



Department of
English and Creative Writing



Teaching
Excellence
Framework



Department of English and Creative Writing

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Important information

The programme information published in this brochure was correct at time of going to print (July 2020) 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.

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Welcome

The Department of English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth delivers an outstanding student experience – our students are some of the happiest and the best taught in the country. We are proud to be consistently ranked as one of the top UK English Departments for teaching quality and student experience.

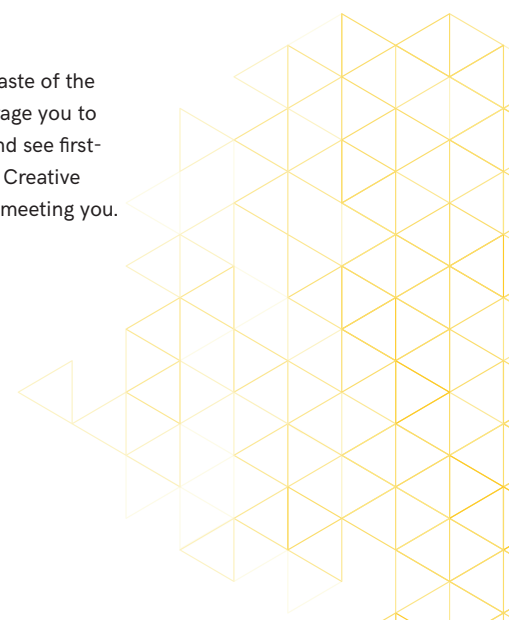
As the internationally renowned “cultural capital” of Wales, Aberystwyth is a truly exceptional place to study. Not only is the University situated in one of the most attractive landscapes in the UK, it also offers excellent academic resources and learning opportunities. Our Department offers you flexible courses that combine tradition and innovation, breadth and depth. From Chaucer to Twitter, the writing we produce and the texts we encounter have informed and challenged generations of readers. Literature has the power to effect genuine change, and at Aberystwyth you can channel your own passion for reading and writing into making your own contributions to our literary heritage and to the literature of the future.

The Department is well served by the University library which, above and beyond the usual array of scholarly and critical editions, houses a fascinating collection of rare books that are a delight to anyone interested in reading and the art of textual production. We also have one of the biggest libraries in the world, the National Library of Wales, on our doorstep – one of only five copyright institutions entitled to receive a copy of every book published in the UK. The Department is also home to New Welsh Review – Wales’ foremost literary magazine – and the International Journal of Welsh Writing in English. Through these affiliations we offer exciting opportunities for our students to get involved in a variety of writing and publishing activities, internships, and training opportunities.

Our prestigious programmes deliver exceptionally high-quality teaching ensuring that your talents will be fostered and nurtured, enabling you to develop fantastic career prospects suited to a wide range of coveted employment destinations. Our students have gone on to succeed across the broadest possible range of graduate career destinations. Recent graduates have signed to some of the UK’s major literary agents and have published with some of the world’s most prestigious publishing houses, including Faber & Faber and Penguin. Every year the Department organises guest lectures and workshops, which involve a range of well-known writers, scholars, and industry professionals from around the world. Amongst those who have visited recently are: columnist and critic Caitlin Moran; Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy, National Poet of Wales Gillian Clarke and award-winning poet Andrew McMillan; novelists Niall Griffiths, Gareth L Powell, and Sarah Hall; and the popular vlogger and social media manager for Vintage, Leena Normington.

We hope that this brochure will give you a taste of the subjects we offer, but most of all we encourage you to accept our invitation to come and visit us and see first-hand what is exceptional about English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth. We look forward to meeting you.

Dr Louise H Marshall
Head of Department



Welcome from our Students

"My experience studying Literature at Aberystwyth University has absolutely changed my life for the better. I have gained more confidence in myself and my abilities than I ever thought I would thanks to the excellent course and people here. I've grown as an individual and formed many new useful skills in creative and critical practice that will stay with me forever. From modules on ancient texts to modules on the playful language of postmodernism, the course is varied and flexible. I was able to take modules in art and in creative writing whilst completing my literature degree an excellent scheme that shows Aber is a university that puts its students' interests and learning first.

