



AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS EOLAÍOCHTA

LEAVING CERTIFICATE

PHYSICS
SYLLABUS

(ORDINARY LEVEL AND HIGHER LEVEL)

LEAVING CERTIFICATE PROGRAMMES

Aims and Principles

1. The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, expressive, intellectual, for personal and home life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.
2. Leaving Certificate programmes are presented within this general aim, with a particular emphasis on the preparation of students for the requirements of further education or training, for employment and for their role as participative, enterprising citizens.
3. All Leaving Certificate programmes aim to provide continuity with and progression from the Junior Certificate programme. The relative weighting given to the various components – e.g. personal and social (including moral and spiritual) development, vocational studies and preparation for further education and for adult and working life – within the programmes may vary.
4. Programmes leading to the award of the Leaving Certificate are of two years duration and are offered in three forms:
 - i. The Leaving Certificate (Established)
 - ii. The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
 - iii. The Leaving Certificate Applied
5. All Leaving Certificate programmes, in contributing to a high quality education, emphasise the importance of :
 - self-directed learning and independent thought
 - a spirit of inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving, self-reliance, initiative and enterprise
 - preparation for further education, for adult and working life
 - lifelong learning.

The Leaving Certificate (Established)

The Leaving Certificate (Established) programme offers students a broad and balanced education while allowing for some specialisation. Syllabuses are provided in a wide range of subjects. All subjects are offered at Ordinary and Higher levels. In addition, Mathematics and Irish are also offered at Foundation level.

The certificate is used for purposes of selection into further education, employment, training and higher education.

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme is an intervention within the Leaving Certificate (Established). LCVP students study a minimum of five subjects (at Higher, Ordinary or Foundation levels), including Irish and two subjects from specified vocational subject groupings. They are also required to take a recognised course in a Modern European language, other than Irish or English. In addition LCVP students take three Link Modules on Enterprise Education, Preparation for Work and Work Experience.

In particular, the LCVP aims to foster in students a spirit of enterprise and initiative and to develop their interpersonal, vocational and technological skills.

The Leaving Certificate Applied

The Leaving Certificate Applied is a distinct, self-contained Leaving Certificate programme. It is designed for those students who do not wish to proceed directly to third level education or for those whose needs, aspirations and aptitudes are not adequately catered for by the other two Leaving Certificate programmes. The Leaving Certificate Applied is structured around three main elements – Vocational Preparation, Vocational Education and General Education - which are interrelated and interdependent. This programme is characterised by educational experiences of an active, practical and student-centred nature.



LEAVING CERTIFICATE

PHYSICS

(ORDINARY AND HIGHER LEVEL)

Preamble

Policy Context

Science education in the senior cycle should reflect the changing needs of students and the growing significance of science for strategic development in Ireland.

Leaving Certificate science syllabuses are designed to incorporate the following components:

- science for the enquiring mind, or pure science, to include the principles, procedures and concepts of the subject as well as its cultural and historical aspects
- science for action, or the applications of science and its interface with technology
- science, which is concerned with issues – political, social and economic – of concern to citizens.

The three components should be integrated within each science syllabus, with the first component having a 70% weighting. The remaining 30% should be allocated to the other two components in the ratio 3 to 1.

The syllabuses, which are offered at two levels, Higher and Ordinary, will have approximately 180 hours of class contact time over a two-year period. They should be practically and experimentally based in their teaching.

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Introduction

Aims

The aims of the syllabus, common to both levels, are:

- to give students an understanding of the fundamental principles of physics and their application to everyday life and technology
- to develop an appreciation of physics as a human endeavour, thereby enriching the students' experience of life
- to provide a reasonably broad perspective of physics, thus developing an understanding of the physical environment and of how human beings interact with it
- to provide a general education in physics for all students, whether or not they proceed to further studies in physics
- to develop the ability to observe, to think logically, and to communicate effectively
- to develop an understanding of the scientific method
- to develop an appreciation of physics as a creative activity, using informed intuition and imagination to create an understanding of the beauty, simplicity and symmetry in nature.

Structure of the Syllabus

The entire Ordinary level syllabus is presented first followed by the entire Higher level syllabus. The syllabus is presented in four columns:

- content
- depth of treatment
- activities
- science, technology, and society (STS).

The content and the depth of treatment required are stated. The activities given in the syllabus provide opportunities to achieve the objectives of the syllabus.

The science, technology and society (STS) component places the content within a relevant context. The format in which the syllabus is presented does not imply any particular order of teaching. Teaching strategies should promote, in a positive manner, the aims and objectives of the syllabus.

Activities describe how the syllabus objectives are to be achieved as the content is studied. The activities column provides a pedagogical approach to the syllabus by outlining the relevant demonstrations and by indicating where problem-solving is required. Where resources permit, the use of spreadsheets, data-logging, computer-aided learning, modelling and simulation is recommended. Slides, posters and videos are excellent resource materials, and their use in implementing the syllabus is recommended. Additional activities may be included where appropriate.

The science, technology and society (STS) component places the concepts, principles and theories of physics within relevant contexts by (a) referring to the applications of physics and (b) solving problems set in the everyday world. It is important to include personal, medical, biological and social examples of physics as well as mechanical or technical examples, so that the place of physics in the everyday world can be appreciated. Establishing links with local industry would be of great importance in implementing this aspect of the syllabus. The links between history, culture, philosophy and physics should also be included. Students, through their study of physics, should develop a critical awareness of the limitations of, and constraints on, physics. Therefore, as citizens, they can contribute constructively to the development of their society on social, economic and environmental issues, some of which may be controversial.

STS is an integral part of the syllabus at both Ordinary and Higher levels, so that students can place physics within the everyday world. The STS material needs to be known at the appropriate level; that is, where the basic principle is on the Ordinary level, examples must be known at Ordinary level, and similarly at Higher level. Only the principles of the applications listed in STS are required. Technical details, e.g. structural details, operational details, etc., are not required. The list of applications is not exhaustive and additional applications may be included where appropriate.

The mathematical requirements are stated on pages 45 and 46. The notation and symbols to be used are defined on pages 47 to 51 and the formulas section on pages 52 to 54 indicates the equations relevant to the syllabus.

Practical work

Students must follow a course of practical work. The experiments listed at the end of each section of the syllabus must be carried out by the students and an adequate record of such work must be retained for the period of the course.

Standard laboratory safety precautions must be observed, and due care must be taken when carrying out all experiments.

The hazards associated with electricity, EHT, lasers etc. should be identified where possible, and appropriate precautions taken. The careful use of sources of ionising radiation is essential. It is important that teachers follow guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Science.

It is recommended that the practical work listed in the syllabus be supplemented by teacher demonstrations, further student practical work, and student investigations, as appropriate. Where possible, physical phenomena should be demonstrated in the

laboratory. Those required are indicated in the activities column by the term “demonstration of effect”.

Experimental error: There should be an appreciation of the errors inherent in an experiment and of the precautions that can be taken to reduce such errors. No quantitative treatment is required.

Differentiation between Higher level and Ordinary level

There are three main differences between Higher level and Ordinary level:

- structure and content
- depth of treatment
- mathematical treatment.

Structure and content: Ordinary level consists of a defined set of concepts. Higher level consists of the Ordinary level concepts, additional concepts, and either Option 1 (Particle Physics) or Option 2 (Applied Electricity). The additional concepts at Higher level are printed in black text.

Depth of treatment: Ordinary level provides an overview of physics and its applications to everyday life, while at Higher level there is a deeper, more quantitative treatment of physics.

Mathematical treatment: Equations must be known and used at Ordinary level. At Higher level certain equations must be derived; the other equations must be known and used. The formulas section (pages 52 to 54) indicates the equations relevant to the syllabus. Appropriate calculations are essential throughout to develop students’ skills and understanding.

Assessment objectives

The syllabus will be assessed under the headings knowledge, understanding, skills, and competence.

The attitudinal objectives will be assessed where feasible. All material within the syllabus is examinable.

It should be noted that STS is examinable. Students will be expected to have a knowledge of general applications but will not be required to have a detailed knowledge of specific applications.

Practical work is an integral part of the study of physics; it will initially be assessed through the medium of the written examination paper. An element of practical assessment may be included as part of the overall assessment at a later stage.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE PHYSICS

ORDINARY LEVEL

SYLLABUS

Ordinary Level Syllabus Objectives

Ordinary level physics provides an introduction to, and an overview of, physics.

Students are expected to develop an appreciation of the fundamental laws and principles and their application to everyday life.

The objectives of the syllabus are:

1. Knowledge

Students should know

- basic physical principles, terminology, facts, and methods
- that physics is fundamental to many technological developments
- that physics contributes to the social, historical, environmental, technological and economic life of society.

2. Understanding

Students should understand

- basic physical principles
- how physical problems can be solved
- how the scientific method contributes to physics
- how physics relates to everyday life.

3. Skills

Students should be able to

- measure physical quantities in the appropriate SI units
- work safely in a laboratory
- follow instructions
- use scientific equipment appropriately
- use experimental data appropriately.

4. Competence

Students should be able to

- present information in tabular, graphical, written and diagrammatic form, as appropriate
- report concisely on experimental procedures and results
- use calculators
- solve numerical problems
- read popular science writing
- relate scientific concepts to issues in everyday life
- explain the science underlying familiar facts, observations, and phenomena.

