02477 Bayesian Machine Learning Exam F24R - solution

Rev 1.0

```
%matplotlib inline
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import numpy as np
import seaborn as snb
snb.set_style('darkgrid')
```

Part 1: Multi-class classification

Question 1.1

The prior distribution is identified as $p(\boldsymbol{W}) = \prod_{ij} \mathcal{N}(W_{ij}|0,\alpha^{-1})$ and the likelihood is given by $p(y_n|\boldsymbol{f}_n) = \operatorname{Categorical}(\operatorname{softmax}(\boldsymbol{f}_n))$, or alternatively, $p(y_n|\boldsymbol{W}) = \operatorname{Categorical}(\operatorname{softmax}(\boldsymbol{W}\phi(\boldsymbol{x}_n)))$.

Question 1.2

```
# MAP estimate
Wmap = np.array([[-0.5, -2], [3.0, 0.0], [1.0, 1.0]])
# point for prediction
xstar = -1
phi = lambda x: np.array([1, x])
phi_star = phi(xstar)
# apply linear model and softmax
softmax = lambda x: np.exp(x)/np.sum(np.exp(x))
p_plugin = softmax(Wmap@phi_star)

print('Wmap matrix for plug-in approximation')
print(np.array2string(Wmap, precision=2))
print(''Approximate posterior predictive distribution for x^* using plugin approximation')
for i in range(3):
    print(f'p(y**={i+1}|x^*) = {p_plugin[i]:3.2f}')
```

Question 1.3

```
W1 = np.array([[-0.15, -1.92], [3.2, 0.45], [1.37, 0.80]])
W2 = np.array([[-0.31, -2.03], [2.98, 0.08], [1.03, 1.29]])
W3 = np.array([[-0.35, -1.98], [3.09, 0.07], [1.3, 0.96]])
print('Posterior samples of W')
print(np.array2string(W1, precision=2))
print('')
print(np.array2string(W2, precision=2))
print('')
print(np.array2string(W3, precision=2))
print('')
# computer MC estimate
W samples = [W1, W2, W3]
p samples = [softmax(Wi@phi star) for Wi in W samples]
p mc = np.mean(p samples, axis=0)
print('Approximate posterior predictive distribution for x^* using MC estimation')
for i in range(3):
    print(f'p(y^{**}=\{i+1\}|x^{**}) = \{p mc[i]:3.2f\}')
Posterior samples of W
[[-0.15 -1.92]
[ 3.2 0.45]
[ 1.37 0.8 ]]
[[-0.31 -2.03]
[ 2.98 0.08]
[ 1.03 1.29]]
[[-0.35 -1.98]
[ 3.09 0.07]
[ 1.3 0.96]]
Approximate posterior predictive distribution for x^* using MC estimation
p(y^{**}=1|x^{*}) = 0.22
p(y^{**}=2|x^{*}) = 0.72
p(y^{**}=3|x^{*}) = 0.05
```

Question 1.4

```
# pred. dist
p = np.array([0.00, 0.27, 0.73])
```

```
def entropy(p):
    idx = p > 0
    return -np.sum(p[idx]*np.log(p[idx]))

confidence = lambda x: np.max(x)

print(f'Confidence is: {confidence(p):3.2f}')
print(f'Entropy (natural log) is: {entropy(p):3.2f}')
Confidence is: 0.73
```

Question 1.5

Entropy (natural log) is: 0.58

When α is **increased**, the prior variance α^{-1} is **decreased** and hence the prior becomes tighter around $W_{ij}=0$. Consequently, the weights will be regularized stronger towards zero and thus the coefficients of MAP estimate are expected to be numerically smaller. Alternatively, we can argue that the posterior is a compromise between the prior and posterior and if the prior concentrates around zero, the mass of the posterior will around shift towards $W_{ij}=0$.

Part 2: Gaussian process regression

```
# data
x = np.array([-2, 0, 2])[:, None]
y = np.array([-2.01, 1.41, 0.23])[:, None]
```

Question 2.1

By comparing the expression for the kernel k_1 to the standard formulation of the squared exponential, we can identify the magnitude of the kernel is $\kappa = \sqrt{2}$ and the lengthscale to $\ell = 2$.

