



## CODE OF PRACTICE – HONOURS

<b>Date approved</b>	17 August 2007	<b>Date Policy will take effect</b>	Autumn Session 2008	<b>Date of Next Review</b>	January 2010
<b>Approved by</b>	University Council				
<b>Custodian title &amp; e-mail address</b>	Senior Manager, Policy & Governance <a href="mailto:governance@uow.edu.au">governance@uow.edu.au</a>				
<b>Responsible Faculty/ Division &amp; Unit</b>	Policy and Governance Unit, Academic Registrar's Division				
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy</b>	Honours Guide Checklist				
<b>References, Legislation &amp; Policies</b>	<a href="#">Code of Practice – Teaching and Assessment</a> <a href="#">Code of Practice – Students</a> <a href="#">Code of Practice – Supervision</a> <a href="#">Code of Practice – Research</a> <a href="#">Authorship Policy</a> <a href="#">Acknowledgement Practice/ Plagiarism Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Academic Consideration Policy</a> <a href="#">Occupational Health and Safety Policy</a> <a href="#">Policy and Guidelines on Non-Discriminatory Language Practice and Presentation</a> <a href="#">Intellectual Property Policy</a> Human Research Ethics Guidelines Animal Research Guidelines <a href="#">Academic Grievance Policy (Coursework and Honours Students)</a> <a href="#">Grievance Investigation Procedures</a>				
<b>Audience</b>	Public – accessible to anyone				
<b>Expiry date of Policy</b>	January 2010				

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## 1 Purpose of Policy

1. The Code of Practice - Honours applies to a research project or creative project (referred to in this Code as an 'Honours project') within an Honours program or a course of study leading to an Honours award.

## 2 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Honours Program	Course of study involving a thesis, creative or research project leading to an Honours award
Honours project	Thesis, creative or research project required for the award
Honours Coordinator	A member of academic staff who is responsible for the operation of the Honours program.
Academic unit	Faculty, School, Unit, Program or Discipline.
Head, Academic Unit	A member of academic staff who is ultimately responsible for the matters regarding the Honours program.
Supervisor	A member of academic staff who oversees the progress of the creative or research project.
Examiner	Examiner means a person or persons with responsibility for the assessment of honours project.

## 3 Application & Scope

Not Available

## 4 Responsibilities

### University

1. It is the responsibility of the University to:
  - a. specify clearly minimum entry standards for each honours degree award;

- b. take measures to protect the intellectual property (IP) arising from the work of in accordance with the University's Intellectual Property Policy;
- c. provide procedures by which either the student or the supervisor may make representations as appropriate should significant difficulties arise (see section 5 of this Code).
- d. ensure a student enrolling full time in their final year of study be given the opportunity to complete all subjects in time for them to graduate with their cohort at the end of that academic year.

## Academic Unit

2. The following responsibilities of an academic unit are assumed by the head of the academic unit but may be delegated to the Honours Coordinator where appropriate:
  - a. depending on the size of the Honours cohort, to appoint an Honours Coordinator to oversee the Honours program within the academic unit;
  - b. to ensure that the student meets the minimum requirements for admission to the Honours program and is capable of undertaking the proposed Honours project;
  - c. to ensure that the proposed Honours project is of an appropriate standard for the award;
  - d. to ensure that each Honours project is situated in the most appropriate discipline or area of study;
  - e. where an Honours project is undertaken across two disciplines, to approve the course of study with the head of the other academic unit and negotiate the appointment of co-supervisors and subject requirements before enrolment;
  - f. to provide an Honours Guide that sets out all procedures and requirements pertaining to assessment including those listed in the checklist, Section 4 of this document.
  - g. to foster a supportive environment for Honours students;
  - h. to ensure that reasonable resources are made available to Honours students;
  - i. to provide a foundation in research methods appropriate to the discipline or area of study;
  - j. to provide opportunities for the development of the skills necessary for academic writing appropriate to reporting research in the discipline or area of study;
  - k. to provide appropriate opportunities for Honours students to develop their presentation skills;
  - l. to ensure that procedures are in place to select the most appropriate supervisor(s) or supervisory panel for the Honours project;
  - m. to ensure that supervisors of Honours students have a degree equivalent to or higher than that being supervised and that they:
    - i. are currently active researchers; or
    - ii. have proven research records; or
    - iii. have previous successful experience in supervising Honours students.
  - n. to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the supervisor(s) and student;
  - o. to ensure that quality supervision is provided throughout the candidature;
  - p. to ensure that arrangements are made to provide for supervision if a supervisor is absent for more than two weeks;
  - q. to ensure that examiners have adequate time to report before the meeting of the Assessment Committee.