5. Attitudes

Students should appreciate

- the contribution of physics to the social and economic development of society
- the relationship between physics and technology
- that a knowledge of physics has many vocational applications.

| MECHANICS | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| MOTION | | | |
| 1. Linear motion | <p>Units of mass, length and time — definition of units not required.</p> <p>Displacement, velocity, acceleration: definitions and units.</p> <p>Equations of motion.</p> | <p>Measurement of velocity and acceleration, using any suitable apparatus. Use of distance-time, velocity-time graphs.</p> <p>Measurement of g. Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Sports, e.g. athletics.</p> |
| 2. Vectors and Scalars | <p>Distinction between vector and scalar quantities.</p> | | <p>Vector nature of physical quantities: everyday examples.</p> |
| FORCES | | | |
| 1. Newton's laws of motion | <p>Statement of the three laws.</p> <p>Force and momentum, definitions and units. Vector nature of forces to be stressed. $F = ma$ as a special case of Newton's second law. Friction: a force opposing motion.</p> | <p>Demonstration of the laws using air track <i>or</i> tickertape timer <i>or</i> powder track timer, etc.</p> <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seat belts • rocket travel. <p>Sports, all ball games.</p> <p>Importance of friction in everyday experience, e.g. walking, use of lubricants, etc.</p> |
| 2. Conservation of momentum | <p>Principle of conservation of momentum.</p> | <p>Demonstration by any one suitable method. Appropriate calculations (problems involving change of mass need not be considered).</p> | <p>Collisions (ball games), acceleration of spacecraft, jet aircraft.</p> |

| MECHANICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 3. Gravity | Newton's law of universal gravitation. $F = \frac{Gm_1m_2}{d^2}$ Weight = mg | Compare gravitational forces between Earth and Sun and between Earth and Moon. | Solar system. |
| | Value of acceleration due to gravity on other bodies in space, e.g. Moon. | Calculation of weight on different planets. | Presence of atmosphere. |
| 4. Density and pressure | Definitions and units. Pressure in liquids and gases. Boyle's law. Archimedes' principle. Law of flotation. | Demonstration of atmospheric pressure, e.g. collapsing-can experiment. Appropriate calculations. Demonstration only. Calculations not required. | Atmospheric pressure and weather. The "bends" in diving, etc. Hydrometers. |
| 5. Moments | Definition. Levers. Couple. | Simple experiments with a number of weights. Appropriate calculations. (Only problems involving co-planar parallel forces need be considered.) | Torque, e.g. taps, doors. Handlebars on bicycles. Reference to moving-coil meters and simple motor. |
| 6. Conditions for equilibrium | The sum of the forces in any direction equals the sum of the forces in the opposite direction. The sum of the moments about any point is zero. | Appropriate calculations. | Static and dynamic equilibrium. |

| MECHANICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| ENERGY | | | |
| 1. Work | Definition and unit. | Simple experiments. Appropriate calculations involving force and displacement in the same direction only. | Lifts, escalators. |
| 2. Energy | Energy as the ability to do work. Different forms of energy. $E_p = mgh$ $E_k = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$ Mass as a form of energy $E = mc^2$ Conversions from one form of energy to another. Principle of conservation of energy. | Demonstrations of different energy conversions. Appropriate calculations. | Sources of energy: renewable and non-renewable. Mass transformed to other forms of energy in the Sun. Efficient use of energy in the home. |
| 3. Power | Power as the rate of doing work or rate of energy conversion. Unit. Percentage efficiency $= \frac{\text{Power output} \times 100}{\text{Power input}}$ | Estimation of average power developed by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person running upstairs • person repeatedly lifting weights, etc. Appropriate calculations. | Power of devices, e.g. light bulbs, motors, etc. |

MECHANICS: Experiments

1. Measurement of velocity and acceleration.
2. To show that $a \propto F$.
3. Verification of the principle of conservation of momentum.
4. Measurement of g .
5. Verification of Boyle's law.
6. Investigation of the laws of equilibrium for a set of co-planar forces.

| TEMPERATURE | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Concept of temperature | <p>Measure of hotness or coldness of a body.</p> <p>The SI unit of temperature is the kelvin (definition of unit in terms of the triple point of water not required).</p> <p>Celsius scale is the practical temperature scale</p> $t/^{\circ}\text{C} = T/\text{K} - 273.15$ | | |
| 2. Thermometric properties | A physical property that changes measurably with temperature. | <p>Demonstration of some thermometric properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> length of liquid column, e.g. length of mercury column emf of thermocouple resistance pressure of a gas at constant volume volume of a gas at constant pressure colour. | |
| 3. Thermometers | <p>Thermometers measure temperature.</p> <p>Two thermometers do not necessarily give the same reading at the same temperature.</p> <p>The need for standard thermometers – use any commercial laboratory thermometer as school standard.</p> | Graduate two thermometers at ice and steam points. Compare values obtained for an unknown temperature, using a straight-line graph between reference points. | <p>Practical thermometers, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clinical thermometer, oven thermometers, boiler thermometers, temperature gauge in a car. |

| HEAT | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Concept of heat | Heat as a form of energy that causes a rise in temperature when added or a fall in temperature when withdrawn. | | |
| QUANTITY OF HEAT | | | |
| 1. Heat capacity, specific heat capacity | Definitions and units. | Appropriate calculations. | Storage heaters. |
| 2. Latent heat, specific latent heat | Definitions and units. | Appropriate calculations. | Heat pump, e.g. refrigerator. Perspiration. |
| HEAT TRANSFER | | | |
| 1. Conduction | Qualitative comparison of rates of conduction through solids. | Simple experiments. | <i>U</i> -values: use in domestic situations. |
| 2. Convection | | Simple experiments. | Domestic hot-water and heating systems. |
| 3. Radiation | Radiation from the Sun. Solar constant (also called solar irradiance). | Simple experiments. | Everyday examples. Solar heating. |

HEAT: Experiments

1. Calibration curve of a thermometer using the laboratory mercury thermometer as a standard.
2. Measurement of specific heat capacity, e.g. of water *or* a metal by a mechanical *or* electrical method.
3. Measurement of the specific latent heat of fusion of ice.
4. Measurement of the specific latent heat of vaporisation of water.

| WAVES | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Properties of waves | Longitudinal and transverse waves: frequency, amplitude, wavelength, velocity. Relationship $c = f \lambda$ | Appropriate calculations. | |
| 2. Wave phenomena | Reflection. Refraction. Diffraction. Interference. Polarisation. Stationary waves; relationship between inter-node distance and wavelength. Diffraction effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at an obstacle • at a slit with reference to significance of the wavelength. | Simple demonstrations using slinky, ripple tank, microwaves, <i>or</i> other suitable method. | Everyday examples, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • radio waves • waves at sea • seismic waves. |
| 3. Doppler effect | Qualitative treatment. | Sound from a moving source. | Red shift of stars. Speed traps. |

| VIBRATIONS AND SOUND | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Wave nature of sound | Reflection, refraction, diffraction, interference. Speed of sound in various media. | Demonstration of interference, e.g. two loudspeakers and a signal generator. Demonstration that sound requires a medium. | Acoustics. Reduction of noise using destructive interference. Noise pollution. |
| 2. Characteristics of notes | Amplitude and loudness, frequency and pitch, quality and overtones. Frequency limits of audibility. | | Dog whistle. |
| 3. Resonance | Natural frequency. Fundamental frequency. Definition of resonance, and examples. | Demonstration using tuning forks <i>or</i> other suitable method. | Vocal cords (folds). |
| 4. Vibrations in strings and pipes | Stationary waves in strings and pipes. Relationship between frequency and length. | Use string and wind instruments, e.g. guitar, tin whistle. | String section and woodwind section in orchestras. |
| 5. Sound intensity level | Threshold of hearing and frequency response of the ear. Sound intensity level, measured in decibels. The dB(A) scale is used because it is adapted to the ear's frequency response. | Use of sound-level meter. | Examples of sound intensity level. Hearing impairment. Ear protection in industry, etc. |

SOUND: Experiments

1. Measurement of the speed of sound in air.
2. Investigation of the variation of fundamental frequency of a stretched string with length.

| LIGHT | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| REFLECTION | | | |
| 1. Laws of reflection | | Demonstration using ray box <i>or</i> laser <i>or</i> other suitable method. | |
| 2. Mirrors | Images formed by plane and spherical mirrors. Knowledge that $\frac{1}{f} = \frac{1}{u} + \frac{1}{v}$ and $m = \frac{v}{u}$ | Real-is-positive sign convention. Simple exercises on mirrors by ray tracing <i>or</i> use of formula. | Practical uses of spherical mirrors Concave Convex • dentists • supermarkets • floodlights • driving mirrors • projectors |
| REFRACTION | | | |
| 1. Laws of refraction | Refractive index. | Demonstration using ray box <i>or</i> laser <i>or</i> other suitable method. Appropriate calculations. | Practical examples, e.g. real and apparent depth of fish in water. |
| 2. Total internal reflection | Critical angle. Relationship between critical angle and refractive index. Transmission of light through optical fibres. | Demonstration. Appropriate calculations. | Reflective road signs. Mirages. Prism reflectors. Uses of optical fibres: • telecommunications • medicine (endoscopes). |
| 3. Lenses | Images formed by single thin lenses. Knowledge that $\frac{1}{f} = \frac{1}{u} + \frac{1}{v}$ and $m = \frac{v}{u}$ Power of lens: $P = \frac{1}{f}$ Two lenses in contact: $P = P_1 + P_2$ The eye: optical structure; short sight, long sight, and corrections. | Simple exercises on lenses by ray tracing <i>or</i> use of formula. | Uses of lenses. Spectacles. |

| LIGHT (CONTINUED) | | | |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| WAVE NATURE OF LIGHT | | | |
| 1. Diffraction and interference | Use of diffraction grating formula. $n\lambda = d\sin\theta$ | Suitable method of demonstrating the wave nature of light. Appropriate calculations. | Interference colours • petrol film, soap bubbles. |
| 2. Light as a transverse wave motion | Polarisation. | Demonstration of polarisation using polaroids <i>or</i> other suitable method. | Stress polarisation. Polaroid sunglasses. |
| 3. Dispersion | Dispersion by a prism and a diffraction grating. Recombination by a prism. | Demonstration. | Rainbows, polished gemstones. Colours seen on surfaces of compact discs. |
| 4. Colours | Primary, secondary and complementary colours. Addition of colours. Pigment colours need not be considered. | Demonstration. | Stage lighting, television. |
| 5. Electromagnetic spectrum | Relative positions of radiations in terms of wavelength and frequency. Detection of UV and IR radiation. | Demonstration. | Ultraviolet and ozone layer. Infrared cameras: • medical applications • night vision. Greenhouse effect. |
| 6. The spectrometer | The spectrometer and the function of its parts. | Demonstration. | |

