PRIFYSGOL ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY

Department of Modern Languages

Undergraduate studies in

Modern Languages

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THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES GOOD UNIVERSITY GUIDE 2026 UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Important information

The programme information published in this brochure was correct at time of going to print (October 2026) and may be subject to change. Prospective students are advised to check the definitive programme information, including entry requirements, that is available on our website before making an application, to ensure that the programme meets their needs.

Welcome to the Department of Modern Languages

We are a dynamic, welcoming community and your successful development is our main focus. We rank 2nd for Quality of Feedback and 4th for Quality of Teaching in the subject of Languages and Linguistics in the Guardian League Table 2027, while in the Complete University guide, we rank within the top 4 in the UK for Student Satisfaction for all four languages we teach.

At the Department of Modern Languages, we offer a range of courses in French, Spanish, German and Italian, either as single or joint honours degree programmes. We are one of only a handful of universities in the UK offering you the opportunity to combine the study of three languages, even from beginners' level. You can also combine your language study with a wide range of other subjects such as International Relations, Law, Business, Marketing, English, Creative Writing, Drama and Theatre, History, and Mathematics.

Across the four years of your BA in Modern Languages, you will develop into a professional linguist, graduating with high-level proficiency in your language(s) of choice. We place particularly strong emphasis on employability and the value of developing language skills for professional life. As a result of our targeted work in this area, our graduates go on to successful careers in a wide range of settings across the globe.

Complementing your focused language study, you can choose to follow specialist option modules, designed to deepen your knowledge of national and transnational topics in society and culture. Our teaching is informed by our high-quality research, and our innovative approach to teaching and assessment makes language learning at Aberystwyth an engaging, empowering, and exciting experience for all our students.

The Year Abroad provides opportunities to become fully immersed in the languages and cultures you are studying. When you return to Aberystwyth for your final year as an undergraduate, you will be equipped with invaluable insights, knowledge, and confidence, that will make you an exceptionally valuable future employee with demonstrable skills and qualities that are highly prized in the workplace. We will support you throughout the experience, from preparing you for your time abroad to welcoming you all back to Aberystwyth, because we know that enabling our students to make the most of this central feature of our degrees ensures that they graduate as global citizens ready for the future.

We are delighted to invite you to visit us, and I look forward to welcoming you to the Department. Come and join us in our unique location in beautiful West Wales and let us tell you more about our degrees, and introduce you to our vibrant, close-knit, and welcoming community of lecturers, scholars and students.

Arrivederci / À très bientôt /
Hasta pronto / Bis bald,

Professor Louise Marshall, Head of School

My experience

as a language student at Aberystwyth...

Erykah Williams-McIntosh

"Growing up in Walsall, I always knew languages were my passion. I initially applied to university for French and English Literature, but upon arriving at Aberystwyth, I switched to French and Spanish within the first week. Although I was initially worried about my Spanish, the support from lecturers and friends quickly boosted my confidence, and I never looked back.

The teaching at Aberystwyth was exceptional. My lecturers were approachable, engaging, and supportive. Even after graduation, they remained invaluable resources whom I can always contact for advice and support. Film and Cultural Studies were my favourite modules, sparking a deep love for the subject which became the focus of my Master's dissertation, and would be my academic specialism if I decide to return to academia. Even courses I was initially doubtful about – such as Business French – turned out to be enjoyable, thanks to inspiring lecturers.

My Year Abroad, during the pandemic, was challenging but transformative. Studying at Sorbonne Université in Paris and Universidad de Córdoba in Spain allowed me to build lifelong friendships, immerse in new cultures, and gain the confidence to speak fluently. Aberystwyth's vibrant social scene—bonfires on the beach, nights at Pier, and lifelong friendships—also left lasting memories.

After earning a First-Class degree, I continued my studies with a Master's at the University of St Andrews. Since then, I've grown even more passionate about languages – wishing I'd also studied German at Aberystwyth, as so many friends spoke highly of it.

