

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:

BDS Dentistry (A206)

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 and the selection process is the same for UK/EU and overseas applicants. 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. All candidates who are selected for interview must attend in order to be considered. Typical offers are reviewed annually.

The School is committed to principles of professionalism, patient care and integrity and incorporates these into its admissions processes. For further information you are encouraged to refer to Guiding Principles for the Admission of Dental Schools, available from:

www.dentalschoolscouncil.ac.uk/documents/DSCAdmissionsPrinciplesFeb2012.pdf

All applications must be submitted to UCAS by 15th October. Late applications are not considered. Applicants who use the 5th option on the UCAS form for another (non-dental) programme will not be disadvantaged.

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

All UCAS forms are considered by the admissions team who consider the personal statement, qualifications and academic reference for evidence of:

- Academic achievements and predictions/grades
- Interest, motivation and commitment to dentistry as evidenced in the personal statement
- Amount and variety of dental work experience; where possible this should be within various fields of dentistry.
- Extracurricular interests including sporting, musical and other personal achievements
- Evidence of teamwork and leadership.
- Demonstration of voluntary, charitable and/or mentoring activities.
- Paid or unpaid work

All applications are allocated scores based on the academic record and the personal statement/reference. As long as all academic requirements are met, selection for interview is based solely on the Personal Statement/Reference.

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

3. Interview or visit day

No offers for Dentistry are made without the candidate first attending an interview. This does not mean that we interview all applicants (see Section 6).

4. Correspondence with applicants

The University sends all candidates an e-mail to acknowledge receipt of their UCAS application. If a disability has been declared, a questionnaire is also sent.

Applicants will be contacted by email to inform them of any of the following changes to their application status:

- Application is unsuccessful before interview stage (via UCAS)
- Application is 'on hold' and may be invited to an interview at a later date
- Applicant is being invited to attend an interview
- Applicant has received an offer post-interview (via UCAS)
- Applicant is 'on hold' after interview
- Applicant has been unsuccessful at interview (via UCAS)

The e-mail inviting applicants to interview will direct applicants to an online booking facility allowing them to register themselves for one of the available dates.

5. Deferred applications

Applicants are supported if they wish to take a year out between leaving school or college and entering the Dental School. They should have made firm plans for how they intend to spend the year.

Applications must be made in the cycle prior to entry; it will not be possible to defer an application once it has been submitted, either before or after a decision has been made.

Criteria for assessing applicants

1. Academic entry requirements

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Bacc, GCSEs) can be found in the online Undergraduate Prospectus:

www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/ORDS/dept_intro

Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits; further information is available at:

www.bristol.ac.uk/international/study-at-bristol/how-to-apply/country-specific/

2. Additional academic criteria

Applicants offering A levels are expected to take all three during the same, two year exam period and achieve a minimum of AAA, with two science subjects. The School expresses no preference for the choice of the third A level subject.

AS levels are not taken into account, except where applicants are not taking Biology to A2 level, in which case, Biology should be offered at AS level with an A grade achieved.

Please note the Dental School does not accept General Studies and Critical Thinking.

Non-traditional entry: In line with the Faculty's Widening Participation Strategy entry qualifications other than A levels may be considered. Applicants are expected to meet our GCSE requirements. We are unable to consider applications from those who are taking foundation courses if they do not meet our GCSE and A level requirements

Re-sit Candidates: Applications may be considered, *in truly exceptional circumstances*, from candidates who had firmly accepted a conditional offer from Bristol, narrowly missed achieving the required grades and performed well at interview from the previous admissions cycle. This will not be allowed in all cases and the candidate must be able to demonstrate that there were genuinely exceptional mitigating circumstances that caused them to narrowly miss their grades. A clear case must be made to the Admissions Team by any student wishing to follow this route. A further application must be made via UCAS and the candidate will go through the selection and interview process just as any other candidate. Any subsequent offer would be subject to achieving grades AAA in the same subjects within one year of the first sitting. Re-sit candidates are otherwise not considered.