LIGHT: Experiments

1. Measurement of the focal length of a concave mirror.
2. Verification of Snell's law of refraction.
3. Measurement of the refractive index of a liquid *or* a solid.
4. Measurement of the focal length of a converging lens.
5. Measurement of the wavelength of monochromatic light.

| ELECTRICITY | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| CHARGES | | | |
| 1. Electrification by contact | Charging by rubbing together dissimilar materials. Types of charge: positive, negative. Conductors and insulators. Unit of charge: coulomb. | Demonstration of forces between charges. | Domestic applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dust on television screen static on clothes. Industrial hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in flour mills fuelling aircraft. |
| 2. Electrification by induction | | Demonstration using an insulated conductor and a nearby charged object. | |
| 3. Distribution of charge on conductors | Total charge resides on outside of a metal object. Charges tend to accumulate at points. Point discharge. | Van de Graaff generator can be used to demonstrate these phenomena. | Lightning. Lightning conductors. |
| 4. Electroscope | Structure. | | Uses. |
| ELECTRIC FIELD | | | |
| 1. Force between charges | Coulomb's law $F = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon} \frac{Q_1 Q_2}{d^2}$ an example of an inverse square law. | | |
| 2. Electric fields | Idea of lines of force. Vector nature of electric field to be stressed. | Demonstration of field patterns using oil and semolina <i>or</i> other method. | Precipitators. Xerography. Hazards: effect of electric fields on integrated circuits. |
| 3. Potential difference | Definition of potential difference: work done per unit charge to transfer a charge from one point to another. Definition of volt. Concept of zero potential. | Appropriate calculations. | |

| ELECTRICITY (CONTINUED) | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| CAPACITANCE | | | |
| 1. Capacitors and capacitance | <p>Definition: $C = Q/V$ Unit of capacitance.</p> <p>Parallel plate capacitor.</p> <p>Energy stored in a capacitor.</p> <p>Capacitors — conduct a.c. but not d.c.</p> | <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> <p>Charge capacitor — discharge through lamp or low-voltage d.c. motor.</p> <p>Demonstration.</p> | <p>Common uses of capacitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tuning radios • flash guns • smoothing • filtering. |
| ELECTRIC CURRENT | | | |
| 1. Electric current | Description of electric current as flow of charge $1 \text{ A} = 1 \text{ C s}^{-1}$ | | |
| 2. Sources of emf and electric current | <p>Pd and voltage are the same thing; they are measured in volts. A voltage when applied to a circuit is called an emf.</p> | | Sources of emf: mains, simple cells, lead-acid accumulator, car batteries, dry batteries, thermocouple. |
| 3. Conduction in materials | <p>Conduction in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • metals • ionic solutions (active and inactive electrodes) • gases • vacuum • semiconductors. <p>References in each case to charge carriers.</p> <p>Conduction in semiconductors: the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic conduction; p-type and n-type semiconductors.</p> <p>The p-n junction: basic principles underlying current flow across a p-n junction.</p> | <p>Interpretation of $I-V$ graphs.</p> <p>Demonstration of current flow across a p-n junction in forward and reverse bias, e.g. using a bulb.</p> | <p>Neon lamps, street lights.</p> <p>Electronic devices. LED, computers, integrated circuits.</p> <p>Rectification of a.c.</p> |

| ELECTRICITY (CONTINUED) | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 4. Resistance | Definition of resistance, unit. Ohm's law. Resistance varies with length, cross-sectional area, and temperature. Resistivity. Resistors in series and parallel. | Appropriate calculations. Use of ohmmeter. Appropriate calculations. | |
| 5. Potential | LDR – light-dependent resistor. Thermistor. Potential divider. | Demonstration of LDR and thermistor. Demonstration. | Potentiometer as a variable potential divider. |
| 6. Effects of electric current | Heating: $W = I^2Rt$ Chemical: an electric current can cause a chemical reaction. Magnetic effect of an electric current. | Demonstration of effect. Appropriate calculations. Demonstration of effect. Demonstration of effect. | Everyday examples. Advantage of use of EHT in transmission of electrical energy. Use of the chemical effect. Everyday examples. |
| 7. Domestic circuits | Plugs, fuses, MCBs (miniature circuit breakers). Ring and radial circuits, bonding, earthing, and general safety precautions. No drawing of ring circuits required. RCDs (residual current devices). The kilowatt-hour. Uses. | Wiring a plug. Simple fuse calculations. Appropriate calculations. | Electricity at home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fuse box • meter, etc. Electrical safety. |
| ELECTROMAGNETISM | | | |
| I. Magnetism | Magnetic poles exist in pairs. Magnetic effect of an electric current. | Demonstration using magnets, coils, and nails. | Electromagnets and their uses. |

| ELECTRICITY (CONTINUED) | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 2. Magnetic fields | Magnetic field due to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • magnets • current in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a long straight wire - a loop - a solenoid. Description without mathematical details. Vector nature of magnetic field to be stressed. | Demonstrations. | Earth's magnetic field. |
| 3. Current in a magnetic field | Current-carrying conductor experiences a force in a magnetic field. Direction of the force. Force depends on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the current • the length of the wire • the strength of the magnetic field. $F \propto I l B$ Magnetic flux density $B = \frac{F}{Il}$ Forces between currents (non-mathematical treatment). | Demonstration of the force on a conductor and coil in a magnetic field. Appropriate calculations. | Using Earth's magnetic field in navigation, i.e. compasses. Applications in motors, meters, and loudspeakers. |
| 4. Electromagnetic induction | Magnetic flux: $\Phi = BA$ Faraday's law. Lenz's law. Change of mechanical energy to electrical energy. | Demonstration of the principle and laws of electromagnetic induction. | Application in generators. |
| 5. Alternating current | Variation of voltage and current with time, i.e. alternating voltages and currents. | Use oscilloscope to show a.c. | National grid and a.c. |
| 6. Concepts of mutual induction and self-induction | Structure and principle of operation of a transformer. Effects of inductors on a.c. (no mathematics or phase relations). | Demonstration. Appropriate calculations (voltage). Demonstration. | Uses of transformers. Dimmer switches in stage lighting — uses of inductors. |

ELECTRICITY: Experiments

1. Verification of Joule's law (as $\Delta\theta \propto I^2$).
2. Measurement of the resistivity of the material of a wire.
3. To investigate the variation of the resistance of a metallic conductor with temperature.
4. To investigate the variation of the resistance of a thermistor with temperature.
5. To investigate the variation of current (I) with pd (V) for
 - (a) metallic conductor
 - (b) filament bulb
 - (c) copper sulfate solution with copper electrodes
 - (d) semiconductor diode.

| MODERN PHYSICS | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| THE ELECTRON | | | |
| 1. The electron | The electron as the indivisible quantity of charge. Reference to mass and location in the atom. Units of energy: eV, keV, MeV, GeV. | | Electron named by G. J. Stoney. Quantity of charge measured by Millikan. |
| 2. Thermionic emission | Principle of thermionic emission and its application to the production of a beam of electrons. Cathode ray tube, consisting of heated filament, cathode, anode, and screen. Deflection of cathode rays in electric and magnetic fields. | Use of cathode ray tube to demonstrate the production of a beam of electrons – deflection in electric and magnetic fields. | Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cathode ray oscilloscope • television. Use of CRO to display signals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECG and EEG. |
| 3. Photoelectric emission | Photoelectric effect. The photon as a packet of energy: $E = hf$ Effect of intensity and frequency of incident light. Photocell (vacuum tube): structure and operation. | Demonstration, e.g. using zinc plate, electroscope, and different light sources. Demonstration of a photocell. | Applications of photoelectric sensing devices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • burglar alarms • automatic doors • control of burners in central heating • sound track in films. |
| 4. X-rays | X-rays produced when high-energy electrons collide with target. Principles of the hot-cathode X-ray tube. X-ray production as inverse of photoelectric effect. Mention of properties of X-rays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • electromagnetic waves • ionisation • penetration. | | Uses of X-rays in medicine and industry. Hazards. |

