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## Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) at the University of Oxford

Currently, students applying to the University of Oxford to study:

- ❖ Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE)
- ❖ Economics and Management
- ❖ Experimental Psychology
- ❖ Psychology and Philosophy

will be required to take a pre-interview admissions test this autumn, which is administered by Cambridge Assessment. Please note that this test was known as the "PPE Admissions Test" until 2008.

The University of Oxford receives a high number of applications for the above courses and these are growing annually. Admissions decisions are complex because candidates come from a wide variety of subject backgrounds, and the study of these courses requires a range of abilities. The Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) helps tutors to assess whether candidates have the appropriate skills and aptitudes.

More information about the courses that require the TSA can be found on the University of Oxford website at [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)

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## What is the Thinking Skills Assessment?

The Thinking Skills Assessment for the University of Oxford consists of two components:

**Section 1:** a 90-minute multiple-choice component, which consists of 50 questions designed to measure a candidate's *problem solving* (reasoning using numerical and spatial skills) and *critical thinking* skills (reasoning using everyday written language).

**Section 2:** a 30-minute writing task, which gives a candidate the opportunity to show that they can communicate effectively in writing, organising their ideas and presenting them clearly and concisely.

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## When does it take place?

This year's TSA will take place on Wednesday 3rd November 2010, on the same day as some other admissions tests such as the BMAT and ELAT.

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## Where do candidates take the test?

Typically, candidates sit the test at their school or college; however, Cambridge Assessment also hosts an extensive network of open centres in the UK and overseas, where candidates can register for and sit the test if their schools or colleges do not have the facilities in place to administer the test.

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## How do candidates register for the test?

Although it is ultimately a candidate's responsibility to make sure s/he is registered for the TSA, it is the school or college's responsibility to make the entry on their behalf. Entries are made via an easy-to-use, secure online system that is accessible to centres only.

Entries will be accepted until 5pm BST on Friday 15th October 2010. Candidates or centres who miss this deadline date should contact Cambridge Assessment.

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## What does it cost?

Candidates will not be charged an entry fee for taking the TSA in November 2010. It is important to note that some open centres may charge an administrative fee for organising and administering the test on behalf of external candidates. This administrative fee normally covers the cost of invigilation, return despatch costs and room hire, where applicable.

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## Where can I find out more about the TSA?

There is a dedicated website which provides more information about the TSA for the University of Oxford. This also provides guidance for centres and candidates alike, as well as specimen test materials for practice purposes.

**email:** [tsainfo@cambridgeassessment.org.uk](mailto:tsainfo@cambridgeassessment.org.uk)

**website:** [www.tsa.cambridgeassessment.org.uk](http://www.tsa.cambridgeassessment.org.uk)

## Thinking Skills Assessment 2010



The Cambridge Assessment Group is Europe's largest assessment agency. It plays a leading role in researching, developing and delivering assessment to eight million candidates in 150 countries.

TSA Oxford Support Team  
Cambridge Assessment  
1 Hills Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2EU  
United Kingdom

tel: +44 (0)1223 553338  
fax: +44 (0)1223 553042  
email: [tsainfo@cambridgeassessment.org.uk](mailto:tsainfo@cambridgeassessment.org.uk)  
website: [www.tsa.cambridgeassessment.org.uk](http://www.tsa.cambridgeassessment.org.uk)

## Key Dates for TSA 2010

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**17 September** *Last date for requests for modified question papers (e.g. Braille or enlarged)*

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**15 October** *Last date for TSA entries*

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**3 November** *Test takes place*

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**14 January 2011** *Results released*

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