

Ministry of Education,
Government of India
National Testing Agency

(An Autonomous Organisation under the Department of Higher Education)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Dated: 20th July 2026

Subject: Submission of fabricated, digitally altered or AI-generated OMR answer sheets and score cards by candidates of NEET (UG) 2026, and consequences under the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, and other laws.

1. The National Testing Agency conducted NEET (UG) 2026 on 21st June 2026, and has, in accordance with the prescribed transparency mechanism, uploaded on its website the provisional answer keys, the recorded responses and the scanned images of each candidate's OMR answer sheet, and has also individually emailed to every registered candidate a scanned copy of his or her own OMR answer sheet at the e-mail address given at the time of registration. Candidates were also afforded a formal window to raise objections and to challenge answer keys and recorded responses as per the Public Notice dated 13th July 2026. The result of NEET (UG) 2026 has been declared on 16th July 2026.
2. It has come to the notice of the National Testing Agency that, after the declaration of the result, a number of representations have been received from candidates or from persons purporting to act on their behalf, alleging that the OMR answer sheet uploaded against their Roll Number, or emailed to them, does not belong to them, or has been "interchanged", or shows a substantially lower number of answers than the candidate claims to have made. In many such representations, the sender has enclosed an image of an OMR answer sheet, or of a score card, said to be the "correct" document, and has sought a re-evaluation of the result on the basis of that image.
3. The National Testing Agency has examined each such representation on merits. In every case examined so far, the position on record is the same. The genuine OMR answer sheet of the candidate concerned, bearing the correct Roll Number, the correct Test Booklet Number, the correct Answer Sheet barcode, the correct Test Booklet Code, the candidate's own name, parentage, signature and thumb impression, and the signatures of the invigilators, is held on record with NTA. The score declared against that Roll Number is fully consistent with the official answer key and the calculation sheet. The image enclosed by, or on behalf of, the candidate with such a representation is, on forensic and record-based examination, not the OMR answer sheet issued by the Agency. It is a fabricated document.
4. The patterns of fabrication that have been observed include, but are not limited to, the following. First, digital regeneration of the printed portion of the OMR sheet by AI-based image tools, which produces distinctive typographical distortions on parts of the sheet that were pre-printed by the Agency and cannot be altered by any candidate with a pen, such as the top-of-sheet instructions, the column headers over the

response grid, the serially printed question numbers, the candidate declaration paragraph and the field labels. Second, digital overwriting of the identity fields, that is, the candidate name, the parents' names, the signature and the thumb impression, on an image of the candidate's own genuine OMR sheet, while retaining the barcode, the booklet number and the shading on all 180 answer bubbles unchanged. Third, digital alteration of the marks or the response counts shown on a downloaded score card or OMR image, while leaving in place the underlying QR code or barcode which continues to point to the genuine record on the Agency's server. Fourth, insertion into the fabricated image of a fictitious identity, that is, a candidate name and parentage that do not correspond to any candidate registered for NEET (UG) 2026.

5. Candidates and their guardians are hereby advised that the OMR answer sheet, the recorded responses, the score card and every other document generated in the course of NEET (UG) 2026 are public examination documents. Every genuine document carries verifiable identifiers, including the barcode, the Test Booklet Number, the Answer Sheet number and, in the case of the score card, an embedded QR code. Each such identifier resolves, on verification, to a single authoritative entry on the secure servers of the Agency and of the National Informatics Centre. A fabricated image may deceive the eye, but it does not, and cannot, alter the record on those servers. In every proceeding in which such a fabricated image has so far been placed, whether before NTA itself or before any Court, the fabrication has been exposed on verification against the record, and the claim founded on it has failed.
6. Candidates and their guardians are further advised that the creation, possession, use, submission or circulation of a fabricated, digitally altered, AI-generated or otherwise forged OMR answer sheet, score card or any other public examination document, whether for the purpose of seeking a re-evaluation, or of securing an admission, or of amplifying an unfounded grievance in the public domain, constitutes a cognisable offence under the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, and separately attracts liability under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the Information Technology Act, 2000. The offences carry substantial terms of imprisonment and fines and further carry the consequence of cancellation of candidature and debarment from future examinations conducted by the National Testing Agency, in accordance with the said Act.
7. The Agency may, in every case in which a fabricated document is found to have been submitted, place the finding on record by way of a written communication to the candidate and to the person, if different, who has submitted the document, initiate legal action against those creating these forged documents, including against any third party found to have prepared, supplied, brokered or amplified the fabricated document. The result declared on the basis of the genuine OMR answer sheet on record will, in every such case, stand as declared, and no re-evaluation, revision or reservation of seat will be undertaken on the basis of any fabricated image.
8. Nothing in this Notice affects the right of any candidate to raise a genuine grievance through the prescribed channel. Any candidate who is of the view that the OMR answer sheet held against his or her Roll Number contains a genuine error may submit a representation to the Agency at the helpdesk address published on the Agency's website, quoting the Application Number, the Roll Number, the specific discrepancy alleged, and the basis of the allegation. Candidates are advised, in their own interest, not to annex to any such representation any image or document that is not a copy of a document actually issued by the Agency or

downloaded by the candidate from the Agency's portal. Any representation supported by a fabricated document will be dealt with in accordance with paragraph 7 above, irrespective of whether the candidate claims to have been misled by a third party. In such cases, the candidate is expected to disclose the identity of the third party and to co-operate in the investigation.

9. All candidates, their parents and guardians, coaching institutes, consultants and any other person purporting to advise candidates in the matter of their NEET (UG) 2026 result, are advised accordingly. This Notice is issued in the public interest and without prejudice to any other action that the Agency or any other competent authority may take.

(Sd/-)

Director (Examinations)
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