



# PSY 934

## Dissertation

S1 Day 2018

*Department of Psychology*

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### Disclaimer

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Maria Kangas <a href="mailto:maria.kangas@mq.edu.au">maria.kangas@mq.edu.au</a>
Credit points 8
Prerequisites Admission to MClinPsych and PSY933
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description PSY933 is the compulsory prerequisite for this unit. This unit (PSY934) involves the conduct of research appropriate to the discipline of clinical psychology, and requires the submission of a piece of research in the form of a journal article, usually of around 5000-8000 words plus a literature review in the form of a critical review paper (5000 – 8000 words). The two papers are submitted together for external marking.

## 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:

- Writing an empirical paper in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.
- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.
- Conducting critical evaluations of theories and empirical studies for a particular population/ topic relevant to clinical psychology.
- Writing a literature review in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.

## General Assessment Information

### DISSERTATION EXAMINATION:

Your supervisor will arrange for two examiners, generally at least one of whom is external to the

University. At least 5 to 6 weeks prior to your submission of the project (by at least 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2018) you should remind your supervisor of the due date so that sufficient time is available to make examination arrangements. Complete the student section of the examiner nomination form (See Unit Learn page) and send to your supervisor. This is particularly important because your dissertation is to be marked during the busy times of the year, notably late in second semester when the Honours theses are also being marked. Most theses are marked by one internal and one external examiner, but occasionally, two internal or two external examiners may be used.

***Please carefully note the following process pertaining to the thesis examination***— if there is any delay in assigning examiners for your thesis (which is the Research Supervisor's responsibility to arrange), then this could likely lead to delays in receiving examiners reports back in a timely manner (i.e. – it is common in such cases for examiners reports to not be available until sometime in January if students submitted their thesis by the October due date). This will have ramifications for applying for full registration if the thesis mark/grade is the final unit that needs to be finalized (i.e. you have completed all other course requirements for the MClPsych degree). Unfortunately, even if examiners are assigned by the thesis submission date – it is beyond the MClPsych staff's control (inclusive of Research Supervisor) to guarantee that examiners reports will be ready before the end of the year (if students submit by the October due date). Although all efforts are made to remind examiners that reports are due within 1 month of receipt of thesis, unfortunately some examiners do take longer to examine the thesis – and sometimes are not available until 2-4 months later.

For the abovementioned reasons, students are NOT to assume - a) Examiners will automatically Pass the thesis; b) Thesis marks/grades will be ratified by December if they are submitting by the October due date; and c) Guarantee future employers that they will have met all course work requirements and are eligible for registration by the end of the year in which they submit the thesis for marking. Students cannot apply for full registration with the Psychology Board of Australia until they have met ALL coursework requirements inclusive of the thesis – this means both the examiners reports must have been returned to the university, the thesis has been assessed at minimum Pass level, and all outstanding unit marks/grades have been ratified by the university.

The below marking guidelines are provided to examiners and are used to formulate an appropriate grade. Both examiners provide suggested grades for each component of the thesis and the final grade is then assigned by the unit convenor.

#### Instructions to Examiners

*The task is not to decide whether the paper is publishable (though any comments along these lines, or suggestions concerning improvements to assist publishability, would be most welcome), but to decide whether the standard is adequate for a Masters level project (which constitutes 25% of the degree) and whether the format is acceptable journal format and a suggested grade.*

**Mark range 85 - 100 (High Distinction)** – given to a study that you may expect to see in a good level journal.

- outstanding command of expression and logical argument in a skillfully structured manuscript
- superior evaluation and integration of existing literature
- evidence of significant insight and original thought in dealing with the critical issues
- sophisticated understanding of research methods, with evidence of careful attention to critical design issues in the execution of the project
- thoughtful and appropriate choice of data analysis and outstanding presentation and reporting of results
- clear and coherent interpretation of the thesis data, and/or the results of other studies
- comprehensive understanding of the importance of the results in the context of the theoretical framework
- An obviously publishable paper as is or with perhaps only minor changes.

**Mark range 75 - 84 (Distinction)** – given to a study that you may expect to see in a low to moderate level journal

- the manuscript is well written, logically argued and generally well structured
- the evaluation and integration of the existing literature is very sound without being outstanding
- reasonable insight and some evidence of original thought in dealing with the critical issues
- evidence of a solid understanding of research methods
- adequate design of the research project, although possibly containing minor but retrievable errors
- choice of data analysis that is appropriate for the design and clear presentation of results
- generally sound but pedestrian interpretation of results and their importance to the theoretical context
- paper is almost certainly publishable quality, but perhaps following some minor polishing

**Mark Range 65 - 74 (Credit)** – given to a study that is potentially publishable, but with some attainable changes and improvements.

