

# The format for CUET

The National Testing Agency has announced the format of the Central Universities Entrance Test. What will the papers contain, how many can a candidate take, and how will admissions take place based on CUET?

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APPLICATION FORMS for the Central Universities Entrance Test (CUET) for undergraduate programmes will be open from April 2-30, the National Testing Agency (NTA) of the Ministry of Higher Education has announced.

All admissions to UG courses in central universities will now be through CUET, replacing the class XII scores-based admission system wherever it was being followed. The test will be computer-based, with Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) in each paper.

The NTA has advised candidates to go through details of programmes on offer, and eligibility criteria, on the websites of the universities they wish to apply to. After making their choice, they can visit [cuet.samarth.ac.in](http://cuet.samarth.ac.in) and submit their application forms.

## What will be the format of the test?

The test, based on the NCERT class XII syllabus, will be divided into four broad sections. Sections I-A and I-B will involve papers on languages; Section II will be on core subjects a candidate wishes to pursue; and Section IV will be a general test, only for programmes in certain universities where such a test is required.

## What will the language papers contain?

Sections I-A and I-B will each contain 50 questions, of which an applicant must attempt 40. These papers will test for reading comprehension by setting passages, based on which the candidate will have to answer MCQs.

Section I-A, compulsory for all, will test a candidate in English or an Indian language to be chosen from a basket of 12 — Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Urdu, Assamese, Bengali, Punjabi, and Odia. The duration of this test will be 45 minutes.

Section I-B is for those looking to study foreign languages. The 19 languages on offer in various central universities are French, Spanish, German, Nepali, Persian, Italian, Arabic, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Konkani, Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Manipuri, Santhali, Tibetan, Japanese, Russian and Chinese.

## What are the core subjects in Section II?

Students can pick up to six subjects from a list of 27: Accountancy/ Book Keeping; Biology/ Biological Studies/ Biotechnology/ Biochemistry; Business Studies; Chemistry; Computer Science/ Informatics Practices; Economics/ Business Economics; Engineering



Counselling in Delhi University in 2017. So far, DU admissions were based on Board scores; now, UG admissions will be through CUET across central universities. File

Graphics; Entrepreneurship; Geography/ Geology; History; Home Science; Knowledge Tradition and Practices of India; Legal Studies; Environmental Science; Mathematics; Physical Education/ NCC / Yoga; Physics; Political Science; Psychology; Sociology; Teaching Aptitude; Agriculture; Mass Media/ Mass Communication; Anthropology; Fine Arts/ Visual Arts (Sculpture/ Painting)/ Commercial Arts; Performing Arts — (i) Dance (Kathak/ Bharatnatyam/ Odissi/ Kathakali/ Kuchipudi/ Manipuri); (ii) Drama — Theatre; (iii) Music General (Hindustani/ Carnatic/ Rabindra Sangeet/ Percussion/ Non-Percussion); Sanskrit.

A candidate will have to attempt of 40 out of 50 questions within 45 minutes.

## And what is Section III about?

Section III will be a general test for any undergraduate programme offered by universities where a general test is being used for admission rather than a test on domain subjects. The paper, for which an hour will be given to candidates, has been designed to assess their general knowledge, knowledge of current affairs, general mental ability, and numerical ability. It will also test quantitative reasoning through simple application of basic mathematical concepts of arithmetic/ algebra, geometry/ mensuration taught until class VIII. This paper will have 75 questions, of which 60 will have to be attempted.

## Can a science stream switch to

## humanities through CUET?

Yes, a science stream student can pursue courses in humanities such as BA Political Science or BA History even after CUET. However, the admission procedure may vary from one university to another. Some universities may require a science student to also take a domain test on the humanities subject, while many are likely to admit students based on their CUET scores even if they pick science subjects for the Section II paper.

## How many papers can a student take?

A candidate can take a maximum of nine papers in two different combinations. In one combination, she can pick up to two language papers spread over Section IA and IB; up to six domain subjects; and a general test. In the second combination of a maximum nine papers, a candidate can pick up to three languages; up to five domain subjects; and a general test.

## What if a subject is not among in the 27 domain-specific papers being offered?

In such cases, the candidate may choose the subject closest to their choice. For example, those willing to pursue BSc in Biochemistry may choose Biology. "Generally the languages/ subjects chosen should be the ones that a student has opted for in their latest Class XII Board examination. However, if any University permits any flexibility in this regard, the same can be exercised under CUET (UG)—2022 also. Candidates must carefully refer to the eligi-

bility requirements of various Central Universities in this regard," the NTA says.

## Can a student who has already cleared class XII take this year's CUET?

Yes, if any university permits students of previous years of class XII to take admission in the current year, such students would also be eligible to appear in CUET(UG)—2022.

## How will universities admit students based on the CUET?

The CUET will not rank students, and will just provide scores. There will be negative marking for wrong answers. While marks scored in the class XII Board exam will not be given any weightage, universities have been given the option to use Board exam scores on one count — they can set a minimum score as a requirement. For example, a particular university can say, irrespective of a candidate's score in the CUET, their application for admission will be considered only if they have scored at least 60% in the Board exams. That will vary from university to university and will be optional: not all universities will use Board exam scores as qualifying criteria. These aspects will have to be checked by the candidates with the universities they are applying to.

## Should a student take special coaching?

"All questions in various testing areas will be benchmarked at the level of Class XII only. Students having studied Class XII Board syllabus would be able to do well in CUET (UG)—2022," the NTA notice said.

UGC chairperson M Jagadesh Kumar too has stressed that coaching will not be necessary as the questions in the test will be drawn up based on NCERT syllabus, which is widely accepted across the country. "Board-wise syllabus variations will also be taken into account. These exams are not going to be like the IIT exams. Experts will moderate the difficulty level and questions will be confined to Class XII syllabus alone," Prof Kumar said.

"In the case of the IIT entrances, over a million candidates compete for around 16,000 seats. But in the case of central universities, Delhi University alone has around 70,000 seats and when the other universities (total 45) are taken into account, there will be a couple of lakhs seats. The ratio of seats against applicants will be 1:5 as against 1:50 or 1:60 in the case of IITs. In the case of IITs, tough questions drive people to coaching. But in CUET, the difficulty level of questions will be moderated so that students are comfortable without coaching," he said.