SOWK29006 *Social Work Research for Practice*
Term 1 - 2026

Profile information current as at 28/03/2026 01:20 am

All details in this unit profile for SOWK29006 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
In this unit, you will develop a research proposal on a topic of your choice. To achieve this, you will follow a structured, step-by-step research process, commencing with formulating a research question and research objectives. You will examine and critique quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods designs. You will identify and retrieve a relevant body of research and literature, analysing and synthesising the findings into a coherent literature review. By identifying gaps in the literature, you will develop a justifiable rationale for your topic and design an appropriate research proposal. You will evaluate any ethical challenges in line with the AASW Code of Ethics and human research ethics guidelines and develop a feasibility strategy for your proposed study, ensuring the research is ethically and practically achievable.

Details
Career Level: *Postgraduate*
Unit Level: *Level 9*
Credit Points: *6*
Student Contribution Band: *10*
Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: *0.125*

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites
Pre-requisites: SOWK29001 Ethical and Legal Issues in Practice SOWK28005 Social Work Field Education 1
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 1 - 2026
- Sydney

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. Literature Review or Systematic Review
Weighting: 50%
2. Research Proposal
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.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:
1. Critically evaluate the key methods and methodologies used in social work research and the implications for evidence-based practice.
2. Conduct a literature review that critically and ethically analyses and synthesises appropriate research findings to inform a research topic.
3. Design a research proposal that justifies the selection of research methodologies and addresses identified gaps in the literature.
4. Evaluate ethical considerations of the research design and develop a feasibility strategy to ensure the proposed study is ethically sound and practically achievable.

Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes

— N/A Level • Introductory Level • Intermediate Level • Graduate Level ○ Professional Level ○ Advanced Level

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes			
	1	2	3	4
1 - Literature Review or Systematic Review - 50%	●	●	●	●
2 - Research Proposal - 50%	●	●	●	●

Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

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

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)
- CQ library literature search tools

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

Sarah Wayland Unit Coordinator
s.wayland@cqu.edu.au
Nina Melander Unit Coordinator
n.melander@cqu.edu.au

Schedule

Week 1 - 09 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Introduction to social work research and methods to analyse evidence	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture - Welcome and unit introduction, including an overview of learning and assessments. - Moodle engagement and participation approaches will be discussed, students should check for updates. - Academic integrity expectations will be discussed

Week 2 - 16 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Choosing your social work topic of interest and designing your research question	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture Students should prepare for this week by reflecting on a social work topic of interest from placement one or from your previous learnings. In class, your unit coordinator will provide individual and group opportunities to explore the relevance of your chosen topic.

Week 3 - 23 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Skill development session to enhance your confidence to search the literature	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture A guest session from CQU Library will be held in person, to explore use of the CQU Library database, to develop search skills to locate relevant literature.

Week 4 - 30 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
How to extract and synthesise data from your literature search	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture Students will work in small groups to complete a literature review matrix to extract and synthesise skills; in preparation for submission of assessment one in week 5.

Week 5 - 06 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Developing a framework to analyse your literature	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture The focus of this week will be to reflect on the outcomes of the literature review to begin to build the framework for development of a research proposal.

Week 6 - 13 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Understanding research design and why is research ethics is important	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture This session will provide an in-person review of the National statement on research ethics, and an analysis of the AASW code of ethics. Literature review Due: Week 6 Wednesday (15 Apr 2026) 4:00 pm AEST

Vacation Week - 20 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Vacation week	Please use this mid-term break as an opportunity to rest and recover. Enjoy your break!	No timetabled learning activities. Please use this week to progress your assessments.

Week 7 - 27 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
An introduction to quantitative and mixed methods research	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture The focus of this week will be to provide students with foundational learnings about research methods, to assist the design of their research proposal.

Week 8 - 04 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
An introduction to Qualitative research	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture The focus of this week will be to provide students with foundational learnings about research methods, to assist the design of their research proposal. Students will be provided with a 1-1 session with their unit coordinator to discuss the draft of their research proposal.

Week 9 - 11 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
How to select and recruit participants	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture Following on from the week 6 discussion regarding ethics, this session will emphasis strategies to safely and ethically recruit participants. Students will be invited to review research projects online and reflect on identified recruitment strategies.

Week 10 - 18 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Data collection methods relevant to social work research	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture This week's focus will be centred on how to collect data in a safe and rigorous way to answer the proposed research question.

Week 11 - 25 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Data analysis approaches	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person lecture This week will centre on the approaches of content, thematic or descriptive analysis. Students will participate in a research methods board game to allow them to make decisions, to assist them with the final preparation of assessment two. Student Unit and Teaching Evaluation survey – We encourage you to provide feedback about your unit and teaching experiences in this unit. The survey opens Week 11 and closes one week before release of grades.

