THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK TESTS (NBTs)

WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK TESTS?
The National Benchmark Tests (NBTs) are tests designed to measure a writer’s ability to respond to and cope with the entry-level academic literacy, quantitative literacy and mathematics demands they will face in their university studies. They are used by many universities in South Africa to determine the readiness of the writer for higher education. There are two tests:
1. The combined Academic Literacy and Quantitative Literacy (AQL) test consists of multiple-choice questions in seven timed sections, requiring three hours and five minutes of writing time.
2. The Mathematics (MAT) test consists of multiple-choice questions and is timed with three hours allowed.

If you apply to more than one university, your NBT scores will be provided to all universities to which you have applied.

DO I NEED TO WRITE THE NBTs?
Many South African universities require applicants to write the NBTs. We require all undergraduate applicants normally resident in South Africa to write the NBTs. This includes transferring applicants from other institutions and students returning to UCT after an absence.

WHEN SHOULD I WRITE?
All applicants should write at the earliest opportunity.
As we cannot process your application until we have your NBT scores, we urge you to write at the earliest possible date. Available data suggest that learners writing the NBTs late in the year have no advantage over those writing in earlier sessions.

The last date to write the NBTs that will meet UCT admission requirements is 15 October 2016. Applicants who do not have an NBT score on system after the release of the results of the 15 October tests will have failed to meet the minimum admission requirements for UCT and may be denied.

HOW DOES UCT USE MY NBT RESULTS?
UCT uses the NBT results in addition to school academic performance and results for admissions, placement in development courses or extended degrees, and as an indicator of eligibility for an early offer or an Entrance Scholarship.
All applicants are required to meet the minimum NBT scores stipulated for each UCT qualification. In the faculties of Engineering & the Built Environment and Health Sciences, NBT results make up a specific proportion of an applicant’s overall admission score (the faculty point score or FPS).

HOW DO I REGISTER TO WRITE?
You should have registered to write the NBTs before applying to UCT.
Registration to write the NBTs is done through the internet and takes about five minutes to complete. Open your web browser to www.nbt.ac.za. After reading the general information and the FAQs, select the 'Book a Test' link and follow all instructions. You must use your name as it appears on your official South African ID or foreign passport when you register for the NBTs. If you do not have access to the internet, or encounter problems during the registration process, you may call the NBT helpline. See below for contact details.
Registration is valid only for the specific date and location you select and must be done at least three weeks prior to the desired test date.
It is your responsibility to register early enough to ensure a place on one of the national test days. Please note that the last date for applicants to UCT to write the NBTs is 15 October 2016. There is no late registration process.

WHAT DOES IT COST TO WRITE?
Test fees are non-refundable and can be paid at any EasyPay point. Fees for the 2016 Admission cycle are:
AQL only: R80
AQL and MAT: R160

Should you miss the test for which you were registered, you must register and pay again. Note that results are released only for paid tests.
WHICH TESTS MUST I WRITE?
All applicants write the Academic and Quantitative Literacy (AQL) test and all applicants to Commerce, Engineering and the Built Environment, Health Sciences, and Science faculties must also write the Mathematics test (MAT). If you have further questions, please check the requirements of the specific faculty in the UCT Undergraduate Prospectus for 2017.

Please Note:
• UCT requires that you register to write the NBTs before applying to UCT.
• UCT requires that you write the NBTs in English.
• If required to write Mathematics in addition to the AQL, you must write both tests on the same day.
• You are allowed to write the NBTs a second time within one year, but if you do, you must rewrite all the tests you initially wrote, and you must do so on or before 15 October.
• You may write the NBTs at any test centre.
• All universities to which you apply can receive your NBT results.

