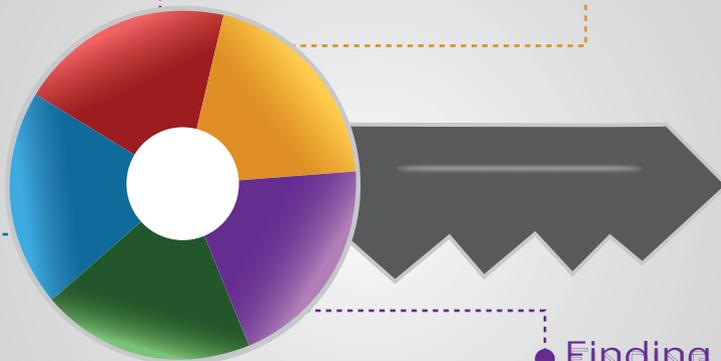


Choosing HSC  
courses ●

HSC and  
ATAR ●



Offers ●

● Finding out  
about tertiary  
study

● Applying  
through UAC

All About UAC for

# Parents

# Essentials: All About UAC for Parents

## 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.
- Your child should study courses they enjoy and do well in. Just about any combination of courses can lead to a good ATAR.
- To avoid higher processing charges, encourage your child to apply before the end of September. They can change their course preferences as many times as they like after that date.
- Make sure your child keeps their UAC PIN in a safe place. They will need it to apply through UAC and access their ATAR.

## Contacting UAC



1300 ASK UAC (1300 275 822)  
from mobiles: (02) 9752 0200  
from overseas: +61 2 9752 0200



UAC  
Locked Bag 112  
Silverwater NSW 2128



[www.facebook.com/  
universitiesadmissionscentre](http://www.facebook.com/universitiesadmissionscentre)



Quad 2, 8 Parkview Drive  
Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127

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



[www.uac.edu.au](http://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)

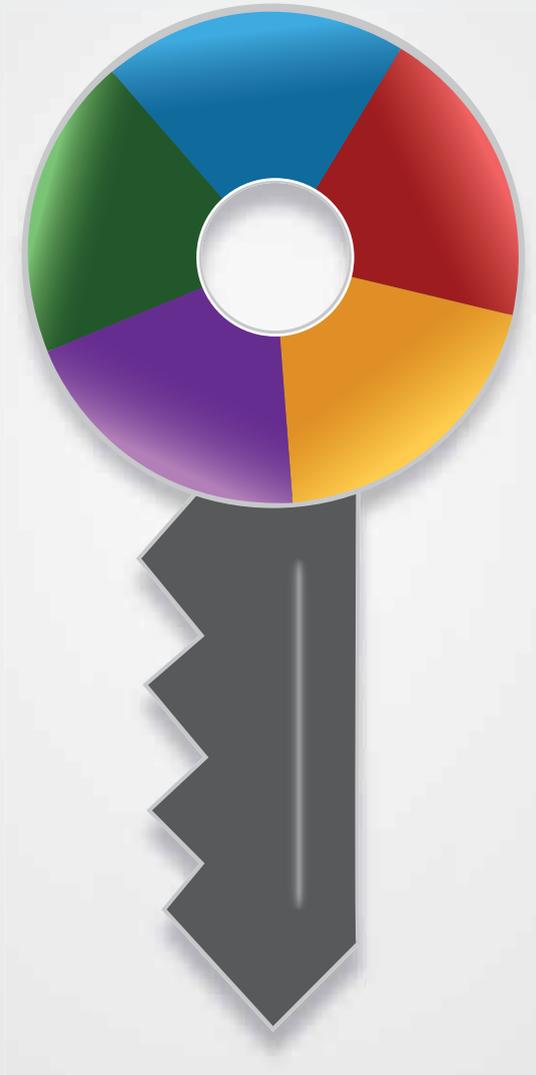


[www.youtube.com/user/  
UACinfo](http://www.youtube.com/user/UACinfo)

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# Introduction and common terms



## Introduction

Does talk about ATARs and course cut-offs sound like a foreign language to you? Did your son or daughter forget to pass on the letter about the parents' information night? Do you just want more information so you can help your child navigate Year 12 and entry to tertiary study?

The Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) has put together *All About UAC for Parents* to provide more information about how the process works, from selecting HSC subjects in years 10 and 11 to accepting an offer to a tertiary course after completing Year 12.

*All About UAC for Parents* is designed to give you enough information about the UAC process to help your child select course preferences and fill out their application for tertiary study, remind them about important dates, talk to their teachers with confidence and take the next step.

For more information about anything covered in this booklet, visit our website at [www.uac.edu.au](http://www.uac.edu.au).

### Talking to UAC on your child's behalf

UAC is bound by the Privacy Act, so we cannot talk to you about your child's application unless you are listed as an agent in your child's UAC application.

If your child nominates you as an agent when they apply you will be able to access information about their application via Check & Change on UAC's website or by contacting UAC Customer Service.

If your child does not nominate you as an agent when they apply and then decides to do so later, they must submit a letter of authority to UAC.

Note that this authorisation only applies to the UAC application process. It does not authorise you to accept an offer on their behalf. To accept an offer on your child's behalf, contact the relevant institution.

## Frequently asked questions



***My child won't give me their ATAR. Can UAC give me their PIN?***

No. To obtain your child's PIN you must be named as an agent on their application.



***Can UAC give me my child's ATAR?***

No. An ATAR can only be accessed by a student or their authorised agent. UAC does not give ATARs to parents, schools or student advisers. You may ask your child what their ATAR is, but it is their decision whether or not to give it to 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.

### Admissions period

The period when applications are open for tertiary study. Applications open in August and close in July of the following year for courses starting later in the same year, the beginning of the following year and in the second half of the following year.

### Apply

UAC's online application system on our website. Year 12 students must apply online through UAC to be considered for a place at one of UAC's participating institutions.

### 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 can 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.

## Deferment

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.

## Educational Access Schemes (EAS)

Schemes for university applicants who have experienced long-term educational disadvantage due to circumstances beyond their control or choosing.

## 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.

## Pathway courses

Non-degree courses – such as foundation studies, preparatory courses and Certificates, Diplomas or Associate Degrees – offered by institutions to applicants who don't meet the entry requirements for their degree course or need further support and preparation before studying at degree level.

## 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 you to have achieved a specified standard in an HSC course or equivalent before you will be offered a place in those courses (course prerequisites). Some subjects within a tertiary course require you to achieve a specified standard in a particular HSC course or equivalent before you are able to enrol in those particular subjects (subject prerequisites). Some institutions offer bridging or introductory courses to help you 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 unscaled 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.

## Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS)

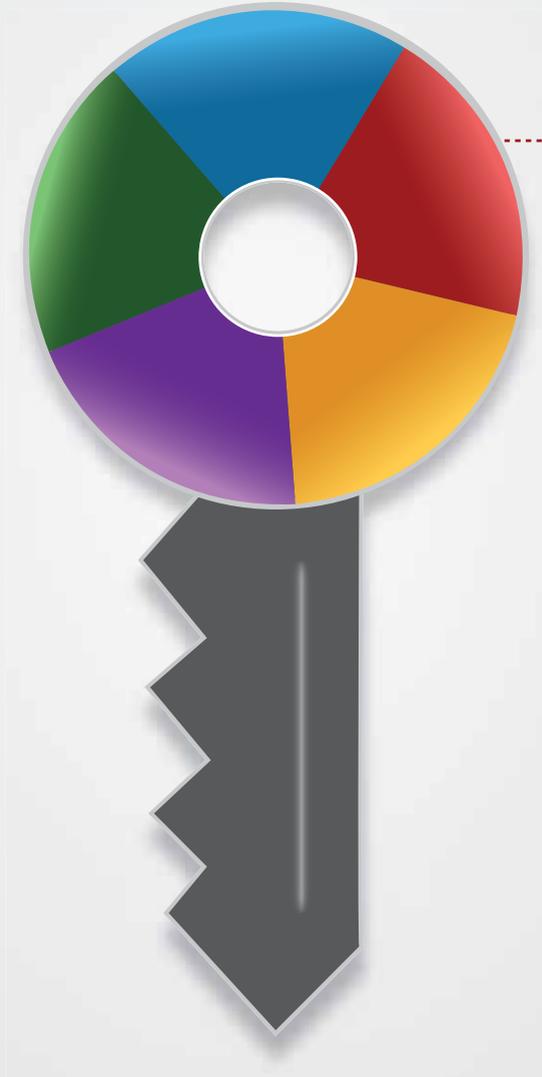
Schemes that enable schools to recommend current Year 12 students who are UAC applicants for offers of undergraduate admission. SRS aim to assist access to higher education for current Australian Year 12 students using a wide range of selection criteria, including school recommendation, senior secondary studies and personal awards and achievements. SRS is processed centrally through UAC.

