

# PSY704 Advanced Research Design and Methods

School: School of Health - Psychology

2026 Trimester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast

BLEND  
ED  
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](http://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

The UniSC postgraduate psychology programs are committed to maintaining the primacy of public safety in the delivery of the program within the education and placement environments. This course extends students' previous studies by providing a guide to clinical research methods. In recognising the Scientist Practitioner Model, there is a focus on research design with practical implications for clinical practice and on critical use of the research literature to guide evidence based practice.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLEND ED LEARNING			
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – On campus workshop - 3 hours	3hrs	Week 1	12 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

Course topics encompass the scientist-practitioner model, boundaries of research design and methods, analysing research, designing interventions, and synergies between research and clinical practice.

## 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 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 advanced knowledge and understanding of recent developments in clinical research methodology and design.	Knowledgeable	3.2, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.12, 3.14, 3.16
2 Demonstrate an ability to access and, critique methodological strategies relevant to clinical research, and the ability to present, compare and contrast such methodologies in a cogent manner through professional presentations and materials.	Creative and critical thinker Empowered	3.2, 3.6, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.13, 3.14, 3.16
3 Demonstrate understanding and responsiveness to diverse populations and critical analysis of relevant literature.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical Problem solving	3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 3.10, 3.12, 3.16

#### \* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
<b>AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY ACCREDITATION COUNCIL</b>	
3.2	Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically apply evidence-based and scientific methods to professional practice across the lifespan in empirically valid and culturally responsive ways.
3.3	Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically employ professional communication skills, in a culturally responsive manner, with a range of socially and culturally diverse clients.
3.5	Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically identify psychological disorders using a recognised taxonomy.
3.6	Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically conduct professional interviews and assessments and synthesise information from multiple sources, including assessment of risk, to formulate a conceptualisation of the presenting issues to determine the most appropriate interventions.
3.7	Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically monitor outcomes/modifications based on evolving case formulation, including health concerns, family/support networks, & organisational/cultural/community contexts, with care given to the appropriateness of interventions for the client.
3.8	Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically interpret and communicate findings in oral and written formats, including formal psychological reports, using culturally appropriate language.
3.9	Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically implement appropriate, empirically supported interventions, and monitor clients' progress and intervention outcomes.

- 3.10 Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically demonstrate respect for the skills and contribution of other professionals.
- 3.11 Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically work effectively with a range of professional and support staff in the workplace and communicate and collaborate effectively, within the bounds of ethical and legal requirements.
- 3.12 Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically operate within the boundaries of their professional competence, consult with peers or other relevant sources where appropriate, and refer on to relevant other practitioners where appropriate.
- 3.13 Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically rigorously apply professional practice policies and procedures, including as they relate to referral management and record-keeping, across a range of workplace settings and with recognition of different organisational cultures and practices.
- 3.14 Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically engage in self-reflective professional practice, taking account of the impact of their own values and beliefs, and taking appropriate actions as a result.
- 3.16 Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, & consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings & codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically critically evaluate contemporary scientific literature to inform practice.

## 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 Program AR702 or AR703

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

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

Fundamentals of Statistical Methods and Analysis

### 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

You should discuss the topic of your clinical decision making presentation with the course coordinator prior to commencing preparation on any of your presentations. You will be able to use the feedback from the clinical decision making presentation to guide your efforts for the role play.

### 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	Oral and Written Piece	Individual	Presentation 20 minutes. Handout 750 words.	Refer to Format	In Class
All	2	Oral	Group	5-7 minutes.	Refer to Format	In Class

#### All - Assessment Task 1: Clinical decision-making presentation

<b>GOAL:</b>	The goal of this assessment is to communicate your understanding of research about current treatments for psychological disorders, through an oral presentation and a handout that demonstrates the decision-making process.															
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral and Written Piece															
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>																
<b>FORMAT:</b>	You will present the information in two parts. First, as an oral group presentation and second, as a brief summary of the articles and your conclusions (minimum 750 words). You should discuss the topic of your clinical decision-making presentation with the course coordinator prior to commencing preparation of your presentation. Please refer to your course Canvas site at the commencement of the teaching semester to confirm the due date for this assessment task.															
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th>Learning Outcome assessed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Explanation and understanding of psychological disorder or condition. <b>2 3</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Evaluation of research and understanding of statistical and methodological issues. <b>1 3</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Clarity and justification of clinical decision-making process. <b>2 3</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Integration of research with clinical practice and consideration of client context. <b>1 2 3</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>Clarity and usefulness of the handout. <b>1 2 3</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>Communication and professionalism in oral presentation. <b>1 2 3</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	1	Explanation and understanding of psychological disorder or condition. <b>2 3</b>	2	Evaluation of research and understanding of statistical and methodological issues. <b>1 3</b>	3	Clarity and justification of clinical decision-making process. <b>2 3</b>	4	Integration of research with clinical practice and consideration of client context. <b>1 2 3</b>	5	Clarity and usefulness of the handout. <b>1 2 3</b>	6	Communication and professionalism in oral presentation. <b>1 2 3</b>	
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<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy															

## All - Assessment Task 2: Explaining Research to a Client

<b>GOAL:</b>	The goal of this task is to demonstrate your ability to communicate psychological treatment options to a client in an ethical, accessible, and evidence-informed way.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral		
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>			
<b>FORMAT:</b>	You will participate in a 5–7 minute role play where you take the role of the therapist and explain the treatment you recommended in Task 1 to a simulated client. You must demonstrate clear communication of relevant research, cultural sensitivity, and client-centred reasoning. A peer will take the role of the client. Please refer to your course Canvas site at the commencement of the teaching semester to confirm the due date for this assessment task.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Clear and accurate communication of treatment recommendation.	1 2 3
	2	Integration of research into the client explanation.	1 2 3
	3	Cultural sensitivity and awareness of client context.	3
	4	Ethical and professional communication	2 3
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy		

### 6.4. Assessment to competency mapping

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE	ASSESSMENT TYPE	TITLE	COMPETENCY	TEACHING METHODS
<b>APAC AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY ACCREDITATION COUNCIL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: GRADUATE COMPETENCIES</b>				
All delivery modes	Oral	Explaining Research to a Client	3.2	Assessed
			3.3	Assessed
			3.5	Assessed
			3.6	Assessed
			3.8	Assessed
			3.11	Assessed
			3.16	Assessed
	Oral and Written Piece	Clinical decision-making presentation	3.2	Assessed
			3.3	Assessed
			3.5	Assessed
			3.6	Assessed
			3.7	Assessed
			3.11	Assessed
			3.12	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.

## 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

You are expected to attend all lectures. For any lectures that are missed you will need to demonstrate to your course coordinator that you have covered the required material. This will usually take the form of a detailed summary and reflection of the Directed Study Activities for the missed lecture.

## 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](#)