

ANU Honours Working Party

Final Report

28 August 2014

The ANU Honours Working Party was set up by the ANU University Education Committee in response to the *ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences AQF Level 8 Inquiry Report* to review Honours throughout the university.

Terms of reference

1. Provide a clear and succinct statement on the nature and purpose of Honours programs that is consistent with University strategy, the Australian Qualifications Framework and national and international trends;
2. Examine the current structure of the Honours programs and consider the balance between coursework and the thesis;
3. Identify a consistent and sustainable approach for the administrative management of Honours coursework;
4. Identify consistent nomenclature for Honours program structures, orders and thesis components;
5. Develop a framework for developing and maintaining clear and concise admissions and transfer standards for Honours programs;
6. Consider opportunities for new and innovative articulation between Honours programs and masters and PhD programs;
7. Provide advice on the consistent and sustainable management of interdisciplinary Honours programs; and
8. Advise on the management of international exchange components of Honours programs, including minimum time required to be spent at ANU as part of the program.

Membership

Chair: Dr Royston Gustavson

One staff member from each ANU College:

- ANUCAP: Dr Tamara Jacka
- ANUCASS: Dr Andrew Banfield
- ANUCBE: A/Prof Sigi Goode
- ANUCECS: Professor John Slaney
- ANUCoL: A/Prof Mark Nolan; Alt: Ms Judith Jones
- ANUCMBE: Dr Anna Cowan
- ANUCPMS: Professor John Close

Registrar, DSA: Mr Mark Erickson

A/Registrar, ASQO, DSA: Mr Ewan Evans

ANUSA representative: Mr Cam Wilson; Alt: Ms Annika Humphreys

Executive Officer to the DVC(A): Ms Felicity Gouldthorp

By invitation:

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Research Training): Professor Jenny Corbett

Secretary to the Committee: Dr Wendy Dimond

Meeting Schedule

02 May, 12.00P.M.-2.00P.M., Beryl Rawson Building 013, Jean Martin Room

25 June, 1.00P.M.-3.00P.M., Beryl Rawson Building 013, Jean Martin Room

22 July, 12.00P.M.-2.00P.M., Beryl Rawson Building 013, Room 2.02 (Training Room 1)

22 August, 12.00P.M.-2.00P.M., Beryl Rawson Building 013, Jean Martin Room

Feedback Schedule

The Draft Report Version 2.0 was sent by the Chair of the Working Party to the Associate Dean (Education) of each College and to the President of ANUSA on 23 July, with written feedback requested by 14 August. Written feedback was received from: each of the 7 Colleges (CBME and CMPS submitting jointly), ANUSA, the PhD Pathways Working Group, Research School of Biology, Research School of Earth Sciences, Department of Mathematics, and the Medical School.

Discussion of the received feedback and subsequent amendment of the Draft was the principal item on the Agenda of the Working Party's final meeting on 22 August.

The ANU Honours Working Party unanimously endorses (i) each recommendation and (ii) the Report as a whole.

0. Introduction

0.1 The Working Party noted that it is important to emphasise that there are significant disciplinary differences throughout the university; for example, in laboratory-based sciences, it can be difficult to separate out development of laboratory techniques into a separate course from the research project itself. Other differences result from the two very different type of Honours programs: the “+1 year” model where students enrol in a Bachelor Honours plan following completion of a Bachelor pass plan, and the “embedded” model, found in the professionally accredited disciplines of engineering and law, where the pass and Honours degrees are both of the same 4-year duration.

0.2 As such, the recommendations of the Working Party represent a default setting, together with, for issues where there are important disciplinary differences, rules for exemptions that are either inbuilt, or which may be granted on application by Academic Board.

0.3 For the purposes of amendments to Honours plans, it is recommended that an expedited process is used, as for the implementation of the reforms of the Graduate Coursework Working Party. It is recommended that a new form be used for the expedited process for new or amended “+1 year” model programs and amended “embedded” model programs, based on the form used for new Master’s programs for the GCWP reforms, with the deletion of “type” and the prefiling of units, AQF Level, and Exit standard (graded). New 4-year “embedded” programs will use a standard new program form.

0.4 The recommendations are to take effect from 01 January 2015, with full compliance by 01 January 2016; Recommendation 26 formalises the implementation timeframe. A work plan follows:

Oct 2014–June 2015	Colleges review Honours structure and propose amendments
June 2015	Final submission of Honours structures for 2016
August 2015	Final accreditation of Honours structures for 2016
October 2015	All Honours plans appear on programsandcourses.anu.edu.au

1. Provide a clear and succinct statement on the nature and purpose of Honours programs that is consistent with University strategy, the Australian Qualifications Framework and national and international trends

1.1 ANU by 2020

ANU by 2020 references “the unique nature of the [ANU] educational experience” (p.4), and as such we should not simply follow trends. It states that “...education will be research-led. An ANU education will engage students and stretch them intellectually, encouraging them to question the norms—to ask “why” not only “how” and to discover through their own research” (p.5). While characteristic of ANU education, Honours can do this more intensely than a pass Bachelor’s degree. *ANU by 2020* states that students “interact with staff in a research-led environment” (p.18), something that happens intensely and intensively in an Honours program. AQF Level 8 Honours is not only consistent with, but actively supports *ANU by 2020*.

1.2 Australian Qualifications Framework, Second Edition (January 2013), pp. 48 and 51

1.2.1. The following compares the difference between the Bachelor pass and Bachelor Honours degree in the AQF. The additional text for the Honours degree is in underlined italics; text not repeated in the Honours description is struck through:

Bachelor Honours Degree qualification type descriptor:

Purpose The Bachelor Honours Degree qualifies individuals who apply a ~~broad and coherent~~ body of knowledge in a ~~range of~~ specific contexts to undertake professional work and as a pathway for research and further learning

Knowledge Graduates of a Bachelor Honours Degree will have a ~~broad and coherent~~ and advanced body of knowledge, ~~with depth in~~ of the underlying principles and concepts in one or more disciplines as a ~~basis for independent lifelong learning~~ and knowledge of research principles and methods

Skills Graduates of a Bachelor Honours Degree will have:

- cognitive skills to review ~~critically~~, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge to identify and provide solutions to complex problems with intellectual independence
- cognitive and technical skills to demonstrate a broad understanding of a body of knowledge and theoretical concepts with advanced understanding ~~with depth~~ in some areas
- ~~cognitive and creative~~ skills to exercise critical thinking and judgement in ~~identifying and solving problems with intellectual independence~~ developing new understanding
- communication skills to present a clear, and coherent ~~and independent~~ exposition of knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences

Application of knowledge and skills. Graduates of a Bachelor Honours Degree will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills:

- with initiative and judgement ~~in planning, problem solving and decision making~~ in professional practice and/or scholarship
- to adapt knowledge and skills in diverse contexts
- with responsibility and accountability for own learning and ~~professional~~ practice and in collaboration with others within broad parameters
- to plan and execute project work and/or a piece of research and scholarship with some independence

Volume of learning. ~~The volume of learning of a Bachelor Degree is typically 3–4 years~~ The volume of learning of a Bachelor Honours Degree is typically 1 year following a Bachelor Degree. A Bachelor Honours Degree may also be embedded in a Bachelor Degree, typically as an additional year

1.2.2. In essence, the difference between a pass degree and an Honours degree is that the latter includes “knowledge of research principles and methods” and “theoretical concepts” in “developing new understanding” that is demonstrated, “with some independence” through “project work” and/or “a piece of research and scholarship”.