Although most institutions make early offers of undergraduate admission under SRS, institutions have their own policies on determining SRS eligibility and making offers.

## 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.

# Choosing • HSC courses



## 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.

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

- **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 consider the importance of assumed knowledge and recommended studies. Bridging courses help, but they 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 subject choices did not meet the ATAR eligibility criteria.

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 an area of study, such as mathematics. Within that subject there may be a number of courses, such as Mathematics General 2.)

The number of courses, or units, your child studies depends on how many subjects they can realistically cope with and succeed in. Also, students need to ensure that the courses they take in years 11 and 12 will allow them to be eligible for an ATAR and give them some flexibility for entry into a range of tertiary courses. The most common mistake students make is to not study enough *subjects* – make sure your child chooses courses from *four* subjects.

## 'Maximising' the ATAR

The ATAR is a rank, not a mark. It is a number that indicates a student's position in relation to other students.

Many students and parents are convinced that certain courses, such as HSC Mathematics Extension 2, are 'scaled up' and lead to a higher ATAR. 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, the best way for students to maximise their ATAR is to choose courses they will do well in.

## Choosing between different levels of courses

As mentioned above, many parents and students believe that studying a higher-level course will lead to higher scaled marks and therefore a higher ATAR. In fact, it is very difficult to predict which courses will receive higher scaled marks. 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 frequently high.

Rather than trying to work out if they are better off completing a lower- 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 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.

## 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 then goes on to complete Mathematics Extension 1 and Mathematics Extension 2 in Year 12, their Mathematics result cannot be included in their 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 the best two units of English have been included).

## 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 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 or drop a course based on their perception of how it scales (read 'Scaling', page 12).

## Frequently asked questions



**How do Year 10 students choose subjects for years 11 and 12?**

Students need to ensure that the courses they take in years 11 and 12 will allow them to be eligible for an ATAR and give them some flexibility for entry into a range of tertiary courses.

UAC's University Entry Requirements for Year 10 Students booklet provides extensive information about HSC subject choices and tertiary course prerequisites, assumed knowledge, recommended studies and additional selection criteria.



**Are there any courses my child can choose to maximise their ATAR?**

No. It is a myth that choosing certain courses will increase a student's ATAR. The best way for students to maximise their ATAR is to choose courses they will do well in. Students who achieve high ATARs study a large variety of courses and are generally placed near the top in all of their courses.



**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 your child 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)

