Admissions Tests 2026 Entry

Arrangements for the ESAT, TARA and TMUA

Agenda

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- Questions & Answers

Welcome

- **Peter Derrick**
  - Director of Admissions and Data, for Imperial College London.
- **Helen Reed**
  - Head of Admissions and Data Services, for University of Cambridge.

An Introduction to UAT-UK

Who are we?

- Joint Venture established by Imperial College London and the University of Cambridge in December 2023

- Not-for-profit

- Dedicated UAT-UK team

- Initial focus on mathematics, engineering and science.

- Engineering and Sciences Admissions Test (ESAT) and the Test of Mathematics for University Admissions (TMUA) were delivered for the first time in October 2024 and January 2025

- Entering second year of operation and launching our third admissions test; The Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions (TARA)

Why use an admissions test?

- State exams (such as GCE A levels and other public examinations) are a good indication of a student's ability.

- They form important preparation for our tests.

- The courses that will use these tests typically receive applications from very large numbers of students who have, or are predicted to achieve, the highest grades.

- The admissions test is a chance for applicants to demonstrate:
  - Their skills (for example, their mathematical problem-solving ability).
  - Their subject knowledge.
  - Their understanding of topics related to their chosen course.

- UAT-UK was established to address a need for a robust way of further differentiating top applicants and benchmarking them across qualifications.

Aims and Objectives of UAT-UK

- By sharing the same admissions tests, applicants can use one single test for multiple UCAS applications/chocies

- Reducing financial barriers in the UK via our bursary scheme

- Candidate experience is at the heart of what we do – significant investment and improvement has been made this year to streamline the experience.

Our Tests

Test Overview

Three tests:
- **The Test of Mathematics for University Admission** (TMUA)
- **The Engineering and Science Admissions Test** (ESAT)
- **The Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions** (TARA)

- All tests are administered by Pearson VUE, which is the certification and licensure arm of Pearson, one of the world's leading learning companies, via their global network of test centres

- Each test offered in two sittings per year; October and January (Cambridge applicants **must** sit in the October sitting)

- Each test is offered on two days* per test sitting

Excluding Test Centres in China, Macau and Hong Kong

Test Overview

- Tests must be booked in advance and paid for by the candidate.

- Candidates must sit in a Pearson VUE Test Centre (over 5500 worldwide). See our landing page to find your nearest centre (available now): https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/uatuk.html

- **£75** in the UK and ROI and **£130** anywhere else in the world

- Computer-based tests

- All tests, with the exception of the writing task in the TARA, are made up of multiple-choice questions. There is no penalty for wrong answers, so candidates are best advised to attempt all questions.

Who uses our tests?

IMPERIAL

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

LSE — THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

WARWICK — THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Durham University

UCL

The Engineering and Science Admissions Test (ESAT)

- The ESAT tests mathematical and science thinking, along with reasoning skills.

- Compulsory Maths module - **Most** candidates will need to select two further modules at the point of registration, depending on their UCAS choices.

- Modules are made up of 27 MCQs and are 40 minutes long. They are sat back-to-back meaning most candidates will have a 120-minute test.

- Cannot return to a module once you move on or have used the 40-minute time allocation.

Mathematics 1

(Compulsory)

+

two modules selected from:

| **Mathematics 2** | **Physics** |
| **Chemistry** | **Biology** |

The Test of Mathematics for University Admission (TMUA)

- Two papers (75 minutes each/20 MCQs):

  - **Applications of Mathematical Knowledge**, which assesses an applicant's ability to apply their knowledge of mathematics in new situations.
  - **Mathematical Reasoning**, which assesses their ability to deal with mathematical reasoning, and simple ideas from elementary logic.

