

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:

- BSc Social policy (L400)
- BSc Social Policy with Quantitative Research Methods (L402)
- MSci Social Policy with Quantitative Research Methods (L403)
- BSc Social Policy with Management (LN42)
- BSc Social Policy with Criminology (LM49)
- BSc Criminology (M900)
- BSc Criminology with Study Abroad (M901)

Joint Honours:

- BSc Social Policy and Politics (LL42)
- BSc Social Policy and Sociology (LL43)

1. Admissions process

1.1. Admissions team

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

We score and rank applications based on A-level results.

Please see sections 2.3 and 2.4 for how we may use your Personal Statement and Reference.

We will assess your application on the basis of your UCAS form (or Common Application) only; we will not take into account any additional information you send us, unless we have requested it

All applications for Joint Honours courses are also assessed in relation to the other subject's selection criteria so the other relevant admissions statement should also be consulted.

We do not discriminate 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. You will be able to learn more about the degree, the School for Policy Studies and the wider Faculty of Social Sciences and Law; as well as exploring the University campus and the city of Bristol. We will normally give you a choice of dates to visit. We do not normally expect international applicants to attend a visit day unless you are resident in the UK (for instance, at school here) however we encourage you to attend wherever possible.

1.4. Correspondence with applicants

We will send all correspondence relating to your application by email.

We will acknowledge receipt of your application by email on receipt (starting in mid-September), to establish contact and to tell you about the process to be followed.

We will then notify you whether your application has been successful or unsuccessful, or to inform you that your application has been assessed and put on 'Hold' pending a decision later in the cycle.

If you submit your application by 15 January then the final deadline by which you will receive a decision is 5 May. We make most decisions well before this date. We monitor the number of offers we make carefully and hold some applications until later in the cycle.

2. Criteria for assessing applicants

To assess an application we need:

- Your 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 may 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 and 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 from the [International Office](#).

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

Applications that are received on time are guaranteed equal consideration.

2.2. Additional academic criteria

We evaluate your level of academic ability from your predicted or actual grades achieved in examinations.

A-levels (or equivalent qualifications) 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 subjects (particularly Sociology for BSc Social Policy and Sociology, and Government and Politics for BSc Social Policy and Politics).

We do not count A-level General studies or A-level Critical Thinking in our assessment, nor do they count towards meeting our entrance requirements..

We also take previous academic qualifications into account, and credit is awarded for GCSEs achieved at grade C and higher. GCSE subjects must include English Language and Mathematics. For BSc Social Policy with Management (LN42) GCSEs must include Mathematics at GCSE grade A or above.

2.3. Personal statement criteria

In cases where we refer to the personal statement and reference to differentiate between applicants, the criteria will include the following:

- Evidence of your interest in, and commitment to, Social Policy or Criminology;
- Your declared interests and aspirations;
- Evidence of clear thinking, understanding and analytical skills;
- Relevant paid and unpaid work;
- Positions of responsibility you have held at school/college or work;
- Non-academic achievement;
- Your standard of written English;
- Responses to any personal challenges you have faced.

2.4. Reference criteria

We will use your reference for information about your motivation, ability to work independently, and powers of analysis and expression. If your referee believes that your performance does not reflect your ability, due to educational context and/or special circumstances, you should complete an Extenuating Circumstances form at bristol.ac.uk/applicants/applied/extenuating-circumstances/. We do not consider extenuating circumstances without this form.

References should be from your school or college, from an academic tutor confirming your potential to study at degree level. Where this is not possible, a non-academic reference should confirm any relevant experience you may have, explaining how that experience may indicate your potential for study at degree level.

We will take into account the following when assessing a reference:

- Evidence of academic progress and potential;

- Interest and commitment to studying the chosen subject at degree level;
- Appropriateness of the chosen Bristol course in relation to your declared interests and aspirations;
- Evidence of clear thinking, understanding and analytical skills;
- Positions of responsibility at school/college or work;
- Non-academic achievement;
- Your responses to any challenges faced.

2.5. Interview

In the majority of cases, we make admissions decisions on the basis of your application alone. However, in some cases we may invite an applicant to attend an interview in order to discuss further their application, for example, if the applicant has been out of education for a number of years, or if a non-standard qualification is offered.

If we invite you for interview, we will consider the following criteria when assessing interview performance:

- Your interest in Social Policy or Criminology;
- Evidence of motivation;
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding;
- Academic and non-academic achievement and/or experience; and
- Communication skills.

2.6. Mature applicants

We may interview a selection of suitable mature applicants. All interviews are conducted by two people, at least one of whom is trained in fair and effective recruitment, and are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities. Non-mature applicants are interviewed only in exceptional circumstances.

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

You need to demonstrate that you have sufficient ability to understand and express yourself in both spoken and written English in order to benefit fully from your degree course.

You can find the English Language requirements for each course in the [undergraduate course finder](#). They 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 on the relevant course page via 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 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](#).

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 **2.9. Contextual information** above).

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 level of our typical offer conditions.

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. Please note that receipt of this email does not guarantee an offer will be made.

4. Other

4.1. Deferred applications

We will consider applications for deferred entry. However you 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

We are happy to consider applicants who resit their qualifications.

4.3. Transfers

We consider applications for direct entry into year two of the course from suitable applicants who have completed the first year of a degree course with similar content at another institution. However, this decision is entirely at the discretion of the University and is dependent on availability of places and the suitability of previous study.

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.

We will of course treat the information provided on the form confidentially. It will help us to assess accurately your academic performance in light of your situation.

4.5. Policies

All applications are considered in accordance with our [Admissions policies and procedures](#).

We are committed to following 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](#).

If you believe that the University's admissions principles and procedures have been inconsistently or incorrectly applied, these complaints procedures provide a mechanism for objective review.

4.6. Additional information

We can only guarantee places if the exact terms of the offer are met, however you would not automatically be unsuccessful if you narrowly missed the terms of your offer.

If offer holders do not meet the terms of their offer when exam results are released they may be considered as 'near miss candidates'. 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.