FUTURE CAREER SCHOOL

Career Chart After 12th: All Routes

Science, commerce and arts: entry gate, length, pay signal and the catch for each route

Last checked October 2026
futurecareerschool.com

Compare three routes at a time. Read the entry gate and the catch before you read the pay. Pay figures are fresher averages from public profiles and vary widely by college and skill.

The chart at a glance

Science (PCM) · Physics, Chemistry, Maths

- B.Tech / BE: JEE Main, JEE Advanced, state tests (Scalable with a business layer)
- BCA, BSc Computer Science, Data Science (Scalable)
- Architecture: JEE Main Paper 2 or NATA (Scalable with a business layer)
- NDA: Army, Navy and Air Force (Not so scalable)
- Also open: design (Scalable), CA (Scalable with a business layer), BBA (Scalable with a business layer), law (Not so scalable)

Science (PCB) · Physics, Chemistry, Biology

- MBBS and BDS: NEET UG (Not so scalable)
- BSc Nursing, physiotherapy, allied health (Scalable with a business layer)
- B.Pharm, biotech, life sciences (Scalable with a business layer)
- Psychology, nutrition, forensic science (Scalable with a business layer)
- Also open: design (Scalable), CA (Scalable with a business layer), BBA (Scalable with a business layer), law (Not so scalable)

Commerce · With or without Maths

- B.Com and BA Economics, then CA, CS or CMA (Scalable with a business layer)
- BBA, BMS, integrated MBA (IPMAT, JIPMAT) (Scalable with a business layer)
- Integrated law: CLAT and other law tests (Not so scalable)
- BCA and data routes (Maths helps) (Scalable)
- Banking, insurance and finance jobs after graduation (Not so scalable)

Arts / Humanities · Any subject mix

- BA (Psychology, Economics, Political Science, English) (Scalable with a business layer)
- Integrated law: CLAT, AILET (Not so scalable)
- Design (Scalable), media, journalism, mass communication (Scalable with a business layer)
- Teacher education, including the four-year ITEP (Scalable with a business layer)
- Civil services after graduation, with a backup skill (Not so scalable)

The full chart, row by row

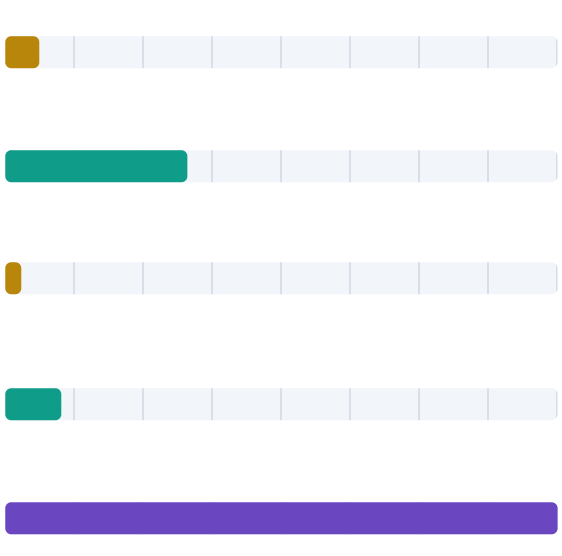
ROUTE	WHO CAN APPLY	ENTRY GATE	LENGTH	PAY SIGNAL (INDICATIVE)	THE CATCH	SCALABILITY AND HOW TO GROW
BCA, BSc Computer Science or data science	Most colleges want Maths or Computer Science in 12th; check each one	CUET UG or a college test	3 years (4 in many four-year honours programmes)	Data analyst fresher pay averages about ₹4.1 lakh	Cheaper than B.Tech, but the degree carries less brand weight, so proof of work matters more.	**Scalable.** Skills can be sold directly as software, dashboards or automation, so income does not wait on a rank or a licence. *To grow: Ship real projects, then freelance or form a small agency. Stack AI use, automation and one business domain.*
Design: B.Des, fashion, interior, UX	Any stream	UCEED, NID DAT, NIFT entrance and college tests	4 years	Graphic designer fresher pay averages about ₹2.4 lakh; a strong portfolio moves it up	Admission tests reward drawing and thinking speed. Prepare a portfolio early.	**Scalable.** Portfolio and skill decide pay, and a designer can freelance, consult or run a studio without a rank. *To grow: Build a portfolio, freelance, then specialise (UX for health or finance, brand identity) and publish case studies.*

