



TE KUNENGA  
KI PŪREHUROA | MASSEY  
UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

2026 Handbook

# Postgraduate Research Students in Psychology\*



\*For more information on coursework, see the Postgraduate Prospectus for Psychology



The School of Psychology is represented on Massey University's three campuses and extramurally/distance learning as well.

### Albany Ōteahā Campus (Auckland)

**School of Psychology**

Massey University  
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Private Bag 11 222  
PALMERSTON NORTH 4442

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**School of Psychology**

Massey University  
PO Box 756  
WELLINGTON 6140

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Email our Specialist Academic Advisors

[academicadvice@massey.ac.nz](mailto:academicadvice@massey.ac.nz)



**School of Psychology**  
Te Kura Hinengaro Tangata

The information contained in this publication is correct at the time of printing, but may be subject to change. While all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure changes will not be made, the University reserves the right to do so should circumstances require this.

The URLs (addresses) of web sites and web pages, both within and outside university, change frequently. If you can no longer access a page via URL given in our Handbook, and do not get promptly re-directed, please consult the Postgraduate Co-ordinator.

*This publication was updated in November 2025*



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# School of Psychology Te Kura Hinengaro Tangata



## Welcome to postgraduate research in psychology

The purpose of this Handbook is to give you an overview of what to expect in the qualification, and information about resources available to you, so keep it handy as a reference throughout your postgraduate studies.

To begin, we have a recording on the overview of the qualifications we offer here at the School of Psychology, Massey University: <https://webcast.massey.ac.nz/Mediasite/Play/ccc730f0b41448ad95327390da7c71701d>.

Should any problems arise during your course of study, please consult this handbook in the first instance. This Handbook is relevant to you, regardless of which campus you are based on or whether you are studying at distance. It will give some idea of the people and support available to you as you select and complete your studies, as well as provide some useful guidelines for the process of designing, conducting, completing your Honours, Masters, or PhD research report, collecting and analysing data, and writing up the report, thesis, or dissertation.

If you have queries not addressed by this book, you are advised to seek advice from your lecturers or your supervisor.

Alternatively, the Postgraduate Co-ordinator, and other support persons, may be reached by e-mail, as described on the following pages of this Handbook.

We also have the 'Postgraduate Prospectus' which provides more information on postgraduate study, especially the qualifications based on coursework. It's available at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/find-a-subject-course-or-qualification/study-psychology-and-mental-health/postgraduate-psychology-study/>

The Handbook and Prospectus contain different information and you'll find it helpful to read both.

Wishing you enjoyable and successful studies in Psychology.

**Dr. Michelle Lee**

Postgraduate Co-ordinator | School of Psychology | Massey University

It is **important** to remember that you need to be continuously enrolled throughout your thesis or research report. If you need to take time out from study, or if you need an extension of time, contact your supervisor in the first instance.



# Philosophy of postgraduate studies

## Academic integrity

As a School, we aim to impart critical thinking skills and a good working knowledge of a range of research methodologies in Psychology. Additionally, you may expect to gain familiarity with a specialist body of literature reflecting particular areas of interest. Through your postgraduate work, we hope that you gain an appreciation of the scholarly work through which knowledge is gained and disseminated and the importance of academic integrity in this context.

Unless explicitly directed otherwise in the applicable assessment criteria, third-party assistance may not be used to generate assessment tasks which are then uncritically submitted as the students' own work. This includes work completed for a student by a peer, family member, or friend or which has been produced, commercially or otherwise, by a third party (e.g., often known as contract cheating or ghost writing). It also includes the use of artificial intelligence tools to produce work.

Information on the university's academic integrity policy can be found at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/study-and-assignment-support-and-guides/academic-integrity-student-guide/>

Information on the use of artificial intelligence in assessment policy can be found at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/study-and-assignment-support-and-guides/academic-integrity-student-guide/artificial-intelligence-ai-usage-and-detection/>

You can find guidance about the use of AI in research reports and theses in Massey's AI Essentials Stream site at: <https://stream.massey.ac.nz/mod/book/view.php?id=5430644&chapterid=1392505>

## Ethical responsibility

Students and staff in the School of Psychology are expected to adhere to ethical guidelines in their work with research participants and clinical cases. There is information on ethics, especially research ethics, here:

Research with Human participants: <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/93>

Resources and human ethics application processes: <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/95>

## Good conduct

Harassment of any form is unacceptable. Harassment is defined widely and may range from seemingly small matters such as tactless, sexist, or racist remarks which 'put down' someone, to more serious cases of sexual harassment or bullying. There is information on harassment and discrimination which can be found at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/student-life/services-and-support-for-students/harassment-and-racial-discrimination-help/>

## Cultural awareness

As part of Massey University's commitment to the Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the School of Psychology has a bi-cultural focus as an integral part of the qualifications offered. Specifically, we uphold the four Whakapūmāutanga me mahi Āhuarangi – 1. Sustainability and climate action; 2. Rakahinonga – Entrepreneurship; 3. Tātaki Tūmatanui – Civic leadership, and 4. Whakaanga ā-Ao – Global engagement. The Māori Advisory Group and Māori staff and students play an important role in facilitating the ongoing development of these qualifications, although it is the responsibility of all staff and students to authentically embrace being Te Tiriti led. We expect that all participants in our qualifications (both staff and students) recognise that Psychology has an ongoing responsibility, through its teaching and research qualifications, to promote genuine Māori participation in the discipline in a manner consistent with Māori aspirations and processes. It is consistent with our ethical responsibilities that we demonstrate recognition and respect of different cultures.



# Helpful people for research

The following are a few people you might deal with more regularly or need for specific help.

## Postgraduate Co-ordinator

Michelle Lee can be consulted on general academic matters including enrolments and applications, course advice, supervisors, initial guidance for choosing Honours or Masters research topics, and for help with any problems that arise in the course of your studies. If you are having any particular difficulties that are hindering your progress in any way, it is important to seek advice about how to proceed as soon as possible. Please note that co-ordinator roles rotate among academics. However, the email address will not change:

Email: [Psych.Grad.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz](mailto:Psych.Grad.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz)

## Specialist Academic Advisors

Specialist Academic Advisors for Professional Psychology offer expert guidance on studying psychology, including programme options, entry requirements, and course planning. They provide specialist advice for students aiming to further their studies at postgraduate level or become registered psychologists, outlining the academic and professional pathways required for registration. You should contact them in the first instance for all enquiries:

Email: [academicadvice@massey.ac.nz](mailto:academicadvice@massey.ac.nz)

## Director of Clinical Psychology Training / DClínPsych and MClínPsych Co-ordinator

Simon Bennett, the Director of Clinical Psychology Training and coordinator of the Doctor of Clinical Psychology and Master of Clinical Psychology qualifications can be consulted on issues regarding applications and admission criteria for the clinical programme, as well as advice on clinical course work and supervision, arrangement of practica, and issues related to clinical training.

