

## THE LONDON 11+ CONSORTIUM

### FAQs

#### Mission Statement

We aim to provide an application process which is fair, clear, robust and accessible to children from all schools and backgrounds. We are concerned about the pressure the 11+ application system can place on young children and the damage to learning which relentless ‘teaching to the test’ produces. We therefore seek to run a simple process with just one test, which provides a good tool of assessment to elicit information which can match candidates to schools best fitting their profile. We are interested not only in verbal and mathematical potential, but also in non-verbal ability, which often signifies the sort of creative and visual intelligence relating to problem-solving and design. The changing landscape of work needs all these aptitudes.

#### Who are we?

There are 14 schools in the Consortium, listed below with the names of their heads:

Channing School - Mrs Lindsey Hughes  
Francis Holland School, Regent’s Park - Mr Charles Fillingham  
Francis Holland School, Sloane Square - Mrs Lucy Elphinstone  
Godolphin and Latymer School - Dr Frances Ramsey  
More House School - Ms Faith Hagerty  
Northwood College for Girls - Ms Rebecca Brown  
Notting Hill and Ealing High School - Mr Matthew Shoults  
Queen’s College London - Mr Richard Tillet  
Queen’s Gate School - Mrs Rosalynd Kamaryc  
South Hampstead High School - Mrs Victoria Bingham  
St Augustine’s Priory - Mrs Sarah Raffray  
St Helen’s School London - Mrs Alice Lucas  
St. James Senior Girls’ School - Mrs Sarah Labram  
St Margaret’s School - Mr Mark Webster

#### Important News

The London 11+ Consortium schools have carefully reviewed the last two years’ application processes which, driven by the uncertainty of the pandemic, necessitated a variety of assessment approaches in 2020 and adoption of the ISEB Common Pre-Test in 2021.

In 2022 we are introducing a bespoke Consortium assessment process, for all Consortium schools, which goes beyond testing cognitive ability alone and seeks to discover a child’s potential in creative and

critical thinking, analysis, synthesis and problem-solving. This test will be 100 minutes in total and taken in the candidate's current school, but where this is not possible, provision will be made in all Consortium schools for candidates to sit the test there.

The new FAQs are available now but full details including the Code of Practice and Familiarisation Materials will be published here in the Summer Term. In the meantime please note the following Key Dates:

- Closing date for registrations: Friday 11th November 2022
- Consortium Assessment dates: Friday 2nd, Tuesday 6th and Thursday 8th December 2022
- Offer date: Friday 10th February 2023
- Deadline to accept: 12 noon on Monday 6th March 2023

## Key Facts

- For entry to London 11+ Consortium schools in September 2023 onwards, the Consortium will be introducing a new assessment. The assessment for September 2023 applicants will be held in December 2022 for pupils in Year 6 at that time.
- The assessment will include cognitive reasoning, English comprehension, Maths and some creative new components to assess problem-solving and analysis skills.
- Any prior knowledge assessed in the entrance examination will be based on the National Curriculum for Year 5, but with opportunities for additional challenge built into the assessment.
- The assessment will be taken as an **online** assessment. Candidates do NOT need to make any separate application for the test as Consortium schools will organise the application for them.
- Candidates eligible for additional time will be granted this if supporting evidence is provided, in accordance with JCQ rules, when requested by Consortium schools.
- Candidates will **either** sit the assessment in their current school **or** at one of the Consortium schools to which they have applied, if their current school is unable to provide this facility.
- Familiarisation materials will be published on the Consortium website in early Autumn Term 2022. We recommend that all candidates look at these before taking the assessment.

## FAQs

### When is the new Consortium entrance examination being introduced?

The first candidates for the new Consortium entrance examination will be Year 6 pupils sitting the test in December 2022 for entry to Senior School in September 2023.

### What are the key dates and times I need to know?

- The deadline for applications to any Consortium school is Friday 11th November, 2022.
- Test dates are one of Friday 2nd December, Tuesday 6th December and Thursday 8th December. Candidates only sit the assessment once, irrespective of the number of Consortium schools to which they are applying.

- Offers will be sent out to arrive on Friday 10th February with acceptances due by Monday 6th March at noon.
- If she is sitting at a Consortium school, she may have either a morning or an afternoon assessment on one of the three assessment dates. Schools will advise of the exact start time for their sitting.

### **Why is the Consortium introducing a new test?**

The Consortium wants to continue to assess mathematical and verbal ability, but also to assess deeper thinking. We have worked very hard with our new test provider, ATOM Learning, to design creative new questions to assess problem-solving and analysis skills, something our previous assessment did not do. We believe that the new assessment is innovative as well as reliable and that candidates will find the questions stimulating.

