

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:

Veterinary Science (D100)

Admissions process

1. Admissions team

Applications assessed by centralised team in close co-operation with Admissions Tutor/s.

2. Application assessment methods

All applications to UK veterinary schools have to be submitted to UCAS by October 15th. 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 UCAS applications are considered independently by two members of the admissions team. Applications are initially screened on the basis of educational achievements and predictions. Re-applications are considered using the same criteria.

A second screening ranks the student in terms of the following:

- Is the applicant realistic and informed about a career in veterinary medicine?
- Has the applicant got work experience in veterinary practice?
- Has the applicant got related work experience, e.g. farm, stable, kennel, rescue organisation, research, abattoir?
- Has the applicant contributed to school/ college/ community activities and do they have interests outside of veterinary science?
- Does the applicant have evidence of personal achievements?

This information is obtained from the Personal Statement and the Reference. Each application is awarded an overall mark; the highest scoring applicants will be invited to interview. The UCAS form will be scored in 3 areas which will contribute to the overall mark as follows:

- GCSE results 15%
- A level results 15%
- Personal statement & reference 70%

After scoring the possible outcomes are:

- Unsuccessful
- Successful - possibly interview
- Successful - definitely interview

Some applicants may be interviewed soon after selection, but others will be held for possible interview, dependent upon numbers of applicants.

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

3. Interview or visit day

Interviews are held at the School of Clinical Veterinary Science, Langford House, Langford, Bristol, BS40 5DU (NB this is 14 miles from Central Bristol). Interview applicants will be given the opportunity for a tour of the facilities at the time of interview and information about the course structure and what happens next in the admissions process. Telephone interviews may be arranged if required (e.g. for overseas applicants). Prospective applicants may visit the School at the University Open Days.

4. Correspondence with applicants

All correspondence relating to an application's status will be sent by email. All applicants will be contacted when we receive their application, to establish contact and inform the applicant of the process to be followed. Applicants will be contacted by email to inform them of any of the following changes to their application status:

- Application is unsuccessful before interview stage Application is 'on hold'
- Applicant is being invited to attend an interview
- Applicant has received an offer post interview Applicant has been unsuccessful at interview

5. Deferred applications

Applications for deferred entry are welcome.

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: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2014/sections/VESC/157/admissions#entry>.

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/>

For UK/EU graduate applicants, the entry requirement is an Honours degree of class 2:1 or a 1st the subject area of the degree would normally be science based, but this is not compulsory. In the case of non-science graduates, Chemistry and Biology A levels (or equivalent) would be required. All Graduate applicants would be expected to have achieved a minimum of BBB at A level.

2. Additional academic criteria

GCSE (or equivalent level 2 qualifications) Eight GCSE subjects are assessed on the application; these must include Maths, English Language and two Sciences/ Double Science plus a good spread of other subjects. A minimum of six A grades would be expected – if an A grade is not achieved in Maths GCSE the candidate must have an A grade in Maths/ Physics at AS or A level. The scores for the top 8 GCSEs including Maths, English Language and two Sciences/ Double Science account for 15% of the overall mark.

A levels (or equivalent level 3 qualifications) For students offering subjects at A2, AS levels are NOT taken into consideration. The subjects required at A2 include Chemistry and Biology and a third subject excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking. No priority is given to students studying Mathematics or Physics as the third subject over any other. Only 3 subjects are required at A2; additional A levels or other qualifications (e.g. Advanced Extension exams) are not taken into consideration. The scores for the top three qualifying A levels including Biology and Chemistry account for 15% of the overall mark. There are equivalences for other level 3 qualifications.

3. Personal statement criteria

The scores from the personal statement contribute 70% towards the overall mark. The criteria assessed and their weightings within the personal statement scores are:

- Is the applicant realistic and informed about a career in veterinary medicine? 30%
- Has the applicant got work experience in veterinary practice? 20%
- Has the applicant got related work experience, e.g. farm, stable, kennel, rescue, research, abattoir? 20%
- Has the applicant contributed to school/college/community activities and have interests outside of veterinary sciences? 10%
- Does the applicant have evidence of personal achievements? 20%

4. Reference criteria

The preference is for an academic reference rather than a personal one (where possible); it should support the student's personal statement but avoid repetition. The applicant's academic performance and abilities should be discussed along with any extenuating circumstances known to have affected progress. The ability of the applicant to interact with peers and teaching staff, along with positions of responsibility held within the school or college, is valuable information.

