

AFCAT Exam Pattern and Syllabus 2026: Complete Subject-Wise Guide

Air Force Common Admission Test | Exam Pattern • Syllabus • Marking Scheme • EKT • Selection Process • Preparation Strategy

Exam Mode	Questions	Maximum Marks	Duration
Online / CBT	100	300	2 Hours

Prepared for AFCAT Aspirants

CareerMafiya.Com

Introduction

The Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT) is one of the major entrance examinations conducted by the Indian Air Force for selecting eligible candidates for officer-level training in the Flying Branch and Ground Duty branches. For aspirants preparing for AFCAT, understanding the exam pattern, subject-wise syllabus, marking scheme, difficulty level and selection process is essential before beginning serious preparation.

The AFCAT written examination is conducted in online computer-based mode. The paper covers English, General Awareness, Numerical Ability, and Reasoning & Military Aptitude. Candidates applying for the Ground Duty Technical branch may also have to appear for the Engineering Knowledge Test (EKT), as applicable to the recruitment cycle.

What Is AFCAT?

AFCAT stands for Air Force Common Admission Test. It is conducted by the Indian Air Force for recruitment of officers in different branches of the IAF.

The examination primarily covers:

- Flying Branch
- Ground Duty (Technical) Branch
- Ground Duty (Non-Technical) Branch

The AFCAT written examination is conducted in online computer-based mode. Candidates who qualify the written examination proceed to the next stages of the selection process, including the Air Force Selection Board (AFSB) process and subsequent medical and final selection stages.

AFCAT Exam Pattern 2026

Candidates should understand the structure of the written examination before starting preparation.

Particular	Details
Examination	Air Force Common Admission Test
Exam Mode	Online Computer-Based Test
Total Questions	100
Maximum Marks	300
Duration	2 Hours
Question Type	Objective / Multiple Choice Questions
Language	English
Correct Answer	+3 marks
Incorrect Answer	-1 mark
Unattempted Question	0 marks
Sections	English, General Awareness, Numerical Ability, Reasoning & Military Aptitude

The AFCAT paper contains 100 questions, with two hours allotted for the examination. Each correct answer carries three marks, while one mark is deducted for an incorrect answer. No marks are awarded or deducted for questions left unanswered.

Important Point About Negative Marking

AFCAT uses a +3/-1/0 marking system.

- 70 correct answers = 210 marks
- 10 incorrect answers = -10 marks
- 20 unanswered questions = 0 marks

Therefore, the final score in this example would be 200 marks. Random guessing can reduce the score significantly, so question selection matters.

AFCAT Sections

The AFCAT written examination consists of four major areas:

- English
- General Awareness
- Numerical Ability
- Reasoning and Military Aptitude

The Numerical Ability section is of approximately Matriculation level, while the other subjects are broadly based on the graduation level.

AFCAT English Syllabus

English evaluates vocabulary, grammar, comprehension and the ability to understand and correctly use the language.

Important English topics include:

- Reading Comprehension: Main idea, supporting information, vocabulary, inference, conclusion and tone.
- Error Detection: Subject-verb agreement, tenses, articles, prepositions, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions.
- Sentence Completion: Selecting the word or phrase that logically and grammatically completes a sentence.
- Synonyms and Antonyms: Common and competitive-exam vocabulary.
- Cloze Test: Selecting appropriate words based on context and grammar.
- Idioms and Phrases: Meaning and usage of common expressions.
- Analogy: Identifying relationships between words.
- Sentence Rearrangement: Arranging jumbled sentences in logical order.
- One-Word Substitution: Replacing a phrase or description with one appropriate word.
- Sentence Transformation: Understanding changes in sentence structures.
- Homonyms: Understanding words with similar pronunciation or spelling but different meanings.

How to Prepare English for AFCAT

- Revise vocabulary daily.
- Strengthen grammar fundamentals.

- Practise previous AFCAT questions.
- Solve reading comprehension regularly.
- Practise error detection and cloze tests.
- Revise idioms, phrases and one-word substitutions.
- Attempt timed English sectional tests.

AFCAT General Awareness Syllabus

General Awareness has one of the broadest syllabi in AFCAT because it combines static knowledge with current affairs.

Important areas include:

- History: Ancient, medieval and modern India, freedom movement, important events and personalities.
- Geography: Physical geography, Indian geography, rivers, mountains, climate, soils, agriculture, resources, oceans and important locations.
- Indian Polity: Constitution, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, Parliament, President, Prime Minister, Supreme Court, Election Commission and constitutional bodies.
- Indian Economy: GDP, inflation, banking, monetary policy, fiscal policy, taxation, budget and major economic developments.
- Science: Basic Physics, Chemistry, Biology, human body and everyday science.
- Science & Technology: Space, AI, defence technology, biotechnology, IT, nuclear technology and major missions.
- Environment & Ecology: Ecosystems, biodiversity, pollution, climate change, conservation and environmental conventions.
- Sports: Major tournaments, championships, personalities, awards and records.
- Art & Culture: Dance, music, painting, architecture, literature, festivals and heritage.
- Defence Awareness: Armed Forces, IAF, Army, Navy, exercises, missiles, aircraft, ranks, operations and major defence developments.
- Current Affairs: National and international events, government schemes, appointments, awards, sports, science, space, reports and summits.

