

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES OF SCHEDULED CASTE (SC) AND SCHEDULED TRIBE (ST) CATEGORIES

Q.1 What are reservation provisions available for the candidates of the SC/ST categories?

A. Reservation is made for the candidates belonging to the SC/ST categories in respect of vacancies as may be fixed by the Government.

Q.2 Are the SC/ST candidates eligible/allowed to apply for all the Posts/Services under any Examination/selection?

A. Yes, provided they otherwise fulfill other eligibility criteria. Reservation is, however, not available in respect of Examinations conducted for recruitment to Defence Services viz., NDA & NA Examination and Combined Defence Services Examination.

Q.3 Can the SC/ST candidates be considered against the vacancies reserved for them even though SC/ST certificate is not available?

A. No. A SC/ST candidate is considered against SC/ST vacancies only if he/she possesses a valid caste certificate. However, such SC/ST candidates can always compete for the unreserved vacancies provided they fulfill the eligibility criteria of General category.

Q.4 How much age relaxation could be allowed to the candidates of SC and ST categories?

A. The prescribed upper age-limit of an Examination (wherever applicable) is relaxable up to a maximum of 5 years in the case of candidates belonging to SC/ST categories. SC/ST candidates, who also belong to either PwBD or Ex-servicemen category, are eligible for grant of cumulative age-relaxation under both categories.

Q.5 What are the permissible number of attempts available to the SC/ST categories candidates in the Civil Services Examination and Indian Forest Service Examination?

A. SC/ST categories candidates are allowed unlimited attempts in case they are otherwise eligible till they attain the permissible relaxed age limit.

Q.6 Are SC/ST category candidates required to pay application fee?

A. No. The candidates belonging to SC/ST category are exempted from payment of application fee.

Q.7 Whether an SC/ST candidate selected on his/her own merit adjusted against reserved vacancy or unreserved vacancy?

A. A candidate of SC/ST category, selected on his/her own merit, without availing of any of the concessions or relaxations to which such candidates are entitled to, is recommended against unreserved vacancies. If any concession or relaxed standards of selection has been applied at any stage of selection process, such candidates will be considered against vacancy reserved for the concerned category only.

Q.8 What are the concessions and relaxations in standards of selection applicable to SC/ST category?

A. The candidates of SC/ST category are entitled to relaxed standards of selection vis-a-vis the standards of selection adopted for General Category.

Q.9 Whether change of category is allowed in case of SC/ST categories candidates?

A. If the category indicated by a candidate in the application form for any Examination of the Commission is Unreserved/General category but the candidate subsequently writes to the Commission to change the category to a reserved one i.e. SC/ST, such request is not entertained by the Commission. Further, once a candidate has chosen a reserved category (SC or ST), no request is entertained for change to other reserved category viz. SC to ST, ST to SC etc. While the above principle will be followed in general, there may be a few cases where there was a gap of not more than 3 months between the issuance of a Government Notification enlisting a particular community in the list of any of the reserved communities and the date of submission of the application by the candidate. In such cases, the request of change of category from unreserved to reserved may be considered by the Commission on merit.

Q.10 Whether change of category to Unreserved/General category is allowed in case of SC/ST categories candidates?

A. No, the SC/ST categories candidates, other than those recommended on General Merit, shall not be allowed to change their category from SC/ST

to Unreserved/General or claim the vacancies (Service/Cadre) for Unreserved/General category after the declaration of final result by the UPSC.

Q.11 If a candidate makes any mistake while filling the Online Application Form, what will be the next step?

- A. The candidate is advised to fill up another form if the link for the application form is open.

Q.12 What precautions must be taken by the candidates for claiming SC/ST reservation before applying for an Examination?

- A. Candidates seeking reservation/ relaxation benefits available for SC/ST categories must ensure that they are entitled to such reservation/ relaxation in accordance with the eligibility prescribed in the Examination Rules issued by the Government/Examination Notice issued by the UPSC.

Q.13 Where to find prescribed format of SC/ST certificate?

- A. The prescribed format is available on the Commission's website (www.upsc.gov.in) under section "Forms & Download". The candidate may download the requisite format from there.

Q.14 Who are competent to issue SC/ST certificate?

