



2027 Summer Research Project Template

Help us present your project in a way that connects with the right students. Thoughtful, engaging descriptions tend to attract stronger and more suitable applications. Thank you for putting a project forward - these programs rely on your contribution, and we couldn't do it without you.

Section	Description
Project title	The optimality of young children's cognitive offloading
Hours & delivery	This project will run for 6 weeks (11/01/2027 – 19/02/2027), with one position offered. The successful applicant will be required to be available at UQ's St Lucia campus throughout the project. The project will involve approximately 25-30 hours of engagement per week. This developmental project involves data collection with children, and is therefore likely to involve weekend testing sessions.
About the project (150–250 words)	<i>Cognitive offloading</i> - the use of physical action to alter information processing requirements of a task to reduce cognitive demand – typically entails value-based decision-making. When choosing whether to offload, we weigh anticipated costs (time, physical effort) against anticipated benefits (improved performance, reduced cognitive load). Being able to do this optimally, without systematic biases towards the use of internal or external sources, may be particularly important amidst concerns about potential consequences of over-reliance on cognitive offloading in the digital age. In this ongoing project, children aged 4 to 7 years complete a tablet-based memory offloading task, designed to quantify the extent to which children show over-use and under-use biases, relative to their optimal cognitive offloading strategy. We are interested in age-related changes in the optimality of children's cognitive offloading, and the potential role that metacognition may play in their offloading decisions.
What you'll do (100-150 words)	The student researcher will gain experience in data collection from children and caregivers who visit the Early Cognitive Development Centre over the summer break. This involves carrying out recruitment, consent and debrief procedures, as well as running the optimal offloading task described above with 4- to 7-year-old children. The student researcher will also likely gain experience in data cleaning, data analysis, and interpretation of results.
What you'll learn (100–150 words)	As outlined above, the student researcher will mainly gain experience in data collection with children in the Early Cognitive Development Centre, and will also likely gain experience in data cleaning, analysis and interpretation once data collection is complete. They will be trained on how to carry out developmental psychology projects within the Early Cognitive Development Centre, and will work directly with children and caregivers.
Project outcomes (75–125 words)	This is an ongoing project exploring the optimality of young children's cognitive offloading. The goal is for the student researcher to complete data collection on the project, with sufficient time remaining to allow them to also be involved in data cleaning, analysis and interpretation. This project will provide the student researcher with experience in many aspects of the research process and the opportunity to contribute to ongoing work within the School of Psychology.



Who should apply? (75–125 words)	This project is open to applications from students who have completed at least 2 years of their undergraduate degree. Applicants must have a strong background in developmental (PSYC2030) and cognitive (PSYC2050) psychology, as well as a genuine interest in children's problem-solving and metacognition.
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Team & supervision (75–125 words)	This project will be supervised by Dr Kristy Armitage, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow within the Early Cognitive Development Centre. The student researcher will also work alongside other members of the ECDC, including the lab manager and other students and staff involved in ongoing data collection.
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Additional opportunities (optional)	
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Additional requirements (if applicable)	The applicant must have a current Blue Card.
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Contact	(Yes/No), students (may /may not) contact the supervisor before applying. Direct enquiries to: k.armitage1@uq.edu.au
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