



FOAR8005

Research in Social Sciences and Education

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

Arts Faculty level units

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Chris Houston

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

"Admission to Graduate Diploma of Research OR Bachelor of Philosophy."

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will introduce students to research in the Social Sciences, including the cognate disciplines of Education, Sociology, Anthropology, Geography and Planning, Politics and International Relations, and Security Studies and Criminology, exploring what characterises research in these disciplines. Students will encounter and learn to critically evaluate the key concepts, questions and issues that have shaped and/or are currently shaping research in these disciplines. This unit will equip students to analyse the disciplines' key literature and identify the important theoretical approaches, methods, arguments and ethical considerations that characterise research within this area. This unit will prepare students to position their own developing research ideas within a disciplinary context as they prepare for future independent research projects.

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: Evaluate and analyse relevant approaches to research in your discipline, including relevant discipline specific theories, concepts, methods and arguments.

ULO2: Critically evaluate an advanced body of knowledge in your discipline.

ULO3: Analyse and evaluate arguments, texts and/or data, considering the ethics and integrity frameworks required to conduct responsible, ethical and reflective research in your discipline.

ULO4: Communicate relevant research concepts and ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences using appropriate discipline-specific language.

General Assessment Information

1. Reading Log Book

FOAR8005 class seminars will be held fortnightly on Fridays from the first week of the first semester (February 28th) until Friday May 16th. **We will meet face-to-face in Weeks 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10.** The seminar will be devoted to a discussion of course readings, but we will also consider writing tasks and thesis research strategies. Students are expected to read the set readings and to participate in discussion.

To facilitate seminar discussion, over the course of the unit students are required to submit **five one-page responses to the readings, one each fortnight we meet.** Each reading response is marked out of 6. Log book responses should be structured according to the three 'I's – **Insight, Interest, and Incomprehension.** In your reading response present what you thought was the author's main *insight*. Discuss something of particular *interest* to you. And puzzle out which arguments or claims seemed confusing or even *incomprehensible* that you would like to discuss in the class. Responses should be submitted at the seminar in which the reading is to be discussed. The **Reading Log Book** mark will be awarded on the basis of the written work.

All readings can be found on the Unit iLearn page.

2. Reflective Writing

Referencing ideas from the readings that we have discussed in the seminars, the task in this **1,300 word** piece of writing is to **reflect upon your own experiences and processes of learning something.** This may be a musical instrument, a sport, craftwork, religion, caring for an animal, a language, becoming a national citizen, or even your own formation in an intellectual discipline. This short piece of writing is due on Friday April 11th at the end of Week Seven just before the term break.

3. Project Writing Essay

This project writing essay is required to be approximately **2,500 words** in length. **In it you should relate, compare, and assess the relevance of the unit's fortnightly readings to central concerns of your own discipline.** For example, how do you think structural theories of society or phenomenological perspectives on human perception are relevant and useful to understanding research in your disciplines, as well as the lives of the people your disciplines seek to understand?

This essay is due in **Week 12, on Friday 30th May**. One copy must be uploaded through TURNITIN on this date.

Late Penalties

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, **a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted**, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to written reports and recordings only. **Late submission of time sensitive tasks** (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs **will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application.**"

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Reading log book	30%	No	Fortnightly. Week 3, 5, 6, 8,10.
Reflective writing on research	30%	No	11/04/2025
Project integrating theory and methods	40%	No	30/05/2025

Reading log book

Assessment Type ¹: Log book

Indicative Time on Task ²: 24 hours

Due: **Fortnightly. Week 3, 5, 6, 8,10.**

Weighting: **30%**

Regular submissions to an online log book based on required reading

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate and analyse relevant approaches to research in your discipline, including relevant discipline specific theories, concepts, methods and arguments.
- Critically evaluate an advanced body of knowledge in your discipline.

Reflective writing on research

Assessment Type ¹: Reflective Writing

Indicative Time on Task ²: 24 hours

Due: **11/04/2025**

Weighting: **30%**

Reflective writing task critically engaging with research in their discipline

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate and analyse relevant approaches to research in your discipline, including relevant discipline specific theories, concepts, methods and arguments.
- Critically evaluate an advanced body of knowledge in your discipline.
- Analyse and evaluate arguments, texts and/or data, considering the ethics and integrity frameworks required to conduct responsible, ethical and reflective research in your discipline.

Project integrating theory and methods

Assessment Type ¹: Project

Indicative Time on Task ²: 54 hours

Due: **30/05/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

A project task integrating insights on theory and methods in their discipline

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate and analyse relevant approaches to research in your discipline, including relevant discipline specific theories, concepts, methods and arguments.
- Critically evaluate an advanced body of knowledge in your discipline.
- Analyse and evaluate arguments, texts and/or data, considering the ethics and integrity frameworks required to conduct responsible, ethical and reflective research in your discipline.
- Communicate relevant research concepts and ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences using appropriate discipline-specific language.

