

Ace Your Way

CSS EXAM

2017 - 2018



“My relatives, who earlier shunned my family, completely changed their attitude after I was appointed as ASP.”

(ASP Suhai Aziz Talpur, CSS 2012)

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BEGINNERS' GUIDE TO CSS EXAMINATION 2017 - 2018

Disclaimer!

All the information, details and recommendations given are purely based on the best of my knowledge and experience, and are totally fair & unbiased. Nonetheless, people may have opinions otherwise and I respect the opinions of others. This is just a free-opinion. Thank you.

PREFACE

I, *Aamir Mahar*, would start this booklet with the name of Allah Rabb-ul-Izzat who is The Most Merciful and The Most Gracious.

It has been my effort to help and guide the aspirants with the best possible way so that you get a simulated experience of the whole process before you appear in the CSS Examination. As the saying goes, *“The will to win is not nearly as important as the will to prepare to win. Everyone wants to win, but not everyone wants to prepare to win. Preparing to win is where the determination that you’ll win, is made. Once the game is underway, it is too late to prepare to win. The actual game is just like the end of a long process of getting ready, in which the outcome was really determined. So if you want to prepare to win, you must want to prepare to win. Once you prepare to win, winning is almost anti-climactic.”*

I am writing down this detailed document which will comprise the CSS Exam Preparation from the very first stage till the exam-days plus interview day. Numerous friends and aspirants had asked for such kind of a document which could be helpful for every aspirant. I’ll try and go ahead step-by-step. In nutshell, I would like to say that this booklet is an attempt to fill the void that aspirants of CSS Exam felt when it came to preparing for it.

In the end, I wish the best of luck for all the candidates of CSS Competitive Examination, especially those who remain firm and steadfast throughout life. I would like to remind the candidates that this is just an exam for a job. Success or failure in it would not mean an end to life. Just keep faith in your abilities and try to give it your best. Before you say I can't. Say I'll try then give it your best!

Aspirants' constructive feedback and suggestions are most welcome which have always remained and will remain our guiding light. I will be highly obliged if you mail me your feedback or suggestion on aamirmahar321@gmail.com.

Aamir Mahar
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UNDERSTANDING THE CSS EXAMINATION

INTRODUCTION TO THE CSS EXAMINATION

CSS Examination is a competitive examination conducted by Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) Islamabad every year for recruitments to post in Basic Pay Scale -17 for following occupational groups under Federal Government.

1. Commerce & Trade Group (CTG)
2. Pakistan Customs Service (PCS)
3. Pakistan Administrative Services (PAS)
4. Foreign Service of Pakistan (FSP)
5. Inland Revenue Service (IRS)
6. Information Group (IG)
7. Military Lands and Cantonments Group (MLCG)
8. Office Management Group (OMG)
9. Pakistan Audit and Accounts Service (PAAS)
10. Police Service of Pakistan (PSP)
11. Postal Group (PG)
12. Railways (Commercial & Transportation) Group

PARTS OF CSS EXAMINATION:

CSS Examination is given for the selection of candidates for occupational services under FPSC. The Commission ensures that selected candidate is perfect in all aspects for the post or service. Candidate has to undergo all the parts of CSS Exam for appointment against a post. The CSS Exam comprises the following.

1. **WRITTEN EXAMINATION:** The written exam carries total 1200 marks. For written Exam candidate has to take all compulsory subjects (papers) which carry total 600 marks as well as select subjects from optional subjects, which carry total 600 marks. Each paper is given time of 3 hours. There are subjective questions as well as some MCQs. MCQs are to be attempted on computerized OMR Answer sheet, whereas subjective questions are to be attempted on Answer Book. Blue or black ink is allowed only. For qualifying written test a candidate should obtain at least 40% in each compulsory subject and 33% in each of optional subject or 50% in aggregate.

Compulsory Subjects (600 Marks)

Optional Subjects (600 Marks)

Total Marks= 1200

2. **MEDICAL TEST:** Candidates who qualify the written examination will be medically examined by the Medical Boards constituted for the purpose to ensure that candidate is in good mental and physical health and free from any physical defect likely to interfere with the discharge of their duties. The candidates who (after such medical examination which Government or the appointing authority, may prescribe) are found not to satisfy these requirements, will not be appointed except the disabled candidates as rules mentioned for disabled candidates by FPSC. Disabled candidates must submit a certificate of disability issued by the competent authority designated for the purpose by the Federal/Provincial Government. Disabled candidates in the categories of physically impaired,

hearing/speech impaired (deaf & dumb) and visually impaired (blind) are allowed to compete for Competitive Examination against four Occupational Groups/Services viz:

- (a) Commerce & Trade Group
- (b) Pakistan Audit & Accounts Service
- (c) Information Group &
- (d) Postal Group

Disabled candidates will be provided helper such as Writer, if so requested by them in their application forms. In order to prevent disappointment, candidates are advised to have themselves examined by a Government Medical Officer of the standing of a Civil Surgeon before applying for admission to the examination.

3. **PSYCHOLOGICAL TEST:** All candidates called for Viva Voce will be required to undergo Psychological Test first, comprising written tests and group tasks. Such tests are designed to assess abilities, attitude and personality characteristics of the candidates with special regard to their aptitude for the Civil Services. Separate marks are not awarded for the Psychological assessment. However, 300 marks assigned to Viva Voce also reflect the performance on Psychological Test. Candidates must bring their National Identity Cards and two copies of recent photographs when summoned for Psychological test, and Viva Voce. If a candidate remains absent in the Psychological Test, he/she will not be allowed to appear for Viva Voce.
4. **VIVA VOCE:** Each candidate who qualifies written part of the examination will be interviewed by a Board. S/he will be asked questions on matters of general interest. The object of the interview is to assess his/her suitability for the services for which he/she is entered and in framing their assessment the Board will attach particular importance to the moral and ethical qualities of the candidates, his/her intelligence and alertness of mind, his/her vigour and strength of character and his/her potential qualities of leadership. The Board will take into consideration his/her extra-mural activities such as sports, debates, hobbies, etc., and their effect on his/her physique and character, in assessing his/her merit. All candidates are expected to have basic knowledge regarding Islam and Pakistan. Questions may be asked in the Interview on these subjects. Persons securing less than pass marks in these subjects will not be considered for appointment to Government jobs, irrespective of their proficiency in other fields. However, the Non-Muslim candidates will not be asked any question regarding Islam.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TAKING CSS EXAM

Male as well as female candidates can appear in CSS exam if they fulfill the following eligibility criteria.

NATIONALITY

The candidate must be a citizen of Pakistan or permanent resident of state of Jammu and Kashmir.

REQUIRED EDUCATION

- a) 14 years of formal education recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) is required. Candidate must possess at least 14 years education to be eligible.

- b) A candidate can possess any Bachelors Degree (B.A, B.Com, BBA, B.Sc, LLB, MBBS etc.) from one of the Pakistani Universities or an equivalent degree or comparable educational qualifications of a foreign University recognized by Higher Education Commission (HEC), Islamabad.

Essential Requirement: The Bachelors Degree must be passed with a minimum of 2nd Division (or grade C). Previous academic records do not matter in eligibility for CSS Exam.

Note: (i) A candidate who has obtained a Third Division (or 'D' grade) in his/her Bachelor's Degree will be eligible for the Examination in cases where he/she has obtained a higher Division in Master's Degree.

(ii) The decision as to which foreign degrees or comparable educational qualifications are equivalent to corresponding Pakistani degree rests solely with the Commission.

NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS

A candidate may attempt/avail three chances of the examination within prescribed age limits.

AGE LIMIT

As per the latest rules of CE-2017, age limit for CSS Examination is 21 to 30 years. The upper age limit for CE-2018 is same as it was for CE-2017 i.e. 30 years and cut off date for age calculation will be 31-12-2017. This means that an applicant shall be considered ineligible if his/her age is 30 years on/or before 31-12-2017.

RULES FOR AGE RELAXATION

The upper age limit will be relaxed by two years up to the age of 32 years in respect of:

(a) the candidates belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Buddhist Community subject to production of a certificate (Annex-A of Application Form) to be issued by Political Agent/DCO/ District Magistrate in support of their claim.

(b) The candidates belonging to the recognized Tribes who are permanent residents of the areas mentioned-below and whose families have been living in these areas. Such candidates must attach a certificate (Annex-B of Application Form) to be issued by Political Agent/ DCO/District Magistrate in support of their claim:

1. Balochistan.
2. Tribal Areas of D.I.Khan and Peshawar Divisions (including former Frontier States of Dir, Swat, Chitral and Amb).
3. Former excluded (Baluch) area forming part of the Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur Districts.
4. Former Tribal Areas of Mardan and Hazara Divisions.
5. Upper Tanawal Area of Hazara Division.

(c) The candidates who are permanent residents of Azad Kashmir Territory, subject to submission of a certificate (Annex-C of Application Form) to be issued by Kashmir Affairs Division, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad.

(d) The candidates who are permanent residents of Gilgit - Baltistan including Gilgit, Diamir, Baltistan, Ghizar and Ghanche, subject to submission of a certificate (Annex-B of Application Form) to be issued by the Political Agent/DCO/ District Magistrate.

(e) The candidates who are disabled namely, physically impaired, hearing/speech impaired (deaf & dumb) and visually impaired (blind), subject to submission of certificate of disability issued by the competent authority designated for the purpose by the Federal/Provincial Government.

(f) In Service Government Servants, Armed Forces Personnel, Contract employees, including the Government servants of AJ&K, who possess a minimum of two years continuous Government service as on 31st December, 2013, subject to submission of Departmental Permission Certificate (Annex-E) from the competent authority. Employees of Nationalised Banks, State Bank of Pakistan, WAPDA, Regulatory Authorities, Autonomous bodies and other semi autonomous bodies are not entitled to age relaxation.

PERCENTAGE OF REGIONAL/PROVINCIAL QUOTA FOR SEATS/POSTS

Detail of regional quota is as under: Merit = 7.5%, Punjab = 50%, Sindh = 19% (Sindh U = 7.6%, Sindh R = 11.4%), Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa = 11.5%, Balochistan = 6%, GB & FATA = 4%, and AJK = 2%.

Note: 10% quota is reserved for women from the share of Provinces/ Regions except Merit quota. Un-filled vacancies will be carried forward. 5% quota is reserved for Minorities (Non-Muslims) from the share of Provinces/Regions except Merit Quota. Unfilled vacancies will be carried forward. No separate quota fixed for disabled candidates. Disabled candidates will compete in accordance with the Government recruitment policy.

PLACES OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination is held simultaneously at Abbottabad, Bahawalpur, D.I.Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Faisalabad, Gilgit, Gujranwala, Hyderabad, Islamabad, Karachi, Khuzdar, Lahore, Larkana, Multan, Muzaffarabad, Okara, Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Sialkot, Skardu & Sukkur depending on the number of applicants for each centre.

PLACES OF INTERVIEWS

The interviews will be held at Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar & Quetta.

APPLYING FOR CSS EXAM

Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC), Islamabad publishes their advertisement for CSS Exam in all "daily newspapers" every year. In which date of Exam and last date for submitting application form is given. All applications for CSS Competitive Examination must be submitted on line through FPSC website www.fpsc.gov.pk. The closing date for submission of online Application Form to the FPSC, Islamabad is 31st December, 2017. Candidate must pay Rs. 2200/ (PKR) as application fee (exam fee) which is deposited in State Bank/National Bank of Pakistan under the account head "C02101-Organs of State Exam Fee (FPSC Receipt)". The application form must reach Commission on or before the closing date. No extra time is allowed.

DECLARATION OF RESULTS OF THE WRITTEN EXAM

The usual time taken for declaration of results of the written examination is 6 or 7 months.

REQUIRED TIME FOR FINAL ALLOCATION OF QUALIFIED CANDIDATES

After announcement of final result of CSS Written Exam and receipt of quota wise seats from Establishment Division FPSC issue a Public Notice on its website and leading newspapers and made allocations in due course of time.

FIXED STANDARD (QUALIFYING) MARKS FOR CSS EXAM

Aspirants having at least 600 marks out of 1200 marks in the written examination, and 101 marks in viva voce out of 300 marks will be considered pass.

SCHEDULE OF CSS EXAM 2018

According to the *tentative schedule* of CSS Exam 2018 is as under:

Application Submission: 1st October, 2017

Deadline: 31st December, 2017

Written Exam: February, 2018

* A candidate has to submit the Online Application Form during the month of October. These dates can be changed by FPSC Islamabad for every year.

CSS EXAM REQUIRES SOMETHING FROM YOU

Whenever planning for any journey, you need a backpack with stuff you might need while travelling. On your journey towards CSS Exam, you need to work on a few skill sets that would help you in your way. Missing even a single one may slow down your process or cause any hurdles. Hence, ensure that you have mastered those set of skills before you embark this journey. Some of the skills may be polished on the way but some of them need to be well practiced beforehand.

CSS BACKPACK: SKILL SETS

1) PERSONALITY TRAITS

- a) Self-discipline and Self-confidence
- b) Commitment and Motivation
- c) Patience and Diligence

2) INTELLECTUAL ABILITY

- a) Basic Knowledge Base
- b) Analytical Mindset

3) WRITING SKILLS

- a) English Writing skills
- b) Expression

PERSONALITY TRAITS

If you don't have the above mentioned skills, I'm afraid the journey would be difficult. Self-discipline means you should be able to do what you are supposed to do. Self-confidence means you need to believe in yourself, the power you are blessed with by Allah Almighty, and the fact that you can do or be whatever the hell you want to. Commitment and Motivation makes your journey a goal oriented approach i.e. a clear sense of direction make distractions unlikely. Sometimes, days are slow and things don't work out the way you expected, hence, be patient yet diligent to always find your way around things. Work smart, not hard.

INTELLECTUAL ABILITY

Simultaneously, you need to work on your mind i.e. mental abilities. Basic Knowledge Base is a Must-Have. There are a few areas in which you need to be well-versed (at least the basic terms and events etc., must be clear) i.e. World History, Philosophy, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Science, and Technology etc. For that, read good books and research especially YouTube videos prove quite beneficial.

Competitive exams require you to be competent. Do what others are overlooking. For that you need to start 'thinking' about absolutely everything in terms of What? Why?

How? Pros and Cons? Causes and effects? What ought to be? This is how you analyze and evaluate. Once you have the basic know how about everything you'll be able to connect the dots and bring coherence and unity in your thoughts that would reflect on your paper. Make the best use of your mind, you hold wonders within yourself!

WRITING SKILLS

Another area that you need to ensure before you start your journey is English writing skills. If you cannot transfer your thoughts on a piece of paper, then unfortunately you are in hot water. You need to be good at your grammar, hire an English teacher that can check your work and help you write, watch English movies, listen to English Songs, and start thinking in English. Do absolutely whatever you think of that can help you able to write good English. Secondly, the more you practice writing, more you'd be able to develop an expression. This is really important from paper point of view. Once you have practiced analyzing, you should be able to convert it on a piece of paper.

For me, CSS Exam is not just an exam, it is a lifestyle. In order to start with CSS Exam Preparation the above is a rough sketch and a checklist of the required skills. There may be more or some may not be very important to anyone of you, but I believe these really are needed at all times. Give a month or two to analyze yourself and check if you have all the above mentioned skills. And if you're good at the above skill sets, believe me, you're halfway there. Work on yourself first, then studying and appearing in exams becomes quite mechanical and bearable of course. As they say that success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it.

START YOUR CSS EXAM PREPARATION

Today people from all fields of educational backgrounds are involved with taking the CSS Exam. The Doctors, engineers, architects, Management students, Social scientists, journalists etc., interested in CSS Exam, they all try to start their preparation at one point or another, but the million dollar question is: **How should one start his/her preparation?** This is how you should start your CSS Preparation:

UNDERSTAND THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

It is imperative before you begin preparing your quest for CSS Examination, understand thoroughly the terms and conditions and the eligibility criteria for CSS Exam. It makes sense, because you wouldn't like your candidature to be rejected after you have prepared for the Exam would you? So, check earliest if you are eligible for appearing in the next CSS Examination.

KNOW YOURSELF, KNOW YOUR APTITUDE:

The second and one of the most imperative step is to get to know your strengths, weaknesses and competitive advantages (if any) before hand. This allows you to understand your Aptitude. And it is your aptitude/inclination towards particular sciences which make you good at a subject. For example: Candidates good at Humanities subjects like Social science, Anthropology, Political science etc. should opt for subjects that involve answers with subjective opinions. Similarly, those who have an aptitude for History may opt subjects like Indo-Pak history, US-History etc. So, get to know yourself better, before starting preparation.

ASK QUESTIONS AND CLEAR OFF ALL MISUNDERSTANDINGS:

Thirdly, you should jot down on a paper all your queries, issues, problems, confusions and misconceptions regarding the CSS Exam and its preparation. Then ask all such questions until you are satisfied with reasonably accurate answers. Well, in my opinion this booklet is going to help you in this regard.

SUBJECT SELECTION:

Now don't act smart-pants and select the subjects unwisely, just because you like a subject doesn't make it a good subject selection choice. In CSS Exam, subject selection holds a position of key significance, because it is the six optional subjects which make or break most of the Candidates each year. So, be careful.

PREPARATION PLAN AND STRATEGY:

Once all is said and done in the initial pre-preparation phase, the next most important step is to develop an effective preparation (study) plan, strategize your plan, break it down into daily targets, Set weekly goals and devise a CSS preparation schedule. Sounds tough? Well, it is because it takes effort and commitment. Always remember, if it was easy everybody would do it!

LIFE STYLE MANAGEMENT:

Simply having a study plan and a preparation strategy without any discipline, hard work and motivation is like having library with no books. What I meant is that it is a worthless effort if not done properly. All those CSP Officers who took good positions had sacrificed their luxuries to discipline their study routines. The lifestyle of CSS Aspirant must be different and more productive than an ordinary person.

TAKE ACTION!

Only sitting on your bum day dreaming and planning wouldn't get you anywhere. If you are seriously committed to clear the CSS Exam at the best of your ability, then *get up*, and *do something!* Act Now.

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATION

There will be two papers of 100 marks each of the subjects which carry 200 marks. In other subjects there will be one paper. Each paper will be of 3 hours duration. The candidates should expect some objective type questions (MCQ's) in compulsory and optional papers except in the papers of Essay, Applied Mathematics and Pure Mathematics. MCQs are to be attempted on computerized OMR Answer sheet, whereas subjective questions are to be attempted on Answer Book. The Question Papers in Urdu or other Pakistani regional languages (*Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto and Balochi*), *Persian* and *Arabic* should be answered in the respective languages. However, question relating with translation from respective language into English or vice versa may be answered as directed in the question paper. The question paper in Islamic Studies or Comparative Study of Major Religions is to be answered in English or Urdu only. All other papers must be answered in English unless otherwise directed in the Question Paper. Contravention of these instructions will result in the cancellation of the papers and award of **ZERO** marks in the paper(s) concerned. The Non-Muslim candidates have the option either to take Islamic Studies or Comparative Study of Major Religions. The three papers of General Knowledge i.e General Science & Ability, Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs and (GK-I, GK-II and GK-III) are to be passed collectively by scoring 120 marks out of 300. A candidate who does not appear in any compulsory/optional subject will not be allowed to appear in the remaining papers of the Examination.

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS (600 MARKS)

- 1) English Essay
- 2) English (Précis & Composition)
- 3) General Science & Ability (GK Paper -I)
- 4) Current Affairs (GK Paper -II)
- 5) Pakistan Affairs (GK Paper -III)
- 6) Islamic Studies OR Comparative Study of Major Religious (For Non Muslims)

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS (600 MARKS)

The minimum standard of optional subjects will be that of an *Honour's Degree* of a university in Pakistan. Aspirants, get yourself well acquainted with the content of the optional subject's syllabi, the length of syllabus and the topics that it covers. A thorough familiarity with your optional subject will help you select the one that you are most familiar with and it will reduce your mental tension that is attached with its selection. The candidates are required to select optional subjects carrying a total of 600 marks from the following groups as per rules given below:

GROUP 1: TO OPT FOR ONE SUBJECT OF 200 MARKS.

- 1) Accounting & Auditing
- 2) Economics
- 3) Computer Science
- 4) Political Science
- 5) International Relations

GROUP 2: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT(S) OF 200 MARKS

- 1) Physics
- 2) Chemistry
- 3) Applied Mathematics/ Pure Mathematics
- 4) Statistics
- 5) Geology

GROUP 3: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Business Administration
- 2) Public Administration
- 3) Governance & Public Policy
- 4) Town Planning & Urban Management *

GROUP 4: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) History of India & Pakistan *
- 2) Islamic History & Culture *
- 3) British History *
- 4) European History *
- 5) History of USA

GROUP 5: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Gender Studies
- 2) Environmental Science *
- 3) Agriculture & Forestry (*Agriculture 50 marks and Forestry 50 marks*)
- 4) Botany
- 5) Zoology
- 6) English Literature
- 7) Urdu Literature

GROUP 6: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Law
- 2) Constitutional Law
- 3) International Law
- 4) Muslim law & Jurisprudence
- 5) Mercantile Law

- 6) Criminology *
- 7) Philosophy

GROUP 7: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Journalism and Mass Communication *
- 2) Psychology *
- 3) Geography *
- 4) Anthropology
- 5) Sociology

REGIONAL LANGUAGES (Examiners of regional languages favour aspirants that choose these subjects this is the reason why these subjects have an average score between 70 and 80. Aspirant should opt this subject if it's his or her mother tongue. This paper can give you 20 out of 20 marks against each question. In Punjabi Paper, you are given English passage to be translated into Punjabi. These subjects need legible writing and writing speed is necessarily required.)

- 6) Punjabi
- 7) Sindhi
- 8) Balochi & Pashto
- 9) Persian
- 10) Arabic

** The syllabus is extensive.*

ENGLISH ESSAY PAPER

A few prerequisites to prepare for Essay Paper:

BASIC KNOWLEDGE BASE

For preparation of Essay Paper, daily reading of a quality newspapers and books on the subject of Philosophy, World History, Politics, Economics, Sociology to name a few is very helpful. Remember that aspirant is aiming to be an all-rounder.

PAST PAPER ANALYSIS

Essay Paper is divided into some core areas i.e. Education, Islam, Socio-Economic crises, Crisis management, Terrorism and Extremism, Governance, Media, Environmental issues, Pakistan, Science and Technology, and UNO. Choose any 5 areas (to be on the safe side) that you have a command over according to your educational background, interest and aptitude. Once you have chosen your 5 core areas, get the past papers and list down all the questions that appeared in past papers regarding that Core Area.

ANALYTICAL MINDSET

Firstly you need to take a simple essay topic from any area that you are well-versed in, and start brainstorming. Think and scribble everything that comes to your mind on a piece of paper. Then divide your outline into *Major Variables*, and *Minor Variables*. Make your outline comprehensive to such an extent that the examiner clears you for essay while looking at your outline only. All of your essay preparation would revolve around you practicing your outlines. All of the other stuff is just mechanical. (You in-depth practice of making outlines, it is

preferred to hire a teacher to check your outlines on a regular basis, so that you can improve). Once you know how to make an outline, your essay will be clear. In short, work on your mind on the go, think in terms of What? Why? How? Pros and Cons? Causes and effects? What ought to be? (It will be used in making outlines)

KNOW YOUR PARAGRAPH

You need to have a technical know-how of writing a simple paragraph, an introduction, and a conclusion.

WRITE A SHORT EXPANSION DAILY

It will be an exercise of your mind. Writing an expansion daily will keep your mind running till your exams. You need to be in a writing habit and your mind must be in a habit of thinking too. So keep practicing.

STAY MOTIVATED and once in a week, write an essay on one of your outlines.

P.S. It is assumed that your grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and spellings are in good shape.

OUTLINE - MAKING

Making an outline for an essay means to make a sketch for the entire essay by writing the basic and main ideas which are to be elaborated to write the essay. Making an outline is important for two reasons, firstly it is the part of your answer as asked in the question and secondly it helps you to write an essay with perfection.

Before starting to write the essay, think over the topic to collect the main ideas which you will elaborate to the essay. Write down all these main ideas in the form of lines having numbers or bullets. You can give a name or a title to each main idea while making the outline or you can also write each main idea in a sentence form but all the ideas should be in proper order.

MAJOR HEADERS

1. Introduction: What, How
2. Historical Perspective (Optional)
3. Meaning of the Key Terms
4. Views of Philosophers & Analysts
5. Analysis
 - a) Pros & Cons
 - b) Causes & Effects
 - c) Compare & Contract
6. Case Studies
7. Recommendations
8. Conclusion

MINOR HEADERS (Division of ideas and thoughts)

1. Origin to End
2. From different angles (Social, Moral, Cultural, Religious, Economic,

Political)

3. All levels (Individual, Community, Provincial, State level, Regional, International/ Global)
4. Categorization according to tangible or intangible

OUTLINE IS THE SKELETON OF ESSAY

Outline is the skeleton of essay. It should be very comprehensive and elaborated. A sample outline of topic **“Failure of Governance in Pakistan”**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Prerequisites of good governance:**
 - 2.1 Rule of law
 - 2.2 Accountability
 - 2.3 Equal distribution of resources and opportunities
 - 2.4 Service delivery
- 3. Evidences of failure of governance in Pakistan**
 - 3.1 Absence of rule of law
 - 3.2 A state organs and national institutions are contradicting and overriding each other
 - 3.3 Rampant extremism, terrorism and security issues
 - 3.4 Insurmountable domestic and international political challenges
 - 3.5 Nepotism, favoritism and corruption have become inherent features of institutions
 - 3.6 Consistently deploring economic condition and rising unemployment, poverty and inflation
 - 3.7 Rupturing social infrastructure, degrading social institutions and widespread social unrest
- 4. In-depth analysis on current state of governance:**
 5. Solutions to ensure good governance in Pakistan:
 - 5.1 Strong and independent parliament
 - 5.2 Rule of law and no institutional activism
 - 5.3 Drastic measures to curb Terrorism
 - 5.3 De-politicization of administration
 - 5.4 Strict enforcement of Law and accountability
 - 5.5 Ensuring service delivery through public private Partnership, higher GDP allocations and by attracting FDI
 - 5.6 Building human resource and enhancing job base to utilize human resource
 - 5.7 Optimum utilization of indigenous resources to reduce fiscal and trade deficits and economic uplift
 - 5.8 Planned urbanization, controlled population growth and infusing high moral
- 6. Conclusion**

HOW TO HANDLE ESSAY PAPER?

Well, many of you are quite worried about essay paper. We have here for you the technique of handling an Essay. Before we start I would like you to take a deep breath and read this slowly and carefully so as to understand everything clearly. I would want you to put all the worries of your life behind. Everything's gonna be all right, okay? Anyways, there you go.

GENERAL TIPS FOR ESSAY WRITING:

Generally, essay depicts two things i.e. Knowledge and Mode of Expression. Now, by the end of your preparation you would have studied 12 subjects, so you would have enough knowledge to write in an essay. What really matters in an essay is its "Structure". Aspirants, FPSC Examiners want to see if you have 'followed the basics' and given them what they expect, this is what is known as discipline. Discipline is a prerequisite of essay writing. Discipline is, basically, when you see the right person at the right place at the right time. Discipline is depicted in your structure. Well, we'll get back to part that later.

TECHNIQUE OF STARTING WITH AN ESSAY

STEP 1: TOPIC SELECTION IN THE ESSAY PAPER

The technique to select a topic is to read it, firstly, from *up* to *down* while grading the topic according to your interest and knowledge e.g. A*, A, B etc. Secondly, you need to start reading the topics from *down* to *up*, again doing the same thing. The reason behind doing this is as you start with the first topic your concentration level is 100%. As you move along, your concentration level decreases. So not to do injustice to your topic selection, you need to repeat the process from downwards this time. Doing this will help you choose the right topic. Cool?

STEP 2: BRAINSTORMING

Once you have selected the topic, it is prime time for you to start brainstorming your topic. Now, I would like to tell you that there are broadly two types of people in this world. The first type is known as *left-brained* who has a calculated approach. That person goes by the rule in everything s/he does. The Second type is the *right-brained* who is quite creative and innovative in his approach. You'd be wondering why I would be telling you this regarding essay writing. Well, there are two ways of brainstorming. If you're the *left-brained* person you'd restrict your thoughts and categorize them as they come in your mind. For example, if your essay is related to terrorism you may start thinking firstly the causes, then the effects, and so and so forth. You would try to limit your thoughts. Whereas, if you're a *right-brained* person, you'd let your ideas flow in a meaningless and category-less approach. This way, a meaningless point may lead you to a very strong point if you put no limits to your thoughts. Once you have scribbled all your ideas, then you may categorize them or code them. You may choose the approach that suits you, but personally, I would go with the latter.

STRUCTURE OF AN ESSAY

In this section we will be looking into the structure of an essay. This is how you need to attempt your essay in your CSS Exam. This is what discipline is all about that I mentioned earlier. To begin with, there are three parts of an essay that are as follows:

- a. **Introduction:** *Will* (what we will discuss.)
- b. **Body:** *Am* (what I am discussing.)
- c. **Conclusion:** *Was* (what I was discussing.)

RELATION BETWEEN INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

The introduction is a mirror to a conclusion i.e. the conclusion is a mere restatement of an introduction. Whatever your stance was in the introduction part, it must be the same in your conclusion with a mere reshuffling of the words or sequence.

THE FIRST PART OF THE ESSAY: INTRODUCTION

The introduction has three parts.

1) MOTIVATORS OR BRAINWASHING

- a. This is to be your background where you indirectly come to your topic should be general in nature, not specific.
- b. You may use a quotation, anecdote, Hadith, Ayat, recent news or historical event.
- c. Attract the examiners attention (emotional trapping) in 4 to 5 lines.

2) THESIS STATEMENT

- a. Thesis Statement is particular and precise; it contains the main theme of your essay. It is a pivot around which your essay revolves. In simple words, thesis statement is: one sentence opinion explaining your stance/ point of view.
- b. You cannot waver from your stance, stick to it till the end and defend it at all times.
- c. It is the simplest and clearest sentence (no ambiguities).
- d. It may be a risk for a few but you may use a blue marker to write down your thesis statement.

3) SKETCH/PLAN

- a. Telling the sequence you'd be following.
- b. It must depict connectivity and coherence.
- c. It must be simply and clearly stated
- d. For instance, if you're writing an essay on "My favorite Politician" Your introduction structure may be as follows:
Motivators: The significance of politics and politicians
Thesis Statement: Mr. ABC is my favorite politician.
Plan: I will be discussing Mr. ABC's sincerity, devotion, higher qualification, and courage.
- e. Your plan tells the sequence of your body paragraphs.
- f. The examiner may pick one random point from the list e.g. devotion and see if your second body paragraph is about devotion or not. (Sequence matters a lot)

THE SECOND PART OF AN ESSAY: BODY

The second part of your essay includes as your body *Paragraphs*. They may be 15 to 20 in number. It is imperative to understand the technique of paragraph writing. All your paragraphs must be according to this technique. The examiner may pick any paragraph to see if you've followed the technique or if you know what it is.

PARAGRAPH WRITING: A group letters is a word. A group of words (having complete sense) is sentence. A group of sentence (supporting one idea) is a paragraph. Paragraph Writing just like essay writing has three parts. Paragraph writing is nothing but solid evidence. Paragraph writing is an art. Like other arts, it can also be learnt and mastered by learning some principles and acting upon them. You will have here the most important techniques and principles for writing paragraphs and later essays. They are as follows:

1. *Topic Sentence (Will):* It is advisable to state your point in very first sentence. The point or an idea of a paragraph is called a topic sentence. Whole the paragraph relates to topic sentence. Make sure all the details are directly relevant to topic sentence? If you add irrelevant details your paragraph is going to be weaker, and weak paragraph does not capture the attention of the examiner. If you fail to catch your examiner's heed, he/she will not read your

paragraph with interest and finally he/she may put it a side. In paragraph, first and last places are very important. Induce your examiner in first sentence to read more and have interest so that he/she likes your writing skills.

- It is the first single sentence.
- It is the heading in a form of a sentence.
- It must contain *one main idea*.

An effective topic sentence does two things. First, it provides the topic of a paragraph. Second, it demonstrates the writer's point of view/idea/opinion about the topic. For example, if you're writing an essay related to crime, and your first portion of paragraphs is on 'causes of crimes', then one of your paragraphs may be on unemployment as a cause of crime. Your topic sentence would be: '*Unemployment is one of the causes behind crime*'. So in this sentence "Unemployment" is a topic and "is one of the causes behind crime" is a writer's idea about topic.

Remember, your topic is a general idea. Supporting idea is specific one. This will be described below.

2. *Supporting Arguments/ Supporting Details (Am)*: You have made a point and provided an effective topic sentence. Now it is time for supporting the point you have made. To support your point you may provide logical or specific reason, example or experience, etc. Even if you mention one example, that would be enough. Your supporting details should be concise so that your examiner can understand it. The more brief and specific your supporting details are, the better your examiner can make picture of your paragraph in his/her mind. This portion would have five to six lines while you're justifying your topic sentence.

Paragraph has main idea, which is general idea and the details which support the general idea (topic) are specific ones. To write an effective and impressive paragraph, you should understand the general and specific ideas.

Do you know that you use general and specific ideas on daily basis? Yes, you do, but you do not know about them. For example: you may say that "Unemployment is one of the causes behind crime" and after that you go on telling how it causes crime. So in this example "Unemployment is one of the causes behind crime" is general idea (topic sentence) and the "causes" which you provide are the specific details and strong evidence about topic.

Guys, remember that the details in your paragraph clearly relate to and support your topic sentence. If details are irrelevant, your paragraph is going to lose unity. If unity is lost, nothing is in paragraph. For example: if your topic is, "Economy of Pakistan is going down day by day" so in this topic you should discuss only the reasons of going down of economy with examples, experience, some study etc. You should not discuss political aspect of Pakistan because topic is economy not politics. If you mix relevant and irrelevant details in your paragraph your paragraph will not be read by anyone.

3. *Concluding Sentence (Was)*: A mere reflection of your topic sentence. It means that it is the restatement of topic sentence.

COHERENCE: Writer should know the ways of organising the support in a paragraph. Coherence is basically the flow that you have to maintain in your paragraphs as well as your whole essay. He/she should also learn signal words (transitional words), which increases effectiveness of a paragraph. Transitions are words or phrases which show relationships among ideas. They are like signposts which are installed on roads to show the direction to the travellers. The signposts are installed to facilitate travellers to tell them where to move now. Transitions are like a bridge which connects two roads. As bridges connect two roads so is the job of transitions. They connect two thoughts and direct the reader that writer is connecting another reason with the first or writer is introducing another idea to support the topic. You must use transitional words.

Coherence can be maintained with the help of transitional words/ connectors. Use transitions before you introduce any new idea. They'll help you organise and connect new idea, and they will help your readers follow the direction of your thoughts. Here are some transitions for you to use: therefore, however, firstly, secondly, furthermore etc. You can also use time order to arrange your supporting ideas in a way they occur or arrange them in a chronological order, for example: first this happened then this after that this finally, etc. This method is mainly followed in narration or direction. Use transitions wherever they are required.

There are mainly two types of coherence that are as follows:

- 1) **Inter-paragraph Coherence:** Between the first and the next paragraph
- 2) **Intra-paragraph Coherence:** Coherence within the paragraph

THE THIRD PART OF AN ESSAY: CONCLUSION

While writing your conclusion, you must be very clear about your stance i.e. it must be the same as it was in your introduction paragraph. It can range from five to six sentences. You must be like *'What I was saying was right, I still believe that I was right, I have proved above that I was right, and I am stating it again what I believe in'*. Furthermore, make sure that you finish your essay on a positive and optimistic note.

SUPPLEMENTARY TIPS

“Writing is not an easy task, nor is it everybody's business. It needs a lot of practice. One has to start from scratch and continue writing until one gets mastery in art of composition. It can't be done randomly or accidentally. Don't entertain the notion that you know everything about the subject, nor ever claim that you have written the best of composition ever written. Bear in mind that your attempt is merely one of the creation on a given subject. There may be certain better attempts than yours and even best ones of all you can ever imagine or create. I think that with practice, patience and painstaking attention to standard writing skills, you can improve quality of your write-up to an acceptable and enviable level.” - *Prof. Ghulam Hussain Manghar, IBA Sukkur*

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ESSAY WRITING

- 1) Quantity doesn't matter but quality does.
- 2) The examiner needs to see your structure and knowledge i.e your own opinion expressed in clear and simple English in a convincing manner.
- 3) Avoid using idiomatic verbosity or technical diction, nothing else can irritate the examiner more than this so called stunt of yours.
- 4) The placement of your thesis statement and topic sentence must be correct. Give them what they want.
- 5) Try to improvise the knowledge you have gained from other subjects; relate your knowledge and extract convincing arguments. You may come up with points from Islamic Studies or even General Science. Let your creative juices flow.
- 6) Do not prepare pet essays. Essays are never asked on one topic, it is usually a relation between two or more concepts.
- 7) Keep things simple, clear, and follow the basics.
- 8) Essay never decides your allocation so don't try to impress the examiner, just try to pass. That'll be a great favor you'd be doing for yourself.

