XAT EXAM PREPARATION 2026

Overall, XAT exam pattern is quite different from CAT exam. XAT exam pattern is designed to assess a candidate's decision-making/ analytical-thinking, language skills, quantitative aptitude, and general knowledge. The XAT 2026 exam pattern comprises a total of 95 questions spread across four key sections. These include Decision Making (21 questions), Verbal and Logical Ability (26 questions), Quantitative Ability and Data Interpretation (28 questions), and General Knowledge (20 questions). Each question carries one mark, making the total to 95 marks. Note that XAT Essay Writing section was remove from XAT 2025 exam pattern. Check table below for a clear understanding.

XAT Exam Pattern 2026

XAT Sections	Number of Questions	Total Marks
Decision Making	21	21
Verbal and Logical Ability	26	26
Quantitative Ability & Data Interpretation	28	28
General Knowledge	20	20
Total	**95**	**95**

XAT Preparation 2026 for Verbal Ability and Logical Reasoning (VALR) Section

To prepare for XAT exam, you should know exam pattern and syllabus. Check complete details below. XAT preparation 2026 tips by toppers follow pattern and syllabus. These details will help you in your XAT preparation journey.

XAT 2025 Verbal Ability & Logical Reasoning - Question Types and Syllabus

In XAT 2025 exam, there were 17 Reading Comprehension questions and 9 Verbal Ability/Reasoning questions. Check break up in the table below.

Area/Questions	No. of Qs.	Level of Difficulty
Grammatically correct sentence	**2**	**Medium**
Fill in the blanks (4 blanks)	**1**	**Medium**
Jumbled Paragraphs (5 statements)	**2**	**Medium**

Critical Reasoning	3	Medium
Main idea/message of the given image	1	Medium
RC Passages – 5 (300-450 words)	15	Difficult
Poem-based passage	2	Difficult

XAT **Verbal Ability & Logical Reasoning** section syllabus is given below.

Topics		
Vocabulary Based Questions	Fill in the blanks	Synonyms/Antonyms
Contextual Meaning of Words	Jumbled Paragraphs	Correction of Errors in Sentences
Correct Usage of Words	Completion of Sentences/Paragraph	Critical Reasoning
Cloze Test	Poem	Grammar Section

XAT Syllabus for Reading Comprehensions

Topic		
RC Passages on various topics	Main Idea & Purpose based Questions	Inference Based Questions
Author's View type of Questions	Explanation of Words/Phrases	Strengthening and weakening arguments

Toppers Tips for XAT VALR Preparation

- **Daily Newspaper Reading for RCs & Poems**: Reading editorials from quality newspapers helps build comprehension. Says Nipun Garg (XAT Topper 99.95%; XLRI PGDM-BM 2023-25), "My main source for preparation of the VA section was the daily newspapers (mainly *The Hindu* or *Indian Express*). Apart from that, one of

the main things anyone should focus on is to read the RCs and poems in the exam extremely carefully before attempting."

- **Regular Practice with Short Passages**: Consistent effort and timed practice can boost accuracy in VA. Says Harsh Gupta (XAT Topper 99.99%; XLRI PGDM-BM 2023-25), "For verbal, I was mainly studying from online available sources... I was regularly reading short passages on diverse topics and I had set a fixed timing of 1.5-2 hrs every day to spend on verbal section solving RCs and critical reasoning questions."
- **Focus on Understanding, Not Just Speed**: Clarity of thought helps avoid silly mistakes. Says Harsh Gupta, "My major focus in verbal was to ensure that I can understand the meaning of the passages and poems and don't make silly mistakes during examination."

XAT Preparation 2026 for Decision Making Section

Decision Making (DM) is a unique section in Xavier Aptitude Test (XAT). It tests your ability to holistically view a situation and propose a solution to a problem. DM also tests you on your ethical standing. To prepare well for this section, you should know exam pattern and syllabus. Check complete details below. XAT preparation tips by toppers follow pattern and syllabus.

XAT 2025 Decision Making Section: Type of Questions

This section consisted of 21 questions. The section consisted of 7 sets of 3 questions each. Some questions were ambiguity with no clear "correct answer". XAT 2024 DM Section break up is also given below.

