



Academic Societies Overview

What is a society?

A society is a student group operated by students; whose membership typically consists of current students. Students obtain membership to the student group, sometime at a cost. As student groups are non-profit this cost is to cover insurance of fund society activities. In Aberystwyth student groups are affiliated with the Students' Union and all our groups aim to facilitate an activity or promote a shared interest e.g. Beer Pong play beer pong.

What is an Academic Society?


In Aberystwyth we define academic societies as societies that are linked to a degree or subject.

What do Academic Societies do?

When looking at the academic societies in Aberystwyth we managed to broadly split their activities into either **Academic** or **Social**. Importantly, many activities encompass both the academic and social side e.g. trips and competitions.

Academic activities tend to relate to the associated degree or subject (i.e. extracurricular activities). The activity will have a strong emphasis on gaining degree/subject specific experience/knowledge that will benefit a member in their education.

Example activities include...

- **Guest speakers:** follows a similar format to a standard lecture where a guest speaker (either internal or external) is invited in to give a presentation on a certain topic relating to the groups associated degree/subject.
 - **Workshops:** Similar to guest speakers they tend to focus on a certain topic or skill relating to the groups associated degree/subject and they are often run by either the committee or someone from the academic department. Common workshop topics revolve around using certain degree specific software, referencing, etc.
 - **Study groups:** Usually the society will book a space for members across all years to come together for designated study time. Sometimes it is used by individuals to just have company while independently working, others use it to work on groups projects, others use it to ask each other questions if they are stuck on a certain part of their course.
 - **Careers fairs:** Usually run in collaboration with the associated department, a careers fair is used to show member all the possible avenues their degree could take them. This can be done in a variety of ways e.g. brining in a series of alumni to give talks on what they are doing or companies to give talks on what they offer, or it can be more like a conventional fair where there are a series of stalls for members explore.
 - **Trips:** tends to be to somewhere of significance to the groups associated degree/subject, often members will be learning about the place as part of their course.
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Social activities tend to focus on non-academic activities that offer an opportunity for individuals to try something new, meet new people and most importantly have fun.

Example activities include...

- **Socials (alcoholic):** this is probably the most well-known social activity; it tends to involve a student group going around different establishments in town. Often there is a theme to them (e.g. anything but a cup). Many groups will have a set time each week they host this kind of social.
- **Social (non-alcoholic):** this encompasses any activity that does not involve alcohol and is not academic related, many of the examples below exemplify this and many activities can be tailor for both alcohol drinkers and non-alcohol drinkers.
- **Dinners:** These tend to be either Christmas Meals or End of Year Meals. They are used as a way to bring everyone in the society together, often the End of Year Meals are used for societies to present their own awards, as well as a way to say goodbye before leading the summer and a final farewell to those graduating.
- **Bonfires:** Aberystwyth benefits some great beaches in walking distance from the town, many groups utilise this to host bonfires.
- **Games nights:** this comes in many forms as it depends on the kinds of games played and the methods of playing those games. It can either be a mix of games with people branching off to play in smaller groups (e.g. AmongUs, JackBox Party Pack, Cards Against Humanity, board games). Or it includes everyone in one big group (e.g. hosting a quiz, running a scavenger hunt, classic childhood games)
- **Screenings:** usually of either a film or part of a tv series, often voted upon by members. It can also be made relevant to the associated degree/subject.
- **Trips:** some groups will go on trips outside of term time. The destination varies, either within the UK or abroad, and is often decided upon by members at the start of the academic year to give time to save up and plan the trip.

Benefits of getting involved

Overall getting involved can enhance your academic and social performance, often this revolves around providing you with the opportunity to gain/develop skills, knowledge, and experiences.

Some common benefits include:

- Trying something different or doing something you have never done before
- Meeting new people – especially people with similar interests to yourself
- Network – be it with other students, university staff or external organisations
- Follow your passion – make a difference to something that is important to you Participate in 'once in a lifetime' opportunities
- Enhance your CV and employability
- Learning work/life balance
- Applying what you have learnt on your course
- Have some fun – take a break from studying

