

# An Introduction

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Thank you for your interest in preparing for the GRE with me. To help you determine if my offering is aligned with your prep needs, let me give you some details about my coaching practice.

This document has the following sections (in order):

- [My approach](#)
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  - [How I coach for verbal](#)
- [My coaching philosophy](#)
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- [Why go for classes with me?](#)
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## My Approach

I offer one-on-one online coaching for the quant and verbal sections of the GRE. All coaching sessions are conducted over Zoom and are billed by the hour. The session recordings and the files discussed in each session will be shared with you.

Overall, my coaching process is designed to meet **two goals**:

1. To make your prep journey as efficient and effective as possible (no false turns, no overwhelm, no overdoing of one topic at the cost of others, no use of inferior study materials).
2. To hone your thinking skills and your ability to reason through the GRE questions clearly, systematically, and confidently.

For both quant and verbal, I have divided the coaching process into two phases:

- the **Learning Phase**
- the **Revision-Testing Phase**

As the labels suggest; the first phase focuses on learning concepts and their application, while the second phase is about methodical revision, mock-testing and targeted practice of the weaknesses brought to light by mock tests.

Let me now explain my setup for quant and verbal Learning Phases respectively.

### What happens in the quant Learning Phase?

When you enroll for quant coaching with me, this is how our work will be structured:

- **Before each session**, I will assign you a Pre-work (short for 'pre-session work') that will consist of a set of official questions and the theory related with those questions.

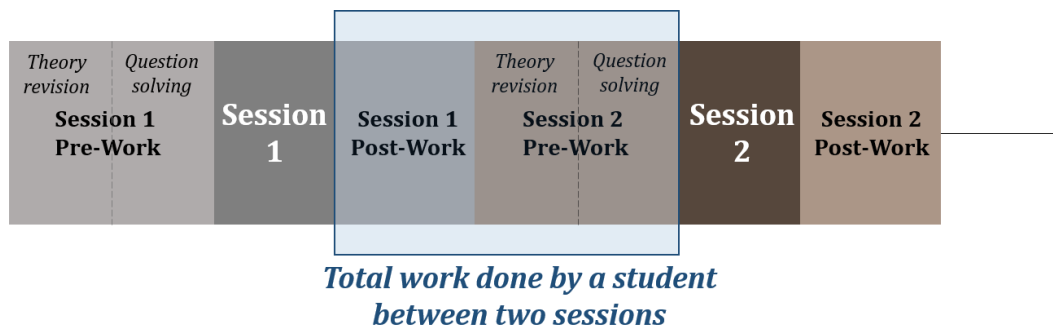
You will first study the theory and then attempt the questions.

After completing this assignment, you will share your work-report with me. By work-report, I mean snapshots of the notebook pages where you solved the assigned questions. If you have any doubt – some question or concept that is not clear - in the pre-work assignment, you'll let me know in your work report.

- Once I get your work-report, we will schedule a session. **In the session:**
  - If you have shared any doubts, I'll take up those.
  - I will give you corrective feedback, if needed, on your attempt of the assigned questions.
  - I will make you solve LIVE some official questions from the assigned concepts. This will help me gauge at first-hand the confidence and clarity with which you solve the questions. If I notice any specific conceptual or behavioral issues as you navigate a question, I'll share my observations and will also suggest corrective strategies or practice exercises for those issues.
- **After the session**, I'll give you further practice material around your specific weaknesses. I call this 'post-session work' or 'post-work'.

And, so, we will go through the entire Quant material (theory + official questions) topic by topic, one assignment at a time.

There are **10 Learning Phase assignments** in total for Quant.



For most students, the Zoom sessions with me – such as ‘Session 1’ and ‘Session 2’ in the above figure - represent only a small fraction of their total study time. Most of their study time goes in doing the pre-work and post-work assignments and in revising the assignments already done.

Once you are done with all 10 assignments, the **Learning Phase** will be over for you: you will have covered in great depth **all** the topics and **all** the questions for quant in [the ETS books](#) (*The Official Guide* and *Official GRE Quant Reasoning Practice Questions*).

