

## 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 History (V100)

## 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 on the academic record and the personal statement/reference.

The respective weightings ratio out of 100 (academic: personal statement) is as follows:

- Academic score: 30%;
- Personal Statement/Reference score: 70%.

Applications will be assessed on the basis of their UCAS application 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. 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.

Applicants are expected to describe briefly in their personal statement how their "gap" year might subsequently benefit their university career. Preference may be given to those with a clear and relevant academic purpose or with significant health or personal issues.

### **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](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: [www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries)

A-level General Studies is not considered towards offers or academic assessment.

#### **2. Additional academic criteria**

History is a mandatory subject but we welcome applications from applicants offering it with any combination of any other A2 subjects (or equivalent), apart from General Studies which we do not accept.

We take an applicant's record at GCSE into account, but there are no specific requirements, except GCSE English Language and Mathematics and we recognise that a applicant's academic abilities may improve significantly subsequent to GCSE. Credit is given to the best 8 subjects.

Those who do not satisfy the normal eligibility criteria, but whose applications are deemed to indicate interest in and aptitude for the subject, may be asked to attend a selection interview.

#### **3. Personal statement criteria**

Given the very large number of applications we receive each year from applicants who have achieved or are predicted to achieve high grades, we necessarily place substantial emphasis upon the quality of the personal statement.

- We seek evidence of serious interest in, and commitment to, the active study of history. We are particularly eager to identify applicants whose interest in the subject extends beyond the A2 History syllabus, who are keen to engage in independent research, and who wish to learn how to undertake such historical research at university level.
- Evidence of wider reading and of a critical engagement with such reading is important. Applicants who have gained a relevant broader experience of the practice of history (e.g. volunteering at a museum, independent research projects, etc.) are also given credit.
- Within the Personal Statement itself, we seek evidence of coherent, analytical and critical thinking. Credit is given for well-constructed and accurately expressed argument.
- We may also take into consideration an applicant's understanding of how other relevant disciplines can inform the study of history, and whether the course applied for is appropriate to the applicant's declared historical interests and aspirations.
- 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, the Mutual Recognition Scheme, etc.), or participation in outreach activities.
- We give some credit for non-academic achievements and experience, extra-curricular activities and positions of responsibility held, including paid and voluntary employment, bearing in mind the range of opportunities available to the applicant and the nature of any particular challenges s/he may have faced.
- Our mission is to identify and attract those applicants who satisfy all the criteria outlined above and whose academic and intellectual interests and potential are germane to our methods of teaching and areas of expertise.

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

The reference will be included in the assessment of the Personal Statement, with the following taken into account:

- Evidence of high levels of motivation, an ability to work independently, and intellectual inquisitiveness
- The ability of the applicant to engage in historical research, or their interest in undertaking such research
- The applicant's powers of critical analysis and potential for further development in these areas
- Ways in which the applicant's performance does not reflect their ability, e.g. educational/special circumstances

We are aware that some applicants (for instance, mature students) may well have referees with less experience of the UCAS system. Whilst all candidates should try to ensure they have a reliable and informed referee, the School will endeavour to ensure that a poorly written reference does not significantly disadvantage an applicant.

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

No tests are currently used as part of the selection process for History.

In the event that the department should require the submission of a piece of written work in support of an application, the reasons for the request will be explained and pertinent directions given.

## **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 purpose of the interview is to assess whether the applicant currently has the necessary skills and capabilities to pursue a degree programme in History and whether the course is appropriate to the applicant's interests and aspirations.

There is no testing of the applicant's subject-specific knowledge but s/he will be given the opportunity to discuss and debate their historical interests.

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 level.

## **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 in order to assess their academic potential and ascertain their level of commitment to the academic study. A decision will be made after the interview.

## **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:

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

Incoming students will normally be expected to enter at the start of the next first year.

Requests for transfers to our courses may be made from suitable applicants from other degree programmes within the University at the end of Year One.

Suitably qualified applicants who have completed the first year of a degree programme at another institution may seek entry to Year 2, but acceptance is at the discretion of the Department and is subject to there being space available on the degree programme to which the applicant is applying. Applications are to be submitted through UCAS, indicating in the appropriate field ('Point of Entry') the applicant's intention to be admitted into Year Two.

## **2. Additional information**

The department of History does not currently offer any Joint Honours courses.

### **Contacts for enquiries**

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