3. Personal statement criteria

You are expected to show in your personal statement that you have made a significant effort to find out what it would be like to work as a general dental practitioner, and should refer to your dental work experience. Ideally you will have carried out work experience in various fields of dentistry, such as a general practice, a hospital, a dental laboratory, or community service.

Good communication skills are essential. Can you explain complex information simply and coherently? Dentists work closely with patients and must develop a high standard of professional responsibility. You should show that you are a reliable and conscientious person. You will need to be interested in people and their welfare. Can you reassure people and put them at their ease?

Being able to work with your hands is very important. Do you play a musical instrument, do any art or crafts, make models or do your own car or bike maintenance?

You will need to have a logical mind, so that you will be able to formulate questions and solve problems. You will need to be self-motivated. Can you set your own goals and show independence of thought?

How do you contribute to your school or community? For example engaging in voluntary, charitable and/or mentoring activities

You will also need to be able to work well in a team. Professional dentists work with a group of other people, for example, other dentists and dental specialists, dental nurses, dental hygienists/therapist, dental technicians, and reception and administration staff.

We are also interested to hear about your extra-curricular activities, and general interests. What do you do to relax?

4. Reference criteria

Referees should note that the reference will be used as a basis for the assessment of academic performance and as support for the personal statement. Assessors will want to consider the accuracy and consistency of the predicted grades in the light of previous GCSE and AS level achievement (or reasons why this is not the case), evidence of effort and a positive attitude towards studies, and if there are any educational or special circumstances. It would also be useful to have comments on the suitability of a candidate for a career in dentistry, their ability to communicate and work well with others, timekeeping skills, and evidence of dexterity.

5. Additional Tests

We do not require applicants applying to our Dental programme in the 2014 cycle to take any additional admissions test (e.g. UKCAT, BMAT, GAMSAT) and scores from these tests are not used in our selection processes.

6. Interview

From the applications received, approximately 20% will be selected for interview. From these, around 50% candidates will receive an offer.

We interview on the basis that we have limited information from the UCAS form and, as such, we need to establish that the applicant has the necessary qualities required to become a good dentist.

Applicants will be assessed using the Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) system. This is a robust and evidence-based method which has been proven to be objective and efficient. Candidates will be interviewed or assessed at 10 different “stations” on different aspects of the skills and knowledge required to be a successful dental student and dentist.

The Dental Admissions Tutor will give more information about MMIs on the day of the interviews, as well as an overview of the admissions procedure and the format of the BDS programmes. Candidates will also receive a tour of the dental hospital and school.

Extra time in assessments

If you are invited to interview and you are usually entitled to extra time in assessments due to a disability (such as dyslexia), and you wish to be given extra time in the MMIs, you **MUST**:

- Declare your disability on your UCAS form
- Contact the admissions team on dent-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk to advise them that you wish to be granted extra time, and explain the reason for this, by the date prescribed on the invitation web page.
- Provide hard-copy documentary evidence of your entitlement to extra time in assessments, to be received at the Admissions Office by the date prescribed on the invitation website.
- On the “choose and book” system for selecting your MMI slot, you will be instructed to choose a specific date and slot.

If you do not complete all of these steps exactly as specified above we will not be able to provide you with extra time in the MMIs.

If you successfully complete the above you will be given 25% extra time to complete each station of the MMIs.

After interview

Candidates' performance on the MMIs will be scored by assessors and ranked by the Admissions Tutor. Those candidates with the strongest overall performance will receive offers.

7. Mature applicants

Mature students should show evidence of recent study to a high level of achievement; it is expected that this should be in the last 12-18 months prior to application.

8. International applicants

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

Overseas applicants must satisfy the Dental school's requirements in spoken English proficiency, and this will be reflected in the terms of any subsequent offer. The academic requirements for overseas applicants are exactly the same as those for home applicants, and overseas applicants are subject to the same MMI process as home applicants.

