



# PSYC20038 *Positive Psychology: Research Methods*

## Term 2 - 2020

Profile information current as at 06/05/2024 04:23 am

All details in this unit profile for PSYC20038 have been officially approved by CQUniversity and represent a learning partnership between the University and you (our student). The information will not be changed unless absolutely necessary and any change will be clearly indicated by an approved correction included in the profile.

## General Information

### Overview

This unit will introduce you to the various methodological approaches to research and evaluation as they relate to positive psychology. You will develop a critical understanding of the research process, and gain knowledge of the theoretical and empirical traditions in positive psychology research and assessment. The unit will help you to become familiar with valid and ethical processes for collecting and analysing data, the importance of data-driven decision making, and measuring the impact of interventions, and evaluating programs, using a range of methods specific to positive psychology research. In this unit you will be encouraged to question why and how research contributes to best practice (and vice versa). You will learn the skills of engaging with research in a critical manner, and consider the ways research can be used to guide design and procedure for interventions. There will be an overarching focus on being a critical consumer and user of research - to inform the formulation of research questions and intervention designs - whilst also recognising the key research foci, drivers, and interests in this domain.

### Details

Career Level: *Postgraduate*

Unit Level: *Level 8*

Credit Points: 6

Student Contribution Band: 10

Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: 0.125

### Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

There are no requisites for this unit.

Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#).

### Offerings For Term 2 - 2020

- Online

### Attendance Requirements

All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes - in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

### Website

[This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.](#)

## Class and Assessment Overview

### Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Postgraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

### Class Timetable

#### [Regional Campuses](#)

Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

#### [Metropolitan Campuses](#)

Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

### Assessment Overview

#### 1. **Research Assignment**

Weighting: 25%

#### 2. **Essay**

Weighting: 20%

#### 3. **Online Test**

Weighting: 5%

#### 4. **Critical Review**

Weighting: 50%

### Assessment Grading

This is a graded unit: your overall grade will be calculated from the marks or grades for each assessment task, based on the relative weightings shown in the table above. You must obtain an overall mark for the unit of at least 50%, or an overall grade of 'pass' in order to pass the unit. If any 'pass/fail' tasks are shown in the table above they must also be completed successfully ('pass' grade). You must also meet any minimum mark requirements specified for a particular assessment task, as detailed in the 'assessment task' section (note that in some instances, the minimum mark for a task may be greater than 50%). Consult the [University's Grades and Results Policy](#) for more details of interim results and final grades.

## CQUniversity Policies

**All University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).**

You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

## Previous Student Feedback

### Feedback, Recommendations and Responses

Every unit is reviewed for enhancement each year. At the most recent review, the following staff and student feedback items were identified and recommendations were made.

#### Feedback from Student Emails and Student Evaluation responses.

##### Feedback

A number of students indicated that they felt engaged with the assessment tasks because the tasks allowed them to choose their own area of interest to focus upon.

##### Recommendation

Continue to allow student choice of topic area in assessments tasks.

#### Feedback from Student Emails and Student Evaluation responses.

##### Feedback

Students appreciated timely communication and support from the Unit Coordinator.

##### Recommendation

Continue to use this communication approach in the unit.

#### Feedback from Student Evaluation responses.

##### Feedback

Some students stated more instructional tips and tools for the critical essay could be useful.

##### Recommendation

Revise and update the assessments section of the Moodle site as necessary with additional instructions/tip sheets/videos.

## Unit Learning Outcomes

### On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Contrast instruments to evaluate the effectiveness of a range of relevant positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing interventions
2. Evaluate ethical methods in conducting research and evaluation of positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing interventions
3. Locate appropriate peer-reviewed and industry-based empirical research relevant to the positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing domains
4. Interpret contemporary research literature relevant to positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing
5. Critique current research literature, including why and how this knowledge can inform best practice
6. Discern and communicate research gaps, future directions, and strategies, to enhance the body of knowledge in the positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing domains.

## Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes



### Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - Research Assignment - 25%			•			

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
2 - Essay - 20%			•	•	•	
3 - Online Test - 5%		•				
4 - Critical Review - 50%	•			•		•

## Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attributes	Learning Outcomes					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - Knowledge	○	○	○	○	○	○
2 - Communication						○
3 - Cognitive, technical and creative skills	○		○	○	○	
4 - Research				○	○	○
5 - Self-management		○	○			
6 - Ethical and Professional Responsibility		○				
7 - Leadership						
8 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures						

## Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Graduate Attributes

Assessment Tasks	Graduate Attributes							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 - Research Assignment - 25%	○	○		○	○			
2 - Essay - 20%	○			○				
3 - Online Test - 5%	○					○		
4 - Critical Review - 50%			○	○				

## Textbooks and Resources

### Textbooks

There are no required textbooks.

### IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)

## Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

## Teaching Contacts

**Lauren Miller-Lewis** Unit Coordinator  
[l.miller-lewis@cqu.edu.au](mailto:l.miller-lewis@cqu.edu.au)

## Schedule

### Week 1 - 13 Jul 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
What is research, and what is a researcher?	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	

### Week 2 - 20 Jul 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
What is research, and what is a researcher? (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	<b>Zoom Tutorial 1: Week 2 Wednesday 22 July 2020, 6:30-7:45pm AEST.</b>

### Week 3 - 27 Jul 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
What is research, and what is a researcher? (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	<b>Assessment 1 (Part A) Research Assignment - Written Assessment</b> Due: Week 3 Monday 27 July 2020, 5:00pm AEST

### Week 4 - 03 Aug 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Understanding and personalising research.	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	

### Week 5 - 10 Aug 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Understanding and personalising research. (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	<b>Zoom Tutorial 2: Week 5 Wednesday 12 August 2020, 6:30-7:45pm AEST.</b>

**Vacation Week - 17 Aug 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
No modules/topic this week.		<b>Assessment 1 (Part B)</b>  <b>Research Assignment - Written Assessment</b> Due: Vacation Week Monday (17 Aug 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

**Week 6 - 24 Aug 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Understanding and personalising research. (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	

**Week 7 - 31 Aug 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Asking questions and doing research.	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	

**Week 8 - 07 Sep 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Asking questions and doing research. (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	<b>Zoom Tutorial 3: Week 8 Wednesday 9 September 2020, 6:30-7:45pm AEST.</b>

**Week 9 - 14 Sep 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Asking questions and doing research. (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	<b>Assessment 2</b>  <b>Essay: Developing Research Questions</b> Due: Week 9 Monday (14 Sept 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

**Week 10 - 21 Sep 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Asking questions and doing research. (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	<b>Assessment 3</b>  <b>Online Test: Ethics</b> Due: Week 10 Monday (21 Sept 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

**Week 11 - 28 Sep 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Asking questions and doing research. (Continued)	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	

**Week 12 - 05 Oct 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Bringing it all together.	Please see selected readings and activities on Moodle.	<b>Assessment 4</b>  <b>Critical Review and Research Proposal</b> Due: Week 12 Tuesday (6 Oct 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

**Review/Exam Week - 12 Oct 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
There are no examinations for this unit.		

**Exam Week - 19 Oct 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
There are no examinations for this unit.		

## Assessment Tasks

### 1 Research Assignment - Written Assessment

#### Assessment Type

Research Assignment

#### Task Description

In this assessment task, you will begin the process of engaging with peer-reviewed literature in an area that interests you within the domain of Positive Psychology/wellbeing/resilience.

This assessment is in two parts, with requirements detailed below.

#### Part A. Post in a discussion forum on Moodle

For Part A of the assessment, you will identify a research interest relating to an area of passion/strong interest for you in the field of Positive Psychology/wellbeing/resilience. In week 3, in the allocated Moodle discussion forum, you will state your chosen area of research interest, provide a brief description of why this area is of interest, and justify the importance of the topic to positive psychology.

The maximum word count for the Moodle post is 300 words (+/- 10%).

#### Part B. Source three relevant journal articles and write a report

For Part B, you will be required to:

- 1) Conduct a peer-reviewed journal article search through the CQUniversity library, and source three peer-reviewed articles relevant to the research interest you identified in your Week 3 post.
- 2) Write a brief (100-word) description of the methods used to source the peer-reviewed journal articles.
- 3) Write a brief (250-300 words per article) overview of each of the three articles including:

- Why specifically each of the three journal articles were chosen
- The researcher(s) research question of interest
- Each article's significance to the area of interest
- The key findings in each article

The maximum word count for Part B of this assessment task is 1000 words (+/- 10%). This word limit includes in-text citations but excludes any reference section. Meeting the word count is included as a part of the marking criteria in your marking rubric on Moodle. See the Psychology Word Count Information document on Moodle for a rationale for using this type of word limit restriction.

Further information will be provided in the Unit and Assessment Guide on the unit Moodle site.

#### Assessment Due Date

Vacation Week Monday (17 Aug 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

The Moodle discussion post (Part A) is due Week 3 Monday (27 Jul 2020) 5:00pm AEST. The written report (Part B) is due Vacation Week Monday (17 August 2020) 5:00pm AEST.

#### Return Date to Students

Week 7 Monday (31 Aug 2020)

Feedback and grade for each part will be provided within 2 weeks of each submission.

