



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

POLICY: THE AWARD OF A DEGREE WITH HONOURS

Purpose:	To define the expectations of students enrolled in the Honours program of an undergraduate (Bachelor's) degree
Responsible Executive:	Provost
Responsible Office:	Registrar's Office
Contact Officer:	Manager
Effective Date:	September 2006
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Rationale

The purposes of this policy are to:

- define the expectations of students enrolled in the Honours program of an undergraduate (Bachelor's) degree;
- ensure that degrees with Honours program provide the foundations of research or research preparation and have identifiable discipline-specific individual research, scholarly or creative components; and
- provide a framework for grading to recognise and reward outstanding academic ability.

Definitions

'Degree with Honours' – shall mean an honours program that is a specific additional year of study embedded in a Bachelor degree program, or forms part of a normal Bachelor degree program of four or more years' duration or a graduate entry degree of three or more years' duration.

'Research Component' - shall mean a dissertation, thesis, project, or creative work which constitutes part of the assessable work towards a degree with honours.

Principles

1. An undergraduate (Bachelor) degree of the University may provide for the award of the degree with Honours.
2. Entry into the Honours program of the degree will be at the discretion of the Dean of the School.
3. Normally, the minimum requirements to be eligible for admission to an Honours program is the achievement of an average mark of at least 65% in relevant units of study.
4. All students enrolled in the Honours program must complete a research component leading to the production of an assessable outcome, normally a written paper which demonstrates sustained, high academic achievement. The nature of the paper and its length will be specified in the course regulations but shall be consistent with the standard expectations established by the relevant discipline.
5. Any coursework undertaken as part of the Honours program must be at an advanced level.
6. A principal supervisor shall be appointed for the research component. A co-supervisor or associate supervisor may be appointed.
7. There shall normally be a minimum of two readers of the research component, at least one of whom shall produce a formal examination report to the Dean of the School. The other reader will be an assessor of the paper and will confer with the examiner on the production of the final report.
8. Neither the principal supervisor nor any co-supervisor or associate supervisor shall normally be appointed as examiner. A supervisor may be invited as an assessor of the Honours dissertation.
9. Standard numerical cut-offs will be adopted to guide the award of the rank of Honours.
10. Normally, to qualify for the award of the degree with Honours a student must obtain at least a Credit grade in the research component.
11. Except where permitted by the relevant Dean, a student in an Honours program may not repeat, or be granted supplementary assessment in, any Honours coursework that has been failed, and may not take studies-in-lieu of coursework that has been failed.
12. A student may request permission from the Dean of the School to resubmit an Honours research component on submitting evidence that an examiner (a) substantially misinterpreted the work or (b) was prejudiced or biased in the assessment. If resubmission is approved, an alternative examiner will be appointed.

Procedures

- 1 Each School will establish and publish within the Course Regulations for the Bachelor's degree, regulations concerning the Honours program consistent with this Policy. This must, where applicable, include details on:
 - 1.1 selection and admission;
 - 1.2 coursework and the research component;
 - 1.3 submission and examination of the Honours research component.
- 2 Where a student has completed additional units that would not be required for the award of the Bachelor's degree (either because they are enrolled in a double degree program or have enrolled in units in addition to course requirements), these units will not be used to determine eligibility for entry to the Honours program. Where there is some discretion in determining which units should be included, the units that would yield the highest possible average mark will be selected for the purposes of the calculation of the average.
- 3 When a student is admitted or invited to Honours or upon withdrawal of a student from the Honours program, the Dean shall advise the Registrar accordingly.
- 4 A student enrolled in the Honours program of an undergraduate degree are bound by the provisions of the Policy: *Research Integrity and the Code of Conduct for Research*.
- 5 Each School shall prepare and publish *Guidelines for Examination of Honours Research Components* with established assessment criteria for use by Examiners.
- 6 The Honours research component shall normally be allocated a final grade and mark.
- 7 The Board of Examiners shall determine the rank of Honours consistent with this Policy.
- 8 The School may pay external examiners an honorarium at the appropriate rate set by the University.
- 9 In determining the rank of Honours, Schools may refer to the guide shown in Appendix 1.
- 10 Testamurs shall indicate whether a student has achieved First Class Honours; for Honours Divisions IIA and IIB, the testamur will indicate Honours only.

**APPENDIX 1
CLASS OF HONOURS AND MARK CUT-OFFS**

Graded Honours

Class	Mark	Comments
First Class Honours (H1)	80% and over	Work of exceptional quality showing clear understanding of subject matter and appreciation of issues; well formulated; arguments sustained; figures and diagrams where relevant; appropriate literature referenced; strong evidence of creative ability and originality; high level of intellectual work.
Honours Division IIA (H2A)	70% - 79%	Work of high quality showing strong grasp of subject matter and appreciation of dominant issues though not necessarily of the finer points; arguments clearly developed; relevant literature referenced; evidence of creative ability and solid intellectual work.
Honours Division IIB (H2B)	60% - 69%	Work of solid quality showing competent understanding of subject matter and appreciation of main issues though possibly with some lapses and inadequacies and with clearly identifiable deficiencies in logic, presentation or originality; some evidence of creative ability; well prepared and presented.
Ordinary Degree (i.e. Honours not awarded)	50%-59%	Awarded only to candidates in Degrees with Honours. Adequate report, reasonable quality but showing a minimal understanding of the research area with major deficiencies in content or experimental rigour; little evidence of creative ability or original thought.
Fail (F)	<50%	

Ungraded Honours

Ungraded Pass (S)	>50%	Assessment in the degree was criterion based and it is not possible to grade according to the standard UNDA system. The student has completed work that meets all the requirements and level of performance as prescribed.
Fail (F)	<50%	