

Course delivery in 2020/21 – summary of findings from UK universities

Summary of main findings

- As of early May 2020, 98% of universities who responded to our survey were undertaking contingency planning for disruption to international student mobility as a result of Covid-19. Those not undertaking planning felt their delivery mode was already well adapted to the current situation.
- Around 20% of universities had made a final decision about how to change course delivery for new students starting in 2020/21 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic but the majority (60%) of those who hadn't yet expected to do so within the next month.
- Approximately 80% of universities said they were very or somewhat likely to pursue a blended approach (starting delivery online and transitioning to face to face when possible) and over half were somewhat or very likely to delay the start of the academic year by less than a month.

Full Results

Planning

98% of institutions who responded were undertaking contingency planning for disruption to international student mobility as a result of Covid-19. Those not undertaking planning felt their delivery mode was already well adapted to the current situation.

Timing of the decision making

As of early May, 78% of respondents said they hadn't yet made a final decision about how to change course delivery for new students starting in 2020/21, whilst 22% had.

For those that hadn't decided:

- 17% expected to within the next fortnight
- 43% expected to within the next month
- 29% expected to within the next two months

Confidence

93% of respondents were confident that they would be able to implement the mitigations required to allow international (non-EU and EU) students to begin courses in some form in 2020/21. Those who answered no to this question cited external factors such as the ability for students to obtain visas and travel to the UK.

Course delivery scenarios for new students

The survey then asked respondents what scenarios they were considering for course delivery to new students starting in 2020/21.

Across all domiciles and levels of study, 84% felt a blended approach, starting delivery online with transition to in person when possible, was somewhat or very likely, whilst only 30% felt a delayed start to early 2021 was somewhat or very likely.

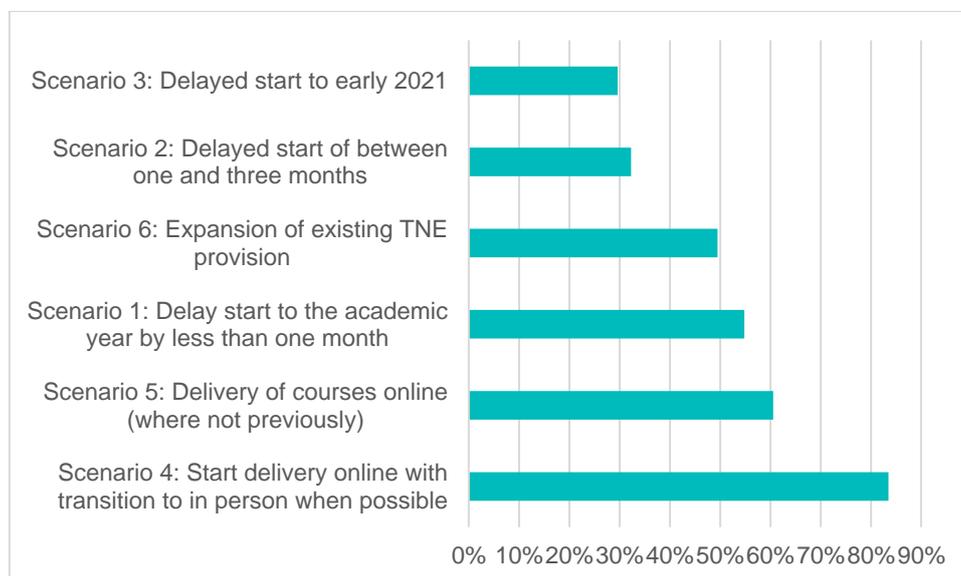


Figure 1 - What scenarios are you considering for course delivery to new students starting in 2020/2? Percentage somewhat or very likely.

There was however variation in how likely respondents felt these scenarios were for international vs domestic students and UG vs PG students. For example, respondents felt a delayed start was much more likely for PG international students (47% somewhat or very likely) compared to domestic UG (14% somewhat or very likely).

The breakdown of results for all scenarios are given in the annex.

Factors affecting decision making for new students

The survey then asked respondents about the factors that are impacting their decision making for new international students. The highest impact factor was travel restrictions with 96% of respondents saying this was having a high or very high impact. This was followed by the closure of visa application centres (82% high or very high), perceived student preference for face-to face delivery (78% high or very high) then the international perception of the UK's response to Covid-19 (67% high or very high).

