



The Ultimate Guide to
UPSC CSE Preparation

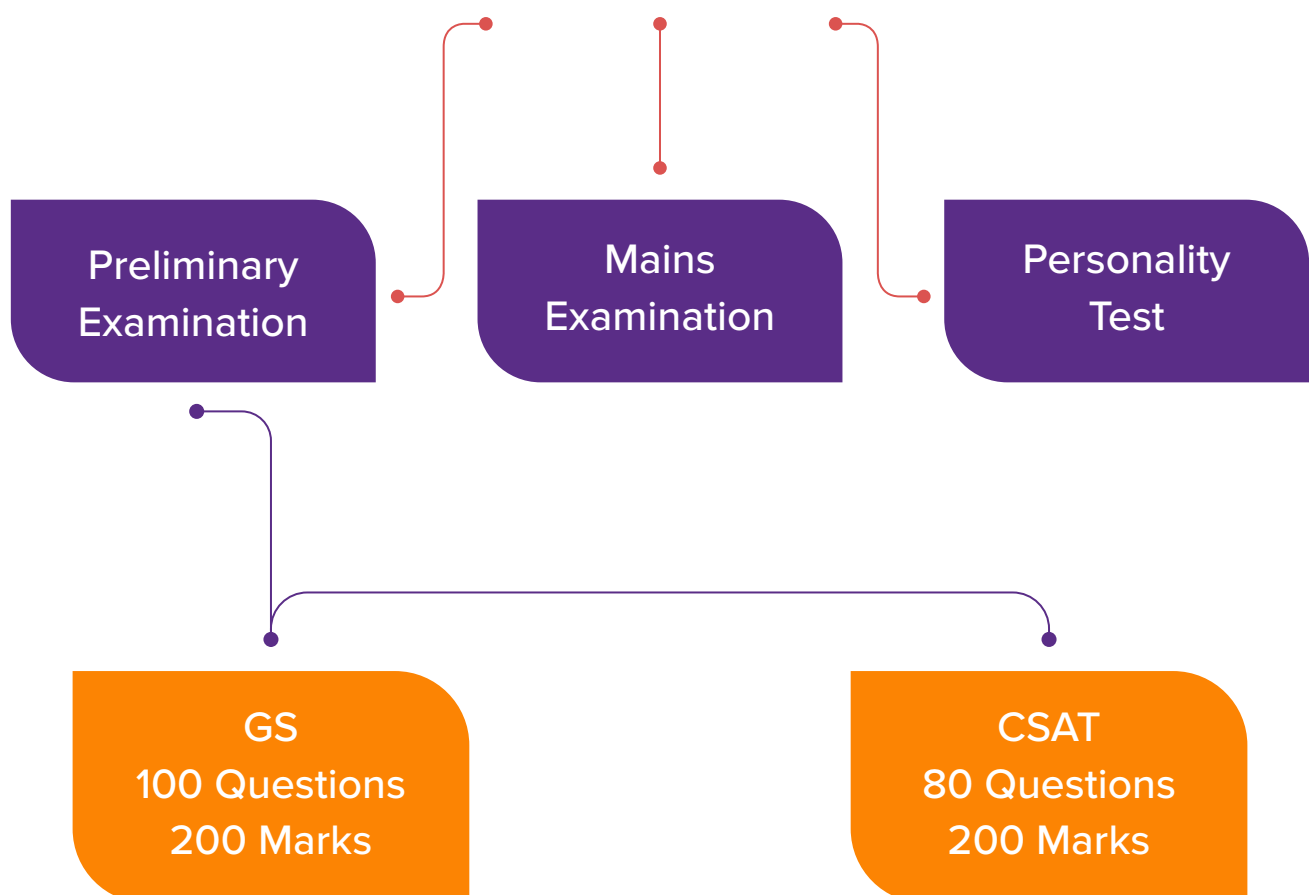
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1. UPSC Exam Guide

The Civil Services Exam is conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) every year. It has three stages.