NOTABLE POINTS FOR ENGLISH ESSAY PAPER

- 1) Read all essay tips and select those issues which you have prepared the best.
- 2) Select that essay which you can best attempt considering thoughtfully the aspect which is asked.
- 3) Now turn your sheet and cross the page No. 25 - the last page - and start doing your rough work on that page.
- 4) Thoroughly explore your mind and bring out all relevant points of that issue on paper.
- 5) Now pick those points which are most suitable for your outline.
- 6) Make a logical outline depending solely upon the statement or topic of essay set by the examiner.
- 7) Reconsider each point for its relevancy and order in the outline.
- 8) Review your points and see if the used words can be replaced with more catchy or striking words. Remember, outline is like a cover of your essay which clearly depicts what is wrapped inside. So give it due consideration and time before starting your essay.
- 9) On rough pages, write an introduction for the essay. Articulate it with best words possible.
- 10) Now reconsider your outline and introduction and assess whether it fulfills the demands of the given essay. Only if you are satisfied with that rough draft proceed with the essay, otherwise reject it and attempt your second best essay on similar pattern. This is important because you would not get a second chance before one year if you fail in this paper.
- 11) This exercise would certainly take time but do not be panic even if it takes 40-45 minutes because you have done all the hard work. All you have to do is to write that outline and introduction neatly on your answer sheet and then proceed with the essay following the outline that you have already prepared.

MY TAKE ON ENGLISH ESSAY

It is an open secret that writing standard English and grammatical accuracy play a vital role in success in essay writing for CSS Exam. You should know the art of literary and scholarly writing. It needs a long discussion to expatiate about improving written English but let me give you some rudimentary tips. A basic attribute which is to learn idiomatic usage in writing an essay should be developed. For earning grammatical accuracy in your written expression, one should study English grammar books thoroughly (not cursorily) to learn the correct usage of grammatical units i.e. verbs, adverbs, adjective, coordination, subordination, subject-verb agreement, phrasal verbs, etc.

There are two parts in Essay i.e. reading and writing. Reading quality books enhances one's vision and also increases the capability to write academically. As mentioned in earlier posts, there are a few diverse areas that need to be strengthened by every **CSS Aspirant**. Some of the resources are mentioned below that can help greatly.

PART ONE: READING

1) Politics

- a) Politics: A very short introduction (Kenneth Minogue)
- b) Introduction to Political Theory (John Hoffman and Paul Graham)
- c) Introduction to Political Science (Mazhar ul Haq)
- d) Analyzing Politics (Ellen Grigsby)

CSS Beginners' Guide (Aamir Mahar)

e) Penguin Dictionary of Politics

2) Economics

- a) Economics (Partha Dasgupta)
- b) Issues in Pakistan Economy (Akbar S. Zaidi)
- c) Economic Survey of Pakistan

3) World History

- a) World History (V.B Rao)
- b) Western Heritage (Donald Kaghan)
- c) International History (Anthony Best)

4) Literature

- a) Conquest of Happiness (Bertrand Russell)
- b) Pleasures of Philosophy (Will Durrant)
- c) Unpopular Essays (Bertrand Russell)
- d) Siddhartha (Hermann Hesse)
- e) Skeptical Essays (Bertrand Russell)

5) Philosophy

- a) Sophie's World (Jostein Gardner)
- b) Philosophy: the Power of Ideas (Brooke Noel Moore)

PART TWO: WRITING

The stages of academic writing are as follows:

- 1) **Basic Grammar:** Tenses, Parts of Speech, and Use of Punctuation.
- 2) **Sentence Structure:** Types of Sentences, Parallelism, Sentence problems, and Types of Clauses.
- 3) **Paragraph Writing:** Paragraph Structure, Outlining, Unity and Coherence, Kinds of Logical Order, and Concrete Support.
- 4) **Essay Writing:** The Process of Academic Writing, Components of Essay, Patterns of Essay Organization, Outline-Making, and Capacity Building.
- 5) **Developing Expression:** Analysis, Evaluation of knowledge and proper linking.

RESOURCES FOR WRITING

Always remember; the key to good writing is good reading and extensive practice.

- a) English Precis & Composition (Karimdad Chughtai)
- b) Exploring the world of English (Sayyid Saadat Ali Shah)
- c) English Grammar in Use (Raymond Murphy)
- d) College Writing (Macmillan)
- e) Essay Writing Notes (Aamir Mahar)
- f) Exploring Writing (John Langan)
- g) College Writing (Susan Anker)

3 STAGES FOR WRITING A SHORT ESSAY

STAGE 1

1. Select your strong area of writing in the beginning, for instance, law students can write easily on law topics & literature students can write on literary topics
2. Short essay is necessary for all because it is a base for long essay and 12 papers.
3. Short essay should be of 250-300 words.
4. Introduction should be of 50-70 words.
5. Supportive arguments in second paragraph should be of 150-200 words.
6. Conclusion should be of 50 words

STAGE 2

7. Introduce your topic and take a stance in your introduction.
8. Support your arguments with reason, logic and examples in 150-200 words. Add proverbs, national, international local examples.
9. Prove your stance in conclusion in the end.

STAGE 3

10. Write correct but simple English.
11. Read the topic before you write
12. Do brainstorming before writing.
13. Write points in out line after brainstorming
14. Organize your points.
15. Now, it is high time to write your essay.

FPSC: ESSAY REQUIREMENTS

Majority of the candidates relies on the stereotypical substandard material available in the market instead of keeping themselves abreast of updated information and using their own mind and intelligence for innovative and genuine approaches. They demonstrate glaring flaws both in comprehension and expression. They abruptly jump at writing on a topic without comprehending its meaning, spirit, direction and range. Consequently a loose and lengthy jumbled lot produced without any sense of relevance, clarity, coherence and structured organization. From the angle of the question paper it is heartening fact that the candidates attempt almost all topics. This manifests that due to multiple orientations and thematic variety of the given topics, the candidates do not have to face any undesirable inconvenience in finding a subject.

WHAT FPSC REQUIRES YOU TO FOCUS ON?

- **Updated Information:** Improve the quality of your arguments through effective research and extensive reading.
- **Innovative and Genuine Expression:** Learn to write whatever's on your mind on the paper academically.
- **Comprehension:** Understand the topic's meaning, spirit, direction and range.
- **Components of the Essay:** Develop a sense of relevance, clarity, coherence and structured organization.
- **Strengthen your Core Areas:** Thematic variety of the topics is provided, hence, choose a niche and strengthen it.

ESSAY CHECKING TECHNIQUE OF THE FPSC EXAMINER

I look at the outline first and foremost. There are three possible types of outlines:

- 1) Relevant, to the point
- 2) Twisted, convoluted and confusing
- 3) Incomprehensible due to poor English

The last two outline-producing varieties of candidates are half-failed in my mind when I reach the end of their outlines. Then I look for the thesis statements and again there can be three types of them

- 1) Coherent and relevant
- 2) Irrelevant
- 3) Incomprehensible

For the third variety, their thesis statement marks the end of their stories. I skim through the pages of their sheets in next few seconds just to find out more blunders and finally award them, marks in 0-20 range. For the second type of thesis statements, if the outline is irrelevant too, I give a read to their introductory and concluding paragraphs, and just a fleeting glance to the material they've written in the body. If they used correct English, I award them marks just for doing that. If the thesis is irrelevant but the outline was relevant, I give them a fighting chance. I read the introductory paragraph, if it conveys some sense as a whole, I continue. If the essay is coherent and strong till the end, and my eyes don't find mistakes while turning the pages, this type of candidate can make through. For the candidates who have relevant outlines and thesis statements, they are already half-passed when I reach the end of their introductory paragraphs. I skim through their essays just to check if they have written the same stuff as their outline inside or if they have digressed and gone beyond the scope of the title. If they haven't done that to an unforgiving extent, they are clear. Some candidates produce very good outlines and introductory paragraphs. Once I have decided to pass them, I read whole of their essays just to decide how much they deserve above 40. But this is a very rare variety.

(I have quoted a person who used to be an examiner for FPSC. They don't need to read the whole essay just to ascertain this. He could know whether a candidate knew proper English just by reading five to six sentences.)

ENGLISH PRÉCIS & COMPOSITION PAPER

Actually, English Précis and Composition Paper is more concerned with your expressions rather than the arguments. It's a test of your literary skills and command over English language and grammar. Do hand-pick standard books on grammar and cast your eyes over them, read between the lines and avoid cramming. Here, every portion is dealt with separately.

PRÉCIS WRITING:Précis writing is one of the most useful skills you can acquire for your work both as a student and as a professional. Précis writing involves summarizing a document to extract the maximum amount of information, then conveying this information to a reader in minimum words. A précis is a clear, compact logical summary of a passage. It preserves only the essential or important ideas of the original.

Here, I have for you a wonderful piece of advice regarding "Précis Writing". I am sure Précis Writing is a hard nut to crack for all the aspirants out there, but not anymore I hope I do justice with the transferring of the knowledge. Well, I try my level best. However, none of you is bound to follow this technique. If you find it useful, great! If not, even better. **I hope we all learn a lot. Enjoy!**

PREREQUISITES OF PRÉCIS WRITING

A good précis shows the writing skills of a candidate. It must have the following qualities.

1. Clarity: Clarity means getting your message across so that the receiver can understand what the writer is trying to convey. It is the basic and essential need of a précis. The ideas should be clear and understandable. There should not be any ambiguity in your writing. The writer can achieve clarity by using simple language and simple structure. If your précis is not understandable to the reader it will lose its importance and meanings for the reader.

2. Correctness: Mistakes in your writings always irritate the reader. Of course mistakes are never intentional; even so there is no excuse for them. At the time of writing or composing a précis the writer must ensure that the facts and figures are correct. Structure of sentences and spellings of words must be correct because a single mistake in structure and spelling may spoil the message. We may consider the mistakes under the following headings:

- Misspelled words
- Mistakes in figures and dates
- Mistakes in punctuation
- Mistakes of grammar and structure

3. Objectivity: Objectivity means the ability to present or view facts uncolored by feelings, opinions and personal bias. While making a précis, the writer should adopt an objective approach. He should not give and add his personal opinion and ideas in a précis. A précis should be purely a summary of the original text without any addition.

4. Coherence: Coherence means the logical and clear interconnection of ideas in a written piece of work. A good précis should be coherent. The ideas which are presented in a précis must have a logical connection and they all should be interrelated. In short we may say that the ideas should be well knitted so that the writer may not be confused and lose his interest.

5. Completeness: Another striking feature of a good précis is completeness. A précis should be complete in all respects. Completeness means that the writer should include all the important facts in a précis. To make it short he should not omit the important ideas. This mistake on the part of the writer will spoil the importance and meaning of the précis.

6. Conciseness: Conciseness is a desirable quality of a good précis. Conciseness means to say all that needs to be said and no more. The writer should write what is necessary and avoid writing unnecessary details. A concise piece of work conveys the message in the fewest possible words. But one point must be kept in mind that the writer should not omit some basic and essential facts to achieve conciseness. To achieve conciseness, notice the following suggestions:

- Omitting unnecessary details
- Eliminate wordy expressions
- Include only relevant material
- Avoid unnecessary repetition

GENERAL TIPS FOR PRÉCIS WRITING

- 1) Précis Writing is the first question of the subjective part.
- 2) Follow the sequence of the English Composition and Précis paper, so the examiner knows that you don't lack self-confidence
- 3) Spend almost 1 hour on this section
- 4) Be confident
- 5) The problems in précis writing are sometimes difficult vocabulary. Don't Panic. There are two types of meanings of difficult words.

Lexical Meanings: exact meanings out of the dictionary

Contextual Meanings: meaning of the word according to the context in which it is used. Contextual Meanings can be understood from the former sentence in which it is used or the latter. (Remember: Word is not important, the position of the word is.)

- 6) Start practicing Précis from passages of Psychology and Philosophy books. So go and get a pair of books on Philosophy and Psychology, read them with dictionary on and build your vocabulary, and then later start Past Papers.

For instance,

2005 précis passage was taken from book "Modern Reading in Psychology"

2006 précis passage was taken from "Pleasures of Philosophy" by Will Durant

2017 précis passage was taken from "In the Praise of Idleness" by Bertrand Russell

STEP BY STEP GUIDANCE FOR PRÉCIS WRITING

A well written précis should be a serviceable substitute for the original work. The goal of a précis is to preserve the core essence of the work in a manner that is both clear and concise. Here, I'm going to guide you step by step for Précis Writing.

- 1) Précis-writing is a very fine exercise in reading. Most aspirants read carelessly and retain only a vague idea of what they have read. Nothing provides a stronger corrective to such a habit than the practice of putting down briefly the substance of what has been just read. Précis-writing forces you to pay attention to what you have read. No one can write a summary of any passage unless he has read it attentively and grasped its meaning. Thus, summarizing is an excellent training in concentration. It teaches one to read with the mind as well as with the eye. Read the passage for the first time slowly in order to grasp the overall idea. (*Only 15–20% meaning will be comprehended at this time*)
- 2) In the second reading, highlight certain points. Points are divided into two categories;
 - a) 'Are's': Facts and Figures (*You can't change them.*)
 - b) 'Are not's': Explanations and Details.

You are given 20 % permission to use words as they are, these are the facts and figures, Highlight them! In a normal passage of 300 to 400 words, you will be able to find 8 or 10 or 12 points.
- 3) On a fresh page, write down a heading "*Points for the Précis*" and enlist all the points in *your own words* in a chronological order.
- 4) On the next page, make a heading "*Rough Draft*", with the help of Connectors/ Transitional Phrases, write down all the points you wrote on the previous page in a single whole paragraph.
- 5) Count the words of the original passage and the ones in your Rough Draft. Relaxation of 10 words is given by the examiner so that you do not miss out the important points. (*Do not try to be over-efficient and avail this opportunity.*)
- 6) Start editing your Rough draft and apply one word substitution or other techniques where applicable.
- 7) On a fresh Page, make a heading '*Neat Draft*'. Write down the material left after editing your '*Rough Draft*'. You need to write down your '*Neat Draft*' within 105-110 words (if the original passage is 300 words, follow the 1/3rd Rule)
- 8) Using a Black Marker, write down "Words in the Original Passage: 300 words" on a separate line. On the next, write down "Required Number of Words=100 words". On the next, "Words in the Précis: 108" (*This is just a sample.*)
- 9) **Title of the Précis:** "*Title Giving*" can be done by either giving "*Points of The Précis*" a read and come up with a title, or figure it out through the Topic

Sentence, which is either written in the first sentence or the concluding one. The former method is more reliable.

The title of the Précis must be given, even if it is not asked. The hint for the title can be found in the central idea of the passage. In fact, the title is the central idea of the central idea—the Précis of the Précis. It should also be remembered that every word of the title (except Articles, Prepositions and Conjunctions) should begin with a capital letter. It can be:

- a) In a phrase: “Unemployment is one of the reasons behind Crime”
- b) Like the Topic of an Essay:
 “Unemployment: a cause behind Crime” (Most Effective Title)

Go back to the portion where you wrote “Points of the Précis” and “Rough Draft” and put a cross using a Black Marker. The whole point of this exercise is to make the examiner see that you have followed a proper structure while attempting précis. S/he’ll be impressed.

Read the following passage and answer the question given at the end:

A life of action and danger moderates the dread of death. It not only gives us fortitude to bear pain, but teaches us at every step the precarious tenure on which we hold our present being. Sedentary and studious men are the most apprehensive on this score. Dr. Johnson was an instance in point. A few years seemed to him soon over, compared with those sweeping contemplations on time and infinity with which he had been used to pose himself. In the still life of a man of letters there was no obvious reason for a change. He might sit in an arm chair and pour out cups of tea to all eternity would it had been possible for him to do so. The most rational cure after all for the inordinate fear of death is to set a just value on life. If we mere wish to continue on the scene to indulge our head-strong humour and tormenting passions, we had better be gone at once,; and if we only cherish a fondness for existence according to the good we desire from it, the pang we feel at parting which it will not be very server.

Questions:

1. Suggest a suitable title for the passage.
2. Make a précis of the passage.

Solution:

1. **Suitable Title:** The fear if death.
2. **Summary or Précis:** If we lead an active life facing dangers, we will less fear death. People, who lead a lazy and peaceful life, are the most afraid of death. The most sensible way of getting rid of the fear of death is to value life properly. If we do not give unnecessary importance to our life, we will not feel the pang of death.

COMPREHENSION:

Use *Sandwich Strategy*. Do not read the paragraph first. Read the questions first, so that a detector is set in your mind. When you read the questions first, you’ll detect the answers right away. Underline those sentences, read the questions again. Answer now, in your own words only taking the concept and facts and figures from the paragraph. Answer in a very comprehensive manner in 4 to 5 sentences. If the examiner asks you to write the meaning of the underlined words, lexical meaning is not required, contextual meaning is required.

Read the given passage then give brief answers to the questions placed at the end, in your own words (CSS 2002):

There is indeed, something inexpressibly *pleasing* in the annual renovation of the world and the new display of the treasures of nature. The darkness and cold of winter with the naked deformity of every object, on which we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what we have escaped, as for what we may enjoy. Every budding Flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The spring affords to a mind free from the disturbance of cares or passions almost everything that our present state makes us capable of enjoying. The Variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odors, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal from the growth of his food and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gaiety, significantly expressed by Smile of nature. (Samuel Johnson)

Questions:

1. Give meanings of the bold expressions in the passage in your own words.

Annual renovation (yearly renewal)

Treasures of Nature (phenomenal beauty)

Naked deformity (exposed disfigurement)

Succeeding season (following period)

Warm situation (pleasant weather)

Variegated Verdure (colourful freshness)

Grateful odors (welcoming fragrances)

Clemency of the weather (pleasantness of climate)

Air of gaiety (scene of happiness)

Smile of nature (beauty of nature)

2. Say, how an early budding flower becomes a messenger of happy days?

Answer: After the dullness of the winter, an early budding flower announces spring. The scenic beauty shoos cares away and bring happiness. Fields and woods become colourfully fresh. Fragrances spread everywhere. Melodies can be heard. Almost every shade of nature starts its charm and attractiveness.

3. Who, according to the writer can make the best of the spring season?

Answer: A human being can make the best of spring season. He can feast his eyes on the scenic beauty around. He can enjoy the attractiveness of the multicoloured forests and lush green fields. Melodious singing of the birds can also soothe his ears. The beauty of the spring can free him from worries and cares of life.

4. Why are all animals glad at the approach of spring seasons?

Answer: In the spring the animals are glad to have plenty of food which was unavailable during winter. The animals either store food or face hanger as snow covers everything. The spring brings fresh fodder for the animals. The mild weather also makes animals happy. They leave their hideouts and graze.

SENTENCE CORRECTION:

Sentence Correction is essentially a test of English grammar and usage, so the best preparation for these questions is a review of the different grammar rules and their usage. I strongly advise you to pay attention to elements of grammar and sentence construction. There may be 10,000 rules of grammar but the Examiner judges you in the exceptional ones. Make a separate note book in which you need to write beneath it that **where** was the mistake, **what** was the rule, and **how** it works. Many GMAT Sentence Correction books are available on Google. Get one book and start practicing it!

For example:

He not only comes there for swimming but also for coaching new swimmers. (CSS 2017)

Correct: He comes there not only for swimming but also for coaching new swimmers.

Structure Rule: 'Either ... or', 'neither nor', 'both and', 'not only.... but also' should be followed by the same parts of speech.

VOCABULARY:

For improving your vocabulary, read as much as possible. Peruse books on a variety of topics and in many different genres. Underline words you do not know, try to determine the meaning of the word based on the context and then it up in the dictionary. The key to a better vocabulary is regular practice and progress. Maybe you can't learn a hundred new words a day, but you can learn one or two a day, totaling thousands of new words over the years. Suppose, if you remember ten words daily, think that after a month there would be 300 new words in your memory and it would make a special difference to the owner. I think English newspapers (Dawn Newspaper, The Economist) are the best source for it and keep in mind that you can't grasp them properly until you use them in your own sentences and work on three to four synonyms for that word. Moreover, the comprehension and precise paragraphs may contain hellish and hard words of vocabulary that may impede you getting what actually is being said. If you manage to crack those words, it would make quite easy for you to write your precise and answer the questions with good understanding. Here's an example for you.

Precipice: cliff, crag, rock face, brink, scarp

Sentence: The path had sheer rock on one side and a *precipice* on the other.

Wait and think, this word has 5 synonyms. You can use these synonyms instead of using same word again and again. So, open your mind like a child and you will learn words faster. Work on this strategy at least for one month and then learn how to use right word at right place using any lexicon (Recommended: Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th Edition). Another interesting way to learn vocabulary is through mnemonics (another file named Barron's Mnemonics can easily be download from Google.)

According to the perusal of English Précis and Composition Paper (CSS 2017), a good command over vocabulary is a mandatory factor to get through this paper. Vocabulary building is a systematic progress. Rote learning doesn't promise fruitful results. Many brilliant candidates may memorize hundreds of words but are unable to recall the same during exams. In order to keep the words in active memory, candidates are required to chalk out a comprehensive plan for 'vocabulary building'.

PHRASAL VERBS:

Understand the meaning of prepositions. If there are 1000 verbs and you understand 10 prepositions, you'll be able to understand 10, 000 phrasal verbs. Once the concept of prepositions is clear, Have a look at 10 Phrasal Verbs and comprehend the way a preposition changes the meaning of a verb. 'Building of the Perception' is going to help you in paper.

TRANSLATION & IDIOMS:

Read the sentence and try to make out the sense of the sentence. Try not to translate as it is, translate in "almost" the same words. You can divide the given in the following segments:

1. Subject Verb Resolve
2. Phrase Resolve
3. Voice Resolve
4. Narration Resolve

5. Context Resolve
6. Conjunction Resolve
7. Idiom Resolve
8. Omission
9. Addition
10. Draft Resolve

FOR EXAMPLE:

کچھ ماہرین لسانیات نے اردو کی ابتداء کا سراغ قدیم آریاؤں کے زمانے میں لگانے کی کوشش کی ہے۔

1. Subject Verb Resolve: Some language experts - tried
2. Phrase Resolve: Origin of Urdu, Ancient Arian Era
3. Context Resolve: Find the roots, Find the traces

TRANSLATION: Some language experts tried to find the traces of Urdu in Ancient Arian era.

Idiomatic expression is not translated word for word. For idioms, try to read between the lines. Recommended book is: Azhar Idioms or Oxford Idioms

PAIR OF WORDS: Aspirants need conceptual study. Exploring the world of English by Sayyid Saadat Ali Shah and any other book, try to make out the difference of the words. Explain the meaning of both words first and then make clear sentences.

For example:

Veracity, Voracity (CSS 2017)

They questioned the veracity of her story. (*truth, truthfulness*)

Arsalan was voracity in nature. (*extreme appetite*)

GROUPING OF WORDS (SYNONYMS & ANTONYMS):

Practice these from GRE Barron's Book preferably 15th Edition. You'll find a portion there for grouping of words. Plus, there are many online sources to practice that from, all of the grouping of words question of 2016-17 came from a website (just so you know). Recommended book is: Synonyms & Antonyms by Tariq Ali Khan

GRAMMAR:

Get good grammar books preferably Practical English Grammar (A. J. Thomson, A. V. Martinet), All about Competitive English (Prof. Muzaffar Bukhari), Practical English Usage (Michael Swan), Grammar in Use (Raymond Murphy), and clear your basic grammar skills i.e. Articles, Tenses, and Punctuations. There are a lot of grammar books on internet, do check them and choose whatever suits you best. If you manage to read at least 2 to 3 books on English Grammar, it would be more than enough and would make you confident in written expressions.

ANALOGY:

Analogy questions are used to test both logic and reasoning skills and word knowledge. These questions ask test takers to identify relationships between pairs of words. In order to solve analogy questions, you must first have a clear understanding of the words' definitions and then use that understanding to determine how the words are related. Analogy questions are often described as "*blank is to blank as blank is to blank.*" So for example, puppy : dog :: kitten : _____, is read "puppy is to dog as kitten is to blank." The answer is, of course, "cat." However, the "blank is to blank" format does not really answer the question precisely. More accurately, you might describe the relationship between puppy and dog as "a puppy is a young dog." To determine the missing word, you might say "a kitten is a young..." The key to solving an analogy question is to precisely describe the relationship between the pair of words and then apply the same relationship to determine which word completes the analogy.

Candidates, preparing for this section, should take online practice tests on Analogy Questions.

The relationships that are found in analogy questions fall into several general types.

1. **Worker and article created.** For example, composer : symphony.
2. **Worker and tool used.** For example, surgeon : scalpel.
3. **Tool and object worked on.** For example, saw : wood.
4. **Time sequence.** For example, sunrise : sunset.
5. **Cause and effect.** For example, dawn : twilight.
6. **Degree of intensity.** For example, joy : ecstasy.
7. **Synonyms.** For example, lie : prevaricate.
8. **Antonyms.** For example, real : fictional.
9. **Sex.** For example, bull : cow.
10. **Symbol or representation.** For example, dove : peace.
11. **Action and significance.** For example, cry : sorrow.
12. **Manner.** For example, shamble : walk.
13. **Type and Category.** For example, orange : citrus.

ADVICE FOR ASPIRANTS

To be specific for spelling, “gathering” the words from newspapers and writing them down in your notebook will itself help you to remember the spelling. For those who still find it difficult, writing the spelling 10-20 times is suggested. You should avoid using “short language” while chatting on social media. Your brain is very adaptive; such short words (misspelled) may cause trouble while taking exams. So always use properly spelled words while you converse.

A POINT TO UNDERSTAND

This paper is all about practice. Get your work checked by someone who could point out your mistakes. The point of all of the above exercises is to improve your academic written English. Though I am personally against the way this exam is trying to judge one’s written English, however, try to improve your general English standard and you’d be good to go. **All the best!**

GENERAL SCIENCE & ABILITY PAPER

General Science and Ability Paper is a very technical and a highly scoring subject; make sure you make the best of it. General Science Portion carries 60 marks and General Ability is of 40 marks. In the General Science Portion, you need to be precise and relevant with your answers. For example, if you are asked to answer a 5-mark question then you merely need to write 5-6 different, relevant, and coherent points. Try and give answers in bullets form in GSA paper. For instance, as in 2016 they asked a question on *Artificial Intelligence (AI)*, your answer should look like:

1. What is AI? Definition.
2. When did it start to evolve? Mention any famous scientists, dates, names, etc.
3. Where is it used? i.e. in what fields
4. What are the recent trends?
5. How can it be improved?
6. What is its future?

As I mentioned earlier, try to answer the ‘wh’ questions (*What? When? Where? How? What ought to be?*). Aspirants should be good at drawing. Always try to make

diagrams, graphs, etc. wherever necessary. Always remember being precise since time management is the *key* in this paper. Many candidates spend too much time in General science portion that they miss out on questions from General Ability.

The General Ability Portion can fetch you good marks as most of the mathematical and analytical questions carry solid marks. This portion comprises: *Quantitative Ability (Reasoning Concepts and Ability)* to reasons quantitatively and solve problems in a basic mathematical skills, basic arithmetic, algebra and geometry (average, ratios, rates, percentage, quantitative setting. angles, triangles, sets, remainders, equations, symbols, rounding of numbers random sampling). *Ability Logical Reasoning* includes the process of using a rational, systematic series of steps based on sound mathematical procedures and given statements to arrive at a conclusion. *Analytical Reasoning/Ability* includes visualizing, articulating and solving both complex and uncomplicated problems and concepts and making decisions that are sensible based on available information, including demonstration of the ability to apply logical thinking to gathering and analyzing information. *Mental Abilities scales* that measures specific constructs such as verbal, mechanical, numerical and social ability. Aspirants are advised to practice General Ability portion as much as possible. It will spare time for you which you can utilize in the General Science portion.

In my opinion, consult howstuffworks.com & www.khanacademy.org as it is a good website for GSA (watch more and more videos of geography, math, biology and various other topics). And please never rely on your skills and background knowledge since this is the only paper in which you can make a lot of difference with others. And never plan half but always be fully prepared. And one thing you must be doing in next hour is the installation of Encarta Encyclopedia in your computer (laptop). Pick a subject and discover each and every facet of the topic. Get the book that covers the complete syllabus such as:

1. General Science and Ability (Mian Shafiq)
2. Test of Reasoning (Edgar Thorpe)
3. GRE's books for General Ability Portion.

Along with reading books, make sure that you make Bullet Notes for Revision Purposes and for MCQs. In a nutshell, the key to ace this exam you have to manage your time properly, stay relevant, and be precise in your answer.

CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

It will be no exaggeration to term Current Affairs as the backbone of CSS Exam because if this subject is strong, then half of the work is done. Current Affairs plays a pivotal and overlapping role in most of the compulsory and optional subjects. Here, through this write-up I will try to guide you through the art of tackling the Current Affairs paper.

SUBJECT ANALYSIS:

Current Affairs as a subject is quite an easy one. We all know what is happening all around us. You simply need to be tactical in your approach and justification of your stance is highly crucial. Most aspirants consider these subjects as the most difficult obstacles to defeat i.e. Essay and Current Affairs Papers. It is so because candidates have to build the edifice of their preparation. In short, it is the backbone of CSS Exam, the 'key'. Apparently, Current Affairs is only a single compulsory paper yet its use in Essay, Pakistan Affairs and Islamic Studies as well as in the optional ones like Geography, International Relations, International Law,

Political Science, etc., is all too visible. That's the reason why a huge chunk of candidates opts for these subjects.

SYLLABUS ANALYSIS:

The syllabus has been divided into 3 Major Areas; Domestic Affairs, External Affairs, and Global Issues. All of the domestic affairs of Pakistan such as political, economic along with social issues comprise the first part. Relations with neighbors, Muslim world, USA, and regional as well as International organizations are the features of External Affairs of Pakistan. Global Issues constitute all the current (ISIS, Muslims in Burma, etc.) as well as decades old global issues (Kashmir issue and Palestine issue). At least 2 questions appear from all of the 3 areas but External Affairs and Global Issues are majorly focused. (Check 2016 paper)

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Analytical mind plays decisive role in one's success. FPSC has too changed her course from encouraging rote learning to appreciate analytical mind. If you do not have analytic skill it would be very difficult to attempt paper with reason and logic. If your paper has no show of mind you can't expect any bright success. Anyhow to develop analytical skill is not too difficult you just need to read what one says and put argument accordingly. First you would face difficulty to pen argument but you can learn from editorials or opinions of newspaper where writer always support her option only on bases of logic. You can easily judge that different writers support their points on different ground and they often vary from each other if endorse one policy other endorse any other policy you can judge that on what points one endorse a specific policy and on what points one oppose that policy. Another way is to develop these skill is to discuss contemporary affairs with your friends, try to get opinions of different people who belong to different regions argue with them on specific points through this way you can easily gather different viewpoints view on specific issues. Remember learn how to acknowledge true reason; do not dare stick to your point if one provides enough logic to support her point instead of your insistence on your viewpoint, which is averse of logic. So, one must stay relevant, precise, and logical with one's answers. Try to theorize your answer, hence, an understanding of the history and politics is pertinent. Examiner requires analysis so ensure that you are able to justify your stance.

While attempting the paper, most candidates do not understand the questions before answering them. There is a wide gulf between what they write and what has been actually asked. For example, the question is: "Resolution of Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan can bring peace and prosperity in the region. Discuss."

Most candidates would go on writing all they knew about Kashmir while remaining completely oblivious to what has been actually asked. Here, what is required is to discuss only one aspect of the many branches of the Kashmir dispute. So, do read the question again and again to grasp what examiner wants to see in your answer, and then write your points accordingly.

Q. Discuss the causes of extremism and militancy in Pakistani society. Suggest ways and means for the state organs to overcome these issues.

1. Introduction
2. Causes of Extremism and Militancy in Pakistan
 - a) Motivation by religious ideologies and grievances.
 - b) Injustice to Minorities.
 - c) Terrorists will use poverty, social strife, inequality and oppression to their advantage.
 - d) Involvement of Foreign Hand

- e) Several interpretations of Islam.
- f) Illiteracy
- g) Low employment rate
- 3. Ways to Overcome These Issues
 - a) Invigorate law-enforcement agencies.
 - b) More vigilance along borders.
 - c) Depriving criminals of their profits
 - d) Providing necessary technology, harmonizing laws and sharing information.
 - e) Seek negotiated political settlement.
 - f) Reorganize national priorities with education as main concern.
 - g) Prevent others from following the same path and thus succeed in eliminating the terrorism menace.
- 4. Conclusion

External Affair Questions:

How to critically analyze external affairs from different perspectives?

1. Study Relations Through Maps:

Practice making the following three maps so as to memorize them;

- a. World Map
- b. South Asian Map
- c. Pakistan Map

When you have a clear picture of the above maps in your head, it would be easier to deal with current affairs related questions.

2. Influence of other Countries/ Organizations:

We all know that all the countries have some influence and interest in every neighbor country due to inter-dependency. In relation based questions such as Pak-Afghan Relations, Afghanistan has an Indian, Chinese, Iranian, and Russian influence which directly affect the dynamics of Pak-Afghan Relations. Critical analyses of these relations can be discussed in the question.

You write an outline of **Study Relations with Organizations** through this technique. For instance: **European Union (EU)**

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Formation: Answering 'wh' questions
- 3. Objectives and Organizational Structure
- 4. Recent Developments: When was the last conference held and when will the next be held?
- 5. Effectiveness of EU
- 6. Challenges Faced by EU
- 7. Role of Pakistan; Critical analysis required (GSP plus status)
- 8. Conclusion

3. Analyses from Different Perspectives:

Bilateral Relations include Strategic, Political, Economic, Cultural, and Social level interactions. All the more reason studying relations has become quite difficult as two countries interact with each other on different fronts. For instance, Pakistan-China Relations are usually studied on a strategic and an economic front. Whereas, Pak-US relations has been studied from political and economic perspectives.

POINT TO NOTE:

Examiner always asks about a particular aspect of bilateral relations according to the recent developments. As in 2015, there was a huge uproar about restarting the dialogue process between Pakistan and India. Hence, in 2016 he asked questions regarding comprehensive dialogue between Pakistan and India. Note that the question has been asked in context of Dialogue so keeping that in mind we will be formulating an outline.

COMPARISON OF ANSWERS: GENERAL V/S QUESTION SPECIFIC**1) General Technique: Pak-India Relations**

- I. Introduction
- II. Historical Background; Wars, dialogues.
- III. Irritants: Kashmir Issue, Water Disputes, Indian Presence in Afghanistan, Indian Involvement in Pakistan (Presence of Raw), events such as Mumbai carnage and the blame game
- IV. Current Developments
- V. Way Forward/ Recommendations: Role of both Indian and Pakistani government, Role of media, citizens, Multi track Diplomacy, how can the tussle be solved especially Kashmir issue, Role of Afghanistan as a Buffer state, and power sharing percentage.
- VI. Conclusion

2) Question Specific (2016): Discuss the possibilities of progress under the recently agreed rubric of Comprehensive Dialogue between Pakistan and India. In your opinion what are the major constraints at present?

1. Introduction
2. Historical Context: Linking every event with the prospect of dialogue
3. Brief Analysis of Dialogues: How many dialogues occurred and how many were effective if any?
4. Recent Dimensions in terms of hurdles to Peace
 - a. Systematic violation of LOC since 2013 (you may make a South Asia Map here)
 - b. India blotting the image of Pak (blame game)
 - c. Conservative Regime in India
 - d. Growing ties of US and India in context of Nuclear Supplier Group membership
5. Conflicting Foreign Policy Objectives
 - a. Indian Approach toward Pakistan(Regional Policy, and Neighborhood policy)
 - b. Pakistan's understanding of such policies
6. Hurdles in Peace?
 - a. Psychological clash of historical narratives
 - b. Pakistan's India fear
 - c. Legacy of Partition
 - d. South Asia being a breeding ground for extremism
 - e. Accusations
7. Can Peace be possible?

- a. Curriculum Reformation: Removing opposing elements
 - b. Reconstruction of national narratives
 - c. Trade as an effective tool
 - d. Multi-track Diplomacy
 - e. Effective utilization of SAARC's platform
8. Conclusion

5) Domestic and Global Issues Section: Keep a check on the events of later half of the previous year and the start of the year in which exams are to be commenced. You have to be conceptual and analytical in your answers and not factual.

START PREPARING FOR CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

Now, you have got the basic structure ready. Make a separate register for Current Affairs. Daily pick up a national and international newspaper/magazine and look out for any update on your relevant topic and you just need to add that under 'Recent Developments' section. Preferably start preparation of Current Affairs from October till the exam date. Reading newspapers helps you to improve English vocabulary, since most of the vocabulary words for written expressions are high frequency words except the Précis Paper.

STRATEGY FOR READING DAWN NEWSPAPER

For newspaper reading, if it's DAWN, go through the front page, back page, editorial and what nobody will emphasize enough is the 2 international pages, specially the left one which contains opinions and views by Intl' newspapers' writers, plus the business page for just staying in touch with the state of global economy. Monday's supplement on economy is a MUST. Two to three questions in each of Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs and Geography, or even a topic in essay, can be prepared by thorough reading of this supplement, noting down imp stats etc. On average, 3 to 4 articles in each supplement are worth cutting away and preserving from examination point of view.

