UCAT OnVUE Policy

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Overview

The UCAT Consortium is the operating name of the UKCAT Consortium. Our admission tests are delivered by our business partner Pearson VUE.

The UCAT Consortium has a number of official policies which guide its work in specific areas. Each policy is reviewed on an annual basis and any updates reflected in operational processes, website information and other communications to candidates. Where appropriate, policies are made available on the UCAT website.

UCAT policies are underpinned by its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Any substantial amendments to policies are considered in the light of their impact on EDI.

Online Proctored Testing

The majority of candidates will sit their UCAT in a Pearson VUE test centre. Our computer-based test is designed to be delivered in a test centre environment. This offers the best, most secure experience for our candidates.

The UCAT Consortium is committed to ensuring that access to sitting the UCAT in a test centre is not a barrier to some candidates required to take the test as part of university selection processes. In recognition of this, the UCAT Consortium offers online proctored testing, using the Pearson VUE OnVUE platform, for candidates unable to test at a test centre who meet certain criteria.

The OnVUE UCAT is sat at home or other private location whilst the candidate is monitored by an offsite proctor via webcam and microphone. Test content is the same as tests delivered in test centres.

OnVUE UCAT testing takes place between 7 July and 19 September 2025.

Avoiding Testing Issues when sitting the OnVUE UCAT

Candidates approved to sit an OnVUE UCAT are advised how to avoid testing issues associated with online testing. These include:

Familiarising themselves with the information on the Pearson VUE OnVUE UCAT site and:

- running a System Test and reviewing the technical requirements.
- checking their testing space meets the requirements.
- reading the testing policies, procedures and FAQs.

Referring to the very important information on the UCAT Website, where they must:

- note the specific Photo ID Policy for online proctored testing.
- note the OnVUE UCAT Exam Rules.
- familiarise themselves with the note taking arrangements for online proctored testing.

Most issues can be avoided by completing a system test and ensuring that all system requirements are met in advance of testing.

Candidates are strongly recommended to use a personal computer (i.e., one not issued by school) and a wired, ethernet connection. Issues are more likely to occur if an unreliable internet connection is used (e.g., a wireless network) or a computer with firewalls or security settings.

Issues that might prevent a Candidate from sitting the OnVUE UCAT

Candidates may be prohibited from testing and will not be eligible for a refund or a free reschedule if:

- their set up does not meet the system requirements and causes a problem during testing
- they fail to present photo ID that meets the OnVUE Photo ID Policy.
- candidates under 18 only – a parent/guardian is not present at the start of their exam (with their own correct photo ID) to give their consent to testing.
- their testing space is not adequate (it must be private, free from noise or distractions, and cleared of any unauthorised items).
- they miss their test for any reason

The proctor will watch out for the following types of prohibited behaviours during testing:

- leaving the webcam view for any reason or duration
- looking or leaning off screen
- mumbling or speaking aloud
- covering the mouth or face
- failing to follow proctor instructions
- using unauthorised materials (e.g., mobile phones, recording equipment, writing materials)
- interacting with third parties intentionally or unintentionally

Depending on the severity of the violation, candidates may first receive a warning and reminder of the policy in question.

The proctor may revoke a test session (which invalidates the test result) if the violation is very serious or is repeated.

Candidates whose test session has been ended (revoked), are advised to email the UCAT Office as soon as possible for advice on next steps.

Principles of this Policy

- We have a clear and transparent process in place for making decisions on applications from candidates wishing to sit the OnVUE UCAT that is shared with candidates through our website. There is an opportunity for candidates to make direct contact with the UCAT Office if they require additional advice/support.
- We welcome applications from candidates and as such our policy is promoted through our website in a positive manner.
- Applications must normally be supported with appropriate evidence (such as proof of address) to verify eligibility. The evidence we require is stated clearly on our website.

Candidate Data

The UCAT Office uses candidate data and evidence to assess whether candidates are entitled to sit the OnVUE UCAT. Information may be shared with Pearson VUE. Candidates consent to this data being used for this purpose. Where evidence includes the data of any third party, candidates also confirm consent to share these data has been obtained. Candidate data is retained for the duration of the relevant admissions cycle (usually September the following year).

Information from candidates is held in the strictest confidence unless the candidate agrees for information to be shared with third parties such as Consortium Universities.

Applying to sit the OnVUE UCAT

Candidates must create a UCAT account as a candidate ID is required to make an OnVUE application. Returning candidates should use their existing candidate ID.

Candidates must complete an online application on the UCAT website which should include details of their nearest test centre and an estimate of their distance/travel time from it.

Candidates are expected to have checked local test centre availability (by following the steps to schedule a test through their UCAT account) before making an application.

Candidates must normally upload appropriate evidence (such as proof of address) to verify eligibility. UCAT reserves the right to request additional evidence if, in our view, the initial supporting documentation is not considered sufficient.

Applications must be received by the published deadlines or they will not be processed.

