NDA II 2026 Previous Year Question Paper Analysis & Trends

Introduction

The **NDA (National Defence Academy & Naval Academy) II 2026 exam** is one of India's most competitive defence entrance examinations conducted by the Union Public Service Commission for admission into the National Defence Academy and Naval Academy.

Analysing previous year question papers (PYQs) is one of the smartest preparation strategies for aspirants. It helps candidates understand the exam pattern, topic weightage, difficulty trends, and the type of questions UPSC prefers.

1. NDA II 2026 Exam Structure – Overview

Written Examination Pattern

Paper I — Mathematics

- Questions: 120 (Objective type)
- Marks: 300

Paper II — General Ability Test (GAT)

- Questions: 150 (Objective type)
- Marks: 600

Total Written Marks: 900
Exam Duration: 5 Hours
Mode: Offline (Pen & Paper)

Marking Scheme

- Correct Answer: +2.5 marks
- Incorrect Answer: −0.83 marks
- Unanswered: No negative marks

UPSC has maintained a consistent exam structure over the years, making PYQ analysis extremely reliable for preparation.

2. Why Previous Year Question Paper Analysis is Important

Practising NDA PYQs offers multiple advantages:

⭐ Understand Question Style

UPSC focuses on conceptual clarity, analytical ability, and application-based questions rather than rote memorization.

☐ Identify High-Weightage Topics

Repeated topics across years reveal where aspirants should focus more time.

☐ Know Difficulty Trends

Understanding whether papers are easy, moderate, or tough helps set realistic preparation levels.

☐ Improve Time Management

Timed practice improves speed and accuracy — crucial for competitive exams.

☐ Boost Confidence

Familiarity with exam patterns reduces stress and improves performance.

3. Key Takeaways from Recent NDA Question Papers

Mathematics Paper Trends

Frequently asked areas:

- Algebra (Quadratic Equations, Sequences & Series)
- Trigonometry (Identities, Heights & Distances)
- Calculus (Limits, Differentiation, Integration)
- Matrices & Determinants
- Vector Algebra
- Analytical Geometry (2D & 3D)
- Probability & Statistics

Trend Insight:
Recent papers emphasize multi-step and application-based problems. Strong fundamentals from Classes 11 & 12 are essential.

Difficulty Level: Moderate to Moderately Tough

General Ability Test (GAT) Trends

English Section

Common question types:

- Spotting Errors
- Synonyms & Antonyms
- Fill in the Blanks

- Sentence Improvement
- Reading Comprehension

Difficulty: Generally Moderate

General Knowledge Section

Major recurring areas:

History

- Indian Freedom Movement
- Ancient & Medieval India
- Important Personalities

Geography

- Physical Geography
- Indian Geography
- Climate & Resources

Science

- Physics fundamentals
- Chemistry basics
- Biology concepts

Current Affairs

- Defence exercises
- Awards & Honors
- Science & Technology updates
- Important national & international events

Trend Insight:
UPSC balances static knowledge with current developments.

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4. Topic-Wise Trend Analysis

A. Mathematics Trends

Topic	Frequency	Preparation Priority
Algebra	Very High	Must Master
Trigonometry	Very High	Must Practice Daily
Calculus	Increasing	High Priority
Matrices & Determinants	Frequent	Quick Scoring
Analytical Geometry	Consistent	Important
Probability & Statistics	Moderate	Practice Well

Key Pattern:

About 70–80% of Maths marks usually come from Algebra, Trigonometry, Calculus, and Matrices.

B. GAT Trends

Section	Key Focus Areas
English	Grammar, Vocabulary, Comprehension
History	Freedom Struggle, Culture
Geography	Indian & World Geography
Science	Conceptual Fundamentals
Current Affairs	Defence & National Importance

5. Difficulty Level Trends (Past Years)

🔢 Mathematics

- Earlier Years: Concept-based direct questions
- Recent Years: More analytical & multi-step problems

📚 GAT

- English: Stable difficulty
- GK: Increasing inclusion of current affairs and defence topics

Overall Difficulty Trend:
Moderate with occasional challenging sections.

6. Good Attempts & Score Trends

While official cut-offs vary each year:

📘 Mathematics

- Good Attempts: 70–85 questions with high accuracy

📊 Competitive Written Score

- Safe Score Target: **340–355+ marks out of 900**

Cut-offs depend on:

- Paper difficulty
- Number of candidates
- Overall performance

7. Smart Preparation Strategy Using PYQs

🎯 Focus on High-Weightage Topics

Prioritize frequently repeated areas.

🗂️ Solve Multiple Years' Papers

Practice at least the last 7–10 years of question papers.

⏱️ Simulate Real Exam Conditions

Solve papers with a timer to improve speed.

🔍 Analyze Mistakes

Review errors and revise weak topics regularly.

🧩 Combine PYQs with Mock Tests

PYQs build familiarity; mocks build exam temperament.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q1. Why should I analyze previous year papers for NDA II 2026?

They reveal exam patterns, repeated topics, difficulty trends, and help improve speed and accuracy.

Q2. Which Maths topics are most important for NDA?

Algebra, Trigonometry, Calculus, and Matrices carry the highest weightage.

Q3. Is NDA GAT more focused on current affairs now?

Yes. Recent papers show increased emphasis on defence news, science updates, and national events.

Q4. What is considered a safe score in NDA written exam?

A score above 340–355 marks is generally considered competitive.

Q5. How many years of PYQs should I practice?

Practising at least 7–10 years of papers is recommended.

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