agreement or contact your landlord directly for advice.

Planning for the future

Graduating university is a big step, you have done all the hard work and now you are probably wondering what to do and where to go next. The first step is to focus on what you want to do with your future - this could be working out possible career options based on your interests. Planning for

the future can be something you do with a family member or friend. You can also see a careers adviser who will help piece together what you would like to do for work or even future study.

The National Autistic Society (NAS) has a guide on planning for the future after graduating which has some tips on the transition from further education into work. You can access the guide by clicking [here](#).

Further support

Accessing the University Careers Service

The Careers Service is a great place to start the process of deciding what you want to do with your future, even when you might not know what the next steps are. There's a range of excellent resources on the Careers Service website and you can book confidential careers appointments with a GCU Careers Adviser which are currently by phone or online.

Have a look at some of the main sections of the Careers website:

[Career Planning](#) – a good place to start if you're unsure about your career options

[Recruitment Process](#) – information about CVs, applications, interviews, online tests and assessment centres

[Career Hub @ GCU](#) – for online job vacancies

[Career Success](#) – a broad range of interactive tools and e-learning content including:

- CV Builder
- Cover Letter Builder
- Interview 360
- Job Tracker

You'll need to register with Career Success and you'll find information about how to do this in the Career Success section on the Careers homepage by [clicking here](#).

[Graduates First](#) – opportunity to practice Verbal, Numerical, Logical Reasoning and Situational Judgement Tests, and advice on how to prepare for Assessment Centres

[Events](#) – source of online employer and other careers events

[Equal Opportunities](#) – links to organisations that give job-hunting advice and other support to disabled students and graduates

Careers appointments

The Careers Advisers are experienced in working with disabled students. A careers appointment is part of a process where a Careers Adviser helps students figure out what they would like to do with their future based on their skills, qualifications and interests, even if you have no ideas about what you want to do.

Things you might want to discuss with a careers adviser could include:

- Career planning and exploring your ideas
- What to expect and how to prepare for the recruitment process
- Your choice and privacy options for informing employers about your disability
- Part-time, volunteering, internship and graduate job search
- CV, cover letter, application, LinkedIn profile feedback
- Preparation for interviews and practice interviews
- Postgraduate study options and applications

To find out more about appointments and to book your appointment, [click here](#).

Email service

If you have a quick query and don't need an appointment, you can email your question to careers@gcu.ac.uk.

Frequently asked questions

Q. I have a disability and have some questions such as; how to tell employers, asking for extra help for interviews and for when I start a job. Would the Careers Service be able to help me with this?

A. Yes. You'll find information and links to organisations that give job-hunting advice and other support to disabled students and graduates in the [Equal Opportunities](#) section of the Careers website. This is also something

you could discuss in more detail with a Careers Adviser. To find out more about appointments and to book your appointment, [click here](#).

You may find it useful to watch this webinar 'Neurodivergence: neurodiversity, navigating hidden barriers in recruitment'

Recording:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EAzLCxKQFhhDlnRYdnxrDvd9QCvQZjN8/view?usp=sharing>

Q. I've got my first interview coming up and I have no idea what to expect, is there a way to practice in advance?

A. Yes. In addition to the interview preparation resources on the Careers website, you can book a practice interview appointment and get feedback on your interview skills. To find out more about practice interviews and to book your appointment, [click here](#).

Q. I've got no idea what I want to do after university and I'm graduating soon. What can I do?

A. To find out more about career planning and options go to the [Career Planning](#) section of the Careers website.

If you're not sure about your options, don't worry – you don't need to have a plan before meeting a Careers Adviser. A careers appointment is part of a process where a Careers Adviser helps students figure out what they would like to do with their future based on their skills, qualifications and interests. To find out more about appointments and to book your appointment, [click here](#).

Q. I'm nervous with meeting new people and easily distracted. Can I invite someone to join the online meeting with me?

A. Yes, you can invite another person to attend your online careers appointment with you. Some students like to invite their disability mentor to take notes. Others like to invite a peer, interpreter or a parent to the meeting. When booking your online careers appointment, please add a note to let the careers adviser know that someone will attend the appointment with you.

In the meantime...

If you intend to apply for postgraduate study opportunities, remember to ask your personal tutor or one of your course lecturers for a reference. Your mentor is unable to provide an academic reference.

Alternatively, you might decide that some time out is needed before you start applying for jobs or future study. Volunteering is a great option to keep you busy whilst maintaining valuable social and employability skills. Volunteering will not only make your CV look more attractive to future employers; it will help boost your confidence in a work place environment.

