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■ EDU GUIDE ■

PREPARING FOR the BUET admission test

BUET students share valuable admission test preparation tips

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The Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) admission test is more of a marathon than a sprint. An aspirant would need around two years' worth of preparation before sitting for the exam and they can take either of the two approaches – be regular from the very beginning and adapt to the process, or crunch two years' worth of effort within a few months. I prefer the first one, and so do many other BUET students.

BUET has recently started a preliminary MCQ exam before the written exam, which requires a somewhat different preparation strategy.

"For each MCQ, you get around 30 seconds," said Anindya Guha, a second-year student of Mechanical Engineering at BUET. "I used to solve lots of MCQs from the Varsity Ka question bank without a calculator to speed up calculations in my head. A month or two before the preliminary exam, I started solving MCQs from other question banks, like the CKRUET one, with a calculator."

While some students focus on learning shortcuts, a good understanding of the topics is more important for both MCQ and the written part.

"My preparation for MCQs and the written part wasn't vastly different. I think if you understand the topics in-depth, you get faster with time," said Abdullah Al Shafee Chowdhury, a second-year student of Civil Engineering at BUET. "I didn't learn a lot of shortcuts although they're popular among aspirants. My strategy was that if I could correctly solve 70 questions, I would get in, and it worked. Since memorising has always

been difficult for me, it was easier for me to take the conventional way because memorising so many shortcuts and mnemonics end up wearing you out."

For both the MCQ and written part, the time crunch is a serious crisis during the admission test. Practising how to solve problems efficiently and quickly from college days ends up being a huge asset in the admission season.

"I used to practise doing all the steps and calculations in my head," said Puspita Mobarak, a third-year student of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) at BUET. "In the exam hall, if I got stuck in any problem, I immediately jumped to the next one without wasting time. During my preparation, I realised that delivering what one knows beforehand and solving familiar problems is more challenging than attempting and cracking new problems right there in the exam hall."

Maintaining a balance between Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics during your preparation is often difficult since it's rare for someone to have an equal grasp of all three subjects. You must identify your weaknesses in college so that you have ample time to put more work into those sectors.

"I personally put the most effort into Organic Chemistry, since I was weak in Chemistry in college," said Adit Al Razi, a second-year EEE student at BUET. "On the other hand, Physics and Maths were naturally easier for me, so it took less effort."

"I was strong in Maths but integration was a bit difficult for me, so I ironed that out well before HSC," said Shafee. "By the time of the admission test, I ended up getting better at integration and it became my strongest area. As I was weak in Chemistry, I gave it

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everything and was slightly negligent about my Physics and Maths preparation, which took a toll on my BUET admission test."

"Since I used to give mock tests regularly, I had to attempt questions from all three sections, which helped me keep in touch with all three regularly," said Srishant Roy, a second-year EEE student at BUET. "Moreover, I had my plans set at the start of the week and used to design these plans effectively so that I'm always in touch with all three subjects."

Even after all these, what do the ones who make it through the most competitive entrance exam in the country do differently? The answer lies in consistency, perseverance, and keeping your nerves in control.

Unfortunately, an unhealthy fixation regarding getting into BUET is prevalent among our students, which causes the journey to become more about getting into a particular institution rather than pursuing Engineering in higher studies. Before giving it your everything, make sure that your goal is fuelled by inspiration, not obsession.

Hasib is an undergraduate student at BUET.