

CAREERS 360

PREPARATION Series

CAT

Exam Pattern 2024



Introduction

CAT exam is one of the most popular [MBA entrance exams](#) in India. Over 2 lakh MBA aspirants take this exam every year. It is a computer-based test having 3 sections - VARC, DILR, and QA. You can take admission in [21 IIMs](#) and 1000+ B-schools in India through CAT scores. [Top B-schools](#) in India require at least a 99%tile and above for the admission. In order to score a decent percentile in CAT Exam one should be aware of the Exam Pattern and Marking Scheme. The exam pattern of CAT helps candidates to understand the structure of the CAT question paper and marking scheme which will also help in better [CAT exam preparation](#). Careers360 brings to you a comprehensive Ebook about the paper pattern and other important aspects of the CAT exam that will help you ace it and crack your dream B-school.



CAT Exam Pattern: Major Highlights

The pattern of the CAT exam not only tests your knowledge in different subjects but also evaluates your decision making skills due to the time boundation on each section. Toppers usually make a strategy to attempt different sections in order to achieve their desired percentile. It is advised to practise [CAT Mocks test to get familiarised with the paper pattern and the type of questions that can come in the exam](#). Usually, the exam is held in three slots, that is in the morning, afternoon, and evening on the same day. **It is a computer-based test (CBT) which gives 40 minutes to each section.** check out the table given below to know the CAT Exam pattern and other important information. **The number of questions ,marking scheme and time allotted to each section can be changed by the official authority.**

CAT Test Pattern

Particulars	Details
Duration of the CAT exam	2 hours (120 minutes)
Name of the section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC) • Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR) • Quantitative Aptitude (QA)
Section-wise duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 minutes for each section (VARC, DILR & QA) • 53 minutes 20 seconds for PwD candidates for each section
Use of tools	Calculator given on the screen
Use of Gadgets	Physical calculator and phones not allowed
CAT exam total marks	198 marks
CAT exam mode	Computer-Based (CBT) mode
CAT marking scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For every right answer, +3 will be awarded • For every wrong answer in MCQs, -1 will be deducted • No negative marks for Non-MCQs

CAT Test Pattern: Important points

- Candidates can use an on-screen calculator for computation during CAT exam
- By using an on-screen clock candidate can check the time
- Sheets will be provided to candidates for rough work, which has to be submitted after the conclusion of the CAT exam for [MBA](#).
- Candidates will not be allowed to switch from one section to another while answering questions in one section.
- The [CAT official mock test](#) will be released on the official CAT website, iimcat.ac.in. It generally reveals the overall and section-wise IIM CAT exam pattern. The slots can be changed by the official authority, however here are the three sessions in which CAT is usually conducted:
Morning session (8:30 am - 10:30 pm)
Afternoon session (12:30 pm - 2:30 pm)
Evening session (4:30 pm - 6:30 pm).

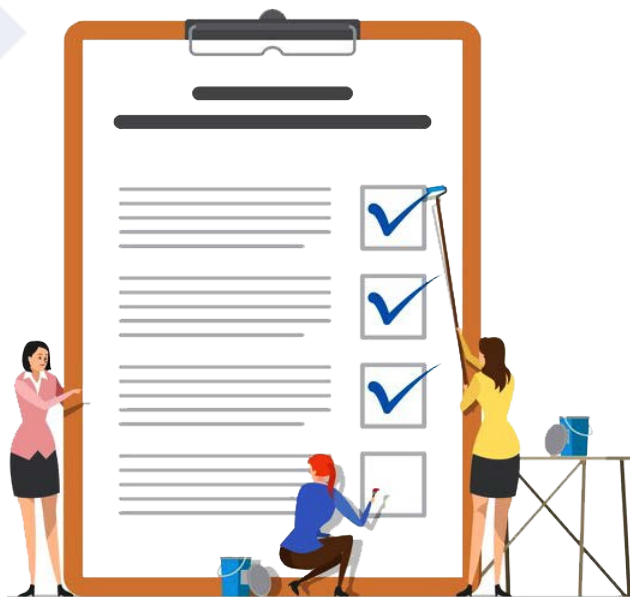


Section-wise CAT Exam Pattern

Section as per IIM CAT Exam Pattern	Total Questions	Allotted Time	Allotted Time for PwD Students
Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC)	24	40 Minutes	53 minutes and 20 seconds
Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR)	20	40 Minutes	53 minutes and 20 seconds
Quantitative Aptitude (QA)	22	40 Minutes	53 minutes and 20 seconds
Total	66	120 Minutes	150 Minutes

Type of Questions and important topics for each section.

