

Problem 1

A partially ordered set I is said to be a *directed set* if for each pair i, j in I there exists $k \in I$ such that $i \leq k$ and $j \leq k$.

Let A be a ring, let I be a directed set and let $(M_i)_{i \in I}$ be a family of A -modules indexed by I . For each pair i, j in I such that $i \leq j$, let $\mu_{ij} : M_i \rightarrow M_j$ be an A -homomorphism, and suppose that the following axioms are satisfied:

1. μ_{ii} is the identity mapping of M_i for all $i \in I$.
2. $\mu_{ik} = \mu_{jk} \circ \mu_{ij}$ whenever $i \leq j \leq k$.

Then the modules M_i and homomorphisms μ_{ij} are said to form a *direct system* $\mathbf{M} = (M_i, \mu_{ij})$ over the directed set I .

We shall construct an A -module M called the *direct limit* of the direct system \mathbf{M} . Let C be the direct sum of the M_i , and identify each module M_i with its canonical image in C . Let D be the submodule of C generated by all elements of the form $x_i - \mu_{ij}(x_i)$ where $i \leq j$ and $x_i \in M_i$. Let $M = C/D$, let $\mu : C \rightarrow M$ be the projection and let μ_i be the restriction of μ to M_i .

The module M , or more correctly the pair consisting of M and the family of homomorphisms $\mu_i : M_i \rightarrow M$ is called the *direct limit* of the direct system \mathbf{M} , and is written $\varinjlim M_i$. From the construction it is clear that $\mu_i = \mu_j \circ \mu_{ij}$ whenever $i \leq j$.

Problem 2

In the situation of Exercise 14, show that every element of M can be written in the form $\mu_i(x_i)$ for some $i \in I$ and some $x_i \in M_i$.

Show also that if $\mu_i(x_i) = 0$ then there exists $j \geq i$ such that $\mu_{ij}(x_i) = 0$ in M_j .

Problem 3

Show that the direct limit is characterized (up to isomorphism) by the following property. Let N be an A -module and for each $i \in I$ let $\alpha_i : M_i \rightarrow N$ be an A -module homomorphism such that $\alpha_i = \alpha_j \circ \mu_{ij}$ whenever $i \leq j$. Then there exists a unique homomorphism $\alpha : M \rightarrow N$ such that $\alpha_i = \alpha \circ \mu_i$ for all $i \in I$.