

Candidate Pack

Director of Marketing and Communications

October 2026



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Our Mission

University for the
Common Good

Our Vision

To transform lives through
excellent education and
research that is accessible
and impactful for the
people of Glasgow and
our communities locally,
nationally and internationally.

Our Values

Integrity
Responsibility
Confidence
Creativity





Welcome

Dear Candidate

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) is Scotland's largest modern university, with campuses in the heart of Glasgow and London. We are a vibrant, values-led institution where everyone belongs, and where students, staff and graduates are empowered to make a positive difference in their careers, communities and society.

As the University for the Common Good, our strong sense of purpose shapes everything we do, rooted in a legacy that began with the Glasgow School of Cookery in 1875. A pioneer of educational opportunities for women and an advocate for health and wellbeing, the institution evolved to meet the changing needs of society, industry and the professions. While much has changed over the past 150 years, our commitment to opportunity, access, equality and inclusion remains.

We are proud to support talented learners from all backgrounds and are recognised as one of Scotland's leading universities for students from underrepresented communities. Through partnerships with schools, colleges and community organisations, we help raise aspirations and open pathways to success across Glasgow and beyond.

The impact of this work is amplified by influential champions who share our belief in the power of education to transform lives. Our Chancellor, Professor Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE, is an internationally recognised STEAM leader and advocate for diversity in education and technology. We are also proud of the transformational impact of our Founding Donor, Sir Alex Ferguson CBE, whose generosity, advocacy and enduring support have created life-changing opportunities for thousands of students and helped foster a culture of philanthropy across our University community.

As a civic university with a global outlook, we are committed to sustainability, equality and social innovation. Our research addresses some of society's most pressing challenges, from health inequalities and public policy to engineering, business and the future of work. Through collaboration with governments,

industry and international partners, we deliver impact at local, national and global levels.

With a diverse community representing more than 100 countries, GCU is a place where people come together to learn, collaborate and thrive. Guided by our values of integrity, responsibility, creativity and confidence, we are proud of the contribution we make to the communities we serve and the positive impact our students, staff and graduates achieve around the world.

We hope this pack gives you a sense of our University, our ambitions and the opportunity ahead. If you are inspired by our values and the chance to help shape the next phase of GCU's journey, we would love to hear from you.

Professor Mairi Watson

*Principal and Vice-Chancellor,
Glasgow Caledonian University*

Our Chancellor

Professor Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE

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One of the UK's most influential people in tech and a leading advocate of diversifying talent in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), Professor Anne-Marie Imafidon was appointed Chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University in February 2024.

[Read Professor Imafidon's biography.](#)



Glasgow Caledonian University

Top 50

UK University

Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2027

1st

Top ranked Scottish
modern university

(Daily Mail Guide 2027)

1st

in Scotland for sustainability

(People and Planet 2025)

Winner

Outstanding Business Engagement
in Universities

(Herald Education Awards 2026)



20,000
students

105
student home
countries

185,000
alumni

1,000
Graduate
Apprenticeship
students

300
business partners

1,500
staff

Play a leading role

This is an opportunity to play a leading role at a university with a strong sense of purpose, a clear strategic direction and an ambitious vision for the future.

Glasgow Caledonian University is the University for the Common Good. Our commitment to creating positive change through education, partnership and innovation shapes everything we do. As a member of the University's senior leadership community, you will help shape the next phase of our journey, ensuring that GCU continues to grow its impact, influence and reputation in an increasingly competitive and rapidly evolving environment.

GCU has built a strong reputation for widening access, graduate employability and meaningful engagement with employers and communities. We are proud to welcome students from diverse backgrounds and support them to develop, succeed and thrive. Our commitment to access, equality and inclusion remains central to who we are and underpins our ambitions for the future.

At a time of increasing competition for students, changing learner expectations and growing demands on institutional reputation,

this role offers a significant opportunity to shape how GCU attracts, engages and inspires future generations of learners. As we look ahead to GCU's Strategy 2035, you will lead the strategic development of marketing, communications and student recruitment, helping to strengthen awareness of our distinctive mission and the impact we deliver through education, research and partnership.

Working collaboratively with colleagues across the University, you will play a vital role in shaping how we tell our story, engage with prospective students and key stakeholders, and build our reputation locally, nationally and internationally. You will lead an integrated approach that strengthens brand and reputation, supports sustainable recruitment growth, deepens engagement and helps position GCU for future success.

