

PSY403

Ethical and Professional Issues In Psychology

School: School of Health - Psychology

2026 | Trimester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast
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 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

This course focuses directly on ethical and professional issues that arise in the professional practice of psychology. The style is dialectical, requiring discernment of the ethical issues, argument about the issues, and knowledge of how to approach new issues in order to engage in ethical best practice.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus tutorial/workshop - 3 hours	3hrs	Week 1	12 times

1.3. Course Topics

Course content encompasses professional practice and ethics associated with contextual decision-making, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, managing subpoenas, professional competence, multiple relationships, record keeping and assessments, treatments and endings, relationships and advertising, working in rural and remote settings, reflective practice and registration requirements.

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...	Australian Psychology Accreditation Council
1 Demonstrate knowledge of the Psychology Board Code of Conduct and associated Guidelines regarding the practice of psychology.	Knowledgeable Ethical	2.2, 2.3
2 Demonstrate knowledge of the major ethical issues confronting psychologists in professional practice.	Knowledgeable Ethical	2.2, 2.3
3 Apply that knowledge to analyse and formulate responses in hypothetical practice situations.	Creative and critical thinker Ethical	2.2, 2.3
4 Apply ethical decision making approaches to the formulation and analysis of ethical dilemmas across the lifespan in empirically valid and culturally responsive ways.	Creative and critical thinker Ethical	2.2, 2.3

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY ACCREDITATION COUNCIL	
2.2	Taking into account broad diversity, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically demonstrate appropriate interpersonal communication and interview skills in situations appropriate to psychological practice and research. This includes active listening, clarifying and reflecting, effective questioning, developing rapport, appropriate cultural responsiveness and empathic responding.
2.3	Taking into account broad diversity, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically demonstrate basic assessment strategies in situations appropriate to psychological practice and knowledge of psychometric theory and principles of the construction, cultural considerations, implementation and interpretation of some of the more widely used standardised psychological test instruments.

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

SC407 or AR403 or (AR405 and PSY300, PSY301, PSY302, PSY303, PSY304, PSY305, PSY306 AND PSY307).

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

Standard Grading (GRD)

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

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Early formative feedback will be incorporated into class activities.

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	Oral and Written Piece	Individual and Group	30%	5 to 7 minutes for oral presentation/ 150 word reflection.	Refer to Format	In Class
All	2	Report	Individual	50%	Refer to format	Refer to Format	Online Submission
All	3	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	20%	60 minutes	Exam Period	Online Test (Quiz)

All - Assessment Task 1: Oral and Written Reflection

GOAL:	The first part of this assessment is a group oral presentation critically analysing an ethical vignette using an Ethical Decision Making Model (EDM) to facilitate the integration of theory and practice taught throughout the program regarding knowledge professional and ethical issues in professional psychology practice, and ethical decision-making. The second part of this assessment is an individual written reflection piece that flows from your group presentation. More details will be provided on Canvas in week 1.											
PRODUCT:	Oral and Written Piece											
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:												
FORMAT:	The oral presentation will occur between weeks 5 and 7 of the Trimester, with written reflection to be submitted in same workshop.											
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GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy											

All - Assessment Task 2: Report: Professional ethics

GOAL:	<p>With reference to a specific circumstance (details to be given on Canvas), you will critically discuss those circumstances to which professional requirements refer, from the point of view of:</p> <p>(a) psychologist responsibilities</p> <p>(b) tools that psychologists have at their disposal to assist in this context</p> <p>(c) ethical guidelines that have been developed to assist psychologists to act in accordance with current professional requirements</p> <p>(d) relevant research and professional writing in psychology relevant to the context.</p> <p>You will also be integrating reflective practice into your response.</p>																		
PRODUCT:	Report																		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:																			
FORMAT:	<p>Written report to be submitted via Canvas.</p> <p>This assessment task will be due between weeks 6-9 of the teaching trimester. The final date of submission for this task will be determined once public holidays and the course timetable have been published prior to the commencement of trimester. Please refer to your course Canvas site at the commencement of the teaching trimester to confirm the due date for this assessment task.</p>																		
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GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Information literacy																		

All - Assessment Task 3: Quiz

GOAL:	You will complete the quiz via Canvas to demonstrate knowledge of appropriate professional and ethical guidelines and the various common ethical issues faced by psychologists. In the quiz you will also demonstrate your ability to engage in ethical decision making.						
PRODUCT:	Examination - Centrally Scheduled						
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:							
FORMAT:	You will provide a response to questions covering the content from Weeks 1 - 12.						
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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

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
Required	Alfred Allan,Anthony Love	2010	Ethical Practice in Psychology	n/a	Wiley

8.2. Specific requirements

Information regarding prescribed texts or other associated resources will be made available on the Canvas site prior to commencement of study.

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

You must contact your Course Coordinator and follow the relevant procedure on Canvas to provide the required documentation if you require an extension or alternative assessment.

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. 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](#)