



# 2023 UCAT OFFICIAL GUIDE

Issue: April 2023

University Clinical Aptitude Test for Medicine and Dentistry

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# ABOUT UCAT

## What is the UCAT?

The University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) is an admissions test used by a consortium of UK and International Universities to help select applicants for their medical and dental degree programmes.

It is used in collaboration with other admissions processes such as the UCAS application and academic qualifications.

It is also your opportunity to stand out from other applicants and demonstrate your aptitude for a demanding programme of study.

The UCAT does not contain any curriculum or science content. It focuses on exploring the cognitive powers of candidates and other attributes considered to be valuable for health care professionals.



### Which Universities require the test?

All applicants should check the entry requirements for each course with the relevant university before booking a test. Alternative requirements apply to certain applicants to courses with an asterisk (\*). The **UCAT website** has the most up to date list.

UK Universities		
A20	University of Aberdeen	A100, A201
A60	Anglia Ruskin University	A100
A80	Aston University	A100
B32	University of Birmingham	A100, A200
B78	University of Bristol	A100, A108, A206, A208
B84	Brunel University London	A100
C15	Cardiff University	A100*, A200
C30	University of Central Lancashire	A100*, A202
C55	University of Chester	A101
D65	University of Dundee	A100, A200
E14	University of East Anglia	A100, A104
E42	Edge Hill University	A100, A110
E56	University of Edinburgh	A100
E84	University of Exeter	A100*
G28	University of Glasgow	A100, A200
H75	Hull York Medical School	A100, A108
K12	Keele University	A100*, A104
K31	Kent and Medway Medical School	A100
K60	King's College London	A100, A101, A102, A202, A205, A206
L23	University of Leeds	A100, A101, A200
L34	University of Leicester	A100, A199
L41	University of Liverpool	A100*, A200
M20	University of Manchester	A104, A106, A204, A206, A300, A301
N21	University of Newcastle	A100, A101, A206
N84	University of Nottingham	A100, A10L, A108, A18L
P60	Plymouth University	A100, A206
Q50	Queen Mary University of London	A100, A101, A110, A200
Q75	Queen's University Belfast	A100, A200*
S18	University of Sheffield	A100, A101, A200
S27	University of Southampton	A100, A101, A102
S36	University of St Andrews	A100, A990
S49	St George's, University of London	A100, BB96
S84	University of Sunderland	A100
S85	University of Surrey	A101
W20	University of Warwick	A101
W80	University of Worcester	A101

### International Universities

UCAT is also used in selection to the following courses:

American University of the Caribbean	Doctor of Medicine (MD) Program
University of Kurdistan Hewlêr	Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS)
Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKC-Medicine), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS)

### Who should take the test?

The UCAT is a compulsory entry requirement for applicants to relevant medical or dental degree courses at our UK and International Consortium Universities. You are required to sit the test between 10 July and 28 September 2023 if you are intending to apply for entry in 2024 (or deferred entry in 2025). UCAT results cannot be carried over from one year to the next.

It is your responsibility to book and sit your test within the test window.

You may only take the test once in any test cycle.

Candidates applying to Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKC Medicine) at Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) or to any Australian/New Zealand consortium universities should visit the **Eligibility** page of our website for further advice on sitting the test.

### Where can I take the test?

The UCAT is delivered in Pearson VUE test centres throughout the UK and worldwide. You should use the **Test Centre Locator** on our website to find your nearest test centre.

Consortium Universities expect international applicants to take the test, which could mean travelling to another country. If travel to a test centre is difficult because of distance, pandemic, war, civil unrest or natural disaster you should refer to the information on **OnVUE online proctored testing** before booking your test.

### Key dates 2023

16 May	Account creation opens Bursary and Access Arrangement applications open
20 June	Booking opens
10 July	Testing begins
19 September	Access Arrangement application deadline
21 September	Booking deadline
28 September	Last test day
29 September	Bursary Scheme application deadline
16 October	UCAS application deadline
Early November	Results delivered to universities



## Test Format

### Overview

The UCAT assesses a range of mental abilities identified by university Medical and Dental Schools as important. The standard test is 2 hours and consists of five separately timed subtests in multiple-choice format. There are four cognitive subtests (Verbal Reasoning, Decision Making, Quantitative Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning) and a fifth non-cognitive subtest of Situational Judgement.

Once the test has started it cannot be paused but each subtest is preceded by a 1 minute instruction section.

Subtests	Test Time	Questions
<b>Verbal reasoning</b> - assesses your ability to critically evaluate information presented in a written form	21 minutes	44 questions
<b>Decision making</b> - assesses your ability to make sound decisions and judgements using complex information	31 minutes	29 questions
<b>Quantitative reasoning</b> - assesses your ability to critically evaluate information presented in a numerical form	25 minutes	36 questions
<b>Abstract reasoning</b> - assesses your use of convergent and divergent thinking to infer relationships from information	12 minutes	50 questions
<b>Situational judgement</b> - measures your capacity to understand real world situations and to identify critical factors and appropriate behaviour in dealing with them.	26 minutes	69 questions

## UCAT Scoring

The UCAT is marked on the number of correct answers you give. There is no negative marking for incorrect answers.

### Cognitive subtest scoring

For each subtest raw marks are converted to scaled scores in a range from 300 to 900.

A total scaled score is generated by summing the individual scaled scores of Verbal Reasoning, Decision Making, Quantitative Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning. The total scaled score ranges from 1200 to 3600.

