

NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY, BENGALURU

Press Release on NLSIU Admissions 2020-21

04th September 2020

1. The Consortium of National Law Universities (the “**Consortium**”) began preparations for the Common Law Admission Test 2020 (the “**CLAT 2020**”) towards the end of November 2019. The Vice-Chancellor of National Law School of India University, Bengaluru (“**NLSIU**”) is also the *ex-officio* Secretary-Treasurer to the Consortium and manages the Permanent CLAT Secretariat, based out of the NLSIU campus. NLSIU and the CLAT Secretariat played a key role in conceptualising a revised examination pattern for the proposed CLAT 2020.
2. This team, for the first time in the history of the CLAT examination, prepared and published various study modules, several sample questions, and mock tests freely accessible to CLAT 2020 candidates. Further, we provided extensive logistical, technological, and administrative support to the Consortium in developing the CLAT 2020. These efforts made by the NLSIU and the CLAT Secretariat have been well received by the members of the Consortium, as well as candidates for the CLAT 2020. NLSIU remains committed to providing such support, and will contribute its fullest to the smooth conduct of CLAT 2020 at the date settled by the Consortium.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdowns resulted in the initial postponement of CLAT 2020 from **May 10th, 2020**, to **June 21st, 2020**. Given the continued restrictions and social-distancing requirements, the Consortium postponed the CLAT for the second time on May 18th 2020.

A decision was subsequently taken to restructure the examination process and hold the CLAT 2020 on **August 22nd, 2020** as a Socially Distanced Computer Based Test in-line with the MHRD and MHA Guidelines, which would address the health and safety of the candidates and invigilators. Despite putting in place these measures and securing necessary permissions, CLAT 2020 was postponed on two further occasions, to **September 7th, 2020**; and then again, to **September 28th, 2020**. As such, even if CLAT 2020 is conducted in late September, NLSIU will be unable to complete its admissions process for 2020-2021 before the end of September 2020.

4. The repeated postponement of the examination has resulted in uncertainty for students, parents, and the participating Universities. NLSIU is especially disadvantaged as it follows a trimester system where every academic year is made up of three terms, each of 90 days’ duration. Hence, if NLSIU is unable to complete admissions before the end of

September 2020, it will inevitably result in a ‘**Zero Year**’ with no admissions. This will deprive law students of the opportunity to pursue their studies this year at India’s premier law university.

5. NLSIU therefore was compelled by the current circumstances to conduct its own admissions entrance exam, the **National Law Aptitude Test (“NLAT”)**, in the fairest and most accessible manner to all candidates. Due to the extremely short time available, it was resolved to (i) conduct a Home-Based Online examination which ensures that candidates do not need to travel to a physical centre for an additional examination; (ii) test on only those subjects proposed to be tested in the CLAT 2020 and (iii) cap the **Application Fee at a nominal rate of INR 150** for General and PWD candidates **and INR 125** for SC and ST candidates. This ensures that any candidate desirous of pursuing an education at the premier legal education institution of the country in 2020-2021 is not deprived of the opportunity to do so. NLSIU will continue to explore with the Consortium how we may further simplify these processes to benefit the student community.
6. Furthermore, NLSIU has made efforts to ensure the integrity of the testing process. The NLAT 2020 shall be conducted using a combination of technological, Artificial Intelligence-based proctoring, as well as human proctoring. In order to prepare candidates from the get-go, NLSIU has also published sample questions for the NLAT 2020 UG simultaneously with the Admissions Notification for 2020-21. Online Mock tests for the UG and PG tests will also be held soon. We encourage candidates to view the sample questions and appear for the mock test so as to better prepare for the NLAT 2020. A Helpdesk has also been established to support candidates, and communications with candidates are being actively conducted through the NLAT 2020 email and phone channels. We assure NLAT 2020 candidates that NLSIU shall take all possible measures to ensure a smooth test experience.
7. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our collective lives in myriad ways. NLSIU remains committed to its academic mission of educating future leaders of the bar and the bench despite these disruptions. We believe that conducting a fair, accessible, and safe admission process at the earliest is in the best interests of the student community and the University.
