Bachelor of Theology/Ministry (Honours)
Master of Divinity
Master of Theology
Master of Arts
Research Training Pathway

RM095D-4/6
Introduction to Research Methods
(Stream One)

Unit Guide

ITERIM UNIT GUIDE ONLY – Make sure you download the final Unit Guide from the Moodle in February.

Semester 1, 2019
Malyon Theological College
is an approved institution of the
Australian College of Theology

Contents

About Theological Malyon College

At Malyon we recognise that the world is changing. These are times of great challenge and opportunity. Our commitment is to raising up a generation of influential Christians who have a strong biblical base, skills in leadership and ministry, and a heart for God.

We have been training Christian leaders for over 100 years, and we've learnt a few things about theological training. Our graduates are serving all over the world as pastors, cross-cultural workers, workplace leaders, chaplains, church leaders and theological faculty.

Malyon offers full-time and part-time study options through lecture, intensive and distance modes. We have excellent resources for students including a large library, wireless internet and 24 hour access to the campus. All our awards are accredited through the Australian College of Theology.

About the Australian College of Theology

The ACT was established under the auspices of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia in 1891. The ACT is a company limited by guarantee governed by a nine-member Board of Directors. The Anglican Primate of Australia presides as the chairman of meetings of the company which consists of 54 persons (in 2010). The ACT is an Australasian provider of state accredited higher education courses leading to awards in theology and other disciplines related to Christian ministry. The ACT operates as an ecumenical consortium of some 2,500 students enrolled in 19 Bible and theological colleges approved to teach the awards of the ACT. These awards range from two-year diplomas, three-year undergraduate and coursework masters degrees to masters and doctoral research degrees.

The ACT has a centrally devised and managed curriculum and a quality assurance process that are applied across the whole network of affiliated colleges. The day-to-day educational system is managed by the Dean from the ACT office in Sydney. Academic governance is the responsibility of the Academic Board which oversees all academic activities of the College. The standing committees of the Academic Board share this responsibility by monitoring the quality of delivery and resourcing, developing policy, and reviewing the course structure for research, coursework and diploma courses. The membership of the Academic Board and its committees is comprised mostly of faculty members of affiliated colleges. A number of senior university academics are represented to help ensure that ACT practice (especially in the outcome of the consideration of research examiner's reports and general academic policy) remains comparable with the standards of and best practice in the university sector.

As a HEP under the Higher Education Support Act, the College was required to undergo a quality audit conducted by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). The AUQA Audit Report was publicly released on the AUQA website in February 2007.

In 2010 the company consists of 54 members composed in the following way:
(1)   the Anglican Primate of Australian and the Dean of the ACT,
(2)   the principals of 10 Anglican Theological Colleges,
(3)   21 persons elected by the House of Bishops of the General Synod,
(4)   the principals of 11 affiliated colleges approved to deliver the research degrees of the ACT,
(5)   5 graduates holding an ACT research degree,
(6)   5 graduates holding any other degree of the ACT.

Unit Details

Unit Description

The purpose of this unit is to assist candidates to plan and design a research project/thesis in the areas of Biblical studies, theology or Church history. It aims to introduce candidates to the discipline of text-based research methods, including developing and undertaking a research project.

Although a requirement of the BTh (Honours) course this unit also serves as a creditable introduction to research methods for Bible Languages (LA), Old Testament (OT), New Testament (NT), Theology (TH) or Church History (CH) research projects/theses in the MA (Theol) and M.Div. It also serves as the non-creditable introduction to research methods for the MTh or PhD.

Credit Points

This unit is offered as a 4cps and 6cps unit. It is valued at 6 credit points as part of the BTh (Honours) course. Students completing a MA or MTh who already have an MDiv enrol in this unit at the 4cps level. Students completing a MA or MTh who do not already have a Masters degree enrol in the 6cps version of the unit.

Co- and Pre-Requisites

- BTh or BMin with GPA min 2.0 overall, with 2.0 in the designated field of study
- 8 cps in either Biblical Hebrew (LA003) or New Testament Greek (LA004) and at least 8 cps of biblical language exegesis in their initial theology degree.

