# General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit convenor and teaching staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Convenor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Paulsen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ian.paulsen@mq.edu.au">ian.paulsen@mq.edu.au</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact via Email</td>
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<tr>
<td>By appointment</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Haynes</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:paul.haynes@mq.edu.au">paul.haynes@mq.edu.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Scientific Officer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashwini Nagaraja</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ashwini.nagaraja@mq.edu.au">ashwini.nagaraja@mq.edu.au</a></td>
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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ammara Sajjad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ammara.sajjad@mq.edu.au">ammara.sajjad@mq.edu.au</a></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prerequisites</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>130cp at 1000 level or above including BMOL2201 or CBMS201 or CBMS223</td>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-badged status</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMOL6432</td>
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Unit description
Molecular biology is a central science in twenty-first century biology and biotechnology. Understanding the fundamentals of molecular biology is essential for many other fields in the life sciences, including microbiology, cell biology, immunology, and development. Molecular biology makes a significant and increasing contribution to major sectors of our society including agriculture and medicine, and is also important in environmental science and forensics. In this unit we explore topics that allow students to obtain an advanced understanding of the mechanisms of molecular biology, including those of DNA replication and recombination, prokaryotic gene expression, eukaryotic gene expression, mobile elements, the functions of the nucleus, and epigenetics. We also address topics on the rapidly changing technologies in molecular biology, including those used in genome sequencing, metagenomics, systems and synthetic biology. Practical sessions complement the lectures and provide students with hands-on experience with a range of critical laboratory skills including those required for DNA and RNA isolation, PCR and RT-PCR, cloning, and bioinformatics. Students gain experience in working with both bacterial and eukaryotic systems in the laboratory classes so that their skills and experience are valuable for a variety of positions in both industry and 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:

ULO1: Describe the theory behind and demonstrate competency in the use of a range of molecular biology experimental techniques, including PCR, restriction enzyme digestion, gel electrophoresis, cloning, gene editing, DNA sequencing and DNA hybridization.
ULO2: Describe and discuss essential molecular processes in the cell, especially as related to DNA and RNA. These molecular processes include transcription, translation, DNA replication, recombination, DNA repair, and transposition.
ULO3: Relate the revolutionary impact of genomics across all biological sciences.
ULO4: Analyse and interpret experimental data and present this in a structured report utilising appropriate scientific referencing.

General Assessment Information
Requirements to Pass this Unit
To pass this unit you must:

Attempt all assessments, and
Achieve at least 40% in the final examination

Note: There are no hurdle assessments

Assignments
All assignments must be submitted as soft copy on the date specified.
All written work must be submitted to Turnitin for plagiarism checking. Instructions will be provided on iLearn.
Criteria and standards required for the assessment tasks will be available on iLearn.

Note the standardised **11:55pm submission time for assessments**
Extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

Late Assessment Submission Penalty
Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark of the task) will be applied for each day a written report or presentation assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a grade of ‘0’ will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. The submission time for all uploaded assessments is 11:55 pm. A 1-hour grace period will be provided to students who experience a technical concern.

For any late submission of time-sensitive tasks, such as scheduled tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, and/or scheduled practical assessments/labs, please apply for **Special Consideration**.

Late submissions will be accepted for all assessments in this unit with penalties.

General Faculty Policy on assessment submission deadlines and late submissions: Online quizzes, in-class activities, or scheduled tests and exam must be undertaken at the time indicated in the unit guide. Should these activities be missed due to illness or misadventure, students may apply for Special Consideration.

Special Consideration
The **Special Consideration Policy** aims to support students who have been impacted by short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive, and which may affect their performance in assessment. If you experience circumstances or events that affect your ability to complete the assessments in this unit on time, please inform the convenor and submit a Special Consideration request through ask.mq.edu.au.

**Off-shore students** Off-shore students must email the convenor as soon as possible to discuss study options as this course has in person practical classes and attendance is mandatory. So this course cannot be completed off-shore.

**Weekly practice-based tasks**: To pass the unit you need to demonstrate ongoing development
of skills and application of knowledge in all of the weekly practical classes. If you miss a weekly practical class due to a serious, unavoidable and significant disruption, contact your convenor ASAP as you may be able to attend another class that week. If it is not possible to attend another class, you should still contact your convenor for access to class material to review in your own time.

We will communicate with you via your university email or through announcements on iLearn. Queries to convenors can either be placed on the iLearn discussion board or sent to ian.paulsen@mq.edu.au from your university email address.

**COVID Information and on-campus classes**

For the latest information on the University’s response to COVID-19, please refer to the Coronavirus infection page on the Macquarie website: [https://www.mq.edu.au/about/coronavirus-faqs](https://www.mq.edu.au/about/coronavirus-faqs). Remember to check this page regularly in case the information and requirements change during semester. If there are any changes to this unit in relation to COVID, these will be communicated via iLearn.

### Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Hurdle</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midsemester Test</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 8, Apr 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab reports</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 6, Mar 26; Week 9, Apr 30; Week 13, May 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthetic Biology</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 12, May 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>University Examination Period, June 2024</td>
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**Midsemester Test**

Assessment Type 1: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task 2: 10 hours

Due: **Week 8, Apr 8**

Weighting: **10%**

Test carried out during regularly scheduled laboratory time.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe the theory behind and demonstrate competency in the use of a range of molecular biology experimental techniques, including PCR, restriction enzyme digestion,
gel electrophoresis, cloning, gene editing, DNA sequencing and DNA hybridization.

