NLSAT 2022

The National Law School Admissions Test, 2022 ("**NLSAT 2022**") will test applicants for admission to the 3-Year LL.B. (Hons) programme commencing in 2022 at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru ("**NLSIU**").

Details of the syllabus for NLSAT are available here. This document sets out indicative details of the format, additional instructions and sample questions for *Part A* and *Part B* of NLSAT 2022.

NLSAT 2022 – Part A Format and Instructions

- *Part A* of NLSAT 2022 will comprise between 8 (eight) and 10 (ten) General Comprehension ("**GC**") passages.
- Each GC passage will be accompanied by MCQ questions that candidates will answer based on the information provided in the question paper.
- *Part A* of NLSAT 2022 will have a total of 75 (seventy-five) MCQs.
- Each GC passage will be approximately 500 words.
- The questions will **combine elements from each of the 3 (three) subjects** i.e., English Comprehension, Current Affairs, and Critical Reasoning (including logical reasoning and legal aptitude). *Part A* of NLSAT 2022 shall include 25 (twenty-five) questions from each subject.
- Each MCQ carries 1 (one) mark. Candidates will receive 1 (one) mark for each correct answer.
- Candidates will receive -0.25 marks (negative point two-five) marks for each wrong answer.
- Candidates will receive -0.25 (negative point two-five) marks for each un-attempted question (that is, for each question that they do not provide an answer to).

NLSAT 2022 – *Part B* Format and Instructions:

- Part B of NLSAT 2022 will comprise (i) 10 (ten) Legal Aptitude/ Reasoning problem-based questions with short answers, and (ii) 1 (one) Current Affairs essay of no more than 500 (five hundred) words.
- Candidates must answer **all** the Legal Aptitude/ Reasoning questions within 150 words. No prior knowledge of the law is expected. Each question in the Legal Aptitude/ Reasoning section of Part B carries 5 (five) marks.
- The Current Affairs section of Part B will provide at least three essay topics. Candidates must write a 500-word essay on **one** topic, which will carry 15 marks.

SAMPLE GC PASSAGE AND MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION SET FOR PART A OF NLSAT 2022

General Instructions:

Each set of questions in this section is based on a single passage. Please answer each question relying on what is stated or implied in the corresponding passage. If more than one option provides a partial answer to the question, choose the option that most accurately and comprehensively answers the question. Some questions may require a knowledge of information that is not supplied in the passage.

1. General Comprehension Passage

The news that the Union Cabinet has cleared the move to raise the legal minimum age at marriage for women to 21, and will introduce an amendment to the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act comes as a blow to women's rights. The move is neither feasible, nor grounded in evidence, nor respectful of women's rights.

Why isn't it feasible? The law prohibiting marriage below the age of 18 has been in effect in some form since the 1900s, yet child marriage has persisted virtually undeterred until 2005 when almost half of all women aged 20-24 had married below the legal minimum age. By 2015-16, this proportion declined significantly to 27 per cent and more modestly to 23 per cent by 2019-20 (NFHS4, NFHS5) — an impressive shift that is largely attributable to social changes such as greater access to education and expanding aspirations. Even though more than one in five marriages took place below age 18, hardly any violations of the Act appear in our criminal records.

Of course, it is true that those marrying at the age of 21 and later are healthier, better nourished, better educated, and have better career opportunities than those experiencing child marriage. The two groups — early and late marrying — are not comparable. As Mary John notes, while almost half (45 per cent) of those belonging to the poorest households married in childhood (before 18), just one in 10 (10 per cent) of women from the wealthiest households did so. Moreover, evidence gathered by demographer Ann Blanc and others, suggests it is giving birth in adolescence (the ages at which those who marry below 18 may experience pregnancy) that is unsafe, and maternal mortality after 18 is by far the lowest.

The comment that the task force's decision was enthusiastically supported by students of 16 universities and 15 NGOs, across all religions and by those most disadvantaged is simplistic, misleading and generalising from a biased sample. Moreover, relying on their view about an ideal age to marry quite likely neglects their perceptions about a woman's right to make informed marriage decisions, including whether or not to marry between the ages of 18 and 20.

