CDS I 2027: Eligibility Criteria, Age Limit and Educational Qualification

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The Combined Defence Services (CDS) Examination is one of the most popular opportunities for graduates who dream of becoming commissioned officers in the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force. Conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), the CDS examination provides admission to four prestigious training academies: the Indian Military Academy (IMA), Indian Naval Academy (INA), Air Force Academy (AFA) and Officers Training Academy (OTA).

Before applying for CDS I 2027, candidates must understand the eligibility criteria, age limits, educational qualifications and other important requirements. Each academy has different eligibility conditions, so candidates should carefully check whether they meet the requirements for their preferred entry.

This guide explains the **CDS I 2027 eligibility criteria, age limit and educational qualification** to help defence aspirants prepare confidently.

1. CDS I 2027: Important Dates

According to the UPSC Annual Calendar 2027, the important dates are:

Event	Date
Notification release	2 December 2026
Last date to apply	22 December 2026
CDS I 2027 examination	11 April 2027

The notification will contain the final eligibility conditions, vacancies and application instructions. Candidates should check the official notification before submitting their applications.

2. CDS I 2027 Age Limit

The age limit varies depending on the academy selected by the candidate.

Academy	General age requirement
Indian Military Academy (IMA)	19–24 years
Indian Naval Academy (INA)	19–24 years
Air Force Academy (AFA)	20–24 years
Officers Training Academy (OTA)	19–25 years

Important points:

- Candidates applying for IMA and INA must satisfy the prescribed unmarried male candidate conditions.

- AFA candidates must satisfy the applicable marital status requirements.
- Eligible Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) holders may receive age relaxation up to 26 years for AFA, subject to UPSC conditions.
- Women candidates can apply for the OTA entry under the prescribed Short Service Commission conditions.

The exact date-of-birth limits are specified separately in the official notification. Therefore, candidates should not determine eligibility based only on their current age.

3. Academy-Wise Educational Qualification

The educational qualification for CDS I 2027 differs depending on the academy.

A. Indian Military Academy (IMA)

- Candidates must possess a bachelor’s degree from a recognised university or an equivalent qualification.
- Students from Arts, Commerce, Science and other recognised degree streams can apply.
- Final-year degree students can also apply, subject to UPSC conditions.

B. Indian Naval Academy (INA)

- Candidates must possess an engineering degree from a recognised university or institution.
- Alternatively, candidates with a B.Sc. degree having Physics as a core or elective subject, along with Physics and Mathematics at the 10+2 level, may be eligible under the latest notified conditions.
- Final-year students must satisfy the prescribed degree completion requirements.

C. Air Force Academy (AFA)

Candidates must fulfil either of the following educational requirements:

- A bachelor’s degree from a recognised university with Physics and Mathematics at the 10+2 level.
- A Bachelor of Engineering (BE) or Bachelor of Technology (BTech) degree.

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Candidates must also satisfy the prescribed age and medical standards for Air Force entry.

D. Officers Training Academy (OTA)

- Candidates must possess a bachelor's degree from a recognised university or equivalent qualification.
- Students from Arts, Commerce, Science and other recognised streams can apply.
- Final-year degree students can also apply, subject to the prescribed conditions.

OTA offers Short Service Commission entry for eligible male and female candidates.

4. Can Final-Year Degree Students Apply for CDS I 2027?

Yes. Candidates studying in the final year or final semester of their degree course can apply for CDS I 2027, provided they meet the conditions mentioned in the UPSC notification.

However, candidates must:

- Have no pending backlogs at the stage specified in the notification.
- Submit proof of passing the degree examination within the prescribed deadline.
- Produce the required educational documents during the selection process.

The degree completion deadlines differ between academies. Candidates should carefully check the official notification to avoid disqualification.

5. Nationality Requirements for CDS I 2027

Candidates must satisfy the nationality conditions prescribed by UPSC. Eligible categories include:

- Citizens of India.
- Subjects of Nepal.
- Certain persons of Indian origin who have migrated from specified countries with the intention of permanently settling in India, subject to the required eligibility certificate.

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Candidates belonging to applicable categories other than Indian citizens should check the certificate requirements specified in the notification.

6. Marital Status and Gender Eligibility

The gender and marital status requirements differ depending on the academy.

Academy	Eligible candidates
IMA	Unmarried male candidates
INA	Unmarried male candidates
AFA	Candidates satisfying the prescribed gender and marital status conditions
OTA	Eligible unmarried men and women, including specified widowed or divorced candidates who have not remarried

Women candidates can apply for the OTA Short Service Commission (Non-Technical) entry through CDS.

