

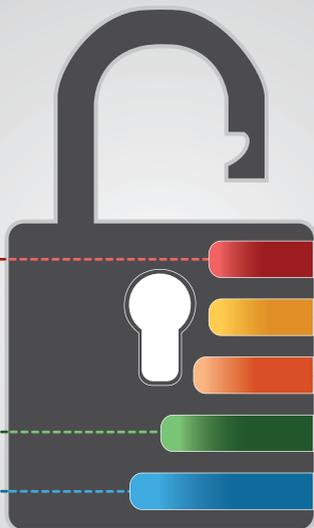
HSC subject
choice

Explaining
the ATAR

Offers

Applying
through UAC

International
students



All About UAC for

Student Advisers



Essentials: All About UAC for Student Advisers

Key dates

Early August	Applications open
End September	On-time applications close
Mid-December	HSC results and ATARs released
Early January	Change of preferences for January Main Round close
Mid-January	January Main Round offers made. Most offers to Year 12 students are made in this round

Fast facts

- The ATAR is a rank that indicates a student's position overall against other students. HSC marks indicate their performance in each of their courses.
- To be eligible for an ATAR, students must satisfactorily complete 10 units of ATAR courses, including: 8 units from Category A courses, 2 units of English, 3 Board Developed courses of 2 units or greater, and 4 subjects.
- Students should study courses they enjoy and do well in. Just about any combination of courses can lead to a good ATAR.

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For those travelling by train,
UAC is 250 metres from
Olympic Park railway station.



www.uac.edu.au



<http://twitter.com/UACinfo>



8.30am–4.30pm
Monday to Friday (Sydney time)



email online enquiry form,
[www.uac.edu.au/general/
contact.shtml](http://www.uac.edu.au/general/contact.shtml)



[www.youtube.com/user/
UACinfo](http://www.youtube.com/user/UACinfo)

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Introduction and common terms



Introduction

All About UAC for Student Advisers has been produced to help senior secondary staff give advice to high school students about maximising their chances of being accepted into tertiary education.

The booklet is divided into chronological sections, from advising Year 10 and Year 11 students on their subject choice to guiding Year 12 students through the university application process. Each section contains an overview of the topic followed by the answers to the questions UAC frequently receives from student advisers throughout the year. For those requiring additional information, a list of resources is provided.

Talking to UAC about your students

UAC is bound by the Privacy Act, so we cannot talk to you about your students' applications.

In addition, an ATAR can only be accessed by a student or their authorised agent. UAC does not give ATARs to schools or student advisers. You may ask a student directly what their ATAR is, but it is the student's decision whether or not to tell you.

Common terms

Additional selection criteria

Criteria used by some institutions as well as, or instead of, the ATAR to assess specific skills relevant to a particular course. They can include tests, interviews, auditions and portfolios.

Apply

UAC's online application system on our website. Year 12 students must apply online through Undergraduate Apply to be considered for a place at one of UAC's participating institutions. International students undertaking Year 12 at an Australian high school need to apply through International Apply.

Assumed knowledge

Knowledge of a specific Year 12 course that an institution assumes students have before they start a particular tertiary course. If students do not have that assumed level of knowledge but have met the admission requirements, they could still be selected for the course, but may have difficulty coping with their studies.

ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank)

A rank, not a mark, indicating a student's overall academic achievement in Year 12 in relation to their age cohort. It helps institutions rank applicants for selection.

ATAR courses

Board Developed courses for which the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) conducts examinations that yield graded assessments. English Studies, Mathematics General 1 and Life Skills courses are not ATAR courses. VET courses can contribute to a student's ATAR eligibility requirements and calculation if the student enrolls in the appropriate additional examination course and completes the examination.

Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES)

NSW Government authority that sets the core curriculum for Kindergarten to Year 12, sets guidelines for school assessment tasks, and sets, organises and marks the HSC examinations. Referred to as 'BOSTES' in this publication.

Bonus points

Points allocated to a student by an institution. Bonus points do not change a student's ATAR, but change their selection rank for a particular course preference. Examples are subject bonus points or regional bonus points. Bonus points can also be awarded to Educational Access Schemes (EAS) applicants.

Check & Change

UAC's online facility that enables applicants to check and change their preferences and other details on their application.

Cohort

A student's peer group. For example, the ATAR cohort refers to those students who receive an ATAR in the same academic year. A Year 7 cohort comprises those students who began Year 7 together, regardless of when they left the school system.

Course cut-off

The lowest selection rank (including any bonuses) obtained by current Australian Year 12 students receiving an offer to a course. The cut-offs for courses in a particular year are only known after Main Round offers for that year are made. The previous year's Main Round cut-offs published by UAC should only be used as a guide.

Course cut-offs can change from year to year, depending on the number of places available, the number of applications for the course and the quality of the applicants.

Deferral

The situation when a student has received an offer to enrol in a tertiary course but has been given permission by the institution to delay the start of the course for a fixed period, usually one year.

HSC course

A branch of study within a NSW HSC subject. A subject may have several different courses. For example, within the subject of English, courses include English (Standard), English (Advanced), HSC English Extension 1, HSC English Extension 2 and English as a Second Language.

HSC mark

A 50:50 combination of a student's examination mark and school-based assessment mark for each course. It is recorded on the student's HSC Record of Achievement, which is issued to them by BOSTES.

HSC subject

A general area of study or key learning area in the NSW HSC; for example, within the subject of English, courses include English (Standard), English (Advanced), HSC English Extension 1, HSC English Extension 2, and English as a Second Language.

Institution

A provider of tertiary study, such as a university or a college.

Moderation

The process of adjusting school assessment marks to a common scale so that direct comparisons can be made between assessment marks awarded by different schools. The rank order of students within a school group, and the relative gaps between them, are maintained.

Prerequisite

An essential prescribed level of achievement that must be reached in order to be considered for admission to certain tertiary courses. Some tertiary courses require students to have achieved a specified standard in an HSC course or equivalent before they will be offered a place in those courses (course prerequisites). Some subjects within

a tertiary course require students to achieve a specified standard in a particular HSC course or equivalent before they are able to enrol in those particular subjects (subject prerequisites). Some institutions offer bridging or introductory courses to help students achieve the required standard.

Raw HSC mark

The average of a student's raw examination mark and their raw moderated school assessment mark, before it is aligned to performance bands by BOSTES or scaled by UAC. This mark is not reported to the student.

Recommended studies

Year 12 courses that an institution suggests a student should study to assist in their chosen tertiary course. If a student has not studied these courses their chances of selection are not affected. However, a student who has studied these courses will be better prepared for their chosen tertiary course.

Scaled mark

The mark used in the ATAR calculation. It is used because marks in different courses are not directly comparable, and an adjustment must be made before an overall measure of achievement can be determined. Scaling allows the comparison of students who have studied different courses by determining what the marks would have been if all students had attempted all courses.

Slipback offer

An offer to a lower level of study than the student has applied for; for example, if a student applies for a Bachelor degree and the institution decides that it cannot offer the student entry to that course, it may offer the student entry to a lower level of study, such as a Diploma.

Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)

The central office that receives and processes applications for admission to most undergraduate courses at its participating institutions as well as applications for Educational Access Schemes, Schools Recommendation Schemes and Equity Scholarships. UAC notifies NSW HSC students of their ATAR (ACT students are notified by their school) and makes offers of admission on behalf of participating institutions. It also processes applications for many postgraduate courses.

HSC • subject choice



Preparing in Year 10 and Year 11

In Year 10, students begin to think about the subjects and courses they need to study in years 11 and 12 if they intend to pursue tertiary education. They may have heard rumours from older students and siblings about Year 12, the ATAR or university entry. It's important to dispel myths and to give students solid information on which they can base their decisions.

