



SPED102

Why People Believe Weird Things: Making Rational Decisions in an Irrational World

S2 Day 2015

Institute of Early Childhood

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Mark Carter

sped102@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

X5A106

Tuesday 1-2, Thursday 9-10

Tutor

Nicholas Best

nicholas.best@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

X5A113

Wednesday 11-1

Tutor

Kathleen Doolan

kathleen.doolan@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

X5A113

Friday 11-1

Tutor

Ian Krycer

ian.krycer@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

X5A113

Friday 11-12, 2-3

Tutor

Andrew Wowk

andrew.wowk@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

X5A113

Tuesday 3-5pm

Tutor

Sarah Carlon

sarah.carlon@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

X5A113

Wednesday 11-1

Greg Robertson

greg.robertson@mq.edu.au

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides an introduction to why people make irrational decisions and how an understanding of the scientific process can assist making rational decisions in everyday life. The unit will include examination of flaws in human perception and cognitive biases, characteristics of pseudoscience as well as features and limitations of scientific approaches. Principles discussed in the unit will be illustrated with practical examples including paranormal claims, questionable educational interventions and dubious health claims. You will be equipped with tools to evaluate evidence, strengthen your reasoning and improve your decision making in both academic study as well as everyday life.

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:

Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.

Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.

Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.

Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

General Assessment Information

Compulsory Assessment Tasks

Attendance must be satisfactory and all assessment tasks must be attempted for students to be eligible for an overall passing grade in the unit. Students who do not attempt

all assessment tasks will receive a maximum SNG of 40 and an overall grade of Fail (F) for the unit.

Students are required to gain an overall pass on the unit, but do not have to pass all assessment components. If you perform poorly on one component, you may compensate for this with an improved performance in the other components.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

You must read the University's practices and procedures on Academic Honesty. These are available at: http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

The policies and procedures explain what academic honesty and plagiarism are, how to avoid plagiarism, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism, and the penalties if you are found guilty. Penalties may include a deduction of marks, failure in the unit, and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee. Details of possible penalties are at http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/schedule_penalties.html

Other important points:

- Close paraphrasing of another persons' writing is considered to be plagiarism. You must express ideas using your own words.
- Claim of ignorance of the University policy on plagiarism is NOT a defence in this unit. If you do not understand the preceding information, please seek advice from a member of the academic staff.

All students are strongly advised to complete the Student Academic Integrity Module which is available at:

http://www.students.mq.edu.au/support/learning_skills/academic_integrity_module_for_students/

University Assessment Policies

The University Assessment Policy, Code of Practice and Procedures are available at

- <http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>
- http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_code_of_practice.html
- <http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/procedure.html>

Standardised Transcript Marks

Your overall unit result will be assigned a standardised numerical grade (SNG) on your University transcript. High Distinction grades are assigned a mark between 85 and 100, Distinction grades between 75 and 84, Credit grades between 65 and 74, Pass grades between 50 and 64, and Fail grades below 50. For further information, see the Grading Policy.

Please note that SNGs are NOT percentages and grade cutoffs will vary from assessment to assessment.

Grade Descriptors

The following generic grade descriptors are applied across the University.

High Distinction: Provides consistent evidence of deep and critical understanding in relation to the learning outcomes. There is substantial originality and insight in identifying, generating and communicating competing arguments, perspectives or problem solving approaches; critical evaluation of problems, their solutions and their implications; creativity in application as appropriate to the discipline.

Distinction: Provides evidence of integration and evaluation of critical ideas, principles and theories, distinctive insight and ability in applying relevant skills and concepts in relation to learning outcomes. There is demonstration of frequent originality in defining and analysing issues or problems and providing solutions; and the use of means of communication appropriate to the discipline and the audience.

Credit: Provides evidence of learning that goes beyond replication of content knowledge or skills relevant to the learning outcomes. There is demonstration of substantial understanding of fundamental concepts in the field of study and the ability to apply these concepts in a variety of contexts; convincing argumentation with appropriate coherent justification; communication of ideas fluently and clearly in terms of the conventions of the discipline.

Pass: Provides sufficient evidence of the achievement of learning outcomes. There is demonstration of understanding and application of fundamental concepts of the field of study; routine argumentation with acceptable justification; communication of information and ideas adequately in terms of the conventions of the discipline. The learning attainment is considered satisfactory or adequate or competent or capable in relation to the specified outcomes.

Fail: Does not provide evidence of attainment of learning outcomes. There is missing or partial or superficial or faulty understanding and application of the fundamental concepts in the field of study; missing, undeveloped, inappropriate or confusing argumentation; incomplete, confusing or lacking communication of ideas in ways that give little attention to the conventions of the discipline.