XAT 2024 Decision Making Section: Type of Questions

Sub-section/ Topic	Type of Questions	Description	No of Questions
Caselet-1	Problem Based on Human Resources	Experience Credentials of Employees	3
Caselet-2	Problem Based on ABC Business School	Disciplined School with High Placements but less learning	3
Caselet-3	Problem Based on Taxis	Competition among Taxi Drivers	3

Caselet-3	Problem Based on Sales & Marketing	SUV Sales Target Met but recovery of loss a concern due to extended warranty	3
Caselet-4	Problem Based on Household help	Wrongful Termination of Domestic Help	3
Caselet-5	Problem Based on Human Resources at IT Firm Symbolis	Distribution of Performance Bonus to the Best Employees	3
Caselet-6	Problem Based on Gas Extraction Company Deep Sea c	Releasing the Natural Gas Pressure and Safety Arrangements	3

While XAT DM section does not have any specific syllabus, based on past papers, this can be considered as XAT DM syllabus.

- Analytical Reasoning Decision Making
- HR related Decision Making
- Ethical Issues Decision Making
- Mixed Issues related to above dimensions

a) Analytical Reasoning Decision Making: Focuses on evaluating and interpreting data, identifying patterns, and solving logical dilemmas.

Key Topics:

- Logical consistency and argument evaluation

- Cause and effect relationships

- Dilemma-based scenarios

- Prioritization and sequencing tasks

- Data sufficiency and interpretation

- Evaluating multiple options under constraints

Example: Choosing the best strategy for product pricing based on market data.

b) HR-Related Decision Making: Tests understanding of organizational behavior, employee management, and workplace dynamics.

Key Topics:

- Recruitment and selection dilemmas

- Performance evaluation and appraisal

- Promotions and internal conflicts

- Conflict resolution in teams

- Workplace policy decisions

- Handling diversity and inclusion

Example: Deciding whether to promote a high-performing but controversial employee.

c) Ethical Issues Decision Making: Assesses ability to make morally sound choices in ambiguous or high-stakes situations.

Key Topics:

- Ethics vs. profitability

- Confidentiality and transparency

- Conflict of interest

- Corporate social responsibility

- Fair treatment and justice

- Whistleblowing scenarios

Example: Choosing between reporting a colleague's misconduct vs. team loyalty.

d) Mixed Issues (Analytical + HR + Ethical): These scenarios combine multiple dimensions, requiring integrated thinking and balanced judgment.

Key Topics:

- Navigating conflicts that involve HR, ethics, and logic

- Trade-offs between ethical integrity and business goals

- Multifaceted problems with both qualitative and quantitative aspects

- Situational judgment with limited information

Example: A team lead must balance employee morale, project deadline, and compliance with a new corporate directive.

Toppers Tips for XAT DM Preparation

- **Practice Past Year Papers Thoroughly**: Consistent practice with previous DM sets is crucial. Says Nandagopal V (XAT Topper 99.99%; XLRI PGDM-BM 2023-25), "To prepare for DM, my recommendation would be to practise previous year papers, as many times as you want, specifically the DM section."
- **Match the Examiner's Perspective**: Understanding the expected logic behind answers is key. Says Nandagopal V, "Each of us has a unique perspective... Unless this perspective matches with the examiner's, there is no point in our justifications."
- **Discuss Case Studies with Peers**: Peer discussions can reveal alternate, valid interpretations. Says Nipun Garg (XAT Topper 99.95%; XLRI PGDM-BM 2023-25), "I also relied on few of my friends to discuss the given case studies to gain a different perspective."
- **Focus on Logical Deduction**: Understanding the rationale behind correct answers improves accuracy. Says Nipun Garg, "I tried to deduce logically why the given answer was correct."

XAT Preparation 2026 for Quantitative Ability & Data Interpretation Section

Quantitative Ability & Data Interpretation (QADI) section in XAT assesses the foundational understanding of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, mensuration, modern maths. The questions on DI are about clear interpretation, summarization, and insightful analysis of the data. To prepare well for this section, you should know exam pattern and syllabus. Check complete details below. XAT preparation tips by toppers are also given.

XAT 2025 Quantitative Ability & Data Interpretation Section: Type of Questions

In XAT 2025 exam, out of the 28 questions in the section, 16 questions were on Quantitative Ability and 12 questions were on Data Interpretation. In Quantitative Ability section there were questions from Arithmetic, Geometry, Modern maths, Algebra and Numbers. Check break up below. There were four sets of Data Interpretation with 3 questions in each set. Details are given below.

