

NDA Exam Pattern 2026 Explained with Marks Distribution (Written Exam + SSB)

The **National Defence Academy (NDA) Exam 2026**, conducted by the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)**, is one of the most prestigious defence entrance examinations in India. Understanding the **latest NDA exam pattern 2026 and marks distribution** is crucial for aspirants targeting the **Army, Navy, and Air Force wings**.

This article provides a **complete, detailed, and SEO-optimised explanation** of the **NDA Exam Pattern 2026**, including **written exam structure, subject-wise marks, time duration, negative marking, and SSB interview details**, followed by an **FAQ section**.

NDA Exam Pattern 2026 - Overview

The NDA selection process consists of **two main stages**:

- 1. Written Examination**
- 2. SSB Interview (Personality Test)**

Only candidates who **qualify the written exam** are called for the **SSB interview**.

Stage	Mode	Total Marks
Written Examination	Offline (Pen & Paper)	900 Marks
SSB Interview	Psychological & Personality Tests	900 Marks
Total	—	1800 Marks

NDA Written Examination Pattern 2026

The **NDA written exam** consists of **two objective-type papers** conducted on the same day.

Paper-wise Exam Pattern

Paper	Subject	Duration	Maximum Marks
Paper I	Mathematics	2.5 Hours	300 Marks
Paper II	General Ability Test (GAT)	2.5 Hours	600 Marks
Total	—	5 Hours	900 Marks

NDA Mathematics Paper Pattern 2026

- **Total Questions:** 120
- **Marks per Question:** 2.5
- **Negative Marking:** -0.83 marks for each wrong answer
- **Maximum Marks:** 300

Mathematics Topics Covered

- Algebra
- Matrices & Determinants
- Trigonometry
- Analytical Geometry
- Differential Calculus
- Integral Calculus
- Vector Algebra
- Statistics & Probability

Mathematics requires strong conceptual clarity and regular practice.

NDA General Ability Test (GAT) Pattern 2026

The **GAT paper** tests a candidate's **general awareness, reasoning, and language skills.**

- **Total Questions:** 150
- **Marks per Question:** 4
- **Negative Marking:** -1.33 marks for each wrong answer
- **Maximum Marks:** 600

Section-wise Marks Distribution (GAT)

Section	Topics	Marks
English	Grammar, Vocabulary, Comprehension	200
General Knowledge	Physics, Chemistry, History,	400

Section	Topics	Marks
	Geography, Polity, Current Affairs	
Total	—	600 Marks

NDA Written Exam - Important Instructions

- Objective-type questions (MCQs)
- Medium of paper: **English & Hindi** (except English section)
- No sectional time limit
- OMR-based answer sheet
- Calculators and electronic devices are **not allowed**

NDA SSB Interview Pattern 2026

Candidates clearing the written exam are called for the **Services Selection Board (SSB) Interview**, conducted over **5 days**.

SSB Marks Distribution

Stage	Test Type	Marks
Stage I	Screening Test (OIR & PPDT)	Qualifying
Stage II	Psychology Tests	—
Stage II	Group Testing Officer (GTO) Tasks	—
Stage II	Personal Interview	—
Total SSB Marks	—	900 Marks

⚠ Stage I is qualifying in nature; marks are not added to the final merit list.

Final NDA Merit List 2026

The **final merit list** is prepared based on:

- **Written Exam Marks:** 900
- **SSB Interview Marks:** 900

∴ **Total: 1800 Marks**

Candidates must also **clear medical standards** prescribed by the armed forces.

Why Understanding NDA Exam Pattern 2026 is Important

- Helps in **smart study planning**
- Ensures **balanced preparation** for Maths & GAT
- Avoids excessive negative marking
- Improves **time management strategy**
- Boosts final **selection chances**

NDA Exam Pattern 2026 – Key Highlights

- Two papers: Mathematics & GAT
- Objective-type questions
- Negative marking applicable
- Equal weightage to Written Exam & SSB
- No sectional cut-off officially declared
- Merit-based final selection

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1. What is the total marks for NDA Exam 2026?

The total marks are **1800**, including **900 for written exam** and **900 for SSB interview**.

Q2. Is there negative marking in NDA 2026?

Yes. Negative marking applies to both Mathematics and GAT papers.

Q3. How many papers are there in the NDA written exam?

There are **two papers** – Mathematics and General Ability Test (GAT).

Q4. Is the NDA exam conducted online or offline?

The NDA exam is conducted in **offline (pen and paper) mode**.

Q5. What are the qualifying marks for NDA written exam?

UPSC does not officially declare qualifying marks; it varies each year based on difficulty

and competition.

Q6. Is SSB interview tougher than the written exam?

SSB tests **personality, leadership, and officer-like qualities**, making it equally important as the written exam.

Q7. Can I qualify NDA with strong GAT but weak Maths?

Both papers must be **cleared individually**, so basic qualification in Mathematics is mandatory.

Conclusion

A clear understanding of the **NDA Exam Pattern 2026 with marks distribution** is the foundation of a successful preparation strategy. Aspirants should focus equally on **Mathematics, GAT, and personality development** to secure a place in the **National Defence Academy**.

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