

Admissions Principles and Procedures for Undergraduate Courses

1 Aims

1.1 The University of Bristol aims to:

- maintain the high academic standards for which it is known;
- create a student body that is balanced and diverse in terms of background and experience, with all the educational and cultural benefits that this brings;
- recruit students who will engage with and contribute to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the University community

1.2 The University will achieve these aims by:

- encouraging applications from all those with the motivation and academic ability to thrive at Bristol, whatever their background;
- assessing each application carefully and fairly;
- offering places to suitably qualified applicants who have the potential to do well at Bristol.

1.3 To ensure consistency and fairness, the general principles and procedures set out in this document will be followed by all those involved in the admissions process.

1.4 The University is committed to creating a diverse learning environment where all students are valued for their individual differences and contribution, with equal opportunities for all irrespective of age, disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation. All applicants are considered on an equal basis in line with the University's [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy](#).

1.5 The University will monitor and review its Admissions Principles and Procedures in the light of experience, research, relevant legislation and best practice (e.g. the Quality Assurance Agency, Office for Students, UCAS).

2 Transparency and Consistency

2.1 All data requested and held by the University through the application process will be processed in line with the University's Student Fair Processing Notice, and in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2.2 The University will only correspond about an application or decision with the applicant, or the person given nominated access within the UCAS application form, unless the applicant has given express consent to the University to correspond with another nominated contact (family member, agent, representative).

2.3 The University will publish a course profile for each course both in the University's own publications, online course finder and through UCAS. This will include key information

about the course, the typical offer, additional entry requirements, application process and deadlines. This information will be published for the year in which the application cycle begins and will be finalised by 1 August for entry the following September.

- 2.4 The University will publish the admissions policies, procedures and course information pages (available via [our course finder](#)) by 1 August each year
- 2.5 Each course information page will explain the selection criteria and procedures for that course, including information on how applications will be considered. This will include:
- specific criteria against which the applicants will be assessed by the Admissions Team;
 - an indication of how different components of the application will be weighted;
 - the process for considering applications, including any additional assessment requirements such as interviews, tests or written work
 - links to any dedicated webpage containing information about the admissions process
- 2.6 All decisions on applications are made subject to strict quality assurance procedures, which will include the following:
- regular consultation with Academic Directors of Admissions and Recruitment to ensure compliance with selection criteria;
 - routine spot checks to ensure assessment consistency and compliance with legal and policy requirements;
 - regular reviews of selection criteria and outcomes;
 - monitoring of turnaround times to ensure that applications are assessed in a reasonable timeframe.
- 2.7 The University will make every effort to run courses advertised in the current admissions cycle. However, if it is necessary to change or discontinue a course, the University will contact applicants in a timely manner and offer alternative options, e.g. consideration for another course.

3 How we assess an application

- 3.1 The University ensures that all courses have appropriate selection criteria in place to support the assessment of applications in accordance with the admissions aims and principles set out in this document. Selection criteria, assessment methods, and relevant weightings will be published for each course within our [course finder](#) and the relevant course information page.
- 3.2 Applications will normally be assessed on the basis of three A-levels and eight GCSEs (or equivalent qualifications). The University recognises that not all applicants will have had the opportunity to take additional qualifications, and application scoring is therefore limited to include only the three most relevant and highest scoring A-levels, and eight most relevant and highest scoring GCSEs. Equivalencies for many qualifications are published in our course finder and in country-specific guidance on our [Country and Region Pages](#). Applicants are welcome to contact our [Enquiries team](#) for further information and guidance.
- 3.3 The University assesses applications based on the information submitted via UCAS, including predicted grades provided by schools or colleges. In line with UCAS guidance, we do not routinely consider revised predicted grades after submission. Amendments will

only be considered where a genuine error has occurred and this is confirmed by the applicant's school or college (e.g. an incorrect subject or grade entered in error). These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the University reserves the right to accept or decline changes depending on timing, the nature of the amendment, and course demand. For highly competitive programmes, revised predictions may not be considered.