Aspirants, don't waste your whole day on news paper. Maximum 1-2 hour is sufficient if you are good reader. If you want to improve your composition, rewrite one editorial daily and get it checked. Select 5 new words daily and use those words into sentences. Make short notes from news paper and add facts and figures to-up-date.

RESOURCES FOR CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

- a. Dawn, and Express Tribune
- b. The Economist Magazine (Online)
- c. Current Affairs Digest (Safdar Mehmood)
- d. Foreign Policy Magazine
- e. You should also check online websites including for Current Affairs:
www.newsweekpakistan.com
www.economist.com
www.foreignpolicy.com
www.spiegel.de/international

ANALYTICAL ABILITY:

As I mentioned earlier, the analytical ability should be developed. Aspirant should not be a rote learner. You should be able to analyse the statement and describe it in your own words. Only the availability of knowledge is useless. You should be able to arrange the knowledge in the required format. Keenly observe the method used by the

writers in newspaper articles. They provide logic for every statement they make. You should have clear points against and in favour of different issues. The discussion with the friends can be helpful too. This will make you aware of their points of view. Every point should have logic behind it.

I CAN HELP YOU IN CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

- 1) Choose the questions carefully. Go for the topics about which you have extensive knowledge.
- 2) Make coherent outlines and follow that pattern strictly while answering the question. An outline serves as a snapshot of what lies ahead for the examiner. It facilitates students as well for properly organizing their scheme of answer.
- 3) Proper introduction, analysis, pointers to support the premises and conclusion are some essential constituents of a good answer. Employ a good number of headings and present your paper well.
- 4) Be extremely relevant, targeted and focused. Answer the gist of the question only.
- 5) Avoid passing sweeping statements rather back your arguments with relevant statistics, figures, maps, diagrams, flow charts, examples, case studies, quotations and views of significant authors and experts of the concerned subject. Statistics need to be current and correct. Do not think examiner will not find out if you're misquoting figures.
- 6) Give a proper conclusion.
- 7) Skim through your answer after completion in order to avoid any mistakes.
- 8) Time yourself throughout and complete all your answer well in time. Do not answer more than 35-37 minutes per question.

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER

Before I start on discussing the method, I'd like you all to know that this is my personal take on Pakistan Affairs. You're free to agree or disagree with the method and the suggestions. So, I would request everyone to critically analyze on your own the pros and cons of this method, instead of blindly following it. Though, I'm pretty sure not everyone would understand it. Anyway, I hope it helps. Have a great one!

UNDERSTAND THE SYLLABUS & PAPER PATTERN

Go through the syllabus to understand this division as well as the number of questions appeared in the Papers of Pakistan Affairs (CSS 2016 & CSS 2017). I have re-categorized the syllabus for better comprehension and understanding of this subject.

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER (CSS 2016)

Pakistan Studies Areas (5 Questions)

1. Ideology of Pakistan and Reforms (1) **
2. Pre-Partition Era **
3. Land and People of Pakistan (2)
4. Strategic and Political Aspects (4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19)
5. Foreign Policy (14) *
6. Constitutional Measures of Pakistan (27)

Current Affairs Areas (2 Questions)

7. Socio-Economic Challenges (7, 16, 17, 20, 26, 28)
8. Regional Dynamics (3, 5, 9, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25) **
9. Global Issues (10, 13)

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER (CSS 2017)

Pakistan Studies Areas (4 Questions)

1. Ideology of Pakistan and Reforms (1)
2. Pre-Partition Era
3. Land and People of Pakistan (2) *
4. Strategic and Political Aspects (4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19) **
5. Foreign Policy (14)
6. Constitutional Measures of Pakistan (27) *

Current Affairs Areas (3 Questions)

7. Socio-Economic Challenges (7, 16, 17, 20, 26, 28) *
8. Regional Dynamics (3, 5, 9, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25) **
9. Global Issues (10, 13)

A POINT TO UNDERSTAND

The numbers written in brackets in front of the topics are in accordance with the original syllabus of Pakistan Affairs by FPSC. The Asterisks show the number of questions appeared in the Papers of Pakistan Affairs (CSS 2016 & CSS 2017).

GET THE RIGHT BOOKS FOR PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER

For Research Based Study

1. Pakistan: A modern history (Ian Talbot)
2. Pakistan: History and Politics (Rafiq Afzal)
3. Foreign Policy: A concise history (Abdul Sattar)
4. A concise history of Pakistan (M R Kazmi)
5. Pakistan beyond a crisis state (Maleeha Lodhi)
6. Pakistan: A manifest destiny (Atif Qureshi)
7. Jinnah of Pakistan (Stanley Walport)

For General Reading

1. Pakistan: A hard country (Anatol Levien)
2. The Idea of Pakistan (Stephen Philip Cohen)
3. Struggle for Pakistan (Ayesha Jalal)
4. The Military & Politics in Pakistan (Hasan Askari Rizvi)

From Paper Point of View

1. Pakistan Affairs (Ikram Rabbani)
2. Trek to Pakistan (For Pre Partition) (Ahmad Saeed)
3. The making of Pakistan (K K Aziz)

STRATEGY FOR PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER

- a) **TIME FRAME:** Give around 15 to 20 days to this subject.
- b) **PAST PAPER ANALYSIS (PPA):** Get last 10 years past papers and list them down under each related subheading of the syllabus topics mentioned above. Refer to past paper study/analysis for Pakistan Affairs. Now you have the topic and the general trend as to what types of questions are asked. This would act as your guide.
- c) **READING BOOKS STRATEGY:** Start with the books according to paper point of view. Use them to make the basic structure of your bullet notes. But don't forget to leave a few pages for additional note-taking after each topic. For research based books, you better get them online, skim through them, and only get the relevant material for quality arguments and add them to your

bullet notes. The books for general reading would expand your horizon and give you a deeper insight regarding Pakistan Studies.

- d) **BULLET NOTES STRATEGY:** Get a print out of the PPA. Take the cut-outs of each topic and its past paper questions. Before starting to make notes, paste the relevant topics' PPA Cut-out on the top. This way you'll have the end in mind at all times. Study relevant material from paper point of view Books and internet and construct a basic structure i.e. an outline covering the topic in entirety. Leave 1 or 2 pages for add-on ideas/arguments. Now, you may add further points later or whenever it's feasible for you, but make sure it's before you start your revision process. This exercise would help you outshine others.
- e) **PRACTICE AND REVISION PROCESS:** Revise your bullet notes and keep updating them by reading quality books and adding quality arguments. Practice last ten years MCQs along with Past paper questions. Current affair related topics overlap in Current Affairs and International Relations Papers, which gives you an edge. *You're good to go. Best of Luck!*

SYLLABUS DIVISION OF PAKISTAN AFFAIRS

PAKISTAN STUDIES AREAS

1. IDEOLOGY OF PAKISTAN AND REFORMS

- a) Muslim rule in the Sub-continent, its downfall and efforts for Renaissance
- b) Ideology of Pakistan in the light of Speeches and statements of Allama Iqbal and Quaid- i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.
- c) Movements for reforms
 - 1. Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi
 - 2. Shah Waliullah
 - 3. Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed
 - 4. Aligarh, Deoband, Nadwah, and other educational institutions- Sindh Madrassah and Islamia College Peshawar.

2. PRE-PARTITION ERA (PAST PAPER ANALYSIS)

3. LAND AND PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN (Geography, Society, Natural resources, Agriculture, Industry and education with reference to characteristics, trends and problems.)

4. STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL ASPECTS

- a. Nuclear Program of Pakistan, its Safety and Security; International Concerns
- b. Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan
- c. Political Evolution Since 1971
- d. Evolution of Democratic System in Pakistan
- e. Changing Security Dynamics for Pakistan: Challenges to National Security of Pakistan
- f. Pakistan's National Interest
- g. Challenges to Sovereignty
- h. Non-Traditional Security Threats in Pakistan: Role of Non-State Actors

5. FOREIGN POLICY POST 9/11

6. CONSTITUTIONAL MEASURES OF PAKISTAN (The Recent Constitutional and Legal Debates, the Latest Constitutional Amendments and Important Legislations, Legal Cases and the Role of Higher Courts.)

CURRENT AFFAIRS AREAS

1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

- a. Economic Challenges in Pakistan: Economic Conditions of Pakistan, the Most Recent Economic Survey, the Previous and Current Budgets, and the Problems and Performance of Major Sectors of Economy.
- b. The Prevailing Social Problems of Pakistan and the Strategies to Deal with Them, Poverty, Education, Health and Sanitation.
- c. Ethnic Issues and National Integration
- d. Hydro Politics ; Water Issues in Domestic and Regional Context
- e. Pakistan's Energy Problems and their Effectssa

2. REGIONAL DYNAMICS

- a. Pakistan and Changing Regional Apparatus and Pakistan's Role in the Region
- b. Regional Cooperation Organizations (SAARC, ECO, SCO) and the Role of Pakistan
- c. Pakistan's Relations with Neighbors excluding India
- d. Pakistan and India Relations Since 1947
- e. The Kashmir Issue
- f. The war in Afghanistan since 1979 and its impact on, and challenges to Pakistan in the Post 2014 era.
- g. Proxy Wars: Role of External Elements

3. GLOBAL ISSUES

- a. The Palestine Issue
- b. Pakistan and US War on Terror

ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER

Islamic Studies Paper has always been considered as the most unpredictable and decisive subject along with English Essay and English Composition. The prime reason has been the fact that this paper has to be passed on its own unlike the three GK papers that comprise Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs, and GSA where you need to score an aggregate of 120 marks out of 300. Thus, each year's result surprised many as most of the failed candidates were a victim of this paper. Purely for the sake of paper, set aside your confidence in your command over your faith and seize this opportunity to study Islam in detail. The failure of so many candidates does not mean that their faith is incomplete; rather they fail to understand the essence of questions. There are also many false notions and myths about this paper that the candidates must give moderate views in paper or otherwise prepare to be failed. These notions are false and absurd. There is no room for confusion in Islam so give your clear cut view but do not forget to prove it with effective argumentation and examples. The paper demands a critical approach in every attempted question. Moreover, try to understand contemporary problems from Islamic point of view. It means that the aspirant is asked to answer a question where the solution to a current problem is sought in the light of Islam.

ISLAMIAT PAPER: URDU OR ENGLISH?

There is one more confusion about this paper is attempting it in Urdu or English. This is no issue as the main purpose is checking your knowledge. English or Urdu does not carry any marks of their own, but your argumentation and presentation does. So choose the language in which you can best attempt the paper. There has been a wrong perception that any particular medium of expression can fetch you more marks as compared to the other one. It is highly recommended that you had better go with the medium of expression with which you feel at home and can express yourself in a better manner be that English or Urdu. In my personal capacity and recommendation, I suggest that one should opt this paper in English. The following reasons:

1. One is not enslaved to the formula of writing extended Hadith and Quran References, required in Urdu
2. One is studying everything in English so it is good to keep practicing in the same knowledge
3. The Urdu paper is also attempted from left to right of the answer sheet which creates confusion
4. Good and precise attempt will fetch good marks while in Urdu a lot of effort is required.

PREPARING FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER

The way to prepare is to go through the past 10-15 years of papers. Sort out the most important and repeated 30 questions. Whatever book(s) you are consulting, you must sort out at least 5 Hadiths and 5 Ayats for each topic. Thus you will have some 300 references (Hadiths + Ayats) for all the 30 topics. These 300 references will broaden your vision to a huge extent and you will get the feelings of a religious scholar. Whatever opinion you hold while answering a question will surely be immensely supported by the references. Another very important point worth-bearing in mind is that there are diverse opinions regarding the manner of quoting the references. If you can quote any reference in indirect speech by using your own words but the same message as embodied by the reference, it is considered to be a *Good Approach*. If you can remember the exact words of any reference and can state correctly, it is reckoned as a *Better Approach*. And if you can recall the exact words of any reference along with its reference (Ayats or the narrator of the Hadiths), it will surely be the *Best Approach* and will fetch you maximum marks.

SCORING HIGH IN ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER:

The following suggestions can be helpful in improving the quality of your answer to get the maximum score:

1. Proper, coherent and impressive introduction to an answer is a prerequisite to scoring high in Islamic Studies Paper.
2. After providing an impressive introduction, the answer should be written in a style that is simply rational and coherent.
3. Try to make an outline of each question.
4. Be focused that what you're going to write. There are usually three types of sentences: Issue-based, Argumentative (which may support the issue at hand), Concluding (which are usually suggestion-based).
5. During preparation you should focus basically the Islamic Systems and the questions related to the fundamental problems of human beings and the importance and role of the Holy Quran in finding solutions to them.
6. In paper, there is hardly any heed paid to maintain coherence and linkage between the paragraphs and sequence of events.
7. Do write a relevant Quranic verse before starting to write the answer.
8. One more confusion is about the number of Ayats and Hadith references one has to quote. It purely depends on the question. If you remember any relevant references you should write preferably with other pen and some extra margin left on sides. But even if you do not quote any references, this would not mean a big difference if you answer the question effectively. Many candidates, including the writer, could not quote a single reference in Islamic Studies paper last year (2009) and still scored 70 per cent marks in it.

9. Use of headings is purely defined by the question asked. If you have any suitable heads for your arguments, use them with marker in bold style. But if questions demand critical analysis, you might not need more than a few.
10. Objecting others is, unfortunately, rampant in our society. We hear criticism of every sort almost round the clock. But, in CSS Exam, it is not approved of by the examiners. They just want to assess that which candidate has actually understood the issue and what suggestions he has to help resolve the said issue. It has been witnessed that some students become more than necessary critical while writing the answers to questions related to Western culture or civilization or those related to the issues of women. However, to score high, a balanced approach must be followed.
11. The students do read the books but they fail to utilize their analytical skills and creativity while writing down their answers. The students should consciously try to think about the contemporary challenges to Islam and the ways to tackle those.
12. Aspirants should pay attention to the prevailing trend of questions in the actual paper. So, read quality books and analyze.
13. Numerous aspirants, having no academic background in Islamic Studies, need a lot of guidance but they do not bother to seek any.
14. The last, but not least, are spelling and grammar mistakes. Try to avoid them in the paper.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

1. Islam Its Meaning and Message (Professor Khurshid Ahmed)
2. Islami Nazriya-e-Hayaat (Professor Khurshid Ahmed)
3. Islamic Studies (in Urdu & English) (Hafiz Karimdad Chughtai)
4. Islamic Ideology (S.M Shahid)
5. Documentaries on Islam and other religions (topdocumentaryfilms.com)

SELECTION OF OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

It has been quite rightly said that good subject selection is half a success especially when it comes to CSS Exam. Subjects should neither be finalised very early nor quite late. Aspirants are generally found quite perplexed especially when it comes to finalising their optional subjects. They often fall prey to the ambiguous term such "scoring trend". In this way, most aspirants follow blindly, recommendations made by others and have to rely heavily on the advice of others that often does not prove to be right for every aspirant. After the revised syllabus of 2016, the selection of optional subjects becomes even more crucial. This has come quite hard at the aspirants and has stunned them completely where they were seen biting their nails and scratching their heads after failing to cope with simple yet technical and analytical questions. And, only a scoring mind can score well. As ASP Mufakhar Adeel (2nd Position, CSS-2006) said, *"I did masters in English and LLB. But I neither took English nor any subject of law as my optional. I went for entirely new subjects, the subjects in which I had the interest. My combination included Islamic History, Urdu, Sociology and Journalism. It was mainly because of these subjects that I managed to score 76% marks in optional subjects and hence secured second position overall."* Therefore, it is highly recommended that aspirants must keep the following aspects in mind prior to finalising their optional subjects.

1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK PRIOR TO SELECTING YOUR OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

Do go through the prescribed revised syllabus by FPSC. Opt your subject in accordance with your educational background but bear in mind that you need

not go for natural sciences. One of the best ways to analyze one's capabilities in natural sciences subjects is to review past 10 years papers in this way one can easily understand the prospective problems and rate of success. By reviewing past 10 years papers one can easily calculate how much diligent efforts are required to get excellent marks in the subject. Please neither underestimate nor overestimate your competence. In case of overestimation none would endure loss but only you. Underestimation is somewhat good because it would work as impetus for hardworking. Most important thing in opting these subjects is your aptitude. Higher the aptitude higher would be the rate of success. At the same time, you need to be aware of subjects that are literary in nature such as English literature and Urdu literature. Past Papers always provide you with different perspectives relating various topics. Past Papers Analysis will enable you making any decision whether you are able to handle that very subject. Remember, the FPSC does not have any hard and fast rule to sticking to its syllabus. It may ask you for the applications of any subject. For instance, you might be asked to resolve any international conflict by applying international law principles. Last but not least point in opting optional subjects is to evaluate scope of subjects. Go for that subject where you have adequate interest coupled with relatively shorter syllabus instead of that subject where you feel too aptitude coupled with too much syllabus.

2. SCORING TREND VS. OVERLAPPING SUBJECTS

No denying the fact that there are certain subjects, which are really marks yielding these subjects such as Accounting & Auditing, Public Administration, USA History, Philosophy, Sociology, etc. This phenomenon is true to some extent *only*. Since 2016, the perception of scoring has shifted towards overlapping of subjects. For instance, IR does overlap with Essay, Current Affairs, and Pakistan Affairs. However, regional languages and history subjects do tend to help you gain more marks, hence, if possible one must go for it. Basically, supporting subjects are those that help you build your knowledge base along with expanding one's intellectual capacity. Optional subjects do overlap with one another in the following ways such as the following:

International Relations = International Law + USA History or European History

Political Science = Constitutional Law + Any history subject

Muslim law & Jurisprudence = Islamic Studies

Sociology = Gender Studies

Philosophy = Political Science

Criminology = Psychology

International Law = International Relations

Environmental Science = General Science and Ability (slightly)

Islamic History and Culture = Islamic Studies

History of India and Pakistan = Pakistan Affairs

Governance & Public Policy = Public Administration

Aspirants, at this stage, should consider these points for scoring high marks in any optional subject you need the following:

- One's aptitude concerning the subject
- One's skill concerning the subject
- One's capacity concerning enhancement one's capability in the subject
- No subject is low scoring if one is well prepared. (Please note that no subject is low scoring subject in itself. Your depth of knowledge earns you the marks.)
- Only requirement to get high score is to know how to deal that subject

- Your aptitude is your strength; higher the aptitude higher would be success rate.

3. SCORING SUBJECT:

No one bothers to truly understand, what really is a scoring subject? Here, I'm going to enlist five things that can be used to judge whether a subject is scoring or not and whether you can perform well in the subject or not.

- One of the simplest techniques that aspirants can use to judge whether a subject is scoring or not is by looking at its syllabus. The most scoring subjects usually have a shorter outline as compared to others. The subjects with short syllabus take less time to be covered and aspirants can cover major proportion of the syllabus much more comprehensively. Thus students are in a better position to attempt any question that is asked, even the unexpected ones, in the exam and therefore score high marks. For example, USA History has the shortest syllabus as compared to European and Indo-Pak History.
- This is the most authentic criteria for predicting about a subject whether it is scoring or not. The repetition of questions in a particular subject allows students to prepare selective questions and topics comprehensively and attempt them in the exam in the most perfect manner. In some subjects questions are copied and pasted on the question paper and leave little to surprise the aspirants. In some subjects, sometimes covering as little as 5 to 8 topics can enable a student to attempt all the four questions. For example, one can easily secure good marks by preparing past papers of last 10-15 years.
- The subjects with absolute nature of the answers like science subjects is to review past 10 years papers in this way one can easily understand the prospective problems and rate of success.
- When all has been said and done, in the end it would be *you* and *your effort* that would make the difference. Always be confident to follow your heart and choose a subject that you feel would get you good scores. Your personal interests, educational background and aptitude in a particular subject are good enough reasons to make a subject scoring and can help you gain considerable advantage over others. It would be worth mentioning, to the aspirants reading this booklet that they have enough time to make the most rational and logical decision. Use this time to your advantage and select those subjects which can get you miles ahead from other candidates. Take a day out and filter out some subjects and view their course outline and past papers. This would give you a head start and boost your confidence a lot.

4. APTITUDE

As said before your aptitude is your strength and next step to get excellent marks is to administer your aptitude. Only advice that could be given is to evaluate your aptitude precisely. Point is to put effort. It includes the ability and competence to handle the subject. Never go into conflict with yourself. If your heart does not accept any subject, your mind never will. I couldn't stand Agriculture and Forestry, it gave me a hard time, and I didn't do justice with it because my heart never accepted it. Lower the aptitude, higher would be boredom; higher would be boredom, higher the difficulty in dealing the subject and ultimately higher stamina would be required to borne that subject. So please do not waste your vitality just in digesting perceived monotony a subject.

5. SAFE CHOICE

Try to opt a subject that provides you safer passage on the basis of your educational background, precise syllabus, repetition of questions from past

papers, and overlapping. Try to opt subjects that give you the freedom to express your own general opinion e.g. sociology, journalism.

6. MAXIMUM MARKS

CSS Exam is not about clearing or passing the written exam but it is about scoring maximum marks. Compulsory Subjects such as Essay, English Précis & Composition, and Islamic Studies are the most vulnerable subjects. You had better focus on *merely* passing these papers rather than scoring very highly.

A POINT TO UNDERSTAND

It is you who is going to finalise the subjects. Don't leave it to someone else. Nor you should follow someone's advice blindly since there is difference between your aptitude and background and that of other person.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

International Relations by Prakash Chander
 Globalization of World Politics by Baylis
 IR by Peu Ghosh (3rd Edition)

HISTORY OF USA

History of USA by R.K Majumdar and A.N. Srivastva
 A Brief History of United States of America by John J Newman

ECONOMICS

Paper I: Modern Economic Theory by K.K Dewett & Economics International Edition by Paul A. Samuelson
Paper II: Economics of Pakistan by Saeed Nasir and Kamal Haider

JOURNALISM

Journalism for All by Dr. Mehdi Hassan
 Exploring Journalism by Mirza Muhammad Yousaf
 Journalism in Pakistan by Dr Abdus Salam Khurshid
 Journalism for All by Dr Mehdi Hassan & Dr Abdus Salam Khurshid
 Journalism for CSS/PMS by Quratulain & Haseeb Gohar

SOCIOLOGY

An Introduction to Sociology by Abdul Hameed Taga
 Sociology by Horton and Hunt
 Social Problems of Pakistan by Dr Muhammad Khalid

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Western Political Thought by Judd Harmon
 Muslim Political Thought by S.M. Shahid
 Political Science Theory and Practice by Mazhar ul Haq
 World Constitutions by S. Kaely

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture by Masood A Qureshi
 Agriculture by Asif Malik

FORESTRY

Forestry by Prof. Masood A Qureshi
 Yellow pages on Dawn News (Monday edition)

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public Administration by Dr. Sultan Khan
 Personnel Management by Dr. Sultan Khan
 Public administration by M. Suhail Bhatti

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Management by Stephen. P. Robins and Mary Coulter

CSS Beginners' Guide (Aamir Mahar)

Principle of Marketing by Philip Kotler
Strategic Management by Fred.R.David

INDO PAK HISTORY

Indo Pak History by K. Ali
Indo Pak History by Sohail Bhatti
Trek to Pakistan by Ahmed Saeed
Pakistan Affairs by Ikram Rabbani
Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan by Hamid Khan

ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CULTURE

Study of Islamic History by K. Ali
History of Islam by Mazhar ul Haq.

EUROPEAN HISTORY

Mastering Modern European History by Stuart T. Miller
About European History by L.P. Cock
European History by I.J Chawla

BRITISH HISTORY

British History by Birdsall S. Viault
Mastering Modern British History by Norman Lowe
Modern English History by G.W. Southgate
British History for CSS Exam by Dr Waheed Asghar

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

World Constitutions by S. Kealy
How states are governed.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

International Law by Tandon
International Law by Agarwal
International Law by S.K. Kapoor

MUSLIM LAW AND JURISPRUDENCE

Muslim Law by D.F. Mullah
The Principles of Muhammad Jurisprudence by Abdul Raheem

GEOGRAPHY

Modern Physical Geography by Sarfraz Ahmed Bajwa
Economic Geography by Fazal Karim
Human Geography by Debljij
Human geography Razaullah khan

PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology by Feldman
Psychology by Sherbano
Introduction to Psychology by Morgan & King
Abnormal Psychology by Neil Davisson
Psychology by Ali Ajmal

MERCANTILE LAW

Mercantile and Industrial Laws by Khuwaja Amjad Saeed
Mercantile Law by M.C Shukla

SINDHI

Sindhi Adab Jo Tanqidi Ibheyas by Abdul Majeed Memon
Sindhi Boli Ji Mukhtasar Tarikh by Leghari
Sindhi Adab Jo Mukhtasir Jaiza by Abdul Jabbar Junejo

PERSIAN

Gul e Farsi
Gulzar e Farsi
Notes of Persian available on Punjabi University Photostat Shop

ARABIC

Tareekh e Adab e Arabi by Ahmad Hassan Zyat
Notes of Hafiz Arshad

PUNJABI

Punjab Rang by Qamar Husnain Qadri and Faisal Hayat Jappa

PASHTO (Pohanna)

BALOCHI

Chakkar by Aqil Baloch

URDU (PMS)

Urdu by Ahmed Najeeb

STATISTICS

Stats by Prof. Sher Muhammad Chaudhry for BA & BSc

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING

Meigs and Meigs' Accounting-basis for business decision (Chapter 1 to 5)

GENDER STUDIES (Gender Studies by Nawaz Khalid)

CRIMINOLOGY

Theoretical Criminology by George Vold

Criminology and the Core by Lary Seigel

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

Introduction to Business by Saeed Nasir (only related topics)

MAKING BULLET NOTES

“In my opinion, it is imperative to read different books & some other topics as well. This broadens one's scope & clears the concepts on a particular topic. Hence, it enables one to tackle a question from various angles. However, retention of these concepts is possible only by **making one's own notes** instead of relying on those of others.”

– ASP Suhai Aziz Talpur (CSS 2012)

The more elaborative, thorough and comprehensive your first reading is, the more you will learn, and the lesser time you will need to revise that subject later. Now some candidates ask if they should make notes or not. Making good notes is an open secret of success of candidates. Making notes is a part of preparation for CSS Exam and other competitive exams. The luxury of making full-length notes is available to those only who spend more than 7-8 months preparing for CSS Exam. If you can organize the material on your books by marking with pencil/pointer etc. that should work, that will be your notes. But if you still want to write something from your own hands (some people can't survive without it, including me) you can make **Bullet Notes**. In Bullet notes making, you need to highlight the facts and figures. For a 4 page answer, you can easily write 10-15 different and unique points. Where complete notes include the information as well as analysis, bullet notes only contain the information. Bullet points help you in preparing for your MCQs as well. One page bullet notes greatly assist in building Pictorial Memory. That's what you need. Good Notes ensures high grades in the examination. Questionnaires filled out by successful students show that 80% candidates attribute their success to good notes. Making good notes is a skill.

THE IMPORTANT PROPERTIES OF HELPFUL NOTES:

- Easily understandable
- Easily revisable
- Save time - because you don't have to read book again for learning them
- Refreshes key points of topics
- Help to learn how to present answer in answer sheet in befitting way, to get more marks.
- It contains collective information of books or guide books
- Increase your interest
- Notes are written in your own hand writing, you feel acquainted to them and you pick up easily.
- It gives you food for thought.

TAKING NOTES FROM BOOKS:

It is really important to understand the technique of notes making. If you have at least two books for any subject, it is better you open both for taking notes. The syllabus should be followed. Don't read a book from beginning till the end. Only the related topics should be studied. In this way, try and prepare your own notes about every subject. Get focused on each sentence while you study. Extract key points from each paragraph and write it down. Write down the important information from both books which help to remind all the explanation attached to the topic. Do write the technical terms used in book, you need to memorize these terms so your notes should contain it. Write down the definitions. Definitions are very much important you can write it in your own words but you can't its idea. So your notes should have them. This period must continue to enhance your English abilities too.

SHAPING NOTES:

The notes should be shaped in a proper way so that it can be properly used in future. Shaping notes according to the question format of exam helps you present you answer in befitting way.

Candidates preparing for CSS Exam prefer "writing notes in points". Bullet notes should be very compact, yet very detailed notes of every article, with the whole chapter covered on 2-3 pages at max. Write the main headings, write the keywords contained in that heading in front of it in bullet form, and move to next heading. Make sure you put all the headings you made on book on the paper. Bullet Notes satisfy the craving of making notes plus they come handy during revisions and during the exams when you do not have the time to go through the books. A cursory reading of these compact notes can get it all refreshed in your mind.

WHATEVER YOUR METHOD IS BUT ALWAYS REMEMBER SOME POINTS FOR MAKING YOUR NOTES USEFUL.

1. Use heading and sub-headings
2. Use abbreviation and short words
3. All the lines or paragraphs should be in proper sequence
4. Skip the unnecessary explanation
5. Write in good handwriting
6. Make easy diagram or table for long description
7. Write page number on each page if you are use loose pages for making notes.
8. Notes for different subject should be separate. Never write notes for different subject on one page or in one note book which has no separation line.
9. **Keep your notes in a safe place** because you use it many times during preparation.
10. If you are using a note book or register for making notes, it is good. Write on each note book, the name of subject of note it contain.
11. If you are making notes on loose pages, write page number on each page. Keep all pages in a folder and write name of subject on its folder.

START WRITING NOTES

Start with the books according to paper point of view. Use them to make the basic structure of your bullet notes. But don't forget to leave a few pages for additional note-taking after each topic. For research based books, you better get them online or in hard, skim through them, and only get the relevant material for quality arguments and add them to your bullet notes. The books for general reading would expand your horizon and give you a deeper insight regarding your subject.

TIME MANAGEMENT IN CSS EXAM PREPARATION

Time is a precious recourse and proper time management is a major issue for the aspirants. For utilizing your time more effectively, you should follow a time table. Make a time table for CSS Exam Preparation, in which you have time for your compulsory and optional subjects as well as time for refreshment and other daily activities. Some subjects needs comparatively more concentration, assign them the time in which you are more active, alert and agile. When you make your time table, paste it on wall in front of your study chair so that you can see it and follow it. The more important than making time table is, to follow it. Try to follow your time table. In the beginning you may find it a little hard to follow your time table but if you follow it for a week then you will like to follow it forever. Another thing is this time span is estimated with viewing of getting good positions. There could be no time span if one claims oneself a fatalist and insist to enjoy the aftermaths of one's adventure based on "high stars" rather than on deliberation.

Well, CSS Exam is not the end of the world. If one remains calm and study in a systematic way, one can surely pass. Now, how do we go about doing that? That's when you make a study plan. Aspirants, it's just like walking on the ladder, take one step at a time and you wouldn't even realize you are at the top. Remember; always remain cool, calm and focused. Now, let's get to the steps.

STEP 1: As CSS Exam is a psychological game, you need to learn to control yourself emotionally as well as physically. This is the first step to strengthen you psychologically. You don't get everything in one day, so be patient and have faith in Allah as well as yourself. Don't worry!

STEP 2: In order to plan something all the resources and to-do lists are gathered. We believe our biggest resource is time, so let's count it. It's almost the start of August 2017. So we have approximately 6 months and 180 days in total. Now, let's assume an average candidate can spend 4 hours daily for CSS Preparation. So we have 720 hours in total (4×180). Keep this in mind. Now, we need to calculate what we need. There are 12 subjects including compulsory and optional. Now let's take one subject at a time. If we take Pakistan Affairs, there are almost 30 topics (considering the new syllabus of course). Even if one average candidate spends 1.5 hours to study one topic, s/he would need 45 hours for one subject right? We can apply the same formula to other subjects including optional ($6 \times 45 = 270$) and compulsory ($4 \times 45 = 180$). Now for English Essay and English (Précis and Composition) you can spend 50 hours each ($2 \times 50 = 100$). Total time we need is 550 hours or 140 days.

How much time we had? 720 hours. How much we need? 550 hours. Wow, we just got 40 extra days. Cool? You can spend that time to cover up anything you lack. And remember the revision strategy I have already discussed in making bullet notes.

STEP 4: Now, write down all topics of each subject along with the time you have allocated for it. As you go along preparing notes within the time limit, deduct that time from the quota of the respective subject. This way you will have everything managed. Move smoothly.

STEP 5: Always start with the subject that you like most so that a rhythm is created. Don't aim for perfection the very first day. Slowly adjust your study plan into your schedule according to your ease. Never force yourself, you'll get nowhere. You eat when you get hungry, similarly, study when you feel like. But stay committed and true to yourself and your goals.

STEP 6: Finally, you are set to embark this wonderful journey.

PREPARE FOR CSS EXAM WHILE DOING JOB

“How do I prepare for CSS Exam while doing job?” is a question which generally confuse or create a tension in the mind of aspirant who wants to be a bureaucrat. With less time in your hands, time management is crucial to your preparation. I'll discuss about this question and give you some tips so that you can do better with your life. No one can answer this question better than you. You just have to prepare your mind and maintain your confidence level. It all depends on how much time you can give to your study consistently. Initially with this idea in mind, you must have a proper planning to execute your plan. Try to manage your time and give at least five hours daily to your study. Now the question comes how you manage to get five hours from this busy schedule. Manage to rise at 5:30 in the morning and study for 2 hours, in starting it is hard to rise but think of your aim and goal. Make a habit of rising this time. You have to choose your pleasure of sleeping or your commitment that you make with your life.

Generally the people come from office at 7:00 pm. Remember after 7:00 pm, take rest of half an hour. So you have 3 hours from 8:30 to 11:30 pm for study. Just make a law in your life or let's say a habit that you will not sleep without studying 3 hours and you will rise early in morning so that you can give 2 hours easily to your study. You can easily utilise travelling time for English portion. In this time you can learn one word substitutions, idioms or phrases. Make it as your habit. In office, use your leisure time in reading Dawn Newspaper or find people who are in your situation and socialize with them to utilise that time for discussions. You will thus have time to chill with friends who are serious about the CSS Exam. It will also fulfill your social needs and keep you stress free. Now on weekend days try to study 9 hours per day. So in a whole week you manage to give 48 hours (30 on weekdays and 18 on weekend days). On an average 8 hours per day which are sufficient to crack the CSS Exam. On weekend days, practice writing answers. It'll work for revision. Here, you have to look for ready-made notes and study material that are short and effective. But some topics you will have to do in-depth studies and will need your concentration. Use memory techniques (mnemonic methods) that speed up your learning. Never fall prey to the temporary pleasure, make a commitment with yourself that you will use this precious time to make your life dynamic, vibrant and a life of permanent pleasure. Never think negatively and always be optimistic. Whenever you feel tire or burden just focus your mind on your aim. You can relax once you achieve your goal.

So candidates start your preparation with full energy and confidence. You must definitely crack the CSS Exam. Do not waste even a single second. Use this time to achieve your goal. This time will make your future and you will relax in your whole life. It always seems impossible until its done.

US HISTORY - 14 DAYS SCHEDULE (SAMPLE)

Sr.	Date	Topics
1.	9 Feb, 2017	Expansion of USA from 13 – 30 states
2.	10 Feb, 2017	Constitution & its salient features
3.	11 Feb, 2017	USA as an independent country
4.	12 Feb, 2017	Civil War; Industrialization
5.	13 Feb, 2017	USA's role in world wars; Post 1945 world scenario; Emergence of USA & USSR
6.	14 Feb, 2017	American role in patronizing UNO and International Organizations (1945–2012)
7.	15 Feb, 2017	American role in Cold War and its emergence as the Sole Super Power 1945–99
8.	16 Feb, 2017	International Concerns of USA
9.	17 Feb, 2017	War on Terror; Global perceptions on USA
10.	18 Feb, 2017	Progressive Era; Great depression and new deal
11.	19 Feb, 2017	Presidential Elections; Role and mandate of Congress
12.	20 Feb, 2017	Civil Rights Movement; Separation of Powers
13.	21 Feb, 2017	US Role in International Conflicts
14.	22 Feb, 2017	Revision Time

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR 6 MONTHS

Total Months = 6
 Hours per Day = 6
 Phases per Day = 3
 Total Subjects = 12
 Total Topics = 360

Total Days = 180
 Total Hours = $180 \times 6 = 1080$
 Each Phase of 2 hours
 Topics per Subject = 30
 Topics per Phase = 1

First 30 Days

Phase 1 = Pakistan Affairs
 Phase 2 = Islamiat
 Phase 3 = General Science & Ability

Second 30 Days

Phase 1 = Optional # 1
 Phase 2 = Optional # 2
 Phase 3 = General Science & Ability

Third 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = Optional # 3
 Phase 3 = Optional # 4

Fourth 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = Optional # 5
 Phase 3 = Optional # 6

Fifth 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = English Essay
 Phase 3 = English Composition

Sixth 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = English Essay
 Phase 3 = English Composition

Note:

- Write two essays weekly and get them checked.
- More weight-age is given to Current Affairs because it is going to help you out in Current Affairs, IR, Essay, Pakistan Affairs, etc.