1.2.3. It is important to note that there are two different types of Honours degrees—the “+1 year” model and the “embedded” model, both of which exist at ANU (see Attachment 1). Most ANU Honours programs are “+1 year”. The only embedded programs are the professionally accredited programs, such as the LLB(Hons) and the BEng(Hons). Note that other ANU direct entry Honours programs, such as the PhB, are actually the “+1 year” model, even where, such as the PhB, there is no “pass” version. For the non-embedded model, the “+1 year” model, the learning outcomes need to be met in one year, not over four.

1.3 National and International Trends

It is acknowledged that the concept of an additional “Honours” year is not widely understood outside of Australia, Canada, and the UK. However, it must be stressed to external stakeholders that all Honours programs at ANU require the completion of four years of undergraduate study (3+1), as the concept of a “4-year degree” is much more widely understood. It is important for ANU to stress that a Bachelor Honours degree is, in practice if not always in theory, a four-year degree.

Even within Australia, Macquarie University has moved away from Honours, and other universities are, anecdotally, considering this.

As noted above under 1.1, ANU aims for a unique educational experience. Leaders do not set out to follow trends.

1.4 Analysis

1.4.1. The concept of a Bachelor Honours degree is consistent with *ANU by 2020*, with the *AQF*, and with international trends in four-year undergraduate degrees. In the current environment, Australian universities are attempting to differentiate themselves, such as by the “Melbourne Model”, the model at UWA, or Macquarie’s move away from Honours. Rather than merely copying attempts to distinguish themselves by other institutions, the ANU needs to consider how to differentiate itself. A strong Honours program may attract students from throughout Australia to undertake an elite Honours year that is the culmination of their undergraduate experience and that positions them more strongly for employment or HDR than any other single year’s study could do. There can be no doubt that ANU should not only retain, but also strengthen its Bachelor Honours degree as a key part of its educational strategy.

1.4.2. The ANU statement on the nature and purpose of Honours needs to meet both the professional reasons for taking Honours and the role of Honours as a PhD pathway, and both need to be made explicit in the statement.

1.4.3. For the “+1 year” model, the description and learning outcomes need to be based on what is achieved in that one additional year, thus treating the Honours year like the other AQF Level 8 qualification types (the Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate). For the embedded model, the description and learning outcomes may be based on what is achieved over the entire four years of study.

1.4.4. It is important to demonstrate clearly, via our Honours plans, to both internal and external stakeholders, that Honours at the ANU provides an option in its structure that is a possible pathway to a PhD, just as the Master (Advanced) does. Once the ANU PhD Pathways

Working Group has developed the definition of the competencies expected at entry, it will need to be demonstrated for each Honours and Masters (Advanced) plan how it meets that definition.

Currently, the ANU statement for Bachelor Honours Degree Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS), in the section “pathway to further study”, states: “*Graduates of the [AWARD] from ANU may progress to an AQF level 9 qualification (Masters Degree) or AQF level 10 qualification (Doctoral Degree), subject to specific admission requirements.*” The Honours Working Party does not recommend that this wording be changed.

1.5 Recommended Statement of the Nature and Purpose of Honours

Recommendation 1:

The ANU Bachelor Honours degree exemplifies ANU’s commitment to research-led education. It prepares students for professional life or, with completion of a thesis, entry into a PhD, through the development of an advanced knowledge of the research principles and methods and theoretical concepts of their discipline/s or specialisation such that they can design and implement research projects that lead to the development of new understandings or that provide solutions to complex problems.

2. Examine the current structure of the Honours programs and consider the balance between coursework and the thesis

2.1 Current structures

ANU currently has a number of Honours structures, but these can be categorised into the two structures referred to in the AQF:

1. Direct entry into a final “+1 year” Honours year of 48 units of 4000-level course/s following completion of an AQF Level 7 qualification with admission based on results in the AQF Level 7 qualification. This is the most common type of Honours at ANU. Although there are a number of direct entry 4-year Honours programs such as the PhB(Hons), BSc(Advanced)(Hons), or BISS (Hons), these are essentially the 3 year’s pass Bachelor + 1 year Honours model, with a hurdle between the 1000- to 3000-level courses and the 4000-level courses. Note that the requirement to maintain an HD average in the PhB(Hons) is a hurdle within the first 3 years, not between the first three years and the fourth (“+1 year”) year.
2. The “embedded” Honours, which are all single 4-year degrees, which have the following characteristics:
 - Direct entry based on ATAR
 - there is no distinct 48 units of courses that form the Honours component,
 - they do not require at least 48 units of 4000-level courses
 - a 12-unit research project is required,
 - there may be an internal hurdle but it is not between the 1000- to 3000-level courses and any 4000-level courses

These are the BEng (Hons), BEng(R&D)(Hons), BSoftwareEng(Hons), BAdvancedComputing(Hons), BAdvancedComputing(R&D)(Hons), and LLB(Hons). The

LLB Hons requires a 12-unit thesis but otherwise is based on achievement across other courses over the 4 years.

Current ANU Honours Plans are listed in Attachment 1.

2.2 Coursework vs Thesis

Honours includes both training in theory and research methods and the application of that training in a project (typically but not necessarily a “thesis”). The Committee agreed that both are essential components of Honours, although it can be difficult to differentiate at course level between “coursework” and “thesis” when research training is integrated into the project such as in laboratory-based sciences. Nevertheless, it should be conceptually possible to articulate which parts of the Honours plan relate to training in theory and method, and which parts relate to implementing a research project. The former is part of the “coursework” and the latter the “thesis”. It may therefore help to think of this Term of Reference as the balance between summative assessment tasks relating to the training part of the plan and the summative assessment tasks relating to the project part of the plan.

2.3 Academic Board statements

Training in theory and method in coursework can occur either as one aspect of a course, or as the sole focus of a course. As such, one method of considering the balance between coursework and thesis is through the balance of summative assessment tasks rather than through the balance of discrete courses. This is consistent with the definition of the minimum research component for Master’s degrees, as approved by Academic Board 6/2013, Item 22 (p.80):

“The requirement of “demonstration of the application of knowledge and skills... to plan and execute a substantial research-based project, capstone experience and/or piece of scholarship” within the AQF is met by:

Course/s assembled in a program to the value of 12 units, where no less than 50% of the assessment involves the demonstration of appropriate research skills. The default composition of these 12 units will be one 12-unit course or two 6-unit courses.

Alternatively, in cases where professional accreditation requirements mean that it is necessary to embed research skills across a program, no less than 12.5% of the assessment in the program must involve the demonstration of appropriate research skills.

