Biomedical Research Eligibility Test (BRET)
JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1. When the DHR-BRET entrance examination is usually announced? When it is usually held?

A1. The examination notice is published in leading English Newspapers of India usually during March/April and on the websites of Department of Health Research (DHR) and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). The entrance examination is usually held once a year, tentatively in first/second week of July, on a Sunday.

Q2. Where will be the Centres for the written examination located?

A2. Test for ICMR JRF is conducted at the twenty Centres VIZ., Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan,Tamil Nadu,Telangana,Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Q3. What is the eligibility criterion for appearing in the entrance examination?

A3. You should have a Post Graduate degree M.Sc or equivalent post-graduate (PG) degree (M. Tech/M. Pharma), in Life Sciences, Zoology, Botany, Biomedical Sciences, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Genetics, Biotechnology, Biophysics, Bioinformatics, Forensic Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Food And Nutrition, Molecular Biology, Biological Sciences, Ecology, Immunology, Neurosciences, Veterinary Sciences, Nursing, Biostatistics, Pharmacology, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Public Health, Social Work, with minimum55% marks in PG test for General/EWS/OBC candidates and 50% for the SC/ST and PwBD candidates.

Q4. What is the number of fellowships awarded annually? What are the subjects? Can I also apply for other JRF appointments?

A4. A tentative total of 250 candidates shall be selected, subject to the availability of budgetary provisions and in accordance with the guidelines of DHR. The validity of result will be one year.

Q5. What is the pattern of the written examination? Do I have to attempt all the questions?

A5. The examination will consist of 150 objective-type multiple-choice questions consisting of components as described in Syllabus & Structure in this document. b) The question paper will be structured section-wise, in accordance with Sections A, Band C of the prescribed syllabus.The total duration of the examination shall be three (03) hours, during which candidate will be permitted to navigate freely across all sections.

d) In each part, the candidate will be presented with 50 questions, in accordance with Sections A, B and C:

i. Aptitude and General Analytical Ability (Section-A)

ii. Fundamentals of Biomedical and Life Sciences (Section-B)

iii. Discipline/Subject-specific domains (Microbiology, Biochemistry, Biostatistics, Veterinary Science/Medicine, Public Health, Nursing, Biotechnology, Social & Behavioural Sciences, Nutrition, Pharmacology,Biological Sciences (Section-C)

Q6. What is the duration of the written examination?

A6. The test will consist of one paper of three hours duration.

Q7. Is there any syllabus for the examination?

A7. The syllabus and level of questions in all components of the examination — Aptitude & Analytical Skills, General/Interdisciplinary Knowledge, and Domain-Specific Knowledge — will correspond to the subjects and topics ordinarily prescribed and expected at the qualifying degree level, commensurate with the standards required for pursuing higher studies and research in the relevant fields.

The Biomedical Research Eligibility Test (DHR-BRET) will be a Computer Based Test (CBT) of150multiple-choice questions to be answered in 180 minutes. The questions will be drawn in from following components in given manner:

1. Aptitude and Analytical Skills– SECTION-A

This component will assess general aptitude (approx. 50 questions) relevant to biomedical research consisting of, including: Reading comprehension, Reasoning ability (verbal, non-verbal, data interpretation, deductive reasoning),Analytical ability (logical reasoning, data analysis), Quantitative ability (numerical analysis, graphical interpretation) and Quantitative comparison

2. General & Interdisciplinary Knowledge – SECTION -B

This component will test broad-based fundamentals (approx. 50 questions) common across biomedical and life sciences, including: Molecular basis of cellular changes, Cell structure and communication, Basic physiology, Genetics and genomics, Evolution and origin of life, Biotechnology processes and applications ,Biosafety and bioethics, Immunology (innate and adaptive), Common bacterial, viral, fungal, and parasitic infections

3. Domain-Specific Knowledge – SECTION-C

Each candidate must choose one discipline at the time of application. Questions (approx. 50questions) will be drawn from the chosen subject domain, selected from the following list:

A. Microbiology (Bacteriology, Virology, Parasitology, Entomology, Mycology)

B. Biochemistry

C. Biostatistics

D. Veterinary Science / Medicine

E. Public Health

F. Nursing

G. Biotechnology

H. Social & Behavioural Sciences (Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology)

I. Nutrition

J. Pharmacology

K. Biological Science (Life Science, Human Biology, Environmental Sciences, Zoology,Botany)

Q8. What is criterion for results for selection?

A8. A combined merit list of students qualifying the BRET i.e., 50% marks for General-UR, OBC, PwBD and EWS categories & 45% marks for SC/ST categories, will be made on the basis of their score in the above test. For the year 2025-26, the candidates who have qualified DHR-JRF exam in the previous years will be allowed. The first 60% of the eligible candidates may enroll for the Ph.D. program in subjects of biomedical/health research from any University recognized by the UGC or Institute of National Importance. For the remaining 40% of the eligible candidates will mandatorily enroll in any of the 27 ICMR institutes/centers only and will be registered from the ICMR-Faculty of Medical Research under AcSIR.

