



UAT-UK Ltd

Annual Reports 2025-2026

Candidate Data

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1. Executive Summary

UAT-UK was founded as a joint venture between the University of Cambridge and Imperial College London on 1st December 2023. UAT-UK offers three undergraduate, computer-based admissions tests: the Engineering and Science Admissions Test (ESAT), the Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions (TARA) and the Test of Mathematics for University Admission (TMUA).

UAT-UK is ultimately governed by the UAT-UK Board, consisting of three Directors from each founding institution. A small, dedicated team manages the day-to-day operations of UAT-UK and oversees content development, test construction, test quality and test delivery via Pearson.

After a competitive tender process, UAT-UK opted to use Pearson as a delivery partner because of its extensive network of over 5500 professional test centres, across 180+ countries and territories. In 2025-26, UAT-UK is pleased to confirm that tests were taken in 129 different countries, thus demonstrating that the tests are truly global. Similarly to last year, key markets outside of the UK included China, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the United States, the UAE, Türkiye, Spain and France.

Separate technical reports have been published relating to performance in each of the three UAT-UK tests. They can be [found here](#). When candidates register for the test, they complete a questionnaire about their demographic characteristics such as gender, ethnicity and school type. Performance by demographic is reported in the technical reports, however, in summary, trends observed in all tests generally follow national trends for comparable exams. UAT-UK will continue to monitor test performance; candidate feedback and other data recorded here and is committed to the continuous improvement of the tests.

This report has been prepared by the Chief Operating Officer, UAT-UK, and signed off by the Board of Directors, including any actions arising.

Any enquiries relating to this report should be directed to uatdata@esat-tmua.ac.uk.

2. Aims and Objectives of UAT-UK

UAT-UK was set up with the aims of:

- i. Streamlining the applicant experience and ensuring a smooth experience in booking and taking an admissions test,
- ii. Enabling applicants, where feasible, to take a single admissions test per subject area across all of their UCAS choices.
- iii. Providing a fair, robust and reliable way for institutions to differentiate between top applicants, with similar qualifications.



UAT-UK is committed to:

- iv. Maintaining equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). This is reflected in all policies and processes including the facilitation of access arrangements, the UAT-UK bursary scheme and the analyses of test performance,
- v. Minimising bias in respect of gender, age, ethnicity or socio-economic status,
- vi. Reducing financial barriers to entry through the UAT-UK bursary scheme.

For the 2026 entry cycle, UAT-UK made a significant investment in enhancing the candidate experience by introducing a new candidate-facing system designed to provide a more streamlined and integrated end-to-end journey.

Through a single online account, candidates can now:

- Apply for a bursary and track the status of their application.
- Apply for access arrangements and track the status of their application.
- Apply for special consideration and track the status of their application.
- Book a UAT-UK test.
- View their test results when available.
- Contact the dedicated UAT-UK team through a secure messaging service.

The new system also simplified the bursary and access arrangements application processes. These services are now prominently displayed on the candidate dashboard to improve visibility, while application forms have been redesigned to require only essential information, making them quicker and easier to complete.

3. About the tests

This report relates to the 2026 admissions cycle. UAT-UK offered three tests in two sittings, October 2025 and January 2026. Both sittings were available to all candidates, except those applying to a course at the University of Cambridge with an October UCAS deadline. Candidates are only permitted to take a test once per admissions cycle; resits were not permitted in the January sitting.

Each test window consisted of six days of testing, with each test delivered across two days. For reasons of test security, candidates sitting in China, Hong Kong or Macau could only take the test on one day per sitting. Test appointments were available throughout each day meaning that candidates could select a time and location convenient for them. All UAT-UK tests require the candidate to book and pay for their own test. The cost of a test was £75 for candidates in the UK and Republic of Ireland and £130 for candidates sitting anywhere else in the world.



The ESAT consists of five modules: Mathematics 1, Mathematics 2, Chemistry, Biology and Physics. Candidates are all required to take Mathematics 1 plus one to three other modules depending on the courses they are applying for. Each module is 40 minutes in duration and modules are taken consecutively. Each module is scored separately.

