

# Enhancing Engagement: Strategies for Effective Collaboration between FedUni and HeBust in China

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GPS, Federation University

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The Aboriginal Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters where our campuses, centres and field stations are located include:

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<b>Wimmera:</b>	Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagulk
<b>Ballarat:</b>	Wadawurrung
<b>Berwick:</b>	Boon Wurrung
<b>Gippsland:</b>	Gunai Kurnai
<b>Nanya Station:</b>	Mutthi Mutthi and Barkindji
<b>Brisbane:</b>	Turrbal and Jagera

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# Introduction

- **FedUni Information Engineering Institute** is a unique partner located at Shijiazhuang, Hebei, China.
- Each semester, faculty members from FedUni travel to Shijiazhuang, to deliver lectures and tutorials at the local university
- The cohort is totally different and unique when compared to the Australian based cohorts.
- It is essential to **tailor teaching content** and methodologies to align with the specific characteristics of the local cohort

# Contents

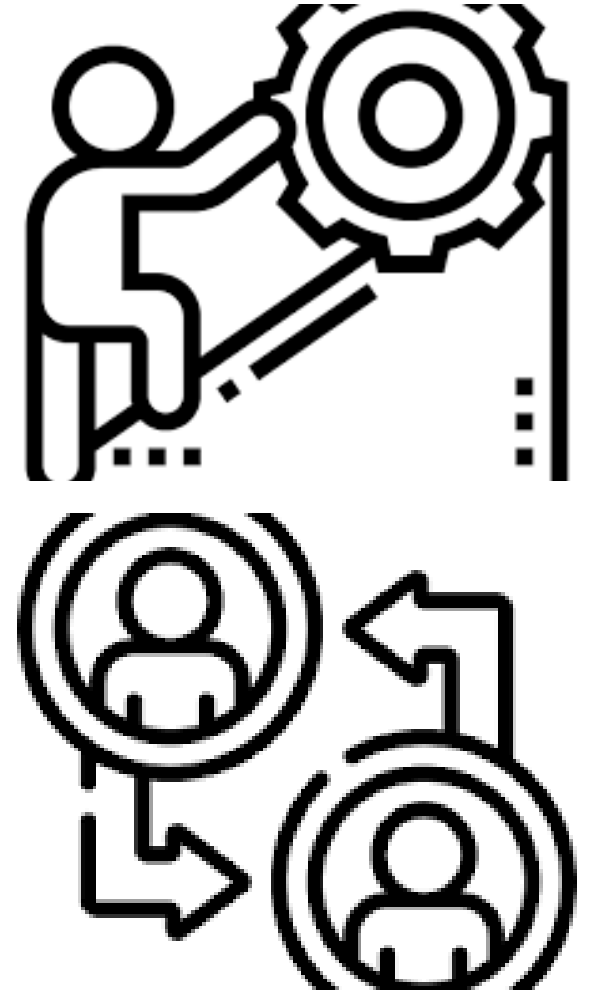
- Key differences in teaching methodologies
- Challenges
- Our approaches to enhance the teaching experience
- Recommendations
- Q&A and inputs from audience

# Differences

- Lecture and practice 90 mins each
- Additional 90 mins lecture and practice in alternate weeks
- Cohort size is 50/100 students for each practice/lecture session
- A Teaching Assistant from the local partner present in the sessions
- TAs chosen based on English speaking skills (not necessarily have the subject knowledge)

# Challenges

- [Language](#) and [cultural barriers](#) for communication resulting in lack of engagement
- Some Units contain YouTube links
- Unit content designed using Australian/Western examples
- Use of [multiple platforms](#) for communication such as MS Teams, WeChat, TAs and Moodle announcements
- Presenting using MS teams with captions on makes the presentation smaller



01:56

Stop sharing

Layout

Private view

Pop out

Chat

People

Raise

React

More

Camera

Mic

Share

Leave

Federation University

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Settings

# Our Approaches – specific to HUFED

- Thorough lab task demonstrations as explanation of the task is not enough
- Use MS teams with captions enabled
- Involvement of TAs and student representatives
- Promoting the teamwork
- Exploiting the local messaging apps such as WeChat to coordinate teaching with TAs