Above all my degree has been incredible due to the spectacular enthusiasm, kindness, and support both professionally and personally from the staff, who go above and beyond teaching to bring literature to life. With plenty of contact hours in and around seminars, a support system, and a willingness to partake in student society events, the department and its staff played the most significant part making my Aberystwyth experience so wonderful.

Outside of the lecture hall, the opportunity to be an English and Creative Writing Society committee member is one of many examples where I feel I have gained a rounded student experience in this town packed with possibilities. Before studying at Aber, I would have never considered that I could write, perform, and publish poetry, or interview authors about new books and innovative research. I would never have thought that I could get work experience on a published magazine, organise a range of charitable events, or swim in a sea that is walking distance from my home. All of these beautiful opportunities have presented themselves in Aber and I would never hesitate to recommend studying English Literature and Creative Writing here. In fact, I cannot recommend it enough!"

Ivy Napp (English Literature)

"I have already had a wonderful two years studying English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth, and I am now going into my third year with a lot of excitement. Not only have I grown as a person and made amazing friends, but I have also thoroughly enjoyed my course. The Creative Writing modules have given me the skills I needed to improve my writing. As well as feeling more confident, I can see the improvement in my work. During the module 'Beginning the Novel' I learnt how to write in different styles and genres, and overall developed a wider skill set. The Creative Writing workshops allow you to share your work and get feedback from your lecturers and peers. The English modules are equally fantastic; modules like 'Place and Self' and 'Encountering Texts' have given me the opportunity to study a wide variety of interesting and compelling books. There is also a good balance between small-group seminars and large group teaching in lectures.

Not only is the degree interesting and enjoyable, but the staff are absolutely amazing. They are incredibly supportive and are always willing to help you, whether by reading through your work and telling how you can improve, or by answering any questions you might have. The department is lovely and welcoming, and if need to ask the staff any questions, you'll probably find yourself in the charming English foyer which has a coffee machine, books, magazines and is a place to feel at home within the department. There is also the English and Creative Writing Society, which is a great way to make friends, talk about books at the weekly book club, share work at workshops and open mics and attend writers' talks where published authors share their work and experiences within the field. Authors like Gillian Clarke, Hayley Long and Kate Hamer have given talks whilst I've been at Aber.

Aberystwyth is a wonderful place to live, with the National Library less than five minutes from campus, the gorgeous beach where you can read, go swimming, have bonfires, visit the local castle, and watch the most beautiful sunsets. Pay us a visit and see Aber in all its glory for yourself."

Chloe Clarke (English and Creative Writing)



Subject Areas

Creative Writing

Our Creative Writing course provides exciting and diverse opportunities for working in a broad variety of forms and genres. At Aberystwyth you will develop confident, imaginative and inventive creative skills through engaging with a broad curriculum that cuts across traditional subject boundaries.

Over the duration of your course, you will explore and experiment with genre, form, language, media, style, and presentation. We will encourage you to experiment with writing in a wide range of styles and give you the chance to encounter and practice writing for an array of different purposes.

Studying Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University will enable you to write with confidence, tailoring your work to different audiences and agendas preparing you for whatever career path you choose to take in a whole host of professions for which powerful, compelling communication matters. You will have an acute awareness of issues such as tone, structure, genre and function and how to effectively utilise these in your own writing.

For more information about our Creative Writing courses, and a full list of specialist option modules currently available please visit www.aber.ac.uk/en/english.



