

XAT 2015 maintained its reputation as the toughest exam of the season. The difficulty level of the overall exam was higher than the last couple of years (which were relatively easier than expected) but less than the very tough test in 2011. Like last year, GK (along with essay) was a separate section in the main exam but the difference was that 40 minutes were separately allocated to this section while the main test was for 2 hours and 20 minutes. Continuing the recent trend in XAT, each question had the same number of marks and constant one-fourth negative marking.

Summary		
	Paper I	Paper II (GK)
Total Questions	84	30
	114	
Number of Sections	3	1
Options per Question	5	
Negative Marking	1/4th of Marks for the Question	
Marks per Question	Undisclosed	
Expected Overall Cut-offs	26-28	

Paper I

1. Verbal Ability – 28 questions:

The Verbal Ability section was at the difficulty level expected from a XAT test. While the areas covered in the RCs were slightly simpler (on the lines of CAT), the answer options were extremely inferential, thereby compensating for the reduced length and complexity of the RCs. The passages were deceptive, in the sense that though they were readable, deep understanding and/or prior knowledge of the subject matter would have helped.

There were relatively doable Critical Reasoning questions along with some questions on vocabulary (including some in RC).

Thus, selecting the right questions was of utmost importance in this section and it was better to not attempt questions where one wasn't certain of the correct answer.

16-18 attempts in this section would be a good performance. The cut-offs for this section are expected to be around 8-9.

LO	Number of Questions
Reading Comprehension	15
Fill in the Blanks	2
Jumbled Sentences	2
Vocabulary	2
Critical Reasoning	7

2. Decision Making – 23 questions:

This section was less tedious compared to last year due to shorter passages and easier-to-comprehend data. However, the questions were trickier due to the presence of a lot of prioritization-based questions where students had to arrange decisions in a particular order.

It had 23 questions, of which only 3 (the set on Bright Engineering College) were purely logical reasoning based. Though this set was tricky, it could have been attempted keeping in mind the trickier DM sets. Two decision making sets had one mathematical question each (one on foregone earnings and one on generics and patented drugs).

The remaining questions were all pure decision making based. Of these, the set on Mr. Patel was the easiest and should have been attempted. The other sets were all very tricky, due to very close answer options.

On the whole, 8-9 questions could have been attempted in this section. The cut-offs for this section are expected to be 6-7.

Question Type	Number of Questions
Decision Making	20
Venn Diagrams	3

3. Quantitative Ability – 33 questions:

This section was of moderate to tough difficulty level with a few easy questions thrown in. Hence, identifying and selecting these questions was critical.

Some of the “should have been attempted” questions were: sum of A.P. of negative numbers, probability of receiving gifts on time, area of folded rectangle, equation of graph, cost of circular road, both questions on functions, the question on time and work and the question on three-digit number divisible by 10.

On the other hand, the question on $M! - N!$ as well as the one on clock at the top of the tower were very tough and should have been avoided.

On the whole, the questions involved usage of multiple concepts as well as tedious calculations (in some cases).

There were 2 DI sets having 4 questions in each. The set on employee improvement programs looked very tricky but was observational in nature. Even if a student read the graphs correctly and just went through the questions once, he/she would have realized that this was a slightly time consuming but doable set. On the other hand, the set on political parties was very calculation intensive. Each question required multiple calculations. At the most, a couple of questions (one on descending order and one on neutral tweets) should have been attempted.

Approximately 6 attempts in pure QA and 4 attempts in DI (in around 55-60 minutes in all) would be a good performance in this section. The cut-offs for this section are expected to be the lowest at around 6-7.

LO	Number of Questions
Percentages	1
Ratio and Proportion	1
Profit, Loss and Discount	1
Interest and Growth Rates	1
Mixtures and Alligation	1
Time and Distance	1
Time and Work	1
Number Theory	4
Triangles	3
Quadrilaterals and other polygons	2
Co-ordinate Geometry	1
Mensuration	3
Sequences, Progressions and Series	1
Probability	1
Functions	2
Data Sufficiency	1
Charts and Diagrams	4
Tables and Caselets	4

Paper II

This year, the GK section and essay were given as a separate question paper with 40 minutes allotted to them.

There was a lot of emphasis on current events. A well-read student would have been able to attempt atleast 12-14 questions.

The essay, like every year, was quite abstract – “Listening is a dying art. We hardly listen to understand, we only listen to refute or reply”. However, there was no word limit given for the essay.