

Undergraduate admissions statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with the University's admissions principles and procedures.

Year of admissions cycle: 2014

Courses covered:

BA Archaeology (V400)
BA Archaeology and Anthropology (VL46)
BA Anthropology (XD49)

Admissions process

1. Admissions team

Applications assessed by centralised team in close co-operation with Admissions Tutor/s.

2. Application assessment methods

All applications are considered on an equal basis. Applications are not segregated by the type of educational institution attended. All applications are acknowledged by email on receipt (starting in mid-September), to establish contact and inform the applicant of the process to be followed.

Occasionally, the Admissions Office may seek further information from an applicant or their referee when there is an apparent mistake on or omission from the UCAS form that prejudices their application.

All applications are allocated scores based on their academic record (achieved and/or predicted), weighting GCSEs as 40% and A-levels (or equivalent qualifications) as 60%. Where the personal statement and reference are also scored, the weighting for this is as follows:

- Academic score: 50% (10% GCSE, 40% A-levels)
- Personal Statement/Reference score: 50%

Applications will be assessed on the basis of their UCAS application form only; we cannot take into account any additional information received from an applicant or institution, unless we have requested it.

Applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, or age.

3. Interview or visit day

All applicants who have received offers will normally be invited to a Visit Day. This provides the opportunity to see the city and the University, and to ask questions about the teaching programmes, and other aspects of student life in Bristol.

While attendance at a Visit Day is strongly recommended, it is not obligatory and plays no role in the selection process; it is also recognised that not all applicants will be able to attend.

4. Correspondence with applicants

All correspondence relating to an application's status will be sent by email.

All applicants should be contacted when we receive their application, to establish contact and inform the applicant of the process to be followed. Applicants will then be notified if their application has been successful or unsuccessful, or to inform them that their application has been assessed but that we will not be able to make a final decision until later in the cycle.

Applicants who receive an offer will receive an invitation to a visit day.

5. Deferred applications

Deferred entry applications are welcomed, but applicants are expected to explain their reasons for requesting deferred entry and to describe briefly in their personal statement how their 'gap' year might subsequently benefit their university career. Only a very limited number of offers may be made to applicants in this category in order to ensure fairness to those applying in the next admissions cycle. Preference may be given to those with a clear and relevant academic purpose or with significant health or personal issues. Offers for deferred entry may be at marginally higher grades than the typical offers for immediate year of entry.

We urge applicants to submit applications in the current admissions cycle wherever possible.

Criteria for assessing applicants

1. Academic entry requirements

The academic entry requirements for each individual programme can be found in our online prospectus: www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014

We would consider applicants with alternative equivalent qualifications to those listed in our online prospectus. Further information on other qualifications, including international qualifications, is available at: www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries

A-level General Studies and Critical Thinking are not considered towards offers or academic assessment.

2. Additional academic criteria

There are no A-Level subject requirements for Archaeology, Anthropology or Archaeology and Anthropology and applicants may present qualifications in either humanities or sciences or a mixture of both. Subjects such as History, Geography, Classical Civilisation, Biology, modern languages or Archaeology are particularly suitable.

3. Personal statement criteria

We will check the personal statement and reference for evidence of mitigating circumstances. In some cases we may need to refer to the personal statement and reference to differentiate between applicants with very similar academic profiles. If this is the case, then the criteria will include the following:

- Demonstrable interest and commitment to the subject;
- Relevant reading or research beyond the A-level syllabus;
- Non-academic achievement and/or experience where relevant to the subject;
- Appropriateness of the chosen Bristol course in relation to the applicant's declared interests and aspirations;
- Evidence of analytical thinking; a well-constructed statement demonstrating a good standard of English and clarity of expression.