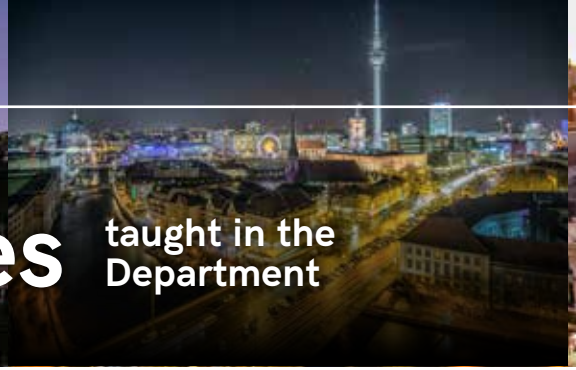
Today, I'm proud to work as a 'Black Queer and Thriving' Project Officer, using French, Spanish, and other languages more than English in my role. I also run a successful online tutoring business. Reflecting on my journey, I'm incredibly grateful for the teaching and experiences that have shaped me."

Carys Davies

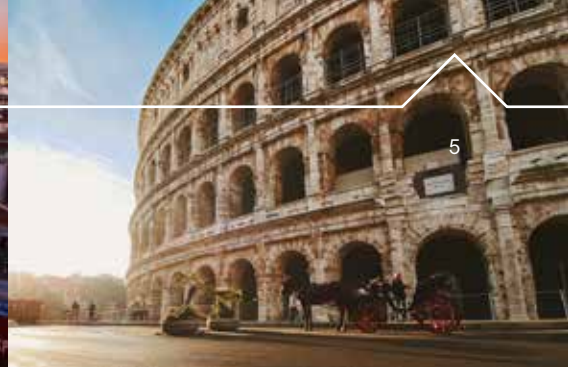
"Studying French and Spanish at Aberystwyth proved to be a life-changing experience that exceeded my expectations. I was instantly drawn to the Modern Languages department in Aberystwyth because of the passion and knowledge demonstrated by the lecturers. Not only did I develop my linguistic ability in French and Spanish, but I also deepened my understanding of Francophone and Hispanic cultures which is a credit to the department as they were extremely dedicated to supporting students during their studies. The close-knit community was a huge factor when choosing Aberystwyth, and this was proven to me during my studies as the lecturers would provide detailed feedback and were always happy to answer any questions.

The Year Abroad was undoubtably one of my personal highlights. I studied at the Université Bordeaux-Montaigne for the first semester and at the Universidad de Sevilla for the second. During my time in both universities, I studied translation which prompted me to want to choose translation as a pathway for Master's. Both Bordeaux and Sevilla were outstanding cities that were both rich with history and culture. I was able to fully immerse myself in the languages and culture as I visited Saint-Émilion, the wine capital of Bordeaux, several times and expanded my knowledge on wine culture. In Sevilla, I had the most amazing time experiencing the Semana Santa with my friends and going to the Feria de Abril, dancing flamenco with local people. I have made so many amazing friends and until this day we organise reunions, and have visited several countries together.

I couldn't have asked for a better student experience at Aberystwyth, so I returned for a Master's in Professional Translation Studies. I have translated some articles and even poetry from French and Spanish to Welsh. Thanks to contacts established between the two institutions, I will be taking up a teaching position at the University of Rennes for one year. Living in Brittany has always been a dream of mine, and I am very grateful for this opportunity."



Languages taught in the Department



French

French is hugely important in the world of international relations today. It is used in a large number of international institutions such as the United Nations, and it is the official language of 29 countries with 220 million native speakers.

Why study French at Aberystwyth University?

French is spoken across the globe as a native or second language by up to half a billion people. The French-speaking world extends across the globe from Europe to Africa, Asia and the Americas. French is more important than ever before and the ability to communicate in the language is an invaluable skill.

At Aberystwyth, studying French will enable you to develop your linguistic competencies further but at the same time explore and develop your knowledge of French culture, literature, art, film and the practical use of language in a business context. Our wide range of modules for you to choose from will develop your communication and analytical skills, which are highly desired by multinational organisations worldwide.

Upon completion of a four-year course in French, you will have acquired a high level of proficiency in the French language, as well as a critical understanding of key aspects of modern and contemporary French and Francophone culture.

