# Uttarakhand

## Mains answer-writing practice

## 8 original descriptive questions + model answers

Expanded state GK + four illustrated revision pages, in one PDF.

Higher level: eight analytical prompts, each with a roughly 175-word model response and a suggested 10-mark self-assessment guide.

These are original practice questions, not previous-year questions or an official mock. This focused first collection does not replace an exam-specific syllabus.

Language: English. Core focus: history, geography, heritage, governance, development, environment and institutions.

This edition emphasises stable concepts. It is not a current-affairs digest; verify changing schemes, office-holders, district boundaries and budget figures separately.

## How to use this book

Write your response before reading the model. Use the marking guide to check coverage, accuracy and structure. Marks and word targets are practice choices.

Research and scope - page 2
Visual revision - page 3
Start practice - page 7
Source register - page 15

# What the exam research tells us

## 1 / Basic recruitment preparation

UKSSSC publishes separate intermediate and graduate syllabi [EX2, EX3]. This basic set develops state-GK recall and simple applications. Hindi, general studies, reasoning, mathematics and post-specific skills require separate preparation.

## 2 / Higher-level examination

The indexed official UKPSC 2024 scheme has objective prelims, written mains and interview. Mains includes two Uttarakhand knowledge papers [EX1]. Statement evaluation and policy reasoning are useful preparation approaches; our formats and marks are editorial choices.

## 3 / Evidence, not frequency claims

We reviewed official syllabus listings, indexed UKPSC scheme text and government subject sources. Scanned UKSSSC PDFs yielded no extractable text in this research session. No systematic past-paper coding was completed; question frequency and predicted weightage are not claimed.

## 4 / What this collection covers

Formation and capitals; Panch Prayag; heritage and symbols; Himalayan ecology; livelihoods; disaster management; original numerical cases. Four visual pages precede practice. Basic and advanced sets have explained keys; mains has model responses.

## 5 / Use with your own notification

This is a focused state-study supplement, not a complete syllabus or official mock. Check the recruiting body's latest notification for pattern, eligibility, negative marking and skills tests. Research checked 29 October 2026; stable facts take priority over changing statistics.

# Visual revision / 1



## Kedarnath

Shiva shrine
Mandakini valley [C3]

## Valley of Flowers

Alpine meadows
UNESCO property [N1]

## Himalayan monal

State bird
Mountain memory cue [N2]

AI-generated illustrations for recall; not photographs or measured reconstructions.

## State symbols / four different categories [N2]

Bird: Himalayan monal Animal: musk deer
Flower: Brahma Kamal Tree: Buransh (Rhododendron arboreum)