Students need to choose courses that work for them in three main ways:

- 1 They need to make them eligible to receive an ATAR.
- 2 They need to be subjects they like, do well in and, therefore, give them the greatest chance of receiving the highest possible ATAR.
- 3 They need to prepare them for the areas of tertiary study they are planning to pursue.

Year 10 booklet

UAC's University Entry Requirements for Year 10 Students booklet helps students select courses for years 11 and 12. It includes information and worksheets to help students map their interests and skills to some possible career paths and study options and select useful HSC subjects. It also sets out course entry requirements for UAC's participating institutions, including prerequisites, assumed knowledge and recommended studies. Our Year 10 PowerPoint presentation, which you can download from www.uac.edu.au/schoolink/year-10.shtml, is a useful resource for a 'subject selection' lesson.

When using the Year 10 booklet, students should pay careful attention to the following information:

- **Course prerequisites:** Some tertiary courses require a student to have achieved a certain standard in an HSC course or equivalent before they will be offered a place in that course.
- **Subject prerequisites:** Some subjects in tertiary courses require a student to have achieved a certain standard in a specific HSC course before the student is able to enrol in those particular subjects.
- **Assumed knowledge:** Some institutions assume a student has knowledge of specific HSC courses or equivalent before they begin the course.

- **Recommended studies:** These are HSC or equivalent courses that the institutions suggest will help a student in their chosen tertiary course.

Although NSW institutions have few prerequisites and many offer bridging courses where required subjects or standards are not met, students need to be aware that bridging courses are not equivalent to the two-year HSC course and they may add significantly to a student's study load and course fees.

The Year 10 booklet also provides information about:

- university open days to encourage students to begin researching their options by visiting campuses
- HSC courses and whether they are classified as Category A or Category B
- how the ATAR is calculated and used for tertiary entry.

Ensuring ATAR eligibility

The most important requirement for students intending to go on to further study is to choose (and continue with) a pattern of study that will make them eligible for an ATAR. It sounds obvious, but it is not unheard of for students to put in a lot of hard work only to find out that their chosen subjects did not meet the ATAR-eligibility criteria.

To be eligible for an ATAR in NSW, students must satisfactorily complete at least 10 units of ATAR courses, including:

- eight units of Category A courses
- two units of English
- three Board Developed courses of two units or greater
- four subjects. (A subject is a general area of study, such as English. Within that subject there may be a number of courses, such as English (Standard), English (Advanced), HSC English Extension 1, HSC English Extension 2 and English as a Second Language.)

Only two units of Category B courses can be included in the calculation of the ATAR.

Doing more than 12 units in Year 11 is not necessary but it may be worthwhile for able students to broaden their scope of study, giving them greater choice when it's time to refine their course choice for Year 12. If they decide to drop any courses at the end of Year 11 they need to ensure they will still be eligible for an ATAR.

The most common mistake students make is to not study enough *subjects* – make sure your students choose courses from four subjects.

'Maximising' the ATAR

Many students and parents are convinced that certain courses, such as HSC Mathematics Extension 2, are 'scaled up' and lead to a higher ATAR. This is probably the hardest myth to bust. Just about any combination of courses can lead to a good ATAR; it all depends on how well a student has done in all their courses in comparison to other students.

Students who achieve high ATARs are generally placed near the top in all of their courses. Therefore, UAC recommends encouraging students to choose HSC courses they enjoy and are good at, and which will prepare them for what they are planning to study after Year 12.

Preparing for tertiary study

Students should select courses that give them some flexibility and allow entry into a range of tertiary courses.

Very few universities in NSW and the ACT have courses with prerequisites. However, students should also take careful note of assumed knowledge and recommended studies. It is better to have a background in an area of study across years 11 and 12 than to undertake an intensive bridging course when university begins.

Many interstate institutions do have prerequisites. Students need to be advised to look at the websites or publications produced by interstate institutions and tertiary admissions centres to check those prerequisites.

Advising on different levels of courses

UAC does not recommend that students select a course based only on its perceived ATAR value. It is very difficult to predict which course will receive a higher scaled mark. Even if we could make this prediction it wouldn't necessarily benefit the student if their position in the course is low.

A course such as HSC Mathematics Extension 2 is often studied by a small number of high-achieving students who do well in all their courses and therefore the scaled marks for that course are often high.

Rather than trying to work out if they are better off completing a standard- or higher-level course, students should think about which of the two courses they prefer and will therefore do better in. This is particularly relevant for English because it has to be included in the ATAR calculation no matter how well or poorly the student performs.

Accelerating studies

Some students may accelerate their studies by completing HSC courses while in Year 11. This can offer advantages such as:

- letting students take fewer courses in Year 12, meaning they can focus on those units
- allowing students to study a broader range of subjects
- having more units available for inclusion in the calculation of their ATAR.

Courses are scaled in the year they are completed and the scaled mark is available for inclusion in the ATAR calculation when the student becomes ATAR eligible. The student is ranked with others in the same ATAR cohort.

Take the example of a Year 11 student below:

Year completed	HSC course	Scaling
2014	Agriculture	Results scaled against other students completing that course in 2014
2015	10 additional HSC units	Results scaled against other students completing those units in 2015

Mathematics extension courses

Only four units of calculus-based maths can be included in the ATAR calculation. If a student completes Mathematics in Year 11 and then goes on to complete HSC Mathematics Extension 1 and HSC Mathematics Extension 2 in Year 12, their Mathematics result cannot be included in the student's ATAR calculation, even if they have excelled in it.

Category A and B courses

HSC courses are classified as either Category A or Category B. Category A courses are more academically rigorous than Category B courses.

No more than two units of Category B courses can be included in the ATAR calculation. To have the units included in the calculation, the student needs to be enrolled with BOSTES for the Category B course and exam.

A Category B course completed in Year 11 can be included in the ATAR calculation. Whether it is actually included will depend on whether it is among the student's best eight scaled units (after English).

VET courses

Vocational education and training (VET) courses provide students with the opportunity to gain industry-recognised national vocational qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) as part of their schooling. VET courses (Industry Curriculum Frameworks or VET Board Endorsed courses) are based on qualifications and units of competency contained in nationally endorsed Training Packages.

Some TAFE-delivered HSC VET courses are Category B courses and can contribute to the ATAR if the student is enrolled with BOSTES and sits an exam. Other TAFE-delivered courses are endorsed by BOSTES and contribute to the HSC but they do not have an HSC examination and do not contribute towards the calculation of the ATAR. ATAR courses (either Category A or Category B) must be Board Developed courses for which BOSTES conducts examinations that yield graded assessments.

Dropping courses

If a Year 11 student is considering dropping a subject, the most important thing for them to do is to make sure they will still be eligible for an ATAR. They need to ensure they are studying the required number of Category A courses, two-unit courses and subjects. UAC does not recommend that students select a course based on their perception of how it scales (read 'Scaling', page 12).

Frequently asked questions



Is a Band 4 or 5 in English (Advanced) better than a Band 6 in English (Standard)? And is it better for a student who is good at English, but dislikes it, to drop English (Advanced) and study English (Standard)?

It's very difficult to predict which course will lead to a higher scaled mark. Remember that the scaled mark depends on the scaled mean of the course *and* the student's position in the course.

Advice should be based on which of the two courses the student prefers and will therefore do better in. This is particularly relevant for English because it has to be included in the ATAR calculation no matter how well or poorly the student performs.



If a student completes Mathematics in Year 11 then goes on to complete HSC Mathematics Extension 1 and HSC Mathematics Extension 2 in Year 12, will Mathematics still be available for inclusion in the student's ATAR?

No. Only four units of calculus-based maths can be included in the ATAR calculation. Students studying HSC Mathematics Extension 1 should be aware that it has a different weighting (in terms of units) depending on whether they take Mathematics or HSC Mathematics Extension 2.

If students study Mathematics (2 units), then HSC Mathematics Extension 1 accounts for 1 unit.

