

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:

BVSc Veterinary Science (D100)

1. Admissions process

1.1 Admissions team

Applications are assessed by a centralised team in close co-operation with the 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.

The following procedure applies to all applicants who meet the UCAS application deadline of 15th October. We cannot consider any applications submitted after this date.

Applications are scored on a range of academic and qualitative criteria (see **2. Criteria for assessing applicants** below). Applications are then sorted into three categories, according to agreed thresholds:

- i) Interview
- ii) Hold
- iii) Unsuccessful.

Applicants in category i) are invited for interview.

Applicants not immediately selected for interview are put in category ii) '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. For questions regarding feedback, please see the University's Applicant Feedback and Complaint Procedures:

bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions/feedback-complaints.html

All applications are allocated scores on the academic record and the personal statement/reference; the combined score determines which applicants will be invited to attend an interview. The weighting is as follows:

- Academic score: 30% (A-level score: 15%, GCSE score: 15%)
- Personal Statement score: 70%

The reference is read but not scored.

We do not require applicants to our veterinary courses in the 2016 cycle to take any additional admissions test (eg BMAT) and any declared scores from these tests are not used in our selection processes.

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 candidates who are selected for interview must attend in order to be considered. No offers for veterinary courses are made without the applicant first attending an interview. This does not mean that we interview all applicants (see **Criteria for assessing applicants: 5. Interview** below).

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.

Invitations to attend an interview are sent to applicants via email.

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; we cannot consider any direct applications.

Applications that are received on time are guaranteed equal consideration.

2.2 Additional academic criteria

Applicants are normally expected to complete three A-levels (or equivalent level 3 qualifications) within a single two-year exam period.

For A-level students, only three subjects are required at A2; additional A-levels or other qualifications (eg Advanced Extension exams or EPQs) are not taken into consideration. No priority is given to students studying Mathematics or Physics as the third subject over any other.

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-level grades are not taken into consideration.

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 or pending.

For the school's policy regarding resits, see **4.2. Resits**, below.

2.3. Personal statement criteria

The personal statement forms a crucial part of the selection process in assessing each applicant's motivation and suitability for the course. Applicants are expected to show in their personal statement that they have made a significant effort to find out what it would be like to work as a veterinary surgeon.

The personal statement is assessed to see if the applicant has demonstrated:

- that they are realistic and informed about a career in veterinary medicine;
- work experience in veterinary practice;
- animal-related work experience (eg rescue centre, farm, abattoir);
- that they have made contributions to school/community activities, have varied interests outside the discipline, personal achievements, etc.

Applicants must have at least one week's work experience in both veterinary practice and animal-related settings in order to be considered for an interview. When assessing an applicant's work experience at this stage, maximum credit is given for more than four weeks' work experience in more than one veterinary practice and in varied related areas (ie more than eight weeks' work experience in total across a number of varied placements). Further

information regarding work experience can be found in the school's FAQs for applicants: bristol.ac.uk/vetscience/study/undergraduate/vetsci/.

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.

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.

References are read in conjunction with the personal statement and used as supporting information. Applicants with an adverse comment from their referee are unlikely to be successful.

2.5. Interview

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 at our School of Veterinary Science at Langford. They 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 undertake the MMI circuit, conducted under exam conditions. Each station takes approximately four minutes with a transition period of one minute between stations. Scores from the five stations are totalled to contribute to the overall score.

Extra time in assessments

If you are invited to interview and are usually entitled to extra time in assessments due to a disability (such as dyslexia), you can request to be allowed extra time in the MMIs. Please follow the [instructions for requesting extra time](#) on our veterinary science interviews web page. It will not be possible to allow extra time if you have not submitted a request and had this granted prior to interview; a specific interview date will be allocated for applicants requesting extra time.

After interview

Applicants' performance at the MMIs will be scored by assessors (50 per cent face-to-face interview and 50 per cent MMI) and ranked by the Admissions office. Those candidates with the strongest overall performance will receive offers.

2.6. Mature applicants

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

2.7. International applicants

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

bristol.ac.uk/international/countries

International applicants who are invited to interview will be expected to attend in Bristol; no interviews will be conducted away from the School of Veterinary Sciences.

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 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; i.e. 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 (e.g. 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](#).

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.

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 School of Veterinary Sciences will consider applicants who are completing resits of GCSEs and/or A-levels (or equivalent level 3 qualifications), or who are taking extra subjects to fulfil our subject requirements, within the following conditions:

- Applicants are normally expected to complete their initial three A-levels (or equivalent level 3 qualifications) within a single two-year exam period.
- Any subsequent A-level resits must be taken within a maximum of one further year of study.
- A maximum of one resit is allowed in any one subject.
- Any additional subjects taken to meet the specified subject requirements (ie. Chemistry and/or Biology), and subsequent to the initial 3 A-levels, must be completed within a maximum of two years of further study.
- GSCE retakes are permitted, either in parallel with A-level (or equivalent) study/resits or within an additional 1 year of study.
- Applicants taking such resits or extra subjects beyond the initial two year period of study will not be disadvantaged compared to other applicants.
- The achieved and/or predicted grades for such applicants must meet the overall minimum admissions requirement stated at the time of their current application.

The only exceptions to these provisos are where there are mitigating personal circumstances (see **4.4. Extenuating Circumstances** below). The decision to allow any deviation from the points above regarding resits or periods of study is entirely at the discretion of the University.

4.3. Transfers

It is not possible to transfer from another course into the BVSc Veterinary Science course at Bristol. Applicants currently studying on another degree course would be expected to have completed, or be in the final year of, their current degree when they apply.

Transfers into the second or successive years of the course are not permitted.

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 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 the Undergraduate Admissions Office: choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 331 7203.