

## Departmental Admissions Statement

### 1. Admissions Process

Year of admissions cycle – 2010

Courses covered

Animal Behaviour & Welfare D390

Admissions Team

Professor Christine Nicol (Chair of Admissions Tutors)

Dr Toby Knowles (Admissions Tutor)

Professor William Browne (Admissions Tutor)

Dr David Main (Admissions Tutor)

Dr Frank Taylor (Head of School of Veterinary Science)

Mrs Pauline Wade (Information Manager)

Ms Issy Gray (Admissions Secretary)

The above team is responsible for admissions to the single honours degrees of Animal Behaviour and Welfare (D390). Co-ordination is achieved by regular meetings between the Chair of the Admissions Tutors and the other members of the team at least weekly during the main period of application processing.

Outline of assessment methods

#### **UK/EU Applicants**

All applications are considered on an equal basis, and are not segregated by the type of educational institution attended. All applications are considered independently by at least two members of the admissions team. Each application has an attached in-house assessment form for recording specific information like subjects and predicted grades, and spaces for qualitative notes based on the personal statement and reference. Applications from home students taking A-levels, or vocational qualifications such as ND or HND, are assessed and ranked according to several criteria. The principal criteria are the range of subjects taken, the actual or predicted grades, and the degree of interest in animal behaviour and animal welfare discernible from the personal statement. Applicants in the top ranks are made an immediate offer and are invited to one of our Open Days. Applicants whose subjects/grades are well below our usual requirements will be unsuccessful. Applicants ranked as acceptable but not in the highest categories are retained in a holding pool for further consideration. We strive to minimise the time that any application is held in the pool. This two-stage process ensures that we can follow the UCAS directive that all applications received at UCAS by 15<sup>th</sup> January are given equal consideration. At, or soon after this time, the number of offers to be made (in order to reach our entry target at confirmation) is used to decide how many of the 'pooled' applicants can be made offers. The applications in the pool are then considered on an individual basis; candidates who are offered a place are invited to an Open Day held at the Langford campus in the spring term, and unsuccessful applicants are sent a brief letter of explanation. All applicants are contacted within 4 weeks of receipt of application, to establish contact and inform the applicant of the process to be followed (*or of alternative arrangements*).

Applicants from other EU countries and from overseas are initially ranked alongside home applicants where their examination system (e.g. Scottish or Irish Highers, International or European Baccalaureate, and some continental examination systems) is specified in the Table of Examination Equivalents in the UoB Handbook for Admissions Tutors. As for A-level applicants, some may be made immediate offers, some will be held in the 'pool' and others will be unsuccessful.

Other correspondence with applicants

An Open Day is held at the Veterinary School, Langford in February. This is only for candidates to whom an offer of a place has been made.

Additional assessment: (a) interviews

Interview is not normally used as part of the selection process for the degree in Animal Behaviour & Welfare.

Additional assessment: (b) tests/written work

Additional tests are not part of the selection process for the degree in Animal Behaviour & Welfare.

Procedures for specific categories of applicant

Applications from mature students taking an Access course or with a limited range of A-levels are considered individually. In judging this we look for evidence that the candidate has attempted to find

out something about animal behaviour and welfare, perhaps by gaining relevant work experience on a farm, zoo, stables, kennels etc., or with an animal welfare organisation.

### Cross-dept/joint course admissions arrangements

Not applicable

## **2. Criteria for assessing applicants**

### Entry Requirements

#### **UK/EU Applicants**

Academic assessments are based on several criteria, the most important being A-level subjects and actual/predicted grades. Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Bacc, 14-19 Diploma, GCSEs) can be found in the online Undergraduate Prospectus:[http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2010/sections/XABW/dept\\_intro](http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2010/sections/XABW/dept_intro). Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits; further information is available at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/study-at-bristol/how-to-apply/country-specific/>.

Candidates that fulfil our criteria in terms of A-level subjects are ranked according to actual/predicted A-level grades. It is impossible to specify exact subject and grade combinations that are likely to result in offers, since the number of places available and the number and quality of applicants does vary slightly from year to year.

### Academic Record Criteria

Before a final decision is made we also take account of any science-related A or AS level qualifications in addition to the standard entry requirements. The GCSE record of the applicant is noted; we expect to see a good range of high-grade passes, especially in the sciences and in mathematics. This is especially important for candidates offering only 2 scientific A-levels. Most of our successful applicants have grade A or B in sciences and maths. A pass in GCSE English Language at grade C is normally required.

### Contextual Information

We take an holistic approach to all applications, ensuring that the educational and social context in which an applicant applies is taken into consideration, where supported by clear evidence that this may have adversely affected academic achievement. This may include time spent in Local Authority care, information about which is provided in the UCAS application.

We also consider evidence of clear motivation to study. This may include attendance at a University summer school, a targeted Access Scheme (such as Access to Bristol), or participation in Aimhigher outreach activities. Consideration will also be given to applicants who have completed a targeted Access scheme at another university, under the 'Mutual Recognition Scheme'.

We do not take the following into consideration when making admissions decisions: the school type attended by an applicant or whether an applicant's parent has any experience of higher education

### Reasons for varying offers

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 (<http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions-policy.html>).

### Personal Statement Criteria

The Personal Statement and Referee's Report are always studied carefully. We are particularly keen to see evidence that the candidate appreciates the scientific nature of a degree in Animal Behaviour and Welfare, rather than just being interested in their own companion animals. Whilst an interest in companion animal behaviour is important (clinical work with companion animals is a relevant part of the programme) it is only one of many aspects to the programme. Candidates who can demonstrate an interest in farm animals, or animals kept for other purposes in zoos, or in sport or entertainment, will strengthen their application. Candidates who have thought about the political and Ethical issues

relating to the use of animals in society or who have a commitment to the rational improvement of animal welfare standards will also be regarded favourably. Participation in relevant extra-curricular activities is useful, and evidence for general intellectual and practical skills and non-academic experience is also noted.

#### Reference Criteria

Any positive (and indeed negative) comments by the referee concerning the applicant's potential as a University student are of course noted.

#### Criteria for international applicants (if different)

English Language requirements can be found in the UG Prospectus and at:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions-english-lang-reqs.html>

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

### **3. Offers**

Typical offers for A-levels and other UK qualifications can be found in the Entry Data in the online UG Prospectus: [http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2010/sections/XABW/dept\\_intro](http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2010/sections/XABW/dept_intro) . Offers to applicants with non-standard qualifications will be made equivalent to the published A-level offer.

#### Variations in offer level

*To follow.*

### **4. Other**

Please note that transfer from the degree in Animal Behaviour & Welfare into Veterinary Science is not possible.

Candidates with sufficient background may be considered for entry into year 2 of the program. The decision is made on an individual basis.

Head of Veterinary School

Professor Jo Price

01.10.2009