

Undergraduate admissions statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with the [University's admissions principles and procedures](#).

Year of admissions cycle: 2015

Courses covered:

BSc Computer Science (G400)

MEng Computer Science with Study in Continental Europe (G401)

MEng Computer Science (G403)

MEng Mathematics and Computer Science (GG1K)

BSc Mathematics and Computer Science (GG14)

MEng Computer Science with Study Abroad (entry by transfer from G401 or G403)

Admissions process

1. Admissions team

Applications are assessed by a centralised team in close co-operation with admissions tutor/s.

2. Application assessment methods

All applications are considered on an equal basis. Applications are not segregated by the type of educational institution attended.

All applications that are received on time (in accordance with UCAS deadlines) are guaranteed equal consideration.

All applications are allocated scores on the academic record (A-levels or equivalent), which forms 100 per cent of our assessment.

Applications will be assessed on the basis of their application form only; we cannot take into account any additional information received from an applicant or institution, unless we have requested it.

We do not consider any direct applications to the University.

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

3. Interview or visit day

Applicants to whom an offer is likely to be made are invited to attend one of our school's pre-offer visit days; applicants are given the choice of several alternative dates for this visit, usually between November and March. The schedule for the pre-offer visit day includes a 30-minute informal group tutorial session which gives you a chance to find out more about the department and the courses we offer.

At all times, applicants are encouraged to ask questions about any aspect of the degree courses on offer.

Although there are other opportunities to visit the department, such as University open days, offers are usually only made to applicants who visit as part of our programme of pre-offer visit days.

Allowance may be made for applicants who cannot make a visit day due to exceptional circumstances, in these cases the applicant should inform the admissions team as soon as possible. The department will contact such applicants by phone for an informal discussion.

4. Correspondence with applicants

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

All applications are acknowledged by email on receipt (starting in mid-September), to establish contact and inform the applicant of the process to be followed.

Applicants will then be notified if their application has been successful or unsuccessful, or to inform them that their application has been assessed but that we will not be able to make a final decision until later in the cycle.

5. Deferred applications

We will consider applications for deferred entry (ie 2016). However deferred applicants should be aware that, in fairness to other applicants in the following cycle, we can only make a limited number of deferred offers in each cycle.

Criteria for assessing applicants

1. Academic entry requirements

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Baccalaureate, GCSEs) can be found in the [undergraduate course finder](#). Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits; [further information](#) is available.

2. Additional academic criteria

We initially rank applicants according to the A-level subjects offered and predicted/actual grades. We will be looking to see that you have or will have an A Level in Mathematics or equivalent and whilst all other A Level subjects are fully considered as well (with the exception of Critical Thinking and General Studies) applicants with preferred subjects will score higher than those without preferred subjects.

The weightings we use to rank A-level subjects are as follows:

- Weighting 1 (required subject):
Mathematics
- Weighting 0.9 (preferred subjects):

Further Mathematics, Physics, Computing, Computer Science, ICT, Electronics, Design and Technology

- Weighting 0.8:
Everything else.

A-level students interested in applying for the Mathematics and Computer Science degree courses should note that Further Mathematics, STEP or AEA Mathematics are highly desirable, but not required, alongside Mathematics A-level. We know that Further Mathematics is not available to students in all schools and colleges, or that it is often taught in a restricted amount of time. We would urge prospective applicants to study Further Mathematics to the highest level available to them. If A-level Further Mathematics, or STEP and AEA Mathematics are not available in your school or college, or if they are taught in a restricted manner (for example in less time than is normally allocated to an A-level subject), please ask your referee to make this clear in your application.

A-level Computer Science, Computing or ICT are not required for any of our courses. For those looking for a good grounding in the principles of Computing pre-A-level, we do recommend the new GCSE in Computing. Again, however, this is not a requirement for admission to any of our degrees.

We would encourage applicants to tell us about any particularly strong performances in modules in mathematics or any closely related subject.

3. Personal statement criteria

In some cases we may refer to the personal statement and reference to differentiate between applicants with very similar academic profiles. If this is the case, then the criteria will include the following:

- Evidence of further mathematics / additional academic preparation and achievements;
- Competitions, other mathematical or computer science-related activity;
- Personal factors such as relevant work experience, being given a level of responsibility (eg mentoring, head girl/boy, etc);
- A good standard of written English, expression and construction of the personal statement.

Overall, you should demonstrate a genuine interest in the chosen course and basic knowledge of the subject, highlighting your skills in mathematics and problem solving. You should also give evidence of strong study skills, responsibility, leadership and team working, commitment and achievement, both in academic and extra-curricular activities. Any relevant work experience or placements should be highlighted along with any relevant reading/research beyond the A-Level course syllabus. We are also interested in evidence of organisation, self-motivation, and the ability to balance different activities.

