GATE PHYSICS (PH)

EXAM PATTERN

The GATE Examination is carried out as **ONLINE** Computer Based Test (CBT) where the candidates will be shown the questions in a random sequence on a computer screen. The duration of the examination will be 3 hours. The medium for all the test papers is English only. There will be a total of 65 questions carrying 100 marks.

GATE paper would contain questions of THREE different types

(i) Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ),

MCQ carrying 1 or 2 marks each, in all the papers and sections. These questions are objective in nature, and each will have choice of four answers, out of which ONLY ONE choice is correct.

(ii) Multiple Select Questions (MSQ)

MSQ carrying 1 or 2 marks each in all the papers and sections. These questions are objective in nature, and each will have choice of four answers, out of which ONE or MORE than ONE choice(s) are correct.

(iii) Numerical Answer Type (NAT) questions.

Questions carrying 1 or 2 marks each in most of the papers and sections.

For these questions, the answer is a signed real number, which needs to be entered by the candidate using the virtual numeric keypad on the monitor (keyboard of the computer will be disabled). No choices will be shown for these types of questions.

The answer can be a number such as 10 or -10 (an integer only). The answer may be in decimals as well, for example, 10.1 (one decimal) or 10.01 (two decimals) or -10.001 (three decimals). These questions will be mentioned with, up to which decimal places, the candidates need to present the answer. Also, for some NAT type problems an appropriate range will be considered while evaluating these questions so that the candidate is not unduly penalized due to the usual round-off errors. Candidates are advised to do the rounding off at the end of the calculation (not in between steps). Wherever required and possible, it is better to give NAT answer up to a maximum of three decimal places.

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General Aptitude Section

The paper will consist of a mandatory General Aptitude (GA) section which will have 10 questions. 5 of the questions will be of 1 mark and the remaining 5 will be of 2 marks. Therefore, the total marks for this section will be 15 marks.

This section is intended to test typically the Language and Analytical Skills.

Marking Scheme

1 Mark MCQs – 1/3 mark will be deducted for every wrong answer.

2 Mark MCQs – 2/3 mark will be deducted for every wrong response.

Zero marks will be awarded for unattempted questions

No negative marking will be done for Multiple Select Questions (MSQ) and Numerical Answer Type (NAT) questions.

In all the papers, there will be a total of 65 questions carrying 100 marks, out of which 10 questions carrying a total of 15 marks will be on General Aptitude (GA) and 55 questions carrying a total of 85 marks will be on physics syllabus.

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GATE PHYSICS SYLLABUS

Section 1: Mathematical Physics

Vector calculus: linear vector space: basis, orthogonality and completeness; matrices; similarity transformations, diagonalization, eigenvalues and eigenvectors; linear differential equations: second order linear differential equations and solutions involving special functions; complex analysis: Cauchy-Riemann conditions, Cauchy's theorem, singularities, residue theorem and applications; Laplace transform, Fourier analysis; elementary ideas about tensors: covariant and contravariant tensors.

Section 2: Classical Mechanics

Lagrangian formulation: D'Alembert's principle, Euler-Lagrange equation, Hamilton's principle, calculus of variations; symmetry and conservation laws; central force motion: Kepler problem and Rutherford scattering; small oscillations: coupled oscillations and normal modes; rigid body dynamics: interia tensor, orthogonal transformations, Euler angles, Torque free motion of a symmetric top; Hamiltonian and Hamilton's equations of motion; Liouville's theorem; canonical transformations: action-angle variables, Poisson brackets, Hamilton-Jacobi equation.

Special theory of relativity: Lorentz transformations, relativistic kinematics, mass-energy equivalence.

Section 3: Electromagnetic Theory

Solutions of electrostatic and magnetostatic problems including boundary value problems; method of images; separation of variables; dielectrics and conductors; magnetic materials; multipole expansion; Maxwell's equations; scalar and vector potentials; Coulomb and Lorentz gauges; electromagnetic waves in free space, non-conducting and conducting media; reflection and transmission at normal and oblique incidences; polarization of electromagnetic waves; Poynting vector, Poynting theorem, energy and momentum of electromagnetic waves; radiation from a moving charge.

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Section 4: Quantum Mechanics

Postulates of quantum mechanics; uncertainty principle; Schrodinger equation; Dirac Bra-Ket notation, linear vectors and operators in Hilbert space; one dimensional potentials: step potential, finite rectangular well, tunneling from a potential barrier, particle in a box, harmonic oscillator; two and three dimensional systems: concept of degeneracy; hydrogen atom; angular momentum and spin; addition of angular momenta; variational method and WKB approximation, time independent perturbation theory; elementary scattering theory, Born approximation; symmetries in quantum mechanical systems.

Section 5: Thermodynamics and Statistical Physics

Laws of thermodynamics; macrostates and microstates; phase space; ensembles; partition function, free energy, calculation of thermodynamic quantities; classical and quantum statistics; degenerate Fermi gas; black body radiation and Planck's distribution law; Bose-Einstein condensation; first and second order phase transitions, phase equilibria, critical point.

Section 6: Atomic and Molecular Physics

Spectra of one-and many-electron atoms; spin-orbit interaction: LS and jj couplings; fine and hyperfine structures; Zeeman and Stark effects; electric dipole transitions and selection rules; rotational and vibrational spectra of diatomic molecules; electronic transitions in diatomic molecules, Franck-Condon principle; Raman effect; EPR, NMR, ESR, X-ray spectra; lasers: Einstein coefficients, population inversion, two and three level systems.

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Section 7: Solid State Physics

Elements of crystallography; diffraction methods for structure determination; bonding in solids; lattice vibrations and thermal properties of solids; free electron theory; band theory of solids: nearly free electron and tight binding models; metals, semiconductors and insulators; conductivity, mobility and effective mass; Optical properties of solids; Kramer's-Kronig relation, intra- and inter-band transitions; dielectric properties of solid; dielectric function, polarizability, ferroelectricity; magnetic properties of solids; dia, para, ferro, antiferro and ferri-magnetism, domains and magnetic anisotropy; superconductivity: Type-I and Type II superconductors, Meissner effect, London equation, BCS Theory, flux quantization.

Section 8: Electronics

Semiconductors in equilibrium: electron and hole statistics in intrinsic and extrinsic semiconductors; metal-semiconductor junctions; Ohmic and rectifying contacts; PN diodes, bipolar junction transistors, field effect transistors; negative and positive feedback circuits; oscillators, operational amplifiers, active filters; basics of digital logic circuits, combinational and sequential circuits, flip-flops, timers, counters, registers, A/D and D/A conversion.

Section 9: Nuclear and Particle Physics

Nuclear radii and charge distributions, nuclear binding energy, electric and magnetic moments; semi-empirical mass formula; nuclear models; liquid drop model, nuclear shell model; nuclear force and two nucleon problem; alpha decay, beta-decay, electromagnetic transitions in nuclei; Rutherford scattering, nuclear reactions, conservation laws; fission and fusion; particle accelerators and detectors; elementary particles; photons, baryons, mesons and leptons; quark model; conservation laws, isospin symmetry, charge conjugation, parity and time-reversal invariance.

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