Graduate Apprenticeships
Flexible, industry-relevant learning with Glasgow Caledonian University
Why GCU?

With more than 20 years’ experience in work-based education, we have demonstrable expertise working closely with employers to offer the most industry-relevant programmes for your business.

We do this by co-creating a variety of programme aspects, such as work-based assignments, to support your employees, and your business, to grow.

Graduate Apprenticeships may be new, but our programme teams’ expertise in delivering part-time, work-based and professionally accredited programmes is not.

Why choose Graduate Apprenticeships at GCU?

"GCU is committed to delivering excellence in apprenticeships, putting employers’ needs at the heart of the process.”

Claire Young, Head of UK Business and Partnerships, GCU

GCU has pioneered work-based education throughout the UK and Internationally. Working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and employers, we have successfully delivered Graduate Apprenticeship programmes since their creation in September 2017.

Since then, our portfolio of programmes has grown and we are proud to deliver Graduate Apprenticeship Programmes in IT, Engineering, Construction and Business and Management - GCU has the highest number of Skills Development Scotland funded places of all Scottish Universities.
How will Graduate Apprenticeships fulfil my organisation’s future skills needs?

Graduate Apprenticeships are intended to tackle current and forecast skills gaps in industry.

Vital skills in areas such as engineering design and manufacture, RICS and CIOB accredited Quantity Surveying, software development and cyber security are greatly needed. Technically and commercially astute business leaders in these and other areas are also critical to economic growth and productivity.

These future skills areas require a higher level of competence that can only be attained through higher academic learning and aligned workplace experience.

The Graduate Apprenticeship programmes offered at GCU will help you to empower your staff for the work they do now and to develop their skills to contribute to the future growth of your organisation.

“If you want to build capability for the future within an organisation you need that pipeline of talent, enthusiasm and energy. These are all elements that Graduate Apprentices bring.”

Stephen Faull, Business Intelligence Strategy and Technology Leader, William Grant and Sons
Why Graduate Apprenticeships?
Skills Development Scotland has worked with employers, schools, colleges and universities to create a range of apprenticeship opportunities for young people and existing employees across Scotland.

All programmes are fully funded, so there is no fee incurred to the employer or employee.

Programmes can take a maximum of four years to complete, which is the same amount of time as a full-time undergraduate programme.

At GCU, we have worked in partnership with industry to ensure that the design of all our Graduate Apprenticeship programmes delivers flexible, applied learning. This enables apprentices to put what they have learned into practice while they work.

By placing the employer’s needs at the heart of this process, we offer many opportunities to co-create real-world assignments and work-based projects, delivering added value to your business.

At the end of the programme, apprentices have the unique combination of relevant work experience plus a university qualification, which will enable them to progress in their chosen career.

How much involvement does the employer have in the Graduate Apprenticeship?
GCU’s industry-led programmes have been running successfully for over 20 years. We know that the education your employees receive must be relevant for their work environment and we have a variety of conduits for those conversations, from employer forums to mentors.

A key component of the Graduate Apprenticeship programmes is that employers must provide an in-work mentor. Our team support your mentors to encourage apprentices throughout their learning journey.

We work closely with your organisation, with in-work mentors and with your apprentices, to ensure they reach their goals and yours. Regular meetings take place between the university and employers to ensure that students are being supported.

“I get to use what I learn at university in a practical sense at work on site.”
Lewis Clark, Graduate Apprentice, Glaxo Smith Kline
This enables apprentices to become more capable in their role and to apply their learning directly to their workplace in real-time.

**What is the application process?**

Our team will guide you through the process which takes between four-six weeks. Apprentices can only apply with the support of an employer.

Our business team can discuss options in detail with you and guide you to make the right decisions for your workforce.

Your apprentice’s application will be considered by GCU’s programme team. All applicants are notified of our decision via email.

If your apprentice is successful and does not need further qualifications, they will receive an unconditional offer. A conditional offer is where your apprentice’s acceptance is based on them achieving further qualifications or other requirements. Apprentices may decline any offer made to them.

Entry to some programmes may not always need the normal academic entry requirements stated if apprentices can support their application with equivalent relevant experience. GCU recognises a wide range of equivalent qualifications from throughout the UK, EU and worldwide. Offers are normally based on achieving certain grades and subjects. Please see our website for specific entry requirements.