German

German is the language of business and finance and is the most widely spoken language within the European Union.

Why study German at Aberystwyth University?

Language, culture and history are inseparable, and studying German at Aberystwyth University will show you that there is more to German culture, language and history than you might have expected.

German language skills are highly desirable for employers in international business in a wide range of fields including finance, marketing, translating, teaching, media, arts, publishing and the civil service. There is an alarming shortage of people in the UK with the ability to speak one of the ten most important foreign languages for the country's prosperity and global standing. To speak German will provide you with a real competitive edge in the job market.

Taught by native speakers, all our German courses provide comprehensive language training combined with the opportunity to explore the cultures, literatures and intellectual histories of German-speaking countries.

Spanish

Spanish is the mother tongue of an estimated 400-450 million people, making it the world's second most spoken language.

Why study Spanish at Aberystwyth University?

Spanish is one of the three most important international languages in the world, spoken as a first language in Europe, Latin America, Africa and increasingly in the USA.

At Aberystwyth University, you will have the opportunity to discover Spanish and Latin American culture and history through the variety of core and optional modules available to you during the four-year degree. By the end of the course, you will have a fluent command of the Spanish language as well as a solid grasp and knowledge of Spanish and Latin American culture.

There is a high demand for Spanish graduates from multinational employers who value the communication and intercultural skills that are developed through language degrees. A Spanish course can open up many exciting opportunities in fields such as international politics, business, finance, marketing, teaching and translation/ interpreting.

Italian

Italian is a major European language and is spoken by approximately 85 million people. Its influence is widespread in the arts and in the food and luxury goods markets.

Why study Italian at Aberystwyth University?

Studying Italian provides you with the opportunity to explore careers within teaching, fine arts, banking, the media, tourism and law to name a few.

Italy is a major political partner in the European Union; it is a leading force in fields such as engineering and architecture. Italy is also the home of design and fashion industries. Understanding and developing fluency in Italian will mean that you can explore some of the major contributions to European cultural life, including film and literature, in their native language.

At Aberystwyth University, Italian can be studied from beginners' level. We apply our unique and innovative approaches and methodologies to our teaching, which include small group activities and the support of native Italian teachers and exchange students.

Teaching structure

A degree from the Department of Modern Languages will allow you to focus on three broad areas of development:

- a high level of proficiency in your chosen language(s) of study
- an in-depth understanding of the culture, society, politics, economics, history and literature of the countries where these languages are spoken
- exceptional transferable skills that include soft skills, problem-solving, exceptional written and oral communication, intercultural and analytical skills that will make you highly attractive to prospective employers

Our modules are taught using a combination of lectures, seminars and practical workshop sessions, providing you with core knowledge, up-to-date information, and opportunities to discuss important ideas in a small group environment.

Language classes cover the following skills:

- listening
- grammar/writing
- translation
- cultural and applied language skills
- conversation

The intensive language classes are taught in small groups, designed to ensure maximum impact on your linguistic development during the four years of your degree scheme. We have a higher number of language classes at all levels (typically 5.5 hours per week per language) than most universities.

Our members of staff are passionate about their subject and are keen to share with students their enthusiasm and research-led knowledge. Their expertise spans a wide range of subjects, creating flexibility to specialise or mix-and-match options. Language provision is also supplemented by meetings with Language Assistants for further speaking practice, as well as opportunities to join one of our language societies.

Our courses

Modern Languages p.8

Joint Honours and Major/Minor p.10

Modern Languages

BA (Hons) | R991 | 4 years

Aberystwyth is one of very few universities in the UK offering the opportunity to combine the study of up to three languages, with or without prior knowledge (Beginners). You can focus on the study of one, two or three languages, creating a combination tailored to your interests.

Our Department offers French, Italian, German and Spanish – within this scheme, you can study one, two or three of these languages. You will not only gain practical knowledge of, and fluency in these languages, but you will also learn to understand the position of these languages in a wider global context. Beginners follow an intensive course in the first year, consisting of an intensive language module. After the first year, all students on the beginner course will be ready to join students in the intermediate level class. If you are joining us having studied the language to A-level, the first year will build on and further develop the principles taught at A-level, preparing you for the next three years. We offer unique flexibility in this scheme: up to the beginning of year 2, you can decide to add a further language, or to drop one.