Core modules and teaching structure on this course includes:

Year 1

- > Creative Practice
- > Writing Short Stories

Examples of optional modules:

- > Introduction to Poetry
- > Reading for Writers
- > Literature and the Sea
- > Reading Star Trek

Year 2

- > Beginning the Novel

Examples of optional modules:

- > Adventures with Poetry
- > Contemporary Queer Fiction
- > Reading and Writing Fantasy Fiction
- > Shaping Plots
- > Telling True Stories
- > Writing Selves

Year 3

- > The Writing Project

Examples of optional modules:

- > Haunting Texts
- > Literatures of Surveillance
- > Writing Science Fiction;
- > Writing Crime Fiction
- > Writing and Place
- > Contemporary Poetry

Creative Writing

BA (Hons)

Our Creative Writing course provides exciting and diverse opportunities for working in a broad variety of forms and genres. At Aberystwyth, you will develop imaginative and inventive creative skills that will enable you to work confidently and effectively in a wide range of styles, preparing you for your professional career.




This degree offers a broad curriculum that cuts across traditional subject boundaries. Over the duration of this course you will explore and experiment with genre, form, language, media, style, and presentation.

Upon completion of this degree, you will be able to write with confidence, tailoring your work to a broad range of audiences. You will have a highly developed awareness of issues such as tone, structure, genre and function, and of how to utilise these effectively in your own writing.

A degree in Creative Writing at Aberystwyth offers you:

- the opportunity to learn alongside a team of distinguished, award-winning authors who work across a broad spectrum of creative fields
- the benefits of working in an inter-disciplinary environment that allows you to explore your creativity across a range of academic subjects
- a strong tradition of specialist teaching in the fields of life writing, historical fiction, the graphic novel, contemporary poetry, crime fiction, science fiction, and writing for stage, screen, and radio
- opportunities to work with leading literary and cultural institutions such as *New Welsh Review* – Wales’ foremost literary magazine – and Aberystwyth Arts Centre – which is one of the largest arts centres in Wales, recognised as a 'national flagship for the arts.

Key Facts

	Degree type: BA.
	UCAS Code: W801.
	Duration: 3 years.

Modules

First year:

You are introduced to a range of writing styles and genres through our core modules – creative practice and writing short stories. Creative practice is designed to provide a foundation of essential knowledge and techniques. Writing short stories hones these skills for short-form prose. You can choose option modules from a wide range of courses looking at literature from the classical era through to contemporary writing, explore creative-critical responses (where you choose whether to write a critical or a creative piece for your assessment), and develop your poetic skills or your knowledge of global literature.

Second and third years:

You will explore a wide range of types of writing to produce and present your own writing professionally and reflect on your own creative practice. We offer modules on writing genre fiction, such as graphic novels and crime fiction, on writing poetry, and on specific skills such as plot and characterisation. In parallel to this, we offer modules designed to introduce you to the best and the most exciting writing from the last 1000 years, from medieval texts through to contemporary fiction. Texts across the genres of prose, drama and poetry, texts that deal with personal, political and philosophical concerns that affect us all. Your final year project allows you to explore any creative mode and topic, and you will have the opportunity to take part in our annual writing retreat designed to kick-start your preparation for this creative endeavour.





English Literature

BA (Hons)

Our English Literature degree will fire your imagination by exploring the widest possible range of literary texts and cultures. We offer our students a superb choice of courses from the early medieval period to the present day.




You will discover a wide variety of approaches to literature and culture. Our course encourages you to read widely and to think critically about writing and its contexts, and the philosophical and political trends that shape the ways we read and write.

Upon completion of this course, you will have outstanding powers of expression and communication, augmented with specialist knowledge and research skills. You will discover your potential as an independent learner, whilst working within a nurturing and structured learning environment that will enable you to excel.

A degree in English Literature at Aberystwyth offers you:

- the opportunity to learn alongside researchers who are recognised internationally for their contributions to knowledge and the furthering of the discipline
- a strong tradition of specialist teaching in the fields of women’s writing, writing and place, children’s literature, Welsh writing in English, LGBTQ+ writing, Postcolonial literature, Medieval studies and Romanticism amongst many more
- opportunities to work with leading literary and cultural institutions such as *New Welsh Review* – Wales’ foremost literary magazine – and Aberystwyth Arts Centre – which is one of the largest arts centres in Wales, recognised as a ‘national flagship for the arts.

Key Facts

	Degree type: BA.
	UCAS Code: Q300.
	Duration: 3 years.

