

# Manhattan Review®

Test Prep & Admissions Consulting

## GMAT® in a Nutshell

Joern Meissner, PhD (Columbia Business School)  
[www.manhattanreview.com](http://www.manhattanreview.com)

Turbocharge  
Your  
GMAT®

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# Manhattan Review®

Test Prep & Admissions Consulting

## GMAT in a Nutshell About the GMAT

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The highly acclaimed Turbocharge Your GMAT series is the result of the arduous effort of Manhattan Review to offer the most comprehensive and clear treatment of the concepts tests in the GMAT. The Manhattan Review Turbocharge Your GMAT preparation materials include over 600 pages of well-illustrated and professionally presented strategies and originally written problems for both the Verbal Section and Quantitative Section, 200 pages of detailed solutions, and more than 300 pages of internally developed Quantitative Glossary and Verbal Vocabulary List with detailed definitions, related words and sentence examples. The detailed breakdown of exclusive practice problems per category is 40+ Reading Comprehension passages, 60 Critical Reasoning questions, 250 Sentence Correction questions, and 300+ Quantitative questions.

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## **About the Company**

Manhattan Review's origin can be traced directly to an Ivy-League MBA classroom in 1999. While lecturing on advanced quantitative subjects to MBAs at Columbia Business School in New York City, Prof. Dr. Joern Meissner was asked by his students to assist their friends, who were frustrated with conventional GMAT preparation options. He started to create original lectures that focused on presenting the GMAT content in a coherent and concise manner rather than a download of voluminous basic knowledge interspersed with so-called "tricks." The new approach immediately proved highly popular with GMAT students, inspiring the birth of Manhattan Review. Over the past 15+ years, Manhattan Review has grown into a multi-national firm, focusing on GMAT, GRE, LSAT, SAT, and TOEFL test prep and tutoring, along with business school, graduate school and college admissions consulting, application advisory and essay editing services.

## **About the Founder**

Professor Joern Meissner, the founder and chairman of Manhattan Review has over twenty-five years of teaching experience in undergraduate and graduate programs at prestigious business schools in the USA, UK and Germany. He created the original lectures, which are constantly updated by the Manhattan Review Team to reflect the evolving nature of the GMAT GRE, LSAT, SAT, and TOEFL test prep and private tutoring. Professor Meissner received his Ph.D. in Management Science from Graduate School of Business at Columbia University (Columbia Business School) in New York City and is a recognized authority in the area of Supply Chain Management (SCM), Dynamic Pricing and Revenue Management. Currently, he holds the position of Full Professor of Supply Chain Management and Pricing Strategy at Kuehne Logistics University in Hamburg, Germany. Professor Meissner is a passionate and enthusiastic teacher. He believes that grasping an idea is only half of the fun; conveying it to others makes it whole. At his previous position at Lancaster University Management School, he taught the MBA Core course in Operations Management and originated three new MBA Electives: Advanced Decision Models, Supply Chain Management, and Revenue Management. He has also lectured at the University of Hamburg, the Leipzig Graduate School of Management (HHL), and the University of Mannheim. Professor Meissner offers a variety of Executive Education courses aimed at business professionals, managers, leaders, and executives who strive for professional and personal growth. He frequently advises companies ranging from Fortune 500 companies to emerging start-ups on various issues related to his research expertise. Please visit his academic homepage [www.meiss.com](http://www.meiss.com) for further information.

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>GMAT in a Nutshell</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Overview of GMAT	1
1.1.1	2012 Changes in Test Administration	2
1.1.2	GMAT Sections and Score Distributions	5
1.1.3	Overview of Basic GMAT Concepts	9
1.2	Key Test-taking and Preparation Strategies	10
1.2.1	Problem Solving	12
1.2.2	Data Sufficiency	13
1.2.3	Sentence Correction	15
1.2.4	Critical Reasoning	17
1.2.5	Reading Comprehension	18
1.2.6	Analytical Writing Assessment	19
1.2.7	Integrated Reasoning	20
1.2.8	Test Preparation Advice	21
1.3	Taking the GMAT	22
1.3.1	Schedule Your Test	22
1.3.2	Test Fee	22
1.3.3	On the Test Day	23
1.3.4	Score Report	24





# Chapter 1

## GMAT in a Nutshell

### 1.1 Overview of GMAT

Business School applicants must take the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT). The GMAT is a standardized test delivered in English. Unlike academic grades, which have varying significance based on each school's grading guidelines, the GMAT scores are based on the same standard for all test takers and they help business schools assess the qualification of an individual against a large pool of applicants with diverse personal and professional backgrounds. The GMAT scores play a significant role in admissions decisions since they are more recent than most academic transcripts of an applicant and they evaluate a person's verbal, quantitative and writing skills.

The GMAT is approximately 4-hour Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) and can be taken at any one of many test centers around the world 5 or 6 days a week. You may take the GMAT only once every 31 days and no more than five times within any 12-month period. The retest policy applies even if you cancel your score within that time period. All of your scores and cancellations within the last five years will be reported to the institutions you designate as score recipients.

The GMAT consists of three separately timed sections. GMAT has changed in June'2012. Before June'12, there used to be two 30-minute sub-sections consists of an analytical writing task of writing an Argument essay, also known as Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA). After June'2012, there is only one analytical writing task. The second AWA task, an issue based essay, is changed to Integrated Reasoning section. The remaining two 75-minute sections (Quantitative and Verbal) consist of multiple-choice questions delivered in a computer-adaptive format. Questions in these sections are dynamically selected as you take the test to stay commensurate with your ability level. Therefore, your test will be unique. Just one question is shown on the screen at a given time. However, Integrated Reasoning is not computer-adaptive section. It is impossible to skip a question or go back to a prior question in any section. Each problem needs to be answered before the next question.

In both the Verbal and Math sections, everyone starts out with an average difficulty level. The difficulty of subsequent questions then increases or decreases based on the

correct or incorrect answers a person submits in the test. For each correct answer you give, you are given a harder question for each subsequent question and for each incorrect answer you are given an easier question. This process will continue until you finish the section, at which point the computer will have an accurate assessment of your ability level in that subject area.

Your score is determined by three factors: 1) the number of questions you complete; 2) the number of questions you answer correctly and; 3) the level of difficulty and other statistical characteristics of each question. To derive a final score, these questions are weighted based on their difficulty and other statistical properties, not their position in the test.

For the AWA section, one person and one computer programmed for grading (E-rater) score the essay based on essay content, organization, grammar and syntactic variety. Your final, single score is an average of both individual cores obtained on the argument essay. In the Integrated Reasoning section, there are 12 questions. The IR score range from 1-8 with an interval of 1 point. AWA score and Integrated Reasoning score are computed separately from other sections and have no effect on the Verbal, Quantitative, or Total score.

The scores necessary to get into top schools are increasing year by year. Studies indicate that applicants who prepare for the GMAT score substantially higher than those who don't. In addition to the admissions process, GMAT scores are also considered in job recruitments and scholarship awards. A good GMAT score can save you thousands of dollars in tuition. Disciplined and dedicated preparation for the GMAT will allow you to get the best score possible on the exam and get into the school of your choice.

Although the GMAT score is considered as a reasonable indicator of future academic performance at business schools, it does not measure your job performance, knowledge of business, interpersonal skills, and personality traits such as motivation and creativity. Instead, your application, essays, recommendation letters and interviews will capture most of those aspects.

*Student Notes:*

### **1.1.1 2012 Changes in Test Administration**

As stated earlier that in the year 2012, GMAC has ushered in a major change in the test content of the GMAT with the introduction of Integrated Reasoning sub-section in place of Issue based essay AWA task.

Since year 2006, Pearson VUE administering the GMAT, but GMAC, the owner of the

GMAT, will still be responsible for setting the standards for the exam itself including format, question types, difficulty levels, adaptive design, etc.

This partnership between the GMAC and Pearson VUE provides:

- A broader test center network (more than 400 locations in nearly 82 countries) with biometrically enhanced equipment
- On-line score report which ensures a reliable, timely, and efficient approach to both test takers and admissions offices (Hard copy of score report is available upon request)
- Improved overall customer service, in particular, secure on-line test registration worldwide

We have summarized and prioritized the key changes affecting the test taker as follows:

**You can take the GMAT only ONCE every 31 days.**

The old rule allowed people to take the exam first on March 31st and again on April 1st, as the criterion was “once per calendar month”. Now you are permitted to take the test only once every 31 days.

Though we generally recommend our students to ace the test on their first try, it is wise to leave yourself some scheduling flexibility for a second attempt if necessary. Schedule your GMAT 5 to 6 weeks prior to your application deadline.

*A note: If you receive a perfect score of 800, you may not retake the exam for 5 years.*

**Replacement of Scratch Paper with note-board or booklet with 5 sheets**

**You cannot skip AWA and IR, and must complete the entire test.**

No longer will you be permitted to ignore the essay section of the test. You must take the test in its set order and in its entirety, **including the essay section**, or your scores will not be processed.

**All scores and cancellations in the past 5 years will be on your score report.**

No longer will only your last 3 scores/cancellations be noted on your score report, but all of the scores you received or cancelled in the last 5 years will be noted on your score report.

We recommend you only cancel your score if you are sure that your performance is not indicative of your normal and true ability, due to unusual reasons such as health, emotions, accident, disturbing testing environment, etc. By canceling the score, you avoid showing an inconsistency of your test performance which might be a red flag for admissions officers.

Otherwise, you should get your score so that you can get an objective evaluation of what you stand against other GMAT test takers and your strengths and weaknesses. As long as you demonstrate consistent and improved test results, reporting the score is generally preferred over cancellation.

**You will receive your official score report on-line via an email notification 20 days after test day. Paper score report will be available via mail upon request only.**

Based on our students' experience, it takes exactly 20 days for them to receive an email notification. You will still receive an unofficial copy of your scores immediately after completing the exam and prior to leaving the testing center. Typically you may fax or bring in a copy of the unofficial GMAT score report to be used to process your MBA application until the official scores arrive from the testing services. MBA programs usually can use the unofficial score report to make a recommendation on an application, but the official GMAT scores must reach the school before an official offer of admission can be made.

### 1.1.2 GMAT Sections and Score Distributions

The GMAT includes the following sections:

<i>Math Section</i>	<i>Verbal Section</i>	<i>Essay &amp; IR Section</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Data Sufficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentence Correction</li> <li>• Critical Reasoning</li> <li>• Reading Comprehension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analytical Writing Assessment</li> <li>• Integrated Reasoning</li> </ul>

Each section requires its own specific strategy, but you may apply some techniques to all sections.

Please note that not all of the IR, verbal and quantitative questions are scored. In the Verbal section, approximately 37 of the 41 questions are scored, and in the quantitative section, approximately 33 of the 37 questions are scored. The number of unsecured questions for IR may be one to three; there is no verified information available so far. The un-scored questions are there for the purpose of gauging results for future tests.

Section	No. of Questions	Time Allowed	Details
•AWA <i>No Break!</i>	1	30 min	• Analysis of an Argument (30 min., 1 topic)
•IR	12	30 min	• Integrated Reasoning (12 questions)
<i>Optional Break of 8 minutes</i>		5 min	
•Math	37	75 min	• Problem Solving (23-24 questions) • Data Sufficiency (13-14 questions) Total number of questions: 37
<i>Optional Break of 8 minutes</i>		5 min	
•Verbal	41	75 min	• Critical Reasoning (14-15 questions) • Sentence Correction (14-15 questions) • Reading Comprehension (4 passages, 12-14 questions) Total number of questions: 41
<b>Total Time</b>		<b>4 hours (approx.)</b>	

Note: The Integrated Reasoning sub-section will follow AWA task (The Argument essay).

GMAT scaled scores range from 200 to 800, which is the main score for you. It is measured in the interval of 10 points with an Standard Error of 30-40 points. About 66 % of test takers score between 400 and 600. The Verbal and Quantitative sections raw scores range from 0 to 60. It is measured in the interval of 1 points.

For GMAT Total score, most people score between 500 and 600. In a sample of 8000,000 candidates, mean scaled Score for GMAT is 545.6 with a Standard Deviation of 121.

For the AWA sub-section, most people score between 3 and 5. In a sample of 270,000 candidates, mean Raw Score for AWA is 4.3 with a Standard Deviation of 1.17.

For the IR sub-section, most people score between 3 and 7. In a sample of 200,000 candidates, mean Raw Score for IR is 4.34 with a Standard Deviation of 2.10.

For the Verbal section, most people score between 9 and 44. In a sample of 800,000 candidates, mean Raw Score for Verbal is 27.3 with a Standard Deviation of 9.12.

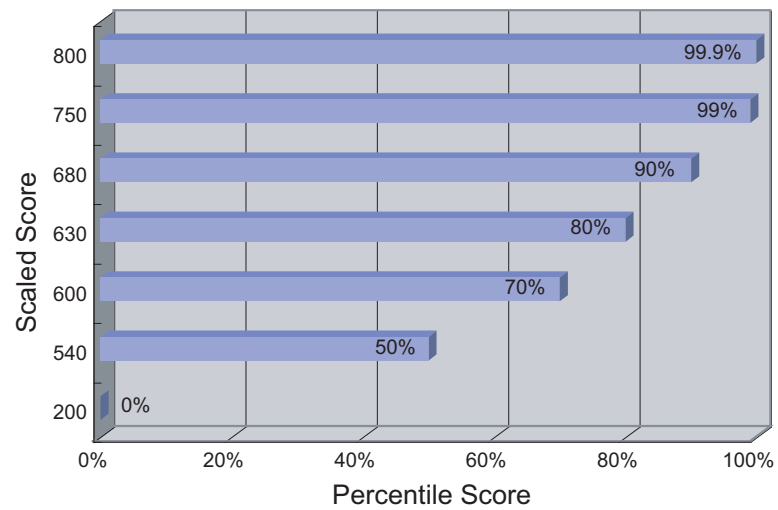
For the Quantitative section, common scores are between 7 and 50. In a sample of 800,000 candidates, mean Raw Score for Quants is 37.3 with a Standard Deviation of 11.

The Verbal and Quantitative scores measure different things and cannot be compared to each other, however, each section's score can be compared across different GMAT tests.

Your GMAT score is an important part of your overall application.

- If you receive a score below 500, we recommend that you retake the exam. A score below 500 will likely make acceptance to any school rather difficult.
- A score below 600 will make acceptance into a top school unlikely without an otherwise flawless application.
- A score in the range of 600-700 will help keep you in the running for acceptance into a top business school.
- A score above 700 is terrific and will help improve your MBA applications.
- Scaled scores of 750 out of 800 on the combined test generally correspond to the 99th percentile.
- 680 out of 800 corresponds to the 90th percentile.

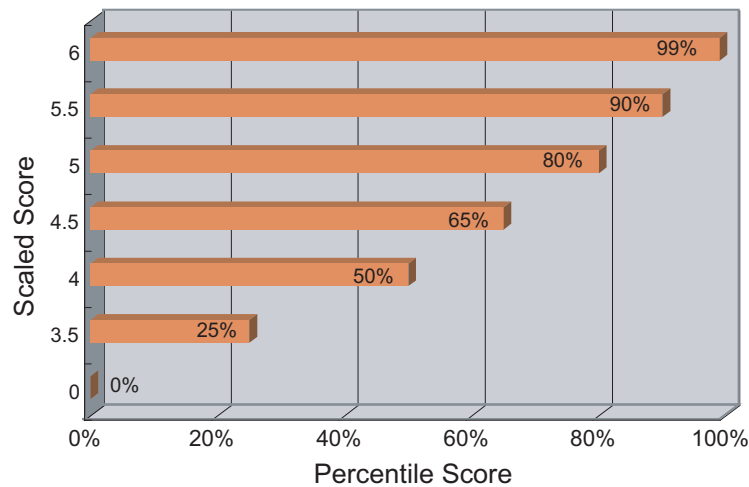
### **GMAT Test Scores Distribution Snapshot - Total Score**



- Scaled scores of 750 out of 800 on the combined test generally correspond to the 99th percentile.
- 680 out of 800 corresponds to the 90th percentile



## GMAT Test Scores Distribution Snapshot - AWA Score



Since IR is relatively new, GMAC is yet to come up with 1 year data for percentile score vs. raw score distribution.

As stated earlier, one person and one computer programmed for grading (E-rater) score AWA based on essay content, organization, grammar and syntactic variety. E-rater is an electronic system that evaluates more than 50 structural and linguistic features. College and university faculty members trained as reviewers of the AWA essays consider the overall quality of your ideas, your overall ability to organize, develop, and express those ideas, the relevant supporting reasons and examples you cited, and your ability to write in standard written English. In considering the elements of standard written English, reviewers are trained to be sensitive and fair in evaluating the essays of non-native English speakers.

E-rater and independent readers agree, on average, 87 % to 94 % of the time. If the two ratings differ by more than one point, another evaluation by an expert reader is required to resolve the discrepancy and determine the final score.

AWA graders assign scores out of 6.0 based on intervals of 0.5 points. Your final, single score is an average of both the scores graded by E-rater and independent readers. AWA and IR scores are computed separately and have no bearings on any other GMAT scores.

*Student Notes:*

### 1.1.3 Overview of Basic GMAT Concepts

Various GMAT sections test students' understanding of fundamental quantitative concepts, and their knowledge, skills and analytical ability. To perform well on the test, students must master the basic underlying math and grammar principles and typical question types. The following is a quick overview.

#### **Math Section**

The Quantitative section measures your basic mathematical skills, understanding of elementary concepts, and the ability to reason quantitatively, solve quantitative problems, and interpret graphic data. Problem-Solving and Data-Sufficiency questions are intermingled throughout the section.

#### ***Basic Concepts:***

- Integers and Prime numbers
- Fractions and Percentages
- Mark-up and Margin
- Exponents and Roots
- Equations and Inequalities
- Probability, Permutations and Combinations
- Statistics, Graph and Data Interpretation
- Coordinate Geometry, Area and Volume of Various Geometrical Objects
- Others to Be Discussed in Class

#### ***Basic Question Types:***

- Solving Equations
- Profit, Cost and Break-Even Calculations
- Distance-Rate-Time Problems
- Divisibility
- Averages and Weighted Averages
- Word Problems
- Data and Graph Interpretation
- Area and Volume of Geometrical Shapes
- Mixture Problems

- Others to Be Discussed in Class

### **Verbal Section**

The Verbal section of the GMAT measures your ability to:

- Correct written English to conform to standard grammar rules and styles
- Read, reason and evaluate arguments
- Speed read, comprehend and assess written English articles

#### ***Basic Grammar Rules:***

- Subject-Verb Agreement
- Pronoun Reference
- Prepositions and Articles
- Verb Tenses and Voices
- Parallelism
- Idiomatic Usages
- Others to Be Discussed in Class

#### ***Basic Question Types:***

- Sentence Correction
- Reading Comprehension
- Critical Reasoning
- Please review the relevant sections for more details

*Student Notes:*

## **1.2 Key Test-taking and Preparation Strategies**

The scores necessary to get into top schools are increasing year by year, making quality preparation an even greater necessity. Disciplined and dedicated preparation for the GMAT will allow you to get the best score possible on the exam and get into the school of your choice.

High quality preparation is essential to achieving your best score on the GMAT. High quality preparation means becoming intimately acquainted with the test structure, format, and the types of questions that are being asked. It means improving upon your weak areas through practice and repetition. It means developing your ability to answer correctly the tougher questions. It also means becoming aware of the types of answers that tend to be the correct ones.

Are there any advantages of taking a top-quality GMAT Prep course versus studying alone with the books, CDs, and online courses available in the market? It really depends on your academic background, study habits, availability and, ultimately, your desired test score. Preparing on your own can save you some financial resources, but may not be as effective as learning from instructors who dissect each answer and impart knowledge and advice from their own GMAT-taking and MBA experiences. Studies show that visualization and discussion in a seminar environment will enable you to recognize complex structures better than learning the same material in a non-interactive way.

In terms of general GMAT taking strategies, **we recommend:**

- Learn the most typical problems and answer types.
- Answer all questions.
- Guess and estimate when necessary.
- Try your best on the initial questions.
- Others to be discussed in class.

If you aim to achieve a top score, **we recommend:**

- Make a special effort to improve your weaknesses along with strengthening your expertise during practice.
- Locate or set up a serious test-taking environment in your house or a public library or a park or another facility so that you can exclusively focus on taking the mock tests.
- Download the free GMATPrep software from [www.mba.com](http://www.mba.com) to practice official questions. It offers 90 questions (30-Quants; 45-Verbal; 15-IR). Save the two GMAT-Prep software tests for right before the actual test and practice the tests in a mock test setting of your choice so that your memory of the actual question types and difficulty levels which have appeared in prior GMAT tests stays fresh.
- Review all prior mistakes along with explanations.
- Make a list of those typical errors you tend to make and consciously remind yourself of them and refrain from making the same mistakes.
- Keep a light-hearted and positive attitude on the test day.

- Maintain strong momentum from beginning to end as the final problems can sometimes be equally as important as the initial ones.

Is it a good idea to reappear GMAT?

The answer is yes and No both. It depends on what was your score in the first attempt, and what is your current level of preparation. Reappearing GMAT more and more number of times does not mean that your score will improve. Approximate 25% candidates score lower than the score in the first attempt in the second sitting, while the average scaled score improves by average 33 point. In each successive attempt, your increment in scaled score diminishes.

So, the preparation and strategy to crack GMAT is utmost important!

*Student Notes:*

### 1.2.1 Problem Solving

The Problem Solving section of the GMAT tests your ability to solve questions and derive correct answers. Often these problems present you with an algebraic formula. It is important that you develop a good pace in your preparation for this section, as speed together with precision will help you do your best on the GMAT exam.

Main Strategies:

- First identify the underlying key mathematical concept of the problem.
- Determine the best way to approach the problem at hand. Common strategies include:
  - Applying algebraic and geometric formulae
  - Back solving
  - Approximation
  - Elimination
- Check your work and read the question again. You may have solved the problem correctly but simply failed to answer the question being asked.
- Take educated guesses when you see fit to do so.
- Others to be discussed in class.

Key test preparation principles include:

- Maintain speed and precision.

- Remember your Algebra and Geometry concepts.
- Review your Algebra and Geometry definitions.

*Student Notes:*

### 1.2.2 Data Sufficiency

Data-Sufficiency questions are designed to measure your ability to:

- Analyze a quantitative problem
- Recognize relevant information
- Determine whether there is sufficient information to solve a problem

Data-Sufficiency questions are accompanied by some initial information and two statements, labeled (1) and (2). You must decide whether the statements given offer enough data to enable you to answer the question. Data Sufficiency questions do not ask for actual number solutions, and instead they ask simply: Is the information given adequate to solve a question?

Two statements are laid out as two possible conditions. It is important to analyze each statement independently from the other statement. In other words, you cannot mix the information from one statement with the other.

There are two common types of Data Sufficiency questions:

- Close-ended: Is “Y” divisible by 3?
- Open-ended: What is the value of “X”?

There are five answer choices for Data Sufficiency.

**A:** Statement (1) is sufficient and (2) is insufficient.

**B:** Statement (1) is insufficient and (2) is sufficient.

**C:** A combination of both statements is sufficient. Either statement alone is insufficient.

**D:** Both statements are sufficient independently.

**E:** Neither the combination nor either individual statement is sufficient.

In a close-ended question, you can judge whether each statement is sufficient by determining if its answer is always Yes or always No. A statement is insufficient if its answer is sometimes Yes or sometimes No.

In an open-ended question, you can judge whether each statement is sufficient by determining if its answer results in a single value. A statement is insufficient if its answer leads to a range of values, instead of a specific value.

Other strategies include:

- Memorize the standardized answer choices for Data Sufficiency questions.
- Evaluate each statement or equation individually and then together.
- Others to be discussed in class.

*Student Notes:*

### 1.2.3 Sentence Correction

The Sentence Correction section tests your knowledge of written English grammar by asking you which of the five choices best expresses an idea or relationship. This section gives you a sentence that may or may not contain errors of grammar or usage. You must select either the answer that best corrects the sentence or the answer stating that the sentence is correct as is. The questions will require you to be familiar with the stylistic conventions and grammatical rules of standard written English and to demonstrate your ability to improve incorrect or ineffective expressions.

This section tests two broad aspects of language proficiency:

- Correct expression
- Effective expression

A correct sentence is grammatically correct and structurally sound. It conforms to all the rules of standard written English such as subject-verb agreement, verb tense consistency, modifier reference and position, idiomatic expressions and parallel construction.

In addition to being correct, a sentence needs to be effective. It should express an idea or relationship clearly and concisely, as well as grammatically. A best choice should have no superfluous words or unnecessarily complicated expressions. This does not mean that the shortest choice is always the best answer. Proper diction is another important part of effectiveness. It refers to the standard dictionary meanings of words and the appropriateness of words in context. In evaluating the diction of a sentence, you must be able to recognize whether the words are well chosen, accurate, and suitable for the context.

One common error that test takers often make in the Sentence Correction section is choosing an answer that sounds good. Do not go on with your gut feeling in this section. Remember your grammar and look for errors in construction (e.g., noun-verb agreement) and eliminate answers that you are sure are incorrect.

Follow the procedure given below.

- Look over answer choices and note for clearly identifiable patterns.
- Focus your attention on the most crucial grammatical issue in the problem.
- Look for patterns in the first and last word(s) across all answer choices, as those parts of the sentence often demonstrate major grammatical differences.
- Look over each answer choice, as you can eliminate the wrong answer by focusing on not only the grammatical difference from other choices, but also the answer's own language style, word usage and idiomatic expressions.
- Keep in mind also that the GMAT prefers active to passive constructions.
- Eliminate clearly incorrect answers.



- Select the answer which is grammatically correct, idiomatically acceptable and the most effective.
- Others to be discussed in class.

*Student Notes:*

### 1.2.4 Critical Reasoning

The Critical Reasoning section tests your ability to make arguments, evaluate arguments, and formulate or evaluate a plan of action. In this section we recommend that you read the questions carefully and identify the assumption implicit in the statement with a heightened awareness of any weakness in the argument.

Please bear in mind the following when you practice in this section:

- Break the argument down into its parts: conclusion, evidence and assumption.
- The main argument types include:
  - Cause and Effect
  - Comparison/Analogy
  - Representative Sample
  - Number and Logic Based
  - Implementation
- Be familiar with major critical reasoning questions category:
  - a) Assumption Questions**
    - Assumption
    - Weakening
    - Strengthening
    - Flaw
  - b) Inference/Conclusion Questions**
  - c) Paradox/Explain Questions**
  - d) Method of Reasoning Questions**
- Determine how the question fits into these types.
- Eliminate clearly incorrect answers when they are totally irrelevant or the opposite of the desired answer.
- Others to be discussed in class.

*Student Notes:*

### 1.2.5 Reading Comprehension

You may see as many as 4 passages in the Reading Comprehension section up to 350 words in each passage, followed by 3 or 4 interpretive, applied, and inferential questions. The topics are typically related to social sciences such as politics and history, physical or biological sciences such as geology and astronomy, business-related areas such as marketing, economics and human resource management, along with other advanced subjects.

Because the Reading Comprehension section includes passages from various different content areas, you may have general knowledge about some of the topics. However, no specific familiarity of the material is required. All questions are to be answered on the basis of what is stated or implied in the reading material.

Reading Comprehension questions measure your ability to speed read, understand, analyze, and apply information and concepts presented in written English. It evaluates your ability to:

- Understand words, terms and statements.
- Understand the ideas, concepts and logical relationships between significant perspectives and to evaluate the importance of arguments.
- Draw inferences from facts and statements.
- Understand and follow the development of quantitative concepts as presented. Then interpret and use the data to reach conclusions.

We recommend the following general guidelines:

- Quickly scan the passage to understand the underlying theme. Read the first and last sentence particularly carefully.
- Read the passage in detail. Note its main structure.
- Pay special attention to the usage of transitional words that change the passage's flow, such as yet, though, however, despite, etc. These transitional words often highlight important information in the passage.
- Note different perspectives presented and the relationship amongst them.
- Quickly scan through the questions and answers to develop a general sense of the focus of the question.
- Read the answers to note the possibilities addressed. At this point eliminate any clearly wrong answers.
- Others to be discussed in class.

*Student Notes:***1.2.6 Analytical Writing Assessment**

The first section you will encounter on the GMAT is the Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA). The AWA requires you to write one essay on 'analysis of an argument' in 30 minutes. The argument that you will find on the test concern topic of general interest related to business or a variety of other subjects.

The AWA section receives a score from 0-6, in increments of 0.5.

- 0 indicates incomprehensibility.
- 6 indicates a well-focused and clear essay.

The AWA score is not reflected in the combined verbal and quantitative overall score, but is still an important aspect of your MBA application and should not be neglected. By focusing on clarity and precision rather than on saying something complicated or brilliant, you will score higher on this portion of the GMAT.

The AWA section is designed to directly measure your ability to think critically through the complexities of an issue and to communicate your ideas through substantiated reasoning. The Analysis of an Argument tests your ability to formulate an appropriate and constructive critique of a specific conclusion based on a rigorous approach. You will need to analyze the supporting logic behind a given argument and write a critique of that argument. Remember your task is to examine and critique the given argument, not to present your own views on the subject.

Consider the following when developing your essay:

- The underlying debatable assumptions behind the argument.
- The alternative explanations or counter-examples might weaken the conclusion.
- The type of evidence could help strengthen or refute the argument.

For the AWA section, we recommend that you make a consistent effort to:

- Brush up on your typing skills.
- Be careful not to make careless mistakes in spelling or grammar.
- Make the reader aware of your essay structure.
- Others to be discussed in class.

*Student Notes:***1.2.7 Integrated Reasoning**

IR sub-section will follow AWA task. This is what GMAC states about IR. The Integrated Reasoning measures your ability to comprehend and evaluate multiple types of information—textual, tabular, graphic, visual, quantitative, and verbal; it applies quantitative and verbal reasoning to solve problems in relation to one another.

The Integrated Reasoning section differs from the Quantitative and Verbal sections in two ways:

- IR comprises both quantitative and verbal reasoning, either discretely or blended, and
- IR prompts use four different response formats rather than only traditional multiple-choice format used for quantitative and verbal questions.

Four types of questions are used in the Integrated Reasoning section are:

- Table Analysis
- Graphics Interpretation
- Two-Part Analysis
- Multi-Source Reasoning

In a nut shell, the IR questions assess your ability to apply, infer, evaluate, recognize, and strategize information from multiple sources.

- Apply questions

Apply questions measure your ability to comprehend the concepts in the information given and apply them to a new situation.

- Evaluate, and Inference questions

Evaluate questions measure your ability to make decisions based on the quality of information. These questions are very similar to Critical Reasoning questions, in which you are asked the questions on Strengthen/Weaken the argument, Sufficiency of the information to make a decision- some aspect of Data Sufficiency, Inference and Flaw in reasoning.

- Recognize questions

Recognize questions measure your ability to identify the information that includes some facts or aspects and their relationships. You may be asked to recognize

agreement and disagreement in the information given, strength of correlation between two variables, compare two or more data points, observe data and deduce information.

- Strategic questions

Strategize questions tests your ability on how you gain an objective within the constraints. You may be asked to select a course of action that gives desired results, and optimise resources.

*Student Notes:*

### 1.2.8 Test Preparation Advice

During your GMAT preparation, be sure to incorporate the following study skills:

- Apply a systematic approach to your test. Take all questions seriously and answer them. Leaving questions unanswered is not helpful on the GMAT CAT.
- Create a study environment that is as similar as possible to the actual test setting, which typically includes a quiet space, possibly a computer room or an office environment.
- Do take two breaks during a practice test of approximately 5 minutes each. In the actual test center, you will be allowed to take two breaks of maximum 8 minutes each during sections. However, the break is limited to taking some drinks, and snack that you bring with you.
- Eliminate distractions and be conscious of time. Especially when you are taking practice tests, be as aware of the clock as you will need to be on the actual exam.
- After completing a practice test, be sure to go over the questions you answered incorrectly. This is the only way to improve. You must understand your mistakes so that you will not make them on the test.
- AND practice, practice, practice!

Remember that the actual exam is on the computer so take advantage of opportunities to practice with Computer Adaptive Tests. For many test-takers, reading large amounts of material on the screen is not easy. It not only dries out their eyes but also makes it hard to absorb the material. Simply practice reading etc. on the computer. The only way to improve is to practice.

*Student Notes:*

## **1.3 Taking the GMAT**

### **1.3.1 Schedule Your Test**

When setting a test date, look up test centers at <http://www.mba.com/the-gmat.aspx>. Keep in mind the following:

- Consider the times of day you tend to be able to concentrate best. Take your test in the morning or afternoon accordingly.
- Make sure the week before your test day will not be a stressful one. This will help you concentrate, be well rested, calm and in the right frame of mind to ace the GMAT.
- Be aware of application deadlines and do your best to provide yourself with enough time after the exam to focus on the other parts of your Business School applications.

Remember to select:

- The best possible time of day for you.
- A low stress week.
- AND give yourself sufficient time to prepare fully for the test.

In the final week before your test, remember:

- Don't cram.
- Take a practice test(s). You can often even do this at the test center (a good way to ensure that you will not get lost on the day of the test). Again don't cram.
- Get solid rest.

### **1.3.2 Test Fee**

The fee to take the GMAT is U.S. \$250 worldwide. The fee for rescheduling the date, time, or location of the test is U.S. \$50 for each appointment you change.

Should you want to reschedule the GMAT, avoid the forfeiture of your test fee by allowing at least 7 calendar days between the day you reschedule your appointment and your test day. Appointments cannot be rescheduled for a date that is more than one

year after the original appointment date.

If you cancel the test appointment, a partial refund of U.S. \$80 will be given if it is canceled at least 7 calendar days before your original test day.

The rescheduling fee and cancellation refund amount are subject to change without notice

### 1.3.3 On the Test Day

Here is a summary of to-do items for the test day:

- Bring all necessary documents such as identification cards (IDs), the registration ticket and the names of the schools to which you would like send your test score. (Bring two forms of ID in case one has expired or is not acceptable to the test center.)
- Bring something warm to put on in case the room is too cold. According to test center rules, you have to wear the sweater or coat rather than put it around your shoulders. So make sure that the additional layer of sweater or coat is comfortable in a test-taking setting.
- Also be sure you can remove a layer of clothing in case the room is hot.
- Bring something light to drink or eat. A bottle of water or a soft drink with a cap is preferred over a can so that you can minimize the chances of spilling. (Though you can not take anything into the testing room, you will be assigned a small locker. During your 8-minute breaks, you can have a few sips to stay hydrated or a bite to eat if you get hungry. Normally test centers allow you to put it outside on a desk or at an easily reachable spot or inside your locker so that you can quickly grab the drink or the food.)
- No testing aids such as study notes, calculators, cellphones and PDAs are allowed. Normally one note-board or booklet will be provided.

At the test:

- Follow your normal routine.
- Arrive at the test at least 30 minutes early.
- Do concentrate on all questions. A myth that first 10 questions are more important is wrong. At the beginning of each section, the total number of questions and the total time allowed are stated.
- Maintain a focused mind and a positive winning attitude throughout the entire test.
- Do not panic. Focus on one question at a time. Focus on one section at a time. Do not think beyond your current section and lose your concentration.



- Do not get fixated and spend unreasonable time on any single question. It will not make or break your score. Because the score per section is partially based on the number of questions you answer, try to answer as many questions as you can.
- Do not leave any questions unanswered before the section time runs out. Always submit an answer after some educated or blind guesses. Remember that you cannot skip questions or change an answer once you confirm it.
- If a few questions or passages are difficult to understand, do not let that prompt you to cancel your score entirely. You can never know.
- If something is wrong with the computer, or if someone is bothering you, or if its miserably hot etc., signal to the exam proctor. The proctor observes the examination area all the time.
- Pace yourself and keep track of your progress by checking the amount of time you have left on the test screen. The first section is of 60 minutes and other two sections are 75 minutes each. You have about 2.5 minutes per IR question, about 2 minutes per Quantitative question, and about 1.75 minutes per Verbal question.
- Pay attention to the number of questions that remain in a section. There are 37 quantitative section questions. There are 41 verbal section questions.
- Clicking on “HELP” or hiding the “TIME” information doesn't pause or stop the time.
- Between test sections, replenish your supply of note-board paper. Take advantage of breaks. Rest your eyes, as the computer screen is difficult to stare at for 4 hours straight.

*Student Notes:*

### **1.3.4 Score Report**

Your Total score and Quantitative and Verbal section scores are available upon your completion of the test. The only opportunity that you will have to cancel your scores is immediately after you complete the test, but before you view your scores. A message will ask you if you want to cancel your scores; you will be given two minute time to either 'Accept' or 'Reject' the score.. You cannot cancel your scores after they are displayed or reported to you.

If you cancel your scores, they cannot be reinstated later. A score cancellation notice will be sent to you and your selected schools. It will remain a part of your permanent record and will be reported on all of your future score reports. The test will not be

refunded and will be accounted for as one taken test.

The official score report is available online. Through a direct e-mail 20 days after the test, you will be notified of the accessibility of your online official score report, which is also available to the schools you selected as recipients. Official Score Reports are now mailed to the student by request only.

Official GMAT score reports, which include the AWA score, will be mailed to you and your designated score report recipients (schools) approximately two weeks after the test. You must respond to both essays and each multiple-choice section of the test to get an official score report.

During the test, if you click “Section Exit” or “Test Quit,” you will have to confirm your choice. If you clicked it by mistake or change your mind, just select the option “Return to Where I Was.” Once you exit a section or quit a test, you won’t be able to return to it and you won’t receive a score for any section, regardless how many questions you have answered.

You may take the GMAT only once every 31 days and no more than five times within any 12-month period. The retest policy applies even if you cancel your score or quit a test within that time period. Official GMAT score results are kept on file for 10 years. All your scores and cancellations within the last five years will be reported to the institutions you designate as score recipients.

On your test day before you take the test, you may select up to five schools to receive your scores. Once you have made your selection, you will not be able to change or delete the list of schools. If you would like to send your scores to more schools, you may order additional score reports at a cost of U.S. \$28 per school.

You may request that your essays be rescored if you have reason to believe that your AWA scores are not accurate. The multiple-choice quantitative and verbal sections of the test cannot be rescored. Independent readers will rescore your essay for a fee of U.S. \$45.

Requests for rescoring must be made within six months of your test date. Rescoring may result in increases or decreases in your original AWA score. The rescoring results are final. Revised results will be sent to you and the schools you designated as score recipients within three weeks of your request.

*Student Notes:*