The demonstration of research skills may include completion of a research project with or without formulation of a research question, or a relevant internship. This research will be required to be articulated at the time of both accreditation and re-accreditation.”

Also relevant is the current specification in the ANU Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy, Table 1: Academic Design Principles:

“Must include a project or piece of research and scholarship worth at least 12 units (created in a single course, or assembled as a coherent piece of research and scholarship from multiple courses) and the remaining balance from 48 units made up of research training or advanced disciplinary training, or both.”

2.4 Role of summative assessment

It is important for students to receive both formative and summative feedback throughout their Honours plan, and both should commence in the first half (in terms of duration) of the plan. To support this, a formalized process of summative assessment and formative feedback should occur. A minimum of 25% of summative assessment, or a combination of both (i) a minimum of 15% summative assessment and (ii) formalized progress monitoring involving staff other than the supervisor or Honours convenor should be completed in the first half (in terms of duration) of the Honours plan. To ensure that this is done in a robust manner, an explanation as to how this requirement is being met, and how the assessment is structured such that it can be determined whether or not each student meets the learning outcomes for the Honours plan, must be included in the documentation for the creation or revision of an Honours plan submitted to Academic Board for approval.

For clarity, it is noted that an oral presentation or oral defense of a research project may count as research project assessment as, like written text, it communicates the project.

2.5 Recommended structure

Recommendation 2:

2.1 All Honours plans will specify at least 48 units of courses as Honours courses, which are to be identified through coding at 4000-level; the learning outcomes for these courses will be at a minimum of AQF Level 8.

2.2 All Honours plans must include both research training and the application of that training in one or more research projects to ensure that students develop “*an advanced knowledge of the research principles and methods and theoretical concepts of their discipline/s or specialisation such that they can design and implement research projects that lead to the development of new understandings or that provide solutions to complex problems.*”

2.2.1. The research training minimum in an Honours plan must be equivalent to 12 units of summative assessment tasks at a minimum of AQF Level 8.

2.2.2. The research project minimum in an Honours plan must be equivalent to 12 units of summative assessment tasks at a minimum of AQF Level 8. To serve as a potential PhD pathway the research project in an Honours plan must comply with the recommendations of the ANU PhD Pathways Working Group as approved by Academic Board.

2.2.3. Research training and research project/s may be in courses dedicated solely to research training or a research project, or may be embedded as one component in each of multiple courses.

2.3 The PhD Pathways Working Group will make recommendations about the minimum requirements for possible entry into an ANU PhD. Each embedded Honours plan in which the minimum requirements do not provide a possible pathway to a PhD is required to provide an option in its structure that is a possible pathway to a PhD. This option may have entry requirements additional to those for entry into the Bachelor Honours degree.

2.4 At least 25% of the summative assessment, or a combination of both (i) a minimum of 15% summative assessment and (ii) formalized progress monitoring involving staff other than the supervisor or Honours convenor, is to be completed in the first half (in terms of duration) of an Honours plan. The form for the creation, amendment, or review of Honours plans will have a section for explanation of how this requirement is met. Where an Honours plan has a thesis, the thesis course outline will also include this information.

2.5. The form for the creation, amendment, or review of Honours plans will have a section for explanation of how the assessment is structured such that it can be determined whether or not each student meets the learning outcomes for the Honours plan.

Many structures would meet these requirements. Some examples include:

Example 1: “+1 year” model.

- 24 unit thesis; and
- 24 units of AQF Level 8 coursework that includes 12 units of research training.

Example 2: “+1 year” model.

- 1 x 48-unit thesis course that includes research training summative assessment totalling at least 25% of the course (that is, 12 units of 48 units).

Example 3: “embedded” model.

- 12 units of research project assessment, consisting of four 6-unit courses at AQF Level 8, each of which has a 50% research project; and
- 12 units of research methodology assessment, consisting of four 6-unit courses at AQF Level 8, each of which has a 50% research methodology assignment; and
- 24 units of other AQF Level 8 coursework.

3. Identify a consistent and sustainable approach for the administrative management of Honours coursework

3.1 Standardisation

To avoid proliferation of requirements, except where this report makes a specific recommendation for change, current requirements will be maintained.

Recommendation 3:

Coursework must be consistent with the *ANU Academic Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy and Procedure*, including *Procedure* para 22: “The standard unit value of courses at ANU is 6. Courses worth multiples of 6 (eg 12, 18, 24) may also be permitted to meet professional accreditation or clinical requirements, or to support research training.”

3.2 Co-badging

To create efficiencies, there may be Honours versions of Master’s level courses.

Recommendation 4:

4000-level courses may be rebadged or co-badged versions of 6000/7000/8000-level courses that have the same learning outcomes, assessment, and contact as the 6000/7000/8000-level courses. For purposes of the micro-load levy, the EFTSL load in these rebadged or co-badged courses will be added together to determine the load of these courses.

3.3. Substitution of non-4000 level courses

Master's degree students may take 25% of their program as undergraduate courses. Especially in interdisciplinary Honours, it may be appropriate, with the approval of the relevant Delegated Authority, for an Honours student to substitute a 2000-, 3000-, 6000-, 7000-, or 8000-level course, for example from another discipline, for a 4000-level Honours course.

Recommendation 5:

The relevant Delegated Authority may approve for an Honours student to substitute 2000-, 3000-, 6000-, 7000-, or 8000-level courses for 4000-level Honours courses specified in the orders for the Honours plan. A maximum of 12 units of 2000- and 3000-level courses may be counted towards the 48 units of Honours courses.

3.4 Enrolment in courses

The practice of completing the requirements of a course but not enrolling in it is cumbersome, is not recognised on the transcript, and does not appropriately reward the AOU undertaking the teaching.

Recommendation 6:

If a student attends classes and submits assessment for a formally-approved course as part of an Honours plan, the student is to formally enrol in that course, with the course, mark, and grade appearing on the transcript.

3.5. Size of Honours disciplines

It is recognised that many Honours disciplines are very small, and may be impacted by the micro-load levy. As such, disciplines are encouraged to work together to develop Honours-level research-training coursework.

3.6. Role of Honours Convenors

In the "+1 year" model, the role of a discipline's/AOU's Honours convenor covers both the "coursework" and "research project/thesis" components of the Honours plan.

3.7. Mid-year entry

A significant issue is created in some disciplines by mid-year entry. If method courses are run only once a year, there is potentially a real equity issue with some students commencing their

thesis before commencing their research training coursework. In this instance, disciplines are to consider and report to Academic Board as part of the Review Process when each plan is reviewed as per the *Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy*, paragraph 8, on the strategies for ensuring that this cohort of students will not be disadvantaged. To avoid this, some disciplines do not allow mid-year entry into Honours.