### **Who is designing the entrance examination for the Consortium?**

We have worked hard over the last 12 months designing a new assessment with ATOM Learning. We selected ATOM as our new test provider because of their evident passion for assessment and ability to innovate in this area. ATOM will be familiar to many primary schools through their online Maths and English learning platform which provides children with opportunities to consolidate and extend their skills in these two critical areas. The assessment designed for the Consortium is almost entirely bespoke and designed in partnership with a group of primary and secondary curriculum specialists in Consortium schools.

### **How long will the new Consortium exam take? How will candidates manage their time?**

The new exam will be 100 minutes long (1 hour 40 minutes). There will be a 30-minute break in the middle. During the exam, candidates will see a clock on their screen that will count down in minutes showing them how long they have left for each section. It will be visible but not so large as to distract them from their work. We have deliberately chosen for the clock not to count down in seconds as we thought this might distract some candidates. They will not be given any additional time warnings.

### **What about candidates eligible for extra time?**

Candidates eligible for extra time will be asked to indicate their entitlement at the point of application to Consortium schools. Admissions teams will then ask families to provide evidence of this entitlement, just as we have done in the past, in accordance with JCQ rules. Candidates eligible for extra time will be granted their extra time on each section of the exam rather than taking it all as one block of time. This is because once a section has been completed, candidates cannot go back to amend it.

### **What will be tested in the new entrance examination?**

There will be five distinct components, taken in the following order:

- 20 minutes for Maths
- 10 minutes for Non-Verbal Reasoning
- 30 minutes for English comprehension and Verbal Reasoning

- BREAK for 30 minutes
- 15 minutes for Problem Solving
- 25 minutes for the Analysis component

## Is the assessment adaptive or non-adaptive? What does this mean?

The first three parts of the examination will be adaptive. The adaptive nature ensures every child can have a good experience completing the assessment as the questions will be tailored to their performance. Adaptive assessment is a tried and tested method of assessment that yields reliable results, especially in assessing cognitive reasoning ability.

The final two sections of the examination (problem-solving and analysis) will be non-adaptive, meaning all candidates will see exactly the same questions. The English comprehension passage will also be the same but questions will be adaptive. We will change the non-adaptive parts for each of our three exam days to ensure the security of the test.

## I would like to know more about each section. What can you tell me?

You should look at the familiarisation materials on the Consortium website which will be available early in the Autumn Term 2022 and will remain on the website thereafter. We hope the information below is helpful to learn a little more about each section:

### Maths section

The questions will be based on the National Curriculum for Year 5 and we will not test anything on the Year 6 curriculum. This is to make things fair as different schools will teach the Year 6 curriculum in different orders. Because we have many very able candidates taking the Consortium exam, we will provide stretch and challenge through the style and depth of the questions we ask. This section is **adaptive**, with questions suited to the performance of each candidate.

### Non-Verbal Reasoning (NVR)

This will involve assessment of the candidate's ability to identify patterns and think logically. NVR is a tried and tested component of many cognitive reasoning assessments. The questions can seem strange to candidates who have never seen those sorts of questions before, so we recommend that all candidates look at our familiarisation materials. We do not, however, recommend intense preparation as any gains quickly become very marginal. This section is **adaptive** (see above for an explanation).

### English Comprehension and Verbal Reasoning

The text will be a piece of fiction specially written for the Consortium examination. Questions will be adaptive depending on a candidate's performance. There will be no extended writing required. Candidates should not be thrown by vocabulary they do not know as one of the things we are assessing is the ability to infer meaning from context. The questions are **adaptive**.

Comprehension will be followed by an assessment of a candidate's ability to identify the correct use of standard English in context. This section will not require any recall of grammar, and candidates who read widely will be well prepared for this section.

### Problem-solving

This section tests the ability of candidates to use words and numbers to solve multi-step problems. The section is **non-adaptive** but candidates are likely to complete different numbers of questions in the time available.

### Analysis component

Candidates have to use information from a variety of different sources to answer questions. The information provided will be given to them in a range of different formats and they may have to look at several different sources simultaneously to answer questions. The context is likely to be unfamiliar to all candidates but in the event of a candidate being familiar with the context, this will not confer any advantage on them. This section is **non-adaptive**.

### **Why are you offering three test dates? Why are all candidates not sitting the test on the same day? Why are you not allowing the test to be taken within a certain timeframe?**

With our previous assessment during the pandemic, candidates were simply given a deadline by which they had to have taken the assessment. Because some elements of our new London 11+ Consortium assessment are non-adaptive, we cannot allow candidates to take the test whenever they wish. They have to take it on one of three selected dates - 2nd, 6th or 8th December 2022. We have allowed three dates to enable as many primary and prep schools to host the tests themselves as possible, giving them flexibility to work around their calendars. To ensure security, different non-adaptive content has been produced for each of the three sitting dates. Our Consortium schools will accommodate pupils who cannot take the exam in their own school.

