



## Bachelor Honours Degree Programs Procedure

---

### Context and Purpose

This procedure outlines the requirements and processes for bachelor degree programs including for admission, supervision, assessment and examination.

This procedure must be read in conjunction with *Policy AB-42 Bachelor Honours Degree Programs*.

### Responsibility

The Provost and Chief Academic Officer is the responsible officer for this Procedure. Procedural responsibilities are detailed in *AB-42 AD1 Appendix: Responsibilities: Research in Bachelor Honours Degree Programs*.

---

### Procedure

#### A. Program structure

1. All bachelor honours degree programs will have a graded honours component comprised of 36 units of advanced studies, of which a minimum of 27 units must be at an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level 8. The 36 units that form the graded honours component will be identified in the program rules for each honours degree program.
2. All bachelor honours degree programs must include:
  - a. training in research principles and methods, and ethics; and
  - b. an advanced component leading to the production of an assessable outcome, known as the *honours project*. The proportion of focus on research and professional practice will be dependent on the requirements of each discipline.
3. The honours project will contribute a minimum of 13.5 of the 36 units in a 1-year honours degree and a minimum of 9 of the 36 units in the final year of a 4-year honours degree.
4. The honours project will normally be equivalent to a maximum of 1000 words per unit value up to a maximum of 18,000 words or equivalent. It may take the form of:
  - a. a thesis, or
  - b. one or more referred (or equivalent) publications of equivalent merit to a thesis, or
  - c. one or more artefacts and supporting exegesis, or
  - d. an advanced professional practice research report, or
  - e. an advanced professional practice project report.
5. The honours project will provide students with the opportunity to understand and apply a range of analytical, cognitive and research design skills, and will:
  - a. have clearly defined objectives that reflect national standards of good practice in the provision of an honours award; and
  - b. be achievable within the time frame available; and
  - c. be consistent with the University's policy and guidelines on ethics, and
  - d. be supported by adequate resources and infrastructure.

## B. Admission

### 6. Honours degree (1 year)

Candidates for admission to honours degrees will normally have a grade point average of 5 or above in an undergraduate program relevant to the intended field of honours.

### 7. Honours degrees (4 years)

- a. Admission requirements for 4-year honours degrees will be determined and approved as part of the program approval process.
- b. Selected 4-year honours degrees allow students to complete the honours component, being the final year of the honours degree. In these instances:
  - i. Students who have undertaken the first three years of the honours degree at UniSA will normally have a grade point average of 5 or above by the end of the penultimate year of the program. The University may invite students to progress with the honours component prior to the start of the final year of the program. Students are selected on the basis of threshold requirements and entry is competitive. This may result in a GPA entry requirement greater than 5 for some programs.
  - ii. Where a student has transferred from another university during the first three years of the honours degree but has completed at least 18 units at UniSA, eligibility for progression to the honours component will be calculated using the GPA of the UniSA courses only, and will not include courses for which credit has been granted.
  - iii. Where a student is transferring from another university into the honours component of a 4-year honours degree the student will be required to demonstrate a grade point average equivalent to 5 or above.
  - iv. Where a student has completed additional courses that would not be required for the award of a relevant single degree either because they are enrolled in a double degree program, or are enrolled in more than one program, these courses will not be included in calculating a GPA to determine eligibility for:
    - a. entry to the relevant honours *degree* or
    - b. awarding of the relevant honours degree.
  - v. Where discretion is required to determine which courses should be included in meeting the requirements for the award of a single degree, the course that would yield the highest possible GPA will be selected for the purposes of the calculation.
- c. Students who do not meet threshold requirements for the honours component or choose not to proceed to honours, exit into and complete an alternate award, pending eligibility criteria for the award are met.

## C. Supervision

8. Academic Units will appoint program directors to monitor the supervision of students in the honours project of bachelor honours degree programs as outlined in *AB-42.16 Appendix: Responsibilities: Research in Bachelor Honours Degree Programs*.
9. A principal supervisor and a co-supervisor, where required, will be appointed for each student in a bachelor honours degree program.

10. The principal supervisor and co-supervisor must have relevant qualifications for the honours project. For projects with a significant research component, supervisors must have completed a research degree, or have completed a Masters degree with a research component, or have completed a Bachelor (Honours) degree and gained additional research experience.
11. The principal supervisor must have relevant knowledge, expertise and interest in the student's honours project topic, access to adequate resources, and sufficient time to provide proper supervision, taking account of their total workload, including the supervision of other students.
12. The principal supervisor should be appointed as soon as a student enrolls in the honours degree program (1 year) or in the final year of an honours degree (4 year), to assist with the development of an appropriate project proposal.
13. The University encourages external contributors such as industry leaders, to participate in supervision. Where appropriate, external contributors are appointed and referred to as associate supervisors.
14. If the principal supervisor will be absent for two or more weeks, the Academic Unit will ensure appropriate supervision is planned for in consultation with the student, before the principal supervisor becomes absent.
15. Supervision will be conducted in accordance with *AB-42.16 Appendix: Responsibilities: Research in Bachelor Honours Degree Programs*.

#### **D. Secondary assessment**

16. Secondary assessment is available in the honours coursework component of bachelor honours degrees in accordance with *AB-68 P2: Variations to Assessment Procedure* and specific program rules.

#### **E. Academic integrity**

17. Academic integrity in bachelor honours degree programs will be managed in accordance with policy *AB-69: Academic Integrity Policy and AB-66 Research Integrity Policy*.

