

1 The scattering cross section

1.1 Derivation of the differential cross section for a general $2 \rightarrow n$ particle scattering process

Let us write down the oncoming wave packets as

$$|i\rangle = \int \frac{d^3 k_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_A}} \int \frac{d^3 k_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_B}} \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) |\vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B\rangle$$

and the outgoing wave packets as

$$|f\rangle = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \int \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_i}} \phi_i(\vec{p}_i) \right\} |\vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n\rangle$$

The S matrix is written as

$$\mathbb{S} = 1 + i\mathbb{T}$$

and the transition amplitude can be computed easily

$$T(\vec{b}) = \langle f | \mathbb{T} | i \rangle = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \int \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_i}} \phi_i(\vec{p}_i)^* \right\} \int \frac{d^3 k_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_A}} \int \frac{d^3 k_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_B}} \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) e^{-i\vec{b} \cdot \vec{k}_B} \\ \times \langle \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n | \mathbb{T} | \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \rangle$$

where

$$\langle \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n | \mathbb{T} | \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \rangle = -\mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right)$$

and the factor $e^{-i\vec{b} \cdot \vec{k}_B}$ corresponds to an incoming projectile B with an impact parameter \vec{b} relative to the target particle A . The transition probability for this process is

$$P(\vec{b}) = |T(\vec{b})|^2 \\ = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \int \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_i}} \phi_i(\vec{p}_i)^* \right\} \int \frac{d^3 k_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_A}} \int \frac{d^3 k_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_B}} \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) e^{-i\vec{b} \cdot \vec{k}_B} \langle \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n | \mathbb{T} | \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \rangle \\ \times \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \int \frac{d^3 p'_i}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_i}} \phi_i(\vec{p}'_i) \right\} \int \frac{d^3 k'_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_A}} \int \frac{d^3 k'_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_B}} \phi_A(\vec{k}'_A)^* \phi_B(\vec{k}'_B)^* e^{i\vec{b} \cdot \vec{k}'_B} \langle \vec{p}'_1, \dots, \vec{p}'_n | \mathbb{T} | \vec{k}'_A, \vec{k}'_B \rangle^* \\ = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \int \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_i}} \phi_i(\vec{p}_i)^* \right\} \int \frac{d^3 k_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_A}} \int \frac{d^3 k_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_B}} \\ \times \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \int \frac{d^3 p'_i}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_i}} \phi_i(\vec{p}'_i) \right\} \int \frac{d^3 k'_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_A}} \int \frac{d^3 k'_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_B}} \\ \times \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) \phi_A(\vec{k}'_A)^* \phi_B(\vec{k}'_B)^* e^{i\vec{b} \cdot (\vec{k}'_B - \vec{k}_B)} (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k'_A + k'_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p'_i \right) \\ \times \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}'_A, \vec{k}'_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}'_1, \dots, \vec{p}'_n \} \right)^*$$

What is the number of events per second of the incident beam scattering on the target particle? If the beam has a particle flux j_B (particles per second per area) then the number of events per second (event frequency) is

$$f = \int d^2b j_B P(\vec{b}) = j_B \int d^2b P(\vec{b})$$

where I supposed that the incoming beam flux is homogeneous across it's transverse area so it can be brought out of the integration. Then the cross section is just

$$\sigma = \int d^2b P(\vec{b})$$

Now our first step is to suppose that the outgoing states are narrow wave packets so that $\phi_i(\vec{p}_i)^* \phi_i(\vec{p}_i)$ is only nonzero when $\vec{p}_i \approx \vec{p}_i'$ (what this really means that our detectors measuring the final state have a good momentum resolution). Using the wave packet normalisation

$$\int \frac{d^3p}{(2\pi)^3} |\phi(\vec{p})|^2 = 1$$

we can perform the integral over the \vec{p}_i' leaving us with

$$\begin{aligned} P(\vec{b}) &= \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \int \frac{d^3p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \int \frac{d^3k_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_A}} \int \frac{d^3k_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_B}} \int \frac{d^3k'_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_A}} \int \frac{d^3k'_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_B}} \\ &\quad \times \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) \phi_A(\vec{k}'_A)^* \phi_B(\vec{k}'_B)^* e^{i\vec{b} \cdot (\vec{k}'_B - \vec{k}_B)} \\ &\quad \times (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k'_A + k'_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \\ &\quad \times \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}'_A, \vec{k}'_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right)^* \end{aligned}$$