- Papers are sat back-to-back and form one test with a single score
- Cannot return to paper one once you move on or have used the 75-minute time allocation.
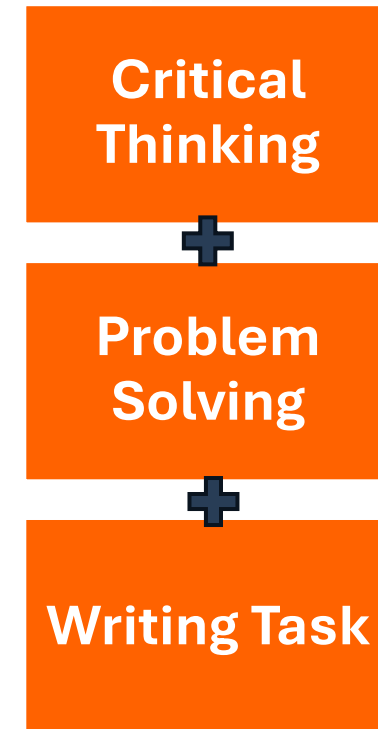
Paper One:
Applications of Mathematical Knowledge

Paper Two:
Mathematical Reasoning

The Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions(TARA)

- Three compulsory modules (40 minutes each)

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving are each made up of 22 MCQs

- For the Writing Task, candidates have a choice of three essays. They should only complete one. There is a 750-word limit.

- Cannot return to a module once you move on or have used the 40-minute time allocation.

- The Writing Task is not scored by UAT-UK. Candidate responses are given directly to the relevant institutions to assess against their own criteria.