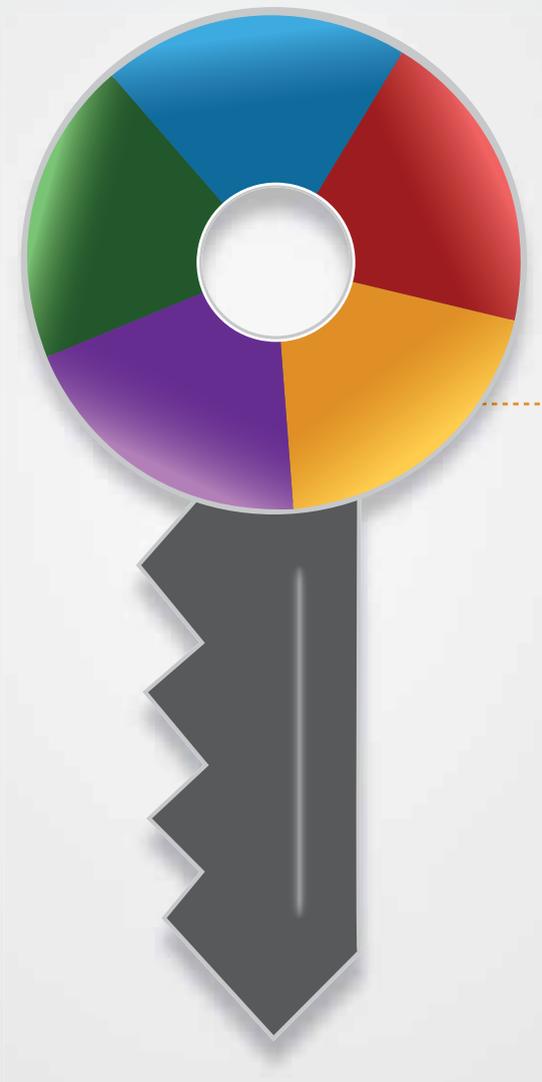
### Buy online

- University Entry Requirements for Year 10 Students: four free copies are provided to each school. In addition, you can order the booklet from UAC's website.

### Read online

- Further information about Category A and B courses is available at [www.uac.edu.au/atar/courses.shtml](http://www.uac.edu.au/atar/courses.shtml).
- For information on courses available through the NSW vocational education and training systems, visit <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au>.

# HSC and ATAR



## HSC marks

The Higher School Certificate syllabus and exams are set by BOSTES. Students receive a mark based on their own performance against standards in each HSC course. There is no quota as to the number of students who can achieve top marks and students are not scaled against other students in the course.

### Moderation

Moderation of assessment marks aims to remove differences between schools by aligning school-based assessment ranks with the state-wide exam marks. This ensures that the process is fair for all students.

When assessment marks are moderated, students maintain their assessment position but may be given a different assessment mark depending on the exam results of the other students in their course. Only assessment marks are moderated, and students always keep their own examination mark.

### HSC marks and the Record of Achievement

The HSC mark is a 50:50 combination of a student's external examination mark and school-based assessment mark for each course. The HSC Record of Achievement shows the student's assessment mark, examination mark, HSC mark and performance band. The student is not given a single, overall score for all their courses combined.

#### Sample HSC Record of Achievement

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE					
Record of Achievement					
BOSTES					
BOARD OF STUDIES TEACHING AND EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS NEW SOUTH WALES					
This is to certify that					
Sample Student					
of					
Sample High School					
has met the requirements of the Higher School Certificate and has (achieved) the results shown below.					
STAGE 6 HSC COURSES					
Year	Course	Examination Mark	Assessment Mark	HSC Mark	Performance Band
2014	English (Advanced) (3 units)	91/100	85/100	88	A
	English Extension 1 (1 unit)	4/52	45/50	45	EA
	Mathematics General 2 (2 units)	85/100	85/100	85	5
	Business Studies (2 units)	92/100	91/100	92	6
	Modern History (2 units)	90/100	95/100	93	6
	Society and Culture (2 units)	85/100	85/100	85	5
	Studies of Religion 1 (1 unit)	47/50	45/50	46	6

Student Number: 123456789

ISSUED BY BOSTES WITHOUT WARRANTY OR GUARANTEE ON 25 September 2014 at  
Sydney, NSW, Australia

Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement © Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales. ([www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/hsc-results/credentials.html](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/hsc-results/credentials.html))

## ATAR

The first thing to understand is that 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.

The NSW ATAR is based on an aggregate of scaled marks in 10 units of ATAR courses, which must include two units of English. A student's ATAR depends not only on their position in the courses they study, but on the ability of the other students in those courses, reflected in the courses' scaled means.

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.

Here are the essential facts you need to know about your child's ATAR.

ATAR essentials	
Your child's ATAR <i>is</i> affected by	Your child's ATAR <i>is not</i> 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.

