We are
Aberystwyth
University.
But you can call us Aber

Welcome to our informal guide about university:
applying, studying, living and leaving.
We want to explain how it all works and why it’s so exciting –
and give you a glimpse of what life might be like when you get here.
Your future starts here.

The second I arrived in Aberystwyth for the Open Day, I fell in love with both the town and the University. The idea of spending three years living by the sea in this glorious, bustling bubble in the middle of the Welsh countryside was all so warm and friendly too and I immediately knew it was the place for me.

Arfon Rowlands, BSc Sports and Exercise Science
Subject areas

University study opens up whole new worlds of inquiry, allowing you to be guided by your interests and a wide selection of subjects and modules, and the expertise of world-renowned research and teaching. Many of the subjects will no doubt sound familiar to you, but the range of what you can do with them is only limited by your imagination.

▲ Art
The School of Art is housed in a magnificent Grade II-listed building where history and tradition meets contemporary practice. Here, art is made and debated, exhibited and experienced. You will become immersed in artistic and curatorial practices and art historical research.

▲ Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences
Aberystwyth has a long-established reputation for teaching and research in Agriculture. We are recognised internationally for our plant breeding programmes, as well as our research expertise in animal and crop science. Our Equine Science students benefit from our liveries, Olympic-size indoor arena, round pen, horse walker, weighbridge, solarium, laboratories and so much more.

▲ Business
The Aberystwyth Business School is one of the premier institutions to study subjects like Tourism Management, Marketing and our pioneering Business and Climate Change programme. Meanwhile, our accounting, finance and economics courses are accredited by most professional bodies.

▲ Education
Our education and childhood studies courses will guarantee you an interview for our PGCE teacher training courses.

▲ English and Creative Writing
Described by our students as their second family, the entire department is a tight-knit, warm and supportive place to start your next chapter.

▲ Computer Science
From developing cameras for use in space missions to developing better ways of screening cancers, our research has contributed to some of the most important events in history.
▲ History
Aberystwyth is an ideal place to study History because of our commitment to small-group, research-led teaching, and our unrivalled archival resources.

▲ Information Studies
Established in 1964, the Department of Information Studies provides world-class education for those working or planning a career in libraries, archives, and the fast-developing world of digital information.

▲ International Politics
With strands covering intelligence and security, climate change and global development, our International Politics programmes provide an outstanding environment in which to study the most significant issues and concepts that shape politics and international relations today.

▲ Law and Criminology
All our Law degrees enable graduates to pursue the Bar Professional Training Course or the Legal Practice Course. They also provide you with a foundation for the purposes of taking the Solicitors’ Qualifying Examination. In Criminology, you’ll study the reasons people commit crime, its impact on its victims and how it can be prevented.

▲ Mathematics
Aberystwyth’s Mathematics courses are accredited by the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications. Study here and you will learn from enthusiastic and active researchers who specialise in pure mathematics, applied mathematics and statistics.

▲ Modern Languages
Aberystwyth is one of only a handful of universities in the UK that offers students the opportunity to combine the study of up to three languages. A year abroad will ensure that you’ll also be fully immersed in the culture of your chosen language, providing you with insights, knowledge and confidence.

▲ Nursing
We offer BSc Adult Nursing and BSc Mental Health Nursing courses. Our Nursing courses offer a bespoke and intimate learning experience. The Healthcare Education centre is newly established and houses the Clinical Skills Unit, a state-of-the-art simulation suite where you can learn clinical skills in a safe and supportive environment.

▲ Physics
Our physicists are some of the UK’s leading experts and are involved in projects ranging from engineering new materials and instruments to planetary missions and ground-breaking studies of the Sun’s activity.

▲ Psychology and Sociology
You’ll be taught by active researchers whose expertise includes developmental psychology, perception, music psychology, language and bilingualism, biological psychology and gender.

▲ Sport and Exercise Science
The expertise of our staff allows us to provide a multidisciplinary understanding of sport, exercise, and human health for the 21st century. We’ve worked with everyone from – recreational athletes to those who have competed at European and world championship level.

