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# Guidance 2015

Update information for careers and guidance staff

**Features inside:**

Student Profiles  
BSc (Hons) Nursing Studies (Learning Disability)  
Disability Service



Saltire Centre



Library



Carnegie Suite



# Welcome

**Hello and a warm welcome to the 2015 issue of Guidance, the magazine that aims to provide careers and guidance staff with an insight into Glasgow Caledonian University's developments of courses, facilities and services so that you are fully equipped to advise and support future higher education entrants to make the right choices for their needs.**

The past year has seen a busy time for the UK Recruitment team, we have attended over 200 external events in the way of school talks, visits and careers conventions as well as conducting over 100 campus tours. We also successfully hosted two undergraduate open days in September, which attracted over 3000 potential applicants and their families to the campus.

This year is proving to be busy again and we look forward to meeting many of you at the events over the next few months.

As well as our general student profile features, this issue of the magazine has a focus on the Learning Disability Nursing programme at GCU. We also look at the Disability Service and the support and services they offer and the Glasgow Caledonian University Students' Association.

You will also find dates of the forthcoming careers and guidance staff information days that we run at the university. These days will provide valuable information for advisers in relaying information to potential students, so I hope to see some of you in attendance.

I hope that you enjoy reading Guidance, and as always we look forward to hearing your comments or suggestions on how we can progress the services we offer to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance, we will be delighted to hear from you.

**David Brewster**  
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## Contents

- Page 2-3:** **Featured Undergraduate Programme**  
BSc/BSc (Hons) Learning Disability Nursing
- Page 4:** **Student Profile**  
Laura Blackwood  
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Imaging
- Page 5:** **Undergraduate Open Day**
- Page 6-7:** **Funding Your Future**  
Student Awards Agency Scotland Conference
- Page 8:** **Student Profile**  
Philip Coupe BEng (Hons) Digital Security, Forensics & Ethical Hacking
- Page 9:** **Key Activities and Events**  
Services provided by the UK Student Recruitment Team
- Page 10-11:** **Positive Living and Disability Service**  
Promoting opportunities and skills for independent learning
- Page 12:** **Glasgow Caledonian University Students' Association**

# BSc/BSc (Hons) Nursing Studies (Learning Disability)

The population of people with learning disabilities is increasing across the UK and internationally. Learning disability nursing is fundamentally about working alongside those with learning disabilities, their families and carers. It takes a special type of person to become a Learning Disability nurse. They will place each person at the centre of their treatment, valuing choice, inclusion, citizenship and social justice. Their role is about empowering people with learning disabilities, as well as recognising diversity and challenging inequality. Our nurses are taught to value the whole person and the diversity of people who support and sustain him or her, appreciating the contribution of families and carers.

At GCU, our Learning Disability Nursing programme will provide the theoretical and clinical skills necessary to meet the healthcare needs of a multicultural society in the 21st century. Our students spend half of their time on practice learning experiences and have the opportunity of international exchange placements.

Throughout the programme studies will be rooted in simulated learning, making use of the Clinical Simulation Laboratory; our state-of-the-art simulated centre situated on campus, including an 18-bedded ward, nurse's stations, computerised mannequins and digital recording equipment, allowing for effective student performance feedback.

The programme is taught by leading experts in the field of Nursing. Clinical practice skills will be supported by experienced mentors who will help underpin the theoretical skills learnt in the classroom.

## Why Learning Disability Nursing at GCU?

- GCU is one of the two providers of pre-registration Learning Disability Nursing Programmes in Scotland
- Our pre-registration learning disability nursing programme has been designed to meet the unique, diverse and changing needs of individuals, communities and populations.
- We offer a variety of practice learning experiences that will utilise students' clinical skills within health and social care settings. Although most practice learning experiences will be within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, you can also have the opportunity to gain experiences in other geographical areas of Scotland via our partnership agreements with NHS areas.
- You will get the opportunity to study in our inter-professional learning framework where you will learn

with students from Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Radiology and Social Workers.

## Careers

Employment opportunities for Learning Disability Nurses are extensive, both in the NHS and 3rd Sector services, including assessment and treatment units, community learning disability teams, hospital liaison services, forensic services, child and adolescent services, epilepsy services, and many more. As a qualified Learning Disability Nurse, you'll have many opportunities for career development, with a lot of flexibility if you want to pursue new goals. In fact, many GCU graduates are making use of their skills and knowledge in a number of places around the world.