Exclusions

None

Unit Content

There are two streams of RM095:

STREAM 1 - Theses/Projects involving text based research i.e. theses/projects **not** involving human subject research (most likely but not exclusively BTh(Hons), MA(Th), MTh, ThD).

STREAM 2 - Theses/Project involving human subject research (most likely but not exclusively BMin(Hons), MA(Min), MACS, DMin).

This Unit Guide is for Stream 1 students.

1. The philosophy of research
   a. The place and value of student research in higher education
   b. The purpose of research
   c. Epistemological issues in research
   d. Paradigms in research
   e. Integrity in research: awareness of ethical issues and honesty with evidence
   f. Issues of personal motivation for beginning and sustaining research
2. The resources of research
   a. Resources in the college: staff, library, peer interaction
   b. Resources beyond the college
   c. Learning to use the tools and access the sources for efficient research
   d. Literature reviews: library and other electronic resources
3. Administration of research
   a. The candidate-supervisor relationship
   b. Supervisor's role and responsibilities
   c. Candidate's role and responsibilities
   d. Compatibility, styles of supervision and dispute resolution
4. Project Management
   a. Time path of research
   b. Scoping
   c. Sketching argument and structure
   d. Developing work programs
   e. Establishing a schedule for the production of written materials; parts of the whole paper of a thesis/project;
5. Focus and Production
   a. Formulating a proposal: defining the topic; setting realistic, achievable goals; benefits
   b. Final form of the thesis/project: revision of style and accuracy of writing; consistency in use of conventions; supervisor's final approval; research writing for critique and publication.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:	Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
A: Knowledge and Understanding Know and understand: A1 The nature of research and related debates relating to its purpose, value, ethics, paradigms and epistemology. A2 Critique the research methods most often used in a candidate's proposed field of research.	2 2
B: Skills Be able to: B1 Identify a researchable topic and articulate the research question, or hypothesis being explored. B2 Articulate the conceptualization underpinning the research proposal B3 Develop a research plan that demonstrates capacity to manage the research project	5 5 5
C: Application Be in a position to: C1 Write a clearly set out research proposal that can be completed within the minimum time allowable. C2 Satisfactorily complete an Ethics Protocol where human subject participant is required.	9 9

Workload Requirement

A unit will generally require about 150 hours.

Required Resources

There is a textbook for this unit:

> Smith, Kevin Gary. 2016. *Writing and Research: A Guide for Theological Students*. Carlisle: Langham Global Library.

NOTE: This textbook is available as an e-book through the Malyon College Library. If you would like to buy the book for yourself, It is available as a Kindle book. If you want a hard copy we recommend using the Book Depository but allow at least 10-12 business days for delivery.

Unit Preparer

Ian Hussey is married to Lynette and they have two daughters. Between 1993 and 2010 Ian was solo/Senior Pastor of Nundah/North-East Baptist church during which time the church grew from 35 to 500 people, including people of 15 different nationalities. Ian commenced at Malyon College in 2011 and is the Director of Postgraduate Studies. He also teaches preaching, pastoral leadership and New Testament survey. Ian is part of Windsor Road Baptist Church, an international church in the inner north of Brisbane and has taught conversational English as a cross-cultural outreach for over 15 years. He has degrees in science, education, theology and management. Ian's MTh was on "The soteriological use of kaleo by Luke and Paul" and his PhD was on the topic: "The engagement of newcomers in church attendance." His other research interests include church vitality and spiritual formation. Prior to pastoral ministry he was a school teacher in NSW and Queensland. His interests include music, reading novels and swimming.

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Unit Assessment

Assessment Instructions

The current **Assignment Writing Guide** is available to all students on the Moodle site; it should be studied by all students, both when starting out and at the beginning of each academic year as adjustments or changes may be made from time-to-time.

All assessment items are to be submitted through the Unit Moodle page. Assignments can be submitted either as Word or .pdf documents. When saving an assignment for submission, the following file name format is to be used:

> Format: Unit Code – Requirement number – Surname, Initial
> Example: NT301D1D R1 Smith J

In completing assessments, students should note that:

The College requirements for the writing and submission of assignments are to be adhered to at all times, as marks will be deducted for incorrect and poor presentation. Of particular importance is that the official College title page is to be used, and that the word length be indicated.