Cognitive Subtests	Questions	Scaled Score Range	Marking
Verbal Reasoning	44	300 - 900	Questions are worth 1 mark each.
Decision Making	29	300 - 900	Single answer questions are worth 1 mark. Multiple statement questions are worth 2 marks. 1 mark is awarded to partially correct responses on the multiple-statement questions.
Quantitative Reasoning	36	300 - 900	Questions are worth 1 mark each.
Abstract Reasoning	50	300 - 900	Questions are worth 1 mark each.

### Situational Judgement scoring

Within the Situational Judgement Test (SJT) full marks are awarded for a question if the response matches the correct answer and partial marks awarded if the response is close to the correct answer.

Scores for the Situational Judgement Test are expressed in one of four bands, with band 1 being the highest. Alongside your band, you are given an interpretation of your performance:

Band 1	Demonstrates an excellent level of performance, showing similar judgement in most cases to the panel of experts.
Band 2	Demonstrates a good, solid level of performance, showing appropriate judgement frequently, with many responses matching model answers.
Band 3	Demonstrates a modest level of performance, with appropriate judgement shown for some questions and substantial differences from ideal responses for others.
Band 4	Performance was low, with judgement tending to differ substantially from ideal responses in many cases.

As the SJT is a measure of non-cognitive attributes, it will be considered by universities in a different manner to the cognitive subtests. Please refer to their websites for more details.

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# REGISTER

## Registration and Booking

Registration for the UCAT is a two-step process of registering an account and booking a test, using the Pearson VUE registration system.

**Important Note** - If you created a UCAT Account in a previous year, regardless of whether you sat the test or not, please refer to the page for **Returning Candidates** on our website before proceeding.

### Registration (Step one - Create a UCAT Account)

You must create a UCAT account before you can book a test. This can be done from 16 May 2023 by following the instructions on our [website](#).

Register with your legal name exactly as it appears on the photo ID you intend to present when you test. If there is not an acceptable match, you may be unable to test and may lose your test fee.

After creating your account (which may take up to 24 hours) you will receive an email from Pearson VUE containing your username. You can log in to your account using the username and password you set up during registration.

You need to register for your test personally – this cannot be done by your school or college.



Before you proceed to Step two, please give consideration to the following important aspects which may be applicable to you:

**Prior to booking a test - please give consideration to the following:**

### Bursary Scheme

UK candidates in financial need may apply for a UCAT Bursary Voucher to cover the full test fee. To check your eligibility please refer to the information on the [Bursary Scheme page](#) and apply **before** you book your test.

### Access Arrangements

Candidates who are normally entitled to extra time, rest breaks or other accommodations in their exams should refer to the [Access Arrangements](#) information **before** booking their test.

### Booking (Step two -Book a Test)

Once you have registered you will be able to book your test through your UCAT account. You are strongly recommended to book a test date early in the test cycle.

If you choose to book a late test date and encounter illness or other issues which prevent you from attending your test appointment you may not be able to reschedule.

It is your responsibility to ensure your booking is made successfully in advance of the booking deadline of 21 September 2023.

You should book a standard test unless you are eligible for extra time in public exams. Please see the [Access Arrangements](#) section of this guide for more information. It is your responsibility to book the correct test.

### Test Fees

The following test fees apply in 2023:

Tests taken in the UK	£70
Tests taken outside the UK	£115

The test fee is payable at the time of booking by major debit/credit card. If you are approved for a UCAT Bursary you will be given a voucher code to use as payment for your test.

### Rescheduling and Cancelling

You can reschedule or cancel your test centre appointment through your UCAT account as long as you give appropriate notice.

Rescheduling or cancellation must be done a full 24 hours before your test. If you miss this deadline you will need to pay a further fee for the rescheduled test. The availability of dates and times will be extremely limited in the last two weeks of testing.

Once booking closes (12 noon BST on 21 September) you need to phone Pearson VUE Customer Services to reschedule or cancel your test.

You cannot cancel or reschedule a test by email.

If you miss your test for any reason and have not cancelled and rescheduled in time you will not be eligible for a refund. Please see the [Rescheduling and Cancelling](#) page of the UCAT website for full details.



## Bursary Scheme

**Our Bursary Scheme enables UK candidates in financial need to sit the UCAT for free.**

The Bursary scheme opens on 16 May 2023 at 9.30am (BST)

Application deadline: 29 September 2023 at 4pm (BST)

Applications must be made by completing the online bursary application form and providing correct supporting evidence.

We strongly recommend you apply for a bursary voucher **before** you book your test.

If you have already paid for your test, you can arrange a refund up until the voucher expiry date of 16 October 2023 by contacting Pearson VUE Customer Services.

Full details regarding the evidence we accept as proof of eligibility and the online application form are given on the **Bursary Scheme** page of our website.

## Bursary Eligibility

To be eligible for a bursary you or a parent / guardian need to be in receipt of one of the following:

- **Free School Meals**
- **16 to 19 Bursary** or **Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)**
- **Learner Support (FE 19+)** (or equivalent FE funding for Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)
- **Undergraduate Student Finance maintenance award (full rate)**
- **Universal Credit**
- **Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Working or Child Tax Credit**
- **Asylum Support.**



## Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements are available to disabled candidates. This may apply to candidates with Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, ASD, hearing or vision impairments, physical disabilities, ADHD or mental health conditions.

Access arrangements should be arranged in advance of testing, and some arrangements require you to make an online application with supporting evidence before you can book a test.

You can apply for Access Arrangements from 16 May 2023 until the deadline of 12 noon BST on 19 September 2023.

This page outlines the access arrangements we can provide in our test centres.

