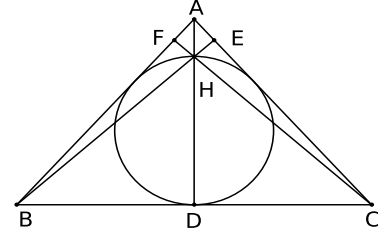


## INMO-2016 problems and solutions

1. Let  $ABC$  be triangle in which  $AB = AC$ . Suppose the orthocentre of the triangle lies on the in-circle. Find the ratio  $AB/BC$ .

**Solution:** Since the triangle is isosceles, the orthocentre lies on the perpendicular  $AD$  from  $A$  on to  $BC$ . Let it cut the in-circle at  $H$ . Now we are given that  $H$  is the orthocentre of the triangle. Let  $AB = AC = b$  and  $BC = 2a$ . Then  $BD = a$ . Observe that  $b > a$  since  $b$  is the hypotenuse and  $a$  is a leg of a right-angled triangle. Let  $BH$  meet  $AC$  in  $E$  and  $CH$  meet  $AB$  in  $F$ . By Pythagoras theorem applied to  $\triangle BDH$ , we get



$$BH^2 = HD^2 + BD^2 = 4r^2 + a^2,$$

where  $r$  is the in-radius of  $ABC$ . We want to compute  $BH$  in another way. Since  $A, F, H, E$  are con-cyclic, we have

$$BH \cdot BE = BF \cdot BA.$$

But  $BF \cdot BA = BD \cdot BC = 2a^2$ , since  $A, F, D, C$  are con-cyclic. Hence  $BH^2 = 4a^4/BE^2$ . But

$$BE^2 = 4a^2 - CE^2 = 4a^2 - BF^2 = 4a^2 - \left(\frac{2a^2}{b}\right)^2 = \frac{4a^2(b^2 - a^2)}{b^2}.$$

This leads to

$$BH^2 = \frac{a^2b^2}{b^2 - a^2}.$$

Thus we get

$$\frac{a^2b^2}{b^2 - a^2} = a^2 + 4r^2.$$

This simplifies to  $(a^4/(b^2 - a^2)) = 4r^2$ . Now we relate  $a, b, r$  in another way using area. We know that  $[ABC] = rs$ , where  $s$  is the semi-perimeter of  $ABC$ . We have  $s = (b + b + 2a)/2 = b + a$ . On the other hand area can be calculated using Heron's formula::

$$[ABC]^2 = s(s - 2a)(s - b)(s - b) = (b + a)(b - a)a^2 = a^2(b^2 - a^2).$$

Hence

$$r^2 = \frac{[ABC]^2}{s^2} = \frac{a^2(b^2 - a^2)}{(b + a)^2}.$$

Using this we get

$$\frac{a^4}{b^2 - a^2} = 4 \left( \frac{a^2(b^2 - a^2)}{(b + a)^2} \right).$$

Therefore  $a^2 = 4(b - a)^2$ , which gives  $a = 2(b - a)$  or  $2b = 3a$ . Finally,

$$\frac{AB}{BC} = \frac{b}{2a} = \frac{3}{4}.$$

**Alternate Solution 1:**

We use the known facts  $BH = 2R \cos B$  and  $r = 4R \sin(A/2) \sin(B/2) \sin(C/2)$ , where  $R$  is the circumradius of  $\triangle ABC$  and  $r$  its in-radius. Therefore

$$HD = BH \sin \angle HBD = 2R \cos B \sin \left( \frac{\pi}{2} - C \right) = 2R \cos^2 B,$$

since  $\angle C = \angle B$ . But  $\angle B = (\pi - \angle A)/2$ , since  $ABC$  is isosceles. Thus we obtain

$$HD = 2R \cos^2 \left( \frac{\pi}{2} - \frac{A}{2} \right).$$

However  $HD$  is also the diameter of the in circle. Therefore  $HD = 2r$ . Thus we get

$$2R \cos^2 \left( \frac{\pi}{2} - \frac{A}{2} \right) = 2r = 8R \sin(A/2) \sin^2((\pi - A)/4).$$

