

UGC NET Syllabus 2026

University Grants Commission / National Testing Agency — University Grants Commission — National Eligibility Test

Vacancies	Not post-specific — UGC NET determines eligibility for Assistant Professor and, separately, Junior Research Fellowship (JRF), not a direct-vacancy recruitment exam
Age Limit	JRF: up to 30 years (relaxation for reserved categories); no upper age limit for Assistant Professor-only eligibility
Qualification	Master's degree (or equivalent) in the relevant subject with a minimum 55% aggregate (50% for SC/ST/OBC-NCL/PwBD categories) from a recognised university; final-year students may apply provisionally
Application Fee	As specified in the current NTA notification (category-dependent, typically in the ₹650–₹1,150 range)
Official Website	ugcnet.nta.nic.in
Last Reviewed	13 Jul 2026

Overview

UGC NET is the national-level eligibility test administered by NTA on behalf of the University Grants Commission, determining eligibility for Assistant Professor positions at Indian universities and colleges, and separately for Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) funding for candidates pursuing a PhD. Conducted across a wide range of subjects spanning humanities, social sciences, commerce, computer science and more, it's held in a single day per session across two papers — a common Paper I testing general teaching/research aptitude, and a subject-specific Paper II testing postgraduate-level content in the candidate's chosen discipline.

What's New in the 2026 Cycle

- Both papers are conducted in a single session on exam day, unlike some other NET-style exams with separately-scheduled papers.
- JRF eligibility and Assistant Professor eligibility are assessed together from the same exam, with JRF requiring a comparatively higher cut-off within the applicable age limit.
- Covers a very wide range of subjects — over 80 — spanning humanities, social sciences, commerce, computer science, and more, unlike CSIR NET's narrower five-discipline science focus.
- UGC NET scores are also increasingly used by some universities for direct PhD admission eligibility, in addition to their traditional teaching/JRF purposes.

Exam Pattern

Paper I (General Paper on Teaching & Research Aptitude)

Mode: Online, computer-based objective MCQ | Duration: 1 hour (as part of the combined 3-hour session)

Section	Questions	Marks
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Teaching Aptitude, Research Aptitude, Reading Comprehension, Communication, Reasoning	50	100	Logical Reasoning, Data Interpretation
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Negative marking: No negative marking | **Nature:** Merit-determining, combined with Paper II score.

Paper II (Subject-Specific)

Mode: Online, computer-based objective MCQ | Duration: 2 hours (as part of the combined 3-hour session)

Section	Questions	Marks
Postgraduate-level content in the candidate's chosen subject (over 80 subjects offered)	100	200

Negative marking: No negative marking | **Nature:** Merit-determining for both JRF and Assistant Professor eligibility, based on subject-wise and category-wise cut-offs.

UGC NET — Detailed Subject-Wise Syllabus

Paper I — Teaching & Research Aptitude

Shared preparation across all UGC NET aspirants regardless of subject — build this foundation early.

- Teaching aptitude — objectives, methods, learner characteristics
- Research aptitude — meaning, types, methods, thesis/paper writing
- Reading comprehension
- Communication — types, barriers, effective communication
- Mathematical & logical reasoning
- Data interpretation
- Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
- People, development & environment
- Higher education system — governance, polity & administration

Paper II — Subject-Specific (over 80 subjects offered)

Genuine postgraduate-level depth is rewarded — revise your Master's coursework systematically rather than relying only on exam guides.

- Postgraduate-level content specific to the candidate's chosen subject (e.g. English, History, Political Science, Commerce, Computer Science, Economics, Sociology, and many others)
- Refer to UGC/NTA's official subject-wise syllabus for the exact unit-wise breakdown of your chosen discipline

Selection Process

- 1 Single-session exam combining Paper I and Paper II.
- 2 Merit determined by subject-wise and category-wise cut-offs, separately calculated for JRF and Assistant Professor-only eligibility.
- 3 JRF-qualified candidates receive fellowship funding for PhD pursuit (subject to separate admission); Assistant Professor-qualified candidates become eligible to apply for teaching positions.

Salary & Job Profile

UGC NET itself carries no direct salary. JRF awardees receive a fellowship stipend (typically in the **₹37,000–₹42,000** per month range for the initial period, rising for the Senior Research Fellowship phase), while Assistant Professor-qualified candidates' pay depends on the specific institution and position they're eventually hired into, generally starting around Pay Level 10 equivalent in government-aided institutions.

Best Books for Preparation

- UGC NET Paper I — Teaching & Research Aptitude guide (Arihant/Trueman's)
- Subject-specific postgraduate-level standard textbooks for your chosen Paper II subject
- UGC NET Previous Year Solved Papers — subject-wise, various publishers
- NTA's official UGC NET syllabus PDF for your specific subject

Previous Cut-off Trends (Approximate)

UGC NET cut-offs vary significantly by subject, category and cycle, with JRF cut-offs typically set higher than Assistant Professor-only cut-offs within the same subject. Always check the official subject-wise and category-wise cut-off release for the specific cycle.

Preparation Tips

- Paper I's syllabus is common regardless of your subject — build this foundation early since it's shared preparation across all UGC NET aspirants.

- Since there's no negative marking, attempt every question in both papers rather than leaving any blank.
- Revise your Master's-level coursework systematically for Paper II, since genuine subject depth is rewarded over superficial exam-guide content.
- Practise previous years' subject-specific papers to understand your discipline's particular question style and difficulty calibration.

Exam Day Guidelines

- Carry the Admit Card and a valid original photo ID to the exam centre.
- No electronic devices are allowed inside the exam hall.
- Arrive well before reporting time for biometric verification, given the single combined session.
- Manage your time carefully across both papers within the single session, since there's no separate break between Paper I and Paper II.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between UGC NET and CSIR NET?

UGC NET covers a much broader range of over 80 subjects spanning humanities, social sciences, commerce and more, while CSIR NET is limited to five core science disciplines — candidates should apply for whichever exam matches their specific postgraduate subject.

Is there negative marking in UGC NET?

No, there is no negative marking in either Paper I or Paper II.

Are Paper I and Paper II conducted separately?

No, both papers are conducted together within a single combined exam session on the same day.

Does UGC NET qualify me for a PhD directly?

Not automatically — a JRF-qualifying score makes you eligible for fellowship funding, but you must still separately secure PhD admission at a recognised institution; some universities also accept UGC NET (even without JRF) as a standalone PhD eligibility criterion, depending on their specific admission policy.