Critical Thinking

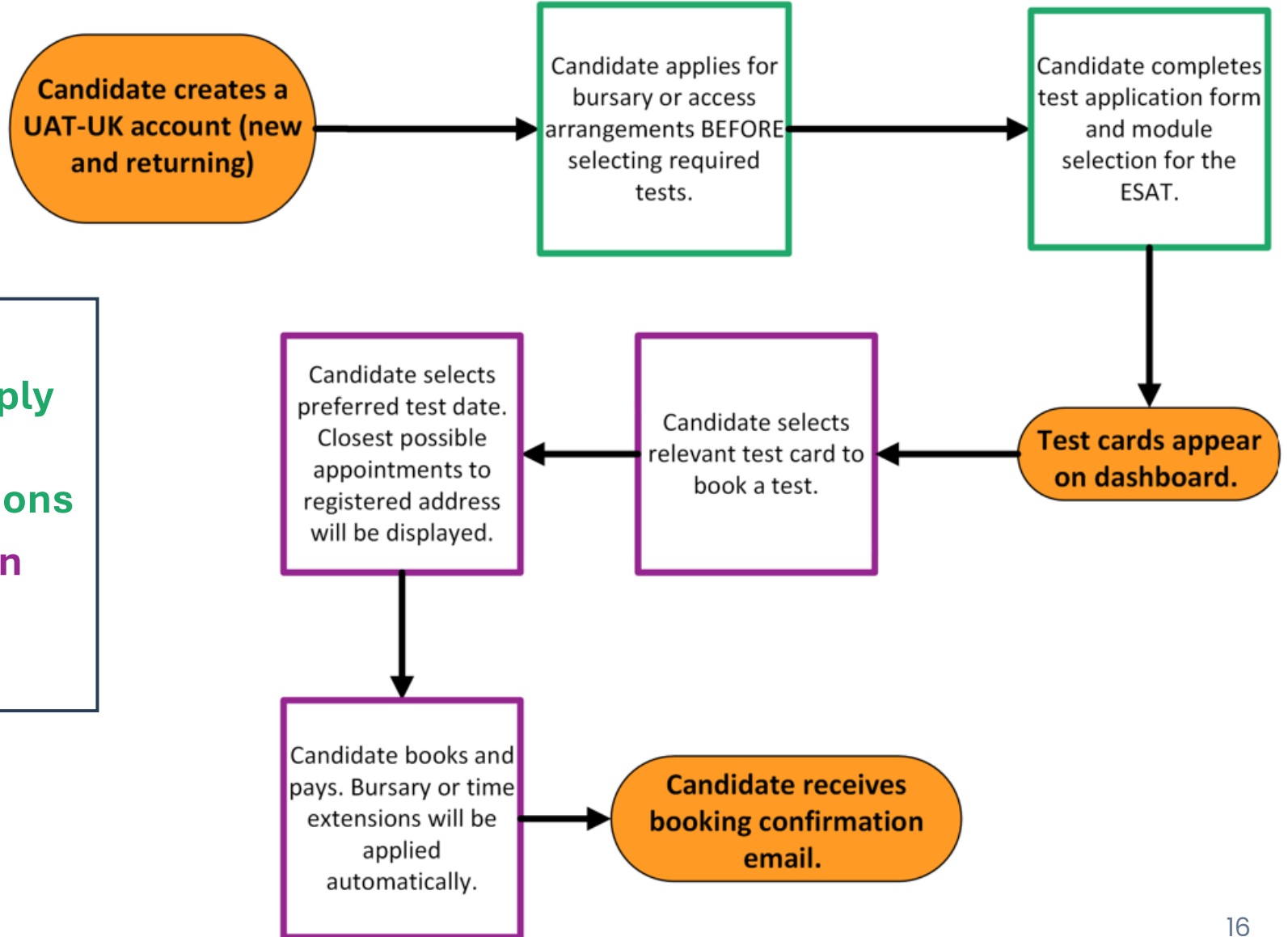**Problem Solving**

Writing Task

Test Administration

Common arrangements
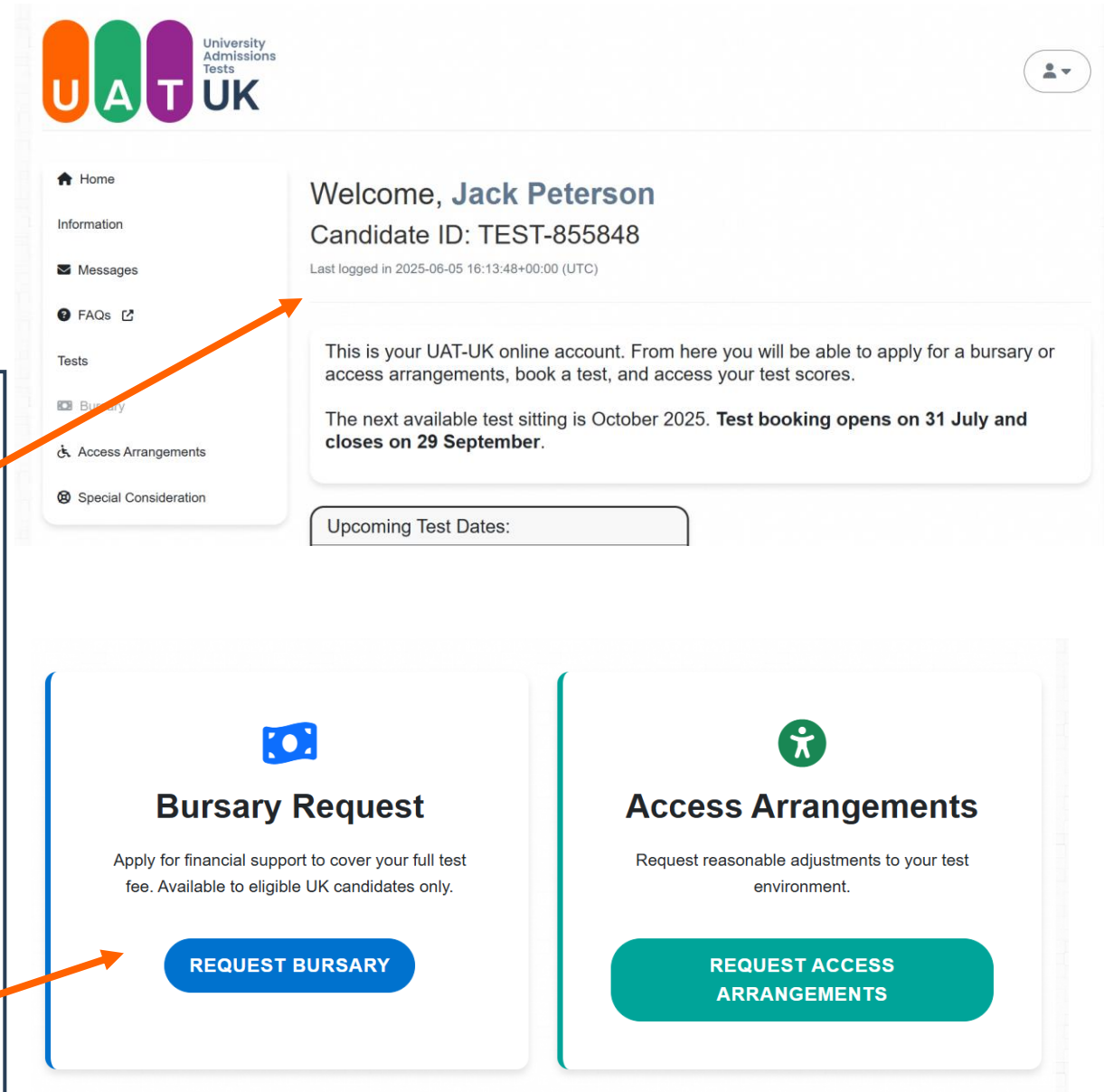across all UAT-UK tests

