

Postgraduate Admissions Statement for PhD Geographical Sciences (Physical Geography)

This Admissions Statement applies to applications submitted between 13 September 2025 and 11 September 2026.

It should be read in association with the [University Admissions Principles and Procedures](#) for Postgraduate programmes, the relevant [prospectus entry](#) and general [application guidance](#).

Admissions criteria

Academic and English language requirements

The academic and English language requirements for this programme are displayed on the [Postgraduate Prospectus](#)

For information on international equivalent qualifications, please refer to our [International Office website](#).

Non-standard applications

We welcome applications from those with non-standard qualifications who can demonstrate knowledge, experience and skills developed in the workplace, or elsewhere, relevant to the programme of study. Please use your personal statement to provide further details.

Non-standard applications will be considered by the Admissions Tutor(s) for the programme on a case-by-case basis.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We welcome and encourage student applications from under-represented groups. We value and are committed to building a diverse research environment. The School of Geographical Sciences, like many other Schools and Departments across the University, is also committed to efforts to decolonise our curriculum and to transform our research and teaching as part of these efforts. We welcome applicants interested in supporting this work.

Application process

Online application form

Applicants should complete the online application form, uploading all required documents directly. Further information is available on our [guidance for online applications page](#).

Applications will not be considered until **all** required documents have been uploaded.

Required and optional documents

References: Required

We require two academic references. References should comply with our standard requirements outlined on [our guidance pages](#).

Degree certificate(s) and academic transcripts: Required

From first and subsequent degrees. Degree certificates and transcripts should comply with our standard requirements outlined on [our guidance pages](#).

Personal statement: Required

(Word count 1,300 words)

Personal statements should highlight the motivation for applying for the course, and any relevant experience and/or skills.

English language certificates/other evidence: Required

Evidence of meeting the English language profile as stated on the [Postgraduate Prospectus](#) and specified by the [University English Language Requirements Policy](#). The English language requirement for Physical Geography is Profile D.

Curriculum Vitae (CV): Required

CVs might include details of other relevant work experience and qualifications to support an application.

Research Statement: Required

You should use the research statement to define and situate your proposed research within an academic/disciplinary context. With due regard for the primary audience/readership for postgraduate research (that is, the academic community), you should identify the following:

1. The research questions or problems that you intend to address
2. The research context for your project/programme of work
3. The methods you intend to use to pursue the key questions

Research statements are not required from candidates responding to an advertisement that already includes a project description.

Selection process

Assessment of applications

All applicants are considered in line with the University's [Admissions Principles and Procedures Policy](#). Once a complete application has been submitted with all required supporting documents, it is usually considered by at least two members of staff.

Interviews

Candidates may be invited to attend an interview, usually lasting approximately 30 minutes. Interviewees are assessed on their academic achievement, research potential, fit to the project and strength of references, as well as their interview performance.

The purpose of the interview is to assess whether the applicant has the necessary skills and capabilities to pursue the chosen postgraduate programme, and whether the programme is appropriate to the applicant's interests and aspirations.

If required, interviewees based overseas will normally be interviewed online.

Decisions

Applicants will be notified by email when a decision has been made and decision letters will be available to view and print by logging into the application portal. If there is a deadline by which applicants must accept an offer of admission or pay a deposit, this will be stated in the offer letter.

Offers

Offers will typically be made in line with the academic requirements set out above.

Offers made may be conditional or unconditional. An unconditional offer will be made to applicants who have already met the conditions and provided evidence that conditions have been met. Where academic or

language requirements have not yet been fulfilled, applicants will receive a conditional offer outlining the requirements that must be met.

Deferrals

Deferred entry is available for this programme, subject to agreement by the relevant Admissions Team. Please contact geog-pgadm@bristol.ac.uk to make a formal request.

Additional information

Extenuating circumstances

If your education has been significantly disrupted through health or personal challenges, disability or specific difficulties within your studies, or family or caring commitments, you can submit an [extenuating circumstances](#) form as part of your application.

The information provided will be treated confidentially and will help us to assess your academic performance fairly considering your circumstances.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

An ATAS certificate is not required for this programme.

Visa

International students coming to the UK to study full-time may need to apply for a student visa. Further information is available on the [University website](#).

Fees and Deposits

Fees

Annual tuition fees are available on the relevant [prospectus entry](#) for this programme.

Deposits

Deposits are not required for this programme.

Sponsored Students

Sponsored students will need to upload a copy of their sponsorship letter to the online application.