- 3.4 The University does not consider performance in A-level General Studies, Critical Thinking, or similar qualifications in the admissions process.
- 3.5 We welcome applications from students with international qualifications and use guidance from UK ENIC, along with internal research and market intelligence, to determine whether a qualification meets the required level. Country-specific information is available on our [Country and Region Pages](#), and applicants are welcome to contact our Enquiries Team for further information about how their qualification will be assessed.
- 3.6 In some cases, even if a qualification appears to be at the required level, we may determine that an applicant's previous study does not align with the academic expectations of our courses and therefore cannot be taken forward in the assessment process. This may be due to factors such as the type of institution attended, its accreditation status, or the mode of study and whether academic rigour can be assured. Where this is the case, the reason will be explained to the applicant in the decision communication.
- 3.7 Meeting the minimum entry requirements for a course does not guarantee an offer. For many courses at the University, the number of applications from eligible applicants far exceeds the number of offers that can be made. The number of offers available will be specific to the course, year of entry, and the fee status of applicants.
- 3.8 In addition to academic qualifications, we may also take into account information provided within the Personal Statement and Reference. The course information page will set out for each course how the personal statement and reference are considered and the criteria they are assessed against.
- 3.9 Interviews may form part of the application process for some courses and this will be stated in the course information page where applicable. Interviews may also be required for other courses where it is not possible to make a decision based on the information in the application alone, for example if there has been a gap in education or nonstandard qualifications have been taken. Any interviews will be conducted by at least two people, including a member of University staff who has undertaken training on fair and effective recruitment. Interview candidates will be advised of the criteria for measuring performance at interview and a record of the interview will be submitted to the Admissions Team.
- 3.10 Supplementary written work may be required as part of the application process for some courses and this will be stated in the course information page where applicable, along with guidance on what is required and how work will be used within the assessment process.
- 3.11 Additional Admissions tests may form part of the application process for particular courses. This will be made clear in the course information page where applicable, including how the test will contribute to the overall application assessment.

- 3.12 Applicants may also be offered the opportunity to take an admissions test for other programmes where it has not been possible to make a decision based on the information in the application, for example if there has been a gap in education or non-standard qualifications have been taken.
- 3.13 Where interviews, supplementary written work, or admissions tests are required, these requests must be responded to within the required timescales.
- 3.14 All applicants are required to meet the relevant English Language profile as listed on the course specific information published in the course finder. If necessary, evidence of English language proficiency will be included as a condition of offer.
- 3.15 The Admissions Team may request further information from applicants to support the assessment of their application. Failure to provide required information within the specified timescale may result in the application being made unsuccessful. Additional information provided which has not been requested will not be considered.

4 Extenuating Circumstances

- 4.1 We recognise that some applicants may experience disruption or disadvantage — such as illness, bereavement, disruption to schooling, caring responsibilities, or other difficult personal circumstances. If this applies to you, we strongly encourage you to submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form at the time of application. This information will be considered alongside the assessment of your academic profile.
- 4.2 The University has a dedicated policy to support displaced applicants — including refugees, asylum seekers, and individuals affected by conflict or humanitarian crises. This policy provides additional flexibility and tailored support throughout the application process, beyond what is available through the standard Extenuating Circumstances process.
- 4.3 We do not consider extenuating circumstances submitted through the UCAS reference. To ensure your circumstances can be reviewed fairly and consistently, you must complete our dedicated Extenuating Circumstances Form and submit it by the published deadline, as outlined in our [extenuating circumstances procedure](#).