The TARA was introduced as a new, non-subject specific, test for 2026 entry which comprises three modules: Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and an unscored Writing Task. All modules were compulsory for all candidates. Each module is 40 minutes in duration and modules are taken consecutively. Critical thinking and Problem Solving are scored separately. The Writing Task is not scored by UAT-UK. Instead, a copy of the candidate's response is sent to the universities where they have applied (for all courses that require the TARA).

The TMUA is a non-modular test, made up of two papers: Applications of Mathematical Knowledge and Mathematical Reasoning. Candidates are given a maximum of 75 minutes per paper and receive one overall score for the test.

For 2026 entry, there were six institutional users of tests. The University of Cambridge and Imperial College London used both the ESAT and the TMUA. Durham University, the London School of Economics, and the University of Warwick all used the TMUA. UCL used all three tests for the first time this year.

Although all institutions use the test scores in conjunction with various other aspects of a candidate's UCAS application, UAT-UK does not dictate how each institution uses test scores and hence this might vary from university to university.

4. Candidate Numbers for 2026 Entry

For 2026 entry, 34,475 candidates booked a UAT-UK test¹. As was the case for 2025 entry, the October sitting remained the larger of the two test windows, with 63.1% of tests for the admissions cycle delivered between 12th and 16th October 2025. The TMUA also remained the largest of the three tests, accounting for 48.9% of tests taken.

The following tables set out the split across home and overseas candidates, the October and January sittings, and across the three different tests.

4.1 Candidate Numbers by Test

Table 1 Division of Candidates Across the ESAT, TARA, and TMUA.

¹ Inclusive of 'no-shows' where a candidate did not cancel their booking but was not present for their test and hence no test score will be reported.

Test	Total Booked	Percentage (%)	Total Delivered	Percentage (%)
ESAT	14,781	42.9	14,193	43.1
TARA	2806	8.1	2626	8.0
TMUA	16,888	49.0	16,092	48.9

4.2 Candidate Numbers by Sitting

Table 2 Division of Candidates by Sitting and Test.

Sitting	Test	Total Booked	Percentage of Sitting (%)	Total Delivered	% increase from 2024-25
October	ESAT	10,502	48.5	10,116	+11
	TARA	1045	4.8	976	n/a
	TMUA	10,109	46.7	9685	+8
	Total	21,656		20,777	+15
January	ESAT	4279	33.4	4077	+47
	TARA	1761	13.7	1650	n/a
	TMUA	6780	52.9	6407	+32
	Total	12,820		12,134	+59

4.3 Candidate Numbers by Geography

Table 3 Division of Candidates by Sitting, Test and Geography.

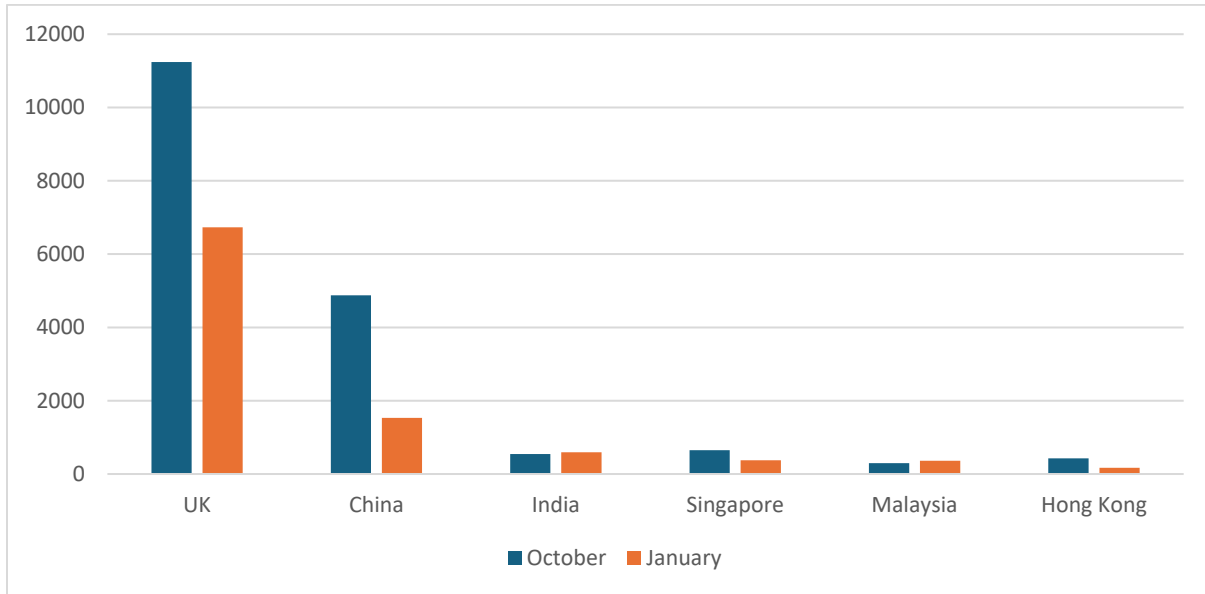
Sitting	Test	Total Booked UK	Total Booked Overseas
October	ESAT	5423	5079
	TARA	508	537
	TMUA	5684	4425
	Total	11,615	10,041
January	ESAT	2257	2022
	TARA	874	887
	TMUA	3897	2882
	Total	702	5791