AFCAT Numerical Ability Syllabus

Numerical Ability tests fundamental mathematical skills. The official syllabus places this component at approximately Matriculation level.

Important topics include:

- Number System
- Decimal Fractions
- HCF and LCM
- Percentage
- Average
- Ratio and Proportion

- Profit and Loss
- Simple and Compound Interest
- Time and Work
- Time, Speed and Distance
- Trains
- Boats and Streams
- Mixture and Allegation
- Area and Perimeter
- Mensuration
- Probability
- Number Series
- Squares and Square Roots
- Cubes and Cube Roots
- Exponents and Powers
- Statistics
- Heights and Distances

Preparation approach: Concept → Formula → Basic Questions → AFCAT-Level Questions → Timed Practice. Learn shortcuts only after understanding the underlying concept.

Reasoning and Military Aptitude Test Syllabus

This section evaluates the ability to identify patterns, analyse information, solve logical problems and demonstrate spatial and visual reasoning.

Verbal Reasoning topics:

- Analogy
- Classification
- Series
- Coding-Decoding
- Blood Relations
- Direction Sense
- Ranking
- Logical Sequence
- Mathematical Reasoning
- Venn Diagrams
- Statement-Based Reasoning

Non-Verbal Reasoning topics:

- Figure Analogy
- Figure Classification

- Pattern Completion
- Mirror Images
- Water Images
- Embedded Figures
- Paper Folding
- Figure Series
- Spatial Relationships
- Visual Reasoning

Military aptitude preparation should develop logical thinking, spatial awareness, pattern recognition, observation, decision-making and speed.

AFCAT EKT: Engineering Knowledge Test

Candidates applying for the Ground Duty Technical Branch may also have to take the Engineering Knowledge Test (EKT), as prescribed for the relevant recruitment cycle.

Particular	EKT
Questions	50
Maximum Marks	150
Duration	45 minutes
Correct Answer	+3
Incorrect Answer	-1

The technical areas can include Mechanical, Computer Science, and Electrical & Electronics Engineering, subject to the applicable eligibility and recruitment cycle. Candidates should always check the notification for their specific cycle.

EKT Syllabus

Mechanical Engineering: Engineering Mechanics, Thermodynamics, Fluid Mechanics, Heat Transfer, Strength of Materials, Theory of Machines, Machine Design, Production Engineering, Materials and Industrial Engineering.

Electrical & Electronics Engineering: Basic Electrical Engineering, Electrical Machines, Network Theory, Control Systems, Power Systems, Electronics, Digital Electronics, Analog Electronics, Communication Systems and Measurements.

Computer Science / IT: Programming, Data Structures, Algorithms, Computer Networks, Operating Systems, DBMS, Computer Organisation, Software Engineering, Digital Logic and Computer Architecture.

AFCAT Exam Standard

Subject Area	Approximate Standard
Numerical Ability	Matriculation level
English	Graduation level

Subject Area	Approximate Standard
General Awareness	Graduation level
Reasoning & Military Aptitude	Graduation-level aptitude

The examination paper is conducted in English only. The real challenge is the combination of speed, accuracy, broad coverage and negative marking.

AFCAT Marking Scheme

Response	Marks
Correct Answer	+3
Incorrect Answer	-1
Unattempted	0

Example: If a candidate answers 80 questions, gets 60 correct and 20 incorrect, the score is $60 \times 3 - 20 \times 1 = 160$ marks.

Normalisation may be undertaken when the examination is conducted in multiple shifts, as specified by the applicable recruitment notification.

AFCAT Selection Process

Stage 1: AFCAT Online Examination

Candidates first appear for the computer-based AFCAT examination.

Stage 2: AFSB

Shortlisted candidates are called for the Air Force Selection Board process, which assesses psychological suitability, officer-like qualities, group behaviour, leadership potential and other attributes.

Stage 3: Medical Examination

Recommended candidates undergo the prescribed medical evaluation.

Stage 4: Final Merit

Final selection is subject to applicable merit, eligibility, medical fitness, vacancies and other conditions specified by the Indian Air Force.

How to Prepare for AFCAT

AFCAT preparation should be treated as a combination of knowledge building and timed performance. The examination rewards candidates who can solve accurately under pressure.

Step 1: Understand the Syllabus

- Create separate preparation folders for English, General Awareness, Mathematics, and Reasoning & Military Aptitude.
- Maintain a separate EKT plan if applicable.

Step 2: Build Your Fundamentals

Strengthen grammar and vocabulary, mathematical fundamentals, standard reasoning approaches and static GK before moving heavily into mock tests.