If students study HSC Mathematics Extension 2 (2 units), then HSC Mathematics Extension 1 accounts for 2 units. This is calculated by doubling the mark received for the 1-unit course.

If a student completes Mathematics then goes on to satisfactorily complete HSC Mathematics Extension 1 and HSC Mathematics Extension 2, their results in Mathematics cannot be included in their ATAR calculation, even if they have excelled in it.



If students wish to drop courses at the end of Year 11, should they first check the Scaling Report before making any decisions?

No. UAC does not recommend that students select a course based only on its perceived ATAR value. The best way for students to maximise their ATAR is to choose courses they will do well in.

The most important thing for Year 11 students to keep in mind is to make sure they will still be eligible for an ATAR if they drop any courses. Remember, to be eligible for an ATAR students must satisfactorily complete at least 10 units of ATAR courses, including:

- eight units of Category A courses
- two units of English
- three Board Developed courses of two units or greater
- four subjects. (A subject is a general area of study, such as English. Within that subject there may be a number of courses, such as English (Standard), English (Advanced), HSC English Extension 1, HSC English Extension 2 and English as a Second Language.)



Is a student's ATAR calculation influenced by the school they attend?

No. The ATAR calculation is based on 10 units of a student's scaled marks, and the school a student attends does not form part of the calculation. Students who achieve high ATARs come from a mix of government (both comprehensive and selective) and non-government schools.

All students can perform well regardless of the school they attend, provided they study hard and achieve good HSC results. You can encourage students to achieve their personal best by choosing courses that they enjoy and are good at.

Resources

Download from UAC's website

- All About UAC for Year 11 and 12 Students (booklet)
- Choosing HSC Courses – Facts and Myths (PowerPoint presentation)

Buy online

- University Entry Requirements for Year 10 Students: four free copies are provided to each school. In addition, you can buy the booklet online from the UAC shop on our website. Booklets are dispatched from early May on receipt of payment. A PDF version can be downloaded from our website.

Read online

- For information on courses available through the NSW vocational education and training system, visit <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au>.

Explaining the ATAR



The ATAR in brief

The ATAR is a rank, not a mark. It's a number between 0.00 and 99.95 with increments of 0.05. The ATAR provides a measure of a student's overall academic achievement in relation to that of other students and helps universities rank applicants for selection into their courses.

The ATAR indicates a student's position relative to all the students who started high school with them in Year 7. So, an ATAR of 80.00 means that a student is 20 per cent from the top of their Year 7 group, even though not everyone who started with them in Year 7 went on to achieve an ATAR.

The average ATAR is usually around 70.00. Some people are surprised by this, thinking that the average should be 50.00. It would be 50.00 if everyone from Year 7 went on to achieve an ATAR. But because the students who leave early are typically less academically able than the ones that stay on, the students receiving ATARs are a smaller, more academically able group, and the average ATAR they receive is higher.

In NSW the ATAR is calculated and released by UAC. In the ACT the ATAR is calculated by the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies and released by schools.

The NSW ATAR is based on an aggregate of scaled marks in 10 units of ATAR courses comprising:

- the best two units of English
- the best eight units from the remaining units.

No more than two units of Category B courses can be included.

Many students and parents hear incorrect information about the ATAR and its calculation. Here are the essential facts they need to know.

A student's ATAR is affected by	A student's ATAR is not affected by
Their position in their courses.	The school they attend.
Their raw HSC marks provided by BOSTES.	Studying certain courses, such as Visual Arts or Business Studies.
Choosing subjects they enjoy and do well in and their effort to work consistently at their optimal level.	Studying extension or advanced courses.
	Studying extra units.
	The performance band they achieve.

HSC marks and the ATAR: what's the difference?

A student's HSC marks, as reported in their Record of Achievement, are an indication of the standards the student has reached in each of the courses they have completed. The HSC mark for each course is a 50:50 combination of a student's external examination mark and school-based assessment mark for that course.

The ATAR, on the other hand, is a number that measures a student's overall academic achievement in the HSC in relation to other students. It is a rank, rather than a mark or score. The ATAR is calculated by UAC using scaled raw HSC marks.

The following table is a summary of the differences between HSC marks and the ATAR.

HSC marks	The ATAR
HSC marks provide information about how well students have performed in each of the courses they have completed.	The ATAR provides information about how students are positioned overall against other students.
HSC marks indicate a student's performance in the different courses they have studied.	The ATAR allows a student to be compared with other students who have completed different combinations of courses.
HSC marks are reported against standards.	The ATAR is a rank, not a mark.
HSC marks are provided by BOSTES.	The ATAR is provided by UAC.

Most HSC marks lie between 50 and 100, and the middle students in most courses receive a mark between 70 and 80. Students who achieve marks in the mid-70s may get an ATAR of around 70.00, but sometimes marks in the 70s can mean a much lower ATAR depending on their courses and their position in those courses.

A student can perform extremely well in their HSC but that doesn't necessarily guarantee a high position in their courses.

Fred and Laura

Consider Fred and Laura, who completed the same courses. Fred received an HSC mark of 70 in each course, while Laura received an HSC mark of 80 in each course.

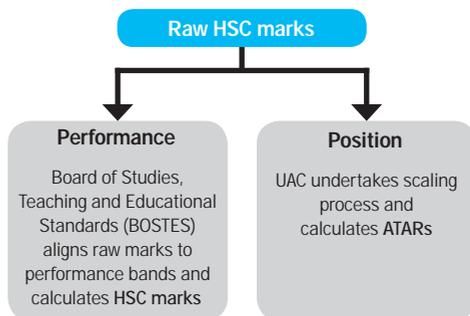
Course	Fred		Laura	
	HSC mark /100	Percentile	HSC mark /100	Percentile
Biology	70	43	80	75
Business Studies	70	36	80	67
English (Advanced)	70	11	80	47
Mathematics	70	21	80	51
Modern History	70	30	80	59
Visual Arts	70	14	80	51
ATAR	57.50		79.65	

Their HSC marks in each course differ by only 10, yet their ATARs differ by 22.15. Their performance was similar, but their positions were quite different. Laura's ATAR is similar to her HSC marks while Fred's ATAR is much lower than his HSC marks. This is because Laura's percentiles (her positions) in her courses are much better than Fred's.

The percentile column in this table tells us about their positions in more detail. For example, in Biology, Laura's mark of 80 positioned her in the 75th percentile, which means she is placed in the top 25 per cent of students. Fred's mark of 70 is in the 43rd percentile, so he is only in the top 57 per cent of students. Even though Fred and Laura's performance in Biology differed by 10 marks, their positions varied by 32.

ATAR calculation

The actual calculation of the ATAR is a complex process that begins with scaling raw HSC marks and ends with ranking the student among their entire Year 7 cohort. It is a different calculation to that used for the HSC, which provides a measure of a student's performance against performance bands.



Year 7 cohort

Each state has different participation rates; that is, the number of students completing Year 12 who are eligible to receive an ATAR. To ensure the interstate equivalence of ATARs, an age cohort is used in each state so that a student's rank is a measure of their performance against all students who started Year 7 with them in that state, not just those who completed Year 12 and were eligible for an ATAR.

Scaling

Scaling is designed to remove differences between courses. Marks in different courses are not comparable, because a student's mark and position in a course depend on how well they have done and how that compares to other students.

Courses have to be scaled so that marks in different courses can be compared with each other properly and fairly. Courses are scaled using the mean scores and distribution of marks, which indicate the ability of the course candidature. Courses such as HSC Mathematics Extension 2 and Physics traditionally scale well because of this. However, students must achieve high HSC marks to gain any benefit from scaling. Also, courses should not be chosen because they may scale well. Courses should be chosen according to the student's interests, aptitude and aspirations.

