

UPSC NOTIFIED

*From Notification to Navigation — Strategy, Risk & Edge in the Civil
Services Exam*





UNION PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

EXAMINATION NOTICE No 05/2025-CSP

DATE: 22.01.2025

(LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ONLINE APPLICATIONS: 11.02.2025 of CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION, 2025)

(The Commission's Website: www.upsc.gov.in)

IMPORTANT

1. CANDIDATES TO ENSURE THEIR ELIGIBILITY FOR THE EXAMINATION:

All candidates are requested to carefully read the Rules of Civil Services Examination notified by the Government (Department of Personnel and Training) and this Notice of Examination derived from these Rules. The Candidates applying for the examination should ensure that they fulfill all eligibility conditions for admission to examination. Their admission to all the stages of the examination will be purely **provisional** subject to satisfying the prescribed eligibility conditions. Mere issue of e-Admit Card to the candidate will not imply that his/her candidature has been finally cleared by the Commission. The Commission takes up verification of eligibility conditions with reference to original documents only after the candidate has qualified for Interview/Personality Test.

2. HOW TO APPLY:

Candidates are required to apply online by using the website <http://upsconline.gov.in>. It is essential for the applicant to register himself/herself first at One Time Registration (OTR) platform, available on the

“It’s not just an announcement. It’s the rulebook, the map, and sometimes... the trap.”

The Uncertainty Architecture of UPSC

- Eligibility, attempt limits, and three-stage filtering
- Examples of uncertainty types:
 - Structural (syllabus breadth)
 - Procedural (changing patterns)
 - Competitive (relative scoring)



Absolute vs. Relative Scoring — Why UPSC Feels Different

Absolute scoring	Relative scoring
Target 🎯	Race track 🏁
Fixed pass mark (e.g., 50%)	No fixed cut-off
Compete against the paper	Compete against thousands at once
Outcome depends on your mastery alone	Even 0.33 marks can change your fate

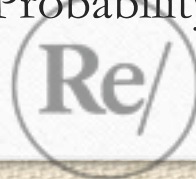
“In UPSC, you don’t just need to be good — you need to be better than others on that very day.”

This shifts focus from only “covering the syllabus” to *leveraging strengths, minimizing losses, and adapting in real time.*



Success

- Success= Talent + Hard work
 - Is it?
- I cleared UPSC in 1st attempt
 - Was I lucky?
- World of Finance
 - Strategy & Risk management
 - Innumeracy by John Allen Paulos: Probability



Luck Vs Probability

- **Luck = Random, Uncontrolled Outcomes**
 - You can't predict or change the odds in any meaningful way.
 - Example: Being born into a certain family, weather on your wedding day, or winning a purely random lottery.
- **Manageable Probability = Controllable Factors + Feedback Loops**
 - You can *measure* the chances.
 - You can *affect* some of the factors.
 - You can *repeat and improve* based on results.
 - Example: Cricket batting average, chess rating, exam performance — all improve with skill, training, and strategy.



Probabilities are Manageable

- **Information** — Research, pattern recognition, and feedback loops help you reduce the “unknown unknowns.”
- **Skill** — Creating repeatable performance.
- **Preparation/Positioning** — Being in the right place at the right time.
- **Adaptability** — Adjusting strategy mid-course.
- **Iterative Tweaks** — Small changes compound. Feedback + adjustment matters
- **Risk Management** — Avoiding irreversible mistakes, survival is the first win.



Prelims

- “This examination is meant to serve as a screening test only.”
 - Prelims is **not designed** to test your full administrative aptitude.
 - It's a Cut-off game.
 - The Prelims is a **zero-sum filter**.
 - It measures basic awareness, **elimination skills**, and mental composure under uncertainty
 - Cut-off prediction is futile.
 - Do not ignore CSAT.



Message

- **Don't attach identity:** Clearing or missing Prelims is not a verdict on your capability or worth. It's a procedural filter, nothing more.
- **Skill over syllabus:** At this stage, the exam isn't asking if you can govern a district; it's asking if you can govern your mind in 120 minutes of uncertainty.
- Importance of **mindset management:** Am I ready for a journey where the first hurdle is designed to keep 90-95%% out, not test my full potential?



Playing the Prelims Screening Game

- **Understand the Rules of the Game:** You're not aiming for mastery; you're aiming to cross a moving cut-off.
- **Build for Threshold, Not Perfection:** Cover the breadth of the syllabus but focus on *high-probability zones*: recurring themes, static + current overlap, elimination-friendly facts.
- **Develop a Probability Mindset:** Learn partial information play: if you can eliminate 2 options, a calculated guess is statistically favorable.
- **Train Psychological Resilience:** Simulate the exam environment
- **Know When to Walk Away:** The Prelims is the most ruthless reality check in the UPSC process



