Mathematical Tripos Part IA

Vector Calculus, Examples sheet 1

1 The curve given parametrically by $(a \cos^3 t, a \sin^3 t)$ with $0 \le t \le 2\pi$ is called an *Astroid*. Find its length.

2 The curve defined by $y^2 = x^3$ is called *Neile's parabola*, named after William Neil (1637-1670). Find the length of the segment of Neile's parabola with $0 \le x \le 4$.

3 Find the minimum and maximum curvature of the ellipse $x^2/a^2 + y^2/b^2 = 1$.

4 A circular helix is given by

$$\mathbf{x} = (a\cos t, a\sin t, ct) \,.$$

Calculate the tangent **t**, curvature κ , principal normal **n**, binormal **b**, and torsion τ .

5 Evaluate explicitly each of the line integrals

$$\int (x \, \mathrm{d}x + y \, \mathrm{d}y + z \, \mathrm{d}z), \quad \int (y \, \mathrm{d}x + x \, \mathrm{d}y + \mathrm{d}z), \quad \int (y \, \mathrm{d}x - x \, \mathrm{d}y + e^{x+y} \, \mathrm{d}z)$$

along (i) the straight line path joining the origin to x = y = z = 1, and (ii) the parabolic path given parametrically by x = t, y = t, $z = t^2$ with $0 \le t \le 1$.

For which of these integrals do the two paths give the same results, and why?

6 The vector force fields **F** and **G** are defined by $\mathbf{F} = (3x^2yz^2, 2x^3yz, x^3z^2)$ and $\mathbf{G} = (3x^2y^2z, 2x^3yz, x^3y^2)$ respectively. (i) Compute the line integrals $\int \mathbf{F} d\mathbf{x}$ and $\int \mathbf{G} d\mathbf{x}$ along the straight line from (0,0,0) to (1,1,1). (ii) Compute the line integrals $\int \mathbf{F} d\mathbf{x}$ and $\int \mathbf{G} d\mathbf{x}$ along the path $\mathbf{x}(t) = (t, t^n, t^2)$ from (0,0,0) to (1,1,1).

7 The closed curve C in the z = 0 plane consists of the arc of the parabola $y^2 = 4ax$ (a > 0) between the points $(a, \pm 2a)$ and the straight line joining $(a, \pm 2a)$. The area enclosed by C is A. Show, by calculating the integrals explicitly, that

$$\int_C (x^2 y \, \mathrm{d}x + xy^2 \, \mathrm{d}y) = \int_A (y^2 - x^2) \, \mathrm{d}A = \frac{104}{105} a^4.$$

where C is described anticlockwise.

8 Use the substitution $x = r \cos \theta$, $y = \frac{1}{2}r \sin \theta$, to evaluate

$$\int_A \frac{x^2}{x^2 + 4y^2} \,\mathrm{d}A$$

where A is the region between the two ellipses $x^2 + 4y^2 = 1$, $x^2 + 4y^2 = 4$.

9 The region A is bounded by the segments $x = 0, 0 \le y \le 1$; $y = 0, 0 \le x \le 1$; $y = 1, 0 \le x \le \frac{3}{4}$, and by an arc of the parabola $y^2 = 4(1-x)$. Consider a mapping into the (x, y) plane from the (u, v) plane defined by the transformation $x = u^2 - v^2$, y = 2uv. Sketch A and also the two regions in the (u, v) plane which are mapped into it. Hence evaluate

$$\int_A \frac{\mathrm{d}A}{(x^2 + y^2)^{1/2}} \, .$$

10 Show without changing the order of integration that

$$\int_0^1 \left[\int_0^1 \frac{x - y}{(x + y)^3} \, \mathrm{d}y \right] \mathrm{d}x = \frac{1}{2} \qquad \text{and} \qquad \int_0^1 \left[\int_0^1 \frac{x - y}{(x + y)^3} \, \mathrm{d}x \right] \mathrm{d}y = -\frac{1}{2}$$

Comment on these results.

11 For the tetrahedron V with corners at (0,0,0), (1,0,0), (0,1,0) and (0,0,1), evaluate the integral

$$\int_V x \, \mathrm{d}V.$$

Hence find the centre of volume $\frac{1}{V} \int_V \mathbf{x} \, \mathrm{d}V$.

12 A solid cone is bounded by the surface $\theta = \alpha$ in spherical polar coordinates and the surface z = a. Its mass density is $\rho_0 \cos \theta$. By evaluating a volume integral find the mass of the cone.

I would appreciate any comments and corrections from students and supervisors. Please e-mail ejh1@cam.ac.uk.