ROUTE	WHO CAN APPLY	ENTRY GATE	LENGTH	PAY SIGNAL (INDICATIVE)	THE CATCH	SCALABILITY AND HOW TO GROW
Skill-first: diploma, certificate and work	Anyone after 10th or 12th	No national entrance test	Months to three years	Depends entirely on the proof you build	Works for digital, trade and creative fields. It does not replace a licence where one is legally required.	**Scalable.** You control the pace: a digital or craft skill with proof of work sells directly. *To grow: Pick AI use, automation, sales, content or design, build proof, take paid projects, then consult or build an agency or product.*
B.Tech / BE in computer, data or electronics	PCM (Maths is compulsory)	JEE Main, JEE Advanced, state and private tests	4 years	Software fresher pay averages about ₹5.4 lakh but ranges widely by college and skill	A branch or college label alone does not get hired. A visible project does.	**Scalable with a business layer.** Crowded when it is only a branch degree aimed at service jobs; it scales when you add product, automation or AI skills. *To grow: Build and sell one tool, or take paid automation work, while you study.*
B.Com or BA Economics with CA, CS or CMA	Any stream can register for CA Foundation	CA Foundation twice a year; CS and CMA have their own entry exams	CA usually takes several years with articleship	Accountant fresher pay averages about ₹2.3 lakh; a qualified CA earns far more	Many students spend years on repeat attempts. Keep a parallel skill running.	**Scalable with a business layer.** A practice can grow into advisory work, but the exam ladder is long and crowded, and many students repeat attempts. *To grow: Add accounting software, data skills and a niche (tax for small firms, finance for startups) beside the exams, and move toward advisory or consulting.*
Teacher education, including four-year ITEP	Any stream, depending on subject	NCET (conducted by NTA) for ITEP	4 years	Stable, moderate pay; coaching and content routes can grow it	Pay ceiling is fixed unless you add a scalable layer such as online teaching.	**Scalable with a business layer.** Salary alone is capped; reach grows when you teach beyond one classroom. *To grow: Build online courses, coaching, content or an education business on one subject niche.*
Architecture (B.Arch)	PCM, with Maths required	JEE Main Paper 2 or NATA	5 years	Pay starts modest and rises with a licence and a portfolio	Registration with the Council of Architecture is needed to practise. Drawing and model-making are tested, so start a sketch portfolio early.	**Scalable with a business layer.** The degree is long; income grows through a studio rather than a salary. *To grow: Build a small studio, interior or design-build service, or 3D visualisation freelancing.*
Psychology and counselling (BA or BSc, then a master's)	Any stream in most colleges	CUET UG or a college test	3 years, then 2 years for a master's	Entry pay is low; it grows with a master's, supervised practice and a clear niche	Clinical practice needs a master's and a licence. A bachelor's alone opens few counselling roles.	**Scalable with a business layer.** A bachelor's alone has a low ceiling; growth needs a master's and a niche. *To grow: Pick a niche (career, school, workplace wellbeing), run workshops and online programmes.*
Media, journalism and mass communication	Any stream	CUET UG or a college test	3 years	Entry pay is modest and depends on the work you can show	Pay follows your body of work. Three finished pieces beat a certificate list.	**Scalable with a business layer.** Employment-only media jobs are crowded; scale comes from owning an audience or an agency. *To grow: Build video, a newsletter or niche media, then offer brand content as a service.*

