



COMP8990

Master of Research - Computing

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

School of Computing

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	3
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	6
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	10
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	10
<u>Changes from Previous Offering</u>	12

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General Information

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Credit points

80

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The 800-level components of the Master of Research are not designed around units. The thesis together with four core research activities form a single coherent research unit based on individual research plans and will consists of the following:

1. Research Frontiers: you will attend a number of school or faculty-run sessions and engage in a program of activities developing your knowledge of the sub-disciplinary field in which you want to situate your own research
2. Literature Review: you will attend sessions explaining how researchers in your field engage with previous research literature, and produce a draft of your own literature review for your thesis
3. Research Methods: with other students and led by academic staff, you will develop the research methods you will use in your research project
4. Research Planning: through a combination of group sessions and individual work with your supervision team, you will develop a plan for a large scale research project, part of which will be completed in the MRes
5. Thesis: you will complete a small research project, and write it up in a short thesis of about 20,000 words.

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:** Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- ULO2:** Research and compose a comprehensive and critical literature review in a specific research area centered around a research question.
- ULO3:** Conduct independent scholarly research in your field or discipline following well-established research methodology within their research field.
- ULO4:** Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards
- ULO5:** Undertake a qualitative or quantitative analysis of the data collected, identify and apply appropriate research methods for the research question at hand, inclusive of critical reasoning, argumentation and justification.
- ULO6:** Write a significant research thesis of 20,000 words with a professional presentation

General Assessment Information

All the assessments in this unit align with the Faculty's and the School's MRes program. The requirements for all the assessment tasks must be satisfied in order for you to complete your MRes course and graduate. The main goal of this unit is to help you structure your year, provide sessions in key skills and encourage you to begin writing early.

Note that late submissions will not be accepted without an approved Special Consideration request.

Project planning

Assessment Type ¹: Project planning Indicative Time on Task ²: 10 hours Due: **Week 4**
Weighting: **0%**

The objective is to provide training in project management, and planning of a major research project.

A plan for your MRes research will be developed, incorporating: a research question, methodology, budget, ethics (if appropriate), timeline; it will also briefly discuss an extension of the plan for a 3-year PhD research project. The plan will be submitted in written form, with an optional seminar presentation in class. The plan will be assessed by your Principal

supervisor and the COMP8990 convenor, and awarded a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade. On its own, the plan does not contribute to a final grade, but it establishes the foundations of your thesis which is worth 90% of your mark.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards

Research Methods

Assessment Type ¹: Report Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours Due: **Week 10** Weighting: **0%**

The goal of this task is for you to really scrutinise the experimental and/or theoretical design of your research and to start writing the methods section of your thesis.

The methods report will be assessed by your Principal supervisor and the COMP8990 convenor, and awarded a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade. A satisfactory grade confirms that the candidates have adequately demonstrated their understanding and skills in appropriate research methodologies, and are able to critically analyse their use in comparison with alternative methods. On its own, the methods report does not contribute to a final grade, but it provides a core component of your thesis which is worth 90% of your mark.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards
- Conduct independent scholarly research in your field or discipline following well-established research methodology within their research field.
- Undertake a qualitative or quantitative analysis of the data collected, identify and apply appropriate research methods for the research question at hand, inclusive of critical reasoning, argumentation and justification.

Literature Review

Assessment Type ¹: Literature review Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours Due: **Week 13** Weighting: **0%**

The goal of this task is to collate and understand the background literature relevant to your chosen project and to start working on a written report in accordance with the requirements of their discipline.

The literature review is assessed by your Principal supervisor and the COMP8990 convenor, and

awarded a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade. On its own, the literature review does not contribute to a final grade, but it is part of the thesis that forms 90% of your mark. More importantly, taking this assessment task seriously at this stage will ensure you know your literature well enough to ask the right questions and leave you more time for analysis and discussion of your data down the line.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Research and compose a comprehensive and critical literature review in a specific research area centered around a research question.
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards
- Conduct independent scholarly research in your field or discipline following well-established research methodology within their research field.

Poster Presentation (Research Frontiers 2)

Assessment Type ¹: Poster Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours Due: **Late June** Weighting: **10%**

This will have two components: (1) a research poster and (2) five short reports on your attended Departmental seminars.

The poster mark determined in your School/Faculty, will contribute 10% to your overall MRes thesis grade. Short reports are marked by the MRes Director and awarded a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Research and compose a comprehensive and critical literature review in a specific research area centered around a research question.
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards

Thesis

Assessment Type ¹: Thesis Indicative Time on Task ²: 1084 hours Due: **EWS Date** Weighting: **90%**

This is the major component of the year, the writing of a thesis; the other activities are all designed to support this.

