Benefits to Universities

This common assessment tool:

- Enables uniform comparisons of prospective students with mixed experiences and from different socio-economic backgrounds
- Identifies applicants’ potential for tertiary level study
- Supplements applicants’ existing academic qualifications
- Facilitates selection judgements and simplifies admissions processes
- Provides a valid and reliable measure of reasoning.

ACER’s ongoing research, quality assurance and technical analysis ensure the test continues to provide a good range of item difficulty to match the range of candidate abilities.

Let us do the hard work

- Test questions are developed by a team of highly experienced item writers.
- Our online registration system can be adapted to suit each client university.
- All test materials, including a detailed Supervisor’s Manual, are delivered directly to the university.
- ACER manages the entire test supervision process, in accordance with stringent exam policies and procedures.
- All scoring is undertaken at ACER and analysed by experienced psychometricians.
- Results are released to UCAS, your institution, applicants, or any combination of the above.

Current use of MSAP

The University of Salford, Manchester has used MSAP UK since 2013 to assist decisions for course place offers.

MSAP has been used in Ireland successfully since 2009 by UCC, UCD, UL & NUIG.

Feel free to browse our website:

https://msap-uk.acer.edu.au

Further information

To discuss possible implementation, timelines, costs and administrative matters related to using MSAP at your institution, please contact:

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What is MSAP?

MSAP stands for Mature Students Admissions Pathway. It is an assessment used for mature applicants to selected courses at various universities in Ireland and the UK.

MSAP provides measures of the types of competencies considered important for success in tertiary study. The purpose of MSAP is to assess candidates’ ability to understand and analyse material and to think critically about issues. It is not a test of knowledge of specific academic subject matter.

MSAP is the ideal instrument for assessing the aptitude of applicants entering Higher Education through a non-traditional pathway.

MSAP allows applicants to provide evidence of their capacity to succeed at university.

Three Modules

Tertiary institutions are given the option of three test modules that suit a wide range of admissions needs.

Written English (Module 1)

Essay format – 1 hour

There are two writing tasks. One invites an argumentative response; the other invites a personal response.

Written English is assessed on the following criteria:

- Thought and content
- Structure and organisation
- Expression, style and mechanics.

Each piece of writing is assessed by two independent, experienced markers.

Reasoning in the Humanities & Social Sciences (Module 2)

Multiple choice format – 1 hour

- Stimulus materials drawn from Humanities and Social Sciences contexts.
- Stimulus may be a cartoon, poem, graph, diagram, fiction/non-fiction narrative, etc.

You Decide

The MSAP Office would be pleased to assist you to select an option that best suits the purposes of your institution or faculty.

MSAP test modules may be used in a variety of combinations. Examples of possible models:

Option A

Applicants to any Higher Education course

- MODULE 2 Reasoning in the Humanities & Social Sciences
- MODULE 3 Reasoning in the Sciences, Mathematics & Social Sciences

Option B

Applicants to any Higher Education course

- MODULE 1 Written English
- MODULE 2 Reasoning in the Humanities & Social Sciences
- MODULE 3 Reasoning in the Sciences, Mathematics & Social Sciences

Option C

Applicants to courses such as Arts, Education, Humanities or Law

- MODULE 1 Written English
- MODULE 2 Reasoning in the Humanities & Social Sciences
- MODULE 3 Reasoning in the Sciences, Mathematics & Social Sciences

Option D

Applicants to courses such as Engineering, Science or Agricultural Science

- MODULE 1 Written English
- MODULE 2 Reasoning in the Humanities & Social Sciences
- MODULE 3 Reasoning in the Sciences, Mathematics & Social Sciences

Sample question:

Reasoning in the Humanities & Social Sciences (Module 2)

The cartoon is a comment on

A corporate loyalty.
B the value of teamwork.
C the social implications of a casualised workforce.
D the social implications of a decentralised workforce.

Answer: D

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