▲ Theatre, Film and Television Studies
Through innovative practical work, challenging scholarly enquiry and a diverse range of opportunities for work experience, our students develop the skills that prepare them for a variety of careers in the creative industries and far beyond.

▲ Veterinary Science
Aberystwyth School of Veterinary Science delivers the BVSc Veterinary Science degree in collaboration with the Royal Veterinary College. Our Bachelor of Veterinary Science degree offers you a chance to train at not one, but two world-leading institutions.

▲ Welsh and Celtic Studies
Aberystwyth offers unique opportunities for its students to learn Breton, Irish, Scottish Gaelic, and Welsh – from beginners to confident and fluent speakers. Aberystwyth is the home of Professional Welsh, and this sector-leading scheme is popular with students and employers who seek a ‘gold standard’ in the language.

▲ Geography
One of the largest and most experienced departments of its kind in the UK. Our Geography Environmental Science programme is accredited by the Royal Geographical Society.

Did you know...
65% of all oats used in the UK have been developed by researchers in the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS)
Research

The research a university conducts is a really important consideration when choosing where to study. This is because the quality of the research has a huge impact on the education they can offer you. If you go on to postgraduate study, you’ll also have the chance to make your own contribution to that research, literally helping shape the way the world thinks about the subjects you love.

Aberystwyth has a diverse research portfolio. Our researchers are at the forefront of innovation and the impact of our research has far-reaching international, national and local benefits.
We are Aber.

The only university to be awarded University of the Year for Teaching Quality across two consecutive years

(Good University Guide, The Times and Sunday Times 2018 and 2019)
We invest...

£40.5m in research
The Aberystwyth Innovation and Enterprise Campus provides groundbreaking research in biotechnology, biological science and more.

£72m in residential development
Fferm Penglais provides accommodation for 1,000 students in 100 high-quality studio flats, only 10 minutes from the University’s main campus.

In September 2020, the University opened its doors to welcome a new generation of students to Pantycelyn: the University’s iconic Welsh-medium hall of residence.

The refurbishment of Pantycelyn provides first-class en-suite and catered accommodation for 200 students.

£20m in facilities
As the birthplace of university scholarship in Wales, the University has exciting plans to restore the Old College to its former glory.
When you start looking at universities, you’re going to hear a lot of unfamiliar terms, even about the kind of degree you might want to study or the ‘path’ you want to go on.

At Aber, we offer all kinds of degrees, both at undergraduate and postgraduate level. You can study full or part time, and you can also study two subjects as part of the same degree, with equal or different focus on each. You can spend a year working for the kind of employer you might go on to have a career with, and even spend a year studying at a university abroad!

### Single honours degrees

If you’re most interested in just one subject, this might be the right path for you. A single honours degree course means you’ll study just one subject, like Biology or History, and graduate in it, usually after three years.

### Combined honours degrees

Yes, you guessed it! A combined honours degree will see you studying two subjects. They don’t necessarily have to be related or even from the same discipline! It’s a great way to expose yourself to more and different types of knowledge, ways of learning and of thinking about the world.

You can study each subject equally (joint honours), or you can choose to focus more on one (your ‘major’) than the other (your ‘minor’). Combined honours degrees are designed to be flexible, so throughout your course you’ll be able to decide for yourself how it is structured.
The department made sure we were ready for working in industry by hosting many events aimed at practising applications, assessment centres and picking up skills. They also encourage students to do a placement year in industry - I worked at the Walt Disney Company Europe headquarters in London!

Natalia Miller, Computer Science

**Integrated year in industry / study abroad**

Some of our degrees give you the chance to spend a year working for a company in the industry your degree is focused on, or study at one of our many partnered universities globally. This is a great opportunity to get some practical experience, to see if a particular type of work is for you, to start making professional contacts, or to immerse yourself in another culture.

An integrated year in industry / studying abroad turns your degree into a four-year programme. Our students come back from their year in industry / study abroad refreshed, newly focused and inspired to take the next steps on their academic and professional journeys.

**Welsh-language courses**

If you’re from a Welsh-speaking background, you might want to study for all or part of your degree in Welsh. Whether you’re fluent or a learner, there are courses where modules can be taken in Welsh or English, meaning that your university study can help you to brush up on your language skills even if you’re mainly studying in English.