## ATAR eligibility

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

- eight units from Category A courses
- two units of English
- three Board Developed courses of two units or greater
- four subjects. (A subject is an area of study, such as mathematics. Within that subject there may be a number of courses, such as Mathematics General 2.)

The number of courses, or units, your child studies depends on how many subjects they can realistically cope with and succeed in.

Also, students need to ensure that the courses they take in years 11 and 12 will give them some flexibility for entry into a range of tertiary courses.

## ATAR calculation

The 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.

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.

For more information about scaling and the calculation of the ATAR, read the Report on the Scaling of the NSW Higher School Certificate, which can be downloaded from UAC's website at [www.uac.edu.au/publications/atar.shtml](http://www.uac.edu.au/publications/atar.shtml).

## Scaling

While moderation aims to remove differences between schools, 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 your child's interests, aptitude and aspirations.

Scaling myths	
Myth	Fact
Some courses are always 'scaled up', therefore my child 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 my child should avoid those.	
My child has 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 maths can be included in the ATAR calculation. HSC Mathematics Extension 1 has a different weighting (in terms of units) depending on whether Mathematics or HSC Mathematics Extension 2 is taken.

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 and through UAC's 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 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 a student hasn't met the requirements of the ATAR the notice will read 'not eligible'.

To access their ATAR, students will need their HSC student number (or ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies student number) and their UAC PIN. If your child has queries once they have 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.

*Sample ATAR Advice Notice*

1800 133 333 (13) 4713 0000 (13)  
 (Call 13 333 3333 from outside Australia)  
 1800 133 3333 (13) 4713 0000 (13)  
 or 1800 133 3333 (13) 4713 0000 (13)  
 (Call 13 333 3333 from outside Australia)

  
 UAC  
 UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS CENTRE

**2015 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank Advice**

**MR FRED CRITZEN**  
 8 PARROTTVIEW DRIVE  
 WHEMERLOUGH BAY NSW 2108

**Your Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR): 73.00 "SEVENTHREE" "ZERO" "ZERO"**

Shown below are the ATAR courses which were available for inclusion in your ATAR, together with the units that were actually included in the calculation. Information about ATAR eligibility and the calculation of the ATAR is shown over the page.

**Your SCOTECs Expiry Number: 12345678**

Course name	Category	Units completed	Units value	Units included in calculation of ATAR
Biology	A	2015	2	2
Business Studies	A	2015	2	2
English Standard	A	2015	2	2
Information Processes & Technology	A	2015	2	2
Mathematics	A	2015	2	2
Physics	A	2015	2	0
Geography	A	2015	2	0

Issued by UAC without alteration or omission (see reverse for details of security features)

Dr David Christie  
 Managing Director  
 18 December 2015



The ATAR is a rank between 0.00 and 99.99 with increments of 0.01. It is used by UAC participating institutions to rank and select to read learners for admission to most undergraduate courses. Some courses use selection criteria other than, or in addition to, the ATAR. For more information about the ATAR read pages 29-42 of the UAC Guide 2013-14 or pages 19-23 of the UAC Information 2013-14 booklet or visit UAC's website at [www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/ATAR](http://www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/ATAR) or [www.uac.edu.au/information/ATAR](http://www.uac.edu.au/information/ATAR).

The course 'Unit value' appears on this advice if you did not satisfactorily complete the requirements for an ATAR as listed over the page.

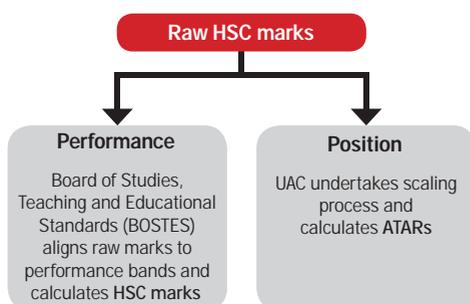
If you are eligible to have a Linked ATAR course it will be sent to you on a separate advice. The Linked ATAR is calculated differently to the ATAR. The calculation of the Linked ATAR is described on page 41 of the UAC Guide 2013-14 or page 11 of the UAC Information 2013-14 booklet or visit UAC's website at [www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/ATAR](http://www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/ATAR) or [www.uac.edu.au/information/ATAR](http://www.uac.edu.au/information/ATAR).



