

MAT Entrance Test 2010

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Management Aptitude Test, popularly known as “MAT”, during the last decade, has become one of the most sought after entrance examinations for admission to B-Schools/Management Institutes in India. A very large section of aspiring students seeking admission to management institutes appear for MAT every year because of the fact that a large number of B-Schools/ institutes which are enrolled with AIMA, admit students, apart from other factors, on the basis of the students’ results/performance in MAT. It is a fact that MAT suits all layers/disciplines of students, particularly those from Arts, Commerce, Bio-technology etc.

MAT, which is conducted by AIMA (All India Management Association), has the approval of Government of India as a national entrance test for admissions to MBA and equivalent programmes.

Planning for MAT

It is imperative that one must start the preparation for MAT as early as possible. The more one practises, the more one gets to learn. MAT, traditionally, is a multiple-choice based examination covering five sections namely Language Comprehension, Mathematical Skills, Data Analysis & Sufficiency, Intelligence & Critical Reasoning and Indian & Global Environment. The enhancement of one’s ability to do well in each section

should be the mantra to do well in MAT. Given below is a basic list of some guidelines which every MAT aspirant should follow:

1. Organised Time-table/ Study Plan :

Time is one of the most crucial factors for the success of MAT and therefore, it is important to prepare a time-table/ schedule for oneself each day of the week, every month to focus on MAT preparation. This will obviously be of great help in following specific plan of activities targeted towards requirements of MAT. The consistency in following the plan within the time-frame is the secret to success.

2. Speed & Accuracy :

To practise as to how to balance between speed and accuracy within the given time should be the main focus for every aspirant. In preparing for MAT, the time given for completing the exam is fixed and not extendable, hence answering the questions accurately within given time is the key to success. Any strategy that one intends to follow necessarily needs to revolve around the time-saving measures to answer the maximum number of questions accurately in the allotted time.

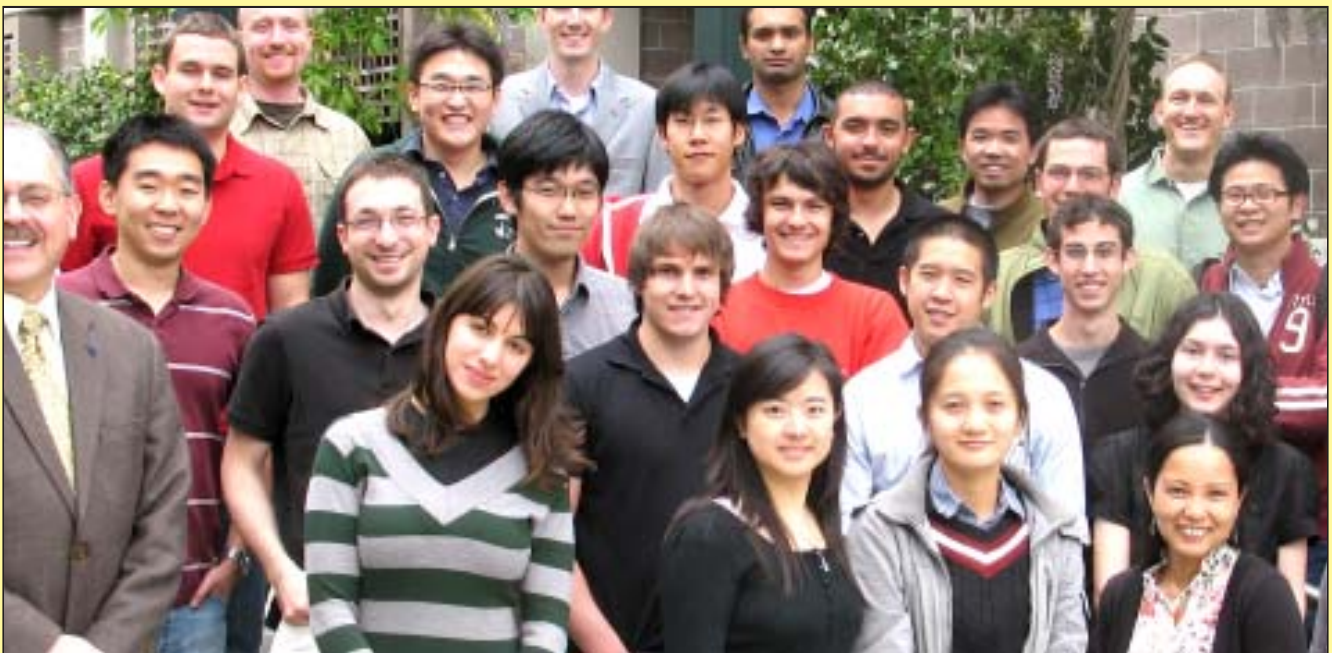
3. General Knowledge & Awareness :

Apart from other areas of knowledge and skills required, one of the sections in the MAT focus



on general knowledge and general awareness of the students. In order to prepare well for this particular part of the paper, one must devote good amount of time everyday to updating oneself with general knowledge across the span of economics, politics, national and international issues. Unlike preparing for the other sections like Mathematical Skills and Data Analysis & Sufficiency, General and Business Awareness requires keeping abreast of happenings through newspapers and other reliable sources of information.