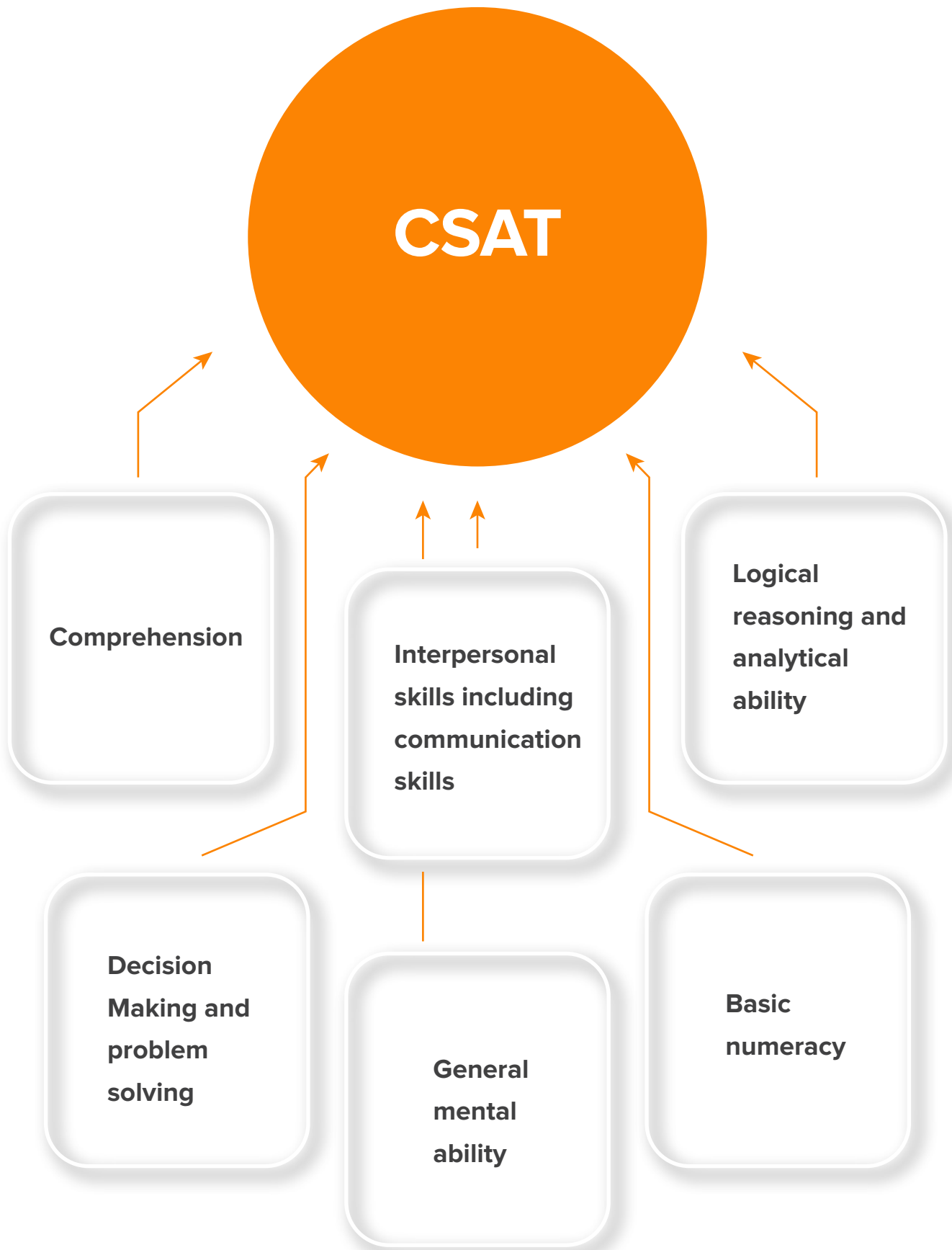
Civil Services Examination



GS

- **Current Affairs** - Current events of national and international importance
- **History** - History of India and Indian National Movement
- **Geography** - Indian and World Geography - Physical, Social, Economic Geography of India and the World
- **Indian Polity & Governance** - Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.
- **Economic & Social Development** - Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.
- **Environment** - General Issues on Environmental Ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change
- **Science** - General Science





Things to note for Prelims examination

1. Questions relating to English Language Comprehension skills of Class X level (last item in the syllabus of CSAT-II) will be tested through passages in English Language only, without providing Hindi translation thereof in the question paper.

