

# Admissions Tests & Written Work

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Wadham College, University of Oxford

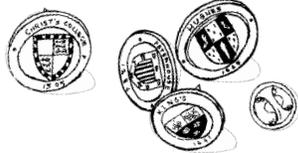


# The Oxbridge application process

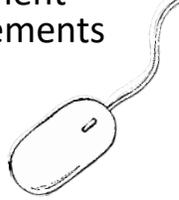
1 Choose course



2 Choose college or make open application



3 Check admission assessment arrangements



4 Submit UCAS application



5 SAQ (only for Cambridge)



6 Submit written work/take test



7 Interview in December



8 Decision in January

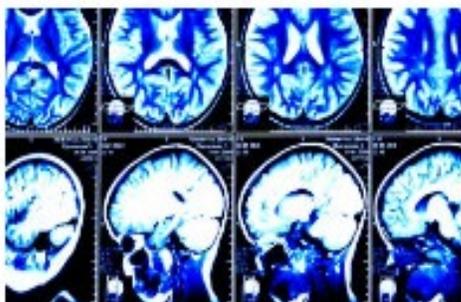


## Why universities use Admissions Tests

- To test relevant skills for the course
  - e.g. critical thinking and problem solving
  - e.g. ability to learn language
- To test subject specific knowledge for the course
  - e.g. MAT, PAT, BMAT
- Allows comparison (UK and abroad)
- Allows comparison (different A-levels subjects)
- To help with shortlisting for interview
- Reduces the need to rely solely on predicted grades



# Admissions Tests



**BMAT (Biomedical Admissions Test)**



**CAT (Classics Admissions Test)**



**ELAT (English Literature Admissions Test)**



**GAT (Geography Admissions Test)**



**HAT (History Aptitude Test)**



**LNAT (National Admissions Test for Law)**



**MAT (Mathematics Admissions Test)**



**MLAT (Modern Languages Admissions Test)**



**OLAT (Oriental Languages Aptitude Test)**



**PAT (Physics Aptitude Test)**



**Philosophy Test (for Philosophy and Theology only)**



**TSA (Thinking Skills Assessment)**

Have a look at past papers: [www.ox.ac.uk/tests](http://www.ox.ac.uk/tests)

## Admissions Test- TSA- Problem Solving

Three thermometers are each accurate to within 2 degrees above or below the temperature they actually read. One reads  $7^\circ$ , one reads  $9^\circ$  and one reads  $10^\circ$ .

What is the minimum range in which the true temperature lies?

- A  $5^\circ - 12^\circ$
  - B  $7^\circ - 9^\circ$
  - C  $8^\circ - 9^\circ$
  - D  $8^\circ - 10^\circ$
  - E  $7^\circ - 10^\circ$
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# Admissions Test- TSA- Problem Solving

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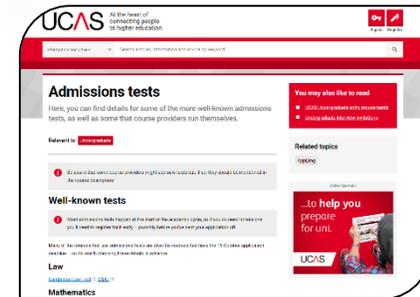
E  $7^\circ - 10^\circ$

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The quickest method here is to search for the acceptable highest and lowest temperatures that meet the conditions, realising that the middle value is irrelevant. As one thermometer reads  $7^\circ$ , the temperature cannot be above  $9^\circ$  and, as another reads  $10^\circ$ , the temperature cannot be below  $8^\circ$ . This is given by C.

# Logistics and Registration

- Both UCAS and the University websites inform students which tests they will need to sit
- It's your responsibility to ensure they are registered for tests in time
- All except the LNAT can be taken in schools, and are paper and pen tests
- Oxford tests mostly taken 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020
- LNAT: Register and book your LNAT test slot (in order to sit the test before or on, 15 October 2020). Find out more: <https://lnat.ac.uk>
- Cambridge: mix of pre-interview and at interview. Find out more: [www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/applying/admission-assessments](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/applying/admission-assessments)



## Top Tips for pupils

1. Practice under timed conditions
2. Know what the tests look like (Length, sections, marking)
3. Skip questions you get stuck on and come back to them later
4. Use the question paper for your workings
5. If you are unsure of an answer, eliminate options that are clearly wrong – and guess sensibly if necessary
6. You need to prepare!

