



COMP8990

Master of Research - Computing

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

School of Computing

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor, Lecturer

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By appointment

MRes Director

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Credit points

80

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The Master of Research is undertaken as a single unit. The thesis together with four core research activities form a single coherent research program based on individual research plans and will consist 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, and develop your own presentation skills;
2. Literature Review: You will learn 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 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; and
5. Thesis: You will complete a small research project and write it up in an externally examined thesis. Following examination, you will revise your thesis to address comments provided by examiners.

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: Apply critical and integrative thinking to develop research questions within your discipline through scholarly investigation of currently available evidence.

ULO2: Communicate a coherent and sustained argument in relation to your research outcomes to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

ULO3: Employ integrity and ethical conduct in research as a socially and culturally responsible researcher.

ULO4: Plan and execute a research project to contribute knowledge to your discipline.

ULO5: Demonstrate expert judgement, adaptability and accountability in your professional practice as an independent researcher.

ULO6: Apply high-level cognitive, creative and technical skills to generate and evaluate

complex ideas and concepts.

General Assessment Information

All the assessments in this unit align with the Faculty's and the School's MRes program. 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.

Weekly Colloquia

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based Task Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours Due: **1-3pm Wednesdays** Weighting: **0%**

The objective is to engage in discipline-specific seminars and colloquia as appropriate. In particular, you will attend a combination of group sessions with your peers and individual work with your supervision team; engage in a program of activities supporting the preparation and the delivery of the assessment tasks in the MRes program; and develop your knowledge of the sub-disciplinary field of your own research topic.

Project planning

Assessment Type ¹: Project planning Indicative Time on Task ²: 14 hours Released: **12noon March 5** Due: **12noon March 19** 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.

Research Methods

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based Task Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours Released: **12noon April 16** Due: **12noon April 30** Weighting: **0%**

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

This task will be reviewed 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 completion of this task does not contribute to a final grade, but it provides a core component of your thesis which is worth 90% of your mark.

Literature Review

Assessment Type ¹: Literature review Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours Released: **12noon May 14** Due: **12noon June 11** 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 report is assessed by your Principal supervisor and the COMP8990 convenor, and awarded a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade. On its own, the literature review report 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.

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 compulsory components: (1) the presentation of a research poster and (2) the submission of five short reports on seminars you will attend throughout the semester.

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.

Thesis

Assessment Type ¹: Thesis Indicative Time on Task ²: 200 hours Due: **EWS Date** Weighting: **90%**

This is the major component of the year, the writing of a thesis; all the other activities are 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 thesis submission and 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.

¹ If you need help with your assessment tasks, 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

Requirements to pass the unit

All the hurdle assessment tasks must be satisfactorily completed as per the requirements described above in order for you to complete your MRes course and graduate.

Note that late submissions for project planning, research methods and literature review will not be accepted without an approval by the unit convenor. If a student has made a serious attempt in these hurdle assessments but has failed, they will be given another opportunity to complete the hurdle.

Late research poster presentations will require approval by the MRes director.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Weekly colloquia</u>	0%	No	1-3pm Wednesdays
<u>Project planning</u>	0%	Yes	12noon March 19
<u>Research methods</u>	0%	Yes	12noon April 30
<u>Literature review</u>	0%	Yes	12noon June 11
<u>Poster Presentation</u>	10%	Yes	Late June
<u>Thesis</u>	90%	Yes	EWS Date

Weekly colloquia

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours

Due: **1-3pm Wednesdays**

Weighting: **0%**

You will engage in discipline-specific seminars and colloquia as appropriate

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Communicate a coherent and sustained argument in relation to your research outcomes to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Employ integrity and ethical conduct in research as a socially and culturally responsible

researcher.

- Demonstrate expert judgement, adaptability and accountability in your professional practice as an independent researcher.
- Apply high-level cognitive, creative and technical skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts.

Project planning

Assessment Type ¹: Plan

Indicative Time on Task ²: 14 hours

Due: **12noon March 19**

Weighting: **0%**

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

You will learn to manage and plan a major research project. You will submit a brief project plan & budget

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply critical and integrative thinking to develop research questions within your discipline through scholarly investigation of currently available evidence.
- Plan and execute a research project to contribute knowledge to your discipline.
- Apply high-level cognitive, creative and technical skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts.

Research methods

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **12noon April 30**

Weighting: **0%**

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

You will demonstrate your understanding and skills in appropriate research methodologies, and that you are able to critically analyse their use in comparison with alternative methods.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply critical and integrative thinking to develop research questions within your discipline through scholarly investigation of currently available evidence.
- Communicate a coherent and sustained argument in relation to your research outcomes to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Employ integrity and ethical conduct in research as a socially and culturally responsible researcher.
- Plan and execute a research project to contribute knowledge to your discipline.
- Demonstrate expert judgement, adaptability and accountability in your professional practice as an independent researcher.
- Apply high-level cognitive, creative and technical skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts.

Literature review

Assessment Type ¹: Literature review

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **12noon June 11**

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 produce a written report which will inform your thesis.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply critical and integrative thinking to develop research questions within your discipline through scholarly investigation of currently available evidence.
- Communicate a coherent and sustained argument in relation to your research outcomes to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Employ integrity and ethical conduct in research as a socially and culturally responsible researcher.
- Demonstrate expert judgement, adaptability and accountability in your professional practice as an independent researcher.
- Apply high-level cognitive, creative and technical skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts.

Poster Presentation

Assessment Type ¹: Poster

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **Late June**

Weighting: **10%**

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

You will prepare a poster presentation explaining your current research

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply critical and integrative thinking to develop research questions within your discipline through scholarly investigation of currently available evidence.
- Communicate a coherent and sustained argument in relation to your research outcomes to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Employ integrity and ethical conduct in research as a socially and culturally responsible researcher.
- Plan and execute a research project to contribute knowledge to your discipline.
- Demonstrate expert judgement, adaptability and accountability in your professional practice as an independent researcher.
- Apply high-level cognitive, creative and technical skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts.

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:

- Apply critical and integrative thinking to develop research questions within your discipline through scholarly investigation of currently available evidence.
 - Communicate a coherent and sustained argument in relation to your research outcomes to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
 - Employ integrity and ethical conduct in research as a socially and culturally responsible researcher.
 - Plan and execute a research project to contribute knowledge to your discipline.
 - Demonstrate expert judgement, adaptability and accountability in your professional practice as an independent researcher.
 - Apply high-level cognitive, creative and technical skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts.
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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

Weekly Colloquia

There will be a combination of weekly group sessions as well as individual sessions with your supervision team 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 and study materials provided on a weekly basis. Students are also encouraged to engage in active discussion via the General Discussion Forum on iLearn.

Assessment Tasks

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](#).

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) 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.

Unit information based on version 2025.04 of the [Handbook](#)