

Postgraduate Admissions Statement

PhD Law

Programmes Covered

This admissions statement applies to the following programme(s):

PhD Law

Distance learning option available

Applicants should also refer to the relevant prospectus entry for further programme details.

This admissions statement should be read in association with the [University Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Research Programmes](#).

Faculty

Faculty of Social Sciences and Law

Admissions team and contact details

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Admissions cycle

This Admissions Statement applies to applications submitted for entry to the programme between 1st October 2018 and 30th September 2019.

Application deadline

Details of application deadlines for this programme are displayed on the individual programme page within the [University course finder](#).

Admissions criteria

Academic requirements

Applicants are required must hold/achieve a minimum of an upper second-class honours degree in law (or equivalent) and normally a merit at master's level (or equivalent). Alternatively, a first-class honours degree in law (or equivalent) and evidence of ability to conduct independent and original research.

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

English language requirements for non-native English speakers

For applicants whose first language is not English, and whose full undergraduate degree was not taught in an

English-speaking country, it is necessary to hold/achieve a minimum score in an approved English language test as specified in Profile B of the [University's English Language Requirements Policy](#).

Applicants have the option to undertake one of the University's Pre-sessional English courses. You can find information about the University of Bristol's Pre-Sessional English courses at the [Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies website](#).

Additional requirements

There are no additional requirements for this programme.

Application process

Online application form

Applicants should complete the online application form, uploading all required documents directly into the application form. Guidance on uploading documents can be found in the [Guidance for online applications](#). Any paper documents received by post, or electronic documents received by email, will not be considered except in exceptional circumstances.

Applicants should make every effort to choose the correct programme in the application form by reading the prospectus entry and admissions statements fully. Applicants should [contact the relevant Admissions Team](#) if clarification is required.

Documents required

The required documents for this programme are listed below. Applications may not be considered until all required documents have been uploaded to the application form.

Applicants who have already submitted an application can upload additional documents into the 'Post-submission uploads' section of the application form. Information about how to upload documents to an application form can be found in our [Guidance for online applications](#).

Required documents for this programme are:

- **Two academic references (minimum):** References should be submitted electronically by the referee, using the online reference form. Alternatively, scanned copies of the original reference document(s) can be uploaded by the applicant.
If you graduated more than five years ago, or if professional experience is relevant to the application, professional references will be accepted in lieu of one academic reference. At least one referee should be familiar with the applicant's recent academic work. References must be written, signed and dated on official letter headed paper from the referee's organisation. They must include the referee's full contact details, i.e. postal address, telephone number and organisation email address. A [reference template](#) is available to show the required format. References supplied with a personal contact email address will not be accepted unless under exceptional circumstances, which must be explained within the reference. All references must be dated within the last two years.
- **Degree certificate(s)** from first and subsequent degrees. We require colour scans of original documents and certified translations of documents issued in any language other than English.
- **Academic transcripts** from first and subsequent degrees. We require colour scans of original documents and certified translations of documents issued in any language other than English. Transcripts must list all subjects taken and grades achieved to date, with the grade scale clearly displayed in the transcript. Applicants must clearly state their current average grade in the online application form.
- **Research statement.** Guidance on writing a research statement can be found on the [Law School website](#). You should use the research proposal to define and situate your 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
- **Personal statement:** Personal statements should highlight the motivation for applying for the course, and any relevant experience and/or skills.

Your personal statement should indicate your interest in the research area and why this is important to you. Please also explain why you are applying to University of Bristol, why you think you are a suitable candidate for your programme of study, and how your choice of programme fits with your future career plans.

