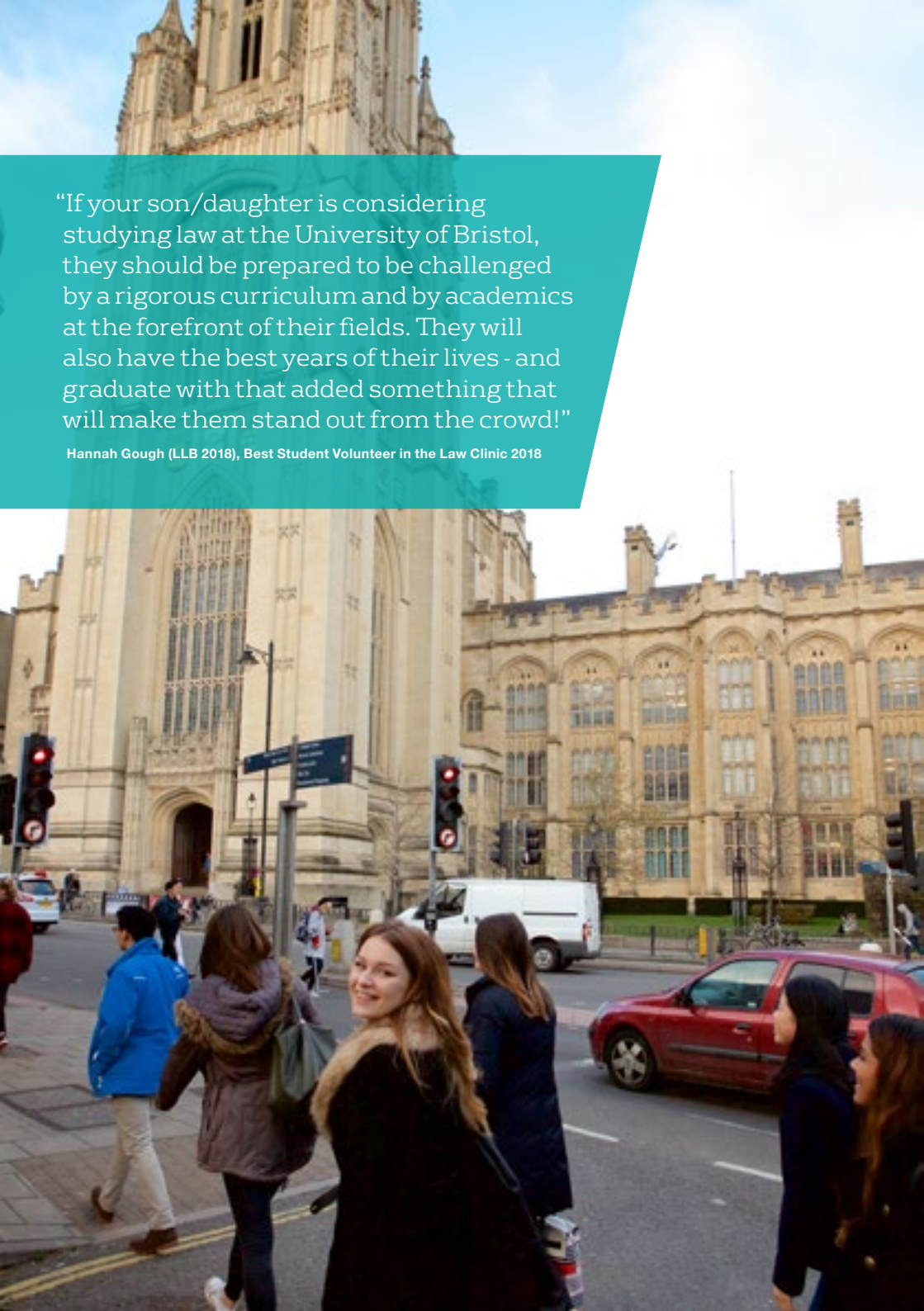


Parent Guide (Law)

Helping your child to stand up and stand out

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the University of Bristol. The top half shows a close-up of a tall, ornate Gothic building with many windows and spires. The bottom half shows a wider street scene with the same building in the background, people walking on the sidewalk, and a red car and a white van on the road. A teal-colored banner is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing text.

