

CAT Exam Pattern 2026: Check Section Wise Pattern, Marking Scheme, Types of Questions

CAT 2026 Exam Pattern will test candidate's verbal ability, logical reasoning and data interpretation skills, and mathematical problem-solving skills. **CAT Exam Pattern consists of 68 questions** divided in three sections: **Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC); Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR); Quantitative Aptitude (QA)**. In 2025, the CAT exam had a total of 204 marks. CAT marking scheme is +3 for correct answers, -1 for incorrect MCQs, and no negative marking for TITA (Type in the Answer) questions. CAT exam duration is 120 minutes, and exam is conducted as computer-based test. Check section wise CAT Pattern 2026 below. [CAT 2026 exam](#) will be held on November 29, 2026.



CAT Exam Pattern 2026

**Check Section Wise Pattern, Marking
Scheme, Types of Questions**

CAT Exam Pattern: Changes in Last Five Years

Before we discuss CAT 2026 exam pattern, take a look at changes in last five years.

1. Total Number of Questions:

- In 2019 and 2020, CAT had 100 questions (VARC: 34, DILR: 32, QA: 34).
- From 2021 onwards, the number of questions was reduced to 66 (VARC: 24, DILR: 20, QA: 22), making the test shorter but more intense. This pattern continued till CAT 2023.
- Total number of questions in CAT 2024 and 2025 exam were increased to 68.

2. Time Duration:

- Until 2019, CAT had a 3-hour duration (60 minutes per section).
- From 2020 onwards, the exam duration was reduced to 2 hours, with 40 minutes per section, which increased the pressure on time management.

3. Sectional Pattern & Difficulty Level:

- **VARC section** has seen a greater emphasis on Reading Comprehension, with fewer Verbal Ability questions.
- **DILR Section** has become more reasoning-focused, with tougher logic-based sets and fewer straightforward data interpretation questions.
- **QA Section** has shifted slightly towards Arithmetic, making it more accessible for non-engineering background candidates.

4. Question Types – MCQ vs. TITA:

- The TITA (Type in the Answer) questions have fluctuated but generally make up 25-30% of the total paper. Check break-up of CAT 2025 in the following section.
- The number of MCQs has reduced, making the paper more unpredictable, as TITA questions do not have negative marking.

5. Slot-wise Variations & Normalization:

Since CAT is conducted in multiple slots, the level of difficulty has varied across different slots, requiring score normalization to ensure fairness in percentile calculations.

CAT Exam Pattern 2026

Looking at previous years' trends, CAT exam pattern 2026 is expected to be similar to previous year's paper with only minor changes in number of questions per section. The expected CAT 2026 Exam pattern is given below.

CAT Exam Pattern 2026 (Expected)

Section No.	Section Name	Duration	MCQs	TITA	Total
I	VARC	40 min	20	4	24
II	DI and LR	40 min	11	11	22
III	QA	40 min	14	8	22
Total		120 min	45	23	68

CAT PREVIOUS YEAR PAPER – CAT 2024 SLOT 1

[Download PDF](#)

[CAT Marking Scheme 2026](#)

The CAT 2026 marking scheme awards +3 marks for each correct answer, -1 mark for each incorrect Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ), and no negative marking for Non-MCQ (TITA) questions. Total marks in CAT exam are 204 marks.

CAT 2026 VARC Exam Pattern: Question Paper Break-up & Marking Scheme

To understand CAT Exam Pattern 2026 for VARC section, candidates should review the pattern of this section in CAT 2025 paper. Last year, the CAT 2025 VARC section consisted of 16 Reading Comprehension questions and 8 Verbal Ability questions. Check slot wise details below.