### What access arrangements can be arranged?

#### Extra test time and/or rest breaks

Requests for extra test time and/or rest breaks must be approved by the UCAT Office before an extended test can be booked.

We offer the following extended versions of the UCAT:

- **UCATSEN** - 25% extra test time.
- **UCATSA** - rest breaks only.
- **UCATSENSA** - 25% extra test time and rest breaks.
- **UCATSEN50** - 50% extra test time.

#### Special Test Centre Accommodations

These must be approved by the UCAT Office before you can book your test.

- Separate room\* - evidence must specify you need separate invigilation.
- Access to medical items or medically necessary food/drink at your workstation (e.g. for diabetes) not included on the comfort aid list (below). This arrangement requires a separate room.

#### Test Centre Accommodations

Whilst these do not need approval from the UCAT Office, they must still be booked at least 5 working days before your test by phoning Pearson VUE Customer Services.

- Wheelchair access\*
- Adjustable height desk\*
- ZoomText
- Coloured overlays (provided by candidate)

\* subject to test centre availability

#### Comfort aids

Items on the **Pearson VUE Comfort Aid List** can be taken into the test room and do not require prior approval.

### How do I apply for access arrangements?

Full details of how to apply for Access Arrangements, what evidence is required, and how to book extended tests and any accommodations are given on the **Access Arrangements** page of our website.

Please ensure you read all the information carefully and apply well in advance of when you wish to book your test.

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# PREPARE

## Preparing for the Test

The UCAT is an important test. Although it is a test of aptitude rather than academic knowledge, you should still allow time to prepare thoroughly.

We would recommend you spend around 25-30 hours preparing for the UCAT. This is the amount of preparation done by the highest scoring candidates. It's best to start at least 4-6 weeks before your test date and do 'little and often' each day, building up your practice gradually as you near your test date.

Below we review each subtest in turn and then move on to how to prepare for the test.



## Verbal Reasoning

The Verbal Reasoning subtest assesses your ability to read and think carefully about information presented in passages and to determine whether specific conclusions can be drawn from information presented. You are not expected to use prior knowledge to answer the questions.

UCAT Test Time	Questions
21 minutes (plus 1 minute instruction time)	44 questions associated with 11 reading passages

### Why Verbal Reasoning?

Doctors and dentists need excellent verbal reasoning skills in many aspects of their work. An ability to understand complex information and communicate this clearly and simply to patients is essential. Medical practitioners must also be able to interpret findings from published materials and apply this to their own practice. It is essential they are able to critique such materials and draw their own conclusion as to the validity of any findings.

### Verbal Reasoning Questions

You will be presented with eleven passages of text, each associated with four questions.

There are two different question types in this subtest:

- a question or incomplete statement with four answer options where you are required to pick the most suitable response.
- a question where you must determine, on the basis of the information in the passage, whether a statement is true, false or you can't tell.

### Verbal Reasoning Strategies

- You are unlikely to be familiar with the content of the text shown to you. Do not draw on existing knowledge as this will not be relevant.
- Think about how you will plan your time in this section.
- Work on your speed reading skills during your preparation by reading articles in the newspapers and learning to extract the key facts quickly.
- Some candidates recommend reading the question first and then scanning for the correct answer, rather than reading the whole passage. Try to find the strategy that works best for you.



The best thing to prepare for Verbal Reasoning is to read a newspaper or even non-fiction books daily, examining the arguments and techniques used. Learn to unpick arguments and read quickly. If you read for 15 minutes every day, you'll gradually become better, and this section will seem very easy by the time you have to take the UCAT."

**Jonathan, 99th percentile**

## Decision Making

The Decision Making subtest assesses your ability to apply logic to reach a decision or conclusion, evaluate arguments and analyse statistical information.

UCAT Test Time	Questions
31 minutes (plus 1 minute instruction time)	29 questions associated with diagrams, text, charts or graphs

### Why Decision Making?

Doctors and dentists are often required to make decisions in situations that may be complex. This requires high-level problem solving skills and the ability to assess and manage risk and deal with uncertainty.

### Decision Making Questions

You will be presented with 29 questions that may refer to text, charts, tables, graphs or diagrams. Additional information may be presented within the question itself.

All questions are standalone and do not share data. Some questions will have four answer options but only one correct answer; others will require you to respond to five statements by placing a 'yes' or 'no' answer next to each statement.

There are a variety of different question types in the subtest, including logical puzzles, syllogisms and Venn diagrams.

Knowledge of specific mathematical or logical reasoning terminology is not required to answer any questions, however some definitions for common Decision Making terms can be found in the **Question Tutorials** on our website.

A simple on-screen calculator is available for use in this section. You may also need to use your notebook and pen.

### Decision Making Strategies

- There are a number of different question types; if there are some you find more challenging, consider flagging these for review and answering those you find easier first.
- It may help you to write out or draw the information given in the question. Make sure you have your notebook and pen to hand.
- Some questions require you to 'drag and drop' the correct response. Practice this functionality in the Tour Tutorial.
- Brush up on your maths skills around probability and Venn diagrams.
- Some items ask you to weigh arguments for and against a particular solution to a problem. You must suspend your own beliefs to reach the strongest conclusion.



Identify the types of questions you struggle with early so that you have time to practise them, look for common question types and work out strategies for answering them quickly. Figure out the type of questions which take you the longest so that you can flag them and leave them to complete at the end of the test.

#### Niamh, 98th percentile



## Quantitative Reasoning

The Quantitative Reasoning subtest assesses your ability to use numerical skills to solve problems. It assumes familiarity with numbers to the standard of a good pass at GCSE. However, items are less to do with numerical facility and more to do with problem solving (i.e. knowing what information to use and how to manipulate it using simple calculations and ratios).

