

GATE 2026 Exam Pattern

Introduction

The Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) 2026 is a national-level examination conducted by the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, for admission to M.Tech/Ph.D. programs and recruitment in Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). This document outlines the detailed exam pattern for GATE 2026, including the structure, marking scheme, and question types.

Exam Overview

The GATE 2026 exam is a Computer-Based Test (CBT) conducted in English, with a duration of 3 hours. It consists of 30 test papers, covering various disciplines in Engineering, Technology, Science, Commerce, Arts, and Humanities. Candidates can opt to appear for one or up to two papers from predefined combinations.

- **Mode of Examination:** Computer-Based Test (CBT)
- **Duration:** 3 hours (180 minutes)
- **Number of Papers:** 30
- **Total Marks:** 100
- **Number of Questions:** 65
- **Language:** English

Sections and Marks Distribution

The GATE 2026 question paper is divided into sections based on the chosen discipline. The General Aptitude (GA) section is common across all papers, carrying 15 marks. The remaining marks are allocated to subject-specific questions, with some papers including Engineering Mathematics as a compulsory section.

- **General Aptitude (GA):** 15 marks (common for all papers)
- **Engineering Mathematics:** 13–15 marks (for papers like AE, AG, BM, BT, CE, CH, CS, EC, EE, ES, IN, ME, MN, MT, NM, PE, PI, TF, XE)
- **Subject-Specific Questions:** 70–85 marks (varies by paper)

Marks Distribution by Paper

Paper Code	GA Marks	Compulsory Section	Subject Marks	Total Marks
AE, AG, BM, BT, CE, CH, CS, EC, EE, ES, IN, ME, MN, MT, NM, PE, PI, TF	15	Engineering Mathematics (13)	72	100
CY, DA, EY, MA, PH, ST	15	–	85	100
AR	15	Part A (60)	Part B1 or B2 (25)	100
GE	15	Part A (55)	Part B1 or B2 (30)	100
GG	15	Part A (25)	Geology or Geophysics (60)	100
XE	15	Engineering Mathematics (15)	2 Optional Sections (2 × 35)	100
XH	15	Reasoning and Comprehension (25)	1 Optional Section (60)	100
XL	15	Chemistry (25)	2 Optional Sections (2 × 30)	100

Question Types

The GATE 2026 exam includes three types of questions designed to test various abilities, such as recall, comprehension, application, and analysis/synthesis.

- **Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs):** Questions with four answer options, where only one is correct.
- **Multiple Select Questions (MSQs):** Questions with four answer options, where one or more may be correct.
- **Numerical Answer Type (NAT):** Questions requiring a numerical value as the answer, entered via a virtual keypad.

Marking Scheme

Questions in GATE 2026 carry either 1 or 2 marks, with a total of 65 questions summing to 100 marks.

- **1-mark questions:** 1/3 mark deducted for incorrect MCQ answers.

- **2-mark questions:** 2/3 mark deducted for incorrect MCQ answers.
- **MSQ and NAT:** No negative marking.
- **Partial Marking:** Not applicable for any question type.

Special Provisions

Candidates with benchmark disabilities (PwD) greater than 40% are eligible for an additional hour of compensatory time. PwD candidates with less than 40% disability and difficulty in writing may also receive compensatory time, subject to certification as per the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment guidelines.

Conclusion

Understanding the GATE 2026 exam pattern is crucial for effective preparation. Candidates should familiarize themselves with the question types, marks distribution, and negative marking scheme to strategize their study plan. For detailed syllabus and previous year question papers, visit the official GATE website at gate2026.iitg.ac.in.