Why do a research project?

• Develop research skills
• Demonstrate independent judgement and capacity to complete a project
• Extend and demonstrate your specialisation
• Pathway to PhD (University of Melbourne requires a minimum of 25 points of research – rules will differ across universities and supervisors may also have expectations of a larger project)
• Meet the capstone requirement of the degree

When should I take it in my degree

• In second half of degree because:
  – You need to have appropriate knowledge base for developing a proposal
  – You need to have appropriate skills base to design a project
  – You need time to prepare for project and securing supervision
  – As a capstone it is a ‘stepping stone’ to the next phase of career development

What subject options are available and how do I decide the right one for me?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Study Period Commencement</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENG10001 Environmental Research Project 12.5</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG10002 Environmental Research Project 25</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG10003 Environmental Research Project 50</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG10004 Environmental Research Project 12.5</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG10005 Environmental Research Project 25</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key decisions on subject selection:
• Size of project: 12.5, 25 or 50 points?
• Duration of project: one semester or two?
• Nature of project: Industry or academic?

What preparation is required?

• Proposal submission dates:
  – For projects commencing Sem 2, 2016 - Monday 9 May 2016 5pm
  – For projects commencing Sem 1, 2017 - Monday 10 October 2016 5pm

• Ideally two semesters out:
  – Consider general area of research for specialisation
  – Select subjects that allow you to:
    • Explore background knowledge relevant to that field, and understand what is and is not known
    • Begin informal conversations with academics working in this area – to identify what they see as key knowledge gaps
    • Develop appropriate research skills
What preparation is required?

• One semester out:
  – Narrow down area of interest
  – Systematically identify academics working in relevant areas
  – Search for advertised projects
  – Develop a preliminary draft proposal and use that as a basis for conversation with potential supervisors
  – Work with a supervisor to refine a proposal
  – Complete paperwork required

What resources are available to help?

• The OEP website provides extensive materials to help
  http://environment.unimelb.edu.au/courses/research_subjects

Consult this before you begin the process and before you ask questions.

• If you still have questions: email OEP-research@unimelb.edu.au

How do I find a supervisor?

• Supervisors seek students for potential projects here:
  – http://environment.unimelb.edu.au/courses/research_subjects/projects

• Searchable data base of academics and their expertise here:
  http://www.findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/

• If you get stuck, make an appointment with subject coordinator (via Student Advising System)

How do I find an industry host (if planning an Industry Project)

• Many projects based on work or personal contacts

• Organisations seek students for projects here:
  – http://www.capstoneportal.com/

• Use resources available Careers
  http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/?_ga=1.19195643.2104263967.1393813771

• If you get stuck, seek advice from Fiona Simpson: Careers and Industry Consultant, Faculty of Science
  science-academicprograms@unimelb.edu.au

How do I prepare a research proposal?

• Detailed guidance is provided here:

  • Define the topic
  • Identify key research questions/hypotheses
  • Outline scope and nature of project
  • Detail methodology and specific research approaches
  • Acknowledge ethics and risk assessment requirements
  • Identify initial expected outcomes

  • Approximately 500 words
  • May be supported by development of a detailed proposal within a research methods subject