UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

SCHOOL FOR POLICY STUDIES ADMISSIONS STATEMENT, 2010-11

1.1 General

1.1.1 This admissions statement covers those undergraduate degree programmes offered by the School for Policy Studies (SPS). This Statement should be read in conjunction with University's Admissions Principles and Procedures (http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions-policy.html). Unless otherwise stated the information contained in this statement relates to applicants for both Single and Joint Honours degree programmes.

1.2 Single Honours Degree Programmes

1.2.1 SPS offers Single Honours degree programmes in:

- Single Honours Social Policy (UCAS code L400)

&

- Childhood Studies (UCAS code L520)

1.3 Joint Honours Degree Programmes

1.3.1 Joint Honours degree programmes are offered in:

- Joint Honours Social Policy & Sociology (UCAS code LL43)
- Joint Honours Social Policy & Politics (UCAS code LL42)
- Joint Honours Social Policy & Philosophy (UCAS code L400 – please discuss your wish to study philosophy in your personal statement)

1.4 Admissions Enquiries

Please use the following email address for all undergraduate admissions enquiries.

socsci-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk

1.5 Assessment for all types of applicant

1.5.1 UCAS form

1.5.1.1 Normally applicants are assessed only on the basis of their UCAS form. A number of factors are taken into account when assessing an applicant's UCAS form (see section 2.1).

1.5.1.2 Two members of the departmental admissions team consider all UCAS forms independently, except in the case of UCAS forms for the Joint

Honours degree programmes where the two members are the Admissions Tutors from each department concerned.

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

1.5.1.4 Wherever possible, all candidates are contacted by the University within 4 weeks of their application being received, to establish contact and inform the candidate of the process to be followed.

1.5.2 Interviews

1.5.2.1 On some occasions it is necessary to interview applicants where the UCAS form does not provide sufficient information on which to base a decision or where it is necessary to distinguish between applicants presenting similar academic profiles. If invited to interview, candidates will be informed whether this forms part of the selection process.

1.5.2.2 All interviews intended to select students are conducted by two people, including a member of staff with training in fair and effective recruitment techniques and are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

1.5.3 Supplementary Written Material

1.5.3.1 Candidates may be asked to provide supplementary written work in cases where the form does not provide sufficient information on which to base a decision or where it is necessary to distinguish between candidates presenting similar academic profiles.

1.6 Open Days

1.6.1 All non-mature candidates with offers are invited to attend a departmental Open Day. Joint Honours candidates will also be invited to attend an Open Day by their other 'joint' school. Candidates for joint honours are welcome to attend either or both departmental open days. There will be opportunity to visit the joint department and meet with a tutor from that department on the day. Open day attendance is optional but we hope students will take the opportunity of visiting the University.

1.6.2 Mature students with offers will be invited to attend a dedicated Mature Student's Open Day. This will involve specially prepared lectures and seminars relevant to their degree course, as well as talks by previous students on the 'mature student experience'. Open day attendance is optional but we hope students will take the opportunity of visiting the University.

2. Criteria for assessing candidates

2.1. General

2.1.1 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 is provided in the UCAS application.

2.1.2 We also consider evidence of clear motivation to study. This may include attendance at a University summer school, a targeted Access Scheme (such as Access to Bristol), or participation in Aimhigher outreach activities. Consideration will also be given to applicants who have completed a targeted Access scheme at another university, under the 'Mutual Recognition Scheme'.

2.1.3 We do not take the following into consideration when making admissions decisions: the school type attended by an applicant or whether an applicant's parent has any experience of higher education.

2.1.4 The School takes into account the following when assessing candidates;

- Academic performance including 'A' Level performance or prediction, normally based on 3 'A' Levels (or equivalent)
- GCSE (or equivalent) or AS levels
- School/college performance and educational disadvantage (see section 2.5)
- Personal statement
- Reference
- Exceptional circumstances

2.1.5 The School does not operate a scoring system.

2.2. Actual or predicted examination performance at A' Level or equivalent

2.2.1 A-levels may be in any subject (excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking). However, when we come to select applicants, all other things being equal, preference might be given to those showing aptitude in subjects that have the most relevance to the studies you will undertake here; in our case to social science and (for Childhood Studies) science subjects.

2.2.2 Neither General Studies nor Critical Thinking will be considered by the department.

2.2.3 Applicants will normally have a GCSE in English and Maths at C or higher. Childhood Studies applicants normally will additionally have a Science GCSE at grade C or higher.

2.3 Non-A Level entrants

2.3.1 Non-A level entrants including ACCESS students, BTEC and HND students will also be assessed according to academic performance.

2.4 English Language requirements

2.4.1 English Language requirements can be found in the UG Prospectus:

http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2011/applying/sections/SPOL/dept_intro

and at:

http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions-english-lang-reqs.html

2.5 Educational disadvantage

2.5.1 The School takes into account information on school/college performance which relates to educational disadvantage. We may make lower 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: (http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions-policy.html).

2.6 The Personal Statement

2.6.1 The Personal Statement is considered very carefully by the Admissions Tutors because it provides an opportunity for the student to demonstrate their suitability for their chose course.

2.6.2 Admissions tutors take into account the following when assessing personal statements;

- Interest and commitment to subject
- The candidate's declared interests and aspirations
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding, analytical skills
- Relevant paid and unpaid work
- Positions of responsibility at school/college or work
- Non-academic achievement
- Standard of written English
- Responses to challenges faced
- Hobbies and interests

2.7 The school/college reference:

2.7.1 Admissions tutors take into account the following when assessing references;

- Academic progress
- Interest and commitment to subject
- Appropriateness of the chosen Bristol course in relation to the candidate's declared interests and aspirations
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding, analytical skills
- Positions of responsibility at school/college or work
- Non-academic achievement
- Responses to challenges faced

2.8 Exceptional circumstances

2.8.1 A small number of applicants will have had their academic performance affected by adverse personal circumstances including illness, family difficulties, etc. The School will consider these issues on a case-by-case basis.

2.9 Interview

2.9.1 Criteria for assessing performance at interview, if required include:

- Interest in subject
- Evidence of motivation
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding
- Academic and non-academic achievement and/or experience
- Communication skills

2.10 Supplementary written work

2.10.1 Criteria for assessing performance in written work, if required include:

- Standard of written communication
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding
- Subject knowledge

2.11 Anti-discrimination

2.11.1 The School does not discriminate against candidates on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, disability or age.

3. Entry Requirements and offers

Academic entry requirements and typical offers for A-levels and other UK qualifications (SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Bacc, 14-19 Diploma, GCSEs) can be found in the in the online UG Prospectus:

Social Policy (single and joint):

http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2011/applying/sections/SPOL/dept_intro

Childhood Studies:

http://www.bris.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2011/sections/ECHI/dept_intro

Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits; further information is available at:

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/study-at-bristol/how-to-apply/country-specific/

Offers to applicants with non-standard qualifications will be made equivalent to the published A-level offer.