SAMPLE PLAN FOR 6 MONTHS

1. Study Duration: 6 months
2. Subjects per Day: 6 hours daily
3. Subjects per Month: 2
4. Revision Period: 2
5. Sundays:
 - a) Reading Newspaper
 - b) Write an Essay
 - c) Weekly Revision

STUDY PLAN FOR RAMADAN By Samad Hamadani (43rd CTP)

"Yar CSS is my passion. Kisi b keemat pe CSS krna hai, chahay sara zor he kyo na lagana per jye. Per masla ye hai k banda Ramadan mei nae perh skta. Roza k sath tou bilkul bhe nae aur iftari k bad neend ana shru ho jati hai. Lakin CSP tou bn'na he bn'na hai chahay koi b qurbani deni paray"

My apologies for being sarcastic and cheeky but yeah I have seen many aspirants talking the same way as above during the month of Ramadan. I simply cannot understand it. If you are so much committed and dedicated to being a CSP officer ultimately, why cannot you sort out a tack to study even during Ramadan? Why are you digging up lame excuses to avoid studying? It means only two things; either you are not motivated enough to study or you do 'not' really (*Really*) want to be a CSP officer. No doubt allocation in CSS always comes at a cost of an arm and a leg.

I found Ramadan very beneficial in my preparation and that is why I am sharing solely my experience with you folks because that might prove helpful to you. First, because I could not cram things during fasting, I used to read the books, newspapers and magazines and read voraciously. I mean I went through all the books and stuff available to me for CSS preparation. You do not need much effort or energy to read even if you are fasting. So, you should *Read* all the available material for preparation during fasting, whether in books or on internet. It will unconsciously build your writing expression, your style of writing, improve vocabulary and expand your knowledge base.

Secondly, after iftari, I used to make notes of all the subjects. Because you feel kind of sleepy after iftari, writing down important points keeps you alert and awake. I must say these notes aided me a great deal in my preparation as well as in revision near the exam. I made detailed notes from 3 or 4 books of each subject. Even if you utilize 3 to 4 hours in making notes, it will not only improve your hand writing but also assist you in getting a know how about making outlines.

So, shake off that laziness which is gripping you nowadays, hit the books and dedicate yourself to preparation because only *You* can make yourself a CSP by leaving no stone unturned in preparation and hard work.

PREPARE ANY SUBJECT IN 15 DAYS

GET THE STUFF

Get a hold of last ten years past papers including the MCQs, Syllabus, and quality books and resources for a particular subject. This has to be done before starting the preparation.

Point to note: There are two types of books for any subject, one that helps clear out the concepts and the other that is according to paper point of view. Get both the types. There is hardly any One-Book Solution for any subject as you would merely find all the topics in one book having strong arguments. Basically, your writing depicts your level of understanding, which determines your score at the end, so make sure you invest properly to increase your intellectual capacity (that is only done by reading quality resources).

KEEP THE END IN MIND

Make a study plan. Chalk out 30 topics from the syllabus and write down all the past paper questions (PPQ) under the relevant topic headings. This exercise might take a day.

START STUDYING

Get relevant material from the books and online resources. Keeping in mind the PPQ, you should start making bullet notes of 3 topics a day, in a way that all the relevant material of PPQ is a part of your notes. (Remember to keep the end in mind). For instance, you need to prepare a topic for Pakistan's Ideology in Pakistan Affairs, search for relevant material/topics from all the books, read the PPQ, and make bullet notes in a way that you are answering the PPQs. Make around 10 to 15 unique, coherent, and logical points.

YOU'RE GOOD TO GO!

Spend 10 days doing 3 topics a day and spend the last 5 days revising and practicing PPQs. You need to write quality answers with solid arguments so do practice writing the answers of a few past paper questions. Also, practice last ten years past paper MCQs.

IMPROVE YOUR WRITTEN EXPRESSION

English is most essential and prerequisite of CSS Exam. The very prime cause of concern which an aspirant comes across has been the dilemma regarding written expression. This myth has somewhat been presented as a very queer and hard-to-get kind of phenomenon.

ASP Kamran Adil says, *“Excellent command on English language is a pre-requisite. If a person's English is not up to the mark, even ten years of preparation will not help him.”* One does not get birth with the mastery over a language. One learns it through consistent hard-work and efforts. Improving language is a continuous process. One should be clear in expressions.

As Mathew Arnold says, *“Have something to say, and say it as clearly as possible”*. The more one writes the better expressions become. Mind is receptive: One should read and listen more to be good at writing and speaking.

As Francis Bacon says, *“Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.”* Write on daily basis and get writings checked by an English teacher. Read down, magazines, novels, and different books to learn and improve English and expressions. Try to write in a précised way in own words what you read. And, indeed, brevity is soul of wit. Bring brevity and beauty in your composition; write in flow along-with coherence and unity. Practice! Practice! And Practice is the only way to achieve impressive expressions and striking English.

MY SLICE OF ADVICE MIGHT LOOK IRRATIONAL TO SOME BUT IT'S QUITE USEFUL SINCE I HAVE MYSELF FOUND IT QUITE EFFECTIVE.

1. On daily basis, for merely 2 hours, select paragraphs from the newspapers randomly and read those one by one and write their crux.
2. For instance, take up a paragraph, read that out twice or thrice and then quickly and precisely write down whatever you are able to recollect.
3. Such practice will help you in different perspectives.
4. Your writing practice will immensely improve.
5. Your expression will be polished since you will surely be learning few new words and getting accustomed to the sentence-structure used in the paragraph.
6. As you write down the crux of whatever you have gained, you will be able to write precisely and to the point in exams.
7. Your memory will be sharpened since the piece of writing first goes through your eyes, stored in your in mind via pictorial memory and then further cemented when you write it down.
8. It will also help you develop in you the ability to be precise and to the point when you'll be taking the exams.
9. The vocabulary will itself get injected into your mind.

ART OF ATTEMPTING PAPER

Your future hinges on the 3-hour performance that you actually give on paper in the examination hall. It's always better to do some written practice along with your reading process. See, it might happen with you during the paper that you feel yourself overstuffed with knowledge about a given question but struggle to find the right words to express them. Or it might happen that you are clueless about how to start your answer. All this is a result of no written practice and it may prove disastrous at the end. So, I will advise you all to make it a habit to write for at least 1 to 1.5 hours continuously daily for not less than 45 to 60 days before the start of papers as this will help you a lot. The additional aspect of this written practice should be that in your initial days, you must write about something that you have prepared in the whole day. For example, if you have gone through 10 questions of Indo-Pak History today, ask your friend to randomly give you a topic and you start writing about it. During the next phase, it should be so that if you have prepared 10 questions today, write in one hour a gist of all these events in a chronological order. It is very significant that you are able to make connections between different events and draw allusions from different sources as they will add real spice to your answers. So while you are undergoing the written practice, try to inculcate this habit into your expression. Remember, your performance in a paper overwhelming relies on good expression; so the refiner your expression is the better chances you have to accrue maximum benefit from the examiner.

While answering a question the most significant thing to keep in your mind is to communicate your viewpoint strongly through convincing arguments using lucid language. Let's have a look at 10 steps that will surely help you answer the question in a way that convinces the examiner.

SELF-ANALYSIS AND SELF-CONTROL:

This is what you have to do well before you actually sit in the examination hall. Many candidates fail because they couldn't defeat their fears. That makes your target difficult and formidable. Know yourself and control your emotions. All CSS candidates are, more or less, of same intellect; however, calmer and more rational individuals get through. You can also be one of those few if you take into consideration two basic things: (i) accept the reality and (ii) look ahead and find solutions. For instance, you are not a good memorizer, you cannot write well, sitting too long is difficult for you, you have some problems in finishing your answer properly, a sudden emotional setback or some tragedy has overwhelmed you, and so on; many such issues can be challenging for you. But to accept this challenge and overcome it is the real key to success. Don't shy away from your weaknesses and unfavourable circumstances; unfold and rectify them.

TIME MANAGEMENT:

Time management is a skill and you need to attain it. Time is very crucial; especially when you are sitting in exam hall. You have 2 hours and 30 minutes to attempt 4 questions i.e. 37½ minutes per question. Unless you have developed the habit of finishing your answer within 30 minutes and have practiced it well before examination, you will start feeling the pressure as soon as you get the question paper. Remember, time should be managed in such a way that you ward off unwanted pressure that can destroy your efforts and can let you down.

READING QUESTION PAPER:

It is absolutely self-destructive to read the first question and start writing the answer offhand. Give at least 3 readings to the question paper. First reading is just cursory. In second reading, decide which questions you can answer the best. In third reading, mark those questions and be sure about them.

BRAINSTORMING & OUTLINING:

Next, do brainstorming and make outlines of questions you are going to attempt. This can be done while the third reading. This saves your time and makes your written expression eloquent. Brainstorming clarifies that for which question you have ample material. Outlines will make it clear that how to answer and how much to answer and your writing will be more coherent and fluent.

SEQUENCE OF ATTEMPTING QUESTIONS:

Generally, candidates attempt the best question first and the weakest question in end. This is a passive approach. All questions must be, preferably, given equal time while the weak one should be given due importance as giving up on your 20 marks isn't a wise choice.

OPENING THE ANSWER:

Always give proper beginning to your answer. The starting point must be the introduction of your question. Give a comprehensive introduction. Remember, Background or History is a different thing. Opening sentence must be the topic sentence. Talk expansively about the topic and in the end give thesis statement. You can certainly begin with quotation or reference but it must be relevant to the statement of question.

USE OF HEADINGS, QUOTATIONS, FIGURES, MAPS AND REFERENCES:

Headings should be elaborate; avoid one-word headings to facilitate the examiner. When quoting, use proper quotations and mention the reference too. In Islamiyat paper, while quoting from the Holy Quran and the Ahadith, don't ever quote without proper reference. Give maximum quotations to support your argument. Also give facts and figures with references. Vague, untrue and bogus figures must be avoided. Reference of any official document can be given from which figures have been quoted. Draw diagrams or maps wherever they are part of answer. As in Geography I, diagrams elucidate answer and in Geography II, maps are drawn to elaborate answer.

BUILDING ANSWER:

Build answer with cogent arguments. Pragmatic and logical opinion containing statistics, references, sociopolitical, religious and economic factors; and domestic and international aspects should be covered. Always avoid sweeping statements, biased views and planted answers. Try to make a separate heading of "Analysis" and give very comprehensive and to-the-point remarks.

CLOSING THE ANSWER:

Conclusion must be as strong as introduction was. Recapitulate all the ideas that you discussed and finish answer strongly. Analysis and Conclusion can be brought

under single heading such as “Final Comments or Concluding Ideas” or “Ending Remarks or Suggestive Note”. Your answer remains incomplete without conclusion so never ignore it!

CONCLUSION:

Write relevant, overcome your weaknesses, manage your time well and control your emotions. It is totally an absurd idea that CSS Exam is a game of chance or a matter of luck. Work hard consistently, think positive, stay focused, prepare scientifically and leave rest to the Almighty. Enhance your knowledge base. Your expression should be convincing and logical. You should practice 6 hours writing on the pattern of real exam so that you do not feel.

GENERAL TIPS FOR WRITING AN ANSWER

Solving a paper of CSS Exam does not require ordinary techniques that one used to apply in school and university. While you are going to ink the answer sheet, sitting in CSS exam, you must understand two things viz: what is being asked? And what would be the proper answer? I think there are some of the general tips needed for better performance in the written portion of the CSS Exam. Here is the simplified scheme to solve any paper (Islamiat is also included).

1. You have only first ten minutes to select the questions with rough idea.
2. When u have selected the question (except compulsory) find out those four questions which can be best answered by you.
3. Time for each question is almost 35 - 37½ minutes.
4. The length of answer should be 6, 7 or 8.
5. Mark the most prepared questions with more relevant material.
6. Remember that you don't have to beat about the bust, read the sequence of the things asked in question and answer all the key words one by one.
7. As it is highly important to write relevant material, therefore underline the main points of the question.
8. Deeply analyze what the question is demanding i.e. Is it about to write reasons, effects, solution, your opinion or simply the information about the topic?
9. Opening of an answer may be:
10. Write a short outline describing the main points with heading in 7-8 minutes.
11. Write an opening paragraph while the answering the main points of the question. This is called “Exact & Direct Technique”.
12. Then develop each paragraph describing the relevant material.
13. Use of language should be convincing, concise and correct.
14. Your answer should include facts and figures, arguments, examples, references and quotations.
15. Try to use different mode for attempting Question; avoid typical style from introduction to conclusion.
16. Conclusion must contain repetition of main points.
17. Always use blue ink pen and keep ink remover with you so you have one chance to undo to what you did. Remove all cuttings that give bad impressions. (Only blue, black pen and pencil is allowed in examination hall and strict instructions are given in the 1st page of answer sheet about using of color pens.)
18. Both MCQ's sheet and answer sheet is given at the same time, so its better to do MCQ's quick in order to save time for the last question, which you will attempt in the end of paper.

19. Do not use generic and journalistic terms for every subject, rather use specialised terminologies of the same subject.
20. Most importantly, we don't focus on expression while attempting question which is a must for good score.

CSS EXAM PREPARATION AT EARLIER STAGE

"Tomorrow is too late, yesterday is over, and now is exactly the right moment. So start."

Those who decide early in life (after X or during XI or XII standards) that they want to become officers to serve the nation and people. Most students get inspired by famous civil servants or by their own family members at this teen age. So, here are some tips for them:

1. Improve your English Grammar and English Writing Skills. Consult good books on grammar i.e. All about Competitive English (Prof. Muzaffar Bukhari), Practical English Usage (Michael Swan), Grammar in Use (Raymond Murphy), and clear your basic grammar skills i.e. Articles, Tenses, and Punctuations.
2. Read at least two recommended books of important compulsory subjects (Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs and Islamic Studies) very carefully as they are little encyclopedias and also comprehend them carefully.
3. Read one national newspaper (Dawn Newspaper). Students are advised to read the Editorial & Opinion Sections and learn "how the arguments take place and how arguments are built up". Note down difficult words on a register. Use dictionary most of the times. Don't ignore the words which are new for you. Check the meanings again and again and try to learn them.
4. Write a paragraph daily and get it checked. Try to use newly learned words in it.
5. Make your habit to read stories, novels or quality books.
6. Discuss things/news items with your friends and family members that will give confidence of taking a stand against any issue.
7. Once you spend some time in this way, you can go through the past papers of respective subject.
8. In the first step itself, if you take the question paper and if you don't know most of the questions, it will deject you. There is nothing to get dejected at this stage.
9. If you complete your one or two Compulsory subject(s) at the earlier level, it will be easy for you to crack the CSS Exam in the first attempt itself. Wish you all the best!

MNEMONIC METHOD

Many aspirants face difficulties in memorising certain contents of different subjects like physics, history, and geography etc., while preparing for CSS Exam. The contents may include the different dates and events taking place, may include the names of solar system planets and etc. From physics it may include different laws, which are quite tough to memorise or keep in brain exactly as they are stated. The method which I used to learn them or even use now is "Mnemonic Method". It will be quite easy for the aspirants if they will use mnemonic method or way to learn such contents.

For instance:

- It is quite difficult to learn the names and as well as order of all the planets from the Sun. In this way if we put it under mnemonic method and if we try to learn this statement "**M**y **V**ery **E**fficient **M**other **J**ust **S**erve **U**s **N**aan." The bold letters in the above statement represents the first letter of each planet

respectively. And in this way if you people will learn the above statement, so it means you have learned all the planets and their order from the Sun.

- Similarly in English the 7 coordinating conjunctions are For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So just remember the word "FANBOYS".
- If you have to remember the names of 2016 Nobel Prize Winners in Physics: David J Thouless, F. Duncan M. Haldane and J. Michael Kosterlitz. So just keep these words in mind "Dil Dhadke More (DDM)".
- Now I am going to make you memorize the whole of Islamic battles along with their due dates just in 5 minutes, are you ready? If so!
Imagine a word 'ABURK' meaning a battle. When a battle is fought, we get injured so we seek for 'Treatment', if failed we get 'Maut (*death*)'. Now using a 'hindko' word Hun (*meaning Now*), the dead bodies are placed in 'Taboot'. Focus over the sentence above, i.e re-read. Sound interesting no? Hold you breath! The real game begins here.

All of you know how to count from 1 to 9. Simply add 'Hijri' to all.

1 Hijri	2 Hijri	3 Hijri	4 Hijri	5 Hijri
6 Hijri	7 Hijri	8 Hijri	9 Hijri	

Now, 'ABURK' stands for Abwa, Badr, Uhad, Rajih, Khandaq.

Now it comes treatment time, i.e Treaty of Hudaibiya.

Now treatment is failed and death is occurred i.e Mauta.

Hun (*meaning Now*), the body is placed in 'Tabut' (*Simply don't forget replacing 't' with 'k'*)

All of them are in ascending order. Just put each from start till end with the numbers. It becomes:

1 Hijri	Abwa
2 Hijri	Badr
3 Hijri	Uhad
4 Hijri	Rajih
5 Hijri	Khandaq
6 Hijri	Treaty of Hudaibiya
7 Hijri	Mauta
8 Hijri	Hunain
9 Hijri	Tabuk..... Thats it! You're done here.

If you want to go a step ahead, as migration occurred in 622AD, so just remember by 2 Hijri they mean 624 AD (i.e 2 years of migration), by 3 Hijri they mean 625 AD (i.e 3 years of migration) and so on. Hence add concerned ADs too to the above dates from Badr till Tabuk, it will become:

2 Hijri	Badr - 624
3 Hijri	Uhad - 625
4 Hijri	Rajih - 626
5 Hijri	Khandaq - 627
6 Hijri	Treaty of Hudaibiya - 628
7 Hijri	Mauta - 629
8 Hijri	Hunain - 630
9 Hijri	Tabuk - 631

- If you have to remember the number of districts in Pakistan:
KPK = 26
Sindh = 29
Balochistan = 32
Punjab = 36

Consider yourself a resident of KPK, imagine your age is 26 on your paper day. Now all of us knows that the table of '3', so add 3 to 26 and think of a 3 days trip to visit Manorra Island, which is in Sindh; it becomes 29. Now assume you got a Bike and it will take 3 days to see Akbar Bugti Villa in Balochistan, it becomes 32. Finally, you hear that PM Nawaz Sharif is going to announce a lucky draw for the post of AC for those who became over-age and touched 36

and you run Punjab. Simply, you can also remember one digit, i.e 26 for KPK, now start adding 3, and 4 on last.

Aspirants you can sketch small pictures also to remember many hard words or formulas, and I have given you the idea, now work smartly to learn things.

STUDY SKILLS

WHERE TO STUDY

The environment in which you choose to study can have a dramatic impact on how successful your studying is. If you chose to study in a noisy coffee shop at a small table with dim lighting, it may take you two hours to cover the same material you could read in an hour in the quiet of the library. That is an hour that you don't have to lose! However, for some people the noisy coffee shop is the ideal environment. You need to determine what type of study environment works for you.

CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS

Your goal is to find a comfortable, secure place that is free from distractions. The place should also be convenient and conform to your schedule. For example, the library might be ideal in many respects. However, if it takes you an hour to get there and it closes soon after you arrive you are not maximizing your study time.

For many people studying at home is a good solution. Home is always open and you don't waste any time getting there, but it can have drawbacks. If you are trying to fit studying in between family obligations, you might find that working from home offers too many opportunities for distraction. Chores that have piled up, children or younger siblings who need your attention, or television that captures your interest, are just some of things that might interfere with studying at home. Or maybe you have roommates who will draw your attention away from your studies. Studying at home is a good solution if you have a room that you can work in alone and away from any distractions.

If home is not a good environment for quiet study, the library, a reading room, or a coffee shop are places you can consider. Be sure to pick a place that is relatively quiet and which provides enough workspace for your needs.

NOISE

Everyone has his or her own tolerance for noise. Some people need absolute silence to concentrate, while others will be distracted without some sort of background noise. So know yourself.

LIGHT

You will need to have enough light to read comfortably. Light that is too dim will strain your eyes and make you drowsy. Too bright and you will be uncomfortable and tense. Experts suggest that the best light for reading comes from behind and falls over your shoulder. Make sure your light source falls on your book and does not shine in your eyes.

COMFORT

Your study place should be comfortable and conducive to work. While your bed might be comfortable, studying in bed is probably more conducive to sleep than concentrated learning. You will need a comfortable chair that offers good back support and a work surface—a desk or table—that gives you enough space for your books and other supplies.

A LITTLE HELP

When you have settled on a place to study, you will need to enlist the help of your family and friends—especially if you are working at home. Be sure they know that when you go to your room and close the door to study, you do not want to be disturbed. If your friends all go to the same coffee shop where you plan to study, you will also need to ask them to respect your study place. The cooperation of your family and friends will eliminate one of the greatest potential distractions.

WHEN TO STUDY

Finding the time in your busy schedule may seem like the greatest hurdle in making your fore mentioned study plan, but you probably have more time available than you think. It just takes a little planning and some creativity.

Make sure your schedule allows for adequate rest and study breaks. Skipping sleep is not a good way to find time in your schedule. Not only will you be tired when you study, you will be sleep deprived by the time of the test. A sleep-deprived test-taker is more likely to make careless mistakes, lose energy and focus, and become stressed-out by the testing environment. If you plan to do most of your studying in one block of time, say four hours, be sure you leave time to take a study break. Experts have shown that students are more likely to retain material if they take some time to digest it. A five- or ten-minute break to stretch your legs or eat a snack will revive you and give your brain time to absorb what you have learned.

Most people need about six to eight hours of sleep a night. Do not sacrifice sleep in order to make time to study. Hunger can be a distraction, so don't skip meals. Eat three nutritious meals a day, and keep healthy snacks on hand during a long study session. The key word is healthy. Sugary snacks might make you feel energized in the short term, but that sugar rush is followed by a crash that will leave you feeling depleted. Caffeine can have a similar effect. A little caffeine—a morning cup of coffee, for example—can give you a boost, but too much caffeine will make you feel jittery and tense. Tension can affect your ability to concentrate.

Being over-caffeinated is not the only potential source of tension. Pre-exam anxiety can also get in the way of effective studying.

REMEMBER—DON'T MEMORIZE

You need to use study methods that go beyond rote memorization to genuine comprehension in order to be fully prepared for your test. Using study methods that suit your learning style will help you to really learn the material you need to know for the test. One of the most important learning strategies is to be an active reader. Interact with what you are reading by asking questions, making notes, and marking passages instead of simply reading the words on the page. Choose methods of interacting with the text that match your dominant learning style.

STAYING MOTIVATED

How to motivate oneself during this long arduous preparation? Most people had asked me to write something on motivation. I do agree with a lot of people that motivation is that fire in the belly that you and only you can ignite. Having said that we are often bogged down by insecurities. Your friends in corporate sector maybe earning million in bonus, or have a million dollar career all set - while you languish at home or in the small city. Doubt does creep in that what if I don't make it? What will society, my friends, family, etc. think of me? Will I be able to handle the pressure? This that and so many other negative thoughts keep haunting you.

Always have a positive set of friends around you, ones who challenge you to work harder, test your knowledge and when you get tired in the long marathon also fetch water to keep you going. Family obviously is another pillar of support. By now, you might have dreamt hundreds of times seeing yourself getting first rank in civil services exam; imagining yourself giving speeches on TV, to magazines and newspapers, to yourself. You might have also visualized yourself being treated as celebrity in your home, village, city and in state.

Have you noticed one thing? You usually dream about this Big Day in your life mostly after spending few hours productively preparing for this exam. Study well for 2-3 hours, you will soon start imagining yourself to be the future topper. Once you realize you are actually wasting time, you will be shaken and awoken to reality: you will again start reading/writing something; the dream evaporates!

Daydreaming is mostly accompanied by spurts of productive hours in your exam preparation. If you are not studying well, your confidence level will be low and you will rarely think about getting a rank. Your ambition level climbs down once you see yourself wasting time on doing things that doesn't take you anywhere. The less you study, lower will be your ambition level. For some people, clearing Written will be a goal, for few reaching interview level and for a few getting a rank will be the dream: it all depends on how well you are utilizing your time now.

If you are dreaming about getting that top rank, you have everything in you to reach there. You just have to make sure that in coming days, you dream less and work more. But blindly working won't take you anywhere. There are extremely hard working people - every year - who don't make it to the list. It's not about ability. It is about attitude. The more you are willing to learn and enjoy new things every day, the better will be your chances in succeeding in this exam.

Many people stick to old methods or resort to shortcuts. A day you spend on studies, should be an improvement over the past day. For example, if you are writing 2-3 answers daily, after few days you should be writing 4-5 answers within same time. Many people either give up writing after trying it for few days, or never start it, or worse.

To top in this exam, you must use your strengths very well. Analyse in which area you are strong and weak: If you are strong in optional, study even better and try to get highest score possible. If you are weak in essay writing, make sure that you write at least 40 essays on variety of topics before exams. You can overcome your weaknesses by working on them; but you can not easily make them your strength.

Scoring good marks is not the thing you should be worrying most now. You should be worrying about being consistent in what you are doing. Take a break of 10-15 days, you will see your confidence level plummeting to low levels; it's difficult to restore the momentum if you lose it once. But it's not difficult. In such cases, you should just

stop worrying about backlog and focus entirely on future. The cost of not studying for 10 days isn't much if you don't waste a single day in future.

No topper will know for sure that he/she will top in this exam. Until the list is out, it will be a surprise. However, one can be sure of getting a rank in a desired range - like within top 20 or 30. This depends on your performance in written and interview. And also on your honest and objective introspection of your performance. If you are happy about it and have a gut feeling that you have done well in all areas, you might be surprised (or shocked) to see your name right at the top of the list.

To see your name in top 20, two mistakes you must never commit or repeat: Treating this attempt as your experimental attempt and doing too many experiments influenced by too many advises. I believe, it's possible for you to crack this exam in one attempt provided you follow any one good strategy completely.

There is a reason why only a few make it to the top. Even after lots of motivation, only few will be consistent. They just want to clear CSS Exam at any cost. Even when they fall ill, they don't miss their targets; even when there are personal problems, they just focus on their preparation; even when friends and relatives try to demotivate them, they silently re-focus their time and energy on studies; even when they fail, they are not affected by it.

Most people either give up or start something new - be it a strategy, or a job. If 100 people start writing 5 secure answers today, by the end of the month, 50-60 will be still writing them. Among them 10-20 will be writing 5 - 10 answers. After 2-3 months, there will be less than 30-40 people regularly writing answers. In the end less than 20 will be toiling hard. Of these 20, a topper will emerge. Others out of these 20 too will succeed today or tomorrow. Certainty is 100%.

You must try to be one among these 20 people. The 20 who never give up. All it requires is strong will to succeed, a strong desire to see your name among toppers and a clear road-map to follow till the end. This exam doesn't require you to be a graduate of top university or college; it doesn't require you to be an intellectual; it doesn't demand you to master English or any other subject. All it requires from you is consistency in your efforts, and sincerity in your desire.

Compared to all the struggles that you see around the world, giving 100% to this exam is the easiest of all these struggles, or from among those that you will ever face in your life. May be because this exam appears easy, some people take it for granted, and some people don't give their 100%.

If you are consistently seeing improvement in your grasp over current events, English skills and , essay writing skill and finally in your own personality, then never give up. It might take longer than you expected, but success will be yours. Some people achieve it in one attempt. Combination of many factors, including 1% luck, help them achieve this. Don't compare with them. You are not them. Take your time, but also show sense of urgency in achieving your goal.

Self-doubts, confusions and other negative feelings will be your constant companions in this journey. Don't give in to them. Neglect them, and keep on moving. These negative feelings should make you stronger, not otherwise. You know what to do. Start doing it. Don't stop until you succeed. Your dream is not just yours. There are people who love you most in the world and want to see your dreams come true. At least, work hard for them!!!

AND YES! WORK HARD AND START DREAMING AGAIN.

3 POINTS FORMULA TO PASS CSS EXAM

FEARLESSNESS:

The fear of failure, of bleak future, of unpredictability in CSS Exam Preparation and of "*log kia kahein gy*" is the fear which makes you deliver minimum in CSS Exam. Fear is the first hurdle in your way to perform well in examinations. Always believe in a beautiful Hadith by Prophet Muhammad (SAW): "*What has been written for you, if whole universe tries to take it away from you, will reach you and what has NOT been written for you, if whole universe tries to give you that, it cannot reach you*". This concept makes you fearless and allows you to perform to your utmost capabilities. That is one of the factors which helped me qualify CSS Exam.

GENERAL STUDY:

I do not discourage syllabus studies rather I appreciate it but along with it, general study (history, philosophy, politics, opinion, etc.) is what makes you learn analytical abilities. It enhances your knowledge base and you get multifold sources to quote from. Always remember that well read are the ones who perform better than others. This being well read phenomenon is beyond syllabus books. So please study general books in your leisure time.

LEAST OUTER INFLUENCE:

Do not listen to what others tell you. They may tell you its (CSS Exam) not made for you, you ain't capable of doing it, and you lack knowledge / stamina / aptitude / background to do it. If I can do it, so can anyone in whole Pakistan with proper guidance and support.

Also do not rely upon or/ take influence from toppers of CSS Exam, you may take tips but relying completely on what they tell you is what will lead you astray. What they tell you about themselves may have worked very well for them but you have your own journey, own map and a very own destination. So be yourself!

WHY PEOPLE FAIL CSS EXAM BY ASIM RAZA (PAS) 38TH CTP

You appeared! You appeared and you failed! No problem! No problem if things are clear to you! No problem if you know what failed you. And really no problem at all if you are determined to fight back and break the failure jinx next time!

I can tell you 5 hurdles that impede an aspirant's way to an illustrious career in Civil Service of Pakistan. And how do I know them? I know them not because I have myself experienced failing the CSS Exam – I passed it in my very first attempt – I know them simply because every year, some of my students experience it. Yeah! It's a fact! And, Let me openly confess that all those who hold my hand every year with a hope that I would help them sail across the CSS river, don't succeed in crossing it. Although a reasonable number of them certainly does it every year, yet many of them remain standing on the same bank, seeing their fellows heading towards the destination of prestige and glory. And these are the unsuccessful ones, who during the last 4-5 years have made me know all that I know about the hurdles which don't let candidates cross the finish line.

My purpose is to get you, the CSS aspirants, acquainted with at least five such impediments so that when you come across them during your rush towards the finish line, you are well prepared for their skillful handling. Here are these!

LACK OF POTENTIAL

Can everyone get through the CSS Exam? I think, the answer is a big NO. And it is as logical as to say that everyone cannot be a poet or an artist or an economist. There are, certainly, some innate qualities which if a candidate does not possess, it would be impossible for him to pass the CSS exam. What are these qualities? Perhaps, I won't be able to explain them at length, yet some of these are: creativity, spontaneity, perseverance and ability to handle the pressure. These qualities, mostly, are God-gifted.

So, if you don't have the requisite potential, don't feel discouraged, but, CSS is not your cup of tea. *This may lead to success, but success is not limited only to this.*

FLAWED PREPARATION TECHNIQUE

CSS preparation consists of three phases: planning, preparation and practice. Planning phase requires detailed research regarding what, from where and how much to be prepared. Preparation phase is acquisition and gathering of knowledge as per the plan whereas the practice phase is to learn the utilization of the acquired knowledge while actually attempting the paper. And, what you, the aspirants, do? You focus solely on the acquisition and gathering of knowledge. If absence of planning wastes your time, neglect of practice keeps you completely unable to answer even those questions regarding which you have sufficient knowledge in your memory. Thinking of passing CSS Exam without proper planning and exhaustive practice is just like thinking of winning a war with soldiers totally unfamiliar with the use of their weapons. *Smart work is more result-oriented than hard work.*

LACK OF ENTHUSIASM

You can't pass CSS Exam the way you are used to passing your academic exams. CSS Exam is altogether different in nature. Most students who failed this exam have some things in common; and those are flagging energy and dampened enthusiasm. If anyone believes that he would pass the exam because he has joined some famous academy or coaching center, he is under some disastrous

delusion. CSS preparation requires only energetic, enthusiastic and impassionate approach.

So dears, think well before setting CSS as the mission of your life. The goal, though, is an achievable one, it is highly demanding too. *Life blesses you only after it is sure that you deserve to be blessed.*

NO PROPER GUIDANCE

Suppose, you are in a city totally alien to you, how difficult it would be for you to find an address? Extremely difficult, right? Then, how on earth could you get through the CSS Exam without proper guidance? Let me make it very clear that from proper guidance, I mean availability of some capable person who may continuously guide you and set your direction right whenever you, knowingly or unknowingly, start deviating from the right path. *The path that leads to the destination, and the one that does not, always look alike.*

WRONG UTILIZATION OF ENERGY

Is it merely consulting the doctor that cures your disease or it is the use of the prescribed medicine that does the job? Definitely, the use of medicine! A majority of CSS candidates fail this exam only because they rely solely on 'tips & tricks'. These guys think tips to be some sort of abracadabra that would make them pass the exam in a jiffy, without any solid efforts on proper study. Such candidates should come out of the illusion and must realize that there is no shortcut to success, particularly for the destination they want to reach. *Only the straightest way is the shortest way. Tips can be helpful only in streamlining your efforts, they can never substitute actual efforts.*

CRACKING CSS INTERVIEW

It wouldn't be incorrect to state that CSS interview is the most important assessment from among all the tests conducted to gauge a candidate in competitive exams. This 30 -minute exercise determines the candidate's final merit, or more rightly his or her future. It is so because almost all candidates appearing in interview have scores between 600 and 700 at their credit and these 300 interview marks could be an impetus for you to get an edge over others, if you manage it well. Written part requires a lot of hard work and so does the interview. Only a meticulous preparation will make you exceptional and shall prove decisive.

INTERVIEW: THE REAL TEST

Candidates, who have qualified the written part, will now be appearing before a panel for an interview. Since the interviewers have to determine a candidate's suitability for the Civil Services, they lay special emphasis on candidates' moral and ethical qualities, their intelligence, spontaneity/reflexes, communication skills, personality traits, and leadership qualities. Remember those who fail to secure a minimum of 100 marks shall not be eligible for appointment.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Step 1: The first step you must take for interview preparation is to map out a viable strategy. You must know the areas you have to hit. Let it be very clear that in these 300 marks, are contained all your optional and compulsory subjects, general knowledge, questions from your educational background, extracurricular activities, hobbies and national and international current affairs. The interviewers can ask you anything from anywhere.

Step 2: Anticipate questions you might face during the interview. Jot them down and then prepare their answers. Practice your answers in front of someone who could give you honest feedback. This would serve three purposes:

1. It would make things easy especially for those who shy away from public speaking.
2. It would enhance your communication skills.
3. You would be able to generate a good discussion on these questions if asked on the 'D- day'.

Step 3: Ask your friend to give you a real account of your performance.

Step 4: Interview preparation is inextricably linked with newspapers. Waste no time and read the Dawn newspaper daily to get yourself equipped with the knowledge of every significant national and international issue so as to present a deep analysis, if asked. Do keep a notebook with you to note anything important you come across. You can also take a cutting of that very piece for an easy reading later.

Step 5: Do keep a notepad with you at all times to note any question that may arise in your mind.

Step 6: As you prepare your questions, start recording your voice in a device. Read out your answers so that you yourself listen to your answers. You are the best judge of yourself. So, evaluate yourself with extreme honesty. Do the drill again and again if you are not fluent in communication. In a week's time you would be able to mark a clear difference between your first recording and the last one.

Step 7: Once you begin to feel confident enough to go for the interview, start giving mock interviews. This would boost your confidence and would give you a fair idea of what to expect. This step is particularly important for shy and nervous candidates. Two or three mock interviews would definitely boost up your confidence.

QUESTIONS ASKED

Besides questions related to your academic background, extracurricular and hobbies, etc., the most expected questions for a general interview are from current affairs. They can also ask questions related to your preference or career.

INTERVIEW DAY TIPS

1. HAVE A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

On this most important day of your life, your mind must be absolutely clear. So, have a good night's sleep because being awake the whole night can adversely affect your performance.

2. DRESSING

They say first impression is the last impression; so wear a professional business suit but do avoid flashiness and wearing too much cologne. Girls should also be neatly dressed and there should not be too much jewelry or excessive makeup. Do remember

the dress should make you feel comfortable. Also keep in mind that not only your knowledge but your whole personality will be judged.

3. GOING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Before leaving for the interview venue, go through the newspapers, especially the headlines – newspapers are also available in the interview room. Most of the times they ask you a question on the news headline of that day.

4. DOS OF THE INTERVIEW ROOM

1. Do enter the interview room by greeting all in one go, not one by one.
2. Do keep your reflexes sharp and speak with conviction.
3. Do excuse if you do not know the answer
4. Do be confident
5. Do let the member finish the question before you answer it. This would also give you crucial 2 - 3 seconds to decide the answer in your mind.

5. DON'TS OF THE INTERVIEW ROOM

1. Don't move towards the seat before the members gesture you towards it.
2. Don't try to be overly smart
3. Don't pretend that you know more than the Board does; this might prove embarrassing for you.
4. Don't be overconfident and never lie.

NOTE: In previous years, debaters have been made to speak extempore, so be careful with the information you furnish about yourself.

LEAVE THE ROOM

When the interview is over, the panelists would most probably wish you luck. Say a word of thanks to them and leave respectfully. There is no requirement to shake hands. It's a formal day and should be treated as such.

Ace Your Way

CSS EXAM

2017 - 2018



“My relatives, who earlier shunned my family, completely changed their attitude after I was appointed as ASP.”

(ASP Suhai Aziz Talpur, CSS 2012)

Prepared by Aamir Mahar

* It has been my effort to help and guide the aspirants with the best possible way so that you get a simulated experience of the whole process before you appear in the CSS Examination.