GCU will enter into a mutually agreed learning contract with employers once apprentices are accepted onto the programme.

GCU will track student performance through monthly Individual Learning Reports (ILRs) which will be shared with the student and employers.

Regular meetings will take place between the university and employers to ensure that students are being supported and the applied nature of learning is successful for everyone involved.
GCU Graduate Apprenticeships Offered

Work-based education with industry-relevant assignments
A key feature of every programme is the integrated assignment, co-created with employers to ensure that the applied nature of teaching and learning is taken back to the workplace in real time.

This work-based component of each programme, features at every level, culminating in dissertation equivalent study in the final year.

We offer the following Graduate Apprenticeship programmes:

BA (Hons) Business Management
The BA (Hons) Business Management is accredited by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). It is based on industry-defined needs in collaboration with employers to allow knowledge, understanding, skills and competence to be developed. This ensures graduates have the necessary attributes that industry expects within a growing range of business environments.

The programme is ideal for individuals taking responsibility for long-term organisational success, managing people, projects, operations or services within their business. It is delivered using a blended mode, combining classroom-based and distance learning using GCU’s virtual learning environment.

To find out how to give your employees the skills they need to enable the future growth of your organisation with our Graduate Apprenticeship programmes, please contact Claire Young, Head of UK Business and Partnerships, GCU, apprenticeships@gcu.ac.uk 0141 331 3140.

BSc (Hons) Software Development for Business
The BSc (Hons) Software Development for Business programme has been developed to provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to become effective Software Development professionals.

Graduates will be capable of working on the development of the software systems required by modern businesses.

In the UK, software professional roles are the fastest-growing in the ICT sector. GCU’s development team has worked closely with The Tech Partnership, the Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology, and top graduate employers to ensure the learning outcomes of this apprenticeship meet the competencies required by industry.

The programme is delivered using a blended mode, with classroom-based and distance learning using GCU’s virtual learning environment.


BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering
The BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering programme has been developed alongside industry to provide apprentices with the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to produce graduates who are as comfortable with engineering and technical aspects of the industry as they are with the contracts management, planning and environmental protection.

The programme is delivered using a blended mode, with classroom-based and distance learning using GCU’s virtual learning environment.

BEng (Hons) Mechanical Engineering: Design and Manufacture

The BEng (Hons) Engineering, Design and Manufacture programme is based on the very successful Computer Aided Mechanical Engineering programme that currently runs in both full-time and part-time modes within the Department of Engineering.

GCU’s Engineering Department has over 20 years’ experience in the delivery of part-time mechanical engineering education, with continual input from our Industrial Advisory Board which includes representatives from Clyde Bergemann, EDF Energy, GSK, Howden and TUV-NEL.

This programme is supported by state of the art facilities such as 3D printing, 5-Axis CNC milling and a newly refurbished thermofluids laboratory. Students also have access to more traditional mechanical engineering laboratories for fabrication, material testing, metrology and welding.

The programme syllabus includes the following topics: Engineering Science, Mechanical Engineering Design and Analysis, Computer Aided Engineering, 3D modelling, Finite Element Analysis and computational Fluid Dynamics.

BSc (Hons) Construction and the Built Environment with a focus on Quantity Surveying

The BSc (Hons) Construction and the Built Environment (with a focus on Quantity Surveying) is based on the very successful Part-time and Full-time BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying programme. The programme has been developed to provide apprentices with the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to become effective construction professionals.

Studying with GCU guarantees you a clear route to full chartered membership with accreditation from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The aim of the programme is to provide the construction industry with well educated, competent surveyors capable of responding to the industry’s current and future needs.

The programme is delivered using a blended mode, with classroom-based and distance learning using GCU’s virtual learning environment.

To find out how to give your employees the skills they need to enable the future growth of your organisation with our Graduate Apprenticeship programmes, please contact Claire Young, Head of UK Business and Partnerships, GCU, apprenticeships@gcu.ac.uk 0141 331 3140.

BSc (Hons) Cyber Security
This purpose of this programme is to produce graduates with the skills and knowledge to work in industry in the communication networks, security engineering and digital forensics sector, an industry which employs one in three of all jobs within IT. This sector is becoming increasingly complex, with a particular need for digital forensics, digital security, ethical hacking, wireless and mobile specialist skills.