ROUTE	WHO CAN APPLY	ENTRY GATE	LENGTH	PAY SIGNAL (INDICATIVE)	THE CATCH	SCALABILITY AND HOW TO GROW
Agriculture, veterinary and food science	PCB or PCM for most programmes; check each college	CUET UG for ICAR seats, state tests; NEET UG for veterinary	4 years	Government and company roles pay steadily; farming and agri-business pay varies	Seats are limited in good government colleges. Fieldwork is part of the job.	**Scalable with a business layer.** Salaried roles are modest; agri-business, processing and consulting can scale. *To grow: Start with a small agri-business, processing or agri-tech service while you study.*
BBA, BMS or integrated MBA	Any stream	CUET UG, IPMAT, JIPMAT or a college test	3 to 5 years	Wide range. Entry-level digital marketing managers average about ₹3.1 lakh in PayScale profiles and it rises with results	A general management degree without one domain skill produces a generalist gap.	**Scalable with a business layer.** A general management degree is crowded, but a business degree is a natural base for a venture or consulting practice. *To grow: Pick one domain such as sales, marketing or operations, then run a real small venture or consult for local businesses.*
BSc Nursing, B.Pharm, physiotherapy	PCB for nursing and physiotherapy; PCB or PCM for B.Pharm	State counselling, university tests and college tests	4 years	Nurse fresher pay averages about ₹2.6 lakh; pharmacist about ₹2.5 lakh	Licence and registration rules apply. Pay rises through specialisation, not time alone.	**Scalable with a business layer.** Salaried care roles have a pay ceiling and licence rules, but clinics, home-care services and health-tech give a real business layer. *To grow: Add a specialisation, then build a clinic, home-care service or health-tech role.*
Hotel management and hospitality	Any stream	NCHM JEE or a college test	3 to 4 years	Starts modest in India; grows with promotions or overseas postings	Hours are long and shift-based. Check that the college is approved and offers real placements.	**Scalable with a business layer.** Employment-heavy with long hours, but food, event and hospitality-consulting businesses give a real business layer. *To grow: Build a food, event or hospitality-consulting business of your own.*
Integrated law (BA LLB, BBA LLB)	Any stream	CLAT (roughly 3,600 to 3,700 undergraduate seats across the participating NLUs), AILET, CUET and university tests	5 years	Litigation starts slowly; corporate and compliance roles pay more	Competition happens twice: first the entrance, then the climb to a strong practice or firm.	**Not so scalable.** Competition at every level: the entrance test, then a long climb to a strong practice. Litigation starts slowly and few reach the top. *To grow: Choose a niche early (contracts, startups, compliance, IP), write publicly, and consider legal-tech or compliance consulting beside practice.*
MBBS, BDS and allied health	PCB with English	NEET UG (over 22 lakh registered for 2026)	MBBS about 5.5 years including internship; postgraduate study adds more	Income grows late, after specialisation	Two hard gates: NEET, then postgraduate seats. Fees at private colleges can be very high.	**Not so scalable.** Competition at several levels: NEET, then postgraduate seats, then a practice. Seats are few against applicants, the years are long, and consistent effort alone does not guarantee a seat. Dentistry is also crowded. *To grow: If you still choose it, write a second route first. Growth comes later through a specialisation, a clinic or a health-service business.*

ROUTE	WHO CAN APPLY	ENTRY GATE	LENGTH	PAY SIGNAL (INDICATIVE)	THE CATCH	SCALABILITY AND HOW TO GROW
Defence: NDA	Army: any stream. Navy and Air Force: Physics and Maths	UPSC NDA exam, then SSB interview and medical tests	Academy training, then service	Paid training and stable service pay	NDA II 2026 had only 394 vacancies. Medical and height standards are strict.	**Not so scalable.** A very small intake, strict medical standards and a fixed pay ladder; most applicants do not get in. *To grow: Keep a parallel skill running so the effort is not lost if selection does not come.*
BSc, BS or integrated MSc in pure science and research	Science stream; the subjects you studied decide the options	CUET UG, IISER Aptitude Test, NEST or a college test	3 to 5 years (more with a master's)	Fresher pay is modest; research and teaching careers need a master's or PhD	Most science jobs need a further degree or a strong applied skill. Decide early whether you want research, teaching or industry.	**Not so scalable.** A research career takes many years and few people reach stable senior positions; industry roles usually need a further degree. *To grow: Pair the degree with data, lab-service or science-communication skills so you have a way to earn while you study.*
Government jobs: SSC, railways, banks and police	Class 12 pass for many entry-level posts; a degree for others	SSC, railway, bank and state recruitment exams	Depends on the exam cycle	Stable pay and benefits once selected	Many students spend years on repeat attempts. Keep a parallel skill running and confirm each notice on the official site.	**Not so scalable.** Very large numbers sit the same exams, many attempts are common, and seats are few, so consistent study alone often does not lead to a post. *To grow: Keep a parallel skill running and confirm each notice on the official site.*
Aviation: commercial pilot and aircraft maintenance	Pilot: Physics and Maths in 12th. Maintenance: diploma or degree routes	DGCA medical, flying school entrance, AME entrance	Pilot about 2 to 3 years of training; maintenance 2 to 4 years	Training is costly; pay rises with flying hours and experience	Training is very expensive and needs a medical fitness pass first. Check approved schools only.	**Not so scalable.** Training is very costly, a medical pass is needed first, and openings depend on airline hiring cycles. *To grow: Only choose it with the funds in hand and a second plan.*
Merchant navy and maritime	PCM for most deck and engine programmes	IMU CET or a company sponsorship test	3 to 4 years, then sea service	Pay at sea is good, but you spend long periods away from home	Long absences, strict medicals and approved-institute rules apply. Avoid unapproved training.	**Not so scalable.** Long absences, strict medicals and a fixed pay ladder; limited ways to build a business from it. *To grow: Choose an approved institute only, and plan a shore-based skill for later.*