This reduces to

$$\sin(A/2) = 2(1 - \sin(A/2)).$$

Therefore  $\sin(A/2) = 2/3$ . We also observe that  $\sin(A/2) = BD/AB$ . Finally

$$\frac{AB}{BC} = \frac{AB}{2BD} = \frac{1}{2 \sin(A/2)} = \frac{3}{4}.$$

**Alternate Solution 2:**

Let  $D$  be the mid-point of  $BC$ . Extend  $AD$  to meet the circumcircle in  $L$ . Then we know that  $HD = DL$ . But  $HD = 2r$ . Thus  $DL = 2r$ . Therefore  $IL = ID + DL = r + 2r = 3r$ . We also know that  $LB = LI$ . Therefore  $LB = 3r$ . This gives

$$\frac{BL}{LD} = \frac{3r}{2r} = \frac{3}{2}.$$

But  $\triangle BLD$  is similar to  $\triangle ABD$ . So

$$\frac{AB}{BD} = \frac{BL}{LD} = \frac{3}{2}.$$

Finally,

$$\frac{AB}{BC} = \frac{AB}{2BD} = \frac{3}{4}.$$

**Alternate Solution 3:**

Let  $D$  be the mid-point of  $BC$  and  $E$  be the mid-point of  $DC$ . Since  $DI = IH (= r)$  and  $DE = EC$ , the mid-point theorem implies that  $IE \parallel CH$ . But  $CH \perp AB$ . Therefore  $EI \perp AB$ . Let  $EI$  meet  $AB$  in  $F$ . Then  $F$  is the point of tangency of the incircle of  $\triangle ABC$  with  $AB$ . Since the incircle is also tangent to  $BC$  at  $D$ , we have  $BF = BD$ . Observe that  $\triangle BFE$  is similar to  $\triangle BDA$ . Hence

$$\frac{AB}{BD} = \frac{BE}{BF} = \frac{BE}{BD} = \frac{BD + DE}{BD} = 1 + \frac{DE}{BD} = \frac{3}{2}.$$

This gives

$$\frac{AB}{BC} = \frac{3}{4}.$$

2. For positive real numbers  $a, b, c$ , which of the following statements necessarily implies  $a = b = c$ : (I)  $a(b^3 + c^3) = b(c^3 + a^3) = c(a^3 + b^3)$ , (II)  $a(a^3 + b^3) = b(b^3 + c^3) = c(c^3 + a^3)$ ? Justify your answer.

**Solution:** We show that (I) need not imply that  $a = b = c$  where as (II) always implies  $a = b = c$ .

Observe that  $a(b^3 + c^3) = b(c^3 + a^3)$  gives  $c^3(a - b) = ab(a^2 - b^2)$ . This gives either  $a = b$  or  $ab(a + b) = c^3$ . Similarly,  $b = c$  or  $bc(b + c) = a^3$ . If  $a \neq b$  and  $b \neq c$ , we obtain

$$ab(a + b) = c^3, \quad bc(b + c) = a^3.$$

Therefore

$$b(a^2 - c^2) + b^2(a - c) = c^3 - a^3.$$

This gives  $(a - c)(a^2 + b^2 + c^2 + ab + bc + ca) = 0$ . Since  $a, b, c$  are positive, the only possibility is  $a = c$ . We have therefore 4 possibilities:  $a = b = c$ ;  $a \neq b, b \neq c$  and  $c = a$ ;  $b \neq c, c \neq a$  and  $a = b$ ;  $c \neq a, a \neq b$  and  $b = c$ .

Suppose  $a = b$  and  $b, a \neq c$ . Then  $b(c^3 + a^3) = c(a^3 + b^3)$  gives  $ac^3 + a^4 = 2ca^3$ . This implies that  $a(a - c)(a^2 - ac - c^2) = 0$ . Therefore  $a^2 - ac - c^2 = 0$ . Putting  $a/c = x$ , we get the quadratic equation  $x^2 - x - 1 = 0$ . Hence  $x = (1 + \sqrt{5})/2$ . Thus we get

$$a = b = \left( \frac{1 + \sqrt{5}}{2} \right) c, \quad c \text{ arbitrary positive real number.}$$

Similarly, we get other two cases:

$$b = c = \left( \frac{1 + \sqrt{5}}{2} \right) a, \quad a \text{ arbitrary positive real number;}$$

$$c = a = \left( \frac{1 + \sqrt{5}}{2} \right) b, \quad b \text{ arbitrary positive real number.}$$

And  $a = b = c$  is the fourth possibility.