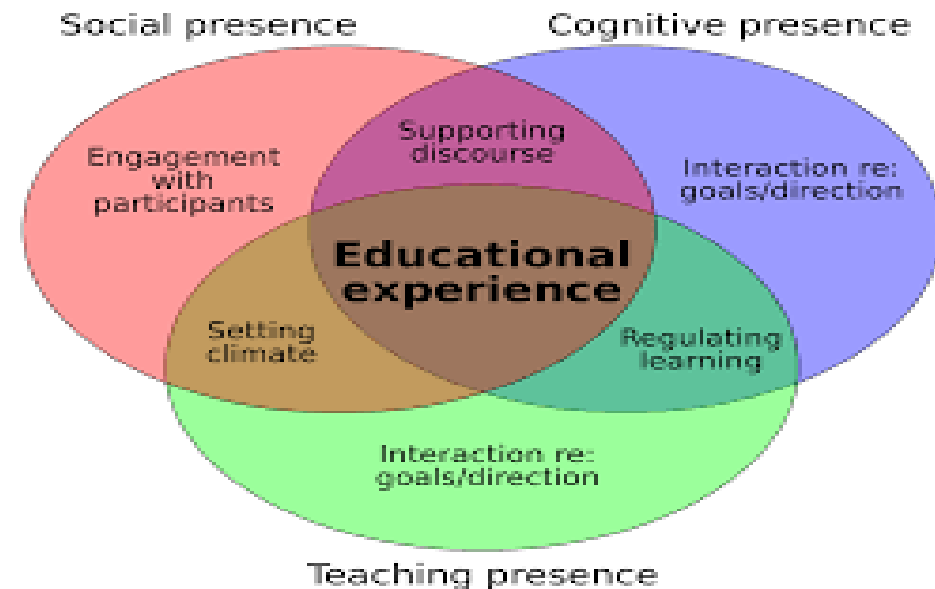
# Employing Community of Inquiry framework (COI)

- Teacher Presence
- Cognitive Presence
- Social Presence



COI framework

Source: Fiock, H. (2020). Designing a Community of Inquiry in Online Courses. The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 21(1), 135-153. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v20i5.3985>



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# Teacher presence

- Slowing down the presentation pace
- Repeating the main points
- Pausing the presentation at regular intervals to ask questions
- Asking the TA to clarify the complex points for the students
- TA demonstrating lab tasks when required



# Cognitive Presence

- Writing down the summary and main points on the board
- Using adjusted and local examples (Chinese companies and businesses) for concepts and assessment tasks
- Consulting with TA to explore relevant Chinese examples and present them to the students
- Asking TAs to explain complex tasks

# Cognitive Presence

Examples for Information Systems - Mehdi

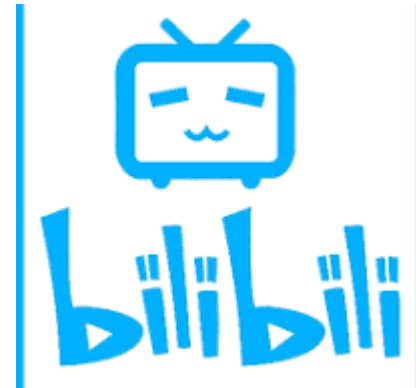
Using companies such as Tencent, Huawei, Alibaba to describe their IT and IS infrastructure



# Chinese Examples

Business Analytics and Android Programming

Adjusted Chinese social media platforms to describe the e-commerce and their applications



# Social Presence

- Asking TA to create a WeChat groups and enrol students for further engagement
- Engaging using MS Teams chat
- Assigning a student representative to engage the students in the class
- Asking students to login to the MS Teams at the start of each tutorial session
- Encouraging the students to share their tutorial answers with the class via MS Teams

# Student Feedback (Mehdi)

- Students believe technologies such as MS Teams is helpful in the learning process
- Specifically, session recording and live caption improve the student learning
- Some students believe the TAs should be more active

# Student Feedback (Naga)

There were 73 responses out of 93 students. Five questions were asked

1. Is demonstration of the lab task helping you to understand? - **100% yes**
2. Can you give any suggestions on improving the demonstrations?
3. Is explaining the tasks in the lab in Chinese by Zheng Kun helping you to understand better? - **100% yes**
4. If yes to the above question, can you explain how it's helping you to understand better?
5. Can you give any suggestions on improving combination of English and Chinese explanation?



# Feedback

**Q 2. Can you give any suggestions on improving the demonstrations?**

- Most of them said no suggestions, or insignificant ones.
- One suggestion is to do along with them, i.e. perform each step and wait for all the students to finish.
- Some wanted both Chinese and English captions (not possible in MS teams)
- Some wanted videos in lab files (YouTube links are available)

**Q4 If yes to the above question (explaining in Chinese), can you explain how it's helping you to understand better?**

Most of the responses just said yes, no constructive feedback is given.