Seats against applicants



NEET UG 2026: MBBS seats per 100 registered candidates
About 6
1,36,939 MBBS seats against over 22 lakh registrations. Around 11.2 lakh qualified in the re-exam.

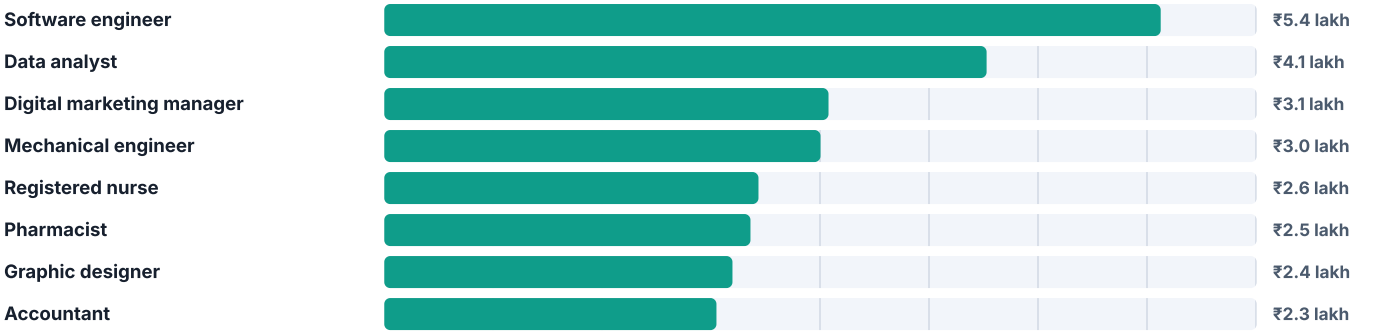
JEE Advanced 2026: IIT seats per 100 qualified candidates
About 33
18,826 IIT seats (18,951 with IISc Bangalore) in the JoSAA matrix against 56,880 qualified, out of 1,87,389 who registered.

NEET UG 2026: government MBBS seats per 100 test-takers
About 3
63,296 government seats against about 20 lakh who appeared. Private colleges hold the other 73,643 seats, and those cost far more.

JEE Advanced 2026: IIT seats per 100 who appeared in both papers
About 10
18,826 IIT seats against 1,79,694 candidates who appeared. Only about 32 in 100 of them qualified, and qualifying does not guarantee a seat in the branch you want.

JoSAA 2026: total IIT, NIT, IIIT and GFTI seats
67,323
Many more seats exist than IIT seats, which is why a strong non-IIT plan is a real plan, not a consolation.

What the first year pays



What the seat costs

SEAT	FEE	THE MATHS	BUDGET RULE (FEE ÷ 0.10)
IIT B.Tech, general category	Tuition ₹1,28,250 per semester (₹28,250 for SC, ST and PwD). Hostel and mess are extra.	₹1,28,250 × 8 semesters = about ₹10.3 lakh of tuition. Against the PayScale entry software average of ₹5.37 lakh, that is about 1.9 years of that pay, before living costs.	About ₹1 crore (₹10.3 lakh ÷ 0.10)
MBBS, government quota	Under ₹8 lakh for the whole course in the states compared	Only about 3 government seats per 100 NEET test-takers, so the fee is low and the competition is the real price.	About ₹80 lakh (₹8 lakh ÷ 0.10)
MBBS, private management quota	Above ₹60 lakh for the whole course in the states compared	At least 7.5 times the government total (₹60 lakh ÷ ₹8 lakh). The seat is easier to get and far harder to repay.	About ₹6 crore (₹60 lakh ÷ 0.10)

The budget rule is a strict planning heuristic: keep the total education cost near 10% of the money you can commit, and protect the rest as runway.

