



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Centre for Cancer Research
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Cancer Research Capstone Supervisor

CLASSIFICATION	Teaching Assistant, Level A.6
SALARY	Hourly rate of \$68.57
SUPERANNUATION	Super Guarantee Charge (SGC)
WORKING HOURS	Casual
BASIS OF EMPLOYMENT	Fixed term position(s) available for the Research Thesis Capstone subject teaching period: Terms 1 to 4 2025; potential for renewals in subsequent years. https://online.unimelb.edu.au/key-dates
OTHER BENEFITS	http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers/working/benefits
HOW TO APPLY	Please send applications, including address of the Key Selection Criteria and CV by Tuesday 3 December 5pm to: Ms Grace Chan Email chan.g1@unimelb.edu.au <i>Please state the role title in your subject line and request a read/received receipt</i>
CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES ONLY	Giulia McCorkell Subject Coordinator, Cancer Research Capstone Email giulia.mccorkell@unimelb.edu.au <i>Please do not send your application to these contacts</i>

For information about working for the University of Melbourne, visit our websites:
about.unimelb.edu.au/careers
<https://handbook.unimelb.edu.au/2025/subjects/medi90098>
<https://handbook.unimelb.edu.au/2025/subjects/medi90099>
<https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/master-of-cancer-sciences/>

Position Summary

The Master of Cancer Sciences is a fully online two-year part time course offered jointly by the VCCC Alliance and the University of Melbourne (UoM). The Master of Cancer Sciences provides a contemporary, evidence-based program to health professionals to improve the outcomes and quality of life for patients with cancer and ultimately to improve cancer treatment outcomes.

We require casual Cancer Research Capstone Supervisors in the Research Thesis Capstone subject to take responsibility for the supervision of multiple students (per 6-month project) within the Master of Cancer Sciences (MCS) course. This will involve overseeing the following areas within the Research Thesis Capstone subject:

The phases of Supervision will include:

- Project planning with the student
- Regular meetings to track progress
- Availability to field questions
- Examination of research reports

The Supervisors will liaise closely with the Subject Co-Coordinators, and Course Convenors to ensure that the student's research experience meets the over-arching course objectives and provides a seamless, integrated experience as part of the Masters suite.

The primary responsibility of a research project supervisor is to ensure that the student completing a research project under their supervision is provided continuing support and guidance in the conduct of their project, so as to produce a piece of work that is the best the student can achieve. However, the final form and content of that work is the responsibility of the student.

Regular meetings with the student are encouraged and are to be negotiated between the supervisor and the student. As a guide, approximately ½ hour long weekly meetings for the first few weeks and 1 hour long fortnightly meetings for the remainder of the project over the two terms are recommended to ensure adequate monitoring of the student's progress. More or less frequent meetings may be required at different periods during the project.

The supervisor's role includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- guiding the student in selecting and defining the scope of a suitable research topic and setting the specific research question;
- guiding the student to develop a realistic study plan including the setting of short, medium, and long-term objectives;
- discussing and reaching agreement with the student around the details of the supervisory arrangements, including a regular meeting schedule;
- monitoring the student's overall progress, discussing with the student any issues they are experiencing, and guiding them to resources that may help them, and if needed notifying the Research Project Coordinator of any problems being experienced by the student that may affect their progress;
- suggesting appropriate background reading;
- informing the student of any ethics approval necessary for the planned project and informing the student that research involving human subjects must not commence before the necessary approval is obtained;
- encouraging the student to consult with other appropriate contacts where specialist technical advice is required;
- guiding the student in planning the structure of their oral presentation;
- guiding the student in planning the structure and writing of their research report;
- reviewing and commenting on at least one draft of each section of the report and reviewing the penultimate draft prior to submission, and providing constructive criticism within a reasonable time frame;
- examining the literature review, oral presentation and Research Project of other students within the agreed assessment framework, or informing the Research Project Coordinator if unavailable to do so;

- discussing issues of intellectual property and authorships with the student early in the research project, along with providing any relevant policy documents and/or data agreement documents to the student;
- when applicable, ensuring that appropriate notice and prior arrangements are made where the nominated project supervisor expects to be absent and continuous supervision cannot be maintained.