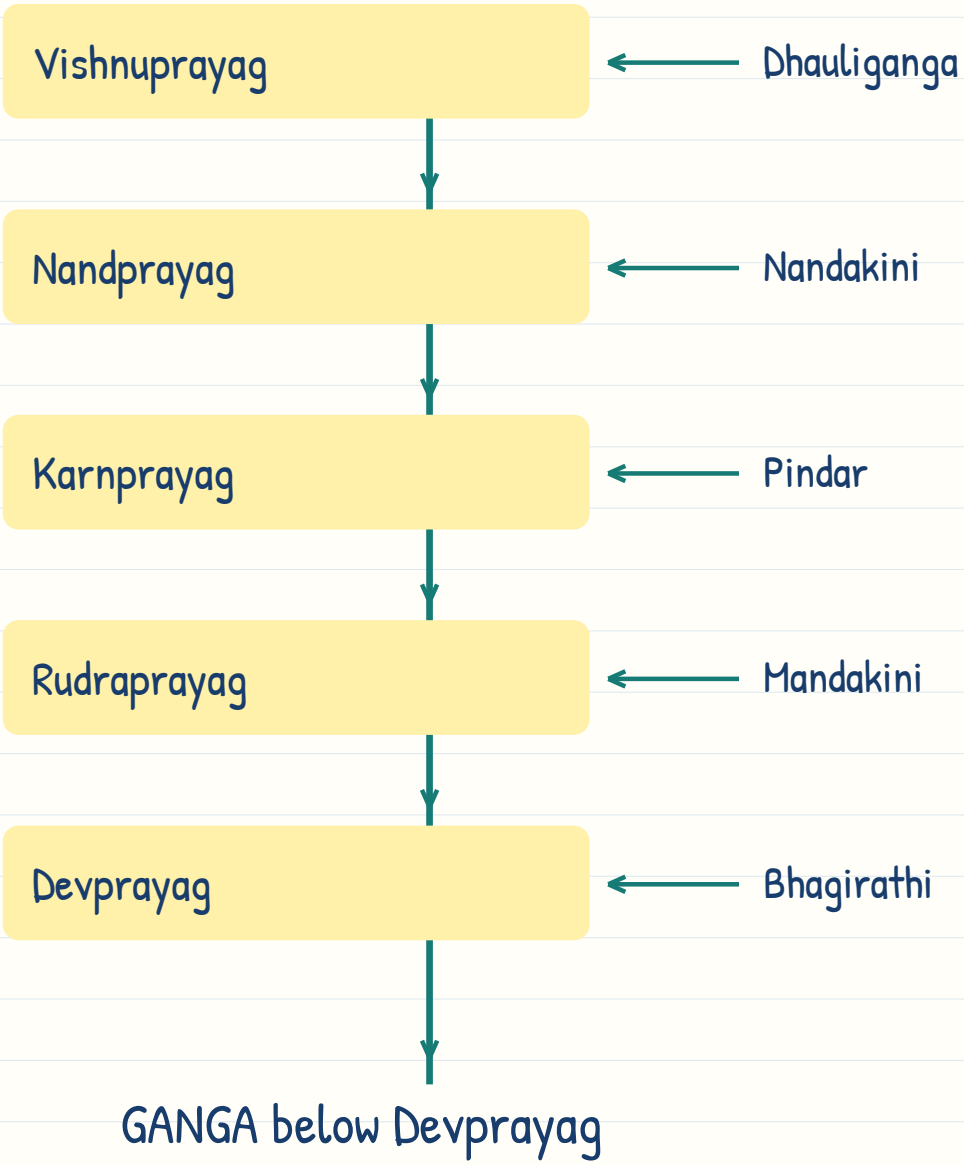
## Cultural memory anchors [C1, C2]

Aipan: Kumaon / white rice-paste designs on red geru.
Chholiya: dance associated with traditional wedding processions.
Pichora: ceremonial cloth; do not confuse it with a dance.

# Visual revision / 2

## Panch Prayag / downstream along the Alaknanda [G2]

Each branch joins the main river at the named confluence.




### Read the network, not map coordinates

Alaknanda + Bhagirathi = Ganga at Devprayag.
Schematic only: branch sides, distances and exact river courses are not shown.

# Visual revision / 3

## History / separate these milestones

**1974** — Reni / Chipko

Gaura Devi and women resisted tree felling in Chamoli. [H2]

**2000** — 9 November / formation

The state was formed as Uttaranchal. [G1, H1]

**2007** — 1 January / renaming

The name Uttarakhand became effective. [H1]

### Capital descriptions [G1]

Dehradun: temporary
Gairsain: summer
Use the official wording.

### Two kinds of borders [G1]

Countries: China, Nepal
Indian states: Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh

UNESCO date trap [N1]: Nanda Devi inscription = 1988; extension including Valley of Flowers = 2005.

# Visual revision / 4

## From mountain processes to public decisions

### Hazard + exposure

A slope process becomes a public risk when people or assets are exposed. Assess local conditions. [D1, D2]

### Drainage + stability

Blocked drains and unsupported slope cuts warrant investigation and maintenance. [D2]

### Warning + action

Timely alerts need understandable messages, reliable reach and feasible response. [D1; application]

### Opportunity + capacity

Tourism planning needs water, waste, access and resident needs assessed together. [Editorial application]

## A simple planning sequence / editorial framework

1. **Observe**
   Measure local conditions and listen to residents.

2. **Compare**
   Assess alternatives, costs and distribution of benefits.

3. **Act + review**
   Assign responsibilities; monitor outcomes and adapt.

Exam habit: explain the mechanism, propose a feasible measure, and name an outcome to check.

# Write, compare, improve

## 01 / Chipko and participation

### Explain how the Reni episode connects conservation, livelihoods and women's participation.

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

The Reni action in Chamoli in 1974 is a useful example of environmental protection connected with community interests. Gaura Devi and other women resisted tree felling through non-violent action. The official biodiversity board account also recognises the livelihood dimension of Chipko.

