

Syllabus for 2011 UPSC Aptitude Test for Prelims

From 2011, UPSC Civil Services Preliminary Test will be on “aptitude for civil services” as well as on “ethical and moral dimension of decision making” under a Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT). Both these objective tests will be common and compulsory for all.

Recommendations of the 10th Administrative Reforms Committee to revamp Civil Services Preliminary Examination

1. The permissible age for appearing in the Civil Services Examination should be 21 to 25 years for general candidates, 21 to 28 years for candidates from OBC and 21 to 29 years for candidates from SC/ST as also for those who are physically challenged.
2. The number of permissible attempts in the Civil Services Examination should be 3, 5, 6 and 6 respectively for general candidates, candidates from OBC, candidates from SC/ST and physically challenged candidates respectively.
3. The present cut-off date for determining the eligibility in terms of age (i.e. 1st of August in the year of the examination) may continue.
4. *Structure of Examination:* Either of the following two models may be adopted for compressing the examination cycle.
 - i. The Preliminary and Main Examinations for the Civil Services Examination would be conducted together on two to three consecutive days. Evaluation of papers for the Main Examination should be done in case of only those candidates who have secured a threshold level of marks in the Preliminary Examination. The personality test would follow thereafter.

OR

 - ii. Based on the results of the Preliminary Examination, candidates eligible for taking the main examination and the personality test would be short listed in accordance with their rankings. Only these short-listed candidates would be eligible for appearing in the Main Examination, which would be conducted within two months of the Preliminary Examination. The short list would be limited to about two to three times of the number of vacancies available. Thus it would be possible to start the Personality Test and the Main Examination almost simultaneously.
5. *Recruitment - Content:*
 - i. The Preliminary Examination should consist of an objective type test having one or two papers on general studies including the Constitution of India, the Indian legal system, Indian economy, polity, history and culture. There should be no optional subjects.
 - ii. The Main Examination should consist of two papers only in the compulsory subjects. These compulsory subjects may include Constitution of India, Indian legal system, Indian economy, polity, history and culture etc. The question papers should be of the conventional descriptive type. Besides, there should be a separate essay paper as a part of the Main Examination.

5. Steps may be taken by DOPT in consultation with the UPSC to finalise the syllabi of compulsory subjects for the both the preliminary and main examination, for the recruitment cycle 2010. This could later on be dovetailed with the recommendation of the "Expert Committee" suggested in Paragraph 5.3.6.

UPSC Chairman D.P. Agrawal's speech on 12.11.2009

Union Public Service Commission in 2002 had forwarded the recommendations on the Alagh Committee Report but no action has been taken by the Govt. on the same. Considering the changes that had taken place during the interregnum, Commission deliberated the issue in their meetings, and as a forward looking organization in improving the quality of candidates for Civil Service, made recommendations for replacing the Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination with a Civil Services Aptitude Test.

The Administrative Reforms Commission in its recommendations has also supported this view. The proposal is under active consideration of the Government. Here, I must express the gratitude of the Commission to five of the Ex. Hon'ble Chairmen for sparing their valuable time and guiding us in formulating the response on the points raised by the Administrative Reforms Commission. Apart from this, another issue, which has been a concern for the Commission, was linkage of UPSC Examinations with Eighth Schedule languages. Commission had been taking up this matter with the Government for a long time and now the Government has come round to Commission's view and has agreed with Commission's recommendation to constitute a single Standing Committee to consider all issues relating to Language Policy for the Commission.

Accordingly, Commission has constituted a High Level Standing Committee to examine the modalities for implementing the recommendations of the Parliamentary Resolution on Official Languages in a manner consistent with the high standards of UPSC without compromising the quality and standards of examinations conducted by the Commission. This Committee will inter alia lay down standards to be met for a language to be eligible for inclusion in the examinations conducted by the UPSC.

The UPSC had told the government two years ago there was a need to test not just the knowledge of aspirants in particular subjects but their aptitude for "a demanding life in the civil services". It had also recommended bringing down the number of attempts a candidate could take.

The existing prelims consist of two papers: the first is on general studies and common to all; candidates can then choose the second paper from a list of 23 Optional subjects. The proposed general studies paper might be tweaked but it is the second paper that will undergo a major change.

A top government official said UPSC chairman Professor D.P. Agrawal has constituted a high-powered committee - under former University Grants Commission vice-chairman Professor S.K. Khanna - to work out the details of the two papers. The committee has been given time till April, 2010-end. Then the UPSC will discuss its recommendations with the government and finalise the content and syllabus of the paper," the official said.
