Oxford University/TCS Test Centre bulletin

Welcome to your next test centre communications update. You are receiving this bulletin because you recently became one of over 2,700 worldwide test centres authorised to deliver Oxford University tests in October 2023. It aims to provide essential information on topical issues and areas of particular concern or which we understand may require further clarification. You can also ask us any outstanding questions via the form mentioned below and we will cover these in the next edition.

Please note that this information does not apply to either the TSA or BMAT which are being delivered by Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing again this year.

The earlier edition of this newsletter is available via the TCS Communications tab on our Information for schools, colleges and other test centres webpage on Oxford's Undergraduate Admissions website. It might be useful to know that we are also providing step-by-step support to nearly 37,000 potential applicants via our regular Choosing Oxford newsletter.

Information to note

Candidate registration

Deadline

As you will be aware, the deadline for registering your candidates via Oxford/TCS's test registration portal was Friday, 29 September. There are currently over 12,500 candidates for Oxford's own tests (so excluding the TSA and BMAT). All registered candidates should have received their test ID and test login details almost immediately. We strongly recommend that you check that they have received these and get in touch with TCS (details below) if they have not. To date, most instances where candidates have not received these credentials have been because the notification has gone into a spam or junk email folder or as result of an error in the candidate's email address. Please ask your candidates to double check that these are not the case.

In recognition that this process is new this year, we will continue to try and register candidates for a few more days but please enter any late registrations as soon as possible.

So long as the registration portal remains open, you can view/edit your candidates via the Registering students menu on the homepage of the registration portal. Your login ID is the same as your username and is your centre's email address.

Access arrangements and modified papers

When registering candidates, please remember to include any access arrangements, including requests for modified paper versions of tests. If you are requesting particular arrangements on behalf of students, you should be able to produce evidence of need, if asked for by Oxford or TCS.

BYOD

If you have candidates registered to take their admissions test on their own device, please encourage them to respond as soon as possible to the agreement clarifying the terms and conditions of this arrangement. Please also check they have read the document *Guidelines for bringing your own device* which you will have seen is available to download from the registration portal.

Preparing students

Online practice tests

Students registered to take an Oxford admissions test are strongly encouraged to take an online practice test (using the 2022 past test paper or similar), well in advance of their test date, and ideally on a device which meets our technical specifications. These tests can be accessed via the specific test webpage which also host demonstration videos. This will allow them to try out the test platform and find out what to expect so on test day they can focus fully on their answers.

Please note that the online practice tests are not designed for giving feedback. If you would like to support your candidates with practice answers, then we suggest you recommend that they explore the other preparation materials and past papers available on the specific test webpages. We would suggest that, unless sitting one of the hybrid tests (MAT, PAT and MLAT (Russian and Modern Greek only) they practise typing their answers. Answer booklets are available to download for use with hybrid online practice tests for candidates who would like to simulate their test experience in advance.

Accessibility functions

When doing their online practice test, it is important candidates explore using all the digital tools available to support them. Depending on the test taken, these may vary but all have a highlighter and annotating tool as well as accessibility features. The accessibility button will allow selection of a larger font size, coloured overlays or high contrast. There may be an online notepad available but candidates should be offered rough paper which should be shredded after completion of the test.

Managing test days

Receiving printed answer booklets for hybrid tests

If you have candidates taking the MAT or PAT please check that you have entered the address of your centre correctly to ensure these reach you.

Note: answer booklets will be dispatched during the week commencing 2 October. After this time, it will not be possible to supply hard copies of these booklets. As a contingency, pdf versions will be available to download and print from the centre's Registration Portal.

Start times

Given that these admissions tests are computer-based, to maintain test security and ensure the integrity of this assessment process, it is essential that centres abide by the local start times listed on the Information for schools, colleges and other test centres webpage. Authorised test centres can also refer to this test timetable for guidance on running consecutive tests.

Later start time for HAT and ELAT

Some courses require candidates to sit the ELAT in addition to the CAT on 19 October or the HAT in addition to the MLAT on 20 October. This is why the start times for all candidates sitting ELAT and HAT are later - to allow candidates applying for a course that requires more than one test to sit both consecutively.

Note: the test platform allows candidates up to 30 minutes to begin their test after the test start window opens. This will allow candidates taking more than one test a maximum of 25 minutes break.

Special consideration

Details on this year's process for requesting special consideration on behalf of candidates can now be found under the Special consideration tab on our Information for schools, colleges and other test centres.

Please note that the special consideration form is for use on or after test days and will be published on the above webpage at 9am UK time on Thursday, 19 October (first test day).

Future bulletins will include further guidance on managing test days and access to a video demonstrating how test centres should use the test dashboard to confirm attendance of candidates and allow access to their tests.

Note: although candidates hold their test login details, these cannot be used to access the test unless the candidate is at the centre and given permission to do so by you.

Any questions?

If you cannot find an answer to your question on our admissions test webpages, then please submit this via our test centre enquiry form and we will address this in the next edition of the bulletin.

Contact details

In addition to using the form above, and for a same day response, you are welcome to contact us via the following email addresses:

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS): oxford.testcentresupport@tcs.com
- Oxford undergraduate admissions and outreach: study@ox.ac.uk

Additional sources of information

In addition to exploring the extensive information provided on our website, you may like to check out our Oxford Admissions Tests playlist at youtube.com/@StudyAtOxford

We hope you have found this information useful and will be in touch again soon.

With very best wishes,

Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach, University of Oxford

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)