FREE UCAT PACK

12 UCAT mistakes that cost the most time.

The UCAT is not marked on what you know. It is marked on what you can finish. This pack names the habits that burn the clock in each of the four sections, and what to do instead.

4	12	8
sections	habits	pages

Written by TopMark Tutors | topmarktutors.com.au
Not produced, authorised or endorsed by UCAT ANZ or the UCAT Consortium.

START HERE

The clock is the exam.

Every section gives you less time per question than feels reasonable. That is the design. Once you know the number of seconds you actually have, a lot of habits that feel careful start to look expensive.

Section	Questions	Time	Per question
Verbal Reasoning	44	22 min	**30 sec**
Decision Making	35	37 min	**63 sec**
Quantitative Reasoning	36	26 min	**43 sec**
Situational Judgement	69	26 min	**22.6 sec**

Situational Judgement is the tightest section per question, not the most generous. Decision Making is the generous one.

How the scoring works.

The three cognitive sections (Verbal Reasoning, Decision Making and Quantitative Reasoning) are each scored from 300 to 900. Added together they give your total, which runs from **900 to 2700**. Situational Judgement does not go into that total: it is reported separately, as its own scaled score from **300 to 900**. Universities use the two differently, which is worth knowing before you decide where your preparation time goes.

Bands 1 to 4 are the UK convention. UCAT ANZ reports Situational Judgement as a scaled score, so if a resource talks about getting “Band 1”, it is not describing the test you are sitting.

How to use this pack.

Read it once end to end. Then, after your next full practice test, come back and mark the three entries you recognise in your own attempt. Three is enough. Working on three habits properly beats nodding at twelve.

VERBAL REASONING · 44 QUESTIONS IN 22 MINUTES · 30 SECONDS A QUESTION

Verbal Reasoning

1

Reading the passage before reading the question.

The passage is not there to be understood, it is there to be searched. Read the question stem first so you know what you are hunting for, then scan the text for the two or three lines that decide it. Reading top to bottom first means reading almost all of it twice.

2

Trying to settle a question you cannot place.

If you cannot find the relevant line, the answer is not going to arrive by staring harder. Flag it, pick your best option, move on. One stubborn question does not cost you one mark, it costs you the two straightforward ones sitting behind it.

3

Arguing with the text.

Every answer is judged against the passage, not against what you know to be true. If the passage supports a statement that is wrong in the real world, it is still supported. Bringing outside knowledge in is the quiet way to lose marks on questions you thought were easy.

TRY THIS

Next practice set, cover the passage. Read the question first, then uncover and give yourself twenty seconds to find the line that decides it. Do ten like that.

Decision Making

4

Drawing the whole diagram.

A full Venn or a complete logic grid is often more work than the question needs. Draw only the part that separates the options, and stop the moment one answer survives. This is the most generous section per question and the easiest one to overspend in.

5

Reading all five statements before answering any.

On yes or no sets, each statement is judged on its own. Read one, decide it, record it, move to the next. Holding five statements in your head at once is what makes you go back and re-read the stem a third time.

6

Calculating probability when the options are far apart.

If the options are spread widely, an estimate decides it faster than exact arithmetic and with less chance of a slip. Reach for the calculator when the options are close together, not by reflex.

TRY THIS

Time ten decision questions with no diagrams allowed at all. You will find out quickly which ones genuinely needed one and which you were drawing out of habit.

Quantitative Reasoning

7

Doing the arithmetic by hand.

You get one calculator on the day and it is the on-screen one, slower than the one in your pocket. That is exactly why it needs practice before test day. Learn the keypad and the keyboard shortcuts in advance so the tool costs you nothing on the day.

8

Working to an exactness the options do not need.

Round early, eliminate and only go back for precision if two options survive. Carrying four decimal places through a question whose options differ by twenty per cent is time spent buying accuracy nobody is paying you for.

9

Missing the unit or the word ‘per’.

Per hour, per item, per cent of which total. The arithmetic is rarely the hard part in this section; reading the stem precisely is. When an answer you are confident in is not among the options, this is almost always why.

TRY THIS

Do one full set using only the on-screen calculator and its keyboard shortcuts. Change nothing else. Compare the time to your last set.

Situational Judgement

10

Answering as yourself.

You are not being asked what you would do. You are being asked to judge an action against the standards published for medical and dental students: patient safety first, then honesty, then working within your competence and escalating when you are beyond it.

11

Agonising over the middle options.

Most of the time lost here goes on the gap between ‘appropriate but not ideal’ and ‘inappropriate but not awful’. Decide the extremes first. If an action risks a patient or hides something, it is at the bottom. If it is safe and honest, it is not at the bottom.

12

Re-reading the scenario for every question.

Scenarios carry several questions. Read it once, properly, then answer the whole cluster before moving on. At under twenty-three seconds a question there is no room to read the same paragraph four times.

TRY THIS

Before you check an answer, write one word for why you chose it: safety, honesty, competence or escalation. The ones where you cannot are the ones to review.

ONE PAGE

The whole pack, in twelve lines.

Print this page. Put it next to you for your next three practice tests.

VERBAL REASONING

1 Read the question before the passage.

2 Flag it and move. One question is never worth two.

3 Judge against the passage, not against what you know.

DECISION MAKING

4 Draw only the part of the diagram that decides it.

5 Answer yes or no statements one at a time.

6 Estimate when the options are far apart.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

7 Practise the on-screen calculator before test day.

8 Round early, eliminate, refine only if two survive.

9 Read the unit and the word ‘per’.

SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT

10 Judge the action, not what you would personally do.

11 Decide the extremes first, then the middle.

12 Read the scenario once, answer its whole cluster.

WHAT NEXT

Feedback beats more questions.

A question bank gives you more questions. It does not tell you whether a lost mark was timing, method or reading. That is the gap this pack points at, and it is the gap the course is built to close.

Free Medicine and Dentistry workshop

Saturday 14 November, 11 am Adelaide time (11:30 am AEDT), about an hour on Google Meet. What each university asks for, how the application works and live Q&A. Free to attend, and it is live rather than recorded. Every registrant gets this pack by email beforehand.

UCAT Online Course

Starts **Saturday 5 December 2026**, live online with Haseef: 96th percentile, 3210 in the 2024 sitting, now studying Medicine at Flinders University. Lecture classes teach the content, small-group workshop classes work questions under the clock and every practice test comes back marked with a breakdown by cause.

Two classes a week. **$35** a lecture, **$45** a workshop or **$75 a week for both**. Your first class is free. Classes run weekly through to your UCAT sitting, with a pause over the Christmas period. Enrol by **Monday 30 November** to start with the group on day one.

topmarktutors.com.au/ucat.html

Topmarktutors99@gmail.com | 0450 113 766 | Adelaide

Written by TopMark Tutors. Not produced, authorised or endorsed by UCAT ANZ or the UCAT Consortium. Haseef sat the UCAT in 2024, when the cognitive total was scored out of 3600 across four cognitive subtests; from 2025 Abstract Reasoning was removed and the total is out of 2700.