

What LNAT score do you need?

The university-by-university numbers, the missing years, and why an average is not a cutoff.

THE SHORT ANSWER

There is **no universal target**. Historic offer-holder reference points range from the low twenties to about 31, but the institutions do not use the same evidence. Oxford used Section A and the essay in its shortlisting rank; LSE normally uses Section A only. Treat every average as a dated description of one admitted group, never as the score that buys an offer.

Checked against the sources named in this guide, August 2026. British English. Free to share.

1 Start with the only score you actually receive

Section A has 42 questions. Each correct answer earns one mark and there is no penalty for a wrong answer. Section B is sent to universities as your essay, but it does not add points to the mark out of 42. There is no LNAT pass mark.

The planning baseline supplied for these guides records 24.2 as the recent cohort average. That is useful context, not an admissions threshold. A university may give the essay real weight, use a contextual flag, compare applicants within a particular qualification group, or read the LNAT beside grades and the rest of the application.

1 The tell

Whenever someone says “you need 28”, ask four questions: *which university, which course, which cycle, and applicants or offer-holders?* If any answer is missing, the number is not ready to steer an application.

2 The honest university table

These figures are deliberately not normalised. They come from different cycles and cohort definitions. The source column tells you how much weight to put on each one.

University	Historic Section A reference	How to read it	Evidence quality
Oxford	30.96 offer-holder mean	A strong cohort marker, not a minimum	Official 2024–25 report; 247 offers
UCL	29.4 offer-holder mean	Current FAQ says no fixed benchmark guarantees an offer	Official UCL FAQ; “last academic cycle”
King’s	29.9 offer-holder mean	M100, not every King’s law course or future cycle	2023–24 FOI-derived release
LSE	26.4 offer-holder mean	Section A normally carries the LNAT decision; essay exception exists	2023–24 FOI-derived release
Durham	26.0 offer-holder mean	Both LNAT parts may distinguish otherwise similar files	Official FOI response, 2022–23 M101
Bristol	24–26 planning band; 25 mean in 2022	Essay matters too, so Section A alone is incomplete	Supplied planning band plus 2022 FOI
Glasgow	21 in supplied planning data	Low-confidence context only; source year is not attached	Public 2022–23 release is not directly comparable
SOAS	No reliable offer-holder mean supplied	Do not invent a target	Check the exact current course requirement

The UCL site currently carries two nearby figures: its FAQ says 29.4 for the last cycle, while its application page rounds the 2024–25 offer-holder average to 29. That is a reminder to keep the source date and wording attached.

3 Averages do not behave like grade boundaries

An average tells you where one group balanced. It does not tell you the lowest successful score, your probability of admission, or the score that makes the rest of the file irrelevant.

- **Oxford:** its 2024–25 initial shortlisting rank gave equal weight to contextualised GCSEs, Section A, and its internally marked essay. The same report shows an offer-holder Section A mean of 30.96, not a cutoff of 31.
- **UCL:** it considers Section A before an admissions tutor marks the essay. UCL says the essay carries considerable weight and that no Section A score guarantees an offer.
- **LSE:** for most applicants, the essay is not considered. LSE reserves the right to read it for some non-traditional or less familiar qualifications.
- **Bristol:** the current 2027 statement says staff read and assess the essay. Older Bristol statements published a 60% Section A and 40% essay split. The 2027 statement does not restate that numeric formula, so do not present 60/40 as a guaranteed current rule.

2 Try it

Set a practice target as a band with a reason: “I want my final three timed Section A scores to sit at 29–31 because Oxford’s recent shortlisted and offer-holder means were around that region.” That is stronger than “31 guarantees Oxford”, which the data never says.

4 Worked Section A: one mark, four ways to misread

Worked example The target is the claim, not the topic

Passage. A town proposes keeping its library open on Sundays. Supporters point to crowded Saturday sessions and say a seventh day would help shift workers. The extra day would, however, require either a larger budget or shorter hours elsewhere in the week. Before approving the plan, the council should publish who currently uses each opening period. A popular idea is not yet a sensible timetable: the case depends on whether Sunday access reaches people who are presently excluded rather than merely redistributing existing visits.

Question. Which statement best expresses the author's conclusion?

- A. Every public library should always open on Sundays, whatever its current timetable or available budget.
- B. Shift workers already use public libraries more frequently than every other group of local residents.
- C. The council should reject Sunday opening because any increase in operating costs makes the proposal unsound.
- D. The council needs usage evidence before deciding whether Sunday opening broadens access.

Correct: D. The final sentence gives the test the author wants the proposal to pass.

Misreading: Topic substitution, A: Sunday opening is the subject, not the unconditional conclusion.

Misreading: Evidence invention, B: the passage says shift workers may benefit, not that they are heavier users.

Misreading: Position reversal, C: cost creates a trade-off; the author asks for evidence rather than rejection.

That mark is worth exactly one point whether the passage felt easy or horrible. A score target becomes useful only when it changes practice: diagnose which misreading repeats, then remove it under the clock.

5 A target ladder that stays honest

1. **First target: clean coverage.** Finish all 42, leave no blank, and record passages where your reasoning changed after rereading.
2. **Second target: a stable band.** Use the middle three of your last five fresh timed scores. One high score is encouraging; a cluster is evidence.
3. **Third target: university context.** Compare that band with the dated reference for each choice, then add the institution's essay policy.
4. **Final target: no false certainty.** Keep ambitious choices and sensible alternatives. An average is not an admissions forecast.

6 Sources

University of Oxford, Law Admissions Report 2024–25

The 30.9% offer-holder mean and equal shortlisting weight given to contextualised GCSEs, Section A and the essay. [Read the report.](#)

UCL Laws, applying and FAQs

The offer-holder average, absence of a guaranteed score, staged assessment and considerable essay weight. [Read UCL's process.](#)

Official and FOI-derived historic data

[Durham 2022–23](#); [King's 2023–24](#); [LSE 2023–24](#); [Bristol 2020–22](#).

LNAT Consortium, Results and FAQs

No pass mark, Section A out of 42, and university-specific use. [Read the official results page.](#)

UniGenius is independent. Historic outcomes can explain an old cohort; they cannot promise a future decision.