

Undergraduate admissions statement

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

Year of admissions cycle: 2017

Courses covered:

BSc Biomedical Sciences (B900)

1. Admissions process

1.1. Admissions team

Applications are assessed by a centralised team in close co-operation with School Recruitment and Admissions Officer(s).

1.2. Application assessment methods

All applications that are received on time 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.

Applicants will be assessed into the following categories:

- Immediate offer
- Hold
- Unsuccessful

Applicants in the "Immediate offer" category will receive an offer and will be invited to attend a school visit day. The remaining applicants who may meet our normal conditions are notified that their applications will be on "Hold" until January, after which a decision will be made as to how many more offers to make, and, thus, whom else to invite to a visit day.

In the case of a high-ranking applicant whose personal statement makes it obvious that they are primarily aiming for Medicine, Veterinary Science or Dentistry, an offer may not be made until January or February.

Applicants in the "Unsuccessful" category receive an email outlining in general terms why they have not been offered a place to study.

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

- A level (or equivalent) : 80%
- GCSE score : 20%

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 UK candidates who receive an offer are strongly encouraged to attend one of our visit days. Applicants are given an opportunity learn more about the degree, and to view the Faculty, the wider University and the city of Bristol. Applicants are normally given a choice of dates to attend a visit day. We do not normally expect international applicants to attend a visit day unless they are resident in the UK (for instance, at school here) however they are encouraged to attend wherever.

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 5 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 Baccalaureate, GCSEs) can be found in the online [undergraduate course finder](#). Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits.

Our preferred A-level subjects are Chemistry (required), plus at least one of Biology, Human Biology, Physics, Mathematics, and Further Mathematics. The third A-level subject is not specified but those taking a further subject from this list would be at an advantage.

The weightings we use to rank A-level subjects are:

- Weighting 1.0:
Chemistry (required), Biology, Human Biology, Physics, Mathematics, and Further Mathematics.

- Weighting 0.8:

All other subjects

Applicants taking three A-levels should only offer one of Maths or Further Maths, and one of Biology or Human Biology, and offers will be made on this basis. Other than to avoid these subject duplications, there is no advantage in taking more than three A-level subjects.

We may make alternative offers to applicants offering an EP (Extended Project) in a relevant topic.

We do not accept either General Studies or Critical Thinking, nor do we make offers including these subjects.

2.2. Additional academic criteria

Mathematics is acceptable as a science subject. Geography and Psychology are not acceptable as sciences subjects.

2.3. Personal statement criteria

In certain cases we may need to refer to the personal statement and reference to differentiate between applicants with very similar academic profiles. Where this is the case, then the following criteria will be used:

- evidence of the applicant's interest in, and commitment to, the subject;
- appropriateness of the chosen Bristol course in relation to the applicant's declared interests and aspirations;
- standard of written English;
- the applicant's attitude to studies;
- their interests and activities both within school or college and the wider community.

2.4. Reference criteria

References will be assessed for information on the applicant's motivation, ability to work independently, and their 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. 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.

2.5. Interview

Applications from mature students and others offering non-standard qualifications are treated on an individual basis. Sometimes interviews will be used to help establish the level of Chemistry and academic ability of such applicants. In these cases the applicant would be told what we are looking for.

Interviews used in the selection process will be conducted by two people who have been trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques and are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

2.6. Mature applicants

When assessing applications from mature students and/or those with non-standard qualifications, the major consideration is that a level of Chemistry equivalent to A-level is required. In general, we expect evidence of recent study (i.e. within the last 5 years), especially in Chemistry. In some cases, we may invite some mature applicants to interview as part of our assessment (2.5. Interview above).

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 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 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.

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 state 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 applies from a school which 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 two grades 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. Applicants not currently attending school must have been in full-time education in one of the following schools in the academic year 15/16:

Contextual Offer Schools

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).

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](#).

3.1 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 (usually in a non-specified subject). Any offer made would be at the standard level.

3.2 Alternative Offers

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 (i.e. 2018 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 Faculty of Biomedical Sciences will consider applicants who resit their qualifications.

4.3. Transfers

Transfer to Biomedical Sciences programmes would be considered on a case by case basis following University of Bristol guidance.

Applications for transfer from students with appropriate academic attainment at other Universities who have previous academic experience compatible to that undertaken in year one of our degrees may be considered for entry into year two. Any decision in this regard is entirely at the discretion of the University.

4.4. Extenuating Circumstances

If your education has been significantly disrupted through health or personal problems, disability or specific difficulties with disrupted 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 our Enquiries team: choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 394 1649.