Polity & Governance · GS - II

“Institutional quality is a crucial driver of economic performance.” In this context, suggest reforms in Civil Service for strengthening democracy.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2020	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Institutional quality; civil service neutrality; accountability; transparency; lateral entry; performance evaluation; capacity-building; citizen-centric governance; decentralisation; democratic values

Model Answer

Introduction

High-quality institutions support economic growth by ensuring predictable policies, efficient service delivery and the rule of law. Civil services are central to this process because they implement public policy and uphold democratic accountability.

Reforms required

- **Merit-based recruitment:** Maintain transparent recruitment while ensuring equal opportunity and adequate representation.
- **Specialisation:** Develop domain expertise and consider carefully designed lateral entry for specialised roles.
- **Performance management:** Evaluate officers through measurable outcomes, public-service quality and citizen feedback rather than seniority alone.
- **Capacity-building:** Provide continuous training in technology, economics, ethics and emerging policy challenges.

- **Political neutrality:** Protect civil servants from arbitrary transfers and political interference while enforcing accountability.
- **Transparency:** Strengthen disclosure, grievance redressal, social audits and the implementation of the Right to Information framework.
- **Citizen-centric administration:** Simplify procedures and expand accessible digital services without excluding digitally disadvantaged citizens.
- **Decentralisation:** Delegate appropriate authority and resources to local institutions, accompanied by clear accountability.
- **Ethical governance:** Enforce conflict-of-interest rules, protect whistle-blowers and punish corruption fairly.

Conclusion

Civil service reform should combine efficiency with neutrality, integrity and responsiveness. Strong institutions can improve economic performance while ensuring that public administration remains accountable to citizens and constitutional values.

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