



Bachelor of Science Honours

Handbook for Students

Sem 2, 2026

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Faculty of Science and Technology



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1. About the Bachelor of Science (Honours) course

The Bachelor of Science (Honours) course is a stand-alone award, available to graduates with an undergraduate degree in a relevant science discipline (e.g., Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Environmental Science), who fulfill the entry requirements. An Honours degree is designed to give you a competitive advantage for employment, or to provide a first step in a research or academic career. Honours is the typical route to a postgraduate research degree, such as a PhD. The course provides an opportunity for you to:

- develop an advanced level of understanding about a specific field of research;
- gain experience and training in research techniques and principles;
- develop written and oral communication skills;
- learn and demonstrate project management skills; and
- work collaboratively on projects with peers, industry and/or government partners.

The major component of this course is a two semester (full-time), or four semester (part-time) research project. It can be done in a wide range of fields, including:

- environmental science (e.g., aquaculture, biochemistry, botany, marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecology, molecular biology, water resources, and zoology);
- biomedical science, social work and other allied health areas;
- sports science;
- chemistry;
- GIS and remote sensing; or
- information technology.

The other components of the course are two course-work units designed to develop specific research skills, including the communication of research results which are studied concurrently with the research project.

The program is fully flexible, offering:

- 1-year full-time study or 2 years part-time study;
- first or second semester start; and with
- internal or external study mode.

However, the choice of program may be constrained by supervisor and project availability.

Why Honours?

The Bachelor of Science (Honours) provides an opportunity for you to research a particular area in depth and gain experience in project management. Honours students are expected to successfully manage a complex project as well as demonstrate research skills and technical or clinical skills.

The course teaches you research techniques and principles, develops advanced information acquisition, analysis and problem-solving skills, and develops skills to effectively communicate the results of research in written and oral formats. You develop these skills through pursuing in depth research, under the guidance of experienced researchers, with coursework also targeted to provide appropriate research training. While undertaking your research project, you are mentored and advised by experts in your discipline.

As well as providing advanced, and often a prerequisite, preparation for work in industry and government, an Honours course is also essential preparation for postgraduate research at Master and Doctoral levels. Honours research projects at Charles Darwin University may be hosted by a range of Faculties and Institutes including the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods, or the Menzies School of Health Research.

Opportunities for Honours graduates exist in careers/roles such as scientist; environmental scientist; exercise and sports scientist; environmental manager; exercise and sport scientist; biomedical scientist; teacher; scientific technical officer; and laboratory manager. Students gain professional recognition and are introduced to research practices and culture. Many students develop professional networks with researchers and managers in industry and in government during their Honours research.

2. Role of the Bachelor of Science Honours Coordinator

The Bachelor of Science Honours course is coordinated through the Faculty of Science and Technology. Projects and supervisors are available from a range of disciplines and Faculties across the University. The role of the Honours Course Coordinator is to support you, and your supervisor(s), towards your successful completion of the course. The Honours Coordinator does not play any role in supervising you.

Specifically, the role of the Honours 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 supervision agreements and research proposals;
- convening research proposal and results 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.

If you are thinking about doing Honours, you should contact the Honours Coordinator at an early stage.

The Honours Coordinator is Dr Natalie Rossiter-Rachor. Natalie can be reached at:

- **Email:** natalie.rossiter@cdu.edu.au
- **Phone:** (08) 8946 6469
- **Office:** CDU Casuarina campus, Yellow 2.1.02

Administrative support for Honours students (e.g., providing inductions, help organising seminars, building access, reimbursing project expenses etc) is provided by the Faculty of Science and Technology administration team (fst-support@cdu.edu.au).

3. Role of the project supervisor

Your supervisor(s) has responsibility for overseeing, advising and guiding your research project, the preparation of your seminars, and the production of your thesis. Your supervisor(s) will ensure that you receive clear direction as to the aim(s) of the project and that the project is achievable as an Honours project.

Your principal supervisor needs to be a CDU academic staff member experienced in undertaking research. They are responsible for the administration of the project and supporting the student's work on the project. Students may have more than one supervisor, and this is particularly advisable when the additional supervisors have recognised expertise in the area of study, or the project is multidisciplinary. Associate supervisors may be from CDU or from outside agencies with relevant expertise. In some cases, associate supervisors can provide additional resources for the project through their agency. Examples of institutions which have been involved with projects in the past are the NT Government, AIMS, NT Parks and Wildlife, CSIRO and the NT Museum.

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.

At the commencement of the project, you and your principal supervisor should work together to prepare a supervision agreement, which sets out the expectations and responsibilities of both you and your supervisor. A template for the supervision agreement is available via Learnline (you will have access to the Honours Learnline site from the beginning of your first semester). If you want this document before you have access to Learnline, ask the Honours Coordinator to email you a copy.

Some tips for managing your supervisor (also called upwards management)

This is your chance to undertake the research required to complete your thesis and you should not be reserved about asking for exactly what you need. Don't wait for your supervisor to notice that you need something, and don't wait until everything is perfect before discussing your work with your supervisor.

As much as possible, identify your own needs, so you know who to ask for help. Get to know how your supervisor works. Is it best to contact them by phone, email, Teams? When are they most busy and therefore least likely to be receptive?

Choose the best communication method. Email is often the best for university academics. Also, email gives both you and the recipient more time to put thought into your communication. You also then have a record of agreements.

Prepare for meetings! Taking a written list of topics that you want to talk about, a draft section, or written summary of your problem makes it easier for your supervisor to help, and for you

both to get the most out the meeting time. Find a system that works for you. I used to bring along a set of 5-8 PowerPoint slides that set the scene of what I'd been up to, showed a recent result, then outlined the problems that I was having/ input that I was looking for. The main thing is to find out what works for you (and your supervisor(s)).

Do not avoid your supervisor because you 'don't know enough'. Knowing enough is not the issue. At the beginning of your project especially, it is highly likely that your supervisor will know more about the theory and practicalities behind your project than you do, or has additional skills in writing, research or analysis. At least you would hope so! So just accept that as a given. The issue is that you get exactly the help you need, to do the best possible job you can, in the available amount of time. Don't squander precious time waiting until things are perfect. The other point is that hopefully, you know more about the subject matter than your supervisor by the end of the project.

Be as clear as you can be about what you want from a meeting with your supervisor. This will help make sure you get the assistance you need.

Expect to get lost. It is a normal part of the research process. Seek your supervisors help whenever you get lost.

Put thought into the suitability of different people for different problems. It is unrealistic to think that your supervisor will be able to provide all the help and insight you need. Consult widely, and build a network (including other Honours or PhD students).

Don't be put off by a negative response. It is important to develop professional resilience. It may be that you asked the wrong person for what you needed, or that you asked someone for whom how they provide feedback is not important.

Seek support from a range of people, in addition to your supervisor. Your candidature is an opportunity to build your professional network. Plus, it is unlikely that your supervisor will have all the answers.

4. Course structure and study plans

Students should develop a study plan in discussion with their supervisor(s) and the Honours Coordinator at the commencement of their course. Students should refer to the CDU Course Catalogue for the appropriate study plan for their discipline area. Over the duration of their course, students need to complete a total of 80 credit points, comprising 60 credit points of Honours Thesis units (each 10 credit points). The course structure also includes a core coursework unit on research writing (SCI403, 10 credit points), and an elective coursework unit relevant to the discipline (10 credit points).

Honours Thesis #10A (SCI701)

Honours Thesis #10A (SCI701) is designed to set you up for your project. There are four key deliverables during this unit: (1) the student and their supervisor prepare a student-supervisor agreement document, (2) an outline for a research proposal, (3) the delivery of the research proposal and literature review, and (4) a presentation of your research proposal. Given the purpose of this unit, it **must be taken in your first semester of your Bachelor of Science Honours**.

Honours Thesis #10B-E (SCI702-705)

Honours Thesis #10B-E (SCI702-705) are for you to work on your research project. These units have no core deliverables other than work that contributes towards the delivery of your final thesis. The research process is not always a linear one. While there are word counts associated with these units, these were required for administrative purposes only. Please stay in regular contact with your supervisor and ensure that you are working towards delivering a high-quality thesis.

Honours Thesis #10F (SCI706)

Students must have completed SCI701 and SCI702 before enrolling in SCI706, Thesis #10F. This unit must be taken in the final semester of your degree. It is in this unit where you (1) submit your thesis and (2) deliver your final Research Results Seminar. The scores for these two deliverables are applied across SCI702-706. The written thesis is worth 95% of these marks and the presentation is worth 5%.

