



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	A license to do wrong: Are wrongdoers with a past history of victimisation evaluated more leniently?
Hours & delivery	Duration: 6 weeks Weekly hours: 20-30 hours Delivery mode: On campus/hybrid Campus: St Lucia
About the project (150–250 words)	Why do people sometimes excuse wrongdoing? One factor may be whether the wrongdoer is perceived as having suffered hardship themselves. This project examines whether individuals who have a history of victimisation are evaluated more leniently after committing an wrongdoing, and the psychological processes that may drive these judgements. The labels “victim” and “offender” are often used to categorise people based on the roles they have played in any given transgression. In reality, however, individuals occupy <i>both</i> roles at different points in their lives. Understanding how people respond to this complexity is important because such judgements can influence a range of outcomes, including their moral evaluations of the wrongdoer and their wrongdoing, their attitudes toward punishment and redemption, and their willingness to engage with or socially exclude the wrongdoer. The project aims to investigate whether information about a person's prior experiences of victimisation affects how observers evaluate their actions, assign blame, and determine appropriate consequences. We will use established experimental vignette methodology from social and moral psychology to address these questions.
What you'll do (100–150 words)	Students on this project will undertake a range of research activities that provide practical experience across the research process. Activities will include conducting literature reviews to identify and summarise relevant research, assisting with the development and refinement of study materials (e.g., experimental vignettes, measurement scales), writing up a pre-registration, recruiting participants and facilitating data collection both in person (e.g., approaching people on campus) and online. Students will also gain experience conducting data analyses and interpreting research findings. Regular meetings will provide opportunities to discuss research design, emerging results, and broader theoretical questions. Depending on project progress, students may also assist with preparing a research report, presentations, or materials for dissemination.
What you'll learn (100–150 words)	This project will provide valuable training in psychological research methods and the transferable practical skills needed to conduct research more generally. Students will gain hands-on experience with searching and synthesising academic literature, designing experimental studies, completing a pre-registration, recruiting participants, conducting quantitative data analysis, and communicating research findings effectively in both written and spoken formats.



	Students will also learn how social psychologists investigate questions relating to morality and social judgment, including the theorising and problem solving involved at each stage of research, from conceptualisation to data interpretation.
Project outcomes (75–125 words)	By the end of the project, students will have contributed to an active research program examining how knowledge of prior victimisation influences evaluations of wrongdoing. Expected outcomes include a completed pre-registration for the research study, a completed dataset and corresponding analyses. Ultimately, the project will be written up in the form of an academic research publication that the student will have the opportunity to contribute to.
Who should apply? (75–125 words)	This project is well suited to students studying psychology or closely related disciplines such as social science or criminology. Students with an interest in social psychology, morality, justice, or interpersonal judgment are particularly encouraged to apply. Applicants should be curious, reliable, and motivated to learn research skills. Prior coursework in research methods or statistics would be beneficial. Strong organisational skills, attention to detail, and the ability to work both independently and collaboratively will support success in the project.
Team & supervision (75–125 words)	The project will be supervised by Dr Michael Thai, Lecturer at The University of Queensland, who conducts research on interpersonal conflict and intergroup relations. Students will be embedded within an active research environment and will work closely with Dr Thai and members of his research team. Regular supervision meetings will provide students with guidance at each step of the research process. Students will also be invited to attend lab meetings and engage with students and academics at different career stages.
Additional opportunities (optional)	N/A
Additional requirements (if applicable)	N/A
Contact	Yes, students may contact the supervisor before applying.
	Direct enquiries to: m.thai@uq.edu.au