In Sect. A, a majority of students achieve the satisfactory performance while a number of students do not seem to gain the essential understanding for book knowledge that had been highlighted and repeated during lectures and tested in given non-assessed exercises. For example, a number of students could not describe two essential goals in clustering analysis properly, which was highlighted in each lecture related to clustering analysis. Even though a lab exercise was done and the same question was asked in exercises (sample answers were offered as well), over 25% students still could not correctly describe the assumption underlying Naïve Bayesian classifier.

For the main part of the exam, most people (80%) chose Q2 on the ROC analysis and perceptrons. Most people were able to answer the ROC questions, with a few mixing up sensitivity and specificity. Again most people answered the perceptron question well, the most common mistake being not to comment on what parameters can be tuned to make it perform better – the answer was of course the learning rate and number of iterations. Some people mixed up these concepts saying the weights would be tuned – while this is true, it forms more of the fundamental algorithm, rather than parameters that control how well that algorithm works.

For two bigger questions, i.e., questions 3 and 4, in Sect. C, students almost evenly chose either of them. Fortunately, nearly all students made attempts. While most of student could answer essential questions, I am pleased to see around 60% students well understood concepts and main ideas of machine learning algorithms and applied what they learned from this module to a scenario close to a real world problem. In particular, there are a few who achieved a full mark for question 3, which demonstrates their deep understanding on SVM and its variants (the hardest part in this module), which seems to be a reward to the effort in revising the lecture note and its presentation made this academic year in response to students’ feedback last year.

In summary, the overall result closely reflects what students actually achieved from this course unit. In comparison (with the same syllabus), students this year perform better than the cohort last year on average, in particular, regarding two questions in Section C.