

Information for Parents, Guardians and Supporters

1872



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Important information

The programme information published in this brochure was correct at time of going to print (June 2024) and may be subject to change.

Welcome

Founded in 1872, Aberystwyth University has a long tradition of academic excellence. Our reputation for teaching and transformational research means the University consistently performs at the top of leading league tables for teaching, research and student satisfaction. This, paired with our stunning location, is what sets us apart from other universities.

Student life here is second to none. Our Students' Union is home to over 100 clubs and societies, and our location between the mountains and the sea means our students are perfectly situated to explore the great outdoors. Aberystwyth itself is a small and friendly student town, with plenty of shops, restaurants, and cafés in which to socialise with friends.

Our University is an inclusive and welcoming place, and our community is made up of individuals from diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences. Aberystwyth students are supported to explore their interests, given the confidence to fulfil their potential and graduate with a wealth of academic and social experiences that will last a lifetime.

Welsh University of the Year

(Good University Guide 2024, The Times and Sunday Times)

Top in Wales and 2nd in the UK for Student Experience

(Good University Guide 2024, The Times and Sunday Times)

Top in Wales and 3rd in the UK for Teaching Quality

(Good University Guide 2024, The Times and Sunday Times)

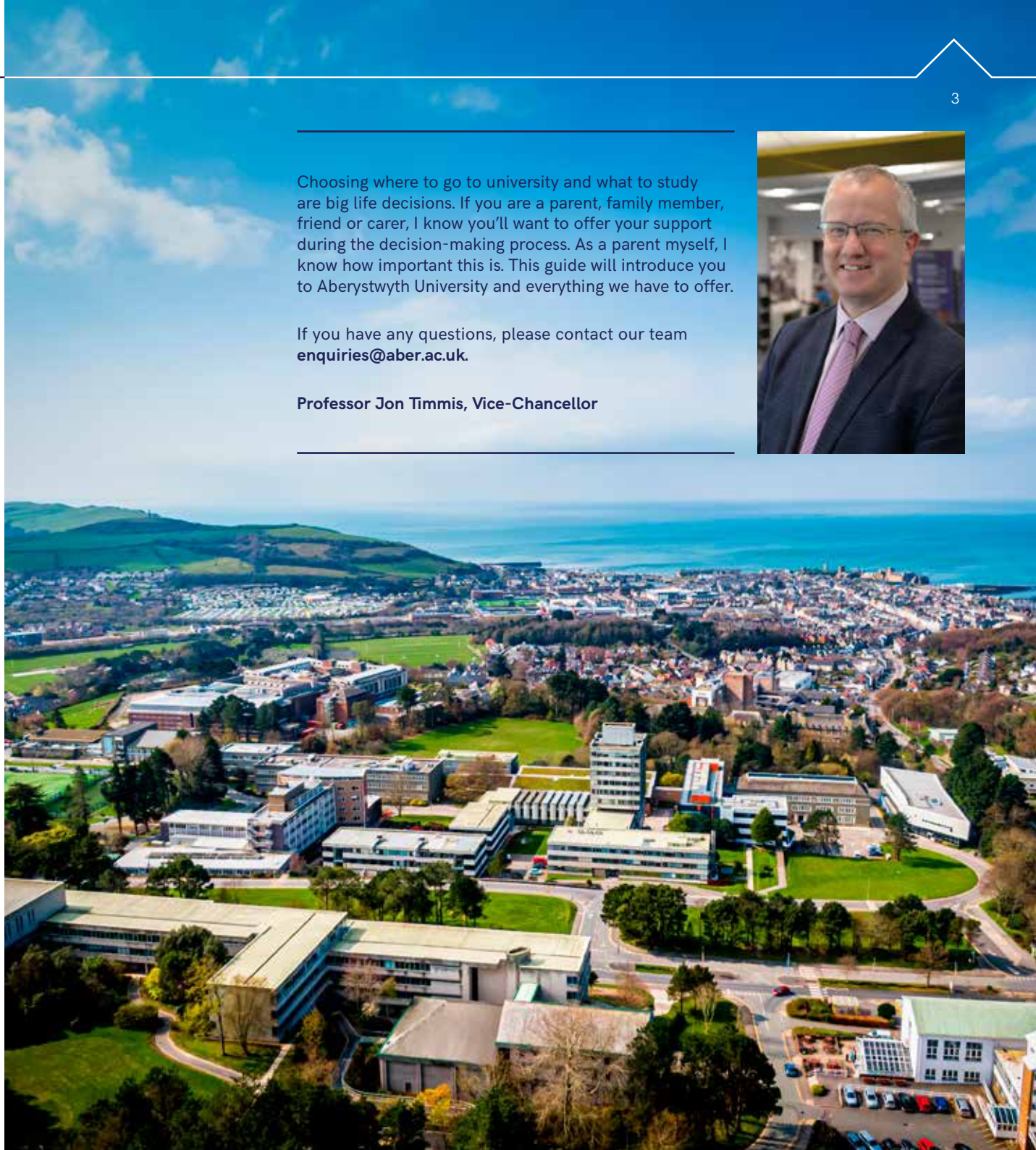
Top in Wales (2023) and Top in England and Wales (2022) for Student Satisfaction