Recommendation 7:

Where Honours research training courses are run only once per calendar year, disciplines are to report to Academic Board on the strategies for ensuring that students who enter the plan in a session in which these courses are not taught will not be disadvantaged (i) whenever an Honours plan is created; and (ii) as part of the proposal to Academic Board as part of the Review Process when each plan is reviewed as per the *Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy*, paragraph 8. If a Review finds that there is any disadvantage then the Review document must explain how the issue will be addressed and the timeframe for implementation. Affected students may appeal under the *Assessment Rules 2014*
http://about.anu.edu.au/_documents/rules/assessmentrules.pdf.

The issue of mid-year entry into the PhB and hence the Honours year is referred to the PhB Working Party for consideration.

3.8. Permissions and Requisites

The requesting, issuing, and administration of permission codes is time-consuming for both students and staff, and so the requirement for permission codes should be kept to a minimum. Once students have been admitted into an Honours plan, they have a right to enrol in courses to complete that plan (through enrolment or under the ANU Credit Policy), and in particular permission to enrol in compulsory courses cannot be denied. To minimise use of permission codes, it is recommended that entry be tied to enrolment in the Honours Plan, and that the Requisite for all 4000-level Honours courses be “Enrolment in [list all relevant Honours plan codes]” and/or with “Permission of the Convenor”. Permission is therefore not required at course level for Honours students. In exceptional cases, Convenors may give permission to non-Honours students to enrol.

Recommendation 8:

The Requisite for all 4000-level Honours courses be “Enrolment in [list all relevant Honours plan codes]” and/or with “Permission of the Convenor”. The exception is a different specified 4000-level course where the courses must be taken in a set order. Other expectations can be communicated as “assumed knowledge”.

4. Identify consistent nomenclature for Honours program structures, orders and thesis components

4.1. The relationship of the Bachelor Honours degree and the Bachelor pass degree

Recommendation 9:

9.1. Honours is a plan within an undergraduate program.

9.2. For the purposes of Paragraph 8 of the *Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy*, when calculating EFTSL load in a program, where there is both a pass plan and an Honours plan, the EFTSL load in each will be added together to determine the program load for determining both load and viability.

9.3. All undergraduate programs that have a pass plan should normally also have an Honours plan; exceptions may be approved by Academic Board based on a case put by the relevant College.

9.4. Undergraduate programs that have an Honours plan are not required to also have a pass plan.

9.5. A student completing two majors in one program may, if meeting the Honours entry requirements for Honours in both disciplines, do two separate Honours years, one for each discipline. This will normally be done sequentially, not simultaneously. A separate plan code may be needed for the repetition of Honours within one program.

4.2 Time limits

4.2.1 Time limits for completion of an Honours program once commenced

The *Undergraduate Award Rules*

http://about.anu.edu.au/_documents/rules/undergradawardsrules.pdf specify time limits for completion under paragraph 2.11. For “+1 year” Honours, under para. 2.11.3(b), this is “in 1 year as a full-time student or 2 years as a part-time student.” For “embedded” Honours, under para. 2.11.5, referring to para 2.11.1, this is 10 years for a single degree program, or double degree program of 240 units or less; or 11 years for a double degree program of 240 units or more.

As approval of a supervisor is normally a key requirement of admission to “+1 year” Honours, it is important that those involved can clearly predict the exact timeframe within which supervision will be required, and the current wording of the rules supports this.

Recommendation 10:

There be no change to the time limits for completion of an Honours program as set out in paragraphs 2.11.1-2.11.3 and 2.11.5-2.11.6 of the *Undergraduate Award Rules*.

4.2.2 Time limits for commencement of a “+1 year” Bachelor Honours degree after completion of a Bachelor Pass degree

The Undergraduate Award Rules

<http://about.anu.edu.au/documents/rules/undergradawardsrules.pdf> specify time limits for commencement under paragraph 2.11.4, which states that an Honours program must be undertaken “immediately after finishing the requirements for the corresponding pass degree”; and that if two Honours programs are undertaken, the second Honours program will be undertaken immediately after the first.

It is not clear why this restriction is in place, however as an Honours year is always cognate, there is a clear need to ensure that the material learned in the pass degree is still current. It is recommended that entry should be made more flexible by extending this period, while acknowledging that the longer the delay, the more likely that there may be changes in the cognate discipline.

Recommendation 11:

That in paragraph 2.11.4(a) of the *Undergraduate Award Rules*, “undertakes the honours year immediately after finishing the requirements for the corresponding pass degree” be amended to “commences the honours year within two years of completing the requirements for the corresponding pass degree”.

That paragraph 2.11.4(b) of the *Undergraduate Award Rules* be amended

From:

“for a student undertaking 2 honours programs—he or she undertakes the honours year of each program:

- (i) immediately after completing the requirements for the corresponding pass degree; or
- (ii) immediately after completing the honours year for the other component degree.”

To:

“for a student undertaking 2 honours programs—he or she commences the honours year of each program:

- (i) within two years of completing the requirements for the corresponding pass degree; or
- (ii) immediately after completing the honours year for the other component degree.”

Given this increase in flexibility it is recommended that students in a “+1 year” Honours program are not given the option of deferring unless the Honours Delegate approves otherwise. This is important owing to the need to provide staff with a predictable supervision load.

Recommendation 12:

The *Undergraduate Award Rules* be amended as appropriate such that students applying for admission to an Honours year must commence in the session for which they have applied unless the Honours Delegate approves otherwise.

4.3 Quotas

After further discussion, the Working Party decided to make no recommendation regarding the introduction of formal quotas on any Honours plans, noting that discussed rational for this, total supervisory capacity, can be informally managed through the “*written approval of an identified supervisor for the research project/thesis*” option in the admission requirements (see Recommendation 20). Recommendation 13, which appeared in the circulated draft, is therefore withdrawn; to preserve the circulated numbering, the subsequent recommendations have not been renumbered.

Recommendation 13:

Withdrawn.

4.4 Differentiating Honours courses

The method of differentiating Bachelor Honours courses from non-Honours courses was discussed. As far as has been determined, there is currently very little (ca. 15 courses in the entire university) use of 4XXX other than for Honours components or for research projects in embedded Honours programs; any non-Honours courses identified will be required to be recoded to a non-4000 level.

Recommendation 14:

14.1 An Honours plan requires the specification of at least 48 units of courses as Honours courses. As noted at 3.3 above, the Delegated Authority may approve variations on a student-by-student basis.

14.2 For programs with embedded Honours, these courses may be completed in the third year and/or fourth year.

14.3 All Honours components listed in program orders will be coded 4XXX.

14.4 The 4XXX code is to be restricted to use for Honours components.

4.5 Honours Specialisations

The accumulation of Honours courses into a structure to sit within the plan was discussed. A term needs to be developed to identify such sets of courses. “Honours Specialisation” is recommended; the Glossary (https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_002601) will need to be amended to enable this. Just as some pass plans have multiple majors, some Honours plans will have multiple areas that typically correspond directly to majors or groups of majors. Likewise, just as a pass plan is not required to have any majors, an Honours plan is not required to have any Honours Specialisations.

