

## **Computer Science**

### **DEPARTMENTAL HANDBOOK**

### **UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

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## Disclaimer

This handbook should be used in conjunction with the University's Regulations and the Academic Quality Handbook (which includes the Examination Conventions). Nothing in this handbook overrides these publications, which always take precedence. Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this handbook is accurate and current. The University does however reserve the right to amend or update the handbook during the course of an academic year. In the unlikely event of any changes you will be notified by your Institute/Department.

## Welcome

Welcome to the Department of Computer Science at Aberystwyth, part of the larger University unit of the Institute of Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science (IMPACS).

It is my hope that you will achieve success in the degree course you have chosen and, above all, enjoy your stay in this beautiful part of the world! Of course our degrees are intellectually challenging and require dedication and considerable hard work to achieve success. This is one of the reasons our graduates are highly regarded and sought by employers.

Computer Science has been taught at Aberystwyth University since 1970 making us one of the first CS Departments in the UK. What was taught then, though, is quite different from what is taught now. Technology has moved on beyond all recognition, but many of the underlying principles remain the same - that software and systems should fulfil their task correctly, that they should be useable, efficient and easily maintained. Computer Science is a particularly fast moving subject, and we aim to equip you with skills that will still be of benefit long after graduation, such as the ability and confidence to learn new programming languages and technology platforms, to communicate effectively and work in teams and to think logically and solve problems.

Learning is an active process, the department guides the learning process and provides the necessary resources, but it is up to you to make the most of the opportunities provided. The most important resource we provide is the lecturing staff, all of whom are either at the cutting edge of research in their specialist field, or have specialised in computer science education. You can make the best use of them by attending the classes provided, listening, asking questions and applying yourself to your studies.

We want all our students to succeed and have a great experience, but of course we don't always get everything right. We can't fix problems we are not aware of, so if you have any problems affecting your studies, or feel we haven't provided a good service, let us know and we'll do our best to fix it.

Have a great time mastering the computer science that matters in the 21st century.

Dr Bernie Tiddeman

Head of the Department of Computer Science

## Section A: Introduction

### Purpose of the handbook

This handbook aims to provide you with key information about your Institute/Department, and about university policies and procedures. It is not a comprehensive guide, but aims to provide you with some of the essential information you need to have a successful, and enjoyable, academic career here at Aberystwyth University.

This handbook is accompanied by further information found on the University's website:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/>.

Our Student Charter lays out our mutual responsibilities and aspirations. You can find it at the following web address: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/governance/su/student-charter/> .

The Institute/Department provides students with a new handbook each academic year that contains the most up to date information. We hope that you will find this information useful. If you would like to comment on the handbook contents, or have comments about how to improve the information provided, please forward these by email to your Institute/Department via [cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk).

You are also welcome to go to the General Office of the Department of Computer Science located on the ground floor of the Llandinam Building, or email [cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk), should you require further information or have any queries concerning any departmental matters presented in the handbook.

### Equality and Diversity

Aberystwyth University are committed to developing and promoting equality and diversity in all our practices and activities. We aim to work, study and provide an inclusive culture, free from discrimination and upholding the values of respect, dignity and courtesy. Every person has the right to be treated in accordance with these values.

We are committed to advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, sex and sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and to embrace intersectionality and raise awareness between and across different groups.

Our Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 promotes equality and equality improvements across the University as required under the Equality Act 2010. Progress Reports measured against this plan will be available in our annual monitoring reports.

Our current 4 year Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 (and accompanying Strategic Action Plan) can be found on the Plans section of the Equality web pages: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/equality/>

Should you have any questions please contact Debra Croft, Director of Equality, by emailing [equstaff@aber.ac.uk](mailto:equstaff@aber.ac.uk).

## Important Dates

The University's academic year begins in September. It is organised into **two semesters**, ending in January and June, and most modules are assessed at the end of each semester. There are also **three terms**, with vacation periods at Christmas and Easter. **All full time students are required to be in Aberystwyth during term time.** The dates of term, including when examinations are held can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/dates-of-term/>.

## Section B: Departmental/Institute Information

### Communication between the University and you

The official means of communication between the University and our students is by Aberystwyth University email. If you have yet to activate your email account, please do so by following the on-line instructions: <https://myaccount.aber.ac.uk/open/activate/>.

Communication between the Department/Institute and yourself is very important. There may be need to inform you of lectures, exams, welfare and so on. E-mail is the primary means of sending that information. We expect you to check your e-mail on a daily basis. It is recommended that you do so at least twice a day, once in the morning and once at the end of the day. Smartphones can be set up to link in to the University email system (see Mobile Email on <https://faqs.aber.ac.uk/>). Important letters may also be sent to your local or home address. It is important that you ensure that all addresses are correct on your student record, and you must inform the University of changes. Also please be aware that some correspondence may be placed in the pigeonholes on the ground floor of Llandinam building.

Should you need to contact a member of staff, e-mail is the best way to do so. As most of the staff are available in their offices during working hours, it is possible to contact them directly. However, remember that the staff are busy so make sure that you come prepared when you visit them in their office. Always bring your own notes and workings should you need help with understanding work. The list of staff members can be found in section B5.

You are also welcome at the Computer Science General Office situated on the ground floor of Llandinam building. Please call by the Office should you require assistance. The staff will be able to help you. Assistance is also available in Welsh. Various forms and literature are available on the stands and tables near the Office.

There are noticeboards on the long ground floor corridor. They display specific University, Institute and Departmental information for students, and also general information relevant to the discipline that may be of interest to you. You should look regularly on the displayed information.

### Arranging to see a member of staff

Most members of staff in the department do not restrict the times they are available to see students to a few hours a week, but neither can they be available all the time. If you need to speak to a member of staff, the best way to arrange an appointment is to e-mail them a day or two in advance suggesting a few times which would be convenient for you. Members of staff will typically advertise, on their office door, times when they are available. Computer Science Reception will normally be able to tell you if a member of staff is expected to be away for more than a day. Do not expect an answer outside normal working hours.

## Attendance and Engagement

The University requires students starting their studies from September 2016 onwards to attend all timetabled activities. For students who started their studies before September 2016, attendance requirements will be set by your Institute/Department.

Attendance is regularly monitored and where it is significantly lower than expected, students are emailed to meet the year tutor, to check there are no pastoral problems.

It is important that you take these emails seriously, as failure to attend is taken as evidence that there is indeed a problem and action is escalated to the Institute level. If you miss such a meeting (e.g. by reading an email too late), you should contact the year tutor as soon as possible.

If you do have problems that prevent you from attending sessions, you must make an appointment to see your year tutor as soon as possible so that you can receive support from the Department.

## Absence from Timetabled Activities

Attendance at lectures, tutorials, practicals and workshops is **compulsory**, as is attendance at meetings with your final year project supervisor and at meetings in connection with your group project. Tutorials will be arranged at the start of the module in such a way as to try to take account of students' other academic commitments.

You should note that the attendance requirements apply to the whole of the teaching period in each semester, as well as to examination periods. In particular, students from overseas should note that difficulties in obtaining travel reservations are not an acceptable excuse for missing classes. If you have a good reason for being unable to attend classes, you should inform the department *in advance*.

It is our experience that students who miss a significant number of their lectures fail. Copying someone else's lecture notes or obtaining a copy of the slides or watching a Panopto video is a very poor substitute for attending a lecture and absorbing its content. It is difficult to recover lost ground because lectures build upon one another.

If illness or personal circumstances prevents you from attending classes for more than a week, University regulations require you to present a medical certificate. Copies of this should be submitted to the department office along with a **Special Circumstances form** (see later in this handbook). Please read the accompanying advice.

