



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	Can Parents' Confidence Shape Parenting? Exploring Parental Self-Efficacy and Parenting Practices
Hours & delivery	Two scholars are expected to work for 30 hrs per week for six weeks, between 11 Jan – 19 Feb 2027. The project will be offered through a hybrid arrangement. Students will be expected to participate in regular team meetings and supervision sessions. Flexible working arrangements can be discussed.
About the project	How confident parents feel in their ability to manage parenting challenges may influence how they interact with and respond to their children. This belief, known as parental self-efficacy, has been studied extensively, but research has produced a wide range of findings and has used many different measures and definitions of parenting practices. This project is part of a large systematic review and meta-analysis examining the relationship between parental self-efficacy and family outcomes. The focus of this summer project will be on parenting practices, including behaviours such as warmth, responsiveness, discipline and other ways parents interact with their children. Students will work with an existing research dataset containing information extracted from published studies. They will help transform this large and complex dataset into a well-organised, research-ready resource and investigate patterns in the available evidence. Their work will contribute to a broader research program examining whether and how parents' beliefs about their own parenting abilities are related to what they actually do as parents.
What you'll do	• Learn how systematic reviews and meta-analyses are conducted. • Become familiar with the existing parental self-efficacy research database. • Identify and organise studies examining parenting practices. • Clean, check and standardise information extracted from published studies. • Develop smaller, analysis-ready datasets focused on parenting practices. • Check coding accuracy and document decisions using a reproducible workflow. • Conduct basic descriptive analyses and help identify patterns in the evidence. • Prepare tables, summaries and/or visualisations of the findings. • Present your work and reflect on what the evidence tells us about parental self-efficacy and parenting.
What you'll learn	You will gain practical experience in how psychological research moves from published evidence to a research-ready dataset and, ultimately, to scientific findings. You will develop skills in literature searching, data extraction, data cleaning, quality checking and research documentation. You will also learn about systematic reviews, meta-analysis and the measurement of parenting and parental self-efficacy. Depending on



	your experience, you will be introduced to quantitative data analysis and data visualisation. Working in a small research team will also provide experience in collaborative research, communicating research decisions and critically evaluating evidence. These skills are transferable to honours, postgraduate research, and research assistant roles.
Project outcomes	By the end of the project, the team will have developed a cleaned and documented research dataset focused on parental self-efficacy and parenting practices, including analysis-ready subsets of the broader meta-analysis database. Students will also produce descriptive summaries and preliminary tables or visualisations that help characterise the existing evidence. The project will contribute to an ongoing research program and provide foundational work for future analyses and publications examining associations between parental self-efficacy and parenting practices.
Who should apply?	This project is open to students with a background in psychology (e.g., Bachelor of Psychological Science) or a related discipline (e.g., Master of Educational Studies, Master of Counselling) and an interest in parenting and family psychology. Applicants from all year levels are encouraged to apply. Students who see a genuine potential in exploring a career in research are particularly welcomed to apply.
Team & supervision	You will be supervised by Dr Tianyi Ma, Research Fellow, Parenting and Family Support Centre, School of Psychology. The project is embedded within the Centre's broader research program on parenting and child development. You will work as part of a small team, with regular supervision and opportunities to engage with other researchers at the Centre.
Additional opportunities	Students will have opportunities to attend team meetings, seminars, and social events at the Parenting and Family Support Centre. Depending on the progress of the project, students may contribute to research presentations, conference outputs or future publications arising from the broader research program.
Contact	Yes, students may contact the supervisor before applying. Direct enquiries to: Dr Tianyi Ma at tianyi.ma@uq.edu.au