

## 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:**

BVSc Veterinary Science (D100)

## 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.

Applications are initially assessed on the basis of educational achievements and predictions/grades, and then the personal statement and reference. Each application is awarded an overall mark; the highest scoring applicants will be invited to interview.

The overall mark out of 100 comprises:

- Academic score 30% (GCSEs 15%, A-level (achieved or predicted) 15%)
- Personal statement/reference 70%

After this scoring, the possible outcomes are:

- i) Applicant will be invited to interview;
  - ii) Applicant is 'on hold';
  - iii) Applicant is unsuccessful.
- Applicants in category i) are invited for interview.
  - Applicants not immediately selected for interview are put in category ii) 'on hold' until later in the application cycle when a review might result in some of these applicants being invited for interview.
  - Applicants in category iii) are notified through UCAS that their application has been unsuccessful.

All applications to UK veterinary schools have to be submitted to UCAS by October 15<sup>th</sup>. We do not consider any direct applications to the University, and late applications are not considered.

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 are selected for interview must attend in order to be considered. No offers for veterinary science are made without the applicant first attending an interview. This does not mean that we interview all applicants (see **Criteria for assessing applicants: 6. Interviews** below).

Interviews are held at the School of Clinical Veterinary Science, Langford House, Langford, Bristol, BS40 5DU (14 miles from central Bristol).

Interviewees will be given the opportunity of a tour of the facilities, information about the course structure and what happens next in the admissions process.

Telephone interviews may be arranged if necessary (eg for overseas applicants).

### **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 of any of the following changes to their application status:

- Application is unsuccessful before interview stage (via UCAS);
- Application is 'on hold' and may be invited to an interview at a later date;
- Applicant is being invited to attend an interview;
- Applicant has received an offer post-interview (via UCAS);
- Applicant is 'on hold' after interview;
- Applicant has been unsuccessful at interview (via UCAS).

The email inviting applicants to interview will direct applicants to an online booking facility allowing them to register themselves for one of the available dates.

### **5. Deferred applications**

Applications for deferred entry (ie 2016) are welcome but we would look for your plans for your year out. If you apply during your gap year, you will still be expected to be available for interview throughout the period November to March.

It is normally possible to defer an application once it has been submitted, either before or after a decision has been made.

## 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

Credit is given for the best eight GCSE grades, which must include Mathematics, English Language and two sciences/double science. Applicants who did not achieve the minimum required GCSE results in their first sitting can apply with resits achieved.

Please note that A-levels in General Studies or Critical Thinking are not counted as part of offers, nor are they considered in the academic assessment of applicants. AS-levels are also not taken into consideration. For A-level students, only three subjects are required at A2; additional A-levels or other qualifications (eg Advanced Extension exams) are not taken into consideration. Applicants are expected to complete three A-levels (or equivalent qualifications) within a single two-year exam period.

No priority is given to students studying Mathematics or Physics as the third subject over any other.

### 3. Personal statement criteria

You are expected to show in your personal statement that you have made a significant effort to find out what it would be like to work as a veterinary surgeon and should refer to your veterinary work experience.

The scores from the personal statement contribute 70 per cent 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 undertaken work experience in veterinary practice? (20%)
- Has the applicant undertaken related work experience (eg farm, stable, kennel, rescue, research, abattoir)? (20%)
- Has the applicant contributed to school/college/community activities and do they have interests outside of veterinary sciences? (10%)
- Does the applicant have evidence of personal achievements? (20%)

### 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. 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.

The reference should support the applicant'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's veterinary school does not require students in the 2015 cycle to take the BMAT (or any additional admissions test). Examination and scores from these tests are not used in our selection processes.

## **6. Interview**

From the applications received, approximately 30 per cent will be selected for interview. Around 50 per cent of interviewees will receive an offer.

We interview on the basis that we have limited information from the application and, as such, we need to establish that the applicant has the necessary qualities required to become a good vet.

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 prior to attending the interview which documents the type and duration of their work experience.

Face-to-face interviews are conducted by two people, with at least one 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 with a situation;
- Ability to communicate / interpersonal skills;
- Overall recommendation from interviewers.

MMI tests comprise 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 four minutes with a transition period of one minute between stations. Scores from the five stations were totalled to contribute to the overall score.

After the interviews, applicants are ranked by their overall score (50 per cent face-to-face and 50 per cent MMI) and offers made to those with the highest scores.

Interviewees who scored very highly were made offers shortly after their interview; the remainder were 'on hold' No interviewees were made unsuccessful until after the final interview date.

### **Extra time in assessments**

Interviewees 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.

## **7. Mature applicants**

Mature applicants are assessed in the same way as all other applicants.

## **8. International applicants**

The academic requirements for international applicants are exactly the same as those for home applicants.

Further information about international qualifications can be found at [www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries)

Suitable applicants will be invited to interview (either Skype or in person). There is no cap on available places for applicants who are liable to pay overseas fees.

## **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](http://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 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).

Typical offers are reviewed annually.

## Other

### 1. Transfers

It is not normally possible to transfer from another course onto the BVSc Veterinary Science degree. Applicants wishing to join the BVSc degree must apply through UCAS and follow the same process as school leavers. Exception may be made in cases of extenuating circumstances for students wishing to transfer from another UK veterinary school.

Students are able to transfer out of the BVSc degree onto other science degrees at the discretion of the individual schools/universities involved.

Please note that students studying BSc Veterinary Nursing and Bioveterinary Science or BSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare Science degree courses at Bristol are not permitted to

apply to the BVSc course to start in year one until they are about to/have completed their first degree.

Entry into year two of the BVSc degree would only be considered in very rare circumstances, eg 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 four-year BVSc degree for graduates and it is not possible to apply for unit exemptions due to the integrated nature of the 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.

### **Re-sit applicants**

Applications may be considered from applicants who have achieved below AAB in the first sitting and are re-sitting. However, as we expect A-level grades of AAA to normally be achieved within the two-year exam period, applicants who are re-sitting will be at a slight disadvantage in the scoring process compared to applicants who achieve, or are predicted to achieve, AAA in one sitting. Applicants who have achieved below AAB in the first sitting, and are re-sitting, may be considered provided there are exceptional extenuating circumstances.

## **Contacts for enquiries**

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