Recommendation 15:

15.1. The term “Honours Specialisation” be created to describe a 48-unit set of Honours courses. The definition of “Specialisation” in the Glossary is to be amended to:

A University-approved set of advanced courses, the completion of which indicates depth of specialist knowledge of the discipline or field identified by the name of the specialisation. The structure of a specialisation

- at undergraduate level, requires the completion of 24 units of 2000/3000-level courses that must be completed in conjunction with a specific major or as a specified requirement within a degree; it indicates additional study in a discipline above any normal major requirement;
- at Honours level, an “Honours Specialisation” requires the completion of 48 units of 4000-level courses; it includes both research training and the application of that training in one or more research projects; and
- at graduate level, requires the completion of 24 units of 6000/7000/8000-level courses.

15.2. Each program that has one pass plan should normally have one Honours plan; an exception is where a student may do double Honours within one plan.

15.3. An Honours plan may have multiple Honours Specialisations.

15.4. An Honours plan is not required to have any Honours Specialisations.

15.5. The creation, disestablishment, and amendment of Honours Specialisations will follow the requirements as detailed for programs in the *Academic Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy* and amendments may be streamlined applying the program streamlining criteria. The proforma for Honours Specialisations will replicate as closely as possible the current proforma for majors, minors and specialisations (<http://drss.anu.edu.au/asqo/docs/New-Major-Minor-Specialisation.docx>) with the expectation that the College completed section be less than one page.

15.6. Before approving proposals relating to Honour Specialisations, Academic Board will consider, amongst other things, the sustainability, distinctiveness, and role as a pathway of the Specialisation.

4.6 Structure of the orders**Recommendation 16:**

The structure of the orders for each Honours plan is, subject to any amendments resulting from recommendations of this report, to follow the *Structure and Wording of Coursework Award Requirements (Program Orders)*

https://policies.anu.edu.au/cs/groups/confidential/@dsa/documents/edrms/dxbf/mda2/~edisp/anup_006803.pdf

4.7 Thesis

The structure and administration of the thesis component was discussed. Colleges are to consider, but are not required, to keep the number of thesis courses to a minimum. The College of Arts and Social Sciences has reduced the total number of Master (Research) and Master (Advanced) thesis course from 58 to 1, which has significant academic advantages in addition to administrative simplification. To facilitate full-time or part-time study without creating separate courses for each, and so that the thesis can be undertaken such that it can flow around any coursework, each thesis course will be set up as single variable unit course (e.g. 6-24u).

Recommendation 17:

17.1 Research projects of 24 units or more are called “Thesis”. The current definition of “Thesis” is to be amended to “Thesis (HDR)” and a new definition added to the Glossary: “Thesis (Coursework). The product of a research project of at least 24 units that investigates a research question through the application of an advanced knowledge of the research principles and methods and theoretical concepts of one or more disciplines or specialisations.” The Glossary (https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_002601) is to be amended to include this definition. The use of the term “Sub-Thesis” is to be discontinued. Research projects of less than 24 units are not to be called “Thesis”; each discipline may determine what term, other than Thesis or Sub-Thesis, to use.

17.2 Each thesis course will be set up as single variable unit course (e.g. 6-24u that may be taken more than once).

17.3 College Education Committees may determine the appropriate number of thesis courses for that College, noting that the micro-load levy will be applied to coursework thesis courses.

17.4 Each thesis will receive a mark of between 0 and 100.

17.5 If a thesis is not completed in one semester, the interim grade KU will be used until there is a final result.

17.6. Theses are exempt from the *Student Assessment (Coursework) Policy and Procedure* sections “Assessment Task Submission” and “Late Assessment Task Submission” and instead follow the requirements in the relevant Course Outline. Theses will be consistent with the practice of HDR theses with regard to the use of text matching software.

17.7. A student taking double Honours may enrol in the thesis twice, but must write on a different topic; any material common to the two theses must be appropriately quoted and cited as common to the two theses.

It is noted that the current definition of HDR thesis may need to be amended.

4.8 Final Honours Result

Determining and managing the final Honours result was considered.

Recommendation 18:

18.1 Current classifications (H1, H2A, *etc.*) and bands (80-100, *etc.*), as specified in the *Student Assessment (Coursework) Policy*, paragraph 30, will continue to be used.

18.2 Where an Honours plan consists of more than one course, an administrative shell will be created to enable the award of a final Honours mark and class of Honours.

18.3 There should be no more than one such shell for each College for “+1 year” Honours plans. Each College’s default shell will be coded HONS4XXX, with the second digit indicating the College. Where approved by Academic Board on the basis of justification based on academic or professional accreditation reasons, there may be separate shells for each embedded Honours program.

18.4 For “+1 year” Honours plans, the final Honours mark will include all courses taken towards the plan and be calculated as follows:

$$\Sigma (\text{mark} \times \text{units}) / \Sigma \text{units, giving NCN and WN a nominal mark of zero}$$

For “embedded” Honours plans the final Honours mark will include all courses identified as Honours courses as per Recommendation 2.1, and for each plan a single method of calculation that gives NCN and WN a nominal mark of zero will be developed, considered for approval by Academic Board and, if approved, published.

18.5 Moderation of marks may apply to individual courses, but not to an administrative shell.

5. Develop a framework for developing and maintaining clear and concise admissions and transfer standards for Honours programs

5.1 Admissions standards: introduction

The current Admissions Standard in the *ANU Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy*, Table 1: ANU Academic Programs Design Principles states that the pathways can include:

“Bachelor degree with at least a distinction average in the discipline for 48 unit programs; completion of senior secondary certificate of education or equivalent for 192 unit programs”

While clear, this raises a number of implementation issues, and does not allow for disciplinary differences.

5.2 Admissions standards: all Honours programs

The Working Party agreed that, given the research-focused nature of the Bachelor Honours program, that even if a student meets the technical admissions standards, the relevant Honours Delegate should have the final decision, as is the case for HDR. It is recommended that rather than being expressed in the admissions standards that it be incorporated into the *Undergraduate Award Rules*.

Recommendation 19:

The following be incorporated into Part 3 Division 3 of the *Undergraduate Award Rules*:

Limit on obligation

If a person seeking acceptance into a Bachelor Honours program satisfies or exceeds the minimum requirement for admission to the Bachelor Honours program, the Delegated Authority is not obliged to admit the person to the program only because the person has satisfied the minimum requirement for admission.

The Honours Delegate will take into consideration any recommendations or endorsements by the potential supervisor, the discipline's Honours Convenor, and the Head of School or his or her delegate.

5.3 Admissions standards: 48 unit programs (i.e., where there is a change of plan)

For 48-unit (“+1 year”) programs, calculation of the average is complex, as is the definition of discipline for a multi-disciplinary program.

