



# GEOP810

## Special Topic in Environment and Geography A

S1 External 2017

*Department of Geography and Planning*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Senior Lecturer

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By appointment

Professor

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Permission by special approval

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides students with an opportunity to undertake a small supervised research project in a relevant field. Supervision is provided by department staff and the aim of the unit is to allow students to demonstrate a capacity for independent research.

## 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:

Develop a critical understanding of research practice in geography relevant to a specific area of research interest.

Prepare and, where appropriate, execute a research project proposal of modest scope.

Contextualise a research interest in an awareness and understanding of the relevant scholarly literature.

Understand the requirements of contemporary research ethics processes and principles.

Present written evidence of research skills at a high standard.

## General Assessment Information

GEOP810 is an **individualised unit of study**. To successfully complete the unit, you must **complete the learning contract** negotiated with your supervisor at a standard of performance that is appropriate to postgraduate study.

Assessment will be determined in the learning contract but needs to reflect the value of the unit as a 4cp postgraduate research unit. The standard suggested is 5,000 words for a 4cp postgraduate unit. Suggested configurations include study options A, B, C or D, as detailed above. **Students need to select one of these four study options.**

Assessment of your performance in GEOP810 will be agreed in your learning contract and marking criteria will be available through iLearn. You should keep a copy of your learning contract and ensure that your supervisor has a signed copy of the contract.

All assignments must be submitted directly to your university supervisor via email as a PDF or word document. Scheduling of your submissions will be negotiated with your supervisor, but will be required to be finalised within four weeks of the final examination meeting in the semester of offer. You must keep a clean electronic copy of your assignments.

In GEOP810 you will negotiate the schedule for assignment submissions with your supervisor. In the event that you are likely not to meet a deadline, you should discuss this with your supervisor in a regular meeting or via email and request an appropriate extension before the deadline falls. Any such request should be accompanied with appropriate documentation and explanation. If no extension is granted, and an assignment is submitted late, 10% will be deducted for each day late.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#"><u>Assessment Task 1</u></a>	40%	No	Week 4
<a href="#"><u>Assessment Task 2</u></a>	40%	No	Week 9
<a href="#"><u>Assessment Task 3</u></a>	20%	No	Week 13

### Assessment Task 1

Due: **Week 4**

Weighting: **40%**

Students must **select from either study option A, B, C or D.** (Please follow the assessment

details, including the weighting of each task, as detailed below and not as listed in the next column! The weightings given in the next column refer to Study Option A, the other study options have different weightings.)

**Study Option A - Research preparation unit:** 1/3 Review of relevant methodological literature (2,000 words) 40%

or

**Study Option B - Research development unit:** 1/3 Overall project proposal and work program (1,000 words) 30%

or

**Study Option C - Small scale research project unit:** 1/3 Research proposal and ethics application (1,500 words) 30%

or

**Study Option D - Work Practice unit:** 1/2 Report on tasks undertaken while at work (3,000 words) 60%

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop a critical understanding of research practice in geography relevant to a specific area of research interest.
- Prepare and, where appropriate, execute a research project proposal of modest scope.
- Contextualise a research interest in an awareness and understanding of the relevant scholarly literature.
- Understand the requirements of contemporary research ethics processes and principles.
- Present written evidence of research skills at a high standard.

## Assessment Task 2

Due: **Week 9**

Weighting: **40%**

**Study Option A - Research Preparation Unit:** 2/3 Extended review of relevant literature on research topic (2,000 words) 40%

or

**Study Option B - Research development unit:** 2/3 Ethics application and progress report (1,500 words) 30% or

**Study Option C - Small scale research project unit:** 2/3 Response to feedback on proposal (500 words) 10%

or

**Study Option D - Work Practice unit:** 2/2 Work experience journal (2,000 words) 40%

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop a critical understanding of research practice in geography relevant to a specific area of research interest.
- Prepare and, where appropriate, execute a research project proposal of modest scope.
- Contextualise a research interest in an awareness and understanding of the relevant scholarly literature.
- Understand the requirements of contemporary research ethics processes and principles.
- Present written evidence of research skills at a high standard.

