

NEST Mathematics Sample Paper – 6

Duration: 45 Minutes

Maximum Marks: 60

Instructions

- This paper contains **20 Multiple Choice Questions (single correct answer)**, modelled on the Mathematics section of **NEST 2026**.
- Each correct answer carries **+3 marks**. There is a deduction of **–1 mark** for each incorrect answer; **no marks** are deducted for an unattempted question.
- Every question has exactly **four options**, of which only **one** is correct. Choose carefully.
- Personal calculators, log tables, mobile phones, and other electronic gadgets are strictly prohibited in the examination hall.
- A simple on-screen (virtual) calculator is provided in the computer-based test interface and may be used; blank sheets for rough work are supplied at the exam centre.

Q1. Consider the function $f : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ defined by $f(x) = 2x - 7$. Which one of the following is correct?

- (A) f is one-one but not onto
- (B) f is onto but not one-one
- (C) f is both one-one and onto (a bijection)
- (D) f is neither one-one nor onto

Q2. The exact value of $\cos 15^\circ$ is

- (A) $\frac{\sqrt{6} - \sqrt{2}}{4}$
- (B) $\frac{\sqrt{6} + \sqrt{2}}{4}$
- (C) $\frac{\sqrt{3} - 1}{2\sqrt{2}}$



(D) $\frac{\sqrt{3} + 1}{4}$

Q3. The value of $(1 + i)^8$, where $i = \sqrt{-1}$, is

(A) -16

(B) $16i$

(C) 8

(D) 16

Q4. The number of diagonals of a convex polygon with 12 sides is

(A) 54

(B) 66

(C) 60

(D) 48

Q5. In the binomial expansion of $(1 + x)^{10}$, the greatest binomial coefficient is

(A) 210

(B) 252

(C) 120

(D) 45

Q6. In the arithmetic progression $27, 24, 21, \dots$, which term is the first to equal zero?

(A) 9th term

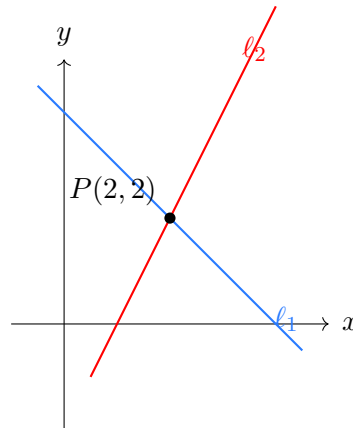
(B) 8th term

(C) 10th term

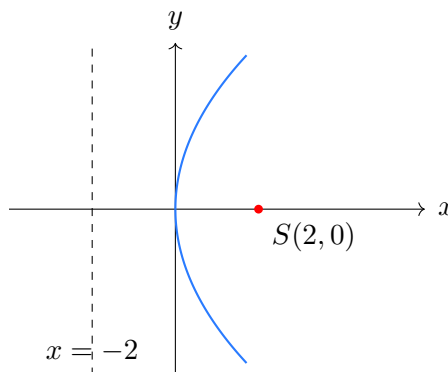
(D) 11th term



- Q7.** The equation of the line passing through the intersection of the lines $x + y - 4 = 0$ and $2x - y - 2 = 0$ and also through the origin is



- (A) $y = x$
 (B) $y = 2x$
 (C) $y = -x$
 (D) $x + y = 0$
- Q8.** The equation of the parabola whose focus is $S(2, 0)$ and whose directrix is the line $x = -2$ is



- (A) $y^2 = 4x$
 (B) $x^2 = 8y$
 (C) $y^2 = 2x$
 (D) $y^2 = 8x$
- Q9.** The value of $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{e^{3x} - 1}{x}$ is



- (A) 1
- (B) $\frac{1}{3}$
- (C) 3
- (D) e^3

Q10. The standard deviation of the first 5 natural numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 is

- (A) $\sqrt{2}$
- (B) 2
- (C) $\sqrt{3}$
- (D) $\frac{5}{2}$

Q11. The value of $\sin^{-1}\left(\sin \frac{2\pi}{3}\right)$ is

- (A) $\frac{2\pi}{3}$
- (B) $-\frac{\pi}{3}$
- (C) $\frac{\pi}{6}$
- (D) $\frac{\pi}{3}$

