

XAT 2010 Analysis

Overview:

Number of Questions	101
Number of Sections	3
Number of Options	5
Time	120 minutes + Essay (20 Min)
Marks Per Question	1 mark (Assumed)
Negative Marking	Progressive Negative Marking: (1) 0.20 Marks for first five incorrect answers <i>in each section</i> (2) 0.25 for each incorrect answer thereafter

XAT 2010 made minor changes in the pattern – while the number and the coverage of the sections, as well as progressive negative marking were preserved – the number of questions in each section changed. True to its form, all three sections were equally difficult – careful selection of questions, and high level of confidence in the questions attempted were key. A large number of questions could have been left while still performing well in the paper.

The type and the flavor of questions were unique – not easily falling into any clearly defined question types, and concepts learnt. There were 4 Question Paper variants - A, B, C, and D. The section order was different across variants, and the order of questions inside a section was also different. The number of attempts and the cutoffs are expected to reduce compared to XAT 2009.

The essay topic (20 min) was “Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed”.

Section	Category	Total Questions	Ideal Attempts	Expected Cut-offs	Level of Difficulty
1	Analytical Reasoning and Decision Making	30	15+	7-8	High
2	Verbal Ability and Logical Reasoning	31	15+	8-9	High
3	Data Interpretation and Quantitative Ability	40	15+	8-9	High
	Total	101	45+	30	High

Verbal Ability and Logical Reasoning – 31 Questions

Learning Objectives	No. of Questions	Topic	No. of Questions
Fill in the blanks	5	Verbal Reasoning	8
Jumbled sentences	2		
Analogy	1		
FIJ	1	Critical Reasoning	17
Critical Reasoning	16		
Elimination Techniques	6	Reading Comprehension	6
Grand Total	31		31

This section had a strong emphasis on Critical Reasoning. Even the RC passages were dense, rather than long, with a clear focus on inferential and critical reasoning questions. Figures of speech questions that made an entry in XAT 2009 were absent. Almost all the questions required careful thought and a lot of deliberation, and there was plenty of scope of making silly mistakes even with the easier ones.

As the level of difficult of the questions was high, only questions where the confidence level was high should have been attempted. It was possible to identify those worth attempting – 5 Fill in the Blanks (would have taken less time) and a couple of critical reasoning questions were pretty straightforward and should have been attempted.

Data Interpretation & Quantitative Ability – 40 Questions

Learning Objectives	No. of Questions	Topic	No. of Questions
Number Theory	3	Algebra	4
Quadratic and Higher Order Equations	1		
Mixtures and Alligation	1	Arithmetic	6
Percentages	1		
Profit, Loss and Discount	2		
Time and Distance	2		
Tables and Caselets	12	Data Interpretation	12
Data Sufficiency	2	Data Sufficiency	2
Circles	1	Geometry	9
Coordinate Geometry	3		
Mensuration	1		
Quadrilaterals and Other Polygons	1		
Triangles	3		
Functions	1	Modern Maths	6
Permutations and Combinations	1		
Probability	2		
Sequences, Progressions and Series	2		
Others	1	Other MBA Topics	1
Grand Total	40		

The level of difficulty of this section too was quite high. Selection of the one's to be left unattempted was important and there were a number of easy questions that should have been definitely attempted.

Most questions required sound fundamentals and high speed and many of them were verbose. A couple of them foxed even the most prepared test-taker with the dilemma of not knowing where to start. Although all the DI caselets were difficult, the Data Sufficiency questions were simpler and should have been attempted.

The questions on "Relation among three paths on circular field", "four digit prime number with a prime units digit", "Sun Metals", "Equilateral Triangle", "Poles", "Acid concentration", "Length of sides of squares", "clock", "Arrangements of CHCJL" and "chocolate boxes" were simple and should have been attempted.

Analytical Reasoning and Decision Making - 30 Questions

Learning Objectives	No. of Questions	Topic	No. of Questions
Complex Arrangement	13	Logical Reasoning	18
Logical Conditions and Grouping	3		
Miscellaneous	2		
Decision Making	12	Other MBA topics	12
Grand Total	30		

The Decision Making questions in this section should have been attempted – there were some questions that could be answered with high level of confidence.

Conversely, there were a number of Logical Reasoning questions that were quite complicated, and were best avoided. (Eg. *NWC Corp, Bands in XLRI*). The conditional nature of the questions asked (If A, then.....), adding more information in the question, while not providing a complete set in the common data made this different as well as difficult.