(National Student Survey)

Choosing where to go to university and what to study are big life decisions. If you are a parent, family member, friend or carer, I know you'll want to offer your support during the decision-making process. As a parent myself, I know how important this is. This guide will introduce you to Aberystwyth University and everything we have to offer.

If you have any questions, please contact our team enquiries@aber.ac.uk.

Professor Jon Timmis, Vice-Chancellor



Why choose Aberystwyth University?

Academic Excellence

Aberystwyth has a long tradition of excellence in teaching and research. The University consistently ranks highly across league tables and our research has global impact. Our teaching staff are leading experts in their field, passionate about inspiring and educating students.

Student Satisfaction

The National Student Survey and other leading league tables identify Aberystwyth's students as being amongst the most satisfied in the UK.

A welcoming and supportive environment

Aberystwyth is a welcoming and inclusive place in which to study. We support our students throughout their time here, enabling them to grow both academically and personally. This is an environment in which students can achieve ambition and be who they want to be.

An inspiring location in which to live and learn

Surrounded by the mountains and the sea, Aberystwyth offers a study setting like no other. Our students study and socialise in the surrounding area, making Aberystwyth a wonderful place in which to live.

Guaranteed accommodation

We guarantee accommodation to all first-year students. Located a short walk from the campus, and with social and study spaces on site, our accommodation is the perfect place in which to settle in and make friends. Our Halls are also amongst the most affordable in the UK.

Real-world experiences

Aberystwyth offers a range of opportunities to complement academic study and develop real-world experience that helps our graduates stand out from the crowd. The vast majority of courses offer opportunities to work or study abroad, with some offering integrated work placements. Our dedicated Careers Service also offers a range of services to develop and enhance employability.



The Application Process



Year 12

March - April

- Learners should start researching universities, attending UCAS conventions, register for university Open Days, Summer Schools, Taster Days etc.
- Apply for work experience.

May - August

- Attend University Open Days, Summer programmes.
- Gain some work experience.
- Learners should start thinking about the Personal Statement they'll add to their UCAS application.

Year 13

September

- Learners should start the UCAS application process, including refining their Personal Statement.
- Attend University Open Days.

October

- Mid-October is the deadline for applying for Oxford and Cambridge, and for most courses in Medicine, Veterinary Medicine / Science and Dentistry via UCAS.
- Attend University Open Days.

January

- Mid / Late January is the deadline for applications to most university courses via UCAS.
- Deadline to apply for many university-awarded Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards.

Feb - March

- Attend Applicant Visiting Days and / or interviews.
- UCAS Extra opens in February.
- Apply for Student Finance.
- Review UCAS application responses. All Universities have to respond to applicants by the end of March.

April- June

- Applicants will confirm their Firm and Insurance choices.
- The deadline for Student Finance is usually during May.
- Many learners will be revising and taking exams during this period.

July - October

- Clearing - if your learner changes their mind about the courses or universities they've applied to, or doesn't yet have any offers, they can apply through Clearing.



