

The **BIG** Partnership

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### Rewards for Recycling

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Recycle ... and be rewarded.

That's the concept behind 'reverse vending' machines that have been officially launched at Glasgow Caledonian University.

Cups, cans and bottles can be recycled in the machines which offer staff and students discount vouchers as an incentive.

The University is one of nine companies and organisations throughout Scotland piloting the 'Recycle and Reward' scheme, part of the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Scotland programme, and the only one in Glasgow.

Encore Hospitality Services, a subsidiary of Cordia LLP which provides catering services at GCU, has been awarded £90,000 by Zero Waste Scotland to install six machines on campus.

Located in the Refectory and Café Roots, both sites have a set of three machines - a Flex Interactive to collect crushed cans; a Flex Interactive to collect and crush PET soft drinks bottles and an EcoVend to collect paper coffee cups.

The machines recognise the composition of the products which are flattened and sorted into a designated bin which saves up to 15 times the volume compared to a non-compacting unit.

Every user will receive a voucher for 5p for each item recycled which can be redeemed in Encore's catering outlets on campus.

Frank McCabe, Encore's catering manager at Glasgow Caledonian University, said: "We cater for 17,000 students and 1500 staff at Caledonian, who on a daily basis use 2000 paper cups, 1500 plastic bottles and 500 aluminium cans.

"In this pilot project, we aim to make all of our customers aware that reducing waste and recycling will mean less going to landfill. To help with that, the reverse vending machines will give rewards.

"Our research suggests that 80% of our population will take advantage of our reward, which is substantial. For every bottle, can and cup which is put through the machine you receive a voucher for 5p, which can be redeemed in any of our outlets on campus. By promoting these benefits we hope customers will become increasingly committed to recycling."

Frank says they have two key messages: The first is a financial motivation - there is money in that waste for customers who take part. This is not a deposit that it is being returned, it is a genuine reward that can be spent on food and drinks. The second is that we must recycle for the sake of the planet."

Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment, said: "Years ago, we thought nothing of taking our empty bottles back to the shops with the added bonus of getting cash back in our pocket. Now, thanks to modern technology, we are breathing new life into this traditional approach."

"By offering customers incentives such as vouchers, I hope we can encourage more people to recycle on the go. Even small steps like recycling more drinks containers can have a big impact on our environment."

Iain Gulland, director of Zero Waste Scotland, said it's important to change attitudes towards waste: "It's vital that we consider fresh approaches to boosting recycling rates and capturing the value of materials which would otherwise be sent straight to landfill.

"Through this pilot, we want to assess the impact of this approach which has proved successful around the world, including in Germany, South Australia and Scandinavia."

Nine 'Recycle and Reward' schemes will be piloted at 14 locations including retailers, event venues, schools and colleges until September this year.