Research Skills (SID403, compulsory coursework unit)

[SID403 Research Skills is a compulsory core unit for all Honours students](#). It enhances the academic, research and professional skills of students. The unit consists of three components: research writing, analysis planning, and research communication. Students learn and practice these critical skills which are required for the successful production of the Honours thesis, the key assessable component of the Bachelor of Science Honours course. *For students starting in semester 1, it is recommended that you take this unit in your first semester.*

Specialist elective unit (coursework unit)

Honours students select **one specialist elective** relevant to their discipline area of study. The specialist elective should complement their research project and unit choice should be discussed with the project supervisor and the Honours Coordinator. In many instances, you may benefit from increased skills in data analysis and statistics. As such, for many students, **ENV511 Real-World Statistics and Data Reasoning** is recommended. Otherwise, please discuss 400 or 500 series units with your project supervisor and Honours Coordinator. **Coordinator approval is required for enrolment in the electives other than ENV511.**

5. Applications and enrolment

Entry requirements

Entry requirements for the Bachelor of Science Honours course are:

- undergraduate degree in a relevant science discipline; and
- GPA ≥ 5 .

Prospective students should identify both the area of investigation for their research project and their supervisor when they apply for Honours. 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 Honours Coordinator has formally approved their admission. Students who have a GPA that exceeds 4 may be admitted if a supervisor can be found who agrees to supervise the project.

How to apply

Information on applying to study at CDU can be found here:

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/study>

Applications for places in CDU courses, including the Bachelor of Science Honours, are made through the SATAC website: www.satac.edu.au. Select the 'Postgraduate' option and search or navigate to the Bachelor of Science Honours course at CDU. There are two SATAC codes for the Bachelor of Science Honours course:

- **1BH017.** This is for students who plan to study at the Casuarina Campus. This is also the code students should use if they are external but will be supervised by staff associated with the Casuarina Campus. This includes the Menzies School of Health Research.
- **1BH018.** This is for students who plan to study at the Alice Springs Campus. This is also the code students should use if they are external but will be supervised by staff associated with the Alice Springs Campus. Applicants will be contacted by CDU admissions once their application has been processed by SATAC.

The application process is as follows:

1. Identify a project and supervisor;
2. Discuss application with Honours Coordinator and supervisor;
3. Apply through SATAC (domestic students) or the CDU International Office (international students);
4. Application goes to the CDU Admissions Team who will contact the student;
5. Submit the following details to the Honours Coordinator:
 - name of CDU academic who has agreed to supervise;
 - brief overview (one or two paragraphs) outlining the proposed project aims and objectives and work to be undertaken;
6. Once a student has demonstrated that they meet the course entry requirements and has identified a supervisor and project, the Honours Coordinator may approve admission to the course.

Enrolment (and issues enrolling in units)

Students can enrol once their admission to the course has been confirmed. They should discuss their study plan with their supervisor, and Honours Coordinator, if necessary, prior to enrolment.

There are detailed instructions for activating a student account and enrolling in units on the CDU website: www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/student-admin.

Closing dates for enrolment and other important dates are also available on the Student Central website: www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/important-dates.

It is important to note that enrolment in units must be finalised by the census date (typically week 4 of the semester). If you are having issues with enrolling in issues, please contact enrolmenthelp@cdu.edu.au (and include dylan.irvine@cdu.edu.au) and clearly document your problem and any relevant context. i.e., (1) provide your degree, (2) the unit code that you are having issues with, and (3) the unit codes that you have already completed/already been able to enrol in.

Example enrolment (full time)

There are four main ways that students may take the Bachelor of Science (Honours).

These depend on whether students are **full-time/part time**, and if they start in **semester 1/semester 2**. Tables 1 and 2 below include example enrolment pathways for full-time students. In the pathways below, ENV511 – Real World Statistics and Data Reasoning is suggested as the elective unit. For other options, please contact the course coordinator. Also note that taking a semester 2 elective changes the enrolment options.

Please note that part-time enrolments will need to balance the fact that some units (see SID403 and ENV511 below) are only run in semester 1.

Table 1: Example enrolment for full time, semester 1 starter. Preferred elective*.

First honours semester (Semester 1)	Second honours semester (Semester 2)
SID403 – Research Skills	SCI703 – Honours Thesis C
ENV511 – Real World Statistics and Data Reasoning*	SCI704 – Honours Thesis D
SCI701 – Honours Thesis A	SCI705 – Honours Thesis E
SCI702 – Honours Thesis B	SCI706 – Honours Thesis F

Table 2: Example enrolment for full time, semester 2 starter. Preferred elective*.

First honours semester (Semester 2)	Second honours semester (Semester 1)
SCI701 – Honours Thesis A	SID403 – Research Skills
SCI702 – Honours Thesis B	ENV511 – Real World Statistics and Data Reasoning*
SCI703 – Honours Thesis C	SCI705 – Honours Thesis E
SCI704 – Honours Thesis D	SCI706 – Honours Thesis F

6. Getting started

The Honours year is designed so that you complete a major research component, within two semesters (full-time equivalent). For that reason, you and your supervisor(s) need to plan the research project and course carefully. Below are several areas that should help to streamline and simplify the Honours experience.

It is strongly recommended that you have agreed on a project with your supervisor at least four weeks prior to the start of semester. This will ensure that you are ready to commence at the start of semester and will be able to complete and submit your project proposal, and give your proposal seminar, on time. The Honours course is relatively short, so timing and planning are very important! You are strongly encouraged to discuss the timing of the different components of your research with your supervisor(s) and the Honours Coordinator, so that you know when you have to achieve milestones towards your research goals. To avoid problems associated with inappropriate experimental design, it is strongly recommended that you discuss the design and expected data analyses of your experiments or observations with researchers who are experienced in these areas. Honours students are strongly encouraged to attend any tutorials offered relating to the use of computer software and statistics packages relevant to their studies.

You and your supervisor must consider, at an early stage in the project, if any ethics clearances are required (for research involving human or animal subjects) and factor time required to obtain ethics clearances into your timeline. In some situations, this will mean you or your supervisor will need to have applied for ethics clearance prior to commencement of your candidature. Your supervisor can advise whether this will be necessary.

Honours project timeline

Below is an example timeline noting that the terminology of First and Final semester is used noting that part time students will typically complete the Bachelor of Science Honours over two years.

Timing	Phase
At least four weeks prior to commencement of semester	Initiation and planning of project
Several weeks prior to commencement of semester	Applications for admission and enrolment
First semester: week 1	Workplace inductions; preparation of supervision agreement (due by 9am Mon of week 3)
First semester: weeks 1–2	Delivery of research proposal structure (due by 9am Mon of week 3)
First semester: weeks 3–8	Preparation and delivery of research proposal seminar (due 9am Mon week 9)
First semester: week 2–Final semester: week 11	Research
Final semester: weeks 10–13	Preparation and delivery of results seminar (due weeks 11–13)
Final semester: Monday, week 15	Submission of thesis

Research training activities

You are encouraged to consider, in consultation with your supervisor(s) and early in your project, additional research training activities that you may require. These may include activities such as attending (in person or online) training sessions focussed on literature searching or database skills. These training activities are not assessable. There are many training activities available via the library. Attending seminars from visiting academics can also be a great way to see how to deliver an engaging research seminar.

Desk space

If you are studying internally, i.e. on campus, your supervisor can work with the relevant Faculty administration team to provide access to a desk space in that Faculty. In the first instance, talk to your supervisor, honours coordinator, and contact the Faculty of Science and Technology administration team (FST-support@cdu.edu.au) for advice about the availability of desk space.

Research expenses

Each student is eligible to claim up to \$300 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. >\$300) if required.

All expenditure must be first approved by your supervisor and the head of Environment (Carla.Eisemberg@cdu.edu.au). The process for students making purchases (and seeking reimbursement):

1. Obtain written approval from supervisor
2. Provide the approval from 1 to the head of Environment,
3. Once approvals from both 1. And 2., make purchases, and contact the Faculty of Science and Technology administration team (FST-support@cdu.edu.au) to claim a reimbursement.

Alternatively, after 1. and 2. above, staff may make the purchase on a CDU Corporate Card and contact FST Support for a journal transfer.

Please note that the funding may be available on a first come, first serve basis and that equipment purchased during the Honours project from University funds remains the property of the University at completion of the project.

Workplace health and safety, including fieldwork

Any laboratory, fieldwork or clinical activities undertaken as part of an Honours project must be approved by the relevant Faculty.

All documentation relating to fieldwork and travel must be completed by the student, checked and authorised by the supervisor and approved by Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty. Your supervisor can provide more information.

For some projects, students may need to go into the field to collect data. Depending upon the project, fieldwork may be required only occasionally, or it may be a regular and integral part of the research. The actual requirements of the process depend upon the nature and location of the fieldwork.