Next to language classes, you will choose from a rich variety of content modules. Year 1 modules provide an introduction to national cultures, as well as subject-specific skills and methodologies. In Year 2 and Final Year (after the Year Abroad), you can choose from an exciting range of modules covering literature, film, history, art and current issues, taught by specialists of these topics. The number of content modules you will follow depends on how many languages you study – you can specialise in the culture of one language, following a range of modules in that area, study two languages with a selection of content modules, or to focus on language modules in three languages.

Your year abroad

For all students, this is a highlight and will certainly be one of the most memorable experiences of your life. We offer the following options:

- studying in one of our partner universities
- studying in a private language school
- undertaking an English Language Assistantship with the British Council
- undertaking a work experience placement in your chosen country that is relevant to the choice of language degree.

Key Facts

Typical offer:
UCAS tariff points: 120-104 to include B in a relevant A level language unless to be studied as a beginner
IB: 30-28 with 5 points in one relevant language at Higher Level unless to be studied as a beginner

Assessment weighting:
Approx 50% coursework and 50% exams

Module list

Below is an indicative list of modules that you may study on this course.

First year:
- Language (French, German, Spanish - Beginners and Non-Beginners; Italian - Beginners).

Second year:
- Language (French, German, Spanish, Italian)

Third year:
- Year Abroad Assessment

Final year:
- Language (French, German, Spanish, Italian).

Optional modules you may select to develop your specialist interests include:

- Cuban Cinema of the Revolution
- Exploring German Cultural Identity
- Gender in Modern and Contemporary French Culture
- German-speaking Refugees from National Socialism in the UK
- Hispanic Civilization
- Humour and Literature
- Introduction to European Film
- Language, Culture, and Identity in Europe
- Reading Late 19th Century Literature
- Rethinking late 20th Century Italy
- Spanish American Cinema
- Study and Research Skills in Modern Languages
- Italian Cities
- Self-Writing in France
- Travel and Literature
- The Spanish Avant-Garde.

For more details on the optional modules available, see the current list on our website, or contact us.

Joint Honours and Major/Minor - language with another subject

Aberystwyth provides the opportunity to study Spanish, French, German or Italian alongside a variety of other subjects in a joint honours programme. This gives you the benefits of developing profound skills and knowledge in one of these languages alongside another subject you enjoy. No previous knowledge of your chosen language is required as you can study from complete beginners' level to a high level of fluency.

Subject	Available with...	Joint Honours	Major/Minor
Modern Languages	Business and Management	NR90	
	Creative Writing	WR90	
	Drama and Theatre	RW90	
	English Literature	QR90	
	History	RV90	
	International Relations	RL90	
	Law	RM90	
	Marketing	NR91	
	Mathematics	RG90	
Spanish	Education		XR04

Year abroad and global opportunities

As part of your degree in Modern Languages at Aberystwyth, you will spend your third year abroad, to immerse yourself fully in your language(s) of study.