An important component of the Research Project Supervisor's role is to offer feedback on the research project report drafts as the student develops their work. As a guide we recommend that supervisors identify areas of weakness and comment on the work (e.g. add more detail on exposure measurement validity here, this section may be a better fit in the paragraph below, etc.) instead of rewriting the student's work. This approach fosters the student's ability to edit and rewrite their own writing and ensures that the final research project report is the student's own work.

According to the University Of Melbourne's [Graduate Research Training Policy \(MPF1321\)](#), which also applies to Coursework Research Projects, supervisors may only provide direct editorial intervention in accordance with the following standards of [The Australian Standards for Editing Practice](#):

- Standard C: Substance and Structure
- Standard D: Language and Illustrations
- Standard E: Completeness and Consistency

This will be a casual position, on an as required basis, with an estimated workload of 2-5 hours per week for Terms 1 and 2; Terms 3 and 4. This position reports to the Research Thesis Capstone Subject Coordinator(s), Giulia McCorkell and Dr Sathana Dushyanthen.

The Subject – Research Thesis Capstone: Research Thesis Capstone - Part 1 (running in Term 1, Term 3)

In this subject, each student will research, design, and present a project proposal and undertake a substantial literature review that will form the basis of their research project. In doing so, students will put into practice the advanced theoretical knowledge they have learnt during other taught modules and have the chance to explore an area of interest to them, in detail. It will reinforce their abilities to evaluate existing research, utilise appropriate methodological techniques in cancer research, and to critically analyse and reflect on data.

Research Thesis Capstone - Part 2 (running in Term 2, Term 4)

Building upon the previous subject (Research Thesis Capstone – Part 1), this subject provides opportunities to extend, deepen and apply knowledge, skills, and attributes, in the context of a research project.

This subject enables students to engage in the implementation, analysis and communication of a research project that demonstrates their advanced theoretical knowledge and critical reflection skills. It provides the opportunity for integration of their prior learning from the course, and demonstration of their advanced practice, focusing on an area of interest. During this project, students will have the unique opportunity to be closely trained and supervised by leading experts in oncology. It will reinforce their abilities to evaluate existing research, utilise appropriate methodological techniques in cancer research and to critically analyse and reflect on data.

Learning outcomes

At the completion of the subject, students should be able to:

- Assimilate, analyse, and critically evaluate existing knowledge within a scientific paradigm
- Conduct research within a translational/clinical environment
- Formulate testable hypotheses, aims and experimental design
- Independently manage a research project
- Effectively construct and express coherent scientific arguments

- Prepare and deliver scientific results in both an oral and written format

Topics covered in the subjects:

- Getting started in research
- Defining research
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Research approach
- Ethics and governance
- Sampling and recruitment
- Data collection
- Data analysis
- Interpretation and discussion
- Reporting and dissemination

1. Key Responsibilities

1.1 TEACHING AND LEARNING

Curriculum development

- Support of Research Thesis Capstone projects in the Master of Cancer Sciences
- Develop appropriate guides for both faculty, assessors and students

Assessment

- Develop a thesis assessment blueprint in collaboration with the Subject Coordinators, Academic team and Course Convenors
- Contribute to the development of assessment items, standard setting and item evaluation

Academic Workforce and Service

- Be responsible for recruiting and supporting appropriate subject experts, or faculty to provide research project assessment or statistical support
- Act as a key point of contact with faculty to facilitate communication

General

- Participate in all committee meetings relevant to the Research Thesis Capstone subject
- Contribute to other medical education related activities as required (eg. webinars, assessing oral presentations).
- Other contributions as required.

1.2 LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

- Adopt leadership responsibilities within the VCCC Alliance through leading committees, delivering presentations, representing the VCCC Alliance, connecting people together
- Participate in community and professional activities related to the relevant disciplinary area including attendance and presentations at conferences and seminars.
- Positive engagement in learning and career development of self and others through participating in the VCCC Alliance Leadership program.
- Effective demonstration and promotion of University values including diversity and inclusion and high standards of ethics and integrity.

