CIVL2201
Soil Mechanics
Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2024
School of Engineering

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Steven Hansen
steven.hansen@mq.edu.au

Credit points
10

Prerequisites
CIVL1001 or MECH1001

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit provides students with an introduction to engineering geology and soil mechanics. The unit presents and discusses specialised knowledge of soil mechanics that helps students undertake a variety of soil mechanics analyses through lectures and laboratory testing.

The first section on engineering geology will include an introduction to geology (minerals, rock types, rock structures), geological maps, rock evaluation and geophysical methods, and geohazards and adverse geological conditions case studies relevant to engineering applications. The second section on soil mechanics includes composition and particle sizes of the soil, physical soil states and soil classification, flow of water through soils, stresses, strains, and elastic deformation of soils, soil compaction, and soil settlement.

The main aim of this unit is to prepare students to develop fundamental knowledge required for more advanced units such as Geotechnical Engineering and Transport Engineering.

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: Demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of solid Earth materials and their formation
ULO2: Identify different geohazards and describe their potential effect on construction projects
ULO3: Describe and classify various soils using standard laboratory techniques and relate these physical characteristics to their engineering behaviour

ULO4: Describe the behaviour and effects of both static and flowing water in soil masses

ULO5: Assess the role of effective stress in soil mechanics and describe the strength of soils based on basic failure theory

**General Assessment Information**

**Requirements to Pass this Unit**

To pass this unit you must:

- Achieve a total mark equal to or greater than 50%, and
- Participate in at least 9 of the 12 weekly practical classes

**Hurdle Assessments**

**Assessment 1: Practical participation (0%)**

Development of knowledge and skills requires continual practice at authentic problems in a laboratory-based setting. This unit has weekly laboratory classes, and you must demonstrate your progress in developing and communicating knowledge and skills in a minimum of 9 of the 12 classes. This is a hurdle assessment meaning that failure to meet this requirement may result in a fail grade for the unit. Students are permitted up to three absences: additional absences will require a Special Consideration to be applied for (see below).

**Assessments where Late Submissions will be accepted**

Practical Reports – YES, Standard Late Penalty applies

Tests and quizzes – NO, unless Special Consideration is Granted

**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 report 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 **10:55 pm**. A 1-hour grace period will be provided to students who experience a technical concern.

For late submission of time-sensitive tasks, such as scheduled tests/exams and/or weekly quizzes, please 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.

**Weekly practical:** To pass the unit you need to demonstrate ongoing development of skills and application of knowledge in *9 out of 12* 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 to schedule a make-up practical. Note that a Special Consideration should **only be applied for** if you miss more than three of the weekly practical classes.

If you receive **special consideration** for the final exam, a supplementary exam will be scheduled by the faculty during a supplementary exam period, typically about 3 to 4 weeks after the normal exam period. By making a special consideration application for the final exam you are declaring yourself available for a resit during the supplementary examination period and will not be eligible for a second special consideration approval based on pre-existing commitments. Please ensure you are familiar with the policy prior to submitting an application. Approved applicants will receive an individual notification one week prior to the exam with the exact date and time of their supplementary examination.

**Assessment Tasks**

Assignments will usually be submitted and marked on iLearn. Weekly lab reports (practical class) will be submitted via dedicated Turnitin links and weekly problem sets are handled using iLearn quizzes. Feedback for your lab group members is conducted using SparkPlus. Grades are reported through Gradebook. Please do not submit your assessments via email or in hard copy unless requested.

Quiz results are released automatically after the submission deadline. We aim to return grades and feedback for lab reports (and tests) within two weeks of the date that you submitted it. We appreciate your patience and will advise you through iLearn or in lecture when your marked assessments and feedback are available for viewing.

### Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Hurdle</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>problem sets/quiz</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical participation</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-session test</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Problem sets/quiz

**Assessment Type:** Problem set  
**Indicative Time on Task:** 12 hours  
**Due:** weekly  
**Weighting:** 10%

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of solid Earth materials and their formation  
- Identify different geohazards and describe their potential effect on construction projects  
- Describe the behaviour and effects of both static and flowing water in soil masses  
- Assess the role of effective stress in soil mechanics and describe the strength of soils based on basic failure theory