| MODERN PHYSICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| THE NUCLEUS | | | |
| 1. Structure of the atom | Principle of Rutherford's experiment. Bohr model, descriptive treatment only. Energy levels. | Experiment may be simulated using a large-scale model <i>or</i> a computer <i>or</i> demonstrated on a video. | |
| 2. Structure of the nucleus | Emission line spectra: $hf = E_2 - E_1$ | Demonstration of line spectra and continuous spectra. | Lasers. Spectroscopy as a tool in science. |
| 3. Radioactivity | Atomic nucleus as protons plus neutrons. Mass number A , atomic number Z , A_ZX , isotopes. | | |
| | Experimental evidence for three kinds of radiation: by deflection in electric or magnetic fields or ionisation or penetration. Nature and properties of alpha, beta and gamma emissions. Change in mass number and atomic number because of radioactive decay. | Demonstration of ionisation and penetration by the radiations using any suitable method, e.g. electroscopes, G-M tube. | Uses of radioisotopes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical imaging • medical therapy • food irradiation • agriculture • radiocarbon dating • smoke detectors • industrial applications. |
| | Principle of operation of a detector of ionising radiation. Definition of becquerel (Bq) as one disintegration per second. | Demonstration of G-M tube <i>or</i> solid-state detector. Interpretation of nuclear reactions. | |
| | Concept of half-life: $T_{1/2}$ | | |
| 4. Nuclear energy | Principles of fission and fusion. Mass-energy conservation in nuclear reactions: $E = mc^2$ | Interpretation of nuclear reactions. | Fusion: source of Sun's energy. Nuclear weapons. |
| | Nuclear reactor (fuel, moderator, control rods, shielding, and heat exchanger). | Audiovisual resource material. | Environmental impact of fission reactors. Development of fusion reactors. |

| MODERN PHYSICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| <p>5. Ionising radiation and health hazards</p> | <p>General health hazards in use of ionising radiations, e.g. X-rays, nuclear radiation.</p> <p>Environmental radiation: the effect of ionising radiation on humans depends on the type of radiation, the activity of the source (in Bq), the time of exposure, and the type of tissue irradiated.</p> | <p>Measurement of background radiation.</p> <p>Audiovisual resource material.</p> | <p>Health hazards of ionising radiations.</p> <p>Radon, significance of background radiation, granite.</p> <p>Medical and dental X-rays.</p> <p>Disposal of nuclear waste.</p> <p>Radiation protection.</p> |

LEAVING CERTIFICATE PHYSICS

HIGHER LEVEL
SYLLABUS

Higher Level Syllabus Objectives

Higher level physics provides a deeper, more quantitative treatment of physics.

Students are expected to develop an understanding of the fundamental laws and principles and their application to everyday life.

The objectives of the syllabus are:

1. Knowledge

Students should know

- basic physical principles, terminology, facts, and methods
- how physics is fundamental to many technological developments
- how physics contributes to the social, historical, environmental, technological and economic life of society.

2. Understanding

Students should understand

- basic physical principles
- how physical problems can be solved
- how the scientific method contributes to physics
- how physics relates to everyday life
- the limitations and constraints on physics.

3. Skills

Students should be able to

- measure physical quantities in the appropriate SI units
- work safely in a laboratory
- follow instructions
- use scientific equipment appropriately
- plan and design experiments
- use experimental data appropriately
- apply physical principles to solving problems
- analyse and evaluate experimental results.

4. Competence

Students should be able to

- present information in tabular, graphical, written and diagrammatic form, as appropriate
- report on experimental procedures and results concisely, accurately, and comprehensively
- use calculators
- solve numerical problems
- read scientific prose
- relate scientific concepts to issues in everyday life
- explain the science underlying familiar facts, observations, and phenomena
- suggest scientific explanations for unfamiliar facts, etc.
- make decisions based on the examination of evidence and arguments.

5. Attitudes

Students should appreciate

- the contribution of physics to the social and economic development of society
- the relationship between physics and technology
- that a knowledge of physics has many vocational applications.

(Black text is for Higher level only.)

| MECHANICS | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| MOTION | | | |
| 1. Linear motion | Units of mass, length and time — definition of units not required. | | |
| | Displacement, velocity, acceleration: definitions and units. | Measurement of velocity and acceleration, using any suitable apparatus. Use of distance-time, velocity-time graphs. | Sports, e.g. athletics. |
| 2. Vectors and scalars | Equations of motion. Derivation. | Measurement of g . Appropriate calculations. | |
| | Distinction between vector and scalar quantities. | | Vector nature of physical quantities: everyday examples. |
| | Composition of perpendicular vectors. Resolution of co-planar vectors. | Find resultants using newton balances or pulleys. Appropriate calculations. | |
| FORCES | | | |
| 1. Newton's laws of motion | Statement of the three laws. | Demonstration of the laws using air track <i>or</i> tickertape timer <i>or</i> powder track timer, etc. | Applications: • seat belts • rocket travel. Sports, all ball games. |
| | Force and momentum: definitions and units. Vector nature of forces to be stressed. $F = ma$ as a special case of Newton's second law. Friction: a force opposing motion. | Appropriate calculations. | Importance of friction in everyday experience, e.g. walking, use of lubricants, etc. |
| 2. Conservation of momentum | Principle of conservation of momentum. | Demonstration by any one suitable method. Appropriate calculations (problems involving change of mass need not be considered). | Collisions (ball games), acceleration of spacecraft, jet aircraft. |

| MECHANICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 3. Circular motion | Centripetal force required to maintain uniform motion in a circle. Definition of angular velocity ω . Derivation of $v = r\omega$ Use of $a = r\omega^2$, $F = mr\omega^2$ | Demonstration of circular motion. Appropriate calculations. | |
| 4. Gravity | Newton's law of universal gravitation. $F = \frac{Gm_1m_2}{d^2}$ Weight = mg Variation of g , and hence W , with distance from centre of Earth (effect of centripetal acceleration not required). Value of acceleration due to gravity on other bodies in space, e.g. Moon. Circular satellite orbits — derivation of the relationship between the period, the mass of the central body and the radius of the orbit. | Compare gravitational forces between Earth and Sun and between Earth and Moon. Appropriate calculations. Calculation of weight on different planets. Appropriate calculations. | Solar system. "Weightlessness" and artificial gravity. Presence of atmosphere. Satellites and communications. |
| 5. Density and pressure | Definitions and units. Pressure in liquids and gases. Boyle's law. Archimedes' principle. Law of flotation. | Demonstration of atmospheric pressure, e.g. collapsing-can experiment. Appropriate calculations. Demonstration only. Calculations not required. | Atmospheric pressure and weather. The "bends" in diving, etc. Hydrometers. |
| 6. Moments | Definition. Levers. Couple. | Simple experiments with a number of weights. Appropriate calculations. (Only problems involving co-planar, parallel forces need be considered.) | Torque, e.g. taps, doors. Handlebars on bicycles. Reference to moving-coil meters and simple motor. |
| 7. Conditions for equilibrium | Vector sum of the forces in any direction is zero. The sum of the moments about any point is zero. | Appropriate calculations. | Static and dynamic equilibrium. |

| MECHANICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| <p>8. Simple harmonic motion (SHM) and Hooke's law</p> | <p>Hooke's law: restoring force \propto displacement.</p> $F = -ks$ $ma = -ks$ $a = \frac{-ks}{m} = -\omega^2 s$ <p>Systems that obey Hooke's law e.g. simple pendulum, execute simple harmonic motion:</p> $T = \frac{2\pi}{\omega}$ | <p>Demonstration of SHM, e.g. swinging pendulum or oscillating magnet.</p> <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Everyday examples.</p> |
| ENERGY | | | |
| 1. Work | <p>Definition and unit.</p> | <p>Simple experiments. Appropriate calculations involving force and displacement in the same direction only.</p> | <p>Lifts, escalators.</p> |
| 2. Energy | <p>Energy as the ability to do work. Different forms of energy.</p> $E_p = mgh \quad E_k = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$ <p>Mass as a form of energy</p> $E = mc^2$ <p>Conversions from one form of energy to another.</p> <p>Principle of conservation of energy.</p> | <p>Demonstrations of different energy conversions.</p> <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Sources of energy: renewable and non-renewable.</p> <p>Mass transformed to other forms of energy in the Sun.</p> <p>Efficient use of energy in the home.</p> |
| 3. Power | <p>Power as the rate of doing work or rate of energy conversion. Unit.</p> <p>Percentage efficiency</p> $= \frac{\text{Power output} \times 100}{\text{Power input}}$ | <p>Estimation of average power developed by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person running upstairs • person repeatedly lifting weights, etc. <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Power of devices, e.g. light bulbs, motors, etc.</p> |

MECHANICS: Experiments

1. Measurement of velocity and acceleration.
2. To show that $a \propto F$.
3. Verification of the principle of conservation of momentum.
4. Measurement of g .
5. Verification of Boyle's law.
6. Investigation of the laws of equilibrium for a set of co-planar forces.
7. Investigation of relationship between period and length for a simple pendulum and hence calculation of g .

| TEMPERATURE | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Concept of temperature | <p>Measure of hotness or coldness of a body.</p> <p>The SI unit of temperature is the kelvin (definition of unit in terms of the triple point of water not required).</p> <p>Celsius scale is the practical scale of temperature.</p> $t / ^\circ\text{C} = T / \text{K} - 273.15$ | | |
| 2. Thermometric properties | <p>A physical property that changes measurably with temperature.</p> | <p>Demonstration of some thermometric properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • length of liquid column, e.g. length of mercury column • emf of thermocouple • pressure of a gas at constant volume • volume of a gas at constant pressure • resistance • colour. | |
| 3. Thermometers | <p>Thermometers measure temperature.</p> <p>Two thermometers do not necessarily give the same reading at the same temperature. The need for standard thermometers – use any commercial laboratory thermometer as school standard.</p> | <p>Graduate two thermometers at ice and steam points. Compare values obtained for an unknown temperature, using a straight-line graph between the reference points.</p> | <p>Practical thermometers, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clinical thermometer • oven thermometers • boiler thermometers • temperature gauge in a car. |

| HEAT | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Concept of heat | Heat as a form of energy that causes a rise in temperature when added or a fall in temperature when withdrawn. | | |
| QUANTITY OF HEAT | | | |
| 1. Heat capacity, specific heat capacity | Definitions and units. | Appropriate calculations. | Storage heaters. |
| 2. Latent heat, specific latent heat | Definitions and units. | Appropriate calculations. | Heat pump, e.g. refrigerator. Perspiration. |
| HEAT TRANSFER | | | |
| 1. Conduction | Qualitative comparison of rates of conduction through solids. | Simple experiments. | <i>U</i> -values: use in domestic situations. |
| 2. Convection | | Simple experiments. | Domestic hot-water and heating systems. |
| 3. Radiation | Radiation from the Sun. Solar constant (also called solar irradiance). | Simple experiments. | Everyday examples. Solar heating. |