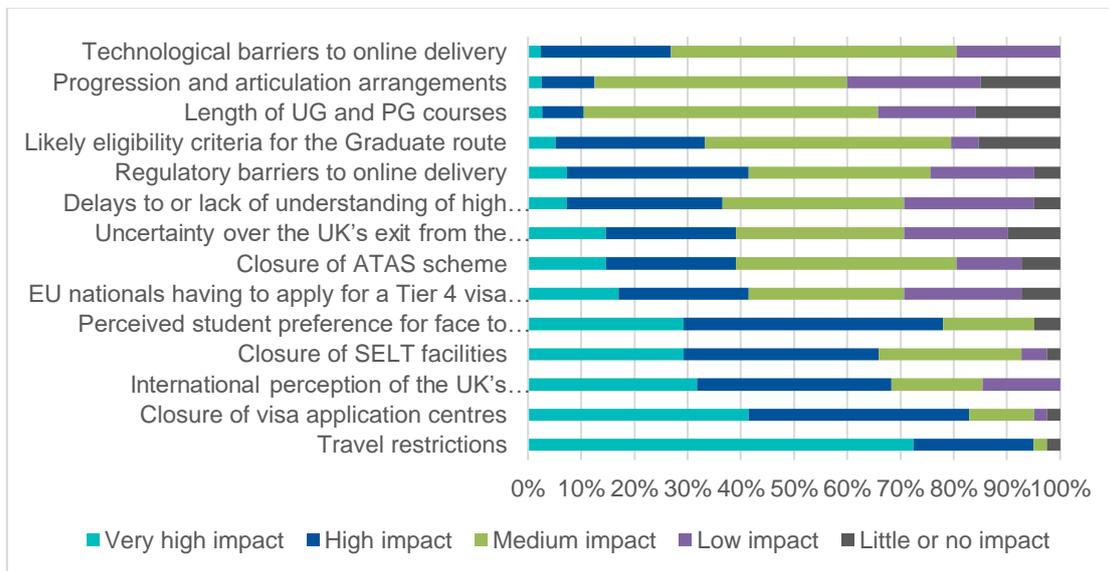


Figure 2 - Which of the following factors are impacting your decision making for new international students starting in 2020/21? (tick all applicable)

Course delivery scenarios for continuing students

The survey then asked respondents what scenarios they were considering for course delivery to continuing students in 2020/21.

Across all domiciles and levels of study, 85% felt starting a blended approach, delivery online with transition to in person when possible, was somewhat or very likely, whilst only 13% felt a delayed start to early 2021 was somewhat or very likely.

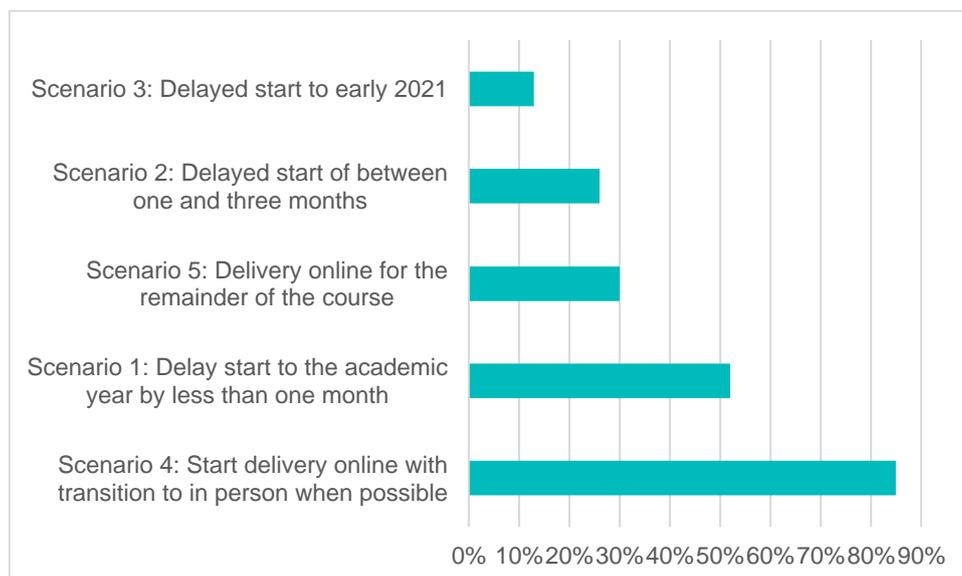


Figure 3 - What scenarios are you considering for course delivery to continuing students starting in 2020/21? Percentage somewhat or very likely.

