

APPROACH PAPER



C2C 2019
PAPER IV
ETHICS, INTEGRITY AND
APTITUDE



SYLLABUS

- Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics in private and public relationships.
- Human Values – lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
- Attitude: content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour; moral and political attitudes; social influence and persuasion.

APPROACH

GS paper IV is perhaps the most intriguing and misunderstood part of the UPSC syllabus. You almost have the feeling that it is in your reach, somewhere in your mind, may be your subconscious thoughts. You see those generic terms like integrity, honesty and governance and immediately have a feeling that you can nail the paper. After all it is all about ideas. And girl! You are never short of ideas, are you?? Remember the college days. No matter what you knew and how much you knew, filling pages was no big deal for you. But only if that could hold true with UPSC as well! Unfortunately, our university machismo doesn't augur well with UPSC. The examiners are quality starved and they won't accept anything below Hyderabad Biryani, forget about the street food of Vijayanagar. But the question is do we have the ingredients to cook that delicious, finger licking Biryani?

So how do you think we should approach the syllabus? The UPSC syllabus designates a name for the paper. It calls it GS Paper IV. Does it mean that we should prepare it as the other three GS papers. Should we start making notes of all the terms and terminologies, views and ideas of thinkers and philosophers, psychological theories related to attitude and aptitude, principles of governance; and the list goes on. Or do we have to think and act differently or we rephrase our word-- smartly?

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APPROACH

We think our smart generation must act smartly. Acting smartly doesn't mean following utopian shortcuts as they lead you nowhere. It only means we must act in the most efficient and effective manner keeping in mind the demands of the syllabus and of course the time constraint.

Now let us begin by saying a simple yet important thing: Ethics, integrity and honesty should form a common theme during your entire preparation and not only for GS paper IV. It should be like a canopy similar to that of a tropical rainforest covering the entire region and not like the bushes and shrubs of the deserts, popping here and there sporadically. Consistency in our thinking is the most important ingredient of success in this paper. What we are trying to convey is that one can't FAKE ethical behaviour. Even if one does manage that, inconsistency would be visible all over his/her answer sheet and that leads to only one thing--failure. So for the sake of this examination we have to be considerate as human beings to everything around us, be it society, environment, friends, foes, relatives and all that surrounds us.



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Our assessment of a situation is driven by our personality and character. It is thus futile to learn the concepts of paper IV from various sources and websites and try implementing them in the examination hall. Even if one does so, the superficiality of his/her intentions would be readily visible in the answers. This paper requires an honest foundation that one can't find in books or websites. They are ingrained in all of us. We just need to revisit the school days of our innocent childhood. We knew certain things for sure those days. We knew to lie was bad, stealing was even worse and hurting someone was an open invitation to punishment by our parents or teachers. So simple was life and its principles. However, today we love to complicate things. We have internalised the notions of relative honesty and comparative moral behaviour. We assess our wrongdoings by judging and quantifying the action of others. We also justify our actions on many flimsy grounds which induce social acceptance and rather promote collective loss of character and integrity. But believe us, the more you complicate things, the more it becomes difficult to hide your true personality and character. UPSC knows this dilemma well and that is why we are asked to answer so many questions in such a short duration of time that after the initial few questions our original thoughts start getting reflected in the answer sheet.



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So what do you do? Don't you need to follow any book? Don't you need to prepare for this paper? Yes! you do. But more important than the list of books and websites is the need to understand the soul of this paper. As we said before all the traits demanded by the syllabus should flow like a common theme in your answers and it is possible only when you enter into dialogues with each other and more importantly with yourselves. Introspection of your own behaviour and self-contemplation would teach you more than anything else. Discuss your feelings with your peers, family and guide. Defend your thoughts and at the same time be receptive to criticism as well. Listen to others and if you find their arguments logical enough, simply own them. It will broaden your horizons. Talk to people of different religion, gender and regions. Exchange ideas with them. Write down your feelings, revisit them after a few days and see whether your thought process has changed or not. Remember, you are aspiring to become civil servants and thus your outlook, dialogues and thought the process should reflect some responsibility. Your approach matters more than your content in the examination. We have already talked in great detail about the right approach. Practice logical writing, because that shows coherence and order in your approach to situations. And, finally don't only read moral stuff, do moral stuff!



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Invest 45 minutes on alternate days. In those 45 minutes, do the following:

15 minutes: Prepare a compilation of the definition of all the terms and terminologies appearing in the syllabus. Each definition should be 30-40 words long. Keep revising them regularly.

15 minutes: Read the important and inspiring life events of :

A leader from the freedom struggle

A teacher

A sportsperson

An administrator

A philosopher

15 minutes: Attempt three question a day:

What do you want in your life?

What does happiness mean to you?