GCU combines the strengths of a globally connected university with a deep commitment to place. Our campuses in Glasgow and London, together with our international partnerships, create opportunities for collaboration, innovation and global engagement while maintaining a strong focus on the communities we serve.

This is a role for a leader who is motivated by purpose, energised by collaboration and inspired by the opportunity to amplify the impact of a university committed to transforming lives and delivering positive change through the Common Good.

If you are motivated by the opportunity to shape the future of marketing, communications and student recruitment within a values-led, ambitious university, we look forward to hearing from you.



Build on our heritage

GCU was among the modern universities created in 1992/3, yet our rich history of serving local communities for the Common Good dates back to the 19th century.

Our organisation was created through the merger of Glasgow Polytechnic (formerly Glasgow College of Technology) and Queen's College Glasgow, which had origins going back to 1875 and received royal patronage from Queen Elizabeth II.

Strategic ambitions

We have an ambitious strategy that was co-created with our students, staff, alumni, stakeholders and partners. Our strategy seeks to transform lives through education and research, and has a distinctive focus on access, excellence and impact. You will be joining our University at a key time as we develop our 2035 Strategy.

Accessibility, both academic and physical, is at the very heart of Glasgow Caledonian – we are open, inclusive and will remain so. Excellence is the goal GCU strives for in terms of quality, in the people we produce, the education and research work that we do, the reputation we secure and the way we do business.

Impact and social benefit are delivered in many ways – for the students we welcome through our doors, the communities we engage with and serve, the national workforce we are training, for our partners, and the ways in which our research makes a meaningful difference.



University for the Common Good



Glasgow
Caledonian Strategy 2030



Student success

91%

positivity score for
teaching staff
(NSS 2026)

90%

in employment and/or further study
within 15 months of graduating
(HESA, 2026)

76%

of graduates employed in
highly skilled occupations
(HESA, 2026)

93%

rating for overall happiness at
Glasgow Caledonian
(International Student Barometer, 2024)

23%

Scottish full-time, first degree
entrants are drawn from the country's
20% most-disadvantaged areas
(SFC, 2025)

45%

of full-time undergraduates are
first in their families to come to
university
(Times Good University Guide, 2026)

92%

of undergraduate programmes have professional accreditation
(Discover Uni, 2025)



Educational experience

GCU students gain far more than a qualification. They enjoy an experience that builds their aspirations, confidence, skills, knowledge and the experience they need to realise their potential.

Our lecturers are experts in their field, many working as close advisers to governments and industry in Scotland and around the world. Our close links to business, placements and professional accreditation help students get the insight and experience they need to succeed in their chosen careers.

We have sector-leading scholarships and the award-winning MINT Programme, which gives every final year student access to an alumni mentor, paid internship opportunities and regular talks and networking events led by industry leaders drawn from our alumni, honorary graduates and partners.

We are deploying technologies including AI to take education to the next level, provide innovative learning and research facilities, and investing in an estate to support our students' studying, working and socialising.

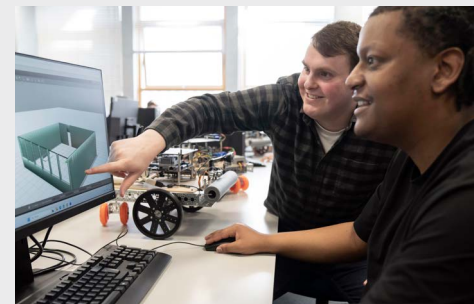
Our goal is to educate global change-makers whose skills, values and leadership will make a positive impact on the world.

We champion widening access to higher education by encouraging and attracting people from diverse backgrounds, and supporting our students throughout their academic and personal journey, and embed the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the institution. We value individuals regardless of the background or group with which they identify.

Our commitment to being exceptional

- Every member of staff wants to contribute to the creation of an excellent student experience.
- Our academic schools develop curricula and models of delivery in ways that best deliver their disciplines, while combining creativity and efficiency.
- We offer academic, wellbeing and pastoral support for all our students, designed to recognise the diverse life experiences and personal challenges to be found across our student population.

- Equipping our students to succeed in the world beyond university is paramount, and professional accreditation and placements are integral to the learning experience.
- Our School of Health and Life Sciences leads the field in developing inter-professional learning for all health and social care professions, and our business and engineering schools have close ties to industry and business.
- We are a community dedicated to learning, and work closely with students to build a sense of belonging and fulfilment, with dedicated Student Communications and Student Wellbeing teams.



