



# HONOURS MANUAL

School of Humanities, Communications & Social Sciences  
Faculty of Arts

BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONOURS)

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL & COMMUNITY WELFARE (HONOURS)

# HONOURS MANUAL

## 1.0 HONOURS ADMINISTRATION

In the School of Humanities, Communications and Social Sciences (HUMCASS) Honours falls within the realm of the Committee for Undergraduate Programs (CAPS). Policy issues and strategic planning in relation to the Honours program are managed by CAPS. Daily administration and coordination is undertaken by the Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator of the Honours program, supported by a Student Services Officer.

## 2.0 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

For admission into the Honours program, applicants must have completed all requirements at undergraduate degree level, and are normally required to have obtained Distinction grades of 70% or higher in the chosen discipline at the value of 24 points at second or third year level (18 of which must be at the third year level). Entry to the program is subject to the recommendation of the relevant Section(s) and the final approval of the Coordinator of the Honours program. If the Section(s) and Coordinator wish to reject an application by a student who meets the entry requirements into Honours they should seek permission from the Faculty.

Students with a  $67\leq\%$  average in the chosen discipline at the value of 24 points at second or third year level (18 of which must be at the third year level) may seek special permission to enter the Honours course. Applicants should submit a letter to the Honours coordinator and include a reference from at least one lecturer.

Students may undertake a combined (interdisciplinary) Honours degree with the approval of both disciplines. In this case the student must meet the entry requirements for both disciplines.

## 3.0 STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

Each Honours student is required to undertake two coursework units worth 12 pts each, as well as complete a dissertation component worth 24pts. All components of the Honours program have to be passed. As a hurdle requirement towards satisfactory progress students enrolled in dissertation units must also present their work-in-progress at two Honours Forums.

### 3.1 COURSEWORK

Each Honours student must complete one coursework unit managed by the disciplinary section and one common HUMCASS coursework unit (HUM4002 Selected Topics in Theory and Practice).

#### 3.1.1 Assessment

All Honours coursework worth 40% or more of the mark for a unit must be marked by the unit coordinator and reviewed by a second marker.

In the event that a student fails a coursework unit the student will be required to repeat the unit or a suitable substitute. In such cases the student will only be eligible to receive the maximum mark/grade of 50/Pass. The Head of the disciplinary section determines the coursework substitute.

In the event that the student fails at the second attempt the student will be deemed to have failed the entire program and will be ineligible to take out the Honours degree

#### 3.1.2 Submission Dates

Submission dates for assessment items in the coursework units will be specified in the Unit Guide for the relevant unit. Faculty policy on penalty for late submission of assessment items in the undergraduate program applies.

Honours students should be aware that failure to submit coursework assessment by the due dates may result in a fail for that unit.

### **3.1.3 Extensions**

Unit coordinators may grant an extension of time for submission of coursework up to the last day of the examination period of the semester in which the work is due. Applications for extensions beyond this date must be made to the Faculty Honours Committee.

## **3.2 DISSERTATION**

Each Honours student must complete a dissertation component worth 24pts.

In the event that a student fails the dissertation component the student will be deemed to have failed the entire program and will be ineligible to take out the Honours degree

### **3.2.1 Approval of Dissertation Topics**

All dissertation topics must be approved by the Head of Section and the Honours Coordinator. The dissertation topic and supervisor application form (Appendix 3) should include the name of a nominated supervisor. The form should be submitted no later than the end of Week 3 of the semester in which the student first enrolls HUM4000 A.

### **3.2.2 Allocation of Supervisors**

The final allocation of supervisor(s) will be determined by the relevant Section and is dependent upon individual staff member's work-loads. The Head of Section will negotiate the supervisory arrangements. The Coordinator will notify student, supervisor and Head of Section of approval no later than end of Week 4.

It is recommended that each individual staff member accepts no more than two students for supervision. Single discipline Honours students will have one supervisor only, except where their dissertation topic requires the support of another discipline.

It will be the responsibility of Sections, in co-operation with the Honours Coordinator, to allocate a replacement supervisor when the principal supervisor is on a period of leave from duty that extends for more than three weeks.

### **3.2.3 Dissertation Supervision**

Students will undertake individual research and have regular contact with a supervisor overseeing the student's work and progress. The nature of the supervisory relationship (for example, the intervals and times of consultation) will vary according to supervisor and student. Supervisors and students are encouraged to establish a schedule of regular meetings (via telephone for OCL students) at the beginning of the year to ensure continuity of supervision. For guidance regarding the respective responsibilities of student and supervisor see Appendix 1 and 2.