Week 12 - 01 Jun 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Research proposals - a collaborative learning session	Visit Moodle for the set readings and activities	In person class In this session we will explore the enablers and barriers to the design of robust research proposals. Students will also be able to reflect on future research aspirations. Student Unit and Teaching Evaluation survey – Please complete the unit evaluation survey. Congratulations on completing this unit. Don't forget to check your unit enrolments for next term.

Exam Week - 08 Jun 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
		Research proposal Due: Exam Week Wednesday (10 June 2026) 4:00 pm AEST

Vacation/Exam Week - 15 Jun 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Term Specific Information

This unit is a face-to-face subject; students are required to attend Sydney campus as per their timetable. This subject has an 80% attendance rate. A key to your success, in this subject, is to commit to understanding how research can value-add social work practice. Student will be working iteratively across the term to produce a literature review and then create a research proposal by the end of the term. Both assessments utilise the same social work topic for exploration, the first two weeks of learning will generate conversations to help you refine and select your topic area. Please check the announcements and participate in class to ensure you are prepared for the assessments. Participation and assessment completion will ensure you have the knowledge and skills to succeed. Remember CQ University communicates with students via your CQ University student email address. When sending emails please place the unit code in the subject line to ensure your unit coordinator can follow up in a timely manner.

Assessment Tasks

1 Literature review

Assessment Type
Literature Review or Systematic Review

Task Description
This assessment allows students to submit a written assessment that provides an overview of the literature and identifies gaps in the evidence base about a chosen social work topic. Students will demonstrate their ability to identify, analyse and synthesise the empirical literature relevant to a chosen social work practice topic of interest. The literature review informs the approach to assessment two, when student's design a research proposal relevant to the topic of interest based upon learnings from the literature.
Academic Integrity

1.   You must abide by the principles of academic integrity (see Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure). Completion of this assessment with another party or sharing of responses is not permitted at any time.
2.   The use of any generative artificial intelligence is not permitted

Extensions: Available as per policy (the 72-hour grace period may apply to this assessment)

Assessment Due Date
Week 6 Wednesday (15 Apr 2026) 4:00 pm AEST

Submit via moodle

Return Date to Students
Week 8 Wednesday (6 May 2026)

Results will be available via moodle by 4:00pm

Weighting
50%

Minimum mark or grade
49.5

Assessment Criteria
Please refer to the marking rubric on the moodle site for more detail on how marks will be assigned

Referencing Style
- American Psychological Association 7th Edition (APA 7th edition)

Submission
Online

Submission Instructions
Submit your assessment via the unit Moodle site in Microsoft word format only

Learning Outcomes Assessed
- Critically evaluate the key methods and methodologies used in social work research and the implications for evidence-based practice.
- Conduct a literature review that critically and ethically analyses and synthesises appropriate research findings to inform a research topic.

- Design a research proposal that justifies the selection of research methodologies and addresses identified gaps in the literature.
- Evaluate ethical considerations of the research design and develop a feasibility strategy to ensure the proposed study is ethically sound and practically achievable.

2 Research proposal

Assessment Type
Research Proposal

Task Description
The aim of this assessment requires students to design a research proposal relevant to their topic of interest based upon assessment one learnings from the literature review. Student's need to identify appropriate research methods, with an emphasis on ethical and feasible approaches, to undertake social work research.

Academic Integrity

1. You must abide by the principles of academic integrity (see Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure). Completion of this assessment with another party or sharing of responses is not permitted at any time.
2. The use of any generative artificial intelligence is not permitted

Extensions: Available as per policy (the 72-hour grace period may apply to this assessment)

Assessment Due Date
Exam Week Wednesday (10 June 2026) 4:00 pm AEST

Please submit assessments online via moodle

Return Date to Students

Results will be shared when grades are released

Weighting
50%

Minimum mark or grade
49.5

Assessment Criteria
Please refer to the marking rubric on the Moodle site for more detail on how marks will be assigned.

Referencing Style
- American Psychological Association 7th Edition (APA 7th edition)

Submission
Online

Submission Instructions
Submit your assessment via the unit Moodle site in Microsoft word only

Learning Outcomes Assessed
- Critically evaluate the key methods and methodologies used in social work research and the implications for evidence-based practice.
- Conduct a literature review that critically and ethically analyses and synthesises appropriate research findings to inform a research topic.
- Design a research proposal that justifies the selection of research methodologies and addresses identified gaps in the literature.
- Evaluate ethical considerations of the research design and develop a feasibility strategy to ensure the proposed study is ethically sound and practically achievable.

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