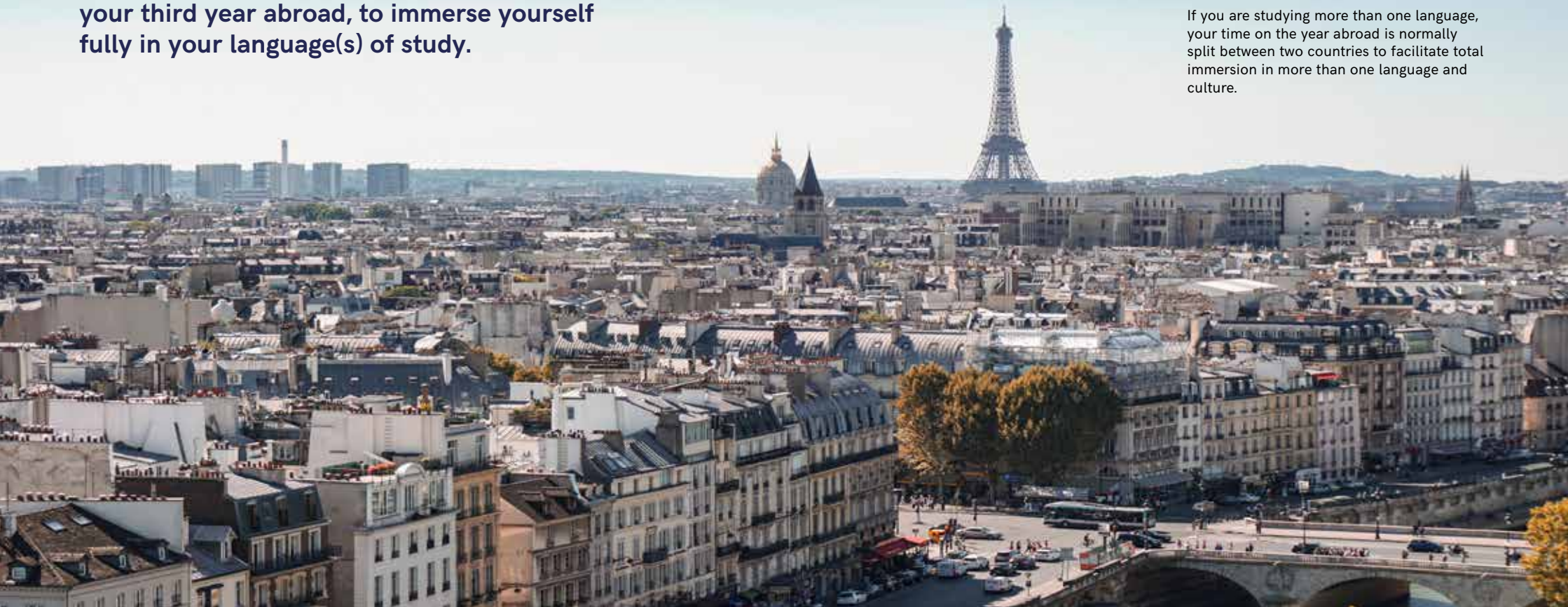
There are three options for your Year Abroad: you can study at one of our partner universities or at a language school; you can teach English as an Assistant for the British Council; or you can work or volunteer.

If you opt for studying abroad, you can choose from a range of options in France and Belgium (French), Germany and Austria (German), Spain and Latin America (Spanish), and Italy.

You will receive dedicated help and support in preparing for your Year Abroad and organising your stay or stays abroad. For each language, a dedicated member of staff is your Year Abroad coordinator, helping you to navigate your options, as well as the administrative and practical steps towards securing your placement. The experience of having spent a year abroad is highly valued by employers, who recognise the independence and resourcefulness that graduates have as a result.

The Year Abroad is not the only opportunity to enhance your learning through time spent abroad: our students can avail of regular short exchanges and residencies. Staff members and the University's Global Opportunities team are happy to inform you of such opportunities and help you apply for them.

If you are studying more than one language, your time on the year abroad is normally split between two countries to facilitate total immersion in more than one language and culture.



Research

Our staff members are internationally recognised specialists in their fields. Their work is published with prestigious reviews and publishing houses, to critical acclaim, and impacts policies in Wales and in the UK. Their research forms the basis of the teaching in our rich range of cultural modules.

Anglo-Norman Dictionary

Dr Geert De Wilde and his team produce the Second Edition of the Anglo-Norman Dictionary (AND). Anglo-Norman is the form of French that was used in medieval Britain from 1066 until the 15th century and had a huge influence on the history and development of Modern English. The project team publishes, in stages and online, an expanded and fully revised version of the AND, and develops new and advanced search options.

Colonial Influencers?

This project, led by Dr Gábor Gelléri and funded by the British Academy, follows the previously unknown history of a group of elite female French students sent to colonial Indochina to witness the great deeds of colonialism and become its advocates. Through archival research and interviews with the descendants of the participants, it explores the many reasons why this project failed, and how local audiences (both French settlers and the colonised) reacted to the presence of these unusual visitors.