If, without good reason, you regularly miss lectures or other compulsory classes, or repeatedly fail to hand in assessed work, the department will initiate disciplinary action, in accordance with the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress. This disciplinary process can lead to your being excluded from the University:

- If your overall attendance is less than 90%, then you will normally be required to meet with your year coordinator.
- If no improvement is seen then you will normally be sent to see the Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Institute.
- If attendance still fails to improve we will start proceedings to exclude you from University.

**Students with unjustified absences may be permanently excluded.**

## Meet the staff

The department's General Office is open between the hours of 9.00am-5.00pm during term time although out of term time these hours may vary according to administrative staff availability.

Responsibility		Room	e-mail	Ext.
Head of Department	Dr. Bernie Tiddeman	B47	bpt	1777
Director of Learning & Teaching (IMPACS)	Prof. Chris Price	E48	cjp	2444
Director of Learning & Teaching (Department)	Dr. Thomas Jansen	E48	cjp	2444
Year 0 Coordinator	Dr. Wayne Aubrey	C50	waa2	2421
Year 1 Coordinator	Mr. Chris Loftus	B62	cwl	2422
Year 2 Coordinator	Dr. Angharad Shaw	B44	ais	2215
Industrial Year Coordinator	Dr. Neal Snooke	E42	nns	1782
Year 3 and 4 Coordinator	Mr. Neil Taylor	C47	nst	1528
Tiwtor Cymraeg	Dr. Wayne Aubrey	C50	waa2	2421
MEng (Year 5) and MSc Coordinator	Dr. Edel Sherratt	MP.1.40	eds	2448
Mature and Overseas Students' Tutor	Dr. Edel Sherratt	MP.1.40	eds	2448
Department Secretary	Mrs. Margaret Walker	B50	zzy	2424
Industrial Year Administrator	Ms. Myfanwy Cowdy	Phys	mmm	2800
Disabilities Officer	Mrs. Meinir Davies	B53	met	2439
Timetable Officer	Ms. Michelle Symes	B50	mis37	2232
Employability Coordinator	Dr. Helen Miles	C37	hem23	8680



Responsibility		Room	e-mail	Ext.
Student/Staff Committee	Dr. Hannah Dee	E44	hmd1	1577
Departmental Advisors	Dr. Andy Starr /	B43	aos	2443
	Dr. Patricia Shaw	MP 1.06	phs	2432
Web and Computer Support	Mr. Sandy Spence	B59A	axs	2430
Health and Safety	Mr. Peter Hoskins	B59A	peh	2430
Examination Board Chair	Mr. Nigel Hardy	C53	nwh	2434
Examination Officers: David Smith, Stephen Humphries tsh@aber.ac.uk				

## Personal Tutors

Every undergraduate student is allocated a Personal Tutor. Personal tutors have an important role within the overall framework for supporting students and their personal development at the University. The role is crucial in helping students to take ownership of their personal development planning (PDP), to make effective use of the resources and opportunities provided by the University and to assimilate learning that is acquired across the whole of the student experience.

The Personal Tutor should provide a first point of contact between student and institute (or constituent departments/schools), be available for consultation at reasonable times, and where appropriate refer the student for specialised advice.

Full time undergraduate students will be given the opportunity to meet their Personal Tutor at least five times during the first year, at least four times in the second year, and at least three times in the third/fourth year.

More detailed information can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/agro/handbook/student-support/>

Students are expected to attend the tutorial meetings with their Personal Tutor. Your tutor will arrange these and inform you by email. If you are unable to attend, please let your tutor know in advance so that an alternative meeting can be arranged. You are also welcome to see your Personal Tutor for other additional meetings. If you have difficulties with studying at the University or are experiencing personal problems, do not keep it to yourself and contact your Personal Tutor immediately to arrange a meeting. In such cases, do not wait to be invited to a usual meeting.

In addition to the Personal Tutor system, the Department operates a Year Tutor system. If you are experiencing more general pastoral problems or academic difficulties that may affect your studies, and may also affect others in your year, please see your Year Tutor (noted in the Staff List). The **Year Tutor** has responsibility for a particular year, and:

- provides a single point of contact for students from a particular year to deal with all general pastoral problems as well as any general academic problems,
- adjudicates applications by students for extensions to coursework deadlines,
- pursues appropriate action following the submission of student medical/report forms,
- interviews students displaying unsatisfactory academic progress or attendance,
- follows-up on poor examination performance with the students concerned.

In cases of difficulty you are also welcome to see the departmental director of learning and teaching or the Institute director of learning and teaching.

### **Mature Students' Tutor**

We welcome the enthusiasm and commitment that mature students bring to the Department, but are aware of the particular challenges they may face in returning to education. Apart from their personal tutors, mature students may wish to speak to the Mature Students' Tutor.

### **Overseas Students' Tutor**

The Overseas Students' Tutor is available to help any student not normally resident in the United Kingdom with any problems relating to the difficulties encountered when living and studying in a foreign country.

### **Welsh Students' Tutor**

If you would like a tutorial through the medium of Welsh, you need to contact Wayne Aubrey (waa2@aber.ac.uk). The tutor will hold one tutorial per week in Welsh for first year students. Tutorials can be adapted to meet the student's needs and technical subjects can be discussed bilingually. In Part 2, students are assigned a personal tutor who can speak Welsh

### **Students on Industrial and Sandwich Years**

Undergraduate students are strongly encouraged to spend a year with an appropriate company and we help students find suitable places. This year comes between the second and the third (taught) years of the course. Students' placements vary from small software houses to multi-national engineering companies, in some cases abroad. Such a year is compulsory for some schemes, it is then known as a Sandwich Year. Most schemes have a version with, and a version without, a Sandwich Year. Each student on a year out is allocated to a member of staff of the department. Sandwich year students will normally be visited once or twice during the placement. We do our best to visit optional industrial year (sometimes called YES placement) students.

## **Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**

The Aberyswyth University Branch of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol is responsible for the University's Welsh medium Academic Strategy and its members collaborate fully with the Coleg to develop and promote the Welsh medium provision at Aberystwyth. You can learn more about the Branch's academic and social activities, along with the opportunities available for students by becoming members of the Coleg. <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/ccc/>

## Welsh Medium Study

There is growing support for students wishing to study Computer Science through the medium of Welsh at Aberystwyth University. The Department places an emphasis on nurturing bilingual skills through the Welsh medium modules of our degree schemes. The aim of the provision is to raise students' confidence to present and deal with Computer Science bilingually, in Welsh as well as English, as is desirable for the workplace in Wales. Most of the lectures are presented in English, and the teaching reinforced in Welsh tutorials and other Welsh medium experiences. Our aim is that bilingual students are confident in handling the subject in Welsh and English by the end of the degree course. For modules offered through the medium of Welsh, look out for the 'CC' module prefix as opposed to the 'CS' prefix.

Dr Wayne Aubrey has the specific duty for Welsh-medium teaching and activities, however you will find many of the academic staff have some level of Welsh to support bilingual students, or students wishing to learn Welsh during their time here. Office and administrative support is also available through the medium of Welsh. You are welcome to contact them should you wish further information.

The Welsh medium provision within the department is supported by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol: <http://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/thecoleg/>.

## Submitting Assessments in Welsh

Aberystwyth University operates a bilingual policy for all written assessments, including coursework essays and examinations. Any student may choose, regardless of whether the main language of assessment of the module in question is Welsh or English, to submit examination scripts and assessed coursework in either Welsh or English (with the exception of assessments where language assessment is included in the module learning outcomes). Students pursuing modules through the medium of Welsh will be examined in that language; students pursuing modules through the medium of English are entitled to be assessed in Welsh.