### **3.2.4 Submission Date**

Students are required to submit four appropriately bound copies of their dissertation by the final Friday of the teaching period in the semester of submission. OCL students must post their copies by that date and retain documentation hereof.

### **3.2.5 Extensions**

On the recommendation from the supervisor the Honours Coordinator may grant up to a maximum of one week's extension. For a further extension students need to apply for special consideration and submit this application before the official due date. Candidates must lodge this application to the Honours Coordinator, who will determine the merit of the application. The Faculty Late Submission of Work policy and its associated penalties will apply to Honours work if further time beyond granted extensions is taken.

### **3.2.6 Assessment of Dissertation**

Upon enrolment in HUM4000 A the student will receive a copy of the dissertation examination guidelines (Appendix 4) in the HUM4000 A + B Dissertation Handbook.

Each dissertation will be marked by one internal marker and one external marker, one of whom should have some expertise in the subject of the dissertation and one of whom should be an experienced Honours examiner. The Honours Coordinator will, under advice from the supervisor, assign markers. The supervisor may not also be the examiner of the Honours dissertation.

As part of the process of allocating examiners, the supervisor must complete a form detailing names, qualifications, contact details, and competence to examine the particular dissertation of both examiners. The Coordinator will then contact nominated examiners to determine their availability and willingness to examine the dissertation.

The Coordinator will provide examiners with the examination guidelines; s/he will oversee the dispatch and return of the dissertation, and receive the examiners' reports. The deadline for the return of examined dissertations will be overseen by the Coordinator and stringently observed. This will normally be 4 weeks from the date of dispatch.

No discussion of any kind between the supervisor and the examiners, or the student and the examiners, concerning the dissertation or student may occur, and all correspondence shall be between the Honours Coordinator and the examiners.

When the examination process is complete the student and supervisor will receive a letter from the Coordinator containing a copy of the examiners' reports.

### **3.2.7 Disputed results**

An Honours thesis should always be marked independently, and results should be returned separately by two examiners. Where the marks differ by 10% or more a third examiner will be called upon. The third examiner must be an experienced external academic in the relevant field.

The supervisor nominates the third marker and provides justification for this nomination in writing. The Coordinator will contact the nominee to determine availability and willingness to mark the dissertation. All communication goes through the Coordinator, who will also contact the student to inform them that the dissertation has gone to a third marker. The student should expect a prolonged examination period.

The final mark for the dissertation will be an aggregate of the two examiners' results that were closest. When the examination process is complete the student and supervisor will receive a letter from the Coordinator containing a copy of the two examiners' reports that formed the basis of the aggregated mark. The disregarded examiner's report will normally not be made available.

## **3.3 HONOURS FORUM**

All students enrolled in Honours dissertation units are required to present their work-in-progress at the Honours Forum of each semester. Participation in the Honours Forum is

a non-graded compulsory hurdle in order to achieve a satisfactory progress report (see below). On-campus students are expected to present in-person and OCL students must either attend in person or organise an alternative means of presenting their work (via tele-conference, pre-recorded video, or otherwise).

The Honours Forum is designed to ascertain progress and for students to receive feedback on their work from academic staff and their fellow students.

Students enrolled in the dissertation unit Part A are expected to deliver a presentation of 15 minutes duration, with 5 minutes extra for comments and question. The presentation should normally include:

- A description of the topic and central questions of the dissertation
- A description of the rationale/justification for the research
- An outline of the research project, including methodology
- An indication of potential difficulties and the means of addressing these

Students enrolled in the dissertation unit Part B are expected to deliver a presentation of 20 minutes duration, with 10 minutes extra for comments and questions. The presentation should normally include:

- A presentation of the work completed to date including empirical research findings or arguments developed
- Indicate any methodological/theoretical difficulties encountered and possible or proven solutions

#### **4.0 SATISFACTORY PROGRESS**

Students enrolled in the Honours dissertation sequence are required to show satisfactory progress. Supervisors who deem that progress has been satisfactory will submit an SFR grade for HUM4000 A to the Honours student support officer prior to School Board of Examiners (BOE) of the first semester. Supervisors who deem unsatisfactory progress must report this in writing to the Honours Coordinator before end of examination period.

In case of unsatisfactory progress the student will be called to a meeting with the Coordinator, who may decide to discontinue the student's enrolment in the program. If such a decision is made a Fail must be recorded for HUM4000 A before the commencement of the following semester.

