

# CAT (Common Admission Test) – Complete Details (MBA Entrance Exam)

## Introduction

The **Common Admission Test (CAT)** is one of India's most competitive national-level entrance exams for admission into MBA/PGDM programs. CAT is the primary gateway to the **Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs)** and is also accepted by **1000+ top business schools** across India.

Cracking CAT requires strong fundamentals, smart time management, high accuracy, and consistent mock test practice. This guide covers CAT exam details, syllabus, marking scheme, eligibility, selection process, and preparation strategy.

## What is CAT?

CAT is a **computer-based test (CBT)** conducted once every year by one of the IIMs on a rotational basis. It tests a candidate's:

- Verbal and reading skills
- Logical and analytical thinking
- Data interpretation ability
- Quantitative aptitude
- Decision-making under time pressure

## Top Colleges Accepting CAT

### IIMs

- IIM Ahmedabad
- IIM Bangalore
- IIM Calcutta
- IIM Lucknow
- IIM Kozhikode
- IIM Indore
- IIM Shillong
- New IIMs (Trichy, Udaipur, Ranchi, Raipur, etc.)

## Other Top MBA Colleges

- FMS Delhi
- SPJIMR Mumbai
- MDI Gurgaon
- IIT MBA Programs
- IIM Mumbai (NITIE)
- IMT Ghaziabad
- Great Lakes
- TAPMI
- FORE School of Management

## CAT Selection Process

The CAT admission process generally includes:

1. **CAT Exam (Score + Percentile)**
2. **Shortlisting by colleges**
3. **WAT (Written Ability Test) / Essay**
4. **GD (Group Discussion) – some colleges**
5. **PI (Personal Interview)**
6. **Final merit list based on overall performance**

## CAT Important Timeline

- **Notification** – July/August
- **Registration** – August/September
- **Admit Card** – October
- **CAT Exam** – November
- **Result** – December/January
- **WAT/GD/PI Rounds** – February to April
- **Final Admissions** – May/June

## CAT Eligibility Criteria

To appear for CAT, a candidate must:

- Have a **Bachelor's degree** in any stream
- Minimum marks required:
  - **General/EWS:** 50%
  - **SC/ST/PwD:** 45%
- Final year students can also apply (subject to proof of completion)

## CAT Exam Pattern (Latest Format)

CAT is conducted in **3 sections**, and each section has a time limit.

### Total Exam Duration

- **120 minutes (2 hours)**
- **40 minutes per section**
- For PwD candidates: **180 minutes (3 hours)**

### Sections in CAT

1. **VARC** – Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension
2. **DILR** – Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning
3. **QA** – Quantitative Aptitude

## CAT Question Types

CAT includes two types of questions:

### 1) MCQ (Multiple Choice Questions)

- Negative marking applies

### 2) TITA (Type In The Answer)

- No negative marking
- Candidate types the answer directly

## CAT Marking Scheme (Very Important)

- **Correct answer:** +3 marks
- **Wrong answer (MCQ):** -1 mark
- **Wrong answer (TITA):** No negative marking
- **Unattempted question:** 0 marks

## **CAT Syllabus (Section-Wise)**

### **1) VARC (Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension)**

#### **Reading Comprehension**

- Long and short passages
- Inference-based questions
- Tone and main idea
- Vocabulary in context

#### **Verbal Ability**

- Para-jumbles
- Para-summary
- Odd sentence out
- Sentence completion
- Grammar-based questions (limited)

### **2) DILR (Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning)**

#### **Data Interpretation**

- Tables
- Bar graphs
- Pie charts
- Line graphs
- Caselets

#### **Logical Reasoning**

- Arrangements
- Puzzles
- Games & tournaments
- Venn diagrams

- Selection and distribution
- Routes and networks

### **3) QA (Quantitative Aptitude)**

#### **Arithmetic (Very Important)**

- Percentages
- Profit & Loss
- Ratio & Proportion
- Time & Work
- Time, Speed & Distance
- Simple & Compound Interest
- Mixtures and Allegations

#### **Algebra**

- Linear equations
- Quadratic equations
- Inequalities
- Functions
- Logarithms
- Progressions

#### **Geometry & Mensuration**

- Lines and angles
- Triangles
- Circles
- Quadrilaterals
- Coordinate geometry
- 2D and 3D mensuration

#### **Number System**

- Factors and multiples
- Remainders
- HCF/LCM
- Divisibility rules
- Base system

#### **Modern Mathematics**

- Permutation & Combination
- Probability
- Set theory

## CAT Score and Percentile

CAT results are announced in:

- **Raw Score**
- **Scaled Score**
- **Percentile**

Since CAT is conducted in multiple slots, the scores are **scaled/normalized** to ensure fairness.

## Skills Tested in CAT

CAT checks:

- Speed and accuracy
- Concept clarity
- Logical thinking
- Reading comprehension ability
- Time management
- Ability to handle pressure

## How to Prepare for CAT (Step-by-Step Roadmap)

### Step 1: Understand the Exam

- Learn the pattern
- Understand the marking
- Know the syllabus

### Step 2: Build Strong Concepts

- QA basics
- VARC reading skills
- DILR set solving techniques

### **Step 3: Practice Daily**

- Daily VARC reading
- QA topic practice
- DILR sets practice

### **Step 4: Start Mock Tests**

- Sectional tests first
- Full mocks regularly
- Analyse every mock deeply

### **Step 5: Improve Weak Areas**

- Identify errors
- Fix concepts
- Repeat practice

## **Study Material and Practice**

A complete CAT preparation program should include:

- Topic-wise study material
- CAT-level practice questions
- Previous year CAT papers
- Daily quizzes
- Sectional tests
- Full-length mock tests
- Mock analysis sessions
- Doubt clearing sessions

## **How EMGC CAT Coaching Can Help**

EMGC CAT coaching provides a complete and structured learning approach for CAT aspirants. With experienced faculty, concept-based teaching, regular practice sessions, updated study

material, mock test series, and doubt-solving support, EMGC helps students improve accuracy, speed, and confidence.

The program includes:

- VARC + QA + DILR complete training
- Regular mock tests and analysis
- Performance tracking
- Personal mentoring and guidance
- Strategy sessions for high percentile

## Conclusion

CAT is a challenging exam, but with the right strategy, consistent practice, and strong mock analysis, cracking CAT is absolutely achievable. Focus on concept clarity, daily practice, and time management. Whether you aim for IIMs or top B-Schools, CAT can be your gateway to a successful management career.