## Typical entry requirements

### BSc Nursing Studies (Learning Disability)

**SQA Higher:** BBC including English plus Nat 5 Maths at B

**A level:** BC plus GCSE English at B and Maths at C

**ILC Higher:** BBCC including English plus Ordinary Level Maths

**IB Diploma:** 24 points

### BSc (Hons) Nursing Studies (Learning Disability)

**SQA Higher:** BBBB including English and a science and Nat 5 Maths

**A level:** BCC including a science and GCSE English and Maths at C

**ILC Higher:** B2 B2 B2 B2 including English and a science plus Ordinary Level Maths

**IB Diploma:** 24 points including a science

## For further information:

If you have any questions about the programme please contact Mark Gallagher [mark.gallagher@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:mark.gallagher@gcu.ac.uk)



“ I was looking for a course which would give me broader scope to improve people’s lives. My degree will allow me to work with children or adults with learning disabilities, to ensure that they are able to live fulfilling, healthy lives, as independently as possible.”

*Corrinne Taylor, Bachelor of Nursing (Learning Disability)*

# Student Profile

Laura Blackwood, BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Imaging (2nd year student)

## Did you apply directly from School or College?

I returned to education when I was 26 and joined the Access to Radiography at Stow College (now Glasgow Kelvin College). This covered all of the Higher modules for the course entry requirements.

## Why did you choose this programme?

When I left school I worked in various customer service roles and eventually I began to research different career options. A relative of mine had shown me a 3D baby scan she had and it fascinated me. I looked into the career paths for a sonographer (the person that conducts an ultrasound scan eg. in pregnancy) and discovered that a degree in Radiography was required. The more I read about it the more I fell in love with the prospect of using my my interest in innovative technologies and customer service abilities to transfer to patient care.

## What attracted you to apply to GCU?

I applied for the three Scottish universities that provided the course, but it was GCU that had the firmest links to my Access course. I felt the information days were well organised and that the GCU website provided more information in an easy to navigate form. I wanted transition into university to be welcoming and I really felt GCU had the edge over the other two universities.

## What do you like most about your chosen programme?

The lecturers on my course are second to none. They have an open door policy and are always available to chat about any issues or feedback with you. All lecturers work closely with students and know exactly where to find any help or support you might need. All of the academic support staff are great, if they are unable to help with any issues they generally know which direction to send you.

## Does your programme have any work placements, opportunity for study abroad?

The course provides a placement site for each student in central west Scotland. Placement time increases each year and the theory involved truly relates to real placement experiences. In 3rd year we have the opportunity to do a 4 week elective placement which you choose and arrange for yourself, this can be almost anywhere (however, exceptions include US and Canada).

## How do you like the work placements or practical side of the course?

The placements are a true representation of the team you will be working in. You are given the opportunity to put your skills into practice daily and are not shielded from the intensity of a busy department. Every site has something different to offer due to locational differences, customs, surgical procedures, different images Dr's like to see etc.

## What do you like about the university campus?

GCU provides a large number of computers for use and a great effort has been made to ensure the facilities are up to date. The chill out spaces are relaxing and students truly respect the quiet study areas available. The campus is at the edge of the city centre and a 5 minute walk from Sauchiehall Street which is perfect for a lunch time shopping trip between lectures.

## What other opportunities have studying at GCU given you?

In first year I took on the role of student mentor, assisting current and prospective students and working with nursery and school children to make university a feasible goal. I have also visited the GCU London campus to work with primary school pupils there. I am vice chair person on the GCU Radiography Society and I am visiting Helsinki this term to improve networking with the Metropolia University for stronger allied health profession links.

## What advice would you give anyone who is going to become a student or who is thinking of applying to go to university?

There is a lot of work involved but I have managed to continue working and enjoying social activities at the same time. You don't have to miss out on a social life for your studies. The best thing is to be organised, have "scheduled fun" - Monica Gellar style always sees me through.

## What do you wish to do once you have graduated?

When I graduate I intend to work for the NHS in a Scottish hospital. I will work as a radiographer for a few years and then choose the area I would like to specialise in. Originally I wanted to specialise in ultrasound but with my placement experience my eyes have been opened to other opportunities in MRI or CT scanning and reporting radiography.

# Undergraduate Open day 2015

**Wednesday 2nd September 2015**

10.00am - 4.00pm

**Saturday 3rd October 2015**

11.00am - 3.00pm

To register online and receive updates visit  
**[www.gcu.ac.uk/openday](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/openday)**



# Thursday 26th March 2015

## Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) Conference

The Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow was the venue for the annual SAAS Conference this year, which had more of a themed networking focus as well as the usual insightful presentations.