The Personal Statement

The Personal Statement is the applicant's opportunity to explain why they're suited to the courses they've applied for. For some students, it can be the trickiest part of the UCAS application. However, schools and colleges will have Advisers that can support learners to compile a great Personal Statement.

How do universities use the Personal Statement?

Alongside predicted grades and the academic reference, it is a key part of the decision-making process.

It may be the basis for interview, and the difference between getting an offer or not.

It may even be reviewed again at results time if an applicant hasn't quite met the conditions of their offer.

Top tips for applicants

- The best Personal Statements have been refined and improved over time, so applicants should be prepared to undertake multiple drafts.
- Great Personal Statements have quality, in-depth examples about the applicant, their achievements and suitability rather than lots of undetailed examples without context.
- Applicants should be positive, honest and truthful.

Top tips for parents/guardians/supporters

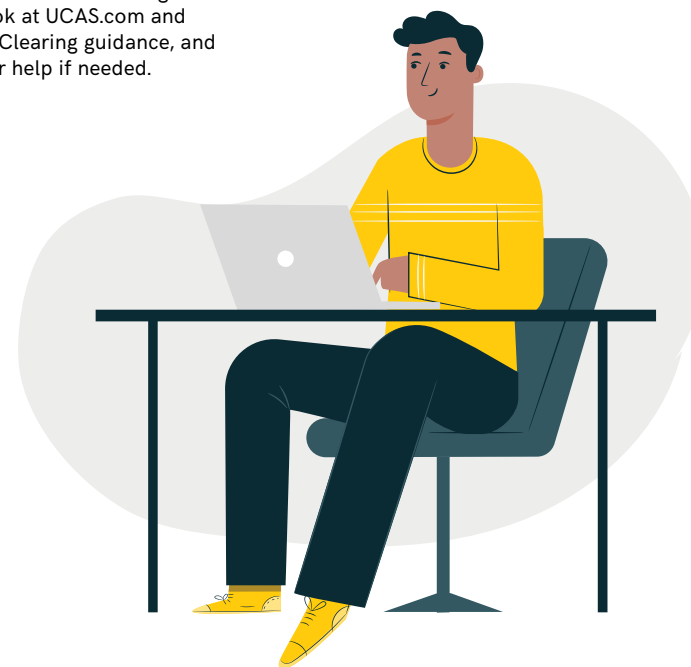
- Encourage the applicant to consider the skills they've gained from any hobbies, work or volunteering, and how these relate to the course(s) they're applying for.
- Read the applicant's Personal Statement. If you can ask 'So what?' after a sentence, the student may not have gone into enough depth.
- For courses that interview, tutors may have an applicant's Personal Statement in front of them. Make sure the student re-reads their Statement before the interview, and practice interview techniques to help them gain confidence.

What is Clearing?

Clearing runs from July to October, and offers students a final opportunity to apply for a university course beginning that year. Your learner may find themselves in Clearing if:

- **They're not holding any offers by the time Clearing starts**
- **They've changed their mind about the courses / universities they've received offers from**
- **Their results haven't met the conditions of the offers they're holding.**

Clearing can be an anxious time for students but it's important to understand that it should be a positive experience - it's an opportunity to find a course and university that suits them. Schools, colleges and universities will be able to support and guide your learner throughout the process - take a look at UCAS.com and university websites for Clearing guidance, and don't hesitate to ask for help if needed.



A guide to university terminology



Apprenticeships

These allow students to work and study at the same time. Apprenticeships follow an approved study programme leading to nationally recognised qualifications. Students on apprenticeships undertake classroom based learning and gain paid work experience.

Big Welcome and Orientation Week

Big Welcome and Orientation Week are the first weekend and week at university. The University and Students' Union will have arranged a programme of activities to help students make friends, settle in and learn more about what to expect in the coming weeks and months.

Campus

A campus is the grounds where university buildings are located. Aberystwyth is a campus-based University, meaning that academic, social and accommodation sites are within walking distance of one another. Other universities may be more spread out with buildings located throughout a town, city or local area.

Clearing

The Clearing period runs from July to October each year, and offers learners another avenue to secure a place at university that year. Students who aren't holding any offers, whose results didn't meet the conditions of their offers, or who've changed their mind about the course they'd like to study, can apply for a place in Clearing.