The top 10% in the merit list shall be rewarded for their outstanding performance as an 'Exemplary Performance Reward.The recipients shall be entitled to get a research contingency of Rs. 1,00,000/- per annum only for JRF tenure and will also be eligible to apply for one-time DHR international travel grant support subject to availability of funds.

Q9. What is the admission procedure after selection?

A9. The list of successful candidates would be available on the DHR and ICMR website. Selected candidates must join their respective Ph.D. course on the prescribed date as indicated in their award letter.

Q10. Can I enroll myself in any research institute/organization for my JRF work?

A10. The candidates selected for BRET-JRF(Junior Research Fellowship) would be permitted to enroll themselves for the Ph.D. programme (**the Ph.D. topic should be strictly pertaining to ICMR health research**) of any University or government college recognized by the UGC/ or any medical college recognized by Medical Council of India (MCI) or 27 ICMR institutes/centers. Ph.D. Enrollment letter certified through Guide is required at the time of Joining.

Q11. What will be the validity of JRF awarded?

A11. The validity of fellowship awarded to a candidate will be one year from the date of issue of Award letter.

Q12. What will be my joining time?

A12. Selected candidates must send their willingness to join JRF as soon as they receive the Award letter, then find placement under a suitable Guide, enroll themselves for Ph.D. in the concerned Institute or University, and send the joining report to DHR within one year of Issue of Award letter (in both soft and hard copy). **The PhD Registration certificate may be submitted within two years of joining**. Failure of which, leads to termination of the fellowship.

IEC approval for the project work proposed should have been obtained in time, to avoid unnecessary delays in starting the research work and submission of annual progress reports on time to avoid delay in release of the fellowship amount and terminations. DHR is not responsible for the administrative and institutional delays for doctoral committee meetings, IEC meetings. Any delays in submitting the same should be informed to the DHR with prior information through the Guide.

Q13. What is the tenure of the fellowship?

A13. JRF is generally for first two years. Only after successful assessment by the Review Committee, JRF may be upgraded as SRF after 22 months of commencement of work either on the date when Review Committee meets but not before completion of two years. The SRF is generally for three years or submission of Ph.D. whichever is earlier. However, total duration is five years. The fellowship can be terminated at any time on a month's notice if the progress of the work is not satisfactory or on receipt of adverse reports from the Guide. In the event if the fellow leaves before completing one year, he/she may be required to refund the stipend drawn by him/her from the date of joining to the date of leaving the fellowship.

Q14. What is the stipend amount that I will be getting and what is amount of House Rent Allowance (HRA) and contingency for the fellowship?

A14. 1st year to 2nd year- Rs. 37,000/-, 3rd year or thereafter whenever upgraded as a SRF Rs. 42,000/- till submission of Ph.D. thesis or 5th year, whichever is earlier (Terms and conditions may be adopted from ICMR Fellowship rules available at http://icmr.nic.in/).

The HRA will be given as per rules. If the fellow gets accommodation in the institute hostel then he/she will not be eligible for drawing HRA. The contingent amount for JRF/SRF will be Rs. 20,000/- per annum.

Q15. How and when will I receive the funds from DHR?

A15. One needs to send the duly filled and signed mandate form for receiving e-payments along with a photocopy of a cancelled cheque (should be clearly scanned) for purpose of verification of the concerned bank account where money (stipend) is to be remitted. Relevant certificates from hostel warden / AO specifying the date of joining hostel facility should be submitted to avail HRA. If residing in a private

accommodation, proof of rent paid from the land lord should be submitted.

Q16. Do I have to send reports annually or quarterly?

A16. The Fellow shall submit annual reports for 1st year and all annual report thereafter as per Guidelines and rules in the prescribed standard DHR-ICMR proforma.

Q17. When should I submit the annual reports?

A17. The first annual report should be submitted after 10 months (duly approved by the Research Doctoral Committee of the host institute) from the date of commencement of the fellowship (through the Guide along with his/her appraisal) giving complete factual details of the research work done. Subsequent annual reports as per the standard proforma should be submitted through the Guide two months before completion of the fellowship year.

Q18. Is the Utilization Certificate (UC) also required?

A18. Annual UC is needed from April to March each financial year.

Q19. Can I transfer my fellowship from one institute to other?

A19. A Fellow will not be allowed transfer from one institution to another except in special circumstances with the prior approval of the DG, ICMR. No Travelling Allowance (TA) will be paid as a result of such a transfer. ICMR approval is required before any Transfer of fellowship is done.

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