



ESPS3002

Human Motor Learning and Performance

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2026

School of Health Sciences and Nursing

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Rachel Ward

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

120cp including (COGS1000 and ESPS1000) OR Admission to BHumanSci and (ANAT1001 and ANAT1002 and BIOL2230)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides you with a broad overview of motor learning, performance, and skill acquisition as it relates to humans. The unit integrates your prior study of anatomy, biomechanics, physiology, neuroscience, behavioural sciences, and psychology as it pertains to human movement. The unit explores the classification of motor skills, the neuromotor processes that underpin motor performance, and features of the learning environment that can be manipulated to promote motor learning in a coaching and/or rehabilitation context. The aim of the unit is to provide a behavioural and physiological understanding of the acquisition and execution of skilled motor actions and how to train and/or retrain motor actions. Through this unit you will learn how to instruct and provide feedback as appropriate for a potential future career as a practitioner/clinician.

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: Define the concepts of motor skill and motor learning and describe the stages of motor skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)

ULO2: Analyse and classify motor skills according to the relevant anatomical, biomechanical, environmental, and physiological requirements (Scientist and Scholar)

ULO3: Evaluate how different elements of practice such as feedback, scheduling and

instructions impact the acquisition of skill, and make evidence-based decisions about these factors when guiding skill acquisition in a range of contexts (Exercise Science Practitioner)

ULO4: Explain common theoretical models often used to explain motor control, motor learning, and skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)

ULO5: Characterise the neural and motor changes that underpin acquisition of motor skills including changes throughout the different stages of learning and how learning/performance is measured (Scientist and Scholar)

General Assessment Information

Grade descriptors and other information concerning grading are contained in the [Macquarie University Assessment Policy](#).

All final grades are determined by a grading committee, in accordance with the Macquarie University Assessment Policy, and are not the sole responsibility of the Unit Convenor.

Students will be awarded a final grade and a mark which must correspond to the grade descriptors specified in the [Assessment Procedure](#) (clause 128 and 129).

To pass this unit, you must demonstrate sufficient evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes, meet any ungraded requirements, and achieve a final mark of 50 or better.

Further details for each assessment task will be available on iLearn.

Late Submissions

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). After the 7th day, a grade of '0' 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 concern.

For example:

Number of days (hours) late	Total Possible Marks	Deduction	Raw mark	Final mark
1 day (1-24 hours)	100	5	75	70
2 days (24-48 hours)	100	10	75	65
3 days (48-72 hours)	100	15	75	60
7 days (144-168 hours)	100	35	75	40
>7 days (>168 hours)	100	-	75	0

For any late submissions of time-sensitive tasks, such as scheduled tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, and/or scheduled practical assessments/labs, students need to submit an application for Special Consideration.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Motor skill preparation plan	20%	No	03/09/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Presentation on Skill Development/ Acquisition of a Motor Skill	30%	No	02/11/2026	Group	No	Open
Final Examination	50%	No	Exam Period	Individual	No	Observed

Motor skill preparation plan

Assessment Type ¹: Professional task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **03/09/2026**

Weighting: **20%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Complete a project plan for your chosen skill, identifying which practice schedule you will be looking to examine and how you will conduct the experiment.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Define the concepts of motor skill and motor learning and describe the stages of motor skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)
- Analyse and classify motor skills according to the relevant anatomical, biomechanical, environmental, and physiological requirements (Scientist and Scholar)
- Evaluate how different elements of practice such as feedback, scheduling and instructions impact the acquisition of skill, and make evidence-based decisions about these factors when guiding skill acquisition in a range of contexts (Exercise Science Practitioner)
- Explain common theoretical models often used to explain motor control, motor learning, and skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)

Presentation on Skill Development/Acquisition of a Motor Skill

Assessment Type ¹: Presentation task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **02/11/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Group

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

You will present as a group based on the experiment undertaken to develop and test your hypothesis/claim relevant to the execution and/or acquisition of your chosen motor skill. There will be a Q&A session at the end of the presentation to demonstrate competency.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Define the concepts of motor skill and motor learning and describe the stages of motor skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)
- Analyse and classify motor skills according to the relevant anatomical, biomechanical, environmental, and physiological requirements (Scientist and Scholar)
- Evaluate how different elements of practice such as feedback, scheduling and instructions impact the acquisition of skill, and make evidence-based decisions about these factors when guiding skill acquisition in a range of contexts (Exercise Science Practitioner)
- Explain common theoretical models often used to explain motor control, motor learning, and skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)
- Characterise the neural and motor changes that underpin acquisition of motor skills including changes throughout the different stages of learning and how learning/performance is measured (Scientist and Scholar)

Final Examination

Assessment Type ¹: Examination

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **Exam Period**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Observed

Final examination held during central examination period.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Define the concepts of motor skill and motor learning and describe the stages of motor skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)
 - Analyse and classify motor skills according to the relevant anatomical, biomechanical, environmental, and physiological requirements (Scientist and Scholar)
 - Explain common theoretical models often used to explain motor control, motor learning, and skill acquisition (Scientist and Scholar)
 - Characterise the neural and motor changes that underpin acquisition of motor skills including changes throughout the different stages of learning and how learning/performance is measured (Scientist and Scholar)
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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
- [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

As a student enrolled in this unit, you will engage in a range of online and face-to-face learning activities, including online lectures, modules, videos and readings. You are required to attend one 2-hour face-to-face class each week, covering hands-on activities to demonstrate practical application of the unit content. Details can be found on the iLearn site for this unit.

