

Analysis of CAT 2008 Paper

Executive Summary:

Lo and behold! The pervasive air of ambiguity, which dominated previous year's CAT Verbal Ability section, seems to have vanished in CAT 2008. On the whole, according to Career Launcher experts, the CAT 2008 paper was moderately tough, with Verbal Ability section providing long awaited respite to the aspirants. Comparatively speaking, the students would have found Data Interpretation (DI), with a mix of calculations and logic to be on the tougher side. Vocabulary based questions in its old format reappeared in CAT after a span of two years! The emphasis in the Verbal Ability section with 40 questions allotted to it is probably to check the much-debated lack of language skills of the Indian management graduates with rigour. One could also assume the larger number of verbal ability questions to be a reflection of GMAT pattern where verbal ability questions are almost as much in number as Quant and DI put together. Signs of CAT going online?

But Quantitative Ability (QA) proved to be on difficult side once again for an average student. However, on a closer look 7-8 questions could have been solved using options without using deeper mathematical knowledge. The proportion of Algebra based (40%+) questions seemed to be higher than last few years with Geometry maintaining a constant proportion of 16% for last two years.

In Verbal Ability (VA), the number of Reading Comprehension (RC) passages was same as last year (4) . All four passages with 20 questions altogether bore the stamp of the CAT written all over it. Overall the RC section had fewer tricky questions than the EU section. As a section, it is safe to infer that the VA section checked almost all the aspects, including verbal logic, vocabulary and grammar.

The vocabulary based and sentence correction questions in VA were similar in nature to last year's except for traditional sentence completion questions a la GRE which resurfaced. The Para completion questions provided a bit of a breather in terms of difficulty level.

But the clincher this time is the DI Section, which was deceptively difficult. Few questions were ambiguous and time consuming. Experts of Career Launcher feel that this is the toughest section in CAT 2008 and student's faced maximum problem in this section. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that the time allocation strategy was disturbed by uneven distribution of questions.

In conclusion, according to the experts of Career Launcher, even with the best of preparations it would be really tough to score more than 120 in this paper. An ideal time allocation strategy of 40-44-66 minutes in QA-DI-VA sections could have enhanced the possibility of maximizing the score as felt by the experts of Career Launcher.

Overview

Here is an overview of how you should have attempted this paper.

Section	Topics	Number of questions	Total Marks	Suggested time	Possible Attempts	Expected Cut-offs
I	Quantitative Ability	25	100	40	13	30-32
II	Logical Reasoning Data Interpretation	25	100	42	14	28-30
III	Verbal Ability	40	160	68	22	46-48
Total		90	360	150	46	124-128

Disclaimer: These cut-offs are decided by expert faculty of Career Launcher who have attempted the CAT 2008 paper and may not tally with the actual IIM cut-offs. These are calculations based on our experience and expertise.

Expected Cut Offs for different institutes:

Institute	Likely Cut Offs in CAT 2008	
	Marks	Percentile
Any 1 IIM call	126+	98.6
MDI (BM)	126+	98.6
S P Jain, NITIE, IMT, IMI, MDI-HR	120+	97+
MICA, TAPMI	112+	95+
KJ Somaiya, BIM, Fore, UBS, NIRMA, IMI-HR	100+	92+
ITM(Mum), LBS, FMS (BHU)	90+	90+
IFMR, IIFM, BIMTech, Kirloskar, IISWBM, Jaipuria	82+	86+
IILM (Lodhi Rd), IMDR, SDM-IMD, JIMS	76+	80+
SCM Cochin, IMM, Globsyn, Cosmic, Alliance, ISBM	60+	72+
NDIM, EMPI, Asia Pacific, Amrita, Suryadatta, Skyline	50+	65+

Disclaimer: All information on cut-offs, analysis, answer key, solutions and scores are based on independent analysis and evaluation made by Career Launcher. We do not take responsibility for any decision that might be taken, based on this information.

Comparison with CAT 2007 and CAT 2006:

Parameter	CAT 2008	CAT 2007	CAT 2006
Number of sections	3	3	3
Number of questions	90	75	75
Difficulty level (Overall)	Difficult	Difficult	Moderate
Difficulty level (Quant)	Difficult	Difficult	Easy
Difficulty level (EU + RC)	Difficult	Difficult	Difficult
Difficulty level (DI + DS + AR)	Difficult	Moderate	Moderate
Expected cut-off (Overall)	124-128	102 - 107	110-115
Expected cut-off (Quant)	30-32	26 - 28	36-40
Expected cut-off (EU + RC)	46-48	26 - 28	21-25
Expected cut-off (DI + DS + AR)	28-30	34 - 36	34-38

Section-wise Analysis

Quantitative Aptitude

Topic	CAT 2008	CAT 2007	CAT 2006
Overall	25	25	25
Arithmetic	5	8	10
Number system	4	1	7
Percentage, SI-CI, PLD, Avgs	0	4 + 1(DS)	1
Ratio proportion	0		1
Speed Time Distance, Work	1	2	1
Algebra	9	9	9
Equations & Inequalities	3	5	4
Functions & graphs	3	1	1
Maxima minima	0	1	2
Series, sequences & progressions & logs	3	2	2

Geometry	5	3	4
Plane geometry	3	1+1(DS)	4
Mensuration	2	1 (DS)	
Co-ordinate geometry + trigonometry	0		
Modern math	3		2
Miscellaneous math	3	5	

English Usage & Reading Comprehension

Topic	CAT 2008	CAT 2007	CAT 2006
Overall	40	25	25
English usage	20	13	10
Inappropriate Usage	4	0	0
Vocabulary: contextual meaning	4	3	0
Para jumbles		4	0
Sentence completion			0
Sentence correction	4	3	0
Fill In the Blanks	4		0
Critical Reasoning			5
Paragraph Completion	4	3	5
Reading Comprehension	20	12	15
Politics		6	1
History & Mythology	5	6	0
Sociology and Linguistics	5		0
Fiction / Non-fiction, Philosophy & Law	5		2
Art & Culture	5		0

Data interpretation, Data sufficiency, Analytical reasoning

Topic	CAT 2008	CAT 2007	CAT 2006
Overall	25	25	25
Data Interpretation	22	21	20
Logical Based Table	2 sets (3 Qs each)	2 sets (4 Qs each)	1 set (5 Qs)
Bar graph	1 Set (4 Questions)		0
Logic based Graph	1 Set (3 Questions)		
Calculations based Table		2 Sets (4 Qs) + 1 Set (5 Qs)	0
Logic based Caselet	2 Sets (5 + 4 Questions)		3 sets (15 Qs)
Data sufficiency	0	4	0
Analytical reasoning	1 Set (3 Questions)	0	1 set (5 Qs)

All the best!

Career Launcher Team