

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:

Single Honours

BA Philosophy (V500)

Joint Honours (offered in conjunction with other Schools)

BA English and Philosophy (QV35)

BA Philosophy and Theology (VV56)

BA Philosophy and French (RV15)

BA Philosophy and German (RV25)

BA Philosophy and Italian (RV35)

BA Philosophy and Portuguese (RV55)

BA Philosophy and Russian (RV75)

BA Philosophy and Spanish (RV45)

BSc Philosophy and Economics (VL51)

BSc Philosophy and Politics (VL52)

BSc Sociology and Philosophy (LV35)

BSc Physics and Philosophy (FV35)

MSci Physics and Philosophy (FVH5)

BSc Mathematics and Philosophy (VG51)

MSci Mathematics and Philosophy (GV15)

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.

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:

BA Philosophy (V500) 80:20
BA English and Philosophy (QV35) 30:70
BA Philosophy and Theology (VV56) 80:20
BA Philosophy and French (RV15) 80:20
BA Philosophy and German (RV25) 80:20
BA Philosophy and Italian (RV35) 80:20
BA Philosophy and Portuguese (RV55) 80:20
BA Philosophy and Russian (RV75) 80:20
BA Philosophy and Spanish (RV45) 80:20
BSc Philosophy and Economics (VL51) 80:20
BSc Philosophy and Politics (VL52) 60:40
BSc Sociology and Philosophy (LV35) 40:60

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.

All applications for joint honours courses are also assessed in relation to the other subject's selection criteria, so the other relevant Admissions Statement should also be consulted.

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.

We do not interview as part of the selection process for Philosophy.

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.

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.

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

All our Philosophy students are expected to master basic formal logic, and contemporary philosophy is informed by and reflects upon the theories and results of the sciences (natural and social); philosophy is like the sciences in so far as it requires logical and mathematical thinking, and makes use of symbolic calculi. However, philosophy students are also expected to engage in textual interpretation and essay writing. Hence, we are looking for students with a rare combination of skills traditionally associated with both the arts and sciences, who are also highly motivated to pursue philosophical inquiry. We are therefore particularly interested in applicants' GCSE results in mathematics, science and English language, and we look favourably on applicants who combine excellence in both science and arts or humanities at A-level.

Please note – cross school/joint honours programmes may have additional/different requirements specific to the particular course of study. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools for the intended course of study.

3. Personal statement criteria

The Personal Statement forms a crucial part of the selection process in assessing each applicant's motivation and suitability for the chosen programme of study. When looking at each applicant's Personal Statement, the selectors look for the following:

- Interest in and commitment to subject
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding
- Problem-solving, analytical and practical skills
- Ability to construct an argument and explain a philosophical problem
- Appropriateness of chosen University course to declared interests and aspirations
- Non-academic achievement/experience, extra-curricular activities, positions of responsibility
- Other relevant skills, e.g. foreign languages

- Relevant reading/research beyond A-Level syllabus
- Written English, expression, construction, argument
- Responses to opportunities and challenges faced

Please note – cross school/joint honours programmes may have additional criteria specific to the partner school. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools for the intended course of study.

4. Reference criteria

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

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

Please note – cross school/joint honours programmes may have additional criteria specific to the partner school. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised to refer to the Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools for the intended course of study.

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 OR to complete a short piece of written work in order to assess their academic potential and ascertain their level of commitment to the academic study of the subject(s).

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/PHIL/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 into single honours philosophy from the various joint schools is rarely possible. Where permitted they are conditional on an excellent performance in philosophy and on a willingness by the student to catch up on elements of the first year they have missed.

Entry into year 2 of any Philosophy programmes is only permitted in exceptional circumstances.

2. Additional information

Not applicable.

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.