UCAT Test Time	Questions
25 minutes (plus 1 minute instruction time)	36 questions associated with tables, charts, and/or graphs

### Why Quantitative Reasoning?

Doctors and dentists are constantly required to review data and apply it to their own practice. On a practical level drug calculations based on patient weight, age and other factors have to be correct. At a more advanced level, medical and dental research requires an ability to interpret, critique and apply results presented in the form of complex statistics. Universities considering applicants need to know they have the aptitude to cope in these situations.

### Quantitative Reasoning Questions

You are required to solve problems by extracting relevant information from tables and other numerical presentations. Most questions will be shown as a set of four questions each connected to the same data. There are some questions that stand alone and do not share data. Each question has five answer options, but only one correct response.

A simple on-screen calculator is available for use in this section. The calculator is integrated into the practice tests and we strongly recommend that you familiarise yourself with using it.

### Quantitative Reasoning Strategies

- Timing, as in all subtests, is very important so be sure to pace yourself during the test. Check how you are doing halfway through and adjust your speed accordingly.
- Read the questions carefully – individual words and units may be crucial in answering the question correctly.
- In the first place try to understand the question being asked - this will help you to focus quickly on the relevant aspects of the scenario presented.
- Use the provided notebook and pen provided to assist with your calculations.
- Review where there might be gaps in your maths. You may need to work out percentages, averages, ratios and fractions – remind yourself how to do some of these calculations if they are causing you problems.
- If you are finding a question difficult, eliminate the more obvious incorrect answers and make an educated guess.
- Practice your mental arithmetic to speed up your answering by reducing your reliance on the calculator.



For me the most challenging sub-test was quantitative reasoning. I initially assumed that this was just simple maths and ignored it for a while. It was only later that I realised how constricting the timing was. While practising I learnt how important it was to not dwell on any questions and just guess and move on if I got stuck.

If I needed to use the calculator I made sure 'number-lock' was turned on and I used the set of number keys on the right hand side of the keyboard."

**Rahul, 99th percentile**

## Abstract Reasoning

Abstract Reasoning assesses your ability to identify patterns amongst abstract shapes where irrelevant and distracting material may lead to incorrect conclusions. The test therefore measures your ability to change track, critically evaluate and generate hypotheses and requires you to query judgements as you go along.

UCAT Test Time	Questions
12 minutes (plus 1 minute instruction time)	50 questions associated with sets of shapes

### Why Abstract Reasoning?

When considering possible diagnoses, medical practitioners may be presented with a set of symptoms and/or results. Some information may be more reliable, more relevant and clearer than other information. Doctors and Dentists need to make judgements about such information, identifying the information which will help them reach conclusions. Carrying out research involving data often involves identifying patterns in results in order to generate further hypotheses.

### Abstract Reasoning Questions

You are presented with questions associated with sets of shapes.

Most questions are shown in sets of five, each connected to the same sets of shapes. There are some questions that stand alone. Each question has three or four answer options. You may only select one response.

There are four different question types in this subtest. You may be asked to:

- decide whether an example test shape belongs to Shape Set A, Shape Set B or Neither;
- select the next shape in a series;
- determine which shape completes a statement;
- decide which shape belongs to a particular Shape Set.

### Abstract Reasoning Strategies

- Timing is very challenging in this section so if you can't see the pattern, don't waste time; flag this set of questions and move on to the next set of shapes. You can revisit it at the end of the subtest if you have time.
- For questions where you are presented with two sets of shapes, remember to leave time to review set A and set B at the beginning of each set of questions. What links shapes in set A and those in set B will often be linked in some way – remembering this may help you ignore distracting information. Once you have identified what links each set you are half way there.
- Consider patterns around size and shape of objects; number of objects; sides of objects; shading and colour; symmetry, number of angles, position and direction... this sounds complicated but as you look at these shapes you will start to grasp what you need to focus on.
- Consider using an acronym to help you remember common rules, and jot this down at the start of the subtest.



Abstract reasoning was the subtest I found the most challenging at the beginning. It was something completely new to me that I simply couldn't get my head round! But by doing simpler questions first to build my confidence (and, more importantly, to get an idea of the patterns that constantly came up), before moving onto more difficult questions, was a system that worked for me. The biggest thing you can do to improve is to do practice questions as inevitably you will get better over time."

**Ayaz, 99th percentile**



## Situational Judgement

The test measures your capacity to understand real world situations and to identify critical factors and appropriate behaviour in dealing with them. Questions do not require medical or procedural knowledge.

UCAT Test Time	Questions
26 minutes (plus 1 minute instruction time)	69 questions associated with various scenarios (with up to 6 associated questions)

### Why Situational Judgement?

The test assesses integrity, perspective taking, team involvement, resilience and adaptability. SJTs are used widely in medical and dental selection, including selection of Foundation Doctors and Dentists, GPs and other medical specialities.

### Situational Judgement Questions

You are presented with a set of hypothetical scenarios based in a clinical setting or during educational training for a medical or dental career.

Each scenario may have up to six questions associated with it.

Some questions ask you to rate the importance or appropriateness of a series of statements in response to each scenario. There are four answer options, but you are only able to select one response.

Other questions require you to choose the most and least appropriate action to take in response to the scenario, from the three actions provided.