4. Reference criteria

An applicant's reference should ideally be from a school or college, from a personal tutor confirming the academic potential of the applicant to study at degree level. It should also give evidence of the commitment of the applicant to academic study and contributions to

school life. Assessors will want to consider the accuracy and consistency of the predicted grades in the light of previous achievement, evidence of effort and a positive attitude towards studies.

Where this is not possible, a non-academic reference should confirm the relevant experience of the applicant and give evidence of responsibility and commitment as well as mathematical and problem solving capabilities. It should indicate the potential of the applicant for study at degree level.

5. Additional tests

We would only require applicants to undertake tests or written assessments as part of a formal interview (see **6. Interview** below). If you are invited to a formal interview you may also be asked to complete a short test of a mathematical nature.

6. Interview

The department does not interview applicants apart from in the following circumstances:

- to clarify issues that may not be clear from the application;
- mature students whose qualifications may provide a poor guide to academic ability (see **7: Mature applicants** below);
- overseas students whose qualifications cannot be exactly equated to A-levels;
- applications to enter the degree course in the second year (see **Other: Transfers** below)

The interview panel will consist of two or three members. At least one of the interviewers will be trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques and all interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities. In the course of such interviews, applicants may be asked to complete short test questions of a mathematical nature.

7. Mature applicants

We welcome applications from mature students. Where applicants may not have the educational qualifications to support their application, industrial and self-taught experience will be taken into consideration. We may invite such applicants to interview (see **6: Interview** above). Where possible, please highlight proven strengths in both computer science and mathematics in your personal statement.

8. International applicants

International applicants will be subject to the criteria as detailed here:

www.bristol.ac.uk/international/countries

We also consider applications for these courses through the Common Application system, and the same criteria and assessment used for UCAS applicants are applied. Applicants can only be considered through one application route; we cannot consider applicants through the Common Application who have also applied to Bristol and/or other institutions through UCAS.

9. English Language requirements for non-native speakers

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 at www.bristol.ac.uk/ug-language-requirements.

10. Contextual information

We take a 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 can be provided in the application.

As part of our commitment to the UK national agenda on widening participation, we consider the educational context in which grades have been achieved, particularly if there is evidence that an applicant's current school or college performs below a defined threshold.

When assessing whether applicants meet our academic requirements, contextual criteria may be applied to those who attend and apply from a school or college which in the previous year ranked in the bottom 40 per cent in any of the following categories:

- average score per A-level entry;
- average score per A-level entrant;
- percentage of students applying to higher education.

If an applicant meets one of these criteria, we will raise their predicted/achieved grades by one grade in our rankings; ie an AAB applicant will be awarded the same academic score as an AAA applicant. Applicants still need to satisfy specific subject requirements. Contextual offers are usually one grade lower than the standard offer.

The University reviews its definition of educational disadvantage and low-performing schools each year and each case is considered on an individual basis.

We also consider evidence of clear motivation to study. This may include participation in higher education outreach activities, attendance at a University summer school or a targeted Access Scheme (such as Access to Bristol or Realising Opportunities where applicants receive special consideration and in some cases, guaranteed and/or lower offers; please see the [University's admissions principles and procedures](#) for more information). We do not take the following into consideration when making admissions decisions: the school type attended by an applicant (e.g. independent school, state school, academy), or whether an applicant's parent has any experience of higher education.

Offers

Typical offers for A-levels and other UK qualifications can be found in the entry data in the online [undergraduate course finder](#). Offers to applicants with non-standard qualifications will be made equivalent to the published A-level offer.

We recognise that some applicants may achieve higher than their predicted grades, and so we may also consider applicants who are predicted to achieve one grade below the entry requirements (as long as this is in a non-specified subject). Any offer made would be at the standard level.

We may make lower 'contextual' 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](#) (see also **Criteria for assessing applicants: 10. Contextual information** above).

Other

1. Transfers

Applicants may transfer between Computer Science G400 and G403 until the end of the second year as the curriculum for both these degree courses is the same for the first two years.

Applications from students seeking entry directly into year two will be considered on an individual basis. We would usually look for the completion of the first year of a similar degree with an overall mark of at least 65 per cent. In these cases transcripts and other relevant information will be required.

2. Additional information

Joint Honours Mathematics and Computer Science courses are led by the Department of Computer Science, therefore all arrangements from that department apply.

Joint Honours Electronics and Computer Science combined courses are led by the Department of Electrical Engineering, therefore all arrangements from that department apply. Please refer to the Electronic and Electrical Engineering admissions statement in our online course finder's course entries for more information.

The University can only guarantee places if the exact terms of the offer are met, however offer holders would not automatically be unsuccessful if the terms of the offer are missed by one grade. If offer holders do not meet the terms of their offer when exam results are released they may be considered as a 'near miss candidate'. All near miss candidates are reviewed mid-August after those who have met the terms of their offer have been confirmed. International offer holders may be reconsidered earlier depending when their exam results are released.

Contacts for enquiries

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Undergraduate Admissions Office: eng-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk or +44 (0)117 928 8150.