

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/>



Year of Admissions cycle:
2026

Courses covered:

A108 Gateway to Medicine (MB ChB)

A208 Gateway to Dentistry (BDS)

D108 Gateway to Veterinary Science (BVSc)

1. Course specific information:

1.1 Eligibility criteria

The Gateway programme is a University of Bristol widening participation initiative, and is only open to applicants who meet certain eligibility criteria.

Applicants for this programme must meet **one** of the following criteria:

- Attending (or, if they are applying with completed qualifications, have attended in the academic year immediately prior to their application) a secondary school or college on one of the Aspiring school lists accessible via the link given below. These selected schools and colleges are those with a lower progression to Higher Education and/or a lower average attainment in A-levels, International Baccalaureate, Pre-U or other Level 3 qualifications as appropriate.
- Applicants who have spent time in care. If this applies to you, please tick the box in the care questions on your UCAS application. If your reference confirms that you have spent time in local authority care, our admissions team will process your application. If not, we may ask you to send us some more information, such as an email or letter from your local authority, school/college, or other organisation.
- Applicants who are in receipt of, or have received, free school meals during their secondary education. The UCAS application will ask you to confirm if you are, or have been in receipt of free school meals. We may also ask for a school letter to confirm this status.

Applicants eligible for Gateway courses due to having spent time in care or have been in receipt of free school meals, need to provide evidence of recent study and examinations within the last two years (including in either chemistry or biology).

For further information and lists of eligible schools and colleges, visit the [Gateway courses eligibility](#) webpage.

Please ensure you check the Aspiring School/College list for the **year you completed your A levels or equivalent Level 3 qualification**.

Please note that there is no eligibility for Gateway using the Polar score for home postcode.

Applicants who have completed a University of Bristol outreach programme are only eligible for Gateway courses if they also meet one of the three eligibility criteria listed above.

Applicants liable for international tuition fees are **not eligible** for the Gateway programme, regardless of school or college attended.

1.2 Admissions process

Eligible applications are initially assessed on their academic record, according to their achieved or predicted results.

As we do not weight A-levels or GCSEs (or equivalent qualifications), applicants who are predicted to, or have already achieved our minimum academic entry requirements (while not exceeding the specific upper grade limits set for the Gateway programme) will then have their applications scored as follows.

Applicants for **Gateway to Medicine and Dentistry (A108 and A208)** who have passed the academic scoring will be ranked solely according to their UCAT score. This ranking will be used to determine which applicants are called for interview.

This ranking will not incorporate any aspect of an applicant's academic profile unless a differentiation needs to be made between identically scoring applicants.



Applicants for **Gateway to Veterinary Science (D108)** who have passed the academic scoring will be asked to complete a Supplementary Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ). The form will ask a series of questions designed to enable us to assess applicants':

- Awareness of required attributes to succeed on the course;
- Understanding of the job roles of the veterinary surgeon and the challenges they may face.
- Understanding of the factors that affect how people work together in groups.

The form is not available prior to application. **Applicants must return the form by the specified deadline otherwise their application will be unsuccessful.** Supporting guidance can be found here: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/vet-school/study/undergraduate/guidance/>

We will then rank applicants based solely on their SAQ score and the top-scoring applicants will be invited to interview. This ranking will not incorporate any aspect of an applicant's academic profile unless a differentiation needs to be made between identically scoring applicants.



1.3 Academic criteria

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, BTEC, Welsh Bac, GCSEs) can be found in the undergraduate course finder:
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/search/>

If an applicant has achieved or is predicted to achieve *above or below* the A-level (or equivalent) grade ranges as stated on the relevant online course page on the University's website, they will not be eligible for the Gateway programme, regardless of whether they meet the eligibility criteria. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the person providing any predicted grades is aware of this. No later revision of predicted grades will be permitted.

Please note that applicants will not be considered for more than one Gateway course.

Applicants will also not be considered for both the Gateway course and a five-year course in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science at Bristol. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they apply for the course most appropriate to their educational circumstances and academic profile.

In some cases, if an applicant applies with predicted or achieved grades which are too high for the Gateway course, the admissions team may consider their eligibility for the relevant five-year programme instead. In such cases, a course change will be made to the five year course and applicants will be notified by email about consideration for this new course.

Graduates, and those who have already commenced any University-level course, including a foundation course, are not eligible to apply for the Gateway courses regardless of their previous A-level grades or school attended.

Access to HE qualifications are not accepted. Applicants with this qualification are welcome to apply for the standard five year course in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science.

Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria (see 1.1 above), and who fulfil the academic requirements in full, and whose application is received on time (in accordance with the published UCAS October deadline for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary courses) will receive equal consideration.

1.4 Additional Criteria

UCAT

Gateway to Medicine and Dentistry (A108 and A208) applicants are required to take the University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) in the same calendar year as submission of the

UCAS application (including all applicants eligible for a guaranteed interview). For example if submitting an application in 2025, the UCAT test must have been taken in the summer/autumn of 2025.