"If your son/daughter is considering studying law at the University of Bristol, they should be prepared to be challenged by a rigorous curriculum and by academics at the forefront of their fields. They will also have the best years of their lives - and graduate with that added something that will make them stand out from the crowd!"

Hannah Gough (LLB 2018), Best Student Volunteer in the Law Clinic 2018

Hello and welcome

As your son or daughter embarks upon independent life at university - and as you prepare to let them fly - there is much that we can do together to make their journey as smooth as possible.

The University of Bristol Law School is one of the best for legal research and education - ranked number eight in England and Wales in the Guardian League Table for 2019 and a top five UK law school for research intensity (REF2014).

We provide students with all they need to stand out as intellectually accomplished, well-rounded, enquiring graduates with a rich, ethically grounded appreciation of law in business and society.

Here your son/daughter will be challenged and inspired to become the very best they can be, gaining the skills and knowledge needed to excel in life and in their chosen career, be that within or outside law.

We understand that the next step is a big one, and it is an emotional journey for students and their families. The pride you have in your son/daughter for working hard, and achieving the qualifications required to meet the offer for a university place, comes with new worries and questions.

This booklet aims to answer those questions and alleviate some of your concerns.

There is no doubt that studying law is hard. However, your son/daughter has already made the difficult first step to receive an offer at our law school. With our stringent entry criteria, that is no mean feat.

Helping your son/daughter to stand up by him or herself over the next few months and into their first year and beyond will provide a solid foundation on which they can flourish.

Professor Judy Laing

Director of Recruitment for Law

“We provide students with all they need to stand out as intellectually accomplished, well-rounded, enquiring graduates ready to excel in their chosen careers.”





“The staff did a tremendous job helping my daughter find her feet. She flourished during her time here and left well-equipped to pursue her dreams. I was so impressed with her experience that I went on to apply for a position in the Law School myself. ”

Professor Joanne Conaghan (Head of School 2015-2018) whose daughter, Rose, graduated with a first class honors degree in 2014.

Making the transition

To help your son/daughter make a successful transition to university it is important that you take the opportunity to discuss together what being at a top-flight law school means, both in terms of the challenges and the exciting opportunities it presents.

The University of Bristol Law School attracts talent from around the world. Securing an offer here is likely to be one of the most significant achievements in your son/daughter's life to date and one they, and you, should be proud of. Moving forward, they will need time to adjust as they transition from school into university.

They might have been at the top of the class at school, yet many students will spend their first year coming to terms with the fact that they may no longer be one of the highest achieving students in their year group. They will need to be reassured that being amongst other bright students presents an exciting opportunity to share ideas and experiences, discuss and debate legal principles and theories. They should certainly continue to have high aspirations and expectations of themselves.

They also need to accept that it may take time to adapt to a learning environment that is very different to that of school. A level of maturity is needed early on. They will need to find their way around, manage their own timetable and work independently - whilst proactively searching out opportunities to engage with their peers and tutors.

We provide everything they need to deepen their learning experience; a personal tutor for every student; world-leading lecturers; small tutorial groups (max. 8 students); specialist careers and wellbeing advisors (page 7); diverse mentoring schemes; active alumni; award-winning student societies; and much more.

To benefit fully from all that we offer, your son/daughter will need to embrace a culture of participation from the outset - a genuine desire to be active in their approach to learning. Unlike school, there are no formal sanctions at university for not turning up to lectures or tutorial groups. But not turning up means missed opportunities to build the layers of knowledge, skills and awareness that are so important for future success.