Now we omit the final state integral and integrate over the impact parameter \vec{b} to write the differential cross section as

$$\begin{aligned} d\sigma &= \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \frac{d^3p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \int d^2b \int \frac{d^3k_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_A}} \int \frac{d^3k_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_B}} \int \frac{d^3k'_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_A}} \int \frac{d^3k'_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_B}} \\ &\quad \times \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) \phi_A(\vec{k}'_A)^* \phi_B(\vec{k}'_B)^* e^{i\vec{b} \cdot (\vec{k}'_B - \vec{k}_B)} \\ &\quad \times (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k'_A + k'_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \\ &\quad \times \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}'_A, \vec{k}'_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right)^* \end{aligned}$$

We can now perform the integral over the impact parameter to get

$$\begin{aligned} d\sigma &= \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \frac{d^3p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \int \frac{d^3k_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_A}} \int \frac{d^3k_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega_B}} \int \frac{d^3k'_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_A}} \int \frac{d^3k'_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_B}} \\ &\quad \times \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) \phi_A(\vec{k}'_A)^* \phi_B(\vec{k}'_B)^* (2\pi)^2 \delta^{(2)} \left(\vec{k}'_{B\perp} - \vec{k}_{B\perp} \right) \\ &\quad \times (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k'_A + k'_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \\ &\quad \times \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}'_A, \vec{k}'_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right)^* \end{aligned}$$

where \perp denotes the components x, y perpendicular to the direction z of the collision. Now the δ -functions enforce the following identities between the A, B four vectors:

$$\begin{aligned}\vec{k}_A + \vec{k}_B &= \vec{k}'_A + \vec{k}'_B \\ \vec{k}_{B\perp} &= \vec{k}'_{B\perp} \\ \sqrt{\vec{k}_A^2 + m_A^2} + \sqrt{\vec{k}_B^2 + m_B^2} &= \sqrt{\vec{k}'_A{}^2 + m_A^2} + \sqrt{\vec{k}'_B{}^2 + m_B^2}\end{aligned}$$

The first two relations together enforce

$$\vec{k}_{A\perp} = \vec{k}'_{A\perp} \quad \vec{k}_{B\perp} = \vec{k}'_{B\perp}$$

while the equations for the z components are

$$\begin{aligned}k_A^z + k_B^z &= k_A'^z + k_B'^z \\ \omega_A + \omega_B &= \sqrt{(k_A'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{A\perp}^2 + m_A^2} + \sqrt{(k_B'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{B\perp}^2 + m_B^2}\end{aligned}$$

which enforces

$$k_A'^z = k_A^z \quad k_B'^z = k_B^z$$

So the result of the k' integration is

$$\begin{aligned}& \int \frac{d^3 k'_A}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_A}} \int \frac{d^3 k'_B}{(2\pi)^3 \sqrt{2\omega'_B}} (2\pi)^2 \delta^{(2)}(\vec{k}'_{B\perp} - \vec{k}_{B\perp}) (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)}(k'_A + k'_B - k_A - k_B) (\dots) \\ &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\omega_A}} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\omega_B}} \int dk_A'^z \delta\left(\sqrt{(k_A'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{A\perp}^2 + m_A^2} + \sqrt{(k_B'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{B\perp}^2 + m_B^2} - \omega_A - \omega_B\right) \Big|_{k_B'^z = k_A^z + k_B^z - k_A'^z} \\ & \quad (\dots) \Big|_{\vec{k}_{A,B} = \vec{k}'_{A,B}} \\ &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\omega_A}} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\omega_B}} \frac{1}{\left|\frac{k_A^z}{\omega_A} - \frac{k_B^z}{\omega_B}\right|} (\dots) \Big|_{\vec{k}_{A,B} = \vec{k}'_{A,B}}\end{aligned}$$

