

Public engineering university admissions prep coming up

What English medium students should know

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The months of May and June have marked the end of O and A Level exams for students across the country. With classes scheduled to start after Eid, I am sure they are spending their few days of vacation either worrying about results or considering what they wish to do after high school.

If you're an English medium student and have decided to give public engineering universities in Bangladesh a shot, here are some tips for you – in the context of preparation for the admissions tests – that I wish someone had told me before.

Be ready to learn a lot of new information

Although it's common sense because you'll be studying content from an entirely different curriculum, many students often either fail to keep this in mind or simply don't realise the significance of the statement when they first embark on their admissions prep journey.

It won't matter if you're an Edexcel or Cambridge student, there will be certain



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topics, especially in Mathematics (e.g. complex numbers, conics and permutations and combinations) and Chemistry (e.g. vocational chemistry), that you will have to learn in depth, from scratch. This is why it's important to walk into this journey with sound knowledge of the

syllabus and willingness to work on it daily because that way, the workload will always be doable.

Be ready to unlearn a lot of information

On the flip side of the coin, there are also certain things that you will need to unlearn during this time.

For instance, something as familiar as the Periodic table will become quite different later on. It's not just the content you study, either. As Showvik Biswas, a CSE student at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and Dhanmondi Tutorial alumnus, recalls, "One thing I had to unlearn while I was studying for the admissions tests was relying on last-minute efforts. Last-minute efforts can definitely take someone a long way during A Levels but that will not amount to anything here. You have to be on the grind from the very start."

Know that classes at coaching will not cover everything in the syllabus.

Gone will be the days of teachers guiding you through the entire syllabus. At admissions tuition, teachers place a lot

more responsibility on you and trust you to do your research on what has not been covered in class and to study those concepts on your own. These untaught topics are always ones that you have already studied during your A Levels and should not need assistance understanding.

While this sounds fairly rational, again, many students often don't figure this out for a while and depend blindly on the notes given at class and once they do take a few tests and understand that they have to self-study a lot as well, there's already an overwhelming workload awaiting them at their study tables.

Ultimately, it's crucial to realise that the chaos surrounding public university admissions is just white noise. It certainly is difficult; it requires plenty of hard work, even more smart strategising and a sprinkle of luck but if you think about it, that's like almost any goal you'll have in life. The best you can do is believe in yourself to give your best and more importantly, believe in yourself to thrive no matter what the outcome.

Fabiha is secretly a Lannister noblewoman and a Slytherin alum. Pledge your allegiance and soul to her at afifafabiha01@gmail.com

Things we'd like to see from our local booktok

NAMREEN SHAIYAZ

The book side of TikTok – "booktok" – is the side of the social media app where people share their love for books. People make videos to share book recommendations, post their favourite excerpts, or make funny content about reading in general.

However, when compared to other countries, our local booktok is just not up to the mark. Here are some ways to improve that.

MORE CONTENT CREATORS

The biggest thing that our local booktok lacks is the amount of people actually making book-related content. Other than a handful of accounts, there are very few people who post about books or any kind of reading-related content.

A lack of content creators means there is less content in general. Different people have different tastes, and a limited number of people will not be able to cover everyone's needs. There is myriad content that can be made about books, starting from funny skits about reader's struggles, to in-depth analysis on various stories.

VARIETY OF CONTENT

Of the current content that does exist, a lot can become repetitive. Most booktok posts discuss the same few authors of one genre and it is mostly just their books



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only. It is completely normal for people to make more content on popular, well-loved authors as more people read their writing, so videos about them are more popular, and get more likes and views.

However, it's gotten to the point where these people are the only ones who are

discussed, and underrated writers from less popular genres are not given the same love. While getting good engagement is important for content creators to thrive, the main focus of booktok should be for book enthusiasts to share their love of reading. Adhering to what only the

majority prefers alienates people who are not into mainstream content. This is something that does not only affect our local side, but is an issue on an international level as well.

CONTENT ON LOCAL BOOKS

Booktok in Bangladesh has the opportunity to become something big. The amount of literature available is immense, and there is much to discuss and dissect on the contemporary and classic scale. There are certain Instagram accounts that share lines from local books, but the amount of content that can fit into a 3-minute video is very different from a post.

Besides, most of these posts tend to be about the aesthetic rather than the content in them. The number of videos that could be made about Bangladeshi novels is untapped and unexplored material. At the same time, it can introduce local stories to the world. Most of booktok is very Euro-centric, and introducing our country's books will help diversify it on a global scale. As previously discussed, booktok is in desperate need of some variation, and this might be able to spread some of that.

Namreen has been stuck in the void for too long. Send help at namreen.shaiyaz@gmail.com