

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 and Diversity Policy.

1.5 The University will review its Admissions Principles and Procedures annually 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 early in 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 and Procedures and the course specific Admissions Statements by 1 August each year, which will apply to applications submitted between 1st sept 2023 and 31st Aug 2024.
- 2.5 Each Admissions Statement 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.
- 2.6 All decisions on applications are made subject to strict quality assurance procedures, which will include the following:
 - regular consultation with Faculty Admissions and Recruitment Officers 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 Admissions Statement.
- 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 8 most relevant and highest scoring GCSE's. Equivalencies for many qualifications are published online and where this is not published, further information and guidance can be requested from the [Enquiries team](#).
- 3.3 The University does not consider performance in A-level General Studies, Critical Thinking, or similar qualifications, in the admissions process.
- 3.4 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.

- 3.5 In addition to academic qualifications, we may also take into account information provided within the Personal Statement and Reference. The Admissions Statement for each course will set out how the personal statement and reference are considered and the criteria they are assessed against.
- 3.6 Interviews may form part of the application process for some courses and this will be stated in the Admissions Statement 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 non-standard 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 taken and submitted to the Admissions Team.
- 3.7 Supplementary written work may be required as part of the application process for some courses and this will be stated in the Admissions Statement where applicable, along with guidance on what is required and how work will be used within the assessment process.
- 3.8 Additional Admissions tests such as the LNAT or UCAT may form part of the application process for particular courses. This will be made clear in the Admissions Statement where applicable, including how the test will contribute to the overall application assessment.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 Where interviews, supplementary written work or admissions tests are required, these requests must be responded to within the required timescales.
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 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 The University recognises that individual applicants' educational attainment and experience may be impacted by a range of factors. Where an applicant's education has been significantly disrupted through health or personal problems, disability or specific difficulties with schooling, they can provide additional information to be considered alongside their application in line with 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. Where a decision is made to offer a place, applicants from these underrepresented groups will normally be eligible for the published Contextual Offer for their course.
- 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 local students and learners returning to study. Applicants meeting the eligibility criteria will be considered for a guaranteed offer or a guaranteed interview. 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. 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) Current student on one of the University's [partner International Foundation Programmes](#) and be eligible for Overseas fee status.
 - b) Current or recent participant in one of the University of Bristol [Global Summer School programmes](#) and be eligible for Overseas fee status.
 - c) Selected for the [Performance Potential Group](#) by the University's Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health, based on criteria available on their website.
- 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 The course profile and admissions statement 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.
- 7.2 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.

- 7.3 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 Admissions statement.
- 7.4 Students attending the International Foundation Programme or other Foundation Year programmes at the University of Bristol, or an approved progression partner foundation programme, will be eligible to enter specified undergraduate degree programmes, subject to meeting the required academic and English language standards for progression and subject to satisfactory completion of the admissions process, including performance in admissions tests or at interview where appropriate.
- 7.5 Applicants to the University may be selected for the Performance Potential Group by the Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health, based on criteria available on their website. Applicants selected for the Potential Performance Group will be guaranteed an offer of a place at the University if an interview would not otherwise be required and provided that they are taking and/or have achieved qualifications which would enable them to meet the offer in full. Where an interview is required, such applicants will be guaranteed an interview if their predicted or achieved grades meet the applicable typical offer for that programme. In certain circumstances, the offer may be for an alternative related course rather than the course for which the applicant originally applied. Any offer made would be at the standard level for the course and applicant.
- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 Applicants who will be under the age of 18 on registration as a student of the University 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](#).
- 7.8 The University has processes in place to and 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).
- 7.9 The University reserves the right not to admit an applicant where information is believed to be either fraudulent or plagiarised and reserves the right to reject an application or cancel an offer made under these circumstances, as outlined in the University statement of policy on fraudulent applications.
- 7.10 An offer of admission does not guarantee a 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.

- 7.11 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 and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\) website](#).
- 7.12 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.
- 7.13 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 and Diversity policy, Acceptable Behaviour policy, or any other relevant policy of the University.

8 Offers and decisions

- 8.1 Decisions on applications will be communicated to the applicant by email and 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 normally 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 may 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 An applicants' 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. and will be communicated to students when an offer is made.
- 8.7 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.
- 8.8 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.

- 8.9 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.
- 8.10 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.
- 8.11 Where an application is not successful for the original course, the University may offer the applicant a place on an alternative course for which they are eligible. This offer will only be made once the original application has been made unsuccessful. If this is the case, this alternative course offer will be communicated to the applicant and the reasons explained.
- 8.12 Applicants who receive an unsuccessful decision on their application will be provided with feedback as to the reason(s) that lead to the unsuccessful outcome at the point the decision is communicated to them. Our full Applicant Feedback Policy can be found on our [admissions policy pages](#).
- 8.13 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.
- 8.14 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 and any University scholarships awarded. 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. Should such steps be required, the University will make every possible effort to offer places to firm offer holders who had achieved the terms of their offers but who had not been allocated a place under the emergency procedures.

University of Bristol, August 2023