CAT4: the four batteries, the levels and the scores

GL Assessment's Cognitive Abilities Test, Fourth Edition. Ages 6 to 17+; 30 minutes x 2 (6-8) or 45 minutes x 3 (8-17+); digital or paper, in a group at school; standardised on 25,000 students and verified yearly on a quarter of a million. A Standard Age Score (mean 100) for each battery and a mean; stanines; national percentile ranks; GCSE, A level, IB and CBSE indicators. Sold to schools only.

The four batteries and eight tests

Battery	Tests	What they ask
Verbal Reasoning	Verbal Classification; Verbal Analogies	Reasoning with words: which word belongs with three others; complete the analogy. GL: the ability to express ideas and reason through words, essential to subjects with high language content
Quantitative Reasoning	Number Analogies; Number Series	Reasoning with numbers: the rule linking pairs; the next in a series. GL: using numerical skills to solve problems, applicable well beyond mathematics
Non-verbal Reasoning	Figure Classification; Figure Matrices	Reasoning with shapes: the odd one out; the missing cell of a matrix. GL: problem-solving using pictures and diagrams, important in maths and science
Spatial Reasoning	Figure Analysis; Figure Recognition	Thinking in three dimensions: how folded and punched paper looks unfolded; which figure hides a given shape. GL: needed for many STEM subjects, not easily measured by other data

Levels by year group and age (GL's table)

Level	Standardised ages	Year group (England and Wales)
A	7:06 to 9:11	Year 4
B	8:06 to 10:11	Year 5
C	9:06 to 11:11	Year 6
D	10:06 to 12:11	Year 7
E	11:06 to 13:11	Year 8
F	12:06 to 15:11	Years 9 and 10
G	14:06 to 17:00+	Years 11 and 12

Level X and Pre-A cover ages 6 to 8. A Year 7 admission test is Level D; a Year 9 or 10 benchmark is Level F.

SAS to stanine, percentile and band

SAS	About the percentile	Stanine	Band
74	4th	2	Below average
82	12th	3	Below average
89	23rd	4	Average
96	39th	4	Average
100	50th	5	Average
104	61st	6	Average
112	79th	7	Above average
119	90th	8	Above average
127	96th	9	Very high
135	99th	9	Very high

From sciencewithshobha.com/blog/cat4-test-explained-the-four-batteries-the-levels-by-year-group-and-age-the-standard-age-score-stanines-and-percentiles-what-the-profile-means-how-uk-and-british-schools-abroad-use-it-and-how-to-prepare/ · 1-on-1 online tutoring for UK and Gulf families, KS2 to A level, free 30-minute first class.

Reading the profile, how schools use it, and your questions

The profile: read the four batteries, not the mean

[ ] GL's rule of thumb: a difference of ten or more SAS points between batteries is significant.

[ ] GL's example: verbal 95, quantitative 101, non-verbal 115, spatial 116 (stanines 4, 5, 7, 7): a child who reasons far better with shapes and space than with words.

[ ] Patterns schools name: verbal bias, spatial bias, even profile, extreme profile (gaps of 20 or more).

[ ] Stanine 9 (SAS 127 and above, about the top 4%) is the line GL's materials associate with the most able.

How schools use it

[ ] Baseline at the start of Year 7, again in Year 9 or 10: the origin of the 'target' or 'expected' GCSE and A level grades on later reports (ask which indicator, and whether adjusted).

[ ] Setting in maths and English in the first term, before the school has its own marks.

[ ] Finding hidden ability (high non-verbal and spatial with low verbal in a child new to English) and hidden need.

[ ] Admission to British-curriculum schools in the UAE and elsewhere at Level D or E, often with a written English task.

Honest preparation

[ ] See the eight question types once, with the timing; GL publishes no practice papers for parents.

[ ] Read every day; mental arithmetic; build and draw. Sleep before the test.

[ ] Treat the result as information for the school, not a verdict on the child.

Questions for the school

Level given, and the date: _____

SAS for verbal / quantitative / non-verbal / spatial, and the mean: _____

Stanines and national percentiles: _____

The gap between the highest and lowest battery, and what the school makes of it: _____

Which sets or indicators were decided from it, and when it is retested: _____