Recommended Readings

There are no required text in the unit. The following texts will be useful resources and available in the library. Recommendations about specific readings from these and other resources (such as research papers, books, websites and videos) will be listed on iLearn.

- *Recommended Texts (specific sections/chapters highlighted in lectures)*

Magill, R.A. and Anderson, D. (2021). Motor learning and control: concepts and applications (12th edition). New York: McGraw-Hill

Edwards, W.H. (2011). Motor Learning & Control: From theory to practice. Belmont, USA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

- *Supplementary Texts*

Davids, K.W., Bittpm C., & Bennett,S.J. (2008). Dynamics of skill acquisition: A constraints-led

approach. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics.

Schmidt, R. and Lee, T., (2019) Motor Learning and Performance: A problem-based approach. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics.

Spittle, M., (2021). Motor Learning and Skill Acquisition: Applications in physical education and sport (2nd ed). Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave-MacMillan.

Technology Used

Active participation in the learning activities throughout the unit will require students to have access to a tablet, laptop or similar device. Students who do not own their own laptop computer may borrow one from the university library.

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/>

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.

Artificial Intelligence Tools

Macquarie University recognises that artificial intelligence (AI), especially generative AI, is rapidly reshaping education and the modern workplace. As AI becomes increasingly accessible, the University and your teaching staff are committed to preparing you to use these tools effectively, ethically, and with strong professional judgment. Rather than restricting technology, the emphasis is on helping you understand when and how AI can be used to enhance productivity, support learning, and reflect real-world professional practice. Across your degree, we will support you to develop the critical thinking, adaptability, and values-based decision-making skills required to navigate evolving AI tools responsibly, including acknowledging their use appropriately. You should always appropriately acknowledge when you have used AI tools within assessment tasks, including which AI tools you have used and how you have used them.

To provide clarity, Macquarie University uses a simple, two-tiered approach to AI in assessment:

AI Open assessments allow you to fully incorporate AI, reflecting authentic tasks where AI would normally be used in professional settings.

Observed with AI Optional assessments involve tasks where you either demonstrate essential knowledge without technology or show how you apply AI under supervision.

Across both categories, the goal is to ensure you build foundational knowledge, exercise sound judgment, and engage with AI in ways that uphold ethical, cultural, and university values.

Inclusion and Diversity

Social inclusion at Macquarie University is about giving everyone who has the potential to benefit from higher education the opportunity to study at university, participate in campus life and flourish in their chosen field. The University has made significant moves to promote an equitable, diverse and exciting campus community for the benefit of staff and students. It is your responsibility to contribute towards the development of an inclusive culture and practice in the areas of learning and teaching, research, and service orientation and delivery. As a member of the Macquarie University community, you must not discriminate against or harass others based on their sex, gender, race, marital status, carers' responsibilities, disability, sexual orientation, age, political conviction or religious belief. All staff and students are expected to display appropriate behaviour that is conducive to a healthy learning environment for everyone.

Professionalism

In the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences, professionalism is a key capability embedded in all our courses.

As part of developing professionalism, students are expected to attend all small group interactive sessions including clinical, practical, laboratory, work-integrated learning (e.g., PACE placements), and team-based learning activities. Some learning activities are recorded (e.g., face-to-face lectures), however you are encouraged to avoid relying upon such material as they do not recreate the whole learning experience and technical issues can and do occur. As an adult learner, we respect your decision to choose how you engage with your learning, but we would remind you that the learning opportunities we create for you have been done so to enable your success, and that by not engaging you may impact your ability to successfully complete this unit. We equally expect that you show respect for the academic staff who have worked hard to develop meaningful activities and prioritise your learning by communicating with them in advance if you are unable to attend a small group interactive session.

Another dimension of professionalism is having respect for your peers. It is the right of every student to learn in an environment that is free of disruption and distraction. Please arrive to all learning activities on time, and if you are unavoidably detained, please join activity as quietly as possible to minimise disruption. Phones and other electronic devices that produce noise and other distractions must be turned off prior to entering class. Where your own device (e.g., laptop) is being used for class-related activities, you are asked to close down all other applications to avoid distraction to you and others. Please treat your fellow students with the utmost respect. If you are uncomfortable participating in any specific activity, please let the relevant academic know.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
13/07/2026	Due date for Assessment Task 1 (Motor skill preparation plan) changed from 04/09/2026 to 03/09/2026.

Unit information based on version 2026.03 of the [Handbook](#)