



# COMP4092

## Software Engineering Research Thesis A

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2024

*School of Computing*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Kate Stefanov

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

(COMP332 or COMP3000) and (COMP333 or COMP3010) and (COMP335 or COMP3100)

Corequisites

(COMP430 or COMP4050) or (COMP434 or COMP4060)

Co-badged status

Unit description

In this unit students will conduct the first half of an individual research thesis project on a topic in the Software Engineering major under the direction of an academic supervisor. The focus of the work will be on developing the project proposal, conducting the literature review and project planning and design.

## 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:** Analyse a complex software engineering problem and define discipline specific research questions that require the development of new knowledge or research into cutting-edge techniques.

**ULO2:** Plan a major software engineering research project, including the design of necessary processes, information management, records keeping, project management, and communications.

**ULO3:** Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of contextual factors, research direction, and foundational concepts in software engineering.

**ULO4:** Apply core software engineering principles, practices, and research methods to a research or industry challenge.

**ULO5:** Demonstrate intellectual independence, and an in-depth understanding of a specialist topic within software engineering through verbal and written communication.

## General Assessment Information

### Grading and passing requirement for unit

In order to pass this unit a student must

- obtain a mark of 50 or more for the unit (i.e. obtain a passing grade P/ CR/ D/ HD), and
- pass the hurdles

For further details about grading, please refer below in the policies and procedures section.

### Hurdle Requirements

The Preliminary Thesis is a hurdle requirement. A grade of 50% or more on the Preliminary Thesis is a condition of passing this unit. If you are given a second opportunity to submit your thesis as a result of failing to meet the minimum mark required, your submission will be due during the supplementary examination period and will be notified of the exact date and time by the unit convenor. The second attempt at a hurdle assessment is graded as pass/fail. The maximum grade for a second attempt is the hurdle threshold grade.

Regular meetings with thesis supervisor is a hurdle requirement. Students are required to attend at least 5 out of 10 weekly meetings from Week 4 to Week 13. See details in assessment task description.

### Late submissions and Re-submissions

All assessments must be submitted by 23:55pm (Sydney Time) on their due date. Should the activities be missed due to illness or misadventure, students may apply for Special Consideration.

- **Preliminary Thesis Report:** Late submissions are not allowed unless there is an approved special consideration request. Resubmissions are not allowed.
- **Presentation:** Late submissions are not allowed unless there is an approved special consideration request. Special considerations for presentations are approved only if there are long delays due to extenuating circumstances. Resubmissions are not allowed.
- **Logbooks (Management and Engagement):** Late submissions are not allowed unless there is an approved special consideration request. Resubmissions are not allowed.

**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](mailto:ask.mq.edu.au).

## Written Assessments

If you experience circumstances or events that affect your ability to complete the written assessments in this unit on time, please inform the convenor and submit a Special Consideration request through [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au). See details of the Special Consideration Policy below.

## Project Implementation

If your project requires on-campus lab attendance and you are not able to get back to campus on time, please contact with the unit convenor and your supervisor as soon as possible.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#">Preliminary Thesis</a>	40%	Yes	Week 13
<a href="#">Supervisor Management Assessment</a>	10%	Yes	Week 13
<a href="#">Presentation and Oral Examination</a>	45%	No	Week 14-16
<a href="#">Practice Presentation</a>	5%	No	Week 10-12

### Preliminary Thesis

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Thesis

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 50 hours

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

**This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)**

Students are required to prepare a thesis report about their projects, including the literature review, project planning & design, progress and achievements.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse a complex software engineering problem and define discipline specific research questions that require the development of new knowledge or research into cutting-edge techniques.
- Plan a major software engineering research project, including the design of necessary processes, information management, records keeping, project management, and communications.
- Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of contextual factors, research direction, and

foundational concepts in software engineering.

- Apply core software engineering principles, practices, and research methods to a research or industry challenge.
- Demonstrate intellectual independence, and an in-depth understanding of a specialist topic within software engineering through verbal and written communication.