# Feedback

Can you give any suggestions on improving combination of English and Chinese explanation?

- “The way of teaching English and Chinese can be more closely integrated, or can be used in more aspects”
- Provide bilingual subtitles or translations
- Be proficient in two languages 😊

# Active Learning and Experiential Learning



# Vidya - Dynamic Web Development

## Active Learning Through Cultural Integration

- Engage students in active learning by incorporating Chinese cultural examples
- Apply cultural concepts (ex: Chinese New Year symbols in Web Design) through hands-on activities

## Experiential Learning via Live Coding and Demonstration

- Integrate live coding and demonstrations into the learning process (enables students to actively participate in the learning process)



# Vidya-Active and Experiential Learning (cont..)

## Peer Teaching for Collaborative Learning

- Peer teaching is a **form of active learning** where students become both teachers and learners
- Students share their knowledge with each other

## Involvement of TAs in Experiential Support

- Having TAs assist the students in various activities
- Can play a crucial role in experiential learning including translation assistance to reinforce clear communication

# Active and Experiential Learning Continued...

## **Active Learning through Continuous feedback**

- This iterative process engages students actively in their learning journey

## **Active Engagement through Group Work in Lab Activities**

- Promotes the exchange of ideas, enhances problem-solving and communication skills
- Experiential aspect of group work reinforces the application of theoretical concepts in a practical setting

# Informal Feedback

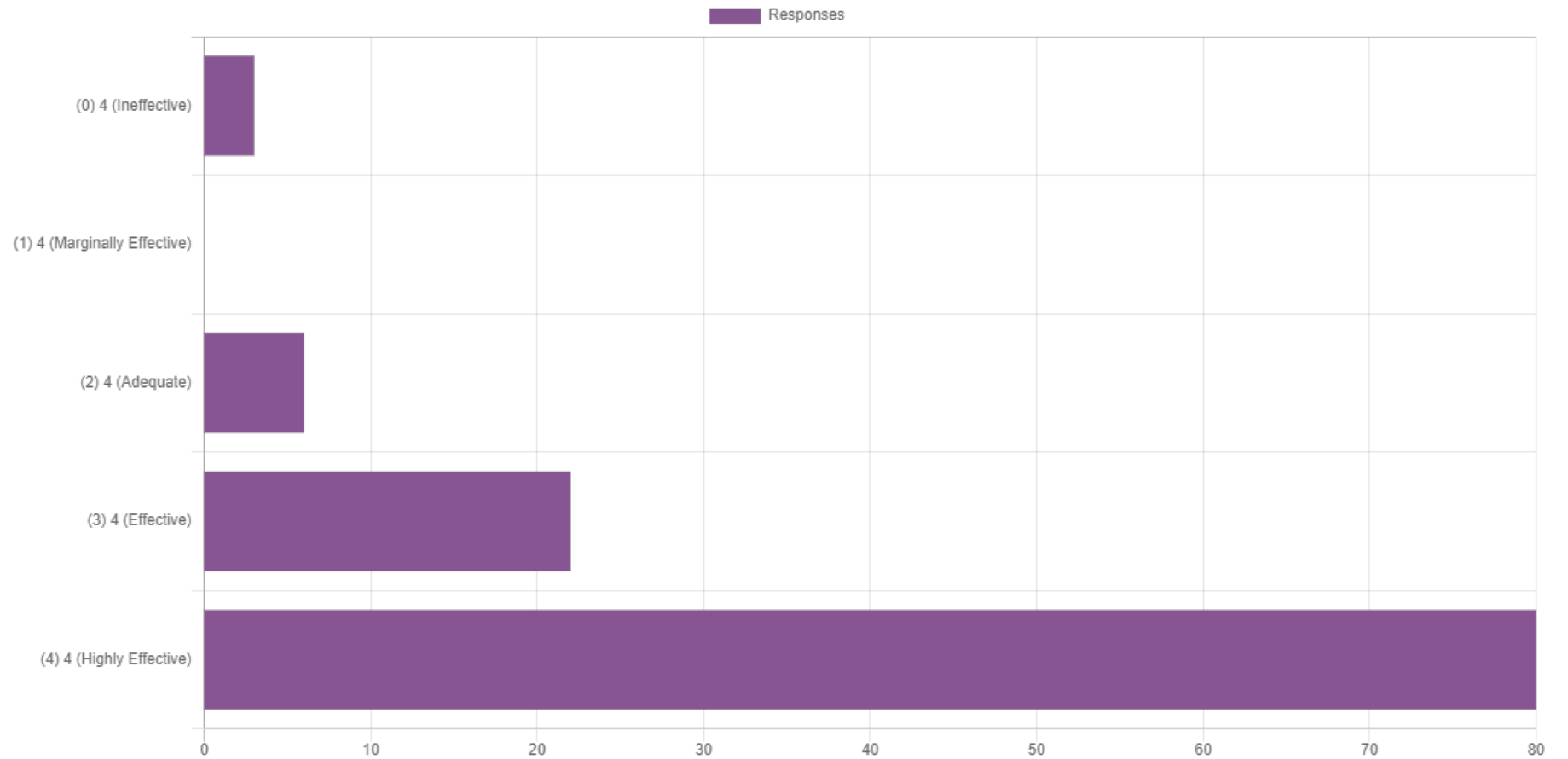
There were 113 responses out of 147 (76.8%). 7 questions were asked:

1. Is the demonstration of practicals in the class effective?
2. Is the speed of demonstration of practicals reasonable?
3. What would you suggest to improve the demonstration?
4. How much is the student representative (person who is student of class and who assists with doing the practicals) helping in your understanding of practicals?
5. Is the explanation from the teaching assistants enhancing the learning?
6. Is the technology (MS TEAMS) helping to understand concepts in a better way?
7. Is dividing into small groups helping in the practice sessions?

# Analysis of the feedback

Is the demonstration of practicals in the class effective?

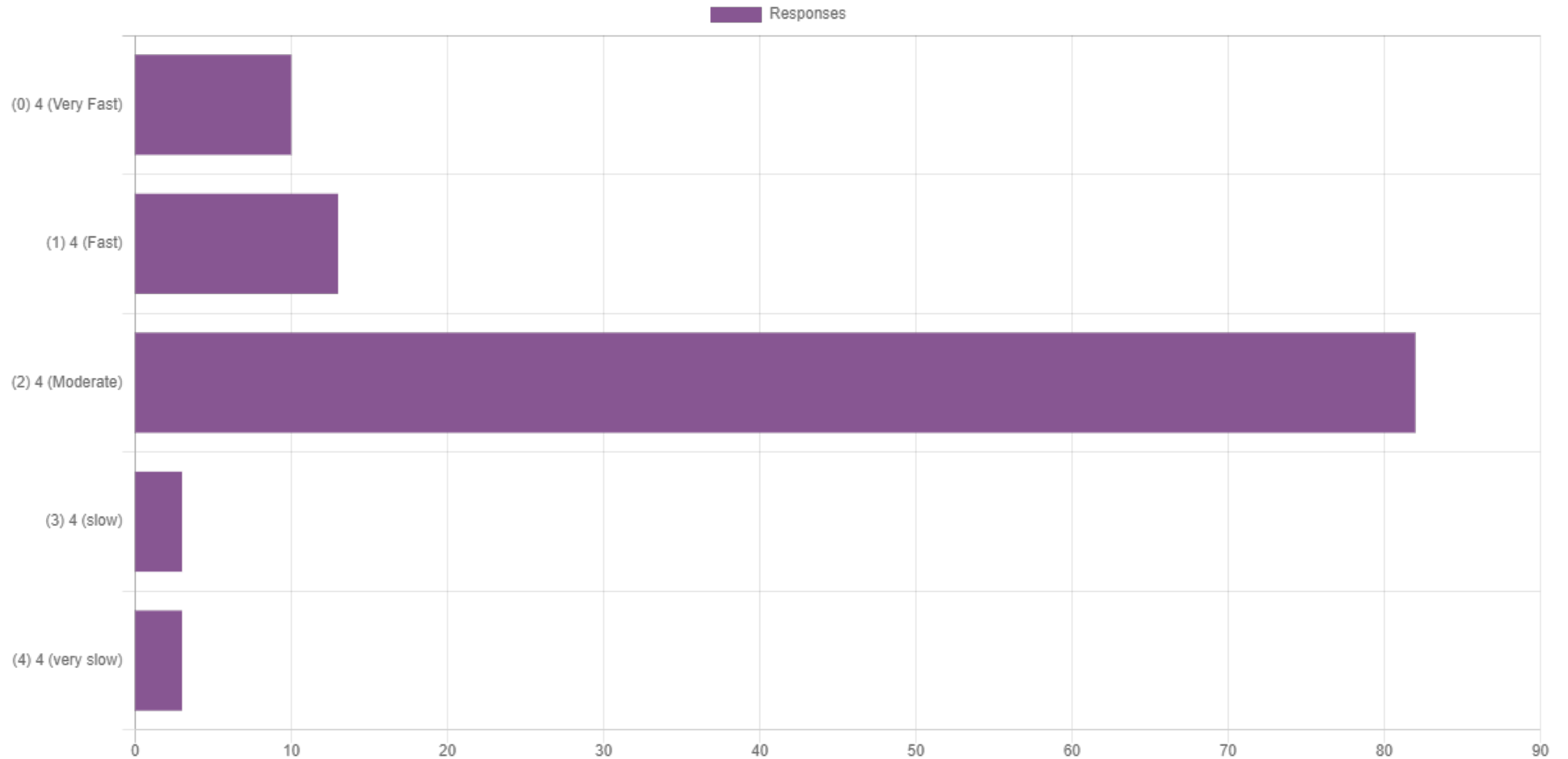
Average: 3.55





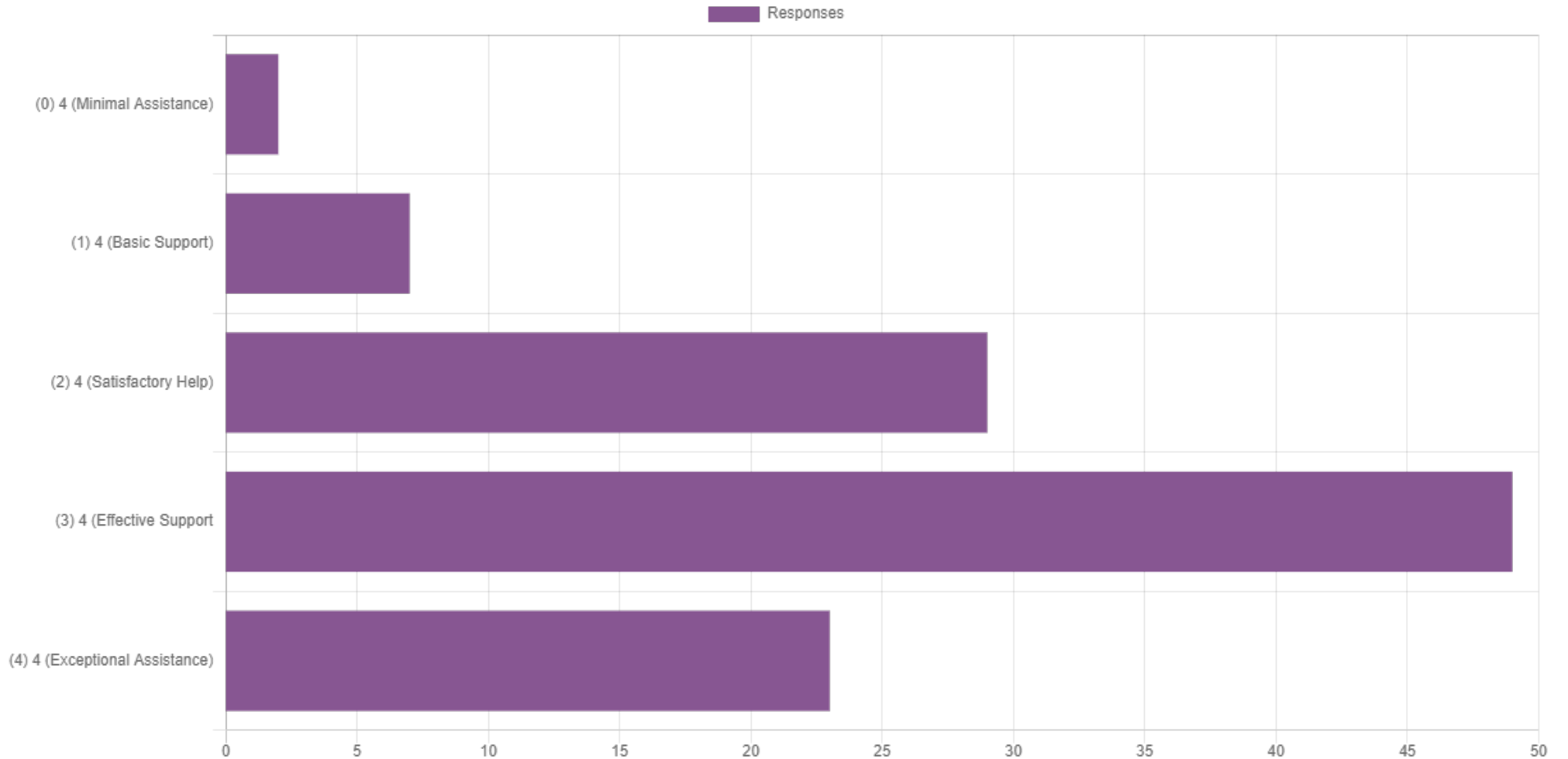
Is the speed of demonstration of practicals reasonable?