Email: [Psych.Clin.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz](mailto:Psych.Clin.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz)

## Industrial / Organisational (I/O) Psychology Co-ordinator

Veronica Hopner, the I/O Co-ordinator can be consulted on issues regarding the I/O programme:

Email: [Psych.IO.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz](mailto:Psych.IO.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz)

## Health Psychology Co-ordinator

Gareth Terry, the Health Psychology coordinator can be consulted about the Health Psychology programme:

Email: [Psych.Health.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz](mailto:Psych.Health.Coordinator@massey.ac.nz)

## Thesis Examinations Co-ordinator

Associate Professor Matt Williams coordinates the examination process for Honours research reports and Masters theses within the School. He should be consulted on questions concerning thesis examination and regulations:

Email: [psych-researchreports-exams@massey.ac.nz](mailto:psych-researchreports-exams@massey.ac.nz)

## Graduate Research School

Doctoral co-ordination is handled by the Graduate Research School. You may find more information here: <https://stream.massey.ac.nz/course/view.php?id=49427>

- Scholar Development Coordinator: [scholars@massey.ac.nz](mailto:scholars@massey.ac.nz)
- Scholarships: [scholarships@massey.ac.nz](mailto:scholarships@massey.ac.nz)
- Master's Research and Examination: [masters@massey.ac.nz](mailto:masters@massey.ac.nz)
- Doctoral admissions: [doctoral.applications@massey.ac.nz](mailto:doctoral.applications@massey.ac.nz)
- Doctoral confirmation, progress and examinations: [doctoral.office@massey.ac.nz](mailto:doctoral.office@massey.ac.nz)



## Head of School

Consulting the Head of School is a final recourse for issues that cannot be sorted out at the level of the Thesis Supervisor, Course Co-ordinator, or Postgraduate Co-ordinator. Please contact the Office Manager to arrange an appointment:

Email: [K.J.Ross@massey.ac.nz](mailto:K.J.Ross@massey.ac.nz)

## School of Psychology administrative staff

Please contact the CoHSS Academic Administration team at [cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz](mailto:cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz) in regard to postgraduate research funds, keys, access cards and other administrative matters.

The Psychology office on the Manawātū campus is located in PLB2.16 and is open for general enquiries between 8.30 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. The location of each campus can be found on page 2.

## Computer Assistance

The information and communication technology services and support available to you at Massey. Please familiarise yourself with the information on this website: <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/162> which has information on remote access, internet connection across the three campuses, software availability to help you with your research, cloud storage, copying, printing, scanning, cybersecurity, and where to contact the IT support when needed.

Contact the Te Paepoto Student Support Centre at:

Phone: (NZ): 0800 627 739

Phone: (International): +64 6 350 5701

Operating Hours: 8.30am to 4.30pm weekdays

## Technical Assistance

Malcolm Loudon and Hung Ton are available to assist across the School. Again, their assistance should be accessed through your supervisor:

Email: [M.R.Loudon@massey.ac.nz](mailto:M.R.Loudon@massey.ac.nz)

Email: [H.Ton@massey.ac.nz](mailto:H.Ton@massey.ac.nz)

# Postgraduate student email list

You should subscribe to the postgraduate e-mail list which serves as a virtual notice-board for student and staff. You may request information from other students on this list, and the Postgraduate Co-ordinator will use it to post notices about such things as new scholarship opportunities, school seminars, or information courses. Subscribers may ask questions, request participants for research (e.g. surveys), and share other information relevant to postgraduate study and research.

The procedures for subscribing and unsubscribing are similar.

Send a message as follows to the 'Sympa' listserver, with <LISTNAME> replaced by the name of the list desired.

To: [sympa@lists.massey.ac.nz](mailto:sympa@lists.massey.ac.nz)

Put the following in either the 'Subject' or in the body of the message:

SUBSCRIBE <LISTNAME>

Or – if you wish to unsubscribe

UNSUBSCRIBE <LISTNAME>

Example: to subscribe to the Psychology postgraduate email list of 'psych-grad'

subscribe psych-grad

You should be able to subscribe to the psych-grad list by [clicking on this link](#) to subscribe.

Messages can be sent to this subscriber list by addressing to: [psych-grad@lists.massey.ac.nz](mailto:psych-grad@lists.massey.ac.nz)



# Funding sources for postgraduates

You will have a broad range of options on additional funding, including scholarships, grants-in-aid and academic prizes. The funding can be obtained from the University or from external sources.

## Scholarships and bursaries

All students planning a research degree should consider applying for at least one Masters or Doctoral Scholarship. The "broadest-based" of these are the University Masters and Doctoral Scholarships. There is a wide range of further scholarships available. Some are offered to specific groups, or may have additional community or service criteria. Deadlines for applications "bunch up" around August and September, so it pays to think about applying for scholarships as early as possible.

For further details about awards, see the 'Research funding and scholarships' and the 'Scholarships and Awards' web pages:

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/research/research-funding-and-scholarships/>

<http://www.massey.ac.nz/scholarships/>

## Applying for scholarships

Most scholarships are competed for on academic grounds (i.e., your grades). However, there are additional criteria, such as the quality of your research proposal and support, and other evidence of your academic performance (such as conference presentations and publications), that will be taken into account.

To give yourself a good chance of winning support for your studies, we suggest that you give careful consideration to your application:

- Once you have chosen a particular fund to apply to, read the application guidelines and application criteria carefully, respond as well as you can to every part. Do use the correct form, as there are differences between scholarships. Answer all questions.
- Keep in mind the assessor who may go through numerous applications. You can make their job easier if you write clearly and succinctly.
- Ask your supervisor to assist you in preparing your application by reading your draft and making suggestions for changes.
- You will need to ask your supervisor to write a letter of reference, letter of support, or testimonial. Give your supervisor as much information about your strengths and achievements as possible, so that they can write a reference that is clearly about you and your particular research.
- Please inform your supervisor about practicalities of the application and the letter of reference: due dates, address for application, appropriate form, and so on.
- If your application requires approval or support from the Head of School, please ensure that it is submitted at least one week before the closing date to [K.J.Ross@massey.ac.nz](mailto:K.J.Ross@massey.ac.nz).

## University scholarships

There are many scholarships available to study at Massey University. You may refer to: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/scholarships-and-awards/>

## School financial assistance

Paid teaching and marking work are sometimes available for postgraduate students. Interested students should enquire with their supervisor to see if there are any vacancies available within the School.

## School research funding

Research funding to assist with Masters and Doctoral research reports is available internally, through the school.

You need to sit down with your thesis supervisor at an early date to discuss your projected budget for the current year and funding prospects. Writing a budget for a research report is an important practical aspect of conducting research.



## Postgraduate Research Fund

Honours, Masters and Doctoral students requiring Postgraduate Funding for research, need to complete a Postgraduate Research Fund (PGRF) Application form that contains a budget for the research, a justification for the budgeted items, and which is signed off by the research supervisor. Once signed by your supervisor, this form should be submitted to the CoHSS Academic Administration team at [cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz](mailto:cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz).

You can download the PGRF application as a PDF file, complete it using Adobe Acrobat, save then send it on to the required destination (wherever your supervisor is based). The PGRF application is downloadable from the School of Psychology Postgraduate Psychology Study page: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/find-a-subject-course-or-qualification/study-psychology-and-mental-health/postgraduate-psychology-study/#Searchallqualificationsandcourses>

The School is able to reimburse you for some thesis / report related expenses, provided that:

- **Prior approval** has been gained through the relevant campus Postgraduate Research Fund (PGRF) approval process **before** expenses are incurred, and
- All claims should be submitted to the CoHSS Academic Administration team at [cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz](mailto:cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz).

School research funding is not guaranteed. The level of support is dependent on the availability of adequate funds in the annual School budget.

Funding will be considered depending on the School budget and on an individual basis but there will be a limit on the amount of funding available to you. For example, Honours students may be funded to a maximum of \$500.00 for the duration of their research reports; and Masters thesis students may be funded to a maximum of \$1,000.00 for the duration of the thesis. PhD and DClinPsych students may be funded to a maximum of \$4,000.00 (DClinPsych) or \$6,000.00 (PhD) for the duration of the research for the dissertation. Information about items that are excluded from funding, and current costings of included research items to assist your budget preparation, can be obtained from your supervisor.