#### **5.0 FINAL HONOURS GRADE**

The Honours degree will be awarded in the following classes: H1, H2A, H2B, and H3.

##### **5.1 DETERMINATION OF FINAL HONOURS GRADE**

The Honours Coordinator will determine the final Honours grade according to the following principles:

###### **5.1.1 There are four grades to be aggregated:**

- Two coursework unit grades (the two coursework units are of equal value and comprise half of the total workload);
- Two grades for the dissertation (from each examiner). In the case of third marker involvement, only the two closest results will be used.

###### **5.1.2 Class of Honours normally correlates with the following aggregated percentage grade ranges. Exceptions are set out in 5.1.4 below.**

First class Honours.....	H1.....	80 -100%
Second class Honours, division A.....	H2A.....	70 - 79%
Second class Honours, division B.....	H2B.....	60 - 69%
Third class Honours.....	H3.....	50 - 59%
Fail.....		0 – 49%

Thus, students can expect that consistent grades at each grade level will result in a corresponding Honours classification. For example, grades of HD for all pieces of work will result in First class Honours.

Note: An H3 grade for the overall honours result indicates the student has passed the Honours degree and is eligible to graduate but at a standard which cannot be used as the basis for further study.

### **5.1.3 The aggregate percentage grade should be calculated as:**

If  $a$  and  $b$  are the coursework grades and  $c$  and  $d$  are the dissertation grades then:

$$\text{Aggregate percentage grade} = (a+b+c+d)/4$$

Example:

If coursework grades are 75% and 86%, two dissertation grades are received and are 62% and 71% then:

$$\text{Aggregate percentage grade} = (75+86+62+71)/4 = 73.5\% \Rightarrow 74\% \Rightarrow \text{H2A}$$

Note: In semester 2, if the final results are not ready in time to be submitted to the BOE, students can not be considered for a Postgraduate Scholarship for the following year.

### **5.1.4 Exceptions to the class of Honours correlating to the aggregated percentage grade will occur when the array of grades fall into one of the following cases:**

Case 1: H1 is not possible if neither dissertation grade is HD. This 'weighting' of the dissertation reflects its importance as the distinguishing feature of the Honours degree.

Case 2: Any grade of P (50-59%) in Dissertation precludes better than H2B.

## **6.0 LEAVE OF ABSENCE/INTERMISSION**

Students may be granted leave of absence for 12 months in total. Requests for leave of absence should be made to the Faculty of Arts Honours Committee. Applications forms for special leave are available at <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/current/honours/faq.php> or from the Administrative Officer (Honours).

## **7.0 WITHDRAWAL IN GOOD STANDING**

Approval to withdraw in good standing may be granted in circumstances where leave of absence is not appropriate and the student requires an extended period of leave from their studies. Requests for withdrawal in good standing should be made to the Faculty of Arts Honours Committee. Applications forms for withdrawal in good standing are available from <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/current/honours/faq.php> or from the Administrative Officer (Honours).

## **8.0 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

The Faculty has introduced student grievance and appeals procedures to cover problems and grievances that students may have over academic and administrative matters at the School or Faculty level. These procedures are designed to resolve problems quickly and efficiently while protecting the rights of students and staff. All cases of this kind will be treated as confidential. These procedures are provided for cases where the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily through discussion with the supervisor, the Honours Coordinator or the Head of School.

With the exception of administrative grievances, the Honours student appeal mechanism will operate in accordance with the existing School of Humanities, Communications & Social Sciences undergraduate policy. Any administrative grievances will be dealt with directly by the Honours Coordinator and the Committee for Undergraduate Programs.

### GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS UNDERTAKING HONOURS

1. Once students have been accepted into the Honours program, they should begin to consider a possible area of research in which they will write their dissertation. This topic may arise out of personal interest, from reading in the field, from perusing staff profiles on the HUMCASS web-site, or topics may be suggested by a prospective supervisor with whom the student wishes to work.
2. To locate a supervisor students are advised to seek help either from the Head of Section or the Honours Coordinator. For OCL students the contact should be made via email or telephone. Students may wish to express supervisor preference, however not all members of academic staff are available to supervise each semester. A Supervisor & Research Topic Proposal form must be lodged to the Honours Coordinator no later than at the end of Week 3 of semester.
3. Students are expected to familiarise themselves with Faculty and School policy for the Honours program. This includes locating the guidelines about the standard format and presentation of the dissertation within their particular discipline. If in doubt, they should ask their supervisor or the Honours Coordinator.
4. It is expected that students will be familiar with library and computer facilities within the University.
5. As such Honours students are expected to be fairly independent, self-motivating and responsible learners.
6. The Honours student is responsible for maintaining contact with the supervisor. For on-campus contact will mostly be on a face to face basis. For off-campus students regular contact should be maintained via email or telephone. Students are entitled to regular meetings throughout the process. The student cannot expect full-time supervision towards completion of candidature.