The University has established a policy on the translation of assessed work aimed at ensuring the integrity of the process (i.e. that students are not unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged by the marking of translated work). Students who wish to submit examination scripts or assessed coursework in Welsh on English medium modules are not required to give prior notification of their intention to do so.

## Employability

### Transferable Skills

Studying for a degree in Computer Science will equip you with a range of transferable skills which are highly valued by employers. These include:

- (i) research and data analysis skills;
- (ii) enhanced mathematical and computational skills;
- (iii) effective problem-solving and creative thinking skills;
- (iv) how to reduce a difficult problem to a structure comprising smaller easier problems;
- (v) a thorough grounding in information technology skills;
- (vi) the ability to work independently;
- (vii) time-management and organisational skills, including the ability to meet deadlines;
- (viii) presentation skills: the ability to express ideas and communicate information in a clear and structured manner, in both written and oral form;
- (ix) self-motivation and self-reliance;
- (x) team-working, with the ability to discuss concepts in groups, accommodating different ideas and reaching agreement.

### Schemes with integrated Sandwich Year

Schemes with integrated Sandwich Year may include:

- (i) An integrated year in industry, consisting of a period working in the UK or abroad
- (ii) An integrated year studying abroad, consisting of a period studying at a university abroad.

During the Sandwich year, students will be expected to be in employment or studying abroad for a minimum of 30 weeks, and must comply with Institute requirements for maintaining contact with tutors during this period. Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress during the Sandwich Year may be reported to the Institute Director under the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress.

The Sandwich Year will be marked in accordance with published assessment criteria, and Senate Examination Board may require students who fail to meet the learning outcomes and achieve a minimum mark of 40% or pass the year to transfer onto a related degree scheme which does not include the integrated year in industry or integrated year studying abroad. Please note also that students are not allowed to go on exchange placements during the year prior to the Sandwich Year.

## **Industrial Year Schemes (IY)**

Almost all our degree schemes come with the option of an integrated industrial year. This offers you the opportunity to take a year out between your second and third year, whilst still maintaining your student status, to work in an organisation in the U.K. or overseas. IYs provides a rewarding and worthwhile experience, both personally and professionally, and can help you to stand out from the crowd in a competitive job market. Both the department and the University's Careers Service (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/careers/>) will help you to explore your options and find a suitable work placement. As an opportunity integrated within our degrees, the year will count towards your final degree, and be included on your transcript for future employers to see.

## **Opportunities to Study or Work Abroad**

The University maintains links with other universities throughout the world. Details may be found at the Study Abroad website (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/international/study-abroad/sya-jya-programme/>). Students who wish to take up this opportunity normally do so for their second year; the application process is in the first year. Placements are allocated through a selection process by the University. Students must discuss their plan with the Computer Science department to ensure their proposed syllabus includes all the material required for their next year of study at Aberystwyth. The departmental contact is Dr Frédéric Labrosse.

Industrial Year placements can be taken abroad, please see information above on Industrial Year Schemes. Please note, we cannot guarantee to visit students taking this opportunity.

## **Your Voice: Gathering Student Feedback**

Aberystwyth University is committed to providing students with a first class student experience. Students are partners in their learning, their opinion of academic programmes and the wider student experience is highly valued by the University.

Your Voice Matters is about students and staff working together to make Aberystwyth University exceptional. You can tell us what we're doing well, where we can improve and what's important to you. Get involved by contacting Aber SU academic reps or officers, talking to your lecturers or support staff, filling in the online Your Voice Matters form, or completing a Module Evaluation Questionnaire. Your feedback helps us to continue enhancing the student experience.

**Your Voice Matters, so get in touch and have your say.**

## **Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQ)**

Each semester, all undergraduate students will be asked to complete an online Module Evaluation Questionnaire in-class for each of the modules they are taking. All feedback via MEQ is anonymous and will be used by your Department to see how the module is performing and make any possible changes. Each module coordinator will write a report analysing the results of the MEQs and the results of which will be provided to students via face-to-face discussions, emailed to students and published on Blackboard. Please provide constructive feedback on your modules, complete module evaluations honestly, with consideration and respect for the teaching and support staff for each module in accordance with the Students Rules and Regulations: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/>.

Students are informed when submitting a comment the University reserves the right to remove or redact comments that are deemed to be in breach of the Students Rules and Regulations.

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/> .

## **Your Voice Matters**

Your Voice Matters is a process by which students are able to feedback at any time about any aspect of their University experience. Student feedback helps the University to continue to enhance the student experience, by telling us what we're doing well, where we can improve and what's important to you.

See <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/your-voice-matters> for more information. Again, please provide constructive feedback with consideration and respect for staff in accordance with the Students Rules and Regulations: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/> .

## **Staff Student Consultative Committee**

Students are at the heart of learning and teaching and an effective student voice, with appropriate representative structures, underpins the University's quality assurance and enhancement systems. In this, the University recognises the importance of effective student representation at many layers within the University's structure in contributing to its success in maintaining and enhancing the student experience.

The purpose of SSCCs is to establish a formal means of discussion and communication between Institutes/Departments and students on matters relating to academic issues affecting their studies. The formal contact is recognised as an important channel of effective communication between students and University staff. At a minimum, Institutes shall establish an Institute or departmental level SSCC, in accordance with Regulations: Academic Institute Structure (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/governance/>).

More detailed information can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aqro/handbook/student-support/>

Elections for the student representatives on the Computer Science Student-Staff Consultative Committee take place at the start of the academic year: Staff are normally represented by the Director of Teaching, Head of Support, and each of the year coordinators. The SSCC meets twice each year, around the middle of the two Semesters. The representatives will seek your views ahead of the meetings, but you can contact them at any time to raise any issues. Formal minutes of the meetings are taken and posted on the departmental notice board and the web, and details of any actions taken as a result of the meetings are posted. As well as the SSCC, you can also raise issues via email at [tellusnow-compsci@aber.ac.uk](mailto:tellusnow-compsci@aber.ac.uk).

## Section C: Registration and your Programme

### Registration

Before you can be known as a full-time or part-time student at Aberystwyth University you need to complete registration at the start of the session. Registration information, registration timetable and a full list of events can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/applicants/post-results/freshers/registration/>

If you have any queries concerning undergraduate registration, please contact the Academic Quality and Records Office (email: [ugfstaff@aber.ac.uk](mailto:ugfstaff@aber.ac.uk), tel: 01970 628515/622787). It is important to inform the Academic Quality and Records Office if you are unable to register on time. **Please note: If you do not complete registration, you will not be a registered student and your access to University facilities will be suspended.**

### Tier 4 Student Visa Responsibilities

#### Important information for non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals in the UK on a Tier 4 student visa.

Aberystwyth University is a registered 'sponsor' under the Tier 4 Point-Based Immigration system (PBS). This gives us the ability to recruit and sponsor International students.

The Home Office, under the PBS places responsibilities on students and their University to ensure Immigration rules are followed.

As a licenced sponsor, the University has developed policies and procedures to ensure that we comply with these responsibilities. These policies and procedures are also in place to help you protect your immigration status.

To help avoid potential difficulties we have provided guidance on these responsibilities on this website and also in the resources section of the Compliance Information page.

If you have any questions, please contact the Visa Support and Compliance Team at [immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk).

Further information can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/international/compliance-information/>

### Scheme Structures and Programme Specifications

Links to all current scheme structures can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/study-schemes/>

Links to all current programme specifications can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/programme-specs/index.html>.

Your degree scheme structure will include 'core modules' which you will be required to study, and may also include a choice of 'option modules'. Please note that the choice of option modules may be limited in some cases where a minimum threshold is applied. This means that the University cannot guarantee to run optional modules with very few registrations, and students may be asked to choose again.