Modules

First year:

Your first core module, critical practice, will provide you with the necessary foundation for successful engagement with literature at university level. The module builds upon your existing skills and helps you become an independent thinker and critic. You will also study writing from the pre-1800 period, introducing you to the long tradition of English literatures from Chaucer to Defoe. In addition, you will choose from an exciting range of option modules, including literature and the sea and introduction to poetry, that allow to respond to what you are learning either creatively, through your own writing, or critically, through essays. You will also be able to study writing from an exceptionally broad range of places and periods, such as Greek and Roman Epic and Drama, American literature and contemporary writing.

Second and third years:

In your second year, modules with a historical sweep, such as medieval texts and their world, nineteenth-century literature, and literature since 1945, will deepen your understanding of literatures in English from the last 1000 years. You will choose specialist options from subjects including the graphic novel, contemporary politics, genre fiction, gender and sexuality, or writing about place. Alongside this, you will engage with the philosophy and politics of reading in literary theory: debates and dialogues. In your third year, you will again select from specialist modules that allow to develop your own interests including romantic eroticism, the eighteenth-century novel, postcolonial writing and ghost stories. The dissertation will allow you to develop your own research project which includes our annual writing retreat.

English Literature and Creative Writing

BA (Hons)




Our combined course in English Literature and Creative Writing will enable you to develop as both a creative and critical practitioner. This degree will expand your range and capabilities as a writer and enable you to work with confidence in a variety of genres and forms.

You will develop a reflective writing practice informed by a wide-ranging knowledge of writing from the past and present, an understanding of the cultural and intellectual contexts in which literature is written and read, and an awareness of the range and variety of approaches to literary study and the practice of writing.

A degree in English Literature and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth offers you:

- the opportunity to learn alongside a team of distinguished, award-winning authors who work across a broad spectrum of creative fields
- a strong tradition of specialist teaching in the fields of women’s writing, writing and place, children’s literature, Victorian writing, Welsh writing in English, LGBTQ+ writing, Postcolonial literature, Renaissance drama and Romanticism, combined with opportunities to develop your writing with practitioners who have expertise in a diverse range of genres such as contemporary poetry, the graphic novel, crime fiction, life writing, historical fiction, science fiction, and writing for stage, screen, and radio
- the benefits of a combined discipline that allows you to explore the creative/critical intersection and to develop into a creative professional with the underpinnings of a traditional academic discipline.

Key Facts

	Degree type: BA.
	UCAS Code: QW38..
	Duration: 3 years.

Modules

First year:

Your first core modules, critical practice and creative practice, will provide you with the necessary foundation for successful engagement with literature and creative writing at university level. Critical practice builds upon your existing skills and helps you become an independent thinker and critic; creative practice gives you a foundation of knowledge and techniques for creative writing. You will also study writing from the pre-1800 period, introducing you to the long tradition of English literatures from Chaucer to Defoe. In addition, you will choose from an exciting range of option modules, including Literature and the sea and An introduction to poetry, that allows you to respond to what you are learning either creatively, through your own writing, or critically, through essays. You will also be able to study writing from an exceptionally broad range of places and periods, such as Greek and Roman epic and drama, American literature and contemporary writing.

Second and third years:

You will explore a wide range of writing modes, produce and present your writing professionally, and reflect on your writing practice. Our writing modules cover graphic novels, crime fiction, specific skills (plot, characterisation), and much more.]Our English modules introduce you to the best, most exciting literature from the last 1000 years, from medieval texts to the newly published. You will choose from a range of specialist modules that allow you to explore the subjects that fascinate you (such as the ghost story, postcolonial writing, writing about gender and sexuality in different periods, and Victorian writing), and develop your own creative writing or English research project, with the opportunity to go on our annual writing retreat.

English Studies and Climate Change

BA (Hons)

Our combined course provides a thorough and critical understanding of the ideological debates that shape the ways we read and write, challenge our perceptions of the places we read and write about, and interrogate who we are. You will encounter texts that explore and represent climate change, that evaluate the climate challenge and its political, economic, social, and ecological impacts. By raising provocative questions about human responses to climate change (which invariably involve the written or the spoken word) this course will equip you with the skills and knowledge to analyse diverse perspectives on a global challenge.