Scaling myths	
Myth	Fact
Some courses are always 'scaled up', therefore students should study those.	Marks are scaled according to a course's scaled mean. The scaled mean indicates the academic ability of the course candidature, which can change from year to year. A student's scaled mark indicates their position within the course candidature. For most courses a student's scaled marks will be lower than their HSC marks. To get the best possible position and maximise their scaled marks, students should select the courses they will do best in.
Some courses are always 'scaled down', therefore students should avoid those.	
Students have to study 'hard' subjects to get high scaled marks.	'Hard' is a subjective term. What is hard for one student could be easy for another. Each student needs to make an individual choice. Students who achieve an ATAR of 99.95 have varied patterns of study.

English courses

In NSW it is mandatory for two units of English to be included in the ATAR.

The NSW ATAR is calculated using the scaled marks from a student's best two units of English, plus their next eight best units. If a student's additional English units are among their next best eight units, they can also be used in their ATAR calculation.

English Studies has no external HSC examination and cannot be included in the ATAR calculation. Therefore, English Studies students are not eligible for an ATAR.

Mathematics courses

Up to four units of calculus-based maths can be included in the ATAR calculation. HSC Mathematics Extension 1 has a different weighting (in terms of units) depending on whether it is paired with Mathematics or HSC Mathematics Extension 2.

If students study Mathematics (2 units), then HSC Mathematics Extension 1 accounts for 1 unit.

If students study HSC Mathematics Extension 2 (2 units), then HSC Mathematics Extension 1 accounts for 2 units. This is calculated by doubling the mark received for the 1-unit course.

If a student completes Mathematics then goes on to satisfactorily complete HSC Mathematics Extension 1

and HSC Mathematics Extension 2, their results in Mathematics will not be included in the ATAR calculation, even if they have excelled in it.

Mathematics General 1 has no external HSC examination and cannot be included in the ATAR calculation.

Accumulated courses

Courses can be accumulated for the ATAR over a period of up to five years. Scaled marks are calculated in the year the course is completed and the scaled mark is available for inclusion in the ATAR calculation when the student becomes ATAR eligible.

Repeated courses

A student is considered to be repeating an HSC course if they:

- repeat the same course
- study a different course in the same subject area, apart from an extension course.

If a student repeats a course, only the marks for the latest satisfactory attempt will be available for inclusion in the calculation of their ATAR, even if they are lower than the earlier attempt.

Re-marked HSC papers

If BOSTES provides UAC with amended HSC results, the student's ATAR is automatically recalculated and UAC notifies the student by email. A new ATAR Advice Notice will also be sent to the student.

ATAR notification

ATARs are calculated for all ATAR-eligible students and students can access their ATAR on UAC's website or on My UAC, the mobile app, in mid-December. However, only NSW HSC students who indicate on their HSC entry forms that they wish to be notified of their ATAR will receive an ATAR Advice Notice from UAC. This will arrive in the mail in mid-December, shortly after ATARs are released. The exact dates for each year can be found on UAC's website. The ATAR Advice Notice indicates which units have been included in the calculation of the ATAR.

If a student receives an ATAR between 0.00 and 30.00 the notice will read '30 or less'. If the student has not met the requirements of the ATAR the notice will read 'not eligible'.

To access their ATAR on UAC's website or mobile app, students will need their HSC student number (or ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies student number) and their UAC PIN. If they have queries once they access their ATAR, they can call UAC's ATAR Enquiry Centre, which operates when ATARs are released. The telephone number and opening hours are published on UAC's website in December.

Limited ATAR

Some institutions allow some applicants completing Year 12 to use a Limited ATAR, along with other selection criteria, to gain entry to tertiary study. A Limited ATAR is calculated from the best four units of courses completed, rather than the eight used for the standard ATAR.

Students who are over 20 years of age on 1 March in the year they complete their HSC studies and who are taking between five and nine units of ATAR courses, including at least one unit of English, are eligible for a Limited ATAR.

For a Limited ATAR, all courses must be completed in the same academic year. Students cannot accumulate courses over several years.

The Limited ATAR is calculated using the scaled marks from ATAR courses, which must include at least one unit of English plus the best four other units of Category A courses.

If a student meets the criteria to receive a Limited ATAR and an ATAR, both will be calculated and sent to them. The student will receive a Limited ATAR Advice Notice and an ATAR Advice Notice. However, students usually receive a Limited ATAR in one year and an ATAR in a later year, once they have completed the required number of units.



Students need to ensure that UAC and BOSTES have their up-to-date postal and email addresses so that they receive their ATAR Advice Notice and other important correspondence.

Frequently asked questions



If a student is ranked second in a school assessment, does that mean they will receive the second highest exam mark?

No. A student who is ranked second in their school assessment will receive the second highest moderated assessment mark. The exam mark the student receives will depend on how well the student performs in the exam and is independent of their assessment rank.



If I have an under-performing student, will this bring down everybody else's marks?

Not necessarily. School assessment marks are moderated against the exam marks to eliminate any differences between schools in the way they assess.

So having one under-performing student in the exam is unlikely to make any difference. If all the students in your school under-perform in the exam, the school assessment marks will be moderated downwards. Conversely, if your students do well in the exam, your school's assessment marks will be moderated upwards.



Are there plans to include Year 9 NAPLAN results in future ATAR calculations?

No. The ATAR calculation is based solely on HSC results. No other school results are used.



Does the ATAR reflect a student's rank against all other Year 12 students in Australia?

No. ATARs are calculated in each state (except Queensland) to reflect a student's rank against other students in their state. An ATAR of 85.00 in NSW will, however, be considered equivalent to an ATAR of 85.00 in other states.



What should I do if I have a student who has completed subjects in another state and wants them included in the calculation of their ATAR?

The student should contact BOSTES to gain approval to include the subjects in the HSC. The student should then make a request in writing to the Director, Information Services, UAC, Locked Bag 112, Silverwater NSW 2128.



Can a student's ATAR be recalculated?

Generally speaking no, but there are some instances in which ATARs will be recalculated:

- if BOSTES provides amended HSC results
- if additional courses are completed in subsequent years
- if courses already completed are repeated in subsequent years.

If an ATAR is recalculated the student will receive a new ATAR Advice Notice.

Resources

Download from UAC's website

- All About UAC for Parents (booklet)
- Frequently Asked Questions About the ATAR (booklet)
- All About Your ATAR (brochure sent to Year 12 students)
- Report on the Scaling of the NSW Higher School Certificate (booklet)

View on UAC's website

- ATAR Essentials (video)

AppLYing • through UAC



Preparing to apply

Students apply online to courses at UAC's participating institutions. They will need:

- access to a desktop or laptop computer (not a tablet or mobile phone)
- a printer (to print the confirmation of application and the payment receipt or invoice)
- their HSC student number from BOSTES (or ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies student number)
- their UAC PIN (sent to them in August)
- a private email address (not a shared address)
- a method for paying the processing charge (a credit card or PayPal account if they are paying online).

PINs and application numbers

HSC students receive two PINs that are used for two different purposes.

- 1 The **HSC six-digit PIN** is received from BOSTES early in Year 12 and gives students access to NSW Students Online. This is not used when applying through UAC.
- 2 The **UAC four-digit PIN** is posted to the student's home address in early August. The UAC PIN allows them to apply online through UAC's website. It gives them access to their ATAR and to UAC's Check & Change, where they can change their preferences and check for offers to courses.

It is important that students keep their PINs in a safe place.

Lost or forgotten PIN

If a student has already applied through UAC, they can click on the lost PIN link in Check & Change to have it emailed to them. If they haven't applied, they can call UAC Customer Service on 1300 ASK UAC (1300 275 822), from mobiles on (02) 9752 0200 or from overseas on +61 2 9752 0200, Monday to Friday 8.30am–4.30pm (Sydney time).