Consider (II):  $a(a^3 + b^3) = b(b^3 + c^3) = c(c^3 + a^3)$ . Suppose  $a, b, c$  are mutually distinct. We may assume  $a = \max\{a, b, c\}$ . Hence  $a > b$  and  $a > c$ . Using  $a > b$ , we get from the first relation that  $a^3 + b^3 < b^3 + c^3$ . Therefore  $a^3 < c^3$  forcing  $a < c$ . This contradicts  $a > c$ . We conclude that  $a, b, c$  cannot be mutually distinct. This means some two must be equal. If  $a = b$ , the equality of the first two expressions give  $a^3 + b^3 = b^3 + c^3$  so that  $a = c$ . Similarly, we can show that  $b = c$  implies  $b = a$  and  $c = a$  gives  $c = b$ .

**Alternate for (II) by a contestant:** We can write

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{a^3}{c} + \frac{b^3}{c} &= \frac{c^3}{a} + a^2, \\ \frac{b^3}{a} + \frac{c^3}{a} &= \frac{a^3}{b} + b^2, \\ \frac{c^3}{b} + \frac{a^3}{b} &= \frac{b^3}{c} + c^2. \end{aligned}$$

Adding, we get

$$\frac{a^3}{c} + \frac{b^3}{a} + \frac{c^3}{b} = a^2 + b^2 + c^2.$$

Using C-S inequality, we have

$$\begin{aligned}(a^2 + b^2 + c^2)^2 &= \left( \frac{\sqrt{a^3}}{\sqrt{c}} \cdot \sqrt{ac} + \frac{\sqrt{b^3}}{\sqrt{a}} \cdot \sqrt{ba} + \frac{\sqrt{c^3}}{\sqrt{b}} \cdot \sqrt{cb} \right)^2 \\ &\leq \left( \frac{a^3}{c} + \frac{b^3}{a} + \frac{c^3}{b} \right) (ac + ba + cb) \\ &= (a^2 + b^2 + c^2)(ab + bc + ca).\end{aligned}$$

Thus we obtain

$$a^2 + b^2 + c^2 \leq ab + bc + ca.$$

However this implies  $(a - b)^2 + (b - c)^2 + (c - a)^2 \leq 0$  and hence  $a = b = c$ .

3. Let  $\mathbb{N}$  denote the set of all natural numbers. Define a function  $T : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  by  $T(2k) = k$  and  $T(2k + 1) = 2k + 2$ . We write  $T^2(n) = T(T(n))$  and in general  $T^k(n) = T^{k-1}(T(n))$  for any  $k > 1$ .

(i) Show that for each  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , there exists  $k$  such that  $T^k(n) = 1$ .

(ii) For  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ , let  $c_k$  denote the number of elements in the set  $\{n : T^k(n) = 1\}$ . Prove that  $c_{k+2} = c_{k+1} + c_k$ , for  $k \geq 1$ .

**Solution:**

(i) For  $n = 1$ , we have  $T(1) = 2$  and  $T^2(1) = T(2) = 1$ . Hence we may assume that  $n > 1$ .

Suppose  $n > 1$  is even. Then  $T(n) = n/2$ . We observe that  $(n/2) \leq n - 1$  for  $n > 1$ .

Suppose  $n > 1$  is odd so that  $n \geq 3$ . Then  $T(n) = n + 1$  and  $T^2(n) = (n + 1)/2$ . Again we see that  $(n + 1)/2 \leq (n - 1)$  for  $n \geq 3$ .

Thus we see that in at most  $2(n - 1)$  steps  $T$  sends  $n$  to 1. Hence  $k \leq 2(n - 1)$ . (Here  $2(n - 1)$  is only a bound. In reality, less number of steps will do.)

(ii) We show that  $c_n = f_{n+1}$ , where  $f_n$  is the  $n$ -th Fibonacci number.

Let  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  and let  $k \in \mathbb{N}$  be such that  $T^k(n) = 1$ . Here  $n$  can be odd or even. If  $n$  is even, it can be either of the form  $4d + 2$  or of the form  $4d$ .