Q12. If $A = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 5 \\ 1 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$, then A^{-1} is

- (A) $\begin{pmatrix} 2 & -5 \\ -1 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$
- (B) $\begin{pmatrix} 3 & -5 \\ -1 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$
- (C) $\frac{1}{11} \begin{pmatrix} 3 & -5 \\ -1 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$
- (D) $\begin{pmatrix} 3 & 5 \\ 1 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$



Q13. The values of x for which $\begin{vmatrix} x & 2 \\ 2 & x \end{vmatrix} = 0$ are

(A) $x = \pm 4$

(B) $x = 2$ only

(C) $x = \pm 2$

(D) $x = 0$

Q14. Consider $f(x) = |x|$ at the point $x = 0$. Which statement is correct?

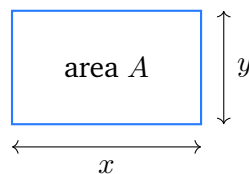
(A) f is continuous and differentiable at $x = 0$

(B) f is differentiable but not continuous at $x = 0$

(C) f is neither continuous nor differentiable at $x = 0$

(D) f is continuous at $x = 0$ but not differentiable there

Q15. A rectangle is to be cut from a wire of total length (perimeter) 40 cm. The maximum possible area of such a rectangle is



(A) 100 cm^2

(B) 80 cm^2

(C) 120 cm^2

(D) 200 cm^2

Q16. The value of the indefinite integral $\int \sin^2 x \, dx$ is (with C an arbitrary constant)

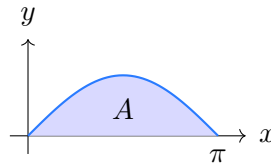
(A) $\frac{x}{2} + \frac{\sin 2x}{4} + C$

(B) $\frac{x}{2} - \frac{\sin 2x}{4} + C$



- (C) $\frac{\sin^3 x}{3} + C$
 (D) $-\cos^2 x + C$

Q17. The area bounded by the curve $y = \sin x$, the x -axis, between $x = 0$ and $x = \pi$ is

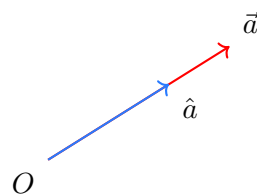


- (A) 1
 (B) π
 (C) 2
 (D) 0

Q18. The order and degree of the differential equation $\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dy}{dx}\right)^2} = \frac{d^2y}{dx^2}$ are, respectively,

- (A) 2 and 1
 (B) 1 and 2
 (C) 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$
 (D) 2 and 2

Q19. A vector of magnitude 6 in the direction of $\vec{a} = 2\hat{i} + 3\hat{j} + 6\hat{k}$ is



- (A) $\frac{12}{7}\hat{i} + \frac{18}{7}\hat{j} + \frac{36}{7}\hat{k}$
 (B) $2\hat{i} + 3\hat{j} + 6\hat{k}$



$$(C) \frac{2}{7}\hat{i} + \frac{3}{7}\hat{j} + \frac{6}{7}\hat{k}$$

$$(D) 12\hat{i} + 18\hat{j} + 36\hat{k}$$

Q20. One card is drawn at random from a well-shuffled standard pack of 52 playing cards. The probability that it is a king or a queen is

$$(A) \frac{1}{13}$$

$$(B) \frac{2}{13}$$

$$(C) \frac{4}{13}$$

$$(D) \frac{1}{26}$$



Detailed Solutions

Q1.

Solution

Concept — One-one and onto for a linear map: A function is one-one if $f(x_1) = f(x_2) \Rightarrow x_1 = x_2$, and onto if every real y is attained by some x .

Step 1 — One-one: If $2x_1 - 7 = 2x_2 - 7$ then $2x_1 = 2x_2$, so $x_1 = x_2$. Hence f is one-one.

Step 2 — Onto: For any $y \in \mathbb{R}$, solve $y = 2x - 7 \Rightarrow x = \frac{y+7}{2} \in \mathbb{R}$. Every y has a pre-image, so f is onto.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) wrongly claims f misses some real value; the codomain \mathbb{R} is fully covered.
- (B) a non-constant line cannot be many-one on \mathbb{R} .
- (D) contradicts both checks above.