2. Selection Criteria

2.1 ESSENTIAL

- Masters, PhD, progression toward PhD or equivalent research experience in a cancer-related discipline, or significant work towards
- Proven expertise in one of the following research areas (please state clearly in your application): quantitative clinical research, qualitative clinical research (highly regarded), mixed methods research and design, systematic reviews, protocol development, clinical database interrogation, and / or bioinformatics/biostatistics for clinical research
- Demonstrated skills and experience in supporting online learning communities
- Previous experience in Supervision of Honours level or above with the ability to take on 3-4 students per run
- Proven track record of publications in the last 3 years
- Demonstrated strong organisational, time management and problem-solving skills
- Ethical scholar who values diversity and works effectively with individual differences
- Demonstrated excellent verbal and written communication skills for effective teaching collaboration and engagement
- Proven rapport with university students and a commitment to pastoral matters
- Proven capacity to work in a team environment

2.2 DESIRABLE

- Research projects/programs with approved ethics
- Clinical practice in a relevant area (cancer related)
- Demonstrated experience administering student cohorts on learning management systems

3. Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing a workplace free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, and victimisation. The University makes decisions on employment, promotion, and reward on the basis of merit.

The University is committed to all aspects of equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace and to providing all staff, students, contractors, honorary appointees, volunteers and visitors with a safe, respectful and rewarding environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and victimisation. This commitment is set out in the University's People Strategy 2015-2020 and policies that address diversity and inclusion, equal employment opportunity, discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and appropriate workplace behaviour. All staff are required to comply with all University policies.

The University values diversity because we recognise that the differences in our people's age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, physical ability and background bring richness to our work environment. Consequently, the People Strategy sets out the strategic aim to drive diversity and inclusion across the University to create an environment where the compounding benefits of a diverse workforce are recognised

as vital in our continuous desire to strive for excellence and reach the targets of Growing Esteem.

4. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

All staff are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other personnel who may be affected by their conduct.

OHS responsibilities applicable to positions are published at:

<http://safety.unimelb.edu.au/topics/responsibilities/>

These include general staff responsibilities and those additional responsibilities that apply for Managers and Supervisors and other Personnel.

5. Other Information

5.1 UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE CENTRE FOR CANCER RESEARCH

<https://research.unimelb.edu.au/centre-for-cancer-research/about/about-us>

The University of Melbourne Centre for Cancer Research (UMCCR) aims to foster innovation and integration in cancer care, research, education and training to achieve a world-leading cancer centre and workforce. It focuses on improving the molecular detection and diagnosis of cancer, improving therapeutic decisions for patients through computational oncology, and enabling innovative programs in personalised cancer care.

Based at the [Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre](#) building, the UMCCR facilitates the sharing of infrastructure and supports collaboration within the [Melbourne Biomedical Precinct](#) and the wider VCCC Alliance. The UMCCR works in a wide variety of cancers including breast, ovarian, prostate, colorectal, pancreatic, neuroendocrine, gastric, oesophageal and melanoma, but recalcitrant cancers – for which the standard of care has changed little over the last 30 years – is an emerging theme.

5.2 FACULTY OF MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND HEALTH SCIENCES

www.mdhs.unimelb.edu.au

The Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS) plays a vital role in the delivery of the University of Melbourne's Strategic Plan 2015-2020: Growing Esteem by providing current and future generations with education and research equal to the best in the world. It is Australia's largest and leading biomedical research faculty. It employs more than 1,700 members of staff, has more than 8,000 students, and total revenue of \$607 million for 2015. Reflecting the complexity of today's global health landscape, the Faculty is made up of six different Schools and four Strategic Research Initiatives, and draws together all areas of human health, ranging from the most basic to the most applied areas of research. The Faculty contributes close to 50 per cent of research conducted at the University.

The Faculty has appointed Australia's first Associate Dean (Indigenous Development) to lead the development and implementation of the Faculty's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which will be aligned with the broader University-wide plan. To enable the Faculty to improve its Indigenous expertise knowledge base, the Faculty's RAP will address

Indigenous employment, Indigenous student recruitment and retention, Indigenous cultural recognition and building partnerships with the Indigenous community as key areas of development.

