

RESOURCE

CLAT vs AILET vs SLAT: Which Law Entrance Exam Should You Take? 2026

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If you've decided that law is the career for you, congratulations — you've made one of the biggest decisions already. But there's a second, equally important decision waiting: **which entrance exam should you actually prepare for?** CLAT vs AILET vs SLAT

Walk into any law coaching center in India and you'll hear the same three acronyms on repeat — CLAT, AILET, and SLAT. They sound similar, they're all gateways into five-year integrated law programs, and they even overlap in syllabus. But they are *not* the same exam, they don't lead to the same colleges, and — this is the part most aspirants get wrong — they don't reward the same skill set.

This guide breaks down exactly what each exam tests, who conducts it, which colleges accept it, how difficult it really is, and — most importantly — how to decide

which one (or which combination) deserves your time over the next year.

Quick Snapshot: The Three Exams at a Glance

Before we go deep, here's the bird's-eye view.

Feature	CLAT	AILET	SLAT
Full Form	Common Law Admission Test	All India Law Entrance Test	Symbiosis Law Admission Test
Conducted By	Consortium of NLUs	National Law University, Delhi	Symbiosis International (Deemed University)
Colleges Covered	26 NLUs (all except NLU Delhi)	NLU Delhi only	4 Symbiosis Law Schools (Pune, Noida, Nagpur, Hyderabad)
Mode	Offline (pen and paper)	Offline (pen and paper)	Online (Computer Based Test)
Questions	120 MCQs	150 MCQs (UG)	60 MCQs
Duration	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour
Sections	English, Current Affairs & GK, Legal Reasoning, Logical Reasoning, Quantitative Techniques	English, GK & Current Affairs, Logical Reasoning	Logical Reasoning, Legal Reasoning, Analytical Reasoning, Reading Comprehension, GK
Negative Marking	Yes, -0.25 per wrong answer	Yes, -0.25 per wrong answer	No negative marking
Attempts per Year	One	One	Two (candidates can attempt on either of two tentative dates and the better attempt can count)

Feature	CLAT	AILET	SLAT
Selection Process	Score-based merit list only	Score-based merit list only	Written test + Written Ability Test (WAT) + Personal Interview
Approx. Seats	3,000+ across 26 NLUs	120 (BA LLB)	1,000+ across 4 campuses
Eligibility	45% in Class 12 (40% SC/ST)	45% General (42% OBC, 40% SC/ST/PwD)	45% General (40% SC/ST)

Now let's unpack each exam individually before comparing them head-to-head. **CLAT 2026 UG Syllabus**

What Is CLAT? The National Gateway to NLUs

The Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) is the largest and most well-known law entrance exam in India. It's conducted once a year by the Consortium of National Law Universities and is the single admission route into 26 of India's 27 National Law Universities — everywhere except NLU Delhi, which runs its own exam (AILET, more on that below).

CLAT Exam Pattern

CLAT is an **offline, pen-and-paper exam** consisting of 120 multiple-choice questions to be solved in 120 minutes — that's exactly one minute per question on average, though in practice you'll spend more time on some sections and less on others. The five sections are:

1. **English Language** — Passage-based questions testing comprehension, inference, tone, and vocabulary in context, rather than isolated grammar rules.
2. **Current Affairs and General Knowledge** — Based on comprehension passages drawn from news and editorials, testing static GK as well as events from the past 12 months.

3. **Legal Reasoning** — Passages describing legal principles or facts, followed by questions asking you to apply the principle to a new scenario. No prior knowledge of law is required.
4. **Logical Reasoning** — Passage-based critical reasoning: identifying arguments, assumptions, inferences, and logical fallacies.
5. **Quantitative Techniques** — Basic Class 10-level mathematics presented through data sets, graphs, or short passages.