Question 2.2

```
X1
                           -- NxD matrix
           X2
                           -- MxD matrix
           kappa
                           -- magnitude (positive scalar)
           lengthscale
                           -- characteristic lengthscale (positive scalar)
                           -- non-negative scalar
           iitter
       returns
                           -- NxM matrix
       # extract dimensions
       N. M = X1.shape[0]. X2.shape[0]
       # prep hyperparameters
       kappa = self.kappa if kappa is None else kappa
       lengthscale = self.lengthscale if lengthscale is None else lengthscale
       # compute all the pairwise distances efficiently
       dists = np.sqrt(np.sum((np.expand dims(X1, 1) - np.expand dims(X2, 0))**2, axis=-1))
       # squared exponential covariance function
       K = self.kernel fun(dists, kappa, lengthscale)
       # add jitter to diagonal for numerical stability
       if len(X1) == len(X2) and np.allclose(X1, X2):
           K = K + jitter*np.identity(len(X1))
       assert K.shape == (N, M), f"The shape of K appears wrong. Expected shape ({N}, {M}), but the actual shape was {K.shape}. Please check your code. "
       return K
class GaussianProcessRegression(object):
   def __init__(self, X, y, kernel, kappa=1., lengthscale=1., sigma=1/2, jitter=1e-8):
       Arguments:
           Χ
                            -- NxD input points
                           -- Nx1 observed values
                           -- must be instance of the StationaryIsotropicKernel class
           kernel
           jitter
                           -- non-negative scaler
                          -- magnitude (positive scalar)
           kappa
           lengthscale -- characteristic lengthscale (positive scalar)
                           -- noise std. dev. (positive scalar)
           sigma
       self.X = X
       self.y = y
       self.N = len(X)
       self.kernel = kernel
       self.jitter = jitter
       self.set hyperparameters(kappa, lengthscale, sigma)
   def set hyperparameters(self, kappa, lengthscale, sigma):
       self.kappa = kappa
       self.lengthscale = lengthscale
       self.sigma = sigma
   def predict f(self, Xstar):
       """ returns the posterior distribution of f^* evaluated at each of the points in x^* conditioned on (X, y)
```

```
Arguments:
Xstar
                -- PxD prediction points
returns:
                 -- Px1 mean vector
                 -- PxP covariance matrix
Sigma
# prepare relevant matrices
k = self.kernel.contruct kernel(Xstar, self.X, self.kappa, self.lengthscale, jitter=self.jitter)
K = self.kernel.contruct_kernel(self.X, self.X, self.kappa, self.lengthscale, iitter=self.iitter)
Kstar = self.kernel.contruct kernel(Xstar, Xstar, self.kappa, self.lengthscale, jitter=self.jitter)
# Compute C matrix
C = K + self.sigma**2*np.identity(len(self.X))
# computer mean and Sigma
mu = np.dot(k, np.linalg.solve(C, self.y))
Sigma = Kstar - np.dot(k, np.linalg.solve(C, k.T))
# sanity check for dimensions
assert (mu.shape == (len(Xstar), 1)), f"The shape of the posterior mu seems wrong. Expected ({len(Xstar)}, 1), but actual shape was {mu.shape}. Please check impleme
assert (Sigma.shape == (len(Xstar), len(Xstar))), f"The shape of the posterior Sigma seems wrong. Expected ({len(Xstar)}, {len(Xstar)}), but actual shape was {Sigma
return mu, Sigma
```

```
# specify hyperparameters
ell = 2
kappa = np.sqrt(2)
kernel = StationaryIsotropicKernel(squared_exponential, kappa, ell)

K = kernel.contruct_kernel(x, x)
print('Prior mean\n', np.zeros(len(x)), '\n')
print('Prior covariance\n', np.array2string(K, precision=2))

# The prior covariance could also be computed using a double for loop over k(x, x')
Prior mean
```

[0. 0. 0.]

Prior covariance
[[2. 1.21 0.27]
[1.21 2. 1.21]
[0.27 1.21 2.]

