

CDS 2027 Eligibility, Age Limit and Educational Qualification Explained

The **Combined Defence Services (CDS) Examination 2027** is one of the most popular defence entrance examinations for graduates who dream of joining the Indian Armed Forces as officers. However, before starting preparation, every aspirant should understand the **CDS 2027 eligibility criteria, age limit, educational qualification, gender requirements and marital-status conditions**.

Whether you are preparing through self-study or looking for the **best CDS coaching in Kerala**, knowing the eligibility requirements is the first step towards a successful preparation journey.

CDS 2027 Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for CDS depend on the academy you are applying for:

- Indian Military Academy (IMA)
- Indian Naval Academy (INA)
- Air Force Academy (AFA)
- Officers' Training Academy (OTA)

Each academy has different requirements regarding **age, educational qualification and other conditions**.

CDS 2027 Age Limit

The age limit varies according to the academy.

Academy	Age Limit
IMA	19-24 years
INA	19-24 years
AFA	20-24 years
OTA	19-25 years
AFA with valid CPL	Up to 26 years

The exact **date-of-birth range** will be specified in the official CDS 2027 notification. Candidates should always check the notification applicable to the particular examination before submitting the application.

IMA - Indian Military Academy

Candidates applying for IMA generally need to be within the **19-24 years** age range and satisfy the applicable marital-status and other conditions.

INA - Indian Naval Academy

The usual age requirement for INA is **19-24 years**. Candidates must also meet the specific educational qualification required for the Naval Academy.

AFA - Air Force Academy

The standard age limit for AFA is **20-24 years**.

Candidates holding a valid and current **Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) issued by DGCA** may be eligible for relaxation up to **26 years**, subject to the applicable conditions.

OTA - Officers' Training Academy

For OTA, the usual age range is **19-25 years**. The eligibility rules differ for the men's and women's OTA courses, so candidates should carefully check the relevant notification.

CDS 2027 Educational Qualification

Educational qualification is one of the most important parts of CDS eligibility.

IMA Educational Qualification

Candidates applying for the **Indian Military Academy** should have a **degree from a recognized university or an equivalent qualification**.

Candidates from different graduation streams can generally apply, subject to fulfilling the other eligibility requirements.

INA Educational Qualification

For the **Indian Naval Academy**, candidates are required to have an **Engineering degree** from a recognized university or institution.

Therefore, candidates with a non-engineering graduation degree generally cannot apply for the INA entry.

AFA Educational Qualification

For the **Air Force Academy**, candidates should have:

- A recognized university degree with **Physics and Mathematics at the 10+2 level**, or
- A **Bachelor of Engineering (B.E.)/Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech.)** degree.

Therefore, students targeting AFA should check their Class 12 subjects carefully before applying.

OTA Educational Qualification

For **Officers' Training Academy**, candidates generally need a **degree from a recognized university or equivalent qualification**.

This makes OTA an option for graduates from various academic backgrounds, subject to the remaining eligibility conditions.

Can Final-Year Students Apply for CDS 2027?

Yes, final-year or final-semester students may be eligible to apply, provided they satisfy the conditions mentioned in the official notification.

Candidates must be able to produce the required proof of passing the degree examination within the prescribed deadline.

Students should therefore avoid waiting until graduation is completely finished before checking CDS opportunities.

CDS 2027 Gender Eligibility

Gender eligibility varies according to the academy and course.

- **IMA:** Male candidates
- **INA:** Male candidates
- **AFA through CDS:** Male candidates under the applicable CDS entry
- **OTA:** Separate courses are available for eligible men and women

Candidates should carefully check the particular CDS notification because gender, course and marital-status conditions can vary between entries.

Marital Status Requirements

Marital-status conditions are also important.

For several CDS entries, candidates are required to be unmarried at the time specified in the notification. AFA also has specific conditions related to age and marital status.

Candidates should never assume that meeting the age and educational requirements alone is sufficient. **Marital status and other conditions must also be checked before applying.**

Nationality Requirements

Candidates must satisfy the nationality conditions specified by UPSC for CDS recruitment. These conditions can include Indian citizenship as well as provisions applicable to certain other categories mentioned in the official notification.

Aspirants should verify the nationality requirements before completing the application.

CDS Eligibility for Graduates from Different Streams

One of the major advantages of CDS is that candidates from many graduation backgrounds can apply for certain academies.

For example, graduates from streams such as:

- B.Com
- B.A.
- B.Sc.
- BBA
- BCA
- Other recognized degree programmes

can generally be eligible for **IMA or OTA**, provided they satisfy the applicable requirements.

However, **INA requires an Engineering degree**, while **AFA has specific Physics and Mathematics requirements at 10+2 level or an engineering qualification.**

Documents Candidates Should Keep Ready

Candidates should keep important documents prepared, including:

- Class 10 certificate for date of birth
- Class 12 certificate
- Graduation certificate/marksheets
- Engineering certificate where applicable
- Valid identification documents
- Other documents specified in the UPSC notification

The date of birth entered in the application should match the accepted official educational record.

How Eligibility Knowledge Helps Your CDS Preparation

Understanding eligibility before preparation helps you select the correct academy and avoid spending time preparing for an entry for which you may not qualify.

Once eligibility is confirmed, candidates can focus on:

Syllabus → Concept Building → Previous-Year Questions → Mock Tests → Revision → SSB Preparation

For aspirants searching for the **best CDS coaching in Kerala**, a good coaching programme should help students understand the examination pattern, academy requirements, subject strategy and complete selection process.

Final Thoughts

CDS 2027 offers graduates an opportunity to pursue a career as an officer in the Indian Armed Forces. However, eligibility differs between **IMA, INA, AFA and OTA**, particularly in terms of age and educational qualification.

Before applying, carefully verify:

- Your age
- Date of birth
- Graduation qualification
- Engineering requirement for INA
- Physics and Mathematics requirement for AFA
- Gender eligibility
- Marital-status conditions
- Final-year eligibility
- Nationality requirements

Once you confirm your eligibility, start your preparation with a structured study plan and regular mock tests. Choosing the **best CDS coaching in Kerala** can further help you prepare systematically for the written examination and SSB stage.

Frequently Asked Questions - CDS 2027 Eligibility

1. What is the age limit for CDS 2027?

The usual age limits are **19-24 years for IMA and INA, 20-24 years for AFA and 19-25 years for OTA**. The exact date-of-birth criteria will be given in the official

notification.

2. Can B.Com graduates apply for CDS?

Yes. B.Com graduates can generally apply for eligible entries such as IMA and OTA, provided they satisfy all other requirements.

3. Is Engineering compulsory for CDS?

No. Engineering is specifically required for the **INA entry**. Other entries have different educational requirements.

4. Can final-year students apply for CDS 2027?

Yes, eligible final-year/final-semester students can apply subject to the conditions and document-submission deadlines specified in the official notification.

5. What qualification is required for AFA through CDS?

Candidates generally need a recognized degree with **Physics and Mathematics at 10+2 level**, or a B.E./B.Tech qualification, along with the applicable age and other requirements.

6. What is the age limit for OTA?

The usual age range for OTA is **19-25 years**, subject to the specific course and notification.

7. Can women apply for CDS?

Yes. Eligible women candidates can apply for the **OTA women's course** through CDS, subject to the conditions specified in the official notification.

8. Is graduation compulsory for CDS?

Yes, CDS is a graduate-level examination. Candidates must satisfy the prescribed educational qualification for the academy they wish to join.

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