Every correct answer earns 1 mark, and every incorrect answer costs you 0.25 marks — so blind guessing can actively hurt your rank. There's no sectional cutoff; only your overall score matters for the merit list. [CLAT Strategy in 120 Days: A Complete Roadmap to Crack the Exam](#)



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CLAT Eligibility

For the undergraduate program, you need to have passed (or be appearing for) Class 12 with at least 45% marks (40% for SC/ST candidates). There is no upper age limit, which means droppers and even working professionals can appear without restriction.

Why Aspirants Choose CLAT

CLAT's biggest draw is **scale and prestige**. A single exam gets you a shot at NLSIU Bangalore, NALSAR Hyderabad, WBNUJS Kolkata, NLU Jodhpur, and dozens of other respected NLUs — plus a growing list of private universities and even some PSU/government recruitment processes that accept CLAT scores. If your goal is “any good NLU,” CLAT is non-negotiable.

The trade-off is competition: CLAT draws well over 60,000-70,000 applicants annually for a UG seat pool in the low thousands, so top NLU cutoffs sit at the very high end of the score range.



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FOCUS.
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QUALIFY CLAT

IN JUST

150 DAYS



DAY 150
QUALIFY

DAY 100
IMPROVE

DAY 50
BUILD

DAY 1
START



**EXPERT
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Learn from
the best



**SMART
STUDY PLAN**

150-day
structured roadmap



**DAILY TARGETS
& TRACKING**

Stay consistent.
Stay ahead.



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& MOCKS**

Practice like
the real exam



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Guidance.
Whenever you need.

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CLAT



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What Is AILET? The NLU Delhi Express

AILET (All India Law Entrance Test) is conducted exclusively by National Law University, Delhi — and it's the *only* way into that university. NLU Delhi does not

accept CLAT scores, and CLAT-qualified NLUs don't accept AILET scores. This makes AILET a completely separate, self-contained exam with its own ecosystem.

AILET Exam Pattern

AILET is also an offline exam, but it packs more questions into the same time: **150 MCQs in 120 minutes** for the BA LLB program — meaning you get roughly 48 seconds per question, noticeably tighter than CLAT's pacing.

Unlike CLAT, AILET does not have separate Legal Reasoning or Quantitative Techniques sections. The paper is built around just three areas:

1. **English Language** — Reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and para-jumbles.
2. **General Knowledge and Current Affairs** — Indian and international affairs, polity, history, and legal updates.
3. **Logical Reasoning** — Syllogisms, critical reasoning, statement-assumption questions, and analogy-based reasoning. Legal principles sometimes appear inside this section to test logical application, but no background knowledge of law is assumed.

Since there's no distinct legal reasoning section, **Logical Reasoning carries outsized importance** in AILET — it's typically the highest-weighted section, and it also doubles as the primary tiebreaker when candidates score identically (followed by age, and finally a computerized draw of lots).

Marking is the same 1 mark for a correct answer, -0.25 for an incorrect one.

AILET Eligibility

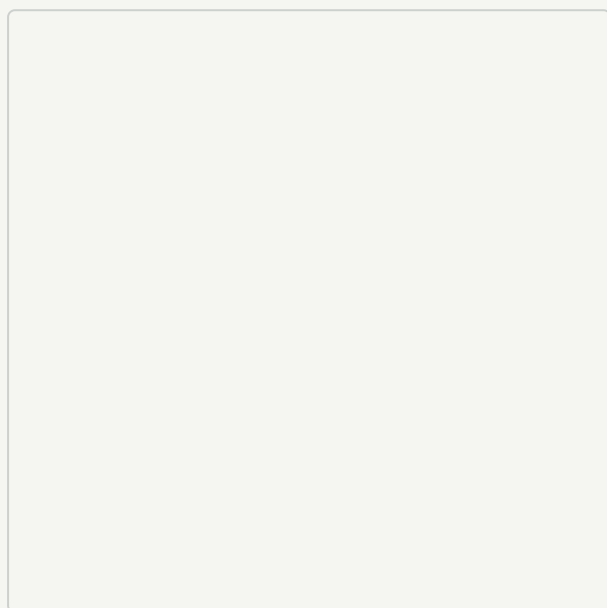
You need a minimum of 45% in Class 12 for the General category, 42% for OBC, and 40% for SC/ST/PwD candidates. Like CLAT, there's no upper age limit, and students awaiting their Class 12 results can still apply.

