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# **Your AberWelcome 2024 International Guide**

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WELCOME**



# You made it!

We are very pleased you have chosen to join our university community and look forward to meeting you. We hope this booklet makes it easier for you to settle into life in Aberystwyth.

Please visit us at the Student Welcome Centre if you require assistance in wellbeing, visa advice, money advice and career services.



## Settling into Aber

Let's start your university life with the essentials you need to complete when you arrive.

### Register with a doctor (GP)

You can register with a doctor (GP) using the online registration form, or by using the QR code:



NHS services are free to those that have paid the Immigration Health Surcharge. Some services will need to be covered privately or have a cost. If you are studying with us for one semester only, you will need to show your European Health Insurance Card or private health insurance to register with a doctor.

Free services:

- Any medicine prescribed by a GP
- Emergency contraceptive
- General Vaccines
- Mental Health Services

### Collect your Aber Card

Once your email account has been activated, you can apply for your Aber Card online.

You can collect your Aber card from the Hugh Owen Library. You will need to come in person and bring photo ID with you.

Your Aber Card is an important resource giving you access to a range of facilities and services inside the University.

The University is a cashless campus, therefore you can top up your card with cash at the SU reception or online if you wish to spend within the University shops and restaurants.

### Connect to the University Wi-Fi and get your SIM card

#### University Wi-Fi

Go to settings on your device, click on 'Wi-Fi settings' then select the 'eduroam' network. You can connect by login in with your university email address and password.

#### SIM card

You can purchase e-sim cards online through a network company. Just select your preferred plan and buy it online, then wait for your SIM card to arrive to your address.

The most popular network companies in the UK are: Giffgaff, O2, Three, Vodafone and EE.

If you're living on campus, there will be a free GiffGaff SIM card in your welcome box on your desk you can set up if you wish to go with their service.



# Open your UK bank account

You will need to open a bank account in the UK while you are studying here. It is a requirement if you wish to receive payments within the UK, such as wages, refunds and more. You will be issued a bank card to pay for goods and services.

## What you need

### • Banking Introduction Letter

Login into your Student Record, go to 'my personal information' select and 'Download Official Letter' and print if required. If you are required to print the banking introduction letter, it must be printed in colour. This can be done in the Hugh Owen library or with other university printers.

### • A UK address and a confirmation letter

Your address letter will be available as well in your Student Record under the 'Download Official Letter' Section.

### • A valid Passport

### • A valid BRP

### • A Student ID or acceptance letter

### • Be a registered student

## How to open a bank account?

Most banks ask you to apply for an account online. Search online for different banks in the UK and look for an 'international student', 'current' or 'everyday' bank account. Any bank account that is a debit account is the one you should apply for.

After applying, the bank will contact you to let you know if your application was approved. If approved, they will send the bank card to your current address. Additionally, you can go directly to the branch in town for more information.

Things to look for when applying for a bank account:

### Monthly fees

Some banks will charge you a monthly fee for holding an account, others will not. You can find this information when applying for your account online.

### Benefits

Some banks may offer different benefits, from saving accounts to discounts on services and shops.

### Fees for currency exchanges

If you plan to use your UK account outside the UK, your bank will charge a fee and use their own currency exchange rate upon your purchases. You can find this rate looking at the Terms and Conditions of your account.

### International transfers

When you receive and send money from abroad, each bank charges a different transaction fee. As well, the transaction period can take longer to arrive depending on the currency it is converted to or is originally converted from.

### Cancellation policies

Look for the cancellation policies, whether you should cancel on the branch or how can you cancel your account if you wish to do so, and if there are any charges when doing so.

### Withdrawals and deposits

Look for a bank that allows you to make deposits and withdrawals at the branch. Also ask for the withdrawal fees from an ATM that is not from your bank.

If you experience any problems with money and repaying an overdraft, please get in touch with the Money Advice team at [student-support@aber.ac.uk](mailto:student-support@aber.ac.uk) or by phone at (01970) 621761 / 622087.