CAT 2025 VARC Slot 1: RC Passages, Topics, and Weightage

Area / Questions	No of Qs.	Type
Reading Comprehension	16	MCQ
RC 1: Alienists and the art of diagnosing mental disorders	4	MCQ
RC 2: Income inequality and economic growth	4	MCQ
RC 3: Objections to Electronic Music as a musical genre	4	MCQ
RC 4: Complex Systems and the dynamics of tail events	4	MCQ
Verbal Ability	08	MCQ & TITA
Paragraph completion	2	MCQ
Summary	2	MCQ
Odd Sentence Questions	2	TITA
Jumbled Paragraphs	2	TITA

CAT 2025 VARC Slot 2: RC Passages, Topics, and Weightage

Area / Questions	No of Qs.	Type
Reading Comprehension	16	MCQ
RC 1: How tetrafish adapted and evolved	4	MCQ
RC 2: Biases of AI	4	MCQ
RC 3: The role of "Place" in literature	4	MCQ
RC 4: Science and culture	4	MCQ
Verbal Ability	08	MCQ & TITA
Paragraph completion	2	MCQ
Summary	2	MCQ

Area / Questions	No of Qs.	Type
Odd Sentence Questions	2	TITA
Jumbled Paragraphs	2	TITA

CAT 2025 VARC Slot 3: RC Passages, Topics, and Weightage

Area / Questions	No of Qs.	Type
Reading Comprehension	16	MCQ
RC 1: Ill-effects of dams	4	MCQ
RC 2: AI and ethical decision-making	4	MCQ
RC 3: The Forest Act 1982	4	MCQ
RC 4: Tribal art	4	MCQ
Verbal Ability	08	MCQ & TITA
Paragraph completion	2	MCQ
Summary	2	MCQ
Odd Sentence Questions	2	TITA
Jumbled Paragraphs	2	TITA

CAT PREVIOUS YEAR PAPER – CAT 2024 SLOT 2

[Download PDF](#)

CAT 2026 DILR Exam Pattern: Question Paper Break-up & Marking Scheme

Data Interpretation for CAT section tests a candidate's ability to analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions from a given numerical data. The questions in CAT Data Interpretation section are typically based on tables, bar graphs, line charts, pie charts, caselets, and mixed data sets.

Logical Reasoning for CAT section evaluates a candidate's ability to analyze patterns, identify relationships, and solve complex problems using logical reasoning. Common Logical Reasoning questions in CAT exam include arrangements, puzzles, blood relations, syllogisms, Venn diagrams, and logical sequences.

To better understand CAT Exam Pattern 2026 for DILR section, candidates should review the pattern of this section in CAT 2025 paper. Last year, the CAT 2025 DILR section consisted of 36 Data Interpretation questions and 30 Logical Reasoning questions. Check slot wise details below.

CAT 2025 DILR Slot 1 Analysis: Set-wise Distribution & Question Types

Area	Set Description	No. of Questions	Question Type
1. Data Interpretation	Performance rating of 6 employees	5	4 TITA
2. Data Interpretation	Import-Export data of 5 countries	4	4 MCQ
3. Logical Reasoning	Circular arrangement set involving 4 persons and 7 chairs	5	4 MCQ 1 TITA
4. Logical Reasoning	Five persons tapping yes and no	4	2 MCQ 2 TITA
5. Logical Reasoning	Train movement from stations A to E	4	4 TITA
Total No of Questions		22	

CAT 2025 DILR Slot 2 Analysis: Set-wise Distribution & Question Types

Area	Set Description	No. of Questions	Question Type
1. Data Interpretation	Pollution Index – Weighted average	5	1 MCQ 3 TITA
2. Data Interpretation	Authors and Number of Books (2 Bar Graphs)	4	2 MCQ 2 TITA
3. Data Interpretation	Scatter Plot (Index calculations of 3 years)	4	4 MCQ
4. Logical Reasoning	Ranking (6 balls and 4 holes)	4	2 MCQ 3 TITA
5. Logical Reasoning	Musicians	5	2 MCQ 3 TITA
Total No of Questions		22	

CAT 2025 DILR Slot 3 Analysis: Set-wise Distribution & Question Types

Area	Set Description	No. of Questions	Question Type
1. Logical Reasoning	6 friends calling each other	4	1 MCQ 3 TITA
2. Data Interpretation	Four friends solving puzzles – chart	4	2 MCQ 2 TITA
3. Logical Reasoning	Circular Arrangement (7 students)	4	4 MCQ
4. Data Interpretation	Currency Exchange – 4 countries	5	2 MCQ 3 TITA
5. Data Interpretation	Trade Balance – Import & Export	5	2 MCQ 3 TITA
Total No of Questions		22	

CAT 2026 Quantitative Aptitude Pattern: Arithmetic, Algebra Weightage

Quantitative Aptitude (QA) for CAT section assesses a candidate's mathematical skills, problem-solving ability, and numerical aptitude. The questions in Quantitative Aptitude test the conceptual clarity, logical application, and time management skills. CAT Quantitative Aptitude section covers topics from arithmetic, algebra, geometry, number systems, and modern mathematics. Read CAT Quantitative Ability exam pattern.