5. Additional Tests

Bristol Veterinary School does NOT require students to take the BMAT examination.

6. Interview

Interviews are held from November through to March and comprise of a 20 minute face- to-face interview and a series of multiple mini interviews (MMIs) -Applicants are required to complete a form which documents the type and duration of their work experience prior to attending the interview.

Face to face interviews are conducted by 2 people, with at least 1 trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques, and are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities using 20-minute interview slots. A third member of staff may be present in the room to observe the process. Numerical scores (0-3 equating to poor, average, good and excellent) are assigned to:

- Depth of knowledge gained from work experience
- Informed about career and awareness of current topics
- Enthusiasm;
- Commitment and determination to study;
- Their perceived ability to cope
- Ability to communicate / interpersonal skills

The interviewers also give a score (0-9) on their overall recommendation. Marks from the 5 categories are totalled and comprised 60% of the overall interview score in 2013. MMI tests in 2013 comprised of five stations:

- A spoken communications skills task
- A spoken problem solving task
- A written data handling task
- A written calculation task
- A practical task following written instructions

Five candidates at a time undertook the MMI circuit which was conducted under exam conditions. Each station took 4 minutes with a transition period of 1 minute between stations. Candidates who are eligible for extra time for written exams must contact the admissions office by email at least a week before the interview date if they wish to apply for extra time in the MMIs. Marks from the 5 stations were totalled and comprised 40% of the overall score. After the interviews, the overall score (60% face to face and 40% MMI) was ranked and offers were made to those candidates with the highest scores. Those candidates who scored very highly were made offers shortly after their interview via UCAS the remainder were 'on hold' No interview candidates were rejected until after the final interview date.

7. Mature applicants

Mature students are treated in a manner similar to the above.

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/VESC/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

It is NOT normally possible to transfer from another course onto the BVSc Veterinary Science programme. Applicants wishing to join the BVSc programme must apply through UCAS and follow the same process as school leavers. Exception may be made in cases of mitigating circumstances for students wishing to transfer from another UK veterinary school. Students are able to transfer out of the BVSc programme onto other science degrees at the discretion of the individual schools/universities involved.

Please note that students studying Veterinary Nursing and Bioveterinary Science and Animal Behaviour and Welfare Science degree courses at Bristol are not permitted to apply to the BVSc course to start in year 1 until they are about to/ have completed their first degree.

Entry into year 2 of the BVSc programme would only be considered in very rare circumstances, e.g. for graduates with relevant experience or for a transfer from another veterinary school. Such cases are dealt with on an individual basis.

2. Additional information

The University of Bristol does not offer an accelerated, 4-year BVSc degree for graduates and it is not possible to apply for unit exemptions due to the integrated nature of the new curriculum.

In determining who to admit and who to graduate we have to follow the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) professional, prescribed standards as well as our own academic standards and regulations. We do not have the discretion to offer individuals dispensation from parts of the course as graduation leads to automatic membership of the RCVS and the legal right to practise veterinary surgery in the UK. We are, therefore, in this respect the gatekeeper for the veterinary profession. As a result, we require applicants to declare their disabilities when they apply. If an offer is made we consider carefully the requirements of the "Day One" competencies set by the RCVS and will consider whether the applicant has sufficient coping strategies, not only to cope with the course, but also with the "Day One" competencies at the end of the course. Applicants should be able to carry out all the tasks normally undertaken by veterinary surgeons. If this is in doubt, then such a case will be addressed on an individual basis and additional expert advice may be sought to inform our decision to enable us to assess whether reasonable adjustments to the method of learning and the assessment by which the students demonstrate their skills can be made.

All offers are made subject to satisfactory occupational health clearance, and a form is issued in May.

Contacts for enquiries

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