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.

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

HSC marks and the ATAR are two different measures of achievement. They are calculated separately using different methods:



The following table outlines the differences between HSC marks and the ATAR.

Your HSC marks	Your ATAR
Your HSC marks provide information about how well you have performed in each of the courses you have completed.	Your ATAR provides information about how well you are positioned overall against other students.
HSC marks indicate your performance in the different courses you 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 high level of *performance* in their HSC courses does not guarantee a high *position* in those courses.

Consider the following two students 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
<b>ATAR</b>	<b>57.50</b>		<b>79.65</b>	

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.

## Frequently asked questions



### *How is the ATAR calculated?*

The 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.

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.



### *Why is my child's ATAR low in comparison to their HSC marks?*

It's a mistake to compare your child's HSC marks and their ATAR, as they're different measures of achievement – performance and position.

There is no general rule for the relationship between these two measures. However, if your child is in the middle group of students in all their courses (with marks typically in the mid-70s), they may get an ATAR of around 70.00, which is usually close to the middle ATAR. But sometimes marks in the 70s can mean a much lower ATAR depending on their courses and their position in those courses.



### *If my child is ranked third in their class but gets the highest exam mark, will that exam mark be given to the student ranked first?*

No. Students always keep their own examination mark and their own assessment rank. When assessment marks are moderated, students maintain their assessment rank, but may be given a different assessment mark depending on the exam results of the other students in their course. The exam mark the student receives will depend on how well the student performs in the exam and is independent of their assessment rank.



### *Why do some courses scale better than others?*

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.



### *Can my child'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 your child's ATAR is recalculated they 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)

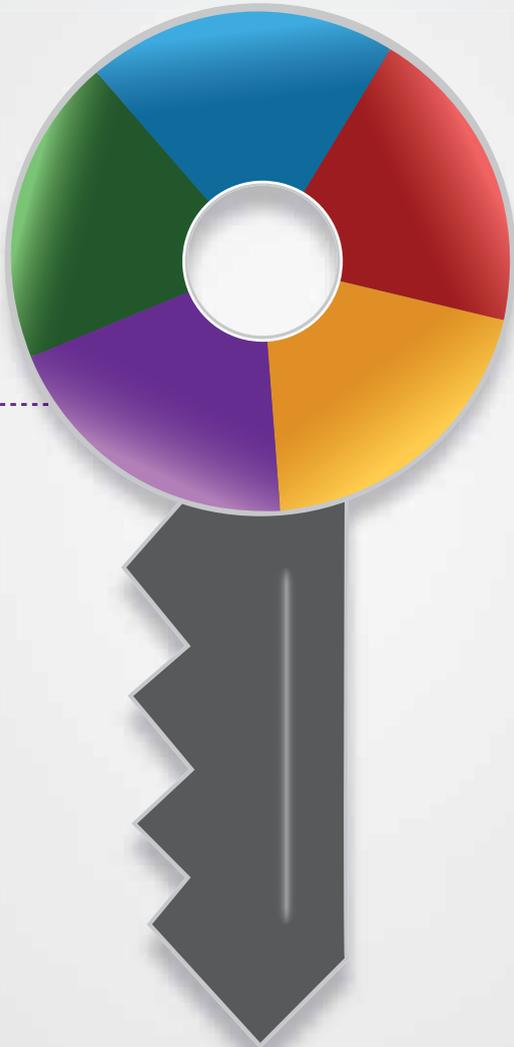
### View on UAC's website

- ATAR Essentials (video)

### Other resources

- Contact BOSTES for more information on moderation: [www.bostes.nsw.edu.au](http://www.bostes.nsw.edu.au).
- For information about the calculation of the ACT ATAR, read the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies booklet, *What's the ATAR?*, which can be downloaded at [www.bsos.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students](http://www.bsos.act.edu.au/information_for_students).