Test Booking

Two-step process:

1. **Create an account and apply for your bursaries/access arrangements/test selections**
2. **Book your test at a Pearson VUE Test Centre**

Candidate creates a UAT-UK account (new and returning) → **Candidate applies for bursary or access arrangements BEFORE selecting required tests.** → **Candidate completes test application form and module selection for the ESAT.**

Candidate selects preferred test date. Closest possible appointments to registered address will be displayed. ← **Candidate selects relevant test card to book a test.** ← **Test cards appear on dashboard.**

Candidate books and pays. Bursary or time extensions will be applied automatically. → **Candidate receives booking confirmation email.**

Test Booking

Notes:

1. Unlike last year, everything is done within one, purpose-built, end-to-end system for candidates.

2. Each candidate will be issued a UAT-UK Candidate ID. This needs to be quoting if contacting UAT-UK or Pearson VUE outside of the system

3. Candidates **MUST** make sure they have applied and been approved for a bursary or access arrangements before applying for their test. If the test card is already on their dashboard before being approved, it won't push through to the booking system.

UAT UK
University Admissions Tests

- Home
- Information
- Messages
- FAQs
- Tests
- Bursary
- Access Arrangements
- Special Consideration

Welcome, **Jack Peterson**
Candidate ID: TEST-855848
Last logged in 2025-06-05 16:13:48+00:00 (UTC)

This is your UAT-UK online account. From here you will be able to apply for a bursary or access arrangements, book a test, and access your test scores.

