

HLT401 Research Dissertation B: Research Proposal and Ethics in Health

School: School of Health - Physiotherapy

2027 | Trimester 2

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 unisc.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

In this course you will develop a research proposal and apply for ethics approval to conduct your research. You will extend your understanding of different research methods and examine key ethical requirements related to research in Australia. You will also present and justify their research proposal and obtain support and feedback from their peers and other researchers.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Online resources to assist students in preparing for tutorial sessions and conducting research	2hrs	Week 1	11 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Research skills and support	2hrs	Week 1	11 times
Seminar – Introduction to course & assessment support (Wk 1 & 11)	1hr	Week 1	2 times

1.3. Course Topics

- Aligning research methods and study design with research aims and questions
- Considering strengths, limitations, feasibility and scope of different research projects
- Developing a research proposal and ensuring ethical, rigorous, high quality research methods
- Defining the study population, developing inclusion and exclusion criteria and providing justification
- Developing a participant recruitment and selection process that is achievable, rigorous, and appropriate
- Designing and justifying study interventions and assessments for the study population
- Describing interventions and assessments in a clear, specific and reproducible manner
- Selecting valid, reliable, and relevant comparisons and outcome measures and providing justification
- Developing, describing and justifying research data collection methods and data analyses
- Considering ethical aspects of research and completing the Health Research Ethics Application and attachments
- Keeping on track with research tasks, meeting deadlines and managing stress and competing work/study demands

2. What level is this course?

400 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

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 MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Physiotherapy Board of Australia
1 Design and justify robust research methods of high quality which align with research aims and research questions	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered	2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 6.1
2 Apply understanding of research ethics and integrity when designing research methods and completing ethics applications	Creative and critical thinker Empowered Ethical	2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.3, 6.1
3 Demonstrate effective communication, critical thinking and reflection, and a commitment to learning and improvement	Creative and critical thinker Empowered Engaged	3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 6.1
4 Develop and write a research proposal that is clear, well-structured, detailed, and supported by research evidence	Creative and critical thinker Empowered	2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 6.1
5 Demonstrate respectful and professional behaviour, and effective self management, organisation and collaboration with others	Empowered Ethical Engaged Sustainability-focussed	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 6.1, 7.1

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
PHYSIOTHERAPY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA	
2.1	Comply with legal, professional, ethical and other relevant standards, codes and guidelines
2.2	Make and act on informed and appropriate decisions about acceptable professional and ethical behaviours
2.3	Recognise the need for, and implement, appropriate strategies to manage their physical and mental health and resilience
3.1	Use clear, accurate, sensitive and effective communication to support the development of trust and rapport in professional relationships with the client and relevant others
3.2	Record and effectively communicate physiotherapy assessment findings, outcomes and decisions
4.1	Assess their practice against relevant professional benchmarks and take action to continually improve their practice
4.2	Evaluate their learning needs, engage in relevant continuing professional development and recognise when to seek professional support, including peer review
4.3	Efficiently consume and effectively apply research and commit to practice informed by best available research evidence and new knowledge
4.4	Proactively apply principles of quality improvement and risk management to practice

CODE	COMPETENCY
4.5	Recognise situations that are outside their scope of expertise or competence and take appropriate and timely action
6.1	Use education to empower themselves and others
7.1	Organise and prioritise their workload and resources to provide safe, effective and efficient physiotherapy autonomously and, where relevant, as a team member

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

HLT400 and enrolled in BH001 and Research pathway

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

5.5. Microcredential Information

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Limited Grading (PNP)

Pass (PU), Fail (UF). All assessment tasks are required to be passed for successful completion of the course.

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Students will receive regular formative feedback during workshops, and from their supervisor throughout the trimester.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Written Piece	Individual	Variable length (but aim for no more than 3000 words or 7 pages with diagrams/figures, excluding attachments)	Refer to Format	Online Submission
All	2	Written Piece	Individual	Variable - dependent on the length of research methods required by supervisor(s) and for selected journal for publication. No more than 2000 words is suggested.	Exam Period	Online Submission
All	3	Report	Individual	One page progress report using template provided, in addition to a one page GANTT chart created by the student.	Exam Period	Online Submission

All - Assessment Task 1: Draft Research Ethics Application

GOAL:	To encourage student engagement with learning and to ensure students keep on track to meet research deadlines to complete their embedded honours degree.		
PRODUCT:	Written Piece		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	The draft ethics application will consist of a completed: 1. Human Research Ethics Application (download copy from NHMRC website) 2. Attachment 1 - Research Description/Clinical Trial Protocol 3. Attachment 2 - Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form 4. Attachment 3 - Other required materials for recruitment (e.g. adverts) or data collection tools (e.g. survey) The ethics application and attachments are due for submission by the end of Week 2 of the Examination period.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Design and justify robust research methods of high quality which align with research aims and research questions	1
	2	Apply understanding of research ethics and integrity when designing research methods and completing ethics applications	2
	3	Demonstrate effective communication, critical thinking and reflection, and a commitment to learning and improvement	3
	4	Develop and write a research proposal that is clear, well-structured, detailed, and supported by research evidence	4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 2: Draft Research Proposal