Deferred entry

Deferred entry is where an applicant decides they would like to delay starting their university course. For example, they may choose to take some time out for travel or to undertake work experience.

Degree

This is a higher education qualification. A degree can be an undergraduate (Bachelor's) qualification or a postgraduate one such as a Masters, PhD or Doctorate.

Degree apprenticeships

A degree apprenticeship is a part-time course that students follow alongside employment. The government and employer pay for degree apprenticeships.

Firm choice

Universities will reply to a learner's applications either offering them a place or not. Once all universities have replied, the applicant will decide which two offers they prefer best. Their Firm choice is their first choice, with their Insurance choice as back-up.

Further Education

This follows secondary education. Students enrolling on university courses will have FE qualifications, such as A levels, BTECs or Diplomas.

Gap year

Some students may take a year off between school / college and university. A gap year is often spent travelling, working or volunteering.

Graduate

Students completing a degree programme are graduates. They will be invited to an official graduation ceremony where they will be given their degree certificate. Graduation is an important celebration of the hard-work and effort that's gone into their study.

Halls of residence

University provided accommodation is often in halls of residence. Living in halls is an excellent way of making sure students settle into university life.

Higher Education

Higher Education comes after secondary and Further Education, leading to a qualification from a degree-awarding body such as a university.

Insurance choice

From the offers received, this is the applicant's second preference. If they don't meet the conditions of their Firm choice (for example, their results weren't what that offer asked for), they may still meet those of the Insurance choice.

Internships

An internship, or year in industry, is a work placement, allowing the student to gain practical experience related to their degree. Internships / placements can be paid or unpaid.

Postgraduate

This is the name given to a student who has completed their first (undergraduate) degree and is now studying for a higher qualification such as a Master's, a PhD or Doctorate.

Research Degrees

Research degrees are PhDs or Doctorates. They are postgraduate qualifications that involve significant original research and contribute new and innovative findings to the student's subject area.

Scholarships

Scholarships are similar to bursaries and is money awarded to a student that does not have to be paid back. Scholarships are awarded for a range of reasons and it's always worth checking what's available.

Semester

University terms are called semesters. A student has two semesters each year.

Study Abroad

Many courses offer students the opportunity to study abroad as part of their degree. The student will undertake modules at a partner university, providing them with valuable experiences that complement their study.

UCAS Extra

Students that have used all five choices on their original UCAS application and are not holding any offers can add another choice using Extra.

UCAS Hub

The UCAS Hub is one central location where learners can access a wealth of information about the opportunities available to them. They will also log into the Hub to submit their application, view and respond to offers, and add a Clearing choice should they find themselves in Clearing.

UCAS ID

Each UCAS applicant is given a unique 10-digit UCAS identification number. This unique ID allows applicants to log into UCAS Hub to track their applications and will need to be referenced if they contact any universities regarding their application.

UCAS Tariff

UCAS Tariff points convert your qualifications and grades into a numerical value. Many qualifications (but not all) have a UCAS Tariff value, which will vary dependent on the qualification and the grade you achieved. This numerical value is used by universities to assess whether you meet their entry requirements for a particular course.



Fees and finance

We realise that cost of Higher Education is a major consideration for learners and their supporters. Whilst universities charge a similar tuition fee, accommodation and living costs will differ according to location, the type of accommodation on offer and other factors. Aberystwyth's accommodation is amongst the most affordable in the UK, and our rural location generally means a lower cost of living.

Financial support

At Aberystwyth, we offer a generous package of bursaries and scholarships to support our students. Take a look at aber.ac.uk/scholarships for more information.

We also offer first-year undergraduate students a free one year 16-25 Railcard, making travel between home and University more affordable.

For information about loans and grants, visit your government's student finance website:

Wales - studentfinancewales.co.uk

England - gov.uk/student-finance

Scotland - saas.gov.uk

Northern Ireland - studentfinancenir.co.uk

Other possible sources of funding include sponsorship, working part-time or charitable bequests.