## Banks and Building Societies in the UK

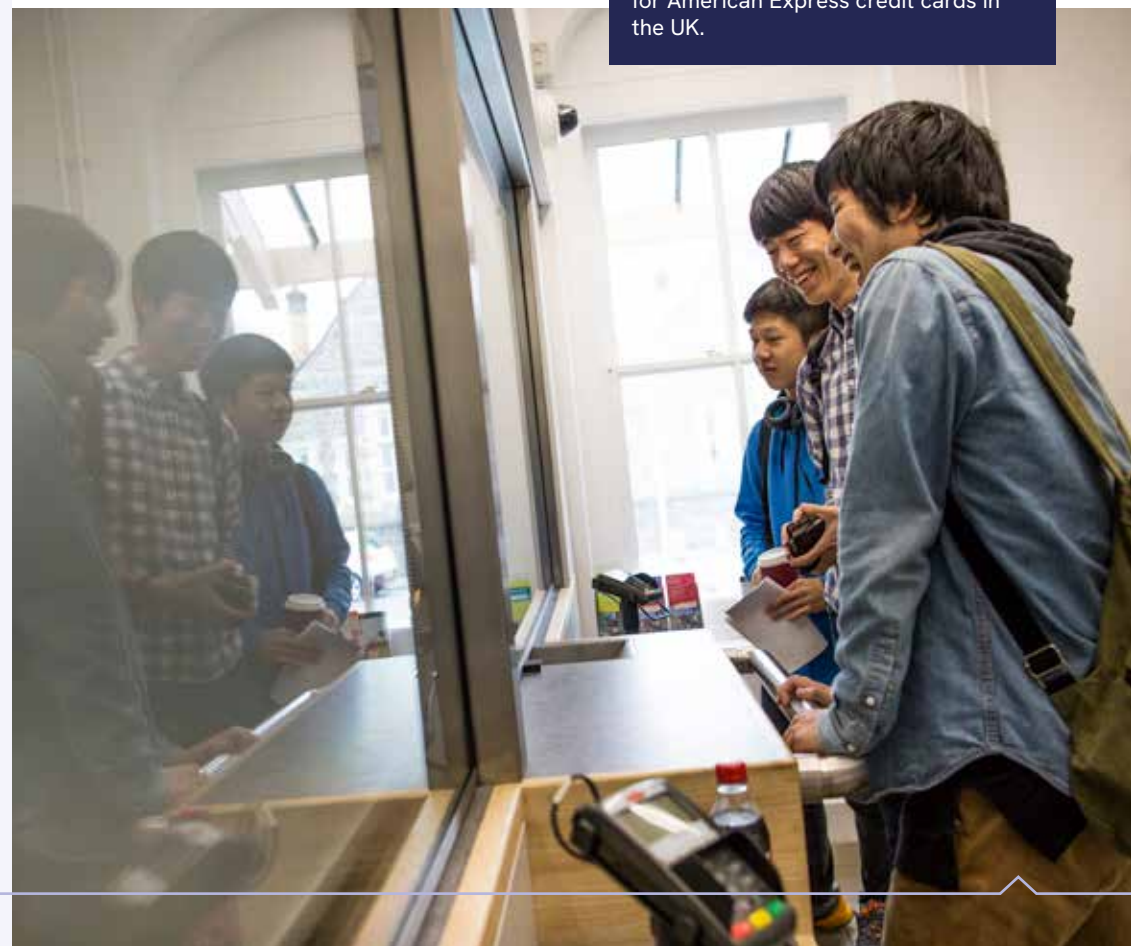


## Overdraft aware

An overdraft is when you spend more than what's in your current account. This will be up to a set amount, and you may be charged interest for using it. You need to repay your overdraft.

## American Express

International students can only apply for American Express credit cards in the UK.



## Working in the UK

If you wish to work in the UK under a Student Visa, you need your BRP and apply online for a NIN (National Insurance Number). You can start working before receiving it, only under the condition that you have applied for it.

The Visa Adviser will run different sessions on How to work in the UK and protect your visa. These sessions will take place in A6 Llandinam.

**Wed 25 September 2024**

1.30pm to 2.30pm

**Friday 11 October 2024**

1pm to 2pm

**Wed 6 November 2024**

2pm to 3pm

Finding work in Aberystwyth is exciting but, in some cases, it is also stressful. Please do not hesitate to contact Career Services if you have problems or questions.



