

1. Purpose

The Bachelor of Science Honours is accredited and coordinated by the Faculty of Science and Technology but students may be admitted from disciplines in the Faculty of Health and from the Menzies School of Health Research.

Regardless of discipline, all students have equitable access to resources and opportunities, and the responsibilities of supervisors to their students across all disciplines are the same. The learning outcomes and graduate attributes are the same for all candidates, regardless of the discipline of their project.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to facilitate a rewarding, productive and successful experience for both Honours supervisors and their students, and to ensure equitable access to opportunity for students.

The success of an Honours candidature relies heavily upon the success of the relationship between supervisor and student. A low achieving candidate cannot be supervised into an HD outcome, but a high achieving candidate can be disadvantaged by poor communication, an unfeasible project, a lack of adequate resources or unclear expectations. The role of a supervisor is to guide the development and scope of a project proposal, and advise and mentor the student towards their best achievement during the project's implementation. This can require patience, diplomacy, time for supervision and access to appropriate resources for the student to complete their project.

The supervisory relationship should be characterised by (for both parties):

- Professional, ethical and respectful behaviour,
- Clearly articulated roles, responsibilities and expectations, established early in the Honours candidature,
- A thorough understanding of the program requirements, and
- Provision of adequate commitment of time during planning, implementation and completion.

These guidelines aim to ensure:

- The respective roles of supervisor, student and Course Coordinator are clear and differentiated
- Honours project supervisors are as clear as possible about their duties and responsibilities, well before they take on the responsibility of supervising an Honours student, and
- Problems are dealt with early and by those most able to solve them.

Co-supervision is encouraged in order to:

- Manage risk,
- Manage staff workloads,
- Broaden opportunities for students, and
- Create professional development and supervisory training opportunities for staff.

The role of the Course Coordinator is to support the students and supervisor towards a successful completion of the Honours course. The Course Coordinator does not play any role in supervising the student.

Specifically, the role of the Course Coordinator includes:

- Assessing the credentials of applicants and approving admission to the course,
- Providing advice on course rules and policy to ensure they are adhered to,
- Advising on study plans and research training options,
- Approving supervisor agreements and project proposals,
- Convening proposal and final seminars, with the support of supervisors and students,
- Providing advice and direction to the supervisor and student at key times in the process of completing the Course requirements,
- Assisting with any supervision or student conflict issues,
- Considering and approving extension requests, and
- Implementing the thesis examination process.

2. Supporting documentation

In addition to these guidelines, it is expected that prospective Honours supervisors will be familiar with the requirements of the program and will have read and be familiar with the Honours Handbook - https://www.cdu.edu.au/files/2020-03/BSCIH%20Handbook%202020_3.pdf

Additional information relevant to Honours can be found in the following locations:

- On the Honours website – <https://www.cdu.edu.au/science-technology/information-technology/science-honours-program>
- In the CDU Common Course Rules - <https://www.cdu.edu.au/governance/doclibrary/index.php>
- In the CDU Grading Policy - <https://www.cdu.edu.au/governance/doclibrary/index.php>

3. The candidature schedule

An Honours candidature involves the stages described in the following pages, with the timeline for part-time students being pro rata over four semesters.

The Faculty will be promoting the Honours course to promising students throughout their degree. Disciplines chairs are encouraged to also promote opportunities within specific disciplines to their students. Ideally Honours supervisors will have commenced discussions with prospective students well before semester starts – ideally during the preceding semester.

3.1 Initiation and planning

Promotion, topic selection and supervisor appointment: It is expected that prospective Honours supervisors will have a project in mind before agreeing to supervise an Honours student. The timelines are short and the research experience of the candidate will be limited. It is for these reasons that prospective supervisors are requested to provide a brief project summary for publishing on the [Honours website](#) . A template for the description of Honours projects is

provided in Appendix 2. However, students often approach potential supervisors with potential projects, and this should be encouraged where appropriate and where adequate project resources can be identified.

Even if applicants meet the entry requirements, they are only admitted to the course if they have identified a project and a CDU academic who has agreed to supervise them, and the Course Coordinator has formally approved their admission.

Ethics clearances: For those projects requiring Human Ethics and/or Animal Ethics approval, it is expected that supervisors will have considered the time frames required for applications to be considered and approved (see Appendix 1). Delays in ethics clearances can be the cause of unnecessary extension requests during Honours candidatures and can create considerable anxiety to the students. In some cases, it is recommended that students consider deferring commencement until ethics clearances relating to their project have been lodged. Please refer to the Office of Research and Innovation (ORI) website for further information about the process and timelines for ethics clearance applications at <http://www.cdu.edu.au/research/ori/ethics>.

3.2 Admission and enrolment

Admission: Once a student has demonstrated that they meet the course entry requirements and has identified a supervisor and project, the Course Coordinator may approve admission to the course.

Study planning and enrolment: Candidates are required to complete 20 CP (Credit Points) of coursework units and 60 CP of research units. The planned timing for undertaking these units should be discussed with the Course Coordinator and Supervisor early. Honours research units, with the code SCI7xx *Honours Thesis*, cover work on the project, with the specific code used being determined by the discipline of the project. SID403 Research Skills is compulsory for all Honours students. The second course work unit should be chosen, in consultation with the supervisor, to provide research training specifically relevant to the student's discipline or to fill a specific identified need (e.g. training in statistics). A suggested study plan for the course can be found on the CDU website in the Course Catalogue. The students can then enrol in the coursework and research component of their Honours course.

Supervisory agreement: In order to ensure the student is equipped and supported to do the best of their ability with the research, a Supervisory Agreement is developed and signed (Appendix 3). The supervisory agreement is developed using the discipline requirements of the research project, and the experience and qualifications of the student. The Course Coordinator can provide advice to both parties about opportunities that will help to address any skills gaps apparent in the student's background. Students and supervisors are encouraged to consider research training activities while drafting the supervisory agreement. These may include activities such as attending (in person or online) literature searching or database skills, or auditing undergraduate intensives or units. These training activities are not assessable.

For students studying internally on campus, the supervisor will work with the relevant Faculty administration officer to provide access to a desk space, laboratory and/or other facilities in that Faculty, as required for each project.

3.3 Preparing the Research Proposal

During the preparation of the proposal document and presentation, the supervisor will assist the student with advice, regarding:

- Project structure, including hypothesis/aim and objectives,
- Key references,
- Methods and approach to be used,
- Realistic and suitable timeframes to complete each stage of the project,
- Required resources and where to access them,
- Editing of the proposal document, and
- Design and content of the proposal seminar presentation, including attending at least one rehearsal.

The Supervisor will communicate regularly with the student during the preparation of the proposal (e.g. weekly meetings or phone appointments, as negotiated and agreed by both parties). The Supervisor will provide comments on proposal drafts (typically between 1 and 3 drafts), up to the point of submission to the Course Coordinator.

The research proposal will include a timeline for stages of the research. This should be revisited frequently by student and supervisor to make sure adequate progress is maintained during candidature. The proposal should also include a list of all the resources needed for the successful completion of the project, indicating those that can be provided by the Supervisor and those that must be sought from elsewhere. During preparation of the research proposal the supervisor should determine if the student requires assistance with academic writing and communication. If so, the supervisor should insist the student has an assessment by ALLSP and include recommendations for workshop attendance in the Supervisory Agreement.

The Course Coordinator will provide feedback on the proposal and proposal seminar to both the Student and Supervisor. If the Course Coordinator does not believe the proposal meets the approval criteria (Appendix 4), the student may be advised to:

- Withdraw from the BSc (Hons) course and consider transferring to an alternative course
- Withdraw from the BSc (Hons) course and to re-enrol in the future, after further development of research skills or project development
- Reconsider their proposal and /or presentation and be given further time to prepare; an extension to the thesis submission date may also be considered at this time.

3.4 Undertaking the research

It is expected that the supervisor will provide appropriate training, assistance and support to the student during the development of practical activities and in the early stages of data collection – for example by attending an initial field trip, advising on project establishment, attending meetings to arrange clinical participation, interviews or testing etc. If progress is consistently slow and deadlines are not being met, supervisor and student should first attempt to identify why this is and remedy the situation, then consider calling on advice from the Course Coordinator if needed.

The supervisor will meet regularly (weekly or fortnightly, as agreed and depending on enrolment status) with the student to:

- provide advice on design and analysis for the study,
- recommend literature,
- help the student plan practical work (if applicable), such as field work, clinical work, lab work, interviews etc.,
- ensure formal approval of required fieldwork paper work or ethics clearances
- discuss progress of field work and early results as the project is implemented,
- help to resolve any complications that may occur (such as changes to methodology that may become necessary once the primary research has commenced)
- provide general support for the student on all matters relating to the research project
- discuss feed-back on written materials,
- review the project timeline and advise the student on how to meet it,
- monitor budget and expenditure, and
- review the proposed thesis structure.

3.4 Expenditure of operational funds

Each student is eligible to claim up to \$600 from the Faculty of Science and Technology for operational expenses related to their project. It is the supervisor's responsibility to source and provide any additional operational funds (i.e. > \$600) if required.

All expenditure has to be approved by the Supervisor. Once approved expenses will be reimbursed by the Faculty up to the value of \$600. If you or your student requires a tally of expenses, please email FST-Support@cdu.edu.au

Equipment purchased during the honours project from CDU funds remains the property of the University at completion of the project.

3.5 Work Health and Safety and related matters

Any laboratory, field work or clinical activities undertaken under the auspices of an Honours project must be approved according to the WHS procedures and policies. Documents can be requested from FST-Support@cdu.edu.au

Travel requests and all other documentation related to field work and travel must be completed by the student, and then checked and authorised by the supervisor and approved by the PVC of that student's discipline, before processing.

3.6 Preparation for thesis submission

Preparation for thesis submission: This is often a stressful period for both student and supervisor. Regular meetings are recommended, so that the supervisor can provide feedback and advice throughout this critical stage. Outside of meetings, the supervisor will spend considerable time reading and providing comments on drafts of the thesis. It is not the role of the supervisor to re-write sections of the thesis, as the thesis needs to be the student's own independent work. However, the supervisor will provide specific constructive feedback on completed written work which may include examples of writing style, suggestions on the structure and sequence of writing, suggestions on where more (or less) information is required. It is expected that students will endeavour to work actively to improve their drafts based on the feedback provided. It is strongly recommended that writing the thesis starts early, for example a draft of the methods can be written before the field work is commenced (and is a great basis for discussion with the supervisor) and then amended as necessary while results are being collected and analysed and while everything is fresh in the memory. Similarly a draft of the Introduction can be completed during the data collection phase. This approach can also help the student and supervisor develop a common view about the required writing style, referencing and layout. Students are encouraged to provide drafts of sections of the thesis to their supervisors as early as possible and should expect several cycles of drafts and feedback on each section before submission. This needs to be factored into timelines.

Final seminar: The Supervisor will advise the student on the content and design of the final results seminar. They will attend at least one rehearsal as well as the actual presentation, where possible. The supervisor will assist the student to integrate feedback received at the seminar into their final thesis, as appropriate. The supervisor will invite discipline colleagues to the seminar to assist with the provision of feedback and ensure appropriate staff attendance for marking of the seminar. The College will arrange and promote the seminar. At least 5 staff markers are required.

3.7 Submission

While there is no formal process of sign-off by the supervisor ahead of thesis submission, the supervisor will provide feedback on drafts of individual chapters and is expected to have reviewed the final draft of the whole thesis prior to submission. The student and supervisor need to discuss and agree on appropriate timelines for submission of a final draft (of the whole thesis or this can be of different sections) that will allow time for the supervisor to provide feedback and the student to incorporate into the thesis.

Completed theses ready for examination are emailed to the Faculty admin team FST-Support@cdu.edu.au and copied to the Course Coordinator.

3.8 Extension Policy

A common submission date is set for all students completing their thesis in a given semester (Appendix 1). If an extension is required, it must be requested and substantiated in writing to the Course Coordinator.

For extensions of up to two days and due to minor logistical or other reasons, these may be requested via email and sent to the Course Coordinator. The Course Coordinator has the authority to approve (or not) these requests.

For longer extensions, the student must complete an extension request form, and seek the support of their supervisor (Appendix 5). This request must be sent to the Course Coordinator, who will provide a recommendation to submit to the PVC for approval.

3.9 Examination

By the time of the final seminar, the supervisor, in consultation with the student will have identified three potential examiners (one as back up), checked directly with them on their availability and provided their names and contact details to the Course Coordinator.

No examiner shall have participated in the supervision of the candidate and at least one examiner shall be external to the Faculty. In exceptional circumstances, where a case can be made that it is not possible to obtain an external examiner, and that an examiner internal to the College should be appointed, this case may be presented in writing to the PVC.

Criteria for a suitable examiner include:

- Suitable research qualification (e.g. at least Honours and appropriate research experience),
- Knowledge and expertise in the topic of the thesis,
- Familiarity with the requirements of an honours degree,
- An absence of any conflict of interest with the supervisor(s), the student or the approach taken in the work,
- Awareness of the educative role of the examination process,
- Someone whose opinion is valued by the student,
- Availability to examine within a reasonable time frame, and
- At least one examiner external to CDU.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to contact potential examiners to check that they are available and willing to serve as an examiner.

Supervisors need to provide names and contact details of the three individuals (two examiners and one back-up examiner) they have arranged to examine the thesis. They should be expecting to receive a copy of the thesis for examination once it has been submitted by the student. Where possible, we ask that examiners are able to return the marking sheet (and annotated thesis if they wish) within 3 weeks.

Examiner information required:

- Name
- Email
- Phone
- Position

Please send to FST-Support@cdu.edu.au and copy in brett.murphy@cdu.edu.au

The examination process is the responsibility of the Course Coordinator.

When the assessment mark of the two examiners differs by more than 10%, the thesis will be sent to a third examiner and the average of the three marks will be the final thesis mark.

Appendix 1: Schedule for Bachelor of Science Honours candidature Appropriate for a full-time student completing in two semesters (part-time students normally complete over four semesters).

DATE	PHASE	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
Well prior to commencement of semester	Initiation & planning	<p>Frame project idea and publish on Hons website - applicants can approach staff in the field of interest to see if a project is available or possible. They do not necessarily have to do an advertised project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Animal Ethics and/or Human Ethics applications • Review Ethics committee meeting dates to ensure project approval will allow enough time to implement the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review relevant Honours project offerings of Honours website, or contact staff working in the discipline of interest • Discuss project with prospective supervisor (several projects and supervisor may be considered ahead of final decision) • Contact Hons Course Coordinator to notify of intention to enrol • Finalise project choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student
Prior to Commencement of semester	Preparing for admission and enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop enrolment plan (i.e. selection of coursework units) • Confirm appointment of supervisor • Apply for Course admission via SATAC • CC approves admission • Enrol in first coursework unit(s) • Enrol in first research unit(s) • Finalise access to resources (desk space, laboratory space) in relevant Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Supervisor • Course Coordinator can provide advice • Relevant Faculty admin officer
Semester 1 Weeks 1 - 7	Preparing Research Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature research • Seek advice on approach, design, methods, analysis etc. for your study • Review progress on ethics permissions • Hurdle assessment: Finalise research proposal and submit to Course Coordinator for evaluation (Week 3) • Complete Supervisory Agreement, including at least two (2) research training requirements, list of coursework units selected, other workshops as required, meeting schedule etc. • Finalise ethics approvals, if required • Confirm project timeline • Hurdle assessment: Present proposal seminar (Weeks 4-6) • Course requirement: Commence coursework unit (s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Supervisor • Course coordinator provides evaluation
Semester 1 Weeks 3 - 15	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on project • Regular meetings with supervisor(s) • Regular review of project timeline • Attend workshops as per supervisory agreement • Start thinking about thesis structure • Enrol in second course work unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Supervisor
Semester 2 Weeks 1 - 11	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on project • Regular meetings with supervisor(s) • Regular review of project timeline • Attend workshops as per supervisory agreement • Work on thesis structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Supervisor

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write thesis 	
Semester 2 Weeks 11 - 13	Submission preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research assessment item: Final project presentation • Potential seminar markers invited to seminar by supervisor (CC notified) ; seminar arranged and promoted by FST; at least 5 examiners required • Potential thesis examiners identified and names provided to Course Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Supervisor
Semester 2 Week 15	Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate feed-back from seminar (as appropriate), collate and submit thesis. • Research assessment item: Thesis submission on the Monday of Week 15 of semester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Supervisor
After submission	Examination, Submission of grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis dispatched to examiners • Completion of hurdle assessments confirmed • Coursework marks collated from unit coordinators • Seminar marks collated from final presentation • Thesis marks collated from examiners reports • Finals course mark and Class calculated (and moderated by appropriate academic staff). • Graduation Selection Report submitted to Academic Liaison Unit (ALU) • Student, supervisor notified of final result • Student permission sought regarding thesis lodgement in eSpace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Coordinator
	Consider publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some cases an honours project may be suitable for publication. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss this with their supervisor and, if the research is appropriate, to make a plan for how to progress the work toward publication in collaboration with the supervisor following Honours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and Supervisor

Honours: Potential Project Outline

Project Title: (required)	
Supervisor/s: (required)	
Contact Details: (required)	
Location: (required)	
Project timeline: (if relevant to project)	<i>e.g. project must be completed by December 2020</i>
Synopsis of project: (short paragraph)	
Ethics clearance: (required)	<i>Not applicable / in preparation / submitted / approved</i>
Scholarship/funding: (if available)	
Necessary skills or knowledge:	
Methodological approach:	

Email completed outline of potential project to FST-Support@cdu.edu.au at any time for promotion via the Honours website

Supervisor Agreement Form

Bachelor of Science Honours

The following information should be completed by the Student and Primary Supervisor at the commencement of the BSCI Honours course.

Student name:	Student ID:
Project title:	
Name of Principle Supervisor:	
Additional Supervisor:	
Specialist elective unit (code and title):	
If required, additional research training activities identified by the students, supervisor or course coordinator:	
Meeting arrangements: e.g frequency, responsibility, arrangements for meeting notes etc	

Supervisor has read the guidelines for supervisors and Honours handbook <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	Student has read Honours handbook and the the guidelines for supervisors <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Principle supervisor signature:	Student signature:
Date:	Date:

Completed Supervisory Agreement should be emailed to FST-Support@cdu.edu.au no later than the end of Week 3 of student's first semester of enrolment.

Faculty of Science and Technology
T 08 8946 6904
E FST-Support@cdu.edu.au
W cdu.edu.au

Appendix 4 – Process and criteria for evaluation of Honours Project Proposals

The proposal document and proposal seminar are hurdle assessments in the Honours program. Although not marked, this means that they must be completed to the satisfaction of the Honours Research Units coordinator, before the student will be recommended to continue with their project.

During the preparation of the proposal document and presentation, the supervisor is expected to assist the student with advice, regarding:

- Project structure, including aim and objectives,
- Key references,
- Methods and approach to be used,
- Editing required on the proposal document, and
- Design and content of the proposal seminar presentation, including attending at least one rehearsal.

This assistance is provided via regular collegial discussion and meetings. It is expected that the student and supervisor discuss the project generally well before the first semester of enrolment.

The Honours Course Coordinator will determine if a student is ready to pursue their research project, based upon:

- Advice of the student,
- Advice of the supervisor,
- Advice of other members of the relevant discipline (if required)
- The quality of the seminar presentation, and assessment of the quality of the project proposal.

Criteria for evaluating the quality of the proposal and the student's readiness to undertake the research project, and potential to successfully complete it, are:

1. Hypothesis/Aim and objectives that clear, logical, achievable and well justified,
2. Adequacy of resources (financial, physical, human, supervisory) to successfully complete the project,
3. Appropriateness of proposed methods for the project aims,
4. Appropriateness of the scope of the project for the time and other resources available to an Honours student,
5. Animal or human ethics clearance, or the likelihood of securing it within suitable time frame,
6. The student's ability to demonstrate appropriate conceptual and logical reasoning skills to successfully complete the project, with an appropriate level of independence, and
7. The student's ability to demonstrate a suitable level of written and oral communication skills to successfully complete the project.

The Honours Coordinator will make one of the following recommendations, based on this evaluation:

1. The student has a feasible project, is prepared, and is **advised to proceed** with the project as presented, OR
2. The student has a feasible project, but is not yet prepared and is **advised to undertake further preparation**, while enrolled and according to an agreed new timeline; this may include requiring a second presentation and /or proposal, OR
3. The student has an unfeasible project, or is not likely to be prepared within the framework of their current enrolment and is **advised to withdraw without academic penalty** – the student may be advised about an alternative course or professional experience.

As required, the Honours Course Coordinator will seek discipline-specific advice on the feasibility, appropriateness of methods etc. before making a recommendation.

