CUET Exam Pattern 2026

National Testing Agency (NTA)

August 2025

Overview of CUET UG 2026 Exam Pattern

The Common University Entrance Test (CUET) UG 2026, conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), is a national-level entrance exam for admission to undergraduate programs across over 200 participating universities in India, including central, state, private, and deemed universities. The exam is designed to provide a standardized and fair evaluation process for students from diverse academic backgrounds. The CUET UG 2026 exam will be conducted in **Computer-Based Test (CBT)** mode, featuring **multiple-choice questions (MCQs)** across all sections. Below is a detailed breakdown of the exam pattern, including sections, subjects, marking scheme, and duration.

Exam Structure

The CUET UG 2026 exam is divided into **three main sections**:

1. **Section I: Language Test**

2. **Section II: Domain-Specific Subjects**

3. **Section III: General Aptitude Test (GAT)**

Candidates can select a maximum of **five subjects** across these sections, which must include at least **one language paper**. The exam is conducted in **multiple shifts** over several days, depending on the number of candidates and subject combinations. Each subject paper consists of **50 MCQs**, with a uniform duration of **60 minutes**.

Section-Wise Details

Section I: Language Test

- **Purpose**: Assesses proficiency in the chosen language through reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar.

- **Languages Offered**: 13 languages, including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Gujarati, Odia, Bengali, Assamese, Punjabi, English, Hindi, and Urdu.

- **Number of Questions**: 50 MCQs per language paper.

- **Duration**: 60 minutes per language paper.

- **Medium**: The question paper is available in the chosen language (except for linguistics, which is in English) and English/Hindi as selected during registration.

- **Choice**: Candidates can choose up to **two languages**.

Section II: Domain-Specific Subjects

- **Purpose**: Tests knowledge based on the NCERT Class 12 syllabus for the chosen subject.

- **Subjects Offered**: 23 domain-specific subjects, including Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, Accountancy, Economics, History, Political Science, Business Studies, and others. Note: Subjects like Entrepreneurship, Teaching Aptitude, Fashion Studies, Tourism, Legal Studies, and Engineering Graphics have been discontinued, and admissions for these programs will be based on the General Aptitude Test score.

- **Number of Questions**: 50 MCQs per subject.

- **Duration**: 60 minutes per subject.

- **Choice**: Candidates can choose up to **four domain-specific subjects**, irrespective of their Class 12 subjects, but must align with the university's eligibility requirements.

Section III: General Aptitude Test (GAT)

- **Purpose**: Evaluates general knowledge, current affairs, mental ability, numerical ability, and logical reasoning.

- **Topics Covered**:

    - General Knowledge (including current affairs)
    - General Mental Ability
    - Numerical Ability (basic mathematics up to Class 8 level)
    - Quantitative Reasoning (arithmetic, algebra, geometry, mensuration, statistics)
    - Logical and Analytical Reasoning

- **Number of Questions**: 50 MCQs.

- **Duration**: 60 minutes.

- **Choice**: Optional, depending on the requirements of the chosen university or program.

Marking Scheme

The marking scheme for CUET UG 2026 is consistent across all sections:

- **Correct Answer**: +5 marks

- **Incorrect Answer**: -1 mark (negative marking)

- **Unanswered Questions**: 0 marks

- **Multiple Correct Options**: If more than one option is correct, candidates who mark any correct option will receive +5 marks.

- **All Options Correct**: All candidates who attempt the question will receive +5 marks.

- **Incorrect Question**: If a question is found to be incorrect, candidates who attempted it will receive +5 marks.

The **total marks per subject** are **250** (50 questions Œ 5 marks). The overall marks for a candidate depend on the number of subjects chosen (ranging from 750 to 1250 for 3 to 5 subjects).

Exam Slots and Duration

- The exam is conducted in **multiple slots** (23 slots per day) across multiple days, depending on the number of candidates and subject combinations.

- **Slot 1** (Morning): Up to 4 tests, 120 minutes total.

- **Slot 2** (Afternoon): Up to 5 tests, 120180 minutes total, depending on subject combinations.

- **Compensatory Time for PwBD Candidates**: An additional 20 minutes per hour of examination is provided for candidates eligible for a scribe.

Subject Selection and University Requirements

- Candidates must carefully select subjects based on the eligibility criteria of their desired university and program. Each university may have specific requirements for language, domain subjects, and the General Aptitude Test.

- A maximum of **five subjects** can be chosen, typically including:
  - One or two languages from Section I.
  - Up to four domain-specific subjects from Section II.
  - General Aptitude Test (Section III, if required by the university).

- Candidates should refer to the official university brochures to ensure their subject choices align with the admission criteria.

Key Changes in CUET 2026

- **Reduced Subject Options**: The total number of subjects has been reduced to 37 (13 languages, 23 domain subjects, and 1 General Test) from 63 in previous years.

- **Discontinued Subjects**: Admissions for programs like Entrepreneurship, Teaching Aptitude, Fashion Studies, Tourism, Legal Studies, and Engineering Graphics will now be based on the General Aptitude Test score.

- **Uniform Duration**: All subject papers have a standardized duration of 60 minutes.

- **Computer-Based Mode**: The exam will be conducted exclusively in CBT mode, discontinuing the hybrid (online/offline) format used in previous years.