4. Sectional Approach : A sectional approach is one of the best ways of cracking well in most of the sections of MAT where an individual will need to break his/her study schedule into verticals of each subject along with setting targets for qualifying in each one of them. It is best to concentrate on each section



and devote equal time. Even within each section, there is a very clear need for a planned strategy of attempting questions. Unless a clear-cut timed strategy for attempting the test is in place, there is every chance that one may miss out on very easy questions which may be at the end of the section and instead end up solving all the difficult questions that may have been given in the beginning.

5. Use of Tools and Resources :

Some of the assistance and help one can derive in the preparation for MAT could possibly be the use of some of the resources like:

a) **Books :** We recommend students to update themselves through books targeted at preparing for MAT which are available in the market, particularly to practise and sharpen mathematical skills. The Maths Course Book of Class X may be very helpful to practise mathematical skills.

b) **Coaching Classes :** Joining coaching classes in a reputed coaching institute has been found to be helpful for aspiring students as it equips them with a greater understanding about the MAT and other similar tests. It is desirable that the students should join coaching institutes which provide them with a fairly good idea about the composition and character of these entrance tests. It is, however, equally important to practise test-taking skills at home on a regular basis over and above what they are being taught in a coaching institute. Most of the good coaching institutes often share samples of previous years' question papers which help in building the confidence level of the students and also provide them with an overview of what they can plan and prepare for their forthcoming examinations.

c) **Computer Software Programme :** As an alternative to coaching classes which may be expensive, aspiring students can also opt for Computer Software programmes which are available in the market for practising test-taking skills.

6. Assessment of Strengths & Weaknesses :

As mentioned above, the entire MAT paper is divided into five sections namely, Language Comprehension, Mathematical

Skills, Data Analysis & Sufficiency, Intelligence & Critical Reasoning and Indian & Global Environment. Every individual has his own set of strengths and weaknesses and therefore, it is important to identify them and accordingly prepare for the exam. For example, if one feels that he/she is weak in Mathematics, then ample amount of time must be given to prepare for this subject. Having formulae at your fingertips, being strong in mental calculations and developing your own short cuts will prove very useful to score in Mathematical and Data Interpretation sections. Reasoning section is wide and open and covers all types of questions. Since there are no fixed formulae to tackle them, the scores depend on how much one is familiar with myriad of questioning patterns. Continuous process and plan of self-evaluation and assessment very often turn out to be the eye opener for most of the aspirants and help them in catching up with areas they are still lagging behind in.

7. **Mental & Physical Health :** To achieve success in any field of life, one must ensure optimum mental and physical fitness. Same is the case for succeeding in MAT. It is, therefore, important to remember that there is no alternative to physical and mental fitness. Clearly, if one is not fit either physically or mentally, the chances of any success are remote. Ensuring balance between the two through balanced diet, proper sleep, refreshing short naps, and some physical exercise will definitely lead to success.

8. **The "Right" Attitude :** As in anything and everything in life, the key to success lies in our attitude towards any objectives / goals we have and how we orient our minds accordingly. The same applies to MAT. If one looks at this exam as something unachievable or very difficult, success is indeed going to be difficult or may not be possible. However, if one learns to look at it from the perspective of self-development and as a positive challenge, the whole mindset towards it changes for the better.

Norms for MAT

We have been getting several questions from students seeking admission to MBA about requirements and eligibility for MAT. Aspirants should, well in advance, be aware of certain basic information and requirements for appearing in MAT.

Detailed information is given below. The MAT opens up ample opportunities for students to appear in the test as it takes place four times a year, i.e. in February, May, September and December.

Basic Information (As per the AIMA-MAT Bulletin 2010 & AIMA website) :

a) Eligibility Criteria for appearing for MAT:

The minimum qualification for appearing in MAT is graduation in any discipline from any recognised University or equivalent recognised degree. Those who are in their final year of graduation can also apply for MAT for provisional admission subject to the completion of their graduation.

b) **Mode of Test:** The aspirant can choose from any one of the two options to take the test i.e. Paper-pencil based test or Computer-based test in MAT. Although, the aspirant can choose from any one of these options, it is important for every aspiring student to decide the mode of test based on his/her personal competence, comfort and how well they can handle the examination given the time and type of questions.

I. **Paper-pencil-based test:** In a traditional Paper-pencil based test, the candidate is supposed to bring Pen, Pencil, Eraser and Sharpener with him/her, whereas the question paper and answer sheet are provided at the test centre. The student has to attempt the test by answering the questions on the answer-sheet.