The aim of this year's conference was to ensure SAAS and delivery partners in the sector are ready for the 2015-2016 session by informing the sector on SAAS developments and their plans for the next 3 years, as well as lifting ambition of SAAS's role in the sector.

Director of Advanced Learning and Services, Aileen McKechnie, was the first guest speaker to address the delegates. Aileen spoke of the successes and challenges with regard to providing opportunities for young people in Scotland, highlighting the creation of the Commission on Widening Access, announced by the First Minister in November, as part of the Scottish Government's Programme for Government. The aim is to guarantee a move towards 20 per cent of university entrants coming from the most disadvantaged 20 per cent of society, which will further address levels of inequality in attainment between Scottish pupils from different socio-economic groups.

Ann Gordon from the Scottish branch of the National Association of Student Money Advisers spoke of delivering an effective support network for Student Money Advisers. NASMA is recognised as the leading authority on all matters relating to Higher Education student advice and funding, who bring professionals from across the sector together and encourage the free exchange of ideas. They work with national decision makers and their influencers on student finance policy and can provide training, consultancy, networking and peer support. One of the worrying trends they had identified across the sector was the increasing problem of students with gambling debts due to the proliferation of online gambling.

David McNeill from Young Scot spoke about the work they do and of proposals to encourage all young people to maximise their potential by co-designing services with them. 600,000 students have a Young Scot card which provides access to a range of information and services. A recent partnership with Abertay University saw the Young Scot card doubling as a matriculation card, which meant that it could also be loaded with credit for free bus travel, which in turn improved attendance.

Director of Scholarships and Student Administration from University of Edinburgh, Robert Lawrie, highlighted the benefits of a partnership they set up with SAAS to share data. This has led to automatic award bursaries to eligible students as soon as they are identified. 2013-14 saw 225 bursaries worth £320,500 awarded to first year students but after data sharing that has increased to 786 bursaries awarded to first and second year students worth £1,100,200 in 2014-15.

A themed networking session then followed with groups of ten discussing various areas of interest, such as the benefits of partnership working; barriers to education students faced and what you could do to help; the value of social media; how to engage with SAAS, and deterring, detecting and dealing with fraud. This was an ideal opportunity to discuss various issues and identify ways these could be addressed in future.

CEO of SAAS David Wallace introduced the final part of the conference which highlighted the achievements, opportunities and challenges that lay ahead before the grand unveiling of the new SAAS brand. The new



branding was created in part to help increase awareness of SAAS and the information and guidance they offer, hence the new tagline 'Funding your Future'.

Applicants can apply for fees, loan, bursary and grants from SAAS around April and they must have submitted a correctly filled-in application by 30 June. It is recommended that applicants apply as soon as they know which course they want to study, as applying for funding doesn't rely on knowing exam results.

If someone was to miss out on the required grades then it is simple to change or cancel an application through SAAS online services.

Many students are unaware that they must apply to SAAS to have their fees paid in each year of their course and assume this happens automatically, for this and other key information you can download the SAAS Funding Guide for 2015/16 from: [www.saas.gov.uk/\\_forms/funding\\_guide.pdf](http://www.saas.gov.uk/_forms/funding_guide.pdf)

#### For further information:

- Student Awards Agency Scotland: [www.saas.gov.uk](http://www.saas.gov.uk) T: 0300 555 0505
- National Association of Student Money Advisers: [www.nasma.org.uk](http://www.nasma.org.uk) T: 0113 212 3503
- Young Scot: [www.youngscot.org](http://www.youngscot.org) T: 0808 801 0338

# Student Profile

**Philip Coupe, Digital Security, Forensics & Ethical Hacking (2nd year student)**

## Did you apply directly from School or College?

I applied directly from School after my 6th year, although I do wish I'd spent my 6th year at college or doing something more productive.

## Why did you choose this programme?

I've been interested in Computer Networking, more specifically security, since about 4th year so when I found out there was a course specialising in that so close to home it was a no brainer to apply.

## What attracted you to apply to GCU?

GCU have been supporting me through their SCETT program since 6th year and gave me a wonderful opportunity to shadow my course for a day and get some experience in it. The resources available for Computer Networking courses are also fantastic with several labs dedicated to us.