Volunteer Scotland has volunteering opportunities all over Scotland and you can find out what's available in your area by clicking [here](#).

Transitioning to work

The National Autistic Society Scotland have the Moving Forward+ Project which helps young autistic people to find a positive pathway. This includes a number of different supports such as groups, placements, 1-1 support and mentoring. All of their support is blended, both online and in person sessions and adapted to meet your needs. Support extends into your positive destination to ensure you make a positive transition into your future.

To be eligible for the programme you must be:

- Aged 16-24.
- on the autism spectrum or seeking a diagnosis.
- Not in education, employment, or training.
- Living at an eligible postcode.

For more information on this [click here](#).

Settling in at work

Whilst the careers service can help with getting jobs and internships, once you are in a job there might be other instances which may cause some confusion. Below are some examples of situations which can arise in a workplace environment and how to deal with them.

Workplace Conversations

It is important to remember that there will be topics which are appropriate and inappropriate for the workplace. Try using the 'WORM' (*Weather, Occupation, Recreation, Media*) guide when having conversations. When your colleagues are busy discussing something work related, try to keep on topic. If everyone is on a lunch break, do not bring up something work related, instead wait until lunch break is over and then ask.

Understanding Workplace 'Banter'

The National Autistic Society (2020) describes workplace banter as 'short bursts of conversation which happen throughout the day' and it is often the type of conversation people have whilst they are still doing other things. Examples of appropriate banter include; talking about a recent TV show or the latest movie at the cinema. Examples of inappropriate banter include being insulting to other colleagues and talking about topics which are likely to cause offence and upset.

The 'Unspoken Workplace Rules'

In most office environments there will be some unspoken office rules. This can change depending on what type of organisation you work for. For example, most offices have a shared kitchenette where you can prepare your lunch. It's important to be considerate of others by keeping the equipment clean after you use it. Some people have their own tea cups and so you may want to bring in your own so you do not accidentally take someone else's. Other unspoken rules can include:

Making tea or coffee - If your workplace is small, you could ask if anyone would like a tea or coffee, if you are making one for yourself. Whereas if there are lots of people, for example in a call centre, you would just make a drink for yourself.

Using the shared office fridge - Never take someone else's lunch from the fridge and make sure your lunch is properly labelled and contained in the fridge so it does not spill and make a mess. Remember not to leave any

food in the fridge which might go out of date. For example, over the weekend or when you are on holiday.

Using shared milk, tea and coffee - In most workplaces everyone can use the milk, tea and coffee in the fridge. If you are not sure about this, then you can ask your manager about it. Sometimes everyone in the office may take turns in buying the milk and biscuits, so if you are in doubt, just ask.

The National Autistic Society has some great advice on workplace tips. To access them, [click here](#).

Organising the workload

It is always a good idea to keep yourself organised so that your workload does not pile up. Making 'to-do' lists for each day is a good way of sorting out what needs to be done and what tasks you need to prioritise. There may be days where unexpected tasks can arise, therefore a completed 'to do' list will help you structure your working day. 'Smartsheet' have a collection of free downloadable templates you can use to create structure to your working week. They also have bill schedule templates and daily to-do list templates which you might find useful for all aspects of being organised. To access the free templates from Smartsheet, [click here](#).

Bullying in the workplace

Bullying in the workplace is something that will not be tolerated. If you think that you are being bullied or are being made to feel uncomfortable, then speaking to your manager about this is the first step. It is your employer's responsibility to ensure you feel safe in the workplace and so they will listen to your concerns and give you advice on how to resolve any issues. If you feel like you are being bullied, then speaking to someone you trust such as a friend or parent is also important so that you have support to deal with the situation. The National Autistic Society has advice on what to do if you are being bullied in the workplace and guidelines on what to do about it. To access this information, [click here](#).

Reasonable Adjustments in the workplace

The Equality Act 2010 states that people with disabilities are entitled to request reasonable adjustments in the workplace. Reasonable adjustments

are there to ensure that employees are not disadvantaged or face barriers due to their disability. There are many examples of reasonable adjustments such as being granted extra time for deadlines and providing extra equipment such as a ramp for wheelchair users etc. If you feel that you would benefit from a reasonable adjustment, you can organise a meeting with your manager where you can discuss the situation with them and the areas you feel your employer could support you with. To see Acas (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) recommendations on reasonable adjustments in the workplace and examples of the different types of adjustments which can be made, [click here](#).

The National Autistic Society has tips and information on speaking to your employer about reasonable adjustments. To access them, [click here](#).

Looking after yourself

Whilst you may look forward to graduation and be excited for the future, it is common to sometimes feel a little anxious about getting a job and worry about what you are going to do after university.