Appeals Against Grades for individual Assessment Components

If any student has concern about the marking of an assessment, they must:

1. Consult the member of staff who marked the work.
2. If there is no satisfactory resolution, an appeal should be made in writing to the unit convenor within one week of the marked assessment being returned or of results being made available. The student should explicitly state the basis of the appeal.
3. The unit convenor will review the marking and may, at their discretion, ask for re-marking by a second marker. If re-marking by a second marker is judged appropriate, the final mark will normally be the average of the two marks awarded for the assessment task. Students should note that the revised mark for the task may be higher, the same or lower

than the original mark. Please note that it is unit policy to double mark all failing assessments.

The decision of the unit convenor is final.

Appeals Against Final Unit Grades

Students should refer to the Macquarie University Handbook 2015 for information about appeals against a final grade. The Handbook is at <http://handbook.mq.edu.au/2015/>

You should also read the policy at <http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

The first step of the appeal process must be made within 20 days of the release of the unit results. As for requests for special consideration, appeals against final grades must be made through <http://ask.mq.edu.au>.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Attendance	0%	No	Ongoing
Participation	10%	No	Varies
Topic Quizzes	40%	No	Weeks nominated in schedule
Assignment	15%	No	11/9/15 at 11:59 pm
Final Examination	35%	No	Examination period

Attendance

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **0%**

As this is an internal unit, attendance of tutorials is compulsory for all students and students must pass this component to pass the unit. A pass requires 80% attendance of tutorials. Students must attend for the **whole session or seek tutor consent to leave early or they will be regarded as being absent. If you have a legitimate reason for leaving early, you must seek approval from the tutor on each occasion.**

A roll will be distributed in each tutorial session. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they sign-on for each tutorial attended. Tutors cannot keep track of individual student attendance. **Failure to sign the roll will be considered an absence from that tutorial.**

How Do I Change Tutorials?

Groups have ceiling numbers because of room capacity, OH&S regulations and, in fairness to all students, to ensure groups are not too large to teach. Tutorial changes can be made by:

- In the first two weeks of semester changes can ONLY be made via eStudent if there is a

vacancy available.

- After the first two weeks, requests for changes can be emailed to sped102@mq.edu.au. We will ONLY accommodate requests where this is practically possible and preference will be given to requests with supporting documentation (e.g., letter from an employer).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
- Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

Participation

Due: **Varies**

Weighting: **10%**

Students may earn up to a total of 10% through participation in nominated online or in-class unit related activities (e.g., presentations in class, completing online questionnaires that will be used as the basis for tutorial discussion). **Participation points may only be earned for in-tutorial activities when students are attending their registered tutorial. Students attending out of their registered tutorial group will not be eligible for participation points allocated within that tutorial.**

Please note that the end of semester ASGS questionnaire is compulsory and you may only earn a maximum of 8 points if you do not complete this questionnaire. Students only need to accumulate 10 participation points over the course of the semester to earn the full 10%. However, additional participation may be taken into account where requests for special consideration are made. Planned participation activities are detailed below but additional activities may be announced throughout the semester.

Activity

Date Due

Participation Points

*(1) Online registration for Psychic Personality Reading Experiment

AND

*(2) Online rating of Psychic Personality Reading Experiment

(Both tasks must be completed for allocation of any points).

(1) 9pm 31/7/15

AND

(2) 9pm 2/8/15

2

*Beginning of unit online completion of ASGS Questionnaire

9pm 31/7/15

1

*Participation in in-class eyewitness memory experiment

Week 3

2

Participation in preparation for bad science proposal

Week 8

2

Participation in presentation of bad science proposal

Week 9

2

Bonus point for best bad science proposal

Week 9

1

**End of unit online completion of of ASGS Questionnaire

1/11/15

2

Spokesperson reporting back on small group discussion (preference to students who have not previously presented)

Tutorials - Multiple opportunities

Multiple (1 point each)

Note: *Task may be linked to research data collection. Students may decline to have data included for research purposes but participation will still count. **Task is compulsory and must be completed to be eligible for the full 10 participation points. If you do not complete this task, you will be eligible for a maximum of 8 participation points.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
- Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

Topic Quizzes

Due: **Weeks nominated in schedule**

Weighting: **40%**

A total of 9 Topic Quizzes will be conducted and each will be of 5 minutes duration and will typically consist of 5 multiple choice questions. These quizzes will assess knowledge and understanding of required reading for the relevant tutorial (typically 3-4 questions) as well as key concepts from the preceding topic (typically 1-2 questions). For example, the quiz conducted in the second week of the semester will cover the reading for Topic 2 and the content of Topic 1. **Please note that the required readings for the first quiz include the Unit Guide. Dates for quizzes and required readings are available in the Unit Schedule section of this guide.**

