

PGP Admission Process for IIMB Batch of 2008¹

This document details the process that will be adopted for selecting candidates for admission to the Post Graduate Program in Management (PGP) at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) for the batch of 2008.

IIMB has internally developed an admission process that seeks to identify the most promising candidates for the PGP program. This process has been progressively refined over the years based on cumulative data on the Common Admission Test (CAT) applicants and on the academic performance of the candidates that were admitted at IIMB. The process arrived at is based on the relationship of academic performance in IIMB to past academic performance, CAT score, performance in group discussion, interview and prior work experience. The selection criteria and weights given to various parameters are based on data from previous cycles as well as on inputs from the IIMB faculty body and other relevant stakeholders and are usually revised every year. The admission committee fixes these criteria and weights at the beginning of each admission cycle before looking at information pertaining to candidates applying in that cycle so as to avoid any bias.

IIMB has found over the years that students who perform well in the academic program are typically those who have a consistently good academic record during their school, high school and graduation level, besides exhibiting sufficiently high aptitude as measured by the CAT. Therefore IIMB uses multiple parameters, namely academic performance in school, high school and graduation programs as well as candidates' scores in CAT to judge the suitability of candidates for the PGP program. Relevant work experience, if any, is also given weight in the selection. Evaluation by multiple criteria is also consistent with empirical research on recruitment and selection that shows greater efficacy of recruitment processes that uses multiple criteria. The CAT score, over and above being a selection criterion, is also used to establish the minimum level of proficiency that is expected from the candidate in respective faculties as indicated by section wise minimum scores in the CAT. Multiple criteria are used to arrive at a composite score for every candidate, which is used to select candidates for the subsequent stage. The remaining part of the document explains this process in detail.

IIMB adopts a two-phase selection process and accordingly these selection criteria are applied in two phases. The first phase process is applied to all eligible candidates who appear for CAT 2007 to determine those qualifying candidates who will be called for group discussion and personal interview (GDPI). During the GDPI process, two faculty members will evaluate each qualifying candidate on his/her performance in the group discussion, his/her summary of the group discussion and his/her performance during the personal interview. In addition, for candidates having work experience, each interviewing faculty will evaluate the quality and relevance of the candidate's work experience. These scores, in combination with the pre-GDPI selection parameters will be used cumulatively in the second and final phase of selection to identify the candidates who will merit selection from among those candidates who appear for the GDPI.

¹ This information is pertinent to the admissions cycle (2008) alone and therefore, no inference can be made from this document about the admissions process that will be used for future admission cycles at IIMB. IIMB reserves the right to change, modify or adopt any new admissions process that it deems necessary and which best suits its purpose for a given admissions cycle.

The selection process, parameters and weights used are uniform for all categories of applicants. Sufficient candidates are short listed at each stage in each category to meet the reservation requirement for each group, as applicable at that time.

Phase 1

- 1) The first short list of candidates will be based on candidates securing minimum section-wise and aggregates percentile scores in the CAT. The percentile cut-off scores used in 2007 are shown in Table 1. The percentile cut-off scores that will be used in 2008 for preparing the first short-list will be available in the IIMB website soon after the processing of CAT scores is over. This is because the section-wise and aggregate level cut-offs cannot be decided in advance – they have to be based on the overall performance of all candidates in that CAT and will be adjusted to ensure that a sufficiently large pool of applicants is available in each category for subsequent processing by applying other selection criteria on these candidates. All the subsequent processing, standardization and selection will be limited to candidates belonging to this first short list alone. This means that the CAT score alone will be used as the basis for arriving at the first short list.

Table 1: First Shortlist (2007)

Category	Minimum Percentile Requirement for First Shortlist (as used in 2007)			
	Sec 1 (Logic & Data)	Sec 2 (Verbal)	Sec 3 (Quantitative)	Aggregate
ST	50%	55%	50%	65%
PWD	50%	55%	50%	75%
SC	50%	55%	50%	75%
OBC ²	75%	75%	75%	85%
General	85%	85%	85%	90%

- 2) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), the candidates' percentage scores in the 10th and 12th board exams will be initially adjusted by dividing each such score by the 90th percentile score obtained in that board. The database of 10th and 12th scores of all CAT applicants of the past two years will be used for identifying the 90th percentile score for each 10th and 12th board for this purpose.
- 3) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), final scores obtained by the candidate will be used for the bachelors degree and professional degrees (if any). Incomplete or intermediate scores will be considered only if the candidate's final score is pending. Thus, for final year bachelor's degree candidates, their incomplete graduation score would be taken in lieu of final graduation score. Graduation scores will be standardized within their respective categories. This gives the standardized score for the bachelor's degree for all candidates in the first shortlist.

² This is as per reservation act applicable at the time of creating the shortlist for GDPI in 2007. At the time of making admission offers in 2007, as per the Honorable Supreme Court judgment, OBC reservation was withheld and consequently all OBC candidates called for GDPI were considered in the General category.