BEGINNERS' GUIDE TO CSS EXAMINATION 2017 - 2018

Disclaimer!

All the information, details and recommendations given are purely based on the best of my knowledge and experience, and are totally fair & unbiased. Nonetheless, people may have opinions otherwise and I respect the opinions of others. This is just a free-opinion. Thank you.

PREFACE

I, *Aamir Mahar*, would start this booklet with the name of Allah Rabb-ul-Izzat who is The Most Merciful and The Most Gracious.

It has been my effort to help and guide the aspirants with the best possible way so that you get a simulated experience of the whole process before you appear in the CSS Examination. As the saying goes, *“The will to win is not nearly as important as the will to prepare to win. Everyone wants to win, but not everyone wants to prepare to win. Preparing to win is where the determination that you’ll win, is made. Once the game is underway, it is too late to prepare to win. The actual game is just like the end of a long process of getting ready, in which the outcome was really determined. So if you want to prepare to win, you must want to prepare to win. Once you prepare to win, winning is almost anti-climactic.”*

I am writing down this detailed document which will comprise the CSS Exam Preparation from the very first stage till the exam-days plus interview day. Numerous friends and aspirants had asked for such kind of a document which could be helpful for every aspirant. I’ll try and go ahead step-by-step. In nutshell, I would like to say that this booklet is an attempt to fill the void that aspirants of CSS Exam felt when it came to preparing for it.

In the end, I wish the best of luck for all the candidates of CSS Competitive Examination, especially those who remain firm and steadfast throughout life. I would like to remind the candidates that this is just an exam for a job. Success or failure in it would not mean an end to life. Just keep faith in your abilities and try to give it your best. Before you say I can't. Say I'll try then give it your best!

Aspirants' constructive feedback and suggestions are most welcome which have always remained and will remain our guiding light. I will be highly obliged if you mail me your feedback or suggestion on aamirmahar321@gmail.com.

Aamir Mahar
April 13, 2017

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UNDERSTANDING THE CSS EXAMINATION

INTRODUCTION TO THE CSS EXAMINATION

CSS Examination is a competitive examination conducted by Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) Islamabad every year for recruitments to post in Basic Pay Scale -17 for following occupational groups under Federal Government.

1. Commerce & Trade Group (CTG)
2. Pakistan Customs Service (PCS)
3. Pakistan Administrative Services (PAS)
4. Foreign Service of Pakistan (FSP)
5. Inland Revenue Service (IRS)
6. Information Group (IG)
7. Military Lands and Cantonments Group (MLCG)
8. Office Management Group (OMG)
9. Pakistan Audit and Accounts Service (PAAS)
10. Police Service of Pakistan (PSP)
11. Postal Group (PG)
12. Railways (Commercial & Transportation) Group

PARTS OF CSS EXAMINATION:

CSS Examination is given for the selection of candidates for occupational services under FPSC. The Commission ensures that selected candidate is perfect in all aspects for the post or service. Candidate has to undergo all the parts of CSS Exam for appointment against a post. The CSS Exam comprises the following.

1. **WRITTEN EXAMINATION:** The written exam carries total 1200 marks. For written Exam candidate has to take all compulsory subjects (papers) which carry total 600 marks as well as select subjects from optional subjects, which carry total 600 marks. Each paper is given time of 3 hours. There are subjective questions as well as some MCQs. MCQs are to be attempted on computerized OMR Answer sheet, whereas subjective questions are to be attempted on Answer Book. Blue or black ink is allowed only. For qualifying written test a candidate should obtain at least 40% in each compulsory subject and 33% in each of optional subject or 50% in aggregate.

Compulsory Subjects (600 Marks)

Optional Subjects (600 Marks)

Total Marks= 1200

2. **MEDICAL TEST:** Candidates who qualify the written examination will be medically examined by the Medical Boards constituted for the purpose to ensure that candidate is in good mental and physical health and free from any physical defect likely to interfere with the discharge of their duties. The candidates who (after such medical examination which Government or the appointing authority, may prescribe) are found not to satisfy these requirements, will not be appointed except the disabled candidates as rules mentioned for disabled candidates by FPSC. Disabled candidates must submit a certificate of disability issued by the competent authority designated for the purpose by the Federal/Provincial Government. Disabled candidates in the categories of physically impaired,

hearing/speech impaired (deaf & dumb) and visually impaired (blind) are allowed to compete for Competitive Examination against four Occupational Groups/Services viz:

- (a) Commerce & Trade Group
- (b) Pakistan Audit & Accounts Service
- (c) Information Group &
- (d) Postal Group

Disabled candidates will be provided helper such as Writer, if so requested by them in their application forms. In order to prevent disappointment, candidates are advised to have themselves examined by a Government Medical Officer of the standing of a Civil Surgeon before applying for admission to the examination.

3. **PSYCHOLOGICAL TEST:** All candidates called for Viva Voce will be required to undergo Psychological Test first, comprising written tests and group tasks. Such tests are designed to assess abilities, attitude and personality characteristics of the candidates with special regard to their aptitude for the Civil Services. Separate marks are not awarded for the Psychological assessment. However, 300 marks assigned to Viva Voce also reflect the performance on Psychological Test. Candidates must bring their National Identity Cards and two copies of recent photographs when summoned for Psychological test, and Viva Voce. If a candidate remains absent in the Psychological Test, he/she will not be allowed to appear for Viva Voce.
4. **VIVA VOCE:** Each candidate who qualifies written part of the examination will be interviewed by a Board. S/he will be asked questions on matters of general interest. The object of the interview is to assess his/her suitability for the services for which he/she is entered and in framing their assessment the Board will attach particular importance to the moral and ethical qualities of the candidates, his/her intelligence and alertness of mind, his/her vigour and strength of character and his/her potential qualities of leadership. The Board will take into consideration his/her extra-mural activities such as sports, debates, hobbies, etc., and their effect on his/her physique and character, in assessing his/her merit. All candidates are expected to have basic knowledge regarding Islam and Pakistan. Questions may be asked in the Interview on these subjects. Persons securing less than pass marks in these subjects will not be considered for appointment to Government jobs, irrespective of their proficiency in other fields. However, the Non-Muslim candidates will not be asked any question regarding Islam.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TAKING CSS EXAM

Male as well as female candidates can appear in CSS exam if they fulfill the following eligibility criteria.

NATIONALITY

The candidate must be a citizen of Pakistan or permanent resident of state of Jammu and Kashmir.

REQUIRED EDUCATION

- a) 14 years of formal education recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) is required. Candidate must possess at least 14 years education to be eligible.

- b) A candidate can possess any Bachelors Degree (B.A, B.Com, BBA, B.Sc, LLB, MBBS etc.) from one of the Pakistani Universities or an equivalent degree or comparable educational qualifications of a foreign University recognized by Higher Education Commission (HEC), Islamabad.

Essential Requirement: The Bachelors Degree must be passed with a minimum of 2nd Division (or grade C). Previous academic records do not matter in eligibility for CSS Exam.

Note: (i) A candidate who has obtained a Third Division (or 'D' grade) in his/her Bachelor's Degree will be eligible for the Examination in cases where he/she has obtained a higher Division in Master's Degree.

(ii) The decision as to which foreign degrees or comparable educational qualifications are equivalent to corresponding Pakistani degree rests solely with the Commission.

NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS

A candidate may attempt/avail three chances of the examination within prescribed age limits.

AGE LIMIT

As per the latest rules of CE-2017, age limit for CSS Examination is 21 to 30 years. The upper age limit for CE-2018 is same as it was for CE-2017 i.e. 30 years and cut off date for age calculation will be 31-12-2017. This means that an applicant shall be considered ineligible if his/her age is 30 years on/or before 31-12-2017.

RULES FOR AGE RELAXATION

The upper age limit will be relaxed by two years up to the age of 32 years in respect of:

(a) the candidates belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Buddhist Community subject to production of a certificate (Annex-A of Application Form) to be issued by Political Agent/DCO/ District Magistrate in support of their claim.

(b) The candidates belonging to the recognized Tribes who are permanent residents of the areas mentioned-below and whose families have been living in these areas. Such candidates must attach a certificate (Annex-B of Application Form) to be issued by Political Agent/ DCO/District Magistrate in support of their claim:

1. Balochistan.
2. Tribal Areas of D.I.Khan and Peshawar Divisions (including former Frontier States of Dir, Swat, Chitral and Amb).
3. Former excluded (Baluch) area forming part of the Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur Districts.
4. Former Tribal Areas of Mardan and Hazara Divisions.
5. Upper Tanawal Area of Hazara Division.

(c) The candidates who are permanent residents of Azad Kashmir Territory, subject to submission of a certificate (Annex-C of Application Form) to be issued by Kashmir Affairs Division, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad.

(d) The candidates who are permanent residents of Gilgit - Baltistan including Gilgit, Diamir, Baltistan, Ghizar and Ghanche, subject to submission of a certificate (Annex-B of Application Form) to be issued by the Political Agent/DCO/ District Magistrate.

(e) The candidates who are disabled namely, physically impaired, hearing/speech impaired (deaf & dumb) and visually impaired (blind), subject to submission of certificate of disability issued by the competent authority designated for the purpose by the Federal/Provincial Government.

(f) In Service Government Servants, Armed Forces Personnel, Contract employees, including the Government servants of AJ&K, who possess a minimum of two years continuous Government service as on 31st December, 2013, subject to submission of Departmental Permission Certificate (Annex-E) from the competent authority. Employees of Nationalised Banks, State Bank of Pakistan, WAPDA, Regulatory Authorities, Autonomous bodies and other semi autonomous bodies are not entitled to age relaxation.

PERCENTAGE OF REGIONAL/PROVINCIAL QUOTA FOR SEATS/POSTS

Detail of regional quota is as under: Merit = 7.5%, Punjab = 50%, Sindh = 19% (Sindh U = 7.6%, Sindh R = 11.4%), Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa = 11.5%, Balochistan = 6%, GB & FATA = 4%, and AJK = 2%.

Note: 10% quota is reserved for women from the share of Provinces/ Regions except Merit quota. Un-filled vacancies will be carried forward. 5% quota is reserved for Minorities (Non-Muslims) from the share of Provinces/Regions except Merit Quota. Unfilled vacancies will be carried forward. No separate quota fixed for disabled candidates. Disabled candidates will compete in accordance with the Government recruitment policy.

PLACES OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination is held simultaneously at Abbottabad, Bahawalpur, D.I.Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Faisalabad, Gilgit, Gujranwala, Hyderabad, Islamabad, Karachi, Khuzdar, Lahore, Larkana, Multan, Muzaffarabad, Okara, Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Sialkot, Skardu & Sukkur depending on the number of applicants for each centre.

PLACES OF INTERVIEWS

The interviews will be held at Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar & Quetta.

APPLYING FOR CSS EXAM

Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC), Islamabad publishes their advertisement for CSS Exam in all “daily newspapers” every year. In which date of Exam and last date for submitting application form is given. All applications for CSS Competitive Examination must be submitted on line through FPSC website www.fpsc.gov.pk. The closing date for submission of online Application Form to the FPSC, Islamabad is 31st December, 2017. Candidate must pay Rs. 2200/ (PKR) as application fee (exam fee) which is deposited in State Bank/National Bank of Pakistan under the account head “C02101-Organs of State Exam Fee (FPSC Receipt)”. The application form must reach Commission on or before the closing date. No extra time is allowed.

DECLARATION OF RESULTS OF THE WRITTEN EXAM

The usual time taken for declaration of results of the written examination is 6 or 7 months.

REQUIRED TIME FOR FINAL ALLOCATION OF QUALIFIED CANDIDATES

After announcement of final result of CSS Written Exam and receipt of quota wise seats from Establishment Division FPSC issue a Public Notice on its website and leading newspapers and made allocations in due course of time.

FIXED STANDARD (QUALIFYING) MARKS FOR CSS EXAM

Aspirants having at least 600 marks out of 1200 marks in the written examination, and 101 marks in viva voce out of 300 marks will be considered pass.

SCHEDULE OF CSS EXAM 2018

According to the *tentative schedule* of CSS Exam 2018 is as under:

Application Submission: 1st October, 2017

Deadline: 31st December, 2017

Written Exam: February, 2018

* A candidate has to submit the Online Application Form during the month of October. These dates can be changed by FPSC Islamabad for every year.

CSS EXAM REQUIRES SOMETHING FROM YOU

Whenever planning for any journey, you need a backpack with stuff you might need while travelling. On your journey towards CSS Exam, you need to work on a few skill sets that would help you in your way. Missing even a single one may slow down your process or cause any hurdles. Hence, ensure that you have mastered those set of skills before you embark this journey. Some of the skills may be polished on the way but some of them need to be well practiced beforehand.

CSS BACKPACK: SKILL SETS

1) PERSONALITY TRAITS

- a) Self-discipline and Self-confidence
- b) Commitment and Motivation
- c) Patience and Diligence

2) INTELLECTUAL ABILITY

- a) Basic Knowledge Base
- b) Analytical Mindset

3) WRITING SKILLS

- a) English Writing skills
- b) Expression

PERSONALITY TRAITS

If you don't have the above mentioned skills, I'm afraid the journey would be difficult. Self-discipline means you should be able to do what you are supposed to do. Self-confidence means you need to believe in yourself, the power you are blessed with by Allah Almighty, and the fact that you can do or be whatever the hell you want to. Commitment and Motivation makes your journey a goal oriented approach i.e. a clear sense of direction make distractions unlikely. Sometimes, days are slow and things don't work out the way you expected, hence, be patient yet diligent to always find your way around things. Work smart, not hard.

INTELLECTUAL ABILITY

Simultaneously, you need to work on your mind i.e. mental abilities. Basic Knowledge Base is a Must-Have. There are a few areas in which you need to be well-versed (at least the basic terms and events etc., must be clear) i.e. World History, Philosophy, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Science, and Technology etc. For that, read good books and research especially YouTube videos prove quite beneficial.

Competitive exams require you to be competent. Do what others are overlooking. For that you need to start 'thinking' about absolutely everything in terms of What? Why?

How? Pros and Cons? Causes and effects? What ought to be? This is how you analyze and evaluate. Once you have the basic know how about everything you'll be able to connect the dots and bring coherence and unity in your thoughts that would reflect on your paper. Make the best use of your mind, you hold wonders within yourself!

WRITING SKILLS

Another area that you need to ensure before you start your journey is English writing skills. If you cannot transfer your thoughts on a piece of paper, then unfortunately you are in hot water. You need to be good at your grammar, hire an English teacher that can check your work and help you write, watch English movies, listen to English Songs, and start thinking in English. Do absolutely whatever you think of that can help you able to write good English. Secondly, the more you practice writing, more you'd be able to develop an expression. This is really important from paper point of view. Once you have practiced analyzing, you should be able to convert it on a piece of paper.

For me, CSS Exam is not just an exam, it is a lifestyle. In order to start with CSS Exam Preparation the above is a rough sketch and a checklist of the required skills. There may be more or some may not be very important to anyone of you, but I believe these really are needed at all times. Give a month or two to analyze yourself and check if you have all the above mentioned skills. And if you're good at the above skill sets, believe me, you're halfway there. Work on yourself first, then studying and appearing in exams becomes quite mechanical and bearable of course. As they say that success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it.

START YOUR CSS EXAM PREPARATION

Today people from all fields of educational backgrounds are involved with taking the CSS Exam. The Doctors, engineers, architects, Management students, Social scientists, journalists etc., interested in CSS Exam, they all try to start their preparation at one point or another, but the million dollar question is: **How should one start his/her preparation?** This is how you should start your CSS Preparation:

UNDERSTAND THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

It is imperative before you begin preparing your quest for CSS Examination, understand thoroughly the terms and conditions and the eligibility criteria for CSS Exam. It makes sense, because you wouldn't like your candidature to be rejected after you have prepared for the Exam would you? So, check earliest if you are eligible for appearing in the next CSS Examination.

KNOW YOURSELF, KNOW YOUR APTITUDE:

The second and one of the most imperative step is to get to know your strengths, weaknesses and competitive advantages (if any) before hand. This allows you to understand your Aptitude. And it is your aptitude/inclination towards particular sciences which make you good at a subject. For example: Candidates good at Humanities subjects like Social science, Anthropology, Political science etc. should opt for subjects that involve answers with subjective opinions. Similarly, those who have an aptitude for History may opt subjects like Indo-Pak history, US-History etc. So, get to know yourself better, before starting preparation.

ASK QUESTIONS AND CLEAR OFF ALL MISUNDERSTANDINGS:

Thirdly, you should jot down on a paper all your queries, issues, problems, confusions and misconceptions regarding the CSS Exam and its preparation. Then ask all such questions until you are satisfied with reasonably accurate answers. Well, in my opinion this booklet is going to help you in this regard.

SUBJECT SELECTION:

Now don't act smart-pants and select the subjects unwisely, just because you like a subject doesn't make it a good subject selection choice. In CSS Exam, subject selection holds a position of key significance, because it is the six optional subjects which make or break most of the Candidates each year. So, be careful.

PREPARATION PLAN AND STRATEGY:

Once all is said and done in the initial pre-preparation phase, the next most important step is to develop an effective preparation (study) plan, strategize your plan, break it down into daily targets, Set weekly goals and devise a CSS preparation schedule. Sounds tough? Well, it is because it takes effort and commitment. Always remember, if it was easy everybody would do it!

LIFE STYLE MANAGEMENT:

Simply having a study plan and a preparation strategy without any discipline, hard work and motivation is like having library with no books. What I meant is that it is a worthless effort if not done properly. All those CSP Officers who took good positions had sacrificed their luxuries to discipline their study routines. The lifestyle of CSS Aspirant must be different and more productive than an ordinary person.

TAKE ACTION!

Only sitting on your bum day dreaming and planning wouldn't get you anywhere. If you are seriously committed to clear the CSS Exam at the best of your ability, then *get up*, and *do something!* Act Now.

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATION

There will be two papers of 100 marks each of the subjects which carry 200 marks. In other subjects there will be one paper. Each paper will be of 3 hours duration. The candidates should expect some objective type questions (MCQ's) in compulsory and optional papers except in the papers of Essay, Applied Mathematics and Pure Mathematics. MCQs are to be attempted on computerized OMR Answer sheet, whereas subjective questions are to be attempted on Answer Book. The Question Papers in Urdu or other Pakistani regional languages (*Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto and Balochi*), *Persian* and *Arabic* should be answered in the respective languages. However, question relating with translation from respective language into English or vice versa may be answered as directed in the question paper. The question paper in Islamic Studies or Comparative Study of Major Religions is to be answered in English or Urdu only. All other papers must be answered in English unless otherwise directed in the Question Paper. Contravention of these instructions will result in the cancellation of the papers and award of **ZERO** marks in the paper(s) concerned. The Non-Muslim candidates have the option either to take Islamic Studies or Comparative Study of Major Religions. The three papers of General Knowledge i.e General Science & Ability, Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs and (GK-I, GK-II and GK-III) are to be passed collectively by scoring 120 marks out of 300. A candidate who does not appear in any compulsory/optional subject will not be allowed to appear in the remaining papers of the Examination.

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS (600 MARKS)

- 1) English Essay
- 2) English (Précis & Composition)
- 3) General Science & Ability (GK Paper -I)
- 4) Current Affairs (GK Paper -II)
- 5) Pakistan Affairs (GK Paper -III)
- 6) Islamic Studies OR Comparative Study of Major Religious (For Non Muslims)

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS (600 MARKS)

The minimum standard of optional subjects will be that of an *Honour's Degree* of a university in Pakistan. Aspirants, get yourself well acquainted with the content of the optional subject's syllabi, the length of syllabus and the topics that it covers. A thorough familiarity with your optional subject will help you select the one that you are most familiar with and it will reduce your mental tension that is attached with its selection. The candidates are required to select optional subjects carrying a total of 600 marks from the following groups as per rules given below:

GROUP 1: TO OPT FOR ONE SUBJECT OF 200 MARKS.

- 1) Accounting & Auditing
- 2) Economics
- 3) Computer Science
- 4) Political Science
- 5) International Relations

GROUP 2: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT(S) OF 200 MARKS

- 1) Physics
- 2) Chemistry
- 3) Applied Mathematics/ Pure Mathematics
- 4) Statistics
- 5) Geology

GROUP 3: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Business Administration
- 2) Public Administration
- 3) Governance & Public Policy
- 4) Town Planning & Urban Management *

GROUP 4: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) History of India & Pakistan *
- 2) Islamic History & Culture *
- 3) British History *
- 4) European History *
- 5) History of USA

GROUP 5: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Gender Studies
- 2) Environmental Science *
- 3) Agriculture & Forestry (*Agriculture 50 marks and Forestry 50 marks*)
- 4) Botany
- 5) Zoology
- 6) English Literature
- 7) Urdu Literature

GROUP 6: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Law
- 2) Constitutional Law
- 3) International Law
- 4) Muslim law & Jurisprudence
- 5) Mercantile Law

- 6) Criminology *
- 7) Philosophy

GROUP 7: TO SELECT ONE SUBJECT OF 100 MARKS

- 1) Journalism and Mass Communication *
- 2) Psychology *
- 3) Geography *
- 4) Anthropology
- 5) Sociology

REGIONAL LANGUAGES (Examiners of regional languages favour aspirants that choose these subjects this is the reason why these subjects have an average score between 70 and 80. Aspirant should opt this subject if it's his or her mother tongue. This paper can give you 20 out of 20 marks against each question. In Punjabi Paper, you are given English passage to be translated into Punjabi. These subjects need legible writing and writing speed is necessarily required.)

- 6) Punjabi
- 7) Sindhi
- 8) Balochi & Pashto
- 9) Persian
- 10) Arabic

** The syllabus is extensive.*

ENGLISH ESSAY PAPER

A few prerequisites to prepare for Essay Paper:

BASIC KNOWLEDGE BASE

For preparation of Essay Paper, daily reading of a quality newspapers and books on the subject of Philosophy, World History, Politics, Economics, Sociology to name a few is very helpful. Remember that aspirant is aiming to be an all-rounder.

PAST PAPER ANALYSIS

Essay Paper is divided into some core areas i.e. Education, Islam, Socio-Economic crises, Crisis management, Terrorism and Extremism, Governance, Media, Environmental issues, Pakistan, Science and Technology, and UNO. Choose any 5 areas (to be on the safe side) that you have a command over according to your educational background, interest and aptitude. Once you have chosen your 5 core areas, get the past papers and list down all the questions that appeared in past papers regarding that Core Area.

ANALYTICAL MINDSET

Firstly you need to take a simple essay topic from any area that you are well-versed in, and start brainstorming. Think and scribble everything that comes to your mind on a piece of paper. Then divide your outline into *Major Variables*, and *Minor Variables*. Make your outline comprehensive to such an extent that the examiner clears you for essay while looking at your outline only. All of your essay preparation would revolve around you practicing your outlines. All of the other stuff is just mechanical. (You in-depth practice of making outlines, it is

preferred to hire a teacher to check your outlines on a regular basis, so that you can improve). Once you know how to make an outline, your essay will be clear. In short, work on your mind on the go, think in terms of What? Why? How? Pros and Cons? Causes and effects? What ought to be? (It will be used in making outlines)

KNOW YOUR PARAGRAPH

You need to have a technical know-how of writing a simple paragraph, an introduction, and a conclusion.

WRITE A SHORT EXPANSION DAILY

It will be an exercise of your mind. Writing an expansion daily will keep your mind running till your exams. You need to be in a writing habit and your mind must be in a habit of thinking too. So keep practicing.

STAY MOTIVATED and once in a week, write an essay on one of your outlines.

P.S. It is assumed that your grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and spellings are in good shape.

OUTLINE - MAKING

Making an outline for an essay means to make a sketch for the entire essay by writing the basic and main ideas which are to be elaborated to write the essay. Making an outline is important for two reasons, firstly it is the part of your answer as asked in the question and secondly it helps you to write an essay with perfection.

Before starting to write the essay, think over the topic to collect the main ideas which you will elaborate to the essay. Write down all these main ideas in the form of lines having numbers or bullets. You can give a name or a title to each main idea while making the outline or you can also write each main idea in a sentence form but all the ideas should be in proper order.

MAJOR HEADERS

1. Introduction: What, How
2. Historical Perspective (Optional)
3. Meaning of the Key Terms
4. Views of Philosophers & Analysts
5. Analysis
 - a) Pros & Cons
 - b) Causes & Effects
 - c) Compare & Contract
6. Case Studies
7. Recommendations
8. Conclusion

MINOR HEADERS (Division of ideas and thoughts)

1. Origin to End
2. From different angles (Social, Moral, Cultural, Religious, Economic,

Political)

3. All levels (Individual, Community, Provincial, State level, Regional, International/ Global)
4. Categorization according to tangible or intangible

OUTLINE IS THE SKELETON OF ESSAY

Outline is the skeleton of essay. It should be very comprehensive and elaborated. A sample outline of topic “**Failure of Governance in Pakistan**”

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Prerequisites of good governance:**
 - 2.1 Rule of law
 - 2.2 Accountability
 - 2.3 Equal distribution of resources and opportunities
 - 2.4 Service delivery
- 3. Evidences of failure of governance in Pakistan**
 - 3.1 Absence of rule of law
 - 3.2 A state organs and national institutions are contradicting and overriding each other
 - 3.3 Rampant extremism, terrorism and security issues
 - 3.4 Insurmountable domestic and international political challenges
 - 3.5 Nepotism, favoritism and corruption have become inherent features of institutions
 - 3.6 Consistently deploring economic condition and rising unemployment, poverty and inflation
 - 3.7 Rupturing social infrastructure, degrading social institutions and widespread social unrest
- 4. In-depth analysis on current state of governance:**
 5. Solutions to ensure good governance in Pakistan:
 - 5.1 Strong and independent parliament
 - 5.2 Rule of law and no institutional activism
 - 5.3 Drastic measures to curb Terrorism
 - 5.3 De-politicization of administration
 - 5.4 Strict enforcement of Law and accountability
 - 5.5 Ensuring service delivery through public private Partnership, higher GDP allocations and by attracting FDI
 - 5.6 Building human resource and enhancing job base to utilize human resource
 - 5.7 Optimum utilization of indigenous resources to reduce fiscal and trade deficits and economic uplift
 - 5.8 Planned urbanization, controlled population growth and infusing high moral
- 6. Conclusion**

HOW TO HANDLE ESSAY PAPER?

Well, many of you are quite worried about essay paper. We have here for you the technique of handling an Essay. Before we start I would like you to take a deep breath and read this slowly and carefully so as to understand everything clearly. I would want you to put all the worries of your life behind. Everything's gonna be all right, okay? Anyways, there you go.

GENERAL TIPS FOR ESSAY WRITING:

Generally, essay depicts two things i.e. Knowledge and Mode of Expression. Now, by the end of your preparation you would have studied 12 subjects, so you would have enough knowledge to write in an essay. What really matters in an essay is its "Structure". Aspirants, FPSC Examiners want to see if you have 'followed the basics' and given them what they expect, this is what is known as discipline. Discipline is a prerequisite of essay writing. Discipline is, basically, when you see the right person at the right place at the right time. Discipline is depicted in your structure. Well, we'll get back to part that later.

TECHNIQUE OF STARTING WITH AN ESSAY

STEP 1: TOPIC SELECTION IN THE ESSAY PAPER

The technique to select a topic is to read it, firstly, from *up* to *down* while grading the topic according to your interest and knowledge e.g. A*, A, B etc. Secondly, you need to start reading the topics from *down* to *up*, again doing the same thing. The reason behind doing this is as you start with the first topic your concentration level is 100%. As you move along, your concentration level decreases. So not to do injustice to your topic selection, you need to repeat the process from downwards this time. Doing this will help you choose the right topic. Cool?

STEP 2: BRAINSTORMING

Once you have selected the topic, it is prime time for you to start brainstorming your topic. Now, I would like to tell you that there are broadly two types of people in this world. The first type is known as *left-brained* who has a calculated approach. That person goes by the rule in everything s/he does. The Second type is the *right-brained* who is quite creative and innovative in his approach. You'd be wondering why I would be telling you this regarding essay writing. Well, there are two ways of brainstorming. If you're the *left-brained* person you'd restrict your thoughts and categorize them as they come in your mind. For example, if your essay is related to terrorism you may start thinking firstly the causes, then the effects, and so and so forth. You would try to limit your thoughts. Whereas, if you're a *right-brained* person, you'd let your ideas flow in a meaningless and category-less approach. This way, a meaningless point may lead you to a very strong point if you put no limits to your thoughts. Once you have scribbled all your ideas, then you may categorize them or code them. You may choose the approach that suits you, but personally, I would go with the latter.

STRUCTURE OF AN ESSAY

In this section we will be looking into the structure of an essay. This is how you need to attempt your essay in your CSS Exam. This is what discipline is all about that I mentioned earlier. To begin with, there are three parts of an essay that are as follows:

- a. **Introduction:** *Will* (what we will discuss.)
- b. **Body:** *Am* (what I am discussing.)
- c. **Conclusion:** *Was* (what I was discussing.)

RELATION BETWEEN INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

The introduction is a mirror to a conclusion i.e. the conclusion is a mere restatement of an introduction. Whatever your stance was in the introduction part, it must be the same in your conclusion with a mere reshuffling of the words or sequence.

THE FIRST PART OF THE ESSAY: INTRODUCTION

The introduction has three parts.

1) MOTIVATORS OR BRAINWASHING

- a. This is to be your background where you indirectly come to your topic should be general in nature, not specific.
- b. You may use a quotation, anecdote, Hadith, Ayat, recent news or historical event.
- c. Attract the examiners attention (emotional trapping) in 4 to 5 lines.

2) THESIS STATEMENT

- a. Thesis Statement is particular and precise; it contains the main theme of your essay. It is a pivot around which your essay revolves. In simple words, thesis statement is: one sentence opinion explaining your stance/ point of view.
- b. You cannot waver from your stance, stick to it till the end and defend it at all times.
- c. It is the simplest and clearest sentence (no ambiguities).
- d. It may be a risk for a few but you may use a blue marker to write down your thesis statement.

3) SKETCH/PLAN

- a. Telling the sequence you'd be following.
- b. It must depict connectivity and coherence.
- c. It must be simply and clearly stated
- d. For instance, if you're writing an essay on "My favorite Politician" Your introduction structure may be as follows:
Motivators: The significance of politics and politicians
Thesis Statement: Mr. ABC is my favorite politician.
Plan: I will be discussing Mr. ABC's sincerity, devotion, higher qualification, and courage.
- e. Your plan tells the sequence of your body paragraphs.
- f. The examiner may pick one random point from the list e.g. devotion and see if your second body paragraph is about devotion or not. (Sequence matters a lot)

THE SECOND PART OF AN ESSAY: BODY

The second part of your essay includes as your body *Paragraphs*. They may be 15 to 20 in number. It is imperative to understand the technique of paragraph writing. All your paragraphs must be according to this technique. The examiner may pick any paragraph to see if you've followed the technique or if you know what it is.

PARAGRAPH WRITING: A group letters is a word. A group of words (having complete sense) is sentence. A group of sentence (supporting one idea) is a paragraph. Paragraph Writing just like essay writing has three parts. Paragraph writing is nothing but solid evidence. Paragraph writing is an art. Like other arts, it can also be learnt and mastered by learning some principles and acting upon them. You will have here the most important techniques and principles for writing paragraphs and later essays. They are as follows:

1. *Topic Sentence (Will):* It is advisable to state your point in very first sentence. The point or an idea of a paragraph is called a topic sentence. Whole the paragraph relates to topic sentence. Make sure all the details are directly relevant to topic sentence? If you add irrelevant details your paragraph is going to be weaker, and weak paragraph does not capture the attention of the examiner. If you fail to catch your examiner's heed, he/she will not read your

paragraph with interest and finally he/she may put it a side. In paragraph, first and last places are very important. Induce your examiner in first sentence to read more and have interest so that he/she likes your writing skills.

- It is the first single sentence.
- It is the heading in a form of a sentence.
- It must contain *one main idea*.

An effective topic sentence does two things. First, it provides the topic of a paragraph. Second, it demonstrates the writer's point of view/idea/opinion about the topic. For example, if you're writing an essay related to crime, and your first portion of paragraphs is on 'causes of crimes', then one of your paragraphs may be on unemployment as a cause of crime. Your topic sentence would be: '*Unemployment is one of the causes behind crime*'. So in this sentence "Unemployment" is a topic and "is one of the causes behind crime" is a writer's idea about topic.

Remember, your topic is a general idea. Supporting idea is specific one. This will be described below.

2. *Supporting Arguments/ Supporting Details (Am)*: You have made a point and provided an effective topic sentence. Now it is time for supporting the point you have made. To support your point you may provide logical or specific reason, example or experience, etc. Even if you mention one example, that would be enough. Your supporting details should be concise so that your examiner can understand it. The more brief and specific your supporting details are, the better your examiner can make picture of your paragraph in his/her mind. This portion would have five to six lines while you're justifying your topic sentence.

Paragraph has main idea, which is general idea and the details which support the general idea (topic) are specific ones. To write an effective and impressive paragraph, you should understand the general and specific ideas.

Do you know that you use general and specific ideas on daily basis? Yes, you do, but you do not know about them. For example: you may say that "Unemployment is one of the causes behind crime" and after that you go on telling how it causes crime. So in this example "Unemployment is one of the causes behind crime" is general idea (topic sentence) and the "causes" which you provide are the specific details and strong evidence about topic.

Guys, remember that the details in your paragraph clearly relate to and support your topic sentence. If details are irrelevant, your paragraph is going to lose unity. If unity is lost, nothing is in paragraph. For example: if your topic is, "Economy of Pakistan is going down day by day" so in this topic you should discuss only the reasons of going down of economy with examples, experience, some study etc. You should not discuss political aspect of Pakistan because topic is economy not politics. If you mix relevant and irrelevant details in your paragraph your paragraph will not be read by anyone.

3. *Concluding Sentence (Was)*: A mere reflection of your topic sentence. It means that it is the restatement of topic sentence.

COHERENCE: Writer should know the ways of organising the support in a paragraph. Coherence is basically the flow that you have to maintain in your paragraphs as well as your whole essay. He/she should also learn signal words (transitional words), which increases effectiveness of a paragraph. Transitions are words or phrases which show relationships among ideas. They are like signposts which are installed on roads to show the direction to the travellers. The signposts are installed to facilitate travellers to tell them where to move now. Transitions are like a bridge which connects two roads. As bridges connect two roads so is the job of transitions. They connect two thoughts and direct the reader that writer is connecting another reason with the first or writer is introducing another idea to support the topic. You must use transitional words.

Coherence can be maintained with the help of transitional words/ connectors. Use transitions before you introduce any new idea. They'll help you organise and connect new idea, and they will help your readers follow the direction of your thoughts. Here are some transitions for you to use: therefore, however, firstly, secondly, furthermore etc. You can also use time order to arrange your supporting ideas in a way they occur or arrange them in a chronological order, for example: first this happened then this after that this finally, etc. This method is mainly followed in narration or direction. Use transitions wherever they are required.

There are mainly two types of coherence that are as follows:

- 1) **Inter-paragraph Coherence:** Between the first and the next paragraph
- 2) **Intra-paragraph Coherence:** Coherence within the paragraph

THE THIRD PART OF AN ESSAY: CONCLUSION

While writing your conclusion, you must be very clear about your stance i.e. it must be the same as it was in your introduction paragraph. It can range from five to six sentences. You must be like '*What I was saying was right, I still believe that I was right, I have proved above that I was right, and I am stating it again what I believe in*'. Furthermore, make sure that you finish your essay on a positive and optimistic note.

SUPPLEMENTARY TIPS

"Writing is not an easy task, nor is it everybody's business. It needs a lot of practice. One has to start from scratch and continue writing until one gets mastery in art of composition. It can't be done randomly or accidentally. Don't entertain the notion that you know everything about the subject, nor ever claim that you have written the best of composition ever written. Bear in mind that your attempt is merely one of the creation on a given subject. There may be certain better attempts than yours and even best ones of all you can ever imagine or create. I think that with practice, patience and painstaking attention to standard writing skills, you can improve quality of your write-up to an acceptable and enviable level." - Prof. Ghulam Hussain Manghar, IBA Sukkur

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ESSAY WRITING

- 1) Quantity doesn't matter but quality does.
- 2) The examiner needs to see your structure and knowledge i.e your own opinion expressed in clear and simple English in a convincing manner.
- 3) Avoid using idiomatic verbosity or technical diction, nothing else can irritate the examiner more than this so called stunt of yours.
- 4) The placement of your thesis statement and topic sentence must be correct. Give them what they want.
- 5) Try to improvise the knowledge you have gained from other subjects; relate your knowledge and extract convincing arguments. You may come up with points from Islamic Studies or even General Science. Let your creative juices flow.
- 6) Do not prepare pet essays. Essays are never asked on one topic, it is usually a relation between two or more concepts.
- 7) Keep things simple, clear, and follow the basics.
- 8) Essay never decides your allocation so don't try to impress the examiner, just try to pass. That'll be a great favor you'd be doing for yourself.