Being at university and learning law will feel like learning a new language - and inevitably it will take time to assemble the vocabulary, crack the grammar and master the new skills. However, like many students before them, taking an active role in their own learning will see them rewarded with success as they graduate to the next exciting chapter of their lives.

Support networks

One of the biggest worries for parents with a child away at University is not knowing if someone is looking out for them. And when times get tough, who is there to help their son or daughter navigate through rough waters?

In the Law School, our personal tutors are on the front line, supporting students to develop essential skills to complete assignments, deal with exam pressure and manage demanding workloads. Some students will naturally excel in exams - whilst others will be better at writing a great essay or formulating an argument in a debate. Initially, they may not have all these skills.

Personal tutors help students understand that the diverse methods we use to assess their progress help us identify their development needs, and help them to build resilience. Assessments provide an opportunity to reflect on what has or hasn't worked and plan how to move forward. For the majority of our students, the very process of studying law will therefore help build confidence. However, there are times when things don't go as well as expected.

We understand that some of our students face a variety of challenges, both in the University and in their personal and wider lives. And there are sources of support and guidance available to help your son/daughter through these difficult times (see page 7). In School, the Senior Tutor can complement the activities of our personal tutors, providing emotional support and guidance, when necessary working closely with our dedicated Faculty Wellbeing Advisors to determine the best plan of action for students needing help.

It is important to understand that, because almost all our students are 18 or over, they are adults and we need their consent to talk to anyone outside the University, including parents, about issues affecting them and their academic progress.

Prior to commencing their studies we ask each student if they are willing to provide that consent. Most agree, but even then we will only contact you in cases of serious concern. We strongly recommend that all parents discuss whether their sons/daughters feel prepared and ready to leave home and start a challenging university degree. This is particularly important for parents of children who have existing mental health issues.

Whilst most students will feel prepared for the challenges ahead, it is still a good idea to help your son/daughter understand the hurdles they may face along the way, and encourage them to ask for help if they feel they need it after they arrive in Bristol to start their course. They will need reassurance that there is no shame in reaching out. We all need to look after our wellbeing and many of us may need to ask for support at some point our lives.



For most students, starting at university will be the most exciting and rewarding time of their lives - a time when they will forge new friendships that last a lifetime. Those friendships, and learning how to balance study with social activities, are essential to keep wellbeing in check.

Health and Wellbeing at the University

Outside of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, the University has many additional services. For most students living in university accommodation, this starts with our trained Residential Life Advisors. There is also a dedicated Student Counselling Service, and the University Health Service has GPs experienced in dealing with a wide range of student health issues.

There are many other resources, such as the Student Union's Just Ask advice service, and the Big White Wall, a free 24/7 digital service for students who need somewhere to turn to for advice, at any time of the day and night.

For further information visit:

www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/services



Our Law School Employability Advisor provides vital, dedicated careers support to our law students through 1:1 development sessions, workshops, tailored CV and application support and much more. When a student is struggling, advice on career options and pathways that they may not have previously considered can often help to refocus and reignite their passion in the subject.

Career prospects

Coming to the University of Bristol significantly increases your child's prospects of getting a job. We are the fourth most targeted university by UK employers (High Fliers Research 2018) and sixth in the UK for graduate employability (QS Graduate Employability Rankings, 2019).

In terms of employability our statistics really do speak for themselves. In Law, we are ranked as a top five UK law school for the most graduate trainees recruited by top law firms (Chambers Student Guide 2018). We are also cited as having the most alumni reaching partner status within leading Magic and Silver Circle firms after Oxbridge (Laurence Simons, Partnership Survey, 2016.)

Recently, government figures indicated that a Bristol law degree boosts your earnings by 80% by the time you are 29 ('The impact of undergraduate degrees on early-career earnings,' Department of Education/Institute of Fiscal Studies, 2018).

With a rich and diverse calendar of career-focused activities and a strong collaboration between the School, our international alumni network, student organisations and community partners, our students will graduate with the skills, knowledge and contacts to fulfil their career aspirations.

