



# POIR902

## Policy Research Project

S1 External 2017

*Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer

Glenn Kefford

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Contact via (02) 9850 8853

W6A 428

Monday 5-6pm and by appointment

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

POL820 and POIR901 and admission to MPPP

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This is a self-directed research project under supervision. Students will identify a contemporary or historical policy problem, and plan and undertake in-depth research culminating in an original dissertation.

## 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:

- Plan, design and execute self-directed research into a current or historical policy problem
- Critically apply key concepts, theories and methodologies in the discipline of public policy
- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies
- Critically reflect on the importance and relevance of contextual factors in the development of policy arguments
- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of evidence related to a chosen policy
- Effectively communicate concepts, arguments and recommendations

## General Assessment Information

### Assignment Submission

All written assignments must be submitted using the “Turnitin Assignments” facility on the iLearn website. This facility includes software which scans the uploaded assignments for plagiarism. Follow the instructions on the screen carefully. Your assignment should be uploaded before midnight on the due date.

Note that two hard copies of the final dissertation must also be submitted by the due date.

**In all cases**, you should ensure that you keep a copy of the assignment.

### Return of marked work

Marked assignments will be returned via Turnitin Assignments on iLearn. When marks are released, you will need to go back in to the assignment submission box, and open your uploaded assignment. When you click on the “GradeMark” button, you will be able to see the marker’s comments on your work. You can save or print the assignment with the comments.

### Extensions

Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and will require documentary evidence such as a medical certificate to support the request for an extension. You should contact the convenor as early as possible if you think you may need an extension. While we do understand that most students are engaged in paid employment, extensions cannot be granted on this basis alone.

### Penalties for late submission

Assignments which are submitted after the due date, without having an extension granted by the convenor, will be penalised, at a rate of 5% of the mark for each week day after the due date. Any paper submitted more than 3 weeks after the due date will not be marked, and the student will be failed for the assignment.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Research Proposal</u>	20%	No	End of Week 2
<u>Literature Review</u>	20%	No	End of Week 6
<u>Dissertation</u>	60%	No	First Monday of exam period

### Research Proposal

Due: **End of Week 2**

Weighting: **20%**

The first assessment task requires you to refine your general topic area so that it addresses a

specific problem. You should do this in consultation with your project supervisor. This task involves defining some research questions which your project will answer, and developing a tentative argument in relation to the problems/issues you intend to address. Your proposal should also give an indication of the relevant research literature in your chosen area, and identify the methodology which you intend to use in conducting your research.

Your written research proposal should include the following components:

- a working title
- an abstract (maximum 150 words)
- a preliminary literature review (approximately 800 words)
- justification of your chosen research questions(s) (approximately 300 words)
- the proposed methodology (approximately 300 words)
- a preliminary annotated bibliography (at least 10 relevant scholarly sources)
- a work plan

Total word limit for the research proposal: 1500 words

A marking rubric and marking criteria are provided on the iLearn site.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Plan, design and execute self-directed research into a current or historical policy problem
- Effectively communicate concepts, arguments and recommendations

## Literature Review

Due: **End of Week 6**

Weighting: **20%**

The second assessment task requires you to identify and analyse the relevant scholarly literature for your research project. You will need to do a substantial amount of reading to be able to find the most relevant books and articles. The literature review also requires you to demonstrate your reading, comprehension and analytical skills.

The literature review should do the following:

- provide a theoretical context for the research project
- demonstrate where the research project fits in the existing body of public policy knowledge
- identify flaws or gaps in the existing literature
- justify the research questions of your project, and your chosen approach

The literature review may form part of your final essay, subject to revisions in response to feedback from your supervisor.

Word limit: 1500 words

The marking criteria and rubric are posted on the iLearn site.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Plan, design and execute self-directed research into a current or historical policy problem
- Critically apply key concepts, theories and methodologies in the discipline of public policy
- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies
- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of evidence related to a chosen policy
- Effectively communicate concepts, arguments and recommendations

## Dissertation

Due: **First Monday of exam period**

Weighting: **60%**

The final task is the submission of the dissertation which is the end result of your research project. Your dissertation will be a piece of formal academic writing, which demonstrates mastery of the topic area, shows originality in your analysis, and presents a clear, coherent and well-substantiated argument.

Your dissertation should include:

- title page
- plagiarism (academic honesty) declaration
- abstract
- table of contents indicating section or chapter headings
- page numbers
- bibliography

**Submission instructions:** You should submit two hard copies of the dissertation to your supervisor on or before the due date, as well as submitting the dissertation electronically to Turnitin Assignments on the iLearn website by midnight on the due date.

**Examination of dissertation:** Your dissertation will be marked by two examiners from within the department.

**Word limit:** The dissertation has a maximum word limit of 6000 words, not including the bibliography.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Plan, design and execute self-directed research into a current or historical policy problem
- Critically apply key concepts, theories and methodologies in the discipline of public policy
- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies

- Critically reflect on the importance and relevance of contextual factors in the development of policy arguments
- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of evidence related to a chosen policy
- Effectively communicate concepts, arguments and recommendations

## Delivery and Resources

### Resources:

This unit has a unit webpage which is accessible only to currently enrolled students. Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>

There is no text book for this unit. There are suggested readings about research practice posted on the iLearn site, and these will be available in the Macquarie University library.

There are many valuable resources within the Macquarie University Library, and the staff in the library are also able to help you to find the materials you need. The Library also runs useful sessions on You should get to know the library well during this unit, and familiarise yourself early in the session with the databases and other resources available through the Library website. Further details are available here: <http://www.mq.edu.au/about/campus-services-and-facilities/library/research>

### Supervision:

This is an exercise in independent research, and you are expected to draw on knowledge and skills which you have developed in other units in the Master of Politics and Public Policy, and to further develop your knowledge and skills as you work independently on a topic of your choice. You will be allocated a supervisor from within the department who will be able support and guide you as you undertake your research project. You should meet or communicate by telephone with your supervisor on a regular basis during the semester. As a guide, you should meet your supervisor in the first week of the session, and then on a fortnightly basis from that point on, depending on semester breaks and the teaching schedule.

There are no timetabled classes for this unit.

## 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](http://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](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://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 outcome

- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies

#### Assessment tasks

- Literature Review
- Dissertation

### 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

- Plan, design and execute self-directed research into a current or historical policy problem
- Critically apply key concepts, theories and methodologies in the discipline of public policy
- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies
- Critically reflect on the importance and relevance of contextual factors in the development of policy arguments
- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of evidence related to a chosen policy
- Effectively communicate concepts, arguments and recommendations

#### Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Literature Review
- Dissertation



## 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

- Plan, design and execute self-directed research into a current or historical policy problem
- Critically apply key concepts, theories and methodologies in the discipline of public policy
- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies
- Critically reflect on the importance and relevance of contextual factors in the development of policy arguments
- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of evidence related to a chosen policy

### Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Literature Review
- Dissertation

## 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

- Plan, design and execute self-directed research into a current or historical policy problem
- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies
- Critically reflect on the importance and relevance of contextual factors in the development of policy arguments
- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of evidence related to a chosen policy

## Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Literature Review
- Dissertation

## 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

- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of evidence related to a chosen policy
- Effectively communicate concepts, arguments and recommendations

## Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Literature Review
- Dissertation

## 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

- Analyse, integrate and synthesise complex information related to a real-world case studies

## Assessment tasks

- Literature Review
- Dissertation