Average: 1.78



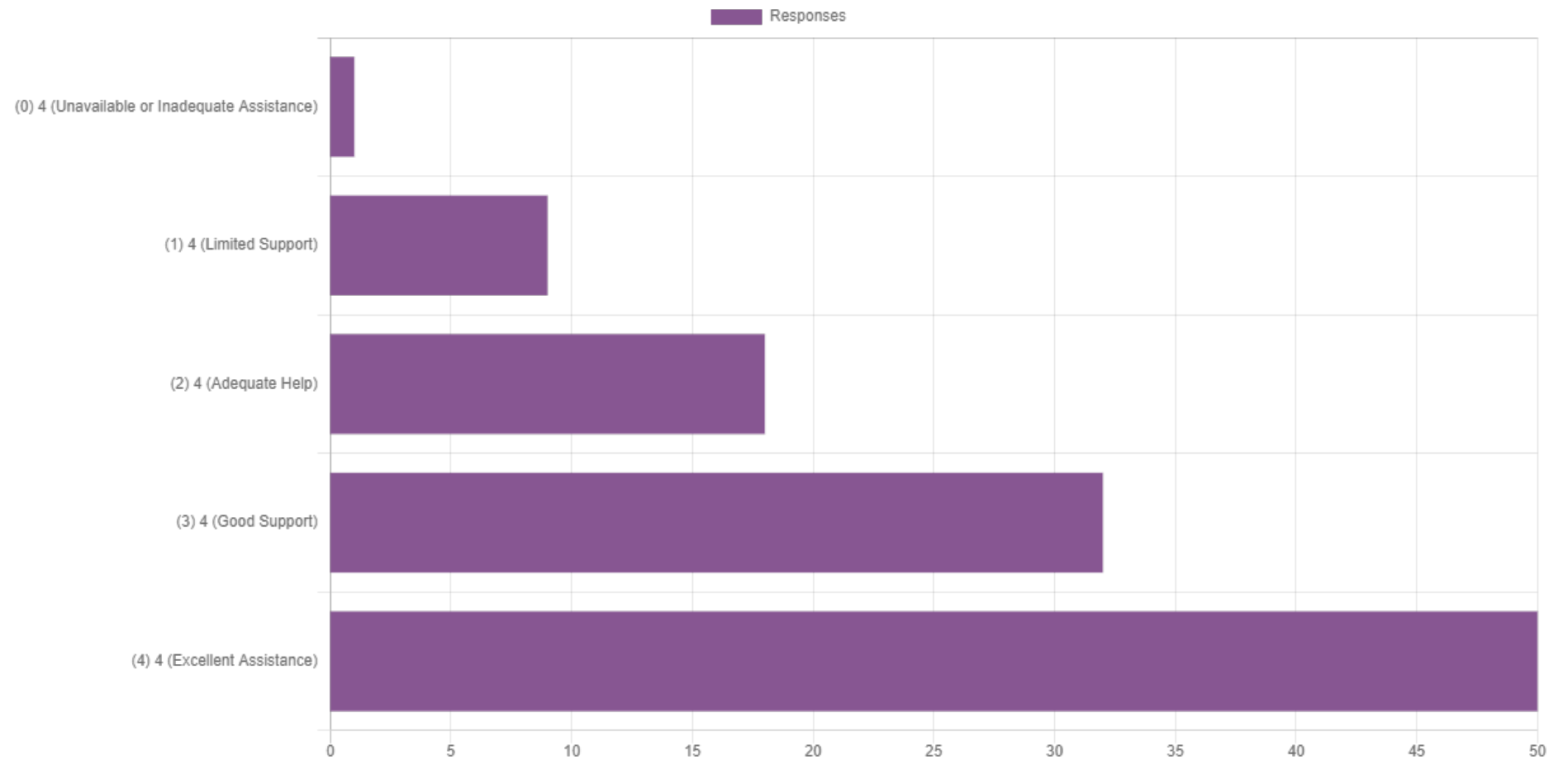
How much is the student representative (person who is student of class and who assists with doing the practicals) helping in your understanding of practicals?

