Michaelmas Term 2023

Number Theory: Example Sheet 1 of 4

1. Calculate $d = (a, b)$ and find integers r and s such that $ra + sb = d$ when

   (i) $a = 841$, $b = 160$;

   (ii) $a = 2613$, $b = 2171$.

2. Let a and b be integers with $a > b > 1$. Let $\lambda(a, b)$ denote the number of individual applications of the division algorithm required by Euclid's algorithm to compute the greatest common divisor of a and b.

   (i) Find a pair of four-digit numbers a and b for which $\lambda(a, b)$ is very small.

   (ii) Find a pair of four-digit numbers a and b for which $\lambda(a, b)$ is large.

   (iii) Find constants c and d such that $\lambda(a, b) \leqslant c \log b + d$.

3. This question is about Diophantine equations of the form $ax + by = c$, where a, b and c are fixed positive integers, and we are interested in integer solutions (x, y). Where possible, give an example of such an equation that has

   (i) no solutions;

   (ii) exactly one solution;

   (iii) infinitely many solutions;

   and briefly justify your answers.

4. Let x be an integer greater than 1. Use the Fundamental Theorem of Arithmetic to show that
$$x \leqslant \left(1 + \frac{\log x}{\log 2}\right)^{\pi(x)}.$$
   Deduce that when $x \geqslant 8$ we have $\pi(x) \geqslant \frac{\log x}{2 \log \log x}$.

5. Let a and n be integers greater than 1. Prove that if $a^n - 1$ is prime, then $a = 2$ and n is prime. Is the converse true?

6. Let q be an odd prime. Prove that every prime factor of $2^q - 1$ must be congruent to 1 mod q, and also congruent to ± 1 mod 8. Use this to factor $2^{11} - 1 = 2047$.

7. We say that a positive integer n is *perfect* if the sum of all the positive divisors of n is equal to $2n$. Prove that a positive even integer n is perfect if and only if it can be written in the form $n = 2^{q-1}(2^q - 1)$, where $2^q - 1$ is prime.

   (It is conjectured that there are no odd perfect numbers, but this is as yet unknown.)

8. By considering numbers of the form $n = (2^2 \cdot 3 \cdot 5 \cdots p) - 1$, prove that there are infinitely many primes congruent to 3 mod 4.

9. Find the smallest non-negative integer x satisfying the congruences $x \equiv 2 \pmod 3$, $x \equiv 3 \pmod 5$, $x \equiv 4 \pmod{11}$, $x \equiv 5 \pmod{16}$.

10. Find all integers x satisfying both $19x \equiv 103 \pmod{900}$ and $10x \equiv 511 \pmod{841}$.

11. A positive integer is said to be *square-free* if it is the product of distinct primes. (So, for example, 174 is square-free but 175 is not.) Are there 100 consecutive numbers that are *not* square-free?

12. Prove that the classes of both 2 and 3 generate $(\mathbb{Z}/5^n\mathbb{Z})^\times$ for all positive integers n. For each of the primes $p = 11$, 13, 17 and 19, find a generator of $(\mathbb{Z}/p^n\mathbb{Z})^\times$ for all $n \geqslant 1$.

13. Let A be the group $(\mathbb{Z}/65520\mathbb{Z})^\times$. Determine the least positive integer n such that $g^n = 1$ for all g in A.

14. Let a and n be integers greater than 1, and put $N = a^n - 1$. Show that the order of $a + N\mathbb{Z}$ in $(\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z})^\times$ is exactly n, and deduce that n divides $\phi(N)$. If n is a prime, deduce that there are infinitely many primes q such that $q \equiv 1 \pmod n$.