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CLAT Safe Cutoff 2027 & How to Crack CLAT in Just 3 Months

27 July 2026 · 8 min read · 1,615 words · 35 views



CLAT Safe Cutoff 2027 & How to Crack CLAT in Just 3 Months: The Complete Guide

Every year, lakhs of students register for CLAT (Common Law Admission Test), but only a small fraction actually understand what a "safe score" really means — or believe they can turn things around with limited time left. This guide answers both questions: what cutoff should you be aiming for, and how do you realistically prepare for CLAT in just 3 months?

Part 1: CLAT Safe Cutoff — What Score Do You Actually Need?

Understanding "Safe Cutoff" First

A safe cutoff isn't a fixed number — it changes every year based on paper difficulty, number of test-takers, and seat availability. However, based on recent trends, here's a realistic picture of where different score ranges land you.

General Category Safe Scores (Out of 120)

Score Range Expected AIR (Rank) What You Can Expect 95–100+ Top 100–300 Shot at NLSIU Bangalore, NALSAR Hyderabad, NUJS Kolkata 90–95 300–1000 Strong chance at Top 5–10 NLUs 85–90 1000–2500 Mid-tier NLUs like WBNUJS, NLU Jodhpur, NLIU Bhopal 80–85 2500–4800 Tier-3 NLUs, newer NLUs, or state quota seats Below 80 4800+ Limited NLU options; consider private law schools (Symbiosis, Jindal, etc.)

For context, recent counselling data showed NLSIU Bengaluru closing at around rank 101 for the general category in Round 1, with NALSAR Hyderabad closing close behind at rank 148. The top 3 NLUs typically close within the top 300 ranks, and the top 5 within roughly the top 400 for general category candidates.

Category-Wise Cutoff Differences

- **OBC candidates:** Typically need 3–6 marks less than general category to secure the same NLU. Recent data showed NALSAR's OBC cutoff closing around rank 915–1116, a much wider band than general category.
- **EWS candidates:** Cutoffs sit somewhere between general and OBC bands, varying by NLU.
- **SC/ST candidates:** Significantly relaxed cutoffs. In recent cycles, SC category closing ranks for NLSIU stretched to around 3000+, and ST category closing ranks extended even further, giving reserved category candidates access to top NLUs at considerably lower raw scores.

Important: Cutoffs Shift With Each Counselling Round

CLAT counselling typically runs across five rounds:

1. **Round 1** – The toughest cutoff. Top-ranked students lock in their preferred NLUs here.

2. **Rounds 2–3** – Seats vacated by students who move to better options (or other exams like AILET, Jindal, Symbiosis) re-enter the pool. This often allows lower-ranked candidates to move up.
3. **Rounds 4–5** – Waitlisted and surrendered seats get filled. Cutoffs for lower-tier NLUs typically rise slightly here as more seats open up.

Practical takeaway: Don't panic if your Round 1 allotment isn't your dream NLU. Movement across rounds is common, and many students who apply strategically end up upgrading by Round 2 or 3.

How to Use Cutoff Data Practically

Divide your target NLUs into three buckets:

- **Dream NLUs:** Colleges just above your expected score/rank — a stretch goal.
- **Match NLUs:** Colleges where your rank comfortably fits based on previous trends.
- **Safe NLUs:** Colleges where you're almost certain to get a seat, ensuring you don't end up with no NLU at all.

This layered approach — rather than obsessing over just one "dream college" — protects you from ending up empty-handed during counselling.

Part 2: How to Crack CLAT in Just 3 Months

Three months is tight, but not impossible — provided you ditch the idea of "covering everything" and instead focus on **high-yield, high-frequency topics** with disciplined execution. Here's a realistic, no-fluff plan.

The Reality Check First

Before starting, understand this: in 3 months, you cannot build the same depth as someone who's been preparing for a year. Your strategy needs to shift from "mastering everything" to "maximizing accuracy on what's most likely to appear." This means smart prioritization, aggressive mock testing, and ruthless elimination of low-return topics.

Month 1: Foundation + Syllabus Mapping (Days 1–30)

Week 1–2: Understand the exam thoroughly

- Get familiar with the CLAT pattern: 5 sections — English Language, Current Affairs & GK, Legal Reasoning, Logical Reasoning, and Quantitative Techniques.
- Understand weightage: Legal Reasoning and Current Affairs typically carry the highest number of questions, making them top priority for a 3-month plan.
- Solve one full-length mock test cold — no prep — just to identify your baseline strengths and weaknesses. Don't skip this step; it tells you exactly where to focus.