HEAT: Experiments

1. Calibration curve of a thermometer using the laboratory mercury thermometer as a standard.
2. Measurement of specific heat capacity, e.g. of water *or* a metal by a mechanical *or* electrical method.
3. Measurement of the specific latent heat of fusion of ice.
4. Measurement of the specific latent heat of vaporisation of water.

| WAVES | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Properties of waves | <p>Longitudinal and transverse waves: frequency, amplitude, wavelength, velocity.</p> <p>Relationship $c = f \lambda$</p> | Appropriate calculations. | <p>Everyday examples, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • radio waves • waves at sea • seismic waves. |
| 2. Wave phenomena | <p>Reflection.</p> <p>Refraction.</p> <p>Diffraction.</p> <p>Interference.</p> <p>Polarisation.</p> <p>Stationary waves; relationship between inter-node distance and wavelength.</p> <p>Diffraction effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at an obstacle • at a slit <p>with reference to significance of the wavelength.</p> | Simple demonstrations using slinky, ripple tank, microwaves, <i>or</i> other suitable method. | |
| 3. Doppler effect | <p>Qualitative treatment.</p> <p>Simple quantitative treatment for moving source and stationary observer.</p> | <p>Sound from a moving source.</p> <p>Appropriate calculations without deriving formula.</p> | <p>Red shift of stars.</p> <p>Speed traps.</p> |

| VIBRATIONS AND SOUND | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 1. Wave nature of sound | Reflection, refraction, diffraction, interference. | Demonstration of interference, e.g. two loudspeakers and a signal generator. | Acoustics. Reduction of noise using destructive interference. Noise pollution. |
| | Speed of sound in various media. | Demonstration that sound requires a medium. | |
| 2. Characteristics of notes | Amplitude and loudness, frequency and pitch, quality and overtones. Frequency limits of audibility. | | Dog whistle. |
| 3. Resonance | Natural frequency. Fundamental frequency. Definition of resonance and examples. | Demonstration using tuning forks <i>or</i> other suitable method. | Vocal cords (folds). |
| 4. Vibrations in strings and pipes | Stationary waves in strings and pipes. Relationship between frequency and length. Harmonics in strings and pipes. | Use string and wind instruments, e.g. guitar, tin whistle. | String section and woodwind section in orchestras. |
| | $f = \frac{1}{2l} \sqrt{\frac{T}{\mu}}$ for a stretched string. | Appropriate calculations. | |
| 5. Sound intensity level | Sound intensity: definition and unit. Threshold of hearing and frequency response of ear. Sound intensity level is measured in decibels. Doubling the sound intensity increases the sound intensity level by 3 dB. The dB(A) scale is used because it is adapted for the ear's frequency response. | Use of sound-level meter. | Examples of sound intensity level. Hearing impairment. Ear protection in industry, etc. |

SOUND: Experiments

1. Measurement of the speed of sound in air.
2. Investigation of the variation of fundamental frequency of a stretched string with length.
3. Investigation of the variation of fundamental frequency of a stretched string with tension.

| LIGHT | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------|------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|--|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS | | | | | | | | |
| REFLECTION | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Laws of reflection | | Demonstration using ray box or laser or other suitable method. | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Mirrors | <p>Images formed by plane and spherical mirrors.</p> <p>Knowledge that</p> $\frac{1}{f} = \frac{1}{u} + \frac{1}{v} \text{ and}$ $m = \frac{v}{u}$ | <p>Real-is-positive sign convention.</p> <p>Simple exercises on mirrors by ray tracing <i>or</i> use of formula.</p> | <p>Practical uses of spherical mirrors:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Concave</td> <td>Convex</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• dentists</td> <td>• supermarkets</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• floodlights</td> <td>• driving mirrors</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• projectors.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | Concave | Convex | • dentists | • supermarkets | • floodlights | • driving mirrors | • projectors. | |
| Concave | Convex | | | | | | | | | | |
| • dentists | • supermarkets | | | | | | | | | | |
| • floodlights | • driving mirrors | | | | | | | | | | |
| • projectors. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| REFRACTION | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Laws of refraction | <p>Refractive index.</p> <p>Refractive index in terms of relative speeds.</p> | <p>Demonstration using ray box <i>or</i> laser <i>or</i> other suitable method.</p> <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Practical examples, e.g. real and apparent depth of fish in water.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Total internal reflection | <p>Critical angle.</p> <p>Relationship between critical angle and refractive index.</p> <p>Transmission of light through optical fibres.</p> | <p>Demonstration.</p> <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Reflective road signs.</p> <p>Mirages.</p> <p>Prism reflectors.</p> <p>Uses of optical fibres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • telecommunications • medicine (endoscopes). | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Lenses | <p>Images formed by single thin lenses.</p> <p>Knowledge that</p> $\frac{1}{f} = \frac{1}{u} + \frac{1}{v} \text{ and}$ $m = \frac{v}{u}$ <p>Power of lens: $P = \frac{1}{f}$</p> <p>Two lenses in contact:</p> $P = P_1 + P_2$ <p>The eye: optical structure; short sight, long sight, and corrections.</p> | <p>Simple exercises on lenses by ray tracing <i>or</i> use of formula.</p> | <p>Use of lenses.</p> <p>Spectacles.</p> | | | | | | | | |

| LIGHT (CONTINUED) | | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| WAVE NATURE OF LIGHT | | | |
| 1. Diffraction and interference | Use of diffraction grating formula: $n\lambda = d\sin\theta$ Derivation of formula. | Suitable method of demonstrating the wave nature of light. Appropriate calculations. | Interference colours • petrol film, soap bubbles. |
| 2. Light as a transverse wave motion | Polarisation. | Demonstration of polarisation using polaroids <i>or</i> other suitable method. | Stress polarisation. Polaroid sunglasses. |
| 3. Dispersion | Dispersion by a prism and a diffraction grating. Recombination by a prism. | Demonstration. | Rainbows, polished gemstones. Colours seen on surfaces of compact discs. |
| 4. Colours | Primary, secondary, complementary colours. Addition of colours. Pigment colours need not be considered. | Demonstration. | Stage lighting, television. |
| 5. Electromagnetic spectrum | Relative positions of radiations in terms of wavelength and frequency. Detection of UV and IR radiation. | Demonstration. | Ultraviolet and ozone layer. Infrared camera: • medical applications • night vision. Greenhouse effect. |
| 6. The spectrometer | The spectrometer and the function of its parts. | Demonstration. | |

LIGHT: Experiments

1. Measurement of the focal length of a concave mirror.
2. Verification of Snell's law of refraction.
3. Measurement of the refractive index of a liquid *or* a solid.
4. Measurement of the focal length of a converging lens.
5. Measurement of the wavelength of monochromatic light.

| ELECTRICITY | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| CHARGES | | | |
| 1. Electrification by contact | Charging by rubbing together dissimilar materials. Types of charge: positive, negative. Conductors and insulators. Unit of charge: coulomb. | Demonstration of forces between charges. | Domestic applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dust on television screen static on clothes. Industrial hazards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in flour mills fuelling aircraft. |
| 2. Electrification by induction | | Demonstration using an insulated conductor and a nearby charged object. | |
| 3. Distribution of charge on conductors | Total charge resides on outside of a metal object. Charges tend to accumulate at points. Point discharge. | Van de Graaff generator can be used to demonstrate these phenomena. | Lightning. Lightning conductors. |
| 4. Electroscope | Structure. | | Uses. |
| ELECTRIC FIELD | | | |
| 1. Force between charges | Coulomb's law $F = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon} \frac{Q_1 Q_2}{d^2}$ – an example of an inverse square law. Forces between collinear charges. | Appropriate calculations. | |
| 2. Electric fields | Idea of lines of force. Vector nature of electric field to be stressed. Definition of electric field strength. | Demonstration of field patterns using oil and semolina <i>or</i> other method. Appropriate calculations – collinear charges only. | Precipitators. Xerography. Hazards: effect of electric fields on integrated circuits. |
| 3. Potential difference | Definition of potential difference: work done per unit charge to transfer a charge from one point to another. Definition of volt. Concept of zero potential. | Appropriate calculations. | |