As with new students, certain actions such as delayed start to early 2021 was considered more likely in the case of international students than domestic ones. A full breakdown across all the scenarios is provided in the annex.

Factors affecting decision making for continuing students

The survey then asked respondents about the factors that are impacting their decision making for continuing international students. The highest impact factor was travel restrictions with 93% of

respondents saying this was having a high or very high impact. This was followed by perceived student preference for face-to face delivery (65% high or very high) and the international perception of the UK's response to Covid-19 (65% high or very high).

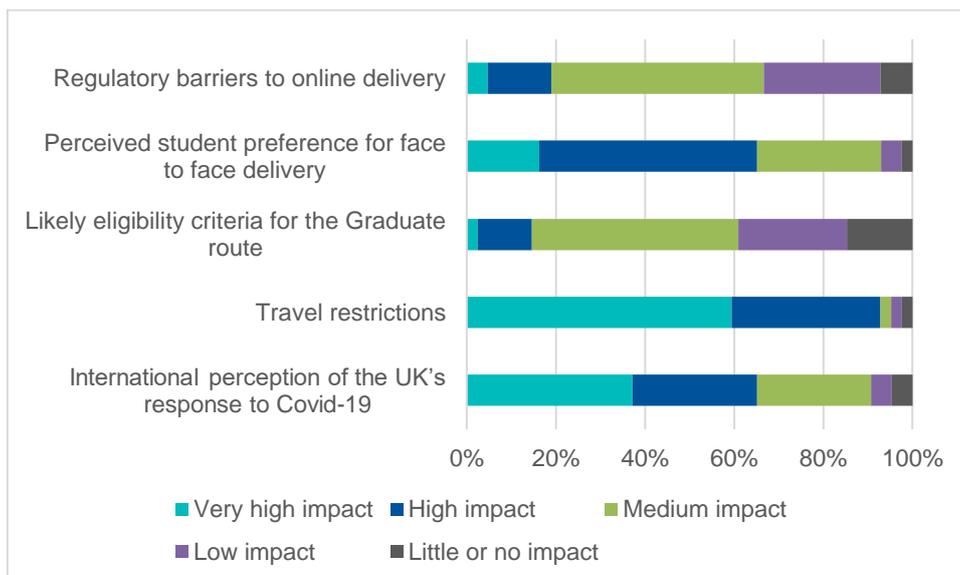


Figure 4 - Which of the following factors are impacting your decision making for continuing international students starting in 2020/21? (tick all applicable)

Effect on longer-term strategy

82% of respondents had started to consider how the impact of Covid-19 will affect their longer-term international strategy past the 2020/21 academic year.

Of those who had started to consider the effect, 92% felt that both increased online programs and articulation and progression arrangements were likely or very likely. Only 19% felt increased branch provision was likely.