NOTABLE POINTS FOR ENGLISH ESSAY PAPER

- 1) Read all essay tips and select those issues which you have prepared the best.
- 2) Select that essay which you can best attempt considering thoughtfully the aspect which is asked.
- 3) Now turn your sheet and cross the page No. 25 - the last page - and start doing your rough work on that page.
- 4) Thoroughly explore your mind and bring out all relevant points of that issue on paper.
- 5) Now pick those points which are most suitable for your outline.
- 6) Make a logical outline depending solely upon the statement or topic of essay set by the examiner.
- 7) Reconsider each point for its relevancy and order in the outline.
- 8) Review your points and see if the used words can be replaced with more catchy or striking words. Remember, outline is like a cover of your essay which clearly depicts what is wrapped inside. So give it due consideration and time before starting your essay.
- 9) On rough pages, write an introduction for the essay. Articulate it with best words possible.
- 10) Now reconsider your outline and introduction and assess whether it fulfills the demands of the given essay. Only if you are satisfied with that rough draft proceed with the essay, otherwise reject it and attempt your second best essay on similar pattern. This is important because you would not get a second chance before one year if you fail in this paper.
- 11) This exercise would certainly take time but do not be panic even if it takes 40-45 minutes because you have done all the hard work. All you have to do is to write that outline and introduction neatly on your answer sheet and then proceed with the essay following the outline that you have already prepared.

MY TAKE ON ENGLISH ESSAY

It is an open secret that writing standard English and grammatical accuracy play a vital role in success in essay writing for CSS Exam. You should know the art of literary and scholarly writing. It needs a long discussion to expatiate about improving written English but let me give you some rudimentary tips. A basic attribute which is to learn idiomatic usage in writing an essay should be developed. For earning grammatical accuracy in your written expression, one should study English grammar books thoroughly (not cursorily) to learn the correct usage of grammatical units i.e. verbs, adverbs, adjective, coordination, subordination, subject-verb agreement, phrasal verbs, etc.

There are two parts in Essay i.e. reading and writing. Reading quality books enhances one's vision and also increases the capability to write academically. As mentioned in earlier posts, there are a few diverse areas that need to be strengthened by every **CSS Aspirant**. Some of the resources are mentioned below that can help greatly.

PART ONE: READING

1) Politics

- a) Politics: A very short introduction (Kenneth Minogue)
- b) Introduction to Political Theory (John Hoffman and Paul Graham)
- c) Introduction to Political Science (Mazhar ul Haq)
- d) Analyzing Politics (Ellen Grigsby)

CSS Beginners' Guide (Aamir Mahar)

e) Penguin Dictionary of Politics

2) Economics

- a) Economics (Partha Dasgupta)
- b) Issues in Pakistan Economy (Akbar S. Zaidi)
- c) Economic Survey of Pakistan

3) World History

- a) World History (V.B Rao)
- b) Western Heritage (Donald Kaghan)
- c) International History (Anthony Best)

4) Literature

- a) Conquest of Happiness (Bertrand Russell)
- b) Pleasures of Philosophy (Will Durrant)
- c) Unpopular Essays (Bertrand Russell)
- d) Siddhartha (Hermann Hesse)
- e) Skeptical Essays (Bertrand Russell)

5) Philosophy

- a) Sophie's World (Jostein Gardner)
- b) Philosophy: the Power of Ideas (Brooke Noel Moore)

PART TWO: WRITING

The stages of academic writing are as follows:

- 1) **Basic Grammar:** Tenses, Parts of Speech, and Use of Punctuation.
- 2) **Sentence Structure:** Types of Sentences, Parallelism, Sentence problems, and Types of Clauses.
- 3) **Paragraph Writing:** Paragraph Structure, Outlining, Unity and Coherence, Kinds of Logical Order, and Concrete Support.
- 4) **Essay Writing:** The Process of Academic Writing, Components of Essay, Patterns of Essay Organization, Outline-Making, and Capacity Building.
- 5) **Developing Expression:** Analysis, Evaluation of knowledge and proper linking.

RESOURCES FOR WRITING

Always remember; the key to good writing is good reading and extensive practice.

- a) English Precis & Composition (Karimdad Chughtai)
- b) Exploring the world of English (Sayyid Saadat Ali Shah)
- c) English Grammar in Use (Raymond Murphy)
- d) College Writing (Macmillan)
- e) Essay Writing Notes (Aamir Mahar)
- f) Exploring Writing (John Langan)
- g) College Writing (Susan Anker)

3 STAGES FOR WRITING A SHORT ESSAY

STAGE 1

1. Select your strong area of writing in the beginning, for instance, law students can write easily on law topics & literature students can write on literary topics
2. Short essay is necessary for all because it is a base for long essay and 12 papers.
3. Short essay should be of 250-300 words.
4. Introduction should be of 50-70 words.
5. Supportive arguments in second paragraph should be of 150-200 words.
6. Conclusion should be of 50 words

STAGE 2

7. Introduce your topic and take a stance in your introduction.
8. Support your arguments with reason, logic and examples in 150-200 words. Add proverbs, national, international local examples.
9. Prove your stance in conclusion in the end.

STAGE 3

10. Write correct but simple English.
11. Read the topic before you write
12. Do brainstorming before writing.
13. Write points in out line after brainstorming
14. Organize your points.
15. Now, it is high time to write your essay.

FPSC: ESSAY REQUIREMENTS

Majority of the candidates relies on the stereotypical substandard material available in the market instead of keeping themselves abreast of updated information and using their own mind and intelligence for innovative and genuine approaches. They demonstrate glaring flaws both in comprehension and expression. They abruptly jump at writing on a topic without comprehending its meaning, spirit, direction and range. Consequently a loose and lengthy jumbled lot produced without any sense of relevance, clarity, coherence and structured organization. From the angle of the question paper it is heartening fact that the candidates attempt almost all topics. This manifests that due to multiple orientations and thematic variety of the given topics, the candidates do not have to face any undesirable inconvenience in finding a subject.

WHAT FPSC REQUIRES YOU TO FOCUS ON?

- **Updated Information:** Improve the quality of your arguments through effective research and extensive reading.
- **Innovative and Genuine Expression:** Learn to write whatever's on your mind on the paper academically.
- **Comprehension:** Understand the topic's meaning, spirit, direction and range.
- **Components of the Essay:** Develop a sense of relevance, clarity, coherence and structured organization.
- **Strengthen your Core Areas:** Thematic variety of the topics is provided, hence, choose a niche and strengthen it.

ESSAY CHECKING TECHNIQUE OF THE FPSC EXAMINER

I look at the outline first and foremost. There are three possible types of outlines:

- 1) Relevant, to the point
- 2) Twisted, convoluted and confusing
- 3) Incomprehensible due to poor English

The last two outline-producing varieties of candidates are half-failed in my mind when I reach the end of their outlines. Then I look for the thesis statements and again there can be three types of them

- 1) Coherent and relevant
- 2) Irrelevant
- 3) Incomprehensible

For the third variety, their thesis statement marks the end of their stories. I skim through the pages of their sheets in next few seconds just to find out more blunders and finally award them, marks in 0-20 range. For the second type of thesis statements, if the outline is irrelevant too, I give a read to their introductory and concluding paragraphs, and just a fleeting glance to the material they've written in the body. If they used correct English, I award them marks just for doing that. If the thesis is irrelevant but the outline was relevant, I give them a fighting chance. I read the introductory paragraph, if it conveys some sense as a whole, I continue. If the essay is coherent and strong till the end, and my eyes don't find mistakes while turning the pages, this type of candidate can make through. For the candidates who have relevant outlines and thesis statements, they are already half-passed when I reach the end of their introductory paragraphs. I skim through their essays just to check if they have written the same stuff as their outline inside or if they have digressed and gone beyond the scope of the title. If they haven't done that to an unforgiving extent, they are clear. Some candidates produce very good outlines and introductory paragraphs. Once I have decided to pass them, I read whole of their essays just to decide how much they deserve above 40. But this is a very rare variety.

(I have quoted a person who used to be an examiner for FPSC. They don't need to read the whole essay just to ascertain this. He could know whether a candidate knew proper English just by reading five to six sentences.)

ENGLISH PRÉCIS & COMPOSITION PAPER

Actually, English Précis and Composition Paper is more concerned with your expressions rather than the arguments. It's a test of your literary skills and command over English language and grammar. Do hand-pick standard books on grammar and cast your eyes over them, read between the lines and avoid cramming. Here, every portion is dealt with separately.

PRÉCIS WRITING:Précis writing is one of the most useful skills you can acquire for your work both as a student and as a professional. Précis writing involves summarizing a document to extract the maximum amount of information, then conveying this information to a reader in minimum words. A précis is a clear, compact logical summary of a passage. It preserves only the essential or important ideas of the original.

Here, I have for you a wonderful piece of advice regarding "Précis Writing". I am sure Précis Writing is a hard nut to crack for all the aspirants out there, but not anymore I hope I do justice with the transferring of the knowledge. Well, I try my level best. However, none of you is bound to follow this technique. If you find it useful, great! If not, even better. **I hope we all learn a lot. Enjoy!**

PREREQUISITES OF PRÉCIS WRITING

A good précis shows the writing skills of a candidate. It must have the following qualities.

1. Clarity: Clarity means getting your message across so that the receiver can understand what the writer is trying to convey. It is the basic and essential need of a précis. The ideas should be clear and understandable. There should not be any ambiguity in your writing. The writer can achieve clarity by using simple language and simple structure. If your précis is not understandable to the reader it will lose its importance and meanings for the reader.

2. Correctness: Mistakes in your writings always irritate the reader. Of course mistakes are never intentional; even so there is no excuse for them. At the time of writing or composing a précis the writer must ensure that the facts and figures are correct. Structure of sentences and spellings of words must be correct because a single mistake in structure and spelling may spoil the message. We may consider the mistakes under the following headings:

- Misspelled words
- Mistakes in figures and dates
- Mistakes in punctuation
- Mistakes of grammar and structure

3. Objectivity: Objectivity means the ability to present or view facts uncolored by feelings, opinions and personal bias. While making a précis, the writer should adopt an objective approach. He should not give and add his personal opinion and ideas in a précis. A précis should be purely a summary of the original text without any addition.

4. Coherence: Coherence means the logical and clear interconnection of ideas in a written piece of work. A good précis should be coherent. The ideas which are presented in a précis must have a logical connection and they all should be interrelated. In short we may say that the ideas should be well knitted so that the writer may not be confused and lose his interest.

5. Completeness: Another striking feature of a good précis is completeness. A précis should be complete in all respects. Completeness means that the writer should include all the important facts in a précis. To make it short he should not omit the important ideas. This mistake on the part of the writer will spoil the importance and meaning of the précis.

6. Conciseness: Conciseness is a desirable quality of a good précis. Conciseness means to say all that needs to be said and no more. The writer should write what is necessary and avoid writing unnecessary details. A concise piece of work conveys the message in the fewest possible words. But one point must be kept in mind that the writer should not omit some basic and essential facts to achieve conciseness. To achieve conciseness, notice the following suggestions:

- Omitting unnecessary details
- Eliminate wordy expressions
- Include only relevant material
- Avoid unnecessary repetition

GENERAL TIPS FOR PRÉCIS WRITING

- 1) Précis Writing is the first question of the subjective part.
- 2) Follow the sequence of the English Composition and Précis paper, so the examiner knows that you don't lack self-confidence
- 3) Spend almost 1 hour on this section
- 4) Be confident
- 5) The problems in précis writing are sometimes difficult vocabulary. Don't Panic. There are two types of meanings of difficult words.

Lexical Meanings: exact meanings out of the dictionary

Contextual Meanings: meaning of the word according to the context in which it is used. Contextual Meanings can be understood from the former sentence in which it is used or the latter. (Remember: Word is not important, the position of the word is.)

- 6) Start practicing Précis from passages of Psychology and Philosophy books. So go and get a pair of books on Philosophy and Psychology, read them with dictionary on and build your vocabulary, and then later start Past Papers.

For instance,

2005 précis passage was taken from book "Modern Reading in Psychology"

2006 précis passage was taken from "Pleasures of Philosophy" by Will Durant

2017 précis passage was taken from "In the Praise of Idleness" by Bertrand Russell

STEP BY STEP GUIDANCE FOR PRÉCIS WRITING

A well written précis should be a serviceable substitute for the original work. The goal of a précis is to preserve the core essence of the work in a manner that is both clear and concise. Here, I'm going to guide you step by step for Précis Writing.

- 1) Précis-writing is a very fine exercise in reading. Most aspirants read carelessly and retain only a vague idea of what they have read. Nothing provides a stronger corrective to such a habit than the practice of putting down briefly the substance of what has been just read. Précis-writing forces you to pay attention to what you have read. No one can write a summary of any passage unless he has read it attentively and grasped its meaning. Thus, summarizing is an excellent training in concentration. It teaches one to read with the mind as well as with the eye. Read the passage for the first time slowly in order to grasp the overall idea. (*Only 15–20% meaning will be comprehended at this time*)
- 2) In the second reading, highlight certain points. Points are divided into two categories;
 - a) 'Are's': Facts and Figures (*You can't change them.*)
 - b) 'Are nots': Explanations and Details.

You are given 20 % permission to use words as they are, these are the facts and figures, Highlight them! In a normal passage of 300 to 400 words, you will be able to find 8 or 10 or 12 points.
- 3) On a fresh page, write down a heading "*Points for the Précis*" and enlist all the points in *your own words* in a chronological order.
- 4) On the next page, make a heading "*Rough Draft*", with the help of Connectors/ Transitional Phrases, write down all the points you wrote on the previous page in a single whole paragraph.
- 5) Count the words of the original passage and the ones in your Rough Draft. Relaxation of 10 words is given by the examiner so that you do not miss out the important points. (*Do not try to be over-efficient and avail this opportunity.*)
- 6) Start editing your Rough draft and apply one word substitution or other techniques where applicable.
- 7) On a fresh Page, make a heading '*Neat Draft*'. Write down the material left after editing your '*Rough Draft*'. You need to write down your '*Neat Draft*' within 105-110 words (if the original passage is 300 words, follow the 1/3rd Rule)
- 8) Using a Black Marker, write down "Words in the Original Passage: 300 words" on a separate line. On the next, write down "Required Number of Words=100 words". On the next, "Words in the Précis: 108" (*This is just a sample.*)
- 9) **Title of the Précis:** "*Title Giving*" can be done by either giving "*Points of The Précis*" a read and come up with a title, or figure it out through the Topic

Sentence, which is either written in the first sentence or the concluding one. The former method is more reliable.

The title of the Précis must be given, even if it is not asked. The hint for the title can be found in the central idea of the passage. In fact, the title is the central idea of the central idea—the Précis of the Précis. It should also be remembered that every word of the title (except Articles, Prepositions and Conjunctions) should begin with a capital letter. It can be:

- a) In a phrase: “Unemployment is one of the reasons behind Crime”
- b) Like the Topic of an Essay:
 “Unemployment: a cause behind Crime” (Most Effective Title)

Go back to the portion where you wrote “Points of the Précis” and “Rough Draft” and put a cross using a Black Marker. The whole point of this exercise is to make the examiner see that you have followed a proper structure while attempting précis. S/he’ll be impressed.

Read the following passage and answer the question given at the end:

A life of action and danger moderates the dread of death. It not only gives us fortitude to bear pain, but teaches us at every step the precarious tenure on which we hold our present being. Sedentary and studious men are the most apprehensive on this score. Dr. Johnson was an instance in point. A few years seemed to him soon over, compared with those sweeping contemplations on time and infinity with which he had been used to pose himself. In the still life of a man of letters there was no obvious reason for a change. He might sit in an arm chair and pour out cups of tea to all eternity would it had been possible for him to do so. The most rational cure after all for the inordinate fear of death is to set a just value on life. If we mere wish to continue on the scene to indulge our head-strong humour and tormenting passions, we had better be gone at once,; and if we only cherish a fondness for existence according to the good we desire from it, the pang we feel at parting which it will not be very server.

Questions:

1. Suggest a suitable title for the passage.
2. Make a précis of the passage.

Solution:

1. **Suitable Title:** The fear if death.
2. **Summary or Précis:** If we lead an active life facing dangers, we will less fear death. People, who lead a lazy and peaceful life, are the most afraid of death. The most sensible way of getting rid of the fear of death is to value life properly. If we do not give unnecessary importance to our life, we will not feel the pang of death.

COMPREHENSION:

Use *Sandwich Strategy*. Do not read the paragraph first. Read the questions first, so that a detector is set in your mind. When you read the questions first, you’ll detect the answers right away. Underline those sentences, read the questions again. Answer now, in your own words only taking the concept and facts and figures from the paragraph. Answer in a very comprehensive manner in 4 to 5 sentences. If the examiner asks you to write the meaning of the underlined words, lexical meaning is not required, contextual meaning is required.

Read the given passage then give brief answers to the questions placed at the end, in your own words (CSS 2002):

There is indeed, something inexpressibly *pleasing* in the annual renovation of the world and the new display of the treasures of nature. The darkness and cold of winter with the naked deformity of every object, on which we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what we have escaped, as for what we may enjoy. Every budding Flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The spring affords to a mind free from the disturbance of cares or passions almost everything that our present state makes us capable of enjoying. The Variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odors, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal from the growth of his food and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gaiety, significantly expressed by Smile of nature. (Samuel Johnson)

Questions:

1. Give meanings of the bold expressions in the passage in your own words.

Annual renovation (yearly renewal)

Treasures of Nature (phenomenal beauty)

Naked deformity (exposed disfigurement)

Succeeding season (following period)

Warm situation (pleasant weather)

Variegated Verdure (colourful freshness)

Grateful odors (welcoming fragrances)

Clemency of the weather (pleasantness of climate)

Air of gaiety (scene of happiness)

Smile of nature (beauty of nature)

2. Say, how an early budding flower becomes a messenger of happy days?

Answer: After the dullness of the winter, an early budding flower announces spring. The scenic beauty shoos cares away and bring happiness. Fields and woods become colourfully fresh. Fragrances spread everywhere. Melodies can be heard. Almost every shade of nature starts its charm and attractiveness.

3. Who, according to the writer can make the best of the spring season?

Answer: A human being can make the best of spring season. He can feast his eyes on the scenic beauty around. He can enjoy the attractiveness of the multicoloured forests and lush green fields. Melodious singing of the birds can also soothe his ears. The beauty of the spring can free him from worries and cares of life.

4. Why are all animals glad at the approach of spring seasons?

Answer: In the spring the animals are glad to have plenty of food which was unavailable during winter. The animals either store food or face hanger as snow covers everything. The spring brings fresh fodder for the animals. The mild weather also makes animals happy. They leave their hideouts and graze.

SENTENCE CORRECTION:

Sentence Correction is essentially a test of English grammar and usage, so the best preparation for these questions is a review of the different grammar rules and their usage. I strongly advise you to pay attention to elements of grammar and sentence construction. There may be 10,000 rules of grammar but the Examiner judges you in the exceptional ones. Make a separate note book in which you need to write beneath it that **where** was the mistake, **what** was the rule, and **how** it works. Many GMAT Sentence Correction books are available on Google. Get one book and start practicing it!

For example:

He not only comes there for swimming but also for coaching new swimmers. (CSS 2017)

Correct: He comes there not only for swimming but also for coaching new swimmers.

Structure Rule: 'Either ... or', 'neither nor', 'both and', 'not only.... but also' should be followed by the same parts of speech.

VOCABULARY:

For improving your vocabulary, read as much as possible. Peruse books on a variety of topics and in many different genres. Underline words you do not know, try to determine the meaning of the word based on the context and then it up in the dictionary. The key to a better vocabulary is regular practice and progress. Maybe you can't learn a hundred new words a day, but you can learn one or two a day, totaling thousands of new words over the years. Suppose, if you remember ten words daily, think that after a month there would be 300 new words in your memory and it would make a special difference to the owner. I think English newspapers (Dawn Newspaper, The Economist) are the best source for it and keep in mind that you can't grasp them properly until you use them in your own sentences and work on three to four synonyms for that word. Moreover, the comprehension and precise paragraphs may contain hellish and hard words of vocabulary that may impede you getting what actually is being said. If you manage to crack those words, it would make quite easy for you to write your precise and answer the questions with good understanding. Here's an example for you.

Precipice: cliff, crag, rock face, brink, scarp

Sentence: The path had sheer rock on one side and a *precipice* on the other.

Wait and think, this word has 5 synonyms. You can use these synonyms instead of using same word again and again. So, open your mind like a child and you will learn words faster. Work on this strategy at least for one month and then learn how to use right word at right place using any lexicon (Recommended: Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th Edition). Another interesting way to learn vocabulary is through mnemonics (another file named Barron's Mnemonics can easily be download from Google.)

According to the perusal of English Précis and Composition Paper (CSS 2017), a good command over vocabulary is a mandatory factor to get through this paper. Vocabulary building is a systematic progress. Rote learning doesn't promise fruitful results. Many brilliant candidates may memorize hundreds of words but are unable to recall the same during exams. In order to keep the words in active memory, candidates are required to chalk out a comprehensive plan for 'vocabulary building'.

PHRASAL VERBS:

Understand the meaning of prepositions. If there are 1000 verbs and you understand 10 prepositions, you'll be able to understand 10, 000 phrasal verbs. Once the concept of prepositions is clear, Have a look at 10 Phrasal Verbs and comprehend the way a preposition changes the meaning of a verb. 'Building of the Perception' is going to help you in paper.

TRANSLATION & IDIOMS:

Read the sentence and try to make out the sense of the sentence. Try not to translate as it is, translate in "almost" the same words. You can divide the given in the following segments:

1. Subject Verb Resolve
2. Phrase Resolve
3. Voice Resolve
4. Narration Resolve

5. Context Resolve
6. Conjunction Resolve
7. Idiom Resolve
8. Omission
9. Addition
10. Draft Resolve

FOR EXAMPLE:

کچھ ماہرین لسانیات نے اردو کی ابتداء کا سراغ قدیم آریاؤں کے زمانے میں لگانے کی کوشش کی ہے۔

1. Subject Verb Resolve: Some language experts - tried
2. Phrase Resolve: Origin of Urdu, Ancient Arian Era
3. Context Resolve: Find the roots, Find the traces

TRANSLATION: Some language experts tried to find the traces of Urdu in Ancient Arian era.

Idiomatic expression is not translated word for word. For idioms, try to read between the lines. Recommended book is: Azhar Idioms or Oxford Idioms

PAIR OF WORDS: Aspirants need conceptual study. Exploring the world of English by Sayyid Saadat Ali Shah and any other book, try to make out the difference of the words. Explain the meaning of both words first and then make clear sentences.

For example:

Veracity, Voracity (CSS 2017)

They questioned the veracity of her story. (*truth, truthfulness*)

Arsalan was voracity in nature. (*extreme appetite*)

GROUPING OF WORDS (SYNONYMS & ANTONYMS):

Practice these from GRE Barron's Book preferably 15th Edition. You'll find a portion there for grouping of words. Plus, there are many online sources to practice that from, all of the grouping of words question of 2016-17 came from a website (just so you know). Recommended book is: Synonyms & Antonyms by Tariq Ali Khan

GRAMMAR:

Get good grammar books preferably Practical English Grammar (A. J. Thomson, A. V. Martinet), All about Competitive English (Prof. Muzaffar Bukhari), Practical English Usage (Michael Swan), Grammar in Use (Raymond Murphy), and clear your basic grammar skills i.e. Articles, Tenses, and Punctuations. There are a lot of grammar books on internet, do check them and choose whatever suits you best. If you manage to read at least 2 to 3 books on English Grammar, it would be more than enough and would make you confident in written expressions.

ANALOGY:

Analogy questions are used to test both logic and reasoning skills and word knowledge. These questions ask test takers to identify relationships between pairs of words. In order to solve analogy questions, you must first have a clear understanding of the words' definitions and then use that understanding to determine how the words are related. Analogy questions are often described as "*blank is to blank as blank is to blank.*" So for example, puppy : dog :: kitten : _____, is read "puppy is to dog as kitten is to blank." The answer is, of course, "cat." However, the "blank is to blank" format does not really answer the question precisely. More accurately, you might describe the relationship between puppy and dog as "a puppy is a young dog." To determine the missing word, you might say "a kitten is a young..." The key to solving an analogy question is to precisely describe the relationship between the pair of words and then apply the same relationship to determine which word completes the analogy.

Candidates, preparing for this section, should take online practice tests on Analogy Questions.

The relationships that are found in analogy questions fall into several general types.

1. **Worker and article created.** For example, composer : symphony.
2. **Worker and tool used.** For example, surgeon : scalpel.
3. **Tool and object worked on.** For example, saw : wood.
4. **Time sequence.** For example, sunrise : sunset.
5. **Cause and effect.** For example, dawn : twilight.
6. **Degree of intensity.** For example, joy : ecstasy.
7. **Synonyms.** For example, lie : prevaricate.
8. **Antonyms.** For example, real : fictional.
9. **Sex.** For example, bull : cow.
10. **Symbol or representation.** For example, dove : peace.
11. **Action and significance.** For example, cry : sorrow.
12. **Manner.** For example, shamble : walk.
13. **Type and Category.** For example, orange : citrus.

ADVICE FOR ASPIRANTS

To be specific for spelling, “gathering” the words from newspapers and writing them down in your notebook will itself help you to remember the spelling. For those who still find it difficult, writing the spelling 10-20 times is suggested. You should avoid using “short language” while chatting on social media. Your brain is very adaptive; such short words (misspelled) may cause trouble while taking exams. So always use properly spelled words while you converse.

A POINT TO UNDERSTAND

This paper is all about practice. Get your work checked by someone who could point out your mistakes. The point of all of the above exercises is to improving your academic written English. Though I am personally against the way this exam is trying to judge one’s written English, however, try to improve your general English standard and you’d be good to go. **All the best!**

GENERAL SCIENCE & ABILITY PAPER

General Science and Ability Paper is a very technical and a highly scoring subject; make sure you make the best of it. General Science Portion carries 60 marks and General Ability is of 40 marks. In the General Science Portion, you need to be precise and relevant with your answers. For example, if you are asked to answer a 5-mark question then you merely need to write 5-6 different, relevant, and coherent points. Try and give answers in bullets form in GSA paper. For instance, as in 2016 they asked a question on *Artificial Intelligence (AI)*, your answer should look like:

1. What is AI? Definition.
2. When did it start to evolve? Mention any famous scientists, dates, names, etc.
3. Where is it used? i.e. in what fields
4. What are the recent trends?
5. How can it be improved?
6. What is its future?

As I mentioned earlier, try to answer the ‘wh’ questions (*What? When? Where? How? What ought to be?*). Aspirants should be good at drawing. Always try to make

diagrams, graphs, etc. wherever necessary. Always remember being precise since time management is the *key* in this paper. Many candidates spend too much time in General science portion that they miss out on questions from General Ability.

The General Ability Portion can fetch you good marks as most of the mathematical and analytical questions carry solid marks. This portion comprises: *Quantitative Ability (Reasoning Concepts and Ability)* to reasons quantitatively and solve problems in a basic mathematical skills, basic arithmetic, algebra and geometry (average, ratios, rates, percentage, quantitative setting. angles, triangles, sets, remainders, equations, symbols, rounding of numbers random sampling). *Ability Logical Reasoning* includes the process of using a rational, systematic series of steps based on sound mathematical procedures and given statements to arrive at a conclusion. *Analytical Reasoning/Ability* includes visualizing, articulating and solving both complex and uncomplicated problems and concepts and making decisions that are sensible based on available information, including demonstration of the ability to apply logical thinking to gathering and analyzing information. *Mental Abilities scales* that measures specific constructs such as verbal, mechanical, numerical and social ability. Aspirants are advised to practice General Ability portion as much as possible. It will spare time for you which you can utilize in the General Science portion.

In my opinion, consult howstuffworks.com & www.khanacademy.org as it is a good website for GSA (watch more and more videos of geography, math, biology and various other topics). And please never rely on your skills and background knowledge since this is the only paper in which you can make a lot of difference with others. And never plan half but always be fully prepared. And one thing you must be doing in next hour is the installation of Encarta Encyclopedia in your computer (laptop). Pick a subject and discover each and every facet of the topic. Get the book that covers the complete syllabus such as:

1. General Science and Ability (Mian Shafiq)
2. Test of Reasoning (Edgar Thorpe)
3. GRE's books for General Ability Portion.

Along with reading books, make sure that you make Bullet Notes for Revision Purposes and for MCQs. In a nutshell, the key to ace this exam you have to manage your time properly, stay relevant, and be precise in your answer.

CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

It will be no exaggeration to term Current Affairs as the backbone of CSS Exam because if this subject is strong, then half of the work is done. Current Affairs plays a pivotal and overlapping role in most of the compulsory and optional subjects. Here, through this write-up I will try to guide you through the art of tackling the Current Affairs paper.

SUBJECT ANALYSIS:

Current Affairs as a subject is quite an easy one. We all know what is happening all around us. You simply need to be tactical in your approach and justification of your stance is highly crucial. Most aspirants consider these subjects as the most difficult obstacles to defeat i.e. Essay and Current Affairs Papers. It is so because candidates have to build the edifice of their preparation. In short, it is the backbone of CSS Exam, the 'key'. Apparently, Current Affairs is only a single compulsory paper yet its use in Essay, Pakistan Affairs and Islamic Studies as well as in the optional ones like Geography, International Relations, International Law,

Political Science, etc., is all too visible. That's the reason why a huge chunk of candidates opts for these subjects.

SYLLABUS ANALYSIS:

The syllabus has been divided into 3 Major Areas; Domestic Affairs, External Affairs, and Global Issues. All of the domestic affairs of Pakistan such as political, economic along with social issues comprise the first part. Relations with neighbors, Muslim world, USA, and regional as well as International organizations are the features of External Affairs of Pakistan. Global Issues constitute all the current (ISIS, Muslims in Burma, etc.) as well as decades old global issues (Kashmir issue and Palestine issue). At least 2 questions appear from all of the 3 areas but External Affairs and Global Issues are majorly focused. (Check 2016 paper)

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Analytical mind plays decisive role in one's success. FPSC has too changed her course from encouraging rote learning to appreciate analytical mind. If you do not have analytic skill it would be very difficult to attempt paper with reason and logic. If your paper has no show of mind you can't expect any bright success. Anyhow to develop analytical skill is not too difficult you just need to read what one says and put argument accordingly. First you would face difficulty to pen argument but you can learn from editorials or opinions of newspaper where writer always support her option only on bases of logic. You can easily judge that different writers support their points on different ground and they often vary from each other if endorse one policy other endorse any other policy you can judge that on what points one endorse a specific policy and on what points one oppose that policy. Another way is to develop these skill is to discuss contemporary affairs with your friends, try to get opinions of different people who belong to different regions argue with them on specific points through this way you can easily gather different viewpoints view on specific issues. Remember learn how to acknowledge true reason; do not dare stick to your point if one provides enough logic to support her point instead of your insistence on your viewpoint, which is averse of logic. So, one must stay relevant, precise, and logical with one's answers. Try to theorize your answer, hence, an understanding of the history and politics is pertinent. Examiner requires analysis so ensure that you are able to justify your stance.

While attempting the paper, most candidates do not understand the questions before answering them. There is a wide gulf between what they write and what has been actually asked. For example, the question is: "Resolution of Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan can bring peace and prosperity in the region. Discuss."

Most candidates would go on writing all they knew about Kashmir while remaining completely oblivious to what has been actually asked. Here, what is required is to discuss only one aspect of the many branches of the Kashmir dispute. So, do read the question again and again to grasp what examiner wants to see in your answer, and then write your points accordingly.

Q. Discuss the causes of extremism and militancy in Pakistani society. Suggest ways and means for the state organs to overcome these issues.

1. Introduction
2. Causes of Extremism and Militancy in Pakistan
 - a) Motivation by religious ideologies and grievances.
 - b) Injustice to Minorities.
 - c) Terrorists will use poverty, social strife, inequality and oppression to their advantage.
 - d) Involvement of Foreign Hand

- e) Several interpretations of Islam.
- f) Illiteracy
- g) Low employment rate
- 3. Ways to Overcome These Issues
 - a) Invigorate law-enforcement agencies.
 - b) More vigilance along borders.
 - c) Depriving criminals of their profits
 - d) Providing necessary technology, harmonizing laws and sharing information.
 - e) Seek negotiated political settlement.
 - f) Reorganize national priorities with education as main concern.
 - g) Prevent others from following the same path and thus succeed in eliminating the terrorism menace.
- 4. Conclusion

External Affair Questions:

How to critically analyze external affairs from different perspectives?

1. Study Relations Through Maps:

Practice making the following three maps so as to memorize them;

- a. World Map
- b. South Asian Map
- c. Pakistan Map

When you have a clear picture of the above maps in your head, it would be easier to deal with current affairs related questions.

2. Influence of other Countries/ Organizations:

We all know that all the countries have some influence and interest in every neighbor country due to inter-dependency. In relation based questions such as Pak-Afghan Relations, Afghanistan has an Indian, Chinese, Iranian, and Russian influence which directly affect the dynamics of Pak-Afghan Relations. Critical analyses of these relations can be discussed in the question.

You write an outline of **Study Relations with Organizations** through this technique. For instance: **European Union (EU)**

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Formation: Answering 'wh' questions
- 3. Objectives and Organizational Structure
- 4. Recent Developments: When was the last conference held and when will the next be held?
- 5. Effectiveness of EU
- 6. Challenges Faced by EU
- 7. Role of Pakistan; Critical analysis required (GSP plus status)
- 8. Conclusion

3. Analyses from Different Perspectives:

Bilateral Relations include Strategic, Political, Economic, Cultural, and Social level interactions. All the more reason studying relations has become quite difficult as two countries interact with each other on different fronts. For instance, Pakistan-China Relations are usually studied on a strategic and an economic front. Whereas, Pak-US relations has been studied from political and economic perspectives.

POINT TO NOTE:

Examiner always asks about a particular aspect of bilateral relations according to the recent developments. As in 2015, there was a huge uproar about restarting the dialogue process between Pakistan and India. Hence, in 2016 he asked questions regarding comprehensive dialogue between Pakistan and India. Note that the question has been asked in context of Dialogue so keeping that in mind we will be formulating an outline.

COMPARISON OF ANSWERS: GENERAL V/S QUESTION SPECIFIC**1) General Technique: Pak-India Relations**

- I. Introduction
- II. Historical Background; Wars, dialogues.
- III. Irritants: Kashmir Issue, Water Disputes, Indian Presence in Afghanistan, Indian Involvement in Pakistan (Presence of Raw), events such as Mumbai carnage and the blame game
- IV. Current Developments
- V. Way Forward/ Recommendations: Role of both Indian and Pakistani government, Role of media, citizens, Multi track Diplomacy, how can the tussle be solved especially Kashmir issue, Role of Afghanistan as a Buffer state, and power sharing percentage.
- VI. Conclusion

2) Question Specific (2016): Discuss the possibilities of progress under the recently agreed rubric of Comprehensive Dialogue between Pakistan and India. In your opinion what are the major constraints at present?

1. Introduction
2. Historical Context: Linking every event with the prospect of dialogue
3. Brief Analysis of Dialogues: How many dialogues occurred and how many were effective if any?
4. Recent Dimensions in terms of hurdles to Peace
 - a. Systematic violation of LOC since 2013 (you may make a South Asia Map here)
 - b. India blotting the image of Pak (blame game)
 - c. Conservative Regime in India
 - d. Growing ties of US and India in context of Nuclear Supplier Group membership
5. Conflicting Foreign Policy Objectives
 - a. Indian Approach toward Pakistan(Regional Policy, and Neighborhood policy)
 - b. Pakistan's understanding of such policies
6. Hurdles in Peace?
 - a. Psychological clash of historical narratives
 - b. Pakistan's India fear
 - c. Legacy of Partition
 - d. South Asia being a breeding ground for extremism
 - e. Accusations
7. Can Peace be possible?

- a. Curriculum Reformation: Removing opposing elements
 - b. Reconstruction of national narratives
 - c. Trade as an effective tool
 - d. Multi-track Diplomacy
 - e. Effective utilization of SAARC's platform
8. Conclusion

5) Domestic and Global Issues Section: Keep a check on the events of later half of the previous year and the start of the year in which exams are to be commenced. You have to be conceptual and analytical in your answers and not factual.

START PREPARING FOR CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

Now, you have got the basic structure ready. Make a separate register for Current Affairs. Daily pick up a national and international newspaper/magazine and look out for any update on your relevant topic and you just need to add that under 'Recent Developments' section. Preferably start preparation of Current Affairs from October till the exam date. Reading newspapers helps you to improve English vocabulary, since most of the vocabulary words for written expressions are high frequency words except the Précis Paper.

STRATEGY FOR READING DAWN NEWSPAPER

For newspaper reading, if it's DAWN, go through the front page, back page, editorial and what nobody will emphasize enough is the 2 international pages, specially the left one which contains opinions and views by Intl' newspapers' writers, plus the business page for just staying in touch with the state of global economy. Monday's supplement on economy is a MUST. Two to three questions in each of Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs and Geography, or even a topic in essay, can be prepared by thorough reading of this supplement, noting down imp stats etc. On average, 3 to 4 articles in each supplement are worth cutting away and preserving from examination point of view.

Aspirants, don't waste your whole day on news paper. Maximum 1-2 hour is sufficient if you are good reader. If you want to improve your composition, rewrite one editorial daily and get it checked. Select 5 new words daily and use those words into sentences. Make short notes from news paper and add facts and figures to-up-date.