### General advice

- Please check the terms of your Student Visa before beginning work in the UK.
- Make sure you always get a written contract that includes your wages, duties and working hours. It is illegal for your employer not to give you a contract.
- When looking for jobs, try looking online at Indeed, Glassdoor and Facebook groups. Also, take a walk around town and see what shops have a hiring poster on. Apply as soon as you can, positions fill up quickly.
- When offered an interview, do some research about the company, you will be asked your knowledge on it.
- It is all about attitude! Being positive and joyful help employers remember you.
- Research the different types of contracts in the UK. Example: Seasonal, fixed term, zero hours, and more.
- Check the current rate of the National Minimum Wage, depending on your age. Is illegal for your employer to pay you less than this.
- To evidence your right to work in the UK, you need to obtain a share code. You can only get this through the GOV. UK webpage.
- The standard Personal Allowance income is £12,570 for each tax year (The current tax year is from 6 April 2024 to 5 April 2025). If you earn less than this and still get taxed, you will then be eligible to claim a Tax Refund. You can do so at the end of the tax year on the HMRC webpage.
- To know your Tax code, look for it in your payslip.

## Services for students

### Undeb Aber

Undeb Aber (previously known as the Students' Union) aims to make sure that students have the best experience possible at university. It is led by students for students and is a completely separate organisation from the University.

### Sports Centre

Situated on campus, our Sports Centre offers a wide variety of sports and physical activity, including classes, gym spaces, a swimming pool, rock climbing facilities and more. Students living in campus accommodation get free Sports membership!

### AberSkills

Study more effectively by developing your academic skills. Maximise your potential and develop confidence through a range of courses, online guides, training sessions and one-to-one appointments.

### Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning offers short, higher education accredited modules in a wide variety of subjects, including Art and Design, Creative Writing, Ecology, Archaeology, Genealogy, History, Natural History Studies, Languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish), and Professional Development.



## How to stay safe in Aber

**With new surroundings and unfamiliar customs, it's crucial to prioritise your safety and well-being during your time in the UK.**

### Know the UK's National Emergency Numbers

Knowing the UK's national emergency numbers is vital for your safety and peace of mind as an international student.

The primary emergency number in the UK is **999**, which you should dial in urgent situations requiring immediate assistance from the police, fire department, or an ambulance.

### NHS 111

NHS 111 is a non-emergency medical helpline in the UK that provides assistance and advice when you need medical help fast but it's not a life-threatening situation. By dialling 111, you will be connected to a team of trained healthcare professionals who will assess your situation and provide appropriate guidance. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and can help you navigate through medical concerns, recommend the right course of action, and direct you to the appropriate healthcare services or facilities.

# Contacts List

Please find the following contact details of different University services that are available to you.

## Accommodation Office

- ☎ 01970 622984  
During office hours  
8:30 am – 5:00 pm Monday to Thursday.  
8:30 am – 4:30 pm Friday.
- @ [accommodation@aber.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@aber.ac.uk)

## Accessibility Service

- ☎ 01970 621761 or 01970 622087
- @ [accessibility@aber.ac.uk](mailto:accessibility@aber.ac.uk)

## Advice and Money

- ☎ 01970 621761 / 622087
- @ [Student-advice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:Student-advice@aber.ac.uk)

## Career Services

- ☎ 01970 622378
- @ [careers@aber.ac.uk](mailto:careers@aber.ac.uk)

## Fees

- ☎ 01970 622043
- @ [fees@aber.ac.uk](mailto:fees@aber.ac.uk)

## Global Opportunities

- ☎ 01970 622364
- @ [global@aber.ac.uk](mailto:global@aber.ac.uk)

## Hugh Owen Library & Information Services

- ☎ 01970 622400
- @ [is@aber.ac.uk](mailto:is@aber.ac.uk)
- 🌐 [aber.ac.uk/en/is/library-services/hughowen](http://aber.ac.uk/en/is/library-services/hughowen)

## International Recruitment and Development

- ☎ 01970 622990
- @ [International@aber.ac.uk](mailto:International@aber.ac.uk)

## Postgraduate Student Admissions

- ☎ 01970 622272
- @ [pgsstaff@aber.ac.uk](mailto:pgsstaff@aber.ac.uk)

## Security

- ☎ 01970 622900  
24/7 Campus Life Helpline. There is a phone in each building entrance (or in the communal block for PJM0 which will connect you to this number).
- 📍 Based at the Penglais Campus Reception (open 24/7).
- @ [security@aber.ac.uk](mailto:security@aber.ac.uk)