The best 7 scores in these quizzes will count toward the final mark for this component of the assessment. Students may elect not to complete all of the Topic Quizzes but will be disadvantaged if they complete less than 7. **The facility to disregard quiz scores is designed to allow for missed quizzes due to events such as lateness, illness, political or industrial action, religious or public holidays, PACE unit requirement, cancelled classes and other disruptions.** Remember that the University regulations require 80% attendance or better to pass the unit.

There will be no provision for repeats of the Topic Quizzes under any circumstances as only 7 quizzes need to be completed and 80% attendance is required. In cases where acceptable unavoidable disruption to study is **documented** for **more than 2** missed quizzes, students may submit a request for special consideration via:

<https://www.ask.mq.edu.au>

If you have documented unavoidable disruption to studies affecting **more than two tutorials** your overall result will be calculated by averaging your scores for the remaining quizzes up to a total of seven.

Topic Quizzes will be conducted in the first 5 minutes of the session. **Students arriving late may elect to attempt the quiz in the remaining time but no additional time will be allocated.** Students may not complete the Topic Quiz and then leave a session. Sessions must be attended in whole or the quiz result will be discarded.

Full instructions will be issued at the beginning of each tutorial and any breach of these instructions may result in the score being discarded. The use of references or notes is not allowed during the Topic Quizzes and they must be completed individually. Students may only write on the answer card. Any collaboration or other misconduct may be referred to the

University for disciplinary action.

Feedback

The results of Topic Quizzes for students will be posted on the unit web site as soon as possible following the tutorial session.

Answers to Topic Quizzes will be provided by the tutor in the week following the relevant quiz. You may also contact your tutor to review your quiz at any point during the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
- Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

Assignment

Due: **11/9/15 at 11:59 pm**

Weighting: **15%**

The assignment will be provided on the iLearn site at the beginning of Week 4. Details of the assignment and the form on which the assignment **MUST** be submitted will be provided in the Assessment section of the web site.

The assignment will take a short answer format and you will be required to apply concepts covered in the unit to analyse a provided scenario and/or webpages, including analysis of possible red flags/signs of pseudoscience and/or feature of a scientific approach.

Provide a reference list for any references cited using APA style. A style guide is provided in the Assessment section of the web site.

How Do I Submit My Assignment?

A link for assignment submission will be provided in the Assessment section of the web site. All assignments must be submitted via this link where they will be subject to a plagiarism check.

What is the Word Limit?

Each question of the assignment has a word limit and the total maximum words for the assignment is 600 words. This includes in text citations but excludes your reference list. Markers will not read beyond the stated limit.

What About a Cover Sheet

The provided form for completion of the assignment includes the cover sheet. Note that the checklist on the assignment cover sheet should be completed to assist to make sure that you have met the requirements.

Can I Get an Extension?

Extensions may be granted in extenuating circumstances where documented unavoidable disruption to study occurs (see the University Disruption to Studies Policy in the Policies and Procedures section of this guide). Reasons for the extension need to be documented through the special consideration form accessible through <http://ask.mq.edu.au> and supported (e.g., a Professional Authority Form in the case of illness). Please note that medical certificates are NOT accepted as evidence of illness - a Professional Authority Form must be provided.

Extension requests should be submitted before the due date. Extensions are usually not granted on the due date. **Post-due date applications for extensions will not be considered under any circumstances except when the student can provide documentary evidence that it was impossible to complete a special consideration form before the due date.**

Note that:

- Extensions will only be considered on receipt of the completed form submitted through <http://ask.mq.edu.au>, plus relevant documentation. Extension requests via any other means (e.g., email) will NOT be accepted.
- It is essential that you plan ahead and organise your study time effectively. Poor time management is not grounds for an extension

Can I Submit a Late Assignment?

Assignments received after the due date will be accepted provided they are received no later than **10 calendar days late**. Note that this is a period of grace, not a new deadline, and extension requests for events after the original due date will not be considered. No assignment will be accepted after 10 days, except when an extension has been applied for before the due date and granted.

After the due date (unless an extension has been granted) a late penalty will be applied, leading to a reduction in the awarded mark. The late penalty is 5% of the total mark for each **calendar day** the assignment is outstanding beyond the due date. These penalties are imposed in fairness to students who submit assignments on time.

When is the Deadline?

