

Guidelines and Handbook for students undertaking Research/Honours Thesis

- **Bachelor of Arts (Honours)** in Geography
- **Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours)** in:
 - Geographical Sciences
 - Geological Sciences
- **Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours)**
- **Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours)**
- **Bachelor of Regional & Town Planning (Honours)**
- **Bachelor of Science (Honours)** in:
 - Coastal & Ocean Science
 - Earth Sciences
 - Geographical Sciences

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Research/Honours Thesis Preparation Guide

INTRODUCTION

A research thesis is regarded as a pivotal year in higher education, shaping future career directions. An Honours research degree is a valuable qualification, opening career opportunities and provides tangible evidence that a person has something to offer beyond the average graduate.

With its emphasis upon an independent, research-based thesis, students will be able to demonstrate a capacity to utilise these skills in a sustained, purposeful way.

Two particular abilities, best substantiated by thesis work, are valued by employers and professionals:

- a demonstrated reliability and capacity for independent work; and,
- evidence of skills for writing substantial reports.

Our School offers students the opportunity to develop and further their research skills through a number of programs. The 4-year bachelor programs enable students to develop foundational research skills in their final year, while the one-year Honours programs provide an opportunity to further develop and apply the various research skills acquired in undergraduate studies.

Bachelor programs with optional research course in the final year:

Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours)

Bachelor of Regional and Town Planning (Honours)

Bachelor of Occupational Health and Safety Science (Honours)

Bachelor programs with optional research course in the final year:

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours) (4-year degree)

Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) in Geological Sciences or Geographical Sciences

One-Year Honours Programs:

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Geography

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours) (1-year – new from 2021)

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Coastal and Ocean Science, Earth Sciences or Geographical Sciences

The major aims of the research year are:

- to enable students with the adequate background to pursue research in a focused area of study;
- to enhance students' capacity for independent research and to acquire research skills appropriate to their area of specialisation; and,
- to train students to a standard sufficient for enrolment in postgraduate research degrees, as well as for a specialist career.

Research Thesis Coordinator:

<p>Prof Gordon Southam (g.southam@uq.edu.au)</p>	<p>Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours) Bachelor of Science (Honours) Bachelor of Regional and Town Planning (Honours) Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours)</p>
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ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission to a research thesis is open to students who have a GPA ≥ 4.5 (GPA ≥ 5.5 for BRTP) in their undergraduate studies.

Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours): students must have completed #48 units from their program list must undertake a research thesis with the support of a suitable supervisor.

Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours): students must have completed #48 units from their program list and have the approval of a suitable supervisor.

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours): (4-year degree; pre-2021 commencement): students must have completed #48 units of required courses from their program list and have the approval of a suitable supervisor.

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours): (2021 onwards); students must have completed #48 units of required courses from their program list and have the approval of a suitable supervisor.

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Coastal & Ocean Science, Earth Sciences or Geographical Sciences: students must have completed a Bachelor of Science with a Pass degree or equivalent and achieved the minimum GPA requirement from at least #8 units of third year courses which are relevant to the proposed research project. The undergraduate degree should have a substantial component in a field relevant to the research project. The approval of a suitable supervisor is mandatory.

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Geography: students must have completed a Bachelor of Arts with a Pass degree or equivalent and achieved the minimum GPA requirement from at least #8 units of third year courses which are relevant to the proposed research project. The undergraduate degree should have a substantial component in a field relevant to the research project. The approval of a suitable supervisor is mandatory.

Bachelor Regional and Town Planning (Honours): students must have completed #48 units from their program list and have the approval of a suitable supervisor.

Prospective students should note that academics are not always in a position to take on students in certain years due to study leave and other commitments.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Prior to formally lodging their application, students are encouraged to make contact with potential thesis supervisors and the Honours Coordinator. Where unsure about who is an appropriate supervisor, they should contact the Honours Coordinator (or refer to the SEES Staff or UQ Experts/UQ Researchers website). A list of potential supervisors and their research interests can be found on our website:

<https://sees.uq.edu.au/team/academic>

<https://sees.uq.edu.au/research>

For students coming to do Honours from outside UQ, the Honours Coordinator can assist in introducing students to academic staff in their field of interest. The prospective supervisors can assist in identifying and developing a proposed topic.

For Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and Bachelor of Science (Honours), where program approval is required: Students must obtain the support of a supervisor prior to lodging the application for admission.

Lodging your application: Applications should be made online at: <https://apply.uq.edu.au/>, in accordance with the dates specified for your program. Please provide official copies of supporting documentation (academic transcripts and degree certificates), which can be uploaded during this online application process.

Once the application is approved: After accepting the online offer, enrolment in the program is activated overnight and previous login details can be used. For non-UQ applicants, login details will be sent within 2-3 business days.

Initially, permission will be given for enrolment in GEOS6001 (Research Design). Enrolment in the program is finalised upon enrolment in at least 1 course (#2 units).

For 4-year programs: After deciding on a topic and obtaining agreement from the supervisor, students are required to submit an online enrolment request form for the appropriate thesis course at: <https://sees.uq.edu.au/apply-research-project>, providing a brief description and title of your project as discussed with the supervisor. Upon approval, you will be notified by the School when you are able to enrol in the course.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Bachelor of Advanced Science Honours (Geographical and Geological Sciences)

Students are required to complete #16 units of study made up as follows:

First Semester	Second Semester
#2 GEOS6001 #2 elective course (level 3) #4 EARTH6501 (Semester I-II sequence) or EARTH6502 (Semester II-I sequence)	#8 EARTH6501 (Semester I-II sequence) or EARTH6502 (Semester II-I sequence)

Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours)

Students are required to complete #16 units of study made up as follows:

First Semester	Second Semester
#2 GEOS6001 #2 elective course (level 3 (Part C)) #4 ENVM4200 (Semester I-II sequence) or ENVM4201 (Semester II-I sequence)	#4 elective courses (level 3 (Part C)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #4 ENVM4200 (Semester I-II sequence) or ENVM4201 (Semester II-I sequence)

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours); Pre-2021

Students are required to complete #16 units of study made up as follows:

First Semester	Second Semester
#2 GEOS6001 #6 ENVM4321 (Semester I-II sequence) or ENVM4323 (Semester II-I sequence)	#8 ENVM4321 (Semester I-II sequence) or ENVM4323 (Semester II-I sequence)

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours); 2021 onwards

First Semester	Second Semester
#2 GEOS6001 #2 elective course level 3 #4 EARTH6501 (Semester I-II sequence) or EARTH6502 (Semester II-I sequence)	#8 EARTH6501 (Semester I-II sequence) or EARTH6502 (Semester II-I sequence)

Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning (Honours; commencing in semester 1 each year)

Students are required to complete #16 units of study made up as follows:

First Semester	Second Semester
#2 PLAN4001 #2 PLAN4100 #2 GEOS6001 #2 PLAN3005	#8 PLAN4008

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and Bachelor of Science (Honours)

Students are required to complete #16 units of study made up as follows:

First Semester	Second Semester
#2 GEOS6001 #2 elective course level 3 #4 EARTH6501 (Semester I-II sequence) or EARTH6502 (Semester II-I sequence)	#8 EARTH6501 (Semester I-II sequence) or EARTH6502 (Semester II-I sequence)

The Honours Program aims to provide an effective sequence of training, which culminates in the production of the Honours Thesis. It is formally scheduled to occupy the full year of study, with the proposal completed in first semester and the bulk of research and writing to be completed in second semester – without the distraction of other assignments.

It is highly recommended that consideration of literature and project-specific aims and methods is done through regular consultation with your supervisor from very early in your enrolment.

GEOS6001 ‘Research Design’: This course is taken in the first semester of the research thesis, forming the foundation of the thesis and is also useful in familiarisation with the literature and in developing research aims and methods. It is designed to provide a transition between undergraduate training and the research required for a postgraduate thesis or dissertation as part of Honours, Masters and Doctoral programs.