We are particularly interested in demonstrable commitment to archaeology, anthropology or a related discipline, which can be demonstrated through participation in appropriate related fieldwork, such as an archaeological excavation, or by independent travel or appropriate academic reading. Evidence of membership of a relevant society or subscription to a relevant journal or periodical is also advantageous. We actively encourage discussion of any relevant experiences, memberships, or subscriptions. We are also interested to hear about extracurricular activities, and general interests, especially where this provides evidence of collaborative engagement with the wider community.

4. Reference criteria

In the Reference for School-Leavers, weighting is given to the following: predicted or achieved exam results; evidence for active, positive contributions in the classroom and school life; Motivation, independent thinking and critical analysis; Written and oral skills.

In the Reference for Mature Applicants weighting is given to the following: motivation; ability to work independently; powers of expression; independent thinking and critical analysis; Written and oral skills.

We will also consider whether applicant performance reflects ability, and take in account any educational or special circumstances.

5. Additional Tests

Not applicable.

6. Interview

Applicants are not interviewed, aside from mature applicants applying after five years or more have elapsed since taking A-levels or equivalent. These interviews typically take place in the New Year.

All interviews are conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom is trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques. All interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

The principal assessment criteria are an applicant's interest in and commitment to the subject, his/her capacity for clear thinking and oral expression, for the critical analysis of arguments and evidence, and for working independently at degree.

Interviewers will be looking for evidence of a suitable level of understanding and comprehension in relation to archaeology and anthropology (or a related discipline); evidence of commitment and motivation; evidence of engagement and relevant experience; evidence of appropriate skills and abilities.

7. Mature applicants

Mature applicants applying before five years have elapsed since taking A levels (or equivalent) will normally be treated as above. Where more than five years have elapsed, mature applicants will normally be expected to have successfully completed an Access course or equivalent qualifications and/ or employment history may in some instances be taken into account.

We will invite selected applicants to interview and or to complete a short piece of written work in order to assess their academic potential and ascertain their level of commitment to the academic study of the subject(s).

8. International applicants

International applicants will be subject to the criteria as detailed here:

www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries

We also consider applications through the Common Application system, and the same criteria and assessment used for UCAS applicants are applied.

9. English Language requirements for non-native speakers

All applicants are required to demonstrate that they have sufficient ability to understand and express themselves in both spoken and written English in order to benefit fully from their degree course.

English Language requirements can be found in the Undergraduate Prospectus and at: www.bristol.ac.uk/ug-language-requirements

The specific IELTS standard required for this programme can be found in our online prospectus:

www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/ARCH/370/admissions

10. Contextual information

We take a holistic approach to all applications, ensuring that the educational and social context in which an applicant applies is taken into consideration, where supported by clear evidence that this may have adversely affected academic achievement. This may include time spent in Local Authority care, information about which is provided in the UCAS application. Such applications will have one grade lifted for their academic score: e.g. an AAB applicant will be awarded the same academic score as an AAA applicant. Applicants still need to satisfy specific subject requirements.

We also consider evidence of clear motivation to study. This may include attendance at a University summer school, a targeted Access Scheme (such as Access to Bristol or Realising Opportunities), or participation in other higher education outreach activities.

We do not take the following into consideration when making admissions decisions: the school type attended by an applicant, or whether an applicant's parent has any experience of higher education.

Offers

Typical offers for A-levels and other UK qualifications can be found in the entry data in the online Undergraduate Prospectus. Offers to applicants with non-standard qualifications will be made equivalent to the published A-level offer.

We may make lower offers based on whether an applicant is deemed to have experienced educational disadvantage, as defined in section 7.5 of the University's admissions principles and procedures.

Other

1. Transfers

All transfers between courses will be considered on their individual merits, and may involve an informal interview with the Schools Head of Teaching and Learning.

2. Additional information

All of the programmes run by the School of Archaeology and Anthropology incorporate practical elements, such as laboratory or museum work, field work or field trips. An annual field course provides the opportunity to participate in an archaeological excavation or to undertake anthropological fieldwork.

Contacts for enquiries

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Undergraduate Admissions Office: arts-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 928 8147.