

## 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:**

F600 Geology BSc,  
F603 Geology MSci,  
F609 Geology MSci with Study Abroad,  
F640 Environmental Geoscience BSc,  
F641 Environmental Geoscience MSci,  
F644 Environmental Geoscience MSci with Study Abroad,  
FC61 Geology & Biology BSc,  
CF16 Palaeontology & Evolution MSci

## 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.

Decisions to make offers are based on the UCAS application, and offers are made to those who have chosen the most appropriate A level subjects and who show potential, appear to be well-motivated and are likely to achieve the standard offer.

On receipt of applications, those with high grades or predictions may be made immediate offers, whereas those with lower grades may have their application held for consideration later in the cycle.

All applications are allocated scores on the academic record and the personal statement/reference. The weighting is as follows:

A level score: 80%

GCSE score: 20%

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

### 3. Interview or visit day

Approximately fifteen members of academic staff in the School assist in hosting applicants and their parents on departmental visit days; the Admissions Tutor has a briefing meeting with these at the beginning of the academic session.

Applicants are invited to visit days as offers are made to them. All who have applied within the standard time frame are able to arrange an alternative day if that offered is not convenient.

Visit days provide applicants with the chance to explore the academic opportunities offered by the School, to attend a sample lecture and tutorial and be shown around the facilities. There are opportunities to meet and question a variety of staff and current students and to visit a residence. Candidates who live abroad or a great distance from Bristol are not expected to attend an open day, though they are advised they are welcome to if they wish.

### 4. Correspondence with applicants

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.

**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

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

1.0 – Maths; Further Maths; Physics, Chemistry, Biology

0.7 – Ancient History; Botany; English Language; English Literature; Environmental Studies/Science; French; Geography; Geology; German; Greek; History; Human Biology; Italian; Latin; Marine Science; Other Modern Languages; Portuguese; Psychology; Russian; Science; Spanish; Statistics; Zoology

0.4 – Everything else with exceptions below

0 – Applied A Levels; Critical Thinking; Design and Technology; General Studies; Health and Social Care; Other Non-Academic Subjects including Art and Design and Photography

Applicants with subject combinations listed below will be at a disadvantage;

Geology and Geography  
Environmental Studies and Biology  
Environmental Studies and Geography  
Marine Science and Geography  
Marine Science and Biology

These combinations can only be considered with a physical science as a third subject.

## 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:

- Interest in and commitment to Earth Sciences
- Evidence of clear thinking & understanding
- Problem-solving, analytical & practical skills
- Appropriateness of chosen programme of study to declared interests & aspirations
- Non-academic achievement/experience, extra-curricular activities, positions of responsibility
- Other relevant skills, e.g. foreign languages
- Relevant work experience
- Relevant reading/research beyond A-level syllabus
- Written English, expression, construction, argument
- Responses to opportunities & challenges faced
- Anything else the applicant considers relevant.

**Please note** – cross school/joint honours programmes may have additional criteria specific to the particular school. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools for their intended course of study; <http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/admissions-statements.html>.

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

#### **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, motivation, suitability for university education, and any educational or special circumstances.

**Please note** – cross school/joint honours programmes may have additional criteria specific to the particular school. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools for their intended course of study; <http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/admissions-statements.html>. We will endeavour to ensure that a poorly written reference does not significantly disadvantage an applicant.

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

See section 7 for mature applicants.

#### **6. Interview**

Interviews will be reserved for cases where the application relies on non-standard academic qualifications. Interviews will be conducted by two members of the School Admissions Team who will have undergone appropriate University training in fair and effective recruitment techniques. All interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

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

Mature applicants, and others who have come through a non-standard route, are required to attend a visit day and a competitive interview. The aim of the interview is to discern the applicant's knowledge level, and ability to apply that knowledge to answer relevant questions. Such applicants tend to be invited later in the admissions cycle to enable them to gain the maximum benefit possible from their e.g Access to Science course prior to assessment.

If A-levels or equivalent are not offered, applicants are required to sit a test involving basic science and quantitative skills. The purpose of the test is to ensure that applicants have enough knowledge and understanding of physical science to enable them to start a degree from a knowledge base comparable to that of their peers.

Mature applicants may be admitted with slightly lower grades than the standard offer, particularly if they have had a relevant employment history.

#### **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/GELY/dept\\_intro](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/GELY/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

Applicants to all of our programmes must enjoy being outdoors, whatever the weather, as fieldwork is an important method of study and learning.

The standard offer for all our programmes is the same, and so applicants may change their single honours programme of study at any time prior to registration.

Single Honours students have a common first year of study and so may change programme prior to the start of their second year, subject to relevant academic criteria being met.

For Joint Honours programmes transfer may be possible but will be considered on a case by case basis.

Occasional transfers from other universities are possible as long as the material studied in a first year elsewhere is comparable to that studied by our first years. Each case is treated individually.

### 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.