99% of graduates who studied in Welsh were in employment or further study just 6 months after graduation. *HESA, 2018*

There is demand for young professionals who can work bilingually, and salaries for such roles are higher on average.

We offer a range of scholarships for students studying in Welsh.

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**Why study in Welsh?**

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Global Opportunities

Aberystwyth’s Global Opportunities team offer an exciting range of options for you to go overseas as part of your degree: from short courses and volunteering opportunities in the summer, to a full semester or year abroad studying your chosen subject at one of our partner universities.

The University also offers a number of courses which include an integrated year studying abroad, enabling you to study at one of our European or international partner universities for one or two semesters during your third year, returning to Aberystwyth for your final year and graduation.

Reports have shown that students who study abroad are more attractive to employers and earn more than their peers. Take advantage of the opportunity of a lifetime while improving your critical skills by choosing to study abroad.

▲ Language students

Students who study one or more languages at Aberystwyth spend an additional year studying or working abroad. Time spent abroad improves fluency and confidence in the languages chosen and immerses students in the host culture.
Aber is a campus university. That means that wherever you go for your classes, our main campus, Penglais, is where you’ll study and socialise, and where many of you will sleep! It doesn’t matter whether you live on or off campus, though – Penglais is a stone’s throw from the centre of Aberystwyth and its historic seafront and some epic views.

We strive to provide everything you need for a happy and successful transition into university life, and the close-knit community that thrives at Penglais is at its heart. Penglais Campus is packed with facilities, societies and people all devoted to making your studies a success, keeping you healthy and active and ensuring your social life is exciting and vibrant.

Life on campus

Moving on from school or college is huge. Moving to a new town is even bigger. That’s why we built a campus that you’ll want to call home.
Study your way

University is about community, but it’s also about independence. Our range of study spaces will help find the balance that’s right for you.

At Aber we understand that, just as everyone learns differently, everyone studies differently too. That’s why our newly refurbished Hugh Owen Library is open 24/7, offering modern study spaces to use whenever is right for you. A dedicated Physical Sciences Library is also available, along with 800 open access computers spread across campus.

We’ve created dynamic study spaces across the entire campus, including informal student lounges (perfect for group work!), vending machines and comfortable seating. If you’re looking for a change of scenery, you can also access the National Library of Wales’ reading room, just next door to Penglais Campus.

Our Blackboard virtual learning environment gives you access to course material anywhere, anytime, and with free wi-fi across the entire campus, including halls of residence, you’ll always be connected!

Students’ Union

Aberystwyth University Students’ Union is a student-led organisation designed to support you through your entire university experience.

The Students’ Union (SU) is a vital part of any university – giving students a say in how the University is run and supporting them with free, impartial and confidential advice through its dedicated representatives. But at Aberystwyth the Students’ Union offers so much more besides; offering students a range of over 100 clubs and societies to connect them with like-minded members and lifelong friends.

The success of our SU is the students themselves, and during your university journey, you’ll have the chance to influence the way it is run through elections and the individual societies. And if there isn’t anything for you and your friends? That’s simple – the SU will give you all the tools you need to set up your own clubs and societies and help you to find your people.
The best thing about studying at Aberystwyth University was trying new things out of my comfort zone, such as playing basketball for the University, and making new friends, many whom I am still friends with today.

Carys Jones, BA International Relations

Sport and fitness

Go, Team Aber! The Students’ Union (SU) hosts over 100 sporting clubs and societies, meaning there’s something for everyone, whether you’re looking for martial arts like karate or Taekwondo, team sports like rugby and hockey, or something a little different, like street dancing, slacklining and ultimate frisbee.

If you’ve never thought of yourself as ‘sporty’ before, maybe one of our clubs can help you change your mind. SU clubs provide the perfect opportunity to pick up something new, boost your fitness, and meet people from outside of your bubble.

Team games not your thing? Our Sports Centre gives you the opportunity to train holistically, offering a gym, treadmills, a swimming pool, a sauna and weights rooms, including a female-only option. But you don’t have to go it alone – work up a sweat in HIIT, Yoga, Pilates or circuits classes, plus lots more.

