ANSWER KEY — 4 JUNE 2026

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
C	A	D	B	A	B	D	A	C	B
Q11	**Q12**	**Q13**	**Q14**	**Q15**	**Q16**	**Q17**	**Q18**	**Q19**	**Q20**
D	A	C	A	A	A	C	D	B	C

RC PASSAGES

Q1 C

The passage explicitly describes the harvest-now-decrypt-later phenomenon: large volumes of encrypted traffic are being recorded today in the expectation of decryption once quantum computers mature. The author's point is that data needing long-term confidentiality is already at risk before any quantum computer has factored a single key. Option C captures this directly. Option A is false: the passage does not claim operational quantum cryptanalysis. Option B contradicts the author's whole concern. Option D overstates: the passage says lattice-based schemes are 'not known to fall to known quantum algorithms', not that they are proved unbreakable. C is correct.

Q2 A

The author's argument turns on the practical feasibility of cryptographically relevant quantum machines within a policy-relevant window. A formal proof that scaling beyond a few hundred logical qubits is information-theoretically impossible would directly defeat the premise, eliminating the urgency for migration. Option A is therefore the strongest weakener. Option B is irrelevant or even mildly supportive. Option C describes the very threat the author warns of, so it strengthens rather than weakens. Option D is an aside about cost/performance, not a defeater of the underlying threat case. A is correct.

Q3 D

The 'unspoken bet' refers to an implicit assumption — not articulated in any formal document but undergirding deployment — that factoring 2048-bit numbers would remain infeasible for the foreseeable future. The passage's previous sentence frames it as a tacit reliance on a hard mathematical problem. Option D best captures this implicit-assumption sense. Options A, B and C invent specific formal artefacts (multilateral wagers, patent clauses, NIST models) that the passage does not reference. D is correct.

Q4 B

The author acknowledges that engineering timelines are speculative and that premature migration carries costs (the steel-man for the sceptics), but concludes that 'the history of cryptography… counsels against such complacency' and that 'a transition begun too late is a transition that fails'. The stance is acknowledgment plus rejection. Option B (cautiously rejecting) captures this. Option A inverts the conclusion. Option C wrongly characterises the author as neutral. Option D overstates: the author is critical but not dismissive. B is correct.

Q5 A

The passage explicitly notes that 'the time taken to roll out a new primitive across the global stack is itself measured in many years' — i.e., migration is a multi-year process. From this it follows that beginning migration only after a quantum breakthrough would leave significant data exposed during the transition gap. Option A captures this directly supported inference. Option B is unsupported and contradicts the passage's careful language. Option C is contradicted (Shor's algorithm has not been used on commercial keys). Option D is a sweeping prediction the passage never endorses. A is correct.

Q6 B

The author's central claim is captured in the second paragraph: 'restoration restores not just the visible water-body but the invisible system that fed it' and in the third paragraph: 'the restoration agenda thus turns, ultimately, on a question that engineering cannot answer: who decides what may be built'. The thesis combines physical repair with the wider hydraulic system and political economy. Option B captures this synthesis. Option A understates the agenda to mere engineering. Option C is unsupported (no metropolitan-versus-smaller-city comparison). Option D wrongly equates civic vigilance with statutory backing — the passage argues they jointly matter. B is correct.

Q7 D

In context the passage says 'a century of unplanned construction has dismembered the chain' — meaning the chain has been broken into disconnected fragments such that it no longer functions as a unit. Option D captures this meaning precisely. Option A (aesthetically improved) is the opposite. Option B (officially deregulated) misreads dismemberment as deregulation. Option C (catalogued) is unrelated. D is correct.

NAME: _____ ROLL NO: _____ BATCH: _____

Q8 A

The author's claim is that statutory teeth lead to durable restoration while advisory regimes do not. A comparative study showing that statutory-regime cities preserve 75% of restored lakes after a decade vs 20% in advisory-regime cities directly corroborates the claim by providing the quantitative comparison the author asserts. Option A is the strongest strengthener. Option B (advisory cities doubling budgets) actually undermines the claim by suggesting civic effort can substitute. Option C (better remote sensing) is sector-neutral. Option D (national de-silting grant) addresses engineering, not the regulatory teeth claim. A is correct.

Q9 C

The passage emphasises that without statutory backing AND active civic vigilance, encroachment can resume after project closure. The closing line — 'a question that engineering cannot answer: who decides what may be built' — is exactly this point. Option C captures the joint-condition inference. Option A contradicts the passage. Option B contradicts the recommended use of colonial-era survey maps. Option D contradicts the passage's central claim about political economy. C is correct.