To access research funding, you need to submit a completed Postgraduate Research Fund (PGRF) application to the CoHSS Academic Administration team at [cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz](mailto:cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz). Where an application exceeds the maximum level of School support for student research, it must be referred to the Head of School.

School research funding may be used for essential items, for example, consumables and other items associated with the cost of undertaking the research.

Research costs might include:

- Library interloans (some loans from other libraries are free).
- Postal Surveys: Letterhead for Information Sheets and the front page of the Results Feedback letter to participants; questionnaire printing through Massey Printery; Standard size envelopes; postage. Note however that many surveys are now conducted online, so printing costs are not required.
- Interviews. Digital Voice Recorders are available for loan through the School. If new equipment is purchased, ownership remains with the School. The equipment must be returned upon completion of the data collection and upload phase. Costs of batteries may be covered by the PGRF.
- Travel costs. The lowest travel cost option is to be used for all travel, consistent with Massey University travel policy.
- Psychometric Instruments. Due to the considerable number of psychometric tests available, it is not possible to list these. Contact Hung Ton in the Psychology Workshop for the prices of particular tests and their associated consumables. Note: You may not use tests for which specialised qualifications are needed for administration unless you are qualified to do so. Copyrighted tests may not be reproduced in theses.
- Participant related costs. All compensation and reimbursement to participants must meet the requirements of the Code of Ethics.

It is your responsibility to accurately identify costs and quantities, and to prepare a budget and rationale for each expense when applying for PGRF funding.

## Funding exclusions

The following items will not normally be funded:

1. Web Survey development is covered within the School budget when undertaken by our Programmer / Analyst.
2. Personal support for data collection costs or analysis, for example, research assistant or transcription services.
3. Data coding or data entry.
4. Travel to see your supervisor.
5. Printing or photocopying that is not directly associated with survey dissemination or other forms of data collection i.e., draft transcriptions, data analysis, or the participant feedback process.
6. Hardware and software e.g., external hard drives, specialist software.
7. Urgent library interloan requests.
8. Printing and binding of Thesis or Research Reports.



## Student conference funding

Two prominent grants are available for students to attend conferences. More information can be found at:

### Massey University Doctoral Conference Grants

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/scholarships-and-awards/massey-university-doctoral-conference-grants/>

### Massey University Postgraduate Overseas Research Grant

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/scholarships-and-awards/massey-university-postgraduate-overseas-research-grant/>

## External research funding

Securing external research funding can improve the quality of research output, and is now an important addition to one's curriculum vitae. This option can be discussed with your supervisor. The Research Office is the main source of information about external funding agencies, the timing of different funding rounds and application forms. To obtain further information visit: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/researchsupport/>

There are several people other than your supervisor whom you may wish to consult when preparing funding applications. Campus secretaries who process your applications are an excellent resource for general costing questions. All grant application budgets should be discussed with your supervisor prior to approval to prevent such common mistakes as underestimating costs, improper exclusion or inclusion of GST, and overlooking hidden costs.

All external grant applications need to be approved by both your supervisor and the Head of School.

# Time limits for your degree

It is very important that you are aware of the time limits for completion of your degree. The time allowed for completion varies according to the qualification that you are enrolled for and whether you are a part-time or full-time student.

Further information regarding Time to Completion of your chosen qualification of study can be found at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/calendar/>

The University Calendar is the document that contains all of the rules and regulations for Massey University degrees, qualifications, specialisations and courses. Information on time limits for degrees is under Maximum Time to Completion. Once enrolled, you can also view your own maximum time to complete qualification (for sub-doctoral degrees) or expected completion time (for doctoral degrees) in the Student Portal at <https://smsportal.massey.ac.nz>

### Important

Coursework students: It is important to remember that if you choose not to enrol for study in any particular semester, unless you apply for an extension, that time is counted toward your completion date. You can apply for extensions through the Portal.

Thesis and research project students: For thesis or research projects, you need to be enrolled continuously until you submit your completed thesis or project. For PhD students, there are cases for suspension or extension where it needs to be approved by the Doctoral Research Committee.

If you need to take time out from study, please contact your supervisor in the first instance.

# Withdrawing from taught courses

If you decide to withdraw from a taught course, the consequences depend on the date of withdrawal relative to the duration of the course.

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/admission-and-enrolment/changing-or-withdrawing-from-study/>

You can find the withdrawal dates for each course by clicking on Course Search and entering the course code number: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/courses/>



# Assessment of coursework

You will be informed early on in each course about the assessment for that course – note that different courses may have very different types of assessment. It is important for you to pay attention to these requirements, as well as the relative contribution of each piece of assessment to the final grade, so that a reasonable plan of study can be made.

## Presentation

You are expected to develop word-processing skills and to present assignments in typed format. You are encouraged to discuss any problems relating to access to facilities and the presentation of work with relevant course co-ordinators. All referencing for assignments should be consistent with APA format. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association is available from the library.

OWLL has information on referencing using APA style referencing at <http://owll.massey.ac.nz/referencing/apa-style.php>

## Extensions

You have a right to know the policy for late assignments of each co-ordinator in each course. These will be communicated directly to you by individual staff members early in the course offering.

**If in doubt, please ask.** Staff members vary in their policies; you should direct any queries to the relevant offering co-ordinator.

## Feedback

Staff are aware of the value to you of prompt feedback and constructive criticism. However, there is variability among staff in terms of the relationship of assigned work to learning objectives and the type of contractual agreement made with you. Co-ordinators of individual courses will be prepared to discuss their policy on the marking and return of assignments early in the course offering.

The University policy is that in general, marked assignments should be returned 15 working days after the due date. However, unpredictable delays in the marking of assignments sometimes occur. In such cases, you should approach the staff member concerned for information about the return of work submitted.

## Moderation

Grades with the School of Psychology are subject to a few layers of moderation. First, we check within the School that the grades in different courses are fair and reasonable. Grades may be subject to moderation by the College, who look at all grades for possible errors, grades yet to be finalised and extreme distributions. For these reasons, all grades should be regarded as indicative until officially released by the University at the end of the second semester. For student information, the indicative grades for the first semester courses are released on the student portal. These grades will give you a good indication of your final grade, but may be changed by the External Examiner or the College.

## External Assessment

The School of Psychology has a policy that all postgraduate course work should be externally assessed. Late in the academic year, a senior academic from the Psychology School of another New Zealand university spends time assessing samples of our postgraduate students' assignments and examination work. The external assessor comments on the consistency and standards within and across postgraduate courses. The aim of this process is to provide reassurance that our academic standards are, at least, as high as those at other Schools of Psychology within New Zealand.

The external assessor is also well placed to provide an objective view on any particular piece of work. This can be especially useful in the case of disputed grades which have not been resolved within the School of Psychology. (The usual and required first port of call for such disputes is the Head of School.) Requests to have specific work looked at by the external assessor should be made via the Head of School.

Once the College approves grades at the end of the second semester, the University releases them.



