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UGC conducts NET (National Eligibility Test) and JRF (Junior Research Fellowship) twice a year in the months of June and December. All those postgraduates who wish to go for Research or wish to apply for University-level Lecturership jobs have to qualify this test. This test is the basic eligibility requirement for a University Lecturership. Moreover, in most of the Universities, NET/JRF qualified candidates are exempted from appearing in an entrance test for seeking admission in Doctorate Programs. For Humanities and Arts disciplines, UGC conducts NET, while as for Science and Engineering disciplines it is jointly conducted by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and University Grants Commission ("CSIR-UGC" NET). UGC (University Grants Commission) is the central body governing the regulatory and financial affairs of the Higher Education in India. UGC-NET/JRF is considered as one of the toughest exams in India. Every year millions of Postgraduates appear in the test and dream of qualifying it. But, not all qualify this prestigious exam. Lack of understanding of the Exam- pattern and lack of proper planning are the main reasons behind their failure. Following are some valuable tips to crack this test.

UNDERSTANDING THE PATTERN:

NET comprises of three papers: Paper I, Paper II and Paper III. Paper I is designed to check the Teaching and Research Aptitude of a candidate. The number of questions is 60, out of which a candidate has to attempt any 50. In case a candidate attempts more than 50 questions, the first 50 will be considered for marks. Paper II consists of questions from one's subject, i.e, if a candidate is a PG in English, his Paper II will consist of questions from English. The number of questions here is 50. Paper III again consists of questions from one's own subject of Post- graduation, the number of questions being 75. A candidate needs to qualify all the three papers individually. There is a minimum requirement of marks to be scored in each of the three Papers. A candidate has to fulfill this minimum criterion first and then only he or she will be considered in the merit list. This basic criterion is 40 percent in Paper I, 40 percent in Paper II and 50 % in Paper III (for

General Category). Once a candidate fulfils this minimum marks requirement, then he will be considered for the final merit list. Note that only the top 15 percent out of such candidates are declared qualified. Out of this bunch, a separate list of JRF qualifiers is prepared. From here one can imagine the level and intensity of the competition.

Tips to Prepare for the Test:

PAPER I

Since Paper II and III are based on one's subject of study, one knows the various aspects of it and, therefore, already has knowledge of how to prepare in it. What matters in NET mostly is Paper I. This is common for all. Questions on varied subjects are asked: Education System of India, Teaching and Research Ability, Numerical Ability, Logical Reasoning, Science, Polity, Environmental Awareness, etc, etc are asked. An analysis of the previous papers makes it clear that questions on Numerical Ability and Logical Reasoning are not many, a couple of questions from each. Therefore, much time should not be devoted to their preparation. Moreover, it's better to do the questions on Logical Reasoning by using one's common sense. The time is not so limited as in other competitive exams like Banking exams, hence, applying common sense and reasonable thinking becomes more feasible. A big chunk of questions comes from Research Aptitude and Teaching Aptitude. The former should be prepared from any Research Methodology book, for example Research Methodology by C R Kothari. Moreover, a paper based on Research Methodology is there in almost all PG courses. This paper may be revised. Various internet websites provide practice-sets based on Teaching Aptitude. They also provide brief material on the subject too. Make a small compilation of such questions and essays to prepare for this part of Paper I. Moreover, separate books on NET Paper I are available in the market. Read a small 200-page General Knowledge book for preparing the General Knowledge Section of Paper I. To sum up, either go for separate preparation for General Knowledge, Research Aptitude and Teaching Aptitude as has been already described or buy a UGC-NET Paper I book from the market. A thorough study of this book is more than enough to crack Paper I.

PAPER II and III

Paper II and III are based on the subject of study. Most of the questions are familiar, since they are from one's own subject. A clear understanding of the basic concepts, a fresh revision of the two year's PG study is what's required to crack these papers. There are books for all subjects available in market. Such books contain all Post- graduation material briefly. They are specially designed for UGC-NET. Thus, you do not have to compile material from here and there. Moreover, since the things have already been studied in detail during the PG, just a surface-study helps to revise the entire syllabus.

Additional Tips:

NET is a tough exam but not impossible to qualify. Believe in yourself and study to qualify the exam and not just to appear in it. More than three months are left till the next NET exam. Start your preparations slowly until you gain confidence. A thorough and serious study of a couple of months is enough. There is no negative marking and the time is not so limited. So, don't get panicked with regard to these two things. Concentrate more on Paper I. Most of the candidates do well in the rest of the Papers but fail in the first Paper. Doing well in them is of no worth unless Paper I is done well. Make a thorough analysis of previous papers. That definitely helps to gain an insight into what is asked in the exam.

SOURCE: http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Sep/16/cracking-ugc-net-jrf-58.asp