- Finding out about tertiary study



## Courses and careers

Trying to decide what to study is difficult. A good place to start is for students to consider their interests, the subjects they enjoy at school and the classes they do well in. Find out what jobs would use these subjects as a key part of what they do: talk to teachers, ask careers advisers and visit careers expos. The UAC publication *All About UAC for Year 11 and 12 Students* is a useful guide to preparing for tertiary study. This and other publications can be found on UAC's website at [www.uac.edu.au/](http://www.uac.edu.au/) publications.

Every year UAC publishes a list of courses available through its participating institutions for the following year. This information is published in the UAC Guide, in the undergraduate course search on UAC's website at [www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/course-search](http://www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/course-search) and in My UAC, UAC's mobile app. The course search is updated in August when applications open.

The UAC Guide is delivered to schools and distributed free of charge to all Year 12 students in July. Copies can also be bought at newsagents.

## Course cut-offs and additional selection criteria

### Cut-offs

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 24), 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.

Course cut-offs are determined when Main Round offers are made. The cut-offs reflect the supply and demand for a course; that is, the number of places in a course, the number of applicants for that course and the quality of those applicants. They are not an indicator of course quality.

Main Round course cut-offs from the previous year are listed in UAC's course search and in the UAC Guide and are intended to be used as a guide only.

### Additional selection criteria

Year 12 students are selected on the basis of their ATAR for most courses. However, some courses have additional selection criteria. Additional selection criteria are requirements in addition to or instead of the ATAR. They may include interviews, auditions, portfolios, supporting statements, questionnaires and tests. To find out if a course has additional selection criteria, read the course description on UAC's website or mobile app or check the UAC Guide.

## Institutions

Most of UAC's participating institutions hold open days in August and September. Some offer personalised campus tours throughout the year for prospective students and their families. UAC recommends you and your child take advantage of this opportunity to get a feel for the campus and the courses that are offered.

## Tuition costs and financial help

Most tertiary courses for Year 12 students have Commonwealth-supported places (CSPs). This means the government pays part of the course fee and the rest is paid by the student. This is called the student contribution and the amount depends on the type of course and the institution. For further information, contact the institution.

If your child is an Australian citizen they can elect to take up the HECS-HELP option to pay their student contribution. This defers the payment until they are working and a percentage of their wage is taken out to pay off the HECS debt through the taxation system. They will need an Australian tax file number to do this. Students who are not citizens must pay their student contribution up-front.

Students may also be eligible for additional financial assistance from the Australian Government.

The Australian Government is exploring a range of changes to higher education that may affect the fees that universities can charge, and the way that students will repay debt accumulated under the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP). For further information, visit the Australian Government's Study Assist website at <http://studyassist.gov.au>.

## Resources

- For information about HECS-HELP and other Australian Government assistance, visit <http://studyassist.gov.au>.

## Frequently asked questions



### *How are course cut-offs determined?*

Course cut-offs are determined when Main Round offers are made in January.

The cut-offs reflect the supply and demand for a course; that is, the number of places in a course, the number of applicants for that course and the quality of those applicants. They are not an indicator of course quality.

UAC publishes the previous year's Main Round cut-offs in the UAC Guide and in the course search on our website and mobile app. They are intended as a guide only.

- 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.

- 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.
- 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 also 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 BOSTES HSC student number (or ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies student number) and UAC PIN to log in.

### *UAC application number*

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

It is important for your child 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 or in the UAC Guide.

For further information, contact the institution directly.

### *Tests*

If your child 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](mailto: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 to the institution as well as 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 or in the course description on UAC's website and mobile app. 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 through UAC's website – 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 significant 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 they 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.

## 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. Your child 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).

## 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 your child applies for an early entry scheme at two different institutions, they need 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 they 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 an Australian Year 12 student needs in order to be offered a place in the course (read 'Course cut-offs and additional selection criteria' on page 18).

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 your child'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 online 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 (EAS) 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 a student has nine course preferences in their application they could potentially have nine selection ranks.

The following example shows how bonus points 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](http://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, your child does 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](http://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 from August each year. 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 for undergraduate admission through UAC and are notified via an acknowledgement letter. These students should also submit an individual 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 help students who have experienced disadvantage 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

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

Your child 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 student can submit an application. The school they attend is not considered.

