

CAT 2026 Exam Dates, Registration, Syllabus & PYQs

A complete, updated guide by Aptitude360 — Chandigarh

Common Admission Test (CAT) 2026 – Overview

The Common Admission Test (CAT) is India's most competitive MBA entrance exam, used for admission to the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and 1,300+ other MBA and PGDM colleges across the country. IIM Indore has released the official CAT 2026 notification, confirming the exam date, registration window, fee structure, and eligibility criteria for this year's cycle.

Preparing for CAT requires a structured study plan, regular practice, and a clear understanding of concepts across all three sections. Staying updated with the latest syllabus and practising previous years' papers and mock tests significantly improves exam-day performance.

CAT 2026 – Key Highlights

Detail	Information
Conducting Body	IIM Indore
CAT 2026 Exam Date	Sunday, 29 November 2026
Mode of Exam	Computer-Based Test (CBT), conducted in three shifts
Number of Test Cities	170+ cities across India
Application Mode	Online only, through iimcat.ac.in

Important Dates for CAT 2026

Event	Date
Registration Begins	3 August 2026, 10:00 AM
Last Date to Apply	15 September 2026, 5:00 PM
Correction Window (photo/signature/image)	Late July – Early August 2026
Admit Card Release	First week of November 2026
CAT 2026 Exam Date	Sunday, 29 November 2026

Test centres are allotted on a first-come, first-served basis. Candidates can list up to six preferred cities in order of priority — applying early improves the chance of getting your first-choice city.

CAT 2026 Application Fee

Category	Fee
General / EWS / NC-OBC	Rs. 2,700
SC / ST / PwD	Approx. Rs. 1,350

Fee is payable online via debit card, credit card, net banking, or UPI, and is non-refundable once submitted.

CAT 2026 Exam Pattern

CAT is conducted in a Computer-Based Test (CBT) format across three sections, each with a fixed 40-minute time limit. Candidates cannot move to another section once their allotted time for the current section is over, making time management within each section critical.

Section	No. of Questions
VARC (Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension)	24
DILR (Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning)	20
QA (Quantitative Ability)	22
Total	66 Questions 198 Marks 120 Minutes

Marking Scheme

Answer Type	Marks
Correct Answer	+3 Marks
Incorrect Answer (MCQ)	−1 Mark
Incorrect Answer (TITA)	No Penalty
Unattempted Question	No Marks

Note: The exam pattern has remained unchanged since 2021. CAT does not follow a fixed syllabus, so consistent practice and conceptual clarity matter more than memorising formula lists.

Eligibility Criteria for CAT 2026

- A Bachelor's degree (minimum 3 years after 10+2) from a university recognised by an act of central/state legislature, or an equivalent qualification recognised by the Ministry of Education, Government of India.
- Minimum 50% marks (or equivalent CGPA) for General/OBC/EWS candidates.
- Minimum 45% marks for SC, ST, and PwD category candidates.
- Final-year students awaiting results can also apply; proof of degree is submitted at the time of admission, not registration.
- Candidates with CA, CS, or CMA qualifications are also eligible.

- There is no upper age limit — working professionals are equally welcome.

Reservation Scheme for CAT 2026

Category	Reservation
Scheduled Caste (SC)	15%
Scheduled Tribe (ST)	7.5%
Other Backward Classes (NC-OBC)	27%
Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)	Up to 10%
Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwD)	5%

Which IIM is Conducting CAT 2026?

CAT is conducted by the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) on a rotational basis each year. **IIM Indore is the confirmed conducting body for CAT 2026**, responsible for the exam pattern, registration process, test administration, evaluation, and score release.

Year	Conducting IIM
2026	IIM Indore
2025	IIM Kozhikode
2024	IIM Calcutta
2023	IIM Lucknow
2022	IIM Bangalore
2021	IIM Ahmedabad
2020	IIM Indore
2019	IIM Kozhikode
2018	IIM Calcutta
2017	IIM Lucknow
2016	IIM Bangalore

CAT 2026 Syllabus

Quantitative Ability (QA)

Arithmetic (Percentage, Profit & Loss, Ratio & Proportion, Averages, Time & Work, Time-Speed-Distance, Mixtures & Alligation), Number System, Algebra (Functions, Progressions, Quadratic Equations, Inequalities, Logarithms), Geometry & Mensuration, Coordinate Geometry, Permutation & Combination, Probability, Set Theory.

Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR)

Tables, Graphs & Charts, Puzzles, Seating Arrangement, Blood Relations, Syllogism, Data Sufficiency, and Logical Puzzles — typically presented as data sets requiring analysis under time pressure.

Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC)

Reading Comprehension passages, Para Jumbles, Para Summary, Odd One Out, Para Completion, Sentence Correction, and Vocabulary-based questions.