As the Honours course is hosted by the Faculty of Science and Technology, students doing fieldwork for their project will need to follow the guidelines and procedures of this Faculty. Please email FST-support@cdu.edu.au for the relevant forms and information and talk to your supervisor about what is required.

Ethics clearances

Any project which involves researching animals or humans will require CDU ethics approvals. This process can be time consuming, so students and supervisors should start this process as soon as the research project has been established. If you need more information about ethics, contact CDU's research ethics team (ethics@cdu.edu.au).

Animal research ethics

Research involving animals must follow established procedures and guidelines. Students and supervisors should refer to information on CDU's Animal Ethics Committee, found by Googling "CDU Animal Ethics Committee". This includes details of meeting and submission dates, forms and guidelines for applications.

The objective of the Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) is to ensure the humane care of animals used for scientific purposes under the auspices of Charles Darwin University. The AEC reviews proposals for the use of animals for scientific purposes and monitors the care and the use of animals.

Honours students conducting research projects involving vertebrate animals will need to obtain approval from the AEC for their project. The supervisor will be listed on the application as the Principal Investigator, and the student will also be listed as an Investigator on the project. However, even though the supervisor is the Principal Investigator, students are encouraged to download the application form from the University's AEC website and complete the first draft of the application before passing it to their supervisor for completion. The University's Animal Welfare Officer can assist in this process and should be consulted if there is any doubt about the most appropriate procedures to use. If the project lasts more than one year (as would be the case for a part-time student), a Progress Report will be submitted at the end of the first year. On completion of the project, a Final Report must be provided to the AEC, and this must include details of the total number of animals used in the project. Students proposing to work with animals should discuss ethics approval with their supervisor at the earliest opportunity because it may take some time to obtain AEC approval, and the work involving animals cannot begin before approval is granted. If the supervisor has ongoing research in the area of the project, then it may be possible to add the student to a previously approved project using a "Project Personnel Amendment Form". The CDU AEC currently meets six times per year, and applications must be lodged approximately two weeks before each meeting (meeting dates and deadlines for submitted applications are posted on the

website). As stated above, projects must be approved before work with animals can commence.

Animal ethics issues are an integral component of research using animals, and they cannot be taken lightly. Breaches of the Code of Conduct carry serious consequences. Students should, however, consider the AEC as a source of information and advice, rather than a bureaucratic obstacle that has to be overcome. The Committee members have a broad range of expertise and experience within animal experimentation and ethics issues. The aim of the committee is not to impede research, but rather to assist students by making sure that animal research is conducted with the appropriate respect and care. Learning about animal ethics issues is an important component of the research training of all scientists who use animals in their research careers. Most funding agencies require approval from an ethic committee as a condition for funding, and the Parks and Wildlife Commission requires ethics approval before permits to conduct scientific research on native animals are issued. The information required on the application is straightforward and, regardless of AEC requirements, these issues should have already been planned well in advance for the sake of an orderly and well managed research project. It is important that the form is filled in completely and carefully and with sufficient detail so that the procedures can be understood by the committee. Students should note the following important points:

All research involving vertebrate animals requires AEC approval, even if it is fieldwork which is purely observational in nature.

Online animal ethics training is offered by the University, and if you are using vertebrate animals in your project, then you will be expected to complete the online training session.

Human research ethics

Students and supervisors should refer to information on CDU's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), found by Googling "CDU Human Research Ethics Committee". This includes details of meeting and submission dates, forms and guidelines for applications.

The University has a duty of care toward members of the university community and also toward members of the general community where the University's activities impact upon them. The primary purpose of ethical review is for the protection of the welfare and rights of participants in research and other activities, and also non-participants who may be affected by the activities. This objective is based on the principle of respect for the inherent dignity and autonomy of individuals. Historically, the development of ethics committees to ensure protection of participants in research was in response to situations in which the welfare and rights of participants were not well protected. Where involvement of individuals has a potential for infringing basic ethical principles, review by an ethics committee is warranted. Protection of the welfare and rights of participants entails scrutiny of the impact of research and other projects on participants' rights in relation to the following:

- **Privacy.** Claims to privacy are part of the claim that the autonomy of each individual should be protected and his or her integrity respected. Individuals should not be interfered with without their consent and they should have a measure of control over their own privacy.
- **Confidentiality.** Individuals have a right to expect that their wishes in regard to information given to another party in confidence will be respected.
- **Avoidance of harm.** Project managers have an obligation to protect the right of individuals to be free of risk of harm, unless the risk has been explained and accepted,

and can be justified in terms of the benefits likely to accrue as a result of the project. The term "harm" includes any discomfort, inconvenience, mental, physical or emotional distress, suffered by participants.

With respect to research and similar activities which involve humans, CDU fulfils its duty of care through the establishment of a system of ethical review of such activities. The system of ethical review conforms to national guidelines established and published by the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC). CDU recognises that ethical review of research and other activities undertaken under its auspices is conducted at many levels and by various bodies and individuals. Researchers undertaking research themselves explicitly or implicitly conduct an ethical review of their research. Peer review is also an established mechanism at the University, including formally through Office of Research and Innovation committees and university ethics committees. The CDU HREC is an important mechanism in assisting the University to meet its duty of care through the identification of ethical issues which need to be addressed by researchers, lecturers and students, and through its educative role vis a vis applicant. The HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the NHMRC National Statement on ethical conduct in research involving humans.

All University staff and students who intend to undertake research involving humans are required to obtain ethics clearance from the HREC. Where ethical clearance is required for projects funded or administered by the Research Committee, funds will not be released until ethical clearance has been obtained. Ethical clearance for research must be obtained prior to the commencement of activities involving humans. Where applications are submitted to the Office of Research and Innovation Ethics Committee, that committee may issue a provisional clearance, which enables commencement of activities involving humans, pending a final clearance by the HREC. The HREC guidelines assist further with the identification of projects which must be submitted to the HREC for review.

Honours students conducting research projects involving humans must obtain prior approval from the HREC. The committee currently meets seven times per year, and applications must be lodged well in advance of each meeting. Projects must be approved by the HREC before research projects involving humans can commence.

Application forms, meeting dates and other information can be downloaded from the HREC website.

7. Assessment items

Timeline of key tasks and assessments

The research project is normally completed over two semesters (full-time) or four semesters (part-time). If you want to switch from full-time to part-time (or vice versa) part-way through the course, you should discuss this with your supervisor and the Honours Coordinator.

The table below shows the due dates for the key research tasks and assessment items (and their contribution to the final mark for the Honours Thesis units (SCI702-SCI706)).

Task or assessment item (overall %)	Unit	Due date
Supervision agreement (0%)	SCI701	First sem: Mon 9am of week 3
Research Proposal Outline (0%)	SCI701	First sem: Mon 9am of week 3
Research Proposal Seminar (2.5%)	SCI701	First sem: Mon 9am of week 9
Research Proposal/ Literature Review (10%)	SCI701	First sem: Mon 9am of week 12
Results seminar (3.125%)	SCI702/6	Final sem: By end of week 13
Honours thesis (59.375%)	SCI702/6	Final sem: Mon 9am of week 15

The remaining 25% of the honours marks are associated with SID403 and your elective unit.

Extension requests and late submissions

A big part of a research thesis is task management! i.e., you can't control time, but you can manage your tasks and how long you spend on them.

Common submission dates are set for all students, and these are expected to be adhered to. The due dates differ depending on whether you are a full-time or part-time student, so if you are unsure of any due dates, please contact the Honours Coordinator for clarification.

Extension requests

If you are going to be unable to meet your due date, let the Honours Coordinator know as soon as possible, as there may be scope for you to get an extension, depending on your circumstances. However, extension requests are only granted in response to circumstances beyond your control. Examples include extended illness or injury, carer's leave, or sudden changes in your employment. For example, not allowing enough time for your supervisor(s) to provide feedback is not a circumstance beyond your control. However, your manager leaving, and suddenly becoming the manager with additional responsibilities could be justification for an extension. You should be communicating with your supervisors about when you need to submit (calendar reminders are a good idea for this), when you will require their feedback, and when they will be able to provide feedback. Extension requests after the due date will not be considered, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

For extensions of up to 2 days, and due to minor logistical or other reasons, an extension request can take the form of an email (explaining the reasons why the request is required), sent to the Honours Coordinator, who has the authority to approve (or not) a short (≤ 2 day) extension.

For extensions exceeding 2 days, students must complete the extension request form, and seek the support of their supervisor. Appropriate evidence (e.g., medical certificate) should be sent along with the request. The request must be sent to the Honours Coordinator, who will provide a recommendation to submit the request to the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Science and Technology for consideration.

