

XAT 2011 Analysis

Number of Questions	101
Number of Sections	3
Number of Options	5
Time	120 minutes (plus 20 minutes for the essay)
Marks Per Question	Variable
Negative Marking	25% of Marks for the question

XAT 2011 (for admission into XLRI and other institutes starting 2011) maintained the number of questions at 101, and the sections at three, but was extremely high in shock value. The incremental negative marking of previous years was replaced by 1/4th negative marking. There was a differential marking scheme, with the marks varying from 1 Mark to 5 Marks per Question.

The total marks per section not being given upfront added to the shock value. The varying number of marks per question made question selection critical but extremely difficult. In addition to this, the questions in Verbal Ability maintained the usual high level of difficulty that previous year question papers had. The questions in the remaining two sections were much more difficult than previous years – and most were not solvable in a few minutes.

Section	Category	Total Questions	Ideal Attempts	Ideal Time	Expected Cut-offs (Marks)
1	Analytical Reasoning and Decision Making	24	10-12	40	12-14
2	Quantitative Ability and Data Interpretation	43	10-12	40	10-12
3	Verbal Ability and Logical Reasoning	34	15-18	40	13-15
	Total	101			55+

The breakup of Marks across sections is given below:

Section	Marks per Question					Total Marks for Section
	1	2	3	4	5	
ARDM	1	8	12	1	2	67
QADI	7	14	14	0	8	117
VALR	13	8	12	1	0	69
Total Marks						253

The topic-wise breakup of questions and marks is given below:

1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Mark Questions in each Topic					
Topic	Question having Marks				
	1	2	3	4	5
Algebra	0	1	2	0	4
Arithmetic	1	1	0	0	1
Critical Reasoning	6	4	4	0	0
Data Interpretation	5	6	6	0	0
Data Sufficiency	0	0	1	0	1
Decision Making	1	1	8	1	1
Geometry	0	5	3	0	1
Grammar	0	0	1	0	0
Logical Reasoning	0	5	4	0	1
Modern Maths	1	3	2	0	1
Reading Comprehension	4	0	3	1	0
Verbal Reasoning	3	4	1	0	0
Vocabulary	0	0	3	0	0
Total	21	30	38	2	10

Analytical Reasoning and Decision Making

With approximately 3 marks per question and the least number of questions, this section could be the differentiator for a call. The section was evenly split between Analytical Reasoning (12 questions) and Decision Making (12 questions).

Analytical Reasoning: Three sets out of the four sets were difficult and time consuming. Only the set on allocation of offices to managers and the individual question on silver bars were simpler. The set on the train passengers was full of data and because the table was not completely filled, it led to uncertainty whether the arrangement was correct or not. However, if the arrangement was correctly made, the first and third question of the set could have been easily answered. The second question required more effort. The set on the club and the one on the allocation of rooms to students in a hostel were very difficult and should have been attempted last.

Decision Making: The set on airline fares was more like a case study given to MBA students rather than MBA aspirants. This set took a lot of time without certainty regarding marks. The set on Chetan Textile Mills was the simplest of the decision making questions and should have been attempted.

Quantitative Ability and Data Interpretation

"None of the above" was present in most questions, which made option evaluation impossible. The instructions for Data Sufficiency were a surprise. The first four options were standard. The fifth was "Neither Statement I nor statement II is necessary to answer the question." Many students would have missed this. Overall, selection of the right questions and a very high accuracy would be very important in clearing cut-offs.

A few questions (*probability of crimes, income tax rates*) were conceptually simple but involved intense calculations. The following questions were relatively simple and should have been attempted: *Ladder, Faulty machines, Maximum value of $21 \sin X + 72 \cos X$, probability of crimes, Rakhal, electives in B-school.*

Verbal Ability and Logical Reasoning

Compared to the other sections, this section had the least surprise in this year's paper. The section maintained its flavour and was at par in terms of question quality, complexity and difficulty as last 3 years' XATs. As expected, Critical Reasoning formed the largest component of the section. Grammar and Vocabulary made a surprise entry in the form of punctuation marks, fill in the blanks and odd man out. With a 70% accuracy, one could have looked forward to score around 20 + marks.