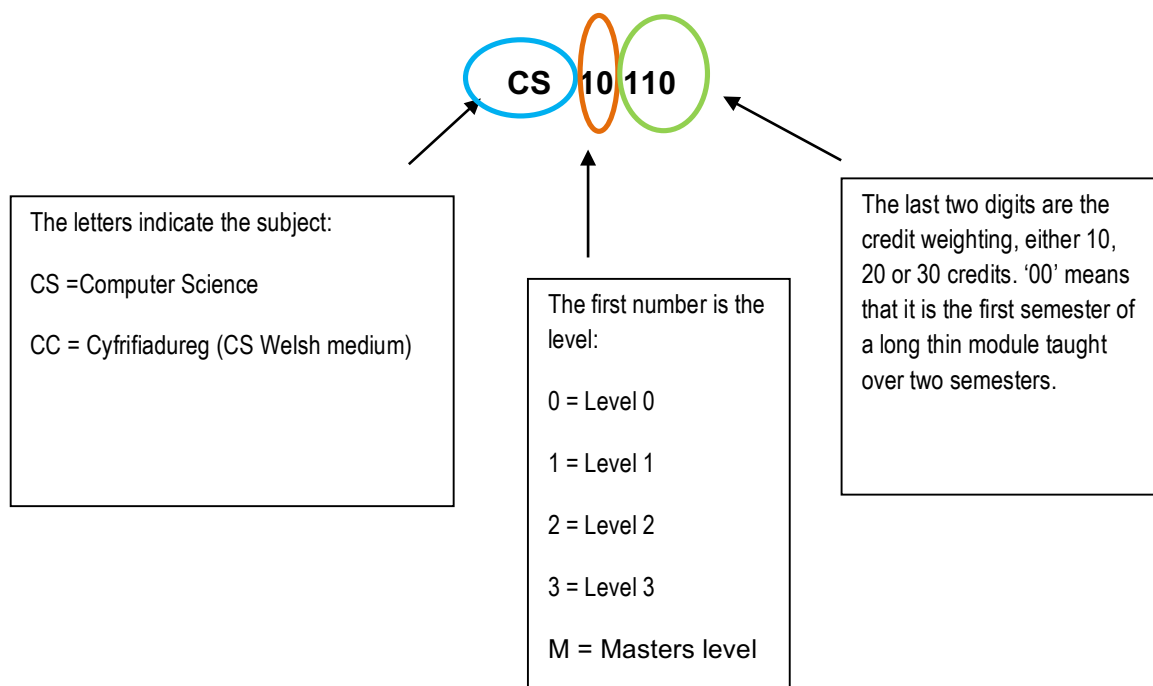
The British Computer Society (BCS) accredit our schemes on behalf of the Engineering Council.

The BCS accept all of our single honours schemes for the appropriate level of accreditation.

## Module Information

A module is a unit of study within a degree scheme with its own learning outcomes. Links to individual module details can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/modules/>.

All modules at Aberystwyth are identified by a seven digit code. This code tells you important information about the module, as shown in the example below



## Academic Timetable

Once you have registered, you can access your personalised on-line timetable via your student record: <https://studentrecord.aber.ac.uk/en/>.

Questions about individual student timetables should be referred to your departmental Timetable Officer in the first instance: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/timetable/departmental-timetable-officers/>



## Section D: Assessment and Feedback

### AberLearn Blackboard / E-Learning Resources

The department makes use of AberLearn Blackboard and a departmental Intranet for learning and teaching content information. Formal minutes of the meetings are taken and posted on the departmental notice board and the web, and details of any actions taken as a result of the meetings are posted.

A departmental page on Blackboard provides access to information relevant throughout your time here at Aberystwyth. Here is the link to the Student Guide to AberLearn Blackboard:

[https://blackboard.aber.ac.uk/webapps/portal/execute/tabs/tabAction?tab\\_group\\_id=19\\_1](https://blackboard.aber.ac.uk/webapps/portal/execute/tabs/tabAction?tab_group_id=19_1)

### Computer Resources

The department believes that the computing facilities available to our students are more than sufficient. Furthermore, the University Information Services facilities, which are closely integrated with those of the department, are available to all students. Even so, availability is not unlimited and there may be occasions when difficulties arise. Students are asked to be understanding in such cases and to comply with any requests the department may make over the use of resources. The Computer Science Department takes no responsibility for the correct functioning of any equipment or software, nor for the security or integrity of any stored program or data except as required by the Data Protection Act.

**Do not leave assignments until the last minute. Computer problems are not an excuse for handing in an assignment late.**

#### Use of Personal Computers

If you own a personal computer, you will enjoy considerable advantages of flexibility and convenience. You must, however, be careful not to let these advantages turn into a disadvantage.

After the first year, some of the practical work set by the department requires, explicitly or implicitly, the use of UNIX; unless you become thoroughly familiar with UNIX, you may have difficulty with the practical work. If you are sensible, you can gain a lot of advantage by becoming familiar with UNIX. Not only will this make you attractive to potential employers, but it will also give you a deeper understanding of a lot of the issues in software engineering.

A second danger that can arise from using your own computer is that you become isolated. You can learn a lot from working in the company of other students and discussing your work with them. If you always sit in your room working at your PC, you will lose the opportunity for doing this.

Finally, departmental facilities are maintained and backed up by support staff. If you depend on your own private machine, your work may suffer if it malfunctions. **It is your responsibility to make sure that you take adequate precautions to back up your important work.**

#### Printing

Information Services provides printers for students to use. You will find that, to print all the teaching materials and project and assignment work you want, you will need to budget a substantial amount for printing, especially at certain times in the semester. When you are issued with an assignment make sure you know what is to be handed in and, if that includes printed copies, in what quality.

For some assignments, you may find it cheaper to learn how to use the various facilities available for fitting more than one document page on a single side of paper ('multipaging').

**If there is a queue in B23 look at <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/computers/rooms/> to find other printers. A queue at the last minute is NOT an excuse for late hand-in.**

### **Regulations for the Use of Equipment**

All students are required to abide by the rules laid out by Information Services at:

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/regulations/>

In addition, students are expected to abide by such further conditions concerning the use of the resources as the Department may impose.

If, in the opinion of the Head of the Computer Science Department, a user's use of the resources contravenes any University rules, or is in breach of any rules promulgated by the Department, access to the resources may be summarily withdrawn from that user.

### **SgiliauAber/AberSkills**

SgiliauAber/AberSkills is an extensive online resource open to all students and staff of Aberystwyth University. It includes advice and guidance on a broad range of study skills. The advice is organised in sections that are closely related to assignments, exams and other forms of assessment. The information is provided at general and subject specific levels and includes advice and materials created within the university and from elsewhere. The advice includes practical guidance on academic writing, referencing, presentations, exams and a wide range of learning strategies and study resources. It is accessible from the main page of AberLearn Blackboard, or directly from the following web pages:  
<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aberskills/>

### **Methods of Assessment**

Modules are assessed by a combination of fixed length examinations, fixed length practical examinations, in-class tests, coursework and reports. The proportions of these elements used for each module are listed on the Module Database:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/modules/deptcurrent/?d=Computer+Science>

It is important to note that the assessment at University does not only display the range and depth of your knowledge. It is also an essential part of the learning process that helps you develop and improve your skills, for example to solve problems, construct arguments and communicate ideas that are often complex in a clear and effective manner. These skills are an important part of your degree programme, and are required in the work-place. As you pursue your degree programme, the feedback you receive from your lecturers on assessed work will help you to improve these skills.

Various modules make use of worksheets as part of the assessment. While individually each worksheet may not contribute many marks to the module, as a set they contribute a significant component.

Therefore, it is important to ensure all your worksheets are signed off during practicals so as not to miss out on the marks available.

