

Albert P'Rayan

“Are you taking the UGC-NET?” I asked a young man who had completed his Master’s in English Language Teaching (ELT) a year ago.

“I’m not sure I can crack it,” he said hesitantly. “The subject I’ve specialised in – English Language Teaching (ELT) – isn’t even on the list of prescribed subjects. So, I’m forced to choose something related, like English Literature. It’s not just me; many of my classmates who specialised in ELT have chosen not to take the exam at all...”

The UGC National Eligibility Test (NET) determines candidates’ eligibility for Junior Research Fellowships (JRF) and Assistant Professorships by assessing their knowledge in a specific subject. According to the National Testing Agency, the June 2025 session will include 85 subjects, yet ELT remains excluded.

When the UGC-NET was introduced in 1989, ELT was not well-established in India and was, therefore, not included. However, according to S. Mohanraj, retired professor from EFLU, Professor Tharu of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad, had recognised the importance of the field and advocated for its inclusion even at that time.

Candidates for the exam are expected to select a subject based on their



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postgraduate specialisation. Since ELT is not on the list, many ELT graduates are compelled to opt for English Literature, which focuses heavily on literary content and literary theory, making it a

poor match for ELT specialists.

**Evolving academic landscape**  
Traditionally, English teachers at the tertiary level held qualifications in

English Literature. Consequently, instruction in General English and other language-based courses often lacked grounding in second language acquisition and pedagogy.

However, some educa-

tors pursued additional qualifications in ELT and gained expertise in language teaching methods.

Over time, the academic landscape evolved and Master’s programmes that once focused solely on lit-

erature began to incorporate language components.

Eventually, dedicated Master’s programmes in ELT were introduced that trained students in second language acquisition, teaching methodologies, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), technology-assisted learning, and applied linguistics, making graduates more suited to teach English language skills than literature graduates.

ELT has now gained significant traction in India and universities increasingly offer programmes at postgraduate and doctoral levels, and student enrolment is steadily rising. Yet, ELT remains absent from the UGC-NET subject list, 35 years after the exam’s inception.

There are several compelling reasons to recognise English Language Teaching (ELT) as a distinct academic discipline and to include it in the UGC-NET list of prescribed subjects to recruit ELT specialists to teach English in colleges.

**Fundamental differences**  
In India, where English is a second language, ELT plays a vital role in the education system, as English is integrated into the curriculum at all levels and is essential for the professional development of individuals who need to communicate effectively in the language.

Teaching English literature and teaching the English language are fundamentally different in their

purpose, content, and methodology. The primary goal of the former is to enable students to appreciate, analyse, and interpret literary texts, whereas the aim of language teaching is to help learners achieve proficiency in English.

Accordingly, literature teachers focus on exploring texts from critical perspectives, while language teachers concentrate on developing learners’ linguistic and communicative competence.

Further, literature instruction typically follows a text-centric approach, emphasising literary theory and critical thinking. In contrast, language teaching adopts a learner-centric approach, with a focus on pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and practical communication skills.

Another major difference lies in classroom practice: literature classes are often lecture-based, while language classes are typically task-based and interactive.

Universities abroad select candidates with specialisation in ELT to teach language courses such as General English, English for Communication, Business English, English for International Tests, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and so on.

Teachers with a background in ELT possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective English teaching. Their expertise in second language acquisition theo-

ries allows them to understand how learners acquire language and to adapt their teaching using diverse methods such as the communicative approach, task-based learning, and technology-enhanced instruction.

As a result, they are well-equipped to prepare students not only for academic achievement but also for success in professional and international contexts.

Given the global status of English and its significance in India, it is imperative that language teaching be led by professionals with formal training in ELT. This can only be possible if ELT is recognised as a distinct subject in UGC-NET.

