



Volunteering

An Opportunities Prospectus and Guide



www.GCUstudents.co.uk/volunteers

Welcome

Welcome to the Students' Association's booklet about volunteering. This will provide you with information about the opportunities to volunteer with us while you study at GCU and how we support you in your role. My own volunteer journey began when I signed up as the Mature Student Officer. I met up with other mature students at social events as well as campaigning events and held an annual Easter Egg drive. I also volunteered as the deputy Women's Officer and had the opportunity to be part of key decision making committees.

As a volunteer, I also had the opportunity to take part in the Student Leaders Programme, to help me develop as a leader and increase my employability. By volunteering, I contributed to the success and development of representation groups, and in return I gained new skills. Soft skills such as leadership, organisational and social skills look impressive on your cv and employers value these and deem them essential. Volunteering also provides the opportunity to meet a diverse group of amazing new people. To get the most out of your university life I would strongly recommend volunteering as a great extracurricular activity and an opportunity to help others and make a difference.

Susan Docherty, Student President 2020/21

Eligibility

To be eligible to volunteer with GCU Students' Association all you need to be is a student registered at Glasgow Caledonian University.

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Volunteer Role: Class Rep

Role Purpose:

To help make the learning experience at Glasgow Caledonian University better by feeding back to both the University and GCU Students' Association any issues, views and opinions students have about their learning experience.

Role Activities:

- To attend & take an active part in Student Staff Consultative Group (SSCG) meetings.
- To communicate & feedback regularly with the students you represent.
- To communicate regularly with other Class Reps on your course, as well as with your School Officer
- To attend & take an active part in GCU Students' Association Class Rep Gatherings

Role Benefits:

- Develop advocacy, communications and meeting skills.
- Gain a Class Rep Certificate
- Make a real difference to your student experience, as well as a positive difference to other student's lives

How to Get Involved:

Class Reps are recruited in the first couple of weeks of Trimester 1. Contact your Programme Leader to find out more about getting involved.

CASE STUDY: Class Rep

Your Name: **Nicole Forbes**

Study Programme: **BSc (Hons) Nursing Studies (Child)**

No of years volunteering? **2**

Role: **Class Representative**



How did you first get involved or how did you find out about it?

I first got involved by becoming a Class Rep which my lecturer told us about on the first day of uni. Since then I began having some meetings in the Students' Association for class reps and began to find out more about what the Students' Association had to offer, that's when I started joining some other groups too.

What difference has it made to your university experience being a volunteer?

It's definitely improved my confidence. I feel I am a much stronger advocate for people and I feel this will help me to become a better nurse.

Volunteer Role: Liberation Groups



Role Purpose:

To represent the interests of the students who define themselves as belonging to a liberation group or groups and to fight against discrimination wherever it takes place. The liberation groups are: LGBT+, disabled, women's and ethnic minorities students.

Role Activities:

- Arrange liberation events for students
- Support and take an active part in liberation campaigns
- Promote liberation issues within GCU Students' Association and the University

Role Benefits:

- Develop advocacy, representation and leadership skills
- Network and meet new people
- Make a real difference to your student experience, as well as a positive difference to other student's lives

How to Get Involved:

Liberation Officers are elected in April each year. To find out more about getting involved go to www.gcustudents.co.uk/liberation

CASE STUDY: Liberation Groups

Your Name: **Jill Stevens**

Study Programme: **BA Multimedia Journalism**

No of years volunteering? **4**

Role: **Women's Officer**



Tell us about the role(s) you were/ are involved in?

Through my role I was able to set up a women's group called the Caledonian Women. Together we ran campaigns for #FreePeriods, I Heart Consent, and I Am A Leader. We fought for the right to have a Gender & Sexuality Safe Space on campus to provide a safe meeting place for marginalised groups. I now run my own online magazine called FeminiSco which focusses on Scotland from a feminist perspective. In my opinion, getting involved with the Students' Association was as equally valuable for my career as getting good grades and attending classes!

What difference has it made to your university experience being a volunteer?

The majority of my university friends were those I met at the Students' Association as I didn't click with many people in my course. I found the Students' Association to be the perfect place to meet people with similar interests.

Volunteer Role: Nightline



Role Purpose:

Nightline volunteers are trained to provide a supportive, confidential and non-judgemental out of hours telephone, online and text listening and information service to their fellow students at GCU, Strathclyde University and City of Glasgow College.