## Coursework

Coursework must be submitted to the Department/Institute according to individual departmental/institute requirements and published deadlines.

**You will be formally assessed by a variety of means during and at the end of each module.**

The precise form of assessment will vary according to the nature of the module, and are explained to you in detail at <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/modules/>

If in any doubt, ask your module coordinator, who will be happy to clarify anything you are unsure about.

It's important to note that at University, assessment is not only about demonstrating the range and depth of your knowledge. It is also an essential part of the learning process that actively helps you develop and enhance your skills in addressing problems, formulating arguments and communicating often complex ideas clearly and persuasively. These skills are a vital part of your degree programme, and are in great demand in all areas of the world of work.

### Assignments and Projects

'Project' is a term reserved for larger pieces of work, specifically: the group project undertaken in the second year; the final year projects for undergraduates; and the MSc project typically undertaken during the summer following the taught part of that scheme.

'Assignments' are smaller pieces of work.

Assignments and projects are a very important part of many modules offered by the Department. They contribute to your learning and they provide some element of assessment.

The description of each individual module tells you exactly what proportion of the assessment comes from coursework. It is important to realise that, if you don't submit the coursework, you will get no marks for it; this will have a serious effect on your mark for that module as a whole. It is much better to hand in coursework that is incomplete than to hand in nothing at all.

Failure to submit coursework, just like missing an examination, may be regarded as grounds for reporting your progress as unsatisfactory, in accordance with the academic regulations on academic progress.

### Worksheets

Worksheets are given primarily as learning and self assessment exercises. They may play a small part in module assessment. (If so, this will be explained in the module description).

There may be a mechanism for handing in completed worksheets or for having them "signed off" by demonstrators. Such mechanisms are designed to provide feedback to you on your progress and understanding and to provide encouragement to stay abreast of material.

The Department is anxious to strike an appropriate balance between assessed and un-assessed practical work. It is most important that you take seriously exercises such as worksheets, where you have an opportunity to develop skills and understanding without the pressures and restrictions of assessment. The Department takes a dim view of the attitude that only assessed work is worth doing.

## Helping one another in coursework

You are encouraged to help one another in practicals (this does not mean doing the work for someone else), but assignments and projects are assessed on the basis that they are your own work. The department provides tutorials, workshops, practical classes, and an advisory desk to help you, in addition to members of staff. You can get help simply by asking, and will lose no marks by doing so. Conscientious students who care enough about their work to seek help often create a more favourable impression than those who stumble on in partial understanding.

**We encourage students to discuss problems and ideas, but there is an important difference between students helping each other to learn and helping each other to complete their work. If you do collaborate with someone on a piece of work, it is very important that all parties involved clearly indicate in the work submitted the extent of the collaboration.**

It is regrettable that some students feel the need to copy work and attempt to pass it off as their own. Such attempts are quite easy to spot, and the Department and the University take a very serious attitude to such practices (see section on Unacceptable Academic Practice).

## Submission

Unless otherwise advised, all text-based, word-processed coursework should be submitted online. Students should refer to the published guidance on e-submission [https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic/e-submission/2014\\_policy/faqs\\_submission/](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic/e-submission/2014_policy/faqs_submission/)

Any variations to the standard submission process will be clearly identified by the lecturer setting the assignment.

- Watch a video on how to submit: (<http://www.inf.aber.ac.uk/advisory/faq/524/> ).
- Don't leave it until the last minute before submitting your work - if you are stressed and working right up to the clock, mistakes are easier to make. Give yourself some extra time and submit your assignment early. That way, you won't risk missing the deadline. You can find the university policy on late submission on the AU website here (<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/ug-issues/>)
- Follow all the instructions on screen whilst you are submitting, including details of file size, file format etc. Please use a short file name (15 characters is a good length).
- If you are using the Turnitin tool, keep the receipt that will come to your AU email account. Please note that for all of the e-submission tools, you can also check your receipt of submission by clicking the link where you originally submitted the assignment.
- If your tutors are using e-marking, you may be able to receive your feedback through the same link, alternatively feedback will be emailed to you. Please check with your tutors to find out how you will receive feedback.
- If you have any problems, contact your department straightaway with details of what happened. Technical problems can be reported to [bb-team@aber.ac.uk](mailto:bb-team@aber.ac.uk). Please take screenshots of any error messages.

If you believe that your submission has not gone through correctly, have a look at the Failed Submission Policy at

<http://nexus.aber.ac.uk/xwiki/bin/download/Main/guides+%2D+Blackboard/failed%2Dsubmission%2Dpolicy.pdf>

## Deadlines

Deadlines for written work are taken very seriously by the University. Students need to manage their time responsibly so that they can submit work on time.

Deadlines will be communicated by module co-ordinators. An outline of the assessment schedule can be found on the Computer Science intranet at: <http://impacs-inter.dcs.aber.ac.uk/en/cs-undergraduate/year-information>

## Late Submission

Work submitted after the deadline will be awarded a zero.

We attach great importance to handing coursework in on time; if it is handed in late, without prior permission, **you will get no marks for it**. The ability to meet deadlines is something which employers value very highly; several employers have congratulated us on the fact that our graduates are better at meeting deadlines than those from many other CS departments.

If you feel you have a very good reason for handing a piece of assessed coursework in late, you must seek the permission of the **year coordinator** (see Section B), before the deadline, using the form available at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/~dcswww/intranet/staff-students-internal/teaching/resources.php> . You will be required to provide evidence, for example a note from a doctor, to support your request, but if this is not immediately available the request should still be made, with an indication that evidence will be forthcoming. The coordinator may ask to see you to discuss your best strategy for completion of work across all your modules. You will be told the outcome of the request within 2 working days. Note that if an extension is granted you cannot also claim that you have special circumstances for that piece of course work unless there is additional evidence.

If you miss the deadline for handing in an assignment then you should still submit it. By handing in the assignment you will also receive feedback on the work.

## Absence from Examinations

A candidate may be deemed absent with good cause from an examination or assessment because of documented illness, accident, close bereavement or on closely related compassionate grounds. The Examination Board concerned shall have discretion to decide whether, on the basis of the evidence received, a candidate has been absent with good cause. A candidate who, without good cause, has been absent from any University examination or failed to complete other forms of assessment by the required date, shall be awarded a zero mark for the assessment concerned.

## Extension Requests

Students must apply for an extension if for unavoidable reasons they are unable to submit coursework on time, by completing the Coursework Deadline Extension Request Form. The request form is available from

your Institute/Department and provides detailed advice on the circumstances in which extensions may be granted, the length of extensions, and what to do if an extension is not possible or permitted.

See further information under Late Submission.

## Special Circumstances

The University aims to assess all its students rigorously but fairly according to its regulations and approved procedures. It does however rely on students to notify it of special circumstances which may affect their performance so that it can treat all students equally and equitably. Examples of Special Circumstances include, but are not limited to: short or long-term illness, severe financial problems, major accommodation problems, bereavement or other compassionate grounds. If you do wish to let the University know of special circumstances, you must complete a Special Circumstances Form and forward it to the designated people (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/agro/exams//special-circumstances/stafflist>) in all your departments together with copies of the supporting evidence. Please note the University requires students to notify it of any exceptional personal circumstances which may have adversely affected their academic performance as soon as possible and in any case before the meetings of Examining Boards.

The full guidelines can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/agro/exams//special-circumstances/>.

Further information is also available at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/agro/exams//exam---conventions/>

## Marking Procedures and Moderation

All examinations are subject to the University's Anonymous Marking procedure, with candidates retaining anonymity until the Institute/Departmental Examination Board. At that stage, the recommendations of Institute/Departmental Special Circumstances Panels are also considered to take account of medical or other special circumstances which have been reported by students under the University's [Special Circumstances Procedure](#). A similar policy applies to written coursework, subject to exemptions approved by Institutes where anonymity is impractical or undesirable.