## Admissions Test- TSA- Critical Thinking

Sometimes poverty is defined in relation to average income. For example, people may be said to be poor if their income is less than 60 per cent of the average income for the population. This is not a legitimate definition because it is a measure of inequality rather than poverty. This is obvious if we consider the consequences of using the definition. It means that a huge pay rise for middle managers automatically throws some people into poverty, even though their income has not changed. On the other hand, the definition implies that in a society where almost everyone is starving, no one is poor.

Which of the following best expresses the main conclusion of the above argument?

- A) Having a relatively low income is not the same as being poor.
- B) It is impossible to find an appropriate definition of poverty.
- C) It is wrong to define poverty in relation to average income.
- D) A huge pay rise for middle managers makes other people poor.
- E) There is no inequality in a society where most people are starving

# Admissions Test- TSA- Critical Thinking

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## Admissions Test- BMAT (Section 1)

Since the late 1990s wolves have been seen in the Haute-France region of the Alps. This places them once again in conflict with the shepherds who farm this region. Due to the protected status of the European wolf, French farmers are awarded a compensation payment for the loss of any of their sheep to a wolf. This payment amounts to considerably more than the livestock value of the animal. In addition to this, it is very difficult to distinguish between evidence of a wolf attack and dog attack. France has a population of 8 million dogs; 8 000 of these are estimated to be wild

compared to only 200 wolves. Which one of the following is a conclusion that can be drawn from the above passage?

- A) The problem of wolves attacking sheep in the French Alps has been exaggerated.
- B) Any claim that a sheep has been attacked by a wolf should be treated with caution.
- C) The protected status of the European wolf is unpopular in the French farming community.
- D) The wolf's reputation for killing sheep is undeserved.

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- D) The wolf's reputation for killing sheep is undeserved.

# Written Work

- Must be received by College in November
- Arts/Humanities subjects
- Think about your interests
- A piece of marked work submitted as part of your A-levels
- If you have any questions, contact the College that has asked for the work
- [www.ox.ac.uk/writwork](http://www.ox.ac.uk/writwork)

# Summing Up

- Make sure you know which tests to register for
- Check the alternative dates for admissions this year
- Start practicing
- If you're submitting written work, select work you are happy to talk about and shows your ability

# Get in touch



Email

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Website

[wadham.ox.ac.uk](http://wadham.ox.ac.uk)

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# Admissions Test Specific Resources



# Admissions Test- BMAT

2 hours

## Section 1: Aptitude and Skills

35 Questions, 60 minutes

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Practise! BMAT past papers and TSA past papers

## Section 2: Scientific Knowledge

27 Questions, 30 minutes

- Biology/Chemistry/Maths/Physics
- Look at assumed knowledge guide
- Tougher on time
- Practise!

## Section 3: Writing Task

1 essay (from 3 options), 30 minutes

- Ethics, veterinary, current affairs, quote
- State the basics well



# Admissions Test- English Language Admissions Test

1 ½ hours

Write one essay comparing two passages

- You will be given six passages on the same theme to choose from e.g. storms
- Test close reading skills and response to unfamiliar texts

Look at the marking criteria:

- Respond perceptively to unfamiliar writing of different kinds
- Demonstrate skills of close reading,
- Paying attention to the effects of structure, language and style
- Construct a well-focused and structured essay
- Write fluently and accurately





# Admissions Test- History Aptitude Test

1 hour

1 question based on a primary source

Since 2018 format has changed  
(similar to Question 3 of past HAT papers)

Tests:

- the ability to read carefully and critically;
- the adoption of an analytical approach;
- the ability to answer a question relevantly;
- ability to handle concepts and select evidence to support points;
- originality and independence;
- precision and clarity of writing.