GOAL:	To provide students with early feedback from their supervisor(s) on their draft research proposal/methods to facilitate improvements prior to submission of thesis for examination in HLT403 Research Dissertation D. A due date for submission in this course also facilitates student organisation and time management in completing their research and meeting project deadlines.																			
PRODUCT:	Written Piece																			
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:																				
FORMAT:	The research proposal should be submitted in word format for supervisor review to CANVAS. Turnitin software will not be used as this assignment will not be formally marked (draft status only). Despite this, students will need to adhere to academic integrity guidelines and reference all citations using the referencing style required by selected journal for publication. A reference list is also expected to accompany the research proposal. Students need to submit their draft proposal to CANVAS by end of the second week of the examination period.																			
CRITERIA:	<table> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th><th></th><th>Learning Outcome assessed</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Demonstrate respectful and professional behaviour, and effective self management, organisation and collaboration with others</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Develop and write a research proposal that is clear, well-structured, detailed, and supported by research evidence</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Demonstrate effective communication, critical thinking and reflection, and a commitment to learning and improvement</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>Apply understanding of research ethics and integrity when designing research methods and completing ethics applications</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td>Design and justify robust research methods of high quality which align with research aims and research questions</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Demonstrate respectful and professional behaviour, and effective self management, organisation and collaboration with others	5	2	Develop and write a research proposal that is clear, well-structured, detailed, and supported by research evidence	4	3	Demonstrate effective communication, critical thinking and reflection, and a commitment to learning and improvement	3	4	Apply understanding of research ethics and integrity when designing research methods and completing ethics applications	2	5	Design and justify robust research methods of high quality which align with research aims and research questions	1	
No.		Learning Outcome assessed																		
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5	Design and justify robust research methods of high quality which align with research aims and research questions	1																		
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy																			

All - Assessment Task 3: Progress Report

GOAL:	To assist students in developing research plans, meeting project milestones, reflecting on progress, and identifying learning and support needs.		
PRODUCT:	Report		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	At the end of the examination period students will need to submit a progress report in relation to their honours research project. This report will need to be co-signed by the research supervisor(s) and uploaded to CANVAS for review by the subject coordinator. Students need to submit this report by the end of the second week of the examination period. The progress report template will be provided on CANVAS and will ask students to provide an update of their project plans, comment on progress to date - including research methods and ethics application, and next steps. Students will also be required to reflect on learning and support needs, and attach a copy of their updated GANTT chart to the report.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate effective communication, critical thinking and reflection, and a commitment to learning and improvement	3
	2	Demonstrate respectful and professional behaviour, and effective self management, organisation and collaboration with others	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies		

6.4. Assessment to competency mapping

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE	ASSESSMENT TYPE	TITLE	COMPETENCY	TEACHING METHODS
PHYSIOTHERAPY PRACTICE THRESHOLDS IN AUSTRALIA AND AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND				
All delivery modes	Report	Progress Report	2.1	Practiced, Assessed
			2.2	Practiced, Assessed
			2.3	Practiced, Assessed
			3.1	Practiced, Assessed
			3.2	Practiced, Assessed
			4.1	Practiced, Assessed
			4.2	Practiced, Assessed
			4.3	Practiced, Assessed
			4.4	Practiced, Assessed
			4.5	Practiced, Assessed
			6.1	Practiced, Assessed
	Written Piece	Draft Research Ethics Application	1.1	Practiced, Assessed
			1.2	Practiced, Assessed
			1.3	Practiced, Assessed
			2.1	Practiced, Assessed
			2.2	Practiced, Assessed
			3.1	Practiced, Assessed

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE	ASSESSMENT TYPE	TITLE	COMPETENCY	TEACHING METHODS
			3.2	Practiced, Assessed
			4.1	Practiced, Assessed
			4.2	Practiced, Assessed
			4.3	Practiced, Assessed
			4.4	Practiced, Assessed
			4.5	Practiced, Assessed
			5.1	Practiced, Assessed
			6.1	Practiced, Assessed
		Draft Research Proposal	1.1	Practiced, Assessed
			1.2	Practiced, Assessed
			1.3	Practiced, Assessed
			2.1	Practiced, Assessed
			2.2	Practiced, Assessed
			3.1	Practiced, Assessed
			3.2	Practiced, Assessed
			4.1	Practiced, Assessed
			4.2	Practiced, Assessed
			4.3	Practiced, Assessed
			4.4	Practiced, Assessed
			4.5	Practiced, Assessed
			5.1	Practiced, Assessed
			6.1	Practiced, Assessed

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.

7.1. Schedule

PERIOD AND TOPIC	ACTIVITIES
Module 1: Research Proposal & Research Methods	Seminar, Online Learning, and Workshops Self-Directed Research with Supervisors
Module 2: Ethics Application & Attachments	Seminar, Online Learning, and Workshops Self-Directed Research with Supervisors

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

You need regular access to the resource(s) below. Many texts are available as ebooks through the [Library](#) at no additional cost.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Recommended	Bernadette Howlett, Teresa Gabiola Shelton, Ellen Rogo	2020	Evidence Based Practice for Health Professionals	n/a	Jones & Bartlett Publishers
Recommended	John W. Creswell, J. David Creswell	2018	Research Design	n/a	SAGE Publications, Incorporated

8.2. Specific requirements

Students will need to meet regularly with their research supervisor outside of class to obtain advice and feedback (Formative).

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

This course will be graded as Pass in a Limited Grade Course (PU) or Fail in a Limited Grade Course (UF) as per clause 5.1.1.3 and 5.1.1.4 of the Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA) - Academic Policy.

In a course eligible to use Limited Grades, all assessment items in that course are marked on a Pass/Fail basis and all assessment tasks are required to be passed for a student to successfully complete the course. Supplementary assessment is not available in courses using Limited Grades.

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

You must contact your Course Coordinator and provide the required documentation if you require an extension or alternate assessment.

Refer to the Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs – Procedures.

10.4. 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>

10.5. 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.

10.6. General Enquiries

For course-specific questions, contact your teaching staff or Course Coordinator.

For other enquiries or to access support, please contact Student Central:

- [UniSC Student Central](#)
- [UniSC Adelaide Student Central](#)