This scheme establishes core knowledge of climate science and issues of governance pertaining to climate change alongside subject-specialist engagement with the representation of climate change in literature from the 1800s onwards. In their interdisciplinary learning community students investigate the science of climate change from multiple subject perspectives (Geography, Biology, Politics, and of course Literary analysis).

The English Studies and Climate Change programme provides subject-specialist knowledge of fictional and non-fictional responses to the climate - from Romanticism’s accounts of 1816 “the year without a summer” to alternate futures analysis in contemporary speculative fiction. You will develop practical skills in crisis writing across genres and forms whilst also acquiring the subject-specialist knowledge and skills of an English graduate.

Students studying English Studies and Climate Change at Aberystwyth will:

- engage with and develop a distinct multidisciplinary approach to communicating climate change informed by an understanding of the science behind the climate crisis
- analyse the causes and consequence of climate change and environmental degradation, and how literature from the nineteenth century to the present-day comments upon climate change
- examine links between climate change and other global challenges (such as conflict, migration, inequality, and isolationism) and the ways in which these challenges are communicated to diverse audiences
- reflect on ways that the planet’s habitats, resources, and ecological systems are reflected in and shape the stories we tell and how such stories challenge the *political status quo*.

Key Facts

	Degree type: BA.
	UCAS Code: FQ73.
	Duration: 3 years.

Modules

First year:

Your core modules will provide you with the necessary foundation for successful engagement with literature and creative writing at university level. Critical practice builds upon your existing skills and helps you become an independent thinker and critic; creative practice gives you a foundation of knowledge and techniques for creative writing. You will also study writing from the pre-1800 period, introducing you to the long tradition of English literatures from Chaucer to Defoe. You will investigate the science of climate change through two innovative modules, Climate Change: impacts, perceptions, adaptation and The Science of Climate. In addition, you will choose from an exciting range of optional modules, including literature and the sea and introduction to poetry, that allow to respond to what you are learning either creatively, through your own writing, or critically, through essays.

Second and third years:

You will build on your work with staff and students from other disciplines in your core module The Governance of climate change. This module engages students in simulation - presenting you with real-world problems and developing the skills essential to addressing current and future global challenges. You will also take core modules that will give you detailed knowledge of fictional and non-fictional responses to the climate, literature and climate in the nineteenth century, contemporary writing and environmental justice, speculative fiction and the climate crisis and you will develop your own creative writing in whatever genre or form you choose in crisis writing. Our writing modules cover graphic novels, crime fiction, specific skills (plot, characterisation), and much more. Our English modules introduce you to the best, most exciting literature from the last 1000 years. In the final year the creative writing project or english dissertation allow students to synthesise their multi-disciplinary and subject-specific knowledge and work with academic supervisors across traditional subject boundaries. With the opportunity to attend our annual writing retreat held at an historic site in the beautiful Mid Wales countryside, the final year project is a fitting culmination to a degree that challenges students to become informed, skilled, and impassioned advocates for change.

Gregynog Writing Retreat and Additional Opportunities

In your final year you will benefit from our fully subsidized annual writing retreat held at a beautiful country manor house in rural west Wales. This immensely popular event allows our students to enjoy some peace away from the hustle and bustle of campus life, whilst developing their final year dissertation and creative writing projects.

As well as the Gregynog Writing Retreat, there are a host of opportunities for engaging with literary culture. Free trips (and free tickets!) to the world-famous Hay Festival are an annual feature of our calendar, and our students have access to subsidised performances at Aberystwyth Art Centre.

Every year our students publish an anthology of their creative and critical work. AberInk, which is written, designed and edited by students, showcases not only their writing but also their skills in a broad range of project management activities, including dealing with everything from deadlines to budget control, to promotional events and beyond.



