



# LIT 870

## Research Thesis I: Preparation

S1 Evening 2014

*English*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MA in (Children's Literature or English Literature)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit involves practise-based research training aimed at developing student research skills. It focuses on the location, evaluation, management and use of research material and the development of key skills required for a research project.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Identify a suitable and unique research topic (with an appropriate scope) for a Masters research dissertation.

Gain insight into academic research culture and learn how to align your research and writing with such a culture.

Develop skills in critically analysing and evaluating scholarly research

Create and maintain an accurate and effective research bibliography.

Gain a clear understanding of academic discourse and how its linguistic style and form constitute a particular genre of writing.

Acquire the necessary writing skills for producing an academic research dissertation.

## Assessment Tasks

| Name                                       | Weighting | Due            |
|--|-----------|----------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Research Proposal</u></a>   | 40%       | 24 March, 2013 |
| <a href="#"><u>Thesis chapter</u></a>      | 50%       | 2 June, 2013   |
| <a href="#"><u>Class participation</u></a> | 10%       | N/A            |

### Research Proposal

Due: **24 March, 2013**

Weighting: **40%**

Students must submit a research proposal which outlines their thesis topic and the scope of their project.

The objective in writing a proposal is to describe what you will do, why it should be done, how you will do it and what you expect will result. A clean, well thought-out, proposal forms the backbone for the thesis itself.

This proposal should be approximately 600 words in length.

Proposals will be evaluated according to:

1. Originality and innovation.
2. Demonstrated awareness of research context (i.e. how does the proposal contextualise the project against existing research?).
3. Articulation of scope (Does the proposal accurately outline the framework of the project? – its boundaries, primary corpus, etc.)
4. Theoretical orientation (Does the proposal articulate a coherent and relevant theoretical framework for its main argument?)

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify a suitable and unique research topic (with an appropriate scope) for a Masters research dissertation.
- Develop skills in critically analysing and evaluating scholarly research
- Acquire the necessary writing skills for producing an academic research dissertation.

### Thesis chapter

Due: **2 June, 2013**

Weighting: **50%**

Students must submit a chapter of their thesis, approximately 4000 words in length. This chapter need not be the first chapter in the thesis, but it must have a coherent conceptual orientation, and this conceptual orientation must be demonstrated through relevant textual analysis. This chapter must also be completed in conjunction with your Masters Research Thesis Supervisor. (You must meet with your supervisor at least twice before submitting this chapter.)

Your thesis chapter will be evaluated according to the criteria used for grading Masters research theses. These criteria are:

- Has the candidate addressed critical literature relevant to the thesis, doing so to an extent and in a manner appropriate for this research level?
- Does the thesis show appropriate skills in the organisation and analysis of material and in its literary presentation?
- Does the thesis show research ability and/or the capacity for independent thought?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop skills in critically analysing and evaluating scholarly research
- Create and maintain an accurate and effective research bibliography.
- Gain a clear understanding of academic discourse and how its linguistic style and form constitute a particular genre of writing.
- Acquire the necessary writing skills for producing an academic research dissertation.

## Class participation

Due: **N/A**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will be graded on their class participation. If internal, they will be graded on their class contribution and preparation. If external, they will be graded on the basis of their participation in the iLearn Discussion Board.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify a suitable and unique research topic (with an appropriate scope) for a Masters research dissertation.
- Gain insight into academic research culture and learn how to align your research and writing with such a culture.
- Develop skills in critically analysing and evaluating scholarly research
- Gain a clear understanding of academic discourse and how its linguistic style and form constitute a particular genre of writing.

## Delivery and Resources

**\*Please note that there are only 4 seminars for this unit. Seminar 2 will take place in the library.**

### **REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS**

There are no set texts for this unit. Students will need to read one article prior to the Research Methodology session in week 4. This article is available on the LIT 870 iLearn site.

### **UNIT WEBPAGE AND TECHNOLOGY USED AND REQUIRED**

Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au> PC and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement. Please consult teaching staff for any further, more specific requirements.

### **To complete LIT 870 students must:**

1. Attend and participate in all seminars (if internal).\*
2. Participate in online discussions on the LIT 870 iLearn site (if external).
3. Attend at least two meetings with your thesis supervisor (these meetings are an attendance requirement of the unit).\*\*
4. Complete all prescribed assessment tasks.
5. Reach a satisfactory level of achievement in the prescribed assessment tasks.

\*Absence from more than two seminars without written explanation (medical or counselling certificate) will disqualify a student from passing the unit. University regulations also stipulate that a student must attempt every part of assessment in order to be eligible to pass a unit of study.

\*\*Students enrolled externally can make alternative arrangements if a face-to-face meeting with the supervisor is not possible. (These meetings can be conducted on the phone or via a series of emails.)

### **Notes on Class Participation for External Students**

External students must participate in online discussions via the LIT 870 iLearn site. External students should read the weekly texts and prepare the seminar discussion topics in advance, then post responses to the seminar questions and respond to the postings of other students, to facilitate an active discussion such as would occur in a face-to-face seminar. Students are also encouraged to raise other relevant points of interest in their online discussions. Be prepared to question the opinions of others, to have your opinions challenged and to participate actively in discussion. External students are expected to make at least 3 posts\* over the semester. \*A "post" is defined as a discursive response relevant to unit interests of at least 50 words: a short paragraph of at least 4 sentences.

## Unit Schedule

**Week 1: Identifying a research topic and writing a research proposal**

**Week 2: Research – How to Use the Macquarie Library**

**Week 3: Research Methods**

**Week 4: Writing a Dissertation – Academic Writing Style**

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)

- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcomes

- Identify a suitable and unique research topic (with an appropriate scope) for a Masters research dissertation.
- Develop skills in critically analysing and evaluating scholarly research
- Create and maintain an accurate and effective research bibliography.
- Gain a clear understanding of academic discourse and how its linguistic style and form constitute a particular genre of writing.
- Acquire the necessary writing skills for producing an academic research dissertation.

#### Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Thesis chapter
- Class participation

### PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and

knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Identify a suitable and unique research topic (with an appropriate scope) for a Masters research dissertation.
- Gain insight into academic research culture and learn how to align your research and writing with such a culture.
- Develop skills in critically analysing and evaluating scholarly research
- Gain a clear understanding of academic discourse and how its linguistic style and form constitute a particular genre of writing.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Research Proposal
- Thesis chapter
- Class participation

## **PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability**

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Identify a suitable and unique research topic (with an appropriate scope) for a Masters research dissertation.
- Gain insight into academic research culture and learn how to align your research and writing with such a culture.
- Develop skills in critically analysing and evaluating scholarly research
- Create and maintain an accurate and effective research bibliography.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Research Proposal
- Thesis chapter
- Class participation



## PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Gain a clear understanding of academic discourse and how its linguistic style and form constitute a particular genre of writing.
- Acquire the necessary writing skills for producing an academic research dissertation.

### Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Thesis chapter
- Class participation

## PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Assessment task

- Class participation

## PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

- Identify a suitable and unique research topic (with an appropriate scope) for a Masters research dissertation.

## Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Class participation