The next available test sitting is October 2025. **Test booking opens on 31 July and closes on 29 September.**
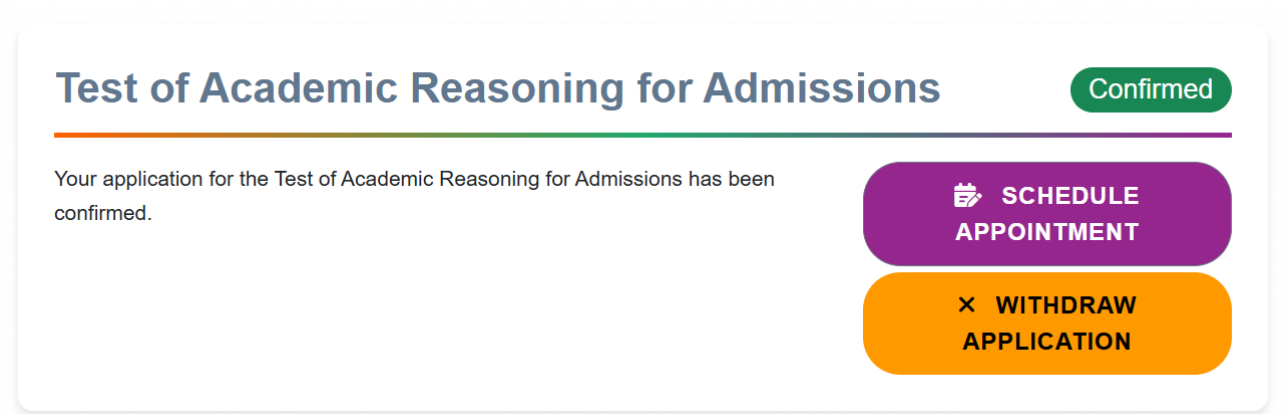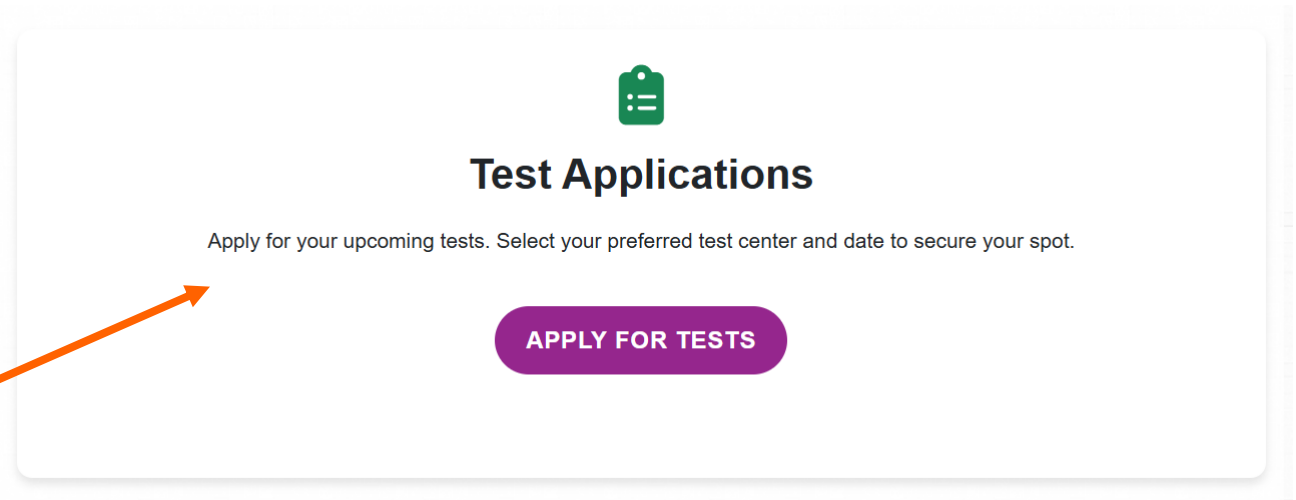
Upcoming Test Dates:

Bursary Request

Apply for financial support to cover your full test fee. Available to eligible UK candidates only.

REQUEST BURSARY

Access Arrangements

Request reasonable adjustments to your test environment.

REQUEST ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

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Test Booking

Test Applications

Apply for your upcoming tests. Select your preferred test center and date to secure your spot.

APPLY FOR TESTS

- From 31st July, the candidate dashboard will have the 'Test Applications' card.

- Once a candidate has selected a test, and chosen their modules (if applicable), the test card will then allow them to schedule.

Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions — Confirmed

Your application for the Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions has been confirmed.

SCHEDULE APPOINTMENT

× WITHDRAW APPLICATION

Oct 2025 Test Sitting Timeline

University Admissions Tests
UAT UK

The opening of bursary applications, requests for access arrangements and test bookings will always be scheduled for **3pm UK time** on the advertised date.