Final Answer: f is a bijection \Rightarrow C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q1](#)

Q2.

Solution

Concept — Compound angle: Write $15^\circ = 45^\circ - 30^\circ$ and use $\cos(A - B) = \cos A \cos B + \sin A \sin B$.

Step 1 — Expand: $\cos 15^\circ = \cos 45^\circ \cos 30^\circ + \sin 45^\circ \sin 30^\circ$.

Step 2 — Substitute values:

$$\cos 15^\circ = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \cdot \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \cdot \frac{1}{2} = \frac{\sqrt{3} + 1}{2\sqrt{2}} = \frac{\sqrt{6} + \sqrt{2}}{4}.$$

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) $\frac{\sqrt{6} - \sqrt{2}}{4} = \sin 15^\circ$, the sine not the cosine.
- (C) $\frac{\sqrt{3} - 1}{2\sqrt{2}}$ uses a minus sign, again giving $\sin 15^\circ$.
- (D) $\frac{\sqrt{3} + 1}{4}$ omits the $\sqrt{2}$ in the denominator.



Final Answer: $\cos 15^\circ = \frac{\sqrt{6} + \sqrt{2}}{4} \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{B}}$

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q2](#)

Q3.

Solution

Concept — Powers of $(1 + i)$: Use $(1 + i)^2 = 2i$, then raise to a power; or apply De Moivre's theorem with modulus $\sqrt{2}$ and argument $\frac{\pi}{4}$.

Step 1 — Square first: $(1 + i)^2 = 1 + 2i + i^2 = 1 + 2i - 1 = 2i$.

Step 2 — Raise to the fourth power: $(1 + i)^8 = [(1 + i)^2]^4 = (2i)^4 = 2^4 i^4 = 16 \cdot 1 = 16$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) -16 uses $i^4 = -1$ (incorrect; $i^4 = 1$).
- (B) $16i$ would be $(1 + i)^{10}$, not the eighth power.
- (C) 8 forgets that $|1 + i|^8 = (\sqrt{2})^8 = 16$.

Final Answer: $(1 + i)^8 = 16 \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{D}}$

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q3](#)

Q4.

Solution

Concept — Diagonals of a polygon: A convex n -gon has $\frac{n(n-3)}{2}$ diagonals (join any two of n vertices, then remove the n sides).

Step 1 — Substitute $n = 12$:

$$\frac{n(n-3)}{2} = \frac{12(12-3)}{2} = \frac{12 \times 9}{2} = \frac{108}{2} = 54.$$

Step 2 — Cross-check: $\binom{12}{2} - 12 = 66 - 12 = 54$, same result.

Why other options are wrong:

- (B) $66 = \binom{12}{2}$ counts all segments, forgetting to subtract the 12 sides.
- (C) 60 subtracts only 6 instead of 12.
- (D) 48 uses $n - 4$ instead of $n - 3$.



Final Answer: 54 diagonals \Rightarrow A

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q4](#)

Q5.

Solution

Concept — Greatest binomial coefficient: For $(1 + x)^n$ the coefficients are $\binom{n}{r}$; the largest occurs at the middle term, $r = \frac{n}{2}$ when n is even.

Step 1 — Middle term: For $n = 10$ (even), the greatest coefficient is $\binom{10}{5}$.

Step 2 — Evaluate: $\binom{10}{5} = \frac{10!}{5!5!} = 252$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) $210 = \binom{10}{4} = \binom{10}{6}$, a neighbour but smaller.
- (C) $120 = \binom{10}{3}$, smaller still.
- (D) $45 = \binom{10}{2}$, far from the middle.

Final Answer: greatest coefficient $= \binom{10}{5} = 252 \Rightarrow$ B

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q5](#)

Q6.

Solution

Concept — General term of an AP: $a_n = a + (n - 1)d$. Set $a_n = 0$ and solve for n .

Step 1 — Identify: $a = 27, d = 24 - 27 = -3$.