The prior distribution for f is given by $p(f|x) = \mathcal{N}(f|0, K)$, where

$$m{K} = egin{bmatrix} 2 & 1.21 & 0.27 \ 1.21 & 2 & 1.21 \ 0.27 & 1.21 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

Question 2.3

```
# specify hyperparameters
ell = 2
kappa = np.sqrt(2)
sigma = 0.5
model = GaussianProcessRegression(x, y, kernel, kappa=kappa, lengthscale=ell, sigma=sigma)
mu_f, Sigma_f = model.predict_f(x)
print('posterior mean of f')
print(np.array2string(mu_f, precision=2))
print('posterior covariance of f')
print('posterior covariance of f')
print(np.array2string(Sigma_f, precision=2))
posterior mean of f
[[-1.53]
[ 0.89]
```

The analytical posterior distribution of f given y is $p(f|y) = \mathcal{N}(y|m, \Sigma)$, where the posterior mean m is given by

$$oldsymbol{m} = oldsymbol{K} (oldsymbol{K} + \sigma^2 oldsymbol{I})^{-1} oldsymbol{y} = egin{bmatrix} -1.53 \ 0.89 \ 0.43 \end{bmatrix}$$

and the posterior variance

posterior covariance of f [[0.21 0.03 -0.01] [0.03 0.19 0.03] [-0.01 0.03 0.21]]

[0.43]]

$$m{K} = m{K} - m{K} (m{K} + \sigma^2 m{I})^{-1} m{K} = egin{bmatrix} 0.21 & 0.03 & -0.01 \ 0.03 & 0.19 & 0.03 \ -0.01 & 0.03 & 0.21 \end{bmatrix},$$

where $K_{ij} = k(x_i, x_j)$ is the prior covariance between $f(x_i)$ and $f(x_j)$. The expressions for m and K can either be derived from the standard GP regression equations for $x^* = x$ or via the equations for linear Gaussian systems in Section 3.3 in Murphy1.

Question 2.4

The analytical prior variance of f(x) under k_2 is given by

$$\operatorname{Var}\left[f(x)
ight] = k_2(x,x) = \exp(-rac{1}{2}||0-0||_2) + 2 = 1 + 2 = 3$$

for all $x \in \mathbb{R}$.

Part 3: A mixture model

```
# data and hyperparameters
X = np.array([[1, 0.5], [-1, 1]])
y = np.array([1, 0])
m = np.array([1, 1])
tau2 = 1.
sigma2 = 1.
```

Question 3.1

The model $p(y|\theta) = \mathcal{N}(y|X\theta, \sigma^2 I)$ is a linear model with a Gaussian likelihood. Hence, we can compute the maximum likelihood solution using the normal equations

$$\hat{oldsymbol{ heta}}_{ ext{MLE}} = (oldsymbol{X}^Toldsymbol{X})^{-1}oldsymbol{X}^Toldsymbol{y} = egin{bmatrix} 0.67 \ 0.67 \end{bmatrix}$$

```
# solution to the normal equations
theta_MLE = np.linalg.solve(X.T@X, X.T@y)
print('theta MLE = ', np.array2string(theta_MLE, precision=2))
theta MLE = [0.67 0.67]
```

Question 3.2

We evaluate the prior density, $p(m{ heta})$, at $m{ heta} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$ to get:

$$egin{aligned} p\left(egin{bmatrix} 0 \ 0 \end{bmatrix}
ight) &= rac{1}{2} \mathcal{N}\left(egin{bmatrix} 0 \ 0 \end{bmatrix} ert - oldsymbol{m}, au^2 oldsymbol{I}
ight) + rac{1}{2} \mathcal{N}\left(egin{bmatrix} 0 \ 0 \end{bmatrix} ert oldsymbol{m}, au^2 oldsymbol{I}
ight) \ &= rac{1}{2} \mathcal{N}\left(egin{bmatrix} 0 \ 0 \end{bmatrix} ert egin{bmatrix} 1 \ 1 \end{bmatrix}, oldsymbol{I}
ight) + rac{1}{2} \mathcal{N}\left(egin{bmatrix} 0 \ 0 \end{bmatrix} ert egin{bmatrix} 1 \ 1 \end{bmatrix}, oldsymbol{I}
ight) \ &pprox 0.06 \end{aligned}$$

```
from scipy.stats import multivariate_normal as mvn
prior = lambda theta: 0.5*mvn.pdf(theta, -m, tau2*np.identity(2)) + 0.5*mvn.pdf(theta, m, tau2*np.identity(2))
print(f'The prior evaluated at theta = [0, 0] is {prior(np.array([0,0])):3.2f}')
```

