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# ECAS7013

# Applied Psychology Project

*MSc Applied Psychology*

# Part II:

# Project Handbook

# 2026-27

# Overview

This document provides comprehensive guidance for students on the three assessment components of the Applied Psychology Project (ECAS7013), including purpose, structure, key requirements, tips for success, and sample templates.

Please read through the guidance, making use of any external sources cited within the document which have been placed to help guide you along the way.

# Your Applied Research Project Journey

Your applied research project is a unique opportunity to explore a topic that genuinely interests you and to develop as an independent researcher. While it may feel daunting at first, the project is best understood as a journey that unfolds over time, with each stage building on the last. From shaping your research question and reviewing the literature, to collecting and analysing data and writing up your findings, you will be guided and supported throughout the process.

Along the way, you will develop valuable skills in critical thinking, research design, data analysis, and academic writing. You may encounter challenges or moments of uncertainty, but these are a normal and important part of learning to conduct applied psychological research. The project is not about producing a “perfect” study, but about demonstrating curiosity, rigour, reflection, and growth as a developing psychologist.

By the end of the project, you will have completed a substantial piece of independent work that you can take pride in. The applied research project represents both an academic achievement and a personal milestone, equipping you with skills and confidence that will be valuable for future study, research roles, and applied psychology careers

# Learning Outcomes

Upon completing your **Applied Psychology Project**, you will be able to:

**1. Design and implement an applied psychology project**

- Plan and conduct an independent research project.
- Apply appropriate methodologies.
- Address and manage ethical and practical considerations.

**2. Critically evaluate project data**

- Analyse and interpret collected data.
- Situate findings within existing research literature.
- Apply psychological theory to real-world issues.

**3. Communicate project findings effectively**

- Produce a well-structured written report (6,000 words).
- Deliver a clear and professional visual presentation of the project.
- Explain processes, outcomes, and implications to an academic audience.

## Key milestones

| Month | Milestone | Description |
|---|---|---|
| **January 2026** | Topic Exploration | Start thinking about areas of interest. Build your understanding of existing research; begin informal note-taking and reviewing broad themes. |
| **February 2026** | Secure Supervision | Initial discussions with potential supervisors. Submit brief EOI. You will be allocated a supervisor. |
| **March 2026** | Systematic Lit Search | Narrow your topic, identify gaps, refine question development. |
| **April 2026** | Pre-Proposal Development | Begin refining and finalising your proposal; explore methods and feasibility. |
| **May 2026** | Official Project Start | End of Part I/Part II ECAS7013 begins<br>***Submission of assessed research proposal.*** |
| **June 2026** | Ethics & Method Finalisation | Finalise methodology and complete ethics paperwork (part of Portfolio).<br>***Submission of assessed ethics.*** |
| **July 2026** | Data Collection | Carry out your study—interviews, surveys, experiments, etc. |
| **August 2026** | Data Analysis & Drafting | Analyse results and begin writing your 6,000-word report.<br>***Submission of assessed progress report.*** |
| **September 2026** | Final Submission | ***Submit your written project plus complete the visual showcase assessment***. |

## Module Overview

Module Structure

ECAS7013 is the **60-credit Part II project module** taken in Semester 3 (May–September) for both full-time and part-time students. The module is designed as a structured but highly independent research process, supported through **supervision and scheduled workshops**.