5.3 THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Established in 1853, the University of Melbourne is a leading international university with a tradition of excellence in teaching and research. The main campus in Parkville is recognised as the hub of Australia's premier knowledge precinct comprising eight hospitals, many leading research institutes and a wide-range of knowledge-based industries. With outstanding performance in international rankings, the University is at the forefront of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

The University employs people of outstanding calibre and offers a unique environment where staff are valued and rewarded.

Further information about working at The University of Melbourne is available at <http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers>.

5.4 VICTORIAN COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTRE (VCCC) ALLIANCE

<https://www.vcccallyance.org.au/>

The VCCC Alliance was established in 2009 and is a powerful alliance of ten successful Victorian organisations committed to cancer control: Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne Health (including The Royal Melbourne Hospital), The University of Melbourne, The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, The Royal Women's Hospital, The Royal Children's Hospital, Western Health, St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (including St Vincent's Institute), Austin Health (including the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute and Austin Lifesciences) and Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

The Master of Cancer Sciences is a major educational initiative of the VCCC Alliance's Strategic Research Plan. This is governed by the VCCC Alliance Cancer Education and Training Advisory Committee and the VCCC Alliance Board, and managed and supported by the Course Co-Convenors, Director of Education, and the education team.

5.5 GROWING ESTEEM, THE MELBOURNE CURRICULUM AND RESEARCH AT MELBOURNE: ENSURING EXCELLENCE AND IMPACT TO 2025

Growing Esteem describes Melbourne's strategy to achieve its aspiration to be a public-spirited and internationally-engaged institution, highly regarded for making distinctive contributions to society in research and research training, learning and teaching, and engagement. <http://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy-and-leadership>

The University is at the forefront of Australia's changing higher education system and offers a distinctive model of education known collectively as the Melbourne Curriculum. The new educational model, designed for an outstanding experience for all students, is based on six broad undergraduate programs followed by a graduate professional degree, research higher degree or entry directly into employment. The emphasis on academic breadth as well as disciplinary depth in the new degrees ensures that graduates will have the capacity to succeed in a world where knowledge boundaries are shifting and reforming to create new frontiers and challenges. In moving to the new model, the

University is also aligning itself with the best of emerging European and Asian practice and well-established North American traditions.

The University's global aspirations seek to make significant contributions to major social, economic and environmental challenges. Accordingly, the University's research strategy *Research at Melbourne: Ensuring Excellence and Impact to 2025* aspires to a significant advancement in the excellence and impact of its research outputs.

<http://research.unimelb.edu.au/our-research/research-at-melbourne>

The strategy recognises that as a public-spirited, research-intensive institution of the future, the University must strive to make a tangible impact in Australia and the world, working across disciplinary and sectoral boundaries and building deeper and more substantive engagement with industry, collaborators, and partners. While cultivating the fundamental enabling disciplines through investigator-driven research, the University has adopted three grand challenges aspiring to solve some of the most difficult problems facing our world in the next century. These Grand Challenges include:

Understanding our place and purpose – The place and purpose grand challenge centres on understanding all aspects of our national identity, with a focus on Australia's 'place' in the Asia-Pacific region and the world, and on our 'purpose' or mission to improve all dimensions of the human condition through our research.

Fostering health and wellbeing – The health and wellbeing grand challenge focuses on building the scale and breadth of our capabilities in population and global health; on harnessing our contribution to the 'convergence revolution' of biomedical and health research, bringing together the life sciences, engineering and the physical sciences; and on addressing the physical, mental and social aspects of wellbeing by looking beyond the traditional boundaries of biomedicine.

Supporting sustainability and resilience – The sustainability and resilience grand challenge addresses the critical issues of climate change, water and food security, sustainable energy and designing resilient cities and regions. In addition to the technical aspects, this grand challenge considers the physical and social functioning of cities, connecting physical phenomena with lessons from our past, and the implications of the technical solutions for economies, living patterns and behaviours.

Essential to tackling these challenges, an outstanding faculty, high performing students, wide collaboration including internationally and deep partnerships with external parties form central components of Research at Melbourne: Ensuring Excellence and Impact to 2025.

5.6 GOVERNANCE

The Vice Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of the University and responsible to Council for the good management of the University.

Comprehensive information about the University of Melbourne and its governance structure is available at <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/governance>