

A is for admissions:

How computer-based testing launched a university in India to success



Universities are tasked with no small feat: educating and training the next generation of professionals. From investing in innovative pedagogy, developing the trailblazers of tomorrow, and excelling in research, it's clear that innovation is central to a university's progress and growth.

Shiv Nadar University in Uttar Pradesh, India, is one such university that has rapidly grown in just a few years since its inception. Founded in 2011, Shiv Nadar University set out to create a research-led and multidisciplinary environment. To set themselves apart, they created an undergraduate curriculum that enabled students to develop as broad a set of skills as possible alongside their primary degree.

To further their growth strategy, **Shiv Nadar University** transformed their candidate selection process by leveraging assessments. In the seven years since their founding, they have improved their university rankings to **#48** among hundreds of universities in India, and the GPA of students increased by **14%** on average in the first semester, demonstrating the increased engagement that comes from reaching a broader candidate base.



To achieve this transformation, Shiv Nadar University:

1. **Developed and adopted an aptitude test**

The university started testing candidates on the larger aspects of aptitude and aspirations (e.g., quantitative aptitude, communication, and analytical skills) and later included academic subjects in these tests as well. Creating a standardized computer-based exam as an application requirement paved the way for fairer selection in a stress-reduced, controlled environment.

2. **Increased candidate convenience and reach**

Providing an accessible exam was instrumental in the uptake of the aptitude test and therefore the growth of the university. By empowering students to test at a Pearson VUE test center convenient to them, it reduced the time and cost impact to the candidate and allowed the university to open the doors to a broad range of aspiring, diverse candidates from across the country. The test scheduling system also allows the candidates outside of India to take the SNUSAT for admission to the university.

3. **Evaluated their program with actionable data**

Computer-based testing allows for vast amounts of data to be analyzed by using detailed item reports and group performance to track metrics around item performance and popular testing times. With this data embedded into the university's strategy, the subject matter experts are confident that the exam accomplishes the intended objectives and that they're providing ample opportunities to test for candidates across India.

By leveraging computer-based testing and technology, Shiv Nadar University was able to reduce the human involvement in what can be a very lengthy and labor intensive admissions process. This improvement in efficiency has given the university the added benefit of refining their priorities, allowing them to become more efficient in the day-to-day running of the university and improve the strategic focus for their continued growth.