5 Contextual Offers

- 5.1 The University has developed a contextual offer scheme to support fair access for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds. Applicants meeting certain eligibility criteria may be entitled to a reduction of up to two grades below the standard entry requirements. The eligibility criteria can be found on the [Contextual Offers information page](#).
- 5.2 Contextual information will be taken into account when assessing an applicant's academic attainment, and when considering whether to make an offer of a place or an invitation to interview. Applicants who meet the University's published criteria for contextual consideration will be eligible for the published Contextual Offer for their course. Further details and eligibility criteria are available on the [Contextual Offers webpage](#).
- 5.3 Contextual information may also be considered after examination results are published, when assessing offer holders who have not met the terms of their offer in full.

6 Guaranteed Offers

- 6.1 The University has developed a guaranteed offers scheme to support applicants from widening participation backgrounds. Further information and eligibility criteria can be found on the [Guaranteed Offers information page](#).
- 6.2 The University also runs a number of other initiatives that may result in a guaranteed offer or interview (where applicable). Applicants who fall into one of the categories listed below may be eligible for a guaranteed offer, subject to the specific terms and eligibility criteria of each initiative:
- a) Applicants who are current or recent participant in one of the University of Bristol [Global Summer School programmes](#) and who have an Overseas fee status.
 - b) Current students on one of the University's [International Foundation Programmes](#), a [Cert HE Foundation Year](#) or an approved progression partner foundation programme. These students can progress to specified undergraduate degree programmes, provided they meet the academic and English language requirements for the programme, and achieve a satisfactory performance in admissions tests or interviews, where applicable.
 - c) Sports Scholars who are selected by the University's Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health. Such applicants are guaranteed an offer or an interview (where applicable) provided they are taking or have achieved the necessary qualifications, subjects and grades to meet the typical offer requirements for their programme. In certain circumstances, the offer may be for an alternative related course rather than the course for which the applicant originally applied. Some scholars may be eligible for a lower offer. Please contact the [Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health](#) for further information.
- 6.3 Where an offer is to be made, it will be made at the relevant offer level as published in the course finder. The offer level will not be influenced by an applicant's eligibility for a guaranteed offer. In certain circumstances, the offer may be made for a course other than that originally applied for.

7 Responding to individual applicants' situations

- 7.1 Applications from students who have previously studied, or are currently studying at University of Bristol will remain subject the [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes](#). Applications from students who are re-applying for the same or a similar programme for which they have already studied mandatory unit(s) may not be eligible for offer and as such may be withdrawn in line with these regulations.
- 7.2 The course information page will confirm whether a course accepts applications for deferred entry. Any applications submitted for deferred entry will be considered in the cycle they are submitted, and under the policies in place for that cycle. The number of places available for deferred applicants may be limited.
- 7.3 The University welcomes applications from disabled students. Such applications will be considered against the same academic criteria that are applied to all applicants. Applicants are encouraged to disclose any disability that may require adjustments to our admissions process; this will not affect your chances of receiving an offer from the University. Disability Services can provide further advice as necessary. In the unlikely event that the University decides that adjustments required to support an applicant during

their education cannot reasonably be made, the University will contact the applicant directly to confirm this decision.

