

## 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 Social Policy (L400)  
BSc Social Policy and Politics (LL42)  
BSc Social Policy and Sociology (LL43)

## 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. Applications that are received on time (in accordance with the deadlines of the UCAS application cycle) are guaranteed equal consideration.

- A candidate's academic potential, and their potential to succeed on our programme
- The personal statement
- The reference
- Exceptional circumstances and/or the educational and social context in which an applicant applies, where there is clear evidence that this may have adversely affected academic achievement.

All applications are allocated scores on the academic record and the personal statement / reference. The respective weighting ratio out of 100 is as follows:

BSc Social Policy (L400) – 100% (academic score)  
BSc Social Policy and Politics (LL42) – 25:75 (academic & Personal Statement score)  
BSc Social Policy and Sociology (LL43) – 100% (academic score)

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

### 3. Interview or visit day

All candidates with offers are invited to attend a departmental Visit Day. Visit Day attendance is optional but we hope students will take the opportunity of visiting the University.

Mature students with offers will be invited to attend a dedicated Mature Students' Visit Day. This will involve specially prepared lectures and seminars relevant to their degree course, as well as talks by previous students on the 'mature student experience'.

It is recognised that it is not always practicable for international students to attend a Visit Day. Visit day attendance is optional but we hope students will take the opportunity of visiting the University.

#### **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 welcome applications for deferred entry.

### **Criteria for assessing applicants**

#### **1. Academic entry requirements**

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Bacc, 14-19 Diploma, GCSEs) can be found in the online Undergraduate Prospectus at:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/SPOL/345/admissions>

Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits; further information is available at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/study-at-bristol/how-to-apply/country-specific/>

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

The standard of academic ability is evaluated from the predicted or actual grades achieved in examinations.

A-levels may be in any subject (excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking). However, when we come to select applicants, all other things being equal, preference may be given to those showing aptitude in subjects that have the most relevance to the course applied for, specifically social science subjects (particularly Sociology for Social Policy and Sociology, and Government and Politics for Social Policy and Politics). A-level General studies and A level Critical Thinking are not counted as part of offers, nor are they considered in the academic assessment of applicants.

We will also take account of previous academic qualifications, and credit is awarded for GCSEs achieved at grade C and above, which must include English Language and Maths.

### **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 and commitment to subject
- The candidate's declared interests and aspirations
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding, analytical skills
- Relevant paid and unpaid work
- Positions of responsibility at school/college or work
- Non-academic achievement
- Standard of written English
- Responses to challenges faced
- Hobbies and interests

### **4. Reference criteria**

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

- Academic progress
- Interest and commitment to subject
- Appropriateness of the chosen Bristol course in relation to the candidate's declared interests and aspirations
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding, analytical skills
- Positions of responsibility at school/college or work
- Non-academic achievement
- Responses to challenges faced

### **5. Additional Tests**

There are no additional tests involved in the selection process and no example of work will be required.

### **6. Interview**

In the majority of cases, admissions decisions will be made on the basis of the UCAS application alone. However, in some cases an applicant may be invited to attend an interview in order to further discuss their application i.e. if the applicant has been out of education for a number of years, or if a non-standard qualification is offered.

Where an interview is required, the following criteria will be considered when assessing the interview performance:

- Interest in subject

- Evidence of motivation
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding
- Academic and non-academic achievement and/or experience
- Communication skills

## **7. Mature applicants**

We welcome applications from mature students.

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

Applications for direct entry into year two are considered from suitable applicants who have completed the first year of a degree programme with similar content at another institution. However, this is dependent on availability of places and the suitability of previous study. Applications must be made through UCAS.

### 2. Additional information

Applications for joint honours courses are considered using the same procedures described above, with additional cooperation with the admissions tutor from the joint School.

**Please note** - cross school/joint honours programmes may have additional/different selection criteria, specific to the particular course of study. Prospective applicants are therefore strongly advised also to refer to the Admissions Statements provided by partner Schools for their intended course of study:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/admissions-statements.html>

## Contacts for enquiries

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Undergraduate Admissions Office: socsci-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 928 8154

[http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/SPOL/dept\\_intro](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/SPOL/dept_intro).