## Undergraduate Student Admissions

- ☎ 01970 622290
- @ [ugfstaff@aber.ac.uk](mailto:ugfstaff@aber.ac.uk)

## Visa Support and Advice

- ☎ 01970 621548
- @ [visaadvice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:visaadvice@aber.ac.uk)

## Wellbeing Services

- ☎ 01970 62171/ 622087
- 📍 Find us at the Student Welcome Centre on Penglais Campus.
- @ [Studentwellbeing@aber.ac.uk](mailto:Studentwellbeing@aber.ac.uk)



## Emergency Numbers

In an emergency always dial 999

## Accident and Emergency

- **Dyfed Powys Police:** Non-emergency calls dial 101
- **NHS Direct Wales:** Non-emergency calls dial 111

## Mental Health

You can access mental health support by calling 111 and selecting option 2. You can also access mental health support through the student wellbeing service at the student welcome centre.

## What to do in an emergency

In urgent health emergencies (physical or mental) go to Bronglais Hospital or call 999.

## Taxi Services

Always book a trip in advance, there are limited taxis available in Aberystwyth.

- **Ows Cabs:** 07807 298440
- **Dragons Cabs:** 07977 990646
- **7's Taxis:** 01970 627777
- **Mayan Cabs:** 07477 165263
- **John's Taxis:** 07792 906559
- **Cymru Cabs:** 07951 580227
- **A1 Taxis:** 07907 387215

## Letting Agencies

If you need advice on finding private accommodation, please visit the Student Union's website and look for their page on finding private accommodation or follow the link below.

[www.abersu.co.uk/advice/housingandaccommodation/lookingforaccommodation/](http://www.abersu.co.uk/advice/housingandaccommodation/lookingforaccommodation/)

- **Aberletting:** 01970 639000
- **Alexanders:** 01970 636010
- **ALP:** 01970 626533
- **Padarn Property:** 01970 627350
- **MS Properties:** 01970 617979



# Buildings on Campus



## Hugh Owen

The Hugh Owen Building is home to the Hugh Owen Library and the departments of English and Creative Writing, Law and Criminology, Modern languages, and Aberystwyth Business School.



## Gwendolen Rees

The Gwendolen Rees building, formerly known as the IBERS building, houses the Department of Life Sciences and includes Caffibach café.



## International Politics Building

The International Politics Building is home to the departments of History and Welsh History as well as International Politics.



## Edward Llwyd

The Edward Llwyd building houses the department of Life Sciences. The building includes laboratories and teaching rooms.



## Llandinam Building

The Llandinam Building houses the departments of Geography and Earth Sciences and Computer Sciences.



## Visualisation Centre

Visualisation Centre houses three lecture rooms and the University's Human Resource department.



## Parry Williams

The Parry Williams building houses the departments of Theatre, Film and Television Studies and Welsh Celtic Studies.



## P5

Located in the P5 Building are the departments of Information Studies, Psychology, and the School of Education.



## Physical Sciences

The physical Sciences building includes the departments of Mathematics and Physics, as well as the Physical Sciences Library.



## Lluest Equine Centre

The Lluest Equine Centre is a purpose-built teaching facility that is located on the University's Llanbadarn Campus.



## Carwyn James

The Carwyn James building houses Sport and Exercise Sciences.



## Cledwyn Building

The Cledwyn building is the oldest building on Penglais campus and is home to many administration departments. It houses the Academic Registry, Student Administration, Global Opportunities, Lifelong Learning, Admissions Office, as well as many others.



## Student Welcome Centre

The Student Support services and the Student Fees office are based at the Centre, as is the University's Admissions and Recruitment office.

Together they offer advice and support on finance, disability, learning support, health and medical issues, undergraduate and postgraduate courses and information on international study opportunities.



## Edward Davies School of Art

The School of Art, or the Edward Davies building, houses the departments of Art and Photography. The building is located close to Penglais Campus and towards the town centre.



## The Workstation

Located in the town centre, next to the train station, the Workstation is a 24-hour student study space. The space contains PCs, printing, Wi-Fi, and a bookable group study room.

It is also near the Aberystwyth town bus station, where students living in student accommodation can take the X28 bus service to take them up to the hill.

