

**UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY
RESEARCH PARTICIPATION POLICY**

For student information

Research Participation Scheme – Rationale

The ability to design and conduct research is part of the required skill base of psychologists, and actual research can provide students with the most realistic appreciation of research activity. Furthermore, direct experience of being a participant offers students some insight into the realities of the participant in various research procedures, and so potentially greater understanding of feasible procedures in the research projects they later design themselves.

Operation of the Research Participation Scheme

Students enrolled in all on campus first year subjects in the School of Psychology, and PSYC247 - Statistics and Measurement 1, can accrue up to 3 points (3% of their overall mark) for each subject by participating for up to 3 hours in research conducted by staff members of the School and postgraduate students under staff supervision.

Research Participation Points are accrued at the rate of half a point for each half hour of participation. Each point counts as 1% toward the aggregate final mark for the relevant subject.

In the first laboratory class in each subject to which the scheme applies, students will be instructed about the operation of the scheme.

Presently the scheme is managed via an external service provider (website at <http://psyc-uow.sona-systems.com>). The website records time spent in research participation, and allows students to book appointments with researchers in current projects; and to cancel, check their accrued points, and communicate with researchers.

Using this scheme involves both participants and researchers in obligations to attend designated venues at appropriate times. Breaches of these obligations will incur a penalty at least equivalent to the potential advantage of attendance.

Students who end the session with accrued points amounting to less than zero will nevertheless be credited with zero points in their aggregate mark for the relevant subjects.

Responsibilities of Researchers

Researchers must use the web site to:

- a) Provide in a standard format their name, room, and contact details (telephone number), the title of the project, and the room where the research will be conducted.
- b) Check regularly the appointments made by participants, and be available at the appointed place, on time.
- c) Acknowledge the attendance or non-attendance of participants, promptly (within 36 hours).
- d) Ensure that penalties are applied where appropriate.***

As well researchers should:

a) Inform participants of the aims and results of the research, and offer whatever other debriefing is reasonable. ***Note that this is an important ethical requirement of psychological research.***

b) Ensure that any questionnaires carry their supervisor's name and room number so that participants can return them properly and have their participation credited.

Responsibilities of Participants

Participants must:

a) Make a note of the times for which they have signed up and the place the research is to be conducted, and be sure to attend punctually.

Failure to attend on time will result in the loss of participation points equivalent to the points that would have been gained by attending.

b) Complete all research participation *and any reassignment of credit points* by the end of the examination period for the relevant session.

Participants should:

a) Regularly check the Research Participation website for opportunities to participate until they have obtained the maximum three points for each relevant subject.

b) Note that Research Participation Points cannot be transferred between first session subjects and second session subjects, nor from one year to another.

c) Note that repeatedly failing to attend appointments (that have not been properly cancelled), may result in exclusion from the Research Participation Scheme.

d) Note that if a cancellation deadline has passed, contacting the researchers may yet enable you to be excused from your appointment with no penalty.

Exclusion from the Research Participation Scheme.

Students who sign up to participate, and do not cancel these appointments, and repeatedly fail to attend, may be subject to exclusion from the Research Participation Scheme for a period of time to be determined by the administrator of the scheme.

The inconvenience for researchers and disruption of research schedules created by unkept appointments is the principal justification for this policy.

AFTER THREE UNKEPT AND UNEXCUSED RESEARCH PARTICIPATION APPOINTMENTS THE CULPRIT WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE EXCLUDED FROM THE SCHEME AND WILL NEED TO APPLY FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IN ORDER TO BE REINSTATED.

ANY PARTICIPATION POINTS ACCRUED BY STUDENTS WHO REMAIN EXCLUDED AT THE END OF SESSION WILL BE LOST.

Exclusion will apply to all subjects to which the scheme applies in the current session, and will normally extend until the end of session – effectively preventing any further research participation for that session.

Students excluded from the scheme may not take advantage of the alternative to research participation (below).

An Alternative to Participating in Research

Students who are unwilling or unable to participate in research projects may accrue Research Participation Points by writing summaries of journal articles that are research reports in the field of psychology.

Each summary is worth half a point. Journal articles may be drawn from any area of psychology, but cannot include references used in psychology coursework assignments.

A summary should

a) be accompanied by a photocopy of the article summarised.

b) be titled by the reference of the article used, written in correct reference list format.

c) describe the questions being asked.

d) describe how the questions are tested.

e) describe the findings of the research.

Summaries must be submitted to class tutors by the end of Week 14 of the session to which they are to be credited.