

The Director of SciencesPo's Centre for Asia, Pacific, Africa and Middle East talks about the institution's interest in welcoming international students, especially from India



Kounal Gupta

Numerous overseas universities favour applicants with strong IELTS test results, as part of the admissions process. One of the components of the test that Indian students find difficult is Speaking, which accounts for 25% of the total score. According to industry experts, 62% of Indian students have a hard time communicating in English. Therefore, here are some tips that can help them do well in this segment.

Conversational tone

When talking to the examiner, keep your tone conversational. Use pauses and emphasise words to ensure he/she understands what you are saying. This is a conversation so keep the examiner engaged. Do not memorise answers, as that tends to disrupt your natural tone. Think of it as candid photography and speak.

Confidence is key

The examiner gets the first impression from your introduction. So keep it simple and speak calmly. The examiner will judge the candidate not by his/her opinions or perspectives but by how he/she conveys the message in English. Other important aspects as good body posture, smiling and making eye contact while speaking. All this shows confidence.

Accent does not matter

The IELTS is an international test that is taken by a diverse number of people from different countries. So a variety of accents is usual. What the

What matters in the IELTS speaking test is the quality of language. So the best way to develop speaking skills is to converse with other people who are fluent in the language and correct your mistakes.



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# Speak with confidence

Five ways in which a student can develop English speaking skills for the IELTS exam

examiner will consider is the pronunciation of words. The best way to develop clarity in pronunciation is to listen to podcasts, news and documentaries. To practise, record yourself speaking and listen to that to measure your progress. Another efficient way to

learn is to use online dictionaries with pronunciation guides.

Develop vocabulary

It is not enough to know complex words. The student must know how to use proper words in appropriate places. A crucial exercise to develop

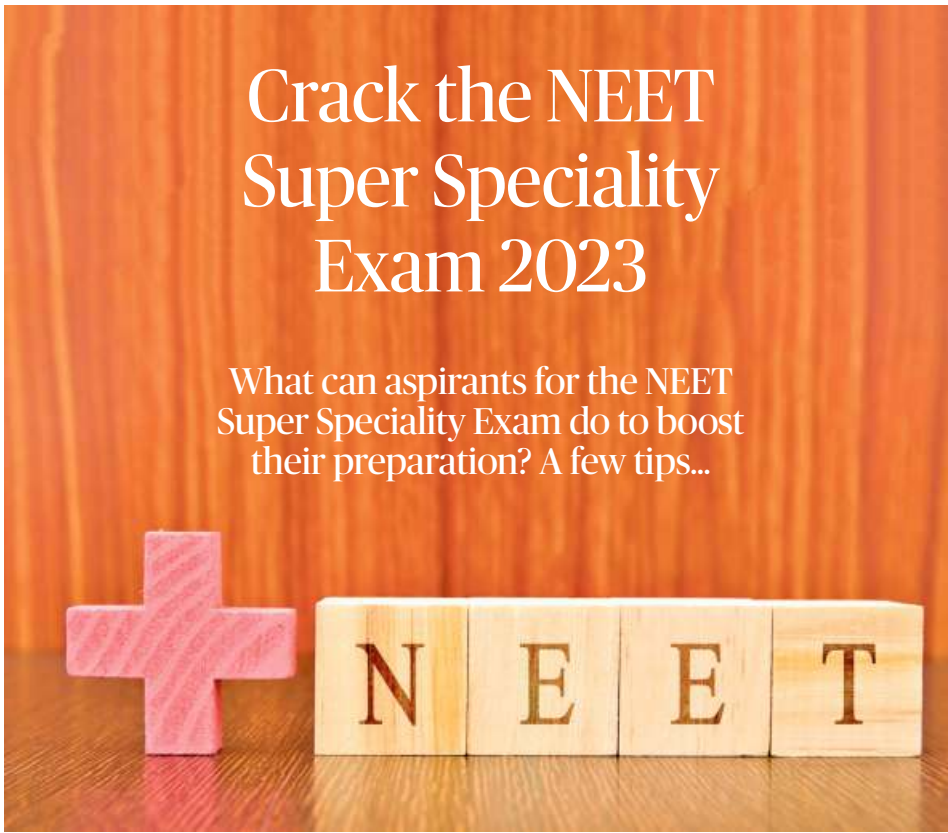
this skill is to test oneself every day by describing events through a different set of words. This not only helps build vocabulary but also develops a speaking style. Follow the 5x5x5 rule! (Stick five sticks at five places in your room and change them every five days)

Grammar matters

Grammatical structure is crucial in conveying the correct meaning in the speaking test. Therefore, the student needs to be fluent and not pause for too long. Use simple present tense while speaking. In the case of passive voice, formal and impersonal words should be used. The only way to master grammar is to practice and more practice.