Role Activity:

- Attend all introductory training sessions and complete an assessed skills practice
- Commit to covering one 12 hour Nightline shift every 2 weeks
- Commit to adhere to all Nightline Principles, policies and procedures (including Anonymity and Confidentiality)
- Commit to attend regular Nightline meetings and ongoing training sessions.

Role Benefits:

- Valuable training in active listening skills
- Gain hands on experience in delivering a service
- Meet and work with new people (from GCU and beyond).

How to Get Involved:

Check out the information on www.scnightline.com and complete an application form on the website if you'd like to apply to train.

CASE STUDY: Nightline Volunteer

Your Name: **All Nightline volunteers remain anonymous**

Study Programme: **BSc (Hons) Psychology**

No of years volunteering? **1**



Role: **Nightline Volunteer**

How did you first get involved or how did you find out about it?

I found out about nightline in an information session before joining GCU as a direct entry student. I then looked up Nightline on the GCU Students' Association website and thought it looked like a perfect opportunity to gain experience and to meet new people as being a new student to the university meant I didn't know many other students.

What difference has it made to your university experience being a volunteer?

Being a Nightline volunteer has given me many new skills such as those taught in the training sessions, an opportunity to help students that may require a safe place to talk and it has been a great way to meet new friends in other nightline volunteers. The experience has given me confidence in my own abilities and has helped in many ways with the course I am studying.

Volunteer Role: Society Committee



Role Purpose:

There are many specific roles within a committee and the purpose depends on the role e.g. President, Treasurer, Secretary or Social Convenor; you can choose one to suit your skills and interests.

Role Activities:

- Undertake the responsibilities of your specific role, as laid out in the Society's constitution
- Attend committee meetings and support other committee members
- Liaise with the Students' Association
- Support your Society to be sustainable

Role Benefits:

- Develop communications, team work and problem solving skills
- Shape and develop your society
- Gain experience of a leadership role
- Network and meet new people

How to Get Involved:

Committee positions are elected by the members of each society, this can happen annually or when a committee position is vacant. Contact one of the current committee to find out about getting involved. www.GCUstudents.co.uk/societies

CASE STUDY: Society Committee Member

Your Name: **Shuja Ansari**

Study Programme: **PhD - Mobile Communications Engineering**

No of years volunteering? **1**

Role: Treasurer – **GCU PakSoc**

How did you first get involved or how did you find out about it?



I attended the annual dinner organised by GCU PakSoc in July 2015, where I met the committee members. They invited me to help them with the society proceedings in the capacity of a Treasurer. I attended the training provided by the Students' Association and it has been a fun sail since then. With the support and help from Students' Association, we managed to organise an acoustic gig and a trip to Glencoe, both of which were highly successful and amusing.

Why did you decide to be involved?

I always had an urge to go an extra mile in university. Managing my time between society's work and my studies makes me feel organised and constantly engaged.

Volunteer Role: Sports Committee



Role Purpose:

There are lots of different roles within a Sports Club committee and the purpose depends on the role e.g. Captain, President, Treasurer, Secretary or Social Convenor; you can choose one to suit your skills and interests.

Role Activities:

- Undertake the responsibilities of your specific role, as laid out in the Sports Club constitution
- Organise fixtures, training and activities
- Attend committee meetings and support other committee members
- Liaise with the Students' Association and support your Sports Club to be sustainable

Role Benefits:

- Develop communications, team work and problem solving skills
- Shape and develop your sports club
- Gain experience of a leadership role
- Network and meet new people

How to Get Involved:

Committee positions are elected by the members of each Sports Club, this can happen annually or when a committee position is vacant. Choose your club and contact one of the current committee to find out about getting involved. www.GCUstudents.co.uk/sport

CASE STUDY: Sports Club Committee Member

Your Name: **Katrina Bevan**

Study Programme: **BA (Hons) International Fashion Branding**

No of years volunteering? **4**

Role: **President – Women's Volleyball Club**

Why did you decide to be involved?

I always knew I wanted to be involved with the sports teams at GCU as I knew it would be a great way to get to know more people and to really get involved with university life. I had also played a lot of sports at school and knew I wanted to get fully involved.

What difference has it made to your university experience being a volunteer?

It's a great way to meet new people. The majority of my university friends are the ones I have met through playing sport and are the ones I will definitely keep in touch with now that I have graduated. It is something that gives you a break from university work and gets you involved in the Students' Association. There is a strong feeling of camaraderie amongst the different sports teams which is unique and great to be part of.



