

The April 2013 SBI PO exam was divided into two parts; an objective paper consisting of 200 questions (200 marks) spread over 4 sections viz. Logical Reasoning, Data Interpretation, Verbal Reasoning and General Awareness/ Computers/ Marketing and a descriptive paper consisting of 5 questions (50 marks). The objective paper was to be completed in 2 hours and the descriptive paper in 1 hour.

While the paper pattern was quite similar to the SBI PO exam conducted in 2011, it had a good mix of sitters, moderate and tough questions. A well-prepared student could have attempted at least 35-40 questions per section.

Objective Paper

Summary	
Total Marks	200
Number of Questions	200
Number of Sections	4
Questions Per section	50
Options	5
Marks per question	1
Negative Marking	0.25

1. Logical Reasoning:

The breakup of this section was as shown below:

Area	Number of Questions	Difficulty Level
Directions and Arrangements (Circular Arrangement)	5	Moderate to Difficult
Directions and Arrangements (Complex Arrangement)	5	Difficult
Data Sufficiency	3	Easy to Moderate
Syllogisms	5	Easy
Sequential Output Tracing	5	Easy to Moderate
Codes	5	Easy to Moderate
Relationships	5	Moderate to Difficult
Logical Puzzles based on Mathematical Operators	5	Moderate to Difficult
Visual Reasoning	5	Easy to Moderate
Critical Reasoning	7	Easy to Moderate

The sets on circular arrangement and complex arrangements were difficult and only one of them should have been initially attempted. Questions on syllogisms, codes, visual reasoning and data sufficiency were relatively simpler and should have been attempted first. There was a new question where a set of parameters was to be compared based on mathematical operators. This set, along with the set on relationships, was time consuming. An attempt of around 40 questions in 35 minutes with an accuracy of 90% would be good.

2. Data Interpretation and Analysis:

The breakup of this section was:

Area	Number of Questions	Difficulty Level
Pie Charts	10 (Two sets of five questions each)	Easy to Moderate
Bar Graphs	10 (Two sets of five questions each)	Easy to Moderate
Radar Graph	5	Moderate
Line graphs	5	Easy to Moderate
Tables and Caselets	15 (Three sets of five questions each)	Easy to Moderate
Probability	2	Easy
Percentages	3	Easy

Like earlier SBI exams, the emphasis in this section was on data interpretation. There was minimal weightage on pure quantitative aptitude. From the QA side, there were 5 questions in all; from probability and percentages. These were quite simple and should have been attempted. On the DI side, there were 9 sets, as shown above. A new question type in this section was the set on radar graphs, which was of moderate difficulty. However, on the whole, this section was on the easier side. Students could have attempted 40-45 questions in around 35 minutes with an accuracy level of 90-95%.

3. English Language:

The area-wise breakup of this section was:

Area	Number of Questions	Difficulty Level
Reading Comprehension	20 (2 RCs – each with 6 + 4 questions)	Moderate to Difficult
Mark the Error	5	Easy to Moderate
Jumbled Sentences	5	Easy
Fill in the Blanks (dual)	5	Moderate to Difficult
Vocabulary	5	Moderate to Difficult
Cloze Passage	10	Difficult

The RCs were not very long and were simple to comprehend, but the vocabulary questions within the RCs were tough. The topics for the RCs included financial inclusion and BYOD (bring your own device). The jumbled sentences were easy to place in order. The 'Mark the Error' questions were sentences based on banking. Each sentence was divided into 4 parts and the 5th option was 'No Error'. It tested basic grammar like subject verb agreement, adverbial phrases, parallel construction etc. The fill in the blank questions were moderate in difficulty and required a good hold over the language. In the Vocabulary questions, 4 words were given, their association was based on either synonyms or antonyms. The right synonym-antonym pair had to be identified. The Cloze passage was tough and was based on taxing the rich. The options were very close to each other in meaning, making it tricky. Overall, a well-prepared student would be able to solve around 35 questions in 30 minutes, given the difficulty of the section and the time limit.

4. General Knowledge and Computer Awareness:

The GK section had questions from general day-to-day affairs on topics like sports, literature, economics, finance and banking terms and services. It also included questions on basic computer topics like CPU, Desktop, Windows, Internet, Networks, input/output devices etc. The section also saw a good number of questions on marketing terms, qualities needed by a marketing head, acronyms, marketing strategies, service and sales related questions etc. A number of questions were based on recent happenings in the finance or banking sector in 2013. A student well-versed with current affairs over the last 5-6 months could have scored between 25 and 30 in this section

Descriptive Paper

This section had 5 questions to be solved in 1 hour. While the topics were easy, they were very time-consuming as well.

Letter Writing – 1 out of 3 topics

1. Write a letter to your younger sibling explaining the importance of saving money
2. Write a letter to the bank manager for extension in joining date
3. As a manager, write a letter to your employees to conduct a meeting to discuss the PR strategy

Essay Writing – 1 out of 3 topics

1. Security of women in the work space, an increasing cause of concern
2. Entrance exams - a necessary evil
3. Pros and cons of inflation

Paragraph Writing – 1 out of 3 topics

1. Importance of education in vernacular languages
2. Pros and cons of winning lotteries
3. Do brokers deserve the cut that they make on deals?

Reading Comprehension

Passage based on wire transfer and followed by 5 questions

Précis Writing – Not more than 130 words

Passage based on Corporate Social Responsibility