

GUIDE TO



GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES



EVERYTHING YOU
NEED TO KNOW TO
HELP YOU IDENTIFY
YOUR SKILLS, AND
GET AHEAD WHEN
APPLYING FOR
GRADUATE JOBS.



University
of Glasgow

WWW.GLASGOW.AC.UK/ATTRIBUTES



WHY DID YOU COME TO UNIVERSITY?

Before you begin this booklet, take a moment to consider your motivations for coming to the University of Glasgow. Did you come just for a certificate? This guide is about your personal development at the University of Glasgow, both in the classroom and in everything else you do during your time here.

Below you'll find some quotes from University of Glasgow students when faced with the same question - why did they come to university?

"I've always wanted to become someone who could have some impact on the world and make a change."

"I love doing research - pushing the boundaries of what we know."

"I didn't want to just go straight into a job when I left school, I wanted to experience something different."

"I just want to learn stuff, learn more. I don't feel smart enough, so that's why."

"It just really opens up your mind and you learn more about yourself - you develop things you never thought you would develop."

"It opens up the world to you."

"People say that your university years are the best of your life, I wanted to find out if they really mean it. So far, it's like nothing I've experienced before."

INTRODUCTION



Everyone knows that graduates are some of the most highly employable individuals in the modern workforce – they get the best jobs at the best companies, and progress quickly through the ranks. It's no wonder that the number of people choosing to study at university is increasing all the time.

But the large number of new graduates every summer can also seem a cause for concern – after all, if everyone has a degree, how can you set yourself apart from the pack? Thousands of students graduate each year from Glasgow alone – what will make your experience unique?

As a future graduate of the University of Glasgow you'll hold a qualification that can catch an employer's eye, but it's up to you to convince them that you've got the skills to match. This guide will help you to take the first steps in thinking about what you have to offer.



PROFILE:

Name: Elspeth Coates

Job Title: Management Intern

Company: John Lewis

Degree: BA Primary Education

Year of Graduation: 2013

Extracurricular Activities:

Cecilian Society, Music Club, GSP, SRC Council, Club 21, Employability Events



What are the most important skills and abilities you developed as a student?

University gave me the chance to mix with a broad set of people which proved particularly useful when I was required to work within, and manage a fairly diverse team. University also made me much more reflective, and this was very important during my internship as I was able to reflect on my performance when working on tasks. I developed many skills and abilities that proved particularly relevant during my internship with John Lewis.

How did your time at Glasgow help you to develop these skills?

I tried to ensure that I engaged in a variety of different experiences, both with regards to my learning and outwith academic studies. I made use of the fantastic services on offer from the Careers Service, and events which give students the chance to think about employability. Group work activities within my course helped to develop a lot of skills, as did becoming actively involved in clubs and societies. I also took part in the College of Social Science's Graduate Skills Programme.

What advice would you give about how best to spend your time at university?

Get involved in everything you can. It's very important to make the most of your time here. It is important that you focus on your academic studies, but also find time to fit in extra-curricular activities – it shows that you can manage your time effectively and aren't afraid to get stuck in. These are two factors which proved hugely beneficial for me. Ensure that what you are doing develops you as a person – play to your strengths and be aware of the various skills you are developing.

NOT WHAT YOU'VE LEARNT, BUT HOW YOU'VE LEARNT IT



Studying for a degree is hard work whatever your discipline, and whether you realise it or not, you'll have picked up some incredibly useful skills and abilities along the way.

Employers often comment that modern graduates don't know how to present their experiences in the best possible light. Can you? Have you ever stopped to think about the value of what you do at university?

Essay Writing.

Essays develop all sorts of skills including critical thinking, creativity, and written communication.

Sports Involvement.

Participating in individual and team sports builds leadership and team working skills.

Meeting Deadlines.

Handing in work on time illustrates the ability to prioritise tasks and manage your time effectively.

Club/Society Management.

Taking a role in a society demonstrates confidence, organisation and interpersonal skills.

Tutorial Presentations.

Delivering talks to groups shows the ability to communicate clearly and present your ideas confidently.

Part time Work.

Working while studying can evidence personal organisation and commercial awareness.

Group Work.