Creative Modern Languages & Creative Assessment

Led by Dr Alex Mangold, the Creative Modern Languages project is funded by the British Academy and aims to identify examples of artistic research and non-traditional "creative" assessments used in Modern Languages throughout the UK Higher Education sector. In its second phase, the project now looks at Creative Assessment as a productive tool for schools working with the New Curriculum in Wales, and for teachers working with creative forms of assessment throughout the UK.

Developing a Spanish language app

Funded by the Research Wales Innovation Fund, and developed in cooperation with the Department of Computer Science, this project, led by Dr Guy Baron, will create a new Spanish language revision app, which will be freely available to all students of Spanish to make it easier for them to revise and reinforce some of the essential elements of their course.

Medicine, Literature and Press

This project, led by José Goñi Pérez, analyses data extracted from Hispanic medical and public health periodicals published between 1850 and 1900. It studies discourses on illness, the transfer of knowledge, on medical policies that affected mothers and children, as well as fiction written by doctors in these periodicals.

Refugees from National Socialism in the UK

Professor Andrea Hammel explores the lives and works of those who had to flee from Central Europe due to the National Socialist dictatorship, with special focus on the Kindertransport and the experience of those resettling in Wales. This has resulted in books for academic and wider audiences and exhibitions which were shown, among others, at the Senedd and the Houses of Parliament at Westminster. She has presented her work at the Wiener Holocaust Library in London, the Hay Literary Festival and the German Bundestag.

Women & the Spanish Avant-Garde

Dr Jennifer Wood works on the often overlooked contribution of women to the Spanish avant-garde movement: much more than mere muses, they were creators and innovators in their own right. The project focuses on how they challenged gender norms, an area currently in the cultural spotlight as the Surrealist movement marks its centenary. Her recent work has focused on the creative friendship between the artist Maruja Mallo and the poet Concha Méndez, as well as on representations of the female form.

Employability

In a fast-paced, constantly changing world, the flexibility and adaptability of Modern Languages graduates put them among the most employable graduates.

Our graduates have been able to pursue diverse, rewarding and impactful careers, and our degrees take our students across the world. Employers appreciate the high-level language proficiency, but also the many transferable skills that you will earn during your degree: intercultural competence, efficient communication and problem-solving, organisational and leadership skills, and resilience. Employers particularly value the transformative experience of the Year Abroad.

Thanks to the combination of in-depth language training and specialist culture modules, graduates from our department can choose from a variety of pathways. You will be able to follow further study in various fields including linguistics, literature and international politics. You can step into the workplace as a highly skilled linguist and secure employment in fields such as international business, marketing and management, tourism, consulting, publishing and broadcasting, HR, social work, politics, the Civil Service, law and the non-governmental sector. And, of course, you will be very well prepared for traditional language-led careers such as teaching or translation and interpreting.

The Department regularly organises employability-related events.

In 2026, we welcomed past graduates who followed unusual career paths with a Modern Languages degree, working in fields such as compliance management, data protection, government, and international trade regulation.

The application process

1 Apply through UCAS.com

Check the UCAS deadline on UCAS.com. Aberystwyth University institution code: A40. **TOP TIP:** You'll be given a 10-digit UCAS ID number. Keep this to hand as you'll be asked for it many times.

2 The University will consider your application

TOP TIP: Use UCAS Hub to keep an eye on your application. At Aberystwyth we aim to make a decision within seven days.

3 The offer will show on UCAS Hub

The University's decision will show on UCAS Hub - if you've been made an offer, it will tell you what grades you need to achieve to secure your place.

4 Decide where to go

Once you've received all your offers, you'll need to decide which university you want to go to, within a set time. This is when you'll need to note which universities will be your Firm and Insurance choices.

5 Accommodation

Once you've chosen your Firm/Insurance choice you'll be invited to apply for accommodation.

6 Results day

UCAS Hub will tell you whether your place is confirmed at your Firm choice. If you don't get the grades you'd hoped for, you may want to consider entering Clearing.

7 Start packing!

Remember to keep an eye on your emails for information about arrival and welcome activities.

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