The template developed by the Graduate Coursework Working Party is an appropriate starting point, modified as follows:

- a cognate pass Bachelor degree is required
- there is to be no work experience requirement
- there is to be no credit towards this 48-unit structure
- there is to be no internal hurdle within this 48-unit structure

Recommendation 20:

The admissions standards template for “+1 year” Bachelor Honours Plans is:

A Bachelor Degree completed within the last two years

[1] in a cognate area [cognate areas to be identified in program proposals]

[2] with an average of at least ___ [select level] [Standard statement of how the average is calculated]

[3] with at least ___ courses in ___ [Select [3] if required; the list may have multiple components; maximum of 12 courses]

[4] and with the written approval of an identified supervisor for the research project/thesis [Select [4] if required; if [4] selected, select research project or thesis]

Guidelines on the completion of the template follow:

[1] Each discipline will determine the areas that it considers to be cognate.

[2] There are two aspects to this number. The first is: what is the number? The second is: how is it calculated from the raw data?

What is the number? It is proposed that there be no change to the *Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy* other than replacing references to grades with references to numbers; noting that different universities have different grade scales, the formulation “the minimum mark required for a [insert grade]” is recommended.

How is it calculated from the raw data? It is essential that there is a clear and consistent method of calculating the average. This is complicated by students coming from other universities, and so we cannot specify specific courses, and need a simple mechanism to calculate the average. It is argued that the average be calculated only from cognate courses. If a student studies Physics and Latin, and wishes to take Honours in Physics, the marks in Latin may not be relevant. It is recommended that the average be calculated from the numerical marks for the best 36 units of courses, excluding courses coded as first year courses, that are in the discipline/s determined by the program as cognate.

[3] All undergraduate programs at ANU, unless exempted, must have 48 units of free electives. Honours entry requirements cannot stipulate a number of courses that would breach this. A specific number of courses is typically only required for broad field program (e.g. Bachelor of Arts) as a narrow field program (e.g. Bachelor of Criminology) should normally require sufficient courses for entry to Honours. The list may consist of multiple components, for example 8 courses dealing with A and 2 courses dealing with B.

Recommendation 21:

21.1 The average referred to in the template will be calculated from the numerical marks for the best 36 units of courses, excluding courses coded as first year courses (i.e., 1000-level), that are in the discipline/s determined by the program as cognate.

21.2 For the purpose of calculating averages, the *Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy* be amended by replacing references to letter grades with “the minimum mark required for a [insert grade]”.

5.3 Admissions Standards: 196 unit programs (i.e. where there is no change of plan)

5.3.1. Direct-entry 196 unit programs (4-year programs) are currently based on “*completion of senior secondary certificate of education or equivalent*.” ANU has a quality floor of 80, however if a program is a direct-entry Honours program the entry standard should be higher than this floor. Further, university policy states that “+1 year” Honours plans all have a distinction average entry requirement. It is therefore recommended that all direct-entry Honours programs require more than “*completion of senior secondary certificate of education or equivalent*” and that an additional requirement is set, namely that an ATAR-based quality floor will be set for direct-entry Honours programs.

5.3.2. Under the *Programs and Courses Accreditation Policy*, a distinction average is required for admission to “+1 year” Honours. According to Admissions Conversion Table T8034, completion of an undergraduate degree with an average of 70 equates to a nominal ATAR of 98.6. However, Recommendation 21.1 (above) on calculation of an average does not require inclusion of all courses but only the best cognate courses. Therefore, a student with an average of 70 resulting from a calculation under Recommendation 21.1 will almost certainly have an average of less than 70 when calculated over the entire degree. Therefore, the ATAR may be set at a level lower than 98.6.

5.3.3. It is recommended that the quality floor for direct-entry Honours programs will be an ATAR of 90 or equivalent. That is, a separate minimum ATAR will be set for each direct-entry Honours program as per current processes, but that the chosen ATAR must not be lower than 90.

Recommendation 22:

The quality floor for direct-entry Honours programs will be an ATAR of 90 or equivalent.

5.4 Transfer standards

ANU does not permit transfer across careers (undergraduate, postgraduate, HDR), so transfer between Bachelor Honours plans and Master's plans is not possible. There are therefore only two possibilities:

1. transfer into a Bachelor Honours plan from a Bachelor pass plan
2. transfer out of a Bachelor Honours plan into a Bachelor pass plan, including forced transfer

Recommendation 23:

23.1 Transfer into a Bachelor Honours plan from a Bachelor pass plan

This is only relevant where there is a direct entry Bachelor Honours plan. Students may transfer if they meet the entry requirements for direct entry into the Bachelor Honours plan.

23.2 Transfer out of a Bachelor Honours plan into a Bachelor pass plan

This is only relevant where there is a 196-unit direct-entry Bachelor Honours plan. A student, subject to meeting academic progress requirements, may voluntarily transfer from a Bachelor Honours plan into a Bachelor pass plan within the same program, with full credit for all completed courses.

If a student does not meet an internal hurdle in a 196-unit direct-entry Bachelor Honours plan, but meets other academic progress requirements, the student will be forcibly transferred into another plan or program. In all instances, a 196-unit direct-entry Bachelor Honours plan with an internal hurdle must state the default program into which students will be transferred if they do not meet the internal hurdle. Students will receive full credit towards the default program for all courses completed in the Bachelor Honours plan from which they have been transferred. Appeals to a decision to forcibly transfer are available under paragraph 6.3 of the *Undergraduate Awards Rules (No. 2) 2013*
http://about.anu.edu.au/_documents/rules/undergradawardsrules.pdf.

The Degree Transfer Working Party, which has commenced meeting, will further consider the implementation process for forced transfers.

5.5. Application and Offer

The recommended Application Method for Honours is set out in Attachment 2.

6. Consider opportunities for new and innovative articulation between Honours programs and masters and PhD programs

6.1. The relationship between Bachelor Honours and the Master (Advanced) programs need to be clearly articulated for each discipline where both exist.

6.2. Master (Advanced) is a two-year pathway to the PhD, but Bachelor Honours is a one-year pathway and so may be viewed as an accelerated pathway for students with a recently-completed cognate Bachelor pass degree.

6.3. Articulation between Bachelor Honours and the Master programs may be facilitated by having co-badged/co-taught courses that are available in both programs. The learning outcomes of these courses will be set at AQF Level 9.

7. Provide advice on the consistent and sustainable management of interdisciplinary Honours programs

7.1. Interdisciplinary Honours is encouraged, and Academic Organisation Units (AOUs) are to work together to support this.

7.2. Development of interdisciplinary Honours plans will involve Honours convenors from all involved AOUs.

7.3. A student in an interdisciplinary Honours plan will have a supervisory panel that will have at least one supervisor from each discipline.

7.4. Consideration was given as to which Honours plan students follow when taking interdisciplinary Honours.

Recommendation 24:

A student will normally follow the Honours requirements of the Academic Organisation Unit (AOU) to which the student will submit the thesis for examination.

8. Advise on the management of international exchange components of Honours programs, including minimum time required to be spent at ANU as part of the program

8.1. Over the duration of a 4-year degree, students are encouraged to go on exchange, but the exchange should not normally, in the “+1 year” model, be in the “Honours year”. Exceptions include those taking language Honours travelling to a country in which that language is spoken.

8.2. Exchange must be clearly differentiated from fieldwork or visiting other institutions; exchange involves enrolling in courses for credit at other institutions.