Step 2 — Solve $a_n = 0$: $27 + (n - 1)(-3) = 0 \Rightarrow 27 = 3(n - 1) \Rightarrow n - 1 = 9 \Rightarrow n = 10$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) 9th term is $27 + 8(-3) = 3$, not zero.
- (B) 8th term is $27 + 7(-3) = 6$.
- (D) 11th term is $27 + 10(-3) = -3$ (already negative).

Final Answer: the 10th term is zero \Rightarrow C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q6](#)



Q7.

Solution

Concept — Family of lines / intersection point: A line through the intersection of two lines passes through their common point; find that point, then the line through it and the origin.

Step 1 — Find the intersection: Solve $x + y = 4$ and $2x - y = 2$. Adding gives $3x = 6 \Rightarrow x = 2$, then $y = 2$. So $P(2, 2)$.

Step 2 — Line through P and the origin: Slope = $\frac{2 - 0}{2 - 0} = 1$, giving $y = x$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (B) $y = 2x$ has slope 2; it does not pass through $(2, 2)$.
- (C) $y = -x$ and (D) $x + y = 0$ have slope -1 and miss $P(2, 2)$.

Final Answer: $y = x \Rightarrow$

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q7](#)

Q8.

Solution

Concept — Parabola from focus and directrix: For focus $(a, 0)$ and directrix $x = -a$, the standard parabola is $y^2 = 4ax$.

Step 1 — Read a : Focus $(2, 0)$ and directrix $x = -2$ give $a = 2$.

Step 2 — Write equation: $y^2 = 4ax = 4(2)x = 8x$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) $y^2 = 4x$ uses $a = 1$ (reads $4a = 4$).
- (B) $x^2 = 8y$ is a vertical parabola, focus on the y -axis.
- (C) $y^2 = 2x$ takes $4a = 2$, i.e. $a = \frac{1}{2}$.

Final Answer: $y^2 = 8x \Rightarrow$

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q8](#)



Q9.

Solution

Concept — Standard limit: $\lim_{u \rightarrow 0} \frac{e^u - 1}{u} = 1.$

Step 1 — Adjust the argument: Write $\frac{e^{3x} - 1}{x} = 3 \cdot \frac{e^{3x} - 1}{3x}.$

Step 2 — Take the limit: As $x \rightarrow 0$, $3x \rightarrow 0$, so $\frac{e^{3x} - 1}{3x} \rightarrow 1$, leaving $3 \times 1 = 3.$

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) 1 forgets the factor 3 from the argument.
- (B) $\frac{1}{3}$ divides by 3 instead of multiplying.
- (D) e^3 substitutes $x = 1$ rather than taking the limit at 0.

Final Answer: the limit is 3 \Rightarrow C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q9](#)

Q10.

Solution

Concept — Standard deviation of the first n natural numbers: $\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{n^2 - 1}{12}},$
 derived from variance $= \frac{n^2 - 1}{12}.$

Step 1 — Substitute $n = 5$: $\sigma^2 = \frac{5^2 - 1}{12} = \frac{24}{12} = 2.$

Step 2 — Take the root: $\sigma = \sqrt{2}.$

Why other options are wrong:

- (B) 2 reports the variance, not the standard deviation.
- (C) $\sqrt{3}$ uses $\frac{n^2 - 1}{8}$ (wrong denominator).
- (D) $\frac{5}{2}$ is the mean, not a spread.

Final Answer: $\sigma = \sqrt{2} \Rightarrow$ A

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q10](#)



Q11.

Solution

Concept — Principal range of \sin^{-1} : $\sin^{-1}(\sin \theta) = \theta$ only when $\theta \in \left[-\frac{\pi}{2}, \frac{\pi}{2}\right]$. Otherwise replace θ with an angle in that range having the same sine.

Step 1 — Check the angle: $\frac{2\pi}{3} \notin \left[-\frac{\pi}{2}, \frac{\pi}{2}\right]$, so the answer is not $\frac{2\pi}{3}$.