### **Why are you allowing some candidates to take the exam in their own school and some in Consortium schools? Is this fair?**

All schools will have to abide by strict rules set out by the Consortium to make things fair for all candidates:

- The exam must start within a certain time frame within the day. This is to preserve the security of the exam.
- The exam can only be taken on three selected dates - 2nd, 6th and 8th December.
- The break must occur at the same point for ALL candidates - after the Verbal Reasoning section. Candidates must resume the exam after a specified break duration of 30 minutes.
- Only Consortium schools will be allowed to run afternoon sittings. We are allowing this to increase capacity for candidates to take the assessment at Consortium schools if required, and because our schools will ensure there is no possibility of afternoon candidates finding out the questions from morning candidates.

## **Will the exam be the same on each of your three exam days?**

The adaptive sections change for each candidate as they work their way through the relevant section of the examination. This means that every candidate will answer different questions on the adaptive parts of the assessment. The adaptive parts of the assessment are therefore intrinsically secure. As a reminder these are: the Maths section, the Non Verbal and Verbal Reasoning section, as well as the questions (but not the passage) on the English comprehension.

The non-adaptive sections will change for each of the three sittings of the exam: the comprehension passage, the problem-solving and the analysis sections. This is to ensure that candidates do not gain any advantage by sitting the test on a later test date. Results will be standardised across the three sittings to ensure parity between candidates taking the assessment on different days. However, the pitch has been carefully checked for all three sittings.

## **My daughter's school cannot offer her the facility to take the exam. What should I do?**

Please do not worry! Whilst we hope that many schools will offer this facility as they did during the pandemic, we recognise that not all schools have the capacity or time to do this. Consortium schools will ask ALL families to indicate a 1st and 2nd choice Consortium exam centre after they apply. This is in case their daughter's school cannot host the exam for them. The 1st and 2nd choice must be a Consortium school to which the family has applied.

The location at which a candidate sits the exam has **no bearing on the outcome** of the application. Candidates should not be at any advantage whether sitting at a Consortium school or in their own school. If sitting at a Consortium school, we do not mind which schools a family selects as their 1st and 2nd preference exam centre, as long as they have made an application to both these schools.

## **My daughter's school is offering the facility to take the exam there but I would rather she sat at a Consortium school. Is this possible?**

No. If your daughter's school offers the facility for her to take the exam there, for important logistical reasons we ask that you take up this facility. The ability to run an effective online assessment is dependent on the number of available devices in each school, including in Consortium schools. We need to keep our exam sittings free for those who can only take the exam in a Consortium school.

## **My daughter is an overseas applicant. Where will she take the exam?**

Your daughter is welcome to travel to sit the test in one of our schools and please indicate to us if she can do this. If you would prefer your daughter to sit the exam overseas, please contact the Admissions team at one of your Consortium schools to find out how to proceed.

## **What if my daughter is ill on the day of the exam?**

If your daughter is unwell on the day of her exam, please alert the Consortium schools to which she has applied as a matter of urgency. A medical certificate will need to be provided to all the Consortium schools to which she has applied. We will aim to organise for her to sit the exam on one of the other

exam dates. If this is not possible (for example because her test date was the last of the three possible dates), we have contingency plans in place and you should liaise with the Consortium schools to which she has applied to make arrangements.

### **What if my daughter is late on the day of her exam?**

You should ensure you leave plenty of time for travel as we cannot guarantee being able to give your daughter the full assessment time she needs if she arrives late. However, we do understand that sometimes even the best-laid travel plans can go wrong and we aim to show kindness and flexibility wherever possible.

### **Will the results affect whether my daughter is invited to interview at the schools to which she has applied?**

Some Consortium schools select for interview, and some do not. You need to check the details on the individual schools' websites. If the school selects for interview, how they make their decision and how many candidates they invite to interview are matters at their discretion.

### **How much preparation does my daughter have to do for the Consortium entrance examination?**

We recommend that all candidates look at the familiarisation materials, which will be available on our website from early in the Autumn Term of 2022. Beyond that, our exam will test knowledge of the Year 5 Maths National Curriculum, and candidates will need to know how to read an extended passage of fiction and answer questions on it. These are all skills that your daughter will be developing in school anyway, so your daughter does not need special tuition or intensive practice for this assessment.

We actively discourage preparation for the interview. Our interviewers can easily identify the candidate who has been coached for this part of the process. They are also experienced in putting nervous candidates at their ease. We are looking for evidence of creative and independent thinking, and suitability for our schools.