For an administrator, this history suggests that forests should be understood as more than timber inventories. Local experiences of resource use can reveal concerns that a narrowly commercial assessment misses. However, communities are not uniform, and consultation must include different users rather than assume one spokesperson represents everyone.

A practical approach would involve women in identifying priorities, documenting customary uses and discussing conservation restrictions. Transparent decision records, accessible grievance channels and locally understandable information can improve accountability. Participation should influence decisions rather than merely supply attendance figures for meetings.

Success should be assessed through both ecological condition and livelihood effects. Monitoring can examine resource access, distribution of benefits and the burden of unpaid work. The lesson is to combine scientific assessment with meaningful public participation while recognising that historical inspiration alone does not prove the effectiveness of any present programme.

## Self-assessment

History and context: 2; livelihood links: 2; women and participation: 3; implementation and evaluation: 3. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: H2; editorial policy analysis. Editorial model answer.

# Write, compare, improve

## 02 / Connected river basins

### Why should development assessment consider connected river basins rather than isolated project sites?

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

The Panch Prayag sequence demonstrates river connectivity in Uttarakhand. Alaknanda receives successive tributaries, and its meeting with Bhagirathi at Devprayag forms the river named Ganga. This network makes the basin a useful unit for considering development decisions.

A project upstream may affect conditions beyond its immediate boundary. Assessment should examine changes in flow, sediment movement, water use and habitat connections, while identifying settlements and infrastructure exposed downstream. The extent and direction of impacts require evidence; a schematic river diagram cannot establish their magnitude.

Planning should combine project studies with cumulative assessment of other interventions in the basin. Baseline monitoring, seasonal observations and consultation with affected users can reveal competing needs. Alternatives should be compared for benefits, environmental effects, disaster exposure and maintenance requirements before approval decisions are taken.

Institutions also need arrangements for sharing observations across administrative boundaries. Monitoring responsibilities, public reporting and corrective triggers should be clear. Basin thinking does not automatically reject development; it improves the quality of choices by placing individual investments within the wider river system and making downstream consequences visible to decision makers.

## Self-assessment

River context: 2; cumulative effects: 3; assessment and alternatives: 3; monitoring and balance: 2. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: G2; D1; editorial policy analysis. Editorial model answer.

# Write, compare, improve

## 03 / Mountain disaster governance

### Suggest a practical approach to reducing disaster losses in mountain settlements.

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

Mountain disaster governance should connect risk assessment with everyday development decisions. Uttarakhand's disaster authority coordinates prevention, mitigation and preparedness, while national landslide guidance highlights drainage, unstable slopes and the importance of avoiding vulnerable construction locations.

The first task is to identify hazards, exposed people and vulnerable infrastructure at an appropriate local scale. A settlement plan should examine drainage paths, slope conditions, road cuts and access routes. Scientific assessment should guide land-use decisions rather than assuming that the absence of a recent disaster proves safety.

Risk reduction requires maintenance as well as new investment. Drains need inspection, debris disposal needs control and critical facilities need continuity arrangements. Warning messages must reach residents in understandable forms and connect to feasible actions. Community exercises should include people who face mobility, language or communication barriers.

Monitoring should track whether vulnerabilities are reduced, not simply count equipment purchases. Authorities can review drainage functionality, warning reach, evacuation access and the restoration time of essential services. Transparent responsibilities and regular updates allow local observations to improve technical plans, supporting preparedness before an emergency requires a coordinated response.

## Self-assessment

Risk framing: 2; land use and maintenance: 3; inclusive preparedness: 3; measurable accountability: 2. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: D1; D2; editorial policy analysis. Editorial model answer.

# Write, compare, improve

## 04 / Water and hill livelihoods

### A hypothetical hill village reports unreliable water and distress migration. Propose an evidence-based response.

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

The village's reports identify problems but do not establish a single causal chain. Water reliability, employment, education, health care and household preferences may interact. A response should investigate these relationships before assuming that one construction project will stop migration.

Begin with seasonal water measurements, household access surveys and an assessment of recharge areas and existing infrastructure. Record collection time and the distribution of work within households. Alongside this, examine migration motives, skills, income sources and access to essential services, including the experiences of women and disadvantaged residents.