## A walkthrough of the verbal Learning Phase

The way I will work with you during the verbal Learning Phase is as follows:

- **Before each session**, I will assign a pre-work (short for ‘pre-session work’) to you. This pre-work will consist of a set of official questions.
  - You will attempt the questions and share a summary work-report with me, as per the format that I’ll share with you as part of the onboarding process.
  - As part of the assignment, I will also share with you the recordings of my attempt for the assigned questions. The purpose of these recordings is to demonstrate to you the SE/TC or RC strategies that I believe in and teach. You will go through all these recordings *thoroughly* as part of your pre-work. If any point I make in the recordings is not clear, let me know in your summary work-report and I’ll make sure to address the doubt when we meet for the next session.
- Once I get your summary work-report, we will schedule a session. **In the session:**
  - we will talk about any points/doubts/questions from the assigned pre-work that you have flagged for discussion with me.

- I will make you solve LIVE some official SE/TC, RC questions. This will help me see how well you are able to apply the strategies I shared in the pre-work recordings. You will get immediate feedback from me on what specific things you need to improve in and how you may do so.
- I may also give you some further practice material (post-work) around your specific weaknesses, to be done *after the session*.

So, on any given day, you will be focused on just your current assignment. But the end result of this 'one step at a time' approach is that by the end of our work together, you will have covered **all** the practice questions for verbal in [the ETS books](#) (*The Official Guide* and *Official GRE Verbal Reasoning Practice Questions*) thoroughly, to the extent that just one keyword brings back the gist and the structure of the entire RC passage or SE/TC sentence in your mind.

When this point is reached, which is usually around the tenth assignment, the **Learning Phase** will be over for you and now the **Revision-Testing Phase** will begin.

## The Revision-Testing Phase

During this time, you will:

- systematically review the questions and strategies that you have done in the Learning Phase
- do further practice exercises, if I suggest any, and
- take full-length mock tests regularly and analyze them.

During the **Learning Phase**, I was directing your prep – giving you assignments, making you solve questions etc. During the **Revision-Testing Phase**, on the other hand, *you* will be in the driver's seat. If you want my help with some questions from the mock tests you have taken, you can request for a session, and we'll meet for doubt resolution. Some students need this, some don't; the choice will be yours.

For your general strategy-related queries, I'll always be there, through the **Learning Phase** as well as the **Revision-Testing Phase**. At the start of our collaboration, we will together create a Study Plan that works for your schedule and test goals. I find that having clarity about all the ground that needs to cover between now and the destination is itself quite

empowering for my students. I will also use this Plan (during both the Phases) to ensure that your study remains on-track for achieving your desired score.

## My coaching philosophy

So now that you have some idea about the ‘What’ I do, let me explain two crucial ‘Whys.’

- *Why do I work only with the official material?*
- *Why do I insist so much on revision?*

### *Why do I work only with the official material?*

Because it is **THE best material** available for the GRE. The GRE is not a test of Math or English but of reasoning. It’s easy to make a quant question hard-to-solve by requiring tedious calculations to get to the answer and to make a verbal question appear hard-to-solve by inserting fancy vocabulary. It’s quite hard, however, to design questions that will take the conceptually sound and clear-thinking person to the correct answer in a pretty straightforward manner but that will catch slapdash attempts through well-designed trap answers. This is even more true for verbal than for quant.

Another huge benefit to sticking with the official material is that it is **finite** - there are only so many official questions.

Many students talk about the finitude of the official questions as if it were a drawback. “But there are *only* a few hundred official questions!” they complain.

In our internet age, it is easy (and usually free) to stack up gigabytes of information (scores of prep book PDFs, mock tests, word lists etc.). For many students, the first step in their GRE prep journey is to create a mountain of to-be-studied materials. And with this first misstep, they set on a frustrating and restlessness-inducing path that often leads nowhere.

When I ask my students how they prepared for the GRE before approaching me, the story I hear is usually on the lines of ‘always solving new questions from ever-new books and never revising past mistakes.’ Then, I ask them to go back in their mind to their school days, to a class and a subject that they had really enjoyed studying and done well in. How did they study at that time?

What I hear most often is that they used to study with only one or two books per subject, and those books they studied so well (with multiple revisions, filling the margins of the books' pages with handwritten notes etc.) that they still remember how the pages looked!

What might be the reason for such a stark difference between their study behavior then and their study behavior now for the GRE?