Elective course (where appropriate): Provides an opportunity for advanced-level training in a field directly related to the thesis project. The elective must be a third year level course and approved by the Honours Coordinator and supervisor. It is typically taken in the first semester of study (or with approval in the second semester, depending on the semester of offering of the elective course).

Research thesis: Aims to provide students with the opportunity to carry out a defined piece of independent research in a setting and in a manner, which fosters the development of research skills. These skills include the capacity to define a research question, showing how it relates to the framework of existing knowledge, identifying the research tools needed to investigate the question, carrying out the research in a systematic way, analysing the results obtained and writing-up the outcomes in a report that is coherent, logically structured and clearly presented.

It is not necessary that a thesis at Honours level will represent a significant contribution to new knowledge; nor is it necessary that Honours theses will resolve great intellectual problems. Indeed, a key aim of the Honours year is to specify a research topic that arouses sufficient intellectual curiosity, and presents an appropriate range and diversity of technical and conceptual challenges, while remaining manageable and allowing achievable outcomes within the time and resources available.

It is important that the topic be of sufficient scope and complexity to allow a student to learn their craft and demonstrate their research skills. Equally imperative is that the task not be so demanding as to elude completion.

Mostly, however, the thesis will be based on primary or secondary data. Primary quantitative and/or qualitative data can be collected through laboratory analyses or via surveys, questionnaires, interviews and observations, respectively. Secondary quantitative and/or qualitative data may be obtained through, for example, the Australian Bureau of Statistic and other databases.

In general, Honours students throughout history have tended to be overly ambitious, rather than overly cautious, in regard to topic selection. The research implementation course, GEOS6001, together with close consultation with Supervisors and the Honours Coordinator, should help guide students to a judicious choice.

A general guide to overall thesis size

Single-year programs with Research Thesis (e.g., #12-#14 unit Research Thesis in BSc (Hons), BA (Hons), BEnvSc (Hons)): it is expected that the Honours Thesis should generally be in the order of 20,000-25,000 words, although shorter theses down to around 12,000 are acceptable, provided they cover the subject matter in an comprehensive manner.

Four-year programs with Research Thesis (e.g., #8 unit research thesis in BEnvMan (Hons), BRTP (Hons)): it is expected that the Research Thesis should generally be in the order of 8,000-12,000 words.

Maps, charts and diagrams, tables, references and appendices are additional to these guidelines on overall word-length.

THESIS STRUCTURE

While there is no rigid prescription for the layout of the thesis, the structure given provides a generalised model and stresses the key elements that need to appear.

The thesis must contain certain elements, however, the format and specific outline should be discussed with your supervisor. Depending on the quality of your research and the data you have obtained, it may be beneficial to write your thesis as a journal paper which, depending on the journal, may have a specific writing style.

Following is a typical thesis structure, which may be suitable for research involving physical or quantitative data, or perhaps even surveys. However, the structure provided is a guide only and could differ somewhat if the research warrants it, for example, research using case studies may require an alternative thesis structure. Your supervisor will be able to assist in the construction of a suitable thesis structure:

- Title Page
- Table of contents; List of figures; List of tables; Acknowledgments;
- Statement of ethical approval (if required)
- Abstract/Executive Summary; ca. one page to inform the reader of the main concepts/points of the paper

Chapter 1 – Introduction and Rationale for Research

- Very brief introduction to the topic and problem to be addressed by the research (justification of why it is important);
- Research hypothesis or a research question and research aim and objectives.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

- Setting the background to the topic and leading into the substance of the thesis;
- Review and synthesis of relevant literature, structured logically to clearly situate the thesis project within the framework of prior research and contemporary knowledge on the topic;
- Include a clear identification of the main strands of research related to the topic, covering both the theoretical framework and empirical results, specification of gaps in current knowledge, and a review of contemporary approaches and solutions to the problem, their strengths and their limitations;
- Identify the specific issues with respect to the chosen research;
- Provide further details beyond the introductory chapter that justifies and supports the aims and research questions.