## What do you like most about your chosen programme?

At the end of each year there's a very industry focussed team project which gives a good simulation of how things actually work in the real world. Learning how to hack is fun too.

## Does your programme have any work placements, opportunity for study abroad?

During first year there's a chance to go on an exchange for 2 weeks and do programming with a team of international students from all over Europe; I personally did it and it was a fantastic time! As well as this, after 3rd year students have the choice to take a year out and go on a paid industrial placement with a company. There are also numerous Summer Internships available although they're mostly aimed at 3rd years.

## How do you like the work placements or practical side of the course?

The practical aspect is very important and there's a big emphasis on it in the way of practical coursework assignments. We spend a lot of time working in the labs.

## What do you like about the university campus?

Most buildings are connected to each other so it's easy to avoid the rain most of the time, which is nice. It's also very compact making those short lecture gaps less of a pain.

## What do you think about the university staff?

For the most part university staff are nice and helpful.

## What other opportunities have studying at GCU given you?

I've had the chance to volunteer as part of the student radio station, Radio Caley, something I never thought I'd find myself doing. I've got my own show and I do the odd bit of IT work on the equipment as needed.

## What advice would you give anyone who is going to become a student or who is thinking of applying to go to university?

Get involved. Some of the best people I've met, most fun I've had and greatest memories I've forged have all been in some relation to getting involved with my Student Association.

## What do you wish to do once you have graduated?

With any luck I'll be one of those lucky people who gets a degree related job, something along the lines of Network Penetration Testing.

# Key Activities and Events

## Careers and Guidance staff Information days

Each year during the month of May we hold information events for careers and guidance staff throughout the UK. The day consists of talks, tours and interactive sessions with each of our academic schools. Invitations are sent out in advance of the events and there is no limit to how many guidance careers staff from each school, college or careers service attend, so look out for the invitations.

## Dates Planned for this year are:

- **Event 1: Tuesday 12th May 2015**  
**School of Engineering and Built Environment**  
including programmes in Computing, Forensics and Audio Technology  
Register online: [www.gcu.ac.uk/openday](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/openday)
- **Event 2: Wednesday 13th May 2015**  
**School of Health and Life Sciences**  
including programmes in Nursing, Psychology and Vision Sciences  
Register online: [www.gcu.ac.uk/openday](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/openday)
- **Event 3: Thursday 14th May 2015**  
**Glasgow School for Business and Society**  
including programmes in Fashion, Journalism, Social Sciences  
Register online: [www.gcu.ac.uk/openday](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/openday)

## Open Days

This year we will have two undergraduate open days:

- **Wednesday 2nd September 2015**  
10.00am – 4.00pm
- **Saturday 3rd October 2015**  
11.00am – 3.00pm

Our college based applicant open evening for those students applying with a HNC /HND is scheduled for:

- **Wednesday 21st October 2015**  
2.00pm – 6.00pm

To register online to attend the Open Day, please visit: [www.gcu.ac.uk/openday](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/openday) or email [openday@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:openday@gcu.ac.uk) if you wish to receive more information on these events.

## Presentations

The UK Student Recruitment team can deliver presentations in schools to potential students or at Parent's Evening on a variety of topics, including:

- Glasgow Caledonian University programmes and facilities
- Applying to university – the UCAS process and personal statements
- Introduction to higher education – the transition process from school to university

Presentations can cover one or more of the above topics and can be tailored to meet the specific needs of your school or college guidance programme.

## New Email Newsletter

The team will also be sending out a newsletter 3 times a year to keep you more up to date with what's happening at GCU, if you would like to ensure you receive, please contact David Brewster, UK Student Recruitment Assistant, [david.brewster@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:david.brewster@gcu.ac.uk)

For more details on any of the above please contact us:

- UK Student Recruitment Team  
E: [ukroenquiries@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:ukroenquiries@gcu.ac.uk)
- Lynne Barrie: [l.barrie@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:l.barrie@gcu.ac.uk)
- David Brewster [david.brewster@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:david.brewster@gcu.ac.uk)



# Disability Team

**The Disability Team runs a number of workshops designed to target students prior to starting their studies at GCU. The aim is to help build the student's confidence before they come for their first lectures and classes.**

## **Summer Transition Programme**

The Summer Transition Programme is designed for new students to the university who would identify with a diagnosis on the Autism Spectrum. Run in collaboration with the National Autistic Society, the programme is run over 3 weeks, with one session each week. The aim of the programme is to help the students acclimatise to the new environment and to find out more about how things work at university so that they know what to expect. During the programme we discuss:

- The changes/differences between school/college and university
- Time management strategies
- Stress and relaxation techniques
- Communication skills and relationship building
- Self-advocacy
- Disclosure

We also introduce the students to some of the key support services at the university to make them aware of all that is available. The programme finishes one week before fresher's week, to ensure it does not clash with any social activities the students want to engage with.