If  $n$  is odd, then  $1 = T^k(n) = T^{k-1}(n + 1)$ . (Observe that  $k > 1$ ; otherwise we get  $n + 1 = 1$  which is impossible since  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ .) Here  $n + 1$  is even.

If  $n = 4d + 2$ , then again  $1 = T^k(4d + 2) = T^{k-1}(2d + 1)$ . Here  $2d + 1 = n/2$  is odd.

Thus each solution of  $T^{k-1}(m) = 1$  produces exactly one solution of  $T^k(n) = 1$  and  $n$  is either odd or of the form  $4d + 2$ .

If  $n = 4d$ , we see that  $1 = T^k(4d) = T^{k-1}(2d) = T^{k-2}(d)$ . This shows that each solution of  $T^{k-2}(m) = 1$  produces exactly one solution of  $T^k(n) = 1$  of the form  $4d$ .

Thus the number of solutions of  $T^k(n) = 1$  is equal to the number of solutions of  $T^{k-1}(m) = 1$  and the number of solutions of  $T^{k-2}(l) = 1$  for  $k > 2$ . This shows that  $c_k = c_{k-1} + c_{k-2}$  for  $k > 2$ . We also observe that 2 is the only number which goes to 1 in one step and 4 is the only number which goes to 1 in two steps. Hence  $c_1 = 1$  and  $c_2 = 2$ . This proves that  $c_n = f_{n+1}$  for all  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ .

4. Suppose 2016 points of the circumference of a circle are coloured red and the remaining points are coloured blue. Given any natural number  $n \geq 3$ , prove that there is a regular  $n$ -sided polygon all of whose vertices are blue.

**Solution:** Let  $A_1, A_2, \dots, A_{2016}$  be 2016 points on the circle which are coloured *red* and the remain-

ing blue. Let  $n \geq 3$  and let  $B_1, B_2, \dots, B_n$  be a regular  $n$ -sided polygon inscribed in this circle with the vertices chosen in anti-clock-wise direction. We place  $B_1$  at  $A_1$ . (It is possible, in this position, some other  $B$ 's also coincide with some other  $A$ 's.) Rotate the polygon in anti-clock-wise direction gradually till some  $B$ 's coincide with (an equal number of)  $A$ 's second time. We again rotate the polygon in the same direction till some  $B$ 's coincide with an equal number of  $A$ 's third time, and so on until we return to the original position, i.e.,  $B_1$  at  $A_1$ . We see that the number of rotations will not be more than  $2016 \times n$ , that is, at most these many times some  $B$ 's would have coincided with an equal number of  $A$ 's. Since the interval  $(0, 360^\circ)$  has infinitely many points, we can find a value  $\alpha^\circ \in (0, 360^\circ)$  through which the polygon can be rotated from its initial position such that no  $B$  coincides with any  $A$ . This gives a  $n$ -sided regular polygon having only blue vertices.

**Alternate Solution:** Consider a regular  $2017 \times n$ -gon on the circle; say,  $A_1 A_2 A_3 \dots A_{2017n}$ . For each  $j$ ,  $1 \leq j \leq 2017$ , consider the points  $\{A_k : k \equiv j \pmod{2017}\}$ . These are the vertices of a regular  $n$ -gon, say  $S_j$ . We get 2017 regular  $n$ -gons;  $S_1, S_2, \dots, S_{2017}$ . Since there are only 2016 red points, by pigeon-hole principle there must be some  $n$ -gon among these 2017 which does not contain any red point. But then it is a blue  $n$ -gon.