The prior evaluated at theta = [0, 0] is 0.06

Question 3.3

The marginal likelihood is given by sum rule:

$$\begin{split} p(\mathbf{y}) &= \int p(\mathbf{y}|\boldsymbol{\theta}) p(\boldsymbol{\theta}) \mathrm{d}\boldsymbol{\theta} \\ &= \int \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{y}|\mathbf{X}\boldsymbol{\theta}, \sigma^2 \mathbf{I}) \left[\frac{1}{2} \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\theta}|-\boldsymbol{m}, \tau^2 \mathbf{I}) + \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\theta}|\boldsymbol{m}, \tau^2 \mathbf{I}) \right] \mathrm{d}\boldsymbol{\theta} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \int \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{y}|\mathbf{X}\boldsymbol{\theta}, \sigma^2 \mathbf{I}) \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\theta}|-\boldsymbol{m}, \tau^2 \mathbf{I}) \mathrm{d}\boldsymbol{\theta} + \frac{1}{2} \int \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{y}|\mathbf{X}\boldsymbol{\theta}, \sigma^2 \mathbf{I}) \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\theta}|\boldsymbol{m}, \tau^2 \mathbf{I}) \mathrm{d}\boldsymbol{\theta} \end{split}$$

Both integrals are now recognized as a marginalization of a linear Gaussian system, which can be solved via the equations in Section 3.3 in Murphy1 to give

$$p(\mathbf{y}) = rac{1}{2}\mathcal{N}(oldsymbol{y}|-oldsymbol{X}oldsymbol{m}, au^2oldsymbol{X}oldsymbol{X}^T+\sigma^2oldsymbol{I}) + rac{1}{2}\mathcal{N}(oldsymbol{y}|oldsymbol{X}oldsymbol{m}, au^2oldsymbol{X}oldsymbol{X}^T+\sigma^2oldsymbol{I})$$

Question 3.4

Bayes rule yields

$$p(oldsymbol{ heta}|oldsymbol{y}) = rac{p(oldsymbol{y}|oldsymbol{ heta})p(oldsymbol{ heta})}{p(oldsymbol{y})}$$

and evaluating for $oldsymbol{ heta} = \left[egin{matrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{smallmatrix} \right]$ yields

$$p\left(\begin{bmatrix}0\\0\end{bmatrix}|\boldsymbol{y}\right) = \frac{\mathcal{N}\left(\boldsymbol{y}|\boldsymbol{X}\begin{bmatrix}0\\0\end{bmatrix},\sigma^{2}\boldsymbol{I}\right)\begin{bmatrix}\frac{1}{2}\mathcal{N}\left(\begin{bmatrix}0\\0\end{bmatrix}|-\boldsymbol{m},\tau^{2}\boldsymbol{I}\right) + \frac{1}{2}\mathcal{N}\left(\begin{bmatrix}0\\0\end{bmatrix}|\boldsymbol{m},\tau^{2}\boldsymbol{I}\right)\end{bmatrix}}{\frac{1}{2}\mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{y}|-\boldsymbol{X}\boldsymbol{m},\tau^{2}\boldsymbol{X}\boldsymbol{X}^{T} + \sigma^{2}\boldsymbol{I}) + \frac{1}{2}\mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{y}|\boldsymbol{X}\boldsymbol{m},\tau^{2}\boldsymbol{X}\boldsymbol{X}^{T} + \sigma^{2}\boldsymbol{I})}$$

$$\approx \frac{0.10\cdot0.06}{0.04} \approx 0.15$$

```
theta0 = np.array([0,0])
C = tau2*XQX.T + sigma2*np.identity(2)

evidence = 0.5*mvn.pdf(y, -X@m, C) + 0.5*mvn.pdf(y, X@m, C)
lik_term = mvn.pdf(y, X@theta0, sigma2*np.eye(2))
prior_term = prior(theta0)
post_term = lik_term*prior_term/evidence

print(f'p(y|theta) = {lik_term*3.2f}')
print(f'p(theta) = {prior_term*3.2f}')
print(f'p(y) = {evidence:3.2f}')
print(f'p(theta|y) = {post_term:3.2f}')
p(y|theta) = 0.10
p(theta) = 0.06
p(y) = 0.04
p(theta|y) = 0.15
```

Part 4: A generalized linear model

Question 4.1

Based on the plots we identify the MLE as approximately

$$oldsymbol{w}_{ ext{\{MLE}\}}pprox \left[egin{array}{c} 0.5 \ -0.2 \end{array}
ight]$$