Best of all, if you live in halls of residence, a platinum membership to the gym (inclusive of all classes, swimming pool and sauna) is included in your rent – helping you stay fit and focused.
The Arts Centre

The Aberystwyth University Arts Centre is one of the largest venues of its kind in Wales, and it plays host to all kinds of artistic and cultural events year-round. Some of these, like performances put on by our Creative Arts and Drama students, support grassroots theatre and celebrate new talent. Others include touring shows by bands, artists, dancers and theatre groups.

The Centre's cosy boutique cinema even plays host to film festivals, and regularly screens cult classics.

The Arts Centre offers:
- live music
- comedy
- theatre
- art exhibitions
- courses
- cafés
- a boutique cinema

Performances take place in the Centre’s 1,200-seat concert hall, its 300-seat theatre and the more intimate studio.

Societies

The Students’ Union (SU) is about bringing students together, with a particular focus on giving students from different courses and subject areas – whose paths might not otherwise cross – the chance to get to know each other.

Here are just a few of the many societies you can join:

**AberPride**

AberPride provides support for LGBTQ+ students, evening and sober socials, and campaigning events.

**Cartoon and Comic Society**

The University’s go-to place for anything related to superheroes, fandoms cartoons and pop culture, providing regular screenings and organising movie marathons at the nearby Commodore Cinema.

**Photography Society**

Acquire new skills or develop existing ones in this enthusiastic group of photographers and film-makers working with a range of technologies in workshops and location shoots.

**Law Society**

One of the oldest and largest societies at Aberystwyth, the Law Society offers networking events and textbook sales, organises law firm visits and open days and an annual Christmas Ball. Other subject societies are available!

Aber’s commitment to community is felt most strongly in our SU societies. These groups are run by students and for students, and there really is something for everyone!

Bursting with culture

Interested in art, culture, music and cinema? Aberystwyth has so much to offer – and much of it can be found right on campus!

having an arts centre on the doorstep was such a desirable addition too – I was able to experience a multitude of brilliant touring performances from across the UK!

Melissa Vagg, BA Drama & Theatre Studies and Scenography & Theatre Design
More than just ‘brain food’

Our restaurants and cafés offer quality, responsibly sourced food at affordable prices. We cater to all our students’ dietary needs, offering a wide range of vegetarian, vegan, halal, kosher meals, as well as options for students with food allergies and intolerances.

You can grab a Starbucks at several of our outlets, pick up snacks and treats at the Students’ Union (SU) shop or sit down to eat at the Arts Centre, IBERBach or in the SU’s own Nosh Da café.

And because university life is about more than just academic learning, we’ve put together a range of flexible meal plans that will help you learn how to budget for food shopping, maintain a healthy diet and survive on more than just pasta and pesto!

We’ve worked hard to make our food and drink concessions as ethical and sustainable as possible. Thanks to our University-wide campaign, Aberystwyth was the first university in the world to earn plastic-free status for all its outlets! We continue to work hard to find and develop new initiatives to minimise our impact on the environment.

All our students get 10% off food and hot drinks across all our outlets, and we offer a loyalty card for extra discounts too. You can pre-load money onto your student card – a great way to help manage that budget!), using our very own app to load and monitor credit.

Music at Aberystwyth

The Music Centre is here for all students. Whatever you’re studying, you can be part of a vibrant musical community in the heart of Aberystwyth.

At this precise moment, music provision at the University is on the threshold of an innovative and exciting era. Music provision at Aberystwyth brings town and gown together to work in varied ways as ensembles, orchestras, concert bands and choirs as well as in smaller, gatherings dedicated to particular instrument groups. The University offers rehearsal spaces and practice rooms to students and community members, groups and musical gatherings and there are opportunities for tuition, further development and performance and production at all levels. We are also thrilled to be able to offer Music Scholarships that provide the chance to practice a wide range of musical skills here at Aberystwyth and beyond. If you love music, in whatever form or fashion, we welcome you to enjoy it here with us at Aberystwyth.