Students should accept that supervisors have other commitments. They should therefore ask for meetings well in advance of suggested times, always provide enough time for supervisors to read drafts, and always in advance notify the supervisor if scheduled meetings can not be attended.

7. Students should keep their supervisor informed if they are experiencing any difficulties which are impeding the progress of the dissertation. If they experience problems with the supervisory process which cannot be dealt with by consultation with the supervisor, students should consult the Honours Coordinator. If the Honours coordinator also happens to be the supervisor, they can speak to the Head of the Section. It is important that any problems with the progress of the dissertation or with supervision are dealt with as they arise.
8. Students are expected to respond appropriately to the advice and guidance given by their supervisor in respect of the dissertation. The supervisor will correct elementary errors as a matter of course, however in commenting on drafts the supervisor will more importantly provide advice on such matters as the nature of arguments advanced, important theoretical and conceptual issues, the employment of evidence, or appropriate literature to be consulted. Ultimately, however, the content of the dissertation remains the responsibility of the student. If students experience difficulties with their command of expression or other aspects of academic writing, their supervisor may refer them to the Language and Learning Unit in the Arts Faculty.
9. It is expected that students will carefully proof-read the dissertation before submission and ensure that it is presented in the format required by the School.
10. Students should, as a matter of course, keep back-up copies of the their dissertation at all stages of writing.

### GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISORS OF HONOURS THESES

1. The supervisor of an Honours dissertation ideally ought to be someone expert not merely in the student's discipline but also in the student's particular research field. However, expertise of the latter kind is not as important for Honours theses as it would be in the case of theses for higher degrees, and Honours students should not be discouraged from undertaking a project of their choice because of staffing constraints.
2. The supervisor should be thoroughly familiar with the University and Faculty Honours dissertation and guidelines.
3. The supervisor should be thoroughly familiar with all School-based documents relating to Honours dissertation supervision and examination.
4. The supervisor should keep in regular contact with the students under his/her supervision, during the dissertation period at least once every two weeks. For on-campus students contact should mainly be on a face to face basis, but where circumstances do not permit this contact via email or by phone is acceptable. For off-campus students a regular schedule of telephone calls and emails should be established.
5. The supervisor should keep notes on conversations with his/her student.
6. Any problems that arise at other times, for example a student consistently failing to show up for appointments or failing to maintain contact, should be discussed with the Honours Coordinator. Students should be warned, in writing, about any serious deficiencies in their progress.
7. The supervisor should submit a final report on his/her students to the end of year Examiners' Meeting (Appendix 5). The report should not labour the inadequacies of the dissertation, but rather, if such exist, indicate why any such deficiencies exist - for example because of illness, personal problems or unavoidable problems with source material. In some cases a nil report may be quite appropriate.
8. The supervisor is required to provide adequate guidance to his/her students in respect of the dissertation. This should include help with fine-tuning the topic, help in identifying important theoretical and conceptual issues, help in finding appropriate literature and electronic resources, and help in structuring the argument. At a later stage the supervisor is expected also to provide editorial advice by way of detailed corrections of student drafts. The supervisor is not, however, responsible for the content of the dissertation and s/he is particularly not responsible for any grammatical or typographical errors that it might contain.
9. The supervisor should return corrected dissertation drafts promptly; turnaround time should not exceed two weeks.
10. A supervisor who plans to go on leave during the dissertation period must inform the Honours Coordinator well in advance so that a replacement can be appointed.
11. Supervisors are strongly encouraged to attend the end of year Examiners' Meeting to give advice as required.



To be submitted no later than end of Week 3

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL SCIENCES
Honours Dissertation / Supervision Approval

Student's Name: ..... ID No: .....
Discipline: ..... Study Mode: .....

Proposed Dissertation Topic / Title:
.....
.....
.....

Proposed Supervisor: .....

Dissertation Outline:

Please attach a 200-word statement of your proposed topic, clearly stating:

- Aims
• Scope
• Theoretical and methodological approaches

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

Is ethical clearance required? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, have you applied for ethical clearance?

[ ] Yes (pending) [ ] Yes (approved) [ ] Will apply once topic approved

Student's Signature: ..... Date: .....

Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date: .....

Head of Section's Signature: ..... Date: .....

Honours Committee Approval
..... Date: .....
(Honours Coordinator)

**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**School of Humanities, Communications & Social Sciences**

**GUIDE TO MARKERS OF HONOURS DISSERTATIONS**

As part of the procedure for the assessment of Honours dissertations, it would assist the Honours Committee if you could complete the accompanying *Assessment Marking Sheet*. Please note that the sheet is only intended as a guide. The following information may help you in completing the assessment.

**1. Aims**

The Marking Sheet is designed to:

- (a) Help markers to make a systematic and detailed assessment of the dissertation and thus improve the thoroughness of the assessment;
- (b) Help the Honours Sub-Committee to compare marks and grades awarded by different markers, by considering the criteria used, and the judgements made on each criterion, and thus assist in aggregating marks and grades into a candidate's class of Honours.

**2. Rationale**

Insofar as a dissertation may have aims and use approaches which are not common to other dissertations, it is not possible to assess them all according to the same criteria. However, the Marking Sheet suggests a number of criteria, and provides space for others to be added.

**3. Procedure for completing guide sheet**

The Honours Committee suggests that the following order be followed when completing the sheet:

- (a) Please add and/or delete specific criteria as you may feel appropriate.
- (b) Indicate against each criterion you have chosen to use, the quality of the assignment or dissertation being examined. Any comments which you wish to make may be incorporated on the final page of the sheet.
- (c) Consider the weightings you wish to give each criterion, and explain the reasons for your choice in the "General Comments" section.
- (d) Determine a grade, given as a class, for the dissertation or assignment, from within the range below. **Please note that a final percentage grade for the dissertation is also required.**

Grade	Percentage	Standard	Former grading system
HD	80-100%	of excellent quality	H1 – Honours Class 1
D	70-79%	of very good quality	H2A - Honours Class 2A
C	60-69%	of good quality	H2B - Honours Class 2B
P	50-59%	of pass quality	H3 - Honours Class 3
N	0-49%	of fail quality	

The candidate's final class of Honours will depend on aggregation of all grades awarded, taken together with the following provisos.

- Proviso 1: H1 is not possible if neither dissertation grade is HD. [This 'weighting' of the dissertation reflects its importance as the distinguishing feature of the Honours degree].
- Proviso 2: H1 is not possible unless at least D is achieved for each grade.
- Proviso 3: Any grade of P in dissertation precludes better than Class 2B.
- Proviso 4: No classification may include an NN grade for any component.

**Monash University**  
**School of Humanities, Communications & Social Sciences**  
**Marking Template for Honours Dissertations**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dissertation Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Examiner's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please use the prompt questions as guidelines only, as some of these may not be applicable.  
You may indicate a letter grade for each criterion if you wish.  
You can expand the textboxes or attach a separate sheet.*

**1. Research topic: scope and rationale:**

- is the research topic clearly defined and well justified?
- are the theoretical and methodological approaches clearly outlined and appropriate?
- are the limitations of the thesis acknowledged?
- is there a degree of originality in the approach to the topic?

[expand textbox]

**2. Review of the literature:**

- has the relevant literature been adequately reviewed?
- are the sources adequately contextualised and discussed?

[expand textbox]

**3. Research and data gathering:**

- does the dissertation use appropriate sources (primary and secondary, as applicable)?
- does the candidate demonstrate the ability to synthesise material from both primary and secondary sources?

[expand textbox]

**4. Analysis and interpretation of evidence/data:**

- does the dissertation adequately support its points by reference to appropriate evidence?
- does the dissertation avoid unfounded generalisation?
- has the evidence been adequately analysed and critiqued?
- are theoretical concepts appropriately applied and integrated into the analysis?

[expand textbox]

**5. Structure and organisation:**

- is the dissertation well organised, logical and coherent?
- does the dissertation include an adequate and appropriate introduction and conclusion?
- does the thesis avoid needless repetition?

[expand textbox]

**6. Presentation:**

- is the dissertation well written?
- does the presentation meet format requirements?
- are sources correctly referenced?
- does the dissertation use a reference system which is appropriate to the discipline?
- has the dissertation been adequately proof-read?

[expand textbox]

**7. Overall argument of the thesis:**

- does the dissertation satisfy its stated aims?
- is the argument clearly articulated?
- is the argument well developed?
- are the conclusions soundly based?

[expand textbox]

**8. General Comments by the Examiner**

[expand textbox]

**Overall grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Percentage mark:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_