“When it comes to finding a job after studying, I feel more equipped in every aspect of my life”

Heather Andrews, Podiatry student

Research and Innovation

Research and innovation that benefits business and communities are key to delivering our commitment to the Common Good. Our core research areas, Inclusive Societies, Healthy Lives, and Sustainable Environments, are aligned with our three academic schools and research centres.

Through our renewed focus on research and innovation (R&I), we have already seen a significant growth in research awards and have ambitions to expand and double research, commercial and infrastructure income as part of our R&I strategy to 2035.

We aim to foster a thriving, financially sustainable R&I culture and environment with a targeted approach to investment. We have many strengths to build on – the possibilities are immense. Our reputation in social innovation is strong, with demonstrable impacts across all our schools and research centres. We pride ourselves on enhancing the student experience, embedding our impactful research into the curriculum and growing our postgraduate research community.

Research and Innovation strengths

- Our health research is surpassed only by King's College London for outstanding impact as attested in REF 2021.

- A vibrant, creative research student culture is a major focus with a current postgraduate research student body of around 500. We promote researcher development through research services available to staff and students, and we have devoted researcher development initiatives for early and mid-career researchers.
- We have recently reconfigured and invested in our research and knowledge exchange services to drive forward high-quality support for research, innovation, knowledge exchange, researcher development, and graduate apprenticeships. This includes closer connections with local universities and businesses.
- Our research grant income has already climbed through success in winning competitive grants from bodies such as the Economic and Social Research Council, the European Commission, the Medical Research Council, National Institute of Health Research, the Chief Scientist's Office, and the Wellcome Trust.
- Our Doctoral Training Hubs are leading major research projects in areas including the links between climate change and sport, together with multiple sclerosis.
- Our Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) and the Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health have a major impact in public policy and practice by providing

the evidence base around the social determinants of health, public health (in partnership with Public Health Scotland), health promotion and rehabilitation. A new research centre in sustainable environments is an exciting development under way.

- Our Blood Borne Virus Prevention Team is at the forefront of international work to reduce the impact of HIV, Hepatitis C and other blood borne viruses. This ground-breaking research into patterns of infection and how to prevent them is key to achieving the Scottish Government's ambitious target to end the transmission of HIV in Scotland by 2030.
- Our partners include: Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, Public Health Scotland, Glasgow City Council, businesses, World Health Organization, African Development Bank, European Commission and more.

72%

GCU research considered to be world leading or internationally excellent (REF2021) — unsurpassed by any other Scottish modern university.



Global reach

Glasgow Caledonian University has a global outlook with transnational partnerships in China, Oman, Nepal, Singapore and Malaysia.

Our long history of successful international research and transnational education has enabled us to extend our global impact and engage in new ways with learners, global businesses and communities. The University's globally recognised researchers regularly advise governments, industry and international bodies on policy development and impact.

Our alumni community has 185,000 graduates based in 150 countries. Our city centre campuses in Glasgow and London are ideal for engagement with a range of international markets. GCU was the first Scottish institution to open a London campus – it now hosts international students from around the world.

Having recently reviewed our strategic collaborations, we continue to develop future partnerships which deliver sustainable income streams and internationalisation opportunities for our staff and students, as well as align with our priority markets for international student recruitment.



“Glasgow Caledonian University plays a vitally important role in connecting the talent of Glasgow and of communities all around the world to the job opportunities emerging in a growing economy.”

Dr Stuart Patrick CBE, Chief Executive, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce

Embrace Glasgow

The opportunity to work in Glasgow also means the opportunity to live in Glasgow. The city is one of the UK's leading metropolitan centres with lively cultural, leisure, and sports scenes.

Glasgow ranks in the top 10 in Europe and top 25 globally for the quality of its education and cultural provision, and was announced as a UNESCO Learning City in December 2024.

It has the buzz and cosmopolitan feel of a great international city, while being within easy reach of some of the most spectacular countryside and scenery the UK has to offer.

It is a major conference centre, and in 2021, hosted the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) which brought together 120 world leaders and over 40,000 registered participants.

Glasgow has hosted the Commonwealth Games for the second time in the summer of 2026.