Group work offers the chance to gain teamwork skills like negotiation, compromise and cooperation.

Volunteer Work.

Volunteering demonstrates dedication, time management and civic-mindedness.



SO, WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

With a little thought, you'll see that almost everything you can do at university is designed to help you develop useful skills, abilities and personal qualities - elements of yourself that you might never have discovered had you not come to Glasgow.

These benefits of university education extend well beyond graduation for our students: we refer to these collectively as graduate attributes.

Transferable graduate attributes form the basis of your future success - whether you want to stand out in the eyes of a particular employer, make a difference in your local community or travel the world.

The University has consulted with its staff, students and graduate employers to develop the University of Glasgow graduate attributes matrix - a representation of the essential skills, qualities and abilities that a well-rounded graduate should possess. You can find the matrix towards the back of this guide - take a look and think about which of the skills listed you have developed and which you need to focus on in the remainder of your time here.

Graduate attributes are the academic abilities, personal qualities and transferable skills which all students will have the opportunity to develop as part of their University of Glasgow experience.



"Be open-minded - be willing to get out of your comfort zone for sure."



DO GOOD GRADES REALLY MATTER?

University degrees are more common now than ever before. A good classification is still something to be proud of, but as the pool of potential employees grows, graduate recruiters are increasingly looking for broader evidence of your potential.

As a graduate, you have much more to offer than your degree parchment. While some degrees are strongly vocational in nature, the majority are not directly connected to any particular job field or sector. A first class degree might impress an employer, but it doesn't actually provide them with any proof that you'll be able to do the job they're offering.

Whatever your degree classification, you'll need to demonstrate to an employer that you possess the skills and competencies they require. If you did well in your degree, you'll have examples of where you exhibited these attributes within your academic work.

Equally, bad grades aren't the end of the world. If you've used your time at university effectively, you should be able to draw on your other experiences and reassure recruiters that you have what it takes to make a successful, positive and adaptable addition to their team.

Grades matter, but they don't define you. Think about all that you have to offer – and use the graduate attributes matrix towards the back of this guide to ensure you're not selling yourself short.



"I think my parents were initially a little disappointed that I didn't get the degree they were expecting - they never really understood why I was involved in extracurricular activities. But when I applied for jobs, I had so much to talk about in interviews, and a CV with more than just grades on it, which helped get me the job I wanted. They were surprised it was as easy as it was for me to find a job despite my degree."

PROFILE:

Name: Will Clayton

Job Title: Project Engineer

Company: Risktec Solutions Ltd

Degree: BSc Statistics

Year of Graduation: 2009

Extracurricular Activities:
Hockey Club



What are the most important skills and abilities you developed as a student?

The skills I acquired from my degree course were invaluable to my job as they helped me approach problems analytically; however, these skills were not the most important – this would have to be the personable elements I had gained throughout my years at uni. This was a fundamental reason why I got my job in the first place – my boss said it himself, it was how easy and approachable I was, and how confident I was at proving that I could perform the role.

How did your time at Glasgow help you to develop these skills?

I joined the Hockey Club in the first week of university. Although there was a focus on developing a successful club in sporting terms, the other key goal was to have fun, through social events involving both male and female teams. It was a great way to meet new people and it made me come out of my shell a lot more. This spurred me on to become more involved in the running of the club by being on the committee, becoming treasurer and then social convenor for the club. It was hard work but it gave me a sense of responsibility.

What advice would you give about how best to spend your time at university?

The first thing I would say is to join a club. It doesn't have to be sports if you're not into it – there's something for everyone. If you want, you can try for a position of responsibility within the club - and develop skills to help gain employment. You should never forget the main reason you're at university is to study, but it may just be your extracurricular activities that give you the edge in getting that all-important job!



KEEPING TRACK... ..

It can be hard to keep track of everything you've learnt while at University – first year seems like a lifetime ago by the time you get to your finals. To help, the University gives all students access to two key tools – Mahara and the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).

Mahara is the University's electronic portfolio software. It's a great place to keep a reflective blog, build a CV, and upload examples of your work into a portfolio that others can view online. You can log into Mahara through Moodle.