## **Pre entry study skills workshops**

These workshops are run with the 3 Learning Development Centres across the university. The aim of these workshops is to engage disabled students with study skills support before they get started. Often when coming to university, students will have no experience of notetaking or academic writing. These sessions allow students to pick up tips and guidance before going to their first classes, which can help to reduce the anxiety around this experience. The sessions also, more broadly, introduce the students to the LDCs and the Disability Team, which can help to engage them with on-going support.

## **Socialeyes**

The Socialeyes programme has been introduced last summer and been offered to students in two intakes. The programme was developed by the National Autistic Society to help people on the Autistic Spectrum to develop strategies to use in social situations. The programme consists of 8 modules which students attend, based around particular social skills. In the sessions, we discuss any strengths and weaknesses in these areas and offer alternate strategies to use. There are weekly class sessions when students come together as a group to go through and discuss the material, and then they each have individual sessions with their student mentor to practice these new skills. The programme has been altered to tailor it to the needs of students, covering situations such as making friends, working in a group, placement and in the workplace.

## **Assistive software**

All students and staff at GCU can attend the assistive software workshops run by the teams Assistive Technology Adviser. These workshops look at software to help with reading, proofreading, planning and structuring work. The main packages covered at are Read and Write Gold and MindGenius. The other workshops cover the use of mobile apps for learning.

## **App**

The Positive Living and Disability Service at GCU also has an app (GCU Positive Living: [www.gcu.ac.uk/student/disability/downloadourapp](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/student/disability/downloadourapp)) which can be downloaded for Apple, Android or Blackberry devices. The app allows students to download reference material, contact us and also book onto the workshops available.

## **For further information:**

- Positive Living and Disability Service:  
Room M136 (first floor of George Moore Building)  
T: 0141 273 1371  
F: 0141 273 1183  
E: [disability@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:disability@gcu.ac.uk)  
Twitter: @DT\_GCU

# Students' Association

**With its own dedicated building on campus, the Students' Association is the cornerstone of student life and is the first place you should visit at GCU. Every GCU student is a member of the Students' Association, it exists to represent and enable students to enhance all aspects of their student life, providing an outstanding experience that will live with them forever.**

## Facilities

Inside the Students' Association Building is the Student Bistro where you can relax, eat and drink. The building also has a 24 hour Social Learning Space, an Advice Centre and 24hr Computer Lab; plus an outdoor basketball court and traverse wall for you to enjoy.

## Representation

The Students' Association is here to make sure you are represented at every level. In order to do this there are elected Class Representatives on every programme, a democratic decision making body, Student Voice, and four students in full time positions, the Executive Committee, who you get to vote for each year.

## Activities

One of the best ways to get involved in the Students' Association is to have some fun at one of our activities. GCU students run over 55 Societies (including course based culture, faith and liberation groups as well as social, interest and hobby based societies) and 35 sports clubs, a great way to make new friends, enjoy your favourite sport, be active and feel good.

The Students' Association also run loads of fun events which is a great way to try something new, relax with friends, have some fun and de-stress from studying. Previous events held include Sigma and Jameela Jamil live gigs, Global Café and the Allister Boyd Ball. Regular activities have included yoga, Pilates, swimming and bowling.

## Independent Support

The Students' Association Advice Centre provides a confidential service to all GCU students and exists to help students obtain information on all the services and rights to which they are entitled to. It provides support, mediation, advocacy and representation where appropriate. You can also gain information on accommodation, employment rights, financial worries and exam stress.

## Volunteering

There are a variety of exciting volunteering opportunities with the Students' Association and most require no previous experience with training and support provided. You could, for example, become a Class Representative, host a show on Radio Caley, be a Wellbeing or Nightline volunteer, write for the student magazine, start a society or be a sports team captain. Through volunteering you will learn and develop skills that are essential for graduates of any degree. Students who volunteer while they study can participate in the Student Leaders Programme and at the end of the year volunteers are given recognition for their commitment and contribution at the end of year event including the most prestigious GCU Student of the Year award.

## For further information:

- GCU Students' Association:  
T: 0141 331 3886  
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