

## School of Education

### Honours Award Level Guidelines 2013

COURSE TITLE (HONOURS)	HONOURS CONTACT DETAILS
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## Honours Award Level Guidelines 2013

The Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy describes the framework for all Honours courses, both end-on and embedded, at UWS: <http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00156>

These School Honours Award Level Guidelines contain procedural information specific to Honours degrees in the School of Education.

### Application Process

#### On-Line Admissions

Students applying for Honours (end-on or embedded) need to complete the on-line application found on the UWS website:

<https://applyonline.uws.edu.au/connect/webconnect>

The final date for applications for 2013 should be submitted by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

#### Procedures for assessing applications

All applications will be assessed by the Honours coordinator and approved by the Research Committee and Dean of Education.

### Criteria for Admission

The criteria for admission to an end-on or embedded Honours Programme are as required by the Honours in the Bachelors Award Policy Part E Clause 21.

- a. Achievement of a threshold Admission Average Mark (AAM) equal to, or above, the minimum of 65; and
- b. Statement of Intent or School equivalent; and
- c. Appointment of a Principal Supervisor by the Director of Academic Programs; and
- d. Demonstrated satisfactory academic writing skills appropriate to the discipline.

### Calculation of the Admission Average Mark (AAM)

1. Following Clause (23) the AAM will normally be calculated on the basis of all units from program commencement.
2. For the purposes of (23) an applicant with an AAM < 65% due to lower relative results in their first year of undergraduate study may be considered for admission if:
  - The applicant has demonstrated a marked improvement in their academic performance in recent semesters; and
  - A supporting letter from the applicant's potential supervisor regarding the applicant's ability to undertake Honours is supplied.
3. Where advanced standing impedes the calculation of a whole of program AAM the School of Education will seek advice from the undergraduate studies provider.
4. Treatment of compulsory fail grades in calculation of AAM will be taken into account by the School of Education.

## Statement of Intent or School Equivalent

The 'Statement of Intent' (or Research Proposal) is an important part of the admission criteria for Honours. It is also an important component of the learning process in the Honours Degree. It provides a brief overview of the research that you are planning to undertake and is a means to develop your conceptualisation of critical research issues. Your 'Statement of Intent' should ideally be written in consultation with your intended supervisor/s. As this may be the first time that you have written a 'Statement of Intent' and undertaken research, the document is also a 'work in progress' that will continue to be developed and refined throughout the early stages of your Honours program. Your 'Statement of Intent' needs to be written clearly so that others can understand what you are interested in researching and why and how you will undertake the research. The 'Statement of Intent' is usually expected to be up to 1000 words. You will need to check with the Honours Coordinator in your School to determine the specified word length. The following 6 areas need to be included in the development of your Statement of Intent.

1. **Research Title:** A research title (While the title you nominate now is not set in stone, it is important to try to be as precise as possible in order to clarify the research project to others.)
2. **Research Question:** A research question and an overview of the research topic, as well as why you consider this to be an interesting and significant area to study.
3. **Readings:** The identification of 6-10 scholarly sources relevant to the topic area, demonstrating some engagement with this existing scholarship.
4. **Method:** A brief statement on how the research will be conducted – that is, will you be doing interviews, a focus group, a document analysis, a survey, or another method, or some combination of these approaches? Consultation with your intended supervisor/s may help you decide on the most appropriate approach to your question in the time frame you have to complete your research.
5. **Theoretical Framework:** Identification of a theoretical framework that is linked to your research method and to your data analysis. This should also relate to your set of scholarly sources.
6. **Ethics Requirement:** Identify whether you will require ethics approval.

It is critical that you acknowledge in your Statement of Intent whether your research requires you to apply for ethics approval in order to undertake your research. If you are conducting research with human subjects e.g. interviews, focus groups, surveys and so on, you will need to complete an ethics application (See information below on Ethics Approval). You will need to seek the advice and support of your intended supervisor/s about ethics and the development of an ethics approval application (NEAF). If you are required to complete an ethics application, once you are admitted to Honours, you will need to complete your application early in your program, as it can be a time consuming process.

## Appointment of a Principal and or Co Supervisors

Please identify your intended supervisor/s of your Honours research project. Honours supervisors must be included on the UWS Graduate Supervisor Register. You may wish to confirm with your intended supervisor/s that they are on this Register.

If you have any questions about developing your Statement of Intent please seek the advice of your intended supervisor/s or School Honours Coordinator

The Graduate Supervisor Register may be accessed at:

[http://www.uws.edu.au/research/current\\_research\\_students/supervision](http://www.uws.edu.au/research/current_research_students/supervision)

## Ethics and/or other required approvals

All research carried out at UWS involving human participants is done in accordance with the *Research Code of Practice* and is guided by the following national guidelines:

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2007\)](#) and the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans \(2007\)](#).

Any Honours research that involves undertaking interviews, focus groups, surveys, or any other methodological approach involving human participants, requires ethics approval, the first step of which is submission to the appropriate Peer Review Committee. This Committee examines the research merit and integrity of applications to undertake Honours research (as well as all other unfunded research, excluding Higher Research Degree candidates). Your supervisor/s can advise you about the submission of your ethics application.

It is essential that you submit your application for ethics approval as a matter of **priority** at the earliest possible time during the Honours program, if not prior to the start of the official academic year. No experiment or fieldwork can be undertaken without the appropriate ethics approvals. UWS uses the National Ethics Application Form (NEAF). Guidance on completing this form can be obtained from [Guidance on applying for ethical review at UWS](#). In order to complete the application you will need to work closely with your supervisor/s, who will actually be the 'Applicant' named on the NEAF application submitted for your research.

Ethics training associated with the completion of the NEAF form is included as part of the coursework in certain units. The School of Education offers the unit 101475 Educational Research Methods and Design in which students learn to draft an ethics application.

In addition, there are UWS workshops available to focus on research methods and completion of the NEAF application. For further information about workshops relevant to Honours students please speak to your supervisor/s or to the School Honours Coordinator. It is highly recommended that you attend these workshops if possible.

Further information about ethics can be found at:

<http://www.uws.edu.au/research/researchers/ethics>

## **Procedures for dealing with Supervision issues**

Appointment of supervisors will take place at the application phase, as the UWS Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy states that admission to the degree is subject to the availability of suitable supervisors and other resources. Principal supervisors should be qualified at the PhD or Masters (Honours) level, or have equivalence in professional standing, as well as having an established publishing and research track record. The minimum level of academic award required to supervise in an Honours project is normally research Masters Degree. Honours supervisors are directed to the Code of Conduct and Guide for Supervisors before commencing supervision.

Where a student is experiencing supervision problems, he/she will in the first instance approach their supervisor and/or co-supervisor, then if required the School Honours Coordinator who will facilitate management of supervision issues. In cases where the School Honours Coordinator is involved in supervision or supervision problems, the student may approach the relevant Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) for advice.

## **Supervision Expectations of Honours Students**

It is expected that students will meet with their supervisor/s on a regular basis during their Honours program. How often you meet with your supervisor/s should be negotiated with your supervisor at the beginning of your program. You may find there will be certain times that you need the support of your supervisor more frequently than at others, but this should be negotiated with your supervisor/s. It is expected that you would meet your supervisor/s at least three times per semester.

## Honours Progression

Clause G of the 2013 UWS Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy, which deals with progression can be found at: <http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00156#p7>

The normal period of candidature for students enrolled in an end-on Honours course is one year full-time, or its part-time equivalent.

The due date for submission of the Honours thesis is October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Three copies of the thesis are to be submitted, soft bound.

### Procedure for applying for an extension of submission date

Extensions for submission of an Honours thesis are only granted under unforeseen, extenuating circumstances, and in compliance with the UWS Special Consideration Policy, which can be consulted at the following URL:

The Request for Extension application form can be found at:

[http://www.uws.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/118273/OAR00XXX\\_0307\\_Request\\_for\\_Extension\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.uws.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/118273/OAR00XXX_0307_Request_for_Extension_WEB.pdf)

Note: Supervisors should be aware and advise students as appropriate, that late submission may make a student ineligible for consideration for a postgraduate scholarship determined at the December meeting of the University Research Committee.

Although students may apply for an extension up to 3 working days before the original due date for submission of the thesis, the Special Consideration Policy clause 37 states: "the application should be submitted as soon as the student is aware that he/she has extenuating circumstances that will affect studies for the session."

Please note the following clauses from the UWS Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy regarding applications for an extension to submit an Honours thesis:

33) A student may apply for an extension of time for thesis submission up to three working days before the student's originally approved submission date. Extensions can only be granted in exceptional and compelling circumstances consistent with the provisions of the [Special Consideration Policy](#).

(34) The principles and procedure of that policy should be followed in making the application, but the application must be submitted to the School Honours Coordinator. The School Honours Coordinator will recommend to the School's Dean whether or not the extension should be granted, and in making that recommendation he/she will consult with the primary supervisor and/or co-supervisor. The Dean will advise the student and the School SAC Committee in writing of the decision.

(35) Where an extension has been granted and the work is not submitted by the census date for the following semester teaching period, the student will normally be required to re-enrol in a non award 20 credit point unit. The student's enrolment in the unit will not consume additional Student Learning Entitlement, but will incur a tuition fee liability. Honours students should note that the submission of the thesis should ideally occur within the same semester in which the thesis was to be submitted (i.e. Spring 2013). Extensions should not be granted beyond the census date for the following semester (i.e. Autumn 2014).

## Lodgement of Thesis

Three soft copies of the thesis will be lodged with the secretary for the Honours programme in the School of Education (Lizzy Pemble) by October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 unless an extension has been granted.

## **Examination Procedures**

### **Appointment of Examiners**

Examiners should typically hold a research Masters, PhD or Professional Doctorate, or equivalence in terms of professional standing and research experience in the field relevant to the thesis. Two examiners are recommended by supervisor/s in consultation with the School Honours Coordinator and forwarded to the School Academic Committee.

The UWS Honours Policy states: “the significant research component will be examined by two suitably qualified examiners, who may be external to UWS or internal to UWS in Schools or Programs where an independent moderation process is used to assure quality and consistency of internal examination”. In keeping with the UWS policy, Schools will appoint two external examiners, or one external and one internal, or two internal to UWS with a mandatory independent moderation process to assure quality and consistency of the internal examination. A summary sheet containing evidence of quality assurance procedures is to be submitted to the School Academic Committee (SAC). (See Summary of Quality Assurance Procedures for the Appointment of Examiners in this document). Students are not told the identity of the examiners. Examiners will not be supervisors or co-supervisors. Ideally examiners should not know students, or should have had minimal contact with the student in terms of their recent degree or Honours program.

Ideally examiners should not have close links, professional or personal, particularly in recent times, with the student’s supervisor/s.

Examiners’ reports will be sent to the School Honours Coordinator, who will ascertain if a third marker / Arbiter is required (see information on Arbiter/Arbitration process below). If required, the School Honours Coordinator, in consultation with the Dean, will select a third marker / arbiter. Students will not be provided final reports or grades until after the endorsement of results by the School Academic Committee (SAC).

### **Materials Sent to Examiners**

Materials forwarded by Schools to examiners need to include:

- a letter inviting the examiner to formally examine the thesis;
- a 150-200 word abstract of the thesis to be examined that contains the title and author of the work;
- an explanation as to which components of the degree contribute to the determination of the Honours Award and, specifically, the weight given to the research component;
- specific information concerning the School’s expectations of the nature, structure, length and presentation requirements of the research component of an Honours degree;
- the criteria by which the examiner is expected to evaluate the research component;
- information concerning the School’s expectations of the examiner (e.g. time frame by which examination needs to be completed (typically 3 weeks), what materials need to be forwarded back to the School to complete the examination process, how the examiner can advise the School as to whether they do or do not give their permission for their name to be released to the student at the conclusion of the examination process);
- a cover sheet that summarises the examiners’ score out of 100 and includes specified criteria for each potential score assigned (see Attachment 3 for an example) and;
- any other School-devised scoring materials.

### **The Use of Third Examiner (Arbiters)**

As per the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy, Part I clause (40), where there is a mark discrepancy of 10 or more marks between significant research component examiners or a difference in the examiner-recommended "grade", a third examiner will be used. The third examiner acts as an arbiter and following review of the thesis and examiner reports he/she determines a mark and grade; this is the final examination result.

## Appointment of Arbiters

As specified in the UWS Honours Policy, if there is a mark discrepancy of 10 or more marks between significant research component examiners or a difference in the examiner-recommended “grade”, a third examiner will be used. The third marker acts as an arbiter and following review of the thesis and examiner reports he/she determines a mark and grade, which is the final examination result.

## Arbitration Process and Outcomes

In the School of Education the procedures for the arbitration process are:

1. The arbiter reads a clean copy of the thesis determining an independent mark. After having determined an independent mark, the arbiter is given copies of the reports completed by examiners 1 and 2. After reading the reports, the arbiter reassesses all three marks determining a final mark for the thesis within the limits of the marks of Examiners 1 and 2. The arbiter then prepares the standard report on the quality of the thesis as well as a brief report explaining the decision in relation to the reports of examiners 1 and 2. The arbiter forwards the reports to the School Honours Coordinator who is responsible for submitting them to the School Academic Committee.

2. The arbiter’s reports, both the standard assessment report and the report outlining the reasons for their decision, will be sent to the supervisor and student after finalisation of the results.

Arbiters should be specialists in the thesis area, or be eminent, experienced academics with a strong background in supervising and examining Honours work.

## Processing Honours Award Levels

The total score across the thesis and the course work components received by the candidate determines the level of award for Honours. Graded coursework units only have marks proportionally added then averaged, before addition with the thesis mark. The School Honours Coordinator completes the School’s Finalisation of Level of Honours Award summary sheet providing a final mark out of 100 for each candidate, a detailed statement as to the calculation of the scores, and a breakdown of all award component scores. **However, the award of Honours Class I requires both a mark of 85-100% for the Honours Research component and a mark of 85-100% for the combined Research and Coursework components.**

Honours Class	Final Honours Mark
Class 1	➤ 85
Second Class Division 1	➤ 75
Second Class Division 2	➤ 65
Third	➤ 50

The School Academic Committee (SAC) undertakes the final endorsement of Honours.

## Example of Written Statements to Guide Examiners on Allocating a Score Out of 100

Please indicate the overall mark out of 100 (specify exact mark) you would award this thesis. Corresponding Honours Level of Award are given in the left column.

Honours Level of Award	Overall Assessment	Mark Range	Mark Awarded
Class I+	Excellent work, creative and original	95+	
Class I	Excellent with innovative ideas, but could be improved by revision.	90-94	
Class I-	Original and creative, with minor problems in writing.	85-89	
Class II Division I+	Very competent. No significant flaws in argument, presentation, analysis or data collection.	82-84	
Class II Division I	As above with minor flaws in one of two areas.	78-81	
Class II Division I-	Reasonably well done but with many minor flaws.	75-77	
Class II Division II+	No major problems, but fails to demonstrate more than adequate ability to handle the material.	72-74	
Class II Division II	Adequate overall, but major flaw in one area (e.g. literature review, writing style, design, analysis or conclusions).	68-71	
Class II Division II-	Major flaws in more than one aspect but shows some competence.	65-67	
Class III	Many major problems. Appears to understand major aspects of material but minimally acceptable.	50-64	
Fail Inadequate	Many major problems. Does not appear to understand major aspects of material.	25-49	
Fail Unmarkable	Incomplete, incomprehensible or otherwise unmarkable.	0-24	

### Appeal Against Level of Honours

As per the UWS Honours Policy, in the School of Education where the level of Honours is determined by both course work components and thesis, appeals against the level of Honours should be made to the Dean. The only grounds for appeal are those arising from procedural irregularity.

### Postgraduate Scholarship Application Process

The School's Research and Higher Degree Committee meet in the last week of November to rank scholarship applications. It is critical that Honours results are completed before this time as the UWS



Research Committee only consider applications from Honours students whose grades have been finalised by the School's Research and Higher Degree Committee.

Consequently, School Honours Coordinators and the School Academic Committee (SAC) need to ensure that all documentation pertaining to the recommended grade of each Honours candidate is received by the Chair of the School Research and Higher Degree Committee by the 2nd week of November

## Key Dates 2013 - Summary

Date 2013	Requirements
<b>21nd June</b>	Supervisors recommend potential examiners to School Honours Coordinator. Examiners are contacted by the Principal Supervisor in writing to seek a formal agreement to examine the thesis/research product. Once examiners have agreed to examine the thesis / research product, the Principal Supervisor sends the appropriate documentation to the School Honours Coordinator.
<b>26th June</b>	Before sending through the recommendations to the School Academic Committee for endorsement, the School Honours Coordinator has the option of discussing the recommendations with the School Research Committee in an advisory capacity. Recommendations of examiners are endorsed by the School Academic Committee (SAC).
<b>28th June</b>	Once endorsed by SAC, the School Honours Coordinator forwards recommendation of examiners to the Dean.
<b>4th October</b>	The candidate lodges copies of the thesis/research product with the appropriate school administration officer, who receipts submission of thesis/research product.
<b>7th October</b>	School Administrative Officer forwards a copy of materials to examiners and requests that the examination process be finalised within 3 weeks or 4 weeks maximum. The examination results need to be back no later than the end of the first week in November.
<b>1st Week of November</b>	Examiners' reports received. Arbiter / or arbitration panel engaged to deal with results requiring third marker or arbitration.
<b>2nd week of November</b>	School Honours Coordinator prepares and submits Finalisation of Level of Honours Award summary sheet to the Committee Officer for the School Academic Committee (SAC).
<b>28th November</b>	SAC Committee meets to determine the level of Honours to be awarded and reports results.
<b>4th week of November</b>	School's Research & Higher Degree Committee meets to rank scholarship applications.
<b>1st week of December</b>	Final grades lodged with the Registrar's Office.

## **Application for Honours Examination**

### **Guidelines**

Examiners must hold at least an MEd (Hons) and preferably a PhD, and have considerable experience and expertise in the substantive area of the thesis, or in the research methods used or theoretical issues explored. One examiner should be internal to UWS. The second examiner should be from outside UWS. Where a suitably qualified internal examiner is not available, an additional external examiner may be nominated.

Recommendation for Examination is to be completed by supervisors in consultation with the Honours Advisor. The Honours Advisor will submit the Recommendation for Examination to the Director of Research for Executive approval prior to posting the thesis to examiners.

It is UWS policy not to advise students of the membership of the examination panel prior to examination.

### **1. Student Details**

<b>Student Name</b>	
<b>Student Number</b>	
<b>Supervisory Panel</b>	
<b>Expected Submission Date</b>	

### **2. Thesis Title:**

### **3. Summary of topic area:**

### **4. FIRST EXAMINER**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Academic Qualifications</b>	
<b>Position</b>	
<b>Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Fax</b>	

<i>Email</i>	
<i>Has the examiner indicated that they can complete the examination in the required time?</i>	

A brief statement (150 words) detailing the examiner's experience and expertise in the substantive, theoretical or methodological areas related to the topic area.

#### 5. SECOND EXAMINER

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Academic Qualifications</i>	
<i>Position</i>	
<i>Mailing Address</i>	
<i>Telephone</i>	
<i>Fax</i>	
<i>Email</i>	
<i>Has the examiner indicated that they can complete the examination in the required time?</i>	

A brief statement (150 words) detailing the examiner's experience and expertise in the substantive, theoretical or methodological areas related to the topic area.

#### 6. THIRD EXAMINER

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Academic Qualifications</i>	
<i>Position</i>	
<i>Mailing Address</i>	
<i>Telephone</i>	

<b><i>Fax</i></b>	
<b><i>Email</i></b>	
<b><i>Has the examiner indicated that they can complete the examination in the required time?</i></b>	Yes

A brief statement (150 words) detailing the examiner’s experience and expertise in the substantive, theoretical or methodological areas related to the topic area.

**7. Certification**

I acknowledge that the nominated examiners have not participated in the research and development of the submitted thesis.

***Supervisor:***

*Signature*

*Date*

I acknowledge that the nominated examiners satisfy the guidelines for examiners.

**Honours Advisor:**

*Signature*

*Date*

**7. Approval of Examiners:**

***Director of Research:***

*Signature*

*Date*

# Honours Application Summary

School of Education

Applicant's Surname	Applicant's First name	Applicant's UWS student number (if applicable)	AAM (Must be 65+)	School Rating of Quality of Applicant's Statement of Intent 1 - Excellent 2 - Very Good 3 - Satisfactory 4. Marginally satisfactory 5- Poor	School Rating of Suitability / Quality of Applicant 1 - Excellent 2 - Very Good 3 - Satisfactory 4. Marginally satisfactory 5- Poor	Name of Proposed Supervisor /s	School Recommendation a-accept r-reject <i>(For rejected applicants note a brief rationale e.g. Supervisor cannot be appointed)</i>	SAC Determination a-accept r-reject

## Summary of Quality Assurance Procedures for the Appointment of Examiners

School of Education (Honours)

Student's Name	UWS Student number (if applicable)	Highest Academic Qualification of Internal Examiner	Highest Academic Qualification of External Examiner	Highest Academic Qualification of Additional Examiner and Status (internal or external) <i>(Applicable only if School unable to appoint an internal and external examiner)</i>	Rationale if School has been unable to appoint an internal and external examiner or if an examiner has been approved that does not hold either an Honours 1 <sup>st</sup> Class, M (Hons.) Professional Doctorate or PhD qualification in the substantive area