- 7.4 Applications who are not applying directly from, or within a year of leaving, school or college, who have non-standard qualifications or who wish work or life experience to be taken into account as part of their application, will be considered on an individual basis, in line with the general aims and principles of the Admissions Principles and Procedures. Where a course has a requirement for formal study within a particular recent period, this will be referenced in the course information page.
- 7.5 Applicants with a criminal record are not necessarily precluded from studying at the University of Bristol. This will depend on the nature of the programme of study, and if relevant, the outcome of any Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The [University guidelines for the recruitment of students with a criminal conviction](#) provide further information on the procedures that will be followed.
- 7.6 The University has processes in place to fulfil our safeguarding duties to admit and support applicants who will be under the age of 18 on registration (or under the age of 18 at the beginning of any academic year). Such applicants will be required to submit a signed parent/ guardian declaration form as a condition of their offer. Further information is available on the [Under-18s information pages](#).
- 7.7 An offer of admission does not guarantee a [Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies](#) (CAS) will be issued. When considering an application, the University will consider whether an applicant is able to meet the necessary UK visa requirements, and if these can be maintained for the full duration of their course. The University reserves the right to reject an application or refuse to issue a CAS, in circumstances where these requirements cannot be met (or the University reasonably believes they cannot be met). Further information may be requested from applicants to enable the University to consider such a situation. Where the University refuses to issue a CAS, this decision is final.
- 7.8 There are a small number of undergraduate MEng and MSci courses which require Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) clearance. Applicants who are [subject to ATAS](#) will require ATAS clearance prior to being issued a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (for those intending to study on the Student route visa), or prior to registering at the University for those with other time-limited immigration statuses. ATAS clearance is an ongoing condition of study so any students who are refused ATAS clearance at any point during their studies will be required to withdraw from the University. For more information on the scheme and how to apply for clearance please visit the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office \(FCDO\) website](#).
- 7.9 Applicants who submit multiple applications, either within a cycle or across admissions cycles, will have each application considered separately, unless an application has been withdrawn by the University in line with these policies and procedures.

8 Offers and decisions

- 8.1 Decisions on applications will be communicated to the applicant by email and (for UCAS applications) via UCAS Hub.
- 8.2 Where an offer is made this will be either Unconditional (if the entry requirements have already been met in full) or Conditional (where certain conditions must still be met).

- 8.3 Offer conditions will be made in line with the relevant entry requirements as published on the relevant [course information pages](#).
- 8.4 Participants on the Bristol Scholars scheme will be eligible for the specific offer relevant to that scheme and that offer will include a condition of successfully completing the Bristol Scholars programme.
- 8.5 Any offer made will be specific to that course, entry point and year of entry. Requests to change course or year of entry will be considered but will not necessarily be agreed.
- 8.6 For the purposes of determining the fee status of applicants, the University considers the “first day of the first academic year” as the 1st day of the calendar month in which a student first registers at the University for the specific course in question, regardless of any prior registrations or engagements with the University in different courses or academic programs. For example, if you are entering, or are applying to enter, Year 2 of a programme for which you have taken an extended break, the first day of the first academic year will remain 1st day of the calendar month in which you registered for Year 1.
- 8.7 An applicant’s tuition fee status is initially determined through information provided in the application form and will be reviewed by the admissions team during the application assessment process. Where the fee status cannot be easily determined, applicants will be asked to provide additional information and complete a fee status assessment questionnaire to inform the fee status review. Further information about [fee status](#) assessments is available to applicants on our webpage.
- 8.8 The University has two main tuition fee levels: a 'home' fee and an 'overseas' fee. For most applicants, this tuition fee status is determined through assessment of information provided in the application form. Fee status assessments are conducted in line with UK Government regulations for who pays home fees for higher education, and are based on [guidance provided by UKCISA](#), the UK Council for International Student Affairs.
- 8.9 Applicants have the right to request that their fee status be reviewed once after the decision has been made, but this must be requested within four weeks of the offer being made, and no later than 31 July in the year of application. For any offers made after 31 July, any review must be submitted within seven days of the offer.
- 8.10 The University has the right to review a fee status if it considers any information in the application to be inaccurate. A change in fee status may result in the offer of a place on a course being reconsidered.
- 8.11 A conditional offer may include additional requirements, such as meeting the relevant English Language profile or completing additional administrative tasks. Where this is the case, the offer will not be considered to have been met until evidence has been received to satisfy all conditions.
- 8.12 The University may offer an applicant a place on an alternative course if we are unable to make an offer for the course they originally applied for and there is a suitable alternative. If this is the case, we will notify the applicant of the alternative course offer along with the reasons for the decision.