# UK University Grading System

To see how the UK grading system compares to your home country's, please visit the 'Exchange at Aber' webpage for grade conversions.

## Undergraduate degree classification

A bachelor's degree involves studying one, or sometimes two, subjects in detail. It's the most common undergraduate degree in the UK and is a level 6 qualification.

Typically classifications include:

- Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- Bachelor of Science (BSc)
- Bachelor of Education (BEd)
- Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)
- Bachelor of Laws (LLB)

Choosing a course in one subject is known as a single honours degree. You may be able to study a minor subject alongside the major subject for a portion of your degree, known as a major/minor honours degree.

Studying two or three major subjects as part of your degree is called a combined or joint honours degree. You'll pick several modules per subject, rather than doing every module for each subject. Each subject you take will hold equal weight towards your final degree.

## UK grading system

The UK university grading system is based on a numerical scale, typically ranging from 0 to 100, or 0 to 70.

Classification	Mark	Letter Grade Equivalent
First class (1st)	70% +	A
Upper second class (2:1)	60-69%	B
Lower second class (2:2)	50-59%	C
Third class (3rd)	40-49%	D
Fail	0-39%	E/F

## Course

Your course is basically your degree.

## Coursework

Written or practical work done by a student during a course of study, usually assessed in order to count towards a final mark or grade.

## Modules

Courses have a 'modular' structure. This means that you can build a personalized course by choosing modules or units of study from different subject areas. For example, if you are studying English literature, for your first year you could choose one module on science fiction, or one module on children's literature, and one module on short stories.

At the beginning of each part of your programme, you register for specific modules. You will have core modules, these are essential modules for your course and cannot be changed. As well, you will have optional modules that you can choose.



## Lectures

Lectures are one of the main ways that you will be taught at university. These are talks or presentations, typically lasting an hour, are delivered by a member of the academic staff.

There may be 50 to 300 students in the lecture theatre. The lecturer will provide a guide to the topic and indicate important points and themes for you to consider. You will be expected to listen and take notes, as you can review the PowerPoint slides online via Blackboard anytime.

## Seminars

Seminars are group discussions where your tutor or lecturer plans the theme. These are excellent learning opportunities. It's normally the lecturer's job to share the goals of the discussion, arrange practicalities like seating and introductions, steer the discussion and to bring the seminar to a close.

## Workshops or Tutorials

These are much smaller than lectures and consist of small groups of students, led by an academic tutor. In these classes you will develop a better understanding of topics and integrate ideas from your reading and lectures. The key difference between lectures and tutorials or workshops is the level of participation expected from you. For tutorials you will be expected to have read about the subject in advance and participate in the discussions, exchanging ideas and views with other students and the tutor.

## Access to blackboard

You can download the blackboard app in advance and login with your student email. As well, you can access it online by doing an online search and login at the Blackboard webpage.



## Aberystwyth Town

Walking from the University to town will take around 15 minutes. In town, you can find a range of restaurants, shops and other local services. Please see the table below for information on the different supermarkets in town.

Shop	Pricing	Kosher	Halal	Vegan
 <b>TESCO</b>	££	✓	✓	✓
 <b>Iceland</b>	££		✓	✓
 <b>SPAR</b>	£££			✓
 <b>home bargains</b>	£			✓
<b>M&amp;S</b>	£££		✓	✓
 <b>LIDL</b>	£		✓	✓
 <b>bm</b>	£			
 <b>Morrisons</b>	££	✓	✓	✓



## Keep Updated

> You can follow the university Accommodation Instagram and Facebook page [@Pauaccomoffice](#)

They post events for students living in student accommodation and import deadlines for accommodation applications.

> Find the International office at [@aberinternational](#) on Instagram

News and events for international students.

> Receive updates on exciting job opportunities at [@abercareers](#) on Instagram

Regular posts on new vacancies for current and graduate students.

> Follow Undeb Aber (The Students' Union) at [@UndebAber](#) on Instagram

Find out the events, societies and opportunities for you to be a part of.

> Discover the Global Opportunities at [@aber\\_globalopps](#) on Instagram

Find out more about opportunities to study, work, or volunteer abroad as part of your degree.

> Get local news at [@bbcwalesnews](#) on Instagram

Updates on relevant local information.