	Case Scenario	Options Eliminated	Your Odds	Best Strategy	EV (per guess)
1	You know answer for sure	0 or 3	100%	Answer	+1
2	Know nothing at all	0	25%	Skip	~0
3	Eliminate 1 option	1	33.3%	Guess	+0.01
4	Eliminate 2 options	2	50%	Guess	+0.335
5	Know question, not options	0	~30%	Cautious guess	-0.69
6	Know question + some options	1-3	~40-60%	Guess	+0.2 to +0.48

Re/

Mains: A Conventional Essay Type exam

- **A human evaluator** is now at the center not OMR sheet
 - It's not just what you know, but how you **reason, balance, and structure** under ambiguity.
 - A “generic, safe, balanced” answer style i.e. **institutionally aligned**: neutral tone, evidence-based reasoning, multi-perspective framing.
- **Essay Type vs. Short Notes:**
 - They want **flow**, not just facts. They want coherence across paragraphs, not bullet-point data dumps.
 - A **mini-thesis** or central argument in every answer.
 - **Introduction–Body–Conclusion** structure, even in GS.



- **“Conventional” = Classical Answering Tradition**

- Learn the *civil service voice*: neutral, reasoned, formal yet human.
- You are being tested on *administrative writing culture*.

- **The Physical and Mental Marathon:**

- pen-and-paper, 3-hour, handwritten marathons
- Stamina, speed, handwriting, and structuring under fatigue are part of the test.

- **It’s as much a *thinking test* as a *writing test*:**

- The merit they seek isn’t only knowledge. It’s the ability to process ambiguity, structure thought, and communicate like a public administrator under pressure.



The ReSchoolEd Takeaway

- Start writing answers now; don't wait until “syllabus is over.”
- Practice the civil service voice: neutral, balanced, structured.
- Simulate full-length, hand-written papers to build endurance.
- Shift mental mode from “information retrieval” (Prelims) to “information synthesis” (Mains).
- Respect the *manual (handwritten), human, old-school* nature of the exam.



Interview/ PT

- “Assess the personal suitability of the candidate for a career in public service.”
 - This is not just testing *knowledge* but *fit*. UPSC is saying: “*We are looking beyond answers — we are looking at who you are becoming.*”
 - UPSC is explicitly asking: **Are you attuned to the realities of a public career, with all its pressures, dilemmas, and responsibilities?**
 - It de-centers technical brilliance and re-centers **clarity of thought, value alignment, and human engagement.**



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- “Assessment of not only intellectual qualities but also social traits and interest in current affairs.”
 - This reflects the **public-facing nature** of administration — the ability to build trust, negotiate, and integrate perspectives.
 - The shift from “memory-based” preparation to “mental models-based” engagement becomes critical here.
 - Your preparation must include social calibration: learning to listen, holding multiple viewpoints, and showing empathy without losing policy objectivity.



- “**Natural, though directed and purposive conversation.**”

- UPSC signals: this is *not* a debate, not a quiz, not a courtroom cross-examination.
- What’s being tested is not compliance, but your *clarity of conviction*.
- Practicing “**directed conversations**” during preparation builds this muscle.
- *It is about* conversational rhythm — where you must **listen, process, and respond with poise**.



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- **“Not intended to be a test of either specialized or general knowledge... already tested through written papers.”**
 - This is UPSC’s way of saying: “Stop cramming facts for the interview. We’re looking for how you think, not what you remember.”
 - Shift focus from “content-loading” to “mind-shaping” in the final months.



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- **“Ability for social cohesion and leadership, intellectual and moral integrity.”**
 - UPSC is essentially asking: “Can you be a bridge?” between competing interests, between policy and people, between system and society.
 - **“Modern currents of thought” and “new discoveries”**
 - This is where preparation becomes *world-oriented*, & look for **intelligent curiosity**.
 - UPSC expects you to *transcend the syllabus* and be alive to the changing world.



ReSchoolEd Insight

- The UPSC interview is less about proving you are “**brilliant**” and more about showing you are “**balanced**.” It’s not a viva; it’s a mirror. What you bring into that room isn’t just knowledge but the sum of your mental habits, your cultural calibration, and your **evolving public self**.
- Prepare as much for *conversation quality* as for content.
- Develop reflective habits: journal on dilemmas, discuss current affairs as policy questions
- Build “directed curiosity”- form genuine interest in society
- Practice neutral articulation- neither overconfident nor evasive, but calmly reasoned.



Notification Summary

- UPSC is a **multi-layered** marathon, not a single decisive exam.
- UPSC is not a neutral tool. It creates the kind of minds it tests for.
- The uncertainty architecture might produce **survivors and adapters**—but it also filters out original thinkers, community builders, and systemic innovators.
- UPSC sits between **myth and mechanism**:
 - *Myth*: It produces the “best minds for India.”
 - *Mechanism*: It produces those who can survive a highly uncertain, procedural game.



Risk, Edge, and Strategy

- Risk: Repeat failure, Time waste
- Edge: Self-Reflection is the key
- Strategy: Enlarge your basket of exams, Plan B, Time stop

“Don’t just get notified. Get prepared to navigate.”



ReSchoolEd Academy

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Dr. Mithun Bhoyar

Radiologist & UPSC 2014 Ranker

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