My hypothesis: during their GRE prep, they are on their own – they may know their starting score and their goal score, but they need to figure out by themselves how to go from here to there. On the other hand, at school, never were they merely told: “This is the mile you have to walk. Now walk it.” Instead, school broke down the mile into two thousand steps for you and made you focus only on one step at a time, and thus, walking a step and then another, you ended even the longest walks!

I believe that this well-designed structure for learning - bite-sized lessons coupled with a lot of chewing per bite - was a big part of why students really assimilated those school lessons, to the point that the once-new concepts became common-sensical and intuitive to them.

I will provide you with a similarly structured experience for your GRE Prep. “But the classroom and online courses for GRE provide a structure too,” you may say. They do. But this structure is for *their* material and it often relegates the official material to the background, while I make the *official* material the star of the show.

## Why do I insist so much on Revision?

Revision leads to **self-confidence**. The more you revise a concept and its attendant questions, the more in-control of the subject matter you feel.

Revision also leads to **error-mindfulness** and, therefore, to **higher accuracy**. If you get to the point where you can easily recall all your mistakes/struggle-spots in an assignment, then it is likely that you will not repeat them in new questions from these topics.

I know that in the time that you take to go through the same 10 questions five times, you could have run through perhaps 40 new questions. But **not running does not mean standing still. Rather, you are now diving deeper into the lesson, and depth brings confidence and mastery.** If you extract 10 learning-points each from 10 questions, then you earn

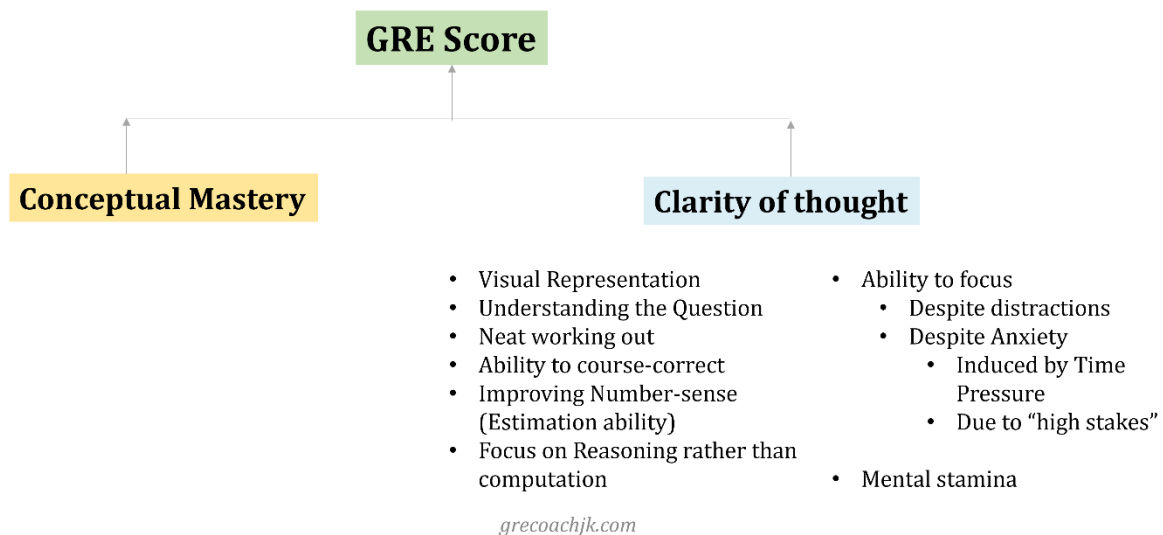
$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Total Learning – points Earned} \\ & = (\text{Number of questions practiced}) \\ & \times (\text{Learning – points gleaned per question}) \end{aligned}$$

$$10 \times 10 = 100 \times 1$$

100 learning-points overall through those 10 questions. In contrast, a runner – someone who is always running, always doing more questions, never returning to the same lesson or question again – may only extract 1 learning-point per question, because he is always in such a hurry to cover more material and so never consolidates his learning. He would have to do 100 questions to learn as much as a diver could learn with just 10 questions!

I want you to be diver, not a runner.

## What makes a good GRE Score?



### Fee

The fee is **USD 85 per hour of session-time**, and I take advance payments in multiples of 10-hours of session-time. The payments for international students are processed through PayPal while Indian students also have the option of direct bank transfers.

The fee is the same for quant and verbal.

