

MCH401 Actuators and Drives in Mechatronic Systems

School: School of Science, Technology and Engineering

2026 | Trimester 1

UniSC Moreton Bay

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

In this course, you will learn about the sensors and actuators commonly used in the design of mechatronics systems. The course focuses on the balance between the analysis and hardware implementation of various devices. The course further discusses the drive circuits and systems for selected actuators. This course also studies the use of controller programming to implement actuator drive systems.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Asynchronous weekly learning material	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
Laboratory 1 – On campus	2hrs	Week 2	5 times
Seminar – On campus	1hr	Week 1	3 times

1.3. Course Topics

Topics may include:

- Sensors (analog and digital)
- Actuators (motors and solenoids)
- Measurement systems
- Conditioning and interfacing (amplification, switching etc.)
- Driver circuits and motion control systems
- Controller programming

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...	Engineers Australia Stage 1 Professional Engineer Competency Standards
1 Demonstrate specialised knowledge and account for the operational principles of different devices applicable to electrical drives and mechatronic systems.	Knowledgeable	1, 1.3.a, 1.3
2 Interpret current research developments to articulate in-depth operations and principles of motion control related to electrical drive systems.	Knowledgeable	1, 1.4.a, 1.4
3 Calculate and review the performance of different actuators and electronic devices in mechatronic systems.	Creative and critical thinker	2, 2.1.b, 2.1
4 Determine and evaluate machine power and drive system performance parameters.	Creative and critical thinker	2, 2.1.a, 2.1
5 Adapt suitable machinery and equipment for a particular engineering system operating under certain conditions.	Empowered	2, 2.2.a, 2.2
6 Apply techniques to interface hardware and control the system through software.	Empowered	2, 2.2.d, 2.2

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA STAGE 1 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER COMPETENCY STANDARDS	
1	Elements of competency: Knowledge and Skill Base
1.3.a	Knowledge and Skill Base - In-depth understanding of specialist bodies of knowledge within the engineering discipline: Proficiently applies advanced technical knowledge and skills in at least one specialist practice domain of the engineering discipline.
1.4.a	Knowledge and Skill Base - Discernment of knowledge development and research directions within the engineering discipline: Identifies and critically appraises current developments, advanced technologies, emerging issues and interdisciplinary linkages in at least one specialist practice domain of the engineering discipline.
1.3	Knowledge and Skill Base: In-depth understanding of specialist bodies of knowledge within the engineering discipline.
1.4	Knowledge and Skill Base: Discernment of knowledge development and research directions within the engineering discipline.
2	Elements of competency: Engineering Application Ability
2.1.b	Engineering Application Ability - Application of established engineering methods to complex engineering problem solving: Ensures that all aspects of an engineering activity are soundly based on fundamental principles - by diagnosing, and taking appropriate action with data, calculations, results, proposals, processes, practices, and documented information that may be ill-founded, illogical, erroneous, unreliable or unrealistic.

CODE COMPETENCY

2.1.a Engineering Application Ability - Application of established engineering methods to complex engineering problem solving: Identifies, discerns and characterises salient issues, determines and analyses causes and effects, justifies and applies appropriate simplifying assumptions, predicts performance and behaviour, synthesises solution strategies and develops substantiated conclusions.

2.2.a Engineering Application Ability - Fluent application of engineering techniques, tools and resources: Proficiently identifies, selects and applies the materials, components, devices, systems, processes, resources, plant and equipment relevant to the engineering discipline.

2.2.d Engineering Application Ability - Fluent application of engineering techniques, tools and resources: Applies a wide range of engineering tools for analysis, simulation, visualisation, synthesis and design, including assessing the accuracy and limitations of such tools, and validation of their results.

2.1 Engineering Application Ability: Application of established engineering methods to complex engineering problem solving.

2.2 Engineering Application Ability: Fluent application of engineering techniques, tools and resources.

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

Enrolled in GC004, GD004, MC004, GC006, GD006, MC006 or SC405.

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

Early feedback will be provided through completion of weekly activities in workshops. Furthermore, feedback on each assessment will be provided which will be used to help with the following assessment.

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	Written Piece	Individual	30%	3 x 500 words	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Practical / Laboratory Skills, and Written Piece	Individual	35%	1750 words	Week 8	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Artefact - Technical and Scientific, and Written Piece	Group	35%	1750 words	Week 12	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: Written Piece

GOAL:	The assignment will develop your knowledge and understanding of selecting, analysing, and using various sensors and actuators to solve specific mechatronics problems. The assignments will further give you the opportunity to design motion control systems and actuator drive systems.	
PRODUCT:	Written Piece	
FORMAT:	Relevant tasks and problems to enforce understanding of the students and help in gradual development of knowledge and skills throughout the course. Weeks 4, 6 and 8.	
CRITERIA:	<p>No.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Demonstration of specialised knowledge and accounting for the operational principles of different devices applicable to electrical drives and mechatronic systems. 2 Calculation and review of the performance of different actuators and electronic devices used in mechatronic systems. 3 Determination and evaluation of machine power and drive system performance parameters. 4 Adaptation of suitable machinery and equipment for a particular engineering system operating under certain conditions. 5 Application of techniques to interface hardware and control the system through software. 	Learning Outcome assessed
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 2: Experimental Analysis/Project

GOAL:	This assessment will build your skills and knowledge to implement and integrate various sensors and actuators. You will also be able to showcase your controller programming techniques.	
PRODUCT:	Practical / Laboratory Skills, and Written Piece	
FORMAT:	Experimental analysis or projects to develop the students ability to apply knowledge and skills acquired in the course.	
CRITERIA:	<p>No.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Demonstration of specialised knowledge and accounting for the operational principles of different devices applicable to electrical drives and mechatronic systems. 2 Calculation and review of the performance of different actuators and electronic devices in mechatronics systems. 3 Determination and evaluation of machine power and drive system performance parameters. 4 Adaptation of suitable machinery and equipment for a particular engineering system operating under certain conditions. 5 Application of techniques to interface hardware and control the system through software. 	Learning Outcome assessed
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 3: Project

GOAL:	The project is designed as a hands-on activity to build your skills to be creative, innovate, apply design methodology, and build artefacts which meet the proposed design brief.	
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Technical and Scientific, and Written Piece	
FORMAT:	Project will be documented in a report and is submitted along with supporting files and demonstrations.	
CRITERIA:	No. 1 Interpretation of current research developments to articulate in-depth operations and principles of motion control related to electrical drive systems. 2 Determination and evaluation of machine power and drive system performance parameters. 3 Adaptation of suitable machinery and equipment for a particular engineering system operating under certain conditions. 4 Application of techniques to interface hardware and control the system through software.	Learning Outcome assessed 2 4 5 6
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, 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

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

Not applicable

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

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

- The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%
- The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale
- You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

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