The programme develops the theory and practical skills of how illegal computer attacks are performed and how to counteract them, explores the nature of digital evidence and focuses on the law and issues surrounding computer crime. It equips apprentices with technical, analytical and evaluation skills in all areas of digital forensic investigation, including ethical hacking, intrusion, detection, data recovery and security systems.

Upon successful completion, graduates will have career pathways in government agencies, law enforcement or associated private sector agencies, supporting specialist roles such as forensic practitioners, penetration testers (ethical hackers) and security and forensic consultants.


MSc Cyber Security
The purpose of this programme is to produce Masters level graduates with skills and knowledge in Cyber Security with a specialisation in Network Security.

Designed for the ongoing development of existing IT Professionals, apprentices will be able to enhance existing skills and experience through assessing security risks across a broad range of technical security solutions and designs; plan and carry out a variety of security testing strategies on IT infrastructures (wired and wireless); research, analyse and evaluate technical threat intelligence to reduce cyber security threats and vulnerabilities; troubleshoot issues arising from vulnerability scanning and design cost-effective mitigations comprising careful combinations of technical, procedural and administrative controls.


Work-based learning features throughout the programme, culminating in the MSc Project.
What happens after studies are complete?

“The course the apprentices do is relevant to the job, so before they even graduate they will be bringing what they learn to the workplace.”

David Miller, Miller Callaghan Engineering

Professional Accreditation
Having successfully completed their qualifications, apprentices will graduate from GCU’s Glasgow campus.

Qualifying students will have the option to work towards a professional body assessment. This enables students to obtain Chartered status through professional bodies such as the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) or the Chartered Management Institute (CMI).

It has never been more important to attract, train and retain the next generation of workers. Research shows that employee development and training improves productivity and staff morale, providing your company with a competitive edge.

Degree Apprenticeships at GCU, London
As an accredited provider on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers, our team at the GCU London campus is committed to the successful delivery of Degree Apprenticeship programmes.

If you are a UK employer, this provides you with a one-stop-shop approach that ensures parity of experience for all your employees whether they are in Scotland or England.
Some examples of how the university delivers the Common Good

Through the education we provide, the research we conduct and the social and economic impact we deliver, Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) is driven by its mission as the University for the Common Good.

We have campuses in Glasgow, London and New York and deliver programmes in Oman, Bangladesh, Mauritius and South Africa. Our University’s heritage dates back to 1875 through its founding institutions and our coat of arms incorporates the motto For the Common Weal. Established as a University in 1993, our commitment to the common good underpins everything we do.

Our Chancellor is Royal Academician, singer, songwriter, social activist and philanthropist, Dr Annie Lennox OBE. She was installed as Chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University on July 2, 2018.

Times Higher Education ranks GCU in the world’s top 150 young universities and rates it among the top universities globally in its prestigious World University Rankings (2017). In addition, GCU’s learning and teaching has achieved the highest judgement from the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland), and 97% of our graduates go into employment or further study.

As the top modern university in Scotland for research power, GCU addresses three societal challenges: to build inclusive societies; lead healthy lives and develop sustainable environments. Our academics think differently and challenge policymakers to do likewise, gaining international recognition in areas as diverse as social work and climate justice.

The University’s award-winning widening access initiative, the Caledonian Club, has a membership of 14,000 children and 3,500 families, working in Glasgow and London to inspire academic ambition and enhance life skills. The programme was awarded the Business in the Community Responsible Business Education Award 2016 and reaccredited in 2017.

A signatory to the United Nations PRME initiative (Principles for Responsible Management Education), GCU is one the first UK universities to join the UN Global Compact, the world’s largest voluntary corporate responsible management programme. GCU is also an Ashoka U Changemaker Campus in recognition of its commitment to socially innovative initiatives, and, as such, is a member of a prestigious university network which includes Cornell, Brown and Johns Hopkins Universities.

In line with its commitment to the Common Good and to its staff, GCU is proud to be a Living Wage employer and signatory to the Scottish Business Pledge.

GCU was the first university in Scotland to achieve EcoCampus Platinum certification. GCU also holds the bronze ATHENA Swan award which recognises its commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research.