The deadline is 11:59 pm on the due date. Note that this means you must submit **BEFORE** 11:59 pm. Note that it takes time to upload your assignment to Turnitin. This is normally quite quick but will depend on the speed of your internet connection at the time. The submission time is the time that assignment is recorded as received by Turnitin as we can not verify the time you started uploading. You need to allow time for the upload. **Do not leave submission of your assignment to the last hours (or minutes).**

What if My Assignment is Only 11 Seconds Late?

Late is late. Any submission after the deadline will be considered late. **Do not leave submission of your assignment to the last hours (or minutes).**

What if My Hard Disk Crashed, My Pet Hippopotamus Ate My Computer, etc?

Computer problems will not be accepted as reasons for extensions. You are responsible for making sure your work is adequately backed up. Make sure your work is regularly backed up on a USB drive or to a cloud-based backup and **don't leave your submission to the last minute.** Always keep your hippopotamus and computer in separate rooms.

What if I Accidentally Submit a Blank Assignment, the Wrong Document, etc?

We can only mark what you submit. **Make sure you re-download your assignment from the location that it was submitted and verify the correct document has been submitted.**

No consideration will be offered if you submit the incorrect document. You may submit your assignment as many times as you wish before the due date and only the last submitted version will be marked.

How do I Know My Assignment Submission was Successful?

Given the size of the unit, staff will NOT respond to requests to confirm that assignments have been correctly submitted. You will receive an emailed receipt on successful submission of your assignment in your student email account. Make sure that this has been received and retain this receipt. **No claims will be considered regarding missing assignments without this receipt.** You can also re-download your assignment to double-check it was submitted (see above). Always keep a copy of your assignment.

How will I get feedback on my assignment?

Your marked assessment task, along with feedback information, will be returned electronically in the location that it was submitted.

Can I Resubmit an Assignment?

Students are required to gain an overall pass on the unit, but do not have to pass all assessment components. If you perform poorly on one component, you may compensate for this with an improved performance in the other components. Resubmission of assessments is not permitted.

What are the Marking Criteria?

In general, markers will be looking for the following qualities in your responses to the scenarios:

- Comprehensive address of the critical features of the assignment.
- Appropriate justification, analysis and integration of relevant information from the unit.
- Clear expression, appropriate word choice, logical argument, use of appropriate academic writing style and correct referencing.

You are encouraged to evaluate your work against these criteria.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.

Final Examination

Due: **Examination period**

Weighting: **35%**

A two-hour examination will be held during the university examination period. It will be comprised typically of questions that require short answers. For the final examination all lecture, tutorial material and readings are examinable.

A sample examination paper will be provided at the end of the unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
- Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

Delivery and Resources

Overview

The unit is primarily organised in an on-campus format. Components are detailed below:

- **Readings**

Readings are designed to prepare students for the tutorials as well as broaden their understanding of topics. Readings should be completed prior to the tutorials for each topic.

- **Lectures**

Typically, lectures present information essential to the unit and provide the basis for subsequent tutorial activities. Students may attend the live lecture or view the lecture via Echo. A link to Echo will be provided in the iLearn web site. Lectures should be viewed before tutorials.

- **Tutorials**

Tutorials provide the opportunity to explore issues in depth through discussion and activities. Tutorials will start punctually. Topic Quizzes, changes and important administrative issues are usually dealt with early in the tutorial. This information will not be repeated for students who arrive late. It is the individual student's responsibility to obtain any information that was missed due to lateness or absence.

- **Assessments**

Assessments activities within the unit enable students to demonstrate their mastery of unit content.

- **Unit Web Site**

The unit web site is used for delivery of resource materials, support and for some assessment tasks.

Unit Schedule

Wk	Start	Lecture	Tutorial	Topic Quiz	Reading
1	27/7	Introduction	What Do You Believe?		1. Hoggart, S., & Hutchinson, M. (1995). <i>Bizarre beliefs</i> . Cohen Books. London, UK. Chapter 1, Introduction., pp. 9 – 17. 2. SPED102 Unit Guide
2	3/8	Cognitive Biases 1	The Fallacy of Personal Validation	Yes	French, C. C., & Wilson, K. (2007). Cognitive factors underlying paranormal beliefs and experiences. In S. Della Sala (ed.). <i>Tall tales about the mind and brain: Separating fact from fiction</i> . Oxford University Press: Oxford. pp. 3-22.
3	10/8	Cognitive Biases 2	Thanks for the Memories!	Yes	Loftus, E. F. (2005). Planting misinformation in the human mind: A 30-year investigation of the malleability of memory. <i>Learning and Memory</i> , 12, 361-366.
4	17/8	Science vs Pseudoscience	Astrology – Science or Pseudoscience?	Yes	Hines, T. (2003). <i>Pseudoscience and the paranormal</i> . Prometheus Books: Amherst, New York. The nature of pseudoscience, Chapter 1, pp.13- 41.
5	24/8	Pathological Science	Lets Make an Ology!	Yes	Huizenga, J. R. (1993). <i>Cold fusion : The scientific fiasco of the century</i> . Oxford University Press: Oxford. Chapter 12, Pathological science, pp. 201 – 114.