What is required to empower disadvantaged women and respect their reproductive rights is, therefore, not a simple waving of the legislative wand to raise the marriage age beyond 18. **[1]** We require investments in reversed the fundamental structures disadvantages that women who marry early face. **[1]** To truly empower them while respecting their reproductive rights, the government must invest far more in addressing issues of equity — measures that will enable the disadvantaged to complete their education, provide career counselling and encourage skilling and job placement, address safety issues of women in public places including public transportation, and change the perceptions of parents who are ultimately those who make marriage related decisions for a majority of women.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from "Why raising marriage age of women won't achieve its stated goal", by Shireen Jejeebhoy, *The Indian Express*, available at: https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/raising-marriage-age-women-rights-7684264/]

1.1 Which of the following most accurately describes who a 'demographer' is?

    (a) Someone who is an expert in appealing to ordinary people's desires and prejudices rather than using rational arguments.
    (b) Someone who specialises in studies of gender differences.
    (c) Someone who conducts statistical studies of structural changes in human populations.
    (d) Someone who uses statistics to create decision-making algorithms.

    (Answer: (c))

    Rationale:
    The correct answer is (c) – Someone who conducts statistical studies of structural changes in human populations.

1.2 Which of the following, if true, would explain why, as the author says, "…those marrying at the age of 21 and later are healthier, better nourished, better educated, and have better career opportunities than those experiencing child marriage"?

    (a) Those marrying at the age of 21 and later come from wealthier households, were not forced to discontinue their education prematurely, and do not belong to socially excluded castes and tribes.
    (b) Those marrying at the age of 21 and later have decided for themselves that they would marry later.
    (c) Those marrying at the age of 21 and later have been married previously, but their previous marriages resulted in early divorces.
    (d) Those marrying at the age of 21 and later suffer from chronic illnesses which resulted in their inability to find spouses at an earlier age.

(Answer: (a))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (a) – Those marrying at the age of 21 and later come from wealthier households, were not forced to discontinue their education prematurely, and do not belong to socially excluded castes and tribes.

The explanations offered in option (a) address all parts of the statement reproduced in the question: coming from a wealthier household would explain why such persons are healthier and better nourished; their not being forced to discontinue their education prematurely would explain why they may be better educated; and not belonging to socially excluded castes and tribes would explain (in combination with the preceding factors about health and education) why they may have better career opportunities.

None of the other options provides strong explanations for the statement in the question; merely choosing to marry later does not explain why such persons may be healthier, better nourished and educated, and have better career opportunities, and so, option (b) cannot be the correct answer; having been married before the age of 21 and having gone through an early divorce does not explain any of the matters described in the statement in the question either, and so, option (c) cannot be the correct answer; the existence of a chronic illness opposes the contention that such people may be healthier, and so, option (d) cannot be the correct answer either.

1.3 The sentence enclosed within '**[1]**' in the last paragraph of the passage above has one or more grammatical errors. Which of the following versions of the sentence would be grammatically correct?

(a) We require investments in reversing the fundamental structures disadvantages that women who marry early face.
(b) We require investments in reversed the fundamental structures disadvantages that women who marry face early.
(c) We require investments in reversing the fundamental structural disadvantages that women who marry early face.
(d) We require investments in reversing the fundamental structural disadvantaged that women who marry early face.

(Answer: (c))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (c) – We require investments in reversing the fundamental structural disadvantages that women who marry early face.

The form of the sentence as set out in the passage is: "We require investments in reversed the fundamental structures disadvantages that women who marry early face."

The use of the expression 'We require investments…' implies that the proposed investments may have an impact in the future; as such, it would be appropriate to substitute 'reversed' with 'reversing'. Further, the sentence that follows the one enclosed in '[1]' indicates that the disadvantages the author has in mind are structural in nature; as such, 'structural' would be more appropriate than 'structures'. If the intention were to talk about disadvantages in fundamental structures, the more appropriate phrase may be 'disadvantages in fundamental structures'; however, the context does not support this interpretation. Option (c) is the only one of the supplied options that rectifies both these errors.

1.4 Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's statements about the university students and NGOs that supported the task force's decisions, as set out in the passage?

(a) The 15 NGOs that enthusiastically supported the task force's decision live and operate in urban areas, and as such tend to support the government's initiatives.
(b) The students from the 16 universities who enthusiastically supported the task force's decision were carefully selected, along with the 15 NGOs that also supported the task force's decision, as a representative sample of young people and NGOs in the country.
(c) Students at universities are relatively privileged by virtue of their being able to attend university, and do not understand the concerns of Indian youth who cannot afford to study at universities.
(d) The task force solicited opinions from those who would be predisposed to support its decisions, and it selected universities whose students were so predisposed, as well as supportive NGOs, to provide feedback on its decisions.

(Answer: (b))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (b) - The students from the 16 universities who enthusiastically supported the task force's decision were carefully selected, along with the 15 NGOs that also supported the task force's decision, as a representative sample of young people and NGOs in the country.