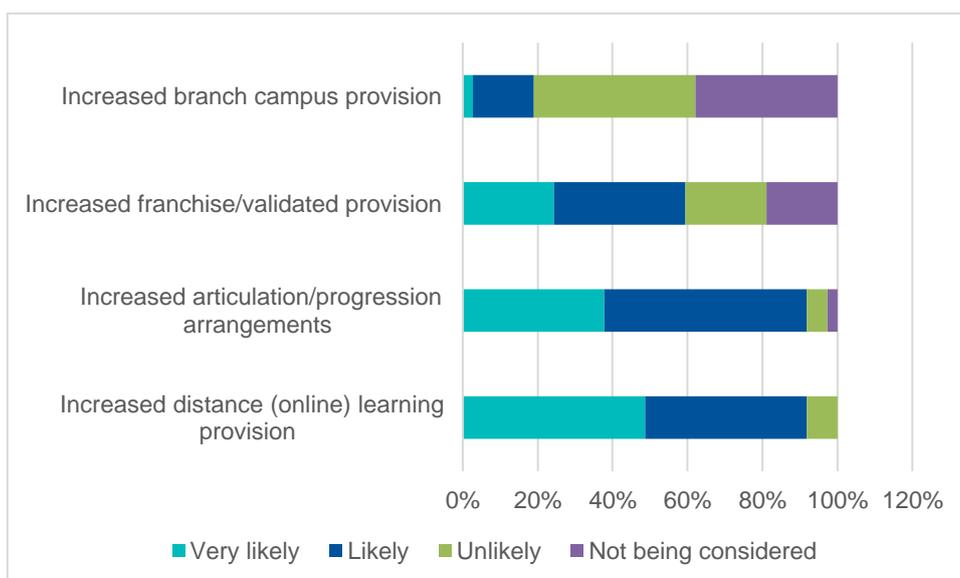


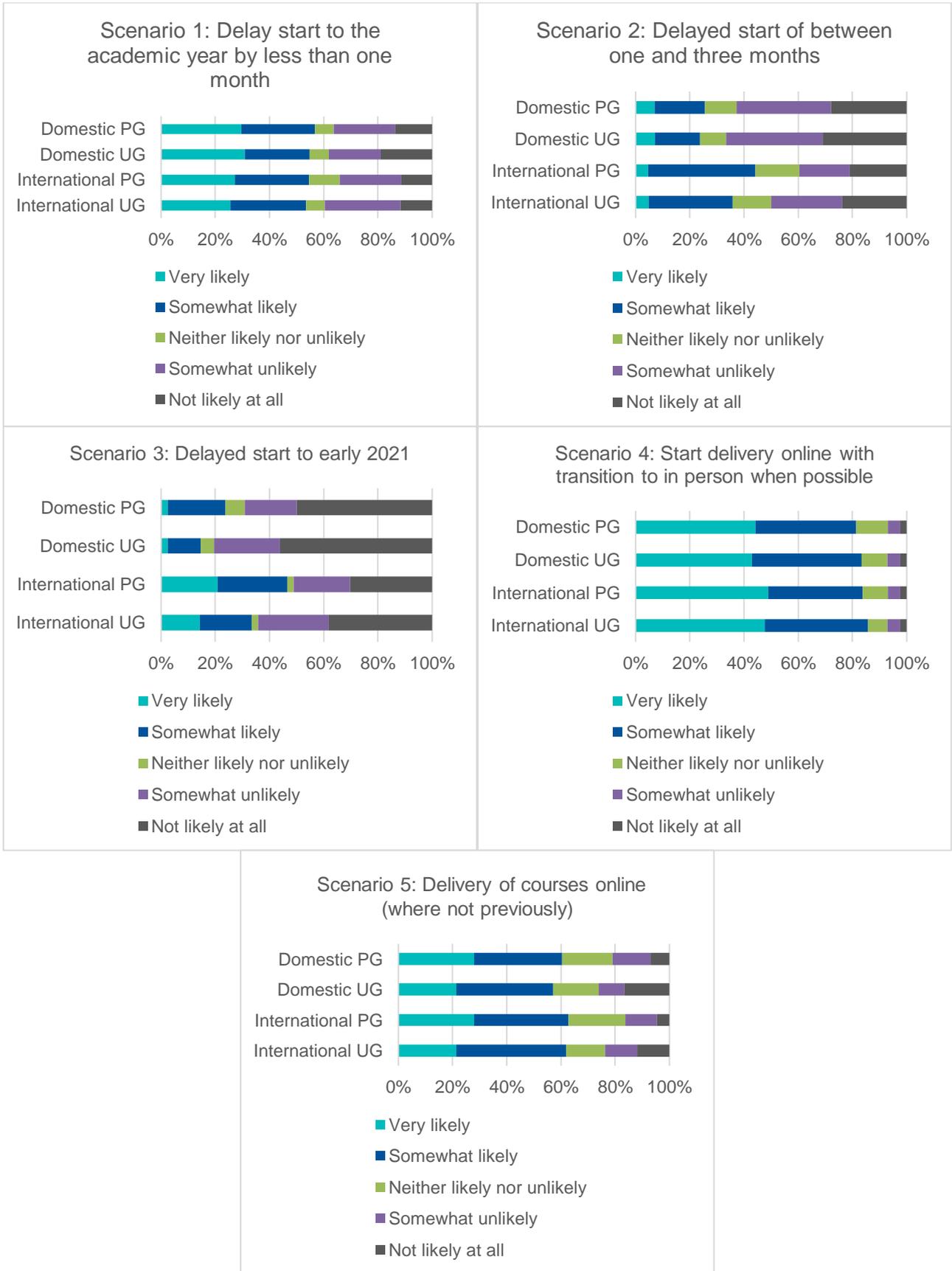
Figure 5 - which of the following actions are you likely to consider?

