

torsion-free modules over principal rings

For an entire ring A and an A -module M , let

$$M_{\text{tor}} = \{m \in M : am = 0 \text{ for some } a \in A - \{0\}\}$$

be the torsion submodule of M . We say M is torsion-free if $M_{\text{tor}} = 0$.

Theorem

Suppose that A is a principal entire ring, and M be a finitely generated module over A . If M is torsion-free, then M is free.

Note that any free module over A is torsion-free.

proof

Choose a finite set of generators y_1, \dots, y_n for M as an A -module.

Let v_1, \dots, v_m be a maximal linearly independent subset of $\{y_1, \dots, y_n\}$.

Then, by maximality, for each y_i one has

$$a_i y_i + b_1 v_1 + b_2 v_2 + \dots + b_m v_m = 0$$

for some $a_i \neq 0$. This means $a_i y_i \in \sum_{j=1}^m A v_j$. Taking $a = a_1 \cdots a_n$, one obtains $a y_i \in \sum_{j=1}^m A v_j$ for all i . One gets a map

$$M \rightarrow aM \subset \sum_{j=1}^m A v_j$$

$$m \mapsto am$$

which is injective since M is torsion-free. On the other hand, the linear independence of v_1, \dots, v_m implies that the sum is in fact a direct sum. M is isomorphic to a submodule of a free module of rank m , so it is free as well.

Question

Show that \mathbb{Q} is not free over \mathbb{Z} , showing that the finite generation is necessary.