COMP24111: Introduction to Machine Learning

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What happens if I register to this course unit late?

    Normally a student is expected to register this course unit (CU) prior to its start. However, it is not unusual to see some students who were enrolled after the CU started. In this case, you might not know your lab group and even miss your lab session in Week 1. In this circumstance, you need to contact the Student Support Office (SSO) rather than a lecturer to get the information on what group you are allocated to, and you should attend the next lab session in Week 1 regardless of whether you are in that group and let the lab supervisor know this during the lab session.

    If you register after Week 1, you need to submit your 1st lab exercise within one week after you are enrolled to this CU. Then you can get this lab exercise marked in Week 12. Also, you might need to fill a late-flag removal form (contact SSO for the information).

2. What is the good practice for doing those assessed lab exercises?

    There are three assessed lab exercises in this CU. Apart from the 1st lab exercise you are expected to complete it during the lab in Week 1, you need to spend substantial time to work on lab exercises 2 & 3 (worth 30 out of 100 marks in all the assessment in this CU). For lab exercises 2 & 3, you should be able to have enough knowledge to work on those after lectures in Weeks 2 and 7, respectively.

    To help you do these two lab exercises, lab sessions in Weeks 3 and 8 will be help sessions where students can get helps from TAs. The good practice is that one should start working on those lab exercises before each help session so you can get effective helps during the lab. According to the feedback from previous students, the help session appeared less helpful if one did not start the work before this session and it often took much longer time than what was expected if one did not make a good use of the help sessions.

3. How is an assessed lab exercise marked?

    Marking an assessed lab exercise is based on both your on-line demonstration and the submitted report. A TA marker is going through all the tasks described in the specification with you. Apart from the experimental results, they will be asking you questions relevant to this lab exercise to test your understanding, examining your code and so on. After this on-line (on-site) marking, a marker will offer your feedback and you are allowed to ask them to clarify their feedback if you have any questions.

    As a marker needs to complete the marking job for quite a number of students during a lab session, the marking process normally takes no longer than 15 minutes.
For efficient marking, your cooperation is required. If you are not satisfied with the feedback given by the marker, you should involve the lab supervisor who is responsible for this lab to resolve the issue before submitting your mark to the system instead of making a complaint after marking your lab exercise has been completed.

4. Can I have an extension to the lab exercise deadline?

A short answer is “No” unless you have a mitigation circumstance. According to the new policy of the school, neither an extension to lab exercises is allowed nor can a lecturer grant any extension. So any request for extending the lab exercise deadline or removing late flag(s) will be ignored if this is sent to a lecturer.

If you want to request an extension or remove a late-flag for any reasons, please go to SSO to fill in a mitigating circumstance form or a request to remove late flag(s) form. For details, see the official mitigating circumstance page.

5. Can I send my experimental results regarding lab exercises to the lecturer for comments before the lab used for marking?

The answer is “No”. As all the lab exercises are assessed, your results will be marked during the lab and the feedback will be offered by the TA marker immediately after completing the marking. Hence, the lecturer cannot comment your results before marking and such a request will have to be ignored.

6. If I cannot get my lab exercise marked during the lab in my timetable, can I get another chance to mark it?

Three lab exercises are scheduled to be marked in the lab of Weeks 1, 5 and 10, respectively. As there are many students but only a few TA markers in a lab session, it is no guarantee that your lab exercise can be marked during those labs in Weeks 1, 5 and 10 if you come late. As a result, we have reserved the labs in Week 12 to give you another chance for getting your lab exercise marked. In other words, you have two chances for each lab exercise to be marked. If one misses two marking chances, their lab exercises(s) will not be marked unless they have a mitigating circumstance approved by the school (in this case, you should go to SSO to fill in the mitigating circumstance form and the marking will be rearranged via SSO after the mitigating circumstance has been approved).

It is worth mentioning that the labs in Weeks 3 and 8 are scheduled for help sessions for lab exercises 2 & 3, respectively. Hence, marking cannot be done during those labs unless spare TAs are available with lab supervisor’s approval.
7. Can I get my lab exercise marked in a lab session not appearing in my timetable?

The answer is “No”. As there are so many students enrolled in this CU but limited resources in the school, students have to be allocated into three groups with different lab timetables. So you must get your lab exercises marked in the lab sessions appearing in your timetable. Attendance will be recorded in each lab session and anyone who is not on the list in that lab session will not be able to get their lab exercise marked. This policy is applicable to all the marking lab sessions including those in Week 12.

8. If I encounter an IT problem or I am a non-CS student who is not familiar with the CS lab facilities, can I contact a lecturer of a TA for helps?

The answer is “No” in general. If one has any IT-related problems, you should directly contact the university IT help desk via their on-line system or emergency phone number (0161-3065544). If necessary, you can visit their office located in the ground floor, Kilburn building for an urgent help.

For a non-CS student, you also need to contact the university IT help desk if you have any IT-related problems. If you are not familiar with CS facilities (e.g., how to submit your lab exercises to the Arcade system), the following website provides the useful information:

https://wiki.cs.manchester.ac.uk/index.php/StudentFAQ/IT#I_am_an_External_Student_or_I_am_a_late-arriving_CS_student._how_do_I_use_the_ARCADE_submit_command