



# BIOL7935

## Advanced Research Topics in Biology

Session 2, Special circumstances 2021

*Archive (Pre-2022) - Department of Biological Sciences*

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#### **Session 2 Learning and Teaching Update**

The decision has been made to conduct study online for the remainder of Session 2 for all units WITHOUT mandatory on-campus learning activities. Exams for Session 2 will also be online where possible to do so.

This is due to the extension of the lockdown orders and to provide certainty around arrangements for the remainder of Session 2. We hope to return to campus beyond Session 2 as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Some classes/teaching activities cannot be moved online and must be taught on campus. You should already know if you are in one of these classes/teaching activities and your unit convenor will provide you with more information via iLearn. If you want to confirm, see the list of [units with mandatory on-campus classes/teaching activities](#).

Visit the [MQ COVID-19 information page](#) for more detail.

## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Ken Cheng

[ken.cheng@mq.edu.au](mailto:ken.cheng@mq.edu.au)

Caitlin Kordis

[caitlin.kordis@mq.edu.au](mailto:caitlin.kordis@mq.edu.au)

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The aim of this unit is to search, read and critically review the available scientific literature in a biological subdiscipline at an advanced level. The topics are to be decided by the student in consultation with a mentor from the Department of Biological Sciences. All students undertake independent literature research, with regular contact with their topic mentor either in person or electronically. Students will need to take responsibility for organising their workload throughout the semester. This unit encourages students to directly interact with research active academic staff, postdoctoral researchers and PhD students within the department and to explore the most current and controversial issues in biological sciences.

## 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:

**ULO1:** Evaluate and synthesise the current state of knowledge in a topic at the forefront of biological research.

**ULO2:** Identify a knowledge gap in the field, explain its importance and present a case for addressing it.

**ULO3:** Demonstrate mastery of bibliographic database software.

**ULO4:** Critically review the written work of others to a professional standard

**ULO5:** Work with a mentor to identify a relevant research topic, plan and conduct literature based research, and reflect on the implementation of the research plan.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#">Literature review</a>	40%	No	Week 10 & 12 or as agreed
<a href="#">Peer review of literature review</a>	20%	No	Week 6 or as agreed
<a href="#">Literature review outline</a>	10%	No	Week 4 or as agreed
<a href="#">Annotated bibliography</a>	5%	No	Week 2 or as agreed
<a href="#">Time on task diary</a>	5%	No	Week 13
<a href="#">Peer review of professional work</a>	20%	No	Week 11 or as agreed

### Literature review

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Literature review

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 60 hours

Due: **Week 10 & 12 or as agreed**

Weighting: **40%**

Students are to complete a literature review based on the broad topic that they expect to research in year 2 of the MRes. The review topic will identify knowledge gaps that could be addressed in the context of MRes or PhD research. Students are to engage with their supervisor through regular meetings and explore the structure and content of the review.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate and synthesise the current state of knowledge in a topic at the forefront of biological research.
- Identify a knowledge gap in the field, explain its importance and present a case for addressing it.
- Demonstrate mastery of bibliographic database software.

### Peer review of literature review

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Professional writing

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 20 hours

Due: **Week 6 or as agreed**

Weighting: **20%**

Students are to provide detailed written feedback and comments on the draft literature reviews of their peers.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically review the written work of others to a professional standard

## Literature review outline

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Professional writing

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 15 hours

Due: **Week 4 or as agreed**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will meet and discuss with their supervisor a structure and outline for their literature review. Students will provide an outline of their lit review, presented as a brief, annotated table of contents that lists the major sections for their review and the information to be covered.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify a knowledge gap in the field, explain its importance and present a case for addressing it.

## Annotated bibliography

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Annotated bibliography

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 15 hours

Due: **Week 2 or as agreed**

Weighting: **5%**

Students will provide an annotated bibliography. The bibliography should be prepared using a referencing database program such as Mendeley or Endnote. For each paper you should include a short description of the relevance of the paper to your review. The bibliography must be submitted as a database file containing your annotated references.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate and synthesise the current state of knowledge in a topic at the forefront of biological research.
- Demonstrate mastery of bibliographic database software.

## Time on task diary

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Reflective Writing

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 10 hours

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **5%**

Time on task diary, reflection on the research plan, workload management and how to improve the effectiveness of future plans.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Work with a mentor to identify a relevant research topic, plan and conduct literature based research, and reflect on the implementation of the research plan.

## Peer review of professional work

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Professional writing

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 20 hours

Due: **Week 11 or as agreed**

Weighting: **20%**

Students will be provided with a relevant piece of scientific writing and they are to provide detailed written feedback and comments on the work. A relevant piece of scientific writing will be provided and approved by the student's supervisor and the unit convenor. It should be a final draft / submission ready - grant, paper, PhD thesis chapter, or MRes thesis relevant to the student's area of research interest. The authors, supervisor, and/or convenor should provide the student with the evaluation criteria and any special focus area prior review.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically review the written work of others to a professional standard

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<sup>1</sup> If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

<sup>2</sup> Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

## Delivery and Resources

The only meeting of this class is an organisational meeting in the first week of the semester. Otherwise, students work closely with a supervisor on the unit.

## Policies and Procedures

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

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](#). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](#) and use the [search tool](#).

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

## Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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](https://ask.mq.edu.au) or if you are a Global MBA student contact [globalmba.support@mq.edu.au](mailto:globalmba.support@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 help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Getting help with your assignment](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

## 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)

If you are a Global MBA student contact [globalmba.support@mq.edu.au](mailto:globalmba.support@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.