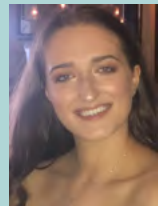
### Situational Judgement Strategies

- Read each scenario and response thoroughly before answering.
- Remember, there are different styles of questions in this subtest; read the instructions carefully to make sure you understand what you have to do.
- Within a scenario, each rating can be used more than once or not at all. For example, all answer options can be given the same rating of very appropriate.
- Responses should relate to what an individual should do, rather than what they may be likely to do.
- Answer options should be treated independently. You should make a judgement as to the appropriateness or importance of an answer option independent from the other options presented within the scenario.



For SJT look at lots of past questions, and read through the explanations or model answers that are given as feedback. A general summary of any appropriate answer would be that the idea proposed is a local, direct solution to the problem, that doesn't reflect badly upon the profession and always puts the patient first."

**Emma, 99th percentile**





- Answer options provided are not intended to represent all possible options. The response you think would be the most appropriate/most important may not be present.
- Some options may be appropriate/important in the short term (i.e. immediately addressing a wrong doing) and some are appropriate/important in the long term (discussing the implications of the wrong doing after the event). Consider answer options irrelevant of the timeframe. A answer option may still be an appropriate thing to do even if it is not something that can be done immediately.
- When deciding which is the most / least appropriate action, all of the possible options may be good actions to take, the question is asking you to prioritise, or rank, the actions.

If you are struggling with this subtest, try reading the General Medical Council (GMC) guidance on '**Good Medical Practice**' as part of your preparation. Previous high-scoring candidates said they found it helpful to apply the general principles contained in these documents to the scenarios in the questions.



## Preparation Resources

We advise you to prepare for the test using the free official practice materials which have been developed by the UCAT Consortium. The resources and advice outlined below and have been produced by UCAT using feedback from previous high-scoring candidates.



- Begin by looking at the **UCAT Preparation Plan** which provides a suggested approach and timetable for preparing for your test. This is also available to view as a short **video**.



- Use the **Tour Tutorial** to familiarise yourself with the onscreen test format, learn how to move through the test, how to flag and review questions, and to use the on-screen calculator provided.



- Watch the **Question Tutorials** which include general advice on how to approach the test as well as giving an overview of each of the different subtests within the UCAT. Each in-depth tutorial includes tips and strategies on how to approach and answer each of the different question types within all five subtests..



- Did you know that we provide over 1,000 FREE practice questions on our website? Once you understand the different sections of the test, begin using our online **Question Banks** which contain hundreds of example questions which you can use to familiarise yourself with the format and style of questions for each subtest.



- An essential part of your preparation should be to use the official UCAT **Practice Tests**. We provide four fully timed tests which mimic the live testing experience. Questions are of an equivalent standard to those you will encounter in the test and you can review your responses against answer rationales. The practice tests are also vital in helping you to understand the time limitations in each section and to develop strategies to approach each subtest with this in mind.



- Visit our **Candidate Advice** pages to hear a selection of high-scoring candidates talk about their experience and offer their advice on how they prepared for the UCAT.



- You can watch a number of videos to support your preparation by finding **OfficialUCAT** on **Vimeo** and **Youtube**. High-scoring candidates share advice on their preparation and overall test experience, plus a selection of Admissions Tutors from our UK Consortium Universities share their thoughts on the use of the test and what they look for in an applicant.



The mock tests on the UCAT website are the most valuable resource you have; don't waste them by attempting them before you've done any preparation. Find a bank of questions and get practice on each type before trying a mock test."

**Adam, 99th percentile**

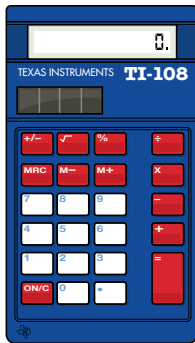


## Test Tools

### Calculator

A simple on-screen calculator is available for the Decision Making and Quantitative Reasoning subtests. To access this click on the icon in the top left hand side of your screen.

The calculator will look similar to this:



The calculator can be operated by using the mouse or the number pad on the keyboard; ensure that **Num Lock** is on for the number pad to work.

The calculator is integrated into the practice materials and we strongly recommend that you familiarise yourself with the functionality. You can find further details on the calculator on the **Test Tools** page of the website.

### Keyboard Shortcuts

Keyboard shortcuts can be used to navigate through the test if you find this preferable to using the mouse.

Wherever there is a letter underlined, the **Alt** key can be used with the underlined letter as a keyboard short cut, e.g. Alt + N = Next (as displayed below) and Alt + P = Previous.



The shortcuts available at any time during the test depend on which screen is currently being viewed.

You can find further information on the **Test Tools** page of the website.

### Note taking

You may wish to take notes or do workings out during your test, particularly in the Decision Making and Quantitative Reasoning subtests. If you are sitting your test at a test centre, you will be given a laminated notebook and a pen. If you require an additional set, raise your hand and request one from the invigilator.

The invigilator will have checked the pen is working before giving it out. You may wish to check this before you start to avoid the need to seek assistance during testing. If you are not given a notebook and a pen when you enter the test room, you should request them by raising your hand. Failure to do so will not be considered a mitigating circumstance.

### Flag for Review

If you are struggling with a question, you may want to flag the question in order to review it, if you have time remaining at the end of the subtest.

To flag a question, click the 'Flag for Review' icon at the top right of the screen. It will change colour to indicate the question has been flagged.

Questions you have flagged for review will then be highlighted on the Review Screen, as will any incomplete (unanswered) questions.

You will only see the Review Screen if you have reached the end of the subtest and still have time remaining. From there you can use your remaining time to revisit any questions you may have flagged or left unanswered.

### Navigator

The Navigator function at the bottom right of the screen allows you to navigate to questions within a subtest.