### Practical participation

**Assessment Type:** Practice-based task  
**Indicative Time on Task:** 0 hours  
**Due:** weekly  
**Weighting:** 0%

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](https://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offers/162951/unit_guide/print) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Development of knowledge and skills requires continual practice at authentic tasks. In each weekly practical class, you will undertake a range of activities and complete various worksheets. To pass this hurdle assessment, you must be able to demonstrate your progress in developing and communicating knowledge and skills in a minimum of 80% of practical classes.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe and classify various soils using standard laboratory techniques and relate these physical characteristics to their engineering behaviour
Final Examination
Assessment Type: Examination
Indicative Time on Task: 16 hours
Due: TBD
Weighting: 30%

Final examination

On successful completion you will be able to:
• Demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of solid Earth materials and their formation
• Identify different geohazards and describe their potential effect on construction projects
• Describe and classify various soils using standard laboratory techniques and relate these physical characteristics to their engineering behaviour
• Describe the behaviour and effects of both static and flowing water in soil masses
• Assess the role of effective stress in soil mechanics and describe the strength of soils based on basic failure theory

Mid-session test
Assessment Type: Quiz/Test
Indicative Time on Task: 8 hours
Due: Week 7
Weighting: 20%

Mid-session test

On successful completion you will be able to:
• Demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of solid Earth materials and their formation
• Identify different geohazards and describe their potential effect on construction projects
• Describe and classify various soils using standard laboratory techniques and relate these physical characteristics to their engineering behaviour

Practical Report
Assessment Type: Lab report
Indicative Time on Task: 24 hours
Due: weekly  
Weighting: 40%

Practical reports based on weekly experiments in the soils lab

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe and classify various soils using standard laboratory techniques and relate these physical characteristics to their engineering behaviour
- Describe the behaviour and effects of both static and flowing water in soil masses
- Assess the role of effective stress in soil mechanics and describe the strength of soils based on basic failure theory

1 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.

2 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 first week of class will include lecture, tutorial (STGA) and practical classes. So, make sure you have enrolled in one of the practical classes and one the tutorials. More information will be given in the first lecture.

We recommend students have a scientific calculator and a lab notebook. You will also need closed toed shoes and appropriate clothing for practical classes in the soil mechanics lab. You will also need access to a computer with excel to perform some data reduction tasks. A laptop or tablet is useful but not required.

**Communication**

Outside of class, we will communicate with students primarily through iLearn announcements and occasionally using your university email. Queries to convenors can either be placed on the iLearn discussion board or sent to CIVL2201@mq.edu.au from your university email address.

**COVID Information**

The pandemic continues and new strains continue to evolve and spread in waves. Mask wearing is strongly encouraged during all practical classes in 13RPD. Students are also strongly encouraged to wear masks in all other indoor gatherings and to obtain their vaccine boosters.
where appropriate.

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)

**Unit Schedule**

Here is a rough outline of the topics covered:

- **Week 1**: Rocks and Minerals
- **Week 2**: Rock Types and Weathering
- **Week 3**: Deposition and Tectonics
- **Week 4**: Hazards and Soil Intro
- **Week 5**: Index Tests and Classification
- **Week 6**: Clays and Structure
- **Week 7**: Capillarity and Stress
- **Week 8**: Compaction
- **Week 9**: Water Flow
- **Week 10**: Consolidation
- **Week 11**: Settlement Time
- **Week 12**: Mohr’s Circle and Failure
- **Week 13**: Shear Strength

**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
- Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution 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 or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

**Academic Integrity**

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – 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, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

**Student Support**

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

**The Writing Centre**

The Writing Centre 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.

- **Subject and Research Guides**
- **Ask a Librarian**

**Student Services and Support**

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:
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.

Changes from Previous Offering

Changes from 2023

- Changes to tutoring Staff
- Some modifications of class schedule
- Addressed LEU suggestions
- Minor edits to quiz questions

Engineers Australia Competency Mapping

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<thead>
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<th>EA Competency Standard</th>
<th>Unit Learning Outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge and Skill Base</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Comprehensive, theory-based understanding of the underpinning fundamentals applicable to the engineering discipline.</td>
<td>1-5</td>
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<td>1.2 Conceptual understanding of underpinning maths, analysis, statistics, computing.</td>
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<td>1.3 In-depth understanding of specialist bodies of knowledge</td>
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<td>1.4 Discernment of knowledge development and research directions</td>
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<td>Engineering Application Ability</td>
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<td>1.6 Understanding of scope, principles, norms, accountabilities of sustainable engineering practice.</td>
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<td>Professional and Personal Attributes</td>
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Unit information based on version 2024.02 of the [Handbook](https://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/162951/unit_guide/print)