



# GEOP710

## Research Project in Geography and Planning

S1 Online 2019

*Department of Geography and Planning*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor and MRes Director

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides students with an opportunity to undertake a small supervised research project in a relevant field. Supervision is provided by department staff and the aim of the unit is to allow students to develop skills and capacity for independent research. Students must have reached an agreement with a supervisor regarding a research project before enrolling in the unit.

## 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:

Investigate at an advanced level the theories, principles and concepts within a discipline area.

Apply a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialisation for the specific needs of a discipline.

Evaluate the research principles and methods used within a disciplinary area.

Make informed and logical judgments of the arguments of others to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and formulate and apply ideas to new contexts.

## General Assessment Information

### Late submission penalty: Written assignments

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

### Important note on final marks

All assessment results will be moderated during the teaching session in accordance with the assessment standards and criteria stipulated in the prescribed task rubrics.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#"><u>Active Participation</u></a>	30%	No	Week 13
<a href="#"><u>Written Report</u></a>	35%	No	Week 6 and Week 9
<a href="#"><u>Research Design Report</u></a>	35%	No	Week 13

### Active Participation

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **30%**

This task requires you to submit a logbook comprising the following elements.

a) Record of meetings with your supervisor (15%)

Before each meeting you should develop an agenda of issues you would like to raise with your supervisor and record them in the logbook. You should arrive at the meeting with questions about your project that you would like to discuss. You should also record the outcomes of your meetings in terms of ideas discussed, issues resolved, and research tasks / directions to explore prior to the next meeting.

Read the following book chapter as a way of getting started and to prepare for these meetings:

Chapter 9: How to manage your supervisors in Phillips, EM and Pugh, DS (2010) How to get a PhD: a handbook for students and their supervisors. Maidenhead: Open University Press (5th edition): 108-126

Another useful source that you may like to explore during the session is the Thesis Whisperer

website, which includes a section on “you and your supervisor”: <https://thesiswhisperer.com/category/you-and-your-supervisor/>. This website focuses on PhD research but is useful for any HDR research project.

b) Reflections on five research seminars (15%)

You are also required to attend at least five research seminars and write a short reflection on these in your logbook. At least two of these seminars should be from the Department of Geography and Planning Seminar series. The others can be from elsewhere in the university, or off campus. You can reflect on any substantive aspect of seminar, including research design, disciplinary context/literature/ and research methods, and consider how they may influence your own research ideas. Did the presenter situate their research within a particular discipline/set of literature? How did this influence their research design and methods? Could they have selected different methods and how would this have changed their project? How would utilising aspects of their research design and methodological approach change your own project?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialisation for the specific needs of a discipline.
- Make informed and logical judgments of the arguments of others to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and formulate and apply ideas to new contexts.

## Written Report

Due: **Week 6 and Week 9**

Weighting: **35%**

### 1) Initial Literature review (20%)

Word length: 2000 words

Due date: Friday Week 6

In this task you are required to conduct an initial review of the literature in your field of interest and develop a problem statement based on this review. The review (2000 words) should demonstrate an understanding of contemporary research within the area you are most interested. The problem statement (up to 100 words) should form a conclusion which comprises a clear statement about the research problem, which may or may not be framed as research questions, that you wish to investigate further.

### 2) Methodological review (15%)

Word length: 1500 words

Due date: Friday Week 9

This task requires you to consider the different ways in which you could approach your problem field. You should conduct a review of the literature that explores 2-3 different methodological approaches that could be used to address your research topic. You should review the methodologies other researchers have used to explore the topic and comment on the type of data and knowledge that could be gathered under each approach. You should conclude with a brief critical assessment on which methodology you favour and why.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialisation for the specific needs of a discipline.
- Evaluate the research principles and methods used within a disciplinary area.

## Research Design Report

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **35%**

### **Research design report**

Word length: 3000 words

This task requires you to write two research outlines and critically reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. The first research outline should be your preferred approach that you would like to develop further in the second year of the MRes; the second should explore an alternative way of approaching the topic. You are encouraged to contrast different approaches in these outlines. If, for example, your preferred approach is cutting edge / contemporary you are encouraged to contrast that with a more conservative / conventional or classic way of approaching the topic (and vice versa). Each research outline should be no longer than 2 pages and should detail:

- Title of research project
- The general problem field your project is exploring and how your project relates to relevant literature
- Specific research aims and objectives
- Research approach – proposed methodology
- Proposed fieldwork locations and participants
- Feasibility (time / cost / equipment / location constraints)
- Ethical / health and safety issues

These outlines should be accompanied by a 1-2 page critical assessment which reflects on the process through which research is designed. In it you should reflect on why you favoured one project over the other; how effective you think it will be in responding to your research problem when compared to the alternative; what you consider the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches presented; what different data and knowledge will be generated by the differing

approaches; and what academic and non-academic considerations influenced you to research this topic and design your research in this way.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Investigate at an advanced level the theories, principles and concepts within a discipline area.
- Apply a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialisation for the specific needs of a discipline.

## Delivery and Resources

Please see GEOP710 Student Guide.

## 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 \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway\)](https://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 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 [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au) or if you are a Global MBA student contact [globalmba.support@mq.edu.au](mailto:globalmba.support@mq.edu.au)

## Student Support

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

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://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](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

If you are a Global MBA student contact [globalmba.support@mq.edu.au](mailto:globalmba.support@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

- Make informed and logical judgments of the arguments of others to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and formulate and apply ideas to new contexts.

## Assessment task

- Active Participation

## 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

- Investigate at an advanced level the theories, principles and concepts within a discipline area.
- Evaluate the research principles and methods used within a disciplinary area.

## Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Written Report
- Research Design Report

## 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

- Investigate at an advanced level the theories, principles and concepts within a discipline area.
- Apply a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialisation for the specific needs of a discipline.
- Evaluate the research principles and methods used within a disciplinary area.
- Make informed and logical judgments of the arguments of others to arrive at reasoned



and meaningful arguments and positions, and formulate and apply ideas to new contexts.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Written Report
- Research Design Report

## **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**

- Investigate at an advanced level the theories, principles and concepts within a discipline area.
- Apply a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialisation for the specific needs of a discipline.
- Evaluate the research principles and methods used within a disciplinary area.
- Make informed and logical judgments of the arguments of others to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and formulate and apply ideas to new contexts.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Written Report
- Research Design Report

## **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**

- Apply a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialisation for the specific needs of a discipline.
- Make informed and logical judgments of the arguments of others to arrive at reasoned

and meaningful arguments and positions, and formulate and apply ideas to new contexts.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Active Participation
- Research Design Report

## **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 outcome**

- Make informed and logical judgments of the arguments of others to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and formulate and apply ideas to new contexts.

## **Assessment task**

- Active Participation