This is illustrated by the number of students gaining training contracts with top law firms, and the successful career destinations of our graduates who decide that commercial law isn't for them. The skills your son/daughter will acquire during their time here can open-up diverse career opportunities in fields such as business, finance, politics, health, international development and journalism.

Whatever career path your son/daughter decides to follow, an education with the University of Bristol Law School will ensure they stand out.

“Despite obtaining a law degree, I ventured off the traditional path and am now working for a financial services consultancy. When I sent out my CV, I had so many calls expressing interest that it practically took the work out of job hunting.”

Kristina MacPherson, LLB 2018

For students and their parents, the cost of university can be a major concern. The UCAS website helps clarify what you have to pay when your son/daughter starts university, and what can wait until they are earning. There is also a range of financial support for students from lower-income backgrounds.

***Tuition fees**

Your son or daughter will typically pay up to £9,250 per year in tuition fees as a UK student. Fees don't need to be paid upfront. Students can apply for a tuition fee loan to cover all or part of their fees.

Because the repayment system isn't based on how much your child has borrowed, but instead on how much they go on to earn, taking out a loan yourself to cover the cost of fees and avoid your child getting into debt will almost always work out more expensive in the long run, so it's not advisable. Currently, English and Welsh graduates will not have to start paying back their loans until they are earning £21,000 or more.

***Living Costs**

The second loan a student can apply for is the maintenance loan, to help towards living expenses while at university, such as accommodation, food, and course materials. The amount they are eligible to borrow depends on several factors, including where they will be studying and your household income. For example, if they'll be living away from home (outside London), a maintenance loan of up to £8,430 per year could be available for households earning £25,000 per year or less.

***Extracts from UCAS Parent Guide 2018**

Extra support from the Law School

The Law School is committed to creating a diverse student community that nurtures talent amongst under-represented groups in higher education, and encourages them to consider university. Our bursaries and scholarships, in particular, help to ease some of the financial burden for bright young people from lower-income backgrounds.

- **The Eileen Drummond and Sheila Anderson Scholarship (EDSA)** supports up to five undergraduate students in the first year of study. Successful applicants receive £9,000 to cover first year tuition fees.
- **The Denise Coates Foundation Bursary** supports first year undergraduate students from lower-income backgrounds. The award is valued at £2,000 for the first year of study.
- **The Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer Stephen Lawrence Scholarship Scheme** is an external scheme the Law School is currently exploring. It supports exceptionally talented black and mixed race male students with an award of £3,500 towards the course.
- **Additionally, the University of Bristol Bursary** offers up to £2,060 to UK students with a household income of £42,875 or below.



Accepting the offer

When your son/daughter has received decisions from all their UCAS choices, they must make sure they're accepting the right offer for the right reasons.

Before your son/daughter replies to any offers they have, and makes that final decision about where they want to study law, it is important to attend a visit day. A visit day is a key step in the decision-making process and can help reassure them, and you, that they are making the right choice. Encourage your son/daughter to have a good look around the university and ask lots of questions. If they decide that Bristol is the best and first choice for them, and they really want to come to study law here, it's really important to put us down as the Firm choice.

If your son/daughter has received a conditional offer from us and accepts it as the Firm choice, s/he will have to wait until the exam results to find out if s/he has a place on our law degree. If an applicant has received an unconditional offer from us, as s/he has already met the entry requirements, then the place is secured, and all s/he needs to do is accept it. More information on key UCAS dates and timelines for making decisions is available at www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply

Further information

Parent information

www.bristol.ac.uk/contacting-people/parent/

Support networks

www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/

Finance

www.bristol.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees-and-funding/

www.bristol.ac.uk/law/widening-participation/bursaries-and-scholarships/

UCAS

www.ucas.com/undergraduate

Studying law at Bristol

www.bristol.ac.uk/law

www.bristol.ac.uk/law/careers-and-employability

www.bristol.ac.uk/law/law-clinic

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