

The Indian Administrative Service (IAS) is one of the 20-odd services for which candidates are recruited by the UPSC via the Civil Services Exam. However, the CSE exam is commonly referred to as the UPSC IAS exam as well.

## IAS Exam Pattern:

The IAS Exam pattern is:

Stage I: Preliminary Examination (IAS Prelims)

Stage II: Mains Examination (IAS Mains)

Stage III: UPSC Personality Test (IAS Interview)

### Stage I: IAS Exam – UPSC Prelims:

Sl. No.	Name of the Paper	Nature of the Paper	Duration of the Exam	Questions	Marks
1	IAS Exam Paper – I: General Studies	Merit Ranking Nature	2 Hours	100	200 Marks
2	IAS Exam Paper – II: General Studies (CSAT)	Qualifying Nature	2 Hours	80	200 Marks

- The questions in the IAS Exam (Prelims) are of the objective type or Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs)
- There is ‘Negative Marking’ in the IAS Exam for each incorrect answer but only in the Prelims stage. The negative marking for incorrect answers will be 1/3rd (0.66) of the allotted marks of that question.
- The GS Paper II (CSAT) in IAS exam is of qualifying nature and candidates should score a minimum of 33 per cent in this paper to qualify to the next stage of the IAS exam i.e. the Mains.
- Blind candidates are given an extra time of 20 minutes for each paper in the IAS Exam (Prelims).
- It is mandatory for the candidates to appear in both the papers of civil services prelims exam for the evaluation.
- The marks scored by the candidates in the preliminary examination are not counted for the final score. It is only a screening test where candidates not securing the cut-off marks are eliminated.

### Stage II: IAS Exam – UPSC Mains:

The second stage of the IAS Exam is called the Mains Exam, which is a written descriptive examination and comprises 9 papers. The 9 papers in IAS Exam (Mains) are as follows: Paper-A (Compulsory Indian Language); Paper –B (English) which are qualifying in nature, while the other papers like Essay, General Studies Papers I, II, III, and IV, and Optional Papers I and II are considered for the final ranking.

Sl. No.	IAS Exam Paper	Name of the Paper	Nature of the Paper	Duration of the Exam	Marks
1	Paper – A	Compulsory Indian Language	QUALIFYING NATURE	3 Hours	300 Marks
2	Paper – B	English		3 Hours	300 Marks

3	Paper – I	ESSAY	MERIT RANKING NATURE	3 Hours	250 Marks	
4	Paper – II	General Studies I		3 Hours	250 Marks	
5	Paper – III	General Studies II		3 Hours	250 Marks	
6	Paper – IV	General Studies III		3 Hours	250 Marks	
7	Paper – V	General Studies IV		3 Hours	250 Marks	
8	Paper – VI	Optional Paper I		3 Hours	250 Marks	
9	Paper – VII	Optional Paper II		3 Hours	250 Marks	
TOTAL					1750 Marks	
Interview or Personality Test					275 Marks	
GRAND TOTAL					2025 Marks	

**NOTE:**

- The candidates can select their medium of writing the UPSC Civil Services IAS Mains Exam as Hindi or English or any other language listed in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- The Indian Languages included in the IAS exam are as per languages listed in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- The candidates who score above the prescribed cut-off marks in the IAS exam (Mains) will get the summons for the Personality Test (last stage of the IAS exam).
- The final ranking of the candidates is on the basis of the marks obtained by them in the Main Examination and Personality Test/Interview Round of the IAS exam.

**Stage III: IAS Exam – UPSC Interview/Personality Test:**

Candidates who clear the Mains stage of the IAS exam with the required cut-off marks qualify for the final stage of the IAS exam i.e., the Personality Test or Interview round with the UPSC Board Members. The candidates who qualify to the final stage will be sent an e-summon by the Commission for a face-to-face discussion round with the board members. In this round, the board assesses the personality traits of the candidates and questions will be asked on their hobbies, current affairs, general knowledge, situation questions, etc. to evaluate if they are fit for a career in the civil services or not. The UPSC personality test will be held only in the UPSC Bhavan in New Delhi.

**IAS Exam Age Limit and Attempts:**

There are conditions of nationality, age, number of attempts and educational qualification if candidates wish to take the IAS exam. For the general category aspirants, the candidate must be a citizen of India or a PIO, must have a graduate degree, must be between the ages of 21 and 32, and must not have attempted the IAS exam 6 times. But there are certain relaxations and other conditions to the above.