## Final Tips and Advice

We regularly interview our highest-scoring candidates for their advice on how they prepared for the test. Some of this feedback, along with our own advice, is below:

- Candidates who take our test early do better - FACT! Doing this will allow you to concentrate on other things (such as your UCAS application). If you book early you will have your choice of test slots and if you then feel unwell or unprepared you can reschedule. This might not be easy in the final weeks of testing.
- If you've not studied mathematics beyond GCSE level (or recently), make additional time to revisit and practice your maths skills as this will impact on performance in the Quantitative Reasoning section in particular.
- Once you've worked out the subtests you are better at, focus your preparation on those with which you are less confident, using the answer rationales to see where you may be going wrong.
- Try to practise under conditions that replicate the test centre environment where possible, i.e. using a keyboard and a mouse, and use the onscreen calculator rather than your own handheld calculator to ensure you're familiar with this on test day.
- Many candidates don't complete all questions in the test. Use the official practice tests as you get nearer to your test date to ensure you are managing your time effectively.
- Try not to leave unanswered questions. If you are finding a question difficult, eliminate the more obvious incorrect answers, then make your best guess from those that are left.
- No points are deducted for wrong answers. If you are struggling with a question, make your best guess and move on. You can flag it for review and come back to it later.
- Using the Flag and Review functions effectively featured strongly in advice from previous high scorers when asked how they managed the time constraints of the test.
- If you are not well, you must reschedule your test to a later date – even if you lose your test fee. In presenting yourself for testing, you are declaring yourself fit.
- Seek advice from your school/college or via online student forums from previous test takers. The Candidate Advice page of our website is also a great source of information. Remember, you're not alone in this!
- Finally, stay calm during the test. If a subtest has not gone well, try to clear your mind before the next section and stay positive!

### What about commercial companies?

Whilst there are many commercial companies publishing books and offering coaching for our test, the UCAT Consortium does not work with any of these companies or endorse the use of their materials.

We strongly advise candidates to use the official Practices Tests and Question Banks on our website, and to be cautious about using resources from any commercial providers as these are not affiliated with UCAT in any way.



You'll probably get tired of hearing this, but reflection is incredibly important. After each practice session, reflect on what the questions you answered were asking for and ask yourself is there a quicker or easier way to do this? Is there a reason why the answer couldn't possibly be any of the other options?

In doing this, you become a lot better at ruling out answers so even if you feel pushed for time you can make a very good guess."

**Olukayode, 99th percentile**



## Resources for Teachers and Advisers

We believe that everyone should have access to free preparation materials to support their test preparation, and do not endorse any commercial companies offering training or coaching in the UCAT.

All our official UCAT preparation materials are free for candidates to use and we advise them to prepare for the test using the official practice materials developed by the UCAT Consortium.

These can be found on the [Preparation Resources](#) page of our website.

We also provide the resources below to assist teachers and advisers in informing their students about this important admissions test.



Schools and colleges can use our UCAT 2023 UCAT Overview Presentation when advising prospective candidates about the 2023 UCAT or for running a UCAT overview session at their own institution



The UCAT 2023 Overview is also available as video with voiceover if you prefer this format.



A UCAT 2023 poster (A3) is available for you to print off and display in your library or sixth form common area, as appropriate.

These resources can be found on the [Resources for Teachers and Advisers](#) page of our website.

## When to talk to students about the UCAT

Students need to sit the test before the UCAS application deadline of 16 October 2023 (for students entering university in September 2024).

We recommend schools and colleges inform students who may be considering applying to Medicine or Dentistry, well in advance of the end of Year 12 (UK), S5 (Scotland) or Year 14 (Northern Ireland). This ensures they have sufficient time to prepare for, and sit the test, before returning to school in September.

The ideal time to discuss the UCAT is around April or May, as this ensures candidates are aware of the need to sit the test before registration opens on 16 May 2023.

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# SIT

## Sitting the UCAT

It's essential that you familiarise yourself with the important information on the **Test Day** page website so that you know what to expect on your test day and what to do if there is a problem before or during your test.

We strongly recommend you check the ID you are intending to present well in advance of your test day to ensure it meets our **Photo ID Policy** and to allow sufficient time to obtain acceptable ID if necessary.

Ahead of the day, make a note of the Test Centre's address and phone number and find it on a map. Ensure you know how long it will take you to get there via public transport, or if relevant make sure you have planned where to park to avoid being late.

**You must arrive at the Test Centre 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment time to complete the check-in process.** If you miss your appointment for any reason, your test fee will not be refunded. This applies in cases of illness, family emergency, accident, arrest, transport problems and security alert as well as forgetfulness, lateness, and failure to present permitted ID. You will have to pay again to book a new appointment.



## ID Policy

You must bring **photographic identification** from the list below to your test. It must be accepted in the country where you are testing.

You will not be allowed to test and you will lose your test fee if you do not have the correct photo ID.

### PASSPORT

Accepted at ANY test centre.

### PHOTO-CARD DRIVER'S LICENCE (full or provisional)

ONLY accepted at test centres in the country of issue.

### EU IDENTITY CARD or IRISH PASSPORT CARD

ONLY accepted at test centres in the EU (no longer accepted in the UK).

