



EDST1500

Understanding Learners and Learning Environments

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

Macquarie School of Education

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	3
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	5
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	8
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	9
<u>Changes from Previous Offering</u>	12

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General Information

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This foundational unit serves as an introductory exploration of the concept of learning and critical factors that affect the learning process. Embracing a systems-based and interdisciplinary approach this unit combines theories, insights and perspectives from social, cultural, and psychological disciplines and applies these to learners, learning environments, and the learning process itself.

The central focus of this unit is understanding the dynamic interactions that influence learners and learning environments. Development and learning is shaped by a range of factors, such as language, cognitive, personal, social, emotional, and physical development. Social and cultural influences also play a significant role in learning experiences, as does the learning environment and pedagogical practices.

Students will engage in exercises involving observation, critical reading, documentary analysis, and reflective practice, to support their learning. These activities will not only facilitate the development of essential study skills necessary for higher education but also encourage students to cultivate a deeper understanding of learners, the learning process, and the impact of learning environments.

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: Explain the way students' educational experiences influence their engagement with learning and learning environments.

ULO2: Develop an understanding of the issues that impact upon learning and learning environments.

ULO3: Apply observational techniques to describe learners and learning environments.

ULO4: Understand the transdisciplinary nature of learners and learning environments.

ULO5: Engage critically with the research literature on areas related to learning and learning environments.

General Assessment Information

General Submission Information

Please format assessments using 12-point font and 1.5 spacing. All assessments must be submitted electronically. Turnitin plagiarism detection software is used to check all written assessments. It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that their submitted work is in a format compatible with Turnitin software for plagiarism checking. Submissions must meet the required file type and formatting specifications outlined in the assessment guidelines. Failure to submit work in an acceptable format may result in delays in processing your submission and potential penalties for non-compliance with assessment requirements. If you are unsure about the file format or have technical difficulties, it is your responsibility to seek assistance before the submission deadline. Students should be careful to check that they submit the correct file for an assessment as no re-submissions will be accepted after the due date and time, including instances where students upload an incorrect file. It is not the responsibility of unit staff to contact students who have failed to submit assessments. If you have any missing items of assessment, it is your responsibility to contact the unit convenor.

Students can use Turnitin's Originality Report as a learning tool to improve their academic writing if this option is made available in the unit. Word limits are strictly applied. Work above the word limit will not be marked.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students should be aware of and apply the University policy on academic integrity (see: <https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=3>). Any student suspected of using unauthorised AI in an assignment will be referred to the Faculty of Arts Discipline Committee. Penalties can include reduced marks for an assessment, being awarded '0' for a task, failing an entire unit,

being excluded from a course of study. Please see each assessment task description/rubric for expectations about AI. Special Consideration / 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 an assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends) (see: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration>). Applications for extensions must be made via Service Connect. 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 non-timed sensitive assessments (incl. essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc).

Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special Consideration application. A Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Marking

All assessments are marked using a rubric. Marking of all assessments is moderated by the Unit Convenor.

University Policy on Grading

Assignments will be awarded grades ranging from HD to F according to guidelines set out in the University's Grading System and University Assessment Policy. To attain a pass or higher grade in Professional Experience a student must obtain a satisfactory in both the Professional Experience component and a pass or higher grade in the academic component. For Professional Experience units the Professional Experience Evaluation Report is marked as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The Macquarie Teaching Performance Assessment (MQTPA - in final WIL/PEX units) is marked as Not met, Met or Exceeds.

Results

Results shown in iLearn, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed because 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 Service Connect.

Withdrawing from this unit

If you are considering withdrawing from this unit, please seek academic advice via Service Connect before doing so as this unit may be a co-requisite or prerequisite for units in the following sessions and may impact your course progression

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Observational Report</u>	50%	No	30/03/2025
<u>Using Personal Experiences to Foster a Deeper Understanding of Learning</u>	50%	No	08/06/2025

Observational Report

Assessment Type ¹: Presentation

Indicative Time on Task ²: 41 hours

Due: **30/03/2025**

Weighting: **50%**

For this assignment, students are tasked with creating a brief video report that showcases their ability to apply observational research techniques to analyse a specific aspect of learning environments and processes.

This report requires students to gather and interpret observational data, crafting a narrative that reveals insightful connections between their findings and theoretical concepts covered in the course.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the way students' educational experiences influence their engagement with learning and learning environments.
- Develop an understanding of the issues that impact upon learning and learning environments.
- Apply observational techniques to describe learners and learning environments.
- Engage critically with the research literature on areas related to learning and learning environments.