where we used the rule

$$\delta(f(x)) = \frac{1}{|f'(a)|} \delta(x - a)$$

when the function $f(x)$ has a single zero at $x = a$, and the result

$$\begin{aligned}& \frac{\partial}{\partial k_A'^z} \left(\sqrt{(k_A'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{A\perp}^2 + m_A^2} + \sqrt{(k_B'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{B\perp}^2 + m_B^2} - \omega_A - \omega_B \right) \Big|_{k_B'^z = k_A^z + k_B^z - k_A'^z} \\ &= \frac{k_A^z}{\sqrt{(k_A'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{A\perp}^2 + m_A^2}} - \frac{k_B^z}{\sqrt{(k_B'^z)^2 + \vec{k}_{B\perp}^2 + m_B^2}}\end{aligned}$$

which is just equal to

$$\frac{k_A^z}{\omega_A} - \frac{k_B^z}{\omega_B}$$

once we use that $\vec{k}_A = \vec{k}'_A$ and $\vec{k}_B = \vec{k}'_B$. Now note that

$$\frac{k_A^z}{\omega_A} - \frac{k_B^z}{\omega_B} = v_A - v_B$$

where v_A and v_B are the velocities of the particles A and B in the direction of the scattering axis z .

So the result is

$$d\sigma = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \int \frac{d^3 k_A}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_A} \int \frac{d^3 k_B}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_B} \frac{1}{|v_A - v_B|} \left| \phi_A(\vec{k}_A) \right|^2 \left| \phi_B(\vec{k}_B) \right|^2 \\ (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \left| \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \right|^2$$

Now we assume that the wave packets $\phi_{A,B}$ are very narrow (i.e. the incoming particles have a sharply defined value of momentum) and that the amplitude \mathcal{M} varies slowly enough so that it can be taken constant on their support. Then we can write

$$d\sigma = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \frac{1}{2\omega_A} \frac{1}{2\omega_B} \frac{1}{|v_A - v_B|} (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \left| \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \right|^2$$

which is our main result.

1.2 Lorentz properties of the cross section

All the ingredients of $d\sigma$ are Lorentz invariant with the exception of the factor

$$\frac{1}{\omega_A \omega_B |v_A - v_B|} = \frac{1}{|k_A^z \omega_B - k_B^z \omega_A|}$$

This should transform as area element in the xy plane. Let us check this explicitly. Lorentz transformations consist of rotations and boosts in three principal directions x , y and z . Let us go through each of these one by one.

1. Rotations around z axis do not change neither the z component of momentum, nor the energy, so this is invariant. This is right since rotation leaves an area element perpendicular to the axis invariant.
2. Boosts in direction z with velocity u (in units of $c = 1$) result in

$$\omega' = \gamma(\omega - uk^z) \\ k'^z = \gamma(k^z - u\omega) \quad \gamma = (1 - u^2)^{-1/2}$$

So we get

$$|k_A^z \omega_B - k_B^z \omega_A| \rightarrow \gamma^2 |(k_A^z - u\omega_A)(\omega_B - uk_B^z) - (k_B^z - u\omega_B)(\omega_A - uk_A^z)| = |k_A^z \omega_B - k_B^z \omega_A|$$

which is correct as area elements perpendicular to the boost direction do not undergo Lorentz contraction.

3. Boosts in direction x with velocity u (in units of $c = 1$) result in

$$\omega' = \gamma(\omega - uk^x) \\ k'^x = \gamma(k^x - u\omega) \quad \gamma = (1 - u^2)^{-1/2}$$

Now since the particles move in direction z , k^x is zero, so we get

$$|k_A^z \omega_B - k_B^z \omega_A| \rightarrow \gamma |k_A^z \omega_B - k_B^z \omega_A|$$

so

$$d\sigma \rightarrow \frac{1}{\gamma} d\sigma = \sqrt{1 - u^2} d\sigma$$

This is just the result of Lorentz contraction in direction x .

The calculation for a boost in direction y is similar, and leads to the same result.