## Supervisors

3. The overriding responsibility of supervisors is to provide continuing support to students under their supervision in researching and producing an Honours project to the best of the student's ability. Specific other responsibilities are to:
  - a. advise the Head of the academic unit of any situation which might lead to a conflict of interest which could unduly advantage or disadvantage a student, e.g. if there is or has been a close personal relationship between a supervisor and an actual or potential student;
  - b. advise students about their procedural and substantive rights and responsibilities contained in this Code;
  - c. advise and assist students to comply with occupational health and safety and ethics requirements where relevant;
  - d. support students in developing a proposal for their Honours project within a negotiated time frame;
  - e. assist students to develop a plan for completing the Honours project within an appropriate time frame;
  - f. maintain regular contact with students in order to monitor their progress;
  - g. inform students about any planned absences during the candidature and arrangements for supervision during those absences;
  - h. provide timely and helpful written feedback to students on any submissions and to assist them to develop solutions as problems are identified;
  - i. advise students of inadequate progress or work below the standard generally required and to suggest appropriate action;
  - j. attend meetings of the academic unit Assessment Committee where students' grades are determined.

## Students

4. Honours students have the primary responsibility for the timely completion of the Honours project and other assessment tasks. Specific responsibilities are to:
  - a. develop an Honours project proposal and plan for completing the project within a timeframe agreed to by the supervisor(s);
  - b. maintain regular contact with the supervisor(s);
  - c. discuss any proposed variation of enrolment or leave of absence with their supervisor(s) and Honours Coordinator/ head of academic unit;
  - d. establish with the supervisor(s) the level of support required for successful completion of the degree;
  - e. present required written material to the supervisor(s) in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussions before scheduled meetings;
  - f. undertake additional work towards their project identified as necessary by the supervisor(s);
  - g. accept responsibility for the quality and originality of all submitted work.

## 5 Grievances regarding supervision

1. Where there are unresolved problems or disagreements between a student and supervisor during the candidature, students may follow the procedures in the Academic Grievance Policy (Coursework and Honours Students), and the Grievances Investigation Procedures, where applicable.