Volunteer Role: Student Media

Role Purpose:

There are loads of different roles to choose from when you get involved as a volunteer with our Student Media groups. The main purpose of all the roles is to produce either a student magazine or online radio shows. Both groups are run by a small Committee that are elected into position by the members of the group. So, you can volunteer to present a show or write an article and then choose to get more involved if you want to be more active.

Role Activities:

- Writing articles for the magazine
- Presenting a radio show, providing IT support or organising events
- Editing magazine articles or designing the magazine
- Be a member of either the Radio or Edit Committee and help co-ordinate activities and events, provide support to other volunteers

Role Benefits:

- Develop communications, team work and problem solving skills
- Network and meet new people
- Shape and develop your media skills
- Gain experience of a leadership role

How to Get Involved:

You can volunteer to get involved by signing up online, and one of the committee will get in touch. Each group provides a training session to introduce you to the basics and then from there it's up to you how much time you commit. Committee positions are elected by members.

www.GCUstudents.co.uk/radiocaley

www.GCUstudents.co.uk/theedit

CASE STUDY: Student Media Groups

Your Name: **Mark Cunningham**

Study Programme: **BA Media and Communications**

No of years volunteering? **4**

Role: **Radio Caley - Station Manager**

How did you first get involved or how did you find out about it?

I had noticed there was a station as I was making my final decision about university. Moreover, there was a mention of it and indeed the GCU Students' Association during my first class induction.

What difference has it made to your university experience being a volunteer?

It was my university experience! The majority of my development and learning happened outside of the classroom. Volunteering has shaped my skill set, improved my standing as a leader and I've made the most incredible bonds with people who I'll never forget.



Volunteer Role: Freshers Team



Role Purpose:

To provide an outstanding welcome to GCU for new students during Freshers' Week.

Role Activities:

Volunteers will be involved in all the activities and events including: induction presentation workshops, assisting at events, social media activity, promoting events, interacting with Freshers' and having fun. Volunteers must be able to commit to a minimum of 16-20 hours over the course of the week, with full training and support provided. We'll allocate you different tasks over the week to make it fun and provide training to make sure you know what to do.

Role Benefits:

- Network and meet new people
- Access to Freshers' Week wristband events
- Freshers Team Hoodie
- Lunch voucher

How to Get Involved:

Recruitment takes place over the summer break; you can sign up online and a staff member will be in touch. Recruitment is by selection through an online application and interview.

www.GCUstudents.co.uk/freshers-team

CASE STUDY: Freshers Team

Your Name: **Kayleigh van Dongen**

Study Programme: **BSc (Hons) Forensic Investigations**

No of years volunteering? **3**

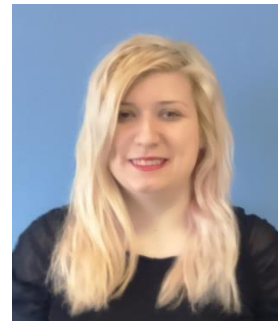
Role: **Freshers Team Volunteer**

Why did you decide to be involved?

I came to GCU as a mature student, and didn't feel I would fit in with the whole Freshers' week, so I did not take part. During my first year I started to get involved with the Students' Association and when I got an email they were looking for volunteers to help out with Freshers'. I decided to sign up, so I would have the chance to experience the Freshers' Week I missed myself.

What difference has it made to your university experience being a volunteer?

It gave me more of an inside of what the Students' Association does, and I decided to get more and more involved. During the training and Freshers week I made great friends. It gave me an opportunity to get involved in more things, and make university not just about studying, but also a way to explore new interests, or do more of the things I love.



Volunteer Role: Student Trustee



Role Purpose:

We are a charity and we are seeking four Student Trustees to sit on our Trustee Board. The Board sets the strategic direction of the Students' Association, monitors our performance and has legal and financial oversight of the organisation.

Role Activity:

We are seeking volunteers who have strategic thinking, independent judgement, an ability to think creatively and a willingness to speak their mind. Ideally, the new Student Trustees will have had a leadership role within the Students' Association, university or the local community and have a good understanding of the issues affecting students and the different types of students (undergraduate, postgraduate, full time, part time, international, mature, articulation etc).

Role Benefits:

Being a trustee is not only a valuable way of contributing to the charity sector. It can also be a fascinating and rewarding experience for individuals, helping them to broaden their interests and develop their skills.

How to Get Involved:

You can watch short videos of other students' experiences and read an information pack: www.GCUstudents.co.uk/studenttrustee. There is an application process for this role.