Q10 B

The author writes that where wetland authorities are 'merely advisory... the eventual fate of any individual wetland tends to track the strength of its local civic constituency, and little else'. This is a sceptical assessment: advisory authorities depend entirely on civic strength to deliver outcomes. Option B (sceptical) captures this. Option A is the opposite. Option C (hostile and dismissive of all advisory work) overstates. Option D (indifferent) misses the explicit critical contrast drawn. B is correct.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 D

The author's conclusion is stated unambiguously at the outset: 'India should now move to a complete and uniform prohibition of single-use plastic across every retail format.' Option D restates this conclusion. Options A, B and C state supporting premises (harms, alternative materials, informal sector welfare) — they are evidence cited in support of the conclusion, not the conclusion itself. D is correct.

Q12 A

The argument's policy recommendation depends on the regulatory state being able to enforce a uniform prohibition once enacted. Without this premise, even a 'clean ban' is just a paper prohibition repeatedly evaded — exactly what the author criticises about the current list-based regime. Option A captures this enforceability premise as the unstated assumption. Option B overstates the harm-causal claim (the passage says floods are 'measurably worse', not exclusively caused). Option C is too strong on consumer preferences. Option D imports a Centre–State federal compact the passage does not rely on. A is correct.

Q13 C

The author claims that complete prohibition will reduce harms. Option C — that complete bans in comparable jurisdictions have been followed by a documented persistent rise in unregulated black-market plastic — directly undercuts the claim by showing that the prohibition produces a worse alternative equilibrium. Option A (state-level narrow bans exist) is irrelevant or mildly supportive. Option B (some bags above the threshold) is anecdotal and weak. Option D (bioplastics somewhat more expensive) is already conceded by the author and addressed via subsidies. C is the strongest weakener.

Q14 A

The author justifies an eighteen-month transition window as 'structured' and pragmatic. Audited precedent showing that comparable Indian transitions in textiles and packaging have repeatedly required 15-20 months provides direct empirical strengthening of the chosen length. Option A is the strongest strengthener. Option B (some small-trader opposition to any window) is weakening or neutral. Option C (state exemptions) is structurally distinct. Option D (longer global supply timeline) actually undercuts the eighteen-month figure. A is correct.

Q15 A

The author writes: 'The risk of cross-border smuggling of banned products is best handled at the customs interface rather than as a reason to retain a porous domestic regime.' This concedes that smuggling is a real risk and reroutes the remedy to customs, rather than denying or ignoring the risk. Option A captures this faithfully. Option B (denies smuggling exists) is the opposite. Option C (treats as decisive) misreads. Option D (ignores entirely) is contradicted by the explicit engagement. A is correct.

Q16 A

The author's main conclusion is stated in the opening sentence and restated at the close: Indian universities should move to fully blind AI grading with human audit. Option A restates this. Options B, C and D state supporting premises (model performance, re-evaluation disagreement, regime inconsistency) — they support the conclusion but do not constitute it. A is correct. This conclusion follows directly from the stated principle as applied to the facts of the question, and the alternative options either misstate the rule, ignore a stated limitation, or invent a requirement that the law does not in fact impose. Students should remember the rule as stated and apply it strictly to the fact-pattern given.

Q17 C

On the model-bias objection, the author writes: 'This is a real risk and the response is not to refuse AI but to require pre-deployment fairness audits and protected-class invariance testing that no human grader has ever been subjected to.' This concedes the risk and answers it with audit-and-testing requirements — exactly what option C states. Option A wrongly asserts models are bias-free. Option B mischaracterises the author as conceding defeat. Option D is contradicted by the explicit engagement. C is correct.

Q18 D

The author argues that AI graders can meet or exceed human inter-rater agreement at the human ceiling. If comprehensive fairness audits of current rubric-based language model graders disclose larger disparate-impact gaps than the human baseline they replace, this directly undermines the proposal: AI grading would worsen fairness, not improve it. Option D is the strongest weakener. Option A (pilot studies) is roughly supportive. Option B (handwriting recognition improves) is supportive. Option C (computational cost) is a logistics concern, not a defeater of the case for AI grading. D is correct.

Q19 B

The author insists on an 'honest comparison' against 'a status-quo regime that is inconsistent, opaque, and uncontestable in practice', not an 'idealised baseline that does not exist in any Indian university examination hall today'. The implicit comparator is therefore the actual present-day human grading regime in Indian universities, with all its flaws — option B. Option A inverts the author's explicit point. Options C and D import external comparators the passage does not invoke. B is correct.

Q20 C

The author's case rests on AI graders achieving inter-rater agreement at or above the human ceiling, with fairness audits. A multi-university audit reporting that fairness-trained, rubric-aligned AI graders deliver higher agreement with expert panels than human-grader pairs would directly strengthen exactly the empirical claim on which the argument rests. Option C is the strongest strengthener. Option A (higher human honoraria) is irrelevant. Option B (parental openness) is rhetorical, not empirical. Option D (digital paper submission) is enabling infrastructure, not direct evidence of grading quality. C is correct.