The extension request form is available via Learnline (you will have access to the Honours Learnline site from the beginning of your first semester). If you want this document before you have access to Learnline, ask the Honours Coordinator to email you a copy.

Late penalties

The penalty for late submissions (i.e. without an extension) is 5% per day.

Key task: Supervision agreement

Due date: Friday of week 2 in first semester of the course.

Candidates must have a primary (main) supervisor from CDU's Faculty of Science and Technology but may also have additional supervisors within or external to the Faculty or the University. Students should consult regularly with their supervisor(s) for guidance and feedback on their work. It is recommended that you negotiate a schedule of regular meetings with your supervisor. It is typical for students to meet with their supervisor(s) weekly for full-time students, or fortnightly for part-time students. Students should seek advice from their supervisor regarding all aspects of their project, including the experimental design, methodology and the structure and format of their thesis. The supervisor should read drafts of the major sections of the thesis as they are prepared and return these to the candidate with comments.

Discuss and complete a supervision agreement with your supervisor at the beginning of your project, using the template provided on Learnline (you will have access to the Honours Learnline site from the beginning of your first semester). If you want this document before you have access to Learnline, ask the Honours Coordinator to email you a copy.

Your supervision agreement must be submitted to the Honours Coordinator via the Learnline submission point.

Assessment 1: Research Proposal Outline (SCI701)

Assessment contribution to final mark: 0% (i.e. hurdle assessment)

Due date: Friday of week 2 in first semester of the course.

The Research Proposal Outline is a *brief document* that demonstrates that you are planning your research proposal and literature review. The proposal and literature review are important stages of your honours project as they help you refine your research questions (the proposal) and to get across the literature on your research topic (a literature review).

The Research Proposal Outline is also an opportunity for you to write a convincing 'elevator pitch' style description of your project. You may find this useful to help you explain to people who may ask what your project is about. The expectation is a short document, i.e., ~300 words that includes the details below.

Mini proposal

- Definition of the research problem (~150 words).
 - What is your research question/ the topic of your research?
 - Why is it important/ why are you working on this topic?
 - What is the significance of the research?
- Describe how you will conduct your research (~100 words)
 - What methods will you use to solve the problem? This can be approximate, as we know that you are still developing this. However, high-level summary of approaches should be simple enough to describe (i.e., statistical analyses, numerical modelling, a systematic literature review, etc.).
 - What data/ resources will you need?

Approach to literature review and review structure

- Provide a skeleton for the proposal and literature review. i.e., what are the key headings?
- Provide an overview of how you will find the relevant literature.

Assessment 2: Research Proposal Seminar (SCI701)

Assessment contribution to honours mark: 2.5% (20% of SCI701)

Due date: Friday week 8 in first semester of the course.

The proposal seminar is a short (10-15 minutes, plus including 5 minutes for questions) seminar intended to inform staff and fellow students of the proposed research program. The seminar accounts for 20% of the marks for SCI701 (2.5% overall). The Research outline seminar provides:

- a great opportunity to deliver a research seminar; and
- opportunities to receive suggestions for improving the research project from other experienced academics and peers attending the seminar.

Students should work with their supervisors on the content and presentation of the seminar. For example, it is expected that your supervisor would watch you give a practice seminar and provide feedback. The marks breakdown for the seminar will be as follows:

- Background and context (20%)
- Research aims and objectives (5%)
- Explanation of methodology/ research approach (25%)
- Timeline and milestones (10%)
- Potential for impact/ significance of the work (10%)
- Anticipated challenges and contingency plans (10%)
- Quality of slides (10%)
- Quality of delivery (10%)

Throughout the Bachelor of Science Honours course, you are strongly encouraged to attend proposal and results seminars of your fellow Honours students, as well as other academic seminars that are delivered at the University. This will help you develop an understanding of what makes a good seminar.

Assessment 3: Research Proposal (SCI701)

Assessment contribution to final mark: 10.0% (80% of SCI701)

Due date: Friday of week 12 in first semester of the course.

A research proposal (that includes a literature review) is a key deliverable in SCI701. The research proposal should be approximately 2000-3000 words in length (excluding references). The Research Proposal should help you to plan your research and to assist you in the writing of your final thesis (i.e., your literature review should be very helpful in crafting your thesis introduction). There is an example template at the end of this document that you may wish to use. Please note that you are welcome to adapt this template to suit your project, as every project is different.

In general, your proposal should include the following:

- Outline the project background, aims and design, with appropriate referencing of the published literature.
- 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.
- Description of any ethics clearances required (e.g., animal ethics, human ethics) and research permits (e.g., NT Government).
- A timeline (Gantt chart) for stages of the research. This should be revisited by student and supervisor to make sure adequate progress is maintained during candidature.
- Any contingency plans should the project become difficult to deliver as intended (e.g., due to delays in approvals, issues with data collection, etc.).

These headings are suggestions only. There is a research proposal template which you might find helpful; but again, this is not intended to be prescriptive. Please note that this document represents a reasonable overall percentage of the honours mark (10%). As such, this should be a highly polished document that clearly demonstrates that you have engaged with the relevant literature and have a clear plan for the research, including contingency plans.

Assessment 4: Results Seminar (SCI706)

Assessment contribution to final mark: 3.125% (5% of SCI702-706)

Due date: Weeks 11–13 in final semester of the course.

The results seminar is a 20-minute presentation (with an additional 10 minutes for questions) which is assessed. It gives you an opportunity to clearly and succinctly present your results to an audience with broad interest and to answer questions from that audience.

The seminar will usually be held at least a week before your thesis is due for submission, so you have sufficient time to make minor clarifications or adjustments to your thesis in response to any feedback received after the results seminar. The Honours Coordinator will contact you, and ask you to liaise with the Faculty of Science and Technology administration team (FST-support@cdu.edu.au) to organise a suitable date/time and venue, and publicise the seminar within the Faculty.

The results seminar is assessed by at least five academics, using a rubric available to you. Details on this rubric, and other assessment information are available in Sections 10-16.

Your honours Results Seminar will be marked on the nine aspects below (each out of 10). Your overall mark for your Seminar will be calculated as the average across at least five academics who attend the seminar:

1. Seminar presentation (clarity of voice, eye contact).
2. Appropriate use of graphic and visual content (including necessary clarification of details).
3. Quality (clarity and accuracy) of explanation of underlying theory and significance of the questions, hypotheses, aims or objectives addressed.
4. Quality (clarity) of linkages made between study design and underlying theory.
5. Discussion of appropriateness of methods chosen and understanding of any limitations or constraints.
6. Clarity of presentation of results, including demonstration of relevance to the stated questions, hypotheses, aims or objectives.
7. Quality (clarity) of conclusions in relation to overall project aims or objectives.
8. Response to audience questions (including understanding of questions and the quality and relevance of responses).
9. Ability to pace the presentation to cover components adequately, keeping within the time allocated. (Note: seminars should run 25 minutes, including time for a few questions. Students should not be marked down here if their seminar attracts interest and many questions).

Assessment 5: Honours Thesis (SCI706)

Assessment contribution to final mark: 59.375% (95% of SCI702-706)

Due date: Monday of week 15 in final semester of the course.

The Honours thesis is the major assessable outcome of the research project. It is worth 95% of the mark for the Honours thesis units SCI702-SCI706 (59.375% overall). It must not be longer than 20,000 words, not including references and any appendices; however, most modern Honours theses are typically much shorter than this, reflecting a trend in science towards concise writing. A target of 6,000 to 12,000 words is recommended, especially if a manuscript format is used (see below).

Thesis structure

Thesis structure will vary considerably depending on the project undertaken, and the field of research. The results of the thesis project may be in a range of forms, including a research report, or systematic review and/or meta-analysis.

Students are urged to consult with their supervisor(s) about the format, referencing and editing, but are reminded that it is not the supervisor's responsibility to write or re-write all or part of the work.

There are two main formats that students may consider:

1. **Manuscript style (preferred):** The recommended format of the thesis, is in the format of an academic journal paper. If students select this option, it is recommended that they identify a Guide for Authors page for a suitable journal and follow this format. This approach should also be discussed with your supervisor. Additional results, discussion and datasets, in addition to what may normally be included in a journal paper, can (and should) be included as Supporting Information.
2. **Traditional thesis style:** Students can opt to present their thesis in a more traditional thesis style. Students can review past Honours theses for reference (see notes below about accessing other theses to use as examples).