Using Personal Experiences to Foster a Deeper Understanding of Learning

Assessment Type ¹: Reflective Writing

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **08/06/2025**

Weighting: **50%**

In this task students will enhance their theoretical understanding by engaging in self-reflection and critically exploring their own experiences. They will be encouraged to cultivate greater self-awareness regarding their perceptions and encounters with learning, both within and beyond formal educational settings. Students will also examine the range of factors that shape their learning experiences. Students will identify and describe the ways in which their understanding of being a learner has been influenced by their engagement with the unit. Explanatory links to relevant learning theories and readings are required.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the way students' educational experiences influence their engagement with learning and learning environments.
- Develop an understanding of the issues that impact upon learning and learning environments.
- Understand the transdisciplinary nature of learners and learning environments.
- Engage critically with the research literature on areas related to learning and learning environments.

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

Delivery

Lectures:

Students will attend 2 hour lectures weekly. Lectures will be face to face as per the timetable.

Lectures will not be available online, students must attend in person.

Tutorials

Students will attend 1 hour weekly tutorials.

Tutorials will expand on lecture material and allow students to discuss and engage in unit material in a meaningful way. Students need to plan and organise their tutorials online.

Academic staff do not have control over tutorials, tutorial locations, timings or student numbers.

Site Visits:

Students will need to attend site visits as a part of this unit. Site visits will be completed in Early Childhood Centres, Primary Schools and High Schools. Students should match their site visits to their tutorials. Site visits are a mandatory part of the unit and all 3 must be completed.

Resources

Required Texts

- Allen, K. A., Vella-Brodrick, D., & Waters, L. (2016). Fostering school belonging in secondary schools using a socio-ecological framework. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, 33,97-121.
- Collie, R., Martin, A., & Frydenberg, E. (2017). Social and emotional learning: A brief overview and issues relevant to Australia and the Asia-Pacific (pp. 1-13). In E. Frydenberg, A. Martin & R. Collie Eds. *Social and Emotional Learning in Australia and the Asia-Pacific Perspectives, Programs and Approaches* Springer, Singapore.
- Duchense, S., McMaugh, A. and MacKenzie, E. (2019). Chapter 13 - Assessment and reporting. In *Educational Psychology for learning and teaching* (7th ed.) (pp. 546-593). Cengage.
- Goss, P., Sonnemann, J., and Griffiths, K. (2017). Engaging students: creating classrooms that improve learning. Grattan Institute.
- Immordino-Yang M. H., Darling-Hammond L., Krone C.R. (2019) Nurturing Nature: How Brain Development Is Inherently Social and Emotional, and What This Means for Education, *Educational Psychologist*. 54: 185-204. DOI: 10.1080/00461520.2019.1633924
- Jones, S.M. & Kahn, J. (2017). The evidence base for how we learn: Supporting students' social, emotional, and academic development – *Consensus statements of evidence from the Council of Distinguished Scientists*. The Aspen Institute.
- Ku, K. Y., Phillipson, S., & Phillipson, S. N. (2015). **Educational learning theory**. In J. D. Wright (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 238-245). Elsevier.
- Tennyson, R. D., & Volk, A. (2015). **Learning theories and educational paradigms**. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 699–711). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.92036-1>
- Weinstein, Y., & Sumeracki, M. (2019). Chapter 3: Is intuition the enemy of teaching and learning? (pp. 22–30). In *Understanding how we learn: A visual guide*. Routledge.

- Weinstein, Y., & Sumeracki, M. (2019). Chapter 4: Pervasive misunderstandings about learning: How they arise, and what we can do (pp. 31–40). In *Understanding how we learn: A visual guide*. Routledge.
- Youdell, D. (2017) Bioscience and the sociology of education: the case for biosocial education, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 38:8, 1273-1287, DOI: 10.1080/01425692.2016.1272406.

Recommended texts

Please see iLearn page for recommended and extended texts.

Information about the unit iLearn site

This unit has a full web presence through iLearn. Information for students about access to the online component of this unit is available at <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/index.php>. You will need to enter your student username and password. Please do NOT contact the Unit Convenor regarding iLearn technical help. Assistance is available from IT Helpdesk: via email onehelp@mq.edu.au or Ph: 9850 4357 or 1800 67 4357. On Campus: Ground floor at 18 Wally's Walk.

Unit Schedule

Lectures 2 Hours	Tutorials 1 Hour	
Module 1: Introducing Learning	Lecture 1: Being a Learner: Introduction Lecture 2: Perspectives on Learning: Seeing Learning in Different Ways	Tutorial 1: Focus: What is Learning?
Module 2: What is learning?	Lecture 3: Key theories of Learning Lecture 4: Debates about Ability	Tutorial 2: Focus: Theories in Application
Module 2: What is learning?	Lecture 5: Child Development over Time (Lifespan) Lecture 6: Social Development and Identity	Tutorial 3: Focus: Change Continuity and Growth
Module 3 Learning together: Relationships, social development and wellbeing	Lecture 7: Attachment, Relationships and Belonging Lecture 8: Recognising Learners	Tutorial 4: Focus: What is a good relationship?
Module 3 Learning together: Relationships, social development and wellbeing	Lecture 9: Emotions and Learning Lecture 10: Social and Emotional Learning	Tutorial 5: Focus: What is the role of emotions in learning?
Module 4 Learning environments	Lecture 11: Learning in Context – Embodied and Embedded Learning Lecture 12: Biosocial Education	Tutorial 6: Focus: Why is Context Important?