Step 2 — Reduce: $\sin \frac{2\pi}{3} = \sin\left(\pi - \frac{2\pi}{3}\right) = \sin \frac{\pi}{3}$, and $\frac{\pi}{3} \in \left[-\frac{\pi}{2}, \frac{\pi}{2}\right]$. Hence the value is $\frac{\pi}{3}$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) $\frac{2\pi}{3}$ lies outside the principal range.
- (B) $-\frac{\pi}{3}$ has the wrong sign (sine here is positive).
- (C) $\frac{\pi}{6}$ has $\sin \frac{1}{2} \neq \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$.

Final Answer: $\frac{\pi}{3} \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{D}}$

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q11](#)

Q12.

Solution

Concept — Inverse of a 2×2 matrix: For $A = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix}$, $A^{-1} = \frac{1}{ad - bc} \begin{pmatrix} d & -b \\ -c & a \end{pmatrix}$.

Step 1 — Determinant: $\det A = 2(3) - 5(1) = 6 - 5 = 1$.

Step 2 — Adjoint and inverse: Since $\det A = 1$,

$$A^{-1} = \frac{1}{1} \begin{pmatrix} 3 & -5 \\ -1 & 2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 & -5 \\ -1 & 2 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) keeps a and d unswapped in the adjoint.
- (C) divides by 11 (a wrong determinant).
- (D) is just A with no sign changes or swap.



Final Answer: $A^{-1} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 & -5 \\ -1 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{B}}$

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q12](#)

Q13.

Solution

Concept — Determinant equation: Expand the 2×2 determinant and solve the resulting equation for x .

Step 1 — Expand: $\begin{vmatrix} x & 2 \\ 2 & x \end{vmatrix} = x \cdot x - 2 \cdot 2 = x^2 - 4.$

Step 2 — Solve: $x^2 - 4 = 0 \Rightarrow x^2 = 4 \Rightarrow x = \pm 2.$

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) ± 4 forgets to take the square root.
- (B) $x = 2$ only drops the negative root.
- (D) $x = 0$ ignores the -4 term.

Final Answer: $x = \pm 2 \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{C}}$

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q13](#)

Q14.

Solution

Concept — Continuity vs differentiability of $|x|$: $|x|$ is continuous everywhere, but the left and right derivatives can differ at a corner.

Step 1 — Continuity: $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} |x| = 0 = |0|$, so f is continuous at $x = 0$.

Step 2 — Differentiability: For $x > 0$, $f'(x) = 1$; for $x < 0$, $f'(x) = -1$. The left-hand derivative (-1) and right-hand derivative ($+1$) disagree, so f is not differentiable at $x = 0$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) claims differentiability, but the corner breaks it.
- (B) differentiability would force continuity, so this is impossible.
- (C) $|x|$ is clearly continuous at 0.

Final Answer: continuous but not differentiable $\Rightarrow \boxed{\text{D}}$



Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q14](#)

Q15.

Solution

Concept — Maximising area at fixed perimeter: With perimeter fixed, express area in one variable and use calculus; the optimum rectangle is a square.

Step 1 — Set up: Let sides be x, y with $2(x + y) = 40 \Rightarrow y = 20 - x$. Area $A = x(20 - x) = 20x - x^2$.

Step 2 — Maximise: $A'(x) = 20 - 2x = 0 \Rightarrow x = 10$, and $A''(x) = -2 < 0$ (a maximum). Then $y = 10$.

Step 3 — Maximum area: $A = 10 \times 10 = 100 \text{ cm}^2$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (B) 80 comes from a non-optimal $x = 4, y = 16$.
- (C) 120 is impossible (exceeds the square's area).
- (D) 200 uses semi-perimeter 20 as one side.

Final Answer: maximum area = $100 \text{ cm}^2 \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{A}}$

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q15](#)

Q16.

Solution

Concept — Power-reduction identity: $\sin^2 x = \frac{1 - \cos 2x}{2}$, which converts the integral into elementary terms.

Step 1 — Rewrite: $\int \sin^2 x \, dx = \int \frac{1 - \cos 2x}{2} \, dx = \frac{1}{2} \int (1 - \cos 2x) \, dx$.