| ELECTRICITY (CONTINUED) | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| CAPACITANCE | | | |
| 1. Capacitors and capacitance | <p>Definition: $C = Q/V$ Unit of capacitance.</p> <p>Parallel plate capacitor.</p> <p>Use of $C = \frac{A\epsilon_0}{d}$</p> <p>Energy stored in a capacitor.</p> <p>Use of $W = \frac{1}{2} CV^2$ Capacitors — conduct a.c. but not d.c.</p> | <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> <p>Demonstration that capacitance depends on the common area, the distance between the plates, and the nature of the dielectric. Appropriate calculations.</p> <p>Charge capacitor—discharge through lamp or low-voltage d.c. motor. Appropriate calculations. Demonstration.</p> | <p>Common uses of capacitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tuning radios • flash guns • smoothing • filtering. |
| ELECTRIC CURRENT | | | |
| 1. Electric current | Description of electric current as flow of charge; $1 \text{ A} = 1 \text{ C s}^{-1}$ | | |
| 2. Sources of emf and electric current | Pd and voltage are the same thing; they are measured in volts. A voltage when applied to a circuit is called an emf. | | Sources of emf: mains, simple cells, lead-acid accumulator, car batteries, dry batteries, thermocouple. |
| 3. Conduction in materials | <p>Conduction in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • metals • ionic solutions (active and inactive electrodes) • gases • vacuum • semiconductors. <p>References in each case to charge carriers.</p> <p>Conduction in semiconductors: the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic conduction; p-type and n-type semiconductors.</p> | <p>Interpretation of $I-V$ graphs.</p> | <p>Neon lamps, street lights.</p> <p>Electronic devices. LED, computers, integrated circuits.</p> |

| ELECTRICITY (CONTINUED) | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 4. Resistance | The p-n junction: basic principles underlying current flow across a p-n junction. | Demonstration of current flow across a p-n junction in forward and reverse bias, e.g. using a bulb. | Rectification of a.c. |
| | Definition of resistance, unit. Ohm's law. Resistance varies with length, cross-sectional area, and temperature. Resistivity. Resistors in series and parallel. Derivation of formulas. Wheatstone bridge. | Appropriate calculations. Use of ohmmeter, metre bridge. Appropriate calculations. Appropriate calculations. | Practical uses of Wheatstone bridge for temperature control and fail-safe device. |
| | LDR — light-dependent resistor. Thermistor. | Demonstration of LDR and thermistor. | |
| 5. Potential | Potential divider. | Demonstration. | Potentiometer as a variable potential divider. |
| 6. Effects of electric current | Heating: $W = I^2Rt$ | Demonstration of effect. Appropriate calculations. | Everyday examples. Advantage of use of EHT in transmission of electrical energy. |
| | Chemical effect — an electric current can cause a chemical reaction. Magnetic effect of an electric current. | Demonstration of effect. Demonstration of effect. | Uses of the chemical effect. Everyday examples. |
| 7. Domestic circuits | Plugs, fuses, MCBs (miniature circuit breakers). Ring and radial circuits, bonding, earthing, and general safety precautions. RCDs (residual current devices). No drawing of ring circuits required. The kilowatt-hour. Uses. | Wiring a plug. Simple fuse calculations. Appropriate calculations. | Electricity at home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fuse box • meter, etc. Electrical safety. |

| ELECTRICITY (CONTINUED) | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| ELECTROMAGNETISM | | | |
| 1. Magnetism | Magnetic poles exist in pairs. Magnetic effect of an electric current. | Demonstration using magnets, coils, and nails. | Electromagnets and their uses. |
| 2. Magnetic fields | Magnetic field due to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • magnets • current in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a long straight wire - a loop - a solenoid. Description without mathematical details. Vector nature of magnetic field to be stressed. | Demonstrations. | Earth's magnetic field – use in navigation. |
| 3. Current in a magnetic field | Current-carrying conductor experiences a force in a magnetic field. Direction of the force. Force depends on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the current • the length of the wire • the strength of the magnetic field. $F \propto I l B$ Magnetic flux density $B = \frac{F}{Il}$ Derivation of $F = qvB$ Forces between currents (non-mathematical treatment). Definition of the ampere. | Demonstration of the force on a conductor and coil in a magnetic field. Appropriate calculations. Appropriate calculations. | Applications in motors, meters, and loudspeakers. |
| 4. Electromagnetic induction | Magnetic flux $\Phi = BA$ Faraday's law. Lenz's law. Change of mechanical energy to electrical energy. | Demonstration of the principle and laws of electromagnetic induction. Appropriate calculations. | Application in generators. |

| ELECTRICITY (CONTINUED) | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 5. Alternating current | Variation of voltage and current with time, i.e. alternating voltages and currents. | Use oscilloscope to show a.c. | National grid and a.c. |
| | Peak and rms values of alternating currents and voltages. | Compare peak and rms values. | |
| 6. Concepts of mutual induction and self-induction | Mutual induction (two adjacent coils): when the magnetic field in one coil changes an emf is induced in the other, e.g. transformers. | Demonstration. | Uses of transformers. Dimmer switches in stage lighting — uses of inductors. |
| | Self-induction: a changing magnetic field in a coil induces an emf in the coil itself, e.g. inductor. | Demonstration. | |
| | Structure and principle of operation of a transformer. | Demonstration. Appropriate calculations (voltage). | |
| | Effects of inductors on a.c. (no mathematics or phase relations). | | |

ELECTRICITY: Experiments

1. Verification of Joule's law (as $\Delta\theta \propto I^2$).
2. Measurement of the resistivity of the material of a wire.
3. To investigate the variation of the resistance of a metallic conductor with temperature.
4. To investigate the variation of the resistance of a thermistor with temperature.
5. To investigate the variation of current (I) with pd (V) for
 - (a) metallic conductor
 - (b) filament bulb
 - (c) copper sulfate solution with copper electrodes
 - (d) semiconductor diode.

| MODERN PHYSICS | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| THE ELECTRON | | | |
| 1. The electron | The electron as the indivisible quantity of charge. Reference to mass and location in the atom. Units of energy: eV, keV, MeV, GeV. | | Electron named by G. J. Stoney. Quantity of charge measured by Millikan. |
| 2. Thermionic emission | Principle of thermionic emission and its application to the production of a beam of electrons. Cathode ray tube consisting of heated filament, cathode, anode, and screen. Deflection of cathode rays in electric and magnetic fields. | Use of cathode ray tube to demonstrate the production of a beam of electrons – deflection in electric and magnetic fields. | Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cathode ray oscilloscope • television. Use of CRO to display signals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECG and EEG. |
| 3. Photoelectric emission | Photoelectric effect. The photon as a packet of energy; $E = hf$ Effect of intensity and frequency of incident light. Photocell (vacuum tube): structure and operation. Threshold frequency. Einstein's photoelectric law. | Demonstration, e.g. using zinc plate, electroscope, and different light sources. Demonstration of a photocell. | Applications of photoelectric sensing devices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • burglar alarms • automatic doors • control of burners in central heating • sound track in films. |
| 4. X-rays | X-rays produced when high-energy electrons collide with target. Principles of the hot-cathode X-ray tube. X-ray production as inverse of photoelectric effect. Mention of properties of X-rays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • electromagnetic waves • ionisation • penetration. | | Uses of X-rays in medicine and industry. Hazards. |

| MODERN PHYSICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| THE NUCLEUS | | | |
| 1. Structure of the atom | Principle of Rutherford's experiment. Bohr model, descriptive treatment only. Energy levels. | Experiment may be simulated using a large-scale model <i>or</i> a computer <i>or</i> demonstrated on a video. | Lasers. Spectroscopy as a tool in science. |
| 2. Structure of the nucleus | Emission line spectra. $hf = E_2 - E_1$ | Demonstration of line spectra and continuous spectra. | |
| 3. Radioactivity | Atomic nucleus as protons plus neutrons. Mass number A , atomic number Z , A_ZX , isotopes. | | |
| | Experimental evidence for three kinds of radiation: by deflection in electric or magnetic fields or ionisation or penetration. Nature and properties of alpha, beta and gamma emissions. Change in mass number and atomic number because of radioactive decay. | Demonstration of ionisation and penetration by the radiations using any suitable method, e.g. electroscopes, G-M tube. | Uses of radioisotopes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical imaging • medical therapy • food irradiation • agriculture • radiocarbon dating • smoke detectors • industrial applications. |
| | Principle of operation of a detector of ionising radiation. Definition of becquerel (Bq) as one disintegration per second. | Demonstration of G-M tube or solid-state detector. Interpretation of nuclear reactions. | |
| | Law of radioactive decay. Concept of half-life: $T_{1/2}$ Concept of decay constant rate of decay = λN | Appropriate calculations (not requiring calculus). Appropriate calculations (not requiring calculus). | |
| | $T_{1/2} = \frac{\ln 2}{\lambda}$ | | |

| MODERN PHYSICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| 4. Nuclear energy | Principles of fission and fusion. Mass-energy conservation in nuclear reactions, $E = mc^2$. | Interpretation of nuclear reactions. Appropriate calculations. | Fusion: source of Sun's energy. Nuclear weapons. |
| | Nuclear reactor (fuel, moderator, control rods, shielding, and heat exchanger). | Audiovisual resource material. | Environmental impact of fission reactors. Development of fusion reactors. |
| 5. Ionising radiation and health hazards | General health hazards in use of ionising radiations, e.g. X-rays, nuclear radiation. Environmental radiation: the effect of ionising radiation on humans depends on the type of radiation, the activity of the source (in Bq), the time of exposure, and the type of tissue irradiated. | Measurement of background radiation. Audiovisual resource material. | Health hazards of ionising radiations. Radon, significance of background radiation, granite. Medical and dental X-rays. Disposal of nuclear waste. Radiation protection. |