Module 4 Learning environments	Lecture 13: Learning and Education Lecture 14: Learning and Teachers	Tutorial 7: Focus: What are challenges in Education and learning? How does education serve children and communities?
Module 5: Learning, Diversity and Intersectionality Includes Site visit information	Lecture 15: Learning and Difference Lecture 16: Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice	Tutorial 8: Focus: Diversity and Learning
Module 6: Measuring Learning	Lecture 17: Measuring learning - possibilities, limits, and proxies I Lecture 18: Measuring learning - possibilities, limits, and proxies II	
Module 7: Know How Your Students Learn	Lecture 19: Bringing it all Together Lecture 20: Knowing the Learner in Context	

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](#).

School of Education Procedures

In addition, the following policies and procedures for the Macquarie School of Education apply to this unit.

Academic Progression Policy

This unit is a part of a professional course listed on Schedules 2 and 3 of the Academic Progression Policy. This course has additional requirements that are applicable for the full duration of the course, including course-specific Inherent Requirements, Fitness to Practice requirements and other compulsory course requirements. It also has rigorous academic progression standards. Inability to meet these requirements may result in a withdrawal of offer of admission and/or permanent exclusion from the course in accordance with the General Coursework Rules.

Fitness to practice in a Professional Experience unit

Macquarie University operates under a 'Fitness to Practice' model as specified in the University's Academic Progression Policy. For this unit, this means that, when undertaking a placement, a student is declaring that they are able to demonstrate professional competence, acceptable professional behaviour, freedom from impairment, and compliance with program specific requirements needed for a student to practice properly and safely throughout their Practical, Clinical or Professional program or unit. It is the responsibility of the student to determine whether they are fit to undertake a placement. Therefore, if a student is feeling unfit to undertake a placement, they should not do so. For more information Academic Progression Policy.

Communication

It is the student's responsibility to check all electronic communication on a weekly basis. Communication may occur via:

- Official MQ Student Email Address
- The Dialogue function on iLearn
- Other iLearn communication functions

Attendance and Participation

See the University timetable for information about when classes begin in this unit. Creating your timetable - Enrolling | Macquarie University, Sydney (mq.edu.au)

Attendance at all synchronous activities, completion of non-synchronous formative/diagnostic class tasks and involvement in professional forums is expected as the [[insert ITE degree title here]] is a professional qualification. Activities completed during weekly tutorials (DAY or ONLINE DAY mode) or on campus days (INFQ mode) are essential for building the core knowledge and/or skills required to demonstrate the learning outcomes of this unit and to meet the AITSL Graduate Teacher Standards and/or ACECQA requirements. Attendance at all tutorials and/or on campus days is expected and will be recorded. Make up tasks may be given if attendance is missed to ensure all content is covered to meet accreditation requirements.

Students are required to attend the tutorial in which they are enrolled. Any changes to tutorial enrolments must be completed officially through e-Student. Please do not contact the unit convenor to request a change.

Infrequent Attendance Students

- Information about the dates of the on-campus sessions can be found in the university timetable. [Creating your timetable - Enrolling | Macquarie University, Sydney \(mq.edu.au\)](#)
- The on campus sessions are essential to student engagement and learning and attendance is expected. Failure to attend or not to have an approved Special Consideration may result in a Fail grade.
- Prior to the on campus sessions, students should have read the prescribed readings and listened to the lectures, summarise the main points, and make notes of the key terms and definitions. Prepare any discussion questions of your own that you wish to share.
- Please make effective use of the online component of the unit and access iLearn regularly. Keep up to date with listening to the lectures on a weekly basis.
- Further details and any updates about times and locations will be posted on iLearn as an Announcement during first half of the semester.

Student Support

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

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) 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

This unit is being offered for the first time in 2025. It is a combination of two previous 1000 level units aimed at first year students.

This unit has been created in consultation with TEQSA and previous student feedback based on their experience with the School of Education. As such, this unit is catered to support students' learning including interactive tutorials, guest speakers in lectures, and engaging iLearn activities.

As per the faculty of Arts' initiative to engage academic staff with students, EDST1500 features a host of established and esteemed lecturers who will bring their unique research and expertise to weekly lectures.

Unit information based on version 2025.02 of the **Handbook**