

What it takes to get into DU C Unit



PHOTO: NAYEM SHAAN

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NUJHAT NISHAT YOUSUF

Everyone discusses what it takes to get into a certain university but no one talks about what this admission season takes away from our lives. Looking back, it surprises me how carefree I was in my admission days. I was never a textbook “good student” because of my laziness like Nobita’s but my results somehow resembled Dekisugi’s.

Admission season was different. It wasn’t anything like our usual academic exams, and it was definitely frustrating as well. When I made up my mind to prepare for Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University (DU), I could feel how unfit I was for that fast-paced analytical exam. Just 12 days before my C unit admission test, I decided not to go for IBA and to devote my time solely to my HSC books.

But just like Nobita, I still wasted the first six days crying about my poor choices. I spent the next six days studying the same things I’ve learnt in the past four years as a business student in high school and college. This must have worked because some weeks later, I noticed I had ranked 8th in Dhaka University’s C unit admission test. I know this story sounds too good to be true, but in reality, it’s merely the result of years spent attempting to comprehend how things function rather than memorising facts.

The 30-mark written part of the C unit admission test question was a blessing in disguise for me. Since the written portion of the DU’s admission tests was still relatively

new, there were no specific guidelines for the materials that admission coaching centres could offer. Since I didn’t have the time to follow any suggestions, I applied my creative writing skills there.

Examinees in 2023 will find this section to be more difficult because it carries 40 marks out of the exam’s total of 120. This 45-minute segment will include translations and error corrections in both Bangla and English. There will be questions on Accounting, Business Organisation and Management, Finance, Banking and Insurance, and Marketing.

I’ve always done well in school since I loved my Business Studies subjects. Despite being the topper in both school and college test exams, I failed to achieve a golden A+ in my SSC or HSC exams. It might not seem significant right now but at the time, it was aggravating to see myself struggling in the board exams.

To add to the troubles, 20 marks of the 120-mark admission test were based on SSC/O level & HSC/A level scores. Getting into DU seemed far-fetched back then.

However, anyone who enjoyed studying the Business Studies topics in their HSC should pass this exam with ease, because I didn’t notice any questions on my test that were noticeably out of the syllabus.

It says on the admission notice that “the purpose of the examination will be to verify the knowledge acquired at the higher secondary level. Question papers will be prepared based on the syllabus at higher secondary level.”

All examinees should take these words on the admission notice seriously. I’ve observed

numerous instructors at various coaching centres disregard this instruction and convince examinees that passing this exam requires rocket science. My results prove these thoughts to be a myth.

Not everyone can do well in this exam the same way I did, however, so here’s some general advice for everyone. You should have a profound knowledge of your business-related subjects and a proper grasp of Bangla and English grammar and vocabulary. You should solve previous years’ questions, and practice translations or error corrections daily.

Although the written portion is now slightly different, analysing previous questions is always an effective way of understanding the question pattern and important topics. Practice will pay off, whether you work alone or with the help of an admission coaching centre. Your HSC books, any C unit guides with questions and any wordbooks should be enough to practise by yourself. Model tests can also be helpful.

Conceptual questions from compulsory subjects like Bangla, English, Accounting, and Business Organisation and Management are included in the 60-mark, 45-minute Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) section. You can choose between Finance, Banking and Insurance or Marketing. It doesn’t matter if you answer questions from the Marketing section without having it as an HSC subject. It also doesn’t matter if you want to study in the Department of Finance but you answer marketing-related questions, and vice versa.

Your written answer script won’t be examined unless you receive 5 out of 12 in English and 24 out of 60 in the MCQ section. Remember to be mindful of the negative marking, which is 0.25 for each incorrect response. Learn to skip confusing questions.

The question pattern and mark distribution for English medium students are a bit different but the preparation plans and exam strategies for the C unit exam should be identical.

Most of you already know that there are nine departments in the Faculty of Business Studies, DU. Out of them, 30-32 courses are common to all departments and 8-10 courses are offered for respective majors. After the results, if you want to specialise in a certain subject, choose it. But if you’re confused, I’d suggest taking a look at the BBA brochures of each department available online and then deciding.

To answer the original question of what it takes to get into DU C unit, the answer is that it takes passion, motivation, practice, knowledge, calmness, luck and most importantly a certain sense of achieving a goal. Stay true to yourself, always be aware of what you want and where you want to see yourself, and make a plan and work for it accordingly. It may seem unachievable, but it really isn’t.

Last but not least, please believe that failure is not the end of life. If not DU C unit, life will provide you with something even better.