II. Computer-based Test:

Computer-based test basically means that the candidate sits in front of a computer and the questions are presented on the computer monitor. The candidate then submits the answers through the use of keyboard or mouse. Each computer is connected to a server, which prepares the question set and delivers it to the candidate on the computer. Computer-based test assumes that the candidate has basic familiarity with the use of computer like the keyboard and mouse operation.

c) Test Pattern & Time Duration :

It is an objective type of a test with multiple-choice answers. Candidates have to answer **200 Questions in 150 minutes**. Questions are divided into five sections. The test is designed to measure a person's general aptitude as the following table indicates:

Section No.	Section	No of Questions	Time Suggested (Minutes)
1.	Language Comprehension	40	30
2.	Mathematical Skills	40	40
3.	Data Analysis and Sufficiency	40	35
4.	Intelligence and Critical Reasoning	40	30
5.	Indian and Global Environment	40	15
	Total	200	150

While the above norms are given in terms of the number of questions and time frame, the key to succeeding in this test is to remember that MAT stresses more on accuracy rather than speed. Therefore, a good strategy would be to first attempt the questions that the student is familiar with and answer them accurately. Once the candidate has attempted all the familiar questions accurately, he/she can then attempt the questions which they were uncertain about.

Test Centres

The test centres for MAT entrance exams are located all over the country and in various countries abroad too. Hence, the reach of MAT is found to be far more extensive than other entrance tests. This is one of the important factors because of which it is availed of by lakhs of students every year and MAT is accepted by hundreds of institutes and university departments.

How to register/ apply for MAT

Candidates can choose any one of the modes of taking the test i.e. between paper-pencil based or computer-based test after which they have the option to choose between any of the three methods given below for MAT registration process:

- The students can obtain the form with MAT Bulletin/CD against cash payment of Rs. 980 from listed branches of Bank of Baroda, listed Study Centres of AIMA and from AIMA, New Delhi and register themselves accordingly.
- Another method of registration for the MAT is to obtain a crossed demand draft (DD) of Rs. 1050 in favour of 'All India Management Association' payable at Delhi from any Bank. The students will then need to register online at AIMA's website i.e. www.aima-ind.org and

enter the demand draft details after which they will be guided through online.

- The third way to apply for MAT is to register online at AIMA's website www.aima-ind.org with Credit Card payment details.

Comparative Analysis between MAT & CAT (As per the AIMA-MAT Bulletin 2010 and CAT-IIM website guidelines)

Very often, the aspiring students are not very clear about the norms and standards of the two most common entrance examinations i.e. CAT & MAT. We believe there are two sets of norms and standards and it should be clearly understood by every aspirant as to what these norms are aiming at in terms of selecting prospective institutes and preparing accordingly. CAT has already been recognised as the most competitive qualifying entrance test for admission to institutes like IIMs and some of the other top B-Schools. These



institutes do not entertain any candidate, who has qualified in the MAT. We also recommend that the students must analyse and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses before deciding to appear for CAT or MAT and not just take a chance per se to appear in both. To give you an overview of some of the features of the CAT and MAT, some comparisons between the two are given below:

	MAT	CAT
Level of the Test	1. MAT affiliated B-Schools are mostly 2 nd tier group of schools.	1. CAT affiliated B-Schools (like IIMs and some other top B-Schools) are ranked a tad higher than the MAT affiliated ones.
Test Pattern	2. MAT has a total of five sections in the test and the total number of questions is 200.	2. CAT has a total of three sections in the test and the total number of questions is 60-70.
Test Duration	3. The duration of MAT is 2 hours and 30 minutes.	3. The test duration in CAT is 2 hours and 15 minutes plus an additional 15 minutes for tutorials.
Mode of Test	4. In MAT, students have the option of attempting either a paper-pencil based test or computer-based test.	4. CAT is a computer-based test.
Eligibility Criteria	5. Candidate should be a graduate; those who are in their final year of graduation can also apply for MAT for provisional admission subject to the completion of their graduation.	5. Candidate must hold a Bachelor's Degree, with at least 50% marks or equivalent CGPA.
Time Period/Frequency of the Test	6. MAT is conducted four times in a year—February, May, September and December.	6. CAT is conducted once a year.

Having a strong desire to achieve a good percentage to get into the B-School of one's own choice is a must along with hard work. Hard work, consistency and a solid preparation plan/strategy in place are the keys to success. The ideal approach should be to hope for the best and prepare for the worst. MAT preparation is like giving it all you have got and at the same time, believing that there is a life beyond MAT

also. The effort of making the entire process of preparation an enjoyable one is of vital importance and will give the aspirant both confidence and success. To sum it up in the words of the famous American author Napoleon Hills, "**Patience, persistence and perspiration (hard work) make an unbeatable combination for success.**"

ALL THE BEST!