Studying Abroad Opportunities

There are several ways in which you can study or work abroad at University. Traditionally, students embark on the year abroad after the second year for one semester or the entire academic year.

In the Department of English and Creative Writing, you can decide to study in one of our Erasmus or International Exchange partner Universities or to work abroad in a whole host of diverse and exciting contexts which make use of and enable you to develop your communication skills.

Currently, the Department has strong established links with the following Universities.

Erasmus+

Denmark

- > Aarhus University

Ireland

- > University College, Dublin
- > Maynooth University
- > Mary Immaculate College

France

- > Paris-Sorbonne University
- > University of Rennes 2

Germany

- > Heidelberg University
- > Heinrich-Heine University Duesseldorf
- > University of Stuttgart

International Exchange Programme

Australia

- > Deakin University
- > Griffith University
- > Murdoch University
- > University New South Wales
- > University of Newcastle

Azerbaijan

- > ADA University

China

- > University of Nottingham, Ningbo

Canada

- > Dalhousie University
- > McGill University
- > Thompson Rivers University
- > University of Guelph
- > University of Ottawa
- > University of Victoria

Hong Kong

- > Hong Kong Baptist University

Japan

- > Rikkyo University

Thailand

- > Thammasat University

USA:

- > American University
- > Boise State University
- > Bowling Green State University
- > Carroll University
- > Purdue University
- > Queens University of Charlotte
- > University of Alabama
- > University of Georgia
- > University of Louisville
- > University of Montana
- > Utica College
- > Washington State University
- > Westminster College
- > Willamette University

Research

Studying with English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth will ensure that you have access to not only the highest quality teaching in our subjects but also to a teaching and learning environment that is driven by world-class research. All our staff are active researchers in their fields and throughout your studies you will be taught by some of the UK's leading scholars in creative writing and literary studies.

Our research forms the basis of our teaching and our research interests are as broad and dynamic as our curriculum. You will be taught by the people who write the books on the subjects you are learning about, by the people who wrote the poetry, novels, short stories, non-fiction, scripts, and graphic novels that you read, and by the scholars who analyse and interrogate such works.

The University's mission is to 'contribute to society in Wales and the wider world by applying our knowledge to local and global challenges'. To achieve this, English and Creative Writing draws upon an extensive network of national and global connections and collaborations, working with academics and creative practitioners from around the world on exciting and innovative projects that our students engage with as part of the process of knowledge creation. Two examples of this vibrant international activity are our research centres, Contempo and The David Jones Centre. ContemPo is a collaborative research centre with a special (but not exclusive) interest in investigating experimental and performance poetics and their poetics. Its core activity is an exciting programme of video-linked papers, seminars, and performances given by poets and scholars of poetry from around the world. The David Jones Centre supports research on the history and impact of modernism in Wales and on the creative interaction of the textual and the visual. The Centre hosts an international conference and seminar series and seeks to promote the exciting possibilities for new research offered by the literary and artistic archives at the National Library of Wales.

Our areas of research expertise include:

- Literary geographies
- Welsh Writing in English
- The Anthropocene
- Pain
- Surveillance culture
- Disordered sleep
- Postmemory
- Psychoanalysis
- Medievalism
- Experimental Poetry
- Modernism
- Working-class poetics
- Digital humanities
- Girlhood
- Early modern drama
- Asian-American writing
- Queer writing
- Politics and national identity
- Science fiction
- Life writing
- Pigs



How to apply

Once you have decided what course you want to study and where, you'll be able to start the university application process. Here's a brief overview of the process and our procedures here at Aberystwyth.

1 Apply through UCAS.com

Deadline 15 January. 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 offer

TOP TIP: Use UCAS Track to keep an eye on your application. At Aberystwyth we aim to make a decision within 4 weeks.

3 The offer will show on UCAS track

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 able to apply for your accommodation (April 1st onwards).

6 Results day

UCAS Track will confirm your offer of a place. If you're not clear what the offer is, contact the university directly. Make sure you're not on holiday on results day. If you don't get the grades you've hoped for, you may want to consider entering Clearing.

7 Start packing!