Further information on the UCAT, including deadlines for application and the testing period can be found here: www.ucat.ac.uk.

UCAT operates a bursary scheme allowing some applicants to sit the UCAT for free which some applicants may be eligible for. Details of this can be found on the UCAT website: <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/register/bursary-scheme/>

We strongly advise candidates to take the test as early as possible should there be any ongoing circumstances which may mean they will need to reschedule a test (e.g., illness). If any problems occur when taking the test, you must contact Pearson (UCAT) directly.

Applicants sitting the UCATSEN are no longer required to provide the University with evidence of their eligibility. This must be submitted directly to UCAT. Further information can be found on the UCAT website: <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/register/access-arrangements/>

Assessment of the UCAT:

The combined score from all subtests, with the exception of Situational Judgement, will be used to select applicants for interview. The University of Bristol will treat all test scores equally when assessing applications.

While the UCAT score will be used to select applicants for interview once all academic requirements have been met, there is no cut-off score for the UCAT. The number used as a threshold for interview is subject to change year-on-year depending on the strength of the cohort, therefore a specific score cannot be used with certainty to predict the likelihood of receiving an invite to interview for the current cycle.

Criminal records check

A DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check will be required for all successful applicants to Gateway to Dentistry and Gateway to Medicine. This process begins in August prior to registration. This is not required for applicants to Gateway to Veterinary Science.

Occupational Health Clearance

Applicants who are made an offer for a place on any of the Gateway courses and make it their firm choice will be required to complete an Occupational Health questionnaire. All offers are subject to satisfactory occupational health clearance.

For more information about the pre-course occupational health questionnaire, please visit: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/after-you-apply/after-accepting/questionnaires/>

All offers are also subject to satisfactory checks against the MSC Excluded Students Database. These checks will be completed in August of the application cycle for applicants who are holding unconditional firm offers for entry in the coming intake. Any applicant who has previously been required to withdraw from a medical course elsewhere and is identified as an excluded student may not be allowed to register on their course of study at Bristol. The Faculty of Health Sciences will consider whether to allow registration on a case-by-case basis.

All checks must be completed satisfactorily for an applicant to register as a student on these courses.

Work Experience

While not a requirement for the course, we strongly encourage applicants, regardless of intended pathway, to obtain some practical work experience in their chosen career field to develop their understanding of the profession, show their commitment to the course and career, and as a basis for questions at interview. This does not necessarily have to include clinical experience (i.e., hospital, GP or animal clinic based) and can include work placements undertaken as part of a relevant course or as independent voluntary work. We encourage applicants to seek opportunities to develop their awareness of their chosen career, and the skills and attributes required of such roles through means such as online research, supporting their families and communities, etc.

Personal Statement

We no longer use the personal statement as a weighted component of our selection criteria. Should we need to differentiate between applicants who have identical scores at interview when making offers, UCAT scores will be used as our primary differentiator for Gateway to Medicine and Dentistry. For Gateway to Veterinary Science, SAQ scores will be used as our primary differentiator. Should there be a situation where applicants achieve the same interview result and UCAT or SAQ score, only then will the personal statement be used as a deciding factor. In these cases, we use the following criteria:

- Evidence of commitment to and realistic interest in career/reflection on work experience
- Evidence of life skills/problem solving/leadership/communication skills/organisational skills; proven leadership ability; time management
- Evidence of altruism/volunteering/ 'helping others', experience in caring roles, community/school involvement.

1.5 Interviews

Interviews will form part of the selection criteria for the Gateway programmes for the 2025/26 admissions cycle and all applicants who are selected for interview must attend in order to be considered. No offers are made without the applicant first attending an interview, unless there are exceptional circumstances involved. This does not mean that we interview all applicants. We do not consider previous interview performance for those applicants who were interviewed in previous cycles.

For the Gateway to Veterinary Science course, interviews will be held in person as MMIs (Multiple Mini Interviews) at the University.

For Gateway to Medicine and Gateway to Dentistry, all interviews are conducted online.

Applicants are assessed using a formal interview system. The purpose of the interview is to provide the applicant with an opportunity to demonstrate evidence of skills and attributes that are appropriate to a career in medicine, dentistry or veterinary science and to give you the opportunity to display insight into a range of related topics. Photo identification will be required at interview.

Applicants' performance at the interviews is scored by assessors and ranked by the Admissions Office. Those candidates with the strongest overall performance receive offers. We aim to make offers as soon as possible, but to ensure fairness, applicants may not receive a decision until all the interviews have been completed. The UCAT or SAQ score is our primary differentiator for distinguishing between applicants with identical interview scores.

Further information about interviews specific to each Gateway pathway can be found on our web pages: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/after-you-apply/interviews/>

Fitness to practise

Please see the admission statement for the five-year Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science course for information about fitness to practise in each subject area. We make no reference to any information disclosed regarding disability when reviewing applications and inviting applicants to interview.