5. Let  $ABC$  be a right-angled triangle with  $\angle B = 90^\circ$ . Let  $D$  be a point on  $AC$  such that the in-radii of the triangles  $ABD$  and  $CBD$  are equal. If this common value is  $r'$  and if  $r$  is the in-radius of triangle  $ABC$ , prove that

$$\frac{1}{r'} = \frac{1}{r} + \frac{1}{BD}.$$

**Solution:** Let  $E$  and  $F$  be the incentres of triangles  $ABD$  and  $CBD$  respectively. Let the incircles of triangles  $ABD$  and  $CBD$  touch  $AC$  in  $P$  and  $Q$  respectively. If  $\angle BDA = \theta$ , we see that

$$r' = PD \tan(\theta/2) = QD \cot(\theta/2).$$

Hence

$$PQ = PD + QD = r' \left( \cot \frac{\theta}{2} + \tan \frac{\theta}{2} \right) = \frac{2r'}{\sin \theta}.$$

But we observe that

$$DP = \frac{BD + DA - AB}{2}, \quad DQ = \frac{BD + DC - BC}{2}.$$

Thus  $PQ = (b - c - a + 2BD)/2$ . We also have

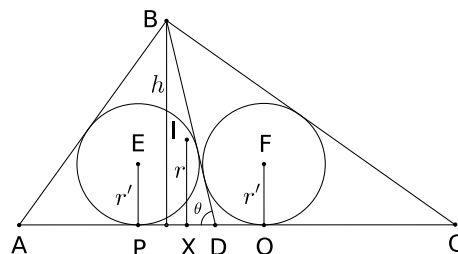
$$\begin{aligned} \frac{ac}{2} &= [ABC] = [ABD] + [CBD] = r' \frac{(AB + BD + DA)}{2} + r' \frac{(CB + BD + DC)}{2} \\ &= r' \frac{(c + a + b + 2BD)}{2} = r'(s + BD). \end{aligned}$$

But

$$r' = \frac{PQ \sin \theta}{2} = \frac{PQ \cdot h}{2BD},$$

where  $h$  is the altitude from  $B$  on to  $AC$ . But we know that  $h = ac/b$ . Thus we get

$$ac = 2 \times r'(s + BD) = 2 \times \frac{PQ \cdot h}{2 \times BD} (s + BD) = \frac{(b - c - a + 2BD)ca(s + BD)}{2 \times BD \times b}.$$



Thus we get

$$2 \times BD \times b = 2 \times (BD - (s - b))(s + BD).$$

This gives  $BD^2 = s(s - b)$ . Since  $ABC$  is a right-angled triangle  $r = s - b$ . Thus we get  $BD^2 = rs$ . On the other hand, we also have  $[ABC] = r'(s + BD)$ . Thus we get

$$rs = [ABC] = r'(s + BD).$$

Hence

$$\frac{1}{r'} = \frac{1}{r} + \frac{BD}{rs} = \frac{1}{r} + \frac{1}{BD}.$$

**Alternate Solution 1:** Observe that

$$\frac{r'}{r} = \frac{AP}{AX} = \frac{CQ}{CX} = \frac{AP + CQ}{AC},$$

where  $X$  is the point at which the incircle of  $ABC$  touches the side  $AC$ . If  $s_1$  and  $s_2$  are respectively the semi-perimeters of triangles  $ABD$  and  $CBD$ , we know  $AP = s_1 - BD$  and  $CQ = s_2 - BD$ . Therefore

$$\frac{r'}{r} = \frac{(s_1 - BD) + (s_2 - BD)}{AC} = \frac{s_1 + s_2 - 2BD}{b}.$$

But

$$s_1 + s_2 = \frac{AD + BD + c}{2} + \frac{CD + BD + a}{2} = \frac{(a + b + c) + 2BD}{2} = \frac{s + BD}{2}.$$

This gives

$$\frac{r'}{r} = \frac{s + BD - 2BD}{b} = \frac{s - BD}{b}.$$

We also have

$$r' = \frac{[ABD]}{s_1} = \frac{[CBD]}{s_2} = \frac{[ABD] + [CBD]}{s_1 + s_2} = \frac{[ABC]}{s + BD} = \frac{rs}{s + BD}.$$

This implies that

$$\frac{r'}{r} = \frac{s}{s + BD}.$$

Comparing the two expressions for  $r'/r$ , we see that

$$\frac{s - BD}{b} = \frac{s}{s + BD}.$$

Therefore  $s^2 - BD^2 = bs$ , or  $BD^2 = s(s - b)$ . Thus we get  $BD = \sqrt{s(s - b)}$ .