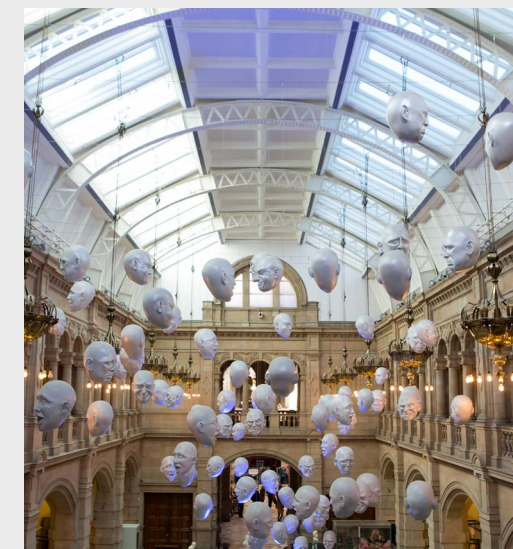
Glasgow

GCU's city centre location and good transport links make us attractive and accessible.



Culturally rich and vibrant

Glasgow is home to Scottish Ballet, Scottish Opera, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, galleries, museums and beautiful architecture.



Fantastic location

A fantastic location for families with excellent schools, strong sense of community, attractive rural and urban living locations and housing styles within and beyond the city.



Role profile

Main Purpose:

Glasgow Caledonian University is seeking an exceptional Director of Marketing and Communications to provide strategic leadership for the University's brand, reputation, marketing, communications, digital presence, student recruitment and admissions functions.

This is a senior leadership appointment at a pivotal point in the University's development. The successful candidate will lead the development and delivery of an integrated marketing and communications strategy that strengthens GCU's reputation, enhances stakeholder engagement, supports student recruitment and positions the University distinctively in an increasingly competitive environment.

Working across the institution, the Director will establish a clear and compelling institutional narrative, ensuring consistency of message, brand and experience across all stakeholder touchpoints. The role will lead a significant programme of brand and digital transformation, including the redevelopment of the University's website and social media presence, maximising the impact of investment in the University's profile and market position.

The portfolio includes responsibility for home recruitment and admissions, ensuring a seamless and effective journey from enquiry through to enrolment. While experience of recruitment and admissions is advantageous, the essential requirement is proven strategic leadership in marketing, communications, brand development and organisational reputation management.

As a member of the Pro Vice-Chancellor's senior leadership team, the Director shares collective responsibility for the success of the wider reach and reputation portfolio. The three Directors in this portfolio (International, Marketing and Communications, and External Engagement and Advancement) have closely connected remits and are expected to work together as a single team. Together they will deliver a unified strategy for growth in recruitment, income and reputation through shared objectives, collaborative leadership and collective accountability for outcomes.

Main accountabilities and responsibilities:

Brand and Reputation Strategy

- Set and lead the strategy for the University's brand and institutional reputation, positioning the University proactively rather than reactively wherever its reputation is at stake. Play an integral role in shaping the

University's ongoing approach to external creative and brand support.

- Establish a clear, coordinated institutional position on what the University stands for, and get ahead of how that story is told. Ensure consistency across every audience and channel, not solely those used for student recruitment.
- Act as the senior voice on brand and reputation matters. Advise the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive colleagues on the reputational implications of institutional decisions.

Marketing

- Lead an integrated marketing function. Ensure campaigns and messaging are consistent, evidence-led and effective across all channels.
- Develop a strong, distinctive proposition for home student recruitment. This needs its own dedicated plan.

Communications and Media Relations

- Lead the University's external communications and media relations. Establish a proactive, well-planned approach that gets ahead of the news agenda.
- Build genuine, well-managed relationships with journalists and media contacts, ensuring the University's research,

achievements and stories are actively and confidently promoted.

- Establish a robust issues management and crisis communications capability. The University needs to respond to sensitive or reputational issues quickly and calmly, with a clear line of sight to senior leadership.
- Set the standard for internal communications. Staff and students should hear about institutional change and decisions clearly and in good time, not through the corridor or the rumour mill.
- Lead student communications specifically, ensuring students receive clear, timely and consistent information about institutional decisions, changes and matters that affect their experience, delivered through channels that work for them.
- Lead the transformation of the University's website and wider digital experience, including social media strategy and channels, ensuring they reflect the University's refreshed brand, enhance institutional reputation, support recruitment and stakeholder engagement objectives.
- Bring visible improvement to the University's current communications function. Addressing this is a priority for the postholder in the first year.

