



Admissions Process

Frequently Asked Questions



Admissions and Funding

Who can answer my questions regarding the admissions process? How do I get funding for Derwen College, and support for appeals and tribunals?

Our Admissions team can answer all your questions around Derwen College's admissions process.

During our Open Days and Young Person's Experience Days (YPED), our Admissions team will be on hand to answer all your questions.

Alternatively, you may email them on admissions@derwen.ac.uk

As a Welsh student, what steps do I need to take with the new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code of Practice to be able to progress my enquiry with Derwen College?

As part of the ALN Code of Practice, you are required to have visited local provisions in Wales, *and* to have determined they cannot meet the needs of your young person.

Your young person's Individual Development Plan (IDP) will need to be converted to a Local Authority IDP. This means your young person's IDP is owned by the Local Authority instead of the school. You can talk to your Local Authority or ALNco for guidance on this. You can also speak to our Admissions Team.

When will I get chance to see the residence/day provision?

After you have completed the enquiry form and submitted it, along with your EHCP or IDP, our Admissions Team will review it. If appropriate, your young person will then be invited to attend one of our Young Person Experience Days (YPED). YPED tours include visiting day and residential facilities, as well as sampling the pathways and programmes available.

What is the next step after visiting Derwen College at the Young Person Experience Day?

After attending the YPED, we will send you an application form to complete. Please return the completed form via email to admissions@derwen.ac.uk (along with any other supporting documents you may be asked for). The application form is a long document. If you require assistance to complete it, please talk to our Admissions Team.

The application form is different to the enquiry form. It asks for more detail so we can determine the level of support your young person needs. If you are Welsh, you will need to provide confirmation that your IDP is held by the Local Authority. The Admissions Team will review your application, and may need to contact you if they need further information. Following this, we may invite your young person to attend an Assessment Day.

Residential queries

If my young person comes to Derwen College as a residential student, will I be able to visit?	Yes! You are more than welcome to visit your young person at weekends. They will also return home during the college holidays. If you are visiting for the weekend during term time, you can take advantage of staying at our on-site training hotel: Hotel 751. We ask that you don't visit during the Freshers' period to give your young person time to transition into college life.
If my young person comes to Derwen College as a residential student, what do we need to bring for their room? Do we need to bring any furniture?	We provide a single bed, bedside table, chest of drawers, wardrobe, desk, notice board and medicine safe. Students are welcome to bring whatever they need to make their room feel like their home, including any electronics, posters and other home comforts. When funding is confirmed for their placement, you will be sent a list of items to prepare your young person for their time at Derwen College.
I am worried about my young person moving away from home for the first time. What resources are available to support the transition of living away from home?	We support your young person to be able to contact you. This may be a phone call, video call or a visit. You may visit on the weekends, or they can visit you. We can also plan a transition into College with you, if required, however, this is dependent on when funding is confirmed by your Local Authority. We do try our best to implement this where possible, and can incorporate tools such as Social Stories.
Will my young person get an ensuite bathroom when they come to Derwen College?	Ensuite rooms are prioritised to students who are under 18, or who have specific care needs that require them to have access to an ensuite bathroom. Many of our rooms are being upgraded but we cannot guarantee that everyone will be able to have an ensuite room.
How do you manage boys and girls in residences together?	Mixed sex residences reflect supported living opportunities available to students after they leave college. We encourage students to respect personal space, and do not allow students to enter a student's room of the opposite sex. In PSHE sessions, students learn what is acceptable behaviour, and what we need to be mindful of when living with others.
Are there staff in the residences all night?	<p>Our Waking Night team are integral to supporting all students – especially new students who may need extra reassurance, particularly overnight, when they first start college.</p> <p>The Waking Night team are available throughout the night to support students in all residences. This allows us to provide a 24-hour service to our students and give peace of mind to parents/carers that their young person is supported and safe. Some students may have access to our new acoustic monitoring system.</p> <p>Staff make use of our campus CCTV systems to provide an additional level of safety and security for all students at night. In addition, the team is supported by an on-call manager if required.</p>

Day student queries

What support will my young person have access to as a day student at Derwen College?

Day students (at our Gobowen campus) have their own well-equipped, dedicated space. This base allows our day students the opportunity to learn and practice independence skills, supported by our day student team. The space is warm and welcoming with lounge spaces, kitchen facilities and student lockers.

Support at Derwen College

What therapy support does Derwen College provide?

We can provide Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Clinical Psychology, and provide social, emotional, and mental health support. More information is available on our website or you can talk to our Head of Therapies in reception during the YPED.

What medical and care support does Derwen College provide?

We have qualified Learning Disability Nurses who provide a range of support, including epilepsy, diabetes, advice on diet and nutrition, wellbeing clinics, talking therapies and the use of nursing care plans. You can find out more information on our website, as well as in the goodie bag that will be provided to you on your visit.

How do we encourage students to take time away from devices? Is wifi turned off at night?

Students are encouraged not to use their devices during work time at College (unless they are used for communication or medical reasons). If students use the College wifi on their own devices, all online activity is monitored and filtered, in line with Ofsted requirements. Students are unable to access the College wifi between 11pm and 7am.

Student life

What clubs and sports activities do you offer at Derwen College?

We offer a wide range of clubs and sports activities at Derwen College. Our sports activities can be anything from football, tennis, swimming, cricket, kayaking, running and much more, including access to our gym. Our clubs are reviewed regularly to ensure they are what students would like to access. Clubs may include arts and crafts, gaming, Lego and Harry Potter clubs. Not to mention quiz nights, discos and trips too.

Who is a typical student at Derwen College – what needs and abilities do they have?

At Derwen College, we understand that no two students are the same. Our students each have their own unique needs, strengths, challenges and range of abilities.

You can refer to our Prospectus and Pathways and Programmes brochure to see the wide range of options we offer students.

Watch our video at [derwen.me/EmbracingDifferences](https://www.derwen.me/EmbracingDifferences)

Can my young person get involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award? If so, which award would they work towards?	Students can take on the challenge of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award whilst with us at Derwen College. We offer the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Young people are invited to take part once they have settled in at Derwen College. Talk to your young person to determine whether they would like to be involved.
How does my young person get involved with Student Voice?	<p>All students contribute to Student Voice, through residential and pathway meetings – making their opinions, ideas and suggestions count.</p> <p>Each autumn term the Student Council is democratically elected via student votes. Representatives are elected for each pathway, residence, and satellite. All students are welcome to put themselves forward to be a representative.</p> <p>Within the Student Council, representatives can aspire to further roles such as Student Council President, Deputy President, Secretary, LGBTQ Rep, Welsh Rep, EDI Rep, and Wellbeing Rep.</p>
If my young person takes part in a sport now, can they carry this on at Derwen College?	Where possible, we try to accommodate existing sporting interests. This can be set up once your young person has enrolled at Derwen College.

General questions

Are there food options for students with intolerances or who are fussy eaters?	Yes. We make sure we take any students' intolerances and allergies into consideration when preparing food. Students work together within their residence to make a weekly food menu to allow for flexibility, preferences and students' wants. We encourage students to make healthy choices as much as possible.
Is my young person able to choose two pathways?	Yes, students may choose a primary pathway, in which they will work towards a nationally recognised qualification. Students may also choose a link pathway to broaden core skills and work experiences.
Can my young person change pathway if they are unhappy with their choice?	This is possible, however, it will need to be agreed by your Local Authority who are funding the placement.
How many students do you have at Derwen College?	We currently have 163 students across all our campuses. Of these, 85 are residential students.