Feedback on Unit Survey Questionnaires – MATH4/68122
Markov Chain Monte Carlo

The number of students who responded on the Unit Survey Questionnaires seems to be in keeping with the number of students attending lectures throughout the semester. I was very pleased to see that the majority of students enjoyed the module (despite the difficulty usually associated with the material) and generally responded positively on all aspects of the course. Taking time during lectures to explain the material covered in the lecture notes in more detail is very important and I was happy that students appreciated that and felt it helped them understand the material better.

A couple of students mentioned that the lectures could be improved in terms of timing/content covered. I do agree that some of the lectures were a bit rushed, mainly in an effort to cover all the material from the lecture notes (some are more lengthy than others), so I would consider in the future putting more focus on the main points rather than trying to go through every single detail. I should note though, that in instances where some material was not covered in the lectures, it was made clear to the students that that material was not of vital importance and more for reference, and that any questions on that material were welcomed after the lecture, or during office hours/lab sessions.

Another point I wanted to address was one made by one of the students regarding the material for the course being based on journal articles as opposed to books. I disagree that lecture notes should be solely following textbooks, as there are rarely 1-2 books which will provide all the necessary information to produce complete notes. This is even more true for a relatively young area of research, such as MCMC. The references provided in the lecture notes cite the original journal articles, where ideas were first introduced, so they offer a good starting point for better understanding of the material. A reading list is also available for the course for further reading.