The candidates will complete a substantial thesis subject to disciplinary standards (worth 90% of the MRes mark). The thesis will be examined by two examiners who are external to Macquarie University. The candidates should refer to [University rules](#) for further information regarding the examination process. In addition, MRes thesis examiners will be asked to provide a percentage

score for the thesis.

Your thesis will be due by your EWS date. You can check your EWS date in your student record, or in your enrolment and registration advice letters. Time extensions may be appropriate in cases of illness or misadventure, with permission from your supervisor and the MRes Director.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Research and compose a comprehensive and critical literature review in a specific research area centered around a research question.
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards
- Conduct independent scholarly research in your field or discipline following well-established research methodology within their research field.
- Undertake a qualitative or quantitative analysis of the data collected, identify and apply appropriate research methods for the research question at hand, inclusive of critical reasoning, argumentation and justification.
- Write a significant research thesis of 20,000 words with a professional presentation

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

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Project planning	0%	Yes	Week 4
Research Methods	0%	Yes	Week 9
Literature Review	0%	Yes	Week 13
Poster presentation	10%	No	Late June
Thesis	90%	Yes	EWS Date

Project planning

Assessment Type ¹: Plan

Indicative Time on Task ²: 14 hours

Due: **Week 4**

Weighting: **0%**

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

You will receive training in project management, and planning of a major research project. You will submit a brief project plan & budget.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards

Research Methods

Assessment Type ¹: Professional writing

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **Week 9**

Weighting: **0%**

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

The goal of this task is for you to really scrutinise the experimental and/or theoretical design of your research and to write the methods section of your thesis.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Conduct independent scholarly research in your field or discipline following well-established research methodology within their research field.
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards

- Undertake a qualitative or quantitative analysis of the data collected, identify and apply appropriate research methods for the research question at hand, inclusive of critical reasoning, argumentation and justification.

Literature Review

Assessment Type ¹: Literature review

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **0%**

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

You will collate and understand the background literature for your chosen project and to produce a written report which will be part of your thesis.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Research and compose a comprehensive and critical literature review in a specific research area centered around a research question.
- Conduct independent scholarly research in your field or discipline following well-established research methodology within their research field.
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards

Poster presentation

Assessment Type ¹: Poster

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **Late June**

Weighting: **10%**

This will have two components: (1) a research poster and (2) five short reports on School seminars that you attended.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Research and compose a comprehensive and critical literature review in a specific research area centered around a research question.
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards

Thesis

Assessment Type ¹: Thesis

Indicative Time on Task ²: 200 hours

Due: **EWS Date**

Weighting: **90%**

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

You will complete an individual research project, for which you will write a single coherent [thesis](#) which is examined externally.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Formulate a research question that has the potential to make original contributions within their research field
- Research and compose a comprehensive and critical literature review in a specific research area centered around a research question.
- Conduct independent scholarly research in your field or discipline following well-established research methodology within their research field.
- Use well-developed judgement to undertake research ethically and responsibly at the highest professional standards
- Undertake a qualitative or quantitative analysis of the data collected, identify and apply appropriate research methods for the research question at hand, inclusive of critical reasoning, argumentation and justification.
- Write a significant research thesis of 20,000 words with a professional presentation

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

Lectures

There will be 2-hour weekly meetings either in person or by video conferencing to discuss the study material in more detail and to help the MRes program and Activities in particular.

All the resources will be provided on [iLearn](#) and the students are expected to study the reading materials provided on a weekly basis. Students are also encouraged to engage in active discussion via the General Discussion Forum on iLearn.

Assignments

Assignment specifications & requirements will be made available on [iLearn](#) and the written reports will be submitted online via Turnitin.

Methods of Communication

We will communicate with you via your Macquarie University's Email or through Announcements on [iLearn](#).

COVID Information

For the latest information on the University's response to COVID-19, please refer to the Coronavirus infection page on the Macquarie University's website, <https://www.mq.edu.au/about/coronavirus-faqs>. Remember to check this page regularly in case the information and requirements change during the 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>). 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) (<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 connect.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:

- [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 the [Service Connect Portal](#), 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

We value student feedback to be able to continually improve the way we offer our units. As such we encourage students to provide constructive feedback via student surveys, to the teaching staff directly, or via the FSE Student Experience & Feedback link in the iLearn page.

Student feedback from the previous offering of this unit was very positive overall, with students pleased with the clarity around assessment requirements and the level of support from teaching staff. As such, no change to the delivery of the unit is planned, however we will continue to strive to improve the level of support and the level of student engagement.

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