Lab reports
Assessment Type 1: Lab report
Indicative Time on Task 2: 30 hours
Due: Week 6, Mar 26; Week 9, Apr 30; Week 13, May 28
Weighting: 35%

Three lab reports 1500 words each

On successful completion you will be able to:
  • Describe the theory behind and demonstrate competency in the use of a range of molecular biology experimental techniques, including PCR, restriction enzyme digestion, gel electrophoresis, cloning, gene editing, DNA sequencing and DNA hybridization.
  • Analyse and interpret experimental data and present this in a structured report utilising appropriate scientific referencing.

Synthetic Biology Challenge
Assessment Type 1: Qualitative analysis task
Indicative Time on Task 2: 10 hours
Due: Week 12, May 21
Weighting: 15%

This is a written group-based report on the design phase of synthetic biology

On successful completion you will be able to:
  • Relate the revolutionary impact of genomics across all biological sciences.
  • Analyse and interpret experimental data and present this in a structured report utilising appropriate scientific referencing.

Final Examination
Assessment Type 1: Examination
Indicative Time on Task 2: 18 hours
Due: University Examination Period, June 2024
Weighting: 40%
Final Examination held in university examination period

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe the theory behind and demonstrate competency in the use of a range of molecular biology experimental techniques, including PCR, restriction enzyme digestion, gel electrophoresis, cloning, gene editing, DNA sequencing and DNA hybridization.
- Describe and discuss essential molecular processes in the cell, especially as related to DNA and RNA. These molecular processes include transcription, translation, DNA replication, recombination, DNA repair, and transposition.
- Relate the revolutionary impact of genomics across all biological sciences.

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.

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**

**Classes**

There are two weekly lectures of 1 hour each on Tuesday 3-4pm and Wednesday 12-1pm which will be held at 23 Wally's Walk T1 and 23 Wally's Walk, T2. There is one weekly practical session of 3 hours on Monday 10-1pm (practical groups 1 and 2) and Monday 2-5pm (practical groups 3 and 4) at 14 Eastern Road Science Labs 130 and 150. Attendance at practical sessions is a compulsory component of this unit. Lecture recordings and graphics slides are available online through iLearn (https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/ MQ/), although lecture attendance in person is highly recommended. The practical manual is also available online through iLearn.

**Required and Recommended Texts**

The course syllabus is defined by all of the subject material presented in lectures and practicals, much of which is beyond standard textbooks. The prescribed text for this unit is Molecular Biology Fifth edition by Robert F Weaver. Available from the Co-op bookshop. The following texts may also be useful and are available in the library:
Technology Requirements

Within this Unit, you will be introduced to web-based search engines that are commonly used in molecular biology. Our expectation is that you will be able to readily access the internet and have a computer available to you for web browsing and preparation of your laboratory reports. Handwritten reports will not be accepted. Your laboratory reports will be submitted and circulated via the online Turnitin program on iLearn, for which access instructions will be given at submission time. Your practical reports will require you to carry out minor computational tasks, for which a calculator and access to basic statistical tools will be required. We place a large emphasis on correct referencing style in all your reports, and use of the program EndNote is encouraged, but not essential.

Unit Schedule

Week | Date | Lecture | Title | Lecturer
---|---|---|---|---
1 | Feb 20 | 1 | Introduction/What is Molecular Biology/Genome Structure | Haynes
 | Feb 21 | 2 | Gene Organization/function | Haynes
2 | Feb 27 | 3 | Molecular Biology Techniques | Haynes
 | Feb 28 | 4 | Molecular Biology Techniques | Haynes
3 | Mar 5 | 5 | Molecular Cloning | Haynes
 | Mar 6 | 6 | Tools for studying Gene Activity | Haynes
4 | Mar 12 | 7 | Transcription in Prokaryotes | Paulsen
 | Mar 13 | 8 | Structure of Prokaryotic Operons | Paulsen
5 | Mar 19 | 9 | Bacterial Gene Regulation | Paulsen
 | Mar 20 | 10 | Transcription in Eukaryotes and Eukaryotic Gene Regulation | Paulsen
6 | Mar 26 | 11 | Nucleosomes/Histones/Chromatin | Paulsen
### 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](#)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Messenger RNA splicing</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mechanism of Translation</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ribosomes and transfer RNA</td>
<td>Cain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>DNA replication</td>
<td>Cain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>DNA recombination</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>DNA Repair</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mobile DNA elements #1</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mobile DNA elements #2</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Genome Sequencing</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Genomes, Pan-Genomes and Metagenomics</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Bioinformatics and Genome Annotation</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Functional Genomics and Systems Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Synthetic Biology I</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Paulsen</td>
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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](https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct)

**Results**

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](https://students.mq.edu.au/), (e.g. 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](https://students.mq.edu.au/). 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)

**Academic Integrity**

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](https://students.mq.edu.au/), [academic skills development](https://students.mq.edu.au/), and [wellbeing consultations](https://students.mq.edu.au/).

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

**The Writing Centre**

[The Writing Centre](https://students.mq.edu.au/) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- **Workshops**
- **Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader**
- **Access StudyWISE**
- **Upload an assignment to Studiosity**
- **Complete the Academic Integrity Module**

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

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via AskMQ, or contact Service Connect.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit 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.

Unit information based on version 2024.01R of the Handbook