We know now that

$$\frac{r'}{r} = \frac{s}{s + BD} = \frac{s - BD}{b} = \frac{BD}{(s - b) + BD} = \frac{\sqrt{s(s - b)}}{(s - b) + \sqrt{s(s - b)}} = \frac{\sqrt{s}}{\sqrt{s - b} + \sqrt{s}}.$$

Therefore

$$\frac{r}{r'} = 1 + \sqrt{\frac{s - b}{s}}.$$

This gives

$$\frac{1}{r'} = \frac{1}{r} + \left( \sqrt{\frac{s - b}{s}} \right) \frac{1}{r}.$$

But

$$\left(\sqrt{\frac{s-b}{s}}\right) \frac{1}{r} = \left(\frac{s-b}{\sqrt{s(s-b)}}\right) \frac{1}{r} = \left(\frac{s-b}{BD}\right) \frac{1}{r}.$$

If  $\angle B = 90^\circ$ , we know that  $r = s - b$ . Therefore we get

$$\frac{1}{r'} = \frac{1}{r} + \left(\frac{s-b}{BD}\right) \frac{1}{r} = \frac{1}{r} + \frac{1}{BD}.$$

**Alternate Solution 2 by a contestant:** Observe that  $\angle EDF = 90^\circ$ . Hence  $\triangle EDP$  is similar to  $\triangle DFQ$ . Therefore  $DP \cdot DQ = EP \cdot FQ$ . Taking  $DP = y_1$  and  $DQ = x_1$ , we get  $x_1 y_1 = (r')^2$ . We also observe that  $BD = x_1 + x_2 = y_1 + y_2$ . Since  $\angle EBF = 45^\circ$ , we get

$$1 = \tan 45^\circ = \tan(\beta_1 + \beta_2) = \frac{\tan \beta_1 + \tan \beta_2}{1 - \tan \beta_1 \tan \beta_2}.$$

But  $\tan \beta_1 = r'/y_2$  and  $\tan \beta_2 = r'/x_2$ . Hence we obtain

$$1 = \frac{(r'/y_2) + (r'/x_2)}{1 - (r')^2/x_2 y_2}.$$

Solving for  $r'$ , we get

$$r' = \frac{x_2 y_2 - x_1 y_1}{x_2 + y_2}.$$

We also know

$$r = \frac{AB + BC - AC}{2} = \frac{x_2 + y_2 - (x_1 + y_1)}{2} = \frac{(x_2 - x_1) + (y_2 - y_1)}{2}.$$

Finally,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{r} + \frac{1}{BD} &= \frac{2}{(x_2 - x_1) + (y_2 - y_1)} + \frac{1}{x_1 + x_2} \\ &= \frac{2x_1 + 2x_2 + (x_2 - x_1) + (y_2 - y_1)}{(x_1 + x_2)((x_2 - x_1) + (y_2 - y_1))}. \end{aligned}$$

But we can write

$$2x_1 + 2x_2 + (x_2 - x_1) + (y_2 - y_1) = (x_1 + x_2 + x_2 - x_1) + (y_1 + y_2 + y_2 - y_1) = 2(x_2 + y_2),$$

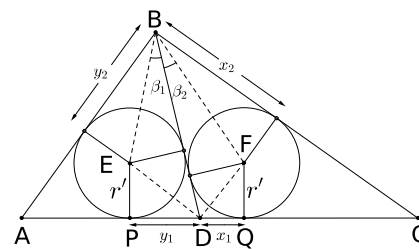
and

$$\begin{aligned} (x_1 + x_2)((x_2 - x_1) + (y_2 - y_1)) &= 2(x_1 + x_2)(x_2 - y_1) \\ &= 2(x_2(x_2 + x_1 - y_1) - x_1 y_1) = 2(x_2 y_2 - x_1 y_1). \end{aligned}$$

Therefore

$$\frac{1}{r} + \frac{1}{BD} = \frac{2(x_2 + y_2)}{2(x_2 y_2 - x_1 y_1)} = \frac{1}{r'}.$$

**Remark:** One can also choose  $B = (0, 0)$ ,  $A = (0, a)$  and  $C = (1, 0)$  and the coordinate geometry proof gets reduced considerably.



6. Consider a non-constant arithmetic progression  $a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n, \dots$ . Suppose there exist relatively prime positive integers  $p > 1$  and  $q > 1$  such that  $a_1^2, a_{p+1}^2$  and  $a_{q+1}^2$  are also the terms of the same arithmetic progression. Prove that the terms of the arithmetic progression are all integers.