Institutions such as the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) and professional bodies like the English Language Teachers’ Association of India (ELTAI) should actively campaign for the inclusion of ELT in the UGC-NET subject list. Xavier Pradeep Singh, National President of ELTAI, has stated that the association has already launched a signature campaign and is planning to submit a petition to the UGC.

It is time for ELT to be acknowledged not as a subset of literature, but as a vital, independent discipline deserving of its rightful place in India’s academic and professional landscape.

The writer is an ELT resource person and education columnist. Email rayanal@yahoo.co.uk



**OFF THE EDGE**  
**Nandini Raman**  
I am pursuing B.Ed. Social Science. My UG degree was International Relations, and Master’s Political Science. What are the potential career options in teaching in India and abroad? What kind of skills do I need to develop?  
**Dheeraj**

Dear Dheeraj,

Your academic background is a strong asset. Potential career options in India teaching in government and private schools (the latter could be affiliated to Indian or international boards), universities and colleges, coaching or tutoring, and curriculum development or creation of educational content. Abroad, you can teach at schools if you complete specific certifications that are pre-requisites in those countries.

Work on becoming a subject expert and stay updated on current events. Understand and apply pedagogical skills such as lesson planning, delivery, classroom management and differentiated instruction. Work on your verbal and written communication and active listening.

Use technology to create digital content and build a skillset in software proficiency. Develop interpersonal skills, research and analytical skills and a deep understanding of

Showcase your expertise

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

cultural sensitivity. Also, explore online teaching, work with NGOs and think tanks and build an online presence by creating a professional website or blog to showcase your expertise and teaching philosophy to help you stand out.

**I am in the final year of B.A. Economics. I want to do a PG in Economics and Econometrics. Are there any good institutions for this? Also will it help to do courses in computers?**  
**Sethu**

Dear Sethu,

Some of the top institutions in India known for their Economics and Econometrics programmes are Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in Delhi and Kolkata; Delhi School of Economics (DSE); Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai; Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU); Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) Delhi, Kanpur, and Kharagpur; and Madras School of Economics (MSE), Chennai. Computer skills are essential for Econometrics (as it relies on statistical software like R, Python, and Stata). Proficiency in these tools is crucial for data analysis and model building and will broaden your job prospects.

**I have completed BBA but**

**am not sure what to do next. I’m interested in stock market trading. Are there any courses on stock market, especially futures trading and option trading?**  
**Viswa**

Dear Viswa,

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) Academy offers a range of courses, including futures and options trading, and provide industry-recognised certifications. The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) Institute also offers courses related to the stock market, including derivatives trading that cater to different levels of experience. The National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM) offers certification exams that are mandatory for certain roles in the securities market.

Online platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and edX offering a variety of courses on finance, investing, and trading. Zerodha, a popular brokerage platform in India, provides free educational modules on various aspects of the stock market, including futures and options. Investopedia is another valuable online resource to learn about financial terms and concepts. Many brokerage firms offer educational resources and seminars on trading.

However, be cautious

and ensure that the information is unbiased and genuine.

Before trading with real money, practise with a demo account to get a feel for the market and test your strategies. Start small and gradually increase your investment as you gain experience. The stock market is constantly evolving and very dynamic, so it’s essential to stay updated with the latest trends and developments. Futures and options trading involves significant risk, so understand the potential losses before you start trading. Be wary of ‘get-rich-quick’ schemes, scams and unrealistic promises.

**I completed B.Sc. (Hons) Agriculture and worked in an e-commerce supplier. Now I’m looking after operations and finance in two retail shops in my family business. This has got me interested in finance, and I took up a certification in Investment Banking. Should I look for entry-level jobs in the investment sector or try for CFA Level 1?**  
**Raghul**

Dear Raghul,

Entry-level jobs in the investment sector will help you gain practical experience, build a professional network and

learn from experienced professionals. However, these positions are highly competitive, and your non-traditional background may require you to put in extra effort to showcase your skills. But the CFA Level 1 is a globally recognised qualification and will significantly enhance your credibility and showcase a strong commitment to finance, thereby increasing your chances of landing better jobs. However, it will require significant time and effort for preparation and does not guarantee a job.