Maybe you’re too busy to cook?
No problem – Nosh Da even delivers to all campus halls of residence!
Well-being is the centre of our world

We’re committed to making sure everyone feels welcome, safe and supported to participate in all parts of university life. It’s part of our mission statement to deliver inspirational education and research in a supportive environment, and we strive to treat the needs of all our students seriously and sensitively.

▲ Accessibility

Our accessibility advisers are committed to helping students with disabilities and learning differences. When considering what course to apply for, try to think about any elements that might present particular difficulties, or contact the department directly to ask if there’s anything you’re unsure about. Our accessibility advisers can help you with this too – just let us know how we can help you.

If possible, we recommend that you visit both Penglais Campus and your chosen department to find out about the support that might be available. Our team of accessibility advisers will be happy to help you at any stage during your application, and they can also:

- discuss a study needs assessment
- give advice on grants, like the Disabled Students’ Allowance or DSA
- arrange one-to-one study skills training and support workers
- provide additional help and support for care leavers.

▲ Peer mentoring

‘Signpost’ is our friendly and confidential scheme open to all new undergraduates, offering one-to-one advice to help you settle into university life.

▲ Nightline

Our independent listening service, Nightline, is our confidential helpline, email and instant messaging service, run by a team of trained students who can point you to useful services and resources – or just be there to listen.

▲ Applying to university

Finally, our well-being support isn’t limited to our existing students. We also want to help prospective students from all backgrounds feel welcome and supported, which is why we encourage you to contact our Admissions team if you need help with your university application.

They’ll be able to help explain the admissions process in more detail and explain the requirements and criteria for applications to our courses.

Applying to university can be a very daunting prospect, but we’re here to help! Contact ug-admissions@aber.ac.uk for more information.
We believe that creating an inclusive environment means providing everyone, no matter who they are, with equal access to opportunities, and removing cultural barriers in the form of discrimination and intolerance.

Professor Elizabeth Treasure, Vice-Chancellor

A community for everyone

At Aberystwyth we are proud of our close-knit community within the university and the town. Although we are relatively small, anything goes here. The student body includes a rich variety of people, cultures and beliefs.

Aberystwyth University is committed to a proactive and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture and diversity of values.

This commitment is underpinned by the University’s Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 which emphasises our commitment to inclusivity.

Examples of equalities initiatives that we have successfully implemented include:

• the ‘Red Box’ project – providing free menstrual products across campus for staff and students
• ‘All Our Trans Tomorrows’ conference series – a project shortlisted for three awards and received national media coverage
• seven years of Aberration LGBT Arts Events in collaboration with the Arts Centre and the Arts Council of Wales, including a tour that visited Cardiff, Caernarfon, Llandudno and the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol
• the ‘Diversifying Portraiture’ project for International Women’s Day, which was intended to be temporary but now is a permanent feature in the Visualisation Centre
• forums such as ‘Is Our University Too White?’, which led to staff and students being able to feed into executive level decision-making and strategy planning
• working across departments to create systems which allow staff and students to be known by ‘known as name’ by default, protecting staff and students from discriminatory treatment
• the creation of the ‘Women in Research Network’, now an integral feature of executive strategy
• the implementation of the Equality Champions Network
• staff BAME and LGBT networks.

As a student at Aberystwyth University, our inclusive and safe environment will give you a chance to try different things, make new friends but more importantly, be yourself.
Learning that lasts a lifetime

When you’re deciding which university to go to, it’s only natural to focus on the subject(s) you want to get a degree in. But don’t forget – universities can offer so much more!

You might call this extra-curricular learning; some say it’s ‘holistic’. But at Aber, we call it Lifelong Learning. After all, do we ever really stop learning?

Lifelong Learning courses can be studied in addition to your degree, offering higher education accredited courses that might complement your study, or take you in a new direction completely – giving you both a break and a fresh perspective.

▲ We offer additional courses in subjects like:

- Art and design
- Ecology and Conservation
- Photography
- Psychology

You can even earn a new language, including Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish!

Many of our Lifelong Learning courses are offered free of charge, and others are available to our students at low rates. These courses can mark you out as an individual, give you the edge over your competitors when applying for jobs, and open your mind to whole new ways of looking at the world.
Applying

Discover
You can learn all sorts of information about courses, accommodation, costs and university life in general on our website (and even in this guide!), or online.