**Solution:** Let us take  $a_1 = a$ . We have

$$a^2 = a + kd, \quad (a + pd)^2 = a + ld, \quad (a + qd)^2 = a + md.$$

Thus we have

$$a + ld = (a + pd)^2 = a^2 + 2pad + p^2d^2 = a + kd + 2pad + p^2d^2.$$

Since we have non-constant AP, we see that  $d \neq 0$ . Hence we obtain  $2pa + p^2d = l - k$ . Similarly, we get  $2qa + q^2d = m - k$ . Observe that  $p^2q - pq^2 \neq 0$ . Otherwise  $p = q$  and  $\gcd(p, q) = p > 1$  which is a contradiction to the given hypothesis that  $\gcd(p, q) = 1$ . Hence we can solve the two equations for  $a, d$ :

$$a = \frac{p^2(m - k) - q^2(l - k)}{2(p^2q - pq^2)}, \quad d = \frac{q(l - k) - p(m - k)}{p^2q - pq^2}.$$

It follows that  $a, d$  are rational numbers. We also have

$$p^2a^2 = p^2a + kp^2d.$$

But  $p^2d = l - k - 2pa$ . Thus we get

$$p^2a^2 = p^2a + k(l - k - 2pa) = (p - 2k)pa + k(l - k).$$

This shows that  $pa$  satisfies the equation

$$x^2 - (p - 2k)x - k(l - k) = 0.$$

Since  $a$  is rational, we see that  $pa$  is rational. Write  $pa = w/z$ , where  $w$  is an integer and  $z$  is a natural numbers such that  $\gcd(w, z) = 1$ . Substituting in the equation, we obtain

$$w^2 - (p - 2k)wz - k(l - k)z^2 = 0.$$

This shows  $z$  divides  $w$ . Since  $\gcd(w, z) = 1$ , it follows that  $z = 1$  and  $pa = w$  an integer. (In fact any rational solution of a monic polynomial with integer coefficients is necessarily an integer.) Similarly, we can prove that  $qa$  is an integer. Since  $\gcd(p, q) = 1$ , there are integers  $u$  and  $v$  such that  $pu + qv = 1$ . Therefore  $a = (pa)u + (qa)v$ . It follows that  $a$  is an integer.

But  $p^2d = l - k - 2pa$ . Hence  $p^2d$  is an integer. Similarly,  $q^2d$  is also an integer. Since  $\gcd(p^2, q^2) = 1$ , it follows that  $d$  is an integer. Combining these two, we see that all the terms of the AP are integers.

**Alternatively,** we can prove that  $a$  and  $d$  are integers in another way. We have seen that  $a$  and  $d$  are rationals; and we have three relations:

$$a^2 = a + kd, \quad p^2d + 2pa = n_1, \quad q^2d + 2qa = n_2,$$

where  $n_1 = l - k$  and  $n_2 = m - k$ . Let  $a = u/v$  and  $d = x/y$  where  $u, x$  are integers and  $v, y$  are natural numbers, and  $\gcd(u, v) = 1, \gcd(x, y) = 1$ . Putting this in these relations, we obtain

$$u^2y = uvy + kxv^2, \tag{1}$$

$$2puy + p^2vx = vyn_1, \tag{2}$$

$$2quy + q^2vx = vyn_2. \tag{3}$$



Now (1) shows that  $v|u^2y$ . Since  $\gcd(u, v) = 1$ , it follows that  $v|y$ . Similarly (2) shows that  $y|p^2vx$ . Using  $\gcd(y, x) = 1$ , we get that  $y|p^2v$ . Similarly, (3) shows that  $y|q^2v$ . Therefore  $y$  divides  $\gcd(p^2v, q^2v) = v$ . The two results  $v|y$  and  $y|v$  imply  $v = y$ , since both  $v, y$  are positive.

Substitute this in (1) to get

$$u^2 = uv + kvx.$$

This shows that  $v|u^2$ . Since  $\gcd(u, v) = 1$ , it follows that  $v = 1$ . This gives  $v = y = 1$ . Finally  $a = u$  and  $d = x$  which are integers.

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