| OPTION 1: PARTICLE PHYSICS (CONTINUED) | | | |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| <p>6. Families of particles</p> | <p>Mass of particles comes from energy of the reactions –</p> $m = \frac{E}{c^2}$ <p>The larger the energy the greater the variety of particles. These particles are called “particle zoo”. Leptons: indivisible point objects, not subject to strong force, e.g. electron, positron, and neutrino. Baryons: subject to all forces, e.g. protons, neutrons, and heavier particles. Mesons: subject to all forces, mass between electron and proton.</p> | <p>Appropriate calculations.</p> | <p>Pioneering work to investigate the structure of matter and origin of universe. International collaboration, e.g. CERN.</p> |
| <p>7. Anti-matter</p> | <p>e^+ positron, e^- electron.</p> <p>Each particle has its own anti-particle.</p> <p>Pair production: two particles produced from energy. γ rays $\rightarrow e^+ + e^-$ conserve charge, momentum. Annihilation: Two γ rays from annihilation of particles. $e^+ + e^- \rightarrow 2hf$ (γ rays) conserve charge, momentum.</p> | | <p>Paul Dirac predicted anti-matter mathematically.</p> |
| <p>8. Quark model</p> | <p>Quark: fundamental building block of baryons and mesons. Six quarks – called up, down, strange, charmed, top, and bottom. Charges: $u^{+2/3}$, $d^{-1/3}$, $s^{-1/3}$ Anti-quark has opposite charge to quark and same mass. Baryons composed of three quarks: $p = uud$, $n = udd$, other baryons any three quarks. Mesons composed of any quark and an anti-quark.</p> | <p>Identify the nature and charge of a particle given a combination of quarks.</p> | <p>James Joyce: “Three quarks for Muster Mark”.</p> |

| OPTION 2: APPLIED ELECTRICITY | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content | Depth of Treatment | Activities | STS |
| APPLIED ELECTRICITY | | | |
| 1. Current in a solenoid | Electromagnetic relay. | Demonstration. | Uses. |
| 2. Current in a magnetic field | Simple d.c. motor. Principle of operation of moving-coil loudspeaker. Principle of moving-coil galvanometer. Conversion of a galvanometer to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an ammeter • a voltmeter • an ohmmeter. | Demonstration. Appropriate calculations for ammeter and voltmeter (not ohmmeter). | Uses of motors and meters. |
| 3. Electromagnetic induction | Induction coil. | Demonstration. | Callan. Electric fences. |
| 4. Alternating current | Structure and principle of operation of simple a.c. generator. Factors affecting efficiency of transformers. Principle of induction motor. Rectification – use of bridge rectifier. | Demonstration. Demonstration. | Uses of generator and transformer. |
| 5. Applications of diode | P-n diode used as half-wave rectifier. Light-emitting diode (LED); principle of operation. Photodiode. | Use of a bridge rectifier and a capacitor to obtain smooth d.c. Use of LED. | Conversion of a.c. to d.c. Practical applications. LED: optical display. Fibre optic receiver. |
| 6. The transistor | Basic structure of bi-polar transistor. The transistor as a voltage amplifier – purpose of bias and load resistors. The transistor as a voltage inverter. | Demonstration. Demonstration. | Applications of the transistor as a switch should be indicated, e.g. to switch a relay. |
| 7. Logic gates | AND, OR and NOT gates. | Establish truth tables for AND, OR and NOT gates. Use of IC in demonstrating circuits. | Relate NOT to transistor. Boole. |

Mathematical Requirements

Black text is for Higher level only.

1. Use of calculators

Students will be expected to have an electronic calculator conforming to the examination regulations for the duration of the course and when answering the examination paper. It is recommended that students have available the following keys:

ORDINARY LEVEL

$+$, $-$, \times , \div , π , x^2 , \sqrt{x} , $\frac{1}{x}$, x^y , EE or EXP;
sine, cosine and tangent and their inverses in degrees and fractions of a degree; memory.

HIGHER LEVEL

as above and
 $\log_{10} x$, 10^x , $\ln x$.

In carrying out calculations, students should be advised to show clearly all expressions to be evaluated using a calculator. The number of significant figures given in the answer to a numerical problem should match the number of significant figures given in the question.

2. Mathematical requirements

The physics syllabus does not require Higher level mathematics. Higher level physics may include some of the optional work of Ordinary level mathematics. There is no requirement for the use of calculus techniques.

Arithmetic

Students should be able to

- understand the concept of significant figures
- recognise and use significant figures as appropriate
- recognise and use expressions in decimal and standard form (scientific) notation
- recognise and use prefixes indicating multiplication by 10^{-12} , 10^{-9} , 10^{-6} , 10^{-3} , 10^3 , 10^6 , 10^9
- use an electronic calculator for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and for finding arithmetic means, reciprocals, squares, square roots, sines, cosines and tangents, exponentials, logarithms, and their inverses
- make approximate evaluations of numerical expressions and use such approximations to check calculator calculations.

Algebra

Students should be able to

- change the subject of an equation
- solve simple algebraic equations
- substitute for physical quantities in physical equations using consistent units
- formulate simple algebraic equations as mathematical models of physical situations
- comprehend and use the symbols $>$, $<$, ∞ , $=$, \propto , Δx .

Geometry and Trigonometry

Students should be able to

- calculate the area of right-angled triangles, circumference and area of circles, surface area and volume of rectangular blocks, cylinders and spheres
- use Pythagoras' theorem, similarity of triangles, the angle sum of a triangle
- use sines, cosines and tangents in physical problems
- recall that $\sin \theta \approx \tan \theta \approx \theta/\text{radians}$, and $\cos \theta \approx 1$ for small θ
- translate between degrees and radians and ensure that the appropriate system is used.

Vectors

Students should be able to

- find the resultant of two perpendicular vectors, recognising situations where vector addition is appropriate
- obtain expressions for components of a vector in perpendicular directions, recognising situations where vector resolution is appropriate.

Graphs

Students should be able to

- translate information between numerical, algebraic, verbal and graphical forms
- select appropriate variables and scales for graph plotting
- determine the slope of a linear graph and allocate appropriate physical units to it
- choose by inspection a straight line that will serve as the best straight line through a set of data presented graphically.

Notations and Symbols

Standard units, signs and symbols should be used throughout the syllabus. In this section, selected abbreviations are given. The physical quantities, their symbols and units are given. The common electrical circuit symbols are shown.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations should be used:

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| potential difference | pd | electromotive force | emf |
| light-emitting diode | LED | light-dependent resistor | LDR |
| proton | p | neutron | n |
| electron | e^- | positron | e^+ |
| neutrino | ν | | |
| quarks: | | | |
| up | u | down | d |
| strange | s | charmed | c |
| top | t | bottom | b |
| antiquarks: | | | |
| up | \bar{u} | down | \bar{d} |
| strange | \bar{s} | charmed | \bar{c} |
| top | \bar{t} | bottom | \bar{b} |

Basic units

The international system of units (SI) should be used. The required base units are given in the table below.

| Physical quantity | Name of SI base unit | Symbol for unit |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| length | metre | m |
| mass | kilogram | kg |
| time | second | s |
| electric current | ampere | A |
| thermodynamic temperature | kelvin | K |

Physical quantities, symbols, and units

The physical quantities, their units and the appropriate symbols required by the syllabus are shown below. Some non-SI units are required. These are indicated by an asterisk*.

| Physical quantity | Symbol | Name of SI unit | Symbol for unit |
|-------------------|--------|-----------------|-----------------|
| mass | m | kilogram | kg |
| length | l | metre | m |
| distance | d | | |
| radius | r, R | | |
| diameter | d | | |











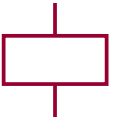








| Physical quantity | Symbol | Name of SI unit | Symbol for unit |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| time | t | second | s |
| periodic time | T | | |
| displacement | s | metre | m |
| speed, velocity | v, u | metre per second | m s^{-1} |
| acceleration | a | metre per second squared | m s^{-2} |
| acceleration of free fall (due to gravity) | g | | |
| gravitational field strength | g | newton per kilogram | N kg^{-1} |
| momentum | p | kilogram metre per second | kg m s^{-1} |
| force | F | newton | N |
| angle | θ | *degree | ° |
| | | radian | rad |
| angular velocity | ω | radian per second | rad s^{-1} |
| weight | W | newton | N |
| gravitational constant | G | newton metre squared per kilogram squared | $\text{N m}^2 \text{kg}^{-2}$ |
| area | A | square metre | m^2 |
| volume | V | cubic metre | m^3 |
| density | ρ | kilogram per cubic metre | kg m^{-3} |
| pressure | P, p | pascal newton per square metre | Pa N m^{-2} |
| moment of a force | M | newton metre | N m |
| torque, moment of a couple | T | newton metre | N m |
| work | W | joule | J |
| energy | E | joule *kilowatt-hour *electronvolt | J kW h eV |
| potential energy | E_p | joule | J |
| kinetic energy | E_k | joule | J |
| power | P | watt | W |
| temperature | T | kelvin | K |
| | t | degree Celsius | °C |
| | θ | degree Celsius | °C |
| temperature change | $\Delta\theta$ | degree Celsius | °C |
| heat energy | Q | joule | J |
| heat capacity | C | joule per kelvin | J K^{-1} |
| specific heat capacity | c | joule per kilogram kelvin kilojoule per kilogram kelvin | $\text{J kg}^{-1} \text{K}^{-1}$ $\text{kJ kg}^{-1} \text{K}^{-1}$ |
| latent heat | L | joule | J |
| specific latent heat | l | joule per kilogram kilojoule per kilogram | J kg^{-1} kJ kg^{-1} |
| frequency | f | hertz | Hz |