Week 3–4: Section-wise foundation building

- **Legal Reasoning (Highest priority):** Focus on understanding legal principles and applying them to fact scenarios. Practice passage-based questions daily — even 15–20 questions a day builds strong pattern recognition within a month.
- **Current Affairs & GK:** Start a daily current affairs habit (30–40 minutes) covering national and international news, legal developments, and government schemes. Use monthly compilation PDFs rather than random daily reading — they're more time-efficient for revision later.
- **Logical Reasoning:** Practice syllogisms, critical reasoning, assumptions, and inferences. This section rewards practice more than theory, so prioritize solving over reading.
- **English Language:** Focus on reading comprehension speed and vocabulary in context. Read editorials daily (10–15 minutes) to build both comprehension and current affairs simultaneously — this dual benefit is crucial when time is short.
- **Quantitative Techniques:** This section usually has fewer questions. Cover only basic arithmetic, percentages, ratios, and data interpretation — don't over-invest time here relative to its weightage.

End of Month 1 target: You should have covered the basics of every section at least once and taken 2–3 mock tests.

Month 2: Intensive Practice + Mock Test Phase (Days 31–60)

This is the most important month. The focus completely shifts from learning to **practicing and correcting**.

Daily Structure (suggested):

- 1 mock test or sectional test every 2 days
- Detailed error analysis after every test (this matters more than the test itself)
- Current affairs revision (compiled notes, not fresh reading)
- Legal Reasoning: solve 25–30 questions daily, focusing on unfamiliar principle types
- English: 2 RC passages daily with timed practice

Why mock tests matter so much in month 2: Mock tests aren't just practice — they reveal your **actual exam behavior**: where you lose time, which sections you rush through, and which question types trip you up repeatedly. Without this feedback loop, month 2 preparation becomes directionless.
Critical habit: Maintain an error log. For every mock test, note down:

- Questions you got wrong and why (concept gap vs. silly mistake vs. time pressure)
- Time taken per section vs. ideal time
- Patterns in errors (e.g., consistently misreading legal passages, or rushing GK)

By the end of month 2, you should be taking full-length mocks under strict timed conditions at least twice a week, along with reviewing previous years' papers to understand recurring question patterns.

Month 3: Revision, Speed, and Exam Temperament (Days 61–90)

No new topics from this point. The final month is purely about consolidation, speed, and mental readiness.
Week 9–10:

- Full revision of current affairs compilations (monthly PDFs), focusing on the last 6 months of news most heavily, since CLAT tends to weight recent events more.
- Revise all legal principles and maxims covered so far — create a one-page cheat sheet of key legal concepts for quick last-minute revision.
- Continue full-length mocks every alternate day, focusing on accuracy over speed initially, then gradually increasing speed as accuracy stabilizes.

Week 11:

- Focus heavily on **time management strategy** — decide your section attempt order in advance based on your personal strengths (e.g., some students prefer starting with Legal Reasoning since it's high-weightage and builds confidence).
- Practice guessing strategy: know CLAT's negative marking scheme well enough to decide when an educated guess is worth the risk versus when to skip.
- Take at least 2 full mocks strictly simulating exam-day conditions (same timing, same environment, no breaks beyond what's allowed).

Week 12 (Final week):

- Only revision — no new mocks after the first 2–3 days of this week to avoid burnout.
- Light review of your error log and cheat sheets.
- Sleep, nutrition, and mental preparation matter enormously here. Many students undo months of prep with poor sleep in the final week.
- Keep current affairs revision light but consistent — a quick daily skim of your compiled notes, not fresh material.

Common Mistakes to Avoid in a 3-Month Prep Cycle

1. **Trying to cover the entire syllabus with equal depth.** With limited time, this dilutes your preparation. Prioritize high-weightage sections.
2. **Skipping mock test analysis.** Taking a mock test without reviewing your mistakes is close to wasted effort.
3. **Ignoring current affairs until the last week.** This section needs consistent daily exposure — cramming doesn't work well here.
4. **Over-investing in Quantitative Techniques.** Given its relatively lower weightage, spending excessive time here at the cost of Legal Reasoning or Current Affairs is a poor trade-off.
5. **Neglecting reading speed.** CLAT is a passage-heavy exam across almost every section. If your reading speed is slow, this alone can cost you significant time on exam day — practice timed reading throughout, not just in the English section.
6. **Burning out in the final week.** Cramming new topics right before the exam often does more harm than good.

Is 3 Months Really Enough?

Yes — provided you commit to focused, high-intensity preparation rather than passive reading. Many students who start late have successfully secured admissions into decent NLUs by combining aggressive mock testing with smart prioritization of high-weightage sections. The key differentiator isn't the number of months you prepare — it's how efficiently you use the time you have.

Final Takeaway

CLAT rewards strategy as much as it rewards knowledge. Understanding realistic cutoffs helps you set the right target and build a smart college preference list, while a focused 3-month plan — built around mock tests, error analysis, and prioritized topics — can genuinely get you into a good NLU even with limited time. The goal isn't perfection; it's consistent, targeted effort right up to exam day.