## Supervisor Management Assessment

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Performance

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

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **10%**

**This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)**

In this unit, development of knowledge and skills will be guided by regular interaction with supervisors. Students must meet with supervisors regularly to show progress and receive feedback. This assessment of performance is made by the student's supervisor. It is comprised of the supervisor's judgement of self-management, engagement, intellectual independence, initiative, as well as judgement of the quality of record keeping & written log book. The logbook should contain dated records of day-to-day activities associated with the project. Outcomes of a minimum of five meetings must be documented using the meeting log sheet provided on iLearn to meet this hurdle assessment task.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse a complex software engineering problem and define discipline specific research questions that require the development of new knowledge or research into cutting-edge techniques.
- Plan a major software engineering research project, including the design of necessary processes, information management, records keeping, project management, and communications.
- Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of contextual factors, research direction, and foundational concepts in software engineering.
- Apply core software engineering principles, practices, and research methods to a research or industry challenge.
- Demonstrate intellectual independence, and an in-depth understanding of a specialist topic within software engineering through verbal and written communication.

## Presentation and Oral Examination

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Viva/oral examination

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

Due: **Week 14-16**

Weighting: **45%**

Students are required to deliver a comprehensive presentation and oral defence of their project proposal and progress at the end of the unit.

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- Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of contextual factors, research direction, and foundational concepts in software engineering.
- Apply core software engineering principles, practices, and research methods to a research or industry challenge.
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## Practice Presentation

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Presentation

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

Due: **Week 10-12**

Weighting: **5%**

Students will undertake a practice presentation and oral exam with their supervisor in the final weeks of session. This would normally take place during regular meetings and serves to guide students as they prepare for the Viva.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse a complex software engineering problem and define discipline specific research questions that require the development of new knowledge or research into cutting-edge techniques.
  - Plan a major software engineering research project, including the design of necessary processes, information management, records keeping, project management, and communications.
  - Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of contextual factors, research direction, and foundational concepts in software engineering.
  - Apply core software engineering principles, practices, and research methods to a research or industry challenge.
  - Demonstrate intellectual independence, and an in-depth understanding of a specialist topic within software engineering through verbal and written communication.
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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

### Unit Delivery

This is a project-based unit. Development of knowledge and skills will be guided by both weekly sessions with the unit convenor and also regular interaction with your supervisor.

The one-hour sessions (lectures / workshops / discussions) with the unit convenor start in Week 1.

You are strongly advised to meet with your supervisor on a weekly basis, once the project commences. Weekly meetings should aim to seek feedback and steer the project, and would normally last at least 15-30 minutes or more. Meetings can be conducted using telephone or video-conference. Outcomes of a minimum of five meetings must be documented using the meeting log sheet provided on iLearn to meet this hurdle assessment task.

### Logbook

This unit requires a logbook. The students should maintain an individual logbook which should contain a dated log of day-to-day activities undertaken in relation to the project.

### Technology Used and Required

The students are required to discuss with their supervisor about the software/hardware resources required for analysis, simulation, testing and experiments related to their project. In addition, word processing software (MS Word, Latex etc.) will be required to produce the preliminary thesis and MS PowerPoint or equivalent software will be required for presentation slides.

### **Unit Webpage**

Access from the online iLearn System at <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>

### **Required and Recommended Texts/Materials**

There is not set textbook for this unit. The students are required to discuss with their supervisor regarding required/recommended reading materials, as suited to individual project needs.

### **Communication**

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 via email to the convenor's address from your university email address.

### **COVID Information**

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>. 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.

## **Policies and Procedures**

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](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 \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](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 \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au)



[du.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](http://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](#) – 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:

- [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/](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

**The assesment tasks and weights have changed.** Oral examination/defence and practice presentation and defence have been added. The weight of the submitted draft thesis has been reduced. See the sections above for details.

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Unit information based on version 2024.02 of the [Handbook](#)