The Higher Education Achievement Report is an extended form of the traditional degree transcript. All Glasgow graduates receive their HEAR alongside their degree parchment. The HEAR is an automated record all of your main achievements during your time as a student – not just your formal curriculum and marks, but your extra-curricular accomplishments such the clubs and societies you led, the internships you undertook, awards you won and more.

Both Mahara and HEAR make it easier than ever to reflect upon and demonstrate the value of your student experience – particularly when applying for jobs or postgraduate courses. Visit the graduate attributes website for more information.

PROFILE:

Name: Dawn Pike
Job Title: Library Assistant
Company: University of Glasgow
Degree: MA & M.LITT
Year of Graduation: 2009, 2011
Extracurricular Activities:
SRC Nightline



What are the most important skills and abilities you developed as a student?

My time as a student and volunteer at the university enabled me to develop excellent interpersonal skills, the ability to be an active and effective team member, confidence in leadership, research skills, creative thinking, problem solving and time management. I use these every day as a graduate trainee working in a busy customer service environment. The nature of the job role requires you to be a flexible team member, rotating between a customer service role and using creative thinking.

How did your time at Glasgow help you to develop these skills?

Most were developed and enhanced through my voluntary work with the SRC Nightline service, which provides a listening and information service to all students. Nightline required me to converse with a wide range of people, which greatly enhanced my interpersonal and active listening skills. I also served as a Nightline committee member, meaning I was responsible for promotion of the service, organising meetings and training for new volunteers. The responsibility and experience I gained is something I could not have gained from my academic work alone and it taught me how to effectively manage my time whilst increasing my confidence.

What advice would you give about how best to spend your time at university?

I would advise everyone to get involved in extracurricular activities. Obviously your academic course should be your main focus, but your time at university is much more than a just a degree. Volunteering allows you to help out a cause close to your heart whilst gaining invaluable work experience, real responsibility and the chance to make great friends. Extracurricular activities both complement and enhance the skills you gain from your academic course.

USING THE GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES MATRIX

On the following pages you'll find the University of Glasgow's graduate attributes matrix – a model of the desirable skills, qualities and abilities that an ideal graduate should possess. During your time at the University, you will have the chance to develop all ten of the graduate attributes through your course and the extracurricular opportunities open to you.

While defining these attributes, the University discovered that staff, students and employers articulated them in different ways dependent on context. To help you to recognise your skills whatever the situation, each attribute is described in three 'dimensions' – roughly corresponding to your studies, your personal life and professional settings.

The graduate attributes matrix is designed to support individual reflection and planning for your personal development. When looking at the matrix, it may help you to consider these questions:

- Do you feel confident that you have developed this skill?
- Can you provide an evidenced example that demonstrates this?
- If not, what could you do during the remainder of your time at Glasgow to ensure you have an opportunity to develop and demonstrate it?

Graduate employers use their application process to determine whether you can evidence these sorts of high-level graduate attributes – if you can demonstrate that you possess each one, you will show yourself to be a very strong candidate for almost any graduate job.



PLEASE
TURN
OVER



UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

| ATTRIBUTE | ACADEMIC DIMENSION |
|---|--|
| SUBJECT SPECIALIST | I understand and respect the values, principles, methods and limitations of my discipline(s). |
| INVESTIGATIVE | I am intellectually curious and engage in the pursuit of new knowledge and understanding. |
| INDEPENDENT & CRITICAL THINKER | I can identify, define and assess complex issues and ideas in a researchable form. |
| RESOURCEFUL & RESPONSIBLE | I am experienced in self-directed learning and authentic research-led enquiry. |
| EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR | I can articulate complex ideas with respect to the needs and abilities of diverse audiences. |
| CONFIDENCE | I can defend my ideas in dialogue with peers and challenge disciplinary assumptions. |
| ADAPTABILITY | I have experience of multi- and/or inter-disciplinary learning in an internationally renowned institution. |
| EXPERIENCED COLLABORATOR | I engage with the scholarly community and respect others' views and perspectives. |
| ETHICAL & SOCIAL AWARENESS | I consider and act upon the ethical, social and global responsibilities of my actions. |
| REFLECTIVE LEARNER | I can use feedback productively to reflect on my work, achievements and self-identity. |

PERSONAL DIMENSION

I possess a breadth and depth of knowledge within my disciplinary area(s).