8.3. Students who come to ANU just for the “+1 year” Honours year may not go on exchange as they are receiving an ANU Testamur for a Bachelor’s Honours Degree for the completion of 48 units.

8.4. In the “+1 year” Honours year, students must complete at least 24 units at ANU which must include enrolment in the ANU thesis component of the Honours year. If the thesis component of an Honours plan is more than 24 units, exchange will not be possible.

8.5. Professional accreditation requirements may prevent students in some Honours plans going on exchange; disciplines are to advise students where this is the case.

Recommendation 25:

25.1 Students in a 48-unit Honours Plan, or in the final 48 units of a 196-unit Honours Plan, are normally expected to complete all units at ANU, but may apply to take between 6u and 24u of coursework (but not the thesis) at approved exchange institutions subject to the following conditions, noting that there is no assurance of being able to undertake an exchange even where desired.

25.2 Students in a 48-unit Honours Plan who do not have an ANU AQF Level 7 qualification must complete 48 units of their program through enrolment in ANU courses (that is, courses created and controlled by ANU).

25.3 Exchanges in a 48-unit Honours Plan, or in the final 48 units of a 196-unit Honours Plan, must be at an institution that is on a list of institutions approved by the University Education Committee for Honours exchanges; the list will include but not be limited to all IARU universities.

25.4 Each course undertaken at a partner institution must be approved IN ADVANCE by both the relevant Program/Honours Convenor and the relevant College's Associate Dean Education or Sub Dean.

25.5 The student must provide documentation to the satisfaction of the Program/Honours Convenor and the College's Associate Dean Education or Sub Dean such that it can be determined that each exchange course will contribute to the learning outcomes of the Honours plan, that the combination of courses that the student proposes will ensure that the Honours plan learning outcomes can be met, and that the proposed courses will enhance the writing of the Thesis.

25.6 Credit will be calculated as 6 ANU units = 7.5 ECTS credits.

25.7 Where it is explicitly stated, disciplines may require students to demonstrate to the relevant Honours Convenor that the specific learning outcomes anticipated by the exchange have been met, for example by submitting copies of work that was submitted for assessment while on exchange, or by some additional form of assessment.

25.8 The grade for courses taken on exchange will appear on the transcript as STE (external status); marks or grades awarded by another institution will, after benchmarking and moderation so that they accord with ANU marking standards, be taken into consideration by the Examiners' Committee when recommending the final Honours mark and class of Honours.

25.9 Students cannot graduate until after receipt of official confirmation from the host university of both the study load and the passing of the courses undertaken while on exchange; students should note that in some cases that this may take more than six months and in such cases the completion of Honours and graduation will be delayed until after this has been received.

25.10 Exchange will not constitute reason for extension to or special consideration towards the Honours thesis.

25.11 Scholarships, unless the scholarship rules expressly prohibits it, will continue.

9. Implementation

Recommendation 26:

The Working Party report is to be implemented as follows:

26.1. Effective upon approval of the Report by Academic Board:

- R4 co-badging and calculation of course load
- R9.2 calculation of plan load
- R15.1 addition of term “Honours Specialisation” to Glossary
- R17.1 amendment of term “Thesis” in Glossary

The Registrar is responsible for implementation of R4 and R9.2, and the Education Standards and Quality Committee for the implementation of R15.1 and R17.1.

26.2. Effective from date of approval by Council: Changes to *Undergraduate Award Rules*: R11, R12, R13, R19. The Registrar is responsible for implementation.

26.3. Effective from the effective date of any changes to ANU policies or procedures: changes to ANU policies or procedures. The Education Standards and Quality Committee is responsible for implementation.

26.4. Effective from 01 January 2015: All other recommendations become available for implementation should Colleges so choose. Colleges are responsible for implementation, including taking down information from College pages that duplicate information on programs and courses; the Registrar is responsible for configuration of programsandcourses.anu.edu.au for the implementation of Honours Specialisations, noting that until 01 January 2016 specialisations will display within program orders but not as separate pages as, for example, majors.

26.5. Effective from 01 January 2016: Full compliance required, except for the MBBS Hons on the grounds that no new students are being admitted. Colleges are responsible for implementation, and will report to UEC 1/2016 on compliance.

Attachment 1: ANU Honours Plans as at 17 July 2014

- The following list includes all ANU Honours Plans that will be active on 01 January 2015, excluding those with a last term admit date of 31 December 2014 or earlier.
- All Honours Plans are undergraduate plans.
- All “+1 year” Honours Plans are 48 units following completion of a 144 unit Bachelor Degree.
- All “embedded” Honours Plans are 196 units.
- The second B Arts plan, HART2, enables students to take double Honours, that is, two separate Honours years in two different disciplines, within the BA.

Course Code	Course of Study Name	Type	College
HAPST	B Asia-Pacific Studies	“+1 year”	CAP
HASEC	B Asia-Pacific Security	“+1 year”	CAP
APHAR	B Philosophy (Arts)	“+1 year”	CASS
APNAR	ANU-NUS	“+1 year”	CASS
HAHCR	B Art History & Curatorship	“+1 year”	CASS
HAPRC	B Archaeological Practice	“+1 year”	CASS
HART2	B Arts	“+1 year”	CASS
HARTS	B Arts	“+1 year”	CASS
HCLAS	B Classical Studies	“+1 year”	CASS
HCRIM	B Criminology	“+1 year”	CASS
HDEVS	B Development Studies	“+1 year”	CASS
HENVS	B Environmental Studies	“+1 year”	CASS
HEURO	Bachelor European Studies	“+1 year”	CASS
HIR	B International Relations	“+1 year”	CASS
HLANG	B Languages	“+1 year”	CASS
HLAS	B Latin American Studies	“+1 year”	CASS
HMECA	B Mid East Central Asia	“+1 year”	CASS
HMUSI	B Music	“+1 year”	CASS
HPOLS	B Policy Studies	“+1 year”	CASS
HPPE	B Pols, Phil and Economics	“+1 year”	CASS
HVART	B Visual Arts	“+1 year”	CASS
HDESA	B Design Arts	“+1 year”	CASS
ASSAE	B SocSc(Hon ActuralStds & Eco)	“+1 year”	CBE
HACTS	B Actuarial Studies	“+1 year”	CBE
HBUSA	B Business Administration	“+1 year”	CBE
HCOMM	B Commerce	“+1 year”	CBE
HECON	B Economics	“+1 year”	CBE
HFINN	B Finance	“+1 year”	CBE
HINBS	B International Business	“+1 year”	CBE
HSTAT	B Statistics	“+1 year”	CBE
AACOM	B Advanced Computing	Embedded	CECS
AACRD	B Advanced Computing (R&D)	Embedded	CECS

AENGI	B Engineering	Embedded	CECS
AENRD	B Engineering (Rsch & Dev)	Embedded	CECS
ASENG	B Software Engineering	Embedded	CECS
HIT	B Infomation Technology	" +1 year"	CECS
HLLBA	B Laws	Embedded	Law
AISSU	B Interdisc Stud (Sust) Adv	" +1 year"	Science
APHSC	B Philosophy (Science)	" +1 year"	Science
APNSC	ANU-NUS	" +1 year"	Science
APSYC	B Psychology	" +1 year"	Science
ASCAD	B Science Advanced	" +1 year"	Science
HBIOT	B Biotechnology	" +1 year"	Science
HGENE	B Genetics	" +1 year"	Science
HISSU	B Interdisciplinary Stud(Sust)	" +1 year"	Science
HMDSA	B Medical Science	" +1 year"	Science
HMEDS	B Medical Science	" +1 year"	Science
HSC	B Science	" +1 year"	Science
HSFOR	B Science (Forest Sciences)	" +1 year"	Science
HSPSY	B Science (Psychology)	" +1 year"	Science
HSREM	B Science (Resource & Env Mgt)	" +1 year"	Science

Attachment 2: Application Methods for Honours

Purpose

To propose the alignment of application and offer methods for Honours.

