

What's the AST?

The ACT Scaling Test (AST) is a test attempted by all ACT Year 12 students wishing to gain a Universities Admission Index (UAI).

The test is designed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), and aims to measure a range of general skills considered to be relevant to success in a variety of courses and to studies at university.

When is the AST held?

The AST is run at your college in September each year. If you are ill and unable to sit at this time, there is a second sitting later in the year. Special sittings can also be arranged interstate or overseas for students not in Canberra when the test is held.

Who sits the AST?

If you are a Year 12 student who intends to apply for entry to university you must sit the AST. If you are unsure what you will do after Year 12, you should also sit the AST. This will allow you to gain a UAI and use it sometime later. Students with specific medical conditions are not exempt from the test, but special arrangements are made to ensure that such students are not disadvantaged. If your college identifies you as a student whose first language is not English, you must still

sit the test but your AST result will not be used in the scaling procedures described later in this brochure.

How are the results of the AST used?

The AST scores of those students who complete a **T** package (see BSSS brochure *What Certificates Could You Obtain?*) provide the basis for scaling course scores awarded to students by the colleges they attend. A student's scaled course scores are used in the calculation of that student's UAI. More details of this process can be found in *What's the UAI?* another publication in this series.

How do I find out my AST result?

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies does not publish your AST score on any of the certificates it produces. At the end of Year 12, your college will provide you with your scores on the various components of the AST.

What makes up the AST?

The AST is made up of three papers – two 90 minute multiple choice tests each containing 50 questions, and a 150 minutes writing task. You must attempt all three papers.

(i) The AST Multiple Choice Tests

The multiple choice questions are grouped into units, each based on a piece of stimulus material. The stimulus material may be a prose passage, a graph, a table

containing words or numbers, a poem, a picture or a map or any combination of these. Any specific information required to answer the questions is contained in the stimulus material or in the questions which follow.

The material is drawn from the humanities, social sciences, sciences and mathematics, but is not aimed at subject specialists and should be accessible to all senior secondary students.

(ii) The AST Writing Task

Candidates will be offered a selection of written material which presents various views of a clear argument, addressing some aspect of the issue presented. The time available allows for planning, drafting, editing, and producing a final written version of the essay.

What should I do to prepare for the AST?

The skills required for success in the AST are believed to develop slowly as a result of a variety of experiences, of which formal schooling is one important element. Your best preparation is to read widely and to think critically.

Your college will arrange trials of the AST Multiple Choice and Writing Task to give you a realistic idea of the nature of the test and the time available in which to complete the set tasks.

The booklet *AST Student information Bulletin*, available from your college, contains many sample multiple choice questions and advice on how to choose the correct answer in each case. You should work through this booklet prior to attempting the AST.

More Information

Remember, your college is keen to help you. There are staff members who can explain and give advice on this brochure or any others in this series. Other pamphlets in this series that are available from your college or on the AIS web site are:

What Certificates Could You Obtain?

Explains all the different certificates you could be awarded at the end of Year 12, and what's on them.

What's the UAI?

Explains the Universities Admission Index and details how it is calculated.

What's Moderation?

Outlines the course moderation process that takes place in Canberra twice a year.

Your Rights to Appeal

A guide to what your rights are in appealing against results and procedures for determining your scores and grades.

Equitable Assessment and Special Consideration in Assessment in Years 11 and 12

Explains the rights of students with disabilities, including physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological or learning disabilities, and special needs.

Further information may be obtained at:

May be obtained at: <http://www.bsss.act.gov.au>

Enquiries could also be directed to the:

Executive Officer

Board of Secondary School Studies

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Tuggeranong ACT 2900

AUSTRALIA

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