The expectation of the UK Quality Code (Chapter B6) is that higher education institutions will have in place transparent and fair systems for marking and moderation. The University needs to be assured that robust, effective and consistent internal moderation processes are being applied in all Departments across all Institutes. The details of these processes are likely to vary according to local circumstances and professional body requirements, but all Institutes should work to the definitions and minimum requirements set out in the Academic Quality Handbook in applying their own internal moderation processes.

## Marking Criteria

Assessment criteria are provided for individual assignments. Below is a general indication of what is expected at each level.

1st: 80-100%	An outstanding body of work demonstrating a very deep understanding of the problem and presented as such. Written components will be professionally presented in both layout on the page and logical structure. They will also be excellently presented in an appropriate style and will be grammatically of an extremely high standard. Demonstrates an excellent understanding of the technologies employed and uses appropriate terminology accurately. Implementation components will be extremely well finished and will more than completely fulfil the functional requirements.
1st: 70-79%	An excellent body of work demonstrating a deep understanding of the problem and presented as such. Written components will be professionally presented in both layout on the page and logical structure. They will also be very well presented in an appropriate style and will be grammatically of a very high standard. Demonstrates an excellent understanding of the technologies employed and uses appropriate terminology accurately. Implementation components will be very well finished and will at least completely fulfil the functional requirements.
2(i): 60-69%	A good body of work demonstrating a good understanding of the problem and presented as such. Written components will be well presented in both layout on the page and logical structure. They will also be presented in an appropriate style and will be of a good grammatical standard. Demonstrates good understanding of the technologies employed and a good grasp of the terminology appropriate. Implementation components will be complete and will usually fulfil the functional requirements in all aspects.
2(ii): 50-59%	A body of work which shows understanding of the problem in most aspects. Written components will demonstrate those areas which are well understood and those areas which are not so well understood. The documents will be structured in a reasonable way which allows them to be easily read, but may be lacking in structure, clarity and grammatical quality. Displays an adequate level of understanding of technologies used and mostly uses terminology appropriately. Implementation components will probably be incomplete in some relatively minor aspects, and may omit some of the more advanced pieces of work.
3rd: 40-49%	A body of work which shows some understanding of the problem. Written components will show what progress has been made, and make some attempt to show which areas have not been understood. Documents may show a lack of structure, comprehensibility, clarity and grammatical quality. Documents may also be incomplete in coverage of the work undertaken. Probably fails to show understanding of the technologies used and often fails to use appropriate terminology. Implementation is likely to be incomplete and may omit some aspects of the core problem. No adequate attempt to tackle more advanced sections of the work.
Fail: 30-39%	A body of work which fails to show proper understanding of the problem or which demonstrates an inappropriate, inadequate or incomplete response. Written components will typically fail to accurately or completely describe the work done and will often contain little indication of which parts of the problem are understood and which are not. Documents often show a lack of structure, comprehensibility, clarity and grammatical quality. Failure to demonstrate understanding of the technologies used and lack of or inaccurate use of the terminology appropriate. Implementation is probably drastically incomplete, severely misguided or severely hampered by inability to use the technologies required.
Fail: 20-29%	Some work which shows little or a seriously flawed understanding of the problem, and an inappropriate, inadequate or drastically incomplete response. Written components will be poor in terms of presentation and content. They will usually fail to describe the problem, the work done, or the level of understanding reached. They will also lack structure, clarity or comprehensibility and often be of a poor grammatical standard. The work will often show a failure to understand the technologies required to solve the problem and will not use the correct terminology. Implementation is likely to be absent, drastically incomplete, severely misguided or severely hampered by inability to use the technologies required.

Fail: 0-19%	Probably very little work on either implementation or documentation, or a body of work which is very severely flawed by lack of ability to use the required technologies and/or to present the small amount of work done. Implementation absent, barely commenced or very severely misguided.
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Examples of assessment criteria for different types of assignments can be found alongside the handbook on the departmental intranet at <http://impacs-inter.dcs.aber.ac.uk/en/cs-undergraduate/official-information/student-handbooks>.

## Feedback

The University's requirement on the return of feedback on coursework is within 15 working days of the date of submission. In the event of exceptional and unavoidable delays you will be informed accordingly and given an amended timescale for the return of the assessment concerned.

The University operates the following Principles of Effective Feedback to students:

- (i) Feedback should be transparent, enabling students to understand it and relate it to assessment criteria;
- (ii) Feedback should help students identify areas of strength and where they need to improve;
- (iii) Feedback should be proportionate and appropriate to the type of assessment, its timing, and the size of class;
- (iv) Students should have clear and accessible information on the types of assessment and the nature and timing of the feedback they will receive associated with each type of assessment;
- (v) Students have the right to seek clarification of marks, to help them understand what they did well and less well and how they might improve.

Staff will normally mark assessed work for feedback within three weeks of deadlines. However, any mark given to the student at this stage will be a provisional mark, which may be revised by the Examination Board.

Computer Science staff give feedback in a variety of ways. The principal form is marks and written comments on submitted work. These identify correct approaches, and in the case when the attempted argument is not valid, indicate how the argument could be modified. It is important that students study this feedback: learning from mistakes is an invaluable tool for improvement. Staff will endeavour to return marked work as soon as practicable; three weeks from the submission date is the latest this will occur (unless there are exceptional circumstances). Some parts of lectures are devoted to discussing common themes that arose from submitted assignments. In tutorials/problem classes/workshops/practical sessions, the emphasis is on students attempting problems; staff will give feedback, building towards a correct solution. Finally, Personal Tutors will wish to discuss exam performance during meetings; students can receive detailed breakdowns of their marks.

Written feedback is typically sent to students by email or provided through TurnItIn on Blackboard.



## External Examiners

External Examiners play a critical role in supporting the maintenance of academic standards and overseeing the assessment process. The University appoints External Examiners for all provision that leads to an Aberystwyth University award.

External Examiners ensure that assessments have been carried out fairly and consistently and that standards are in line with other UK higher education institutions and/or with relevant professional body standards. The External Examiner(s) undertake a number of tasks which are outlined in the Academic Quality Handbook, Chapter 4 External Examining: (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aqro/handbook/ext-exam/>). These include approving assessments compiled by Internal Examiners, reviewing a sample of assessment material, reviewing a sample of assessed work and approving the recommendations made by the Examination Board. External Examiner(s) also provide a written report on the assessment process and on the standards of student attainment which are published on the departmental modules on AberLearn Blackboard. External Examiners' reports are considered by the Quality Assurance Committee and the Academic Board.

The names of External Examiners are published under the 'staff profiles' section of departmental webpages. Annual Reports by External Examiners, with departmental responses, are published on Blackboard and made available to students.

External Examiners are required to remain impartial at all times, and do not make selective adjustments to the marks of individual students. Students should not contact External Examiners, and clarification on provisional assessment marks should be sought through the Institute/Department's standard feedback procedures, or through the University's appeal procedures after the confirmation of the final module mark.

## Unacceptable Academic Practice

It is Unacceptable Academic Practice to commit any act whereby a person may obtain, for himself/herself or for another, an unpermitted advantage. The Regulation shall apply, and a student may be found to have committed Unacceptable Academic Practice, regardless of a student's intention and the outcome of the act, and whether the student acts alone or in conjunction with another/others. Any action or actions shall be deemed to fall within this definition, whether occurring during, or in relation to, a formal examination, a piece of coursework, the presentation of medical or other evidence to Examination Boards, or any form of assessment undertaken in pursuit of a University qualification or award.

