

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 Liberal Arts (2ZB7)

MLibArts Master in Liberal Arts (2T23)

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 application 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

All applicants who have received offers will normally be invited to a Visit Day in the course of the academic year. This gives them a chance to see the city and the University, to ask questions about the teaching programmes and other aspects of student life in Bristol, and to meet informally with existing staff and students. While attendance at a Visit Day is strongly recommended, 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.

International applicants are in most cases treated in the same way as home applicants, except that we recognise that attendance at interview or a Visit Day may not be practicable.

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

Deferred entry applications are considered, but applicants are expected to explain their reasons for requesting deferred entry and to describe briefly in their personal statement how their 'gap' year might subsequently benefit their university career. Only a very limited number of offers may be made to applicants in this category in order to ensure fairness to those applying in the next admissions cycle. Preference may be given to those with a clear and relevant academic purpose or with significant health or personal issues. Offers for deferred entry may be at marginally higher grades than the typical offers for immediate year of entry.

We urge applicants to submit applications in the current admissions cycle wherever possible.

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

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

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

2. Additional academic criteria

Individual applicants are normally expected to have actual or predicted A-level grades (or equivalent) at the required level or above. All candidates should offer 3 A-Levels (or equivalent) including two in subjects taught in the Faculty of Arts.

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 an applicant's academic abilities may improve significantly subsequent to GCSE. Credit is given to the best eight subjects.

All Liberal Arts students pursue a subject pathway as part of their degree (minimum one-quarter of the credit points) and individual subjects may have additional specific criteria.

These include:

- for English pathway, A-level in English Literature or combined English Literature and Language
- for Music pathway, A-level in Music
- for French pathway, A-level in French
- for pathways in other languages an A-level in an ancient or modern language

Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided for the individual subjects they wish to pursue:

www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/admissions-statements.html

3. Personal statement criteria

The personal statement is vital for providing clear indications of the applicant's suitability for the course. We are looking for evidence of:

- interest in and commitment to subjects taught in the Faculty of Arts;
- interest in links between these subjects and overarching themes of historical or contemporary relevance;
- relevant reading or research beyond the A level syllabus;
- clear thinking and understanding, problem solving and analytical skills, and creativity;
- grammatically correct, clearly structured, and stylishly written English;
- self-motivation and management;
- responses to opportunities and challenges faced.

All Liberal Arts students pursue a subject pathway as part of their degree (minimum one-quarter of the credit points) and individual subjects may have additional specific criteria. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided for the individual subjects they wish to pursue.

4. Reference criteria

We would look for evidence of the following within the reference:

- Applicant's motivation
- Applicant's ability to work independently
- Applicant's powers of analysis & expression
- Special circumstances

All Liberal Arts students pursue a subject pathway as part of their degree (minimum one-quarter of the credit points) and individual subjects may have additional specific criteria. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided for the individual subjects they wish to pursue.

5. Additional Tests

Not applicable.

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 the degree programme 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 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

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/XLIB/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.

Direct entry into Year 2 or 3 is not possible.

Acceptance is at the discretion of the Faculty and is subject to there being space available on the degree programme to which the applicant is applying.

2. Additional information

Liberal Arts is only available as a single honours degree. It cannot be studied as half of a joint honours degree.

Contacts for enquiries

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