Supervision (10 hours)

Students receive **10 hours of supervision** (individual or group) in line with UWTSD's supervision policy.
Supervision covers:

- Topic development and refinement
- Research design and method selection
- Ethics support
- Data analysis guidance
- Draft review and feedback

Workshops (10 hours)

In addition to supervision, students attend **10 hours of structured workshops**. Workshops are scheduled monthly and scaffold the project journey. Topics include:

- Developing the project proposal
- Choosing research methods and planning implementation
- Addressing ethical issues and gaining approval
- Time management and project planning
- Data collection and analysis
- Writing the project report
- Preparing the visual presentation
- Communicating findings effectively

Total Scheduled Learning: 20 hours

- 20 hours scheduled learning (supervision + workshops)
- 580 hours independent study

Independent Study (580 hours)

Students spend the majority of their time independently:

- Conducting literature reviews
- Designing the study and preparing ethics documentation
- Collecting and analysing data
- Preparing the portfolio, report, and visual presentation

Assessment Components (overview)

| Component | Type | Weight | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Portfolio** | Coursework | **25%** | Project proposal, ethics submission & progress report |
| **2. Final Project Report** | Coursework | **40%** | 6,000-word dissertation-style report |
| **3. Visual Assessment** | Practical | **35%** | 30-min presentation + Q&A in showcase event |

Example Workshops

1. **Workshop 1:** Proposal writing & project planning
2. **Workshop 2:** Methods, feasibility & ethics preparation
3. **Workshop 3:** Ethics approval & implementation planning
4. **Workshop 4:** Data collection support & supervision checkpoints
5. **Workshop 5:** Data analysis & report structure
6. **Workshop 6:** Preparing the visual assessment

Workshops run alongside supervision so students receive **structured input at all key milestones**.

**Summary**

- **Total scheduled teaching: 20 hours** (10 hrs supervision + 10 hrs workshops)
- **Independent learning:** 580 hours
- **Workshops:** Monthly, covering proposal → ethics → data collection → analysis → writing → presentation
- **Supervision:** Individual/group across project development
- **Assessment:** Portfolio (25%), Final Report (40%), Visual Assessment (35%)

# Assessments

## Assessment Component 1: Portfolio (25%)

Purpose

Documents the development and progress of your research project, including ethical considerations and planning.

Structure

- Ethics Application Form
- Research Proposal (research question, rationale, theoretical framework, methodology)
- Progress Report (1,500 words) reflecting on milestones, challenges, and adaptations

Tips for Success

- Engage deeply with relevant literature and reference correctly.
- Provide clear rationale for your research question and design.
- Reflect critically on progress and challenges.
- Present professionally and adhere to formatting guidelines.

**Assessment Component 2: Final Project Report (40%)**

Purpose

Presents the completed research project in a professional format (6,000 words).

Structure

- Abstract or Plain English Summary
- Introduction (literature review, rationale, aims)
- Methodology
- Findings
- Discussion and Conclusions
- References
- Appendices

Tips for success

- Ensure logical flow and coherence across sections.
- Critically evaluate findings in relation to literature.
- Address ethical and practical considerations throughout.
- Proofread carefully for clarity and APA compliance.

**Assessment Component 3: Visual Assessment (35%)**

Purpose

Showcase your research visually at a departmental event (30-minute display + Q&A).

Example format options (more ideas further down)

- Academic Poster
- Infographic
- Digital Presentation (approved)

Content to include

- Title
- Research question and rationale
- Summary of methodology
- Key findings
- Implications and conclusions
- Visuals (graphs, diagrams, images)

Tips for success

- Use clear and engaging visuals to communicate your research.
- Prepare to explain your project to both academic and non-specialist audiences.
- Practice answering potential questions confidently.
- Utilise tools such as Canva, Prezzi, Powerpoint etc. but ensure you are confident in their use

**Sample Templates for Each Assessment Component**

**Portfolio Template**

Cover Page (Module Code, Assessment Title, AI Acknowledgment Statement)

Section 1: Ethics Application Form

Section 2: Research Proposal

- Research Question
- Rationale and Literature Review
- Theoretical Framework
- Methodology

Section 3: Progress Report (1,500 words)

- Milestones Achieved
- Challenges and Adaptations
- Preliminary Findings
- References (APA Format)

**Final project report structure**

Abstract or Plain English Summary

Introduction

- - Background and Literature Review
- - Research Rationale and Aims

Methodology

- Design
- Participants

- Materials and Procedure

Findings

Discussion and Conclusions

References (APA Format)