The University recognises the following categories of Unacceptable Academic Practice. These are not exhaustive, and other cases may fall within the general definition of Unacceptable Academic Practice:

- Plagiarism: using another person's work and presenting it as one's own, whether intentionally or unintentionally;

- Collusion: when work that has been undertaken by or with others is submitted and passed off as solely the work of one person;
- Fabrication of evidence or data: Fabrication of evidence or data and/or use of such evidence or data in assessed work include making false claims to have carried out experiments, observations, interviews or other forms of data collection and analysis. Fabrication of evidence or data and/or use of such evidence or data also include presenting false or falsified evidence of special circumstances;
- Unacceptable Academic Practice in formal examinations: introduction of unauthorised material; copying from, or communicating with, any other person; communicating electronically with any other person; impersonating an examination candidate or allowing oneself to be impersonated; presenting an examination script as one's own work when the script includes material produced by unauthorised means; failing to comply with written directions to candidates in formal examinations, and verbal instructions by examination invigilators.
- Recycling of data or text: recycling of data or text in more than one assessment when it is explicitly not permitted by the Institute or Department.

The full Regulation on Unacceptable Academic Practice can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/uap/>.

If Unacceptable Academic Practice is substantiated, the consequences can be severe, and could potentially affect progression to the next year of study or final award of a degree. Penalties are applied in accordance with a points-based system: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/agro/handbook/taught-schemes/uap-points/>

Further information regarding good academic practice and referencing can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aberskills/> . If you are unsure, you must contact your Institute/Department for further guidance.

As you see, it is important to indicate clearly in your own work where you have included the work of others. In Computer Science this could include reuse of designs and programs as well as copying or quoting text. Make sure you understand how to acknowledge the work of others in all your submissions. Ignorance of how to do this is not a valid defense.

The following simple guidelines are intended to help you avoid straying from legitimate and desirable co-operation into the area of plagiarism:

- append a bibliography to your work listing all the sources you have used, including electronic;
- surround all direct quotations with inverted commas, and cite the precise source (including page numbers, or the URL and the date you accessed it if the source is on the Web) either in a footnote or in parentheses directly after the quotation;

- use quotations sparingly and make sure that the bulk of the work is in your own words;
- even if you do not use direct quotations, important ideas should still be credited;
- remember that it is your own input that gives a piece of work merit. Whatever sources you have used, the structure and presentation of the argument should be your own. Including someone else's work in your own is readily detectable because the style will be different.

Keep a sense of proportion, and exercise common sense and judgement. For example, it is not necessary to attribute to a source, statements which have passed into the public domain and become commonplace. If in doubt, make sure that you properly quote and cite material in order to avoid any suspicion that you are trying to cheat, and ask for advice if you are not sure.

## Section E: Progression Rules and Examination Conventions

### Progression Rules and Examination Conventions

Examination Conventions and Progression Rules can be found here:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aqro/exams//exam---conventions/>

The Examination Conventions are used to determine progression between years of study on different types of award and the calculation of degree class at the end of degree schemes. The Conventions should be read in conjunction with the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress and include:

#### Honours Degree Conventions

- Bachelor's Degree – Rules for Progression
- Integrated Masters Degree – Rules for Progression
- Conventions for the classification of modular degrees
- Ordinary Degree Scheme in Mathematics
- Level 0: Life Sciences and Physics

#### Foundation Degree (FDSc) Conventions

- Rules for progression
- Year 1 – Requirement to enter final year
- Year 1 – Requirements to undertake Work Experience
- Classification of Award

- Progression to BSc Schemes

Conventions for the award of Certificates or Diplomas of Higher Education

Information can also be found on:

- Guidelines on Absence from Assessments: unavoidable absence from an examination or failure to submit coursework
- Guidance on Special Circumstances
- Examination Boards

### **Prizes (Undergraduates only)**

The following prizes are awarded annually (subject to change).

- The Glyn Emery Prize, named in honour of the founder and first head of the Computer Science Department, to the best first year computing student.
- Best second year Group project
- Best project by a student in CS39440 or CC39440.
- Best project by a student in CS39930.
- Best Bachelor Degree
- Highest MEng Average
- The Best Progress at graduation

### **What to do if things go wrong**

#### **Resits**

If you fail a module and need to resit, you will be informed by your Institute/Department of which elements you need to resit. You will also need to register for resits. Further advice on resit registration is available from the Academic Quality and Records Office: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aqro/students/ug-issues/>.

Details of the format of resit assessments are provided in the module database: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/modules/>. Resits will normally involve repeating the assessments (e.g. essay, exam) which were failed at the first attempt.

Dates for the summer resit period in August can be found at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aqro/students/ug-issues/resits/summer-resit-assessments/>.

**When results are released, the department will send out general advice on what to do if you have failed a module. If you are in any doubt about what you need to do to retake an assessment, or progress with your degree, you should consult: [cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk)**

### **Supplementary resits**

Resits may take place over the summer (supplementary) or in the following academic year. Students are not allowed to complete more than 60 credits of supplementary resits. Students with more than 60 credits of fail must resit during the following academic year.

Students are normally expected to resit assessments by “resitting failed examination and/or resubmission of failed/non-submitted coursework components or ones of equivalent value.” Usually that means that they need only resit the failed pieces of assessment. The department will tell you of exceptions.

### **Resits for people on Industrial year**

Students are required to pass 100 credits in order to proceed to the year in industry, which could mean that you would be required to be in Aberystwyth during August to take supplementary resits. Students who have met the progression requirement but who have the opportunity to resit may find it difficult to do so during the summer. In this situation you are therefore encouraged to resit any outstanding modules as external students during the year. Requests to resit modules in the summer after your placement may be turned down, resulting in the loss of opportunity to resit.

For further advice, contact [cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:cs-exam-advice@aber.ac.uk) .

## **Monitoring Academic Progress**

The Academic Regulation on Academic Progress requires students starting their studies from September 2016 to attend all timetabled activities. These include, but are not limited to, lectures, seminars, practical classes and tutorials. For students who started their studies before September 2016, attendance requirements will be set by your Institute. For more information on the attendance requirements, please refer to the Attendance and Engagement section in this handbook.

The University is committed to a system of monitoring student attendance and progress as part of a duty of care for individual students. If your attendance and progress is not satisfactory, you will be contacted by your Institute/Department and given the opportunity to explain the situation. While the main focus of monitoring academic progress is to offer support, there is a risk of disciplinary action where attempts to remedy a situation of poor attendance and progress have not led to improvement. In such cases, Institute Directors can recommend that students should be excluded from the University.

The full Academic Regulation on Academic Progress, can be found here:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/academic-progress/>

## **Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Academic Appeals Procedure**

An academic appeal is defined as ‘a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with taking decisions on student progression, assessment and awards.’

Appeals will only be considered if they are based on one or more of the following grounds and are accompanied by supporting evidence that was not available to be presented to the relevant Examining Board:

- Exceptional extenuating circumstances which had an adverse effect on the student's academic performance. Where a student could have reported exceptional circumstances to the Examining Board prior to its meeting, those circumstances cannot subsequently be cited as grounds for appeal.
- Defects or irregularities in the conduct of the assessments or in written instructions or in advice relating thereto, where a case can be established that such defects, irregularities or advice could have had an adverse effect on the student's performance.
- Evidence of prejudice, or of bias, or of inadequate assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners.

An appeal will only be considered if the student can provide good reasons why the grounds for appeal had not previously been made known to the University and/or were not made known to the relevant Examining Board.

Appeals questioning academic judgement shall not be considered.

Before making an appeal, you must read the full Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Academic Appeals Procedure which can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/appeals/appeals-proc/>

Advice about this Procedure may be obtained from the Assistant Registrar, Academic Quality & Records Office ([caostaff@aber.ac.uk](mailto:caostaff@aber.ac.uk)) or from a Student Adviser in the Students' Union ([union.advice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:union.advice@aber.ac.uk)).