In writing, students should conform to both scientific and grammatical conventions. Students should familiarise themselves with the standards which are considered appropriate by consulting previous theses or a style manual (such as 'Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers of Australian Government Publications'). Students should also consult their supervisor(s) on the specific conventions required in scientific writing. These include the use of standard abbreviations for chemical substances, the use of the SI system of units, the use of scientific names of plants, animals and micro-organisms, and the use of standard statistical abbreviations and conventions.

It is important to note that writing and formatting styles can vary significantly between fields of research, so students should be guided by the advice of their supervisor(s).

Regardless of the nature of your project the following elements are required for all theses:

- Title cover page (see following for more details);
- Statement of authorship;
- Acknowledgments;
- Table of contents;
- Abstract (see following for more details).

Most Honours theses will have the following structure. The actual names of the sections may vary according to the field of research and specific circumstances of the study.

Abstract ≤250 words

The abstract is written in introduction-body-conclusion form, and all information contained in it must be discussed within the main part of the dissertation. This is a concise statement that outlines the objectives, methods, results and principal conclusions. A useful structure to follow is: What did you do? Why did you do it now? How did you do it? What did you find? What does it mean (and for applied research, what are your recommendations)?

Introduction

This should introduce the topic that is being investigated and include background on the project topic (review of previous work), a description of the significance and scope of your project, and a clear statement of the project aim and objectives. You should assume that the readers are unfamiliar with the thesis topic, and therefore you must provide them with information about the topic and convey to them the significance of the work and justify why the topic is important.

In your introduction, you should lay the foundations for the questions you plan to address later in the discussion. Your Introduction and Discussion are like two sides of the one coin. In the Introduction you raise the questions and in your Discussion you resolve those questions, and see if any new ones have been uncovered.

Methods

This should include a concise description of the methods used in a field or laboratory study, statistical analyses, legislation or procedural protocols, interview procedures or questionnaires used, ethical considerations or a theoretical justification for the approach you have used. This section should contain sufficient information to enable the reader to repeat the procedures you used, or to locate the appropriately detailed references that described them to you.

Results

This section will include a detailed description of the results of an experiment or field study, or description of what you found from a review of literature, or analysis of a current practice, depending on the approach of your thesis.

Discussion

Make sure you do not repeat results here but presume your reader had read your Results section already. Focus on the bigger picture – *what do your results mean?* This could include a discussion of the significance or application of the results of an experiment or field study, or recommendations arising from the review or analysis of the literature. The discussion should describe the significance of project outcomes, and a comparison of outcomes with expected/intended outcomes. You should also suggest recommended actions based upon your research topic.

Conclusions

I once did a paper writing training course, and the presenter told us that they didn't write conclusion sections. I checked and more often than not, they didn't include them! However, nearly every paper includes a conclusions section, so it's recommended that you don't buck the trend and include one too.

References

For reference formatting, see 'Thesis specifications', below.

Appendices/ Supporting Information (optional, but strongly recommended for manuscript style theses)

This section can be used for material that is too long or detailed to be included in the main body of the dissertation or is not essential to the main argument being presented, but which substantiates it. It may include raw data used to derive summary tables which are included in the main body of your thesis. It may include copies of field data sheets or interview questionnaires. You must ensure appendices are referenced in the body of the thesis, and that each appendix starts with a paragraph that summarises the content and outlines its relevance to the thesis.

For students writing their thesis in a manuscript (journal style), note that this format is typically more concise than a traditional thesis format, and that the Supporting Information section may need to be used extensively. Please look for academic papers that include Supporting Information sections and/or discuss this approach with your supervisor.

Thesis specifications

Your final thesis must be in PDF format (so that formatting is preserved), submitted via Learnline or via email to the Honours coordinator.

Text should be at least 1.5 spacing. Font size for the main body of the text should be consistent throughout the thesis, e.g., either 11 or 12 point font. The thesis pages must be numbered, but not include line numbers.

The title page will include the title of the thesis in full, the full names and degrees of the candidate, the Faculty in which the candidate carried out the work, the degree for which the thesis is submitted, and the date of submission.

The thesis should include a Statement of Authorship. This should be worded similarly to the following, but can be modified to suit your circumstances if necessary:

“I declare that this thesis my own work and has not been submitted in any form for any other degree or diploma at any university or other institute of tertiary education. Information derived from the published and unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and list of references.”

This page should be signed and dated.

Illustrations, diagrams, tables, maps etc are to be incorporated into the text. Photos or figures should be of high resolution and clearly legible. They must be clearly and sequentially numbered and identified and referred to by these numbers throughout the text.

Full-page figures should be inserted at the first opportunity after reference to them in the text. Otherwise figures should be inserted directly into the text as soon as possible after the text which refers to them. The legends should be below figures, or if insufficient room, on the left-hand page facing the figure or figure.

A table may be inserted as part of a text page, or as a full-page table. The legend for a table is placed above the table, or in the case of full-page tables, if insufficient room, on the left-hand page facing the table.

After the conclusion of the main text, there shall be a list of the references cited in the text. References not cited in the text must not be included. The style of citation of references must be consistent through the text and the list of references.

Accessing completed Honours theses

Past Honours theses are available through CDU's Research Web Portal:
<http://researchers.cdu.edu.au/en/studentTheses/>.

Your supervisor can probably also provide you with copies of recent theses in your field of research. You can also contact the Honours Coordinator for copies of recent Honours theses. Another recommendation is to find 2-3 papers that are similar to your research and follow the conventions from these (i.e., if you opt to write in a manuscript format, which I recommend that you do).

Thesis assessment criteria

Your thesis mark will reflect your demonstrated ability to:

- plan and conduct research;
- present, analyse and interpret the results; and
- examine, discuss and defend ideas.

Your examiners will be asked to assess the thesis according to the following criteria (with their weightings shown in brackets):

ABSTRACT (5%)

- Does the abstract provide a suitable summary of the research in a reasonable word limit (i.e., ≤250 words)

INTRODUCTION (20%)

- Sufficient background provided to justify the aims of the study? (5%)
- Understanding of previous research in this field? (5%)
- Clarity of aims of the investigation explicitly stated? (5%)
- Clarity of scope of the research (5%)

METHODS (20%)

- Appropriateness of methods to the research aims (10%)
- Understanding of the assumptions and limitations of methods used (10%)

RESULTS (20%)

- Analysis and interpretation of data (10%)
- Clarity of presentation of results, including quality of figures and tables (10%)

DISCUSSION (25%)

- Discussion of results with adequate reference to other published studies (5%)
- Coherent arguments and supporting evidence (5%)
- Relationship between results and aims (5%)
- Discussion of limitations of results (5%)
- Contribution of the study to the topic (5%)

CONCLUSIONS (0%)

- As highlighted earlier, papers typically finish with a conclusion section. However, these are often similar to the abstract and/or much of this has been said in the discussion section. Nonetheless, the inclusion of a short conclusion is recommended.

PRESENTATION (10%)

- Sources of information comprehensive and correctly cited (4%)
- English expression (3%)
- General presentation, e.g., lack of typographical and spelling errors, appearance (3%)

Thesis examination process

Your thesis will be assessed by at least two examiners, neither of whom may be a supervisor. If there is a significant disparity (>10%) in the marks awarded by the two examiners, your thesis will be sent to a third examiner. All examiners' marks are averaged to derive the final mark for the units SCI702-SCI706.

Your examiners are chosen by the Honours Coordinator, upon the recommendation of the principal supervisor. You and your supervisor should discuss potential examiners in advance of your thesis submission date. You are entitled to object to an examiner, prior to the dispatch of the thesis. You are also welcome to recommend potential examiners to your supervisor and the Honours Coordinator.

The examiners will be selected on the basis of:

- appropriate formal academic qualifications (or in special cases, equivalent professional experience);
- relevant discipline expertise;
- an absence of any conflict of interest with the student, their supervisor or the approach taken in the research;
- understanding of the educative role of examination; and
- their availability to return a report in a timely manner.

At least one examiner must be external to the Faculty in which you were based.

The examiners will be contacted by the Unit Coordinator. You must not contact a potential examiner yourself, nor have contact with an examiner while your thesis is being examined.

Examiners are requested to return their reports within three weeks. However, the examination process typically takes 6–9 weeks, and possibly longer if a third examiner is needed.

8. Honours grading

You will receive a mark/grade for each of:

- Honours Thesis unit A (SCI701),
- Research Skills unit (SID403),
- and for your elective unit.

Each of these units represents 10 credit points of a total 80 credit points of your Bachelor of Science Honours degree. As such, each contributes 12.5% towards your final mark/grade.

The mark/grade for the remaining 50 credit points are obtained from your written Thesis and Results Seminar. These items will be used to determine the marks/grades for SCI702-SCI706. The written thesis contributes 95% of the mark for these units (59.375% of the overall honours mark), and the seminar represents 5% of these units (3.125% of the overall honours score).