Maintaining your well-being will be important during this transition after education. It might be challenging adjusting to your new situation: job searching, figuring out your next steps or while you start a new job. You may like to reinstate a routine to support you while you transition. Think about the strategies you have adopted over the past few years. What do you know to have worked well to support your well-being and mental health? In addition, you may wish to incorporate some known well-being strategies to keep your mood positive and balanced. You can find a lot of helpful links and suggestions on our well-being [pages](#) and links. See our [suggestions and resources](#).

If you are currently receiving help from either our Mental Health Advisers or the Counselling team, now could be a good time to discuss any worries that you might have so you will have a plan in place for when you leave university.

Q. What happens if I feel anxious after I've graduated, and I would like to talk to someone?

A. If you are worried about the way you are feeling, or having troublesome thoughts, making an appointment with your GP is the best way to receive help. Your GP will listen to you and give you non-judgemental advice and support to help you feel better. They can give you advice and a referral to the appropriate support services such as counselling and other mental health services.

Q. How do I talk to my GP about my mental health?

A. Some people find it helpful to prepare for their GP appointment in advance by writing down everything they would like to discuss. This can be a summary of how you have been feeling lately and the areas which are causing you concern. Some people also like to go into their appointment with a list of questions they would ask the GP. A useful guide on preparing for a GP visit can be found [here](#).

[Mind.Org.uk](#) have a great guide which helps people 'find the words' to talk to their GP about their mental health and what to expect at their first appointment. They have a video on how to speak to the GP about your mental health which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). They also have an in-depth guide on helping people to prepare for their first appointment which can be found [here](#).

Q. What will I do if I need urgent help?

A. If you feel like you are at crisis point and you are worried or are having thoughts about harming yourself or others then please call your GP as soon as possible. If your GP surgery is closed then call [NHS 24](#) on 111.

You can also contact:

[The Samaritans](#) on: 08457 90 90 90

[Breathing Space](#) on: 0800 83 85 87

[HOPELineUK](#) on: 0800 068 41 41 or text 07786209697 or email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

[SHOUT](#) Text SHOUT on 85258 to speak to a trained crisis volunteer.

Q. I do not feel safe in my relationship. Who can I talk to?

A. If you are worried for your safety or have been threatened, you can call the police on 999 for immediate help. Citizens advice Scotland have collated advice and guidance on Domestic Abuse that you can safely access [here](#).

Autistic People Led Charities and Organisations

Autism Understanding Scotland

Autism Understanding Scotland is an autistic-led service offering information about autism for autistic people, their friends and family, professionals, and anyone else interested in autism. Our services include one to one support, training, consultation and maintaining our Autism Information Hub which can be found on our website. While we primarily focus on providing support in Aberdeenshire we also provide limited support throughout Scotland.

[Autism Understanding Scotland - reframing the narrative around autism](#)

SWAN (Scottish Womens Autism Network)

We offer autistic-led peer-support, in local groups and through online forums, for autistic women in Scotland. We are a Participatory Action and Autism Research organisation; we deliver consultancy and training to all sectors, knowledge share events, academic papers and key-note presentations. We are currently running a Scottish Government-funded project to support employers in building more inclusive workplaces and autistic women in their employment and career.

info@swanscotland.org

Autism Rights Group Highland (ARGH)

ARGH is a group run by and for autistic adults. As an organisation we inform service providers about what autistic people really experience. We campaign for better services for autistic people in the Highlands and beyond. We also look to challenge stigma and discrimination through education about autistic strengths. To join ARGH as a full member you must be autistic, aged 18+ and living in or near Highland (autistic people outwith Highland considered for full

membership at the committee's discretion). We also accept associate members who do not fit the criteria for full membership but who support our aims. For more information on becoming a member of ARGH please email: info@arghighland.co.uk

[ARGH Home \(arghighland.co.uk\)](http://arghighland.co.uk)

AMASE - Autistic Mutual Aid Society Edinburgh

We are an Autistic People's Organisation based in Edinburgh. All members are on the autistic spectrum, and our goal is to help autistic people make each other's lives better through peer support, advocacy and education.

Full Membership of AMASE is open to autistic adults aged 16 and over in Edinburgh, Lothians and Fife, with members in other nearby areas admitted at the committee's discretion. Those who don't fit those criteria are eligible to be Associate Members, provided they support AMASE's objectives. There is no joining fee.

[AMASE - Autistic Mutual Aid Society Edinburgh](http://amase.org.uk)

Autism ATLAS

ATLAS is a small autistic led organisation based in the Glasgow and Renfrewshire area. They aim to increase autism awareness and acceptance in their local community. They deliver training developed from autistic people's experiences to create communities where autistic people and their carers feel valued, respected and safe.