#### **F. Academic progress**

18. The program director and/or principal supervisor are responsible for review and assessment of academic progress, in accordance with *AB-42.16 Appendix: Responsibilities: Research in Bachelor Honours Degree Programs*.
19. If the student is not making satisfactory progress, the program director and/or the principal supervisor will consult with the student at the earliest possible opportunity to determine the most appropriate intervention.
20. Unsatisfactory progress in bachelor honours degree programs will be managed in accordance with *AB-68 P7.1 Academic Review Procedure*.

#### **G. Examination of an honours project**

##### **21. Mode of examination**

The Academic Unit will either:

- a. appoint two examiners for all honours projects, at least one of whom must be external to the University, or
- b. appoint two internal examiners, and arrange for a representative selection of honours projects in the program to be externally moderated at the time of examination, in order to validate the standard of internal assessment.

##### **22. Appointment of examiners**

- a. To ensure that the assessment process is free from any conflict of interest, the program director, in conjunction with the Executive Dean, or delegate, will nominate the examiners for the honours project.

- b. All examiners must have appropriate qualifications and experience to examine an honours project, and supervisors should contribute to recommendations about suitable examiners.
- c. Neither the principal nor any co or associated supervisor may be an examiner.
- d. The program director will forward to the examiner(s) a letter outlining the:
  - i. stated objectives of the honours project,
  - ii. criteria for assessment,
  - iii. assessment Framework (see *AB-68 P6: Final Grades and Notations Procedure*), and
  - iv. return date and contact person for any matters requiring clarification.

### 23. Criteria for assessment

An honours project will be assessed on the following criteria:

- a. the student's ability to articulate the nature and scope of the research in accordance with the stated objectives of the honours project; and
- b. the extent to which the honours project achieves the stated objectives; and
- c. the student's ability to demonstrate a critical appreciation of the literature relevant to the honours project; and
- d. the extent to which the student has developed a consistent and coherent argument relevant to the field of study; and
- e. the student's capacity to demonstrate critical analysis in applying research approaches and, where appropriate, interpreting results; and
- f. the quality of the presentation of the honours project, including where appropriate:
  - i. clarity of expression
  - ii. the relevance and accuracy of citations, references etc.,
  - iii. the accuracy and appropriateness of the presentation of results; and
- g. the quality of artefacts, if any including:
  - i. the conceptual understanding of the relevant field
  - ii. the ideas and/or imagination demonstrated
  - iii. the technical competence
  - iv. the resolution of the artefacts
  - v. the complexity and difficulty demonstrated; and
- h. the student's adherence to standards of academic integrity outlined in the *AB-69: Academic Integrity Policy*.

### 24. Examiners' reports

- a. Examiners are expected to return their reports within four weeks of receiving the honours project for examination.
- b. The principal supervisor will be given the opportunity to comment on the examiners' reports.
- c. The examiners' reports will be provided to the student to foster the learning experience.

### 25. Specified amendments

In the case of specified amendments the program director will receive the revised honours project with a statement from the principal supervisor, where appropriate, confirming that all revisions and corrections have been made satisfactorily.

## 26. Resolving discrepancy

- a. Where there is a discrepancy of more than one grade between two examiners' recommendations, the relevant Executive Dean, or delegate, will appoint a third examiner whose mark will stand, regardless of whether it is higher or lower. No further examination will be allowed.
- b. The third examiner may be from within UniSA or external to UniSA, and must have expertise in the area of assessment.
- c. The third examiner will not be provided with details of the student's original assessment.

## H. Re-examination of an honours project

27. Students are entitled to request re-examination of an honours project on the basis that:
- a. the examiner substantially misinterpreted the work, or
  - b. the specified assessment requirements were not adhered to.
28. The student should lodge a re-examination request with the relevant Executive Dean, or delegate.
29. If the Executive Dean, or delegate, allows a re-examination, they will arrange for the appointment of an alternative examiner. This examiner will be external to the University, will submit a report under the same conditions as the original examiners, and will not have access to the original examiners' reports.

## I. Determination of final grade of honours

30. The honours project grade and honours coursework grades will be combined using the GPA formula specified in *AB-68 P6: Final Grades and Notations Procedure*.
31. The final grade of honours will be determined by the Academic Unit, referring to *AB-68 P6: Final Grades and Notations Procedure*.

## J. Appealing the final grade of honours

32. The student may lodge a formal appeal against their final honours grade with the Registrar and Director: Student and Academic Services in accordance with the appeal procedures specified in *AB-68 P6: Final Grades and Notations Procedure*.

## K. Lodgement of the honours project

33. A bound or electronic copy of the honours project, amended as necessary after review, will be lodged with the program director, and held, within the relevant Academic Unit. This copy must include an appropriate record of artefacts. Where the work cannot be easily replicated the program director will advise on the appropriate medium for a record of the work to be lodged.

### Further Assistance:

[Student and Academic Services](#)

---

### Related Documentation:

AB-42: Bachelor Honours Degree Programs Policy

AB-42 AD1 Appendix: Responsibilities: Research in Bachelor Honours Degree Programs

Assessment Policy and Procedures (AB-68)

- AB-68 P2: Variations to Assessments Procedure
- AB-68 P6: Final Grades and Notation Procedure
- AB-68 P7.1: Academic Review Procedure

AB-69: Academic Integrity Policy

AB-66: Research Integrity Policy

C-37: Honorary Awards and Honorary Academic Titles Policy

RES-2: Human Research Ethics Policy

**Officer Responsible for Update and Review:** Registrar and Director: Student and Academic Services

**Approved by:** Academic Board

**Commencement Date:** 22 March 2024

**Review Date:** March 2027

**History:** This procedure supercedes equivalent content from Policy A-42.16 Bachelor honours degree programs.