Visit
Why not come along to an Open Day? Here you'll get to check out the University and the town for yourself. You'll meet lecturers, students and see all our amazing facilities, giving you a taste of what it might be like to spend the next few years here!

Apply
Once you know what you want to study, you can apply to us through UCAS. Just make sure you get your application in before the deadline.

Get ready
If you're invited to an interview, you'll find out from us via email. All the information about how to get here, what will happen and what you'll need to bring will be in the email, so you can focus on making the right impression.

Wait
We know it's tough, but once you've reached this stage, it's a waiting game. Admissions teams up and down the country work hard to process your applications as quickly as possible, and you'll be notified of any decisions through UCAS Track. Hang tight!

Decide
Once you've received responses from your chosen universities, you need to pick a 'firm' and an 'insurance' university. Your firm choice is the one you'll go to if you get the necessary grades. This is the perfect time to attend an Applicant Visiting Day, especially if you haven't been to campus before. You're going to love it!

Results
It's a big day, but hopefully you'll get the grades you need. Check UCAS Track to see whether you've been accepted by either of your final choices, but if you haven't, don't panic. Now is the time to get in touch with us, as we may have spaces available on similar programmes through Clearing.

Arrive
Well done – getting into university is a huge step! Arrival can be a bit disorienting: you have to move in to your accommodation, enrol on your course and make new friends! But don't worry, our staff and students are here to guide you every step of the way, and during Freshers' Week you'll be able to learn more about clubs and societies, find your way around campus and settle into this exciting new chapter of your life.
Making a statement

When you apply to university, you’ll have to write a personal statement. UCAS asks for 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text – this is roughly 600 words. This might sound like a lot, and it could be the first time you’ve written something like this, so it’s a great idea to plan ahead!

1. You only write one personal statement, which gets sent to all the universities you’re applying to, so don’t mention a particular university by name.

2. Find out about the courses you’re applying for: use information from websites, prospectuses and official social media accounts to find out what qualities universities want from you.

3. Ask yourself: how have your most recent studies prepared you for the course? What do you want to get out of studying for a degree?

4. What else makes you a good candidate for university? Think about jobs, placements, work experience, volunteering, and even your hobbies and interests.

5. Get specific: don’t waste words making general statements that could apply to anyone, or using ‘business-speak’. Give real examples from your life.

6. Make your points quickly and clearly, and don’t repeat yourself.

7. Think about the essays you write now: the best ones always have an introduction and a conclusion, and are well-structured in between. Use your conclusion to reinforce your application, not just to summarise it.

Do’s

- Show you’re interested
  Don’t just describe a course, tell us why you want to study it! Admissions tutors love enthusiasm.

- Give yourself plenty of time
  Set some deadlines for drafts way ahead of the last date to apply. Once you have your ideas down it’ll all feel much more manageable!

- Check, check and check again
  When you’ve finished, wait a day or so, then go back and read it again. Read it aloud, read it on paper, and ask friends and family to help spot typos and any bits that don’t make sense.

Dont’s

- Lie
  It sounds obvious, but a little ‘white lie’ here and there really will shine through.

- Copy
  The first rule of university is that all your work has to be your own. Start with your statement – remember, it’s supposed to be personal!

- Panic
  This might be your first time applying for something formally. But don’t worry – Admissions teams understand this, and we’ve all been there! Plan what you want to say, be proud of yourself and stay positive.
Courses

Our award-winning teaching is informed by our cutting edge research that feeds directly into our courses, helping you to uncover new skills and solve real world problems.

- Accounting & Finance
- Agriculture
- Animal & Aquatic Sciences
- Art & Photography
- Biochemistry & Genetics
- Biosciences
- Business & Management
- Computer Science
- Drama & Theatre
- Ecological Sciences
- Economics
- Education & Childhood Studies
- English & Creative Writing
- Film & Television
- Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences
- History
- Human Biology & Health
- Information & Library Studies
- Law & Criminology
- Marketing & Tourism
- Mathematics
- Modern Languages
- Nursing
- Physics
- Politics & International Relations
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Sport & Exercise Science
- Veterinary Science
- Welsh & Celtic Studies