

SCIF2041 / SCIF3041

Taste of Research

School of Physics

Faculty of Science

T3, 2026

1. Staff

Position	Name	Email	Consultation times and locations	Contact Details
Course Convenor	Ben Montet	b.montet@unsw.edu.au	Consultation times: by arrangement via email	(02) 9065 3889
Teaching Support Officer	Zofia Krawczyk-Bernotas	z.krawczyk-bernotas@unsw.edu.au	School of Physics office G06, Old Main Building	(02) 9065 5719

2. Course information

Units of credit: 6

Students can register for these course codes to earn course credit, or they can participate in a research project voluntarily.

Teaching times and locations: online

2.1 Course summary

In this course, students will complete a short theoretical or experimental research project, supervised by a member of academic staff over the course of a term.

The project may encompass; project planning, literature review, project development, fieldwork, experimental work, statistical analyses and oral and written reporting.

Research projects may also involve placements outside UNSW, in the form of externally funded research programs, industrial placements or other programs either during usual session or in the session breaks. In these cases students will require a UNSW academic member of staff to supervise the students for the duration of the project.

SCIF2041 is designed for students to engage in an entry level research project in their undergraduate career. Students seeking an intermediate level project should enrol in SCIF3041.

Note: Enrolment in this course is by application, and subject to availability of places. Interested students should have identified a potential supervisor and research placement prior to applying – and have discussed their intention to apply.

To apply, complete the online form on the Science Research-Integrated Learning website and submit to the Nucleus Student Hub.

SCIF2041 and SCIF3041 run every term.

2.2 Course aims

The aims of this course are for students to gain experience participating in a research project in physics or astronomy.

Graduate Attributes Developed in this Course:

This course aims to introduce students to the experience and skills required for working in a genuine research environment that aligns with their chosen discipline. Students will develop introductory skills in conducting independent laboratory-based research, as well as their literature research and professional writing and presentations skills.

Engagement in this course is designed to build on students' graduate attributes and employability, as well as provide experience and guidance for them in their potential future career paths.

2.3 Course learning outcomes (CLO)

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Apply relevant physics research methods efficiently and accurately
- Work as part of a research team to achieve defined objectives specific to a research project
- Search, analyse and critically appraise data or textual information to construct persuasive discussions which add to the physical understanding of the world.
- Communicate research results according to the standard practices in a particular subfield of physics

2.4 Relationship between course and program learning outcomes and assessments

The course learning outcomes are assessed in a set of assessment tasks to be agreed upon between the student and supervisor. These assessments are largely of a critical-thinking nature designed to determine students' ability to deploy acquired knowledge to new situations, which is a key capability for successful university graduates.

3. Strategies and approaches to learning

3.1 Learning and teaching activities

Assumed Knowledge

Passing mark or higher in a course such as PHYS1121/1131/1141, PHYS1221/1231/1241, MATH1131/1141, MATH1231/1241 or equivalent. For SCIF2041, students must have completed 48 UOC and have a WAM of 70 to apply. For SCIF3041, students must have completed 72 UOC and have a WAM of 70 to apply.

Timetable

The only scheduled class meeting for this course is the student presentation session. This will be held in Week 11, and scheduled according to student availability. Work is determined by the project content and the supervisor. Students are expected to communicate with their supervisors regularly.

3.2 Expectations of students

We believe that effective learning is best supported by a climate of enquiry, in which students are actively engaged in the learning process. The Taste of Research and Step into Research programs provide students with the opportunity for direct research experience. Effective learning in this environment is achieved when students ask questions and take initiative.

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in any form in this course. Substantiated instances of cheating, plagiarism or copying answers may result in a failure grade or significant deduction of marks. Please <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism> if you are in any way unsure of what constitutes plagiarism. Assignments in this class are to be done independently.

4. Course schedule and structure

The schedule of each project will be negotiated between the student and the supervisor.

5. Assessment

5.1 Assessment tasks

SCIF2041 and SCIF3041 use a competency-based assessment scheme. At the end of the term, you will receive a score of "Competent with Merit," "Competent," or "Not Yet Competent." In general, a CM score is awarded for students performing at the First-Class Honours expected level. More information is available at <https://www.teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessment-methods/grading-giving-feedback>

In consultation with your project supervisor, a range of project deliverables will be discussed and decided upon.

The range of deliverables typically may include (but are not limited to):

- Project proposal
- Literature review
- Lab performance
- Final report
- Seminar presentations

A final list of deliverables and associated due dates that you have agreed to with your supervisor is a condition of application to the course.

Your supervisor will outline for you the criteria for a mark of competent or competent with merit, and provide you with verbal and written feedback on your performance throughout the term.

Further information

UNSW grading system: student.unsw.edu.au/grades

UNSW assessment policy: student.unsw.edu.au/assessment5.2

Assessment criteria and standards

Please see Moodle for a marking rubric for each assessment task.

5.3 Submission of assessment tasks

Assignment Submissions

Unless otherwise specified, assignments should be submitted by email to the project supervisor by 11:50pm Friday of Week 10.

Marks will be deducted for late assignments, at a rate of 5% of the maximum possible mark for the assignment per day. A weekend will count as two days.

5.4. Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided on all assessments by the supervisor within ten working days of the submission date.

6. Academic integrity, referencing and plagiarism

Referencing is a way of acknowledging the sources of information that you use to research your assignments. You need to provide a reference whenever you draw on someone else's words, ideas or research. Not referencing other people's work can constitute plagiarism.

Further information about referencing styles can be located at student.unsw.edu.au/referencing

Academic integrity is fundamental to success at university. Academic integrity can be defined as a commitment to six fundamental values in academic pursuits: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.¹ At UNSW, this means that your work must be your own, and others' ideas should be appropriately acknowledged. If you don't follow these rules, plagiarism may be detected in your work.

Further information about academic integrity and **plagiarism** can be located at:

- The *Current Students* site student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism, and
- The *ELISE* training site subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise

The *Conduct and Integrity Unit* provides further resources to assist you to understand your conduct obligations as a student: student.unsw.edu.au/conduct.

7. Readings and resources

Recommended Text:

By arrangement with the research supervisor

8. Administrative matters

Communications

Students should check their UNSW email account regularly as all official university communication will be sent to that address. Students should use their university email account when writing to UNSW staff and should always include their name and student number.

¹ International Center for Academic Integrity, 'The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity', T. Fishman (ed), Clemson University, 2013.

Health and Safety

The School of Physics is actively committed to the health, safety and welfare of its staff and students. Information on relevant UNSW Occupational Health and Safety policies and expectations is available at: www.ohs.unsw.edu.au and <https://www.physics.unsw.edu.au/about/safety>

Recommended Internet Sites

The School of Physics website is www.physics.unsw.edu.au. Under the “Current Students” link students will find information about degrees, courses, and assessment.

The University website my.unsw.edu.au provides links to the UNSW Handbook, Timetables, Calendars and other student information.

Student Complaint Procedures

UNSW has procedures for dealing with complaints. These aim to solve grievances as quickly and as close to the source as possible. Information is available here: student.unsw.edu.au/complaints. Staff who can assist include:

School Contacts:

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9. Additional support for students

- The *Current Students* Gateway: student.unsw.edu.au
- Academic Skills and Support: student.unsw.edu.au/skills
- Student Wellbeing, Health and Safety: student.unsw.edu.au/wellbeing
- Disability Support Services: student.unsw.edu.au/disability
- UNSW IT Service Centre: www.it.unsw.edu.au/students