Students with disabilities may be eligible for the Disabled Student's Allowance, and an additional grant may be available for travel costs: aber.ac.uk/disability-support

Our Student Support and Careers Services, and Students' Union, can offer students advice on budgeting and where to find part-time work during the holidays or alongside their studies. For more information see:

aber.ac.uk/student-services
aber.ac.uk/careers



Choosing a home from home



For many learners, going to university will be their first time living away from home. Choosing to live in university accommodation is often the best way to make sure they settle in and make friends in those first few weeks. Many Welcome activities will be based around student accommodation, and they will be surrounded by other students in the same position as them.

At Aberystwyth, we offer a range of options, including en-suite or shared facilities, catered or self-catered and self-contained studios. Our accommodation is voted amongst the best in the UK, with social and learning spaces on site, and within easy walking distance of the campus, Students' Union, Arts Centre and Sports Centre. Our accommodation fees also include Sports Centre membership, meaning free and unlimited access to all classes and facilities.

We guarantee accommodation to all first-year students and our Halls are amongst the most affordable in the UK.

Learn more here: aber.ac.uk/accommodation

Supporting our students

Our students' wellbeing is a priority at Aberystwyth University and we offer a range of services to support our students. We offer advice and guidance on academic matters, financial concerns, physical and emotional issues and more.

Personal Tutors

Each student is allocated a personal tutor who is an academic member of staff based in the student's department. The role of the personal tutor is to:

- help the student settle into life at Aberystwyth
- discuss and guide their academic progress
- support and encourage them during their studies.



Student Support and Wellbeing

Our team of expert advisers provide a safe, confidential space where students can talk about any issues which might be affecting their ability to study. Our Support Services include:

- **Advice and Money Service:**
Providing support on a wide range of issues, including finances, academic progress and university life.
- **Accessibility Service:**
Making university life accessible for everyone, by providing tailored support for students with a disability, individuals with specific learning needs, care leavers, and others who may require additional assistance, including transgender and non-binary students.
- **Student Wellbeing Service:**
Using solution-focused techniques to build students' resilience and help them manage their well-being while at university and beyond.
- **Signpost Mentoring:**
A friendly and confidential peer-mentoring scheme for all new undergraduates that offers one-to-one advice to help students settle in and enjoy their time at university.
- **Visa and Immigration Advice:**
Providing specialist advice on study visas for prospective and current international students.
- **Nightline:**
An independent listening service run by students for students, offering a confidential helpline, email and instant messaging service.

Please be aware that there are legal restrictions which prevent universities from sharing personal information about students with their parents, guardians or supporters. This means that the University will not normally be able to talk to you about any issues your learner may discuss with us. However, when registering, students are expected to share details of a Trusted Contact who we may contact in specific circumstances. Where there is concern for a student's welfare, we may contact that person.

Accommodation support

In our accommodation, our dedicated team of Residence Assistants (RAs) are fellow students who provide support and guidance, with the aim of creating a positive living and learning environment. If the RAs are unable to help, they will signpost to someone who can.

Safety and security

We take the safety of our students very seriously. We have a team of dedicated security officers who patrol our sites. In addition, our campus is monitored by CCTV and an ID card is required to access most campus buildings.

Harassment and Misconduct Support

We provide a safe, supportive space in which students can access support, feel heard and consider the options available to them.

Anti-discrimination policies

We have a firm commitment to equality and diversity, and a clear procedure for investigating incidents of harassment, bullying and discrimination. Further information can be found on our website: aber.ac.uk/equality

Careers and employability

We aim to ensure our students graduate with the academic, professional and practical experience to help them stand out in the job market and secure meaningful employment.

Our Careers Service is on-hand to offer support and guidance on developing skills, gaining professional experience and applying for positions.

The Service:

- Provides support in developing CVs, applying for positions and interviewing
- Holds large careers events where students can meet potential employers
- Runs employability workshops and a dedicated Career Readiness Support programme
- Assists students to explore entrepreneurship and enterprise
- Provides lifelong support and guidance, post-graduation, whenever needed.

Work experience

A number of courses offer an integrated year in industry and students can access the Careers Service's Year in Employment Scheme, both of which provide learners with relevant professional experience that complements their studies. The Service can also assist in identifying shorter-term work experience opportunities, such as summer internships, work placements and part-time employment.