Step 2 — Integrate: $\frac{1}{2} \left(x - \frac{\sin 2x}{2} \right) + C = \frac{x}{2} - \frac{\sin 2x}{4} + C$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) has a $+\frac{\sin 2x}{4}$ (wrong sign; the identity carries a minus).
- (C) $\frac{\sin^3 x}{3}$ would be $\int \sin^2 x \cos x \, dx$.
- (D) $-\cos^2 x$ is unrelated to $\int \sin^2 x \, dx$.

Final Answer: $\frac{x}{2} - \frac{\sin 2x}{4} + C \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{B}}$



Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q16](#)

Q17.

Solution

Concept — Area under a curve: Since $\sin x \geq 0$ on $[0, \pi]$, the area is $\int_0^\pi \sin x \, dx$.

Step 1 — Antiderivative: $\int \sin x \, dx = -\cos x$.

Step 2 — Evaluate: $[-\cos x]_0^\pi = (-\cos \pi) - (-\cos 0) = -(-1) + 1 = 1 + 1 = 2$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) 1 integrates over only half the interval $[0, \frac{\pi}{2}]$.
- (B) π confuses the area with the interval length.
- (D) 0 is $\int_0^{2\pi} \sin x \, dx$, where positive and negative parts cancel.

Final Answer: area = 2 \Rightarrow C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q17](#)

Q18.

Solution

Concept — Order and degree: Remove radicals first; the order is the highest derivative, and the degree is its power once the equation is polynomial in derivatives.

Step 1 — Clear the radical: Squaring both sides, $1 + \left(\frac{dy}{dx}\right)^2 = \left(\frac{d^2y}{dx^2}\right)^2$.

Step 2 — Read order and degree: Highest derivative is $\frac{d^2y}{dx^2}$, so order = 2; it appears to the power 2, so degree = 2.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) 2, 1 ignores the squaring needed to clear the radical.
- (B) 1, 2 misreads the order from the first-derivative term.
- (C) $2, \frac{1}{2}$ leaves the equation in radical form (degree must be a positive integer).

Final Answer: order 2, degree 2 \Rightarrow D

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q18](#)



Q19.

Solution

Concept — Vector of given magnitude along a direction: The required vector is (magnitude) $\times \hat{a}$, where $\hat{a} = \frac{\vec{a}}{|\vec{a}|}$.

Step 1 — Magnitude of \vec{a} : $|\vec{a}| = \sqrt{2^2 + 3^2 + 6^2} = \sqrt{4 + 9 + 36} = \sqrt{49} = 7$.

Step 2 — Scale to magnitude 6: $6\hat{a} = \frac{6}{7}(2\hat{i} + 3\hat{j} + 6\hat{k}) = \frac{12}{7}\hat{i} + \frac{18}{7}\hat{j} + \frac{36}{7}\hat{k}$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (B) $2\hat{i} + 3\hat{j} + 6\hat{k}$ is \vec{a} itself, with magnitude 7, not 6.
- (C) is the unit vector \hat{a} (magnitude 1).
- (D) scales by 6 without dividing by $|\vec{a}|$, giving magnitude 42.

Final Answer: $\frac{12}{7}\hat{i} + \frac{18}{7}\hat{j} + \frac{36}{7}\hat{k} \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{A}}$

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q19](#)

Q20.

Solution

Concept — Classical probability with mutually exclusive events: $P(\text{king or queen}) = P(\text{king}) + P(\text{queen})$, since no card is both.

Step 1 — Count favourable cards: A pack has 4 kings and 4 queens, so 8 favourable outcomes out of 52.

Step 2 — Probability: $P = \frac{8}{52} = \frac{2}{13}$.

Why other options are wrong:

- (A) $\frac{1}{13} = \frac{4}{52}$ counts only the kings (or only the queens).
- (C) $\frac{4}{13} = \frac{16}{52}$ counts all face cards plus extras.
- (D) $\frac{1}{26} = \frac{2}{52}$ counts only two specific cards.

Final Answer: $P = \frac{2}{13} \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{B}}$

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q20](#)



Answer Key

Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans
1	C	2	B	3	D	4	A	5	B
6	C	7	A	8	D	9	C	10	A
11	D	12	B	13	C	14	D	15	A
16	B	17	C	18	D	19	A	20	B