## Grading System

The School of Psychology uses the following system for grading both research and coursework. The passing grades are shown in the Table below:

Grade	Grade Point (GP)	Marks	
A+	9	90 - 100	→ <b>A+   A   A-</b> 1st Class Pass
A	8	85 - 89.99	
A-	7	80 - 84.99	
B+	6	75 - 79.99	→ <b>B+   B   B-</b> 2nd Class Pass
B	5	70 - 74.99	
B-	4	65 - 69.99	
C+	3	60 - 64.99	→ <b>C+   C   C-</b> 3rd Class Pass
C	2	55 - 59.99	
C-	1	50 - 54.99	
AG	Aegrotat pass		

## Students with interests in clinical psychology

We have the Master of Clinical Psychology – MCLinPsych and the Doctor of Clinical Psychology – DCLinPsych. Both are competitive-entry professional qualification that will train you to become a registered clinical psychologist. Normally, entry to the Doctorate is by completion of a BA (Hons), BSc (Hons) or Masters degree, incorporating the required clinical courses and achieving at least Second Class, Division I Honours.

Enrolment in the DCLinPsych (in the following year) is dependent on grades, including the research report or thesis. If you plan to enrol in the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, you need to submit your Honours research report or Masters thesis in sufficient time to allow it to be examined before your DCLinPsych enrolment start. You cannot start the doctorate until enrolment in the DCLinPsych is complete, and not being enrolled may also affect your library borrowing privileges.

Information about the MCLinPsych can be found here:  
<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/master-of-clinical-psychology-PMCLP/>

Information about the DCLinPsych can be found here:  
<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/doctor-of-clinical-psychology-PTCLP/>



# Thinking about research

Often beginning your Honours research report, Masters thesis, or doctoral dissertation, can feel like quite a daunting prospect. It seems hard to know what to expect or where and how to begin.

At an early stage, you can examine your own level of readiness for completing a sound research report. Think about the following:

- How well do you write? Do you generally write well-organised, logical, coherent assignments? Does your grammar and spelling need a tune up? Do you know how to write in APA format? If you answered 'no' to most of these, you may want to consider taking some writing skills courses.

There is information regarding a full range of services offered on the “Study and Assignment support and guides” page:

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/study-and-assignment-support-and-guides/>

- Make use of the library and your Liaison Librarians who can provide advice on identifying and using relevant information sources.
- The subject librarians’ names and contact details can be found here: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/library/ask-questions-and-get-support/subject-and-m%C4%81ori-services-librarians/>
- Do you have the necessary methodological preparation? 175.738 *Psychological Research: Principles of Design* is a compulsory course so that you begin with a grounding in research methodology at the required level.
- If you plan a quantitatively focused research report, then 175.746 *Psychological Research: Quantitative Data Analysis* is strongly recommended to develop essential knowledge as a basis for the analysis of your data.
- If you plan a qualitatively focused research report, then 175.750 *Qualitative Methods in Psychology* is strongly recommended to develop essential knowledge as a basis for the analysis of your data.

If you require computer skills training, discuss this with your supervisor.

## The nature of a thesis or research report

Theses and research reports involve independent, supervised research in psychology. You will demonstrate your knowledge about your topic and the field of specialisation, your capability of doing scholarly work, and formulate conclusions.

Research reports differ from theses mainly in size and scope. A research report is smaller than a thesis.

Information on thesis courses is here: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/find-a-subject-course-or-qualification/study-psychology-and-mental-health/postgraduate-psychology-study/#thesis>

## Honours

The Honours degree requires a research report of 30 credits (175.799 *Research Report* (30)). This involves independent, supervised research in psychology.

## Masters

For all Masters degrees, the research thesis is normally conducted after completing the taught course requirement. Masters theses and research reports can be completed part-time or full time.

The 180 credit Master of Arts (Coursework Pathway) and Master of Health Science (Professional Pathway) require 120 credits of coursework followed by a research report worth 60 credits (175.873 *Research Report Psychology* (60)), the equivalent of 4 courses.

The 180 credit Master of Arts and Master of Health Science (Research Pathway) require 60 credits of coursework followed by a thesis worth 120 credits.

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/master-of-arts-PMART/psychology-PMART1SPSYC1/>

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/master-of-health-science-PMHLS/psychology-PMHLS1SPSYC1/>



**Note: To be eligible to apply for training in the professional psychology qualifications e.g., the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Practice, students will need to have a min of 90 credits for the postgraduate courses and thesis (= a min. of 180 cr), with an average of B+ across the two components.**

The 240 credit Master of Science and Master of Science (Health Psychology degrees in Psychology require 120 credits of coursework followed by a thesis worth 120 credits, the equivalent of 8 courses. The thesis is completed in two parts: 175.894 *Thesis 120 credit Part 1* (60 credits) and 175.896 *Thesis 120 Credit Part 2* (60 credits).

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/master-of-science-PMSCN/psychology-PMSCN1SPSYC2/>

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/master-of-science-PMSCN/psychology-health-psychology-PMSCN1SPSHP2/>

## Doctoral study

The PhD is completed solely by thesis (175.900 *PhD Psychology*).

The Doctor of Clinical Psychology includes a thesis that is done in 3 parts (175.991 *Thesis Part A*, 175.992 *Thesis Part B*, and 175.993 *Thesis Part C*).

For more information about the PhD, contact the Graduate Research School:

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/doctor-of-philosophy-PLPHD/>

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/about-postgraduate-study/phds-and-professional-doctorates/what-you-can-study-as-a-phd-or-professional-doctoral-student/>

## Research resources

There is research resource information available to assist if you are enrolled in Honours, Masters or doctoral research. This information is available online at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/about/colleges-schools-and-institutes/college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/research-in-the-college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/psychology-research/psychology-thesis-topics-and-supervisors/>

MyHub contains resources for students for ethics applications and Research Information Management System (RIMS). This can be accessed through here: <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/95>

Other key pages of interest to the Postgraduate Students within MyHub are these ones:

- Technology - <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/162>
- Research Ethics <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/94>
- Academic advice topics - <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/35>

Students who are enrolled in thesis or research report courses should have access to the course titled "Psychology Thesis Research" in Stream. You will find useful information that you need in the site at <https://stream.massey.ac.nz/course/view.php?id=42475>.

If you have not been granted access to the site please contact Anja Roemer [A.Roemer@massey.ac.nz](mailto:A.Roemer@massey.ac.nz) or Matt Williams [M.N.Williams@massey.ac.nz](mailto:M.N.Williams@massey.ac.nz)

The responsibility for successful completion of a thesis or research report lies with you. Be proactive about seeking out and making use of resources including your supervisor. Supervisors are aware that the thesis can sometimes seem a daunting and challenging task. We are more than happy to help.

## Regulations

Detailed regulations are set out in the University Calendar. These regulations cover, among other things, the classes of Honours awarded, and important information on time requirements. Please ensure you are clear about the regulations for your degree when you first enrol.

It is helpful to attend seminars and other courses that are available (many are available via Zoom teleconferencing), and to meet other students.

Please pay attention to the AI policy set by Massey University: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/study-and-assignment-support-and-guides/academic-integrity-student-guide/artificial-intelligence-ai-usage-and-detection/>

## Extension requests

### Extensions on Honours research reports

Applications for extensions for a 30 credit Honours research reports are usually organised in-house within the School of Psychology. Please consult with your supervisor for advice if you wish to apply for an extension on a 30 or 60 credit research report. If they are happy for you to have an extension, they just need to send an email to [psych-researchreports-exams@massey.ac.nz](mailto:psych-researchreports-exams@massey.ac.nz) to record this.

It is also possible to submit an extension request for an Honours research report in the student portal, but we don't recommend using this method since it results in slower



processing. The one exception is if you are an international student requesting a relatively long extension, and want your enrolment formally continued in order to maintain eligibility for a student visa. In this circumstance you should apply for your extension via the portal.