Why Aspirants Choose AILET

The appeal here is concentrated: NLU Delhi is consistently ranked among the top two or three law schools in the country, has a strong placement record, and sits in the capital with unmatched access to courts, chambers, and internships. But with only about 120 seats up for grabs against tens of thousands of applicants, AILET is

arguably the single most competitive law entrance exam in India on a seats-to-applicants basis.

Because AILET's syllabus overlaps heavily with CLAT's English, GK, and Logical Reasoning sections, most serious CLAT aspirants prepare for both exams simultaneously — the incremental prep required is small, and the upside (a shot at NLU Delhi) is significant.



What Is SLAT? The Private-University Alternative

SLAT (Symbiosis Law Admission Test) is conducted by Symbiosis International (Deemed University) for admission to its four Symbiosis Law Schools — located in Pune, Noida, Nagpur, and Hyderabad. Symbiosis Law School, Pune, in particular, enjoys a strong private-law-school reputation and is frequently ranked among the best private law colleges in NIRF rankings.

SLAT Exam Pattern

SLAT is structurally the odd one out among the three exams in several ways:

- It's a **Computer Based Test (CBT)**, unlike the pen-and-paper format of CLAT and AILET.
- It's shorter — **60 questions in 60 minutes**.
- It has **no negative marking**, which changes your test-taking strategy considerably (you can afford to attempt every question).

- Candidates get **two attempts** across two tentative test dates in the same admission cycle, and typically the better of the two scores is considered.

The syllabus spans five equally weighted areas: Logical Reasoning, Legal Reasoning, Analytical Reasoning, Reading Comprehension, and General Knowledge.

SLAT Is Not Just a Written Test

This is the biggest structural difference from CLAT and AILET: **SLAT alone doesn't get you in**. Clearing the aptitude test only shortlists you for the next stages — a Written Ability Test (WAT) at some campuses and, more importantly, a **Personal Interview (PI)**. Your final merit score is a blend: the SLAT score is scaled to 70 marks, and the PI contributes the remaining 30, for a combined 100-mark evaluation. This means your communication skills, general awareness in conversation, and ability to think on your feet during an interview genuinely count toward your admission — something CLAT and AILET never test.

SLAT Eligibility

You need to have passed Class 12 with a minimum of 45% marks (40% for SC/ST candidates), with no upper age limit.

Why Aspirants Choose SLAT

SLAT tends to attract three kinds of students: those who want a solid private-law-school backup to a CLAT/AILET attempt, those who specifically want the Symbiosis brand and Pune's law-school ecosystem, and those who feel more comfortable in a computer-based, no-negative-marking format with a personal interview component where they can showcase strengths a pure MCQ test can't capture.

Head-to-Head: How the Three Exams Actually Differ

1. Difficulty and Competition Level

All three exams test similar underlying skills — reading speed, reasoning ability, and current affairs awareness — but the *pressure* differs:

- **AILET** is widely considered the toughest on a per-seat basis. With roughly 120 seats and tens of thousands of applicants, the margin for error is razor-thin, and

the compressed 48-seconds-per-question pace punishes slow readers.

- **CLAT** is tough in absolute numbers (the applicant pool is the largest of the three) but offers far more seats across 26 universities, so there's more room to land *somewhere* good even if you miss the very top NLUs.
- **SLAT** is generally regarded as comparatively more moderate in difficulty on the written portion, but the interview stage adds a different kind of pressure — one based on articulation and presence of mind rather than pure recall or speed.

2. Format Philosophy

CLAT and AILET are both offline, negative-marking, pure-MCQ tests where your final rank is a direct function of your written score. SLAT breaks from this mold entirely: it's digital, forgiving of guesses (no negative marking), and treats the written test as just one part — not the whole — of your evaluation.

If you're a strong writer/speaker but get rattled by high-pressure timed MCQ papers, SLAT's blended format may suit you better. If you prefer your fate to be decided purely by a number you can control through practice, CLAT or AILET will feel more predictable.

3. What You're Actually Studying For

- **CLAT** rewards well-rounded aspirants — you need reasonable command over five distinct areas, including quantitative aptitude, which trips up many humanities-background students.
- **AILET** rewards aspirants with sharp logical reasoning and fast reading speed, since two of its three sections (Logical Reasoning and English) carry the bulk of the weight, and there's no quant to worry about.
- **SLAT** rewards aspirants who are comfortable across a wider spread of reasoning types (logical, legal, and analytical are all tested separately) but who can also hold their own in a room during an interview.

4. College Outcomes

This is the most important practical difference, and it's worth being blunt about: **these exams do not lead to the same colleges, and clearing one does not help you with the others.**

- CLAT → NLSIU Bangalore, NALSAR Hyderabad, WBNUJS Kolkata, NLU Jodhpur, and 22 other NLUs, plus several private universities and PSU recruitment channels that accept CLAT scores.
- AILET → NLU Delhi exclusively (for the BA LLB program; a separate AILET LLM exists for postgraduate admission).
- SLAT → The four Symbiosis Law Schools exclusively.

If your dream college is on one list, only that exam matters for it — there's no shortcut through the other two.

5. Cost and Time Investment

Application fees are broadly comparable (roughly ₹3,500–₹4,000 for CLAT, ₹1,000–₹3,000 for AILET depending on category, and around ₹2,250 plus a per-institute fee for SLAT), so cost isn't a major differentiator. The bigger investment is *time*: preparing well for all three in parallel is realistic **only** because their syllabi overlap substantially in English, Logical Reasoning, and General Knowledge. Legal

Reasoning appears in both CLAT and SLAT but not as a standalone AILET section, and Quantitative Techniques is unique to CLAT alone.

So, Which One Should You Actually Take?

Here's the honest answer: **most serious law aspirants don't pick just one.** Because the syllabi overlap so heavily, the marginal cost of preparing for two or even all three exams is much lower than it looks on paper. That said, your *primary focus* should still be deliberate. Here's how to think about it based on your situation.

If your goal is a top-tier NLU and you're comfortable with quant Focus on CLAT. It's the exam with the widest reach — 26 universities means more shots at a good outcome even if your best NLU is out of reach on exam day. Since AILET's syllabus is a near-subset of CLAT's (minus quant, minus a distinct legal reasoning section), attempting AILET alongside CLAT costs you very little extra prep.

If NLU Delhi is specifically your dream and you're a strong, fast reader Prioritize AILET, but don't ignore CLAT as a backup — the overlap means you're not sacrificing much by appearing for both. Just remember AILET's compressed timing (48 seconds/question) demands sharper speed drills than CLAT's more forgiving pace.

If you struggle with quantitative aptitude or timed negative-marking pressure SLAT deserves serious weight in your strategy. No negative marking means you can attempt every question without fear, and the personal interview gives you a chance to compensate for a written score that might not fully reflect your potential. It's also a legitimate standalone goal if the Symbiosis brand and campus life genuinely appeal to you — not just a “backup.”

If you want the safest overall admission strategy Prepare for all three, prioritized in this order based on overlap: build your CLAT foundation first (it covers the most ground), layer in AILET-specific speed and logical reasoning practice, and treat SLAT prep as largely already covered — just add mock interviews and WAT practice closer to the exam.