- generally competently written, although some problems may exist in the logical organisation of the text and the way it is expressed
- provides an adequate coverage of the literature, although it tends to be more descriptive than evaluative, and arguments may be disjointed

- evidence of insight into the issues underlying the thesis or essay, but little evidence of original thinking
- the design of the research project is generally adequate but may contain some errors and oversights
- serviceable choice of data analysis, although other approaches may have been more appropriate
- the presentation of results may lack some clarity but is basically solid
- interpretation of results or other studies is adequate but limited

**Mark range 50 - 64 (Pass)** – given to a study that is unlikely to be publishable in any but the most basic journals, although it is still technically correct

- the work is not well written and shows flaws in the structuring of logical arguments
- coverage of the necessary literature is limited, but most relevant information is provided
- no real original input and most of the contribution is basic and pedestrian
- Perhaps some flaws exist in the design of the research project making it difficult for the research to meet its aims, but these should be acknowledged in at least a limited way by the student.
- Data analysis techniques are clearly not the most appropriate but still manage to provide some understanding of the data.
- the results may be poorly presented
- interpretations are superficial, demonstrating a weak but still correct understanding of the results and their relevance to the theoretical framework
- Integration with existing literature may be quite limited
- Little or no theoretical interpretation or implications.
- 

**Mark range 49 or less (Fail)** – this grade should be reserved for projects that clearly do not demonstrate any clear understanding of the use of research methodology in the applied field.

- Little or no logical argument leading to methods
- Inappropriate coverage of relevant literature
- Poorly described methods that would not allow replication
- Inappropriate analyses or inadequately described results

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Literature Review Paper</u>	50%	No	Week 11 - 22nd October 2018
<u>Empirical Paper</u>	50%	No	Week 11 - 22nd October 2018

### Literature Review Paper

Due: **Week 11 - 22nd October 2018**

Weighting: **50%**

- The Literature Review must involve a critical appraisal of a specific topic area relevant to clinical psychology comprising between 5000 to 8000 words maximum.
- The Literature Review can be closely related to and can be used in the formulation of the Empirical Journal Article, however the introduction section of the empirical paper should not be a simple cut and paste job of select paragraphs from the Literature Review paper.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Conducting critical evaluations of theories and empirical studies for a particular population/ topic relevant to clinical psychology.
- Writing a literature review in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.

### Empirical Paper

Due: **Week 11 - 22nd October 2018**

Weighting: **50%**

The Empirical Journal Article is a write-up of your empirical research as if you were going to submit it to a journal for publication. You must state on the front cover the journal you are writing for and follow the guidelines to authors (Notes for Contributors) given in the journal. The empirical paper should not exceed between 5000 to 8000 words maximum.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Writing an empirical paper in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.
- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.
- Conducting critical evaluations of theories and empirical studies for a particular population/ topic relevant to clinical psychology.

## Delivery and Resources

There are no formal seminars for this unit. Rather, students are required to be in regular contact with their designated research supervisor through the course of this year to ensure they meet the thesis requirements by the due date.

Please check Ilearn page for PSYC934 for regular updates.

An electronic copy of each of the 2 thesis papers need to be uploaded to turnitin by the due date.

Notes for Authors/Contributors:

Specify the selected journal on the journal article cover page and, if relevant, specify the category of paper. It is a good idea to include the journal's 'Notes for Contributors' page found on each journal website with your thesis.

The front cover of the dissertation must state the following:-

- Your name and student number
- The degree you are enrolled in and the title of the piece of work (please give both the Literature Review and Empirical Journal Article a title and list on the front page)
- Your Supervisors' name and the year the work is submitted

### SUBMISSION CHECK LIST:

- Nomination of Dissertation Examiners form, (prepare 6 weeks ahead of due date)
- Three bound copies of project (include Literature Review and Empirical Journal Article together).
- Signed "Data Retention" declaration form (see Unit Ilearn page)

### Binding:

All three copies must be bound in some form. Plastic spiral binding, which is inexpensive and done quickly by many printing stores and also in the library, is acceptable. The Literature Review and the Empirical Journal Article should be bound together but show that they are two separate pieces of work. Note that you may not get any copies of the dissertation back so make four copies if you want to keep one.

### Appendices:

If there is a requirement in the article to provide further details, on request, of measures, analyses, etc., then these should be submitted (include them within binding in bound copies) and identified accordingly.

### Data Retention:

All original data associated with research must be retained in a durable and appropriately referenced form for a period of five years after publication. The retention period dates from the day of submission of your dissertation. Submit a Retention of Original Research Data Form with your dissertation, these forms are available via Ilearn page. Please note however, that if you intend publishing your results, the data may need to be kept for considerably longer.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). 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](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<http://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>).

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, 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 [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

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



[dents.mq.edu.au/support/](https://dents.mq.edu.au/support/)

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](https://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](https://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit [http://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](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.

## Graduate Capabilities

### PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcome

- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.

#### Assessment task

- Empirical Paper

### PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of

knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Writing an empirical paper in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.
- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.
- Conducting critical evaluations of theories and empirical studies for a particular population/ topic relevant to clinical psychology.
- Writing a literature review in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Literature Review Paper
- Empirical Paper

## **PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Writing an empirical paper in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.
- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.
- Conducting critical evaluations of theories and empirical studies for a particular population/ topic relevant to clinical psychology.
- Writing a literature review in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Literature Review Paper
- Empirical Paper

## **PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability**

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and

problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Writing an empirical paper in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.
- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.
- Conducting critical evaluations of theories and empirical studies for a particular population/ topic relevant to clinical psychology.
- Writing a literature review in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Literature Review Paper
- Empirical Paper

## **PG - Effective Communication**

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Writing an empirical paper in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.
- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.
- Conducting critical evaluations of theories and empirical studies for a particular population/ topic relevant to clinical psychology.
- Writing a literature review in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Literature Review Paper
- Empirical Paper

## **PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens**

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Writing an empirical paper in journal format suitable for a psychology journal.
- Designing and conducting an empirical research project which has direct relevance for clinical psychology.

## **Assessment task**

- Empirical Paper