



Applying to competitive courses

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Introduction

- Background information about the University
- How does the University select their students
- Selection criteria
- Subject variations
- Using academic criteria
- Structure of the personal statement
- Personal statement examples
- Summary

Bristol the basics

- Based in the South West of England
- UK's most 8th populous city
- Vibrant city of perfect size
- Lots of green spaces
- Best City to live in the UK



Background information

- Established in 1876
- Part of the Russell Group
- Research intensive
- Strong academic focus
- 14,386 undergraduate students
- 6 academic faculties
- 40,000 applications for 5,000 places



The UCAS Application form

Section 1- Personal Details
Section 2- Additional Information
Section 3- Choices
Section 4- Education
Section 5- Employment
Section 6- Personal Statement
Section 7- References

5 Choices

Only chance to make a first impression

Could lead to an offer or an interview

How does Bristol select their students?

- Predicted A Level grades
- Subject combinations
- AS grades and unit marks
- GCSE grades
- Personal statement
- Tutor reference
- Test results: LNAT, BMAT, UKCAT
- Interviews

Selection criteria

- UCAS entry profiles
- University prospectus
- Departmental admission statements
- Information at open days
- Contact individual universities
- Check both academic criteria and tips for application/personal statement including skills, qualities and experience needed

Subject variations

Medicine – 5,000 apps for 216 places

English – 1,407 for 72 places

Geography – 1,411 for 92 places

History – 1,506 for 220 places

Law – 1,723 for 330 places

Social Policy – 88 apps for 26 places

Italian – 28 for 12 places

Engineering Maths – 100 for 25 places

Archaeology – 163 for 23 places

Academic criteria - scoring



Academic criteria – Law at Bristol (200 points)

Achieved/predicted A grades in 3 best A levels or equivalent (0-80) $A^*A^*A^*=80$

Achieved grades in 8 best GCSEs or equivalent (0-40) $8xA^*=40$

Performance on LNAT test (0-50)

Information on UCAS form – Personal statement and reference (0-30)

What impresses admissions tutors

- Interest in and commitment to the subject
- Reading and research beyond the syllabus
- Intellectual curiosity
- Strong study and analytical skills
- How you will benefit from study in HE
- Non-academic achievement
- High standard of written English

What impresses admissions tutors

- If you've thought carefully about what you like about the subject, you'll have a good starting point when you think about the personal statement

Tell the Admissions Tutor:

- What you like about the course and why you want to study it at university
- Anything relevant you've read or researched that wasn't part of the A Level syllabus
- Any masterclasses or summer schools you've been to, or relevant experience

Structure of the personal statement

- What course you are choosing and why
- How you have the relevant knowledge and skills
- Voluntary work and hobbies
- Final summary

Important to provide us with examples and how you match what the University wants!

Why this subject?

‘Throughout my education, my interest in studying Law has increased greatly. Not only does it appeal as a subject that will challenge me intellectually but also as one which I believe is central to the future direction of our society...’

What interests you about this subject?

‘...particularly how the critical decisions that affect our country are made. I am also keen to explore the moral, political and economic implications of such decisions on both individuals and marginalised groups in society.’

What not to do?

Provide us with examples that have not happened recently

"Helena, would you like a diagram of the human heart?" This is something my sister asked me when I was six years old. Then she taught me CPR and using initiative I made a drip using sandwich bags and string.

What not to do?

Insufficient reading or research into your subject

My fascination with the past began when I was introduced to dinosaurs at the age of one. Within months, I knew the names of all the commonly known dinosaurs and their basic behaviours.

How can you stand out?

Qualifications

- Have you got anything over and above the basic 3 A Level formula?

Research

- The market
- The course
- The selection criteria (not just the standard offer grades)
- Actual grades of successful applicants

Read around the subject

- Evidence of motivation and commitment

Tailor your application

- Evidence of close fit with selection criteria

Summary

- You need to ensure that you do your research
- Think about what you might be able to add into the application
- What can you do to make yourself stand out?
- Personal statement is **VERY** important

Any questions?



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