CASE STUDY: Student Trustee

Your Name: **Fraser Drylie**

Study Programme: **BA Social Sciences (Criminology and Sociology)**

No of years volunteering? **3**

Role: **Student Trustee**

How did you first get involved or how did you find out about it?

I got involved after talking to one of my friends in Caledonian Court. She was involved in Radio Caley and said how welcoming, fun and exciting it was to be presenting a show. Once I got involved in Radio Caley I heard more about the representational aspect of the Students' Association. 3 years later I found myself applying to become a Student Trustee, the highest level of governance within the Students' Association.

Why did you decide to be involved?

I got involved initially so that I could hang about with friends and meet new people. I then started to realise the potential of what being involved could enable someone to do. I learned and improved skills that I would never have had before which I have used when applying for jobs.



Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are at the heart of GCU Students' Association as an organisation. We hope that you will enjoy your time volunteering within GCU Students' Association. This is an agreement for all of our volunteering opportunities and not a contract of employment. It sets out exactly what you can expect from us, and what we can expect from you.

We expect you:

- To treat others with respect and courtesy.
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.
- To undertake the activities of your volunteer role description.
- To follow GCU Students' Associations' policies and procedures, including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, and Data Protection.
- To respond to our emails within a reasonable timeframe.
- To attend on time, or to give reasonable notice to cancel or rearrange meetings with staff members.
- To complete risk assessments for your events and activities within a reasonable timeframe.
- To let us know of any problems or difficulties you experience during your volunteering role.
- To attend relevant training for your role.
- Not to purchase any goods or services without speaking to the relevant staff member first.
- To let us know about any support or materials you may need from us for any event or campaign within a reasonable amount of time.

You can expect from us:

- To provide insurance for you and your activities, as long as you have followed our procedures.
- To always treat you with respect and courtesy.
- To support you in conducting Risk Assessments for your events and activities.
- Top training, support, and resources to help you get the most out of your volunteering role.
- To ensure you are never out of pocket due to your volunteering, providing that the expenses have been approved in advance by the appropriate staff member.
- To respond to your emails within a reasonable timeframe.
- To try and deal with complaints straight away, but if not, will keep you regularly informed on how we are dealing with it until resolved.
- To deliver any materials or support on time, as agreed with you.

Support and Advice



The Students' Association provides a wide variety of support and advice for volunteers. Every volunteer has the opportunity to attend training sessions to help them understand their role and responsibilities. Specific information guides are provided to volunteers either at training sessions or online.

Staff

The Students' Association staff team are here to support all volunteers in their role, to contact one of the team go to:

www.GCUstudents.co.uk/staff.

Resources

There are loads of resources for volunteers to use in their role, including how to book rooms or transport, what to do in an emergency; funding and communication, for more information on resources go to: www.GCUstudents.co.uk/volunteerresources.

Volunteer Policy

The Students' Association has a policy for all volunteering and this contains information about all aspects of being a volunteer.

www.GCUstudents.co.uk/get-involved/volunteering/volunteer-policy

Complaints

The Students' Association aims to deliver high quality services to our members and we welcome all feedback and aim to deal with any concerns in a fair and consistent way. The Students' Association has a policy for complaints and can be found on our key information page:

www.GCUstudents.co.uk/keyinformation

Reward and Recognition

Student Awards

Each year the Students' Association presents awards to GCU students to recognise their volunteering contribution. The awards are peer nominated and is decided by an impartial awards committee. More information about the **Sports Awards** and **Societies Awards** is available online.

At the end of March each year, students organise two awards events to celebrate volunteering achievement and recognise contribution. These events are the Sports Ball and the Star Awards. Event information is posted on our website a month or two in advance of the event.

www.GCUstudents.co.uk/events.



Star Awards 2019



Sports Awards Ball 2019

Volunteer References

The Students' Association can provide you with a reference to confirm you have been a volunteer with the organisation, just contact your lead staff member to make this arrangement.

Common Good Award

This award is co-ordinated by Glasgow Caledonian University, it recognises and rewards the informal learning you have gained through extra-curricular activities such as volunteering. For more information about this award go to the Common Good Award Website.

Student Leaders Programme



The Student Leaders Programme is open to any student at Glasgow Caledonian University. The programme is designed to help you develop your skills and be an effective leader.

We will support your development through our Skills Workshops that includes sessions run by outside organisations and employers.

For more information about the Student Leaders Programme go to:
www.GCUstudents.co.uk/slp





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