Due to privacy legislation UAC can only release this information to the owner of the PIN, or their agent (if they have applied and listed an agent in their UAC application).

Year 12 student number

When Year 12 students apply they will use their Board of Studies HSC student number (or ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies student number) and UAC PIN to log in.

UAC application number

Once the application has been started and they complete and submit their personal details, the student's UAC application number will be generated.

It is important for students to keep their UAC application number and UAC PIN safe and handy, as they will need them to change their preferences and check their ATAR and offers online or on the mobile app.

Additional selection criteria

Year 12 students are selected on the basis of their ATAR for most courses. However, some courses have additional selection criteria. These can include interviews, auditions, portfolios, supporting statements, questionnaires and tests.

Students need to check carefully if any of their courses have additional selection criteria or particular course requirements. These can be found in the course descriptions on UAC's website and mobile app and in the UAC Guide.

For further information, contact the institution directly.

Tests

If a student wishes to study medicine (or some health science degree programs), they'll need to sit the **Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT)** during Year 12. It is only held once a year in July. The test is used specifically to assist with the selection of students into health science degree programs at undergraduate level at certain universities. If students choose course preferences that require them to sit UMAT, they will be asked to include their UMAT candidate number on their UAC application. UMAT results are sent directly to the institutions, which match them to the applications for admission to the relevant courses.

For information, email umat@acer.edu.au or visit <https://umat.acer.edu.au>.

Special requirements

Students seeking entry into health/welfare-related and teacher education courses need to be aware of special requirements relating to:

- criminal record/working with children checks
- clinical placements
- procedures for employment after completing the course.

Further details are in the UAC Guide and on UAC's website, but these requirements and policies are subject to regular review, so students should check with institutions before they apply for these types of courses.

Interviews, statements, auditions and portfolios

All interviews and auditions are organised directly between the student and the institution.

Courses that include an interview or audition in their selection criteria usually require applicants to make arrangements directly with the institution in addition to listing the course in their UAC preferences.

If a portfolio or personal statement is required, it will be listed in that course's entry in the UAC Guide and in the course description on UAC's website. Students need to follow the institution's instructions for how to submit the portfolio or personal statement.

Each institution has its own policy for determining how additional selection criteria are assessed. Some institutions may allocate a weighting for each component. For example, the ATAR might be worth 50 per cent, a portfolio 25 per cent and an interview 25 per cent. In other institutions, the ATAR may be used as a cut-off to filter applicants, and those above the cut-off are assessed and ranked on the additional criteria. Or the portfolio or audition may take precedence over other criteria, including the ATAR.

For further information, students should contact the institution.

Gap years

UAC recommends that students intending to take a gap year apply now and defer. Current Year 12s are eligible for early entry schemes, and regional and subject bonus points. Any bonus points will improve their selection rank. In addition, depending on the institution, Educational Access Schemes, Schools Recommendation Schemes and Equity Scholarships may only be available to current school leavers.

If students wait a year they will be applying as non-Year 12 applicants. They will be competing against other non-Year 12 applicants who may have a range of qualifications and experiences. Students may also no longer have access to bonus points.

Applying online

Students apply online for UAC's participating institutions through UAC's website. For undergraduate study, students can apply to up to nine institutions – they don't need to apply separately to each institution.

Some courses may require students to apply directly to the institution, so students need to check each course's requirements carefully.

Timing

Applications for admission to study open in early August.

By applying before the end of September, students will avoid the increase to processing charges between the end of September and late February the following year, which is the final closing date for semester 1 courses. Also, some courses have early closing dates – students need to carefully check the requirements for each of their chosen courses. Students who are also applying for Schools Recommendation Schemes are required to have completed both applications by the end of September.

Once they have their ATAR, students can change their preferences quickly and easily. Preferences can be changed as many times as they wish at no extra cost.

Logging in

To apply, students need their HSC student number (or ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies student number) and the four-digit UAC PIN sent to them in early August. After applying, applicants can change their course preferences and personal details online using Check & Change. Course preferences can also be changed using My UAC, the mobile app.

Paying

The processing charge can be paid online by credit or debit card (Mastercard and Visa) or PayPal, or an invoice can be printed and payment made

by BPAY or Australia Post Billpay. Payments to UAC are not refundable under any circumstances except as required by law. Students can elect to pay the processing charge at a later date but their application will not be processed until full payment is received by UAC.

Check UAC's website for dates and processing charges.

Listing qualifications

Year 12 students will have their Year 12 qualification added to their application automatically when ATARs are released in mid-December. Most Year 12 students will have no further qualifications to add.

The work experience question in the application is a standard question that isn't relevant to Year 12 students. The question is there for non-Year 12 applicants with other qualifications, such as work experience equivalent to 12 months or more of full-time employment. It is not necessary for current Year 12 students to list or supply employment experience as entry to tertiary study is based on their ATAR and other selection criteria (where applicable).

For non-Year 12 applicants, TAFE and private college studies at Certificate III level and above and non-award or Bachelor-level studies (either complete or incomplete) need to be added to their application separately as a tertiary qualification. Only qualifications of Certificate III and above will be assessed.

Listing preferences

Undergraduate applicants can list up to nine different courses at nine different institutions. However, they can also apply with just one preference, particularly if they are still undecided about what they want to do. Once they have their ATAR and know if they are eligible for any bonus points, they can then change their preferences at no extra cost. Some courses have early closing dates and need to be listed in their preferences by the on-time closing date at the end of September. Check our website for dates.

UAC recommends students list their 'dream preference' at number one, but follow that with a number of realistic preferences. At the bottom of the preference list they should include one or two 'safe' options to ensure that they get an offer. This

is because, during the selection process, course preferences are considered one at a time in the order in which they're listed on the application.

To maximise their chance of receiving an offer, students should include courses with a range of cut-offs. They should also tick the box that asks them if they would like to receive information on other study options if they do not receive an offer to any of their selected courses.

Most importantly, students need to take responsibility for their application by reading all correspondence (mainly via email) from UAC and following instructions.

If a student applies for an early entry scheme at two different institutions, the student needs to find out which offer round is being used for the scheme, then make sure that the course for that scheme is listed as their first preference by the change of preference deadline for that round, as only first preferences are considered in early offer rounds. Once that round of offers is complete the student can accept this offer then change their preferences for the next round of offers if they want to keep receiving offers to courses.

Offer round dates can be found in the UAC Guide or on UAC's website.

Cut-offs

The cut-offs published in the UAC Guide and in UAC's course search are the Main Round cut-offs from the previous year. They are intended to be used as a guide only when selecting preferences.

The course cut-off is the minimum selection rank required by Year 12 applicants for selection into a course. For Year 12 students, their selection rank is usually their ATAR. However, if they are eligible to receive bonus points (read 'Bonus points' on page 20), their selection rank = ATAR + bonus points. This means they may receive an offer to a course even though their ATAR is below the cut-off.

Cut-offs are determined when January Main Round offers are made. They cannot be known in advance because they reflect supply and demand; that is, the number of places in a course, the number of applicants for that course and the quality of those applicants. They do not reflect the quality of the course.

Supplying documents

Year 12 students usually do not have to supply any documents with their UAC application. If they do need to supply documents, this will be indicated in their application confirmation package, which they'll be prompted to download when they complete their application.

After applying

HSC results and ATAR

UAC will add a student's HSC results and ATAR to their application when these results are released and their application will be processed in time for consideration of offers. Offers are released online and via the mobile app on offer round dates. Most applicants will receive their offers in the January Main Round.

Changing preferences

Students can add, delete and change the order of their preferences as often as they like via Check & Change on UAC's website or through the mobile app. There is no charge to do this but they will need their UAC number and four-digit UAC PIN to log in. They will not be able to choose a course as a preference if the course closing date has passed.

