

## Guide to SAT Test Taking

The majority of US universities require applicants to sit SAT or Scholastic Assessment Tests as a precondition of entry. There are 2 types of SAT tests on offer:

**SAT Reasoning Test (sometimes known as SAT 1).** Consists of:

- critical reasoning (sentence completion & comprehension)
- maths
- writing (multiple choice questions + 25 min written essay)

Takes 3 hrs 45 mins to complete

This is overall more important than the SAT 2 tests but most leading institutions require SAT 2s as well

**SAT Subject tests (sometimes known as SAT 2 tests)**

- these are 1 hour multiple choice tests in specific subjects
- choice of subjects is quite limited
- probably best if you can tackle science, maths or languages rather than history or literature

The most demanding universities (eg. Harvard, Yale, Princeton) require three SAT 2s but most others are happy with 2.

If you are planning to apply for engineering it would be advisable to take Maths 2C rather than 1C.

It is possible to take 3 different subjects in one test session.

It is **not** possible to take SAT 1s and SAT 2s on the same day – too exhausting!

### **2. Registration.**

- go to the College Board website ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) or look at the poster outside the Careers Library to check when the dates of tests are taking place
- they take place on **six dates only** throughout the year. These are: January, May, June, October, November, December
- REGISTER INDIVIDUALLY ON LINE (pay with credit card)
- you must put in the school code which is **724671**
- you **must** also **elect** to have your scores sent to Sevenoaks school
- **you must register at least 6 weeks in advance** of the test taking place. The earlier you register the better the chance you have of getting into the Test Centre of your choice.
- it is possible to register for 2 or 3 test sessions ahead and in order to avoid disappointment (i.e. no place!) it is **highly recommended** that you do this.

N.B The nearest test centres to Sevenoaks are:

- the American School in London
- Southbank International School
- ACS Cobham
- TASIS Thorpe
- ACS Hillingdon

If you choose either of these last three, you should liaise with other fellow test takers so that you can share the cost of a taxi together.

N.B. It is sometimes possible to get a 'stand-by' place but not always. You will need to contact the test centre where you wish to go in advance to check whether they are willing to take 'standby' applicants.

If you delay registering to take your SATs and find that all the test centres in and around London are full, you may end up having to go to Paris or Manchester!

N.B. Do not forget to take some personal identification with you to the test.

### **3. Preparing for SAT 2 tests**

- it is not really possible to prepare for SAT 2 subject tests although it is a good idea to look through sample test papers or SAT Guides in the library beforehand
- for SAT 2 tests it is a good idea to choose subjects that you may be doing at IB or if you are bilingual, you may decide to choose a language

N.B Please note that language tests are only available on certain dates. (This information is available in the test booklet)

### **4. Preparing for SAT 1 tests**

- you can do some practice tests using the sample test papers available in the Careers Library or your boarding house OR
- you can opt take part in the in-house SATs preparation course (run by Studyworks a professional SATs preparation company) which takes place in school over 2 weekends in the Lent and summer terms.

N.B. Your parents will be notified of this via the school at the end of this term. Dates for next year's course are: 7/8 February and 18/19 April

- another option is to have private classes with Studyworks in London on Sundays throughout the Lent term. Details from Mrs Douglas
- a third option is to do a week's intensive prep course run by Kaplan, another test preparation company in London either in the holidays or at half term. Look at [www.kaptest.co.uk](http://www.kaptest.co.uk)

N.B.If you are scheduled to take a test, you are entitled to half a day's study leave on the Friday before hand.

### **5. Summary**

- it is important that you do not get too obsessed about your SAT tests
- they are important but they constitute only one part of the selection process
- think ahead always and plan your test taking dates sensibly so that you do not end up having to take them all in the autumn term of the U6.
- most importantly make sure that you register well in advance of the test dates to get the test centres that are most accessible to Sevenoaks.