HOW DO I CONTACT THE NBT OFFICE?
Telephone 021 650-3523 (between 08:00 and 16:00 on weekdays and between 07:00 and 10:00 on test weekends)
Email: nbt@uct.ac.za
Facebook: www.facebook.com/nationalbenchmarktest
Twitter: www.twitter.com/cetap_uct

WHAT IS IN THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK TESTS?
The NBT assesses a writer’s proficiency levels in three content areas, focusing on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC LITERACY</th>
<th>QUANTITATIVE LITERACY</th>
<th>MATHEMATICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make meaning from text, typical to that encountered in tertiary studies;</td>
<td>• Select and use a range of quantitative terms and phrases;</td>
<td>• Understand and apply properties of the real number system;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand vocabulary related to academic study, in context;</td>
<td>• Apply quantitative procedures in various situations;</td>
<td>• Recognise and use patterns, including sequences and series;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and track points and claims made in texts;</td>
<td>• Formulate and apply formulae;</td>
<td>• Apply relationships such as ratios and percentages in a variety of contexts;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluate evidence used to support writers’ claims;</td>
<td>• Interpret tables, graphs, charts and text and integrate information from different sources;</td>
<td>• Use surds, logarithms and exponents in a variety of algebraic and numerical contexts, including solution of exponential equations and financial calculations;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Extrapolate and draw inferences and conclusions from text;</td>
<td>• Do calculations involving multiple steps accurately;</td>
<td>• Carry out algebraic manipulations, and apply these in the solution of equations and inequalities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Differentiate main from supporting ideas in the overall and specific organisation of a passage;</td>
<td>• Identify trends and patterns in various situations;</td>
<td>• Solve problems using mathematical process skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify text differences that relate to writers’ purposes, audiences, and kinds of communication;</td>
<td>• Apply properties of simple geometric shapes to determine measurements;</td>
<td>• Understand function concept and identify properties of functions, such as domain and range, in the context of straight lines, parabolas, hyperbolas, exponential and logarithmic graphs, and trigonometric graphs (sine, cosine, tangent);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand and interpret information that is presented visually (e.g. tables and flow-charts); and</td>
<td>• Reason logically; and</td>
<td>• Identify relationships between graphs and their equations, or inequalities and the regions they describe;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand basic numerical concepts and information used in text.</td>
<td>• Interpret quantitative information presented verbally, symbolically, and graphically.</td>
<td>• Interpret transformations of functions represented algebraically or graphically;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

WHAT TIME ARE THE TESTS AND WHAT MUST I BRING WITH ME?
The AQL Test is written in the morning, and writers must be at the test venue by 07h30. The MAT Test is written in the afternoon on the same day as the AQL Test, with a short lunch break between the two tests.

On the morning of the tests, you must bring:
• Your ID Book, passport, or certified receipt of application for South African ID.
• Your NBT registration letter with proof that you have paid the testing fees.
• Two HB pencils, an eraser, and a pencil sharpener.
• Lunch, if you are writing both tests, and water to drink while you are writing.
DO NOT BRING CALCULATORS, RULERS, OR DICTIONARIES.

**TEST DATES FOR 2017 INTAKE CYCLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NBT Test Dates</th>
<th>Last Day to Register Online</th>
<th>Last Day to Pay Fees</th>
<th>Results Available to Institutions</th>
<th>Results Available to Writers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 May 2016</td>
<td>1 May 2016</td>
<td>8 May 2016</td>
<td>13 June 2016</td>
<td>20 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 July 2016</strong></td>
<td>12 June 2016</td>
<td>19 June 2016</td>
<td>25 July 2016</td>
<td>1 August 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*17 July 2016</td>
<td>26 June 2016</td>
<td>3 July 2016</td>
<td>8 August 2016</td>
<td>15 August 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 July 2016</td>
<td>10 July 2016</td>
<td>17 July 2016</td>
<td>22 August 2016</td>
<td>29 August 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 September 2016</td>
<td>28 August 2016</td>
<td>4 September 2016</td>
<td>10 October 2016</td>
<td>17 October 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2016</td>
<td>3 September 2016</td>
<td>2 October 2016</td>
<td>7 November 2016</td>
<td>14 November 2016</td>
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*Sunday test session  **Friday test session

A complete schedule with all locations where you can write is on the NBT website: [http://www.nbt.ac.za](http://www.nbt.ac.za).