Average: 2.76



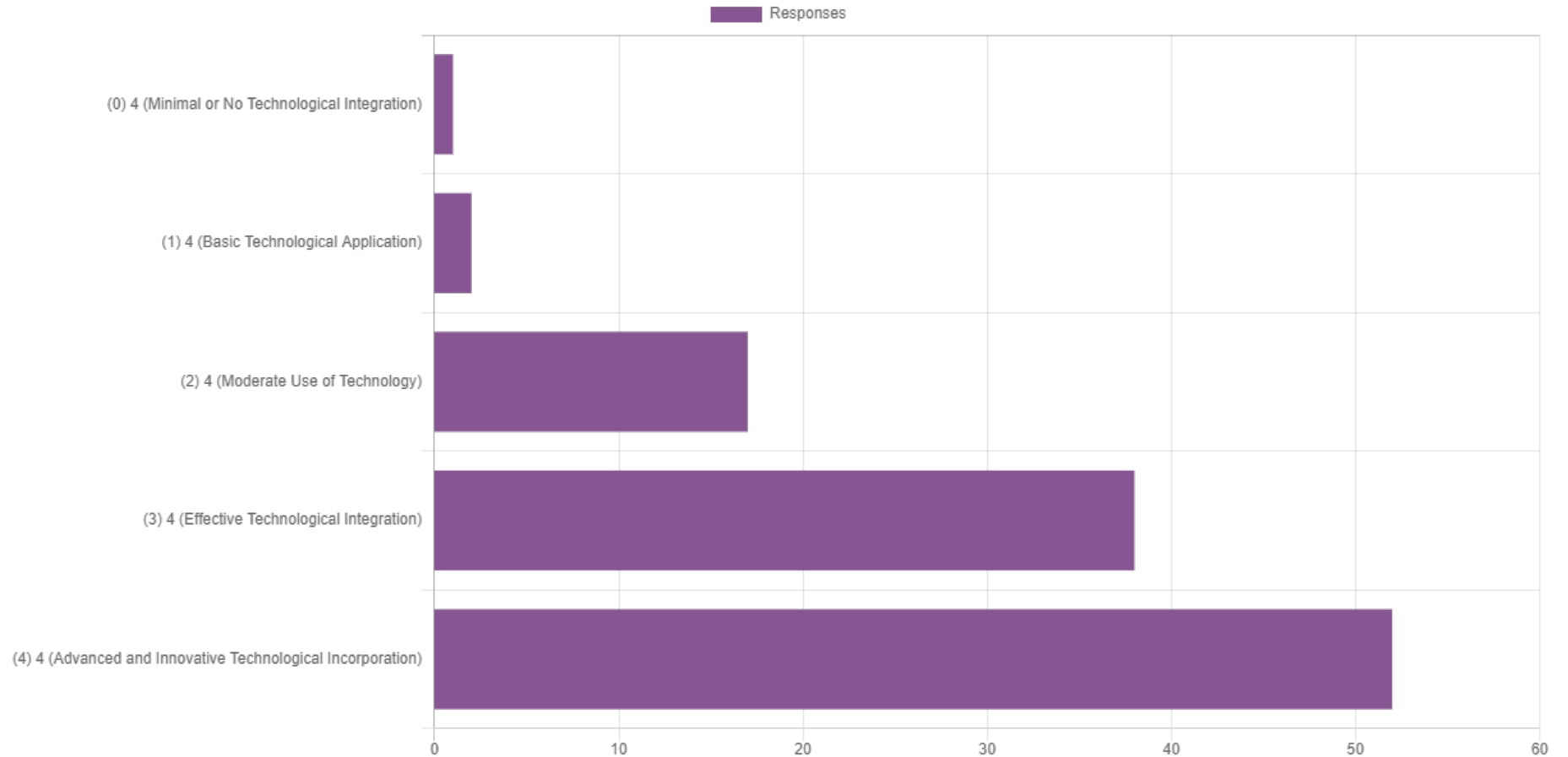
Is the explanation  
from the teaching  
assistants enhancing  
the learning?