## Extensions on Master's research reports and theses

Extension requests for 60 credit research reports and 120 credit theses are handled centrally and are submitted via your student portal: [https://smsportal.massey.ac.nz/sitsvision/wrd/siw\\_lgn](https://smsportal.massey.ac.nz/sitsvision/wrd/siw_lgn)

More information is available here: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/about-postgraduate-study/masters-study/studying-your-masters/#Keydatesandextensions>

## Getting started with research

### Find a topic

Clearly, the first thing you need to do to get started on your research is get some ideas for a topic. It is your responsibility to choose a thesis topic and find a supervisor. Thesis ideas could arise from a range of sources including:

- Your postgraduate courses - often lecturers will refer to their own research interests during courses – a good source of both ideas and potential supervisors.
- Topics offered by supervisors – to work with your supervisor in the area that they are conducting research is one of the best ways to begin your own research. The School publishes a list of supervisors and the topics that they are willing to supervise every year. This is on <https://www.massey.ac.nz/about/colleges-schools-and-institutes/college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/research-in-the-college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/psychology-research/psychology-thesis-topics-and-supervisors/>
- External agencies or organisations – occasionally, there may be specific topics offered from an external source. For example, an agency outside the University may have asked the School of Psychology to do research in a specific area. Such offers are circulated via the postgraduate email list [psych-grad@massey.ac.nz](mailto:psych-grad@massey.ac.nz)
- Completed theses - You can search for Massey theses, theses presented at other universities in New Zealand, and overseas theses via the University library on: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/library/researcher-support/find-and-manage-research-literature/find-these-and-research-reports/>
- You can also get ideas from research seminars, general discussions with staff and your own reading.

## Find a supervisor and complete the Agreement to Supervise form

Names of potential supervisors and the research topics that they offer are listed at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/about/colleges-schools-and-institutes/college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/research-in-the-college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/psychology-research/psychology-thesis-topics-and-supervisors/>

Start thinking about possible research topics as soon as you can, for example while you are doing your coursework. Think about approaching potential supervisors well before you are planning to start your research; most staff members have high number of students and may not be able to take on more. It is a good idea to approach potential supervisors and discuss your research plan by December of the preceding year.

**For a thesis or research report starting in Semester 1, the research topic and supervisor should ideally be chosen in October or November of the preceding year so you can do the necessary reading over the summer break.**

You normally need one supervisor for Honours and Masters research, although joint supervision is possible. Doctoral theses usually have one primary supervisor and one or more co-supervisors. Co-supervision for Honours or Masters degree may be sought from other Schools where necessary, but this would be unusual and should be organised through your Psychology supervisor and approved by the Head of School.

You may have a relatively clear idea of the topic you want to research. Fine-tuning your topic goes along with finding a supervisor. Topics will be revised, refined, and potentially changed in discussion with your supervisor, who will help you finalise the topic, specific research questions, theoretical approaches and analysis of data.

You should feel free to approach staff members and discuss their / your ideas. Please be aware that staff members are located across three campuses and that means you may end up not having a supervisor you may not meet in person. It is perfectly reasonable to approach staff when your own ideas are quite general or somewhat "fuzzy". Hopefully, these research ideas will develop and become clearer with ongoing discussions with potential supervisors. Be aware that the research interests of staff may not match with the topic area you have chosen, and you might have to modify your topic to provide a better fit with staff expertise or interests. In other cases, the most appropriate supervisor for your topic may be on leave or otherwise unavailable, or may already have a full supervision load. You may be more successful if you remain flexible in your choice of topics and supervisors.



If you are having trouble deciding on a topic or finding a lecturer to approach concerning supervision, Kealagh Robinson ([K.Robinson2@massey.ac.nz](mailto:K.Robinson2@massey.ac.nz)) and Steph Denne ([S.Denne@massey.ac.nz](mailto:S.Denne@massey.ac.nz)) may be able to help for Honours students; and Matt Williams ([M.N.Williams@massey.ac.nz](mailto:M.N.Williams@massey.ac.nz)) for Masters students.

In order for your enrolment in a research course to be approved, an Agreement to Supervise form must be completed and returned to the CoHSS Academic Administration team. The forms are available at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/about/colleges-schools-and-institutes/college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/research-in-the-college-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/psychology-research/psychology-thesis-topics-and-supervisors/>

When both you and your supervisor have signed it, please send it to the CoHSS Academic Administration team at [cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz](mailto:cohss-pgug@massey.ac.nz)

## Responsibilities of a Supervisor

The supervisor's major functions are to provide information, ideas, stimulation, constructive criticism, encouragement and direction in all stages of the research report. Where more than one supervisor is involved in a research report, their roles and functions should be discussed and clarified early on.

A supervisor's responsibilities are:

- a) To give guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected, about the planning of the research qualification, about literature and sources and about requisite skills and techniques.
- b) To ensure that the supervisor is not already over-committed and will remain fully conversant with the student's research.
- c) To maintain regular contact through supervision meetings as agreed with you, and to provide in these meetings focused and uninterrupted attention to you and the research.
- d) To assist you in applying for funding through University and outside sources where appropriate.
- e) To assist you to develop a proposal for ethics approval, either by a Low Risk Notification or Ethics Committee review.
- f) To be sensitive to cultural, political or gender issues relating to you and the research.
- g) To give advice on necessary completion dates of successive stages of the research to ensure that the research report is submitted on time.
- h) To request written work as appropriate and to return work with constructive criticism within a reasonable time.
- i) To ensure that student is made aware of any inadequacy in their progress or standard of work.
- j) To provide a collaborative research environment and encourage open communication.
- k) To ensure that if they are to be absent from the University for an extended time, suitable arrangements are made for appointment of a new supervisor, or for interim supervision of a student.
- l) To discuss publication of the research and to come to some agreement about the timing and the authorship of the publication (refer to the section on Publication later in this Handbook).

## Responsibilities of a Supervisor

- a) To find a supervisor and arrange for your supervisor to sign the "Agreement to Supervise Postgraduate Research" form.
- b) To get off to a good start with the research and accept that the principal responsibility for the research and its progress lies with you.
- c) To prepare and submit an application for ethical approval via either a Low Risk Notification or full Ethics Committee review, in consultation with the supervisor, as appropriate.
- d) To discuss with your supervisor the type of guidance and comment that can be expected and to assist with clarification of responsibilities.
- e) To maintain regular contact through tutorial and supervision meetings as agreed to with your supervisor.
- f) To take the initiative in raising problems and difficulties.
- g) To maintain progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed to with your supervisor, including in particular the presentation of written material in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage.
- h) To notify your supervisor if you have to be absent from the University for an extended time and to make suitable arrangements for contact during your absence.
- i) To discuss publication of the research and to come to some agreement about the timing and the authorship of the publication (refer to the section on Publication later in this Handbook).
- j) You are reminded that compliance with regulations and that the quality of your work is ultimately your own responsibility. The role of the supervisor is to assist you to achieve the best result of which you are capable.

You are responsible for making sure you consult your supervisors regularly. You are free to discuss your research with staff members who are not your supervisors as long as they discuss with your supervisor any proposed changes that result from such discussions.

If work is not going satisfactorily for reasons outside your control, consult your supervisor in the first instance.



However, if you feel that you do not have an effective working relationship with your supervisor, you should discuss the matter promptly and confidentially with the Postgraduate Co-ordinator. If necessary, a meeting with the Head of School will be arranged.