RESOURCES FOR CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

- a. Dawn, and Express Tribune
- b. The Economist Magazine (Online)
- c. Current Affairs Digest (Safdar Mehmood)
- d. Foreign Policy Magazine
- e. You should also check online websites including for Current Affairs:
www.newsweekpakistan.com
www.economist.com
www.foreignpolicy.com
www.spiegel.de/international

ANALYTICAL ABILITY:

As I mentioned earlier, the analytical ability should be developed. Aspirant should not be a rote learner. You should be able to analyse the statement and describe it in your own words. Only the availability of knowledge is useless. You should be able to arrange the knowledge in the required format. Keenly observe the method used by the

writers in newspaper articles. They provide logic for every statement they make. You should have clear points against and in favour of different issues. The discussion with the friends can be helpful too. This will make you aware of their points of view. Every point should have logic behind it.

I CAN HELP YOU IN CURRENT AFFAIRS PAPER

- 1) Choose the questions carefully. Go for the topics about which you have extensive knowledge.
- 2) Make coherent outlines and follow that pattern strictly while answering the question. An outline serves as a snapshot of what lies ahead for the examiner. It facilitates students as well for properly organizing their scheme of answer.
- 3) Proper introduction, analysis, pointers to support the premises and conclusion are some essential constituents of a good answer. Employ a good number of headings and present your paper well.
- 4) Be extremely relevant, targeted and focused. Answer the gist of the question only.
- 5) Avoid passing sweeping statements rather back your arguments with relevant statistics, figures, maps, diagrams, flow charts, examples, case studies, quotations and views of significant authors and experts of the concerned subject. Statistics need to be current and correct. Do not think examiner will not find out if you're misquoting figures.
- 6) Give a proper conclusion.
- 7) Skim through your answer after completion in order to avoid any mistakes.
- 8) Time yourself throughout and complete all your answer well in time. Do not answer more than 35-37 minutes per question.

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER

Before I start on discussing the method, I'd like you all to know that this is my personal take on Pakistan Affairs. You're free to agree or disagree with the method and the suggestions. So, I would request everyone to critically analyze on your own the pros and cons of this method, instead of blindly following it. Though, I'm pretty sure not everyone would understand it. Anyway, I hope it helps. Have a great one!

UNDERSTAND THE SYLLABUS & PAPER PATTERN

Go through the syllabus to understand this division as well as the number of questions appeared in the Papers of Pakistan Affairs (CSS 2016 & CSS 2017). I have re-categorized the syllabus for better comprehension and understanding of this subject.

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER (CSS 2016)

Pakistan Studies Areas (5 Questions)

1. Ideology of Pakistan and Reforms (1) **
2. Pre-Partition Era **
3. Land and People of Pakistan (2)
4. Strategic and Political Aspects (4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19)
5. Foreign Policy (14) *
6. Constitutional Measures of Pakistan (27)

Current Affairs Areas (2 Questions)

7. Socio-Economic Challenges (7, 16, 17, 20, 26, 28)
8. Regional Dynamics (3, 5, 9, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25) **
9. Global Issues (10, 13)

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER (CSS 2017)

Pakistan Studies Areas (4 Questions)

1. Ideology of Pakistan and Reforms (1)
2. Pre-Partition Era
3. Land and People of Pakistan (2) *
4. Strategic and Political Aspects (4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19) **
5. Foreign Policy (14)
6. Constitutional Measures of Pakistan (27) *

Current Affairs Areas (3 Questions)

7. Socio-Economic Challenges (7, 16, 17, 20, 26, 28) *
8. Regional Dynamics (3, 5, 9, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25) **
9. Global Issues (10, 13)

A POINT TO UNDERSTAND

The numbers written in brackets in front of the topics are in accordance with the original syllabus of Pakistan Affairs by FPSC. The Asterisks show the number of questions appeared in the Papers of Pakistan Affairs (CSS 2016 & CSS 2017).

GET THE RIGHT BOOKS FOR PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER

For Research Based Study

1. Pakistan: A modern history (Ian Talbot)
2. Pakistan: History and Politics (Rafiq Afzal)
3. Foreign Policy: A concise history (Abdul Sattar)
4. A concise history of Pakistan (M R Kazmi)
5. Pakistan beyond a crisis state (Maleeha Lodhi)
6. Pakistan: A manifest destiny (Atif Qureshi)
7. Jinnah of Pakistan (Stanley Walport)

For General Reading

1. Pakistan: A hard country (Anatol Levien)
2. The Idea of Pakistan (Stephen Philip Cohen)
3. Struggle for Pakistan (Ayesha Jalal)
4. The Military & Politics in Pakistan (Hasan Askari Rizvi)

From Paper Point of View

1. Pakistan Affairs (Ikram Rabbani)
2. Trek to Pakistan (For Pre Partition) (Ahmad Saeed)
3. The making of Pakistan (K K Aziz)

STRATEGY FOR PAKISTAN AFFAIRS PAPER

- a) **TIME FRAME:** Give around 15 to 20 days to this subject.
- b) **PAST PAPER ANALYSIS (PPA):** Get last 10 years past papers and list them down under each related subheading of the syllabus topics mentioned above. Refer to past paper study/analysis for Pakistan Affairs. Now you have the topic and the general trend as to what types of questions are asked. This would act as your guide.
- c) **READING BOOKS STRATEGY:** Start with the books according to paper point of view. Use them to make the basic structure of your bullet notes. But don't forget to leave a few pages for additional note-taking after each topic. For research based books, you better get them online, skim through them, and only get the relevant material for quality arguments and add them to your

bullet notes. The books for general reading would expand your horizon and give you a deeper insight regarding Pakistan Studies.

- d) **BULLET NOTES STRATEGY:** Get a print out of the PPA. Take the cut-outs of each topic and its past paper questions. Before starting to make notes, paste the relevant topics' PPA Cut-out on the top. This way you'll have the end in mind at all times. Study relevant material from paper point of view Books and internet and construct a basic structure i.e. an outline covering the topic in entirety. Leave 1 or 2 pages for add-on ideas/arguments. Now, you may add further points later or whenever it's feasible for you, but make sure it's before you start your revision process. This exercise would help you outshine others.
- e) **PRACTICE AND REVISION PROCESS:** Revise your bullet notes and keep updating them by reading quality books and adding quality arguments. Practice last ten years MCQs along with Past paper questions. Current affair related topics overlap in Current Affairs and International Relations Papers, which gives you an edge. *You're good to go. Best of Luck!*

SYLLABUS DIVISION OF PAKISTAN AFFAIRS

PAKISTAN STUDIES AREAS

1. IDEOLOGY OF PAKISTAN AND REFORMS

- a) Muslim rule in the Sub-continent, its downfall and efforts for Renaissance
- b) Ideology of Pakistan in the light of Speeches and statements of Allama Iqbal and Quaid- i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.
- c) Movements for reforms
 - 1. Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi
 - 2. Shah Waliullah
 - 3. Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed
 - 4. Aligarh, Deoband, Nadwah, and other educational institutions- Sindh Madrassah and Islamia College Peshawar.

2. PRE-PARTITION ERA (PAST PAPER ANALYSIS)

3. LAND AND PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN (Geography, Society, Natural resources, Agriculture, Industry and education with reference to characteristics, trends and problems.)

4. STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL ASPECTS

- a. Nuclear Program of Pakistan, its Safety and Security; International Concerns
- b. Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan
- c. Political Evolution Since 1971
- d. Evolution of Democratic System in Pakistan
- e. Changing Security Dynamics for Pakistan: Challenges to National Security of Pakistan
- f. Pakistan's National Interest
- g. Challenges to Sovereignty
- h. Non-Traditional Security Threats in Pakistan: Role of Non-State Actors

5. FOREIGN POLICY POST 9/11

6. CONSTITUTIONAL MEASURES OF PAKISTAN (The Recent Constitutional and Legal Debates, the Latest Constitutional Amendments and Important Legislations, Legal Cases and the Role of Higher Courts.)

CURRENT AFFAIRS AREAS

1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

- a. Economic Challenges in Pakistan: Economic Conditions of Pakistan, the Most Recent Economic Survey, the Previous and Current Budgets, and the Problems and Performance of Major Sectors of Economy.
- b. The Prevailing Social Problems of Pakistan and the Strategies to Deal with Them, Poverty, Education, Health and Sanitation.
- c. Ethnic Issues and National Integration
- d. Hydro Politics ; Water Issues in Domestic and Regional Context
- e. Pakistan's Energy Problems and their Effectssa

2. REGIONAL DYNAMICS

- a. Pakistan and Changing Regional Apparatus and Pakistan's Role in the Region
- b. Regional Cooperation Organizations (SAARC, ECO, SCO) and the Role of Pakistan
- c. Pakistan's Relations with Neighbors excluding India
- d. Pakistan and India Relations Since 1947
- e. The Kashmir Issue
- f. The war in Afghanistan since 1979 and its impact on, and challenges to Pakistan in the Post 2014 era.
- g. Proxy Wars: Role of External Elements

3. GLOBAL ISSUES

- a. The Palestine Issue
- b. Pakistan and US War on Terror

ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER

Islamic Studies Paper has always been considered as the most unpredictable and decisive subject along with English Essay and English Composition. The prime reason has been the fact that this paper has to be passed on its own unlike the three GK papers that comprise Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs, and GSA where you need to score an aggregate of 120 marks out of 300. Thus, each year's result surprised many as most of the failed candidates were a victim of this paper. Purely for the sake of paper, set aside your confidence in your command over your faith and seize this opportunity to study Islam in detail. The failure of so many candidates does not mean that their faith is incomplete; rather they fail to understand the essence of questions. There are also many false notions and myths about this paper that the candidates must give moderate views in paper or otherwise prepare to be failed. These notions are false and absurd. There is no room for confusion in Islam so give your clear cut view but do not forget to prove it with effective argumentation and examples. The paper demands a critical approach in every attempted question. Moreover, try to understand contemporary problems from Islamic point of view. It means that the aspirant is asked to answer a question where the solution to a current problem is sought in the light of Islam.

ISLAMIAT PAPER: URDU OR ENGLISH?

There is one more confusion about this paper is attempting it in Urdu or English. This is no issue as the main purpose is checking your knowledge. English or Urdu does not carry any marks of their own, but your argumentation and presentation does. So choose the language in which you can best attempt the paper. There has been a wrong perception that any particular medium of expression can fetch you more marks as compared to the other one. It is highly recommended that you had better go with the medium of expression with which you feel at home and can express yourself in a better manner be that English or Urdu. In my personal capacity and recommendation, I suggest that one should opt this paper in English. The following reasons:

1. One is not enslaved to the formula of writing extended Hadith and Quran References, required in Urdu
2. One is studying everything in English so it is good to keep practicing in the same knowledge
3. The Urdu paper is also attempted from left to right of the answer sheet which creates confusion
4. Good and precise attempt will fetch good marks while in Urdu a lot of effort is required.

PREPARING FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER

The way to prepare is to go through the past 10-15 years of papers. Sort out the most important and repeated 30 questions. Whatever book(s) you are consulting, you must sort out at least 5 Hadiths and 5 Ayats for each topic. Thus you will have some 300 references (Hadiths + Ayats) for all the 30 topics. These 300 references will broaden your vision to a huge extent and you will get the feelings of a religious scholar. Whatever opinion you hold while answering a question will surely be immensely supported by the references. Another very important point worth-bearing in mind is that there are diverse opinions regarding the manner of quoting the references. If you can quote any reference in indirect speech by using your own words but the same message as embodied by the reference, it is considered to be a *Good Approach*. If you can remember the exact words of any reference and can state correctly, it is reckoned as a *Better Approach*. And if you can recall the exact words of any reference along with its reference (Ayats or the narrator of the Hadiths), it will surely be the *Best Approach* and will fetch you maximum marks.

SCORING HIGH IN ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER:

The following suggestions can be helpful in improving the quality of your answer to get the maximum score:

1. Proper, coherent and impressive introduction to an answer is a prerequisite to scoring high in Islamic Studies Paper.
2. After providing an impressive introduction, the answer should be written in a style that is simply rational and coherent.
3. Try to make an outline of each question.
4. Be focused that what you're going to write. There are usually three types of sentences: Issue-based, Argumentative (which may support the issue at hand), Concluding (which are usually suggestion-based).
5. During preparation you should focus basically the Islamic Systems and the questions related to the fundamental problems of human beings and the importance and role of the Holy Quran in finding solutions to them.
6. In paper, there is hardly any heed paid to maintain coherence and linkage between the paragraphs and sequence of events.
7. Do write a relevant Quranic verse before starting to write the answer.
8. One more confusion is about the number of Ayats and Hadith references one has to quote. It purely depends on the question. If you remember any relevant references you should write preferably with other pen and some extra margin left on sides. But even if you do not quote any references, this would not mean a big difference if you answer the question effectively. Many candidates, including the writer, could not quote a single reference in Islamic Studies paper last year (2009) and still scored 70 per cent marks in it.

9. Use of headings is purely defined by the question asked. If you have any suitable heads for your arguments, use them with marker in bold style. But if questions demand critical analysis, you might not need more than a few.
10. Objecting others is, unfortunately, rampant in our society. We hear criticism of every sort almost round the clock. But, in CSS Exam, it is not approved of by the examiners. They just want to assess that which candidate has actually understood the issue and what suggestions he has to help resolve the said issue. It has been witnessed that some students become more than necessary critical while writing the answers to questions related to Western culture or civilization or those related to the issues of women. However, to score high, a balanced approach must be followed.
11. The students do read the books but they fail to utilize their analytical skills and creativity while writing down their answers. The students should consciously try to think about the contemporary challenges to Islam and the ways to tackle those.
12. Aspirants should pay attention to the prevailing trend of questions in the actual paper. So, read quality books and analyze.
13. Numerous aspirants, having no academic background in Islamic Studies, need a lot of guidance but they do not bother to seek any.
14. The last, but not least, are spelling and grammar mistakes. Try to avoid them in the paper.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

1. Islam Its Meaning and Message (Professor Khurshid Ahmed)
2. Islami Nazriya-e-Hayaat (Professor Khurshid Ahmed)
3. Islamic Studies (in Urdu & English) (Hafiz Karimdad Chughtai)
4. Islamic Ideology (S.M Shahid)
5. Documentaries on Islam and other religions (topdocumentaryfilms.com)

SELECTION OF OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

It has been quite rightly said that good subject selection is half a success especially when it comes to CSS Exam. Subjects should neither be finalised very early nor quite late. Aspirants are generally found quite perplexed especially when it comes to finalising their optional subjects. They often fall prey to the ambiguous term such "scoring trend". In this way, most aspirants follow blindly, recommendations made by others and have to rely heavily on the advice of others that often does not prove to be right for every aspirant. After the revised syllabus of 2016, the selection of optional subjects becomes even more crucial. This has come quite hard at the aspirants and has stunned them completely where they were seen biting their nails and scratching their heads after failing to cope with simple yet technical and analytical questions. And, only a scoring mind can score well. As ASP Mufakhar Adeel (2nd Position, CSS-2006) said, *"I did masters in English and LLB. But I neither took English nor any subject of law as my optional. I went for entirely new subjects, the subjects in which I had the interest. My combination included Islamic History, Urdu, Sociology and Journalism. It was mainly because of these subjects that I managed to score 76% marks in optional subjects and hence secured second position overall."* Therefore, it is highly recommended that aspirants must keep the following aspects in mind prior to finalising their optional subjects.

1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK PRIOR TO SELECTING YOUR OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

Do go through the prescribed revised syllabus by FPSC. Opt your subject in accordance with your educational background but bear in mind that you need

not go for natural sciences. One of the best ways to analyze one's capabilities in natural sciences subjects is to review past 10 years papers in this way one can easily understand the prospective problems and rate of success. By reviewing past 10 years papers one can easily calculate how much diligent efforts are required to get excellent marks in the subject. Please neither underestimate nor overestimate your competence. In case of overestimation none would endure loss but only you. Underestimation is somewhat good because it would work as impetus for hardworking. Most important thing in opting these subjects is your aptitude. Higher the aptitude higher would be the rate of success. At the same time, you need to be aware of subjects that are literary in nature such as English literature and Urdu literature. Past Papers always provide you with different perspectives relating various topics. Past Papers Analysis will enable you making any decision whether you are able to handle that very subject. Remember, the FPSC does not have any hard and fast rule to sticking to its syllabus. It may ask you for the applications of any subject. For instance, you might be asked to resolve any international conflict by applying international law principles. Last but not least point in opting optional subjects is to evaluate scope of subjects. Go for that subject where you have adequate interest coupled with relatively shorter syllabus instead of that subject where you feel too aptitude coupled with too much syllabus.

2. SCORING TREND VS. OVERLAPPING SUBJECTS

No denying the fact that there are certain subjects, which are really marks yielding these subjects such as Accounting & Auditing, Public Administration, USA History, Philosophy, Sociology, etc. This phenomenon is true to some extent *only*. Since 2016, the perception of scoring has shifted towards overlapping of subjects. For instance, IR does overlap with Essay, Current Affairs, and Pakistan Affairs. However, regional languages and history subjects do tend to help you gain more marks, hence, if possible one must go for it. Basically, supporting subjects are those that help you build your knowledge base along with expanding one's intellectual capacity. Optional subjects do overlap with one another in the following ways such as the following:

International Relations = International Law + USA History or European History

Political Science = Constitutional Law + Any history subject

Muslim law & Jurisprudence = Islamic Studies

Sociology = Gender Studies

Philosophy = Political Science

Criminology = Psychology

International Law = International Relations

Environmental Science = General Science and Ability (slightly)

Islamic History and Culture = Islamic Studies

History of India and Pakistan = Pakistan Affairs

Governance & Public Policy = Public Administration

Aspirants, at this stage, should consider these points for scoring high marks in any optional subject you need the following:

- One's aptitude concerning the subject
- One's skill concerning the subject
- One's capacity concerning enhancement one's capability in the subject
- No subject is low scoring if one is well prepared. (Please note that no subject is low scoring subject in itself. Your depth of knowledge earns you the marks.)
- Only requirement to get high score is to know how to deal that subject

- Your aptitude is your strength; higher the aptitude higher would be success rate.

3. SCORING SUBJECT:

No one bothers to truly understand, what really is a scoring subject? Here, I'm going to enlist five things that can be used to judge whether a subject is scoring or not and whether you can perform well in the subject or not.

- One of the simplest techniques that aspirants can use to judge whether a subject is scoring or not is by looking at its syllabus. The most scoring subjects usually have a shorter outline as compared to others. The subjects with short syllabus take less time to be covered and aspirants can cover major proportion of the syllabus much more comprehensively. Thus students are in a better position to attempt any question that is asked, even the unexpected ones, in the exam and therefore score high marks. For example, USA History has the shortest syllabus as compared to European and Indo-Pak History.
- This is the most authentic criteria for predicting about a subject whether it is scoring or not. The repetition of questions in a particular subject allows students to prepare selective questions and topics comprehensively and attempt them in the exam in the most perfect manner. In some subjects questions are copied and pasted on the question paper and leave little to surprise the aspirants. In some subjects, sometimes covering as little as 5 to 8 topics can enable a student to attempt all the four questions. For example, one can easily secure good marks by preparing past papers of last 10-15 years.
- The subjects with absolute nature of the answers like science subjects is to review past 10 years papers in this way one can easily understand the prospective problems and rate of success.
- When all has been said and done, in the end it would be *you* and *your effort* that would make the difference. Always be confident to follow your heart and choose a subject that you feel would get you good scores. Your personal interests, educational background and aptitude in a particular subject are good enough reasons to make a subject scoring and can help you gain considerable advantage over others. It would be worth mentioning, to the aspirants reading this booklet that they have enough time to make the most rational and logical decision. Use this time to your advantage and select those subjects which can get you miles ahead from other candidates. Take a day out and filter out some subjects and view their course outline and past papers. This would give you a head start and boost your confidence a lot.

4. APTITUDE

As said before your aptitude is your strength and next step to get excellent marks is to administer your aptitude. Only advice that could be given is to evaluate your aptitude precisely. Point is to put effort. It includes the ability and competence to handle the subject. Never go into conflict with yourself. If your heart does not accept any subject, your mind never will. I couldn't stand Agriculture and Forestry, it gave me a hard time, and I didn't do justice with it because my heart never accepted it. Lower the aptitude, higher would be boredom; higher would be boredom, higher the difficulty in dealing the subject and ultimately higher stamina would be required to borne that subject. So please do not waste your vitality just in digesting perceived monotony a subject.

5. SAFE CHOICE

Try to opt a subject that provides you safer passage on the basis of your educational background, precise syllabus, repetition of questions from past

papers, and overlapping. Try to opt subjects that give you the freedom to express your own general opinion e.g. sociology, journalism.

6. MAXIMUM MARKS

CSS Exam is not about clearing or passing the written exam but it is about scoring maximum marks. Compulsory Subjects such as Essay, English Précis & Composition, and Islamic Studies are the most vulnerable subjects. You had better focus on *merely* passing these papers rather than scoring very highly.

A POINT TO UNDERSTAND

It is you who is going to finalise the subjects. Don't leave it to someone else. Nor you should follow someone's advice blindly since there is difference between your aptitude and background and that of other person.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

International Relations by Prakash Chander
 Globalization of World Politics by Baylis
 IR by Peu Ghosh (3rd Edition)

HISTORY OF USA

History of USA by R.K Majumdar and A.N. Srivastva
 A Brief History of United States of America by John J Newman

ECONOMICS

Paper I: Modern Economic Theory by K.K Dewett & Economics International Edition by Paul A. Samuelson
Paper II: Economics of Pakistan by Saeed Nasir and Kamal Haider

JOURNALISM

Journalism for All by Dr. Mehdi Hassan
 Exploring Journalism by Mirza Muhammad Yousaf
 Journalism in Pakistan by Dr Abdus Salam Khurshid
 Journalism for All by Dr Mehdi Hassan & Dr Abdus Salam Khurshid
 Journalism for CSS/PMS by Quratulain & Haseeb Gohar

SOCIOLOGY

An Introduction to Sociology by Abdul Hameed Taga
 Sociology by Horton and Hunt
 Social Problems of Pakistan by Dr Muhammad Khalid

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Western Political Thought by Judd Harmon
 Muslim Political Thought by S.M. Shahid
 Political Science Theory and Practice by Mazhar ul Haq
 World Constitutions by S. Kaely

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture by Masood A Qureshi
 Agriculture by Asif Malik

FORESTRY

Forestry by Prof. Masood A Qureshi
 Yellow pages on Dawn News (Monday edition)

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public Administration by Dr. Sultan Khan
 Personnel Management by Dr. Sultan Khan
 Public administration by M. Suhail Bhatti

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Management by Stephen. P. Robins and Mary Coulter

CSS Beginners' Guide (Aamir Mahar)

Principle of Marketing by Philip Kotler
Strategic Management by Fred.R.David

INDO PAK HISTORY

Indo Pak History by K. Ali
Indo Pak History by Sohail Bhatti
Trek to Pakistan by Ahmed Saeed
Pakistan Affairs by Ikram Rabbani
Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan by Hamid Khan

ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CULTURE

Study of Islamic History by K. Ali
History of Islam by Mazhar ul Haq.

EUROPEAN HISTORY

Mastering Modern European History by Stuart T. Miller
About European History by L.P. Cock
European History by I.J Chawla

BRITISH HISTORY

British History by Birdsall S. Viault
Mastering Modern British History by Norman Lowe
Modern English History by G.W. Southgate
British History for CSS Exam by Dr Waheed Asghar

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

World Constitutions by S. Kealy
How states are governed.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

International Law by Tandon
International Law by Agarwal
International Law by S.K. Kapoor

MUSLIM LAW AND JURISPRUDENCE

Muslim Law by D.F. Mullah
The Principles of Muhammad Jurisprudence by Abdul Raheem

GEOGRAPHY

Modern Physical Geography by Sarfraz Ahmed Bajwa
Economic Geography by Fazal Karim
Human Geography by Debljij
Human geography Razaullah khan

PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology by Feldman
Psychology by Sherbano
Introduction to Psychology by Morgan & King
Abnormal Psychology by Neil Davisson
Psychology by Ali Ajmal

MERCANTILE LAW

Mercantile and Industrial Laws by Khuwaja Amjad Saeed
Mercantile Law by M.C Shukla

SINDHI

Sindhi Adab Jo Tanqidi Ibheyas by Abdul Majeed Memon
Sindhi Boli Ji Mukhtasar Tarikh by Leghari
Sindhi Adab Jo Mukhtasir Jaiza by Abdul Jabbar Junejo

PERSIAN

Gul e Farsi
Gulzar e Farsi
Notes of Persian available on Punjabi University Photostat Shop

ARABIC

Tareekh e Adab e Arabi by Ahmad Hassan Zyat
Notes of Hafiz Arshad

PUNJABI

Punjab Rang by Qamar Husnain Qadri and Faisal Hayat Jappa

PASHTO (Pohanna)

BALOCHI

Chakkar by Aqil Baloch

URDU (PMS)

Urdu by Ahmed Najeeb

STATISTICS

Stats by Prof. Sher Muhammad Chaudhry for BA & BSc

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING

Meigs and Meigs' Accounting-basis for business decision (Chapter 1 to 5)

GENDER STUDIES (Gender Studies by Nawaz Khalid)

CRIMINOLOGY

Theoretical Criminology by George Vold

Criminology and the Core by Lary Seigel

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

Introduction to Business by Saeed Nasir (only related topics)

MAKING BULLET NOTES

“In my opinion, it is imperative to read different books & some other topics as well. This broadens one's scope & clears the concepts on a particular topic. Hence, it enables one to tackle a question from various angles. However, retention of these concepts is possible only by **making one's own notes** instead of relying on those of others.”

– ASP Suhai Aziz Talpur (CSS 2012)

The more elaborative, thorough and comprehensive your first reading is, the more you will learn, and the lesser time you will need to revise that subject later. Now some candidates ask if they should make notes or not. Making good notes is an open secret of success of candidates. Making notes is a part of preparation for CSS Exam and other competitive exams. The luxury of making full-length notes is available to those only who spend more than 7-8 months preparing for CSS Exam. If you can organize the material on your books by marking with pencil/pointer etc. that should work, that will be your notes. But if you still want to write something from your own hands (some people can't survive without it, including me) you can make **Bullet Notes**. In Bullet notes making, you need to highlight the facts and figures. For a 4 page answer, you can easily write 10-15 different and unique points. Where complete notes include the information as well as analysis, bullet notes only contain the information. Bullet points help you in preparing for your MCQs as well. One page bullet notes greatly assist in building Pictorial Memory. That's what you need. Good Notes ensures high grades in the examination. Questionnaires filled out by successful students show that 80% candidates attribute their success to good notes. Making good notes is a skill.

THE IMPORTANT PROPERTIES OF HELPFUL NOTES:

- Easily understandable
- Easily revisable
- Save time - because you don't have to read book again for learning them
- Refreshes key points of topics
- Help to learn how to present answer in answer sheet in befitting way, to get more marks.
- It contains collective information of books or guide books
- Increase your interest
- Notes are written in your own hand writing, you feel acquainted to them and you pick up easily.
- It gives you food for thought.

TAKING NOTES FROM BOOKS:

It is really important to understand the technique of notes making. If you have at least two books for any subject, it is better you open both for taking notes. The syllabus should be followed. Don't read a book from beginning till the end. Only the related topics should be studied. In this way, try and prepare your own notes about every subject. Get focused on each sentence while you study. Extract key points from each paragraph and write it down. Write down the important information from both books which help to remind all the explanation attached to the topic. Do write the technical terms used in book, you need to memorize these terms so your notes should contain it. Write down the definitions. Definitions are very much important you can write it in your own words but you can't its idea. So your notes should have them. This period must continue to enhance your English abilities too.

SHAPING NOTES:

The notes should be shaped in a proper way so that it can be properly used in future. Shaping notes according to the question format of exam helps you present you answer in befitting way.

Candidates preparing for CSS Exam prefer "writing notes in points". Bullet notes should be very compact, yet very detailed notes of every article, with the whole chapter covered on 2-3 pages at max. Write the main headings, write the keywords contained in that heading in front of it in bullet form, and move to next heading. Make sure you put all the headings you made on book on the paper. Bullet Notes satisfy the craving of making notes plus they come handy during revisions and during the exams when you do not have the time to go through the books. A cursory reading of these compact notes can get it all refreshed in your mind.

WHATEVER YOUR METHOD IS BUT ALWAYS REMEMBER SOME POINTS FOR MAKING YOUR NOTES USEFUL.

1. Use heading and sub-headings
2. Use abbreviation and short words
3. All the lines or paragraphs should be in proper sequence
4. Skip the unnecessary explanation
5. Write in good handwriting
6. Make easy diagram or table for long description
7. Write page number on each page if you are use loose pages for making notes.
8. Notes for different subject should be separate. Never write notes for different subject on one page or in one note book which has no separation line.
9. **Keep your notes in a safe place** because you use it many times during preparation.
10. If you are using a note book or register for making notes, it is good. Write on each note book, the name of subject of note it contain.
11. If you are making notes on loose pages, write page number on each page. Keep all pages in a folder and write name of subject on its folder.

START WRITING NOTES

Start with the books according to paper point of view. Use them to make the basic structure of your bullet notes. But don't forget to leave a few pages for additional note-taking after each topic. For research based books, you better get them online or in hard, skim through them, and only get the relevant material for quality arguments and add them to your bullet notes. The books for general reading would expand your horizon and give you a deeper insight regarding your subject.

TIME MANAGEMENT IN CSS EXAM PREPARATION

Time is a precious recourse and proper time management is a major issue for the aspirants. For utilizing your time more effectively, you should follow a time table. Make a time table for CSS Exam Preparation, in which you have time for your compulsory and optional subjects as well as time for refreshment and other daily activities. Some subjects needs comparatively more concentration, assign them the time in which you are more active, alert and agile. When you make your time table, paste it on wall in front of your study chair so that you can see it and follow it. The more important than making time table is, to follow it. Try to follow your time table. In the beginning you may find it a little hard to follow your time table but if you follow it for a week then you will like to follow it forever. Another thing is this time span is estimated with viewing of getting good positions. There could be no time span if one claims oneself a fatalist and insist to enjoy the aftermaths of one's adventure based on "high stars" rather than on deliberation.

Well, CSS Exam is not the end of the world. If one remains calm and study in a systematic way, one can surely pass. Now, how do we go about doing that? That's when you make a study plan. Aspirants, it's just like walking on the ladder, take one step at a time and you wouldn't even realize you are at the top. Remember; always remain cool, calm and focused. Now, let's get to the steps.

STEP 1: As CSS Exam is a psychological game, you need to learn to control yourself emotionally as well as physically. This is the first step to strengthen you psychologically. You don't get everything in one day, so be patient and have faith in Allah as well as yourself. Don't worry!

STEP 2: In order to plan something all the resources and to-do lists are gathered. We believe our biggest resource is time, so let's count it. It's almost the start of August 2017. So we have approximately 6 months and 180 days in total. Now, let's assume an average candidate can spend 4 hours daily for CSS Preparation. So we have 720 hours in total (4×180). Keep this in mind. Now, we need to calculate what we need. There are 12 subjects including compulsory and optional. Now let's take one subject at a time. If we take Pakistan Affairs, there are almost 30 topics (considering the new syllabus of course). Even if one average candidate spends 1.5 hours to study one topic, s/he would need 45 hours for one subject right? We can apply the same formula to other subjects including optional ($6 \times 45 = 270$) and compulsory ($4 \times 45 = 180$). Now for English Essay and English (Précis and Composition) you can spend 50 hours each ($2 \times 50 = 100$). Total time we need is 550 hours or 140 days.

How much time we had? 720 hours. How much we need? 550 hours. Wow, we just got 40 extra days. Cool? You can spend that time to cover up anything you lack. And remember the revision strategy I have already discussed in making bullet notes.

STEP 4: Now, write down all topics of each subject along with the time you have allocated for it. As you go along preparing notes within the time limit, deduct that time from the quota of the respective subject. This way you will have everything managed. Move smoothly.

STEP 5: Always start with the subject that you like most so that a rhythm is created. Don't aim for perfection the very first day. Slowly adjust your study plan into your schedule according to your ease. Never force yourself, you'll get nowhere. You eat when you get hungry, similarly, study when you feel like. But stay committed and true to yourself and your goals.

STEP 6: Finally, you are set to embark this wonderful journey.

PREPARE FOR CSS EXAM WHILE DOING JOB

“How do I prepare for CSS Exam while doing job?” is a question which generally confuse or create a tension in the mind of aspirant who wants to be a bureaucrat. With less time in your hands, time management is crucial to your preparation. I'll discuss about this question and give you some tips so that you can do better with your life. No one can answer this question better than you. You just have to prepare your mind and maintain your confidence level. It all depends on how much time you can give to your study consistently. Initially with this idea in mind, you must have a proper planning to execute your plan. Try to manage your time and give at least five hours daily to your study. Now the question comes how you manage to get five hours from this busy schedule. Manage to rise at 5:30 in the morning and study for 2 hours, in starting it is hard to rise but think of your aim and goal. Make a habit of rising this time. You have to choose your pleasure of sleeping or your commitment that you make with your life.

Generally the people come from office at 7:00 pm. Remember after 7:00 pm, take rest of half an hour. So you have 3 hours from 8:30 to 11:30 pm for study. Just make a law in your life or let's say a habit that you will not sleep without studying 3 hours and you will rise early in morning so that you can give 2 hours easily to your study. You can easily utilise travelling time for English portion. In this time you can learn one word substitutions, idioms or phrases. Make it as your habit. In office, use your leisure time in reading Dawn Newspaper or find people who are in your situation and socialize with them to utilise that time for discussions. You will thus have time to chill with friends who are serious about the CSS Exam. It will also fulfill your social needs and keep you stress free. Now on weekend days try to study 9 hours per day. So in a whole week you manage to give 48 hours (30 on weekdays and 18 on weekend days). On an average 8 hours per day which are sufficient to crack the CSS Exam. On weekend days, practice writing answers. It'll work for revision. Here, you have to look for ready-made notes and study material that are short and effective. But some topics you will have to do in-depth studies and will need your concentration. Use memory techniques (mnemonic methods) that speed up your learning. Never fall prey to the temporary pleasure, make a commitment with yourself that you will use this precious time to make your life dynamic, vibrant and a life of permanent pleasure. Never think negatively and always be optimistic. Whenever you feel tire or burden just focus your mind on your aim. You can relax once you achieve your goal.

So candidates start your preparation with full energy and confidence. You must definitely crack the CSS Exam. Do not waste even a single second. Use this time to achieve your goal. This time will make your future and you will relax in your whole life. It always seems impossible until its done.

US HISTORY - 14 DAYS SCHEDULE (SAMPLE)

Sr.	Date	Topics
1.	9 Feb, 2017	Expansion of USA from 13 – 30 states
2.	10 Feb, 2017	Constitution & its salient features
3.	11 Feb, 2017	USA as an independent country
4.	12 Feb, 2017	Civil War; Industrialization
5.	13 Feb, 2017	USA's role in world wars; Post 1945 world scenario; Emergence of USA & USSR
6.	14 Feb, 2017	American role in patronizing UNO and International Organizations (1945–2012)
7.	15 Feb, 2017	American role in Cold War and its emergence as the Sole Super Power 1945–99
8.	16 Feb, 2017	International Concerns of USA
9.	17 Feb, 2017	War on Terror; Global perceptions on USA
10.	18 Feb, 2017	Progressive Era; Great depression and new deal
11.	19 Feb, 2017	Presidential Elections; Role and mandate of Congress
12.	20 Feb, 2017	Civil Rights Movement; Separation of Powers
13.	21 Feb, 2017	US Role in International Conflicts
14.	22 Feb, 2017	Revision Time

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR 6 MONTHS

Total Months = 6	Total Days = 180
Hours per Day = 6	Total Hours = 180 × 6 = 1080
Phases per Day = 3	Each Phase of 2 hours
Total Subjects = 12	Topics per Subject = 30
Total Topics = 360	Topics per Phase = 1

First 30 Days

Phase 1 = Pakistan Affairs
 Phase 2 = Islamiat
 Phase 3 = General Science & Ability

Second 30 Days

Phase 1 = Optional # 1
 Phase 2 = Optional # 2
 Phase 3 = General Science & Ability

Third 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = Optional # 3
 Phase 3 = Optional # 4

Fourth 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = Optional # 5
 Phase 3 = Optional # 6

Fifth 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = English Essay
 Phase 3 = English Composition

Sixth 30 Days

Phase 1 = Current Affairs
 Phase 2 = English Essay
 Phase 3 = English Composition

Note:

- Write two essays weekly and get them checked.
- More weight-age is given to Current Affairs because it is going to help you out in Current Affairs, IR, Essay, Pakistan Affairs, etc.

