

Undergraduate Admissions Statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with the University's Admissions Principles and Procedures:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/after-you-apply/policies/2018/>



Year of Admissions cycle:
2018

Courses covered:

BA Liberal Arts (2ZB7);

MLibArts Liberal Arts with Study Abroad (2T23)

1. Course specific:

1.1 Admissions process

Applications are scored and ranked based on their academic record, according to their achieved or predicted results with the following weightings:

GCSE 30% | A-level 70%

1.2 Academic criteria

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 top eight grades achieved, including the required subjects.

All Liberal Arts students pursue a subject pathway as part of their degree (minimum one quarter of the credit points) and individual subjects may have additional specific criteria. These include an A-level (or equivalent) in:

- English Literature or combined English Literature and Language, for English pathway;
- Music, for Music pathway;
- French, for French pathway;
- an ancient or modern language, for pathways in other languages.

All applicants for Liberal Arts are expected to have studied at least one subject from the arts subject list (below) and a second subject from either the arts subject list or the essay based subject list (below).

Arts subjects:

Art – includes all A-levels within the Arts group; English Literature; English Lang-Lit (but NOT Eng Lang); Archaeology; Ancient History; Anthropology; Classical Civilisation; Classics; Drama; Languages (including French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, Russian,

Spanish); Music; Film; History; History of Art; Media Studies; Performance; Philosophy; Religious Studies; Theatre Studies

Essay-based subjects include:

Economics; Environmental Studies (not Environmental Science); Geography; Government and Politics; Health and Social Care; Law; Psychology; Social Care; Social Policy; Sociology; Politics; Welsh; Business Studies

1.3 Personal statement criteria

In some cases we may refer to the personal statement and reference to differentiate between applicants with very similar academic profiles. If this is the case, then we are looking for evidence of:

- interest in and commitment to subjects taught in the Faculty of Arts
- interest in links between these subjects and overarching themes of historical or contemporary relevance
- relevant reading or research beyond the A-level (or equivalent) syllabus
- evidence of clear thinking and understanding, problem solving and analytical skills, and creativity
- grammatically correct, clearly structured, and stylishly written English
- self-motivation and management
- responses to both opportunities and challenges faced

1.4 Interviews

For these courses, applicants are not routinely interviewed. In the majority of cases, admissions decisions will be made on the basis of the application information alone.

In exceptional circumstances where an interview is deemed necessary, it will be conducted by at least two people, with at least one of whom has been trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques, and undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

The criteria for assessing interview performance may include, for example: demonstrated interest in, suitability for, and commitment to the subject; evidence of clear thinking and understanding, problem solving and analytical skills; standard of spoken English; appropriateness of the Bristol course in relation to the applicant's declared interests and aspirations; non-academic achievement and/or experience, or extra-curricular interests, that indicate the likely contribution an applicant will make to the life of the University; positions of responsibility held; other relevant skills.

1.5 Mature applicants

Mature students are considered against the same criteria as all other candidates. For mature applicants, evidence of recent study and examinations is expected within the last 5 years.

In some cases mature applicants may be invited to interview (see '1.4 Interview' above). Where applicants do not have recent educational qualifications to support their application, relevant experience may be taken into consideration.

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 (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/study/foundation/>) or taking an Access course, A-level, Open University foundation module or equivalent. Please contact the Admissions team regarding the suitability of your intended programme.

1.6 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 slightly below the entry requirements (usually in a non-specified subject). Any offer made would be at the standard level.

1.7 Alternative offers

Generally, if applicants are not qualified or have an unsuitable academic background for the course to which they originally applied, we do not offer the opportunity to be considered for an alternative course.

1.8 Deferred applications

Deferred applications (ie. applying in 2017/18 for 2019 entry) are accepted. In fairness to the following cycle of applicants we can only make a limited number of deferred offers.

1.9 Resits

The department will consider applicants who resit their qualifications.

1.10 Transfers

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

Direct entry into year two or three of a Liberal Arts degree is not possible. Acceptance is at the discretion of the faculty and is subject to there being space available on the degree programme to which the applicant is applying.

2. General

2.1 Admissions team

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

2.2 Admissions process

When assessing an application the admissions team will consider whether the applicant's academic potential is such that it is likely they would be successful on the degree. The admissions team takes into account a wide variety of factors which include, but are not limited to, actual academic performance to date and predicted results for qualifications currently being studied.

Because of the very high number of applications we receive, and to ensure that all those applying on time are treated fairly, some applications may be held until May before a decision is made.

Applicants will be assessed on the basis of information within their application only; we will not take into account any additional information received from an applicant or institution, unless we have requested it.

All applications received are considered on an equal basis. Applications that are received before the January deadline set by UCAS are guaranteed equal consideration.

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

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 the applicant is currently taking. Predicted grades can only come from a 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 the applicant is studying.
- If predicted grades are not available, then we will accept a transcript showing the results of a previous year's courses or examinations.

2.3 Visit day

All UK candidates who receive an offer are invited 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.

Information about the visit days can be found on our web page:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/visits/>

2.4 Correspondence with applicants

All correspondence relating to an applicant's status will be sent by email.

All applications are acknowledged by email on receipt 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.

For applications that are submitted by 15 January, the final deadline by which applicants will receive a decision is 3 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.

2.5 Academic entry requirements

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Bac, GCSEs) can be found in the undergraduate course finder:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/search/>

Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on an individual basis.

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

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

We assess applications on predicted and/or achieved A-Level grades (or equivalent). We do not assess AS-level grades.

2.6 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, they should advise the applicant to complete an extenuating circumstances form (see 2.11 Extenuating Circumstances)

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 as well as mathematical and problem-solving capabilities. It should indicate the potential of the applicant for study at degree level.

The reference will be included in the assessment of the personal statement, with the following taken into account:

- predictions of examination results (and, where the qualifications are unusual, an explanation of their meaning);
- an overall assessment of the applicant, in particular their suitability for further study;
- a discussion of earlier exam results, especially if they were influenced by personal or medical circumstances (and are therefore a poor guide to ability);
- discussion of the applicant's intellectual curiosity, interests and suitability for the subject;
- discussion of the applicant's other interests.

2.7 International applicants

International applicants will be subject to the criteria as detailed on our International web page: <http://www.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.

2.8 English language requirements

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 on our English Language web page: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/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.

To be eligible for a contextual offer, applicants must meet the criteria set out on our web page: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/entry-requirements-qualifications/contextual-offers/>

Further information about contextual offers can be found in the University's Admissions Principles and Procedures for Undergraduate Courses.

2.10 Typical offers

Typical offers for A-levels and other UK qualifications can be found in the entry data in the undergraduate course finder: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/search/>

Offers to applicants with non-standard qualifications will be made equivalent to the published A-level offer.

2.11 Extenuating circumstances

If an applicant's education has been significantly disrupted through health or personal problems, disability or specific difficulties with schooling they will need to submit an extenuating circumstances form to Undergraduate Admissions:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/after-you-apply/your-application/extenuating-circumstances/>

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

2.12 Policies

All applications are considered in line with our Admissions policies and procedures:
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/after-you-apply/policies/2018/>

We are committed to the implementation 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.

2.13 Additional information

The University can only guarantee places if the exact terms of the offer are met; however offer holders will not automatically be unsuccessful if the terms of the offer are narrowly missed.

If offer holders do not meet the terms of their offers 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.

2.14 Contacts for enquiries

Any enquiries should be addressed to our Enquiries team: choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 394 1649.