## Plan the research

Consider how you will fit the research in with your coursework and other commitments, and the timeframes that you have for completing your degree.

Together with your supervisor, you need to make sure that your research is viable and that appropriate analyses are chosen before collecting data. You need to choose a research topic that matches your research design, data collection opportunities, and analysis skills. You are responsible for acquiring any necessary skills, and approval of the topic may depend on your agreement to do this.

**For example, supervisors should not be expected to carry out statistical analyses for students who have not obtained the necessary skills to do it for themselves.**

## Guidelines for a proposal

Your supervisor may ask you for a proposal. Proposals will take different forms depending upon the nature of the research that is involved. They would usually include:

### Introduction

A brief statement of the background to the research and summary of the essential relevant literature, together with the aims or hypotheses to be investigated.

### Significance

A general statement of why this research is important and should be conducted.

### Method

As much detail as possible on the participants, measures, apparatus, design and procedure of the proposed research.

### Analysis

A detailed statement of how data will be treated and what analysis will be conducted.

### Budget

An analysis of the costs involved in the research and how it is proposed they will be met.

### Ethics

Comment on ethical issues involved in the research and proposals for how they will be handled.

### Time-frame

A statement of how long the research will take, with estimates given for each phase (planning, development of measures, pilot testing, data collection, analyses, writing up, etc.).

### References

Citations for all references in the proposal.

## Bibliographic Database

Bibliographic database software such as EndNote, Zotero, and Mendeley can be used to keep track of your references and reading material. Endnote is incorporated with word processing software in university computer laboratories. Zotero has some Massey library support and is free. Mendeley has limited Library support and is free as well.

The University licensing currently permits current Massey students to download EndNote free of charge. For more information see <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/library/referencing-software-and-tools/guide-to-referencing-software-and-tools/>

This site also provides support information and access to the Library's training sessions for EndNote and Zotero.

## Carry out the research

### Ethics

All research with human participants requires ethical consideration. Ethics information is here: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/research/ethics/human-ethics/>

MyHub also has information on research with human participants: <https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/infopages/detail/93>

The first step is to read the Code of Ethical Conduct (<https://myhub.massey.ac.nz/students/docs/Detail/98>),

Then discuss ethical issues in your research with your supervisor and colleagues. It is also useful to consult the Code of Ethics for Psychologists, downloadable from the Psychologist's Board web site: <http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz>.

The next step is to complete the risk assessment process and submit the relevant forms. There are two submission processes.

One is for Low Risk Application. If you deem your research to be low risk, please apply accordingly. An approval will need to be granted prior any data collection.

Full Ethics committee review is carried out for projects which do not meet the criteria for a Low Risk Notification. Your supervisor will be able to provide you with guidelines for the preparation of an ethics proposal. The committees meet each month (apart from December and January), and the deadline for submitting applications is ten days earlier



than the meeting date. Check the MUHEC web site early in the academic year for a list of meeting and research report submission deadlines as late applications are not accepted.

Most proposals are approved without the need to appear before the Committee. If you are asked to attend a meeting of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, you will be accompanied by your supervisor. Being invited to attend such a meeting simply means that the Committee has some issue they wish to discuss, and you should see this as an opportunity to clarify the ethical issues and ensure that your study is ethically sound. On occasion, gaining final ethical approval can take several rounds of discussion, so it is advisable to consider ethical aspects of a research report as early as practicably possible.

### Access to participants

Where studying a particular topic depends on gaining access to a special population such as hospital patients, employees of an organisation, etc., written permission should be obtained as early as possible. No organisation or agency should be approached until the research has been approved by your supervisor and, where required, ethical approval has been obtained.

Some of the issues you might consider before seeking access include:

- Who or what do you want to research?
- Who are the key individuals, or gatekeepers, who you need to get permission from?
- How much commitment will you require for your research from your respondents in terms of hours, days, weeks, months?
- Is this reasonable?
- Can you identify any potential problems with regard to access?

There are a number of ways in which you might increase your chances of gaining access to a potential pool of respondents / participants:

- Begin by asking for advice on how it would be most appropriate to negotiate access.
- Be modest in your requests. A "cardinal sin" is for you to line up respondents and then turn some of them down or ask them to come back later because you are having time tabling, equipment or measurement problems.
- Make effective use of your supervisor's contacts.
- Offer something back to your research participants - perhaps written feedback or a summary of your results (these should be brief and written in layperson's terms). Ask their advice on what might be useful to them. If your research is of potential use or interest to them then they

are more likely to allow you access.

- Ask at the right time. Some institutions need to plan ahead, while others like to act immediately. Busy periods and holidays are not good times.
- Be as clear as possible about what you are asking for - which people, how long it will all take, and so on - have samples of your questionnaire / research protocol on hand for inspection.
- Explain the reasons for doing your research, why it will be of value, and what the outcomes might be.

### Data analysis

Your research proposal will require details about how you plan to analyse your data. Early on, you need to decide what kind of analysis is appropriate. Your supervisor will help.

The software package 'SPSS for Windows' is available on computers in student computer laboratories on all campuses. There exist free and open source software package for statistical analysis such as R, jamovi, and JASP.

Students undertaking research courses are able to remotely access the SPSS software on Massey servers within the restrictions of the software licensing using the VMWare Horizons Client. Installation of SPSS on to personal student computers is not available under Massey's license for this software.

You are expected to conduct your own analyses and this is likely to require some study time. Your supervisor will be able to suggest whether other members of staff can help you with specific research skills or issues.

### Writing up your research

Theses and Research Reports need to conform to the format requirements detailed in the library handbook 'A Guide to the Presentation of Theses'. The handbook is available from: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/library/researcher-support/publish-and-share-your-research/thesis-presentation-guide/>

The style of presentation uses the current APA style. The latest APA format that we adhere to currently is the 7th Edition APA format. OWLL has information on referencing using APA style referencing at <http://owll.massey.ac.nz/referencing/apa-style.php>.

The report or thesis will have most of the following elements:

- Introduction section. You will conduct a literature search and examine the background of the research topic. You may need to develop or upgrade your library search skills. After detailed reading, you synthesise published findings relevant to your research topic, leading to the actual research question.



- Method section. You will need to describe, among other things, participants, measures, procedures, and ways of analysing your data.
- Analysis and results. You should allow a good piece of time for this section which is important. Your study may include mastering a particular technique of data analysis before conducting the analysis. The analysis is often enjoyable but again time-consuming. You will need to write up your findings.
- Discussion. In this section, you are expected to interpret the findings and demonstrate your understanding of the results, including their implications and contribution to the field. This section tends to prompt further literature review and further readings which cannot be rushed.
- References and formatting. It is best to develop your reference list as you proceed. However, additional time should be left for preparing, reviewing, editing, and presenting the final document, including the final version of the reference list.
- There should also be an abstract, appropriate sections and headings and the report is usually prefaced with acknowledgements and a 'Contents' page. It is important to acknowledge the supervisor and other staff who have assisted with the research.
- Please ensure you have a cover page stating the title of the report, your name, and the degree for which the report or thesis is submitted.

It is often a good idea to start writing the introduction and method sections before the data collection is completed, particularly if the data collection is quite lengthy.

Do not underestimate the time it will take to finish writing up your research; in general allow 6 – 8 weeks for an Honours research report and 4 months full-time for a Masters thesis. The number of drafts required will vary, but you can expect to write each section at least twice.