Interventions should follow the diagnosis. Options might include repairing supply systems, protecting appropriate recharge areas, improving service reliability and supporting viable local enterprises. Each proposal requires technical appraisal, maintenance arrangements and realistic market assessment. Skills training should connect to actual opportunities rather than enrolment targets alone.

Evaluation should revisit households over time and compare outcomes with a credible baseline. Useful measures include reliable supply days, collection time, sustained earnings and changes in reported migration pressures. Voluntary mobility can remain a household choice. The objective is to reduce avoidable hardship and expand opportunity rather than promise that all migration will disappear.

## Self-assessment

Diagnosis and caveats: 2; water and household evidence: 3; linked interventions: 3; outcomes: 2. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: Original hypothetical case; D1 for planning context. Editorial model answer.

# Write, compare, improve

## 05 / Tourism and mountain ecology

### How can pilgrimage and nature tourism support livelihoods while respecting mountain constraints?

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

Uttarakhand combines pilgrimage centres such as Kedarnath with important natural landscapes. Tourism can support guides, accommodation, transport and crafts, but visitor activity must be planned around local environmental conditions and the needs of residents.

Planning should begin with site-specific evidence on water availability, waste handling, access routes and disaster exposure. Peak-season demand is particularly important because annual totals can hide short periods of severe pressure. Ecological sensitivity also varies between destinations, so one uniform visitor rule would be a weak substitute for assessment.

A practical strategy would coordinate visitor information, suitable sanitation, waste collection and reliable emergency arrangements. Local producers and trained guides should have fair opportunities, with transparent service standards. Investment choices should consider maintenance costs and the distribution of earnings rather than judging success only by new buildings or arrivals.

Monitoring should track service reliability, environmental condition, local net income and resident experience. Management can then adjust activity when evidence shows stress. Protecting the character and functioning of a destination is part of sustaining its economic value, while public decisions should make trade-offs visible rather than assume that increasing visitor numbers always improves welfare.

## Self-assessment

Context and opportunity: 2; constraints and assessment: 3; management and inclusion: 3; evaluation: 2. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: C3; C4; D1; editorial tourism analysis. Editorial model answer.

# Write, compare, improve

## 06 / Aipan and cultural enterprise

### Design a programme that supports Aipan artisans while respecting the tradition.

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

Aipan is a Kumaon painting tradition associated with ritual settings and distinctive designs, traditionally using white rice paste over a red geru base. A livelihood programme should recognise this cultural context while allowing artisans to decide how their work develops.

The design process should begin with artisan consultation. Participants can identify skill gaps, material costs, working conditions and market barriers. Training may support quality, documentation, pricing and digital sales, but should preserve attribution and avoid presenting every producer as identical. Women's time and access to payment deserve particular attention.

Market support should be tested through demand rather than assumed from publicity. Transparent orders, fair payment schedules and clear agreements on design use can reduce unequal bargaining. Collective services may help with packaging and transport where producers find them useful. Traditional ritual work and new products can coexist without claiming that commercial expansion automatically safeguards heritage.

Evaluation should measure net earnings, timely payments, repeat orders and artisan satisfaction, alongside the continuity of skills. Participation numbers or exhibition stalls alone cannot demonstrate success. A strong programme gives practitioners influence over decisions and treats them as knowledgeable producers rather than decorative symbols for promotion.

## Self-assessment

Cultural accuracy: 2; artisan agency: 3; practical market support: 3; outcome measures: 2. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: C1; C2; editorial programme proposal. Editorial model answer.

# Write, compare, improve

## 07 / Mandua value chains

### Suggest measures to improve farmer returns from a hypothetical mandua value-chain initiative.

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

Mandua is finger millet, and ICAR's Uttarakhand advisory includes finger millet varieties suited to relevant production contexts. A value-chain initiative should aim at sustainable net returns rather than treating higher harvested tonnage as a complete measure of success.

Start by assessing local production conditions, labour availability, input costs and household food needs. Appropriate agronomic advice should reflect location and season. Record the costs of harvesting, processing, storage and transport because improvements at one stage can be cancelled by losses or expenses at another.

Market planning needs realistic demand information. Producer groups may consider shared processing or aggregation where volumes and governance support them. Quality standards, transparent weighing, timely payment and tested sales arrangements can strengthen bargaining. Public procurement or branding should be assessed on actual implementation and returns, not assumed to guarantee income.