At the end of our work together, if some paid-for hours remain unused, I will refund the corresponding amount to you. For example, say, out of the 10 hours that you have paid for,

2.25 remain unused. Then, I will refund the corresponding amount of  $2.25 \times 85 = 191.25$  USD (via the same mode of payment through which you transferred the fee to me).

Just so there is no confusion, I want to emphasize that your first payment of 850 USD will be for 10 'hours' of session-time and **not** for 10 'sessions.' To understand the distinction between these two terms, let's consider a student who enrolls to do his entire GRE Quant prep with me. As explained in the earlier sections, the Quant Learning Phase has 10 assignments, each of which will correspond to a session of its own. So, the number of 'sessions' that this student will take with me during the Learning Phase is fixed, and this number is 10. However, how long these 10 sessions take is subjective.

- For example, if the math concepts of this student are quite strong, he may finish all 10 Learning Phase sessions in just 7 hours of session-time.
- On the other hand, it's also possible that he needs a good amount of help and guidance, and the average duration of his quant sessions is 1.5 hours. At this rate, to complete the 10 sessions in the quant Learning Phase, he will need a total of 15 hours of session-time; so, at some point in the Learning Phase, his first 10 hours will be fully used up, and he'll need to make a second advance payment for Hours# 10-20. Among these new 10 hours, about 5 will be consumed during the Learning Phase itself and 5 may be used later, during the Revision-Testing Phase, for doubt resolution or mock-test discussion. The hours that remain unused till the end shall be fully refunded.

### What will be the total cost to you?

The total cost to you will be a function of **the number of sessions** you take and **the average duration per session**.

The **number of sessions** will depend on whether you are studying for both quant and verbal with me or just one of these two areas.

The **duration** of any session will depend on:

- the number of your doubts/queries related to the pre-work for the session.
- the number of points in your submitted work-reports on which I have feedback/improvement suggestions to offer.
- the time you take for Live question solving and how much feedback/discussion those questions require.



Therefore, I cannot give you a precise answer on the question of costs. However, to let you make a rough estimate, I can tell you that most of my students take about:

- 10 hours of session-time to complete the quant Learning Phase.
  - So, corresponding fee =  $10 \times 85 = 850$  USD
- 15 hours of session-time to complete the verbal Learning Phase.
  - So, corresponding fee =  $15 \times 85 = 1275$  USD

Please note that these duration estimates:

- are only for the Learning Phase, and
- do not include outliers at either end of ability level (that is, at one end of the spectrum, those students who started their prep journey from the 130s or low 140s, and at the other end of the spectrum, those students who were already in high 150s in verbal or mid-160s in quant when they started working with me.)

## Why go for classes with me?

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1. If you change nothing, nothing will change. You have a default future that you will reach automatically if you continue walking down the prep path you have taken so far. By enrolling with me, you are choosing to take a better path and, so, are increasing your chances of reaching a better place; you are choosing to convert your dream score into a project with a project manager (me) at the helm.
2. You will have, in me, an experienced teacher who means you to do well, provides you honest advice and holds you accountable. I will guide you through all your prep-related needs, confusions, and problems. You will no longer feel alone and stranded in an overwhelming morass of learning resources amid a maddening cacophony of often-contradictory advice from anonymous internet strangers.
3. I will diagnose the thinking habits, question-solving patterns or conceptual weaknesses that are holding you back. Before each session, I will carefully go through your submitted solutions for the pre-work assignment, so that I can give you feedback

that is precise as a laser beam and that, when acted upon, leads to a seemingly dramatic uptick in accuracy and confidence. In contrast, teachers of big classes cannot afford to look through the notebooks of each student and, so, rely on just the macro-statistics like your accuracy and time taken, which allow them to make educated but rough guesses about what your problem might be, and they give you rough, macro-suggestions accordingly. If you have already tried such suggestions and they have not helped you, you may need a more thorough check-up of your work.

4. Your ability to think through (even seemingly convoluted) problems in a calm and structured way will improve. I do not teach through shortcuts, tricks, and rote application of formulae. I will help you improve your conceptual understanding so that you can solve the questions intuitively/from first principles/through logic.

## Next steps

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I hope that this document has given you a better idea of my coaching style. If you would like to work with me, please let me know and we will discuss the next steps.

Best Regards  
Japinder