Assessment requirements are to be submitted through the hyperlinks on the Moodle page. The **Turnitin** software will screen your work for plagiarism. If you are concerned about the Originality Report, contact your lecturer.

The **due date** is non-negotiable; in exceptional circumstances students are to adhere to College protocol for requesting permission for late submission. Penalties for late submission are set at 3% per day. The Assignment Writing Guide contains details of the protocols to be followed.

With respect to **length**, students are permitted to write at a length of 10% either side of the stated length; for example, a 1000-word assignment should be within a 900-1100 word length. 3.2). Where an assessment submission exceeds the number of required words by more than 10%, a penalty of 10% of the total possible marks will normally apply.

With respect to **references**, students should note that:
- Devotional guides are not regarded as academic references.
- Electronic sources should be used critically and supplemented with other resources.

Grade Descriptors

The marking scale used for all ACT instruments is as follows:

High Distinction (HD)	= 85-100%
Distinction (D)	= 75-84%
Credit (C)	= 65-74%
High Pass (P+)	= 58-64%
Pass (P)	= 50-57%
Fail (F)	= 0-49%

Units at advanced level build upon foundational studies. Critical issues raised by a broad range of contemporary scholars are introduced and evaluated; primary sources are analysed in depth; and the critical and evaluative faculties of the students are developed in dialogue with scholarly literature.

Fail
The student's performance fails to satisfy the learning requirements specified.

Pass
The student's performance satisfies all of the basic learning requirements specified and provides a sound basis for proceeding to higher-level studies in the subject area. The student's performance could be described as satisfactory or adequate or competent or capable in relation to the learning requirements specified.

Credit
The student's performance, in addition to satisfying all of the basic learning requirements specified, demonstrates insight and ability in researching, analysing and applying relevant skills and concepts. The student's performance could be described as better than satisfactory or adequate or competent or capable in relation to the learning requirements specified.

Distinction
The student's performance, in addition to satisfying all of the basic learning requirements, demonstrates distinctive insight and ability in researching, analysing and applying relevant skills and concepts, and shows a well-developed ability to synthesise, integrate and evaluate knowledge. The student's performance could be described as distinguished in relation to the learning requirements specified.

High Distinction
The student's performance, in addition to satisfying all of the basic learning requirements, demonstrates distinctive insight and ability in researching, analysing and applying relevant skills and concepts, and shows exceptional ability to synthesise, integrate and evaluate knowledge. The student's performance could be described as outstanding in relation to the learning requirements specified.

Assessment Requirements

Requirement 1: Research Process Essay

Write an essay discussing the following aspects of your research process:
  a) The nature and importance of your relationship with your supervisor (500 words)
  b) The ethical issues related to research (400 words)
  c) The key principles related to academic writing style (800 words)
  d) Your proposed research timetable and practices that will enable you to devote adequate time to your research (300 words).

Find and correctly reference <u>six or more</u> resources in the completion of this task. You will be carefully assessed on your writing style and referencing and your critical evaluation of the resources.

The **key assessment criteria** for this requirement are how well the student demonstrates:

1. Discussion of important issues related to the student-supervisor relationship (15%)

2. Discussion of important issues related to the ethics of research (15%)

3. Discussion of important issues related to academic writing (15%)

4. Presentation of a well thought out research plan (10%)

5. The ability to write concisely and clearly (15%)

6. The ability to synthesise diverse ideas into a coherent argument (15%)

7. Referencing, spelling and grammatical skills (15%).

Due: 10 March by 11:55pm through the Moodle
Length: 2000 words/30 hours
References: 6 or more
Learning Outcomes: A1, B3
30% of assessment for RM095-4
25% of assessment for RM095-6

Read the following sections of Osborne's (2006) *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation:*
- The Introduction.
- Part 1: Read all 5 chapters.
- Part 2: Read the chapters related to the genre(s) you are researching.
- Part 3: Read Chapter 15 on Biblical Theology and Appendix 1.
- If your research is in systematic theology you need to read Chapter 16.