- A. SC/ST certificate should be issued by any of the following authorities:
- (a) District Magistrate/Additional District Magistrate/ Collector/ Deputy Commissioner/Additional Deputy Commissioner/ 1st Class Stipendiary Magistrate/ Sub-Divisional Magistrate/ Taluka Magistrate/ Executive Magistrate/ Extra Assistant Commissioner
 - (b) Chief Presidency Magistrate/Additional Chief Presidency Magistrate/ Presidency Magistrate
 - (c) Revenue Officer not below the rank of Tehsildar and
 - (d) Sub-Divisional Officer of the area where the candidate and/or his family normally resides
 - (e) Administrator/Secretary to the Administrator/Development Officer (Lakshadweep)

The certificate issued by any other authority is not accepted.

Q.15 What is the cut-off date for acceptance of SC/ST certificate?

- A.** The SC/ST certificate should be dated prior to closing date of application of an Examination or the cut-off date as may be prescribed in the Notification for that Examination concerned. **Example:** In case a candidate applying for the Civil Services Examination and closing date application for the Preliminary Examination is 31.03.2021, the candidate should be in possession of requisite SC/ST certificate in the prescribed format in support of his/her claim for availing reservation, **dated on/before 30.03.2021.**

Q.16 Whether Migration Clause/Para should be part of the SC/ST certificate?

- A.** Migration Clause/Para should be the part of SC/ST certificate, in case certificate is issued by a State other than that to which his/her father originally belongs.

Q.17 How the candidate's personal details are ascertained?

- A.** The candidate's Name and his/her father's name in SC/ST certificate should be same as mentioned in Matriculation/School Leaving certificate or equivalent certificate. However, in case candidate's/ father's name is not available in Matriculation/School Leaving Certificate or equivalent certificate, the father's name should be as per other documents like HSC certificate, degree, PAN Card, Aadhaar card etc. and candidate should mention that father's name in the application form also.

Q.18 A candidate's caste/tribe has been recognised by the State Government of the State to which his/her father belongs but not by the Government of India. Is he/she eligible for such reservation?

- A.** No, the caste/tribe should be included in the Central List for that State.

Q.19 What should SC/ST candidates check before applying for an Examination concerning their certificates?

- A.** The SC/ST category candidate should ensure that he/she fulfills all the criteria applicable to him/her before applying for an Examination, failing which his/her **candidature will be liable to be cancelled**. The details of these criteria are as under:

- (i) SC/ST certificate should be dated prior to closing date of application or the cut-off date as may be prescribed in the notification for the Examination concerned.
- (ii) SC/ST certificate should be in prescribed format.
- (iii) SC/ST certificate should be issued by the competent authority.
- (iv) SC/ST certificate should contain the Signature, Stamp/Office Seal of issuing authority. However, in case of digital certificate, where a declaration dispensing any of the above requirement i.e. Physical Signature/Stamp/Office Seal, has been made in the certificate, the requisition to the extent of declaration will be dispensed with.
- (v) Migration Clause/Para should also be the part of the SC/ST certificate, if applicable.
- (vi) Candidate's Personal details should be as per Matriculation/School Leaving Certificate, equivalent certificate, etc.
- (vii) SC/ST certificate should contain the name of the caste/tribe exactly as per the Central List.
- (viii) SC/ST certificate should contain the relevant resolution of Government of India of caste/tribe to which candidate belongs.
- (ix) SC/ST certificate should contain the "ordinarily resides" para and the same should be correctly filled in.

Q.20 At which stage, the candidates are required to submit/produce their SC/ST certificates for any Examination?

- A.** The candidates are not required to submit/produce their SC/ST certificates with online application. However, they are required to indicate the details of the certificates. Once a candidate is qualified for the Main Examination (in case of the Civil Services Examination), he/she is required to upload copy of his/her SC/ST certificate alongwith the Detailed Application Form (DAF). The candidate qualifying for the Personality Tests (Interviews) is required to show the original SC/ST certificate at the time of their Personality Test.

Note: Responses to the above FAQs have been prepared on the basis of existing Rules of Commission's Examinations/relevant instructions of the Government and as such, are liable to change consequent to any change in the said Rules of Examinations/instructions of the Government. In case of any difference between the said Examination Rules/relevant Govt. instructions and the FAQs for any reason whatsoever, the former will prevail.