How important are friends to you?

How do you see your family in your life?

What qualities do you want to see in your partner?

Who is your role model? Why?

Who was your favourite teacher in school? Why did you like him?



What makes you sad?

How do you feel about the current state of society? How can you contribute to change it?

Should girls be allowed to wear short clothes?

What are your expectations from the government?

You can frame similar questions for yourself and start answering them. But before you answer them, please think. Thinking is imperative for this examination process. And please do this exercise as a fun activity. Don't take any stress in attempting these questions. The real intent is to make you understand yourself.



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What changes do you want to see around you?

What makes you sad?

Who is your favourite sportsperson? Why?

How do you feel about the current state of society? How can you contribute to change it?

How do you feel when you see a young couple doing PDA in a public place?

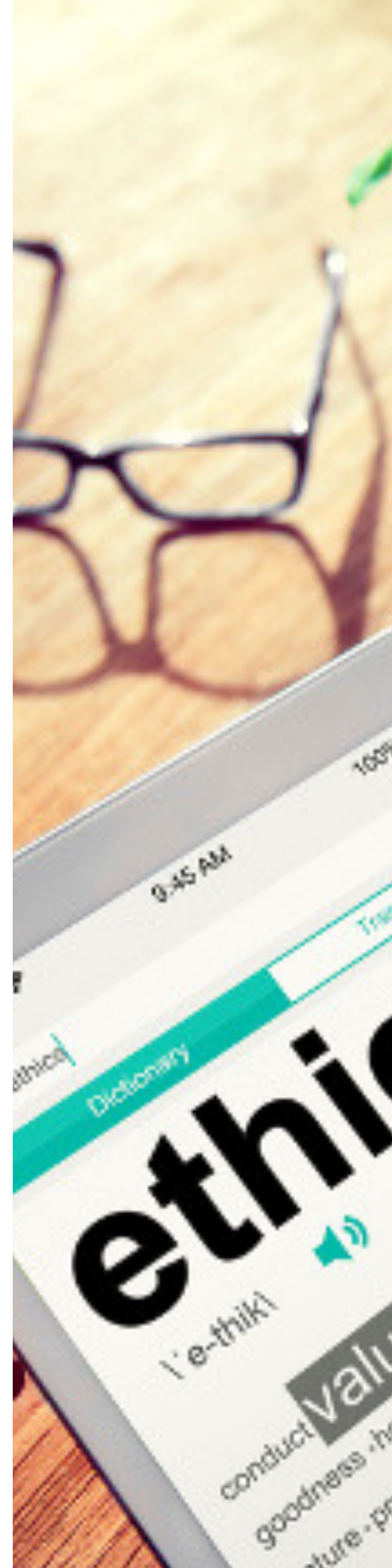
Should girls be allowed to wear short clothes?

Would you allow your wife to go to work and let her wear clothes of her choice?

What are your expectations from the government?

Why do you want to become a civil servant?

You can frame similar questions for yourself and start answering them. But before you answer them, please think. Thinking is imperative for this examination process. And please do this exercise as a fun activity. Don't take any stress in attempting these questions. The real intent is to make you understand yourself.



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- The struggle for freedom in India was an embodiment of ethical and moral values. Do you agree? Substantiate by taking suitable examples.
- If Indian parents start focusing upon character building of their children rather than worrying about their future and career, success will follow their children. Comment.
- How ethics in public life is connected to ethics in private life? Can a dishonest civil servant be a good father, husband or son? Substantiate your opinion.
- Discuss the ideas of Swami Vivekanand about youth and patriotism. How relevant are his ideas today? Analyse.
- What is intolerance? Why is it repugnant to the idea of an egalitarian and inclusive society? Discuss. Why should a civil servant be tolerant? Examine.
- In the age of social media and information explosion, what role family can play in inculcating values in children? Explain with examples. Means are as important as ends in ethics. Do you agree? Elucidate.



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- What is of more importance to a public servant- means or end of an action? Give your views.
- What according to you is moral courage? Should a professional be morally courageous? Can there be hazards of being morally courageous? Discuss.
- Is it possible to have different ethical and moral standards in one's public and private life? Does it lead to contradictions? Discuss with the help of suitable examples.
- The love of family and the admiration of friends is much more important than wealth and privilege. Substantiate.
- "A person should not be too honest. Straight trees are cut first and honest people are victimised first." Critically comment.
- Civil servants should have the courage to stand up to their convictions and take decisions and not leave everything to the politicians. Comment.
- "The highest form of service is to help a person who is incapable of thanking in return." Elucidate.
- Children have to be educated, but they have also to be left to educate themselves. Do you agree? Examine in the light of the role education plays in inculcating values.
- The aim of education is the knowledge, not of facts, but of values. Discuss.