We make no reference to any information disclosed regarding disability when reviewing applications and inviting applicants to interview. If you are invited for interview and feel that your disability means that you would benefit from an adjustment to our interview process, we would be happy to consider what reasonable adjustments might be applied. Further information on how to request reasonable adjustments is available on our interviews website: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/after-you-apply/interviews/>

1.6 Mature applicants

We welcome applications from mature applicants, and assess such applications in equal measure, but the specific eligibility criteria for the Gateway courses must be met (as outlined in section 1.1).

Mature applicants must provide evidence of recent scientific study and examinations (including in chemistry or biology) within the last two years.

As outlined in section 1.1, graduates, or those who have already commenced any course of University study, (including foundation courses) are not eligible to apply for the Gateway courses. We do not accept Access to HE qualifications for entry to the Gateway programme.

1.7 Offers

Due to the competitive nature of these courses, we can only consider applicants who meet the specific eligibility and grade criteria for this programme.

If applicants are not eligible or not qualified or have an unsuitable academic background for the course to which they originally applied, we may offer the opportunity to be considered for an alternative course in a related subject area. In such cases applicants will receive an email notification providing a list of the alternative options.

1.8 Deferred applications

Deferred applications (i.e., applying in 2025/26 for 2027 entry) are **not** accepted for this course.

1.9 Resits

We will consider applicants who are completing resits of GCSEs and/or A-levels (or equivalent level 3 qualifications), however they must be enrolled at an eligible school or college for the academic year in which they are retaking any exams or meet the in-care or free school meal requirements.

1.10 Transfers

This is a one-year programme where successful completion allows applicants to transfer to year one of the appropriate five-year course at the University of Bristol only. Transfers into a mid-point in the Gateway year are not permitted.

2. General information

2.1 Admissions team

Applications are assessed by a centralised team in close co-operation with the School Recruitment and Admissions Officer(s). The team have received training in fair admissions and unconscious bias.

2.2 Admissions process

Because we receive such a high number of applications, and to ensure that all those applying on time are treated fairly, we may hold some applications until May before making a decision.

Applications received before the 15 October deadline set by UCAS are guaranteed equal consideration.

We do not discriminate against applicants on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

To assess an application, we require the following information:

- a full academic history from age 16 onwards, including details of any retakes or uncompleted qualifications.
- predicted grades for any qualifications the applicant is currently taking. These must be provided by the applicant's school or referee, and must include an overall grade (if applicable), *and*, where a particular subject is specified in the entry requirements, the achieved or predicted grades for that subject, and any related or major subjects being studied;
- in cases where predicted grades are not available, a transcript showing the results of a previous year's courses or examinations.

We assess applicants on the basis of their application only; we do not take into account any additional information received from an applicant or institution, unless we have requested it.

Academic references should be provided by a personal tutor from the applicant's school or college. Where this is not possible, a non-academic reference should confirm the applicant's relevant experience and indicate their potential for degree-level study.

The reference is considered alongside the personal statement, where applicable, taking into account the following:

- predictions of examination results (including, if necessary, an explanation of any non-standard qualifications);
- an overall assessment of the applicant, in particular the suitability and academic potential of the applicant to study at degree level;
- discussion of earlier exam results, especially those influenced by personal or medical circumstances (and therefore a poor guide to ability);
- discussion of the applicant's intellectual curiosity, interests and suitability for the subject.

Referees who believe the applicant's performance does not reflect their ability, because of educational context and/or special circumstances, should advise the applicant to complete an extenuating circumstances form (see section 2.6 Extenuating Circumstances).

2.3 Correspondence with applicants

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

We monitor the number of offers we make carefully and may hold some applications until later in the cycle.

Applicants will 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 October, the final deadline by which applicants will receive a decision is the May deadline set by UCAS. Most decisions are made before this date.

2.4 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/>

2.5 Contextual information

The Gateway program is a widening participation initiative established as part of our commitment to the UK national agenda on widening University participation.

To be eligible to apply for the Gateway program, applicants must have attended a school or college on the relevant lists of schools and colleges or spent time in care or be/have been in receipt of free school meals as explained in section 1.1 above.

Please note that eligibility is not established using Polar Score.

Please note that we use the school code entered on the education history section on the UCAS application to determine an applicant's eligibility. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure this is correct. Applicants still at school should apply to UCAS through their school portal. Applicants who are no longer at school (i.e., on a gap year) should where possible ask to apply through their previous school to avoid any confusion regarding their eligibility. Full details of the contextual offer scheme can be found here:

<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/entry-requirements-qualifications/contextual-offers/> and within the University's Admissions Principles and Procedures for Undergraduate Courses.

2.6 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.

However, **if you are applying with your grades already achieved** we will not consider, under any circumstances, applicants who do not meet the published A level entry requirement in either chemistry or biology (or in an equivalent qualification). You will need to be resitting the required qualification (or be taking another suitable qualification) to be eligible for this course.

2.7 Policies

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

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.

2.8 Results

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 on when their exam results are released.

Please see our results web page for further information: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/results/>

2.9 Contacts for enquiries

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