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 following is intended to provide you with essential information concerning unit organisation for FOAR8005. Students in FOAR8005 are studying in different disciplines. This being the case, not everything you read in this unit will be perfectly relevant for your thesis topic. Nevertheless, **everything will be fascinating and applicable to your discipline in some way or other**. Because the concern of this unit is better seen as **researching society and education**, we will also read more general theoretical pieces that will allow you to apply their arguments and presumptions to each of your disciplines.

This semester we will meet fortnightly in a class seminar, in **25WW, Room GB31**. Classes begin **Week 1 on Friday 28th February** and finish in **Week 10 on Friday 16th May**. The seminar is designed to provide a supportive environment in which students can assist each other in discussing their ideas and interpretations of the readings, in conceptualising their essay and in clarifying their thesis topic. Secondly, over the course of the semester students will be able to listen to **six one-hour zoom interviews** with academics in your disciplines.

The **coursework year** that makes up your Graduate Diploma of Research is a transitional year. You are moving from undergraduate studies, where tutors and lecturers have closely directed your work, in the direction of **postgraduate, independent research**. In the **Master of Research or PhD**, a supervisor advises you about your research thesis but a degree of independence is expected of each student. This year is thus a demanding one. Mutual support amongst students themselves will help to make it both intellectually and emotionally more stimulating and manageable.

The **FOAR8005 Convenor in 2025 is Christopher Houston**. I am available on extension 8471 and my email address is chris.houston@mq.edu.au. Please feel free to contact me about problems of any nature that affect your studies this semester.

Seminar Series of School of Education, and School of Communication, Society & Culture.

School seminars involve a wide range of speakers, including staff and postgraduates from each School's different disciplines. Please feel welcome to attend. Attendance provides FOAR8005 students with the opportunity to listen to and engage in debate with working scholars.

This semester the **School of Communication, Society & Culture** seminar series will be held regularly on Wednesdays at 3.00pm - 4.00pm, and **School of Education** seminars are scheduled for ...

Unit Schedule

RESEARCHING SOCIETY AND EDUCATION PROVISIONAL SEMINAR CONTENT

Seminar One: Core Concepts Agency and Structure

Reading: Pierre Bourdieu (2000) 'Habitus', in *Habitus: A Sense of Place* (eds. Hillier and Rooksby) Aldershot, Ashgate (pp. 27-33).

Nigel Rapport and Joanna Overing (2000) 'Agent and Agency', in *Social and Cultural Anthropology: The Key Concepts*. London, Routledge (pp.1-8).

Seminar Two: Skilled Learning, Apprenticeship, Person-Making

Readings: Rebecca Bryant (2008) 'The Soul Danced into the Body: Nation and Improvisation in Istanbul', *American Ethnologist* 32(2): pp. 222-238.

Daniel Santori-Trantor (2024) Introduction and Chapter One in *Lithic Intimacies*. PhD Thesis. pp. 1-20.

Seminar Three: Moral Development, Intersubjectivity, Self-Transformation

Banu Senay (2024) 'Exemplary Masters, Exemplary Reeds: Pedagogies of Self-alteration in Sufi Music', in *Self-Alteration. How People Change Themselves Across Cultures* (eds JP Baldacchino & C Houston), New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press (pp.25-40).

Max Harwood (2024) 'Transcendental Terror. Zen Self-transformation through White Supremacist Atrocity, from Nazi Germany to Utoya and Christchurch', in *Self-Alteration. How People Change Themselves Across Cultures* (eds JP Baldacchino & C Houston), New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press (pp. 90-110).

Seminar Four: Socialisation, Embodiment, Perception

Iris Murdoch (1980) 'Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment, Motility, and Spatiality', *HUMAN STUDIES* 3 (pp.1-19).

Christopher Houston (2022) 'Why Social Scientists Still Need Phenomenology', *Thesis Eleven* 168, 1: 37-54.

Seminar Five: Ethnography and/of Education

Readings: Norma Gonzalez (2010) 'Advocacy Anthropology and Education', *Current Anthropology* 51, (pp. 249-258)

Paul Willis (1980) *Learning to Labour*, London, Saxon House (Chapter One pp. 1-47).

Seminar Six: Education and the Formation of Subjects

Joel Kaplan (2006) *The Pedagogic State. Education and the Politics of National Culture in Turkey*. Stanford University Press (pp. 1-36).

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.s.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.s.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 2025.01 of the [Handbook](#)