Based on your reading identify and discuss the hermeneutical principles relevant to your research topic.

The **key assessment criteria** for this requirement are as follows:

1. Engagement with Osborne's (2006) *The Hermeneutical Spiral* (20% weighting)

2. Identification and discussion of the hermeneutical principles relevant to the student's research topic (20%)

3. Adaptation of the book's content to the student's research topic (20%)

4. The ability to write concisely and clearly (10%).

5. The ability to synthesise diverse ideas into a coherent argument (20%).

6. Referencing, spelling and grammatical skills (10%).

Due: 31st March by 11:55pm through the Moodle
Length: 1000 words / 30 hours
References: 1
Learning outcomes addressed: A1, A2, B3.
15% of assessment for RM095-6

Requirement 3: Research Proposal

Write a Research Proposal for your proposed research. Include the following:

1. Introduction (500 words)
   - Explain your interest in the topic
2. The Research Problem (1000 words)
   - Background and Problem Definition
   - The Research Question and Subordinate Questions
   - Justification for the Hypothesis (if applicable)
   - The Value of the Research
   - Delimitations & Presuppositions of the Research
3. Literature Survey (1000 words)
4. Research Methodology (1000 words)
5. Research Plan (500 words)

The **key assessment criteria** for this requirement are as follows:

1. Informed discussion of the background to the research problem (15%).

2. Articulation of a clear and researchable research question (10%).

3. Convincing argument for the importance and need to complete the research (15%).

4. Empathetic and critical reporting and synthesis of a broad range of scholarship into a coherent narrative related to the research topic (15%).

5. Identification and description of the research method to be used in the proposed research (15%).

6. Critical evaluation of the research method to be used in the proposed research (10%).

7. Presentation of sensible research plan (10%).

8. Referencing, spelling and grammatical skills (10%).

Due: 31 May by 11:55pm through the Moodle
Length: 4000 words / 60 hours
References: 20+
70% of assessment for RM095-4
60% of assessment for RM095-6
Learning outcomes: A2, B1, B2, B3, C1

Unit Contribution to Graduate Attributes

Developing Christians of Influence

"Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding." (Jeremiah 3:15)

	1.	2.	3.	4.
Graduate Attribute 1: Personal Formation (Shepherds with God's heart)				
a. grows a mature relationship with God		✓		
b. seeks and builds healthy relationships	✓			
c. is self-aware and maintains self-care	✓			
d. is secure in God's call but wanting and able to learn and grow				✓
e. committed to living with God-dependence and character			✓	
Graduate Attribute 2: Theological Formation (Knowledge and understanding of God's heart)				
a. knows and trusts the Bible	✓			
b. understands the context of diverse theological ideas	✓			
c. forms a thoughtful, biblical, personal theology	✓			
d. reflects theologically and applies the Bible to real life	✓			
e. committed to helping others know and live God's way			✓	
Graduate Attribute 3: Ministry Formation (Knowledgeable and wise shepherds)				
a. understands how to have godly influence	✓			
b. possesses skills needed for chosen ministry path	✓			
c. able to adapt to and minister in a range of ministry contexts	✓			
d. able to work with and lead a team	✓			
e. committed to serving, evangelising and mentoring others			✓	

Scale:
1. A major thrust of this unit
2. A contribution that this unit should make
3. A possible function of this unit, but not targeted
4. An unlikely product of this unit

Note: Graduates who have not completed the curricular and non-curricular ministry aspects of Malyon's courses will tend to be most developed in Graduate Attribute 2.

ACT Policies and Procedures

Key Policies

Students should take note of the following ACT policies:

1.   Unit Moderation Policy.
2.   Academic Misconduct Policy.
3.   Academic Appeals Policy.

Accessing Documents

These and other policy documents are publically available in the following handbooks, through links on ACT's home page (www.actheology.edu.au):

1.   Undergraduate Handbook.
2.   Postgraduate Handbook.
3.   Student Policy Handbook.
4.   International Student Handbook.
5.   Distance Education Handbook.

These should be read in conjunction with the 'Recent Updates' link found on the ACT website.

Bibliography

Standard Resources

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Classic Resources

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