Currently, 4 places are available for applicants liable to pay "Overseas fees". Only the highest rated candidates are selected for interview.

The highest rated candidates will be invited to attend an interview at the University of Bristol before an offer is made. No offers are made without interview. Unfortunately, we cannot offer individual interviews outside of scheduled interview days.

We cannot accept applications for applicants who are already qualified dentist or part-way through a dentistry degree from another country. You will need to contact the GDC regarding registration for overseas-qualified dentists.

Overseas applicants (from outside of the EU) should be aware that they are required to have work permits if they wish to complete their Vocational Training in the UK, following graduation. For this they will need a work permit for a specific job. Applications for permits can only be made by British-based employers (in this case, trainers) on behalf of the person they wish to employ (in this case, potential Vocational Dental Practitioner). There is no provision within the current arrangements for individuals to apply on their own behalf.

See www.bristol.ac.uk/dentalpg/vt/noneeavt.html for further information.

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/ORDS/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

Requests for transfers into the BDS at Bristol are not considered; neither are applications from candidates who have failed to complete another degree programme. Graduates applying to the Dental school are expected to have completed or in their Final year of a degree programme.

2. Additional information

Criminal Records Check

All dental students are required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, formerly Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)) check, in line with most applicants for health-related programmes in the United Kingdom.

Health

Certain health conditions may be incompatible with some careers in dentistry. You will be required to complete a health assessment questionnaire and undergo screening for blood borne viruses, pre-course. The health assessment and blood tests are to identify the few whose health status may place them and/or future patients at risk. If you require advice, please write to the University of Bristol's Occupational Health Service. You should be aware that students are taught in mixed-sex groups and may form clinical partnerships with students of the opposite gender. Students are required to abide by the School's dress code which ensures cross infection control including, for instance, being "bare below the elbow".

Applicants with a disability

It is the responsibility of the Dental School to ensure that students accepted on the course are able to complete the training and achieve the competencies required by the General Dental Council (GDC) for full registration on completion of the degree programme. The Dental School must consult the GDC if there is doubt and if it proposes a modification of experience to achieve the competencies. A clear plan to enable a disabled student to achieve competency must be agreed before the student enters the course. Not all disabilities limit the experience of dentists in training in this way, but applicants should disclose any disability on their UCAS application forms and be prepared to release their medical details, in order for us to assess the situation. Failure to disclose a disability which might impinge upon a candidate's capacity to ultimately carry out their required duties in full will be considered unprofessional. This could put at risk their fitness to practise and might jeopardise their place on the Dental programme.

The procedure for dealing with Health and/ or disability Issues are set out below:

- i) Applicants who are selected for interview using the University's admissions criteria for interview (as described above) will be invited, irrespective of health issue/disability they have declared. During the admissions interview, the applicant's disability will not be considered or discussed, except in the case of dyslexic applicants who have applied for extra time (see above for details).
- ii) If, following the interview, it is agreed that the applicant should be offered a place on the programme, the applicant will be made an offer and sent a pre-course questionnaire to complete and return to the Occupational Health Service. Applicants with a specific learning disability will be advised to contact Disability Services.
- iii) The Occupational Health Service will be responsible for assessing the health questionnaire according to recognised clinical and professional standards. The Occupational Health Adviser or physician will forward their report to the Faculty Disability Officer who will present it, if necessary, to the Disability and Health Panel for the consideration of any health issues which could impact fitness to practice.
- iv) For applicants with a specific learning difficulty, any concerns identified by the Disability Unit in relation to student support and alternative arrangements and/or any fitness to practice concerns for an individual applicant will be referred to the Disability and Health panel via the Faculty Disability Officer.

- v) Once the applicant is at the university his/her case will be considered for regular review by the Disability and Health Panel as necessary. The Occupational Health Service will also have advised regarding regular health reviews if it is deemed necessary to monitor the progress of the student.

For further information on the available support arrangements, please see <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/>

Contacts for enquiries

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Undergraduate Admissions Office: dent-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 92 87677.