Evaluation should compare net earnings, post-harvest losses, payment delays and the distribution of benefits across participating households. It should also examine whether additional work falls disproportionately on women. A phased approach allows unsuccessful components to be revised before expansion and keeps the programme accountable to farmers' livelihood priorities.

## Self-assessment

Crop context: 2; production and costs: 3; market design: 3; evaluation and inclusion: 2. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: E1; editorial hypothetical initiative. Editorial model answer.

# Write, compare, improve

## 08 / Capital and public access

### Discuss how regional access to government should be assessed beyond the naming of capitals.

Practice target: about 175 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

## Model answer

The Chief Minister portal lists Dehradun as the temporary capital and Gairsain as the summer capital. These descriptions should be reproduced accurately. The administrative question, however, extends beyond terminology to how residents actually obtain services and influence public decisions.

An assessment should examine travel time, cost, seasonal accessibility and the location of essential offices. Different groups may experience the same arrangement differently. Residents in remote areas, people with disabilities and those unable to lose a day's earnings need particular consideration when service access is evaluated.

Options can include clearer delegation, reliable local service centres, scheduled outreach and digital applications with assisted alternatives. Moving activity between locations requires coordination of records, staff responsibilities and public information. Technology helps only when systems work and residents can use them; it cannot replace every face-to-face service.

Evaluation should track completion times, repeat visits, user costs and grievance resolution across regions. Administrative changes should be compared against these outcomes and their recurring costs. Capital arrangements carry symbolic importance, but a defensible governance argument also explains whether they make public institutions more accessible, responsive and accountable in practice.

## Self-assessment

Capital accuracy: 2; access dimensions: 3; practical options: 3; evaluation and balance: 2. Total 10.

Evidence / basis: G1; editorial governance analysis. Editorial model answer.

# Source register

Source IDs beside answers map to the links below. Blue source titles are clickable. Research checked 29 October 2026.

EX1 / UKPSC: Combined State Civil / Upper Subordinate syllabus, 2024

psc.uk.gov.in

EX2 / UKSSSC: official syllabus register, including 31 August 2026 entries

sssc.uk.gov.in

EX3 / UKSSSC: graduate-level syllabus PDF linked by the official register

cdnbbsr.s3waas.gov.in

G1 / Chief Minister portal: formation, capitals and borders

cm.uk.gov.in

G2 / Uttarakhand Judicial and Legal Academy: Traditions of Uttarakhand

ujala.uk.gov.in

H1 / Government Gazette, 25 January 2007: renaming effective 1 January 2007

cdnbbsr.s3waas.gov.in

H2 / Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board: Gaura Devi and Chipko

sbb.uk.gov.in

N1 / UNESCO: Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks

whc.unesco.org

# Source register

Source IDs beside answers map to the links below. Blue source titles are clickable. Research checked 29 October 2026.

N2 / Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board: Winter 2024 newsletter, state symbols

cdnbbsr.s3waas.gov.in

C1 / Development Commissioner (Handicrafts): Uttarakhand Aipan

handicrafts.nic.in

C2 / Nainital district: culture, Chholiya, pichora and food traditions

nainital.nic.in

C3 / Rudraprayag district: Kedarnath and the Mandakini

rudraprayag.gov.in

E1 / ICAR: Kharif agro-advisories 2025, Uttarakhand section

icar.gov.in

D1 / Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority: mandate

usdma.uk.gov.in

D2 / Ministry of Home Affairs: landslide preparedness and mitigation

dgfscdhg.gov.in

C4 / Chamoli district: Badrinath pilgrimage administration

chamoli.gov.in

# Source register

Source IDs beside answers map to the links below. Blue source titles are clickable. Research checked 29 October 2026.

### D3 / National Centre for Seismology: earthquake monitoring mandate

seismo.gov.in

## Read sources in context

EX1 is the 2024 UKPSC scheme, checked through indexed official text; direct PDF retrieval timed out. EX2 verifies syllabus listings, not the complete content of scanned files. No claim of exhaustive PYQ research is made.

Factual answers cite source IDs. Hypothetical data and editorial policy applications are labelled; their conclusions follow from the stated case. Model answers propose measures rather than asserting measured programme outcomes.

Illustrations are AI-generated memory cues. River graphics are schematic. Capitals follow the Chief Minister portal wording. Historical dates are separated from current administrative arrangements; recheck changing facts before an examination.