The acquisition of good writing skills is your responsibility. You can expect your supervisor to provide editorial comment on at least one complete draft of the work, or they may identify writing problems at the proposal stage and, if necessary, encourage remedial action.

It is a good idea not to spend too much time on the first draft. It is rare that this will be satisfactory and it is less frustrating having to change something that has taken a short time to write than to change work on which a long time has been spent. It is usual to write a portion and give it to the supervisor to look at while proceeding with the next part.

The finished product must be in typed form. It is up to you to ensure that typographical, grammatical and formatting errors are kept to an absolute minimum, as these can downgrade

the work and will be reflected in the final grade.

Writing up the thesis can be a real challenge for your personal focus, organisation and self-discipline skills. Making progress is often simply a case of persistence and taking small steps at a time. If you find yourself procrastinating, then try one or more of the following:

- Make notes from your last discussion with your supervisor
- Draft your contents page
- Type out your references
- Draft the structure for a section or chapter
- Note down points you think you will refer to
- Set yourself a target for writing a given number of words each day
- Write anything so that you have something on your screen
- Give yourself a treat or a short break after a work period, but come straight back
- Don't allow yourself to do anything else until you have written something.

The aim is to produce some writing as regularly as you can, and then work from there.

## The completed thesis / research report

### Word limits

- **30 credits** 8000 - 10,000 words
- **60 credits** 15,000 - 20,000 words
- **120 credits** 30,000 - 40,000 words
- **DClinPsych** Up to 65,000 words
- **PhD** Up to 100,000 words

These word limits exclude the reference list/bibliography and any appendices.

### Thesis format

Prior to submission, thesis should be formatted. Masters and PhD thesis should follow the guideline set by Thesis Presentation Guide at <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/library/researcher-support/publish-and-share-your-research/thesis-presentation-guide/>

Honours research reports do not have a specific format to follow. However, we recommend you follow the same format as for Masters and PhD.

### Submission

Honours research reports (175.799) and 60 credit Masters reports (175.873) are submitted digitally, as a Microsoft Word or pdf file to [psych-researchreports-exams@massey.ac.nz](mailto:psych-researchreports-exams@massey.ac.nz). There is no need to also provide a hard copy. You will receive a letter acknowledging your submission.



120 credit Masters theses are submitted online via the portal. The portal also provides the forms to be filled in to go with the submission. Online submission is preferred. If you need further information, you may contact [masters@massey.ac.nz](mailto:masters@massey.ac.nz).

The web link below will take you to Thesis Submission and Publishing page, detailing what is required for you to submit your thesis under the online submission process as well as how to submit online: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/about-postgraduate-study/masters-study/studying-your-masters/>

Note that Masters theses must be submitted by full-time students within 2 years of first enrolling for the Masters degree, if eligibility for Honours is to be retained.

**For all projects and theses, we strongly advise submission by the due date.** Submitting late may have consequences for when you can graduate, and whether you're eligible for subsequent enrolment or scholarship applications.

## Due dates

### Honours reports

175.799 *Research Report* (30 credits) is due on 15 November:

### Masters theses (120cr) and Research reports (60cr)

If you are completing a 60-credit Masters research report in psychology (e.g., as part of a 180-credit Masters degree), you will be enrolled in [175.873 Research Report Psychology](#). The due date for your research report is the end date of the offering of 175.873 that you are enrolled in. For example:

- If you are enrolled in 175.873 double semester in 2026, the course end date is **15 November 2026**. This is the due date for your research report.
- If you are enrolled in 175.873 in Semester One of 2026, the course end date is **21 June 2026**. This is the due date for your research report.
- If you are enrolled in 175.873 in Semester Two of 2026, the course end date is **14 February 2027**. This is the due date for your research report.

### Masters theses (120cr)

If you are completing a 120-credit Masters thesis in Psychology, you will be enrolled in two thesis "courses": [175.894 Thesis 120 Credit Part 1](#), followed by [175.896 Thesis 120 Credit Part 2](#). The due date for your thesis is the end date for the offering of 175.896 Thesis 120 Credit Part 2 that you enrol in. So for example if you are enrolled in the distance offering 175.896 in Semester 2 of 2026, your end date (and thus your due date) is **14 February 2027**.

While your Portal may show a "Maximum time to complete qualification" and "Eligibility for honours/distinction/merit", these are not due dates for your thesis or research report, but rather relate to your qualification as a whole.

## Embargo

An embargo can be applied if there is a strong reason for your thesis not to be made public for a period of time.

Embargos are rare for Massey Psychology theses. If you and your supervisor agree that a thesis should be embargoed, then you need to complete an RF05 Application for Approval to Embargo. This can be downloaded from: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/about-postgraduate-study/masters-study/studying-your-masters/>

## Assessment

Honours reports and 60 credit Masters reports are normally assessed by two members of the School of Psychology staff who are nominated by the supervisor. You are not told who the markers are but will receive written feedback and a final grade.

120 credit Masters theses are assessed by one member of the School of Psychology staff and one external examiner (usually from another New Zealand University). The examiners are nominated by the supervisor. The thesis is awarded a single grade which has been agreed by the examiners. You will receive the examiners' reports, however the identity of examiners and their specific mark and grade recommendations are withheld.

Following submission of a thesis or research report it may take 3-6 months before the final result is available. Examiners need time to review, mark and report on the thesis, and there are administrative processes involving the School, the College, and the University.

## Publication

The School of Psychology encourages students to publish their Masters and PhD research. If you are interested in publishing your research you need to discuss publication with your supervisor and reach an agreement about the authorship and timing of publication.

## Authorship

Depending on the relative contributions of student and supervisor, the options might range from sole authorship by you, to joint authorship. Any disagreements over who should be senior author are best avoided by discussing the issue early in the supervision process. In the event of such a disagreement you can refer the situation to an arbiter such as the Postgraduate Co-ordinator.

You may have little energy for writing up your work for publication immediately following submission of the thesis. This is not unusual and some time may be needed for renewal of energy and enthusiasm before working on a draft for publication. If you still have no interest in publishing the research after a suitable period of time has elapsed, a written agreement should be made with your supervisor concerning authorship rights to the research.



# Resources

## Research facilities and equipment

Research facilities and equipment in the school include:

- Access to Windows-based computer laboratories.
- Postgraduate students can access a variety of software, printing, web and library resources, using the Central Computer Laboratories or Psychology computers dedicated for Postgraduate use. Remote access to computer lab software running on Massey servers is also available via a virtual client application.
- A wide range of audio-visual equipment.
- An extensive psychological test library
- Bespoke software development, web applications and surveys

Within the school there are also facilities managed by experimental psychology staff to support their research activities. These laboratory facilities and equipment include physiological laboratories, the EEG laboratory, and the Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) laboratory. They are situated on the Manawatū campus and the Wellington campus. However, they are not for public use but specifically catered to specific research groups and staff members.

## Software

The software provided on Massey student computers includes Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), web browsers, SPSS statistical package, NVivo, SAS, EndNote (bibliographic software) and access to e-learning environments (Stream).

There is also a range of software available for installation on your personal computers while enrolled in study, including Microsoft Office 365, EndNote and various statistical packages. Your supervisor can advise on this. Virtual access to software hosted on Massey servers also provides remote access to software such as SPSS and other General computer applications.

## Technical services

The School offers students a range of technical services and facilities through the technical staff that can be found in the Workshop on the ground floor of the Manawatū campus. As noted previously, technical services are usually arranged through your course co-ordinators or supervisor. The technical

staff also maintain lists and organise the loan of a range of audio equipment, software and journals held by the School and some members of staff. Albany and Wellington students should enquire at the Psychology Office on your campus.