Methodology

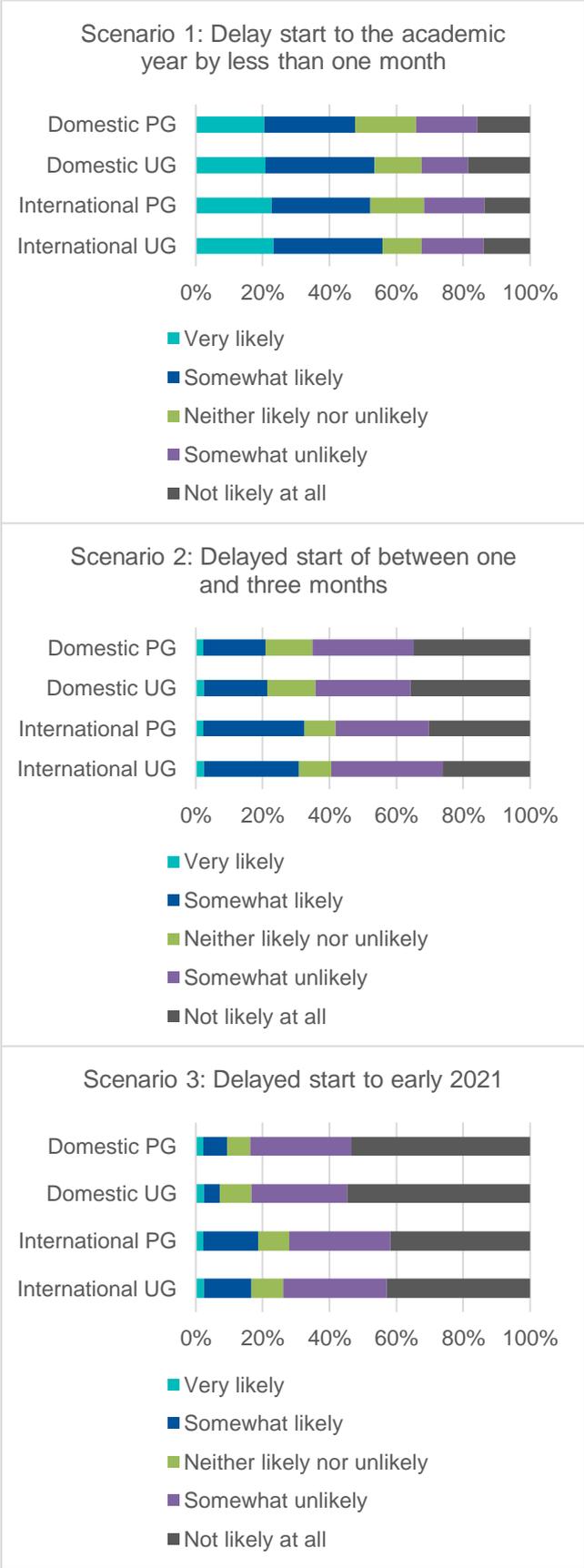
UUKi circulated a survey to its PPCI network at the end of April on scenario planning for course delivery for the next academic year. Responses were received from 45 member institutions.

Annex

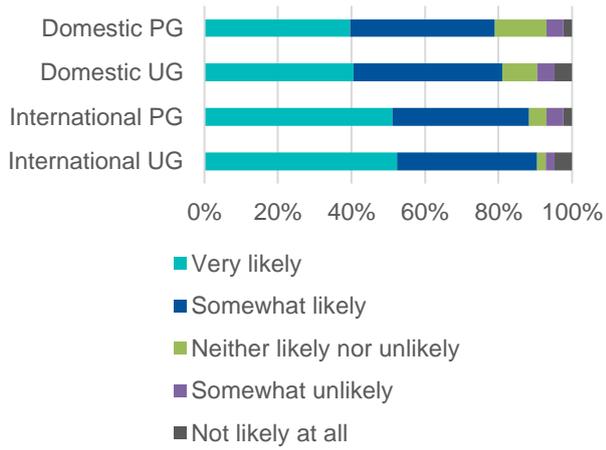
Scenarios for new students



Scenarios for continuing students



Scenario 4: Start delivery online with transition to in person when possible



Scenario 5: Delivery of remainder of course online