4. Rotation around x or y axis does not change the energy, but changes the direction of the momentum. Since the original x and y components are zero, the z components of the momentum picks up a factor $\cos \alpha$ where α is the rotation angle, so we get

$$d\sigma \rightarrow \frac{d\sigma}{\cos \alpha}$$

This is exactly the correct way for the transformation of a cross sectional area element under rotation.

1.3 $2 \rightarrow 2$ processes

For the special case of a two-particle scattering process of two particles of masses m_A and m_B to two other particles with masses m_1 and m_2 we have the conservation equations

$$\begin{aligned} \vec{k}_A + \vec{k}_B &= \vec{p}_1 + \vec{p}_2 \\ E_A + E_B &= E_1 + E_2 \end{aligned}$$

and the differential cross section is

$$d\sigma = \frac{d^3 p_1}{(2\pi)^3 2E_1} \frac{d^3 p_2}{(2\pi)^3 2E_2} \frac{1}{2E_A} \frac{1}{2E_B} \frac{1}{|v_A - v_B|} (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)}(k_A + k_B - p_1 - p_2) \left| \mathcal{M} \left(\{\vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B\} \rightarrow \{\vec{p}_1, \vec{p}_2\} \right) \right|^2$$

Note that we have 6 differentials, but also 4 Dirac deltas, which means that we can fix four of the differential variables (i.e. integrate them out). It is simplest to do this in the center-of-mass (or zero-momentum frame, in which $\vec{k}_A + \vec{k}_B = 0$ which means that the spatial part of $\delta^{(4)}$ enforces $\vec{p}_2 = -\vec{p}_1$. This allows us to integrate over \vec{p}_2 to obtain

$$d\sigma = \frac{d^3 p_1}{(2\pi)^3 2E_1} \frac{1}{2E_2} \frac{1}{2E_A} \frac{1}{2E_B} \frac{1}{|v_A - v_B|} 2\pi \delta(E_{CM} - E_1 - E_2) |\mathcal{M}|^2$$

where

$$E_{CM} = E_A + E_B$$

is the center-of-mass total energy. Now the last δ fixes $p_1 = |\vec{p}_1|$ since it means that

$$E_{CM} - \sqrt{p_1^2 + m_1^2} - \sqrt{p_1^2 + m_2^2} = 0$$

To use this we write $d^3 p_1 = p_1^2 dp_1 d\Omega$ where Ω is the solid angle parameterising of the direction of the outgoing particle A . The derivative of the Dirac delta argument with respect to p_1 is

$$- \left(\frac{p_1}{E_1} + \frac{p_1}{E_2} \right)$$

so after integration we are left by

$$\begin{aligned} d\sigma &= \frac{p_1^2 d\Omega}{4\pi^2} \frac{1}{2E_1} \frac{1}{2E_2} \frac{1}{2E_A} \frac{1}{2E_B} \frac{1}{|v_A - v_B|} \frac{1}{\frac{p_1}{E_1} + \frac{p_1}{E_2}} |\mathcal{M}|^2 \\ &= d\Omega \frac{1}{2E_A} \frac{1}{2E_B} \frac{1}{|v_A - v_B|} \frac{|\vec{p}_1|}{16\pi^2(E_1 + E_2)} \end{aligned}$$

What is all the masses are equal $m_A = m_B = m_1 = m_2 = m$. This leads to $|\vec{k}_A| = |\vec{k}_B| = |\vec{p}_1| = |\vec{p}_2|$ and so $E_A = E_B = E_1 = E_2 = E_{CM}/2$. In addition

$$v_A - v_B = \frac{k_A^z}{E_A} - \frac{k_B^z}{E_B} = 2 \frac{k_A^z}{E_A} = 2 \frac{|\vec{p}_1|}{E_{CM}/2} = 4 \frac{|\vec{p}_1|}{E_{CM}}$$

so we get

$$\left(\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} \right)_{CM} = \frac{|\mathcal{M}|^2}{64\pi^2 E_{CM}^2}$$

In our scalar example we had $\mathcal{M} = \lambda + O(\lambda^2)$, so the differential cross section to first order is

$$\left(\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} \right)_{CM} = \frac{\lambda^2}{64\pi^2 E_{CM}^2}$$

Note that

$$E_{CM}^2 = (p_1 + p_2)^2$$

where the square denotes the Lorentz “norm”. The Mandelstam variable

$$s = (p_1 + p_2)^2$$

provides a Lorentz-invariant expression for the center-of-mass energy (squared).