The writer is a student in the Department of Finance, FBS, DU.



ILLUSTRATION: FAISAL BIN IQAL

The need for admission counsellors in Bangladeshi schools

JAIYANA CHOWDHURY

Studying abroad is a dream that an increasing number of students are realising through sheer determination and hard work. Now, more than ever before, Bangladeshi students are exploring their options to study abroad.

Statistics show that 44,338 students went abroad for higher studies in 2021, a huge jump from 24,112 students in 2015.

However, the increased popularity hasn’t made the application process any less daunting. Taking the first step is always the hardest, and when students discover the tedious process in their last year of high school, stress, confusion, and anxiety follows. This is where school counsellors come in to help students navigate the difficult road ahead.

So, what exactly are school counsellors supposed to do and what makes their role so crucial?

The first step of the application process is choosing the country and the institutions you want to apply to. It is only natural to feel overwhelmed, and this is where counsellors can help students recognise what sort of institution they want to attend and narrow down the list to an appropriate length.

School counsellors also help craft essays, review applications, and, more importantly, write recommendation letters and upload transcripts. A good recommendation from a school counsellor

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which mentions all the areas a student is involved in, and paints a vivid picture of who the student is as a person can essentially make or break an application.

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More often than not, the applicants find themselves alone on this path or have to deal with teachers who are not used to the process yet. As more people are aiming to travel overseas for higher education, educational consultancies, Facebook groups, and YouTube channels have stepped up to fill the gaps formed due to a lack of information and direction from schools.

The fact remains that students in most schools do not receive the support they require from their institutions. While a lot of teachers are eager to help, they fail to do so due to being unfamiliar with the process. Uncooperative institutions result in students going as far as writing their own recommendations when they’re left with no other choice.

To make the whole process easier for both students and teachers, Bangladeshi schools need to invest in qualified school counsellors who know their way around the maze. This will benefit the schools too, and their reputation will be bolstered as a result of having successful alumni around the world.

As the youth of our country unlock new achievements every day, it is high time students get the backing they deserve from their schools to reach their full potential.

Jaiyana is looking for ways to stop procrastinating and survive A Levels. Send her suggestions at jaiyanachy@gmail.com

Studying journalism in this day and age

AZRA HUMAYRA

Watching movies like *Spotlight* and *All the President’s Men*, I used to look in the mirror and think, “I can be another Michael Rezendes or Carl Bernstein if I had the nose for news.” The admission process rolled around, and I was not exactly thrilled to learn that I would be able to major in Political Science. My heart yearned for journalism, so I migrated departments.

I had many things to bemoan, but not migrating to journalism. The teachers were enthusiastic about their subjects, and the curriculum was just what I was looking for. I am currently in my third year and have missed a total of only four classes, primarily because I love what I study. I learned about so many things alongside the fundamentals of journalism. I learned about the nuances Mrinal Sen left in his films, and I learned about how the

The Nazi party employed propaganda to manipulate the Germans. I learned about what a staccato lead is and how Chanakya’s Arthashastra was a practical guide to governing a nation. Studying journalism has marked an epoch in my life.



DESIGN: ABIR HOSSAIN

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Right after starting classes, the pandemic gripped the world. My spirit did not diminish even during the online classes. With nothing to do but stay chronically online, I read online discourses about Mushtaq Ahmed and Ahmed Kishore being detained under the Digital Security Act. Then, in 2021, Rozina Islam faced charges under Articles 379 and 411 of the Penal Code as well as Articles 3 and 5 of the Official

Secrets Act 1923 for her anti-corruption reporting. I gradually realised that pursuing a career that this major will lead to had its risks, and my dream of being another Rezendes or Bernstein might even put me behind bars. The recent case of Shamsuzzaman Shams does not ease my worries.

As I weigh the risks and uncertainties involved in this field against other seemingly “safe” career options, the constant questions about my chosen journalism major haunt me every day. Every sentence I may write carries the burden of possible misinterpretation, I can only hope that what I write aligns with the law when it should align with the truth. So, I learn to censor myself.

The urge to leave the country for higher education and never return can be strong, fuelled by the unpredictable future of journalism in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, an inner voice fully comprehends the dire consequences of the words I speak and write and urges me to stay in my country and make a difference, whatever obstacles stand in my way. Because in times like these, my responsibility to contribute to the betterment of my country goes beyond my mere journalistic title.

Azra Humayra is questioning her major and would appreciate some good music to complement her despair. Send her songs at: azrahumayra123@gmail.com