*Information on the card must be presented in Roman script as well as the original character set.*

### GOVERNMENT-ISSUED IDENTITY CARD FROM A NON-EU COUNTRY

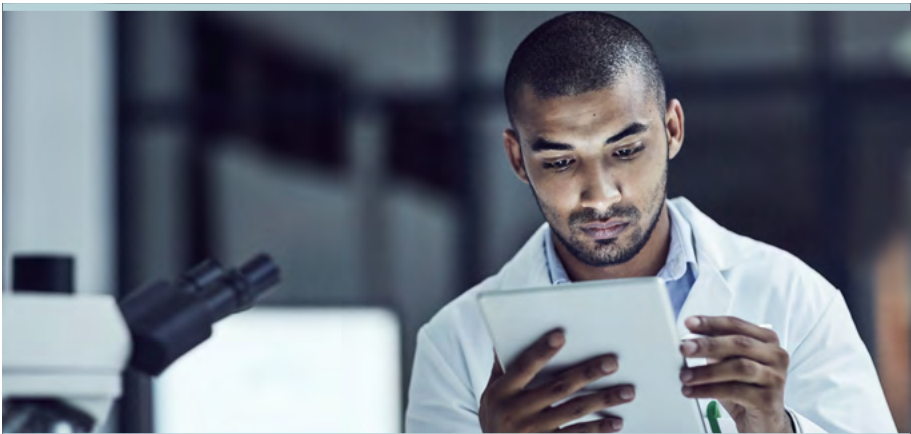
ONLY accepted at test centres in the country of issue.

## Permitted forms of ID must:

- be **government-issued** ID.
- be the **original ID** (not a photocopy or digital ID).
- be **unexpired**.
- include your name which exactly matches the name registered in your UCAT account (and appears in your appointment confirmation email).
- include a photograph which must be a true likeness

If the ID does not include **your visible signature**, it will ONLY be accepted if presented together with an unexpired bank card that has your printed name and visible signature. This also applies in the case of child passports signed by a parent.

For further details regarding acceptable photographic identification and advice on what to do if your ID does not meet these requirements, please check the **ID Policy** page of our website.



## Test Day

### UCAT 'Fitness to Test' Policy

Candidates who attend their test are declaring that they are fit to test.

If you are aware of anything that might affect your performance on the day, you should not sit the test. This applies even if you fall ill or experience issues on the day of your test.

If you are not fit to test, you must reschedule your appointment to a later date, even if this means losing the test fee.

If you choose to book a late test and encounter minor illness/injury or minor personal circumstances, which prevents you from attending your test appointment, you may struggle to reschedule within the test window.

If you have a moderate to severe illness/injury (usually requiring medical treatment and absence from school/work) which you are unlikely to recover from before testing ends, you must contact the UCAT Office for advice before sitting a test.

If you are experiencing major illness or injury or significant personal circumstances that affect your ability to declare yourself 'fit to test' for the duration of the test window, you should contact the UCAT Office for advice before sitting a test.

If you choose to sit your test against this advice, UCAT will not accept this as a mitigating circumstance.

### Test centre Check-in Process

During the check-in process:

- your photo ID will be checked and staff will take a digital photograph of you.
- you will be asked to read the **UCAT Test Centre Exam Rules** and sign to confirm you understand them.
- all personal belongings (including bags, coats, hats or head coverings, papers,

books, pens, watches, wallets, keys, IDs, mobile phones, food/water/drinks) must be placed in the lockers provided before you enter the test room.

- staff will conduct a routine visual inspection of your clothing, hands/arms and any comfort aids.

Please see the **Test day** page on our website for further clarification or if you have any concerns regarding the check-in process..

### Test centre experience

After the check-in process has been completed, you will be taken into the testing room and allocated a desk space at which you will find a PC, keyboard and mouse.

The invigilator will provide you with a laminated notebook and pen.

There will be other people taking tests in the same room as you and there may be some limited disturbance as other test takers arrive and leave the room. The test centre will endeavour for such disturbance to be kept to a minimum. You can request ear plugs if you think this will be disturbing.

Once the invigilator has launched your test, you are under exam conditions. The invigilator will continuously monitor and record you by video while you take your test.

If you need a break to take medication or to use the toilets, raise your hand to notify the invigilator. The test cannot be paused and will continue running - you will lose time when out of the room. You are advised to take any breaks between subtests to limit the impact on test time. *Note - this does not apply to candidates with 'pause-the-clock' breaks.*

After completing the test, raise your hand. The invigilator will escort you from the room to collect your score report.



Don't beat yourself up if you're having a bad session or you keep doing badly in a particular section. The most important thing to do is to go into each section with as much confidence as possible.

I knew from my practice sessions that I wasn't particularly good at Abstract Reasoning so in the 1 minute instruction section I gave myself a silent pep talk in my head and I told myself that I was going to ace it. It's actually crazy how much positive thinking can affect your results because I ended up scoring the highest in that section!

**Suhur, Top 5% candidate**



## Test Day Problems

### Illness during Testing

If you feel ill during your test, raise your hand to notify the invigilator. If you are not well enough to continue, you should ask the invigilator to end your test. You then need to email the UCAT Office as soon as possible (usually within 1 day of your test) to arrange for your test to be rescheduled. If you choose to continue testing, UCAT will not normally take any action.

### Incidents during Testing

We aim to provide a straightforward test experience in a business like environment. However, occasionally things may go wrong and we have systems in place to deal with such circumstances.

#### Raising an issue during your test:

- If you experience an issue during your test at a test centre, raise your hand to notify the invigilator. This includes hardware/software problems, excessive noise disturbance or other distractions.
- If you do not raise the issue during your test, UCAT will not accept this as a mitigating circumstance.
- The invigilator cannot answer questions related to test content.

#### Obtaining an Incident Case Number:

- If you do not feel that the issue was satisfactorily resolved, make sure that the incident is recorded by the test centre and you are given a case number.
- UCAT rarely take any action if the incident is not reported during testing.