Students need to make sure their preferences are in the order they want them for an upcoming offer round. Early offer rounds are for specific purposes, such as deferred courses and early and special entry schemes, and only first preferences are considered in these rounds. If a Year 12 student is participating in, for example, an early entry scheme for a particular course at a particular university that uses the December round for its offers, then that course must be listed as their first preference by the change of preference deadline for that offer round.

Early entry schemes

Early entry scheme offers, including those processed through Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS), are typically made in the early rounds. When students apply for early entry schemes they receive notification about when offers are made. In the early rounds of offers only the first preference is considered, so if students have more than one early

entry application they will need to know when each institution is making offers. There is time for students to change their preferences between offer rounds. Check UAC's website or the UAC Guide for change of preference closing dates.

Bonus points

Typically, there are three types of bonus points: regional bonus points, subject bonus points and Educational Access Scheme bonus points. Each institution sets its own criteria for allocating these.

Bonus points will not change a student's ATAR; they will change their selection rank for a particular institution or course. Bonus points are course specific. If you have nine course preferences in your application you could potentially have nine selection ranks.

The following example shows how they work:

Course A has six applicants and only three places available. The six applicants have the following selection ranks:

1	89.00 (ATAR of 89.00)
2	88.00 (ATAR of 87.00 plus 1 bonus point)
3	87.00 (ATAR of 83.00 plus 4 bonus points)
4	86.00 (ATAR of 86.00)
5	85.00 (ATAR of 83.00 plus 2 bonus points)
6	84.00 (ATAR of 84.00)

Offers will be made to applicants 1, 2 and 3. Applicant 4 will not receive an offer even though that applicant has a higher ATAR than applicant 3. The cut-off for Course A will be 87.00. This is the lowest selection rank required to receive an offer to Course A.

Eligibility

Some tertiary institutions apply bonus points if a student does well in a subject related to the course they have chosen. These are subject bonus points.

Some tertiary institutions apply bonus points if a student lives in a designated region, others apply bonus points if a student attends school in a designated region, and some institutions do both. These are regional bonus points.

Many institutions also apply bonus points if a student has experienced long-term educational disadvantage beyond their control, including attending a school that the government has identified as being disadvantaged. These are Educational Access Schemes (EAS) bonus points.

For more information on bonus points, visit our website and check with the relevant institution.



For contact details for UAC's participating institutions, visit www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/institutions.

Allocation

Most subject and regional bonus points are automatically allocated as part of the application process. There is no need for students to apply for these. However, students need to apply for EAS through UAC. Other bonus points, such as those allocated as part of elite athlete and performer schemes, require a direct application to the institution.

Subject bonus points are different from institution to institution and from course to course within the same institution. All institutions cap their bonus points. Some are capped at 15, some at 10 and others at five.

Students do not receive official notification of bonus points allocated to them.

UAC encourages all students to check the institution websites for details on their specific bonus point schemes.

Educational Access Schemes

Educational Access Schemes (EAS) are for UAC applicants who, due to circumstances beyond their control or choosing, have experienced long-term educational disadvantage that has seriously affected their educational performance during years 11 and 12 or equivalent.

Institutions use EAS to make offers of admission in one of two ways. They:

- allocate bonus points or
- set aside a certain number of places for EAS applicants.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for EAS, students must have experienced an educational disadvantage for at least six months. There are a number of disadvantages considered in EAS applications. For more information, visit www.uac.edu.au/eas.

Applying

EAS booklets are supplied to all NSW schools in August each year. The application form is in the booklet. Copies are also downloadable from UAC's website at www.uac.edu.au/eas. The completed form must be submitted to UAC with necessary supporting documents and statements.

Students at disadvantaged schools (as categorised by the NSW Government) have an EAS application automatically generated on their behalf when they apply through UAC and are notified via an acknowledgement letter. These students should submit an additional EAS application if they have experienced one or more other types of disadvantage.

Any student can submit an application and there is no bias toward any particular school or sector. Institutions provide EAS to assist students who have experienced disadvantage to gain access to higher education. Students from any school can experience disadvantage.

Many schools encourage students to hand in their EAS applications to the school, which then submits all applications from that school directly to UAC. However, it is up to each student to make sure their application has been submitted.

Multiple disadvantages

As students can experience multiple disadvantages they can apply for any disadvantages that are applicable to their situation. Separate statements and supporting documents must be submitted for each disadvantage.

Assessment and allocation

EAS applications are assessed by UAC according to the guidelines agreed to by all institutions. Students do not receive official notification of bonus points allocated to them.

Schools Recommendation Schemes

Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS) are one way institutions make offers to current Year 12 students who have applied for undergraduate admission through UAC. SRS aim to assist access to higher education for current Australian Year 12 students using a wide range of selection criteria, including school recommendations, senior secondary studies and personal awards and achievements.

Eligibility

SRS are open to Year 12 applicants who are attempting an Australian Year 12 qualification or an International Baccalaureate in Australia and are:

- a UAC applicant for undergraduate admission
- an Australian or New Zealand citizen
- a permanent resident of Australia or holder of an Australian permanent resident humanitarian visa.

International students can't apply for SRS.

Applying

Students apply for SRS online through UAC's website after they have completed their UAC application for tertiary study.

Their school then provides a professional assessment of the student's ability in, or suitability for, areas of study and rates the student's aptitude for tertiary study.

Assessment and offers

After the school has completed its assessment and rating, applications are processed by UAC and then considered by the SRS participating institutions. In most cases, offers are made to successful applicants before the Main Round.

Financial assistance

For students needing financial assistance, Equity Scholarships are available. Most institutions also offer a number of merit-based scholarships; check with the relevant institution for more information.

Equity Scholarships

Equity Scholarships assist financially disadvantaged students with the costs associated with higher education.

Equity Scholarships through UAC comprise:

- Institution Equity Scholarships (IES) funded by individual institutions (some IES are funded by donations or sponsorship)
- Commonwealth Scholarships (CS) for Indigenous applicants funded by the Australian Government.

Eligibility

Students may be eligible to apply for an Equity Scholarship under one or more criteria. These include exceptional financial hardship, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) status, regional or remote disadvantage, carer status, sole parent responsibilities, non-English speaking background, refugee status and long-term illness.

Any students can submit an application. The school they attend is not considered.

Meeting the scholarship eligibility criteria doesn't guarantee that a student will be awarded a scholarship. There are a limited number of Equity Scholarships and there are more applicants than scholarships.

Applying

To apply, students must submit an Equity Scholarships application through UAC's website. Visit www.uac.edu.au/equity.

By submitting just one application through UAC, students will be considered for all available Equity Scholarships for which they are eligible at our participating institutions.

Offers

Institutions make their Equity Scholarships offers after assessing applications submitted as part of a competitive application process.

The Equity Scholarships Online application gathers sufficient information from applicants to determine which applicants best meet the eligibility criteria. Equity Scholarships can only be awarded to students who have also received an offer of admission at that institution.

Merit-based scholarships

Merit-based scholarships are awarded to applicants on a range of criteria such as:

- school examination results
- academic excellence
- Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)
- course/faculty of study
- personal achievements such as:
 - leadership
 - creativity
 - self-motivation
 - communication skills
 - an outstanding ability in sport.

Applications for merit-based scholarships are made directly to individual institutions. To find out more about merit-based scholarships contact the relevant institution.

Other types of financial assistance

The Commonwealth Government's Study Assist website has comprehensive information about various types of financial assistance for tertiary study. Visit <http://studyassist.gov.au>.

Common mistakes

The most common mistakes UAC sees from students in the application process are:

- not understanding the preference system:
 - not listing their most desired course as their first preference
 - listing unrealistic preferences
 - not changing preferences after they receive their ATAR to courses with cut-offs more in line with their actual rank
 - changing preferences but not saving their changes
- not paying the processing charge
- not meeting UAC deadlines for applying, changing preferences or supplying supporting documentation.