- 8.13 Applicants who receive an unsuccessful decision on their application will be provided with feedback as to the reason(s) that led to the unsuccessful outcome at the point the decision is communicated to them. Our full Applicant Feedback policy can be found on [our undergraduate policies page](#).
- 8.14 The University monitors the numbers of applications, offers and acceptances for each course carefully, in order to make the number of offers expected to deliver the University's undergraduate intake targets for each course. All applications received before the UCAS Equal Consideration Deadline will be considered on the same basis, though offers will begin to be made before of this deadline.
- 8.15 Applicants who receive an offer from the University are able to consider whether or not to accept it by a deadline they are given. If an applicant declines an offer, the University is not obliged to honour the original offer if the applicant requests to change their response. Any such request should be made to the Admissions Team as soon as possible and may require agreement from the University and any other institutions impacted.

9 Meeting the terms of your offer

- 9.1 All applicants who firmly accept an offer from the University (or accept an offer as Insurance and are not confirmed by their Firm choice) and meet the terms of their offer in full will have their place confirmed.
- 9.2 Applicants who firmly accept an offer from the University (or accept an offer as Insurance and are not confirmed by their Firm choice) who do not meet the terms of their offer in full may still be considered for a confirmed place. This will be based on the individual application and results, as well as the places available. Any decisions made will be in line with the University Admissions Aims and these Admissions Policies and Procedures.
- 9.3 All offer holders will be required to provide confirmation of their results, with formal translations where necessary, for any qualifications listed in their offer by the stated deadline, either automatically from their exam board or directly to the University. Where this result cannot be verified by the University, offer holders may be required to provide the University with original documentation in order to register or maintain their registration as a student.
- 9.4 In the event of exceptional circumstances which make it impossible to assess whether applicants have met the terms of their offer, the University reserves the right to use alternative methods including, but not limited to, use of prior assessment and/or scoring of applications, or any other method(s) deemed most appropriate, to decide which firm offer holders' places to confirm.

10 Applicant Conduct

- 10.1 Our [policies, procedures and regulations for students page](#) contains the codes of conduct, policies and procedures that you need to be aware of as potential student at University of Bristol.
- 10.2 The University reserves the right to exclude a candidate who is considered to be unsuitable for a place on a particular course or for attendance at the University, in accordance with the University's [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy](#), Acceptable Behaviour policy, or any other relevant policy of the University's [Student Rules and Regulations](#).

- 10.3 The university maintains a commitment to fostering a respectful and safe environment for all members of its community, including staff, students, and applicants. Applicants are expected to conduct themselves with integrity, respect, and courtesy in all interactions with university staff, students, and fellow applicants. Inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to abusive language, harassment, dishonesty, or any other form of misconduct (as outlined in the policies cited above in sections 10.1 and 10.2), will not be tolerated. Should such inappropriate conduct occur, the university reserves the right to withdraw the application and cease further communication with the individual responsible. This ensures that all members of our community adhere to the highest standards of behaviour and fosters a safe and supportive environment for all.
- 10.4 The University will not admit an applicant where information provided within the application is believed to be either fraudulent or plagiarised. The University reserves the right to withdraw an application or cancel an offer made under these circumstances, as outlined in the University's Document Verification and Fraudulent Applications Policy. Our full Document Verification and Fraudulent Applications policy can be found on [our undergraduate policies page](#).
- 10.5 All application materials must be the applicant's own work. Using generative AI tools to create or substantially edit content may be treated as contract cheating and academic misconduct, even if the tool is freely available. Where there is reasonable suspicion of AI use or third-party authorship, the University may investigate under the Document Verification and Fraudulent Applications Policy. This may result in the application being withdrawn. This reflects the University's Policy on Academic Integrity, which is built on the values of honesty, trust, fairness, and responsibility. Our full Document Verification and Fraudulent Applications policy can be found on [our undergraduate policies page](#).
- 10.6 Where an application is cancelled, withdrawn or rejected on this basis of any of the clauses set out in the applicant conduct section of this policy, applicants reserve the right to submit a complaint or appeal as per our Applicant Appeal and Complaints Policy, which can be found on [our undergraduate policies page](#).