**UQ Summer or Winter Research Project Description**

Please use this template to create a description of each research project, eligibility requirements and expected deliverables. Project details can then be uploaded to each faculty, school, institute, and centre webpage prior to the launch of the program.

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| **Project title:** | Social cognitive development in children with developmental language disorder: A systematic review |
| **Hours of engagement & delivery mode** | * Winter program: 4 weeks
* Hours of engagement: 20-36 hrs per week (negotiable)
* The project will be conducted on-site and online dependant on the task (hybrid)
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| **Description:** | Developmental language disorder (DLD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by persistent difficulty developing language that is not better explained by another biomedical diagnosis such as autism (Bishop et al., 2017). The population prevalence of DLD is 7.58%, which translates to approximately two children in every classroom (Norbury et al., 2016). Children with DLD experience ongoing difficulties understanding and/or expressing themselves using words. The far-reaching academic and occupational consequences of DLD are well established (Conti-Ramsden et al., 2018; Young et al., 2002; Ziegenfusz et al., 2022). Additional to these barriers, children with DLD also demonstrate challenges with social skills, friendship building, bullying victimisation, and are at greater risk for longer-term internalisation disorders such as anxiety and depression (Fujiki et al., 1996; Knox & Conti-Ramsden, 2003; St Clair et al., 2011; Van den Bedem et al., 2018; Whitehouse et al., 2009). Despite this knowledge, the cognitive processes that underpin these social difficulties remain uncertain (Norbury, 2018). Although language processing impairment that is inherent to DLD may partly explain social difficulties, recent studies have found that social cognitive functioning in children with DLD is an important predictor of peer relationships independent of a child’s language abilities (Andrés-Roqueta et al., 2016; Bakopoulou & Dockrell, 2016). This highlights the need to understand and treat social cognitive difficulties in children with DLD, additional to language-based interventions. **Research Questions:**The systematic review will examine the following research questions:* Do children with DLD experience a difference in social cognitive development compared to typically developing children?
	+ Are there particular facets of social cognition (i.e., social perception, empathy, theory of mind, social behaviour/skills) that are impaired or preserved?
* How has social cognition been measured in children with DLD?
	+ What are the most commonly measured facets of social cognition in children with DLD?
	+ Have any adaptations been made to tasks that are presented in verbal or written form?
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| **Expected learning outcomes and deliverables:** | Scholars may gain skills in the design and implementation of a systematic literature review. |
| **Suitable for:** | This project is open to applications from 3rd – 4th year students with a background in psychology or speech pathology. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Aisling Mulvihill |
| **Further info:** | a.mulvihill@uq.edu.au |