If you successfully complete the Bachelor of Science Honours course, you will also receive an overall Honours class (i.e. H1, H2A, H2B, H3). This is based on your coursework units (20 credit points) as well as SCI701 (10 credit points) and SCI702-SCI706 (50 credit points), with the numerical marks for the units applied to each of SCI702, SCI703, SCI704, SCI705 and SCI706. Hence, your overall Honours class is based on:

Assessment item/unit	Contribution to Honours class
Research Outline Presentation (SCI701)	2.500%
Written Research Proposal (SCI701)	10%
Compulsory core (coursework) (SID403)	12.5%
Specialist elective (coursework)	12.5%
Honours Thesis (SCI702-706)	59.375%
Results seminar (SCI702-706)	3.125%

The Honours classes are defined as:

Honours class	Mark
H1: First Class Honours	≥80%
H2A: Second Class Honours, Division A	70–79%
H2B: Second Class Honours, Division B	60–69%
H3: Third Class Honours	50–59%

9. Where to get help, and other information

The Honours course is short. Don't hesitate to ask for help at an early stage.

If you are having trouble, consider getting in touch with:

- Your supervisor(s).
- Honours Coordinator.
- Other academics or researchers.
- For administrative support, the Faculty of Science and Technology administration team, FST-support@cdu.edu.au, (08) 8946 6781.
- CDU Student Central: student.central@cdu.edu.au, 1800 061 963, www.cdu.edu.au/student-central.
- CDU Equity and Inclusion: inclusion@cdu.edu.au, (08) 8946 6264, www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/life-wellbeing.
- CDU Library: askthelibrary@cdu.edu.au, (08) 08 8946 7016, www.cdu.edu.au/library.
- CDU Library Research students: www.cdu.edu.au/library/researcher.

Contact Officers

CDU's Contact Officers are a group of individuals from different backgrounds who have come together to be the first point of contact for students (and staff) experiencing discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying and want to talk to someone about their options or would like further information.

The role of a Contact Officer is to:

- provide information to the student/staff to enable them to make an informed choice as to how to deal with their concern;
- provide information about the options available to them for resolution;
- provide the individual with information relating to counselling and/or other support services that they are able to access; and/or
- if the individual wishes to make a formal complaint, provide them with the appropriate information of how this can be completed.

Contact details of Contact Officers are available at www.cdu.edu.au/about-cdu/values-and-culture/respect-now-always/cdu-contact-officers.

Other

The official rules, entry requirements, fees and other stipulations for this course are available from the CDU website (www.cdu.edu.au), by searching the course catalogue for 'Bachelor of Science Honours'. Prospective and current students should ensure that they are familiar with this material. Please note that the official repository takes precedence, in the event of any conflict between information in this document and on that site.

Appendix A - Research Proposal template

The pages below contain an example file that you may wish to use for your main proposal and literature review. If you opt to use a manuscript style for your thesis, you may wish to include this literature review, or elements of it as Supporting Information.

Use of this template is optional (although adhering to the headers/ content is required).

Research Proposal

<TITLE GOES HERE>

Candidate name:
Candidate student number:
Supervisors:
Project commencement date:
Thesis submission date:

Signed:

.....

Candidate

...../...../.....

Date

.....

Supervisor

...../...../.....

Date

.....

Honours Coordinator

...../...../.....

Date

Thesis Title

In your *proposal* your title should reflect the project aim. Your *thesis* title should reflect your research findings.

Introduction and research context

This section should include a review of key literature that underpins your research aims, hypotheses and questions. The section should also include the context for your research, and a brief description of why the research is important.

By the end of your Introduction the reader should understand the topic, be convinced that what you are doing is important, understand exactly what aspects of the topic your project will address and understand the theoretical basis of your study. The Introduction leads your reader logically towards your research aim and objectives.

Length guideline: 1000-1600 words.

Research aim and objectives

Aim: This is an overall statement of the purpose of your research, in one or two sentences. You can also express this as a hypothesis or a question.

Objectives:

- A list of the steps or “objects” that will lead to the achievement of your aim
- There will typically be between 4-6 objectives
- You should plan for each objective to stand alone - make sure that the objectives are not inter-dependent, such that if you do not achieve one key outcome, the whole project is placed at risk

Length guideline: 100-300 words.

Methods

Map your methods to the research question and objectives; included expected methods of analysis; include a theoretical framework, as appropriate for your study. This may include literature review and analysis, laboratory studies, field studies, statistical analyses or surveys and interviews. You should justify your theoretical and methodological approach.

Length guideline: 250-500 words.

Ethical, legal and/or intellectual property clearances required

If relevant to the project - the CDU Office of Research and Innovation (ORI) website for information about ethics clearances and research integrity

<http://www.cdu.edu.au/research/ori/ethics> . *Examples of ethical issues that may arise during research include:*

- *human or animal ethics, please refer to CDU website at <http://www.cdu.edu.au/research/ori/ethics>*
- *for guidelines on the responsible conduct of research, including authorship of publications arising from research thesis see, NHMRC website at <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/r39>*
- *for information for collecting NT wildlife for research purposes see <https://nt.gov.au/environment/animals/wildlife-permits>.*
- *Other considerations (please specify) such as:*
 - *Use of data owned by others,*
 - *Ownership of data collected*
 - *Confidentiality*
 - *Acquiring permission to access property for field work, etc.*

Length guideline: Depends on the level of detail required.

Resources required for the project

Examples given below. Identify all resources required to undertake the project, including equipment, consumable items, personnel or travel costs. You will also need to outline how you plan to meet these requirements. If there are no expected costs, please state that.

Expected Costs	Source of funds	\$
Travel and accommodation		
Field work - vehicle hire		
Field work - meals & accommodation		
Translators		
Imagery		
Software		
Equipment purchase		
Safety equipment		
Total		

Length guideline: 50-100 words (excluding the table).

Timeline for research

Include tasks such as submission of your research proposal, time required to designing methods, gaining ethics approval (if needed), time for data collection, data analysis, preparation of figures and table, writing thesis text, time for supervisors to provide feed-back on drafts, formatting and submission of thesis. There are multiple examples of Gantt charts in Excel that may be useful (e.g., <https://create.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/gantt-charts>).

Length guideline: 50-100 words (excluding the timeline chart).

Example of a timeline is shown below:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Proposal - written	*								
Proposal seminar		*							
Write introduction									
Literature review									
Ethics approval	*								
Data collection									
Write Methods									
Data analysis									
Write Results									
Write Discussion									
Write conclusions and abstract									
Research seminar								*	
Submit thesis									*

Project risks and contingency plans

Research projects don't always go exactly to plan. In fact, they almost never do (if you know exactly what is needed, it might not actually be research). What are the potential risks to the successful delivery of your project? What are some contingency plans if these issues cannot be overcome? What steps will you and your supervisor(s) take to decide on if/when to enact any contingency plans?

Length guideline: 100-400 words.

References

References at Honours level and for your research project must be perfect. We suggest using a format appropriate for a journal style in your discipline.

Appendix B- Research Proposal rubric (written)

Thesis Title (5%)

The title should reflect the project aim clearly and concisely.

Criteria	Score
Title is concise, clear, and accurately conveys the project's aim and focus.	5
Title is clear and relevant, with minor improvements needed for precision or focus.	4
Title provides a general idea of the project but lacks specificity or clarity.	3
Title is vague, overly broad, or does not adequately represent the research aim.	2
Title is unclear, misleading, or irrelevant to the project.	1

Introduction and Research Context (50%)

The introduction should review key literature, communicate the research importance, and justify the study.

Criteria	Score
Comprehensive background, strong integration of relevant literature, clearly contextualizes the study, and provides a compelling justification.	45-50
Adequate background, but some details are missing or lack clarity. Literature integration is basic or not fully aligned with the research aim.	44-40
Limited or weak background, minimal or unclear connections to literature, or insufficient justification.	39-30
Poor introduction with little or no context, justification, or relevant literature.	29-15
Adequate background, but some details are missing or lack clarity. Literature integration is basic or not fully aligned with the research aim.	14-1

Research Aim, objectives (10%)

The aim should be a concise statement of purpose, with clear, independent objectives.

Criteria	Score
Aim is concise and clear. Objectives are logical, specific, and feasible, showing a clear progression towards achieving the aim.	10
Clear aim and objectives, but minor areas for improvement in precision or logical flow.	9-8
Adequate aim and objectives, though they may lack clarity, specificity, or logical structure.	7-6
Aim and objectives are vague or lack sufficient detail.	5-4
Aim and objectives are poorly defined, unrealistic, or disconnected from the project.	3-1

Methods (20%)

The description of the methods to be used should clearly justify their use, and where relevant, cite original sources and/or examples of the use of the technique/ method/ approach.

