

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:

Single Honours:

BA French (R100)
BA German (R200)
BA Hispanic Studies (RR45)
BA Italian (R310)
BA Modern Languages (RR01)
BA Spanish (R400)
BA Russian (R700)

Joint Honours (School of Modern Languages only):

BA French and Czech (RR1V)
BA French and German (RR12)
BA French and Italian (RR13)
BA French and Spanish (RR14)
BA French and Portuguese (RR15)
BA French and Russian (RR17)
BA German and Czech (RR2V)
BA German and Italian (RR23)
BA German and Spanish (RR24)
BA German and Portuguese (RR25)
BA German and Russian (RR27)
BA Italian and Czech (RR3V)
BA Italian and Portuguese (RR35)
BA Italian and Russian (RR37)
BA Italian and Spanish (RR34)
BA Portuguese and Russian (RR57)
BA Portuguese and Czech (RR5V)
BA Russian and Czech (R701)
BA Spanish and Czech (RR4V)
BA Spanish and Portuguese (RR54)
BA Spanish and Russian (RR47)

Joint Honours (offered in conjunction with other Schools/Faculties):

BA Politics and French (RL12)
BA Politics and German (RL22)
BA Politics and Italian (RL32)
BA Politics and Portuguese (RL52)
BA Politics and Russian (RL72)
BA Politics and Spanish (RL42)

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 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.

All applications are allocated scores based on their academic record (achieved and/or predicted grades). The weightings are GCSEs as 30 per cent and A-levels (or equivalent qualifications) as 70 per cent of the overall score. Where the personal statement and reference are also scored, the weighting for this is as follows:

- Academic score: 50%
- Personal statement and reference (combined): 50%.

Please be aware that these weightings apply to courses offered by the School of Modern Languages only, and may vary for Joint Honours degrees offered in conjunction with other schools/faculties. All applications for Joint Honours courses are also assessed in relation to the other subject's selection criteria; for details of these courses' assessment criteria, please see the admissions statement for the 'leading' department/school (e.g. Law for LLB Law and German).

Applications will be assessed on the basis of their application only; we cannot 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.

1.3. Interview or visit day

Applicants who receive an offer will be invited to a visit day. This provides the opportunity to see the city and the University, and to ask questions about the degree course(s) and other aspects of student life in Bristol. While attendance at a visit day is strongly encouraged, it is not obligatory and plays no role in the selection process; it is also recognised that not all applicants will be able to attend.

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.

Applicants who receive an offer will receive an invitation to a visit day.

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

Single Honours applicants must have an A-level or equivalent (achieved or predicted) in a modern foreign language. For French, German and Spanish the A-level must be in the language to be studied. Italian and Russian can be studied *ab initio* i.e. at absolute beginner level, but applicants would need to demonstrate language-learning ability, usually through having taken a modern language A-level or equivalent qualification.

Applicants for languages-only **Joint Honours** degrees should normally have an A-level or equivalent in at least one of the two languages to be studied at degree level. A-level French (or equivalent) is required for courses involving French; this is the only language that cannot be studied *ab initio*.

Applicants for **Joint Honours** degrees that combine a language with a non-language subject can study the chosen language post-A-level or as a beginner, provided they have another

language at A-level (or equivalent) to demonstrate language-learning ability. As above, applicants for courses including French must have A-level French; the other exception is MR12 Law and German, which does not offer study of German at *ab initio* level and would require A-level German or an equivalent qualification

Applicants for **BA Modern Languages (RR01)** should note that this degree provides the opportunity to study three languages in a number of combinations, and that for each combination applicants will need A-level or equivalent in the **first two** named languages, whilst the third can be studied from *ab initio* level. We are constantly reviewing the combinations available and for the latest details of these combinations please refer to the online course finder: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/2017/modern-languages/ba-modern-languages/>

For all courses, we take an applicant's record at GCSE into account, but there are no specific requirements and we recognise that an applicant's academic abilities may improve significantly subsequent to GCSE. Credit is given to the eight highest grades achieved.

A-level General Studies and Critical Thinking are not considered towards offers or academic assessment.

2.3. Personal statement criteria

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

- interest in and commitment to the subject. This may be demonstrated by:
 - knowledge and appreciation of the linguistic culture;
 - evidence of curiosity about the culture (including popular culture) and society in those countries, and independent exploration of them;
 - time spent in one or more countries relevant to the degree course;
- appropriateness of the chosen course in relation to declared interests and aspirations;
- non-academic achievement and experience including positions of responsibility and voluntary or paid work;
- evidence of critical thinking and analytical skills, allied with a good standard of written English.

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. 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 evidence of the following within the reference:

- the applicant's motivation for degree level study;
- the applicant's ability in languages and other subjects;
- the applicant's ability to work independently;
- the applicant's powers of analysis and expression;
- any special circumstances which may have adversely affected their academic performance.

2.5. Interview

Interviews are not usually part of our selection process. However, we may seek to interview applicants with non-standard qualifications or who have returned to study less than six months prior to their application.

The purpose of the interview is to assess whether the applicant currently has the necessary skills and capabilities to pursue the chosen degree and whether the course is appropriate to the applicant's interests and aspirations. Attending interview also provides applicants with the opportunity to ask questions and meet staff and students.

Interview days typically take place in March and decisions are then made based on a combination of the UCAS form and interview. Interviewees may be interviewed alone or in small groups. Interviewees based overseas will normally be interviewed by telephone or Skype. All interviews are conducted in English by two members of staff, at least one of whom is trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques. All interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

The principal assessment criteria are an applicant's interest in and commitment to the subject, his/her capacity for clear thinking and oral expression, for the critical analysis of arguments and evidence, and for working independently at degree level. Those applying for a degree programme which includes a modern language may be tested on linguistic ability.

2.6. Mature applicants

Mature applicants who meet our entry requirements and can demonstrate recent study within the last five years will normally be assessed on the basis of their application only.

We would usually only admit after interview mature applicants who meet our entry requirements with qualifications achieved over five years ago, who have only returned to education within the last six months prior to application, or who do not meet our published entry requirements but can demonstrate recent or current study and/ or have particularly relevant employment history or life experience.

Selected applicants will be invited to interview as described in **2.5. Interviews** above.

Mature applicants who do not meet our standard entry requirements and who cannot demonstrate recent study, relevant employment history or life experience will usually be advised to gain some academic experience before reapplying. Current and prospective applicants in this position should consider applying to our [Foundation Year in the Arts and Humanities](#) or taking an appropriate Access course, A-level, Open University foundation

module or equivalent study. Please contact the Admissions team regarding the suitability of your intended programme.

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](#).

3.2 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.

3.3 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

Deferred entry applications are considered. 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.

Applicants are expected to describe briefly in their personal statement how their 'gap' year might subsequently benefit their university career. Preference may be given to those with a clear and relevant academic purpose or with significant health or personal issues.

4.2. Resits

We are happy to accept applications from applicants who resit their qualifications.

4.3. Transfers

Requests for transfers at the end of year one may be made from suitable applicants from other degree courses within the University.

Suitably qualified applicants who have completed the first year of a degree programme at another institution may seek entry to year two, but acceptance is at the discretion of the department and is subject to there being space available. Transfer applications should be submitted via UCAS in the usual way, indicating year two as the year of entry.

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 our Enquiries team: choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 928 8147.