#### Weighting

25%

#### Assessment Criteria

This assessment task will be assessed via a marking rubric, which will be available on the unit Moodle site.

You will be assessed on:

- Fulfilling the requirements of posting on the allocated discussion thread
- The quality and thoughtful effort demonstrated in the discussion post
- Detailing in the written report the methodology used to source appropriate peer-reviewed journal articles through the CQUniversity library
- The relevance of the chosen peer-reviewed articles to the identified area of interest
- The quality and accuracy of the reported overview of aims and key findings of each of the chosen journal articles
- The quality and clarity of written communication, including appropriate APA referencing for in-text citations and the Reference list, and adherence to word-limit.

Detailed information regarding assessment requirements and criteria for assessment can be found in the Unit and Assessment Guide on Moodle.

## Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

## Submission

Online

## Submission Instructions

This assessment will be submitted online through Moodle. Part A will be submitted on the Moodle discussion forum. Part B will be submitted through a submission portal in the Assessment section of the unit Moodle site.

## Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Locate appropriate peer-reviewed and industry-based empirical research relevant to the positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing domains

## Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Communication
- Research
- Self-management

# 2 Essay: Developing Research Questions

## Assessment Type

Essay

## Task Description

Drawing on the three articles selected for Assessment 1, in Assessment 2 you will explore and summarise the key 'gaps' in the literature that could be addressed by further research. This should not be a repetition of the limitations or future directions that the articles identify themselves. Rather, this summary should represent a cohesive consideration of all three articles, and what these articles reveal about future research options or needs. You may include additional articles that support/guide comments, but this is not a compulsory requirement.

Your submission will include:

- Detailing the area of interest.
- An analysis and critique of the 'gaps' in the literature that could be further explored in research, and why this suggested future research would be worthwhile.
- Formulation of at least one research question, using the guiding principles of the PICO style (Population, Intervention/Exposure, Comparison, and Outcomes) framework.
- In-text citations, and a reference list (APA style).

The maximum word count for this assessment task is 900 words (+/- 10%). This word limit includes in-text citations but excludes any reference section. Meeting the word count is included as a part of the marking criteria in your marking rubric on Moodle. See the Psychology Word Count Information document on Moodle for a rationale for using this type of word limit restriction.

Further information will be provided in the Unit and Assessment Guide on the unit Moodle site.

In order to pass the unit, you will need to score at least 50% in this assessment.

## Assessment Due Date

Week 9 Monday (14 Sept 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

## Return Date to Students

Week 11 Monday (28 Sept 2020)

Feedback and grade for this assessment will be provided within 2 weeks of submission.

## Weighting

20%

## Minimum mark or grade

50%

## Assessment Criteria

This assessment task will be assessed via a marking rubric, which will be available on the unit Moodle site.

You will be assessed on:

- Critical analysis and reporting of gaps/areas for further research in the chosen literature
- Rationale as to why the identified future research would be of benefit
- Development of a meaningful research question/s using the principles explored in the unit content, including the PICO (Population, Intervention/Exposure, Comparison, and Outcomes) framework.



- The quality and conciseness of written communication and arguments, and adherence to word-limit.
- Correct adherence to APA referencing style for in-text citations and the Reference list.

Detailed information regarding assessment requirements and criteria for assessment can be found in the Unit and Assessment Guide on Moodle.

In order to pass the unit, you will need to score at least 50% in this assessment.

### Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

### Submission

Online

### Submission Instructions

This assessment will be submitted online through Moodle. A submission portal will be provided in the Assessment section of the unit Moodle site.

### Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Locate appropriate peer-reviewed and industry-based empirical research relevant to the positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing domains
- Interpret contemporary research literature relevant to positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing
- Critique current research literature, including why and how this knowledge can inform best practice

### Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Research

## 3 Online Test: Ethics

### Assessment Type

Online Test

### Task Description

This assessment will be a short online quiz, designed to assess your understanding of fundamental ethics principles covered in the unit content.

### Assessment Due Date

Week 10 Monday (21 Sept 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

The quiz will open at least 2 weeks before the due date. You may complete the quiz anytime up until the due date.

### Return Date to Students

Week 10 Tuesday (22 Sept 2020)

The quiz is marked electronically, with a score returned to you once responses are submitted.

### Weighting

5%

### Minimum mark or grade

50%

### Assessment Criteria

The online quiz will be a multiple choice assessment. All ethics information relevant to the quiz will be covered in the unit content.

Detailed information regarding quiz requirements and scope can be found in the Unit and Assessment Guide on Moodle.

In order to pass the unit, you will need to score at least 50% in this assessment.

### Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

### Submission

Online

### Submission Instructions

This assessment will be completed and submitted online through Moodle.

### Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Evaluate ethical methods in conducting research and evaluation of positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing interventions

## Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Ethical and Professional Responsibility

## 4 Critical Review and Research Proposal

### Assessment Type

Critical Review

### Task Description

In this final assessment, you will source and critically evaluate three published research articles, and make a proposal for future research based on your critical evaluation. The articles sourced will be your choice, but must be:

1. Peer-reviewed primary source journal articles (i.e., articles reporting new research findings from an original study) that are published in reputable journals.
2. Relevant to one specific area of interest in the Positive Psychology/wellbeing/resilience domain, but this must be a different area of focus than the choice in Assessment 1. You will source three journal articles each reporting an empirical study relevant to the chosen area of interest, ensuring that you have not previously critiqued these journal articles in this unit or other units in this course.

The critical review and research proposal will include consideration of the following:

- What is the predominant area of interest for the researcher/s, and why is the area considered important? (This will be the basis for the introduction.)
- What are the main research questions in each article?
- Compare and contrast the methodologies used by the researchers in each article
- What are the key findings in each of the publications, and do they appear to be justified? (Are the conclusions drawn justified based on the evidence gained in the study?)
- What are the strengths and limitations of each of the research publications? (This should be more than a repetition of the limitations that the article authors report themselves.)
- A critical evaluation of the suggestions made by the researcher(s) for future research
- Identification of an important 'gap' in the research literature (based on the 3 chosen publications) that you propose could be further explored in research, and a justification for why this proposed future research would be worthwhile. The justification will include how addressing this 'gap' links to the publications you have reviewed, and is a logical next-step for developing the publication authors' line of inquiry further.
- Formulation of at least one future research question that would address the identified 'gap' in knowledge (using the guiding principles of the PICO [Population, Intervention/Exposure, Comparison, Outcomes] framework).
- A description of the proposed research design and method you would use to attempt to answer your research question (e.g., research study design, types of participants you would seek, method and procedure for generating data, variables of interest, etc.).

The maximum word count for this assessment task is 3000 words (+/- 10%). This word limit includes in-text citations but excludes any reference section. Meeting the word count is included as a part of the marking criteria in your marking rubric on Moodle. See the Psychology Word Count Information document on Moodle for a rationale for using this type of word limit restriction.

In order to pass the unit, you will need to score at least 50% in this assessment.

Further information will be provided in the Unit and Assessment Guide on the unit Moodle site.

### Assessment Due Date

Week 12 Tuesday (6 Oct 2020) 5:00 pm AEST

### Return Date to Students

Exam Week Tuesday (20 Oct 2020)

Feedback and grade for this assessment will be provided within 2 weeks of submission.

### Weighting

50%

### Minimum mark or grade

50%

### Assessment Criteria

This assessment task will be assessed via a marking rubric, which will be available on the unit Moodle site.

You will be assessed on:

- Accurate reporting of the predominant research area of interest, and research questions
- Ability to interpret, critique and summarise the reported research findings
- Quality of comparing and contrasting of the research methodologies used in the three publications
- Quality and comprehensiveness of the identification of the strengths, weaknesses, and future research directions

- Critical analysis of key gaps/areas for further research based on the chosen literature
- Rationale as to why the identified gap would be of benefit to address in future research
- Development of a meaningful research question using the principles of the PICO (Population, Intervention/Exposure, Comparison, and Outcomes) framework.
- Development of an appropriate research design and method to answer the research question posed
- Clarity, conciseness and quality of written communication and critical thinking in the assessment, and adherence to the word-limit.
- Correct use of APA referencing style for in-text citations and the Reference list.

Detailed information regarding assessment requirements and criteria for assessment can be found in the Unit and Assessment Guide on Moodle.

In order to pass the unit, you will need to score at least 50% in this assessment.

### **Referencing Style**

- [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

### **Submission**

Online

### **Submission Instructions**

This assessment will be submitted online through Moodle. A submission portal will be provided in the Assessment section of the unit Moodle site.

### **Learning Outcomes Assessed**

- Contrast instruments to evaluate the effectiveness of a range of relevant positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing interventions
- Interpret contemporary research literature relevant to positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing
- Discern and communicate research gaps, future directions, and strategies, to enhance the body of knowledge in the positive psychology, resilience, and wellbeing domains.

### **Graduate Attributes**

- Cognitive, technical and creative skills
- Research

## Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the [Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#). This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

### What is a breach of academic integrity?

A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

### Why is academic integrity important?

A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

### Where can I get assistance?

For academic advice and guidance, the [Academic Learning Centre \(ALC\)](#) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

### What can you do to act with integrity?



#### Be Honest

If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own



#### Seek Help

If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)



#### Produce Original Work

Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem