

## Course Description

### MEDD8936 Case Study Research: Examining and Responding to Contemporary Educational Challenges

Course description	
<p>This course equips Master of Education students with advanced qualitative research skills through case study methodology; a powerful approach to investigate complex educational phenomena in real-world contexts. Irrespective of specialism, students will learn to design, execute, and critically evaluate case studies addressing pressing challenges in their field. This course is designed to directly support the capstone project by providing students with the skills to identify relevant topics, critically review literature, collect and analyse data, and reflect on their inquiry process.</p> <p>Case studies are versatile across fields, allowing exploration of context-specific issues, from analysing bilingual teaching strategies to evaluating leadership practices in school improvement and educational change. This course deepens professional practice and scholarship by enabling students to investigate nuanced scenarios, such as supporting gifted learners' social-emotional needs, designing culturally responsive counselling interventions, or assessing technology's impact in curriculum and assessment design. Students will develop skills to define case boundaries, collect rich data, and apply analytical techniques like thematic coding or cross-case comparison, ensuring research rigor meets real-world relevance.</p> <p>Students will gain foundational expertise by engaging with the key characteristics and foundations of case study research and its ethical dimensions. Methodological agility is fostered by comparing case studies with other qualitative approaches, enabling students to choose the best methodological approach for their research questions. The course emphasises actionable outcomes, guiding students to design case studies that produce insights applicable to curriculum development, professional learning programs, or systemic challenges. Reflective practice is also a key component, as students examine how their role as researchers influences outcomes, a critical skill for researching professionals in shaping policy and practice.</p> <p>By the end of this course, students will be able to craft a case study proposal tailored to their specialisation, and applicable to their capstone projects, confidently critique and apply case study findings to inform evidence-based decisions and emerge as reflective practitioner-researchers ready to contribute original insights through rigorous, context-driven inquiry.</p>	
Course objectives	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Understand the key characteristics, foundations and applications of case study research.</li><li>2. Develop skills to define and bound cases, identify diverse data types, and design ethical strategies for sampling, data collection, and management.</li><li>3. Apply analytical techniques to case study data, evaluating reliability, validity, and trustworthiness in inquiry.</li><li>4. Critically reflect on researcher subjectivity, navigate ethical challenges, and differentiate case studies from other qualitative approaches.</li><li>5. Connect case study research skills to the capstone project by identifying relevant topics, synthesising literature, and applying findings to real-world educational challenges.</li></ol>	
Course learning outcomes (CLOs)	Aligned programme learning outcomes (PLOs)
1. Explain the key characteristics, uses, and approaches of case study research.	PLOs 1, 5
2. Determine how to define case boundaries to address research issues.	PLOs, 1, 3, 4
3. Articulate the influence of researcher positionality on study outcomes.	PLOs 4, 5
4. Design sampling, data collection, and management protocols.	PLOs 2, 5
5. Apply analysis/interpretation techniques to case study data.	PLOs 2, 3, 5

6. Evaluate reliability, validity, and ethical rigor in case study design.	PLOs 2, 4, 5
<b>Course assessment methods</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical essay</li> <li>• Research proposal</li> <li>• Perusall</li> </ul>	
<b>Course content and topics</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction and History of Case Study Methodology</li> <li>• Designing a Case Study</li> <li>• Data collection methods</li> <li>• Analysing Case Study Data</li> <li>• Reporting and Presenting Case Study Findings</li> <li>• Application of Case Study Methodology</li> <li>• Comparative Analysis of Qualitative Methodologies</li> <li>• Presentation and Evaluation of Research Proposals</li> </ul>	
<b>Required / recommended readings and online materials</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yin, R. K. (2018). <i>Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods</i>. Sage Publications.</li> <li>• Stake, R. E. (1995). <i>The Art of Case Study Research</i>. Sage Publications.</li> <li>• Creswell, J. W., &amp; Poth, C. N. (2016). <i>Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches</i>. Sage Publications.</li> <li>• Hamilton, L., &amp; Corbett-Whittier, C. (2013). Using case study in education research. SAGE Publications Ltd, <a href="https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473913851">https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473913851</a></li> <li>• Kärkkäinen, K., Jääskelä, P., &amp; Tynjälä, P. (2023). How does university teachers' pedagogical training meet topical challenges raised by educational research? A case study from Finland. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i>, 128, 104088. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104088">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104088</a></li> <li>• Szeto, E., &amp; Cheng, A. Y. N. (2018). How do principals practise leadership for social justice in diverse school settings? A Hong Kong case study. <i>Journal of Educational Administration</i>, 56(1), 50-68. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-05-2017-0048">https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-05-2017-0048</a></li> <li>• Zhu, J., Li, H., &amp; Hsieh, W. Y. (2017). Implementing inclusive education in an early childhood setting: a case study of a Hong Kong kindergarten. <i>Early Child Development and Care</i>, 189(2), 207–219. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2017.1307841">https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2017.1307841</a></li> <li>• Trent, J. (2012). Innovation as identity construction in language teaching and learning: case studies from Hong Kong. <i>Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching</i>, 8(1), 56–78. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2012.750664">https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2012.750664</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Other additional course information</b>	
Nil	