

UCAT Keyboard Shortcuts & Calculator Guide

Every navigation shortcut and calculator trick you need to move faster and save precious seconds in the real exam.

The UCAT is brutally time-pressured — on average you have well under a minute per question. Reaching for the mouse to click 'Next' or open the calculator costs you real seconds, again and again, across 200+ questions. Building muscle memory for these shortcuts now means you're not thinking about navigation on exam day — only the questions in front of you.

Navigation Shortcuts

These work throughout the exam. Almost every shortcut uses **Alt**, so keep a finger resting near it.

Shortcut	What it does
Alt + N	Move to the next question.
Alt + P	Go back to the previous question.
Alt + F	Flag the current question to revisit later, then move on.
A / B / C / D	Select that answer option directly, without clicking with the mouse.
Alt + C	Open (or close) the on-screen calculator . Available in Quantitative Reasoning and Decision Making only.
Num Lock	Activates the number keypad on the right of the keyboard — much faster than the top-row numbers once you're used to it.

Review Screen Shortcuts

At the end of each subtest (or once you've clicked into the review screen), these let you jump straight to the questions that matter most with the time you have left.

Shortcut	What it does
Alt + V	Review only your flagged questions — usually your best use of leftover time.
Alt + I	Review only incomplete questions — anything you skipped without answering.
Alt + A	Review all questions in the subtest. Only use this if you genuinely have time to spare.
Alt + E	End the review and move on to the next subtest.

Tip: never leave a question fully unanswered. If you're unsure, guess and flag it — an unanswered question has zero chance of being right, while a flagged guess still has a chance and you might get back to it.

Using the Calculator's Memory Function

The UCAT calculator is deliberately basic — no brackets, no power/square button, no square root. The memory function is the one feature that makes up for this, and it's worth genuinely practising before exam day rather than meeting it for the first time under time pressure.

Shortcut	What it does
M+ (or type P)	Adds the number currently on screen to memory. If memory already holds a value, this adds the new number on top of it.
M- (or type M)	Subtracts the number currently on screen from whatever is stored in memory.
MRC (or type C)	Recall: press once to pull the stored memory value onto the screen. Press twice in a row to clear the memory completely.
Backspace	Clears everything currently on the calculator display (equivalent to pressing ON/C). This does not touch the memory.

Worked example — using memory for powers

The calculator has no power button, so memory is how you handle anything like 17.8^3 or 4^5 . To calculate 17.8^3 ($17.8 \times 17.8 \times 17.8$):

1. Type **17.8**, then press **M+** — this stores 17.8 in memory.
2. Type **17.8 × MRC × MRC** and press **=**.
3. This effectively runs $17.8 \times 17.8 \times 17.8$, giving you the cubed result.

The same idea works for repeated addition, running totals across multiple sub-questions, or storing an intermediate answer while you work out something else — press M+ once you have a value you'll need again, and MRC to bring it back whenever you need it.

*Important: memory is **not automatically cleared** between questions or when the calculator closes — it carries over. Get into the habit of pressing MRC twice to clear it at the start of a fresh calculation, so you're not accidentally adding a leftover number from a previous question.*

A Few Honest Tips

- Don't open the calculator for sums you can do faster in your head — opening it costs time too. Save it for genuinely multi-step calculations.
- In Google Chrome, Alt + F is a default browser shortcut and can clash with the UCAT's own Flag shortcut. Test your shortcuts in the official Pearson VUE practice tests beforehand so you know what actually works on the day.
- If a shortcut doesn't respond, click once anywhere on the test screen to make sure it's in focus, then try again. Don't waste real exam time troubleshooting — fall back to the mouse and keep moving.
- Practise little and often. Shortcuts only save you time once they're automatic — if you're still thinking about which key to press, you're not saving time yet.