The total cross section can be obtained by

$$\sigma = \frac{1}{2} \int d\Omega \left(\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} \right)_{CM} = \frac{\lambda^2}{32\pi s}$$

where the factor 1/2 takes into account that there are two identical particles in the end state and we cannot distinguish which one was emitted in the given angular direction over which we integrate.

2 The decay rate

If there is only a single particle in the initial state, the process describes the decay. As discussed in the class, the proper way of obtaining the decay rate Γ is via the construction of the relativistic Breit-Wigner distribution of the unstable (resonant) excitation, but the end result can be easily guessed modifying the formula for $d\sigma$ by eliminating one of the incoming particles. The result is

$$d\Gamma = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \frac{1}{2\omega_A} (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \left| \mathcal{M} \left(\{k_A\} \rightarrow \{\vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n\} \right) \right|^2$$

The total decay rate can be obtained by integrating over all the final states. Note that the decay rate Γ_0 in the rest frame is obtained by substituting ω_A by the mass m_A , therefore

$$\Gamma = \frac{m_A}{\omega_A} \Gamma_0$$

Since the decay rate is related to the lifetime τ by $\Gamma = 1/\tau$, we obtain

$$\tau = \frac{\omega_A}{m_A} \tau_0$$

where

$$\frac{\omega_A}{m_A} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - u_A^2}}$$

with u_A being the velocity of particle A in $c = 1$ units. This is just the correct formula for relativistic time dilation, thus supporting our guess. In fact, the formula for the decay rate can be proven rigorously using the so-called optical theorem (cf. Section 7.3 in Peskin-Schroeder).

3 Some dimensional analysis

The dimensions (in units of energy) of a momentum Dirac delta can be obtained from

$$\int d^3p \delta^{(3)}(\vec{p}) = 1$$

Since $[d^3p] = 3$ we get $[\delta^{(3)}(\vec{p})] = -3$. Now our states have inner products

$$\langle \vec{p}' | \vec{p} \rangle = 2\omega_{\vec{p}} \delta^{(3)}(\vec{p} - \vec{p}')$$

The left hand side has dimension -2, so a one-particle state has dimension -1. Therefore, the dimensionality of a multi-particle state is given by

$$[|\vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n\rangle] = -n$$

Now the S -matrix is dimensionless since it is a (time-ordered) exponential of the time-integrated Hamiltonian density, and so is \mathbb{T} . Therefore, using

$$\langle \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n | \mathbb{T} | \vec{k}_1, \dots, \vec{k}_m \rangle = -\mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_1, \dots, \vec{k}_m \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(\sum_{j=1}^m \vec{k}_j - \sum_{i=1}^n \vec{p}_i \right)$$

we obtain that

$$\left[\mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_1, \dots, \vec{k}_m \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \right] = -n - m + 4$$

Let us check the dimensionality of the cross section

$$d\sigma = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \frac{d^3p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \frac{1}{2\omega_A} \frac{1}{2\omega_B} \frac{1}{|v_A - v_B|} (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A + k_B - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \left| \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A, \vec{k}_B \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \right|^2$$

We obtain that this is

$$[d\sigma] = n(3 - 1) - 2 - 4 + 2(4 - n - 2) = -2$$

which is just right for an area.

For the decay rate

$$d\Gamma = \prod_{i=1}^n \left\{ \frac{d^3 p_i}{(2\pi)^3 2\omega_i} \right\} \frac{1}{2\omega_A} (2\pi)^4 \delta^{(4)} \left(k_A - \sum_{i=1}^n p_i \right) \left| \mathcal{M} \left(\{ \vec{k}_A \} \rightarrow \{ \vec{p}_1, \dots, \vec{p}_n \} \right) \right|^2$$

we get

$$[d\Gamma] = n(3 - 1) - 1 - 4 + 2(4 - n - 1) = 1$$

which is correct since it must have the same units as energy (being inversely proportional to time).