

CSIR-UGC NET — Life Sciences Exam Guide

Joint CSIR-UGC NET for JRF & Lectureship/Assistant Professor | Life Sciences

About the Exam

The CSIR-UGC NET (National Eligibility Test) is a national-level computer-based test conducted by the **National Testing Agency (NTA)** on behalf of CSIR-HRDG. It determines eligibility for the award of **Junior Research Fellowship (JRF)** and for **Lectureship / Assistant Professor**, and is widely used for PhD admission. The **Life Sciences** paper is one of five science subjects (the others being Chemical, Earth, Mathematical and Physical Sciences). The exam is normally held twice a year (June and December).

Eligibility

- **Qualification:** M.Sc. or equivalent (e.g., BS-MS, integrated BS-MS, M.Tech, MBBS, BE/B.Tech) in a relevant area, with at least 55% marks (50% for SC/ST/PwD/Third-gender).
- **Appearing candidates:** Final-year / result-awaited students may apply (provisional).
- **Age limit (JRF):** Typically 28 years (with the usual 5-year relaxation for SC/ST/PwD/women, 3 years for OBC). No upper age limit for Lectureship/Assistant Professor. Confirm the exact cut-off in the current notification.

Exam Pattern

Single paper, computer-based (CBT), 3 hours, maximum 200 marks. There is a single Life Sciences question booklet split into three parts; candidates attempt a fixed number of questions from each part.

Part	Content	Questions / to attempt	Marks each	Section marks
Part A	General Aptitude (reasoning, numerical, research aptitude)	20 / 15	2	30
Part B	Subject MCQs (Life Sciences syllabus)	50 / 35	2	70
Part C	Higher-order / analytical & application questions	75 / 25	4	100

Negative marking: 25% of the marks for each wrong answer — i.e. -0.5 in Parts A & B and -1 in Part C. Unattempted questions score 0. If a candidate attempts more than the required number, only the first valid set is evaluated.

Note: NTA/CSIR finalise the exact scheme in the Information Bulletin each cycle. Confirm before the exam.

Syllabus at a Glance (13 Units)

The Life Sciences syllabus has 13 units; candidates typically focus on 9–10 based on their background. A detailed breakdown is in the companion file in 02_Complete_Syllabus.

- 1. Molecules & their Interaction Relevant to Biology
- 2. Cellular Organization
- 3. Fundamental Processes
- 4. Cell Communication & Cell Signaling
- 5. Developmental Biology
- 6. System Physiology – Plant
- 7. System Physiology – Animal
- 8. Inheritance Biology
- 9. Diversity of Life Forms
- 10. Ecological Principles
- 11. Evolution & Behaviour
- 12. Applied Biology
- 13. Methods in Biology

Key Dates

CSIR-UGC NET is conducted twice a year (commonly June and December cycles). Notification, registration, admit card and exam dates are released by NTA for each cycle.

Official Links

- NTA CSIR-UGC NET portal: <https://csirnet.nta.ac.in>
- CSIR-HRDG (syllabus & schemes): <https://csirhrdg.res.in>
- NTA website: <https://www.nta.ac.in>

Disclaimer: Compiled for study reference. Exam pattern, marking, eligibility and dates are set by the conducting body and change every cycle. Verify all details against the official Information Bulletin / notification before relying on them.