Meeting the scholarship eligibility criteria doesn't guarantee that your child 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](http://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



*Why do students apply before the end of September when they don't yet know their ATAR?*

Students should apply by the end of September (on-time closing) to avoid the increase in processing charges after this date. Once they have their ATAR and know what bonus points they are eligible for, they can then change their preferences quickly and easily. Preferences can be changed as many times as they wish at no extra cost.

Students who are also applying for Schools Recommendation Schemes are required to have completed both applications by the end of September.



*How should students list their preferences?*

Applicants should list their preferences in the order they wish them to be considered, with their most preferred course as their first preference, then the next most preferred course, and so on. 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.



*How should students list their preferences for early entry schemes?*

When students apply for early entry schemes, including Schools Recommendation 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 and make sure their preferences are correct by the change of preferences closing date for that offer round. 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.



*How do I know if my child is eligible for bonus points?*

Some tertiary institutions apply bonus points if you live in a designated region, others apply bonus points if your child attends school in a designated region, and some institutions do both. These are regional bonus points and they are awarded automatically – your child does not need to apply separately. Some institutions apply subject bonus points if your child does well in a subject related to the course they have chosen. Bonus points may also be awarded as part of an Educational Access Scheme (EAS). For more information on bonus points, check with the relevant institution.



*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.



*If my child 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.



*My child 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.

## 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)

### 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 and also sold at newsagents).
- Read about applying on UAC's website at [www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/apply](http://www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/apply) and watch the videos at [www.uac.edu.au/media-hub/videos.shtml](http://www.uac.edu.au/media-hub/videos.shtml).
- Visit <http://studyassist.gov.au> for information about financial help from the Commonwealth Government.

# • Offers



## Receiving an offer

Students log in to UAC's website or mobile app to retrieve their offers. They will also receive email correspondence from UAC advising them to log in to Check & Change 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 your child 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 31).

## Accepting an offer

Each institution has different procedures and dates for accepting offers. Some institutions have online acceptance and enrolment; other institutions require attendance at an enrolment day. It's your child's responsibility to read their offer and follow the procedure required by the due date.

If your child will be overseas when offers are made, contact the institution directly for advice. Even if you are named as an agent on the UAC application, this doesn't transfer to the acceptance of an offer on their behalf.

## Different 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, some non-Year 12 applicants, 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 this, 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.

## Changing course preferences

UAC advises applicants to accept any initial offer as there is no guarantee that they will receive another offer. However, once they have accepted their offer they can then delete that course from their list of preferences and place the new first preference at the top of the list. By doing this they will be eligible to receive an offer in a later round if places in that course are still available and they meet the course cut-off for that round. If they do receive another offer they can accept that offer and withdraw from the course originally offered.

If your child rejects an early round offer or lets it lapse, and then changes their mind, they need to speak with the institution's admissions office as only the institution can reinstate the offer. Also, if your child 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.

## Deferring

When your child receives an offer they will also receive information about how to apply for deferment. Most institutions will ask 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 your child 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](http://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



*My child will be overseas when the offers are made. Can I accept on their behalf?*

No. Contact the institution directly for advice. Even if you are named as an agent on the UAC application, this gives you authority to manage their application, but it does not give you authority to accept an offer.



*If my child doesn't think they will get into a uni course on the basis of their ATAR, do they have any other options?*

Yes. Most institutions offer non-degree courses, such as Certificate or Diploma courses. If a student successfully completes one of these courses, the 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.

## Resources

### Download from UAC's website

- Directions e-newsletter (subscribe on UAC's website)

### Read on UAC's website

- For UAC's participating institutions' contact details, visit [www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/institutions](http://www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/institutions).

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## All About UAC for Parents

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This publication is available on UAC's website.

### About this publication

*All About UAC for Parents* provides information about applying for tertiary study through UAC. It answers a range of questions about the admissions process, from selecting HSC subjects in years 10 and 11 to accepting an offer to study at a tertiary institution after Year 12.

### Cover image

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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](http://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.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)*.

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