

Bird's Eye View

Common Admission Test (CAT)

November 16, 2008

Finally the BIG BANG happened. Approximately 2, 76, 000 atoms (students) who were in an atmosphere of very high pressure, temperature and density for months (possibly years for many) resulted in the BIG BANG i.e. CAT 2008.

The CAT 2008 was successfully conducted at more than 160 centres of 23 cities in India on 16th of November.

Overall the CAT 2008 paper can be classified as MODERATE to TOUGH. As it was declared in the CAT bulletin there were three testing areas: Quantitative Aptitude, Verbal Ability and Logical & Data Interpretation. There were total 90 questions distributed across three sections.

The Verbal Ability section contained 40 questions whereas, Quantitative Aptitude and Logical & Data Interpretation sections had 25 questions each. This clearly suggests that the paper setters are laying more stress on Language Skills. The Quantitative Aptitude section was of MODERATE level of difficulty. In DI and LR section the LR questions were easier compared to the DI questions. In Verbal Ability section questions were of Easy to Moderate level of difficulty

A bird's eye view of the test is as follows–

Total Number of Questions – 90

Total Time – 150 minutes

The Marking Scheme – Four marks for each correct answer marked. One mark for each incorrect answer marked.

Total Marks – 360

Number of Options – 5

Number of sets Available – 4

Sections/Sectional Time Limit – There were four sections and there was no sectional time constraint.

Medium of marking – Pencil

Sectional Break-up–

Section	Topic	No. of Ques.	No. of Marks	Difficulty Level	Time suggested
I	Quantitative Aptitude	25	100	Moderate	40 to 45 min.
II	Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning	25	100	Moderate to Tough	50 to 55 min.
III	English Usage and Reading Comprehension	40	160	Easy to Moderate	45 to 50 min.
	Total	90	360		150 min.

Mathematical Aptitude
Total number of questions : 25

In MA section there were total 25 questions. The questions were from topics like Numbers, Time, Speed and Distance, Ratio and Proportion, Quadratic Equations, Progressions, Functions, Permutation and Combination, Plane Geometry and Mensuration. There were two Data Sufficiency (5 Options-Standard) questions. Two other questions were based on Logical Reasoning.

Compared to last couple of years the weightage of Arithmetic has decreased while that for Geometry and Algebra has increased. An attempt of 16 to 17 questions with 80 to 85% accuracy would be required to get calls from A+ category institutes.

TOPIC	No. of Questions		
	CAT 2008	CAT 2007	CAT 2006
Arithmetic	5	12	9
Number System	3	7	7
Time, Speed, Distance / Races / Time & work	1	2	1
Percentages and Profit / Loss	Nil	2	0
Ratio & Proportion, Pipes & Cisterns, Averages	1	1	1
Algebra	9	5	8
Equations and Inequalities	4	1	4
Progressions	2	0	2
Functions	2	1	2
Maxima / Minima	1	3	0
Geometry	4	1	5
Plane Geometry + Curves	2	1	2
Mensuration	2	0	3
Sets	Nil	0	1
Calendar	Nil	0	0
Miscellaneous	2	0	1
Permutations & Combinations	3	3	1
Data Sufficiency	2	4	0
Total	25	25	25

Logical Reasoning and Data Interpretation

Total number of questions : 25

In this section there were 12 questions from Logical Reasoning and 13 questions from Data Interpretation area. The LR questions were on Data Arrangement and Mathematical Reasoning. While the questions related to Bar Chart, Scatter Diagram, Table and Logic based DI constituted the DI part of this section.

Compared to the last year this year the section was balanced with 12 questions from LR and 13 questions from DI. The LR questions were easier compared to the DI questions.

An attempt of 15 to 17 questions with 80% accuracy would be considered as good performance.

TOPIC	No. of Questions		
	2008	2007	2006
Data Interpretation	13	21	10
Tables	3	21 (5 sets)	5
Bar Charts	4	Nil	Nil
Pie - Charts	Nil	Nil	Nil
Line charts/Scatter diagram	3	Nil	Nil
Caslet/Logic Based DI	3	Nil	Nil
Network Diagram	Nil	Nil	5
Logical Reasoning (Sets)	12	Nil	15
Data Arrangement	3	Nil	5
Caselets	9	Nil	10
Data Sufficiency	Nil	4	0
Total	25	25	25

Reading Comprehension + English Usage

Total number of questions : 40

There were 20 questions on RC and 20 questions on English Usage and Verbal Ability. EU and VA questions were easy with few sitters in between. On an average the passages were 700 to 900 words long. The passages were not that difficult to comprehend. The questions are a mix of direct and inferential. In EU area the questions based on Fact, Inference and Judgement and Para Jumble were missing. Fill in the Blanks, variety of Sentence Correction questions, Vocab. based usage were major component of this section. With the increase in number of questions the cut-offs would be higher in this section compared to last year. Detailed breakup is as given.

An attempt of 10 questions from RC (two passages) and 15 questions from EU with an accuracy of 85 to 90% would be considered as a good performance.

Reading Comprehension				
Background	Theme	Length (approx.)	No. of Questions	Difficulty level
Philosophical	Art in the 20th Century Understanding the emergence of concepts in modern arts	650 words	5	Moderate to tough
Historic	Analysing the causes responsible for the collapse of the Mayan civilisation	750 words	5	Easy to Moderate
Social	The changing concepts of morality	720 words	5	Moderate to tough
Philosophical	Role of Language	630 words	5	Moderate to tough
English Usage				
Topic			No. of Questions	Difficulty level
Sentence Correction			4	Easy
Vocabulary based usage			8	Moderate
Fill in the blanks			4	Moderate
Completing the paragraph			4	Confusing

Expected Cut-Offs

Cut-off	Marks
Quantitative Aptitude	30 +
Data Interpretation / Logical Reasoning	29 +
Reading Comprehension / English Usage	47 – 49
Overall	115 - 120+

Whatever may be your performance in the CAT, good or bad, believe in these beautiful words as said by Sir Winston Churchill:

**"This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end.
But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning"**

Be well prepared for the IIFT entrance test next Sunday !

Best Wishes, for the road ahead!

