

COU754 Research Project A

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast

**BLENDED
LEARNING**

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Please go to usc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

This course will build on the work you completed in your Research Methods course. Using the proposal you developed, you are required to develop a research project in a core area of counselling under the supervision of academic staff in counselling. The research question under investigation may have either theoretical or practical application of counselling significance. In this trimester, you will refine your research project with your Supervisor, complete your application for ethical approval, and commence the project.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus training on design of research project - 3 hours	3hrs	Week 1	11 times

1.3. Course Topics

- Introduction, Research Literacy, and HREA
- Manuscript Introductions / Research Questions
- Methodologies and Research Designs / Power Analysis
- Research Robustness (measures of credibility)
- Sampling and Data Collection Techniques
- Data Analysis Techniques
- Research Reflexivity / Positionality Statements and Bracketing
- Ethical Considerations
- Research Proposal (written and oral)
- QDA or NVivo?
- SPSS or JASP?
- Collecting and storing data over the trimester break / Researcher Etiquette
- Revision

1.4. Mature Content

Coarse Language, Adult themes

2. What level is this course?

700 Level (Specialised)

Demonstrating a specialised body of knowledge and set of skills for professional practice or further learning. Advanced application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1 Demonstrate a mastery of theoretical knowledge and reflect critically on theory and professional practice through a research project.	Creative and critical thinker Ethical
2 Develop the cognitive and technical skills to ethically investigate, analyse and synthesise complex counselling information and develop interventions or research for specific needs.	Empowered Ethical
3 Communicate and justify your findings with clarity through written and oral presentations.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
4 Demonstrate academic scholarship	Knowledgeable Ethical

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

CMN574, SCS725 or other approved Research Methods course and enrolled in Program AR708

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Timely and detailed feedback is provided for each assessment. Feedback is provided both within text and general comments to build scholarly skills. Students are able to seek feedback through face-to-face discussion with the course coordinator. Tutorials will include extended discussion and review of the assessment task requirements and scope.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Report	Individual	0%	500 words	Week 4	In Class
All	2	Written Piece	Individual	25%	1000 words	Week 7	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Oral	Individual	20%	15 minutes	Week 11	In Class
All	4	Literature Review (or component)	Individual	55%	4000 words approx.	Week 12	Online Submission

All - Assessment Task 1: Analysis of a research article

GOAL:	To demonstrate skill in the critical evaluation of published research.		
PRODUCT:	Report		
FORMAT:	Students will be invited to critically evaluate a provided research publication, and complete a provided worksheet.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Able to accurately identify points of methodological strength in research design;	1 2
	2	Able to accurately identify limitations in research design;	2
	3	Able to identify alternative strategies that could potentially strengthen the research.	1 2
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 2: Proposed Dissertation Introduction

GOAL:	To develop a written introduction to your research dissertation.		
PRODUCT:	Written Piece		
FORMAT:	You are invited to prepare a 1000 word written introduction to your dissertation. The introduction should include an overview of the research topic and a clear rationale for the research questions to be addressed. The introduction should explicitly state the overall study objectives and the specific aims of the investigation. The introduction should be submitted following discussions with your supervisor		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of contemporary research in the chosen topic area.	1 2 4
	2	Construct a clear rationale for the research question/s to be addressed.	2 3
	3	Concisely state the research questions.	1 4
	4	Exactly state the overall objectives and specific aims of the investigation.	1 3
	5	Demonstrate a sound knowledge of APA6 format, writing and referencing styles.	4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Organisation, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 3: Oral Presentation

GOAL:	The oral presentation will provide you with an opportunity to receive additional considered feedback on your dissertation proposal. The oral presentation will demonstrate your ability to: articulate the theoretical framework, research questions and research methods selected; argue for, and defend, the proposed research. It will be presented within your research supervision group.		
PRODUCT:	Oral		
FORMAT:	Detailed presentation criteria for this assessment are available on Canvas.		
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	
	1	Underpinning theoretical framework	1 3
	2	Research questions	1 3
	3	Research methods selected	1 2 3
	4	Organisation of the project / thesis	1 3
	5	Coherent and logical structure and flow	1 3
	6	Adheres strictly to USC presentation guidelines	3
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 4: Dissertation research proposal

GOAL:	You will produce a dissertation research proposal which will lead into your next research stage.		
PRODUCT:	Literature Review (or component)		
FORMAT:	The dissertation research proposal, including introduction, literature review, and method, should be submitted following discussions with your supervisor. The introduction should include an overview of the research topic and a clear rationale for the research questions to be addressed. The introduction should explicitly state the overall study objectives and the specific aims of the investigation. The literature review should provide a critical review of relevant literature, identify knowledge gaps, and address the relationship of the literature to the thesis aims. The method will describe the specifics of investigation design, participant recruitment, ethical approvals, procedures, and data analysis.		
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	
	1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of contemporary research in the chosen topic area.	1 2
	2	Construct a clear rationale for the research questions to be addressed.	1
	3	Exactly state the overall study objectives and the specific aims of the investigation.	1 2
	4	Clearly provide all necessary information to understand the method of enquiry adopted	2
	5	Demonstrate a sound knowledge of APA7 format, writing and referencing style.	4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below. Resources may be required or recommended.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	John McLeod	2022	Doing Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy	4th	Sage Publications Limited

8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

- Less than 15 minutes: No penalty
- From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty
- More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email safe@usc.edu.au.

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](tel:0754301226) or email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au.

10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.10. General Enquiries

In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au