#### Requesting an incident investigation:

- The issuing of an incident case number does not automatically result in UCAT or Pearson VUE taking any action unless you request an incident investigation within 1 day of your test.
- If you wish to have your case investigated please refer to the **Test Incident** page of our website and follow the process outlined.

## Candidate Misconduct

We expect candidates to meet minimum standards of acceptable behaviour during testing and any interactions with the UCAT Consortium, UCAT Office and Pearson VUE staff. Please read the **UCAT Exam Rules** before your test.

Any suspected cases of misconduct or cheating will be thoroughly investigated. Where such allegations are upheld, we reserve the right to take such actions as outlined in the **Misconduct Policy**.



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# RESULTS

## UCAT results

You will receive a copy of your UCAT score report before you leave the Pearson VUE test centre. This test result is valid for the current UCAS Admissions cycle (for entry into medical or dental school in 2024 or deferred entry to 2025).

Your score report will also be accessible online through your UCAT account within 24 hours of your test.

### How do I use my UCAT Result?

You will know your test result before the 16 October 2023 UCAS deadline so please ensure you use this to help inform your UCAS choices, otherwise you might be wasting an application. It is important to understand that the UCAT score is used in different ways by universities during the admissions process. All our universities provide detailed information on their websites regarding how they use the UCAT in selection.

For some universities the UCAT score is a significant factor in their consideration of applications. For others it may be a less significant factor or only used in marginal situations. Most Universities consider total score (i.e. the score after each of the cognitive subtest scores have been added together), however some do look at individual subtest scores and may even have a cut-off score for a particular subtest.



Some universities have a threshold score that candidates have to achieve in order to be considered further in their selection processes. Where this is a fixed score this will be provided on their websites. Some universities determine threshold scores each year but usually indicate on their website the scores that have been used in previous years.

In some cases, universities weight UCAT scores alongside factors such as academic achievement (e.g. GCSE scores). The weighting may be significant or may contribute a smaller amount to the final outcome.

An increasing number of universities use the SJT in selection with some excluding lower performing candidates.

### Test Statistics

In order to help you understand how well you have performed compared to other candidates we publish preliminary scores at an appropriate point during the test cycle, and final test statistics a few days after 2023 testing ends. These are available on the [Test Statistics](#) page of our website.

### Delivering Results

After the UCAS application deadline has passed (16 October 2023), UCAT works with UCAS on a data matching exercise to obtain your application choices that require a UCAT result. You do not need to tell us your application choices or UCAS PID or pass your test result to your universities yourself.

UCAT will deliver your result directly to your chosen universities in early November. Universities should only accept results provided directly by the UCAT Office. You do not need to pass your test result to your university choices or include it on your UCAS application.



All details are correct at the time of publication..  
Please check our website for up to date information.



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[www.ucat.ac.uk](http://www.ucat.ac.uk)

# Step-by-step guide

You may find this step-by-step guide helpful in planning for your test.

## Check

- Confirm which universities / courses require the test and their entry criteria.
- If you require Access Arrangements or other accommodations, obtain the required evidence, as outlined on our website, so that you have everything needed before you need to apply for these.
- Consider whether you are eligible for a UCAT bursary to cover your full test fee by looking at the eligibility criteria on the Bursary Scheme page of our website. Obtain the required evidence (you may need information from your parent/carer or school for this).
- Ensure that you have one of the correct forms of ID required to sit your test, and that it is signed and current.

## Register

- Create a UCAT account between 16 May and midday on 21 September 2023.
- If applicable, submit an online application for any Access Arrangements you require - you can do this from 16 May onwards after you have created a UCAT account. Access arrangements such as extra time or rest breaks require approval from the UCAT Office before you can book a test.
- If eligible, apply for a UCAT Bursary to cover your test fee. We recommend you do this before booking a test so that you can use your bursary voucher code when booking.

## Book

- You can book your test once booking opens on 20 June 2023, until booking closes at midday on 21 September 2023. We recommend you book as early as possible, and would advise you against booking a test in the final week of testing.

## Prepare

- Use the UCAT Preparation Plan on our website to work out a study plan for when you will begin your UCAT preparation.
- Use the free, official preparation materials and resources on the UCAT website. The Question Tutorials are really useful before you move onto the Question Banks, and then finally progress to the timed Practice Tests.

- Familiarise yourself with the onscreen format so you know how to use the mouse, answer questions and move through the test. Practise using the onscreen calculator and get used to the timings of each section.
- Find out what to expect at a Pearson VUE Test Centre.
- Read the statement on candidate misconduct and our Test Centre Exam Rules.
- Familiarise yourself with what to do if something goes wrong either before or during your test.

## Sit

- Ensure you take the correct, original, signed, unexpired ID with you to the test centre.
- Make sure you know where your test centre is and allow yourself plenty of time for arrival.
- Take your test between 10 July and 28 September 2023 - no exceptions!
- In the unlikely event of any issues during your test, you must report this to the test centre immediately and obtain an incident number, then consult the Test Incident page for further actions open to you.

## Research

- Check the information provided on consortium member websites to see how each university uses the test in their admissions process before you submit your UCAS application.
- Preliminary scores will be issued in mid September and final test statistics a few days after testing ends. A report on mean scores from previous test cycles is available now on the Test Statistics page of our website.
- Use all of this information to make an informed decision about where to apply.

## Apply

- Don't forget your UCAS application should be submitted by 16 October 2023.

## Relax

- We will communicate your test result directly to your chosen universities, you do not need to take any action.