2. The questions will be of Multiple Choice and Objective Type.

It is important to note that there is a negative marking for each wrong answer. A wrong answer will attract a penalty of 1/3rd of the marks allotted to that particular question

3. CSAT Paper II has been made qualifying from 2015. A candidate has to score a minimum of 33% of the marks to qualify in this paper. The marks scored in this paper will not be added to the marks scored in GS Paper I to arrive at the cut-off to clear Prelims

4. A candidate must have attained the age of 21 years on 1st August,

of the year he/she is appearing in the Preliminary Examination.

Number of Attempts:

Category	Age Limit	Attempt
General	32	6
OBC	35	9
SC/ST	37	unlimited
Disabled (HP) (General)	42	9
Disabled (HP) (Other category)	42	As per candidates category

5. • An attempt at a Preliminary Examination shall be deemed to be an attempt at the examination
- If a candidate actually appears in any one paper in the Preliminary Examination, he/she shall be deemed to have made an attempt at the examination
 - Notwithstanding the disqualification/ cancellation of candidature, the fact of appearance of the candidate at the examination will count as an attempt

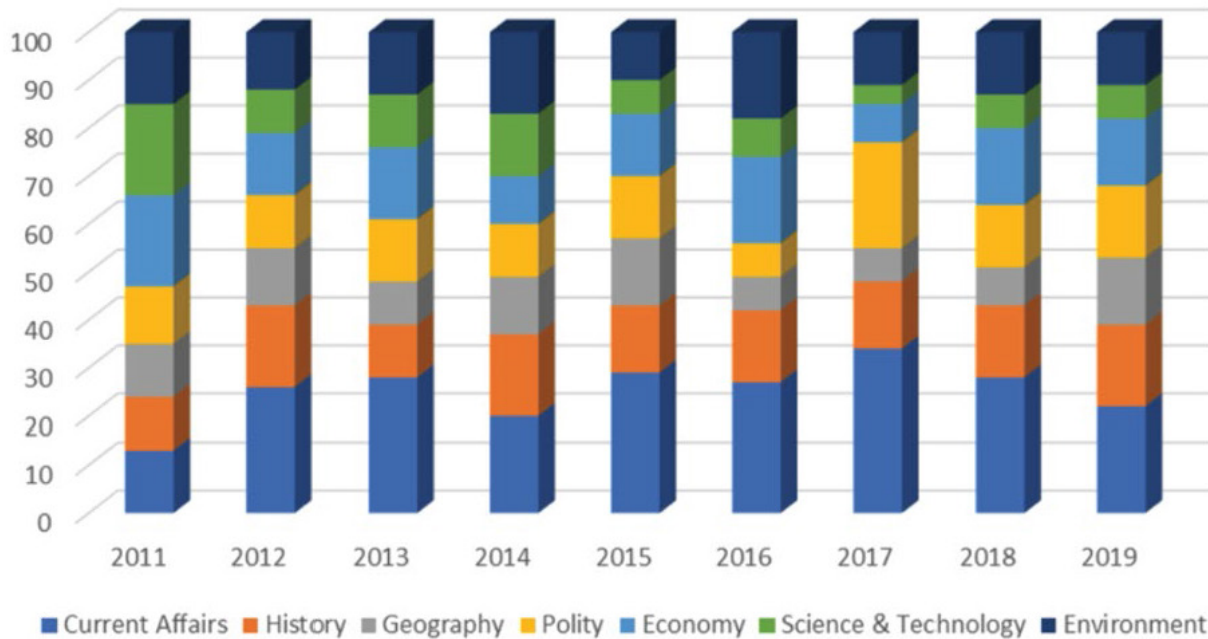
6. Preliminary Examination of the Civil Services Examination shall be held for recruitment to the