And the MAP as approximately

$$oldsymbol{w}_{ ext{\{MAP\}}} pprox egin{bmatrix} -0.25 \ -0.25 \end{bmatrix}$$

Question 4.2

For $x^* = 0$, the prior mean becomes

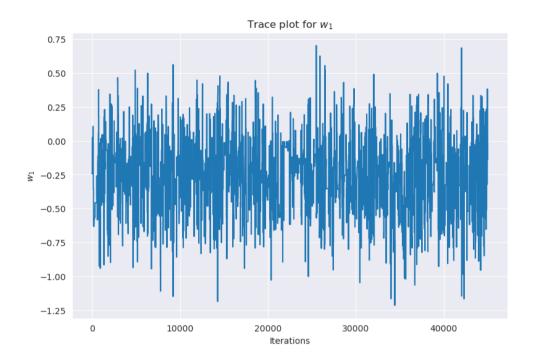
$$\mathbb{E}\left[\mu(0)
ight] = \mathbb{E}\left[\exp(3+w_10+w_20^2)
ight] = \mathbb{E}\left[\exp(3)
ight] = \exp(3)$$

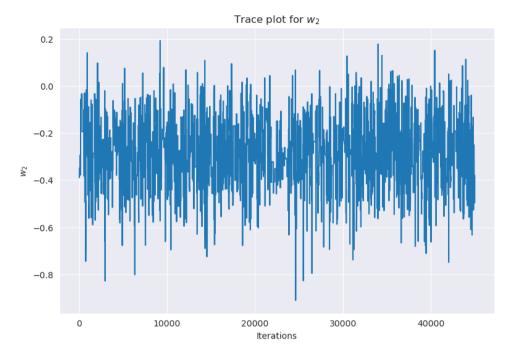
Note that the argument that $\mathbb{E}[\mu(0)]$ is zero because the prior on \boldsymbol{w} is zero in not correct.

Question 4.3

```
def metropolis(log joint, num params, tau, num iter, theta init=None, seed=None):
    """ Runs a Metropolis-Hastings sampler
       Arguments:
       log joint:
                           function for evaluating the log joint distribution
                           number of parameters of the joint distribution (integer)
       num params:
                           standard deviation of the Gaussian proposal distribution (positive real)
       tau:
       num iter:
                           number of iterations (interger)
       theta init:
                                vector of initial values (np.array with shape (num params) or None)
       seed:
                           seed (integer or None)
       returns
       thetas
                                np.array with MCMC samples (np.array with shape (num iter+1, num params))
                            acceptance rate (non negative scalar)
       accept rate
   if seed is not None:
       np.random.seed(seed)
   if theta init is None:
       theta init = np.zeros((num params))
   # prepare lists
   thetas = [theta_init]
   accepts = []
   log_p_x = log_joint(theta_init)
```

```
for k in range(num iter):
        # get the last value for x and generate new proposal candidate
        x cur = thetas[-1]
        x star = x cur + np.random.normal(0, tau, size=(num params))
        # evaluate the log density for the candidate sample
        log p x star = log joint(x star)
        # compute acceptance probability
        log r = log p x star - log p x
        A = \min(1, \text{ np.exp}(\log r))
        # accept new candidate with probability A
        if np.random.uniform() < A:</pre>
            x next = x star
            \log p_x = \log_p_xstar
            accepts.append(1)
        else:
            x next = x cur
            accepts.append(0)
        thetas.append(x next)
    thetas = np.stack(thetas)
    return thetas, np.mean(accepts)
# data
x = np.array([1., 2., 3.])
y = np.array([10, 4, 1])
alpha = 8
# design matrix
X = np.column stack((x, x**2))
from scipy.stats import poisson
# implement log joint
def log joint(w):
    mu = np.exp(3 + X@w)
    log_prior = mvn.logpdf(w, np.zeros(2), 1/alpha*np.identity(2))
    log lik = poisson.logpmf(y, mu).sum()
    return log_prior + log_lik
samples, accept = metropolis(log joint, num params=2, tau=1, num iter=50000, theta init=np.array([0, 0]))
# remove warm-up
samples = samples[5000:, :]
fig, ax = plt.subplots(1, 2, figsize=(20, 6))
for i in range(2):
    ax[i].plot(samples[:, i])
    ax[i].set(xlabel='Iterations', ylabel=f'$w {i+1}$', title=f'Trace plot for $w {i+1}$')
```





Question 4.4

```
print(f'p(w_1 > 0|y) = \{np.mean(samples[:, 0] > 0):3.2f\}')

p(w_1 > 0|y) = 0.16
```

Questions 4.5

```
xstar = 1.5
mu_samples = np.exp(3 + samples[:, 0]*xstar + samples[:, 1]*xstar**2)
print(f'p(mu^* > 7|y) = {np.mean(mu_samples > 7):3.2f}')
p(mu^* > 7|y) = 0.57
```