What matters in the IELTS speaking test is the quality of the language. So the best way to develop speaking skills is to converse with other people who are fluent in the language and correct your mistakes.

The writer is CEO, Henry Harvin



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Dr. Sandeep Sharma

The NEET-Super Speciality exam is a single admission test for aspirants who seek admission into colleges for various DM/MCh and DrNB Super Speciality courses of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019 (as per Section 61 (2) ). The NEET-SS 2023 is tentatively scheduled to take place in the second half of 2023. The 150-minute exam is in MCQ format with 150 questions, each with a single correct answer.

For each correct answer, a candidate is awarded four marks, and one mark is deducted for every incorrect answer. Here are some tips to help aspirants boost their preparation for the 2023 exam:

New exam pattern

It is now imperative for aspirants to read all systems of subjects extensively. All questions will now be from the curriculum of the Post Graduate Exit level of the primary feeder broad speciality subjects.

As a result, the entire subject is vital rather than just the super-speciality being the target. The exam will be more comprehensive and multiple-choice questions

from every system of the subject will be present. To give an example, MCQs can be framed even from therapeutic aspects and organ transplantation.

Define resources

To ensure that preparation strategy is streamlined and smooth, aspirants must define the resources and study materials that they will refer to. Standard primary textbooks such as *Nelson's Textbook of Paediatrics* are essential and will build a strong foundation. Additionally, aspirants must be up to date with recent syllabi, selected portions from speciality books, and national health programmes. By referring to different, diverse, and comprehensive study materials during preparation, aspirants can perform better.

Clinical orientation

Questions that are clinical in nature and test patient-management approaches are increasing in number. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate adequate clinical MCQ testing into their preparation strategy. Increased practice for questions on ventilator graphs, ECGs, and EEG interpretation in the medical branches, as well as on key surgical approaches and instruments

in the surgical branches is advised.

Time management

Identify how much time to spend on each question. To be able to comfortably attempt all 150 questions, candidates must prioritise taking full-length mock and practice tests. This will enhance speed and ensure that they are able to attempt all questions at a desirable speed.

Revision plan

In order to revisit weak areas and less familiar topics, create a detailed revision plan and revise all major systems in the primary feeder subject. Given that the syllabus is vast, it is important identify and study high-yield areas. To ensure no important topics are missed, create an exclusive revision strategy during the last one month and follow it diligently.

Stay healthy

Competitive exams often make aspirants feel stressed and anxious. Therefore taking care of physical and mental health is crucial. Maintain a proper sleep cycle and eat healthy diet. Taking regular breaks helps one remain motivated and increases chances of performing well.

The writer is a Prepladder Educator.

## Crunch those numbers

How can teachers help students overcome the fear of Maths?  
Here are some tips.

Neelakantha Bhanu  
Prakash

Often, maths is perceived as a subject that causes fear and anxiety. Many have faced Maths phobia at some point and try to avoid situations involving numbers.

Several studies have shown that Maths learning took a big hit during the pandemic and the subsequent online classes compared to reading. It is imperative to bridge such gaps in learning and change the way students perceive Maths. Here are some tips on helping students get rid of their fear of numbers.

**Encourage students to ask 'Why':** To make Maths more relatable, emphasise the WHY. Instead of introducing a topic through a textual definition, ask why they want to learn it. For example, when talking about fractions, ask how one can determine whether a glass is half full or half empty. Asking the right questions before a concept is introduced gives context to what they are going to learn and stays in the memory.



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Learning should emphasise 'Why', which should then be followed by 'What' and 'Now'.

**Performance Art and Mind Sports:** When Math is introduced in interesting and relatable formats, students can visualise what the question requires and solve it in their minds. Encouraging students to showcase their talent and knowledge introduces an artistic facet in learning Maths, which is a vital component of strengthening conceptual understanding

**Game-Based Learning:** Classroom and textbook-based

learning can be tiresome and boring. Gamification of learning techniques can help change the perception of Maths and provide new and easy ways and rectify mistakes. Games could be as simple as asking students to keep adding a number when their names are called. Not only does this keep students attentive, but also increases their arithmetical accuracy and speed.

**Problem-solving approach:** Pose a problem, decode it, and present the concept and solution... this encourages the students to spend more time on

the subject. For example, while teaching the concept of area and perimeter, the teacher can ask children to measure their room using this parameter. Focussing on repetition is also an important aspect and the key to etching a concept in students' memory is to link it to previous and future learning.

**One size does not fit all:** Maths curriculums are designed by establishing what students should know in a particular class. This methodology may be unsuccessful if the child does not understand what they have learnt, how it can be applied practically and what is next in learning. It is similar to giving a child a piece of five different jigsaw puzzles daily and expecting them to complete them. Instead, curriculums must focus on creating a Maths journey.

After giving them a solid foundation of the concepts required, students must be taught to explore how these can be applied in the world around them.