Services & Posts mentioned below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Indian Administrative Service (ii) Indian Foreign Service (iii) Indian Police Service (iv) Indian P & T Accounts & Finance Service, Group 'A' (v) Indian Audit and Accounts Service, Group 'A' (vi) Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Central Excise), Group 'A' (vii) Indian Defence Accounts Service, Group 'A' (viii) Indian Revenue Service (IT), Group 'A' (ix) Indian Ordinance Factories Service, Group 'A' (Assistant Works Manager, Administration) (x) Indian Postal Service, Group 'A' (xi) Indian Civil Accounts Service, Group 'A' (xii) Indian Railway Trac Service, Group 'A' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (xiii) Indian Railway Accounts Service, Group 'A' (xiv) Indian Railway Personnel Service (xv) Post of Assistant Security Commissioner in Railway Protection Force, Group 'A' (xvi) Indian Defence Estates Service, Group 'A' (xvii) Indian Information Service (Junior Grade), Group 'A' (xviii) Indian Trade Service, Group 'A' (Gr. III) (xix) Indian Corporate Law Service, Group 'A' (xx) Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Service, Group 'B' (Section Ocer's Grade) (xxi) Delhi, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli Civil Service, Group 'B' (xxii) Delhi, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli Police Service, Group 'B' (xxiii) Pondicherry Civil Service, Group 'B' (xxiv) Pondicherry Police Service, Group 'B' |
|---|--|

2. Subject-wise Weightage

Here is an analysis of the number of questions from each subject in the last nine UPSC Prelims (General Studies I) Exams:

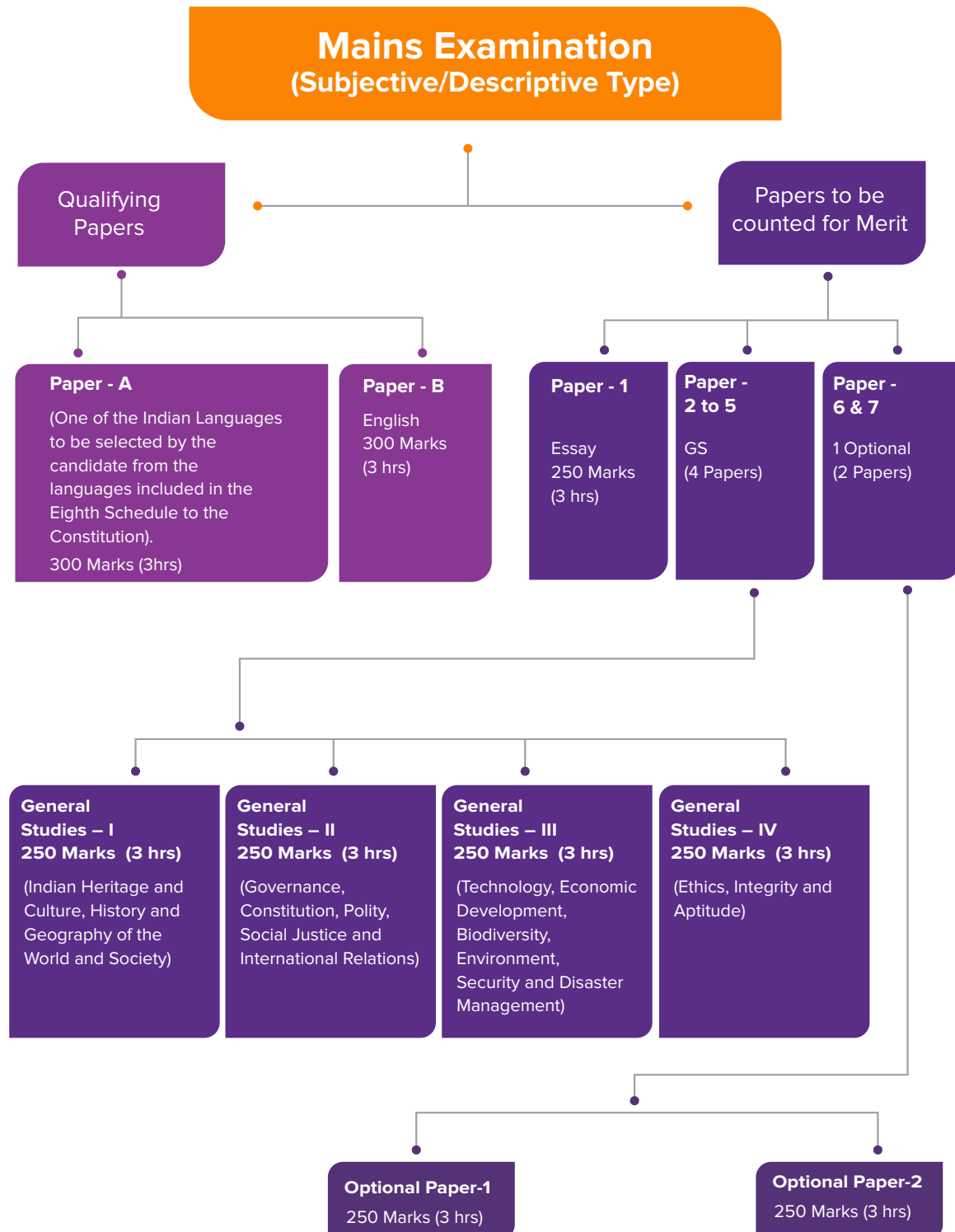


	Current Affairs	History	Geography	Polity	Economy	Science & Technology	Environment
2011	13	11	11	12	19	19	15
2012	26	17	12	11	13	9	12
2013	28	11	9	13	15	11	13
2014	20	17	12	11	10	13	17
2015	29	14	14	13	13	7	10
2016	27	15	7	7	18	8	18
2017	34	14	7	22	8	4	11
2018	28	15	8	13	16	7	13
2019	22	17	14	15	14	7	11

Analysis by BYJU'S IAS

In the past few years, Current Affairs has had the highest weightage in the syllabus of Prelims Examination

3. Mains Examination (Subjective/Descriptive Type)



Mains Exam Syllabus

GS Paper-I

HISTORY

Art & Culture

- Salient Aspects of Art Forms
- Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times
- Ancient & Medieval History

Modern History

- Mid 18th century to present-significant events, Personalities, and Issues
- The Freedom Struggle- its various stages and important contributors/contributions from different parts of the country
- Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country

World History

- The history of the world will

include events from the 18th century such as the industrial revolution, world wars, redrawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization, political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism, etc, their forms and effects on the society

GEOGRAPHY

World & Indian Physical Geography

- Salient Features of the World's Physical Geography
- Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian sub-continent)
- Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India)

Important Geophysical Phenomenon

- Earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, Cyclone, etc.
- Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical flora and fauna and the effects of water-bodies and ice-caps) and in features (including such changes)

GEOGRAPHY

- Salient Feature of Indian Society, Diversity of India

- Role of Women & Women Empowerment
- Population and Associated Issues
- Poverty & Developmental Issues
- Urbanization
- Effects of Globalization on Indian Society
- Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism

GS Paper-II

INDIAN POLITY

- Indian Constitution- historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions, and basic structure
- Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues, and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local

levels, and challenges therein

- Separation of powers between various organs, dispute redressal mechanisms, and institutions
- Comparison of the Indian constitutional scheme with that of other countries
- Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, the conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these

- Structure, organization, and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary, Ministries, and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity
- Salient features of the Representation of People's Act
- Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions, and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies
- Statutory, regulatory, and various quasi-judicial bodies
- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests. Effects of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora
- Important International institutions, agencies and their structure, mandate