## **Student Complaints Procedure**

Aberystwyth University is committed to ensuring a high quality educational experience for all its students, supported by appropriate academic, administrative and welfare support services and facilities. However, there may be occasions when students are dissatisfied with the teaching and learning facilities, or services, provided. Aberystwyth University believes that students should be entitled to have access to an effective system for handling complaints and that they should feel able to make a complaint, secure in the knowledge that it will be fairly investigated.

The University's Student Complaints Procedure can be found at:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/complaints/>

## **Section F: Student Support and Wellbeing Services**

### **Student Welcome Centre**

The Student Welcome Centre houses the Advice, Information and Money Service; the Wellbeing Service and the Accessibility Service and is your one-stop shop for advice and information on a range of support.

Our Welcome Desk is your first port of call for general enquiries about these services and the desk is open Monday to Thursday, 9am–5pm and Friday, 9am–4pm.

Further information can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-support/>

### **Advice, Information and Money Service**

The Student Advice, Information and Money Service provides information, advice, support and referral on a wide range of issues. If you are unsure about where to go for advice or assistance please contact us. No issue is too big or too small. Our service is confidential, nonjudgmental and free of charge. We have a weekday drop-in service (see website for details) or you can make an appointment with a Student Adviser by contacting the Student Welcome Desk.

The student advisers are accredited with The National Association of Student Money Advisers (NASMA) and are able to offer professional advice on money management or any issues with Student Finance. They can also give advice and guidance on any queries relating to accommodation, academic progress, University procedures or eligibility for hardship funds.

### **Accessibility Service**

The University welcomes applications from disabled students and those with specific learning differences, and considers them on the same academic grounds as those for other candidates. We advise you to consider, before applying, the requirements of your chosen course, identifying any elements that might present particular difficulties. We recommend that you visit the University campus and your department of choice to investigate the support that may be available, explore facilities and discuss specific needs.

Our Accessibility Advisers are happy to help before you apply. It is important that you contact your department and our advisers as early as possible as it may take time to arrange adjustments and organise support. We also recommend that you contact our Accessibility Advisers to discuss a study needs assessment and to get advice on grants, such as the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). Our advisers can arrange support workers, including for example, one-to-one study skills support and mentors. Individual examination arrangements may be available for students with a range of impairments including specific learning differences such as dyslexia and dyspraxia.

Our Accessibility Service also supports care leavers and can arrange support from a peer mentor for those student who are finding settling into University challenging.

## **Student Wellbeing Services**

The Student Wellbeing Service provides advice and guidance on a range of health matters, including emotional and sexual well-being, and includes support for mental health, and counselling provision. The Student Wellbeing Service is in addition to, but not a substitute for, your own GP. Although we work closely with local GPs and hospital services to ensure that you get good care and attention when needed, it is important that you register with a local GP practice on arrival in Aberystwyth. Services are available Monday to Thursday, 9am–4.30pm and Friday, 9am–4pm.

In addition to the services located in the Student Welcome Centre support is also available from:

## **Student Learning Support and the International English Centre**

Student Learning Support and the International English Centre provide a range of undergraduate modules, free undergraduate and postgraduate writing and information skills courses and one-to-one consultations for writing and language support. These are open to all students in the university who are studying for degree courses. Further details are available from: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-learning-support/> and <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/international-english/>

## **International Office**

The International Office offers a comprehensive range of services to international students from organising welcome events to specialised immigration advice. Further information is available from our international pages <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/international/>.

## **Visa and Immigration Advice**

Our International Student Adviser can help with all types of study visa applications, Schengen visas for those that are travelling to Europe as well as provide information and advice on other immigration issues, email contact [immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk).

## **International Office Trips**

The International Office organises a social programme which allows students to enjoy trips and events all year round. Day trips are organised to places around Wales at the weekends, such as Cardiff, St Davids, Portmeirion and Harlech Castle. We also offer short afternoon trips to beauty spots close to Aberystwyth, and in the past have included visits to Aberaeron, Nant yr Arian and the Elan Valley. All trips are very low cost and give our students a chance to enjoy visiting places outside Aberystwyth while meeting new friends. The trips are open to all students, home and international, and are very popular so early booking is recommended to avoid disappointment.

## **One World Week**

One World Week is an annual Aberystwyth University event celebrating the diverse culture of our university. Previous celebrations have included the One World Gala Evening, with traditional dancing and music, political debates, international film afternoons and a World Fair with food and drink samples from student's home countries, with traditional menus served in our University restaurant TaMed Da. This is a student



driven event held in collaboration with the Students' Union and requires your input! Meetings to organise One World Week will be held from October onwards so come and join in and make sure that your country and culture is shared by us all.

### **Halal provision**

Our catered establishments offer a selection of hot and cold dishes that are suitable for a Halal diet. All food is clearly marked for ease of identification.

### **Multi-faith and prayer room spaces**

There are faith spaces available for prayer on the Penglais and Llanbadarn Campuses. The Penglais Campus prayer room is situated in the Faith Centre, Arts Centre. The Llanbadarn Campus prayer room is above the Blas Padarn cafeteria, room number 1.01.

### **Students' Union Advice Service**

The Students' Union Advice Service offers free, confidential and independent advice to all Aberystwyth students. Students' Union Advisors are trained staff that can help you with a range of issues and specialise in providing advice and support on University processes and procedures. SU Advisors can also act as an independent advocate for you in meetings and hearings.

You can just drop in to speak to an Advisor – just ask at the Students' Union reception or head to the back offices on the ground floor or you can contact us online or via email: [union.advice@aber.ac.uk](mailto:union.advice@aber.ac.uk). Check out [Abersu.co.uk/advice](http://Abersu.co.uk/advice) for more information.

### **Help and Assistance with Accommodation**

If you have any problems in your room or flat, e.g. you are locked out, are unwell, need a repair or have a problem with a neighbour, we have staff on hand 24 hours a day to help. All Residences are served by the Residences Team, and you can also contact our friendly porters out of office hours. For more information please refer to the following webpages: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/accommodation/living-residences/help/>

### **Resident Assistants**

As a fellow student, your Resident Assistant is here to provide support and guidance to create a positive living and learning environment and ensure that the residential community you live in can flourish.

This may include guidance on resolving flat disputes, how to combat exam stress, or simply where to find the best cup of coffee in Aber! If they can't help or don't know the answer, they'll signpost you to someone who can.

They can also put you in touch with a whole host of events, activities, sports and entertainment provided by the Students' Union and Sport Aber, to enhance your student experience.

In addition to this, throughout the year, they will be arranging small residential events between flats and in the communal spaces around your accommodation, giving you the opportunity to meet new people and perhaps try something new.

Each Resident Assistant is responsible for their own 'patch' of students and they will be on hand over the Big Welcome Weekend, and the weeks that follow, to help you settle into your accommodation. Throughout the year your RA will call in to see how things are going, check if you have any worries or concerns that they can help with and provide you with up to date information on all the amazing events and activities that are going on around campus and within your residence.

However, if at any point you need someone to chat to, or you have a concern and your just not sure who to speak to, you can contact the Res Life team through the 24 hour Campus Life Helpline on 01970 622900 and we will arrange for your RA to call round.

Further information can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/accommodation/>

## **Section G: University Information**

### **Undergraduate**

Comprehensive information for undergraduate students can be found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/ug-issues/> and includes:

- Examination and Assessments Information
- Resit Information and Resit Fees
- Registration Information
- Financial Help
- Rules and Regulations
- Academic Quality Handbook

**Good luck with your studies!**