Appendices (Ethics Approval, Instruments, Additional Data)

**<u>Visual Assessment template (poster layout example)</u>**

- Title (Clear and Concise)
- Research Question and Rationale
- Methodology Summary
- Key Findings (Use Graphs/Tables)
- Implications and Conclusions
- Visuals (Images, Diagrams, Infographics)
- Contact Information (Optional for Event)

# Additional visual assessment ideas

A mix of creative, academic, digital and interactive formats — all suitable for a 30-minute display + Q&A.

**Academic Poster**

A clean, conference-style A1 or A0 poster with:

- Title, aims, and rationale
- Visual summary of methodology
- Key graphs / visuals
- Bullet-pointed findings
- Practical implications

**Infographic-Style Poster**

A visually engaging poster designed like a social-science infographic, using:

- Icons instead of text blocks
- Simplified flow diagrams
- Colour-coded findings
- A “So What?” section for real-world impact

**Interactive Digital Poster (Touch / Scroll Display)**

Displayed on a laptop or touchscreen table:

- Scrollable sections
- Hover-to-reveal definitions
- Clickable graphs
- Embedded audio/video clips (e.g., anonymised interview snippets)

**Research Journey Timeline**

A large horizontal or vertical timeline showing:

- Topic origin
- Literature shaping the question
- Ethical journey
- Data collection moments (photos, icons or diagrams)
- Analysis breakthroughs

**Methodology Showcase Board**

A display focused entirely on how the project was done:

- Recruitment visuals (maps, demographics charts)
- Procedure diagrams

- Example survey items/interview framework
- Annotated coding frame (for qualitative projects)

**“Before and After” Impact Visual**

Ideal for behaviour-change or intervention-style projects:

- Pre-data vs post-data comparison
- Visual impact markers (progress bars, heat maps, icons)
- A concluding “What this means for practice” box

**Gallery-Style Display (Multiple Boards)**

Three separate boards:

1. Concept + rationale
2. Method + sample + visuals
3. Findings + implications

**Storyboard Presentation**

A comic/graphic-novel style storyboard illustrating:

- Why the study matters
- Real-world scenarios

- How the research answers a community need

**Data-Driven Visual Wall**

For data-heavy projects:

- Beautifully formatted data visuals (boxplots, heatmaps, network graphs)
- Short explanatory captions
- A “Data in 60 seconds” summary section

**Mini-Exhibit With Physical Elements**

Examples:

- Printed artefacts (e.g., mock intervention materials)
- Laminated cue cards summarising themes
- QR codes linking to audio summaries or interactive charts

**Rotating Slide Deck (Displayed Automatically)**

A looping slideset on a screen:

- Minimal text
- Strong visuals
- Short animations (e.g., transitions between themes)

**Conceptual Model or Framework Illustration**

If your project develops or extends theory:

- Draw the theoretical framework
- Use arrows, nodes, diagrams
- Highlight which parts your findings support or challenge

**The ethical approval process**

Completing your ethics application is a key part of preparing your Applied Psychology Project. Ethical approval protects you, your participants, and the university. It also ensures your research is conducted professionally and in line with national psychological standards (e.g., BPS codes).

Before starting the ethics form, you should have:

***A clear research question***

You must know what you are investigating and why.

***A defined methodology***

Assessors expect you to describe:

- Who your participants are
- How you will recruit them
- What methods you will use (survey, interview, experiment, etc.)
- What data you will collect
- How you will store and analyse that data

***Supervisor discussion***

You must discuss your design with your supervisor before submitting the form. They will advise on feasibility, risk level, and required documents.

***Sections of the Ethics Form & How to Complete Them***

Below is a step-by-step explanation of each ethics form section and what to include.

3.1 Project Overview

Write a brief summary covering:

- The topic
- Your research question
- The purpose of the study
- Why the research matters

Use clear, accessible language. Avoid jargon unless you explain it.