- 4) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), candidates with Chartered Accountancy Professional course will be eligible for weight under professional course. No other professional course will be eligible for weight under professional course. The professional course score will also be standardized for all candidates in the first shortlist.
- 5) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), the score/weight for work experience will be given by:

Pre GDPI score for Work Experience

$$= 5x/36 \text{ if } 0 < x < 36$$

$$= 5 \text{ if } x \geq 36$$

where x is the months of work experience up to December 2007, as captured in CAT application Form (and substantiated in the application to IIMB). This implies that the score will peak at 36 months work experience and will remain at that level for candidates with work experience exceeding 36 months. The work experience score (maximum 5 in the pre-GDPI stage) will be multiplied by the quality of work experience score on a 5 point scale (0 – 0.5 – 1 – 1.5 – 2) as given by interviewing faculty in the GDPI process in Phase 2 to give a maximum score of 10 for work experience.

- 6) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), the maximum of the work experience score and the professional course score will be considered for selection under a common weight of 10 for work experience or professional course – since both provide professional work experience relevant to a management program.
- 7) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), other than work experience or professional course, the weights for the remaining four components (each of them being standardized) are fixed as:

$$\text{CAT} = 20, \quad 10^{\text{th}} \text{ board} = 15, \quad 12^{\text{th}} \text{ board} = 10, \quad \text{Bachelors} = 15.$$

- 8) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), the weighted total of the five components namely (a) work experience or professional course, (b) CAT, (c) 10th board, (d) 12th board, (e) bachelors as stated above will be used to prepare a pre-GDPI rank list for calling candidates for the GDPI. Sufficient candidates will be invited for GDPI to enable selection based in the additional GDPI evaluation components (a) GD, (b) GD summary, (c) Personal interview, (d) review of work experience (if any).
- 9) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), the top 10 candidates in each sectional and total score in CAT, adjusted SSC, HSC, Bachelors and professional (CA) (from the first shortlist, as created in Table 1) will automatically qualify for GDPI. These candidates are given a chance to appear for GDPI due to their exceptional performance on one parameter. However, at the end of Phase 2, all such candidates must merit selection at an identical level of composite aggregate score like any other candidate.
- 10) For all candidates in the first shortlist as stated in (1), normalization or standardization in any component stated above will be carried out as per the following formula. All

standardization will be done with reference to the qualifying first shortlist or its subdivisions; Standardized score (truncated between 0 and weight (wt)) is computed from the raw score (val) as:

$$\max \left\langle 0, \min \left(wt, \frac{wt}{2} + \frac{val - mean}{sd} \times \frac{wt}{6} \right) \right\rangle$$

Phase 2

- 11) For each of the four elements of evaluation during the GDPI process – Group Discussion, Group Discussion Summary Content, Group Discussion Summary Language and Personal Interview - the average of the scores given by the two interviewing faculty will be considered. The overall performance of each candidate in the Group Discussion will be scored by each faculty individually. Similarly the quality of the Group Discussion Summary Content and the Group Discussion Summary Language will be scored by each faculty individually. Each faculty will use the Personal Interview to comprehensively evaluate the candidate's motivation and ability to fit in and benefit from the PGP program. All candidates will be required to provide three confidential reference letters from their employers or faculty and this will also be used in the personal interview evaluation.
- 12) The work experience score will be multiplied by the quality of experience score, as evaluated by the interviewing panel as an assessment of the relevance of the work experience to the program. The quality of work experience score will be evaluated on a 5 point scale (0 – 0.5 – 1 – 1.5 – 2) by each member of the panel during the interviews. The average quality of work experience score will be multiplied by the pre-GDPI work experience score and accordingly the work/professional experience component score (maximum score 5) used in Phase 1 will be revised in Phase 2 (maximum score 10).
- 13) The scores in all past academics will also be updated, if required, on the basis of actual mark sheet submitted with the principle of considering all subjects (except where mentioned explicitly in the mark sheet).
- 14) The Group Discussion score (weight=5), Group Discussion Summary Content score (weight=5), Group Discussion Summary Language score (weight=5), the Personal Interview score (weight=20), after standardization within interview panels, will be added to the pre-GDPI total to arrive at the final aggregate score.
- 15) The final offers of admission to candidates will be made strictly on the basis of ranks in each category on the final aggregate score as mentioned in (14).

Since IIMB follows a comprehensive multi-criteria process at the pre-GDPI stage, it is able to identify many candidates for the GDPI who have an excellent academic record and work experience but who, while doing well enough in the CAT to be in the first shortlist, may have narrowly missed the high score that would have been required if CAT alone was the basis for the GDPI short list. Such candidates effectively replace candidates who have

only a high CAT score but score poorly in terms of their past academic record and work experience. IIMB emphasizes consistent and high performance in past academics.

Admission into the Post Graduate Program through GMAT

A separate process will be used for processing applications from candidates who apply through the GMAT route. To be eligible to apply through the GMAT route, a candidate must have resided abroad for at least 18 months in the preceding three years [Jan 2005 to Dec 2007] and should not be in a position to appear for CAT2007.

The first short list among such applicants is created by applying the same percentile cut-offs, as used for the general category in the CAT route.

For each applicant in this shortlist, each member of the evaluating committee (6 faculty members were involved in 2007) will go through the applications in detail and in particular will evaluate the academic background and the international experience of the candidates. The evaluating faculty will also assess whether the candidate is likely to gain admission through CAT. Finally each member will recommend strongly or weakly in favor of the candidate or recommend rejection.

The final decision for each candidate will be taken on the basis of detailed discussion on these recommendations and assessments of strengths and weaknesses of each candidate. There will be no quota or fixed number of seats for such candidates. There will also be no wait-lists for the same reason. In most years, the number of such candidates joining the program is not higher than three or four.