## Assessment Task 3

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **20%**

**Study Option A - Research Preparation Unit:** 3/3 Brief research proposal (1,000 words) 20%

or

**Study Option B - Research Development Unit:** 3/3 Research report (2,500 words) 40%

or

**Study Option C - Small scale research project unit:** 3/3 Dissertation (4,000 words) 60%

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop a critical understanding of research practice in geography relevant to a specific area of research interest.
- Prepare and, where appropriate, execute a research project proposal of modest scope.
- Contextualise a research interest in an awareness and understanding of the relevant scholarly literature.
- Understand the requirements of contemporary research ethics processes and principles.
- Present written evidence of research skills at a high standard.

## Delivery and Resources

The overall aim of the unit is to support students in developing and demonstrating the skills and understanding necessary to execute research in the discipline of geography. In this unit students will generally be introduced to the task of framing a research question, contextualising proposed research in the relevant scholarly traditions, and addressing questions of research methods, research ethics and research practice.

GEOP810 is a supervised research unit (or work practice unit) in which you will be allocated to an individual supervisor. It is a requirement of the unit that the details of your project, assessment and supervision procedure are negotiated as a formal learning contract, signed by

yourself and your supervisor and a signed copy provided to the unit convenor, Dr Fiona Miller. Your supervisor will also be selected on the basis of your research topic and supervisor availability and your supervisor will be involved in finalising the learning contract. The unit provides a flexible framework for supporting research training, research development and small-scale research projects by students in a variety of postgraduate programs.

There is no set reading for GEOP810. Supervisors may provide a specific topic-based reading list, but as a research unit, it is anticipated that part of the task is to demonstrate your skills in searching and documenting literature relevant to your topic.

## Unit Schedule

This is flexible, depending on regular meetings between the supervisor and student.

## Learning and Teaching Activities

### Regular (weekly to fortnightly) meetings

Regular meetings, either face-to-face contact or telephone calls as required. In some cases web-based communication via Skype or similar services will be appropriate. The learning contract will include details of proposed supervision contact, meeting times and other contact information.

### Regular emails

Regular emails between students and their supervisor to discuss details of the research.

## 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\\_2016.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html)

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint\\_management/procedure.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html)

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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/)

## 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://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/).

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

## Graduate Capabilities

### 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 outcomes

- Contextualise a research interest in an awareness and understanding of the relevant scholarly literature.
- Understand the requirements of contemporary research ethics processes and principles.

## Assessment tasks

- Assessment Task 1
- Assessment Task 2
- Assessment Task 3

## 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

- Develop a critical understanding of research practice in geography relevant to a specific area of research interest.
- Prepare and, where appropriate, execute a research project proposal of modest scope.

## Assessment tasks

- Assessment Task 1
- Assessment Task 2
- Assessment Task 3

## 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

- Develop a critical understanding of research practice in geography relevant to a specific area of research interest.
- Prepare and, where appropriate, execute a research project proposal of modest scope.
- Contextualise a research interest in an awareness and understanding of the relevant

scholarly literature.

- Understand the requirements of contemporary research ethics processes and principles.
- Present written evidence of research skills at a high standard.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Assessment Task 1
- Assessment Task 2
- Assessment Task 3

## **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**

- Develop a critical understanding of research practice in geography relevant to a specific area of research interest.
- Prepare and, where appropriate, execute a research project proposal of modest scope.
- Contextualise a research interest in an awareness and understanding of the relevant scholarly literature.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Assessment Task 1
- Assessment Task 2
- Assessment Task 3

## **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 outcome**

- Present written evidence of research skills at a high standard.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Assessment Task 1

- Assessment Task 2
- Assessment Task 3

## 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:

### **Learning outcome**

- Understand the requirements of contemporary research ethics processes and principles.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Assessment Task 1
- Assessment Task 2
- Assessment Task 3