Recommendation

The Committee endorse the proposed process for applications and offers to Honours.

Background

Term of Reference 3 for the Honours Working Party is to “Identify a consistent and sustainable approach for the administrative management of Honours coursework.”

Term of Reference 5 indicates that the Working Party is to “Develop a framework for developing and maintaining clear and concise admissions and transfer standards for Honours programs.”

With regard to these Terms of Reference, the Division of Student Administration recently undertook an informal discussion with administrators in the Colleges to determine the processes that are being followed to admit students into Honours. These processes vary between Colleges.

There was some consistency in having external applicants complete the online application process through StudyLink, though some Colleges had applicants complete this as well as a further College form.

For internal applicants, a greater variance in processes was readily observed. An application for Honours may be made through one of the following methods, depending on the area:

- by email to an academic staff member, though their contact information may or may not be widely available
- by email following a select invitation to apply to Honours
- through submitting a College form for consideration
- by informal discussion with the area, who will then contact DSA to have the student admitted
- a formal application through the online application system

Given that more transparent representation of Honours programs on Programs and Courses will require a more transparent method of application, it is proposed that the Honours working party agree on the information required to consider an individual for admission to Honours, and this information then be collected in a consistent manner.

Offers to Honours

For internal applicants, processes to inform them of the outcomes of their applications/requests/emails/discussions varied as widely as the methods. Areas varied between College produced letters, emails back to applicants, and verbal notification.

Not having a systematic method for notifying students regarding their Honours requests is not in the best interests of students, as it does not ensure appropriate information is given to a student on what the expectations on them will be.

It is also not in the best interests of the institution. It is difficult to appropriately ensure that staff making admission decisions hold appropriate delegations under the Undergraduate Awards Rules, if those decisions are being made verbally or through email. For international students, which are admittedly a smaller cohort in Honours, but still represented, the Education

Services for Overseas Students Act indicates a number of requirements on us, that must be contained in any offers to international students, most of which are not being met by current practice. The requirements for international student offer letters include each of the following, which were not included in the examples that have been observed:

- the length of each study period
- the tuition fees for each study period
- total tuition fees
- The CRICOS code for any 'course of study' (program) being offered to the student
- The University's fee refund policy
- the circumstances in which personal information may be shared between ANU and the Commonwealth under the privacy act
- a statement that "This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws"

Reporting

Currently, due to the significant variance in approaches to Honours admission, there is no systematic method to determine the number of students who have applied for Honours, the percentage of those who are successful, and the percentage of those that then go on to undertake Honours. This makes it difficult to have an informed conversation regarding the strategic merits of any particular Honours program, and how to position that program, as the only data available is the number of students enrolled and the number of students completed.

Proposal

Application

The College Honours application forms are included at Appendix A. It is proposed that the Honours working party recommend that an electronic University-wide application form for Honours be developed, either through StudyLink or a University form, capturing the following information:

- Applicant Details including residency
- Proposed Commencement date
- Current ANU student question
- Bachelor Degree completing, and date
- Degree applying for Honours in
- Discipline for Honours (Including combined disciplines)
- Proposed topic and brief summary
- Proposed supervisor
- Applicant declaration
- Link to discipline specific forms that must also be completed – e.g. Psychology

Offer

It is proposed that domestic offers to Honours be produced using the template at Appendix B. In all possible instances these should be electronic and automated, either manually by the College, or by the admissions office using the Student Administration System. These offers would need to be accepted by students prior to them being enrolled in an Honours degree. It is proposed that all offers to international applicants, whether internal or external, be produced by the admissions office in the Student Administration System as these students will require a new eCoE to then apply for a new student visa.

Author

Assistant Registrar, Division of Student Administration

July 2014

Appendices**Appendix A: Current Honours Application Forms**

Joint Colleges of Science application (internal applicants)

[http://cmbe-cpms.anu.edu.au/files/CURRENT Science Honours Application Form 2014-2_CJC.pdf](http://cmbe-cpms.anu.edu.au/files/CURRENT%20Science%20Honours%20Application%20Form%202014-2015_CJC.pdf)

CASS Honours application (both internal and external applicants)

<http://cass.anu.edu.au/application-admission-honours>

CAP Honours application (internal applicants)

<http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/Students/Honours/Honours-application-form-to-be-attached-to-front-of-proposal%202014.doc>

Appendix B: Proposed Standard Honours Domestic Offer Letter

Fields marked in **red text** are to be edited



Australian
National
University

DATE

College/Division

Ph: +61 2 6125

Fax: +61 2 6125

Email Address

Prefix & Student Name

Student Address

Canberra ACT 0200 Australia

www.anu.edu.au

CRICOS Provider No. 00120C

Student ID: **StudentID**

OFFER

Dear [Prefix and Student Name]

I am delighted to offer you conditional/unconditional admission to a program of study at The Australian National University as detailed below:

Program:	Bachelor of Degree (Honours)
Program Type:	Undergraduate
Commencing:	Semester
Program Start Date:	Insert Date
Standard Full-Time Duration	1 Year

Insert any conditions

To Accept this Offer:

- Satisfy any offer conditions
- Complete your acceptance at http://www.anu.edu.au/sas/admission/accepting_your_offer/
[OR by an alternate method determined by College]

Offer Expiry

In order to accept this offer you must complete the above steps by **XX**

Commonwealth Supported Place

This offer is for a Commonwealth Supported Place at the University. Please note all Commonwealth Supported Places are subject to confirmation that you meet the citizenship/residency criteria determined by the Department of Education. Further information can be found at <http://www.goingtouni.gov.au>

To Enrol:

First accept your offer, and then contact your College using the contact details at <http://students.anu.edu.au/contacts/> for further details on how to enrol.

Program and Course Information

For further information about your program and courses please consult
<http://programsandcourses.anu.edu.au>

University Policies

As a student you will be subject to The Australian National University Act 1991 as amended, and to the Statutes, Rules, Orders and policies of the University as made from time to time. For details on these please refer to <http://policies.anu.edu.au/>

Yours sincerely

SIGNATORY