Table 4 Division of Overseas Candidates by Continent.

Geography	Candidate Count
Africa	173
Asia	8745
Europe	1789
North America	650
Oceania	135
South America	36

Relative to the 2025 entry statistics, UAT-UK saw the largest increases in African markets (+42%), closely followed by Asian markets (+39%).

Figure 1 Top UAT-UK Markets by Country



5. UAT-UK Bursary Scheme

All awarded UAT-UK bursaries covered the entire cost of registration, to candidates in the UK that could demonstrate financial need through one of the following criteria:

- Eligibility for free school meals
- Eligibility for the 16-19 Bursary or EMA
- Eligibility for (either the candidate or a parent/guardian living at the same address) one of the following government-issued, means tested benefits:
 - Universal credit
 - Working tax credit
 - Child tax credit
 - Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - The guarantee element of State Pension Credit

UAT-UK is committed to keeping the list of criteria under review each year to ensure that it is in line with sector practice and is maximising the number of candidates awarded a bursary. For 2026 entry, across both sittings, UAT-UK approved requests for a bursary for **94.1%** of candidates who made an application. This is a slight decrease in approval rate relative to 2025 entry, however, can likely be attributed to the rise in speculative applications submitted after the bursary application form was moved to the main dashboard.

UAT-UK is pleased to report a 4% increase in the number of bursaries issues across the UK cohort for the year.

Table 5 Bursaries Issued in the UK by Sitting.

Sitting	Bursaries Issued	Percentage of UK Candidates (%)
October	1300	11.2
January	1079	15.4%
Total	2379	12.8%

6. Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are pre-approved adjustments that enable candidates to sit assessments without unnecessary barriers, while ensuring no unfair advantage is given. UAT-UK uses a single marking scheme for all candidates, so results remain valid and reflect true attainment.

Candidates requiring access arrangements must submit requests by the stated deadline, to allow UAT-UK and Pearson sufficient time to identify a suitable test slot and implement the necessary adjustments. Each request was reviewed by UAT-UK in line with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance.

Reasonable adjustments that could be made as standard included:

- Additional time
- Supervised rest breaks (clock paused)
- Adjustable height desks
- Use of earplugs
- Use of a screen overlay
- Invigilation in a separate room
- Use of a human reader and/or recorder

In addition, all tests had zoom-in/out functionality as standard and the ability to change the background colour for enhanced contrast.

All requests were considered on a case-by-case basis, and the list above was not exhaustive of the adjustments made over the admissions cycle.

Table 6 Total Bookings Made with Access Arrangements by Sitting.

Sitting	Candidates booked with Access Arrangements*	Percentage of Candidates (%)
October	801	3.7%
January	652	5.1%
Total	1453	4.2%

*Of these, 775 candidates in October, and 617 candidates in January, attended their test booking and sat their test with the access arrangements put in place.

Table 7 Delivered Tests with Access Arrangements Broken Down by Test.