The writer is the founder and CEO of Bhanzu, a Maths ed-tech start-up

G. Mallikarjuna

The advent of Information Technology (IT) and IT-enabled Services (ITeS) has boosted the demand for many related academic programmes such as B.Tech Computer Science, B.Sc. Computer Science, and Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA) that allow students to gain the knowledge and skillsets required for direct entry into these sectors.

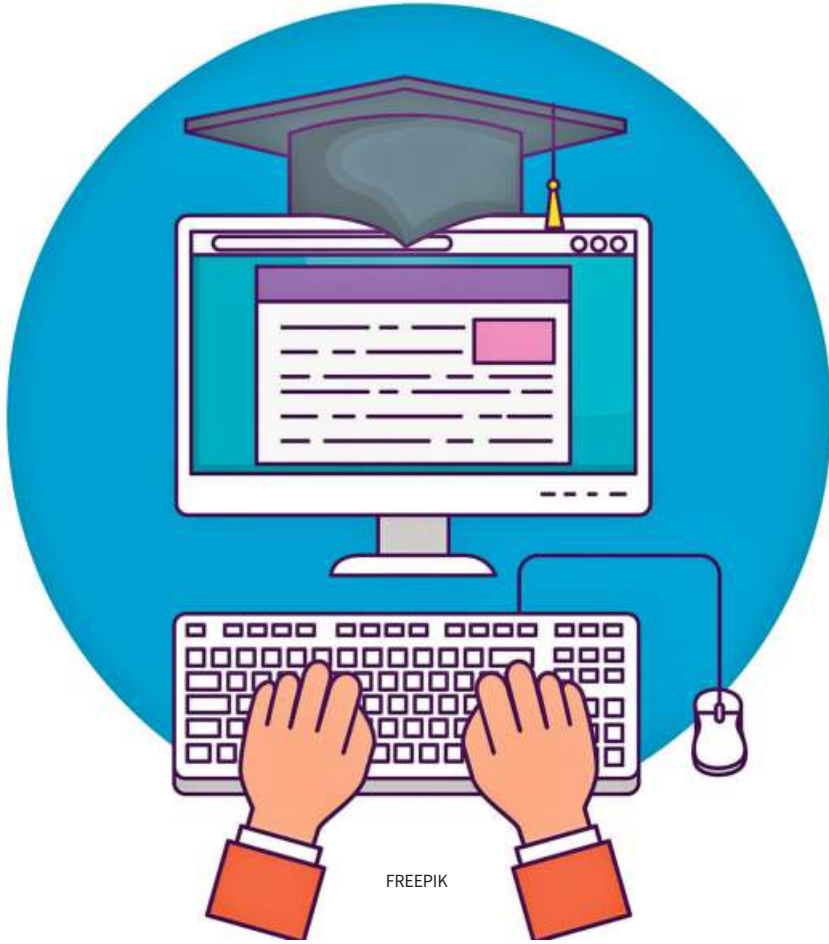
The BCA programme has been increasingly gaining popularity leading higher education institutes to update the curriculum at a much faster rate than that of other programmes. Here are some reasons why this course has gained prominence in the recent past:

**Growing demand:** According to latest reports, IT service companies in India have created over 5,00,000 new jobs in 2022. This is likely to increase in the future, as various industries are adopting digital technology. Thus, A BCA degree opens up the door for a career in the IT sector.

**Learning options:** Many reputed universities are offering BCA in the online mode with the same academic curriculum and rigour as the physical programme at a lower cost. This gives the students the flexibility to learn anywhere and anytime.

**Broad curriculum:** The curriculum covers foundational concepts in computers and its applications such as programming language (HTML, Java, C, C++, and other advanced ones). Lab practicals and projects help them get a firm hold on coding and programming. Additionally, the curriculum covers Software Engineering, Database Management, Cloud Computing, Computer Networking, Mobile Applications, and other subjects that are sought-after skills today.

**Wider opportunities:** A BCA student learns many fundamental concepts in the computer and software domain, each of which is now evolving into an independent domain. From computer networking and mobile application development to coding, data science and cloud computing, a BCA graduate earns credentials in various



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## Enter the IT sector

The Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA) course offers great career prospects for students

domains. There are also higher education options such as Master of Computer Application (MCA) or M.Sc. in Computer Science, M.Sc. in Data Science, Master of Information Management (MIM), Master of Computer Management (MCM), and Master of Business Administration (MBA).

**Affordable:** Compared to the B.Tech /B.E programmes, a BCA is both affordable and available. This allows a stu-

dent to select an institution that suits his/her requirements.

Entry jobs in the IT sector offer equal opportunity to BCA graduates and B.Tech/B.E graduates. As long as the demand for IT professionals keeps growing, BCA graduates will have great career prospects.

The writer is Director, Directorate of Online Education, Manipal University Jaipur