A Quick Self-Check

Ask yourself these three questions:

1. **Am I comfortable with Class 10-level math under time pressure?** If not, CLAT's Quantitative Techniques section may cost you more than it does other candidates — lean more toward AILET or SLAT.
 2. **Do I read fast and accurately, or do I need more time to process passages?** Fast readers should weight AILET more heavily given its 48-second-per-question pace; if you need more processing time, CLAT's slightly more generous pacing may suit you better.
 3. **Do I perform well in interviews, or do I prefer my score to speak for itself?** If interviews are your strength, SLAT's blended format plays to it. If you'd rather let a single written score decide everything, CLAT and AILET are more your speed.
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A Realistic Preparation Timeline

Regardless of which exam(s) you prioritize, here's a broad framework that works across all three, since the overlapping sections (English, Logical Reasoning, GK) form the backbone of your prep either way:

- **12+ months out:** Build reading habits — a daily newspaper or editorial reading routine is non-negotiable for CLAT, AILET, and SLAT's Reading Comprehension and GK sections alike. Start basic logical reasoning frameworks.
- **8–10 months out:** Add Legal Reasoning (principle-application drills) for CLAT and SLAT. If you're also targeting CLAT, begin foundational quantitative practice — this is the section most likely to be neglected and most likely to separate candidates.
- **6 months out:** Start sectional mock tests, one per week, and begin tracking accuracy per section rather than just overall score.
- **3–4 months out:** Shift to full-length, timed mock tests — at least two a week. Analyze every mock in detail: which questions you got wrong, why, and whether it was a knowledge gap or a timing mistake.
- **1–2 months out:** Tighten time management specifically for each exam's pace (CLAT: ~1 min/question; AILET: ~48 sec/question; SLAT: ~1 min/question but no

negative-marking penalty for attempting more). If you're preparing for SLAT's interview stage, start mock PI sessions and WAT practice during this window.

- **Final 2 weeks:** No new topics. Pure revision, lighter mocks, and simulating exam-day conditions — timed, offline (for CLAT/AILET) or in a quiet, uninterrupted setting (for SLAT's CBT).
-

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I take CLAT, AILET, and SLAT in the same year? Yes. All three are conducted in December of the same admission cycle, but on different dates set independently by their respective conducting bodies, so it's generally possible to sit for all three as long as the dates don't clash. Always cross-check the exact dates on each exam's official website before finalizing your plan.

Does a good CLAT score guarantee an NLU Delhi or Symbiosis seat? No. CLAT scores are accepted by 26 NLUs but not by NLU Delhi (which requires AILET) or the Symbiosis Law Schools (which require SLAT). Each exam's merit list is independent.

Which exam is easier — CLAT, AILET, or SLAT? "Easier" depends on your strengths. AILET is often considered the most competitive per seat available. CLAT has the broadest syllabus (it's the only one of the three testing quantitative aptitude). SLAT's written component is comparatively more moderate, but it adds a personal interview stage that the other two don't have.

Is negative marking the same across all three exams? No. CLAT and AILET both deduct 0.25 marks for every wrong answer. SLAT has no negative marking at all, which meaningfully changes your ideal test-taking strategy — attempting every question is generally advisable on SLAT, whereas blind guessing is riskier on CLAT and AILET.

Do I need to know law before appearing for any of these exams? No. None of the three exams require prior legal knowledge. Legal Reasoning sections (in CLAT and SLAT) and legal-flavored Logical Reasoning questions (in AILET) are designed to test your ability to apply a given principle to a new fact pattern — not your memory of actual laws.

Which exam should a Class 11 student start preparing for first? Given the heavy syllabus overlap, there's no need to pick just one this early. Build strong English reading habits, basic logical reasoning skills, and a current-affairs routine first — this foundation serves CLAT, AILET, and SLAT equally well. You can specialize into exam-

specific strategy (quant for CLAT, speed drills for AILET, interview prep for SLAT) in your final year.

Final Word

There's no universally "best" exam among CLAT, AILET, and SLAT — only the one that's best *for you*, given your target colleges, your comfort with quant and time pressure, and how you perform when a human being (rather than an answer key) is evaluating you. The good news is that the overlap between all three exams is large enough that preparing seriously for one gives you a genuine head start on the others. Pick a primary focus based on your dream college, but don't be afraid to sit for all three — in law school admissions, as in law itself, it pays to keep your options open.