The author says that "The comment that the task force's decision was enthusiastically supported by students of 16 universities and 15 NGOs, across all religions and by those most disadvantaged is simplistic, misleading and generalising from a biased sample." If the statement in the option were true, it would weaken the author's contention that this group was a 'biased sample'.

Each of the other options would support the author's contention that the university students and NGOs who supported the task force's decision formed a biased sample.

1.5 Based on the information provided in the passage, which of the following most accurately supports the author's statement that passing a law to raise the legal minimum age for women to marry would not be a feasible move?

(a) The law would only result in the suppression of information about marriage involving women below the prescribed legal minimum age.

(b) The law would only result in a dramatic increase in incidents of female infanticide, since parents would be more reluctant to support girls until their marriage at the age of 21, an additional burden of three years over the current legal minimum age of 18 years.

(c) The law would result in more women being able to complete secondary and undergraduate education, and since women who have received such education are typically more likely not to want to get married, the institution of marriage in the country would collapse.

(d) The law prohibiting the marriage of minors has existed in some form or another for a long time but has not been implemented properly, and has not had a significant impact on reducing the number of child marriages.

(Answer: (d))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (d) – The law prohibiting the marriage of minors has existed in some form or another for a long time but has not been implemented properly, and has not had a significant impact on reducing the number of child marriages.

Option (d) is supported by the author's statements in the second paragraph of the passage about the law prohibiting marriage below the age of 18, and how child marriages have 'persisted virtually undeterred' despite this law. The author goes on to name factors other than the law as having had a significant impact in reducing the number of child marriages, and points out that 'hardly any violations of the Act appear in our criminal records'. These statements support the contention that the author most likely thinks the proposed law would not be feasible as even existing laws in this area have not had a significant impact of reducing the number of underage marriages, and have not been properly implemented. Notably, the second paragraph begins with the words 'Why isn't it feasible?', which support the idea that the sentences that follow immediately are the author's answers to that question.

There is nothing in the passage to support any of the other options, and so, none of them can be the correct answer.

1.6 Who was appointed as the head of the task force appointed to "examine matters pertaining to age of motherhood, imperatives of lowering Maternal Mortality Ratio,

improvement of nutritional levels and related issues", which is mentioned in the passage, and which proposed raising the legal minimum age of marriage for women to 21 years?

(a) Hema Malini
(b) Mahua Moitra
(c) Smriti Irani
(d) Jaya Jaitly

(Answer: (d))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (d) – Jaya Jaitley.

Source:
https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/activists-increasing-minimum-marriage-age-girls-won-t-help-vulnerability-1711763-2020-08-16
https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/raising-legal-age-for-marriage-for-women-law-reasons-criticism-7675447/

1.7 Which United Nations convention, ratified by India, includes the requirement that women and men should have equal rights to enter into marriage?

(a) Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
(b) Convention on the Rights of the Child
(c) Convention on the Political Rights of Women
(d) Seneca Falls Convention

(Answer: (a))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (a) – Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Source:
https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A2013-14.pdf (see Preamble)
https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

1.8 Assume that the Central Government passes a new law in December 2020 called the *Recognition of Reproductive Rights of Women Act, 2020* (the "**Reproductive Rights Act**"), Section 2 of which states:

"Section 2. – All women shall have the right to make their own choices about whether or not they wish to give birth to a child, and no person may compel, coerce, force, or otherwise attempt to influence any woman to act against such choice."

In February 2021, the Central Government passes another law, called the *Increase in Women's Legal Minimum Age for Marriage Act, 2021* (the "**Marriage Age Increase Act**"), Section 3 of which states:

"Section 3. – No woman below the age of 21 years may contract a marriage, and whoever performs, conducts, directs or abets any marriage involving a woman below the age of 21 years shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years."

Smriti, a nineteen-year-old woman, decides to have a child. She discusses the matter with her partner, Rakesh, a twenty-two-year-old male, and they agree that they would bring up the child together. Shocked and upset at Smriti's decision, her friend reports the matter to the local Commission for Women (the "**Commission**"). The Commission informs Smriti that she would be violating S. 3 of the Marriage Age Increase Act if she decides to do go ahead with her decision. Smriti claims that the Commission's actions are violative of her rights under S. 2 of the Reproductive Rights Act. Which of the following would be most accurate in this context?