Exam dates to note

LAW

CLAT 2027: 6 December 2026

The exam runs from 2 pm to 4 pm in offline mode. Applications opened on 3 August and close on 31 October 2026, so this one is still open.

ENGINEERING

JEE Main 2027 Session 1: 22 to 24 and 28 to 30 January 2027

These are the dates in the NTA examination calendar, with 31 January as a buffer day. NTA calls the calendar tentative, and the Session 2 dates and the application window are not announced yet.

COMMERCE

CA Foundation: register by 1 January or 1 July

ICAI needs registration on or before 1 January for the May or June exam, and on or before 1 July for the November or December exam, with at least four months of study.

NOT ANNOUNCED

NEET UG 2027, CUET UG 2027 and the next NDA cycle

NTA's calendar for December 2026 to March 2027 does not list NEET UG or CUET UG. NDA II 2026 was held on 13 September 2026. Wait for each official notice before planning around a date.

Read the chart by your exam result

If the exam goes well

- Use counselling to compare colleges by course, fees and placement median, not by name alone.
- Budget the whole course before you accept a seat, including hostel and coaching.
- Start one small skill project before college begins so first year is not empty.

If the exam goes averagely

- Apply to a route where your score is enough today, such as a good BCA, BBA or allied-health seat.
- Keep the entrance exam as a later option through CUET, lateral entry or postgraduate tests.
- Choose the college for teaching quality and internship access, not for the campus photos.

If the exam goes badly

- Check what actually caused it: preparation, health, stress or the wrong exam for you.
- A drop year is worth it only with a fixed score target, a plan for money and a written skill-building side track.
- Exams can also be disrupted. NEET UG 2026 was cancelled and re-held on 21 June 2026 after paper-leak allegations, so a second plan protects you from more than a bad day.

Test every shortlisted route: 4 checkpoints, then 3 gates

1 Biology
How do you actually work best: abstract study, business thinking, people, or tools and systems? Choose the daily reality, not the label.

2 Context
Marks, money, family situation, school options, commute and emotional readiness. A route right on paper can be wrong for now.

3 Market
Where does the route lead later: real roles, real skills, real progression? Map it forward before you choose.

4 Survival
Will it hold up in an AI-shaped market? Domain skill plus communication, digital fluency and judgment lasts longer than routine work.

5 Proof of Skill
Complete one small real task that resembles the route before you lock it.

6 Proof of Communication
Explain in 30 to 90 seconds why the route fits you, where it leads and what you will test next.

7 Proof of Value
Get grounded feedback from a teacher, senior or professional who does this work, and pressure-test your reasoning.

Your one-page plan

Three routes I shortlisted:

The entry gate and date I verified, and where:

My second route if the exam goes badly:

One small real task I will finish this month:

Two people inside the route I will ask:

Read this first: Seat numbers, exam dates, fees and pay figures change every year and differ by state and college. Use this chart to compare routes, then confirm each date and rule on the official exam site before you act.

About pay figures: Pay figures here are indicative ranges and averages from public profiles, not exact or guaranteed amounts. Pay differs by city, employer, skill and year, and markets change. Check current job listings (for example on LinkedIn, Naukri or Indeed) and ask people working in the role before you decide.

How we rate scalability: We rate a route Scalable when steady learning and a whole-picture approach (skills, proof of work, communication and a little business sense) can grow your income and reach into consulting or a business of your own. A route marked Scalable with a business layer is also a good option for us, as long as you plan that layer: consulting, a studio, a practice or a product. Crowded fields, long ladders of entrance exams and ranks, and careers where very few people reach the top after many years do not count as scalable, so we mark them Not so scalable and list the risk beside them. Well-known routes such as MBBS and BDS, NDA, government exams, integrated law, pilot training, merchant navy and pure research stay in the chart so you can see what they carry, but they are rated Not so scalable. Success there depends on beating rivals at stage after stage, many years pass before pay grows, and few people reach the top. Consistent effort alone does not guarantee a result. If you choose one, write a second route and keep a skill running that can grow on its own.

The route is the base layer. The skill portfolio on top raises your ceiling.
Check your fit with the free career assessments: futurecareerschool.com/services/assessments/
Personal help for you and your family: futurecareerschool.com/services/career-counselling-and-career-guidance/ · WhatsApp message from the site.
Full guide with explanations: futurecareerschool.com/blog/career-options/career-chart-after-12th/