# Reflections on a semester of remote delivery at the Jinan University - University of Birmingham Joint Institute (J-BJI)

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# Background

- Dual degree programmes (2:1) in Applied Mathematics with: Economics; Economics and Statistics; Information Computing Science; or, Mathematics.
- 80 credits of Applied Mathematics modules each year.
- Student numbers: $Y1 \sim 215$, $Y2 \sim 200$, $Y3 \sim 75$.
- Each 10 credit teaching block is typically[1] delivered in 4 consecutive weeks, in person, by UoB academic staff.
- Semester 2 2019/20 was originally scheduled from 17/02/20 to 28/06/20.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a decision was made in early February that teaching would take place remotely.

[1] Sometimes reduced to 3 weeks in reality.

A typical[2] teaching week for a 10 credit course

- | | *Mon* | *Tue* | *Wed* | *Thu* | *Fri* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Lectures* | 2 | 2 | | 2 | |
| *Support Class*[3] | | | 1 | | 1 |

- Weekly group submitted formative assignments.
- Fortnightly Möbius[4] based summative assessments.
- Weekly office hours scheduled.

[2] Sessions are 45 minutes. The schedule differs slightly for years 1/2/3.
[3] Example class, Q&A sessions, seminars etc.
[4] See https://digitaled.com for information about Möbius.

## The current teaching week for a 10 credit course

- | | *Mon* | *Tue* | *Wed* | *Thu* | *Fri* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Video content* | 2 | 2 | | 2 | |
| *Post video Q&A* | 1 | 1 | | 1 | |
| *Support Class* | | | 2 | | 1 |

- ~~Weekly group submitted formative assignments~~.
- Fortnightly Möbius based summative assessments[5][6].
- Weekly remote office hours scheduled.

[5] A marked Improvement, HEA, (2012), link

[6] C Sangwin, *Computer Aided Assessment of Mathematics* (OUP, Oxford, 2013). link

# Pre-Recorded videos

Reflections

- One can split topics in each video w.r.t. course notes.
- One can implement a blended learning style[7].
- One can monitor student engagement with video content.

Practical considerations

- A viewing schedule for videos was given to students to clarify material related to post video watching Q&A sessions.
- Videos should be made available in advance to:
  - allow students to self pace (if they wish); and
  - to mitigate against IT system failures.

[7] CK Lo, HF Hew and G Chen, "Toward a set of design principles for mathematics flipped classrooms: A synthesis of research in mathematics education." Educational Research Review, **22** (2017): 50-73.

# Live Sessions: post-video Q&A + Lecturer led-support

Reflections

- Non-mandatory attendance post-video Q&A were ... subjectively well-attended.
- Mandatory attendance support sessions were a reasonably efficient means to give feedback to the students ... and were subjectively well-attended.

Practical considerations

- Admin support staff were present in all live sessions. This was very helpful, notably, in initial sessions.
- How the lecturer receives questions should be considered.
- If students are having difficulty viewing the session, admin support can inform the host + provide support.

I would like to thank all colleagues who contributed to teaching at the J-BJI during this semester. In particular I would like to note the contributions of:

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- Jingyu Huang,
- Rachel Du Croz,
- Livia Li.