XAT 2025 Quantitative Ability Questions

Type of Questions	No of Questions
Arithmetic	3
Geometry	5

Modern Math	3
Algebra	3
Numbers	2
Total	**16**

XAT 2025 Data Interpretation Section Questions

Type of Questions	No of Questions
Scatter Plot / Line Graph (observation) based set	3
Arithmetic based set	3
Average based set	3
Number-matrix based set	3
Total	12

Syllabus for XAT Quantitative Aptitude Section

Percentages	Algebra	Number System
Geometry	Profit and Loss	Simple and Compound Interest
Speed, Time and Distance	Averages	Time and Work
Ratio and Proportion	Mensuration	Linear Equations
Logarithm	Venn Diagrams	Progressions
Binomial Theorem	Inequalities	Trigonometry
Probability Functions	Permutation and Combination	Surds and Indices

XAT Syllabus for Data Interpretation Section

Bar Diagrams	Pie Charts

Data Analysis and Comparison	Graphs
Data Charts	Data Tables

Toppers Tips for XAT Quantitative Ability & Data Interpretation Section

- **Practice Geometry and Mensuration**: These often-ignored topics can be game-changers. Says Nandagopal V (XAT Topper 99.99%), "The competitive advantage of putting in the extra hours in them are two-pronged... you might know some theorems which that can help you solve these questions really fast, thus saving time."
- **Use Reliable Prep Books**: Structured materials help build core concepts. Says Nandagopal V, "I prepared for the QA section in CAT by practising questions from the Arun Sharma book."
- **Daily Practice Across Topics**: Consistent variety keeps concepts fresh. Says Harsh Gupta (XAT Topper 99.99%), "My major preparation strategy for this section was to solve a set of diverse questions covering all major domains every day to retain concepts in my mind."
- **Smart Question Selection in Exam**: Attempt familiar topics first to optimize time. Says Harsh Gupta, "In final exam I attempted the questions of topics I was most comfortable in and rest I attempted only after I had solved everything else."

XAT Preparation 2026 for General Knowledge (GK) Section

General Knowledge section has 20 questions in XAT 2025 exam. The score in this section is not taken into account for percentile calculation in XAT exam. However, during XLRI PI Round GK plays an important role in final selection. In-depth and regular reading of GK helps more as sometimes a few GK questions in XAT appear trickier and need intensive reading. Below is shared the topic wise XAT entrance exam GK syllabus on which questions were based in XAT 2024 in this section.

General Knowledge (GK) Topics & Questions Appeared in XAT 2024

Sub-section/ Topic	Type of Questions	Description	No of Questions
Static GK	History	Historical capital cities of India; Famous battles; Doctrine of lapse	3
Static GK & Changes	Geography	National capitals of countries; Flow of River Ganges	2

Static & Current	Economics & Business	Brics	1
Current Affairs	Personality & Awards	Dr Akshata Krishnamurthy, Matthew Perry,	2
Current Affairs	Science & Technology	Aditya L-1; X 37B	2
Current Affairs	Sports	Women's Premier League, Asian Games	2
Static & Current	Books & Authors	Match the authors of the books	1
Current Affairs	Latest National & International	Country pulling out of "Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe"; Air India's AI; "Ghol" as the state fish; City illuminating 22.23 lakh earthen lamps; Earthquake in Japan;	5
Miscellaneous	Companies, people, work, action	Leap Year calculation; Dedicated air cargo service in India; ChatGPT, Google Bard, Chatsonic	3
Current Affairs	Nobel Prize	Nobel Peace Prize, Nobel Prize in Economics	2
Static & Current	Culture & Entertainment	Movie Oppenheimer, Nabanno harvest festival of Bengal and Bangladesh	2
Total	--	--	25

XAT Static GK Syllabus

Business, Finance and Economics	The Indian Constitution and Laws	History and Geography
Famous Personalities	Awards and Winners	Books and Authors
Science and Technology	Important Dates & Events	Art & Culture

XAT Current Affairs Syllabus

National Current Affairs	International Current Affairs	Political Developments
Business and Economic News	Environmental Issues	New Government Schemes
Awards and Achievements	Sports News	Science and Tech Updates

Toppers Tips for GK Preparation for XAT 2026

1. Start Early, Stay Consistent: GK isn't a last-minute sprint. Says Tanish Jain (XAT Topper 99.99%), "GK preparation strategy that I followed is to read newspapers consistently for 6 months prior to XAT. Very difficult to prepare for GK last minute."