I am able to locate, analyse and synthesise information from a variety of sources and media.

I exercise critical judgement in evaluating sources of information and constructing meaning.

I am a motivated, conscientious and self-sufficient individual capable of substantial independent work .

I present my ideas clearly and concisely in high quality written and spoken English.

I possess excellent interpersonal and social skills fostered within an internationalised community.

I can respond flexibly and adapt my skills and knowledge to excel in unfamiliar situations.

I am experienced in working in groups and teams of varying sizes and in a variety of roles.

I welcome the richness of multi-cultural and international experiences, opportunities and ways of thinking.

I set aspirational goals for continuing personal, professional and career development.

TRANSFERABLE DIMENSION

I possess discipline-relevant professional skills, knowledge and competencies.

I am able to investigate problems and provide effective solutions.

I apply creative, imaginative and innovative thinking and ideas to problem solving.

I manage my performance to meet expectations and demonstrate drive, determination, and accountability.

I communicate clearly and confidently, and listen and negotiate effectively with others.

I demonstrate enthusiasm, leadership and the ability to positively influence others.

I demonstrate resilience, perseverance and positivity in multi-tasking, dealing with change and meeting new challenges.

I conduct myself professionally and contribute positively when working in a team.

I have a practical and contemporary knowledge of relevant professional, ethical and legal frameworks.

I can identify and articulate my skills, knowledge and understanding confidently, and in a variety of contexts.

WHERE DO I START?



If you want to begin developing your graduate attributes and learn more about presenting yourself as a unique, interesting individual, there are plenty of people and services who can help:

Academic Staff

Talk to your lecturers and your adviser for help in identifying your strengths and weaknesses, and to learn more about opportunities to get involved and add to your experience. They can help you to make more informed choices about how to use your time effectively.

The SRC

The SRC provide all sorts of exciting opportunities and avenues for students to develop their graduate attributes, including volunteering, clubs and societies, working for the student media and joining the council's vast network of student representatives.

Careers Service

The Careers Service can advise you on how best to present your experiences to employers, and they also provide a wide range of developmental opportunities such as work placements, skills workshops, alumni mentoring and help setting up a business.

GUSA, GUU and QMU

The University of Glasgow is fortunate to have not one, but four different student organisations including the SRC. Each boasts a range of affiliated clubs and opportunities to demonstrate your potential through serving on their committees and elected councils.

Friends and Other Students

Find out what your friends and fellow students are involved in. Take advantage of the advice and experience of those in the years above you, or even postgraduate students studying the same subjects as you.





USEFUL LINKS

WWW.

The University of Glasgow Careers Service

For: employment and job hunting advice, business start-up guidance, internship opportunities...

www.glasgow.ac.uk/careers

The Students' Representative Council

For: clubs and societies, volunteering, student media, student representation...

www.glasgowstudent.net

The Student Learning Service

For: effective learning techniques, researcher skills development, revision tips...

www.glasgow.ac.uk/sls

The Graduate Attributes Student Website

For: graduate attributes resources, case studies, info about your HEAR...

www.glasgow.ac.uk/attributes



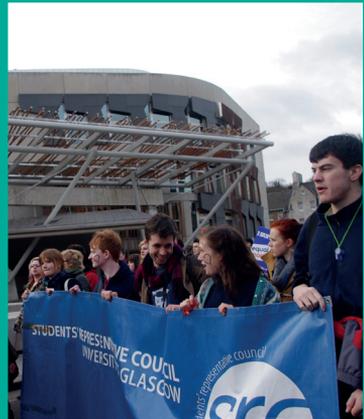


University
of Glasgow

GUIDE TO GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

Everyone knows that graduates are highly desirable employees, but have you ever considered why? This guide will help you to understand how your experiences as a student are preparing you to make your mark in the workplace and beyond after graduation - and how you can more effectively present your skills and experience to help you on your way.

This booklet was co-developed by a team of students undertaking a research project into the development of students' graduate attributes at the University of Glasgow. All quotations in this booklet are taken from interviews conducted with Glasgow staff and students as part of the project.



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