## Psychological test libraries

The School of Psychology has extensive Psychological Test Libraries at Albany and Manawatū campuses and a limited Psychological Test Library at Wellington campus. These libraries contain a variety of tests and books which are available to you on short term loan, normally for a period of two weeks. Loan material must be signed out on the card system in the Test Library and signed in upon return. To access tests contact:

**Hung Ton**

Email: [H.Ton@massey.ac.nz](mailto:H.Ton@massey.ac.nz)

**Carrie Wilson**

Email: [C.Wilson1@massey.ac.nz](mailto:C.Wilson1@massey.ac.nz)

Psychological tests that are not available at your campus may be available at the Manawatū Campus.

## Resource rooms

The School of Psychology maintains two resource rooms at Manawatū. Tuia te Mana Māori (Māori Resource Room) in room 2.20, houses a range of materials. Te Rau Aroha in room 2.21 and room 2.08 are for use by postgraduates.

At Manawatū Campus, copies of completed Honours research reports, Masters theses, and Doctoral dissertations by students in the School are held in the Thesis Library.

At Wellington, theses, dissertations and research reports are held in the Thesis Library in room 7C50. These can be borrowed.

## The library

As a student of psychology, the services and collections of the Library will possibly be the major resource for you in your studies.

Massey University Libraries have extensive collections of print and on-line material – books, encyclopedias, journals, journal article databases, CDs, videos, DVDs, theses. They



are all listed in the Library's catalogue, accessed through the Library's Home Page: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/library/>

You can use material from any of Massey's three campus libraries. The subject guide for Psychology as accessed from the "How do I find information" link on the Library's Home page is a good starting point to identify and link to relevant journal article databases, websites and reference resources of relevance to psychology.

## Library access and Distance Library Service

Thesis and research report students can usually be enrolled as extramural students and receive the distance library service. If you are enrolled for a thesis or research report and you live near a campus, you are expected to visit that campus library for access to books, journals, photocopying and other library services. If, however, you live a significant distance from a campus and are enrolled as an internal student, then you may be eligible to receive distance library services. If you think you are eligible to receive distance library services, contact the Distance Library Service.

Phone: 0800 MASSEY

Email [Library@massey.ac.nz](mailto:Library@massey.ac.nz)

## Research consultations

You may want to take advantage of the Library's Research Consultation Service. One of the Liaison Librarians can give you a one-hour session, either in person or by phone, providing advice on identifying and using relevant information sources. This is a free service. Ask at any Massey University campus library. We urge you to make use of this service.

## Computers

You will have access to computers, library databases and the internet by a variety of means. There are dedicated postgraduate computer laboratories operated by Information Technology Services, public student computing and printing facilities in the 'Information Commons' of Manawātū and Albany Libraries and increasing access to wireless networking services across the University.

Postgraduate students are encouraged to improve their computer literacy and to acquire word processing and other computing skills if they do not already possess them. A variety of training courses is available for postgraduate students via <https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/study-and-assignment-support-and-guides/academic-support-services/>

## Computing access

Student ID and PIN codes provide password access to the Massey's lab computers and online resources such as Library abstract databases. Files may be saved to a Microsoft OneDrive or a student network H: drive (for the period of your

enrolment), or to your own portable storage device. There is no charge for access to software, databases or internet, although there are costs associated with printing. Students can increment their computing budget on-line via the SMS Portal and its secure credit card payment system. GST is deducted at the time the money is put into your account.

Information about computer labs and teaching rooms for students can be found at: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/student-life/campus-guides-maps/>

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## Regulations

The University has strict policies on information technology and communication systems. Breaches of the policy on use and access to ITS are treated seriously. Policies can be found at <https://www.massey.ac.nz/about/policies-procedures-and-guidelines/>

Improper use of the IT system includes, but is not limited to:

- a) unauthorised access to the IT System or circumvention of restrictions on access;
- b) use of the IT System for purposes other than to meet pre-authorised administrative, or teaching course work, course and research requirements for which access was granted;
- c) use of the IT System to produce, store, transmit, or display any materials which are obscene, offensive, slanderous or illegal;
- d) use of the IT System for private gain or unauthorised commercial use;
- e) making unauthorised copies of software and data;
- f) distribution, propagation or creation of computer viruses;
- g) physical abuse of any IT System;
- h) electronic abuse or harassment of individuals via the IT System;
- i) contravention of the rights of an individual;
- j) contravention of the statutes, regulations and charter of the University and New Zealand statutes including the Privacy Act 1993, Human Rights Acts 1993, Official Information Act 1982, Public Finance Act 1992, Employment Relations Act 2000; and
- k) such other activities deemed improper use from time to time." (Use and access to information technology systems policy, June 2013).



## Computers and Health

Extensive use of computers, without appropriate precautions, can contribute to musculoskeletal discomfort (occupational overuse syndrome).

It is important to be aware of the symptoms and causes of musculo-skeletal discomfort and the social and physical factors which may aggravate musculo-skeletal discomfort. There are four areas you need to consider in the management of musculo-skeletal discomfort. These are:

- the design of your equipment and tasks,
- the organisation of your work,
- your working environment, and
- early attention to any musculo-skeletal discomfort.

Each of these is considered in turn.

You need to ensure that the equipment you are using is appropriate for your size. If you are using fixed equipment you may need to consider having it altered to avoid having to hold static and undesirable postures for long periods of time. Where tasks require long periods of static muscle contraction you should take micro pauses (very short but frequent rests) and if possible arrange for other tasks to provide variation.

Your work should be organised so that there is a variety and make sure that appropriate breaks are taken. You should avoid setting unrealistic targets or rewarding yourself on the basis of work rates which involve long periods of static posture.

Social and physical factors in your work environment may contribute to earlier onset of musculo-skeletal discomfort. Social factors which may influence the work environment include: workload, deadlines, inter-personal relationships, supervision styles, your control over your work environment and your mental attitude towards new software and / or research reports / assignments. You need to deal with any of these factors if it is a continuing source of stress. Undesirable physical aspects of the environment may also add to background stress. You need to consider that the lighting, ventilation, humidity, temperature and noise levels are not providing additional stress.

If you do develop musculo-skeletal discomfort it is important to seek help early rather than persisting with the pain. Further assistance and ergonomic evaluation of your workplace can be obtained through the University Health and Safety Co-ordinator. If pain persists it is important to seek appropriate medical assistance and treatment. Don't underestimate the disabling effects of musculo-skeletal discomfort!



# Summary

At some point in the not-too-distant future you will be finished with postgraduate study. Your feelings at this point might include a great sense of release and relief. It is also possible that you will experience some feelings of loss - this 'thing' that has been dominating your life is gone now. So, what do you do now? The options are limited only by your imagination, situation and resources.

Here are some more or less serious suggestions:

- Take a holiday.
- Celebrate with close family and friends.
- Take the dog for more walks / Give the cat some special treats.
- Plan what you are going to wear to your graduation.
- Read a good book.
- Give some time to your family and friends.
- Write up and publish your research.

Should you need counselling, Massey University offers free counselling, please visit: <https://www.massey.ac.nz/student-life/services-and-support-for-students/counselling-services/>

Remember that learning is life-long. Although you may have achieved your qualification, as you continue to work in the area, you will need to keep up with developments, in psychology in general and in your chosen area within psychology in particular







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