- OnVUE applications open: 17 June 2025 at 09:30 (BST)
- Application and evidence deadline: 16 September 2025 at 17:00 (BST)

Applications are usually processed within 5 working days and candidates are emailed the outcome of their application.

Candidates are advised to contact the UCAT Office if they have not received an email within this timeframe (after checking junk/spam folders). UCAT will not normally take action if a candidate fails to follow this advice and misses a key deadline.

Candidate eligibility

Geographic reasons

Candidates may be eligible to sit the OnVUE UCAT if one of the following apply:

- They live, work or are studying in a country where there is no test centre.
- They live, work or are studying in a country where the nearest test centre is a significant distance or travel time away.
- They live, work or are studying in a country where travel to a test centre is difficult because of pandemic, war, civil unrest or natural disaster.

Medical reasons

Candidates may be eligible to sit the OnVUE UCAT for medical reasons. Refer to the Access Arrangements Policy for further information.

Other eligibility considerations

Online proctored testing is not suitable for all eligible candidates for reasons outlined below:

Restricted Countries

Pearson VUE cannot deliver online proctored exams to candidates with a registered address in China (including Macau), Cuba, Iran, North Korea, the province of Quebec (Canada), Sudan, Syria, Russia, Belarus and some regions of Ukraine (Donetsk, Luhansk, Sevastopol, Crimea).

Identification and Permission for Under 18's to Test

Candidates must meet the specific ID Policy for the OnVUE UCAT (which is different to the test centre policy).

Candidates under 18 must have a parent/guardian (with approved ID) present at the start of their OnVUE UCAT.

Pearson VUE cannot accept IDs from Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Syria, Russia, Belarus and some regions of Ukraine (Donetsk, Luhansk, Sevastopol, Crimea) for online testing purposes.

Technical Requirements and Environment

To sit the OnVUE UCAT candidates will need:

- the correct technical equipment that meets or exceeds the recommended specifications.
- to have run the System Test to check their equipment meets minimum requirements.
- a reliable and stable internet connection speed.
- access to a quiet room where they will not be disturbed for the duration of their test.
- the correct note taking materials.

A minority of candidates taking the test at home may encounter technical issues. In most cases, this will be because candidates have not run the System Test or their internet connection is not robust enough to support taking the OnVUE UCAT without interruption.

Connectivity issues may slow some of the functionality in the test (content loading, operating the calculator or using shortcuts). The OnVUE software is designed to take this into account and time is not lost when exam content is loading.

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements, such as extra time or rest breaks can be supported in the OnVUE UCAT. There are different timings for some of the extended versions of the test for candidates testing online.

Candidates are not permitted to leave their room during the test. Rest breaks must be taken at their desk and they must stay within their webcam view at all times.

Apart from permitted note taking materials, any comfort aids or approved accommodations, their desktop should be clean.

Application Process

Processing OnVUE UCAT Applications

Applications are usually processed within 5 working days.

On occasion, advice from the UCAT Board and/or external advice may be requested to support decision making.

Stage 1:   Initial application outcome

Candidates will be advised of one of the following Initial Application Outcomes. These decisions are usually made by one member of the UCAT Office staff. On occasion, cases will

be discussed with more than one member of staff and/or advice sought from the UCAT Board or externally.

Outcome 1:   Approved

Applications to sit the OnVUE UCAT supported by correct evidence in line with this policy will be approved. The confirmation email will advise candidates of the steps they need to take place to either book a test and/or arrange any relevant accommodations before the booking deadline.

Outcome 2:   Rejected - Candidate is not entitled to sit the OnVUE UCAT

If (in the opinion of the UCAT Office), a candidate is not entitled to sit the OnVUE UCAT the application will be rejected. The candidate will receive a written explanation of the decision.

Outcome 3:   Rejected - Insufficient/Incorrect Evidence

Where a candidate has failed to provide sufficient evidence to support their application (in line with this policy), their application will be rejected by a member of the UCAT Office.

Candidates receive a written explanation of the decision. They are advised to email the UCAT Office with evidence that meets our requirements if they want the decision to be reconsidered.

On receipt of additional evidence, a final decision will be made, and the candidate will be responded to in full.

Stage 2:   Review by the UCAT Office

If an application has been rejected the candidate will be advised to email the UCAT Office if they want the decision to be reviewed. They may be advised to provide further evidence to support their claim.

The UCAT Office will review the original decision (made at Stage 1) in the light of additional information provided by the candidates, make a final decision, and respond in full.

Appealing an OnVUE UCAT decision

If a candidate is unhappy with the final decision from the UCAT Office, they may appeal to the UCAT Board.

Withdrawal of approval to sit an OnVUE UCAT

UCAT may withdraw approval to sit an OnVUE UCAT due to any of the violations described above.

Approval may also be withdrawn if a candidate fails to complete a test on more than one occasion due to problems with meeting any of the OnVUE requirements (technical, environment or ID).

Candidates in this position should make arrangements to test at a test centre.

February 2025