(a) Smriti cannot have a child outside wedlock, and so, the Commission's claim that she would be violating S. 3 of the Marriage Age Increase Act is well-founded and plausible.
(b) Since there is nothing in the facts to indicate that Smriti intended to marry Rakesh, the Commission's claim that she would be violating S. 3 of the Marriage Age Increase Act is baseless and unfounded.
(c) Since there is a clear conflict between S. 2 of the Reproductive Rights Act and Section 3 of the Marriage Age Increase Act, the provisions of the legislation that is invoked by the party that first approaches a court would take precedence.
(d) Smriti's and Rakesh's decision to bring up the child together shows that they intended to get married; given this, the Commission's claim is correct, since Smriti is only nineteen years old.

(Answer: (b))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (b) – Since there is nothing in the facts to indicate that Smriti intended to marry Rakesh, the Commission's claim that she would be violating S. 3 of the Marriage Age Increase Act is baseless and unfounded.

This option is fairly self-explanatory; note in addition that (i) there is no information in the passage to support the claim that a woman cannot have a child outside wedlock, and so, option (a) cannot be the correct answer; (ii) there is no conflict between the provisions of the two Acts, since one relates to whether or not a woman wishes to have a child, whereas the other relates to the legal minimum age for a woman to get married, and so, option (c) cannot be the correct answer; and (iii) Smriti's and Rakesh's decision to bring

up the child together does not necessarily mean that they intended to get married, and so, option (d) cannot be the correct answer.

1.9 The government of which among the following States recalled a law in 2021 that was passed by the State legislature, and which required the compulsory registration of child marriages?

(a) Assam
(b) Punjab
(c) Rajasthan
(d) West Bengal

(Answer: (c))

Rationale:
The correct answer is (c) – Rajasthan.

Source:
https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/in-u-turn-rajasthan-recalls-law-amid-concern-over-child-marriages-2572375

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SAMPLE LEGAL APTITUDE/ REASONING QUESTION AND SAMPLE CURRENT AFFAIRS ESSAY TOPICS FOR PART B OF THE NLSAT 2022

General Instructions:

Respond to each of the questions in this section in 150 (One hundred and fifty) words or less. Your responses must be based on the information supplied in the question. No prior knowledge of the law is expected. Responses will be evaluated on the strength of reasoning, cogency of arguments, and ability to set out a clear conclusion supported by reasons and arguments.

1. Sample Legal Aptitude/ Reasoning Question:

1. Sandeep was on holiday in a remote island when the Government imposed a ban on inter-state travel and restrictions on public movement, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, Sandeep and a number of other guests were forced to remain at *The Nice Island Hotel*, where they had booked rooms for their holiday. The hotel management put up signs throughout the hotel, stating that wearing masks was compulsory for all guests and staff whenever they were outside their rooms. Some guests however, refused to wear masks. The hotel management shut down various amenities in the interests of the guests' safety, and announce that guests must stay in their rooms from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. The hotel served meals in a communal dining area, since many hotel staff had contracted COVID-19, and there were insufficient staff to deliver meals to guests' rooms. Sandeep tested negative for COVID-19 on the day the Government's ban on travel went into effect, but tested positive two weeks thereafter, when he, along with other guests, were still confined to the hotel. Sandeep wants compensation from the hotel management, claiming that he contracted the illness because the hotel management did not enforce the rule about wearing masks strictly, as a result of which guests who moved about without masks, and did have the illness, infected Sandeep. The hotel management defend themselves by saying that Sandeep should ask for compensation from the other guests, since he most likely contracted the illness as a result of their moving around without masks. Will Sandeep succeed? (*5 marks*)

   Response Guidelines:

   Each question is designed to allow for candidates to take alternative positions. Rather than trying to get to a 'right' answer, candidates must identify key facts and norms, and persuasively argue for their conclusion.

2. Sample Current Affairs Essay Topics:

General Instructions: *Write an essay on a single topic in 500 words or less. The criteria for evaluation are provided at the end of this section.*

1. Has India done enough to combat climate change? What is the most important step that India should take in the next five years? (***15 marks***)

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OR

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2. Should Artificial Intelligence-enabled machines and systems take decisions that affect human lives? (***15 marks***)

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OR

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3. Should the state permit large-scale protests even when they affect the rights of non-protestors? (***15 marks***)

   Note: Candidates' Current Affairs essays will be evaluated on:
   (i)   the breadth of knowledge displayed and the ability to integrate diverse strands of the contemporary public debate;
   (ii)   the willingness to engage with different points of view and display independent judgment;
   (iii)   the ability to create well supported arguments leading to clear conclusions;
   (iv)   the demonstration of a creative response to difficult, unresolved problems.

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