Step 3: Start Timed Practice

Record questions attempted, correct answers, wrong answers, unattempted questions, time taken and topics responsible for mistakes.

Subject-Wise Preparation Strategy

English: Read regularly, revise vocabulary, strengthen grammar, and practise comprehension, error detection, cloze tests and sentence rearrangement.

General Awareness: Combine static GK, current affairs and defence awareness. Revise repeatedly rather than collecting too many sources.

Mathematics: Practise topic-wise first and then move to mixed timed sets. Accuracy should come before shortcuts.

Reasoning: Learn standard methods for common question types and then practise under time limits.

AFCAT 90-Day Preparation Plan

Phase	Focus
Days 1-30	Foundation: maths basics, grammar, static GK, reasoning fundamentals, vocabulary and defence awareness
Days 31-60	Intensive practice: previous questions, sectional tests, current affairs and speed building.
Days 61-75	Full-length mocks under exam conditions and detailed error analysis.
Days 76-90	Revision, mock tests, formulas, vocabulary, current affairs, defence awareness and weak areas.

How Many Mock Tests Should You Attempt?

There is no magic number of mock tests that guarantees selection. Quality matters more than quantity. After every mock test, analyse why each wrong answer occurred, whether it was a concept gap, calculation error, misreading, time issue or guess.

Common Mistakes AFCAT Aspirants Should Avoid

- Ignoring General Awareness
- Preparing current affairs only at the last minute
- Attempting questions randomly despite negative marking
- Not practising with a timer
- Ignoring defence awareness
- Taking mock tests without analysing them
- Using too many books and resources instead of revising selected material

AFCAT Exam-Hall Strategy

First Pass: Attempt questions where the answer is immediately clear.

Second Pass: Return to questions requiring calculation or moderate reasoning.

Final Pass: Review doubtful questions and make disciplined decisions about attempts.

Do not spend several minutes fighting one difficult question. The goal is to maximise the overall score.

AFCAT Syllabus Quick Revision Checklist

English: Comprehension, Error Detection, Sentence Completion, Synonyms, Antonyms, Cloze Test, Idioms and Phrases, Analogy, Sentence Rearrangement, One-Word Substitution, Sentence Transformation and Homonyms.

General Awareness: History, Geography, Polity, Economy, Science, Science & Technology, Environment, Sports, Art & Culture, Organisations, Personalities, Current Affairs and Defence Awareness.

Numerical Ability: Number System, Decimal Fractions, HCF & LCM, Percentage, Average, Ratio & Proportion, Profit & Loss, SI/CI, Time & Work, Time & Distance, Trains, Boats & Streams, Mixture, Mensuration, Probability, Series, Squares, Cubes, Exponents, Statistics and Heights & Distances.

Reasoning & Military Aptitude: Verbal Reasoning, Non-Verbal Reasoning, Analogy, Classification, Series, Coding-Decoding, Spatial Reasoning, Figure Questions, Pattern Recognition and Logical Reasoning.

EKT, where applicable: Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical & Electronics and discipline-specific technical fundamentals.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is AFCAT conducted online?

Yes. The AFCAT written examination is conducted as a computer-based examination.

How many questions are asked in AFCAT?

The AFCAT paper contains 100 questions.

How many marks is AFCAT worth?

The AFCAT written paper carries 300 marks.

What is the duration of AFCAT?

Candidates get two hours to complete the AFCAT paper.

Is there negative marking in AFCAT?

Yes. One mark is deducted for every incorrect answer, while three marks are awarded for a correct answer.

Is the AFCAT paper available in Hindi?

No. The official syllabus specifies that the examination paper is in English only.

What is the level of AFCAT Mathematics?

Numerical Ability questions are approximately at Matriculation level.

What is the level of the other AFCAT subjects?

The remaining subjects are broadly based on graduation-level standards.

Is EKT compulsory for every AFCAT candidate?

No. EKT is associated with the applicable Ground Duty Technical requirements. Candidates must check their recruitment notification.

What comes after the AFCAT written examination?

Candidates who qualify according to the applicable criteria are called for the AFSB process, followed by medical evaluation and final selection procedures.

Final Words

The AFCAT examination is challenging because of the combination of a wide syllabus, limited time, negative marking and the need for consistent accuracy. Aspirants should therefore prepare strategically rather than trying to memorise everything available online.

Build your fundamentals, practise AFCAT-level questions, stay updated with current affairs and defence developments, take regular mock tests and analyse every mistake. Most importantly, keep revising. A topic studied once is information; a topic revised repeatedly becomes exam-ready knowledge.

For the most reliable preparation, aspirants should always cross-check the official notification for their particular AFCAT cycle because recruitment-specific details, eligibility, technical requirements and other conditions can change.

Official AFCAT Resources

Indian Air Force AFCAT Recruitment Portal: afcat.cdac.in

Indian Air Force official website: careerairforce.gov.in

CareerMafiya.Com