Question 4.6

```
y_samples = np.random.poisson(mu_samples)
np.percentile(mu_samples, [5, 95])
array([ 5.00137416, 10.46926495])
```

Part 5: A non-linear Gaussian model

Question 5.1

We have that

$$\mathbb{E}\left[y
ight] = rac{1}{S} \sum_{i=1}^{S} y^{(i)} pprox 1.67,$$

where $y^{(i)}|w^{(i)} \sim \mathcal{N}(e^{w^{(i)}},1)$ and $w^{(i)} \sim \mathcal{N}(0,1)$.

Alternatively, we could also reason that $y=e^w+\epsilon$, where $\epsilon\sim\mathcal{N}(0,\sigma^2)$ and $w\sim\mathcal{N}(0,1)$. The prior mean of y can therefore also be computed estimated as

$$\mathbb{E}\left[e^{w}+\epsilon
ight]=\mathbb{E}\left[e^{w}
ight]pproxrac{1}{S}\sum_{i=1}^{S}e^{w^{(i)}}pprox1.57,$$

for $w^{(i)} \sim \mathcal{N}(0,1)$. The specific numerical result may vary a bit depending on the random seed.

```
np.random.seed(0)

# ancestral sampling
S = 1000
w_samples = np.random.normal(0, 1, size=S)
y_samples = np.random.normal(np.exp(w_samples), 1, size=S)
print(f'Prior mean of y = {np.mean(y_samples):3.2f}')
```

Prior mean of y = 1.57

Questions 5.2

We have

$$\log p(y,w) = \log \mathcal{N}(y|e^w,1) + \log \mathcal{N}(w|0,1)$$

and thus the log joint y=5 and $w=w_{\mathrm{MAP}}$ becomes

```
# log pdf of univariate Gaussian
log_npdf = lambda x, m, v: -(x-m)**2/(2*v) - 0.5*np.log(2*np.pi*v)

# model
log_prior = lambda w: log_npdf(w, 0, 1)
log_lik = lambda w: log_npdf(5, np.exp(w), 1)
log_joint = lambda w: log_prior(w) + log_lik(w)

w_map = 1.293404

print(f'Log joint at w_map: {log_joint(w_map):3.2f}')
```

Log joint at w map: -3.59

Question 5.3

The logarithm of the joint disitribution is

$$egin{aligned} \log p(y,w) &= \log \mathcal{N}(y|e^w,1) + \log \mathcal{N}(w|0,1) \ &= -rac{1}{2}(y-e^w)^2 - rac{1}{2}w^2 + ext{const} \end{aligned}$$

Computing the first derivative wrt. w yields

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial w} \log p(y, w) = -\frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial w} (y - e^w)^2 - \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial w} w^2 + \text{const}$$

$$= (y - e^w) e^w - w$$

$$= y e^w - e^{2w} - w$$
(via chain rule)

The second derivative becomes

$$rac{\partial^2}{\partial w^2}{
m log}\, p(y,w) = yrac{\partial}{\partial w}e^w - rac{\partial}{\partial w}e^{2w} - rac{\partial}{\partial w}w = ye^w - 2e^{2w} - 1$$

The second derivative at $w=w_{\mathrm{MAP}}$ is then

$$H=ye^{w_{ ext{MAP}}}-2e^{2w_{ ext{MAP}}}-1pprox -9.34$$

Since the Laplace approximation is given by $p(w|y) \approx q(w) = \mathcal{N}(w|w_{\text{MAP}}, -H^{-1})$, the approximate posterior mean is $\mathbb{E}[w|y] = w_{\text{MAP}} \approx 1.29$ and the approximate posterior variance is $\mathbb{V}[w|y] = -\frac{1}{9.34} \approx 0.11$

```
y = 5

H = y*np.exp(w_map) - 2*np.exp(2*w_map) - 1
posterior_mean = w_map
posterior_var = -1./H

print(f'The posterior mean is: {posterior_mean:3.2f}')
print(f'The posterior variance is: {posterior_var:3.2f}')
The posterior mean is: 1.29
```

Question 5.4

The posterior variance is: 0.11

Since the Laplace approximations assumes a Gaussian distribution, and because Gaussians are symmetric, the approximate posterior probability of the event $p>w_{\mathrm{MAP}}$ will be 0.5 by construction.