Average: 3.10



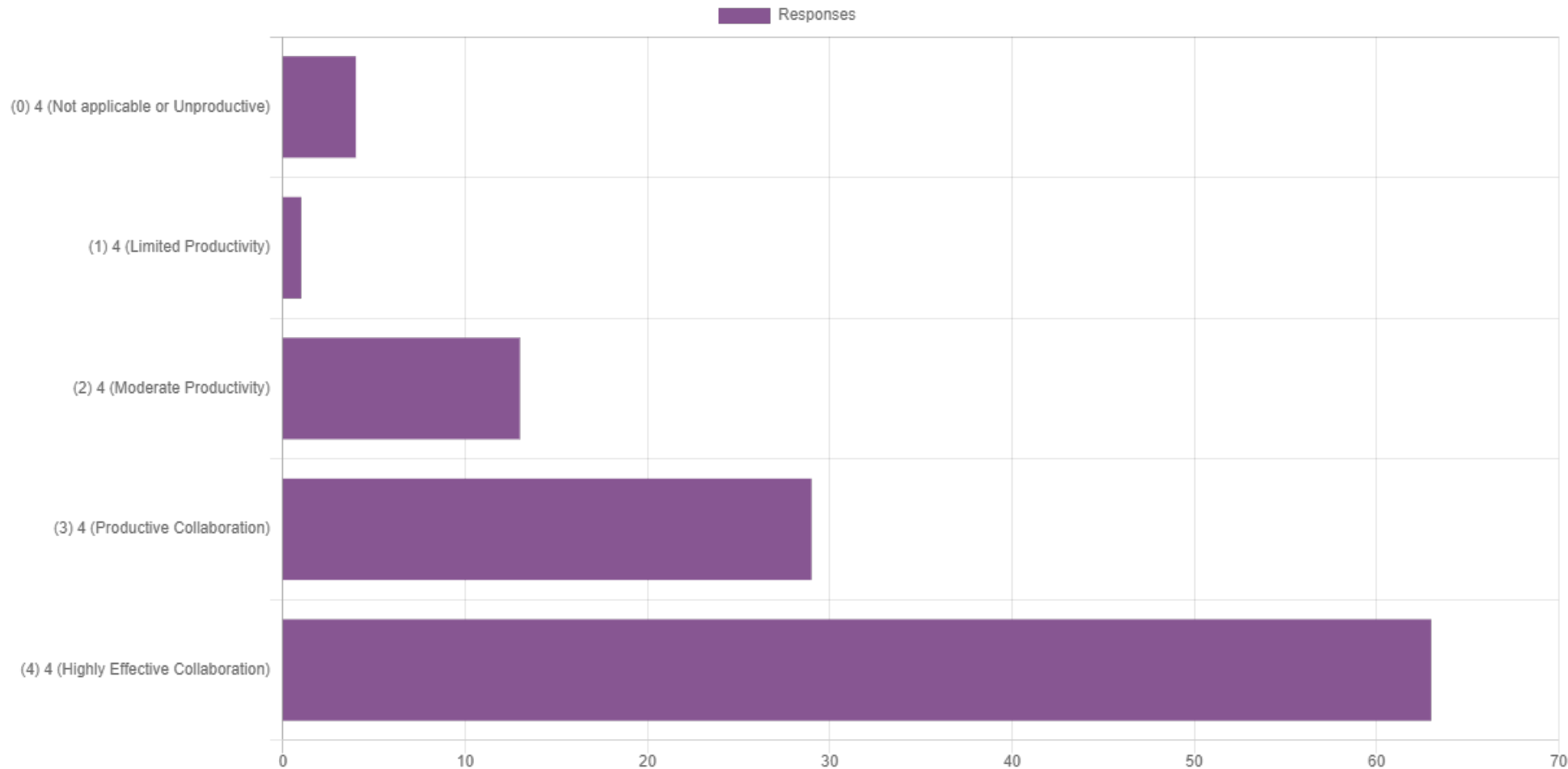
Is the technology (MS TEAMS) helping to understand concepts in a better way?

Average: 3.25



Is dividing into small groups helping in the practice sessions?

Average: 3.33



# Recommendations for future improvements

- Adjusting curriculum to match the cultural and local factors
- Better presentation software to maximize the screen usage
- Choosing TAs based on their background knowledge of the unit
- Involving TAs more actively across all units

# References

Arbaugh, J. B., Bangert, A., & Cleveland-Innes, M. (2010). Subject matter effects and the community of inquiry (CoI) framework: An exploratory study. *The internet and higher education*, 13(1-2), 37-44.

Kolb, D. A. (2014). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. FT press.

# Q&A and Inputs / Suggestions



Source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/question-question-mark-opinion-poll-2736480/>