Candidates should carefully read the marital status conditions in the official notification before applying.

7. Physical and Medical Eligibility for CDS I 2027

Apart from age and educational qualifications, candidates must satisfy the prescribed physical and medical standards.

Important requirements include:

- Good physical and mental health.
- Proper eyesight and hearing standards.
- No medical condition that makes the candidate unfit for military service.
- Appropriate height and weight according to the prescribed standards.
- Fitness to undergo military training.

Air Force candidates must satisfy additional flying medical standards.

Candidates are advised to maintain physical fitness and review the official medical standards before applying.

8. How to Prepare for CDS I 2027?

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Meeting the eligibility criteria is the first step. Candidates must also prepare effectively for the written examination and SSB interview.

A proper preparation strategy should include:

1. **English:** Practise grammar, vocabulary, comprehension and sentence improvement.
2. **General Knowledge:** Study History, Geography, Polity, Science and Current Affairs.
3. **Mathematics:** Focus on arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry and mensuration for IMA, INA and AFA entries.
4. **Previous-Year Questions:** Practise previous-year papers to understand important topics and question patterns.
5. **Mock Tests:** Attempt regular mock examinations to improve speed and accuracy.
6. **SSB Preparation:** Develop communication, leadership, confidence and decision-making skills.

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Students looking for the **best CDS coaching in Kerala** should choose an institute that provides structured classroom training, experienced faculty, regular mock tests and SSB interview guidance.

At Victor Growth, Kochi, defence aspirants can receive academic guidance and structured preparation support to work towards their goal of joining the Indian Armed Forces.

9. Important Points to Remember Before Applying

- Check your date of birth against the academy-specific eligibility conditions.
- Verify your educational qualification before selecting an academy.
- Final-year students should understand the degree completion deadlines.
- Check gender and marital status requirements.
- Review the physical and medical standards.
- Read the complete UPSC notification before submitting the application.

Important update: As of 26 November 2026, the CDS I 2027 detailed notification has not yet been released. The academy-specific age limits above reflect the established

eligibility framework. Exact dates of birth and other final conditions must be confirmed from the notification scheduled for 2 December 2026.

10. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the age limit for CDS I 2027?

The general age limits are 19–24 years for IMA and INA, 20–24 years for AFA and 19–25 years for OTA. Exact date-of-birth limits will be provided in the official notification.

2. Can final-year students apply for CDS I 2027?

Yes. Final-year degree students can apply, provided they fulfil the conditions and submit proof of graduation within the prescribed deadline.

3. Can BCom students apply for CDS I 2027?

Yes. BCom graduates can apply for IMA and OTA if they meet the other eligibility requirements. For AFA, they must also have studied Physics and Mathematics at the 10+2 level. They must satisfy the separate INA qualification requirements.

4. Can women apply for CDS I 2027?

Yes. Eligible women candidates can apply for the OTA Short Service Commission entry.

5. Is Mathematics compulsory for CDS?

Mathematics is compulsory for IMA, INA and AFA candidates. OTA candidates only need to appear for English and General Knowledge.

6. Can candidates from Arts and Commerce backgrounds apply for CDS?

Yes. Arts and Commerce graduates can apply for IMA and OTA. AFA and INA have additional subject-specific educational requirements.

7. Can married candidates apply for CDS I 2027?

Marital status conditions vary by academy. Candidates should carefully check the official notification before applying.

8. When will the CDS I 2027 examination be conducted?

According to the UPSC Annual Calendar 2027, the examination is scheduled for 11 April 2027.

9. Which is the best CDS coaching in Kerala?

Candidates should look for an institute offering experienced faculty, complete syllabus coverage, regular mock tests, previous-year question discussions and SSB interview

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guidance. Victor Growth, Kochi, provides defence examination preparation guidance for aspirants.

Conclusion

Understanding the CDS I 2027 eligibility criteria, age limit and educational qualifications is essential before applying for the examination. Since each academy has different requirements, candidates should carefully evaluate their academic qualifications, age and career preferences.

Whether you dream of joining the Indian Army, Navy or Air Force, starting your preparation early can help you build a strong foundation.

With consistent practice, proper planning and guidance from the **best CDS coaching in Kerala**, aspiring candidates can take confident steps towards achieving their dream of becoming commissioned officers in the Indian Armed Forces.

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