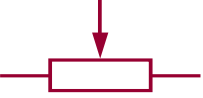










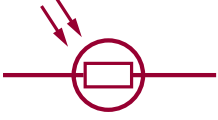

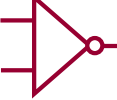



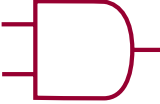
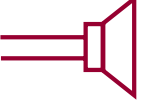

| Physical quantity | Symbol | Name of SI unit | Symbol for unit |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| amplitude | A | metre | m |
| wavelength | λ | metre | m |
| velocity of a wave | c | metre per second | m s^{-1} |
| tension in a wire | T | newton | N |
| mass per unit length | μ | kilogram per metre | kg m^{-1} |
| sound intensity | I | watt per square metre | W m^{-2} |
| sound intensity level | $I.L.$ | *decibel | dB |
| focal length | f | metre | m |
| object distance | u | metre | m |
| image distance | v | metre | m |
| magnification | m | no unit | |
| angle of incidence | i | degree | ° |
| angle of reflection | r | degree | ° |
| angle of refraction | r | degree | ° |
| refractive index | n | no unit | |
| critical angle | C | degree | ° |
| power of lens | P | per metre | m^{-1} |
| grating spacing | d | metre | m |
| slit separation | d | metre | m |
| speed of electromagnetic waves | c | metre per second | m s^{-1} |
| charge | Q, q | coulomb | C |
| permittivity | ϵ | farad per metre | F m^{-1} |
| permittivity of free space | ϵ_0 | farad per metre | F m^{-1} |
| relative permittivity | ϵ_r | no unit | |
| electric field strength | E | newton per coulomb volt per metre | N C^{-1} V m^{-1} |
| potential difference | V | volt | V |
| capacitance | C | farad | F |
| electric current | I | ampere | A |
| emf | E | volt | V |
| resistance | R | ohm | Ω |
| resistivity | ρ | ohm metre | $\Omega \text{ m}$ |
| electrical energy | W | joule | J |
| magnetic flux density | B | tesla | T |
| magnetic flux | Φ | weber | Wb |
| rms value of alternating emf | E_{rms} | volt | V |
| peak value of alternating emf | E_0 | volt | V |
| rms value of alternating current | I_{rms} | ampere | A |
| peak value of alternating current | I_0 | ampere | A |
| number of turns | N | no unit | |
| electronic charge | e | coulomb | C |
| Planck constant | h | joule second | J s |

| Physical quantity | Symbol | Name of SI unit | Symbol for unit |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| mass number | A | no unit | |
| atomic number | Z | no unit | |
| activity of radioactive source | A | becquerel | Bq |
| radioactive decay constant | λ | per second | s^{-1} |
| half-life | $T_{1/2}$ | second | s |

Electrical circuit symbols

The use of standard symbols (BS 3939) is recommended.
The common symbols required by the syllabus are given below.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | conductors crossing with no connection |  | neon lamp |
|  | junction of conductors |  | signal lamp |
|  | earth |  | filament lamp |
|  | normally open switch |  | voltmeter |
|  | normally closed switch |  | galvanometer |
|  | relay coil | } electro magnetic relay |  |
|  | relay contact | | |
|  | primary or secondary cell |  | fuse |
|  | battery of cells |  | fixed resistor |
|  | power supply |  | variable resistor |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|  | thermistor |  | electric bell |
|  | potential divider |  | motor |
|  | capacitor |  | diode/rectifier |
|  | electrolytic capacitor |  | p n p junction transistor |
|  | inductor |  | n p n junction transistor |
|  | inductor with ferromagnetic core |  | light-sensitive diode photodiode |
|  | transformer with ferromagnetic core |  | light-dependent resistor LDR |
|  | light-emitting diode LED |  | invert or NOT gate |
|  | photo-voltaic cell |  | OR gate |
|  | earphone |  | AND gate |
|  | loudspeaker | | |
|  | microphone | | |

Reference: Association for Science Education.
Signs, Symbols and Systematics.
The ASE Companion to 5-16 Science.
 Hatfield: ASE, 1995.

Formulas

Students should know and be able to use the following formulas. At Ordinary level no derivations are required.

Equations in black text apply to Higher level only.

Those marked with † should be derived at Higher level.

Mechanics

Linear motion with constant acceleration:

$$\dagger v = u + at$$

$$\dagger s = ut + \frac{1}{2}at^2$$

$$\dagger v^2 = u^2 + 2as$$

Momentum of a particle = mu

$$\dagger F = ma$$

Conservation of momentum

$$m_1u_1 + m_2u_2 = m_1v_1 + m_2v_2$$

Angle in radians

$$\theta = \frac{s}{r}$$

Angular velocity

$$\omega = \frac{\theta}{t}$$

† Relationship between linear velocity and angular velocity

$$v = r\omega$$

Centripetal acceleration

$$a = r\omega^2 = \frac{v^2}{r}$$

Centripetal force

$$F = mr\omega^2 = \frac{mv^2}{r}$$

Newton's law of gravitation

$$F = \frac{Gm_1m_2}{d^2}$$

Weight

$$W = mg$$

$$\dagger g = \frac{GM}{R^2}$$

$$\dagger T^2 = \frac{4\pi^2 R^3}{GM}$$

Density

$$\rho = \frac{m}{V}$$

Pressure: $p = \frac{F}{A}$

Pressure at a point in a fluid: $p = \rho gh$

Boyle's law

$$pV = \text{constant}$$

Moment = force \times perpendicular distance

Couple $T = Fd$

Hooke's law: $F = -ks$

Simple harmonic motion: $a = -\omega^2 s$

Periodic time

$$T = \frac{1}{f} = \frac{2\pi}{\omega}$$

Simple pendulum

$$T = 2\pi \sqrt{\frac{l}{g}}$$

Work

$$W = Fs$$

Potential energy: $E_p = mgh$

Kinetic energy: $E_k = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$

Mass-energy equivalence

$$E = mc^2$$

Power

$$P = \frac{W}{t}$$

$$\text{Percentage efficiency} = \frac{\text{Power output} \times 100}{\text{Power input}}$$

Heat and Temperature

Celsius temperature

$$t / ^\circ\text{C} = T / \text{K} - 273.15$$

Heat energy needed to change temperature

$$Q = mc\Delta\theta \quad Q = C\Delta\theta$$

Heat energy needed to change state

$$Q = ml \quad Q = L$$

Waves

Velocity of a wave

$$c = f\lambda$$

Doppler effect

$$f' = \frac{fc}{c \pm u}$$

Fundamental frequency of a stretched string

$$f = \frac{1}{2l} \sqrt{\frac{T}{\mu}}$$

Mirror and lens formula

$$\frac{1}{f} = \frac{1}{u} + \frac{1}{v}$$

Magnification

$$m = \frac{v}{u}$$

Power of a lens

$$P = \frac{1}{f}$$

Two lenses in contact

$$P = P_1 + P_2$$

Refractive index:

$$n = \frac{\sin i}{\sin r}$$

$$n = \frac{\text{real depth}}{\text{apparent depth}}$$

$$n = \frac{1}{\sin C}$$

$$n = \frac{c_1}{c_2}$$

†Diffraction grating

$$n\lambda = d \sin \theta$$

Electricity

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Coulomb's law | $F = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon} \frac{Q_1 Q_2}{d^2}$ | Capacitance | $C = \frac{Q}{V}$ |
| Electric field strength | $E = \frac{F}{Q}$ | Parallel-plate capacitor | $C = \frac{A\epsilon_0}{d}$ |
| Potential difference | $V = \frac{W}{Q}$ | Energy stored in capacitor | $W = \frac{1}{2} CV^2$ |
| | $V = IR$ | Resistivity | $\rho = \frac{RA}{l}$ |
| †Resistors in series | $R = R_1 + R_2$ | †Resistors in parallel | $\frac{1}{R} = \frac{1}{R_1} + \frac{1}{R_2}$ |
| Wheatstone bridge | $\frac{R_1}{R_2} = \frac{R_3}{R_4}$ | | |
| Joule's law | $W = I^2 R t$ | Power | $P = VI$ |
| Force on a current carrying conductor | $F = I l B$ | Magnetic flux | $\Phi = BA$ |
| †Force on a charged particle | $F = qvB$ | | |
| Induced emf | $E = \frac{-d\Phi}{dt}$ | Transformer | $\frac{V_i}{V_o} = \frac{N_p}{N_s}$ |
| Alternating voltage and current | $V_{\text{rms}} = \frac{V_0}{\sqrt{2}}$ | $I_{\text{rms}} = \frac{I_0}{\sqrt{2}}$ | |

Modern Physics

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Energy of a photon | $E = hf$ |
| Einstein's photoelectric equation | $hf = \Phi + \frac{1}{2}mv^2_{\text{max}}$ |
| Law of radioactive decay | rate of decay = λN |
| Half-life | $T_{1/2} = \frac{\ln 2}{\lambda}$ |
| Mass-energy equivalence | $E = mc^2$ |



Procedures for drawing up National Syllabuses

The NCCA's Course Committees for the Leaving Certificate (Established) have the following membership:

- *Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland*
- *Teachers' Union of Ireland*
- *Joint Managerial Body*
- *Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools*
- *Subject Association*
- *Irish Vocational Education Association*
- *National Council for Educational Awards*
- *Conference of Heads of Irish Universities*
- *Department of Education and Science (Inspectorate).*

On the basis of a brief provided by Council, the NCCA's Course Committees prepare the syllabuses.

Recommendations of Course Committees are submitted to the Council of the NCCA for approval. The NCCA, having considered such recommendations, advises the Minister for Education and Science accordingly.

Further information may be obtained by contacting the NCCA at 24 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.



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