Revised 2011 GRE - important info*

Created by the Paige Zuckerman of the PAC office with information by Kaplan. *This handout is not intended to be a substitute for extensive study and preparation for the GRE. Test changes in effect August 1, 2011.*

Format:

The new total running time of the GRE will be 4 hours rather than the previous 3. The general format will still include 2 essays (argument and issue) but each essay will have a 30 minute time limit. The essays will also have more detailed directions.

There will be 2 Verbal sections with 20 questions each and 30 minutes allotted per section, and 2 Quantitative sections of 20 questions each with 35 minutes allotted per section.

The new GRE is now a Multi Stage test (MST) in which your performance on the first section of each topic dictates the difficulty level of the second section. This is different from the old CAT style in which each question adjusted in difficulty based on answer accuracy in the prior questions.

Quantitative section

3 types of questions: Quantitative comparisons, problem solving and numeric entry.

Verbal section

3 types of questions: text completions with 1-3 spaces, sentence equivalence and reading comprehension

Scoring:

The new scoring system will be from 130 (minimum) to 170 (maximum) in 1 point increments. This is very different from the old scoring system. The medium score, or “average” will be 150.

**Note that test takers from August 2011-November 2011 will not see their official scores until late November as the new official scoring data is being more carefully collected in the first few months of the new test. After December 1, 2011, all test takers will have the option to view their “unofficial” scores after they complete the test.

Other:

The test will allow students to mark questions and return to them later, or to skip around and answer in a flexible order. This is an advantage over the old format, but students will need to be especially careful with their time management.

A basic function calculator will be available onscreen for use in the quantitative section. This is also an advantage, but students are encouraged to not become overly dependent upon the calculator as some problems will still be better solved with basic mental math.

Vocabulary is crucial.

Reading comp passages will be no more than 1 paragraph in length, versus the longer passages in the old exam.

“Distractors” or deliberately wrong and deceptive answer options are common and will be more advanced. Learn how to identify these and not become trapped by them.