To better understand CAT Exam Pattern 2026 for Quant section, candidates should review the pattern of this section in CAT 2025 paper. Last year, the CAT 2025 DILR section was dominated by Arithmetic (8 questions), followed by Algebra (4 questions) and Numbers (4 questions). Check slot wise details below.

CAT 2025 Quant Slot 1 Analysis: Topics, Weightages

Sub-section & Module	Description	No. of Questions
Number System	Factors 1, Digits Based 1, Set Based 1	3
Algebra	Log 1, Linear Equations 2, Functions 2, Inequality 1	6
Arithmetic	TSD 1, T&W 1, SI CI 1, Percentage 1, Ratio 1, PLD 1, Mixture 1, Maxima & Minima 1	8
Modern Math	P&C 1	1

Sub-section & Module	Description	No. of Questions
Geometry & Mensuration	Circle 1, Polygon 1, Coordinate Geo 2	4
Total		22

CAT 2025 Quant Slot 2 Analysis: Topics, Weightages

Sub-section & Module	Description	No. of Questions
Number System	Digit 1, Remainder 1, Divisors 1	3
Algebra	Log 1, Linear Equations 2, Functions 1, Sequence & Series 1, Algebraic Expression 1, Maxima/Minima 1, Quadratic Equation 2	8
Arithmetic	TSD 1, T&W 1, SI CI 1, Percentage 0, PLD 2, Mixture 1, Averages 1, Ratio 1	8
Modern Math		0
Geometry & Mensuration	Circle/Tangent 1, Polygon (Hexagon Based) 1, Triangle 1, Coordinate Geo 0	3
Total		22

CAT 2025 Quant Slot 3 Analysis: Topics, Weightages

Sub-section & Module	Description	No. of Questions
Number System	Digit Based 2, Calculation Based 1	3
Algebra	Log 1, Functions 2, Max. Min. 2, Exponent 1	6
Arithmetic	TSD 2, T&W 1, Ratio 2, PLD 1, Mixture 1, Averages 1, Pipes & Cisterns 1	9
Modern Math	Set Theory 1	1
Geometry & Mensuration	Triangle 2, Trapezium 1	3
Total		22

CAT PREVIOUS YEAR PAPER – CAT 2024 SLOT 3

[Download PDF](#)

[CAT Exam Pattern 2026 PDF Download](#)

CAT Exam Pattern 2026 PDF is available on MBAUniverse.com to download. Simply click on download PDF button below, complete a quick registration, and your CAT Exam Pattern PDF will download automatically. CAT Exam Pattern PDF 2026 download is free on MBAUniverse.com.

CAT Exam Syllabus 2026

CAT exam pattern and syllabus are related to each other. CAT Syllabus is based on important topics in three sections as in exam pattern that were covered in last 10 year's papers. CAT Verbal Ability Syllabus includes Para Jumbles, Para Summary, and Odd One Out. CAT Reading Comprehension Syllabus includes passages from literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences areas. CAT Data Interpretation syllabus includes questions on Charts and Graphs. CAT Logical Reasoning syllabus includes questions on arrangements, puzzles, blood relations, syllogisms, and Venn diagrams. CAT Quantitative Aptitude syllabus topics from arithmetic, algebra, geometry, number systems, and modern mathematics. Check complete details about [CAT 2026 Syllabus](#).

In conclusion, Exam Pattern for CAT 2026 consists of 68 questions divided in three sections. CAT 2026 Pattern tests a candidate's verbal ability, logical reasoning and data interpretation skills, and mathematical problem-solving skills. Check complete details for CAT 2026 Test Pattern in the article above.