- VARC Section:** The VARC section is the first section a candidate has to attempt in the CAT. This section usually has 4 RC passages with 18 MCQs and 8 verbal ability questions. The verbal ability questions are subdivided into Para Summaries, Para Jumbles, and Context Sentences.
- DILR:** This section has mixed questions from Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning, usually around 20 questions are asked in sets of 4.
- QA:** This section has around 20-22 questions. Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry are the most frequently asked topics.



CAT Marking Scheme

CAT exam pattern includes the marking scheme under which the candidates get to know the total marks awarded for each correct answer and how many marks will be deducted if the candidate answers the question incorrectly.

- For each correct answer, three marks will be awarded.
- For each wrong answer, one mark will be deducted.
- For unanswered questions, no marks will be deducted. Also for Non-MCQs, no marks will be deducted.

The following table summarizes the marking scheme of CAT

Type of questions	Correct answer	Incorrect answer
MCQ	+3	-1
Non-MCQ	+3	0



How has the CAT Exam pattern evolved over the years?

The CAT exam pattern has been changed multiple times. By referring to the below table the candidates will be able to know a clear idea of how the exam pattern of CAT evolved over the years.

The CAT contains three sections such as

- Verbal and Reading Comprehension (VARC)
- Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR)
- Quantitative Aptitude (QA)

There is no difference in the sections for each year. Also, there is no difference in the CAT exam pattern marking scheme.

Year	Number of question	Difficulty level	Duration
2023	66	Moderate to high	2 hours
2022	66	Moderate to high	2 hours
2021	66	Moderate to high	2 hours
2020	76	Moderate to high	2 hours
2019	100	Moderate to high	3 hours
2018	100	Moderate to high	3 hours
2017	100	Moderate	3 hours
2016	100	Moderate to difficult	3 hours
2015	100	Moderate to difficult	3 hours
2014	100	Moderate to easy	2.5 hours
2013	60	Moderate to easy	2.20 hours
2012	60	Moderate to easy	2.20 hours
2011	60	Moderate	2.20 hours

CAT Exam Syllabus

The official syllabus for CAT is never released. Students usually analyse the past year's trend to prepare a [CAT exam syllabus](#) for themselves. CAT preparation should be done in consideration with the CAT Syllabus. However, based on last [year's CAT question papers](#), candidates can check the topics on which the questions are asked.

Section-Wise CAT Syllabus

Section name	Topics
Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal Ability ● English Usage or Grammar ● Close Passage ● Synonyms Antonyms ● Facts-inferences-judgments ● Jumbled Paragraph ● Reading Comprehension ● Verbal Reasoning
Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Caselets ● Blood Relations ● Calendars ● Bar Graphs ● Column Graphs ● Tables ● Cubes ● Clocks ● Binary Logic ● Line Charts ● Combination of two or more types linked to each other ● Syllogism ● Venn Diagrams ● Pie Chart ● Number and Letter Series ● Seating Arrangement
Quantitative Aptitude (QA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Algebra ● Higher Maths ● Geometry ● Trigonometry ● Mensuration ● Arithmetic

How to answer the questions in CAT?

Before going to start the CAT examination, the students should have to know how to answer questions. Candidates should use the following options when answering questions:

- **Save and Next:** Candidates should select the answer, save it, and move on to the next one.
- **Clear Response:** Candidates will have the option to delete the answer to the question they answered.
- **Mark for Review and Next:** If the candidate is unsure about the answer, in such a case they have the option to mark it as a review, then answer it, and then move on to the next question.

NOTE: When answering questions, one should use the mouse provided. Using the system keyboard will lock the computer screen.

What does each colour on the panel represent?

Panel Colour	What it indicates
Red	The question was not answered as it not marked for review.
Green	The question was answered and not reviewed.
Grey	Question not viewed or visited.
Violet	The question is marked for review and not yet answered.
Violet with Green tick	The question was marked and answered for review.