***Methodology***

This is one of the most important sections.

Describe:

- Research design (survey? qualitative interview? experiment?)
- Location (online? campus? community site?)
- Duration for each participant
- Materials/tools used (e.g., Qualtrics, interview guide, surveys)

Top tip:

Write as if someone must replicate your study using only this form.

***Participants***

Explain:

- Who you will invite (e.g., adults aged 18+, students, staff, community group)
- Inclusion criteria
- Exclusion criteria
- Estimated sample size
- How you will approach them (recruitment method)

Make sure:

- Recruitment is voluntary
- No pressure, power imbalance or coercion
- You keep participant contact details private

***Informed Consent***

You must demonstrate how participants will give informed consent.

Include:

- How you will provide the information sheet
- How consent will be recorded (form, tick-box, verbal)
- How participants can ask questions
- How they can withdraw

Attach:

- Participant Information Sheet (PIS)
- Consent Form

These must match the project description.

***Data Protection & Confidentiality***

Explain:

- How you will ensure anonymity
- How data will be stored
- Who will have access (usually only you and your supervisor)
- How long data will be kept
- How it will be securely deleted

UWTSD expects compliance with GDPR.

Good examples:

- "Data will be stored on a password-protected OneDrive folder."
- "Audio files will be transcribed and then deleted."
- "No identifiable information will appear in the report."

***Risks to Participants***

List any potential risks, even if minimal.

Common risks:

- Mild discomfort during interviews
- Discussing personal experiences
- Survey fatigue
- Emotional reflection
- Feeling judged

For each risk, explain:

- How likely it is
- How serious it could be
- What steps you will take to minimise it

Provide safeguarding/referral information if your study touches on sensitive topics.

***Risks to You (the Researcher)***

Examples:

- Lone working
- Distressing content
- Managing emotional disclosure

Explain safety procedures, such as:

- Conducting interviews in public or virtual settings
- Letting a colleague know when you are collecting data
- Avoiding giving personal contact details

***Ethical Issues & How You Will Address Them***

This may include:

- Power dynamics
- Cultural considerations
- Neurodiversity inclusivity
- Accessibility
- Managing personal bias
- Ensuring voluntary participation

Demonstrate you have thought through the practical and psychological realities of your project.

***Gatekeeper Permissions (if required)***

You will need written permission if you recruit through:

- Schools
- Organisations
- Clubs/societies
- Workplaces
- Community groups

Attach evidence or outline your plan to collect permission.

***Supporting Documents***

You must attach:

- Participant Information Sheet
- Consent Form
- Debrief Sheet
- Recruitment advert
- Interview schedule / survey questions
- Any external permissions

Ethics reviewers cannot approve incomplete applications.

***Writing Strong Supporting Documents***

Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

Include:

- Study title
- Your name and MSc programme
- Supervisor contact
- What participation involves
- Risks/benefits
- Confidentiality
- Right to withdraw
- Data protection
- Complaints procedure

***Consent Form***

Use short, clear statements beginning with:

- "I understand that…"
- "I agree that…"

Include a final line:

- "I agree to take part in this study."

***Debrief Sheet***

Include:

- Thank you message
- Purpose of the study
- What happens with their data
- Support resources (where appropriate)

***Submitting Your Application***

Steps:

1. Finalise your form and all attachments
2. Send everything to your supervisor
3. Supervisor checks & signs digitally
4. Supervisor submits via the designated UWTSD ethics email or platform

Do not begin collecting data until formal approval is granted.

***After Approval***

Once approved:

- Follow your approved protocol exactly
- Submit an amendment request if anything changes (design, sample, questions, recruitment method)

## Useful resources

UWTSD House Rules

APA Referencing PowerPoint

APA Referencing Library Handbook

BPS Human Research Ethics

UWTSD AI Guidance

Video Creation Tools