Frequently asked questions



If a student applies for an early entry scheme at two different institutions, how should they order their preferences?

The student needs to find out which offer round is being used for the scheme, then make sure that the course for that scheme is listed as their first preference as only first preferences are considered in early offer rounds. Once that round of offers is complete the student may accept this offer then change their preferences for the next round of offers if they want to keep receiving offers to courses.

This applies to Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS), which require students to have their preferred SRS course as their first preference in early December, in time for December Round offers.



Can Year 12 students apply for bonus points for being school captain or participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award?

Yes. Some universities will consider such extracurricular activities but, as these are not part of their HSC results, students must apply directly to the institution for consideration for these schemes. Special consideration for elite athletes and performers also requires a direct application to the institution.



Can EAS applications be submitted directly by schools?

Yes. Many schools encourage students to hand in their EAS applications to the school, which then submits all applications from that school directly to UAC. However, it is up to each student to make sure their application has been submitted.

UAC discourages schools from submitting the application in bits and pieces. All parts of the application should be filled out and documentation attached when lodging. UAC does not chase outstanding documentation.

Applicants, however, are able to apply for additional disadvantages after their EAS application has been lodged by submitting a supplementary application form, available on UAC's website.

If you are completing an Educational Impact Statement (EIS), and do not believe there has been an impact, it is acceptable to state that you are not aware of any impact.

Remember, students have the right to access any information held about them, including the EIS.



One of my students broke their arm just before their first HSC exam. Can they apply for EAS?

No. EAS does not cover all life situations and this would not be considered a long-term disadvantage. In this situation you could submit an illness/misadventure appeal form (available at the exam centre) to BOSTES via the school principal.



If a student receives an offer based on their ATAR and EAS eligibility and then wants to defer their studies, will EAS still count when they re-apply for study?

Yes, but for their deferred course only. When a student receives an offer and then defers, this place is guaranteed. Students should check the university's policies when re-applying for the deferred course.

If a student decides not to take up the deferred course but to study a different course, they need to complete a new UAC application (which will give them a new UAC application number) and a new EAS application.

Resources

Download from UAC's website

- Applying to Uni: It's Easy if You Know What to Do (PowerPoint presentation)
- Directions e-newsletter (subscribe on UAC's website)
- Educational Access Schemes (EAS) (booklet)
- Equity Scholarships (ES) (booklet)
- Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS) (booklet)
- UAC News (newsletter: contact UAC if your school does not receive this newsletter)

View on UAC's website

- Applying as a Year 12 (video)
- Applying as an International with Australian Year 12 or IB (video)

Other resources

- Read the UAC Guide (delivered to every Year 12 student in NSW and the ACT in August each year)
- Read the FAQ about applying on UAC's website at www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/faq/applying.shtml and watch the videos at www.uac.edu.au/media-hub/videos.shtml
- Visit <http://studyassist.gov.au> for information about Commonwealth Government financial assistance

Offers ●



Receiving an offer

Students log in to UAC's website or mobile app to retrieve their offers. They will also receive an email from UAC, prompting them to log in to view their offer.

Most offers to Year 12 applicants are made in the January Main Round but early and subsequent offers for semester 1 are made up until February. Semester 2 offers are made periodically throughout the year. The early rounds are for specific purposes and not all universities participate. Check UAC's website or the UAC Guide for offer dates.

Domestic students will receive one offer to the highest preference for which they are eligible and competitive enough. Offers for undergraduate places at university are made by UAC on behalf of the institutions. UAC does not decide who receives an offer and cannot influence institutions' decisions.

If a student does not receive an offer to one of their preferred courses, they may receive a 'slipback' offer; that is, an offer to a lower-level course in a similar area of study (read 'Other paths to study' on page 27).

Accepting an offer

When a student receives an offer, it will include clear instructions for accepting, deferring or rejecting the offer. Most institutions have an online acceptance facility that students can access when they retrieve their offer from UAC's website or mobile app.

Other institutions may require a student to attend an enrolment day in person. If they wish to have an agent such as their parent do this for them, they will need to make arrangements with the university.

UAC recommends students accept their offer because a further offer is not guaranteed. They should then delete that course and arrange their remaining preferences in the order they wish them to be considered in future rounds. Not all institutions make offers in later rounds, and not all courses will have vacancies, but if a better offer is made the student can accept that offer and withdraw from the course originally offered.

Offers will only be made in subsequent rounds to courses that have vacancies. As relatively few offers are made in these rounds, the cut-offs may be higher than those in the January Main Round.

Remember, it's important for students to delete the offered course from their list so that they can be considered for further offers. When changing their preferences, students should also check UAC's course search for changes to course closing dates, cancelled courses and any new courses starting later in the year.

If a student rejects an early round offer or lets it lapse, and then changes their mind, the student needs to speak with the admissions office at the institution that made the offer, as only they can reinstate the offer. If the student leaves the offered, but rejected, course as their first preference no further offers can be made because the rejected offer will 'block' any new offers. They should delete that course and arrange their remaining preferences in the order they wish them to be considered in later rounds.

Explaining offer rounds

Early round offers are made by some institutions to a limited number of applicants. These include deferred applicants, applicants for distance education courses, non-Year 12 applicants with no current studies or tests, and those selected predominantly on criteria other than an Australian Year 12, such as interview, audition, portfolio or special admissions program.

Most Year 12 students need not worry if they don't receive an early round offer.

Institutions make the majority of their offers during the January Main Round. After the January Main Round offers, students can change their preferences for consideration in later rounds. Not all institutions make offers in these later rounds, and not all courses will have vacancies.

UAC advises students to accept their early or January Main Round offer as no further offers are guaranteed and relatively few offers are made in the later rounds.

Deferring

When a student receives an offer they will also receive information about how to apply for deferment. Most institutions will ask the student for a statement to explain why they want to defer. There may also be a fee.

In general it is best to accept and defer only one course so that other applicants may be considered. When the deferred course is re-offered to an applicant, UAC recommends the student accept it, as any further offers are not guaranteed.

Deferral periods

Most institutions offer one-year deferrals. A six-month deferral is not always possible because there may not be mid-year intakes for some courses.

Each institution has its own policies on deferring. For information, contact the admissions office at the institution making the offer.

Applying for a different course

If a student would like to be considered for other courses instead of their deferred position, they may need to submit a new UAC application.

Transferring

Course transfers are possible but very competitive and students usually need to achieve excellent results in their first year in order to transfer.

If the course is at the same university, there may be an internal transfer system. For a course at another institution students will need to apply through UAC and will be competing against all other applicants for entry. There is no straight transfer system as students are still competing for a place and must meet the new institution's entry requirements.

Other paths to study

Most institutions offer options for applicants who don't meet the entry requirements for their degree courses or need further support and preparation before studying at degree level.

Non-degree courses

Institutions often offer non-degree courses, such as Certificate or Diploma courses. If a student successfully completes one of these courses, an institution may guarantee entry into particular degree courses. Otherwise, the student can use

their new qualification to apply and compete for admission to degree courses. Applications for some of these courses, known as tertiary preparation courses, can be made through UAC, or applicants may receive a 'slipback' offer to one of these courses; others require applicants to contact the institution directly.

TAFE qualification

Another option is to obtain a TAFE qualification at Certificate III level or above and use that qualification in an application for admission to degree courses.

Entry schemes

Some institutions also have specific entry schemes or programs for applicants who don't meet the usual minimum admission requirements of the institution, but meet special requirements determined by the institution. For further details, contact the relevant institution.

Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT)

Many institutions will accept STAT results from non-Year 12 applicants. STAT is a series of tests designed to assess a range of competencies considered important for success in tertiary study. It assesses a student's ability to think critically and analyse the material given, rather than testing knowledge of specific academic subjects.

For information, visit www.uac.edu.au/stat.

Common mistakes

The most common mistakes UAC sees from students after they receive an offer are:

- not removing or moving down the list a preference they have already received an offer to, thereby blocking offers to lower preferences in later rounds
- declining an offer in the January Main Round in the hope of getting a 'better' offer in a later round
- letting an offer lapse without accepting it
- forgetting to enrol at the institution.

Frequently asked questions



When do the universities determine course cut-offs?

Cut-offs are determined when January Main Round offers are made and cannot be known in advance. The cut-offs reflect the number of places in a course, the number of applicants for that course and the quality of those applicants. Applicants are ranked according to their ATAR and other applicable selection criteria. The course cut-off is the minimum selection rank an Australian Year 12 student needs in order to be offered a place in the course. That selection rank may include bonus points.



How do students accept or defer offers? Each university is different and it's hard to explain to students.

When a student receives an offer, it will include clear instructions for accepting, deferring or rejecting the offer. Most institutions have an online acceptance facility that students can access when they retrieve their offer from UAC's website or mobile app.

Other institutions may require a student to attend an enrolment day in person. If they wish to have an agent such as their parent do this for them, they will need to make arrangements with the university.



If a student applies for an early entry scheme at two different institutions, how should they order their preferences?

The student needs to find out which offer round is being used for the scheme, then make sure that the course for that scheme is listed as their first preference as only first preferences are considered in early offer rounds. Once that round of offers is complete the student may accept this offer then change their preferences for the next round of offers if they want to keep receiving offers to courses.

Resources

Download from UAC's website

- UAC News (newsletter: contact UAC if your school is not receiving this newsletter)
- Directions e-newsletter (subscribe on UAC's website)

International students



Applying through UAC

International students are those who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents or New Zealand citizens. International students can apply through UAC if they are undertaking:

- an Australian Year 12 in or outside Australia
- an International Baccalaureate
- a New Zealand National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 3.

If an international student is completing Year 12 at your school they will, if eligible, receive an ATAR like domestic students. However, there are differences in the way they apply through UAC and the financial support they can receive. These differences are set out in the table on this page.

International students apply through UAC at www.uac.edu.au/international/apply.

International students satisfy the English language requirements for entry into participating UAC institutions if they have completed an Australian Year 12 qualification and have an ATAR.

The UAC International booklet is delivered to schools in August each year.

Offers

International students log in to UAC's website to retrieve their offers.

International students can receive multiple offers from different institutions per offer round. However, they must still satisfy the institution's selection criteria. This could include meeting a course cut-off and/or fulfilling other selection criteria such as submitting a portfolio or attending an interview or audition.

Bonus points

International students may be eligible for the same subject bonus points as domestic students and may be eligible for regional bonus points at some institutions.

Note that UAC's participating institutions do not offer bonus points to international students for language difficulties.

While English language difficulty is one of the types of disadvantage covered under Educational Access Schemes (EAS), international students are not eligible to apply for EAS.

International and domestic Year 12 students: distinguishing characteristics	
International Year 12 students	Domestic Year 12 students
Apply for tertiary study through International Apply on UAC's website	Apply for tertiary study through Undergraduate Apply on UAC's website
Not eligible for EAS	Can apply for EAS
Are not subject to higher processing charges	Are subject to higher processing charges
Can list up to six courses	Can list up to nine course preferences
Can receive more than one offer per round (but only one per institution per round)	Can only receive one offer per round
Cannot be offered a Commonwealth-supported place (CSP)	Can be offered a Commonwealth-supported place (CSP)
Must pay full fees up-front	Can pay all or part of student contribution up-front or with a HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP loan
Not eligible for HECS-HELP	Are eligible for HECS-HELP if studying in a CSP and meet the eligibility criteria. Visit http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/help-payingmyfees
Not eligible for FEE-HELP	Are eligible for FEE-HELP if course and student meet the eligibility criteria. Visit http://studyassist.gov.au

Frequently asked questions



Do international students receive bonus points if English is not their first language?

No. Not all international students are from a non-English speaking background, and UAC participating institutions do not offer bonus points to international students for language difficulties.

Also note that while English language difficulty is one of the types of disadvantage covered under Educational Access Schemes (EAS), international students are not eligible to apply for EAS.



Do international students receive offers to all their preferences because they are full fee-paying students, or do they have to meet cut-offs as well?

International students can receive multiple offers from different institutions in each offer round. However, they must still satisfy each institution's selection criteria for each course, which can include a course cut-off. If there are additional selection criteria for a course, such as submitting a portfolio or attending an interview or audition, they must meet these criteria, too.



Do international students pay a higher processing charge if they don't apply by a certain date?

No. Higher processing charges only apply to applications by domestic students.

Resources

Download from UAC's website

- Applying to Uni: It's Easy if You Know What to Do (PowerPoint presentation)
- Directions e-newsletter (subscribe on UAC's website)
- Equity Scholarships (ES) (booklet)
- Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS) (booklet)
- UAC International (booklet delivered to every international Year 12 student in NSW and the ACT in August each year)
- UAC News (newsletter)

View on UAC's website

- Applying as an International with an Australian Year 12 or IB (video)



My UAC

UAC's mobile app

My UAC mobile app allows students to search for courses, manage course preferences, check their ATAR and offers on their phone or tablet.

Download

Search for courses

Students can search for courses by keyword, field of study, institution name, course name, course cut-off, course code, or distance from their location.

Tag favourite courses. They'll be saved to the Favourites list so they'll be easy to find next time they use My UAC.

Manage their course preferences

In My UAC, students can manage their application wherever they are by adding courses, removing courses or re-ordering their course preferences.

View the 2016 ATAR

ATARs will be available from 9am, Friday 16 December 2016.

Students will need their Year 12 student number or their UAC application number and UAC PIN to view their ATAR.

Check their offers

Students can view and respond to their offers.

Offers are made in a number of offer rounds throughout the year.

Need help?

For more information visit www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/mobile-app.

My UAC is available for FREE in iOS and Android. Tell your students about My UAC today!



All About UAC for Student Advisers

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This publication is available on UAC's website.

About this publication

All About UAC for Student Advisers is based on questions that careers advisers and teachers frequently ask UAC. It will help you give accurate advice on high school students about maximising their chances of being accepted into a tertiary course, from choosing HSC subjects all the way through to the application process and receiving offers from tertiary institutions.

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Details of UAC's Privacy Policy are available at www.uac.edu.au/general/privacy.shtml. Also refer to UAC declarations which are set out in our publications, online at www.uac.edu.au/general/legal.shtml or within our applications.

UAC collects personal information and, in some circumstances, information regarding your health, or information about someone other than yourself, for the purpose of processing your application for admission to tertiary institutions. UAC will only collect information for lawful purposes related to its function. You may seek access to personal information about you collected by UAC.

The type of personal information UAC holds includes your contact details (name, address, telephone number, email address), date of birth, gender, citizenship, educational achievements, professional qualifications, employment experience, examination results, information related to your health or the health of a family member and your Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

If you are providing personal information about someone other than yourself, you should tell them about UAC's Privacy Policy, which can be found on UAC's website at www.uac.edu.au/general/privacy.shtml.

If you are a NSW Higher School Certificate student, your Year 12 results will be held, along with Year 12 results from other states and territories in Australia, in an archive database at UAC. If you are eligible for an ATAR or a Limited ATAR, these will also be held in the database. Your results, including your ATAR if you are eligible, will be held in similar archives at tertiary admissions centres in other states in Australia. Results held in these archives will only be accessed by the relevant tertiary admission centre if you initiate an application for tertiary study through that centre, or if you submit an application for tertiary study directly with an institution participating in that centre.

Any questions regarding privacy at UAC should be forwarded in writing to: The Managing Director, UAC, Locked Bag 112, Silverwater NSW 2128.

¹ In the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*.

² In the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

³ In the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)*.

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