

UPSC Civil Services Examination: A Guide for Law Graduates

UPSC Examinations · Civil Services Examination (CSE)

About the Examination

The Civil Services Examination (CSE), conducted annually by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), recruits officers for the IAS, IPS, IFS and other Central Civil Services. Law graduates are eligible to appear and often choose Law as an optional subject in the Mains examination.

Examination Stages

Stage	Nature
Preliminary Examination	Two objective papers — General Studies I (counts for merit) and CSAT (qualifying, 33% required)
Main Examination	Nine descriptive papers, including an optional subject (Law is a popular choice for law graduates)
Personality Test (Interview)	Final stage before the merit list is prepared

Eligibility (Standing Criteria)

- Must hold a degree from a recognised university (a law degree qualifies).
- Age: generally 21–32 years for the General category, with relaxations for reserved categories as per extant rules.
- Limited number of attempts, varying by category.

Why Law Graduates Often Choose the Law Optional

The Law optional draws heavily on subjects covered in an LL.B. curriculum — Constitutional Law, Law of Torts, Contract, Criminal Law, and International Law — giving law graduates a natural advantage in scoring well without needing to learn an entirely new subject from scratch.

Dates, fees and vacancy numbers change every recruitment cycle. This guide covers the standing eligibility and exam pattern — always cross-check the current year's details on the official notification before applying.