Undergraduate admissions statement
This statement should be read in conjunction with the University's admissions principles and procedures.

Year of admissions cycle: 2016

Courses covered:
BSc Childhood Studies (L520)
BSc Childhood Studies with Quantitative Research Methods (L522)
MSci Childhood Studies with Quantitative Research Methods (L523)
BSc Childhood Studies with Management (L524)

1. Admissions process

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

1.2. 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 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.

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

1.3. Interview or visit day
All applicants who receive an offer are invited to attend a departmental Visit Day. Visit Day attendance is optional but we hope applicants will take the opportunity of visiting the University.

1.4. Correspondence with applicants
All correspondence relating to an applicant’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 and put on ‘Hold’ pending a decision later in the cycle.
If you submitted your application by 15 January then the final deadline by which you will receive a decision is 7 May. Most decisions are made well before this date. We monitor the number of offers we make carefully and may hold some applications until later in the cycle.

2. Criteria for assessing applicants

To assess an application we require:

- A full academic history from age 16 onwards, including any retakes or uncompleted qualifications.
- Predicted grades for any qualifications you are currently taking. Predicted grades can only come from your school or referee. These must include an overall grade (if applicable) AND where a particular subject is specified in the entry requirements, the achieved grades or predicted grades for that subject, and any related or major subjects you are studying.
- If predicted grades are not available, then we will accept a transcript showing the results of your previous year’s courses or examinations.

2.1. Academic entry requirements

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Bac, 14-19 Diploma, 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 through the International Office.

All applications must be submitted through UCAS or Common Application; we cannot consider any direct applications.

Applications that are received on time are guaranteed equal consideration.

2.2. Additional academic criteria

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

A-levels (or equivalent) 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 and science subjects.

We will also take account of previous academic qualifications, and credit is awarded for the best eight GCSE’s achieved at grade C and above.

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.

2.3. Personal statement criteria

In some cases we may refer to the personal statement and references to differentiate between applicants with very similar academic profiles.

If this is the case, we will assess the following:
interest in, and commitment to, Childhood Studies as an academic subject;

- the applicant's declared interests and aspirations related to the course;
- evidence of understanding, analytical skills and critical thinking;
- 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.

2.4. Reference criteria

References will be assessed for information on the applicant's motivation, ability to work independently, powers of analysis and expression. If the referee believes the applicant's performance does not reflect their ability, due to educational context and/or special circumstances, the applicant should complete an extenuating circumstances form at bristol.ac.uk/applicants/applied/extenuating-circumstances/. We are unable to consider extenuating circumstances without this form.

The admissions team will take into account the following when assessing a reference:

- evidence of academic promise;
- evidence of clear thinking and understanding, and analytical skills;
- non-academic achievement;
- responses to challenges faced;
- 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.

2.5. Interview

In the majority of cases, admissions decisions will be made on the basis of the application alone. However, in some cases an applicant may be invited to attend an interview in order to further discuss their application, ie 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 the subject;
- evidence of motivation;
- evidence of clear thinking and understanding;
- academic and non-academic achievement and/or experience;
- communication skills.

2.6. Mature applicants

We welcome applications from mature students, and receive a large number of applications from mature students each year. Applicants are encouraged to contact the admissions team before submitting an application to discuss their previous qualifications and experience, and their suitability for the course. We treat each such case individually, but the main concern is
to ensure that the applicant's qualifications prepare them for the rigours of full-time academic study, perhaps after a gap of several years.

Mature applicants 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’.

2.7. International applicants
International applicants will be subject to the criteria as detailed here: 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.

While we do accept foundation programmes designed for international students, please be aware that they are designed for applicants who have not been able to take the correct level of qualification in their home country. Therefore, we do not consider applicants who are taking a foundation programme and have previously completed A-levels or equivalent qualifications that do not meet our entry grade requirements, except in exceptional circumstances.

2.8. 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.

2.9. Contextual information
We take a holistic approach to assessing all applications, ensuring that an applicant’s educational and social contexts are taken into consideration, where supported by clear evidence that this may have adversely affected academic performance. 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.

Applicants may be eligible for a contextual offer if they are currently applying from (or in the 15/16 academic year were in full-time education in) a school ranked in the bottom 40 per cent in any of the following categories for the: 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 during the scoring process; 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.
To be eligible for a contextual offer, applicants currently attending school must apply from a school in the list below:

2016 cycle list here

Applicants not currently attending school must have been in full-time education in one of the following schools in the academic year 15/16:

2015 cycle list here

Please note that we use the "applying from" school code or the education history listed on the UCAS form to determine an applicant’s eligibility for a contextual offer. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure these are correct.

The University reviews its definition of educational disadvantage 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 (eg independent school, comprehensive school, academy) or an applicant’s parents’ experience of higher education.

3. Offers

3.1 Typical Offers
Typical offers for A-levels and other UK qualifications can be found in the entry data in the undergraduate course finder. 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.

3.2 Aspirational Offers
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.

4. Other

4.1. 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.
4.2. Resits
The Childhood Studies programmes will consider applicants who resit their qualifications.

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

Students, in principle, can transfer between Childhood Studies programmes, subject to approval, but there is no automatic right of transfer between programmes. Transfer is subject to sufficient space being available and the applicant meeting the academic criteria and requirements for the new programme. Applicants should read our Student Transfer Policies for more information.

4.4. Extenuating Circumstances
If your education has been significantly disrupted through health or personal problems, disability or specific difficulties with schooling you will need to submit an extenuating circumstances form (available at http://www.bristol.ac.uk/applicants/applied/extenuating-circumstances/) to Undergraduate Admissions.

The information provided on the form will be treated confidentially, and will help us to accurately assess your academic performance in light of your situation.

4.5. Policies
All applications are considered in line with our Admissions policies and procedures.

We are committed to the provision of high quality, fair and transparent admissions procedures for all our applicants. We recognise, however, that there may be occasions when applicants believe that they have cause for complaint. At this point applicants should follow our Applicant feedback and complaints procedures.

Should an applicant believe that University admissions principles and procedures have been inconsistently or incorrectly applied, these complaints procedures provide a mechanism for objective review.

4.6. Additional information
The University can only guarantee places if the exact terms of the offer are met, however offer holders would not automatically be unsuccessful if the terms of the offer are narrowly missed.

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 in August after publication of A-level results. International offer holders may be reconsidered earlier depending when their exam results are released.

4.7. Contacts for enquiries
Any enquiries should be addressed to our Enquiries team: choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 39 41637.