Governance

- Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures
- Role of civil services in a democracy

International Relations

- India and its neighborhood relations

Social Justice

- Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections
- Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources

GS Paper-III

ECONOMY

- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment
- Inclusive growth and issues arising from it
- Government Budgeting
- Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints; e-technology in the aid of farmers
- Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices; Public Distribution System objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping; issues of buffer stocks and food security; Technology missions; economics of animal-rearing
- Food processing and related

industries in India- scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management

- Land reforms in India
- Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth
- Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.
- Investment models

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life
- Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology
- Awareness in the fields of IT, space, computers, robotics,

nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights International Relations

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

- Conservation
- Environmental pollution and degradation
- Environmental impact assessment

INTERNAL SECURITY

- Linkages between development and spread of extremism
- Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security

- Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges
- Basics of cyber security; money-laundering and its prevention
- Security challenges and their management in border areas; linkages of organized crime with terrorism
- Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

- Disasters and disaster management

GS Paper-IV

ETHICS, INTEGRITY AND APTITUDE

- **Ethics and Human Interface:** Essence, determinants, and

consequences of Ethics in human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values – lessons from the lives

and teachings of great leaders, reformers, and administrators; the role of family, society, and educational institutions in inculcating values

- **Attitude:** content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behavior; moral and political attitudes; social influence and persuasion
- Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service, integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance, and compassion towards the weaker sections
- Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance
- Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and the world
- **Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration:** Status and problems; ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions; laws, rules, regulations and conscience as

sources of ethical guidance; accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding; corporate governance

- **Probity in Governance:** Concept of public service; Philosophical basis of governance and probity; Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption
- Case Studies on the above issues

List of Optional Subjects

Candidates may choose any optional subject from amongst the list of subjects given below

Group 1

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Agriculture | 14. Management |
| 2. Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Science | 15. Mathematics |
| 3. Anthropology | 16. Mechanical Engineering |
| 4. Botany | 17. Medical Science |
| 5. Chemistry | 18. Philosophy |
| 6. Civil Engineering | 19. Physics |
| 7. Commerce and Accountancy | 20. Political Science and International Relations |
| 8. Economics | 21. Psychology |
| 9. Electrical Engineering | 22. Public Administration |
| 10. Geography | 23. Sociology |
| 11. Geology | 24. Statistics |
| 12. History | 25. Zoology |
| 13. Law | |

Group 2

1. Assamese

2. Bengali

3. Bodo

4. Dogri

5. Gujarati

6. Hindi

7. Kannada

8. Kashmiri

9. Konkani

10. Maithili

11. Malayalam

12. Manipuri

13. Marathi

14. Nepali

15. Oriya

16. Punjabi

17. Sanskrit

18. Santhali

19. Sindhi

20. Tamil

21. Telugu

22. Urdu

23. English

Personality Test (Interview)

1. The candidate who has cleared the Mains examination will be interviewed by a board who will have before them a record of his/her career. He/she will be asked questions on matters of general interest.
2. The objective of the interview is to assess the personal suitability of the candidate for a career in public services by a board of competent and unbiased observers.
3. The test is intended to judge the mental caliber of a candidate. In broad terms, this is really an assessment of not only his/her intellectual qualities but also social traits and his/her interest in current affairs.
4. Some of the qualities to be judged are mental alertness, critical powers of assimilation, clear and logical exposition, the balance of judgment, variety, and depth of interest, the ability for social cohesion and leadership, and intellectual and moral integrity.
5. The technique of the interview is not that of a strict cross-examination but of a natural, well-directed, and purposive conversation which is intended to reveal the mental qualities of the candidate.
6. The interview test is not intended to be a test either of the specialized or general knowledge of the candidates which has already been tested through their written papers.
7. Candidates are expected to have taken an intelligent interest not only in their special subjects of academic study but also in the events which are happening around them both within and outside their own state or country as well as in modern currents of thought and in new discoveries which should arouse the curiosity of well-educated youth