Here are some links to their videos:

[SensoryIssues](#)

[Burnout](#)

[Masking](#)

Self-Help resources

Self-help resources can be a good way to find out information and provide guidance on a problem you may be having. They should not be used instead of seeking professional help, but rather can be used whilst you wait on a GP appointment or a referral to counselling. Wellbeing Glasgow has a variety of useful guides on many topics such as Anxiety and Stress and they can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

[Living Life to the Full \(LLTTF\)](#)

Living Life is a self-help website which was created by an accredited Cognitive Behavioural Therapist. LLTTF offers a wide range of online courses to help people understand and cope with various difficulties. Signing up is free and you will be able to choose which course you would like to try. There are a wide range of courses to choose from such as; Overcoming stress and low mood, living with long term conditions, coping with anxiety and coping with being a new parent. To find out more information about LLTTF and to access the courses, [click here](#).

[Lifelink](#)

Lifelink offer one to one counselling online and in person. The service offers support to cope with difficulties such as anxiety, depression and low mood. This is a self-referral service which is free of charge. To find out more and make a self-referral, [click here](#).

Further Resources – Local Counselling

NHS Centre For Integrative Care: [NHS Centre for Integrative Care - NHSGGC](#)

Counselling & Support Service: [Sandyford](#)

Counselling resources from The Spark: [Counselling resources Archives - The Spark](#)

[Tom Allan Centre | CrossReach](#)

[Strathclyde Counselling Research Clinic](#) Strathclyde counselling research clinic provide free counselling in exchange for taking part in research.
Email: counselling-research-clinic@strath.ac.uk

General Advice

[Citizens Advice](#)

Sometimes there may be situations where you need advice, but you are not sure who to ask. A great source of help can be the Citizens Advice Bureau which are located throughout Scotland. They help people get a variety of free advice from benefits and housing advice to workplace rights and health. They will also provide advice on specific things such as jury duty and reasonable adjustments in the workplace. To see the A-Z list of advice which is available, click [here](#).

[Acas \(Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service\)](#)

Acas provides advice and guidance on employment law and workplace relationships. The

Acas website has lots of information on a range of areas concerning your rights in the workplace such as; working hours, discipline and wages. For a list of the most common areas Acas provides guidance on, [click here](#). If you are looking for some specific advice about an issue you are having at work, you can contact them via online or by telephone. To access their contact information, [click here](#).

Useful Documents to Keep Safe

Degree Certificates

You will gain your Degree Certificate during your graduation or through the mail if you are graduating in absentia. Your degree certificate should be kept in a safe place as most employers may need a copy of this as evidence of

your qualifications. Most people choose to frame their certificate, and this is a great option to keep your certificate safe and you will know where it is. It is a good idea to photocopy your certificate and make a scanned copy to store in your computer before you put it in a frame. This way it will be easily accessible to you when applying for jobs or future study.

Q. What happens if I've lost or damaged my Degree Certificate?

A. Requesting a duplicate degree certificate can be done by completing a [Replacement Certificate Application Form which](#) will cost £65.

Academic Transcript

Once your final exam results have been emailed to you, you will also receive a document called an Academic Transcript. This document lists all the modules you have studied and the grades you have received throughout your degree. This is particularly important if you choose to go on to further study. Admissions will often ask for a copy of your degree certificate and your academic transcript as evidence of your qualifications. For students joining chartered memberships upon graduation, for instance, the British Psychological Society (BPS), you may be required to show a copy of your academic transcript, as well as your degree certificate to be awarded membership.

Q. What else is included on the Academic Transcript?

A. The Academic Transcript will include a variety of information on your programme of study, such as your individual module grades and your overall degree classification. For more information, [click here](#).

Q. What can I do if I have lost my transcript?

A. If you have lost your transcript, you need to contact the Examinations Office which is on the 1st floor of the Saltire Centre to request another one. Email: exams@gcu.ac.uk Tel: 0141 331 3336

Useful contact information to store and Requesting an Academic Reference

Sometimes students can lose access to their GCU email account therefore it is useful to keep a note of your dissertation supervisor's email address, as you may wish for them to provide you with a reference for future work or study.

It is common for students to ask their lecturers for an academic reference. You will need to email them in advance and ask for their permission first before putting their name and contact details down in an application form.

Goodbye and Good luck!

We would like to take the opportunity to say goodbye. It has been a pleasure getting to know you through your time at GCU. We wish you the very best of luck, whatever the future holds for you.

Best Wishes

The Disability Mentor Team