

Undergraduate admissions statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with the [University's admissions principles and procedures](#).

Year of admissions cycle: 2015

Courses covered:

BSc Psychology (C801) 3 years

Admissions process

1. Admissions team

Applications are assessed by a 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 that are received on time (in accordance with UCAS deadlines) are guaranteed equal consideration.

Applications are scored and ranked based on their academic record, according to their achieved or predicted A2 results and their GCSE results (or equivalent), with the following weighting:

- A-level: 90%
- GCSE score: 10%

Applications will be assessed on the basis of their application only; we will not take into account any additional information received from an applicant or institution, unless we have requested it.

We do not consider any direct applications to the University.

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

3. Interview or visit day

Successful applicants will be invited to attend one of our post-offer visit days in the spring.

4. Correspondence with applicants

All correspondence relating to an application's status will be sent by email.

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.

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.

5. Deferred applications

Applications seeking deferred entry (ie 2016) are treated in the same way as for those seeking direct entry. Applicants will be expected to explain their reasons for applying for deferred entry in their personal statement.

Criteria for assessing applicants

1. Academic entry requirements

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Baccalaureate, GCSEs) can be found in the [undergraduate course finder](#). Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits; [further information](#) is available.

2. Additional academic criteria

Our preferred A-level (or equivalent) subjects are biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, further mathematics, human biology, psychology, English language, English literature and history.

Please note that applicants taking both mathematics and further mathematics are required to have their third A-level from the list of preferred subjects.

All other subjects are also given full consideration. The weightings we use to rank A-level subjects are as follows:

- Weighting 1:
Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Human Biology, Psychology, English Language, English Literature and History.
- Weighting 0.6:
Latin and Modern Languages, Economics, Geography, Marine Science and Geology.
- Weighting 0.4:
All other subjects (excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking).

3. Personal statement criteria

In some cases we may refer to the personal statement and reference to differentiate between applicants with very similar academic profiles. If this is the case, then the admissions team look for:

- evidence that the applicant is well-informed and appreciates the status of psychology as a biological science;
- clear and convincing enthusiasm for psychological research as a focus for academic study: statements about specific interests and aspirations will be considered in relation to the content of the programme.
- evidence of initiative in extending a scientific interest in psychology beyond formal classroom provision.
- a well-written statement in terms of its structure and power of expression.

Any other information considered relevant by the applicant will also be noted.

4. Reference criteria

References should ideally be from a school or college, from a personal tutor confirming the academic potential of the applicant to study at degree level. Assessors will want to consider the accuracy and consistency of the predicted grades in the light of previous achievement, evidence of effort and a positive attitude towards studies. Where this is not possible, a non-academic reference should confirm the relevant experience of the applicant. It should indicate the potential of the applicant for study at degree level.

We look for strong qualified support from referees. Information about the applicant's particular achievements, and challenges faced, are also taken into account. The reference will often include evidence of the applicant's potential for further academic study, independent and original thought and unsupervised learning across the curriculum. We will also consider information relating to educational or special circumstances that explains why an applicant's performance may not reflect their true ability.

5. Additional tests

Not applicable.

6. Interview

Interviews will be reserved for cases where the application relies on non-standard academic qualifications. Interviews will be conducted by two members of the school admissions team who will have undergone appropriate University training in fair and effective recruitment techniques. All interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

Criteria for assessment by interview are as follows:

- awareness, and elementary knowledge, of the scientific merits and requirements of the course;
- clarity of verbal and written expression;
- academic potential, either through background qualifications or experience;
- motivation for learning, questioning and applying knowledge within psychological science.

7. Mature applicants

Mature applicants will be assessed in the same way as other applicants. If the applicant has been out of education for an extended period of time, or offers non-standard qualifications, we may invite them to attend an interview (see **6. Interview** 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 for these courses through the Common Application system, and the same criteria and assessment used for UCAS applicants are applied. Applicants can only be considered through one application route; we cannot consider applicants through the Common Application who have also applied to Bristol and/or other institutions through UCAS.

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 for each course can be found in the [undergraduate course finder](#) and are explained at www.bristol.ac.uk/ug-language-requirements.

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 can be provided in the application.

As part of our commitment to the UK national agenda on widening participation, we consider the educational context in which grades have been achieved, particularly if there is evidence that an applicant's current school or college performs below a defined threshold.

When assessing whether applicants meet our academic requirements, contextual criteria may be applied to those who attend and apply from a school or college which in the previous year ranked in the bottom 40 per cent in any of the following categories:

- average score per A-level entry;
- average score per A-level entrant;
- percentage of students applying to higher education.

If an applicant meets one of these criteria, we will raise their predicted/achieved grades by one grade in our rankings; ie an AAB applicant will be awarded the same academic score as an AAA applicant. Applicants still need to satisfy specific subject requirements. Contextual offers are usually one grade lower than the standard offer.

The University reviews its definition of educational disadvantage and low-performing schools each year and each case is considered on an individual basis.

We also consider evidence of clear motivation to study. This may include participation in higher education outreach activities, attendance at a University summer school or a targeted Access Scheme (such as Access to Bristol or Realising Opportunities where applicants receive special consideration and in some cases, guaranteed and/or lower offers; please see

the [University's admissions principles and procedures](#) for more information). We do not take the following into consideration when making admissions decisions: the school type attended by an applicant (e.g. independent school, state school, academy), 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 course finder](#). Offers to applicants with non-standard qualifications will be made equivalent to the published A-level offer. We may make alternative offers to applicants offering an EP (Extended Project) or those taking a fourth A-level.

We recognise that some applicants may achieve higher than their predicted grades, and so we may also consider applicants who are predicted to achieve one grade below the entry requirements (as long as this is in a non-specified subject). Any offer made would be at the standard level.

We may make lower 'contextual' 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](#) (see also **Criteria for assessing applicants: 10. Contextual information** above).

If you are not qualified or have an unsuitable academic background for the course to which you originally applied, we may offer you the opportunity to be considered for an alternative course in a related subject area. In such cases applicants will receive an email notification providing a list of the alternative options. Please note that receipt of this email does not guarantee that an offer will be made.

Other

1. Transfers

Internal

We consider requests for transfers to our courses from suitable applicants from other degree courses within the University at the end of year one. Students who have completed a first year of study and who seek to transfer are typically expected to obtain a minimum of 60 per cent overall during their first year of their undergraduate degree and to have met the criteria, as specified, for entry at year one. Transfers are dependent on the availability of places.

External

We consider applications from suitable applicants who have completed the first year of a degree at another institution for entry direct into year one or two, but this is dependent on the availability of places, and the demonstration of academic achievement and profiles consistent with the ongoing cohort of current undergraduates. Students who seek to transfer are typically expected to obtain a minimum of 60 per cent overall during their first year of their undergraduate degree in psychology from another University.

All transfers are at the discretion of the admissions team. For further details of transfer procedures please contact the Undergraduate Admissions Office.

2. Additional information

The University can only guarantee places if the exact terms of the offer are met, however offer holders would not automatically be rejected if the terms of the offer are missed by one grade. If offer holders do not meet the terms of their offer when exam results are released they may be considered as a 'near miss candidate'. All near miss candidates are reviewed mid-August after those who have met the terms of their offer have been confirmed.

International offer holders may be reconsidered earlier depending when their exam results are released.

Contacts for enquiries

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Undergraduate Admissions Office: sci-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 928 8153.