## 6 Assessment of projects

### Assessment of Honours projects with a weighting of 24 credit points or more

1. The requirements set out in this section apply to the assessment of an Honours project with a weighting of 24 credit points or more. Honours programs (or courses of study leading to an Honours award) which include a project with a lesser weighting may also choose to adopt the procedures set out in this section.
2. Documented quality assurance processes shall be in place in each academic unit to ensure the independent, transparent and impartial assessment of all Honours projects.
3. All procedures and processes concerning the assessment of Honours projects shall be approved by the relevant Faculty Education Committee and identified in the Honours Guide for that Faculty, academic unit or course.
4. The assessment of an Honours project is to be undertaken by two examiners, one of whom may be external. An external examiner is defined as being external to the academic unit and may be external to the University.
5. The choice of examiners is a process involving both the candidate and the supervisor. Together they should generate a list of at least four examiners, having regard to the known disciplinary bias of those suggested. The final choice will be made from this list by the supervisor and the head of the academic unit or Honours Co-ordinator. If the list of names agreed upon between candidate and supervisor is exhausted then the candidate must be consulted in drawing up a new list.
6. A supervisor cannot examine an Honours project that they have supervised.
7. Examiners shall be familiar with the expectations of an Honours degree. They shall also:
  - a. have a degree equivalent to or higher than that being supervised; or
  - b. be currently active researchers or have proven research records; or
  - c. have previous successful experience in supervision or examination of Honours students.
8. Examiners should be allowed up to four weeks to provide a report to the assessment committee, to enable the Faculty to meet University deadlines for the declaration of marks and for students to be considered for scholarships.
9. Examiners shall be provided with a clear written brief which covers the following:
  - a. the essential requirements of the particular degree;
  - b. marking procedures, including the method of (and deadline for) reporting their assessment to the relevant academic unit;
  - c. clear criteria for assessing the Honours project;
  - d. the relative weighting of the Honours project compared to other assessment components;
  - e. the requirement that examiners submit independent results;
  - f. any other matters that the academic unit considers appropriate.
10. Until the assessment of an Honours project is complete and a report is submitted by an examiner, all communication between the examiner and the University regarding the Honours project shall be directed through the Honours Co-ordinator, or the head of the relevant academic unit or, if the Head of the Academic Unit is the student's supervisor, another nominated academic.
11. Students and supervisors shall not contact any examiner concerning the assessment of the Honours project until the reports of all examiners are returned to and acted on by the assessment committee of the academic unit.
12. Supervisors should be permitted to view the assessment reports and raise issues or points of clarification prior to the Academic Unit/Faculty Assessment Committee meeting.

13. The assessment reports from the examiners and the marks recorded for both the Honours project and any coursework components are to be forwarded to the relevant assessment committee for final declaration of mark.
14. The names of the examiners and copies of the examiners' reports will be made available to the student after the final mark has been declared.
15. Each Faculty shall have written procedures for dealing with discrepancies between marks for an Honours project, approved by the Faculty Education Committee. These procedures shall be communicated to students in the Honours Guide at the start of the Honours program.
16. Where there is a discrepancy of more than ten percentage points between any two examiners, an additional marker shall be appointed to assess the Honours project. When this delays the assessment process, the student should be notified that further advice has been sought.
17. Each Faculty shall have written procedures which specify:
  - a. the role of additional markers (for example, whether they are 'blind' markers who are not provided with previous examiners' reports or adjudicators who have access to those reports);
  - b. how a final mark is to be determined following a report by an additional marker and;
  - c. where the additional marker is an adjudicator, the criteria for selecting that marker.
18. The Unit Assessment Committee (where appropriate) recommends the overall Honours mark to the Faculty Assessment Committee but, in all cases, the Faculty Assessment Committee declares the final mark.

### **Assessment of Honours projects with a weighting of less than 24 credit points**

19. An Honours program (or a course of study leading to an Honours award) which includes an Honours project with a weighting of less than 24 credit points may choose to adopt the assessment procedures set out in section 5.1-5.18 of this Code.
20. Where section 5.1-5.18 of this Code do not apply or are not adopted, Part 2 of the Code of Practice - Teaching and Assessment applies to the assessment of the Honours project. In addition, the academic unit shall have written procedures, approved by the Faculty Education Committee and tabled at the University Education Committee, which state:
  - a. how examiners are chosen;
  - b. where any of the examiners are external to the university, how their qualifications are assessed and how they are briefed;
  - c. the role of the supervisor in the assessment of the Honours project;
  - d. the relationship that should exist between supervisor(s) and examiner(s) during the assessment process (e.g. what contact can take place);
  - e. where there is more than one examiner, how discrepancies between examiners should be resolved.
21. All assessment procedures concerning Honours projects shall be identified in the Honours Guide.

## **7 Grievances concerning assessment outcomes**

1. There is no provision for resubmission of an Honours project.
2. Students who have an issue or concern regarding assessment of their Honours project or other assessable work may follow the grievance resolution procedures in the Academic Grievance Policy (Coursework and Honours Students).
3. Special consideration is available to students whose work is affected by serious documented illness or misadventure. (Refer to Student Academic Consideration Policy.)
4. Inadequate supervision or other arrangements during the period of study will not be taken into consideration in reviewing the assessment of an Honours project, unless documented efforts

have been made by the student to report these issues which have not been adequately addressed.

## **8 Honours Guide Checklist**

1. It is University policy that every Faculty, academic unit or Honours program have an Honours Guide common for students, staff and examiners that includes the information set out in this section of the Code of Practice Honours.
2. All commitments and requirements stipulated in an Honours Guide shall be adhered to.

### **Section A – General**

1. Name of academic unit and details of key contact people within that unit, including the Honours Coordinator(s) where appropriate
2. Course code
3. Requirements for admission to Honours program(s)
4. Mechanisms for applying for admission
5. Where relevant, details regarding and arrangements for part-time Honours enrolment.
6. Honours program objectives
7. Roles of supervisors and students
8. Key dates/calendar, e.g. deadline for applications, finalisation of proposal, submission of ethics application (where applicable), progress reports, oral presentations, submission of final written project, assessment committee meeting
9. Required coursework making up the Honours program, including subject codes and titles in full, with brief outline and credit points. If coursework is not organised by subject code and credit points a description of the structure of the Honours program coursework with a brief outline and explanation of the weighted value of each component of the coursework program.
10. Ethics application requirements (where relevant)
11. Occupational health and safety requirements
12. Support services and facilities available to students, including contact details of the Student Support Adviser (within Student Services), the Faculty Disability Officer and the Faculty Librarian (within the library)
13. Equipment, study space and computer/software available to students
14. Where relevant, University supplied materials that students should purchase and estimated costs
15. Financial or material assistance (where available)
16. Prizes, scholarships and grants
17. Grievance procedures specific to the Faculty/academic unit

### **Section B – Assessment of Honours Project**

1. Types of assessment to be used to assess Honours project
2. Weight given to Honours project and other components of assessment in determining final result
3. Dates for submission of any written Honours project(s) and other material for assessment
4. Policy regarding and penalties for late submission
5. Clear criteria for assessing the Honours project
6. Guidelines for examiners
7. Whether marks in any components will be modified or scaled
8. Method for determining class of Honours

9. Minimum attendance requirements where appropriate
10. Length, style and format of any written Honours project(s), where relevant
11. System of referencing to be used in written Honours project(s), noting the University policy on plagiarism
12. Method for choosing examiners
13. Procedure for dealing with discrepancies between marks awarded by different examiners
14. Procedures, criteria and possible outcomes in the handling of requests for Student Academic Consideration
15. Method for submitting written materials for assessment
16. Required number of copies of written materials
17. Arrangements for acknowledging submission of written materials
18. Procedures for returning assessed materials
19. Details of other matters relevant to the assessment of the Honours project

### Section C – University Policy

1. References to the following University codes of practice and policies, with web links:
  - a. Code of Practice – Honours
  - b. Code of Practice – Teaching and Assessment
  - c. Code of Practice – Students
  - d. Authorship Policy
  - e. Code of Practice – Research
  - f. Acknowledgement Practice/ Plagiarism Policy
  - g. Student Academic Consideration Policy
  - h. Occupational Health and Safety Policy
  - i. Policy and Guidelines on Non-Discriminatory Language Practice and Presentation
  - j. Intellectual Property Policy
  - k. Human Research Ethics Guidelines
  - l. Animal Research Guidelines
  - m. Academic Grievance Policy (Coursework and Honours Students)
  - n. Grievance Investigation Procedures

## 9 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	19 November 2003	Academic Senate	Consequential amendments following approval of the Student Academic Grievance Policy
2	Autumn Session 2008	University Council	Revisions to improve compliance with Honours Guide Checklist
3	5 February 2009	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Migrated to UOW Policy Template as per Policy Directory Refresh

4	13 August 2009	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Minor amendment to replace references to SEDLOs with reference to Student Support Advisers
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