Criteria	Score
The methods are fully aligned with the research aim and objectives. Theoretical framework is well-integrated, if applicable. Clear and logical justification for methodological choices is provided. Expected analyses are detailed and appropriate.	16-20
Most methods are relevant, but some are not fully justified. Theoretical framework is present but not well-integrated. Some analytical approaches lack detail or rationale.	11-15
Methods lack depth or relevance to research aims. Theoretical and methodological choices are poorly justified. Analytical methods are either too vague or inappropriate.	8-10
Methods are unclear, incomplete, or inappropriate for the study. Theoretical framework is absent or irrelevant. Justification is missing or inadequate.	7-9
Methods are entirely absent or make no logical sense in relation to the research. No theoretical justification or expected analyses provided.	0-6

Resources, approvals, timelines and contingency plans (15%)

Providing a clear idea of the requirements of the project, planning a timeline and exactly what will be done if there are major delays/ the research does not go to plan is important.

Criteria	Score
Comprehensive and well-structured plan, with clear identification of ethical, legal, and intellectual property requirements (if applicable). The resource plan is detailed and feasible, including expected costs and funding sources. The timeline is realistic, with clear milestones, and contingency plans demonstrate a strong understanding of project risks.	12-15
Adequate planning, covering most key aspects. Ethical considerations, resource needs, and funding sources are identified but may lack some detail. Timeline includes reasonable milestones, but minor gaps exist in feasibility or contingency planning.	9-11
Limited or inconsistent planning. Ethical considerations (if applicable) are vague or missing. Resources and budget are listed but lack justification or feasibility. The timeline is incomplete or unrealistic, and contingency plans are superficial.	6-8
Poor planning, with major gaps. Ethical, legal, or intellectual property considerations (if applicable) are not addressed. Resource needs and funding sources are unclear or missing. Timeline is vague or impractical, and contingency plans are absent or inadequate.	0-7

Appendix C- Research proposal seminar marksheet

The marking sheet below will be used to mark your proposal seminar.

Honours seminar feedback sheet

(comments on this side, scores on next page)

Student Name:

Date:

Feedback from:

Constructive comments and suggestions (provided to the student):

Quality of explanation of underlying theory and hypotheses/ aims/ objectives	
Quality of links between study and underlying theory/ literature	
Discussion and understanding of limitations/ constraints	
Presentation of results, links back to hypotheses and objectives	
Quality of conclusions in relation to aims and objectives	
Response to questions	
Clarity of voice, eye contact, graphics/ visuals	
Presentation pace and keeping to time	
Comments that may benefit the thesis? i.e., analyses to consider?	

Please return this sheet to the Honours Coordinator (Natalie.rossiter@cdu.edu.au) or project supervisor at the end of the seminar. Thank you for your attendance and feedback.

Seminar scoring (note that the candidate will not see the breakdown of these scores)

Background and context (quality background and context provided? Motivation for work clear?)									
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Research aims and objectives are explained, explained clearly, and are logical and achievable?									
1	2	3	4	5					
Explanation of methodology/ research approach Quality (clarity and accuracy) of explanation of underlying theory and significance of the questions, hypotheses, aims or objectives addressed.									
5	10	15	20	25					
Clear and achievable timeline provided in a way that is suitable and actionable?									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Potential significance for the work explained including impact on the discipline and at local/ regional national and/or global scales (whichever is relevant)									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Anticipated challenges identified? Suitable solutions to these have been provided?									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality (clarity) of slides.									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality of delivery , including tone, pacing, ability to keep to time, eye contact (if not online) and little to no use of notes?									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Appendix D- Final Research Seminar marking sheet

The marking sheet below is provided to academic staff to assess your Final Results Seminar is provided on the pages below:

Honours seminar feedback sheet
(comments on this side, scores on next page)

Student Name:

Date:

Feedback from:

Constructive comments and suggestions (provided to the student):

Clarity of voice, eye contact, graphics/ visuals	
Quality of explanation of underlying theory and hypotheses/ aims/ objectives	
Quality of links between study and underlying theory/ literature	
Discussion and understanding of limitations/ constraints	
Presentation of results, links back to hypotheses and objectives	
Quality of conclusions in relation to aims and objectives	
Response to questions	
Presentation pace and keeping to time	
Comments that may benefit the thesis? i.e., analyses to consider?	

Please return this sheet to the Honours Coordinator (natalie.rossiter@cdu.edu.au) or project supervisor at the end of the seminar. Thank you for your attendance and feedback.

Seminar scoring (note that the candidate will not see these scores)

Please provide a score out of 10 for each of the criteria below, noting that weights are applied to these scores.

Seminar presentation (clarity of voice, eye contact). (weight = 3%)									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Appropriate use of graphic/visual content. (weight = 10%)									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality (clarity and accuracy) of explanation of underlying theory and significance of the questions, hypotheses, aims or objectives addressed (weight = 12%) .									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality (clarity) of linkages made between study design and underlying theory (weight = 10%) .									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Discussion of appropriateness of methods chosen and understanding of any limitations or constraints (weight = 15%) .									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Clarity of presentation of results, including demonstration of relevance to the stated questions, hypotheses, aims or objectives (weight = 25%) .									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality (clarity) of conclusions in relation to overall project aims or objectives (weight = 15%) .									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Response to audience questions (including understanding of questions and the quality and relevance of responses) (weight = 8%) .									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ability to pace the presentation to cover components adequately, keeping within the time allocated. (Note: seminars should run 25 minutes, including time for a few questions. Students should not be marked down here if their seminar attracts interest and many questions.) (weight = 2%)									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Appendix E- Marking sheet sent to thesis assessors

Bachelor of Science Honours Thesis Assessment Rubric

Last updated: Feb 2026

Overview of the Bachelor of Science Honours and the thesis

At Charles Darwin University, Bachelor of Science Honours is completed within 1-year full time, or two years part time. The research component of the degree makes up 75%, with the remaining 25% being coursework units.

The students can produce either a manuscript-style thesis, or a more traditional style thesis. The manuscript style is recommended to facilitate the conversion into a submittable manuscript where the research is of sufficient quality.

A thesis for the Bachelor of Science Honours is expected to be less than 20,000 words, with a target of closer to 6000-12,000 words (in line with a typical journal article in the discipline).

What to expect

A high-quality thesis should be:

- Well organised and well presented.
- Clearly define the research problem.
- Provide a clear description of the methodology.
- Have high-quality results.
- (in particular) should have a detailed discussion that places the research in the wider context of the discipline.
- Use an appropriate range of references that are relevant for the field.

While a thesis may follow the format of a journal article, it should not be marked to the same standard. i.e., even excellent honours theses typically require additional work before they are suitable to be submitted to a journal. In fact, honours theses are effectively never in a publishable form by the time that they are submitted.

Further details on what to look for in each section is provided below.

Abstract (5%)

Abstracts typically include information to set the scene of the research, provide an overview of what methods were used, key findings, and place the research in the wider context of the discipline.

Description	Score
Excellent - Provides a concise and highly effective summary of the research, - Adheres to the word limit. - Clearly highlights the research aims, methods, key findings, and significance with no omissions. - Language is professional, precise, and impactful.	5 4.5
Very good - Provides a clear and effective summary of the research, within the word limit. - Captures the research aims, methods, and findings with minor omissions or areas for improvement. - Language is professional and mostly precise.	4
Good/ adequate - Provides an adequate summary of the research. - May slightly exceed or fall short of the word limit. - Covers the research aims, methods, and findings but lacks some detail or clarity. - Language is generally clear but may include minor grammatical issues.	3.5 3
Major deficiencies - Provides a somewhat vague or incomplete summary of the research, with notable omissions. - May exceed or fall well below the word limit, with unclear focus. - Language lacks precision or contains frequent errors.	2.5 2
Well below standard, needs major improvement - Fails to provide a clear or concise summary of the research. - Major omissions in aims, methods, or findings; fails to meet word limit requirements. - Language is unclear, imprecise, or poorly written.	1.5 1 0.5

Additional comments:

Introduction (15%)

The introduction of a paper (and therefore a thesis) generally provides a small summary of the field of research, highlights the importance of the field, and creates a gap that will be filled by the research. Some introductions are longer than others. Nonetheless, the introduction should set the scene, review relevant literature and provide an outline of what the thesis will show.

