

ICFAI 2006 and 2007 comparative analysis

Overall Paper Pattern: The paper has been different from many other exams for quite a few reasons. One, the exam has sectional time limits. Two, the cut-off marks for different campuses are not clearly defined and the selection is central at Hyderabad. Third, the exam also has differential marking with undisclosed marking scheme. Mostly, an average performance across all the sections ensures a call. The institute also asks for the CAT score, so may be this might be of importance too for the allotment of the campus. The first change in the pattern of exam was seen last year with the reduced time and number of questions.

Particulars	2007	2006
Duration	150 Minutes (2.5 Hrs)	180 Minutes (3 Hrs)
Number of section	2	4
Number of Questions and Time per Section	200	225
Verbal Ability	90	70 35 Min
Reading Comprehension	25	25 25 Min
Reasoning	5 90 Min	45 45 Min
Quantitative Ability	50	85 75 Min
Data Interpretation	15	(Incl. DI and DS)
Data Sufficiency	15 60 Min	
Negative marking	25% of marks	25% of marks
Number of choices	4	4

2008 Pattern

This year written exam will have an essay writing section (similar to that of XAT) on the day of exam. There can be more than one essay topic and the students can choose a topic of their interest. The essay has around 5% weightage, which means this is an important part of the selection procedure and the students need to work on their writing skills.

With the number of questions in the English usage and now with the essay writing in place, one can surely say that a decent score from the English section could be needed to secure a call for the top campuses.

Few pointers to look out for:

- The exam is easy to moderate in difficulty but lengthy too. Top scorers manage to attempt around 60 - 70% + of the paper. Hence, to ensure calls from the top 3-4 campuses a good attempt is recommended.
- With the differential marking and unclear marking pattern, it is difficult to ascertain a specific cut-off for the paper. But on an average, the students should ideally attempt more than 60% of the paper with good accuracy.
- Students should keep track of the sectional time limit and attempt the different sub-skills within the sectional time limit. Since both the sections, namely, English and Mathematical Skills, are timed, the students might not have any advantage of stronger skill set in one of the sections.
- Students who are not too sure about their chances of making it to good colleges under other major exams, must give this exam a serious attempt, as the exam is easy and chances of getting into a good campus are more and also the number of seats is also more.

Comparative analysis of difficulty level of each of the sub-skills

Quantitative Ability + Data Interpretation + Data Sufficiency:

Overall this section has remained easy to moderate with the number of questions in DI and DS being consistent. The exam gives a mix of arithmetic as well as difficult concepts such as trigonometry and coordinate geometry from higher math. Students who are not familiar with higher math must be strong in their fundamentals in other sub- skill area to manage a good score in this section. **The number of questions has been extremely diverse within the sub skills with 1 – 4 questions in each. The exam so far has tested all these questions.**

Question type	No. of question	
	2007	2006
Numbers	16	9
Averages, Percentages, Ratio / Proportion, Partnership, Stocks, Shares	5	7
Linear and Quadratic Equations	3	-
Mixtures and Alligations	1	1
Simple / Compound Interest, Profit & Loss, Discount	3	6
Plane Geometry	1	7
Time, Speed, and Distance, Works, Pipes, Cisterns	5	1
Sets	1	1
Mensuration – 2D	4	4
Mensuration – 3D	4	4
Progression	2	
Probability, Permutation & Combination	3	3
Function	2	-
Coordinate Geometry and Trigonometry	-	6 + 4
Logarithm	-	3
Data Sufficiency	15	15
Data Interpretation	15	14
Total	80	85

Thus, students must concentrate on basics in each sub-skill. Students not comfortable with the higher math concepts must be thorough with the other concepts.

General English (Grammar, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension)

This section also offers a diverse sub-skill selection. In general, the number of VA questions out weighs the RC. The questions in VA section have had a wide array of skills tested. This is good as well as bad news. Good because, there is no concentration of sub-skills and offers quite a few sitters but for a student who is not good at a particular sub-skill, say vocabulary, then the question selection is reduced.

The types of questions that have appeared so far are:

Question type	No. of question	No. of question
Synonyms (Best meaning)	5	10
Antonyms	10	10
Analogy	10	10

Sentence Completion	20	8
Sentence Correction	15	5
Paragraph formation	5	--
One word substitution	10	10
Idiom / Phrase	5	--
Cloze Test	10	--
Para Jumble	--	5
Replace the bold-italic with appropriate one	--	7
Total Number of Questions	90	70

Reading Comprehension:

The RC section usually consists of medium length passages (ranging between 200 – 500 words each). The type of question usually is direct or partially indirect. The topics of the passages are also easy to comprehend. If one is good at speed reading, this section can yield a good return.

It is imperative to brush up basics of grammar and vocabulary as the level of difficulty is easy / moderate. It is also advisable that students give a quick go through of the questions in RC before reading the passage, in order to locate sitter/ direct questions easily as one reads the passage. Overall an easy section to aim for a good score.

Overall Conclusion:

The paper is usually a very easy paper except for its length. Anybody who has even slept through the classroom sessions, done their bit of revision with the GGIs, Assignments and mock paper provided in the CD, should be able to get a good score. Mostly, students aiming for top institutes do not appear for this exam, thus an average student with an above average preparation should ideally be able to clear the cut – off for this paper.

Above average students should aim for a good score in the English section with a good overall score to ensure a call from Hyderabad campus with scholarship.

One should ideally attempt as close to 150+ questions to ensure a call from the top 4 institutes with a good accuracy. Average cut-off for the campuses could be in the range of 120 – 140.

Since, Essay writing has a 5% weightage – students should work on their writing skills. A possible approach to Essay writing can be as follows:

1. READ the topic carefully
2. UNDERLINE words indicating the specific things to be answered in the essay
3. Prepare an OUTLINE or other organizational form
4. Use CORRECT grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. It is better to write simply and correctly than to try to write eloquently but make errors.
5. WRITE an INTRODUCTORY paragraph
6. WRITE the paragraphs for the BODY, trying to use one paragraph for each separate sub-topic
7. WRITE a good CONCLUSION
8. PROOFREAD carefully, checking especially for errors in grammar and spelling

All the best