

GMAT, The Computer-Adaptive Test

CARLSON
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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The Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) is now administered as a computer-adaptive test (CAT) throughout North America and at many international sites. The paper-based GMAT continues to be available twice a year only at those international locations where the network of computer-based testing sites is not yet complete.

Like the paper-based GMAT, the computer-adaptive GMAT measures general verbal, mathematical, and analytical writing skills that are developed over a long period of time and are associated with success in the first year of study at graduate schools of management. Although the types of questions are the same, both the format of the questions and the test-taking strategies for the CAT are different from those of the paper-based GMAT.

What is a computer-adaptive test?

In a computer-adaptive test, the computer screen displays one question at a time, which is chosen from a very large pool of questions categorized by content and difficulty. The first question in a computer-adaptive test is always of medium difficulty. The selection of each question thereafter is determined by your responses to all previous questions. In other words, the CAT adjusts to your ability level -- you'll get few questions that are either too easy or too difficult for you.

It also means that you must enter an answer for each question, and you may not return to or change your response to any previously answered question. If you guess a correct answer or answer a question incorrectly by mistake, your answers to subsequent questions leads you back to questions that are at the appropriate level of difficulty for you.

How does the GMAT CAT work?

The GMAT CAT includes verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing questions as in the paper-based test, but now you answer them on computer. You have 75 minutes to complete 37 quantitative questions, 75 minutes for 41 verbal questions, and 30 minutes for each of the two analytical writing topics. The types of questions are the same as in the paper-based test, but the multiple-choice questions are not grouped in sections by specific question type. Instead, Data Sufficiency and Problem Solving questions are mingled within the quantitative section, and Sentence Correction, Reading Comprehension and Critical Reasoning questions are mingled within the verbal section.

The verbal and quantitative sections of the GMAT CAT will be computer adaptive, as described above. The Analytical Writing Assessment is administered via computer, but it is not computer adaptive. Instead, you compose the essays by keying in your responses to the two analytical writing questions.

Where and when is the computer-adaptive GMAT offered?

The GMAT CAT is offered three weeks per month, six days per week throughout the year at one of approximately 400 computer-based testing centers in North America and selected international cities. (Testing center hours may vary.) The testing centers are located at various Sylvan Technology Centers®, in colleges and universities, and in field service offices of Educational Testing Service (ETS).

You can schedule your GMAT CAT appointment -- or reschedule if your plans change -- with just a phone call to either an 800 number or a local testing center. You may schedule the test within just a few days of actually taking it, but consider admission deadlines and call early to maximize your chance of getting your preferred test date at the center most convenient for you.

You may retake the GMAT the month following your initial exam. As of July 1, 2004, you may only take the

When do I get my GMAT CAT scores?

You can elect to get unofficial verbal, quantitative, and total scores on site as soon as you complete the GMAT and you can also select the schools to which you would like your official score report sent. Your official score report, including your score on the Analytical Writing Assessment, are sent to you within ten days of testing.

What does the GMAT cost?

The Board of Directors of the Graduate Management Admission Council establishes the GMAT fee. During the 2004-2005 testing year, the GMAT fee worldwide is \$225. The fee is subject to change.

Complete information about the GMAT CAT, including how to schedule an appointment and how to prepare, are provided in the GMAT Information Bulletin and on their Web site.

How should I prepare for the CAT?

The best way to prepare for the GMAT CAT is to become familiar with each type of question and the corresponding directions. Sample questions and directions are currently available on their Web site and are available in the GMAT Bulletin. For those who want to practice on actual computer-adaptive tests, Test Preparation for the Computer-Adaptive GMAT: POWERPREP® Software is available now. The tenth edition of The Official Guide for GMAT Review, the only guide with real GMAT questions, is also available. You can order these publications from their Web site.

The following information lists some of the local options in preparation for the GMAT. This list is not inclusive and does not represent an endorsement.

- ❑ **University of Minnesota, College of Continuing Education:** “Classroom Based Instruction (CBI): Preparing for the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT)” Offered year round. Meets six times; cost is \$455. Or take “I-Prep for the GMAT,” a web-based course, also \$565. Also available, “Math Intensive for the GRE or GMAT”, meets 5 times; cost is \$220. To register call (612) 625-7777.
- ❑ **Kaplan Education Centers:** Courses range from private to classroom to online with a cost range of about \$120 - \$4000. For more information and to register call (612) 641-1200 or 1(800) KAP-TEST, or online at www.kaptest.com.
- ❑ **The Princeton Review:** Classroom, online or private classes available. For more information or to register, please contact www.review.com or call 800-2RE-VIEW

Contacting GMAT

Web site: www.mba.com

E-mail: gmata@ets.org or stasd@ets.org (test takers with disabilities)

Phone: (609) 771-7330 or (609) 734-9362 (TTY)

Fax: (609) 883-4349

Mail: GMAT
Educational Testing Service
PO Box 6103
Princeton, NJ 08541-6103 USA

The above information was compiled from the Graduate Management Admission Web site. The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, handicap, age, veteran status or sexual orientation. This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Please call the Carlson MBA programs office at (612) 625-5555 or (800) 926-9431.

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