



Hi-tech assessment helps Ashoka University reach students from far and wide



Making connections

Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing is helping Ashoka University, in New Delhi, India, to measure key skills of applicants for its undergraduate courses.

The liberal arts university is now using the computer-based Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA), which was developed by Admissions Testing – in collaboration with world-leading universities – to test applicants' critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. These skills are not always adequately tested by school exams, but a high TSA score has been shown to be a good predictor of undergraduate course success.

Extensive research has been carried out to ensure the assessment produces valid and reliable outcomes, with a common benchmark of a candidate's core abilities, not their prior knowledge. When selecting from a diverse group of international students, it offers a fair way to compare applicants from different educational and cultural backgrounds.

Since it began using TSA in August 2018, Ashoka has tested more than 1,800 prospective students for its computer science, economics, maths, philosophy, political science, psychology, physics, biology and sociology/ anthropology courses.

In addition, 391 candidates – from 26 countries within Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, East Asia, South America and Europe, as well as India – have sat the test using the Mercer | Mettl remote invigilation (proctoring) solution. Of these, Ashoka has made offers to 193 (roughly 50%).



ASHOKA
UNIVERSITY

“ Ashoka is experiencing organic growth in applications of around 20% per year and is considering using TSA at an earlier stage of the recruitment process. ”

Contact us

Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing
The Triangle Building
Shaftesbury Road
Cambridge
CB2 8EA
United Kingdom

admissionstesting@
cambridgeassessment.org.uk

About Ashoka University

Ashoka University provides a liberal education through its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, thorough academic research and hands-on experience with real-world challenges. The aim at Ashoka University is to help students become well-rounded individuals who can think critically about issues and become leaders with a commitment to public service. There are 1,400 students on campus, drawn from more than 28 states and 98 cities in India, as well as 17 other countries.

About TSA

The Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) helps you identify an applicant's potential for academically demanding undergraduate and postgraduate study. It is designed to help select students with the right skills and aptitude for entry to a wide range of degree courses, including engineering, economics, politics and psychology. TSA tests the problem-solving and critical-thinking skills essential to success in higher education, university study and employment.

About Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing

We are part of the University of Cambridge and have been working with UK and worldwide universities, governments and employers for more than 15 years. Our admissions assessments are a global mark of excellence that set the quality standard. Backed by extensive research, our admissions tests give your applicants the opportunity to prove they have what it takes and help enhance your selection process. We have a global network of centres that spans 150 countries, making it easy to assess applicants wherever they may be.

Siddhartha Gupta, Chief Executive Officer, Mercer | Mettl, talks about the challenge of selecting high-potential students: 'Finding such talent through remote proctored assessment solutions makes the selection process highly efficient, reliable, auditable and scalable. Also, ensuring the security of the information is mission-critical for partners like Ashoka and Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing through processes that we at Mercer | Mettl have standardized over the decade.'

Within India, candidates come from the length and breadth of the country – from Jammu and Kashmir in the north, to Kerala and Tamil Nadu in the south – from towns where connectivity is nowhere near as good as in metro cities. Ashoka University would never have reached these applicants without remote proctoring and, likewise, these students would never have had the opportunity to apply.

Now in its sixth year of operation, Ashoka's first students have graduated and the university is experiencing organic growth in applications of around 20% per year. It expects around 60–65% of future applicants to come from outside Delhi and, therefore, these will be assessed remotely.

“ The functionality and accessibility of TSA's content, coupled with its user-friendly interface, has helped us conduct our test effortlessly. ”

High potential

In early 2020, experts from Admissions Testing visited the university to see what impact the introduction of testing is having on student recruitment.

Dave Baker, Assistant Director of Customer Services at Cambridge Assessment English (part of the Cambridge Assessment Group), said: 'Ashoka is a key university in the region and it's really encouraging to see how seriously it takes student recruitment. Skills such as problem solving are critical for people taking degree courses and it helps them have a positive experience of university life.'

Ashoka's Directors of Admissions, Rahul Sreekumar and Vineet Sabharwal, have noticed a slight movement in applicants' mean TSA scores – to around 55% from 50% – and they are seeing good correlations between the test and other data required in the admissions process. As the courses at Ashoka are taught in English, TSA (set at the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages at B2 Level English) can also help candidates prove their language proficiency.

A spokesperson for Ashoka University said: 'Being a leading liberal arts university, and following a holistic admissions process, we seek to evaluate and identify high-potential candidates with critical-thinking skills and problem-solving abilities.'

'TSA has bolstered the efficacy of our admissions process considerably. The functionality and accessibility of its content, coupled with the user-friendly interface, has helped us conduct our test effortlessly.'

'It also helps us address the challenges that come with evaluating and assessing a diverse range of applicants within the Indian and international contexts.'

Find out more

 admissionstesting.org

 [admissions-testing](https://www.linkedin.com/company/admissions-testing)

 [/admissionstesting](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCadmissionstesting)

 [@admissionstests](https://twitter.com/admissionstests)