



uniTEST Survey: Response from the University of Cambridge

Background Information

Please provide your email address gtp@eng.cam.ac.uk

1 What role might a specifically developed selection test play?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A low cost multiple choice test that provides additional information as a broad indication of a student's academic potential	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A test that is able to discriminate finely between the most able students	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A test that is entirely new each year	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A test that is suitable for high stakes selection situations	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A test that includes written communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Easy Difficult

2 How easy or difficult is it for your institution to attract students?

	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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3 Does your institution already use admissions tests for any of its disciplines?

Yes No

If so, which test(s)?

BMAT, LNAT, TSA, STEP, AEA

4 Rate the following in terms of how helpful they are in admissions decisions

	Helpful				Not helpful
A-Level (or equivalent) predictions	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
UCAS application personal statement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
UCAS application other information	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Interview	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Where on the scale do you think a generic admissions test such as the one we are proposing might go?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5 Would you see uniTEST as supplementary to your existing selection criteria or as an alternative to them?

Supplementary Alternative

The Test

- 6 Would you be interested in using the test described (uniTEST)? Yes No
- Please explain your answer. At present we do not believe that a test designed to cater for all universities and all subjects would help our selection processes significantly. We believe that to be helpful to us tests would need to be targeted at the top end of the ability range and to be to a significant extent subject-specific.
- 7 Should the test be taken before or after UCAS application? Before After
- 8 Would a post-qualification application and admissions system make any difference to the timing of the test? Yes No
- If so, why?
- 9 Would your institution be prepared to bear any of the cost of offering the test or should the student pay all of the test fee? My institution is willing to pay all the costs
 My institution is willing to pay part of the costs and students should pay the remainder of the costs
 Student should pay all the costs
- 10 Do the 3 dimensions tested by uniTEST represent those which are of interest to your institution? Yes No
- 11 Is the joint branding by ACER and Cambridge an important feature of such a test? Yes No
- Why?/Why not? It is important that such a test is developed and delivered by an organisation that commands respect and trust, but joint branding is not important. Indeed our experience of joint ventures between awarding bodies is not good.
- 12 What type of course would you expect to benefit most from using this test to assist in selection? One with rather generic selection criteria and demanded skills.
- 13 In what ways would you expect this test to be helpful to your institution? Little. It may possibly act as a filter to remove the "tail" from our application. We are not convinced it would help differentiate highly able mathematicians and highly able musicians and highly able classicists and highly able engineers etc.
- 14 What would the test need to do/achieve to be of real value to you/your institution? To identify subject-specific skills and differentiate reliably between highly able students and identify potential in those whose education may have been in some way disadvantaged.

- | | | Likely | | | | Unlikely |
|----|---|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 15 | How likely are you to consider using uniTEST? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 16 | What further information would you need to assess uniTEST? | Evidence that it can reliably differentiate between highly able students and add predictive value in selecting them for specific degree-level courses. | | | | |
| 17 | Would you be prepared to discuss this further with ACER and Cambridge Assessment? | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No | | | | |

Further comments:

We have interpreted Q1 as meaning "What characteristics should such a test have?". Therefore, for "Strongly Agree" read "Essential" and for "Agree" read "Desirable".

Our answer response to Q10 should be interpreted as "They represent some of the dimensions of interest but not all."

In addition to the comments made above, we also note that to be of use to us such a test must be available internationally (throughout the world).

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