Start preparing for the exam while actively seeking entry-level jobs. Leverage your experience in managing finances and operations in your family business, and highlight your ability to analyse financial data and make informed decisions. Connect with professionals in the investment sector. Customise your resume to highlight relevant skills and experience. Emphasise your analytical skills, financial acumen, and ability to learn quickly. Gain proficiency in financial software and tools, and improve your communication and presentation skills. Consider internships to gain relevant experience and make connections.

**Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.**

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge



FREEPIK

Finance gets a makeover

New programmes and industry-academia partnerships are crucial to help students navigate the changes in the finance industry

Rajesh Dedhia

The rapid growth of fintech has completely reshaped the financial services industry and created an urgent demand for professionals equipped to navigate a new, increasingly global financial landscape. Higher education institutions are also recognising the need to update their educational programmes to ensure that students are adequately prepared to manage modern finance, understand evolving financial regulations, and apply data-driven strategies in their future careers.

**Bridging the gap**  
Specialised programmes and certifications that address key financial competencies such as financial modelling and risk management are being offered equip students with a deep understanding of the mechanics that drive today’s financial systems. Institutions are also providing practical learning experiences, giving students ex-

posure to the tools, techniques, and strategies shaping contemporary financial markets. All this helps bridge the gap between traditional financial education and the needs of a fintech-driven world.

One of the most significant trends in global finance education is the development of courses that provide students with in-depth knowledge in areas such as financial data analysis, market research, and risk-management strategies. With the increasing importance of data in decision-making processes, students have to be trained to interpret vast amounts of information and apply it effectively to their financial analyses. As financial markets become more interconnected and reliant on real-time outcomes, understanding how to interpret and apply data is essential.

**Partnerships**  
In addition to this, universities should also partner with industry leaders who can use their experience to help students navigate the complexities of the finan-

cial sector and challenge traditional systems. By cultivating strong industry relationships and incorporating emerging technologies into their programmes, universities can position students to lead the modern finance revolution.

Focusing on ethical and regulatory aspects is another essential aspect of preparing students. As innovations transform traditional systems, they raise complex legal and ethical issues around data privacy, security, financial inclusion, and transparency. By offering courses on these topics, universities can help students grasp the importance of responsible financial practices and effectively navigate the regulatory challenges posed by new technologies.

As the finance landscape rapidly evolves, these evolving programmes will be instrumental in preparing the next generation of finance professionals to drive innovation and foster growth.

The writer is Founder and CFO, Vantage Knowledge Academy.

SCHOLARSHIPS

**UQ International High Achievers Award - India**  
Offered by the University of Queensland, Australia  
**Eligibility:** Students who hold a valid Indian passport and have received an offer for a full-time UG or PG course and have English language

proficiency, relevant programme entry rank, and competitive scores.  
**Rewards:** 20% reduction in tuition fees per semester  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** Round the year  
www.b4s.in/edge/UQII

**Education Future International Scholarship**  
Offered by the Education

Future organisation  
**Eligibility:** Indian nationals with a valid passport who are pursuing a UG or PG course in a recognised institution outside India and have secured a minimum of 60% marks in Class 10 and 12, and can prove the absence of any means for education funding.  
**Rewards:** Between ₹200,000 and ₹10,00,000

**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** Round the year  
www.b4s.in/edge/EFIS5

**Robert Gordon University GREAT Scholarships**  
Offered by the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, the U.K., in partnership with the British Council and GREAT Britain Campaign.  
**Eligibility:** Indian citizens

who have been accepted for a full-time, on-campus PG programme starting this September and classified as international fee-payers.  
**Rewards:** £10,000 towards tuition fees  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** June 22  
www.b4s.in/edge/GUGI

Courtesy: buddy4study