The closing of all of the above will always been scheduled for **6pm UK time.**

Deadline	Event
24 June 2025	Candidates able to create an account. Applications open for Access Arrangements and Bursaries
31 July 2025	Test booking opens
8 September 2025	Test booking closes for candidates requiring access arrangements
29 September 2025	Test booking closes
9/10 October 2025	ESAT Test Window
13/14 October 2025	TMUA Test Window
14/16 October 2025	TARA Test Window
14 November 2025	Test results will be made available to candidates

Jan 2026 Test Sitting Timeline

The opening of bursary applications, requests for access arrangements and test bookings will always be scheduled for **3pm UK time** on the advertised date.

The closing of all of the above will always been scheduled for **6pm UK time.**

Deadline	Event
1 October 2025	Applications open for Access Arrangements and Bursaries
27 October 2025	Test booking opens
1 December 2025	Test booking closes for candidates requiring access arrangements
19 December 2025	Test booking closes
6/7 January 2026	ESAT Test Window
8/9 January 2026	TMUA Test Window
12/13 October 2026	TARA Test Window
11 February 2026	Test results will be made available to candidates

UAT–UK Bursary Scheme

- Our bursary scheme provides UK candidates in financial need.

- Candidates must live in the UK permanently at the time of application and plan to take their test at a UK Test Centre.

- For approved candidates, it covers the entire cost of the test.

- The applicant, or their parent/guardian, will need to meet the criteria set out (next slide) and provide the relevant documentary evidence.

- Bursaries are applied to the upcoming sitting. If a candidate is granted a bursary for October and does not book, they will need to reapply for the January sitting.

- Full details can be found on the website, www.esat-tmua.ac.uk.

Bursary eligibility criteria

- **The candidate is eligible for / in receipt of:**
  - Free School Meals
  - 16–19 Bursary / EMA

- **The candidate (if over 21 years old), or parent/guardian, living at the same address, is in receipt of:**
  - Universal credit
  - Working Tax Credit
  - Child Tax Credit
  - Income support, Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
  - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
  - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

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Access Arrangements

- Access arrangements are available if applicants have a learning difference, a physical or mental disability, sensory impairment or other medical condition that might otherwise impact their ability to sit the test.

- Like a bursary, applicants **must** make these arrangements in advance of registering for the test. They can do so via their online account.

- There is also a list of 'Permitted Comfort Aids' for items that can be taken into the test centre without approval.

- Full details can be found on the website, www.esat-tmua.ac.uk.

Preparing for the tests and results

Preparing for the tests

- The tests use content that students will have already learned in their school studies.

- The tests are based on material from GSCE and AS level mathematics and science qualifications.

- There is **no need** to take a preparation course or to do much preparation beyond revising what they have already learned.

Preparing for the tests

- We do recommend candidates familiarise themselves with the test format and style of questions.

- Full test specification are available on the website now.

- There are two sample tests for each available now from our Pearson landing page (one specimen and one practice), https://home.pearsonvue.com/uatuk.

- The specimen tests comes with explained answers.

- The practice tests provide scores only. We recommend these are completed under timed conditions.

Other resources on the UAT-UK Website:
- Notes on Mathematics
- Notes on Logic and Proof
- TARA Question Guide (from 24 June)
- ESAT Guide (from 24 June)

https://esat-tmua.ac.uk/prepare/

Test Scores

- Will be released to applicants via their online account, approximately four weeks after testing is complete.

- The results are automatically shared with all universities using the tests.

- There is no need for applicants to send Universities their test results.

Test Scores

- Only the result from the first sitting will be accepted i.e. candidates should **NOT** sit the test more than once.

- Results are only valid for one admissions cycle.

- There is no pass or fail for any of our tests. Each score is reported on a scale of 1.0-9.0:
    - The TMUA is awarded one overall score.
    - The ESAT is awarded one score per module.
    - The TARA has two scored modules, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving. The Writing Task is not scored by UAT-UK.

Questions & Answers

An opportunity for your questions