List of IIMs, Programmes & Official Websites

Institute	Key Programmes	Website
IIM Ahmedabad	PGP, PGP-FABM, ePGD-ABA	iima.ac.in
IIM Amritsar	MBA, MBA-Business Analytics, MBA-HRM, EMBA	iimamritsar.ac.in
IIM Bangalore	PGP, PGPEM, PGPBA	iimb.ac.in
IIM Bodh Gaya	MBA, MBA (Digital Business), MBA (Healthcare Mgmt)	iimbg.ac.in
IIM Calcutta	MBA	iimcal.ac.in
IIM Indore	PGP, PGP-HRM, MSDSM	iimidr.ac.in
IIM Jammu	MBA, MBA (Healthcare Mgmt), Executive MBA	iimj.ac.in
IIM Kashipur	MBA, MBA (Analytics), EMBA, EMBA	iimkashipur.ac.in
IIM Kozhikode	PGP, PGP-BL, PGP-F, PGP-LSM, EPGP-IL	iimk.ac.in
IIM Lucknow	MBA, MBA-ABM, MBA-SM, MBA-E&I, PGPWE	iiml.ac.in
IIM Nagpur	MBA, MBA (Executive)	iimnagpur.ac.in
IIM Raipur	PGP	iimraipur.ac.in
IIM Ranchi	MBA, MBA-HRM, MBA (Business Analytics)	iimranchi.ac.in
IIM Rohtak	PGP, EPGDSM, PGPx	iimrohtak.ac.in
IIM Sambalpur	MBA, Executive MBA, MBA for Working Professionals	iimsambalpur.ac.in
IIM Shillong	PGP, PGPEX, PGP (WE)	iimshillong.ac.in
IIM Sirmaur	MBA, MBA (Tourism), ExMBA (Digital & Analytics)	iimsirmaur.ac.in
IIM Tiruchirappalli	PGPM, PGPM-HR	iimtrichy.ac.in

Institute	Key Programmes	Website
IIM Udaipur	MBA, MBA-DEM, MBA-GSCM, PGDBAWE	iimu.ac.in
IIM Vishakhapatnam	PGP, EMBA, PGPDGM	iimv.ac.in

IIM Placements – Highest & Average CTC

The figures below reflect the most recently published placement data (2024 batch) and are shared as an indicative reference; figures for subsequent batches may vary.

Institute	Highest CTC (INR)	Average CTC (INR)
IIM Ahmedabad	75.20 LPA	27.54 LPA
IIM Bangalore	70.20 LPA	28.98 LPA
IIM Calcutta	68.58 LPA	34.00 LPA
IIM Lucknow	58.00 LPA	31.03 LPA
IIM Kozhikode	52.36 LPA	29.04 LPA
IIM Shillong	55.22 LPA	23.10 LPA
IIM Indore	49.00 LPA	25.01 LPA
IIM Raipur	42.15 LPA	17.73 LPA
IIM Udaipur	35.47 LPA	17.50 LPA
IIM Tiruchirappalli	34.00 LPA	17.01 LPA
IIM Rohtak	32.00 LPA	16.06 LPA
IIM Jammu	32.00 LPA	13.53 LPA
IIM Nagpur	31.54 LPA	15.21 LPA
IIM Vishakhapatnam	31.60 LPA	15.06 LPA
IIM Sambalpur	30.00 LPA	12.64 LPA
IIM Bodh Gaya	30.50 LPA	12.36 LPA
IIM Kashipur	28.82 LPA	15.21 LPA
IIM Ranchi	26.50 LPA	15.02 LPA
IIM Sirmour	26.50 LPA	12.74 LPA
IIM Amritsar	25.21 LPA	14.63 LPA

The median salary across IIMs typically ranges between INR 18–20 lakhs per annum; CTC figures include joining/retention/performance bonuses, statutory contributions, and allowances, and vary from institute to institute.

Other Major MBA Entrance Exams in India

- 1 Xavier Aptitude Test (XAT)
- 2 Common Management Admission Test (CMAT)
- 3 Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT)
- 4 Symbiosis National Aptitude Test (SNAP)
- 5 NMAT by GMAC
- 6 Tata Institute of Social Sciences National Entrance Test (TISSNET)
- 7 IRMA Social Awareness Test
- 8 MICAT
- 9 ATMA (AIMS Test for Management Admissions)
- 10 MAT (Management Aptitude Test)
- 11 ICFAI Business School Aptitude Test (IBSAT)

Frequently Asked Questions

Percentile and percentage – are they the same?

No. Percentile indicates your standing relative to other test takers. A 99 percentile means you scored higher than 99% of all CAT candidates that year.

What is the full form of CAT?

Common Admission Test — used for admission to IIMs and other management institutes.

Which mode is CAT 2026 conducted in?

CAT is a Computer-Based Test (CBT), conducted online at designated test centres.

How many sections are there in CAT?

Three: VARC (Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension), DILR (Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning), and QA (Quantitative Ability).

Is there a sectional time limit?

Yes, 40 minutes per section, with no ability to move between sections once time is up.

Can I choose my exam slot (morning/afternoon/evening)?

No, the slot is allotted by the conducting body.

Can I choose my exam city?

You may list up to six preferred cities in order of priority; allotment is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Is there negative marking in CAT 2026?

Yes for MCQs (–1 mark per wrong answer); no negative marking for TITA questions.

How many IIMs are there in total?

There are 21 IIMs across India.

Is there an age limit for CAT 2026?

No, there is no upper age limit.

What is the minimum qualifying percentage for CAT?

50% for General/OBC/EWS candidates; 45% for SC/ST/PwD candidates.

Which IIM is conducting CAT 2026?

IIM Indore is the confirmed conducting body for CAT 2026.

What is the CAT 2026 application fee?

Rs. 2,700 for General/EWS/NC-OBC candidates; approx. Rs. 1,350 for SC/ST/PwD candidates.

Do I need to apply separately to each IIM?

No, IIM/programme preferences are selected within the CAT application form itself.

What is the last date to apply for CAT 2026?

15 September 2026, 5:00 PM.

Source: CAT 2026 official notification (IIM Indore, iimcat.ac.in). Compiled & published by Aptitude360, Sector 34A, Chandigarh.