SAMPLE PLAN FOR 6 MONTHS

- Study Duration: 6 months
- Subjects per Day: 6 hours daily
- Subjects per Month: 2
- Revision Period: 2
- Sundays:
 - Reading Newspaper
 - Write an Essay
 - Weekly Revision

STUDY PLAN FOR RAMADAN By Samad Hamadani (43rd CTP)

"Yar CSS is my passion. Kisi b keemat pe CSS krna hai, chahay sara zor he kyo na lagana per jye. Per masla ye hai k banda Ramadan mei nae perh skta. Roza k sath tou bilkul bhe nae aur iftari k bad neend ana shru ho jati hai. Lakin CSP tou bn'na he bn'na hai chahay koi b qurbani deni paray"

My apologies for being sarcastic and cheeky but yeah I have seen many aspirants talking the same way as above during the month of Ramadan. I simply cannot understand it. If you are so much committed and dedicated to being a CSP officer ultimately, why cannot you sort out a tack to study even during Ramadan? Why are you digging up lame excuses to avoid studying? It means only two things; either you are not motivated enough to study or you do 'not' really (*Really*) want to be a CSP officer. No doubt allocation in CSS always comes at a cost of an arm and a leg.

I found Ramadan very beneficial in my preparation and that is why I am sharing solely my experience with you folks because that might prove helpful to you. First, because I could not cram things during fasting, I used to read the books, newspapers and magazines and read voraciously. I mean I went through all the books and stuff available to me for CSS preparation. You do not need much effort or energy to read even if you are fasting. So, you should *Read* all the available material for preparation during fasting, whether in books or on internet. It will unconsciously build your writing expression, your style of writing, improve vocabulary and expand your knowledge base.

Secondly, after iftari, I used to make notes of all the subjects. Because you feel kind of sleepy after iftari, writing down important points keeps you alert and awake. I must say these notes aided me a great deal in my preparation as well as in revision near the exam. I made detailed notes from 3 or 4 books of each subject. Even if you utilize 3 to 4 hours in making notes, it will not only improve your hand writing but also assist you in getting a know how about making outlines.

So, shake off that laziness which is gripping you nowadays, hit the books and dedicate yourself to preparation because only *You* can make yourself a CSP by leaving no stone unturned in preparation and hard work.

PREPARE ANY SUBJECT IN 15 DAYS

GET THE STUFF

Get a hold of last ten years past papers including the MCQs, Syllabus, and quality books and resources for a particular subject. This has to be done before starting the preparation.

Point to note: There are two types of books for any subject, one that helps clear out the concepts and the other that is according to paper point of view. Get both the types. There is hardly any One-Book Solution for any subject as you would merely find all the topics in one book having strong arguments. Basically, your writing depicts your level of understanding, which determines your score at the end, so make sure you invest properly to increase your intellectual capacity (that is only done by reading quality resources).

KEEP THE END IN MIND

Make a study plan. Chalk out 30 topics from the syllabus and write down all the past paper questions (PPQ) under the relevant topic headings. This exercise might take a day.

START STUDYING

Get relevant material from the books and online resources. Keeping in mind the PPQ, you should start making bullet notes of 3 topics a day, in a way that all the relevant material of PPQ is a part of your notes. (Remember to keep the end in mind). For instance, you need to prepare a topic for Pakistan's Ideology in Pakistan Affairs, search for relevant material/topics from all the books, read the PPQ, and make bullet notes in a way that you are answering the PPQs. Make around 10 to 15 unique, coherent, and logical points.

YOU'RE GOOD TO GO!

Spend 10 days doing 3 topics a day and spend the last 5 days revising and practicing PPQs. You need to write quality answers with solid arguments so do practice writing the answers of a few past paper questions. Also, practice last ten years past paper MCQs.

IMPROVE YOUR WRITTEN EXPRESSION

English is most essential and prerequisite of CSS Exam. The very prime cause of concern which an aspirant comes across has been the dilemma regarding written expression. This myth has somewhat been presented as a very queer and hard-to-get kind of phenomenon.

ASP Kamran Adil says, *“Excellent command on English language is a pre-requisite. If a person's English is not up to the mark, even ten years of preparation will not help him.”* One does not get birth with the mastery over a language. One learns it through consistent hard-work and efforts. Improving language is a continuous process. One should be clear in expressions.

As Mathew Arnold says, *“Have something to say, and say it as clearly as possible”*. The more one writes the better expressions become. Mind is receptive: One should read and listen more to be good at writing and speaking.

As Francis Bacon says, *“Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.”* Write on daily basis and get writings checked by an English teacher. Read down, magazines, novels, and different books to learn and improve English and expressions. Try to write in a précised way in own words what you read. And, indeed, brevity is soul of wit. Bring brevity and beauty in your composition; write in flow along-with coherence and unity. Practice! Practice! And Practice is the only way to achieve impressive expressions and striking English.

MY SLICE OF ADVICE MIGHT LOOK IRRATIONAL TO SOME BUT IT'S QUITE USEFUL SINCE I HAVE MYSELF FOUND IT QUITE EFFECTIVE.

1. On daily basis, for merely 2 hours, select paragraphs from the newspapers randomly and read those one by one and write their crux.
2. For instance, take up a paragraph, read that out twice or thrice and then quickly and precisely write down whatever you are able to recollect.
3. Such practice will help you in different perspectives.
4. Your writing practice will immensely improve.
5. Your expression will be polished since you will surely be learning few new words and getting accustomed to the sentence-structure used in the paragraph.
6. As you write down the crux of whatever you have gained, you will be able to write precisely and to the point in exams.
7. Your memory will be sharpened since the piece of writing first goes through your eyes, stored in your in mind via pictorial memory and then further cemented when you write it down.
8. It will also help you develop in you the ability to be precise and to the point when you'll be taking the exams.
9. The vocabulary will itself get injected into your mind.

ART OF ATTEMPTING PAPER

Your future hinges on the 3-hour performance that you actually give on paper in the examination hall. It's always better to do some written practice along with your reading process. See, it might happen with you during the paper that you feel yourself overstuffed with knowledge about a given question but struggle to find the right words to express them. Or it might happen that you are clueless about how to start your answer. All this is a result of no written practice and it may prove disastrous at the end. So, I will advise you all to make it a habit to write for at least 1 to 1.5 hours continuously daily for not less than 45 to 60 days before the start of papers as this will help you a lot. The additional aspect of this written practice should be that in your initial days, you must write about something that you have prepared in the whole day. For example, if you have gone through 10 questions of Indo-Pak History today, ask your friend to randomly give you a topic and you start writing about it. During the next phase, it should be so that if you have prepared 10 questions today, write in one hour a gist of all these events in a chronological order. It is very significant that you are able to make connections between different events and draw allusions from different sources as they will add real spice to your answers. So while you are undergoing the written practice, try to inculcate this habit into your expression. Remember, your performance in a paper overwhelming relies on good expression; so the refiner your expression is the better chances you have to accrue maximum benefit from the examiner.

While answering a question the most significant thing to keep in your mind is to communicate your viewpoint strongly through convincing arguments using lucid language. Let's have a look at 10 steps that will surely help you answer the question in a way that convinces the examiner.

SELF-ANALYSIS AND SELF-CONTROL:

This is what you have to do well before you actually sit in the examination hall. Many candidates fail because they couldn't defeat their fears. That makes your target difficult and formidable. Know yourself and control your emotions. All CSS candidates are, more or less, of same intellect; however, calmer and more rational individuals get through. You can also be one of those few if you take into consideration two basic things: (i) accept the reality and (ii) look ahead and find solutions. For instance, you are not a good memorizer, you cannot write well, sitting too long is difficult for you, you have some problems in finishing your answer properly, a sudden emotional setback or some tragedy has overwhelmed you, and so on; many such issues can be challenging for you. But to accept this challenge and overcome it is the real key to success. Don't shy away from your weaknesses and unfavourable circumstances; unfold and rectify them.

TIME MANAGEMENT:

Time management is a skill and you need to attain it. Time is very crucial; especially when you are sitting in exam hall. You have 2 hours and 30 minutes to attempt 4 questions i.e. 37½ minutes per question. Unless you have developed the habit of finishing your answer within 30 minutes and have practiced it well before examination, you will start feeling the pressure as soon as you get the question paper. Remember, time should be managed in such a way that you ward off unwanted pressure that can destroy your efforts and can let you down.

READING QUESTION PAPER:

It is absolutely self-destructive to read the first question and start writing the answer offhand. Give at least 3 readings to the question paper. First reading is just cursory. In second reading, decide which questions you can answer the best. In third reading, mark those questions and be sure about them.

BRAINSTORMING & OUTLINING:

Next, do brainstorming and make outlines of questions you are going to attempt. This can be done while the third reading. This saves your time and makes your written expression eloquent. Brainstorming clarifies that for which question you have ample material. Outlines will make it clear that how to answer and how much to answer and your writing will be more coherent and fluent.

SEQUENCE OF ATTEMPTING QUESTIONS:

Generally, candidates attempt the best question first and the weakest question in end. This is a passive approach. All questions must be, preferably, given equal time while the weak one should be given due importance as giving up on your 20 marks isn't a wise choice.

OPENING THE ANSWER:

Always give proper beginning to your answer. The starting point must be the introduction of your question. Give a comprehensive introduction. Remember, Background or History is a different thing. Opening sentence must be the topic sentence. Talk expansively about the topic and in the end give thesis statement. You can certainly begin with quotation or reference but it must be relevant to the statement of question.

USE OF HEADINGS, QUOTATIONS, FIGURES, MAPS AND REFERENCES:

Headings should be elaborate; avoid one-word headings to facilitate the examiner. When quoting, use proper quotations and mention the reference too. In Islamiyat paper, while quoting from the Holy Quran and the Ahadith, don't ever quote without proper reference. Give maximum quotations to support your argument. Also give facts and figures with references. Vague, untrue and bogus figures must be avoided. Reference of any official document can be given from which figures have been quoted. Draw diagrams or maps wherever they are part of answer. As in Geography I, diagrams elucidate answer and in Geography II, maps are drawn to elaborate answer.

BUILDING ANSWER:

Build answer with cogent arguments. Pragmatic and logical opinion containing statistics, references, sociopolitical, religious and economic factors; and domestic and international aspects should be covered. Always avoid sweeping statements, biased views and planted answers. Try to make a separate heading of "Analysis" and give very comprehensive and to-the-point remarks.

CLOSING THE ANSWER:

Conclusion must be as strong as introduction was. Recapitulate all the ideas that you discussed and finish answer strongly. Analysis and Conclusion can be brought

under single heading such as “Final Comments or Concluding Ideas” or “Ending Remarks or Suggestive Note”. Your answer remains incomplete without conclusion so never ignore it!

CONCLUSION:

Write relevant, overcome your weaknesses, manage your time well and control your emotions. It is totally an absurd idea that CSS Exam is a game of chance or a matter of luck. Work hard consistently, think positive, stay focused, prepare scientifically and leave rest to the Almighty. Enhance your knowledge base. Your expression should be convincing and logical. You should practice 6 hours writing on the pattern of real exam so that you do not feel.

GENERAL TIPS FOR WRITING AN ANSWER

Solving a paper of CSS Exam does not require ordinary techniques that one used to apply in school and university. While you are going to ink the answer sheet, sitting in CSS exam, you must understand two things viz: what is being asked? And what would be the proper answer? I think there are some of the general tips needed for better performance in the written portion of the CSS Exam. Here is the simplified scheme to solve any paper (Islamiat is also included).

1. You have only first ten minutes to select the questions with rough idea.
2. When u have selected the question (except compulsory) find out those four questions which can be best answered by you.
3. Time for each question is almost 35 - 37½ minutes.
4. The length of answer should be 6, 7 or 8.
5. Mark the most prepared questions with more relevant material.
6. Remember that you don't have to beat about the bush, read the sequence of the things asked in question and answer all the key words one by one.
7. As it is highly important to write relevant material, therefore underline the main points of the question.
8. Deeply analyze what the question is demanding i.e. Is it about to write reasons, effects, solution, your opinion or simply the information about the topic?
9. Opening of an answer may be:
10. Write a short outline describing the main points with heading in 7-8 minutes.
11. Write an opening paragraph while the answering the main points of the question. This is called “Exact & Direct Technique”.
12. Then develop each paragraph describing the relevant material.
13. Use of language should be convincing, concise and correct.
14. Your answer should include facts and figures, arguments, examples, references and quotations.
15. Try to use different mode for attempting Question; avoid typical style from introduction to conclusion.
16. Conclusion must contain repetition of main points.
17. Always use blue ink pen and keep ink remover with you so you have one chance to undo to what you did. Remove all cuttings that give bad impressions. (Only blue, black pen and pencil is allowed in examination hall and strict instructions are given in the 1st page of answer sheet about using of color pens.)
18. Both MCQ's sheet and answer sheet is given at the same time, so its better to do MCQ's quick in order to save time for the last question, which you will attempt in the end of paper.

19. Do not use generic and journalistic terms for every subject, rather use specialised terminologies of the same subject.
20. Most importantly, we don't focus on expression while attempting question which is a must for good score.

CSS EXAM PREPARATION AT EARLIER STAGE

"Tomorrow is too late, yesterday is over, and now is exactly the right moment. So start."

Those who decide early in life (after X or during XI or XII standards) that they want to become officers to serve the nation and people. Most students get inspired by famous civil servants or by their own family members at this teen age. So, here are some tips for them:

1. Improve your English Grammar and English Writing Skills. Consult good books on grammar i.e. All about Competitive English (Prof. Muzaffar Bukhari), Practical English Usage (Michael Swan), Grammar in Use (Raymond Murphy), and clear your basic grammar skills i.e. Articles, Tenses, and Punctuations.
2. Read at least two recommended books of important compulsory subjects (Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs and Islamic Studies) very carefully as they are little encyclopedias and also comprehend them carefully.
3. Read one national newspaper (Dawn Newspaper). Students are advised to read the Editorial & Opinion Sections and learn "how the arguments take place and how arguments are built up". Note down difficult words on a register. Use dictionary most of the times. Don't ignore the words which are new for you. Check the meanings again and again and try to learn them.
4. Write a paragraph daily and get it checked. Try to use newly learned words in it.
5. Make your habit to read stories, novels or quality books.
6. Discuss things/news items with your friends and family members that will give confidence of taking a stand against any issue.
7. Once you spend some time in this way, you can go through the past papers of respective subject.
8. In the first step itself, if you take the question paper and if you don't know most of the questions, it will deject you. There is nothing to get dejected at this stage.
9. If you complete your one or two Compulsory subject(s) at the earlier level, it will be easy for you to crack the CSS Exam in the first attempt itself. Wish you all the best!

MNEMONIC METHOD

Many aspirants face difficulties in memorising certain contents of different subjects like physics, history, and geography etc., while preparing for CSS Exam. The contents may include the different dates and events taking place, may include the names of solar system planets and etc. From physics it may include different laws, which are quite tough to memorise or keep in brain exactly as they are stated. The method which I used to learn them or even use now is "Mnemonic Method". It will be quite easy for the aspirants if they will use mnemonic method or way to learn such contents.

For instance:

- It is quite difficult to learn the names and as well as order of all the planets from the Sun. In this way if we put it under mnemonic method and if we try to learn this statement **"My Very Efficient Mother Just Serve Us Naan."** The bold letters in the above statement represents the first letter of each planet

respectively. And in this way if you people will learn the above statement, so it means you have learned all the planets and their order from the Sun.

- Similarly in English the 7 coordinating conjunctions are For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So just remember the word "FANBOYS".
- If you have to remember the names of 2016 Nobel Prize Winners in Physics: David J Thouless, F. Duncan M. Haldane and J. Michael Kosterlitz. So just keep these words in mind "Dil Dhadke More (DDM)".
- Now I am going to make you memorize the whole of Islamic battles along with their due dates just in 5 minutes, are you ready? If so!
Imagine a word 'ABURK' meaning a battle. When a battle is fought, we get injured so we seek for 'Treatment', if failed we get 'Maut (*death*)'. Now using a 'hindko' word Hun (*meaning Now*), the dead bodies are placed in 'Taboot'. Focus over the sentence above, i.e re-read. Sound interesting no? Hold your breath! The real game begins here.

All of you know how to count from 1 to 9. Simply add 'Hijri' to all.

1 Hijri	2 Hijri	3 Hijri	4 Hijri	5 Hijri
6 Hijri	7 Hijri	8 Hijri	9 Hijri	

Now, 'ABURK' stands for Abwa, Badr, Uhad, Rajih, Khandaq.

Now it comes treatment time, i.e Treaty of Hudaibiya.

Now treatment is failed and death is occurred i.e Mauta.

Hun (*meaning Now*), the body is placed in 'Tabut' (*Simply don't forget replacing 't' with 'k'*)

All of them are in ascending order. Just put each from start till end with the numbers. It becomes:

1 Hijri	Abwa
2 Hijri	Badr
3 Hijri	Uhad
4 Hijri	Rajih
5 Hijri	Khandaq
6 Hijri	Treaty of Hudaibiya
7 Hijri	Mauta
8 Hijri	Hunain
9 Hijri	Tabuk..... <i>Thats it! You're done here.</i>

If you want to go a step ahead, as migration occurred in 622AD, so just remember by 2 Hijri they mean 624 AD (i.e 2 years of migration), by 3 Hijri they mean 625 AD (i.e 3 years of migration) and so on. Hence add concerned ADs too to the above dates from Badr till Tabuk, it will become:

2 Hijri	Badr - 624
3 Hijri	Uhad - 625
4 Hijri	Rajih - 626
5 Hijri	Khandaq - 627
6 Hijri	Treaty of Hudaibiya - 628
7 Hijri	Mauta - 629
8 Hijri	Hunain - 630
9 Hijri	Tabuk - 631

- If you have to remember the number of districts in Pakistan:
KPK = 26
Sindh = 29
Balochistan = 32
Punjab = 36

Consider yourself a resident of KPK, imagine your age is 26 on your paper day. Now all of us knows that the table of '3', so add 3 to 26 and think of a 3 days trip to visit Manorra Island, which is in Sindh; it becomes 29. Now assume you got a Bike and it will take 3 days to see Akbar Bugti Villa in Balochistan, it becomes 32. Finally, you hear that PM Nawaz Sharif is going to announce a lucky draw for the post of AC for those who became over-age and touched 36

and you run Punjab. Simply, you can also remember one digit, i.e 26 for KPK, now start adding 3, and 4 on last.

Aspirants you can sketch small pictures also to remember many hard words or formulas, and I have given you the idea, now work smartly to learn things.

STUDY SKILLS

WHERE TO STUDY

The environment in which you choose to study can have a dramatic impact on how successful your studying is. If you chose to study in a noisy coffee shop at a small table with dim lighting, it may take you two hours to cover the same material you could read in an hour in the quiet of the library. That is an hour that you don't have to lose! However, for some people the noisy coffee shop is the ideal environment. You need to determine what type of study environment works for you.

CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS

Your goal is to find a comfortable, secure place that is free from distractions. The place should also be convenient and conform to your schedule. For example, the library might be ideal in many respects. However, if it takes you an hour to get there and it closes soon after you arrive you are not maximizing your study time.

For many people studying at home is a good solution. Home is always open and you don't waste any time getting there, but it can have drawbacks. If you are trying to fit studying in between family obligations, you might find that working from home offers too many opportunities for distraction. Chores that have piled up, children or younger siblings who need your attention, or television that captures your interest, are just some of things that might interfere with studying at home. Or maybe you have roommates who will draw your attention away from your studies. Studying at home is a good solution if you have a room that you can work in alone and away from any distractions.

If home is not a good environment for quiet study, the library, a reading room, or a coffee shop are places you can consider. Be sure to pick a place that is relatively quiet and which provides enough workspace for your needs.

NOISE

Everyone has his or her own tolerance for noise. Some people need absolute silence to concentrate, while others will be distracted without some sort of background noise. So know yourself.

LIGHT

You will need to have enough light to read comfortably. Light that is too dim will strain your eyes and make you drowsy. Too bright and you will be uncomfortable and tense. Experts suggest that the best light for reading comes from behind and falls over your shoulder. Make sure your light source falls on your book and does not shine in your eyes.

COMFORT

Your study place should be comfortable and conducive to work. While your bed might be comfortable, studying in bed is probably more conducive to sleep than concentrated learning. You will need a comfortable chair that offers good back support and a work surface—a desk or table—that gives you enough space for your books and other supplies.

A LITTLE HELP

When you have settled on a place to study, you will need to enlist the help of your family and friends—especially if you are working at home. Be sure they know that when you go to your room and close the door to study, you do not want to be disturbed. If your friends all go to the same coffee shop where you plan to study, you will also need to ask them to respect your study place. The cooperation of your family and friends will eliminate one of the greatest potential distractions.

WHEN TO STUDY

Finding the time in your busy schedule may seem like the greatest hurdle in making your fore mentioned study plan, but you probably have more time available than you think. It just takes a little planning and some creativity.

Make sure your schedule allows for adequate rest and study breaks. Skipping sleep is not a good way to find time in your schedule. Not only will you be tired when you study, you will be sleep deprived by the time of the test. A sleep-deprived test-taker is more likely to make careless mistakes, lose energy and focus, and become stressed-out by the testing environment. If you plan to do most of your studying in one block of time, say four hours, be sure you leave time to take a study break. Experts have shown that students are more likely to retain material if they take some time to digest it. A five- or ten-minute break to stretch your legs or eat a snack will revive you and give your brain time to absorb what you have learned.

Most people need about six to eight hours of sleep a night. Do not sacrifice sleep in order to make time to study. Hunger can be a distraction, so don't skip meals. Eat three nutritious meals a day, and keep healthy snacks on hand during a long study session. The key word is healthy. Sugary snacks might make you feel energized in the short term, but that sugar rush is followed by a crash that will leave you feeling depleted. Caffeine can have a similar effect. A little caffeine—a morning cup of coffee, for example—can give you a boost, but too much caffeine will make you feel jittery and tense. Tension can affect your ability to concentrate.

Being over-caffeinated is not the only potential source of tension. Pre-exam anxiety can also get in the way of effective studying.

REMEMBER—DON'T MEMORIZE

You need to use study methods that go beyond rote memorization to genuine comprehension in order to be fully prepared for your test. Using study methods that suit your learning style will help you to really learn the material you need to know for the test. One of the most important learning strategies is to be an active reader. Interact with what you are reading by asking questions, making notes, and marking passages instead of simply reading the words on the page. Choose methods of interacting with the text that match your dominant learning style.

STAYING MOTIVATED

How to motivate oneself during this long arduous preparation? Most people had asked me to write something on motivation. I do agree with a lot of people that motivation is that fire in the belly that you and only you can ignite. Having said that we are often bogged down by insecurities. Your friends in corporate sector maybe earning million in bonus, or have a million dollar career all set - while you languish at home or in the small city. Doubt does creep in that what if I don't make it? What will society, my friends, family, etc. think of me? Will I be able to handle the pressure? This that and so many other negative thoughts keep haunting you.

Always have a positive set of friends around you, ones who challenge you to work harder, test your knowledge and when you get tired in the long marathon also fetch water to keep you going. Family obviously is another pillar of support. By now, you might have dreamt hundreds of times seeing yourself getting first rank in civil services exam; imagining yourself giving speeches on TV, to magazines and newspapers, to yourself. You might have also visualized yourself being treated as celebrity in your home, village, city and in state.

Have you noticed one thing? You usually dream about this Big Day in your life mostly after spending few hours productively preparing for this exam. Study well for 2-3 hours, you will soon start imagining yourself to be the future topper. Once you realize you are actually wasting time, you will be shaken and awoken to reality: you will again start reading/writing something; the dream evaporates!

Daydreaming is mostly accompanied by spurts of productive hours in your exam preparation. If you are not studying well, your confidence level will be low and you will rarely think about getting a rank. Your ambition level climbs down once you see yourself wasting time on doing things that doesn't take you anywhere. The less you study, lower will be your ambition level. For some people, clearing Written will be a goal, for few reaching interview level and for a few getting a rank will be the dream: it all depends on how well you are utilizing your time now.

If you are dreaming about getting that top rank, you have everything in you to reach there. You just have to make sure that in coming days, you dream less and work more. But blindly working won't take you anywhere. There are extremely hard working people - every year - who don't make it to the list. It's not about ability. It is about attitude. The more you are willing to learn and enjoy new things every day, the better will be your chances in succeeding in this exam.

Many people stick to old methods or resort to shortcuts. A day you spend on studies, should be an improvement over the past day. For example, if you are writing 2-3 answers daily, after few days you should be writing 4-5 answers within same time. Many people either give up writing after trying it for few days, or never start it, or worse.

To top in this exam, you must use your strengths very well. Analyse in which area you are strong and weak: If you are strong in optional, study even better and try to get highest score possible. If you are weak in essay writing, make sure that you write at least 40 essays on variety of topics before exams. You can overcome your weaknesses by working on them; but you can not easily make them your strength.

Scoring good marks is not the thing you should be worrying most now. You should be worrying about being consistent in what you are doing. Take a break of 10-15 days, you will see your confidence level plummeting to low levels; it's difficult to restore the momentum if you lose it once. But it's not difficult. In such cases, you should just

stop worrying about backlog and focus entirely on future. The cost of not studying for 10 days isn't much if you don't waste a single day in future.

No topper will know for sure that he/she will top in this exam. Until the list is out, it will be a surprise. However, one can be sure of getting a rank in a desired range - like within top 20 or 30. This depends on your performance in written and interview. And also on your honest and objective introspection of your performance. If you are happy about it and have a gut feeling that you have done well in all areas, you might be surprised (or shocked) to see your name right at the top of the list.

To see your name in top 20, two mistakes you must never commit or repeat: Treating this attempt as your experimental attempt and doing too many experiments influenced by too many advises. I believe, it's possible for you to crack this exam in one attempt provided you follow any one good strategy completely.

There is a reason why only a few make it to the top. Even after lots of motivation, only few will be consistent. They just want to clear CSS Exam at any cost. Even when they fall ill, they don't miss their targets; even when there are personal problems, they just focus on their preparation; even when friends and relatives try to demotivate them, they silently re-focus their time and energy on studies; even when they fail, they are not affected by it.

Most people either give up or start something new - be it a strategy, or a job. If 100 people start writing 5 secure answers today, by the end of the month, 50-60 will be still writing them. Among them 10-20 will be writing 5 - 10 answers. After 2-3 months, there will be less than 30-40 people regularly writing answers. In the end less than 20 will be toiling hard. Of these 20, a topper will emerge. Others out of these 20 too will succeed today or tomorrow. Certainty is 100%.

You must try to be one among these 20 people. The 20 who never give up. All it requires is strong will to succeed, a strong desire to see your name among toppers and a clear road-map to follow till the end. This exam doesn't require you to be a graduate of top university or college; it doesn't require you to be an intellectual; it doesn't demand you to master English or any other subject. All it requires from you is consistency in your efforts, and sincerity in your desire.

Compared to all the struggles that you see around the world, giving 100% to this exam is the easiest of all these struggles, or from among those that you will ever face in your life. May be because this exam appears easy, some people take it for granted, and some people don't give their 100%.

If you are consistently seeing improvement in your grasp over current events, English skills and , essay writing skill and finally in your own personality, then never give up. It might take longer than you expected, but success will be yours. Some people achieve it in one attempt. Combination of many factors, including 1% luck, help them achieve this. Don't compare with them. You are not them. Take your time, but also show sense of urgency in achieving your goal.

Self-doubts, confusions and other negative feelings will be your constant companions in this journey. Don't give in to them. Neglect them, and keep on moving. These negative feelings should make you stronger, not otherwise. You know what to do. Start doing it. Don't stop until you succeed. Your dream is not just yours. There are people who love you most in the world and want to see your dreams come true. At least, work hard for them!!!

AND YES! WORK HARD AND START DREAMING AGAIN.

3 POINTS FORMULA TO PASS CSS EXAM

FEARLESSNESS:

The fear of failure, of bleak future, of unpredictability in CSS Exam Preparation and of "*log kia kahein gy*" is the fear which makes you deliver minimum in CSS Exam. Fear is the first hurdle in your way to perform well in examinations. Always believe in a beautiful Hadith by Prophet Muhammad (SAW): "*What has been written for you, if whole universe tries to take it away from you, will reach you and what has NOT been written for you, if whole universe tries to give you that, it cannot reach you*". This concept makes you fearless and allows you to perform to your utmost capabilities. That is one of the factors which helped me qualify CSS Exam.

GENERAL STUDY:

I do not discourage syllabus studies rather I appreciate it but along with it, general study (history, philosophy, politics, opinion, etc.) is what makes you learn analytical abilities. It enhances your knowledge base and you get multifold sources to quote from. Always remember that well read are the ones who perform better than others. This being well read phenomenon is beyond syllabus books. So please study general books in your leisure time.

LEAST OUTER INFLUENCE:

Do not listen to what others tell you. They may tell you its (CSS Exam) not made for you, you ain't capable of doing it, and you lack knowledge / stamina / aptitude / background to do it. If I can do it, so can anyone in whole Pakistan with proper guidance and support.

Also do not rely upon or/ take influence from toppers of CSS Exam, you may take tips but relying completely on what they tell you is what will lead you astray. What they tell you about themselves may have worked very well for them but you have your own journey, own map and a very own destination. So be yourself!

WHY PEOPLE FAIL CSS EXAM BY ASIM RAZA (PAS) 38TH CTP

You appeared! You appeared and you failed! No problem! No problem if things are clear to you! No problem if you know what failed you. And really no problem at all if you are determined to fight back and break the failure jinx next time!

I can tell you 5 hurdles that impede an aspirant's way to an illustrious career in Civil Service of Pakistan. And how do I know them? I know them not because I have myself experienced failing the CSS Exam – I passed it in my very first attempt – I know them simply because every year, some of my students experience it. Yeah! It's a fact! And, Let me openly confess that all those who hold my hand every year with a hope that I would help them sail across the CSS river, don't succeed in crossing it. Although a reasonable number of them certainly does it every year, yet many of them remain standing on the same bank, seeing their fellows heading towards the destination of prestige and glory. And these are the unsuccessful ones, who during the last 4-5 years have made me know all that I know about the hurdles which don't let candidates cross the finish line.

My purpose is to get you, the CSS aspirants, acquainted with at least five such impediments so that when you come across them during your rush towards the finish line, you are well prepared for their skillful handling. Here are these!

LACK OF POTENTIAL

Can everyone get through the CSS Exam? I think, the answer is a big NO. And it is as logical as to say that everyone cannot be a poet or an artist or an economist. There are, certainly, some innate qualities which if a candidate does not possess, it would be impossible for him to pass the CSS exam. What are these qualities? Perhaps, I won't be able to explain them at length, yet some of these are: creativity, spontaneity, perseverance and ability to handle the pressure. These qualities, mostly, are God-gifted.

So, if you don't have the requisite potential, don't feel discouraged, but, CSS is not your cup of tea. *This may lead to success, but success is not limited only to this.*

FLAWED PREPARATION TECHNIQUE

CSS preparation consists of three phases: planning, preparation and practice. Planning phase requires detailed research regarding what, from where and how much to be prepared. Preparation phase is acquisition and gathering of knowledge as per the plan whereas the practice phase is to learn the utilization of the acquired knowledge while actually attempting the paper. And, what you, the aspirants, do? You focus solely on the acquisition and gathering of knowledge. If absence of planning wastes your time, neglect of practice keeps you completely unable to answer even those questions regarding which you have sufficient knowledge in your memory. Thinking of passing CSS Exam without proper planning and exhaustive practice is just like thinking of winning a war with soldiers totally unfamiliar with the use of their weapons. *Smart work is more result-oriented than hard work.*

LACK OF ENTHUSIASM

You can't pass CSS Exam the way you are used to passing your academic exams. CSS Exam is altogether different in nature. Most students who failed this exam have some things in common; and those are flagging energy and dampened enthusiasm. If anyone believes that he would pass the exam because he has joined some famous academy or coaching center, he is under some disastrous

delusion. CSS preparation requires only energetic, enthusiastic and impassionate approach.

So dears, think well before setting CSS as the mission of your life. The goal, though, is an achievable one, it is highly demanding too. *Life blesses you only after it is sure that you deserve to be blessed.*

NO PROPER GUIDANCE

Suppose, you are in a city totally alien to you, how difficult it would be for you to find an address? Extremely difficult, right? Then, how on earth could you get through the CSS Exam without proper guidance? Let me make it very clear that from proper guidance, I mean availability of some capable person who may continuously guide you and set your direction right whenever you, knowingly or unknowingly, start deviating from the right path. *The path that leads to the destination, and the one that does not, always look alike.*

WRONG UTILIZATION OF ENERGY

Is it merely consulting the doctor that cures your disease or it is the use of the prescribed medicine that does the job? Definitely, the use of medicine! A majority of CSS candidates fail this exam only because they rely solely on 'tips & tricks'. These guys think tips to be some sort of abracadabra that would make them pass the exam in a jiffy, without any solid efforts on proper study. Such candidates should come out of the illusion and must realize that there is no shortcut to success, particularly for the destination they want to reach. *Only the straightest way is the shortest way. Tips can be helpful only in streamlining your efforts, they can never substitute actual efforts.*

CRACKING CSS INTERVIEW

It wouldn't be incorrect to state that CSS interview is the most important assessment from among all the tests conducted to gauge a candidate in competitive exams. This 30 -minute exercise determines the candidate's final merit, or more rightly his or her future. It is so because almost all candidates appearing in interview have scores between 600 and 700 at their credit and these 300 interview marks could be an impetus for you to get an edge over others, if you manage it well. Written part requires a lot of hard work and so does the interview. Only a meticulous preparation will make you exceptional and shall prove decisive.

INTERVIEW: THE REAL TEST

Candidates, who have qualified the written part, will now be appearing before a panel for an interview. Since the interviewers have to determine a candidate's suitability for the Civil Services, they lay special emphasis on candidates' moral and ethical qualities, their intelligence, spontaneity/reflexes, communication skills, personality traits, and leadership qualities. Remember those who fail to secure a minimum of 100 marks shall not be eligible for appointment.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Step 1: The first step you must take for interview preparation is to map out a viable strategy. You must know the areas you have to hit. Let it be very clear that in these 300 marks, are contained all your optional and compulsory subjects, general knowledge, questions from your educational background, extracurricular activities, hobbies and national and international current affairs. The interviewers can ask you anything from anywhere.

Step 2: Anticipate questions you might face during the interview. Jot them down and then prepare their answers. Practice your answers in front of someone who could give you honest feedback. This would serve three purposes:

1. It would make things easy especially for those who shy away from public speaking.
2. It would enhance your communication skills.
3. You would be able to generate a good discussion on these questions if asked on the 'D- day'.

Step 3: Ask your friend to give you a real account of your performance.

Step 4: Interview preparation is inextricably linked with newspapers. Waste no time and read the Dawn newspaper daily to get yourself equipped with the knowledge of every significant national and international issue so as to present a deep analysis, if asked. Do keep a notebook with you to note anything important you come across. You can also take a cutting of that very piece for an easy reading later.

Step 5: Do keep a notepad with you at all times to note any question that may arise in your mind.

Step 6: As you prepare your questions, start recording your voice in a device. Read out your answers so that you yourself listen to your answers. You are the best judge of yourself. So, evaluate yourself with extreme honesty. Do the drill again and again if you are not fluent in communication. In a week's time you would be able to mark a clear difference between your first recording and the last one.

Step 7: Once you begin to feel confident enough to go for the interview, start giving mock interviews. This would boost your confidence and would give you a fair idea of what to expect. This step is particularly important for shy and nervous candidates. Two or three mock interviews would definitely boost up your confidence.

QUESTIONS ASKED

Besides questions related to your academic background, extracurricular and hobbies, etc., the most expected questions for a general interview are from current affairs. They can also ask questions related to your preference or career.

INTERVIEW DAY TIPS

1. HAVE A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

On this most important day of your life, your mind must be absolutely clear. So, have a good night's sleep because being awake the whole night can adversely affect your performance.

2. DRESSING

They say first impression is the last impression; so wear a professional business suit but do avoid flashiness and wearing too much cologne. Girls should also be neatly dressed and there should not be too much jewelry or excessive makeup. Do remember

the dress should make you feel comfortable. Also keep in mind that not only your knowledge but your whole personality will be judged.

3. GOING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Before leaving for the interview venue, go through the newspapers, especially the headlines – newspapers are also available in the interview room. Most of the times they ask you a question on the news headline of that day.

4. DOS OF THE INTERVIEW ROOM

1. Do enter the interview room by greeting all in one go, not one by one.
2. Do keep your reflexes sharp and speak with conviction.
3. Do excuse if you do not know the answer
4. Do be confident
5. Do let the member finish the question before you answer it. This would also give you crucial 2 - 3 seconds to decide the answer in your mind.

5. DON'TS OF THE INTERVIEW ROOM

1. Don't move towards the seat before the members gesture you towards it.
2. Don't try to be overly smart
3. Don't pretend that you know more than the Board does; this might prove embarrassing for you.
4. Don't be overconfident and never lie.

NOTE: In previous years, debaters have been made to speak extempore, so be careful with the information you furnish about yourself.

LEAVE THE ROOM

When the interview is over, the panelists would most probably wish you luck. Say a word of thanks to them and leave respectfully. There is no requirement to shake hands. It's a formal day and should be treated as such.

Ace Your Way

CSS EXAM

2017 - 2018



“My relatives, who earlier shunned my family, completely changed their attitude after I was appointed as ASP.”

(ASP Suhai Aziz Talpur, CSS 2012)

Prepared by Aamir Mahar

* It has been my effort to help and guide the aspirants with the best possible way so that you get a simulated experience of the whole process before you appear in the CSS Examination.