

The GRE

WHAT?

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is a standardized exam required for admission to some graduate programs within the country. Many business schools now accept either the GMAT or GRE. The test is comprised of the following different sections:

1. **Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA):** The AWA measures your ability to “Analyze an Issue” task. This task presents an opinion on an issue and instructions on how to respond. You’re required to evaluate the issue, consider its complexities, and develop an argument with reasons and examples to support your views.

2. **Verbal Reasoning:** The Verbal Reasoning section includes questions that assess your ability to analyze and draw conclusions from a sentence, understand the meaning of complex words in a sentence or paragraph, understand the perspective of the author, summarize the text, and understand its structure.

There are three types of questions on the Verbal Section:

- **Reading Comprehension:** These questions require you to read passages of varying lengths. Subsequent questions test your ability to interpret, apply, and infer information from the texts. Specifically, you will be asked to define words and phrases in context, determine the strong and weak parts of an argument, and draw inferences.
- **Sentence Equivalence:** These questions are based on very short (two-to-three sentence) arguments. To do well, you must recognize the structure of an argument, including assumptions, evidence, and conclusion; recognize parallels between similar arguments; determine factors that would strengthen or weaken an argument; determine flaws in an argument; and recognize the effectiveness of a plan of action given in an argument.
- **Text Completions:** These questions contain a short section of text (between 1-5 sentences) with 1-3 blanks. Sentences with one-blank will have five answer choices and two-blank or three-blank question will have three choices per blank and you are required to choose the right words that fit into the blanks based on the context of the sentence(s).

3. **Quantitative Section:** The Quantitative section contains questions which measure basic math skills, understanding of elementary concepts, and the ability to reason quantitatively. The questions cover three basic areas: Arithmetic, Algebra, and Geometry.

There are four types of questions on the Quantitative Section:

- **Quantitative comparisons:** These questions will give you two choices and you are required to determine which answer is bigger or smaller, if the two answers are equal or if there is not enough information in the question given to provide an answer.
- **Multiple-choice:** Multiple choice questions may include story problems or simply tell you to solve for x with a given mathematic equation.
- **Numeric-Entry:** These questions will require you to solve the given problem and enter in your own answer, meaning you are not provided any possible answers.
- **Data Interpretation Sets:** These questions are grouped together and refer to the same table, graph, or other data presentation. These questions ask you to interpret or analyze the given data.

WHEN?

- The GRE is a computer-based adaptive test and may be taken at GRE testing centers found around the world, upon appointment. Go to www.gre.org to register for a test date.
- GRE scores are good for five years. Thus, it may make sense to take the GRE when your test taking skills are still sharp (usually right before or shortly after completing undergraduate graduation).

HOW TO STUDY

- The GRE can be heavily weighted in the application review process, so it is important that you prepare seriously. Most students plan to study for about 4-6 months, 10-15 hours per week, and take a GRE preparation class.

RE-TAKING THE GRE

- Repeat test-takers often score slightly higher. Schools will have access to your complete record and will see every test score and cancelled test. While you may take the GRE up to five times in twelve months, most schools frown upon an applicant taking it multiple times without improvement.

CANCELLING SCORES

- Students who do not wish to have their score recorded may have their score cancelled but will not be able to know what score they received, or would have received, on that test.

SCORES

- The GRE is a computer-based adaptive test. This means that unlike a paper-and-pencil test, the next question is determined on the spot, pulled from a large bank of questions. Based on your previous answers, you will receive either more or less difficult questions, which will have an impact on your score.
- Overall GRE scores range between 130 and 170. The final score is determined by your performance on the Verbal and Quantitative sections, and is accompanied by a percentile rank. The average score is 150-152.
- An Analytical Writing Assessment score is provided separately. Either two independent readers, or one reader and a computerized essay-scoring software, will score each essay. A third reader is used if the first two scores are too far apart. Each essay is assigned a score between 0 and 6, with 6 being “Outstanding”.