

## 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:**

BSc Biology C100

BSc Zoology C300

FC61 Geology and Biology

Geology and Biology admissions are the responsibility of Earth Sciences, and the process is explained in the Earth Sciences admissions statement.

## 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.

Please note that it is sometimes necessary to delay making offers until the majority of applications have been received, so as to ensure fair consideration for all candidates. In such a case, we'll send you a holding email which will let you know when we expect to be able to give a decision (usually by mid February).

All applications must be submitted through UCAS; we cannot consider any direct applications. All applications that are received on time (in accordance with the deadlines of the UCAS application cycle) are guaranteed equal consideration.

All applications are allocated scores on the academic record. The respective weightings ratio out of 100 is as follows:

A level score: 80%

GCSE score: 20%

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**

If you are made an offer you will be given the opportunity to attend one of the School Visit Days to see something of our teaching and research, meet and talk with academic staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students, and take a tour of the building. Parents are welcome to attend; however, because of a restriction on numbers we request that no more than one visitor attends with each applicant. Details of these events will be sent to you once an offer has been made.

While attendance at a Visit Day is strongly encouraged, 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**

We will consider applications for deferred entry. However, deferred applicants should be aware that, in fairness to other applicants in the following cycle, we can only make a limited number of deferred offers in each cycle.

## **Criteria for assessing applicants**

### **1. Academic entry requirements**

The academic entry requirements for each individual programme can be found in our online prospectus: <http://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: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries/>

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

Candidates taking their A levels in more than one sitting may be at a disadvantage.

We initially rank applicants according to the A Level subjects offered and predicted/actual grades. We will be looking to see that you have grade predictions in line with our usual conditional offers and that you are taking a preferred range of subjects (two science A Levels, preferably including Biology, and a third A-level ). Our preferred A levels are Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Botany, Statistics and Zoology; however, we will also consider Psychology, Environmental Studies, Geology, Geography, Marine Science, Further Mathematics, Other Mathematics, Human Biology, Engineering, and Electronics.

This is the list of weightings we use to rank A-level subjects:

- Weighting 1:  
Biology; Botany; Chemistry; Maths; Physics; Statistics; Zoology
- Weighting 0.8:  
Electronics; Engineering; Environmental Studies; Further Maths; Geography;  
Geology; Human Biology; Marine Science; Other Maths; Psychology
- Weighting 0.6:  
Econ Pol; Economics; Engineering Drawing; English Language; English Literature;  
French; German; Greek; History; Italian; Latin; Law; Mechanics; Modern languages;  
Philosophy; Science; Social Biology; Sociology;  
Accounting; Ancient History; Archaeology; Art; Business Studies; Classical  
Civilisation; Classics; Computer Science; Computing; Drama; Film; Government and  
Politics; Graphics; History of Art; Information Technology; Management; Media  
Studies; Music; PE; Performance; Religious Studies; Social Policy; Social Science;  
Applied A level; Design + Technology; Photography; Health & Social Care; other  
non-Academic subjects; Social Care
- Weighting 0:  
General Studies and Critical Thinking

We also expect you to have a broad range of GCSE subjects at grades A\*-B to include Biology and Chemistry (or double science), Mathematics, and English Language. The top eight GCSE grades are taken into account. We will take account of any additional science-related A Level or AS Level qualifications. Notice is always taken of the educational context, and of any mitigating circumstances.

**Please note-** cross school/joint honours course may have different subject and/or grade requirements that must be met. Prospective applicants are therefore advised to look carefully at the information provided in the online Undergraduate Prospectus, for requirements specific to your intended course of study.

## **2. Additional academic criteria**

Not applicable.

## **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:

We are particularly keen to see evidence that you appreciate the scientific nature of a degree in Biological Sciences, rather than just being interested in natural history.

Where the Personal Statement shows a lack of commitment or a preference for a clinical programme (for example, Medicine, Veterinary Science or Dentistry) candidates are unlikely to be successful.

Participation in relevant extra-curricular activities is useful, and evidence for general intellectual and practical skills, and non-academic experience, is also noted.

**Please note** – cross-school/joint honours programmes may have additional/different requirements specific to the particular course of study. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the [Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools](#) for their intended course of study.

#### **4. Reference criteria**

Any positive (and indeed negative) comments by the referee concerning the applicant's potential as a University student are of course noted.

**Please note** – cross school/joint honours programmes may have additional criteria specific to the partner school. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools for the intended course of study.

#### **5. Additional Tests**

Not applicable.

#### **6. Interview**

Applications from mature candidates or those with atypical educational backgrounds will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Promising candidates may be invited to interview to discuss their application and to provide an opportunity to explain the course structure to see if it meets their needs. Such interviews are conducted by two people, at least one of whom has been trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques, and are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities. In addition to the interview, there is a short written comprehension exercise to allow an assessment of the candidate's ability to understand and explain a scientific article.

#### **7. Mature applicants**

Please see section 6.

#### **8. International applicants**

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

[www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries](http://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](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/ug-language-requirements)

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

[http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/BISC/dept\\_intro](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/BISC/dept_intro)

## 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

Transfers are considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account any grades achieved by the student during their university studies, the subjects studied, space on the course and any other information pertinent to the case.

We do not usually accept entry into year 2 of our degree programmes.

## **2. Additional information**

Not applicable.

## **Contacts for enquiries**

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Undergraduate Admissions Office: [sci-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:sci-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk) or +44 (0)117 3317203.