6	31/8	Research methods – Good vs Bad Science	Research Methods	Yes	Jackson, S. L. (2006) <i>Research methods and statistics</i> . Thomson Wadsworth. Chapter 1, pp. 11-25.
7	7/9	No Lecture	No Tutorial		No reading
8	28/9	Use and Misuse of Statistics	Preparation of Bad Science Proposals	Yes	Goldacre, B. (2008). <i>Bad science</i> . McClelland & Stewart: London. Chapter 14, Bad stats, pp. 256-277.
9	5/10	Education Related Pseudoscience	Presentation of Bad Science Proposals	Yes	Carter, M. & Wheldall, K. (2008). Why can't a teacher be more like a scientist? Science, pseudoscience and the art of teaching. <i>Australasian Journal of Special Education</i> , 32, 5-21.
10	12/10	Health Related Pseudoscience	Alternative Medicines	Yes	Hall, H. (2013). Down the garden path: Faulty thinking and self-delusion. <i>Skeptical Inquirer</i> , 37 (4), 32-35.
11	19/10	Paranormal – The Truth is Out There	Psychics Exposed – Cold Reading Workshop	Yes	1. Hyman, R. (2003). How not to test mediums: critiquing the Afterlife Experiments, <i>Skeptical Inquirer</i> , 27 (1), 20-30. 2. Nickell, J. (2001) John Edward: Hustling the bereaved: <i>Skeptical Inquirer</i> , 25(6), 19-23.
12	26/10	Putting it all together – the take home message	Revision		No reading
13	2/11	No Lecture	No Tutorial		No reading

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

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

Disruption to Studies Policy 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/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

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) 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

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

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be

imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Participation
- Assignment
- Final Examination

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Participation
- Assignment
- Final Examination

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where

relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Topic Quizzes
- Assignment
- Final Examination

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Participation

- Topic Quizzes
- Assignment
- Final Examination

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
- Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Participation
- Assignment
- Final Examination

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.

- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Participation
- Assignment
- Final Examination

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
- Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Participation
- Final Examination

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Students will describe and critically evaluate the basic features and limitations of a scientific approach to evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will identify typical indicators of pseudo-science in evaluating evidence and claims.
- Students will critically evaluate at a basic level a range of claims and evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
- Students will explain common factors that contribute to errors in human judgement when evaluating claims.

Assessment tasks

- Attendance
- Participation
- Final Examination

Changes from Previous Offering

Changes have been made to content of both the lectures and tutorial content.

Assessment weighting have been altered to better reflect the work involved in each component.

Texts and Readings

Text

There is no required text for this unit.

Required reading

Compulsory readings may be downloaded from the eReserve section of the Library web site at:

<http://www.library.mq.edu.au/reserve/>

Search for SPED102 in the Unit Readings Section.

Details of readings for each week are provided in the Unit Schedule section.

Unit Web Page

An iLearn web site has been established to support the unit. Required study materials are available on the web site.

You should check the web site at least twice a week.

The web site for the unit may be accessed at:

<https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>

Information about using iLearn is available at

http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/

How do I get a password?

Information on first time log in and passwords is available at:

<https://mypassword.mq.edu.au/index.php?screen=MQInitPW>

You will need your Student OneID number, surname and date of birth.

What if I have password problems or need IT help?

If you have password problems or any other difficulties accessing the website, please contact:

Student IT Help

Phone: (02) 9850 HELP (4357) (option 1) or freecall 1800 67 4357

Email: help@mq.edu.au

Face-to-face: Building C5C, Room 244

Website: <http://www.mq.edu.au/onehelp/>

Onehelp Ticket Lodgement: <https://help.mq.edu.au/cgi-bin/WebObjects/OneHelp.woa>

Where Do I Start?

Tick off the following steps as they are completed:

- Carefully read this Unit Guide.
- Carefully read this unit guide for a second time.
- Log onto the unit web site to check whether there are any announcements and download the Study Guide for week 1.
- Download the required reading from the library and read it.
- Attend the lecture and tutorial in the first week.

