

IAS Selection Procedure

The UPSC conducts the civil services exam every year to recruit officers to the Indian civil services. The civil services exam, commonly called the IAS exam due to the popularity of its most coveted service, is considered one of the toughest nuts to crack among all the selection examinations in the country. In this article, we give you the whole selection procedure of the UPSC CSE.

Pattern of the UPSC CSE

The civil services exam is conducted in three stages, each stage eliminating candidates who couldn't make the cut. Starting with a few lakh candidates at the preliminary stage, just about a thousand candidates are chosen into the service each year.

Stage 1: UPSC Prelims exam

This stage consists of two objective type-papers namely, the General Studies Paper I and the General Studies Paper II.

You can check the syllabus for the two papers by clicking on the link below:

[UPSC Prelims Syllabus PDF](#)

You can clear this stage and move on to the next stage only if you secure the minimum required marks for both the papers.

Minimum required score for GS Paper II (a.k.a CSAT): 33%

Minimum required score for GS Paper I: The cut-off prescribed by the UPSC

In the CSAT paper, you only have to clear it by scoring the minimum required marks; the marks obtained do not count for the rank list for the mains qualifier.

The prelims results are announced generally within two months of the exam. The UPSC releases a list of candidates who have cleared the prelims and qualified to take the UPSC Mains exam, which is the second stage of the IAS exam.

Stage 2: UPSC Mains exam

In this stage, you have to take nine papers all of which are descriptive in nature. The list of papers is given below:

1. Essay paper – 250 marks
2. Compulsory Indian language – 300 marks
3. Compulsory English language – 300 marks
4. General studies paper 1 – 250 marks
5. General studies paper 2 – 250 marks
6. General studies paper 3 – 250 marks
7. General studies paper 4 – 250 marks

8. Optional paper 1 – 250 marks
9. Optional paper 2 – 250 marks

To read in detail about the UPSC mains exam papers and syllabus, click on the link below:

[Syllabus of UPSC Mains Exam](#)

In order to clear the mains exam, you will have to score the required cut-off marks in total. (The cut-off marks prescribed for both the prelims and the mains will be revealed only after the entire process of the UPSC CSE is over, i.e., after the final results are out).

If you clear the mains exam and score the required cut-off, you will be summoned for the UPSC Personality test which is the final stage of the civil services exam.

Stage 3: UPSC Personality Test

In this stage, candidates will be subject to a panel interview by the UPSC board. In this round, candidates will be assessed on various parameters like the overall personality, presence of mind, mental toughness, ability to stay calm under pressure, etc. Basically, they evaluate whether a person is 'civil servant material' or not.

As such, there is no prescribed syllabus for this round. Candidates will have to go prepared on various aspects like current affairs, their subjects of interest, general awareness, social issues and so on.

The final result of the UPSC exam is generally announced a few days after the final day of the personality test.

The UPSC, on an average, selects about 800-1000 candidates every year to the services, out of a few lakhs who take the prelims exam. The candidates, when they apply for the mains exam, have to give their preference of cadre and service. The cadre indicates the places where you would work. Based on the vacancies in each cadre for all the categories, and your rank obtained, you will be allocated a cadre and a service after the final result. Read more about the [new cadre policy of the UPSC here](#).

Candidates should know that the UPSC Prelims exam is the same for those wishing to take the Indian Forest Services also. Hence, while applying for the prelims exam, you can opt for taking the CSE and/or the forest service.

Only online application is entertained for this exam. Read more about [how to apply for the UPSC exam](#).

The civil services is the perfect choice of career for people who are willing to work hard and sincerely for contributing towards the progress of the nation. Not only would the work be challenging and satisfying, it also entails a high prestige in society.

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