Role profile (cont.)

Admissions

- Take responsibility for home student recruitment and the wider admissions function. Reimagine processes rather than simply refining what already exists.
 - Bring a customer-focused approach to admissions, viewed through the lens of the student journey, ensuring applicants have a clear, well-communicated experience with realistic and consistently met turnaround times.
 - Use data on applications, rejections and conversion to drive continuous improvement. Work with the team to ensure a compliance-first mindset supports recruitment growth.
 - Build and lead a team with strong operational admissions expertise. Your own background does not need to cover every specialism personally.
- As a member of the Pro Vice-Chancellor's senior team, share collective responsibility for the success of the wider portfolio. This is a leadership team, not a set of independent business units. Directors are expected to work across their areas of distinct accountability to unlock the greater potential of GCU together, and to be judged on that collective outcome as much as their own.
 - Be responsible for driving institutional marketing, communications, brand and reputation, bringing pace and clarity to a wide-ranging portfolio that demands a high level of cross-university collaboration, particularly within the team of Directors, but also more widely.

Team Leadership and Collective Responsibility

- Build a high-performing, commercially minded marketing, communications, recruitment and admissions function. Maintain a strong on-campus presence to support close collaboration across the University.



Person specification

Essential Criteria

- A strong track record in strategic marketing and/or communications leadership. Clear evidence of building or significantly strengthening institutional brand and reputation.
- Proven experience of leading proactive media relations and issues management, with a track record of shaping external coverage rather than just responding to it.
- Commercially minded, with the confidence to set direction and hold a broad portfolio to account, including areas outside personal specialism, and to work collaboratively as part of a senior team with shared, collective accountability for the wider portfolio.
- Experience of leading through a significant brand or reputation change, and of working effectively with external creative or brand partners.
- Strong leadership skills, with the ability to build and develop a team that includes specialist admissions and recruitment expertise.
- Willingness and ability to be based on campus, in recognition of the importance of visible leadership and close cross-team collaboration.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of home student recruitment and admissions, either directly or through leading teams responsible for them.
- Experience gained outside higher education, where this has included leading brand, reputation or communications strategy at a comparable level.
- Familiarity with the Scottish or wider UK higher education sector.
- Experience of sponsoring or line managing an alumni relations or fundraising function, even where this did not form a core part of a previous role.
- Established media contacts and relationships relevant to the higher education or public sector landscape.

Key Relationships

- The Director of Marketing and Communications reports to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, International and Marketing. Key working relationships include the Director of International, the Director of External Engagement and University Advancement, the University's external brand and design partners, academic Deans and Heads of School, and the Students' Union.



How to Apply

All applications must include:

- A full curriculum vitae/resume
- Quoting the role reference number: Director of Marketing and Communications: **A042504**
- A covering letter highlighting the aspects of the job description and GCU that particularly attract you to the post (Microsoft Word document)
- Contact details for three referees. These will not be contacted without your permission. (References should validate a minimum period of six years employment)
- A completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form (which you will be redirected to once you have submitted your application) *

Right to work checks

If you are successfully shortlisted, our partner, Yoti, will contact you to complete an online right to work check. This is a quick and secure process, ensuring that all necessary legal requirements are met before proceeding further in the recruitment process.

Monitoring*

One of Alumni Global's and GCU's objectives is to ensure that its workforce is reflective of the local community and therefore we actively encourage applications from under-represented groups. So that we can successfully achieve these aims, while it is not mandatory, we would encourage every applicant to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form so that we can measure the effectiveness of our efforts. The Recruiting Manager does not have access to the Monitoring Information Sections of the application form at any stage of the process and the information provided will be kept entirely confidential.

For a confidential discussion on this role please contact:

- Rabiya Ali, Principal Researcher, on Rabiya.ali@alumniglobal.com or +44 7421533671 or
- Owen Francis, Director, on owen.francis@alumniglobal.com or +447387 022 263

Candidate adjustment

If you require any reasonable adjustments to be made as part of the recruitment process please can you advise us so that we can ensure this is accommodated.

Key milestones

- Closing Date: 27 November 2026
- Final Interview: w/c 14 December 2026

For further information

Visit www.alumniglobal.com/job/gcu

Apply now

https://alumniglobal.formstack.com/forms/alumni_apply