# Admissions Test- Language Aptitude Tests



CAT (Classics Admissions Test) 60 minutes per section  
MLAT (Modern Languages Admissions Tests) variable  
OLAT (Oriental Languages Aptitude Test) 30 minutes

- Check which test you need to complete! This will depend on the course you are applying for and languages (if any) you currently study. For example, if you are applying for Classics but haven't studied Greek or Latin, you will take the Classics Language Aptitude Test.
- Look at past papers (the tests to assess ability to learn new languages are very similar)

## Tests:

- The ability to analyse how languages work;
- Aptitude to learn new languages quickly;
- Existing language ability (if applying to study a language you're already learning)

# Admissions Test- Law National Aptitude Test

2 ¼ hours

Section A:

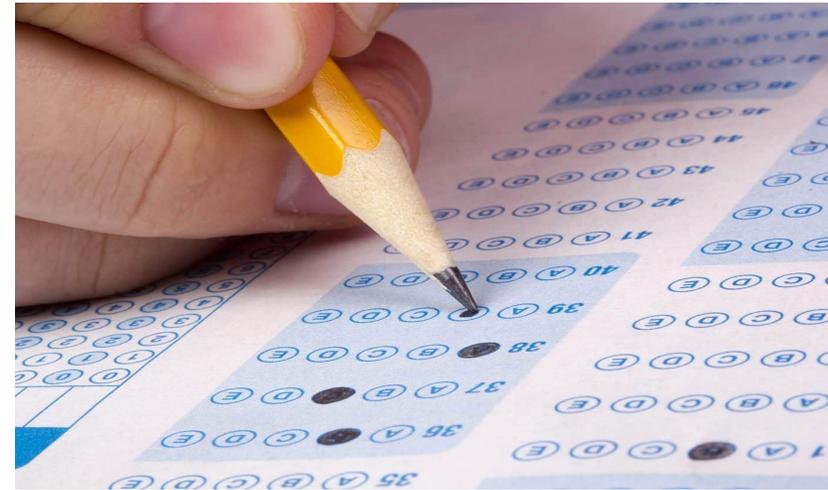
Multiple choice questions, 95 minutes

Section B

1 essay (from a choice of 3), 40 minutes

- Make the best case you can for public funding of the arts.
- Does it matter if some animal and plant species die out?
- What is 'political correctness' and why does it matter?

- Use [Inat.ac.uk](http://Inat.ac.uk) to prepare (past papers, example essays and tips)
- Read good quality media e.g. The Economist, The Financial Times



# Admissions Test- Mathematics Admissions Test

2 hours 30 minutes

Section 1:

10 questions, 4 marks each, 6 minutes per question

Section 2:

4 questions, 15 marks each, 22 ½ minutes per question

- Practise: MAT, nRich, STEP, AEA, TMUA
- Look at the syllabus
- Use words to explain your answers in section 2
- Get strategies for the questions

The image shows a presentation slide for the Mathematics Admissions Test. The slide has a dark blue background with a pattern of white geometric shapes (cubes and rectangles) in the bottom right corner. In the top right corner, there is a small video feed of a person with glasses. The slide contains the following text:

**Mathematics Admissions Test**

Dr James Munro  
Admissions and Outreach Coordinator  
Mathematical Institute  
University of Oxford

OXFORD  
Mathematical  
Institute

[www.maths.ox.ac.uk/r/mat](http://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/r/mat)

@OxUniMaths

/OxfordMathematics

@Oxford.Mathematics

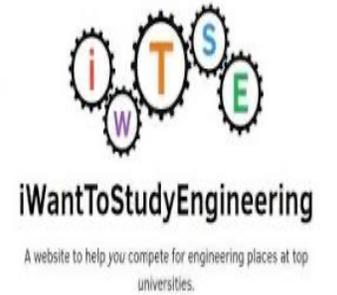
Oxford Mathematics

undergraduate.admissions  
@maths.ox.ac.uk

Oxford  
Mathematics



# Admissions Test- Physics Aptitude Test



2 hours

A mix of maths (50 marks) and physics (50 marks) questions,

6 maths multiple choice

6 physics multiple choice

Selection of higher mark questions on physics and maths



**BRILLIANT**



*Physics. You work it out.*

- Check the syllabus
- Check the format (it has changed a lot)
- Write down your working
- Practise problem solving questions



# Admissions Test- Thinking Skills Assessment

2 hours

Section 1: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving 1 ½ hours  
50 multiple choice questions, scored out of 100

Section 2: Essay 30 minutes  
1 question from 4

1. Are 'drone strikes' morally different to military campaigns fought on the ground?
  2. Is reducing inequality always a good thing?
  3. Is a referendum a good way to decide a major question facing a country?
  4. Can we learn about intelligence by studying how humans and other animals learn?
- Frame your response to answer the question