

Bursary Scheme Policy 2024

1. Introduction

The UCAT Consortium is the operating name of the UKCAT Consortium. Admission tests are delivered by its business partner Pearson VUE (PVUE).

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

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

2. Overview

The UCAT Consortium recognises that the cost of the UCAT test may act as a barrier to some candidates required to take the test as part of university selection processes. In recognition of this, the UCAT Consortium provides full fee bursaries for test takers from low-income backgrounds who meet certain criteria.

Support for candidates from low-income backgrounds is core to the work of the UCAT Consortium and part of its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion which is further outlined in its [EDI Policy](#).

In 2023, 17.7% of UK test takers were in receipt of a UCAT bursary (2022, 16.6%).

3. Candidate eligibility

The bursary scheme is open to UK candidates that meet the bursary criteria.

Candidates over the age of 21 and no longer in full-time education must be personally in receipt of a qualifying award or means-tested benefit to qualify for a bursary.

Candidates are only permitted one bursary voucher each test cycle. Additional vouchers will not be issued if a candidate [misses their test for any reason](#).

4. Bursary criteria and supporting evidence

Bursary criteria are reviewed by the UCAT Office on an annual basis and are subject to change.

Candidates must be able to meet at least one of the bursary criteria detailed below and provide one piece of evidence to support their application.

UCAT reserves the right to request additional evidence if, in its view, the initial supporting documentation is not sufficient to verify eligibility. On occasion UCAT may consider alternative evidence on a case-by-case basis.

Eligibility	Criteria	Evidence Required
Candidate in receipt of:	Free School Meals	A recent letter (dated 2023 or 2024) from the candidate's school/college confirming they receive free school meals (Local Authority funded only).
	16 to 19 Bursary (England), or EMA (Scotland, Wales or NI)	An official award letter for academic year 2023/24 or 2024/25.
	Learner Support (FE 19+) or equivalent for Scotland, Wales or NI	An official award letter for academic year 2023/24 or 2024/25.
	Undergraduate Student Finance maintenance award (full rate)	An award letter for academic year 2023/24 or 2024/25. This includes a full rate (means tested) undergraduate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Finance England Maintenance Grant/Loan • Student Awards Agency Scotland Young / Independent Students' Bursary • Student Finance Wales or Northern Ireland Maintenance Grant <p><i>Candidates who cannot take out student finance loans for religious or cultural reasons should contact the UCAT Office for advice on alternative evidence.</i></p>
Candidate or Parent/Guardian in receipt of:	Universal Credit	The first page of a Universal Credit statement, dated within the last 3 months, which includes the name and address of the claimant, the date, and the award amount.
	Working or Child Tax Credit	The first page of an award letter for financial year 2023/24 or 2024/25, which includes the name and address of the claimant and the date of the letter.
	Income Support, or Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA), or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	An award letter from a UK Jobcentre Plus, dated 2024. <i>Parent/guardians in receipt of JSA or ESA must be entitled to the income-based benefit (e.g. means-tested) and not a contribution-based award.</i>
	Asylum Support	An official award letter, dated within the last 12 months.

5. Awards/benefits or evidence not accepted

The following awards / benefits or evidence are not accepted under any circumstances:

- Scholarships, bursaries or free school meals at independent or fee-paying schools
- Postgraduate Loan
- Advanced Learner Loan
- Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

- Council Tax or Housing Benefit
- Child Benefit
- Annual accounts or a P60 end of year certificate

6. Application process

Candidates are advised to apply for a bursary before booking their test. Candidates who have already paid for their test may still apply.

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

Candidates must complete an online application on the [UCAT website](#) and upload a scan/photo (PDF, JPEG, PNG) of their supporting evidence.

Applications (with correct supporting evidence) must be received by the published deadlines or they will not be processed.

Bursary scheme opens:	14 May 2024 at 09:30 (BST)
Booking opens:	18 June 2024 at 06:00 (BST)
Application and evidence deadline:	27 September 2024 at 16:00 (BST)

Once the application and evidence deadline has passed, candidates who have applied by the deadline with insufficient evidence may be given a short grace period (usually 1 business day after their application is processed) to provide additional evidence requested by the UCAT Office.

Applications are usually processed within 3 working days and candidates are emailed the outcome of their application.

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

7. Bursary voucher redemption

Successful candidates are emailed a bursary voucher code which they can use to book their test.

During the booking checkout process there is an option to 'add a voucher or promo code'.

Candidates may also obtain a refund if they have already paid for or sat their test by completing the [email contact form](#) on the website and quoting their voucher code.

The deadline to redeem a bursary voucher is 17:00 (BST) on 25 October 2024.

8. Missed tests (no-shows) paid for by bursary voucher

Candidates who book a test using a bursary voucher can reschedule their test (giving the required [minimum notice](#)) and re-use the same voucher code.

Candidates who book a test using a bursary voucher and then decide not to sit the UCAT, must cancel their test (giving the required [minimum notice](#)).

If a candidate misses a test ('no-show') paid for by bursary voucher for any reason they will have to pay the test fee to book another appointment. Failure to present correct ID and missing the deadline to [reschedule/cancel](#) a test counts as a 'no-show'.

UCAT will not issue another bursary voucher to cover this cost as UCAT will have incurred a charge for the missed test.

In these circumstances, UCAT reserves the right to request repayment from a candidate of the full test fee. UCAT may also prevent such candidates from applying for a bursary in future years.

9. Results delivery flag

When UCAT results are delivered to Consortium universities, a candidate's result is flagged to show they were in receipt of a bursary.

This will not disadvantage their application. Some Universities may use this information to help identify candidates from backgrounds under-represented at university.

Bursary vouchers must be redeemed by 17:00 (BST) on 25 October 2024 for results to be flagged in this way.

10. Appealing a bursary application decision

Candidates whose bursary applications have been rejected are advised to contact the UCAT Office by [email](#) if they wish to discuss this decision or if they have further evidence to support their application. The UCAT Office will review any such requests, make a final decision, and respond in full to the candidate.

If a candidate is unhappy with the final decision from the UCAT Office, they may [appeal to the UCAT Board](#).

11. Data privacy

Data collected from bursary applications may be used for research purposes. Further details can be found in the [Data Privacy Policy](#).

UCAT Consortium
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