Description	Score
Excellent - Provides highly relevant and comprehensive background information, demonstrating an excellent understanding of the topic. - Discusses key previous research, integrating sources to highlight the study's relevance. - Clearly situates the study within the broader research field, providing strong justification.	15 14 13.5
Very good - Provides detailed and relevant background information, showing a good understanding of the topic. - Discusses previous research with minor gaps in integration or detail. - Situates the study well within the broader research field, with minor areas for improvement in justification.	13 13.5 12 11.5
Good/ adequate - Provides adequate background information, but some details are lacking or too general. - Mentions relevant previous research but lacks integration or depth. - Provides some justification for the study, though it may lack clarity.	11 10 9
Major deficiencies - Background is somewhat vague, incomplete, or insufficiently detailed. - Mentions little or no relevant previous research, or connections are unclear. - Justification for the study is weak or poorly developed.	8 7
Well below standard, needs major improvement - Background is irrelevant or minimal, with no meaningful context. - Fails to mention relevant previous research or provide justification for the study. - Does not situate the study in its broader field.	6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional comments:

Methods (20%)

Methods sections of papers are not always written to the point where the results can be obtained using the exact approach as described, but this is generally the goal. The honours thesis should strive to clearly document the relevant theory, how any data were collected/produced and describe how the results were obtained.

Description	Score
Excellent	
• Methods are highly appropriate for addressing the research aims, clearly described, and logically structured.	20
• Justification for the methods is thorough and well-supported by the research context.	19
• Methods are described in sufficient detail to ensure reproducibility.	18
Very good	17
• Methods are appropriate and clearly described, with minor gaps in structure or clarity.	16
• Justification for the methods is sound but could be expanded in some areas.	15
• Description of methods is detailed, though slightly less precise in parts.	
Good/ adequate	14
• Methods are generally appropriate but lack detail or structure in places.	13
• Justification for the methods is present but not well-developed.	12
• Description of methods is adequate but may omit minor details.	
Major deficiencies	10
• Methods are somewhat inappropriate or not clearly connected to the research aims.	9
• Justification is unclear or insufficient for the chosen methods.	8
• Description of methods lacks clarity or detail, limiting reproducibility.	
Well below standard, needs major improvement	6
• Methods are inappropriate or poorly described, with no clear connection to research aims.	5
• No or little justification for the methods is provided.	4
• Description of methods is vague or missing relevant elements entirely.	

Additional comments:

Results (25%)

The results section is where the findings of the research are presented in a clear and logical manner. This section should include text, tables, figures, or other visualisations to summarise and highlight key results, generally leaving explanations or implications for the discussion. Where results and discussion are combined, there should also be detailed explanations/ discussion in this section. Results should be organised systematically, often following the sequence of the research objectives or hypotheses, to help the reader easily follow the progression of findings.

Description	Score
Excellent	25
Results are described with clarity and logical structure, aligned explicitly to the research aims/objectives (or hypotheses).	24
Figures/tables/statistics are used effectively and are well-integrated with the text; all key outcomes are clearly reported.	23
Analytical outputs are reported precisely (e.g., units, uncertainty/error where relevant, sample sizes, test statistics), demonstrating high technical accuracy.	22
Very good	21
Results are clearly described and well-organised, mostly aligned to aims/objectives (or hypotheses), with only minor issues in flow or emphasis.	20
Figures/tables/statistics are generally effective and integrated, with only very minor omissions or minor clarity issues.	19
Reporting is technically sound, with small gaps in important details.	
Good/ adequate	18
Results are described adequately but organisation and/or clarity issues (e.g., some key outcomes are out of sequence or not clearly linked to aims /objectives).	17
Figures/tables/statistics are present but may be uneven in quality or integration; important results may be insufficiently explained in text.	16
Technical reporting is adequate but lacks important details in places (e.g., incomplete statistical reporting, unclear units, limited quantification of effects).	15
Major deficiencies	14
Results description is unclear, poorly structured, or only weakly aligned to aims/objectives; key findings are difficult to identify or follow.	13
Figures/tables/statistics are missing, incorrect, poorly presented, or not integrated with the text, limiting comprehension.	12
Technical reporting contains notable errors or gaps that materially reduce confidence in the results as presented.	11
	10
Well below standard, needs major improvement	9
Results are largely absent, incorrect, or presented in a way that prevents understanding of the research findings.	8
Figures/tables/statistics are missing or unusable, and results are not meaningfully linked to the research aims/objectives.	7
Reporting includes substantial errors, unsupported statements, or major omissions such that the findings cannot be evaluated.	6

Additional comments:

Discussion (25%)

The discussion may be a standalone section, or the thesis may incorporate the results in with the discussion. Either way, the marks for discussion are for the quality of the interpretation of the data and how the thesis text places the research in the broader context of the discipline and previous research. The discussion may also discuss the economic/ cultural/ environmental implications of the research.

Description	Score
Excellent - Demonstrates a deep engagement with the literature, effectively integrating relevant studies to contextualise and support the findings. - Clearly connects findings to the research aims/objectives (or hypotheses), discussing how they align with or deviate from expectations and why. - Provides a thorough and balanced discussion of limitations/uncertainty and their impact on interpretation, with appropriate implications and/or future directions.	25 24 23 22
Very good - Engages well with relevant literature and uses it to contextualise the findings, with only minor gaps in depth, balance, or integration. - Connects findings clearly to the aims/objectives (or hypotheses) and discusses alignment/deviation from expectations, though some explanations could be more developed or better supported. - Discusses key limitations/uncertainty and their implications with good understanding, but with minor omissions (e.g., not all major limitations are addressed, or impacts are not fully articulated).	21 20 19
Good/adequate - Uses some relevant literature, but integration is limited (e.g., connections to the current findings are sometimes weak). - Relates findings to aims/objectives (or hypotheses) at a general level, but discussion is uneven, descriptive, or lacks clear explanation of <i>why</i> results align/deviate from expectations. - Identifies limitations/uncertainty but addresses them briefly or superficially; consequences for interpretation are stated in general terms or not consistently linked to the results.	18 17 16 15
Major deficiencies - Limited and/or selective engagement with the literature; contextualisation is weak, inaccurate, or largely disconnected from the findings. - Connections between findings and aims/objectives (or hypotheses) are unclear, incomplete, or inconsistent; discussion may repeat results without meaningful synthesis. - Limitations/uncertainty are vague, incomplete, or poorly understood, and their implications for interpretation are not adequately addressed.	14 13 12 11 10
Well below standard, needs major improvement - Fails to meaningfully engage with relevant literature, or includes substantial misunderstandings/misrepresentations of prior work. - Does not connect findings to the aims/objectives (or hypotheses) in a coherent way; interpretation is largely absent or unsupported by the presented results.	9 8

• Limitations/uncertainty are missing or incorrectly treated, such that the credibility and implications of the findings cannot be evaluated.	7 6
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Additional comments:

Presentation (10%)

A high-quality thesis is not only well written, but neatly presented. The presentation score includes the quality of the writing, the consistency of the references and the quality of the figures and tables that effectively communicate the research findings.

Description	Score
Excellent - Writing is highly polished and easy to read, with no or extremely rare typographical/grammatical errors. - Referencing is comprehensive, consistent, and correct (in-text citations and reference list), with a clear and consistent style. - Figures/tables are publication-quality: clear captions, readable labels/units, consistent formatting, appropriate resolution, and effectively integrated and referenced in the text.	10 9
Very good - Writing is clear and professional, with minor typographical/grammatical errors that do not impede understanding. - Referencing is mostly correct and consistent, with only minor formatting inconsistencies or occasional missing details. - Figures/tables are clear and effective, with only minor issues (e.g., occasional caption/label detail missing, minor readability or formatting inconsistencies).	8 7.5
Good/ adequate - Writing is generally understandable but includes noticeable typographical/grammatical issues and/or awkward phrasing in places. - Referencing is inconsistent (style varies, some citations incomplete, or occasional mismatch between in-text and reference list), but sources are broadly identifiable. - Figures/tables are basic but usable; some issues reduce clarity (e.g., small fonts, inconsistent units/labels, or limited integration with the text).	7 6.5 6
Major deficiencies - Writing contains frequent errors and/or unclear sentence structure. - Referencing is poorly executed (numerous inconsistencies, missing key details, and/or multiple missing citations), reducing traceability of claims. - Figures/tables have substantial clarity problems and/or are poorly integrated (not referenced, not explained, or not aligned to the text).	5.5 5 4.5
Well below standard, needs major improvement - Writing quality regularly prevents clear understanding (pervasive errors, unclear expression, or inadequate editing). - Referencing is missing or unreliable (many uncited claims, major omissions in reference list, or incorrect/unclear attribution). - Figures/tables are missing, or misleading.	4 3 2

Additional comments: