

The Graduate Management Admission Test® (GMAT®) is a standardised test, delivered in English, used in admissions decisions by thousands of graduate business programs around the world. The GMAT exam has been shown to be a valid predictor of academic performance in MBA and other business programs: it provides a useful benchmark to admissions professionals, who must choose students from a huge range of academic programs and undergraduate majors worldwide, as well as varying levels of professional experience. As you begin thinking about applying to business school, here are some frequently asked questions about the GMAT exam.



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The GMAT exam is:

- Used by more than 6,000 graduate business programs at nearly 2,000 schools around the world.
- Accessible year-round at approximately 600 test centers worldwide.
- Available at a cost of US\$250 that includes sending up to five official score reports to programs you choose.

Visit mba.com for more information.

Further information

The Official Website of the GMAT Exam

Research graduate study, schedule your GMAT exam, and get access to FREE prep materials and other products. www.mba.com

BusinessWeek

Find articles, news of business school life, and rankings of business education. www.businessweek.com/business-schools

Financial Times

Rankings, b-school news, video lectures, discussion forums, and more. www.ft.com/BusinessEducation

International accreditation agencies for business education

AACSB

www.bestbizschools.com

Association of MBAs

www.mbaworld.com

EQUIS

www.efmd.org/index.php/accreditation/equis

GMAT Club

Information sharing, tools and resources to improve your application for business school. www.gmatclub.com

Beat the GMAT

A social network and discussion forum to learn and share experiences on the admissions process. www.beatthegmat.com

Frequently asked questions about the GMAT® exam



1. What is the format of the GMAT exam and how long does it take?

The GMAT exam is a computer adaptive test that measures academic potential for graduate business programs such as MBA and Master's degrees. The exam takes about four hours, including optional rest breaks. It has four parts:

Analytical Writing one 30-minute essay, 0–6 points in 0.5 intervals

Integrated Reasoning 12 questions over 30 minutes, 1–8 points in single-digit intervals

Quantitative Section 37 multiple-choice questions over 75 minutes, 0–60 points in single-digit intervals

Verbal Section 41 multiple-choice questions over 75 minutes, 0–60 points in single-digit intervals

2. Does everyone get the same questions?

No. The GMAT exam is computer adaptive, which means that the difficulty of the test continuously adjusts to the test taker.

The Quantitative and Verbal sections start with moderately difficult questions. In general, the more questions you answer correctly, the harder the test becomes. If you answer incorrectly, your next question will probably be easier. You are not allowed to skip any questions.

3. What if I don't finish the test?

You are penalised if you do not finish, so practice before the exam to ensure you manage your time effectively on the day of the test. Some tips:

- Try not to spend too much time struggling with one question as you risk leaving no time to answer others.
- Monitor your time and try to manage your progress through the whole exam.
- You can't skip questions but if you are stuck, eliminate as many options as you can and make a best guess.

4. If I'm currently studying and plan to work for a few years before going to business school, should I take the GMAT now or later?

You should consider taking the exam now, while you're used to studying and taking tests, as GMAT scores are valid for five years. Another benefit of taking the test early on is that you have a better chance of being targeted by business schools that are a good match for you. You can create a profile and sign up to be contacted by business schools at mba.com.

5. Do I need a high standard of English or math to take the GMAT exam?

No. The GMAT tests your analytical and reasoning abilities in writing, reading, and quantitative areas.

The Verbal Section includes reading comprehension and critical reasoning, which tests how well you understand and analyse written English, and sentence correction, which asks how you best express an idea.

For the Quantitative Section, you need to understand fundamental arithmetic, elementary algebra, and commonly known geometry concepts. Calculators are not allowed, so all the problems must be solved with paper and pencil provided at the test center.

The difficulty of the Quantitative and Verbal sections comes from the logic and analytical skills required to answer questions correctly.

6. How far in advance do I need to register to take the test?

Most people register between 30 and 60 days prior to testing. Appointments tend to fill up early for Fridays and weekends, and on dates close to large program deadlines. Aside from giving yourself enough time to prepare, you might also want to give yourself enough time to retest if necessary. You can test only once in any 16-day period.

7. How long do I need to prepare for the GMAT exam?

It depends on your ability to study and focus, your study environment, your familiarity and comfort with the item types, etc. You can download the free GMATPrep® software at mba.com, which gives you two full-length tests. You can also purchase study materials such as The Official Guide for GMAT® Review, GMAT Paper Tests, and GMAT Focus® diagnostic tool.

8. Do I need to have a business background to take the test?

No. The GMAT exam is a gauge of your academic potential for business study and does not assume any business knowledge. Students with many different undergraduate majors take the GMAT exam.

9. Can I cancel my score or retake the GMAT?

On the day of the exam you can preview your unofficial score and decide if you want to accept or cancel it. You can also cancel online up to 72 hours after you complete the exam (\$25 fee applies) and reinstate a cancelled score up to 4 years and 11 months after your exam date (\$50 fee applies). You can re-test after 16 days and up to five times in 12 months. You might consider retaking the test if you feel your score seems unusually low compared with your academic record or potential.

Some people can improve their score as they feel more comfortable taking the test the second time around because they know what to expect in terms of the test centre, the time limits, and the use of the computer.

10. Is there a passing score to get into business school?

No. GMAT scores are used in admissions decisions along with undergraduate records, application essays, interviews, recommendation letters, work experience, and other information. Schools use the GMAT in different ways and accept students with a wide range of GMAT scores. We recommend that you speak to the Admissions staff in your target schools to find out what GMAT score you need to be admitted.