The University has industry links with a range of local, national and international employers, enabling our students to connect with leading employers, across sectors.



Student life at Aberystwyth

On campus

Being a campus University means that social spaces, as well as accommodation and our teaching and learning facilities, are all within easy walking distance. The Students' Union is at the heart of the campus and is home to a bar, café, shop and spaces in which to meet friends and socialise. The Union has over 100 clubs and societies, meaning that our students are able to pursue lifelong passions and explore new interests.

The campus is also home to one of Wales' largest Arts Centres, with a theatre, cinema, exhibition spaces, studios, a restaurant and bar; and the Sports Centre, with an innovative self-powered gym, pool, 3G pitch, running track, climbing wall and more (all of which is free for students living in University accommodation).

The town

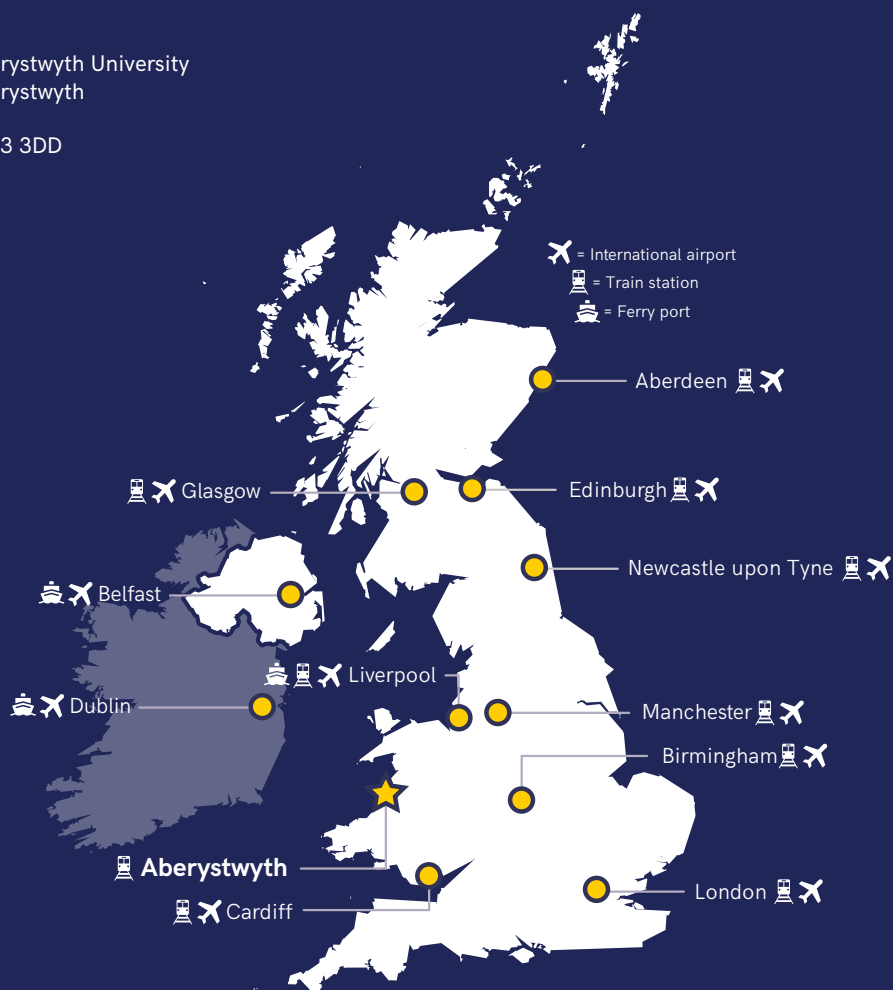
Aberystwyth itself is a friendly and lively student town. With a host of shops, restaurants, cafes and bars, the town offers an inclusive and welcoming environment in which students can socialise, explore their independence and be who they want to be.

The surrounding area

Aberystwyth is located right on the coastline and students spend much of their spare time socialising on one of our three beaches. We're also surrounded by countryside and not far from the Cambrian Mountains, meaning that Aberystwyth is the perfect location for students interested in outdoor activities such as paddleboarding, hiking, mountain biking and climbing.



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