Test	Candidates booked with Access Arrangements*	Percentage of Candidates (%)
ESAT	614	4.3%
TARA	102	3.9%
TMUA	676	4.2%
Total	1392	4.2%

Table 8 Access Arrangements by Type

Access Arrangement	October Total	January Total
Extra Time	505	412
Rest Breaks	74	46
Extra Time and Rest Breaks	202	146
Separate Room	44	39
Other	59	1

For 2026 entry, UAT-UK made significant updates to the booking process for candidates with access arrangements, meaning that 88% of candidates in October, and 86% of candidates in January, with

access arrangements, were able to book via their online account without further assistance from Pearson Customer Services. This streamlined the process for those candidates and significantly reduced delays with booking.

7. Candidate Experience

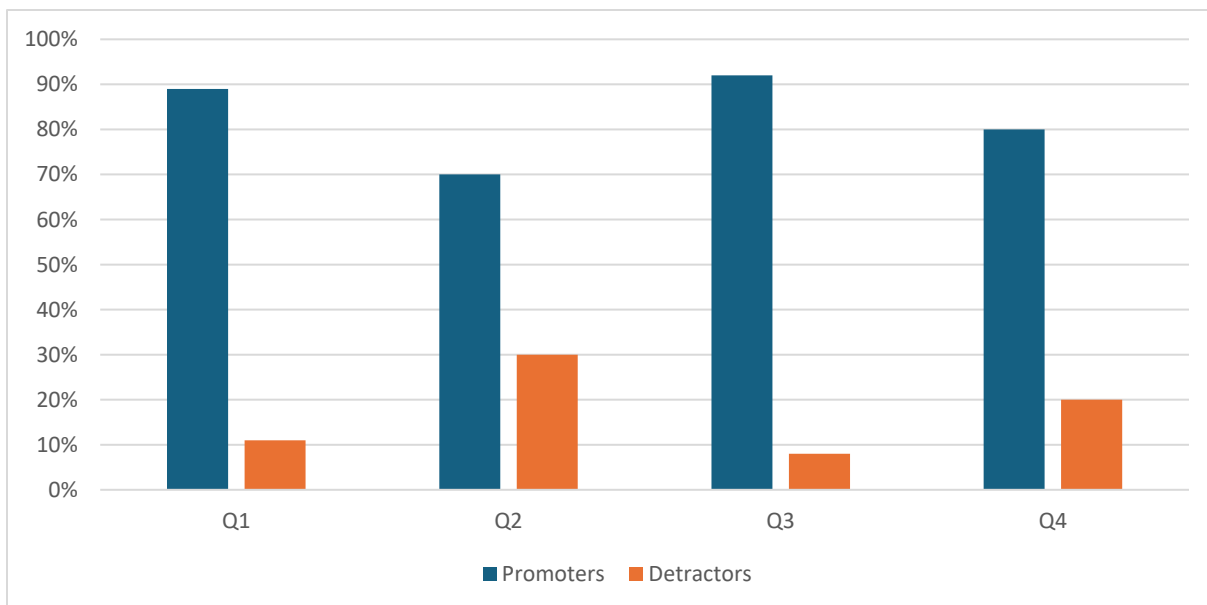
At the end of every test, candidates were asked to complete an optional survey about their experience booking and sitting a UAT-UK test. This took place at their workstation in the Pearson Test Centre and each survey consisted of four multiple choice questions with answers ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and one free-text field for additional feedback.

Questions asked:

1. Booking a test on the Pearson website was a straightforward process.
2. I was able to my first choice of test centre.
3. I found the experience at my test centre, on the day of my test, to be a positive one.
4. I found the preparatory materials on the UAT-UK and Pearson websites to be useful.

Across the two sittings, **76% of candidates opted to complete the survey**. Both tests and both UK and overseas candidates were well represented in the participant pool.

Figure 2 Survey Responses by Question.





In all cases, the vast majority of candidates answered positively. Most notably, UAT-UK is pleased to report an increase in the proportion of candidates answering questions 2-4 positively, by approximately 4% per question relative to the 2025 survey.

Looking specifically at candidates with access arrangements, when asked if they found the booking process straight forward, the positive responses recorded increased from 66% for 2025 entry, to 90% for 2026 entry. UAT-UK will continue to review and improve all processes, including those for candidates requiring reasonable adjustments to the test environment.