- **English language certificates** are required from applicants for whom English is not the native language and whose full undergraduate degree was not taught in an English-speaking country (please see the English Language Requirements for a list of English-speaking countries).
- **Distance Learning supporting letter:** For the distance learning option only, applicants are also required to submit a supporting letter from any institution/organisation that they will depend upon for the purposes of completing their research

Optional documents for this programme are:

- **Curriculum Vitae (CV):** A CV is not required but can help an application. CVs might include details of other relevant qualifications to support an application. Please do not include any school (pre-university) certificates, unless otherwise specified above.
- **Additional References:** Applicants are welcome to upload additional references to further support an application. Professional references from work experience in a related field and/or industrial placements can help an application.
- **Research Training Statement:** A Research Training Statement is not required, but applicants are welcome to provide details of any training requirements to support their postgraduate studies. If there are no training requirements this section can be left blank.

Correspondence with applicants

Applicants will normally receive communication via email to the email address used to set up the application form account. Applicants should ensure the profile email address is kept up-to-date.

Selection process

Assessment of applications

All applicants are considered on an equal basis in line with the [University's Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

Once a complete application has been submitted with all required supporting documents, it is assessed by the research director in the first instance and, if considered of interest, by two academics working in the applicant's proposed subject area.

Students' progress is reviewed within 18 months of admission (or equivalent for part-time students). Students whose progress is unsatisfactory may exit with an MPhil award if they meet the necessary requirements. Full details are available on registration.

Where an applicant has undertaken a transnational education partnership programme or top-up degree, meeting the minimum academic entry criteria will not automatically mean an applicant will receive an offer. For these applicants, admissions decisions will consider the academic history of the applicant alongside

relevance of degree, and, if required, degree content, and performance in key modules.

Each applicant is considered both holistically on their own merit and in competition with the rest of the applicant cohort during the academic cycle.

Interviews

Following the initial application assessment an interview will be held with two academics in the applicant's subject area. It will either take place in Bristol or be held by telephone or via Skype. This interview forms a major part of the selection process.

The purpose of the interview is to assess whether the applicant currently 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 by telephone or Skype.

All interviews are conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom is trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques. All interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

PhD applicants may be interviewed by potential supervisors either in person, by Skype or by telephone. They should be prepared to talk about their research statement and methodology.

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.

Decisions

Notification of 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. If there is a deadline by which applicants must accept an offer of admission, this will be stated in the offer letter.

Offers

Offers will typically be made in line with the academic requirements set out above. Offers may be set above or below this level in recognition of an applicant's relevant qualifications and experience. Offer levels may also be adjusted in response to the level of competition for places in that application cycle.

Offers made may be conditional or unconditional. An unconditional offer will be made to successful 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, successful applicants will receive a conditional offer outlining the requirements that must be met.

If an applicant is not selected to receive an offer for the course to which they have originally applied, we may offer the opportunity to be considered for an alternative programme in a related subject area. In such cases applicants will receive an email notification providing any alternative course options and asking whether they wish to be considered for these. It may be necessary for applicants to submit additional documentation in order for the application to be fully considered for an alternative programme. Details of the documentation required can be found in the [admissions statement](#) for the relevant programme.

Deferrals

Deferred entry is available for this programme, subject to agreement. Please [contact the admissions team](#) if you would like to defer your start date.

Deferral may not be possible for funded students. Please contact the admissions team for advice.

Additional information

Extenuating Circumstances

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

The information provided on the form will be treated confidentially, and will help us to fairly assess your academic performance in light of your circumstances.

ATAS

An ATAS certificate is not required for this programme.

Deposits

Deposits are not required for this programme.

Visa

International students coming to the UK to study full-time must apply for a student visa. [Tier 4 student visa guidance notes](#) are available on the University website.

Sponsored Students

Sponsored students are not required to pay the deposit but will need to upload a copy of their sponsorship letter using the 'Post Submission Uploads' section of the online application. Sponsored students will also need to complete and upload the [sponsorship authorisation form](#).

Version 1.0	Created September 2018
Version 1.1	Amended 3/10/2018 – Entry requirements updated to include alternative requirement for a first-class honours degree in law (or equivalent) and evidence of ability to conduct independent and original research.