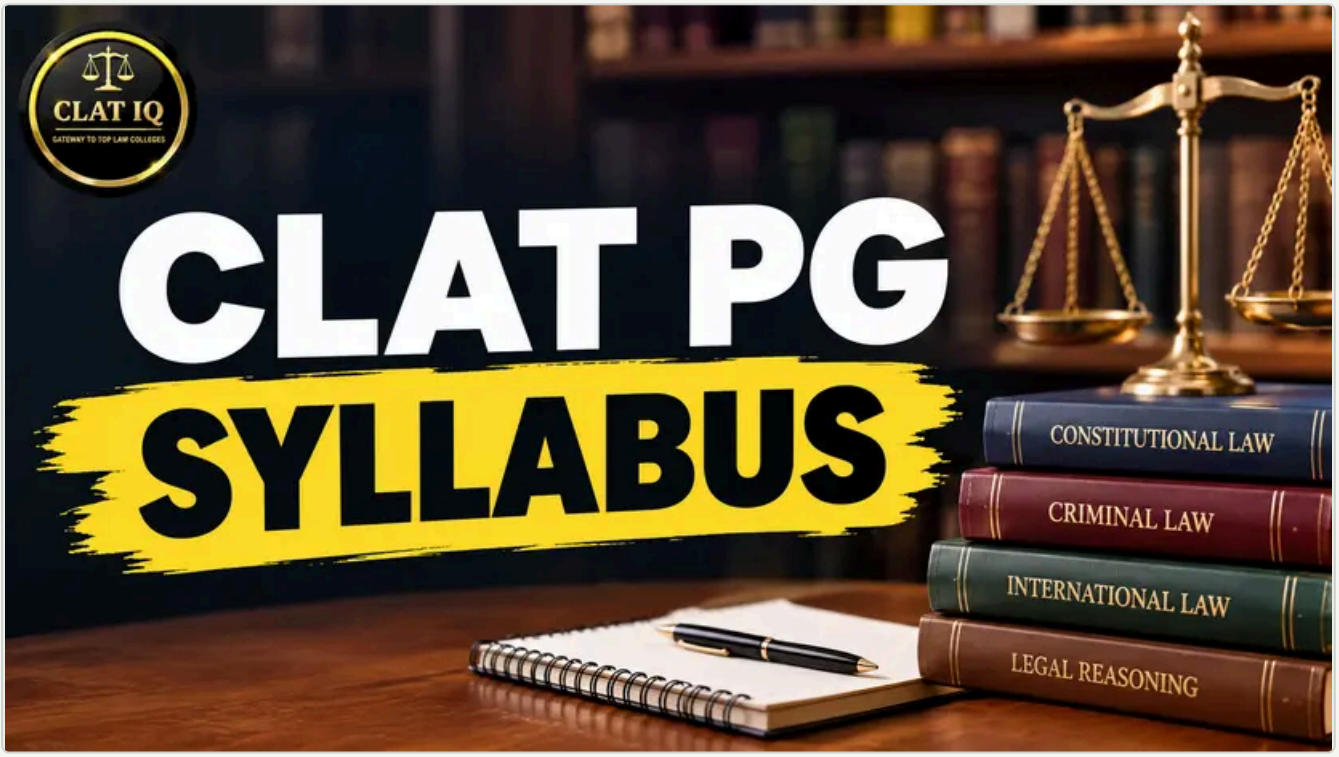
RESOURCE

CLAT PG: A Complete Guide to Pattern, Syllabus

21 September 2026 · 4 min read · 874 words · 27 views



CLAT PG: A Complete Guide to Pattern, Syllabus and Preparation

If you're a law graduate eyeing an LL.M. at one of India's National Law Universities, the Common Law Admission Test for Postgraduates (CLAT PG) is almost certainly on your radar. Unlike CLAT UG, which tests aptitude across five varied sections, CLAT PG is a far more focused, law-heavy exam. Here's a detailed breakdown of what it actually tests and how to prepare for it.

What Is CLAT PG?

CLAT PG is the entrance exam conducted by the Consortium of National Law Universities for admission to LL.M. programmes. Around 21 of the 26 participating NLUs accept CLAT PG scores for their LL.M. admissions, though NLU Delhi runs its own exam (AILET PG) and CNLU Patna uses its own LLM test despite accepting CLAT for UG admissions. Top-ranked NLUs like NLSIU Bangalore, NALSAR Hyderabad, WBNUJS Kolkata, and NLU Jodhpur draw the highest cutoffs, while others are more accessible depending on your rank and category.

Exam Pattern at a Glance

The good news for PG aspirants: the pattern has stayed largely unchanged in recent cycles. CLAT PG consists of 120 multiple-choice questions worth one mark each, to be completed in two hours.

Particular	Detail
Mode of exam	Offline (pen and paper, OMR-based)
Duration	2 hours
Total questions	120 MCQs
Total marks	120
Marking scheme	+1 for correct; −0.25 for each incorrect answer
Unattempted questions	No penalty
Medium	English
Question format	Passage of roughly 350–450 words, followed by a set of MCQs

There's no sectional cutoff structure like you might expect from a multi-subject test — the entire paper flows as a single, integrated law paper built around comprehension passages.

The Syllabus: Two Broad Pillars

This is where CLAT PG differs most sharply from the UG exam. Instead of five distinct sections, the paper pattern is built around Constitutional Law and other branches of

law combined, covering the law of contract, administrative law, jurisprudence, torts, company law, family law, criminal law, property law, tax law, environmental law, public international law, and labour and industrial law.

Subject Area	Key Topics to Cover
Constitutional Law	Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles, federalism, amendment procedure, judicial review, landmark Supreme Court judgments
Jurisprudence	Schools of legal thought, theories of law, justice, rights, and sources of law
Law of Contracts	Formation, breach, remedies, free consent, void/voidable agreements
Torts	Negligence, strict/absolute liability, vicarious liability, defamation
Criminal Law	IPC/BNS principles, general exceptions, offences against the body and property
Administrative Law	Delegated legislation, natural justice, judicial review of administrative action
Company Law	Incorporation, directors' duties, corporate governance
Family Law	Marriage, divorce, succession, maintenance across personal law systems
Property Law	Transfer of property, easements, ownership and possession
Public International Law	Sources, state recognition, treaties, human rights instruments
Labour and Industrial Law	Industrial disputes, trade unions, worker welfare legislation
Tax and Environmental Law	Basic principles, recent statutory and policy developments
Contemporary Legal Developments	Recent amendments, landmark judgments, ongoing legal debates

Note: the exact weightage per subject isn't officially disclosed by the Consortium, so the breakdown above should be treated as a preparation guide rather than a fixed formula. That said, Constitutional Law and Jurisprudence have historically carried disproportionate weight, given how frequently they anchor the comprehension passages.

How the Questions Actually Work

Almost every question in CLAT PG is passage-based. You'll be given an excerpt — often from a judgment, a legal commentary, or a statutory provision — followed by questions that test your ability to:

- Identify the legal principle embedded in the passage
- Apply that principle to a hypothetical fact situation
- Spot the correct or most defensible interpretation among close options
- Recall the specific case law, doctrine, or statutory provision referenced

This is a crucial distinction from law school exams. CLAT PG isn't testing whether you can recite Section numbers from memory — it's testing whether you can *reason* through unfamiliar fact patterns using foundational legal principles. Rote memorisation without comprehension typically backfires here, since the passages are often deliberately unfamiliar or drawn from obscure judgments.

A Practical Prep Strategy

1. Master Constitutional Law and Jurisprudence first. These form the conceptual backbone the exam keeps returning to, even when questions are dressed up as other subjects.

2. Build a case-law bank, not just bare-act knowledge. Since passages are often extracted from judgments, familiarity with landmark cases (and the reasoning behind them, not just the outcome) pays off more than memorising sections verbatim.

3. Practise under strict time pressure. With 120 questions in 120 minutes, you have exactly one minute per question — and passage-reading eats into that. Timed mock tests are non-negotiable.

4. Track negative marking discipline. With a 0.25 penalty per wrong answer, guessing carelessly can erode a good score fast. Practise recognising when to skip a genuinely uncertain question versus when your gut instinct is trustworthy.

5. Stay current. The "Contemporary Legal Developments" thread runs through the paper — recent judgments, ordinances, and amendments are fair game, so a monthly legal-current-affairs habit is worth building early.

Conclusion

CLAT PG rewards depth over breadth — a smaller, tighter syllabus than the UG exam, but one that demands real conceptual fluency rather than surface familiarity. Start with the core subjects, anchor your prep in case law and reasoning rather than memorisation, and simulate exam-day time pressure well before December.