Note:

The interview carries **275 marks**

Grand Total: 2025

Challenges faced by students

1. Vast syllabus

- The syllabus for UPSC CSE is vast
- You never know where to start from
- You may end up spending too much time on a not-so-important topic or too little time on a high-scoring topic
- It's a possibility that by the time you have finished the fifth chapter of a subject, you may not recall the important points of the first chapter

2. Too many resources

- It's very easy to get confused with the plethora of resources available online or offline
- You never know which books are the right ones
- Every author can have a different viewpoint, but it's difficult to choose the books which have

comprehensively covered the subject matter

- You will seldom have to time to read 3-4 books on the same subject just to cover every view point

3. Tough to stay motivated

- It's tough to stay motivated throughout this arduous preparation journey.
- Poor scores in mocks/sectional tests, despite your hard work, can easily bring you down
- Facing difficulty in writing answers in 150-250 words when you have too little or way more content, can be really frustrating
- Not being able to understand why you are fetching low marks for your answers can be really demotivating

Preparation Strategy for IAS Aspirants

Candidates should familiarise themselves with important tips to utilize their time efficiently and study resources that can be used. We are sharing some important points to be kept in mind which, if you follow, will certainly help you in acing the UPSC CSE exam.

1. Prepare a Time Table

The most important factor to achieve success in this competitive exam is time management. The first step toward time control is to put together a timetable for the examination accordingly.

- Prepare a study plan that is straightforward and clean to follow. Do not complicate the agenda with undesirable tasks.
- Include quick breaks for food, rest, and snacks within the timetable.
- Allocate time for every subject matter with a cut-off

time & date to complete reading, taking notes, and analyzing the same

- Reading daily newspaper articles to stay updated on current affairs is a must for any IAS Aspirant
- Create a timetable in a calendar app for vital dates and tasks.
- If you have difficulty following your time-table, you can share the same with your friends and family and they can help you keep track of the same with an objective mindset.

2. Prioritize Your Subjects

- Most of the students begin preparing for the examination by selecting random topics. They do not have a timetable or schedule to be followed. And in the long run, they

become confused about what they have completed and what is yet to be studied.

- Prioritize topics and set timelines in the schedule. Start with small yet achievable goals.
- You need to give proper time to both Prelims and Mains answer writing practice.
- Make a list of the topics that you are weak at and prepare them accordingly

3. Keep Extra Time For Revision

Extra time for revision can help students with their preparation.

- Include time for revising the syllabus. Do check for the topics that might have skimmed through or missed completely.
- Revision can help in remembering information during the exam.
- Take weekly/monthly sectional tests online for better preparation to ensure all the topics are covered.

4. Be consistent in your preparation

- Most of the students are habituated to constantly studying till the final stage of exams. This will only lead to fatigue and unnecessary stress right before the examinations.
- Preparation for CSE is a marathon, not a sprint. You can't cover up if you miss your daily current affairs updates for 10-15 days.
- Be consistent with your preparation schedule and it will start showing results.
- Prepare a stress-free plan on a day-to-day basis and make sure to include quick breaks.

5. Understand the needs of the Exam

- Before beginning your preparation, try to understand how UPSC tests the aspirants in this exam
- UPSC is not just about factual knowledge. It is also about

your ability to present your opinions properly and support them with facts and data during the mains exam and at the interview stage.

- It's critical that throughout your preparation, you should keep this end goal in mind.

6. Do Not Waste Time

Effective time management is the most important factor in cracking competitive exams.

- First and foremost, value and respect time.

- Make sure the time is utilized wisely for the preparation of the exams. As there can be a delay in studying thinking that there is a lot of time and will do it later. But it is not advisable to waste time as it can create a burden with more topics to study at the last moment.
- Do not waste time and work hard for better results.
- Eliminate distractions during the preparation time.

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