

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 Geography (F800) 3 years

MSci Geography (F803) 4 years

BSc Geography with Study in Continental Europe (F801) 4 years

BSc Geography with Study Abroad (09F4) 4 years (subject to approval)

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.

.All applications are allocated scores on the academic record.

A level score: 70%; GCSE score: 10%; Personal statement score: 20%

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.

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

Applicants who have received an offer will normally be invited to a Visit Day in the Spring. 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 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. Those applying for deferred entry will be expected to justify this in their statement.

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.

Breadth and quality of academic attainment is important for a Geography degree, as identified at GCSE and AS or equivalent levels. A strong GCSE (or equivalent) pass in Mathematics is a course requirement. Good performances in science and mathematics subjects are particularly noted when assessing candidates. Those without sufficient analytical skills may be at a significant disadvantage, given the nature of the curriculum we follow. Candidates should have achieved or be predicted to achieve grades A or B at A-level or equivalent. We make no distinction by exam board. Candidates without Geography or a close equivalent at this level would be expected to explain this absence in their application and/or interview.

For our BSc degree with Study in Continental Europe, applicants are expected to have a good pass in the relevant language (German, Spanish or French) at GCSE level or higher. For students with no demonstrated ability in the relevant language, evidence of a high standard of learning in another non-native language must be presented. These criteria may be waived if, for example, the applicant is a native speaker of the relevant language.

2. Additional academic criteria

We rank applicants according to predicted/actual grades, personal statements and school references. We expect to recruit equivalent numbers to human and physical geography pathways. To achieve this, we set different thresholds for groups of applicants presenting with 2 or more, 1, or no sciences. We emphasise that the breadth of material covered in Geography across the humanities and sciences is wide.

To assist in balancing the streams, we use the following subject weightings. These are **not** preferred subjects.

Weighting =1: Geography, Chemistry; Maths; Further Maths; Physics; Biology; Electronics; Economics; Computing; Computer Science, Marine Science, Geology, Information Technology, Environmental Studies.

Weighting = 0.8: All other subjects (except General Studies and Critical Thinking, which are zero)

3. Personal statement criteria

We look for a clear and convincing enthusiasm for Geography as a focus for academic study, consistent with the nature of the programmes provided at Bristol.

This should be reinforced by evidence of initiative in extending this interest beyond formal classroom provision. Candidates should also address the benefits they see from further study at the tertiary level and suggest what they can offer to an intensive and high quality teaching and learning environment, both academically and otherwise, as well as what they hope to gain from it. The statement should be well written in terms of its structure and power of expression.

4. Reference criteria

We look for strong support from school/college or other referees, with explanations of any apparent inconsistencies in candidate performance and predictions. The reference will often include evidence of the candidate's potential for further academic study, independent and original thought and unsupervised learning across the curriculum, particularly in Geography.

5. Additional Tests

Not applicable.

6. Interview

Interviews will be reserved for cases where documented evidence needs further clarification or the application relies on non-standard academic qualifications. Interviews will be conducted by two members of Academic staff outside the School Admissions Team who will have undergone appropriate University training in fair and effective recruitment. Interviews will most likely be scheduled to occur on one of the School Visit Day and candidates will be able to take part in at least some of the guided programme.

7. Mature applicants

Applications from mature candidates or those with atypical educational backgrounds will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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:

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/GEOG/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.

2. Additional information

Not applicable.

Contacts for enquiries

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Undergraduate Admissions Office: sci-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 331 7203.