2. GK Matters Beyond Percentile: Even though it doesn't impact your XAT percentile, it plays a key role in XLRI admissions. Says Kanika Mehra (XAT Topper 98.32%), "Although GK score is not counted in percentile preparation, it plays important role in XLRI admission."

3. Leverage Newspaper Reading: It boosts not just GK but also essay and interview prep. Says Kanika Mehra, "Try reading a newspaper every day... it will help you with your VARC, essay and interview as well."

4. Pick the Right Publications: Quality of source matters. Says Kanika Mehra, "Pick up something like *The Hindu*, *Mint* or *Indian Express*. Read editorials in these papers."

XAT Preparation Strategy 2026

Cracking XAT requires focused preparation across three core sections: Verbal Ability, Decision-Making, Quantitative Ability. General Knowledge section is not used for calculating percentile but must not be ignored. These XAT preparation tips can helpd you maximize your performance.

- Understand the Exam Pattern and Syllabus: As detailed above, familiarize yourself with the XAT syllabus and sectional structure. Knowing the number of questions in each section will help you prioritize your preparation.
- Focus on Decision-Making: Practice decision-making caselets daily, as this section is unique to XAT. Review past years' papers to identify common patterns and improve your problem-solving approach.
- Enhance Verbal Reasoning: Develop critical reasoning and comprehension skills by reading diverse materials. Focus on tackling RC passages, grammar questions, and logical reasoning problems.

- Strengthen Quantitative Ability: Concentrate on key areas like arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. Regularly solve practice problems and take timed mock tests to boost speed and accuracy.
- Brush Up your General Knowledge: Follow current affairs and static GK topics, covering both national and international news. Review business and economic developments relevant to economy and business.
- Take Regular Mock Tests: Take full-length mock tests and analyze your performance after each. Focus on understanding errors and improving time management for each section.
- Finally, Manage Stress: Don't let the exam stress overpower you. Manage it with daily smart preparation and stress busters like music and exercise.

XAT Preparation Books 2026

XAT preparation books are same as books used for CAT preparation since both tests are designed to assess similar skills and understanding. Check these preparation books for CAT which are sufficient for all sections except GK.

Author	Book Title	Edition	Price
Arun Sharma	**How to Prepare for QUANTITATIVE APTITUDE for CAT**	11th Edition Paperback (19 June 2024)	M.R.P.: 1,050.00
Arun Sharma, Meenakshi Upadhyay	**How to Prepare for VERBAL ABILITY & READING COMPREHENSION for CAT**	11th Edition | VARC Paperback (21 May 2024)	M.R.P.: 1,020.00
Arun Sharma	**How to Prepare For DATA INTERPRETATION For CAT**	8th Edition Paperback (17 May 2023)	M.R.P.: 885.00
Arun Sharma	**How to Prepare For LOGICAL REASONING For CAT**	7th Edition Paperback (21 June 2023)	M.R.P.: 845.00
Arun Sharma, Meenakshi Upadhyay	**Chapter Wise Solved Previous Years' Papers for CAT**	2nd Edition Paperback (9 September 2022)	M.R.P.: 559.00

Additionally, you can also refer to these XAT Exam specific books.

- Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension for XAT by Gautam Puri: This book is specifically written for XAT aspirants and covers verbal ability, reading comprehension, and critical reasoning.
- Jabbing the XAT with Solved Papers by R.K. Jha: Specifically written for XAT aspirants, this book includes decision-making questions, along with solutions and explanations.
- XAT Comprehensive Guide by Nishit K. Sinha: This book is prepared for XAT aspirants and covers all sections of the exam, including Quantitative Aptitude, Decision Making, and Verbal Ability. A good guide.

XAT Mocks 2026: Best Preparation Tool

Practice test papers for XAT prepared by top experts and XAT toppers are good tool for XAT preparation and to crack XAT exam with high score. XAT preparation with sample papers can become easy as the XAT Mocks include the best selected questions for XAT preparation. These Mock tests are available both online and offline.

To complete your preparation, you can take free online XAT Mock Tests, XAT Sample Papers and XAT Previous Year Question Papers on MBAUniverse.com from following links.

XAT Mock Tests

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