



SOCI8020

Evaluating Social Policy

Session 2, Online-flexible 2026

School of Communication, Society and Culture

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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By appointment

Lecturer

Flavia Julius

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Please email to arrange an appointment

Norbert Ebert

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

20cp at 8000 level or above; or admission to MPSP or MPASR or GradCertPASR or GradDipPASR or MPlan

Corequisites

Co-badged status

SOCX8020

Unit description

Evaluation research is among the most common, and possibly most useful, forms of applied social science. Evaluation employs research methodologies to systematically assess a project, policy, program or social needs to set criteria. This unit surveys key topics and practice-based skills widely used in evaluation research that have potential applications in the public, non-profit, and for-profit private sectors. As this field of research is expansive, the unit primarily draws on case studies from social policy - public interventions that offer protection from social ills and are among those that impact most on everyday life - to provide focus for class sessions and assessments. Over the course of this unit, you will gain a clear understanding of key elements of evaluation research design, as well as the potential uses and misuses of this form of applied social policy research.

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: demonstrate specialised knowledge of evaluation design and approaches

ULO2: create technical models of a social project, program or policy that visually presents its organising logic

ULO3: critically analyse evidence from evaluations of social policy and public policy

ULO4: research and apply evaluation tools and approaches to assess social and public policy

ULO5: communicate knowledge, skills and ideas about evaluation research to specialist and non-specialist audiences

General Assessment Information

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is an integral part of the core values and principles contained in the Macquarie University Ethics Statement. Its fundamental principle is that all staff and students act with integrity in the creation, development, application and use of ideas and information. This means that:

- All academic work claimed as original is the work of the author making the claim
- All academic collaborations are acknowledged
- Academic work is not falsified in any way
- When the ideas of others are used, these ideas are acknowledged appropriately
- Self-plagiarism (resubmitting your own work - including past assignments for this or other units - without attribution) is an unacceptable academic activity
- **Chat GPT and other generative AI software programs** should not be used when preparing or drafting assessments.

University Grading Policy

The grade that a student receives will signify their overall performance in meeting the learning outcomes of the unit of study. Graded units will use the following grades

HD High Distinction 85-100

D	Distinction	75-84
Cr	Credit	65-74
P	Pass	50-64
F	Fail	0-49

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.

Special Consideration (Extensions)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

More information about Special Consideration is available in the Policies and Procedures section of the unit guide. You can apply for Special Consideration via [ask.mq.edu.au](#)

Late Assessment Submission Penalty

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 non-timed sensitive assessment (including 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. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Student Wellbeing

Macquarie University offers a range of wellbeing services (including [but not limited to]: health, welfare, counselling, disability and student advocacy services) that are available to you at any time during your studies. Student Wellbeing is here to support you and help you succeed, both academically and personally. More information is available in the Policies and Procedures section of the unit guide.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Online journal	20%	No	07/09/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Research Report	40%	No	09/10/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Take Home Exam	40%	No	08/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Online journal

Assessment Type ¹: Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task ²: 12 hours

Due: **07/09/2026**

Weighting: **20%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Online blog

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate specialised knowledge of evaluation design and approaches
- communicate knowledge, skills and ideas about evaluation research to specialist and non-specialist audiences

Research Report

Assessment Type ¹: Written Submission

Indicative Time on Task ²: 35 hours

Due: **09/10/2026**

Weighting: **40%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

1,500 word paper

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate specialised knowledge of evaluation design and approaches
- create technical models of a social project, program or policy that visually presents its organising logic
- critically analyse evidence from evaluations of social policy and public policy

Take Home Exam

Assessment Type ¹: Problem-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 28 hours

Due: **08/11/2026**

Weighting: **40%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Taken home exam

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate specialised knowledge of evaluation design and approaches
- critically analyse evidence from evaluations of social policy and public policy
- research and apply evaluation tools and approaches to assess social and public policy
- communicate knowledge, skills and ideas about evaluation research to specialist and non-specialist audiences

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
- [Academic Success](#) 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.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Delivery

This unit is delivered via 'fully online mode' and 'in person weekly scheduled mode'.

Fully online mode includes online lectures and weekly online activities. There are no on-campus sessions.

Required and recommended resources

There is no required textbook for SOCI8020. Required readings are online available via Leganto (see below).

Technology used

The following technologies are used in this unit...

Email

Make sure that you regularly check your student email for correspondence with teaching staff and unit announcements.

iLearn

Important information about the weekly schedule, course readings and assessment are all available on the course *iLearn* page. If you do not have access, please contact IT help. You are required to check iLearn and your student email regularly for course updates and information.

Turnitin

All written assessments need to be submitted online via Turnitin only. A link to Turnitin is available via the Assessments tab on the iLearn page. Please contact the convenor if you cannot find it (do not leave it until the day of the assessment). There is no need to submit a hard copy of the assessment or to include a cover sheet.

Grademark

Marks will be made available via Grademark. Other feedback will be made available online via iLearn. It will take four forms (in no particular order): specific comments in the text of your paper; overall comments; a score on a qualitative rubric (that cannot be used to calculate your mark numerically); and a numeric score. Once you have received your assignment back, please make sure that you have access to these forms of feedback.

Leganto

Leganto is the electronic system for accessing unit readings that can be accessed via the iLearn page. Readings are allocated via topic. As well as the required readings for each topic, you will find recommended and optional readings on Leganto. The required readings are available in pdf or electronic format. If you are not able to access the readings, please contact the unit convenor via email.

Zoom

Zoom is an online video conferencing software platform. It will not be used for compulsory unit sessions, but may be used for optional meetings and consultation.

Unit Schedule

SOCI8020 Evaluating Social Policy is delivered via 'fully online' and 'in-person scheduled weekly' modes. Please attend the version of the unit that you are enrolled in. It has 13 topics that are structured into four modules, as the table shows.

Module	Topic #	Topic title
Module 1. Foundations of Social Policy	1	Introducing 'Evaluating Social Policy'
	2	Defining Social Policy
	3	Understanding the Welfare State
Module 2. Evaluative Tools & Frameworks	4	Theories of Change
	5	Program Logic Models
	6	Designing Evaluation Frameworks
Module 3. Impact Evaluation	7	Measuring Outcomes, Measuring Impact?
	8	Randomised Controlled Trials: Uses & Misuses
	9	Participatory Impact Evaluations
	10	Realist Impact Evaluations
Module 4. Complexity, Social Policy & Ethical Evaluations	11	Complexity, Social Policy & Ethical Evaluation
	12	Developmental Evaluation
	13	Evidence-Informed Policy? / Unit Conclusion

The 13 topics are intended to mirror the 13 week semester. Topics 1 to 13 are available 'fully online' as well as 'on-campus' sessions. Please see the SOCI8020/SOCX8020 iLearn page for more information.

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](#).

Late Assessment Submission Penalty

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 non-time sensitive assessment (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. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

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.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [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 <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

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 main changes from the previous offering include the updating of lecture content and tutorials.

Unit information based on version 2026.02 of the **Handbook**