Chapter 3 – Methods

- Concise description and rationale for the methods to be used, showing clearly how the methods and techniques to be adopted address the research objectives;
- Identification of data sources to be used for the project, and data collection strategies if appropriate, including a critical appraisal of data quality. Review of alternative sources; and
- Inclusion of appropriate references to support the choice of data and methods.

Chapter 4 – Results

- Clear presentation of results, structured directly around the stated research objectives;
- Text should be supported by tables, maps and graphs, integrated within; and
- If undertaking research that has a number of different results components, it may be beneficial to separate these into individual chapters with the relevant discussion following the results.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

- Comparison of results obtained with outcomes reported in previous studies; and
- Interpretation of results within the appropriate theoretical frameworks including comment on whether findings provide support for, or conflict with, existing theories.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion, Limitations & Future Research

- Restatement of research objectives followed by a succinct summary of the main findings, and an interpretation of how these findings address the stated aims;
- Clear identification of limitations in the approach employed and suggestions for ways these might be addressed in future work;
- Potential directions for future research;
- Summary of major conclusions to be drawn from the study; and
- References & Appendices

Students should break up the text with the use of project specific headings. Where appropriate, illustrations, graphs and photographs should be used if appropriate to the topic and their source acknowledged or explained. Original graphics are strongly recommended. Students should look at a first class thesis from the past few years in a related area to get an idea of the level of presentation required.



THE THESIS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

EXAMINATION OF THE THESIS

The Honours Coordinator, potentially with input from supervisors, will appoint two suitable examiners to mark the Thesis. It is preferable for the student to be unknown to the examiners and for the examiners to have had no involvement in the project. Both examiners are likely to be from within the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences; however, it may be necessary (i.e., in cases of area of expertise) for examiners to be from outside the School.

Students are required to submit their thesis electronically (via Turnitin in Blackboard) by the due date (note that the Thesis will be subject to Plagiarism detection software). A copy of the Thesis is provided to each examiner, and they will independently complete grading. The Honours Coordinator will assess the examiner's reports and make a final recommendation. In the case of conflicting reports on the part of the examiners, the Honours Coordinator will read the Thesis and make an appropriate determination. If, however, the marks diverge by more than one grade or more than 15%, an additional marker will be sought to provide an independent evaluation.

To ensure thesis expectations are clear, it is recommended that students discuss the assessment criteria explicitly with their supervisor very early in the process, paying close attention to the information set out in this handbook.

When reviewing the Thesis, examiners are requested to give particular attention to research initiative, analytical skills and standards of presentation of the work. Potential for publication of the research findings is seen as a major indicator of the quality of the work. Logical structure, grasp of techniques, clarity of expression and quality of illustrative material are also taken into account. Examiners will be asked to comment on the strengths, weaknesses and to provide suggestions to improve the work (90% of your honour's grade; refer to separate, "SEES Research Thesis Criteria and Standards (2021 version)" document.

At Honours level, the Thesis as submitted represents the final product of the research work. Unlike higher research degrees, there is no provision for students to make corrections or refinements to the Thesis in the light of examiners' comments. However, this does not preclude a student from seeking additional feedback according to the University Assessment Policy: (<http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.10.02-assessment>).

If the student is unsatisfied with this result, they can appeal on the basis of a re-mark to the Faculty of Science according to the university's policies on re-marking (<http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.10.10-assessment-re-mark>). Students need to be aware that this review and appeal can result in the awarding of a lower, identical or higher mark. The final grade awarded for the Thesis will be in accordance with standard University course grading. The online version of the Electronic Course Profile contains the most current information on course grading. Final Thesis marks will be forward to the School's Student Administration Manager for calculation of Honours class.

Oral presentation of the Honours Thesis (10% of honours grade): The purpose of the oral presentation is for students to have the opportunity to share their work in a public forum and feature the highlights of their project. It is important to emphasise that this oral presentation is not intended to be an inquisition; nor is it designed to put the candidate through a rigorous defence of the Thesis. Care is taken by the Honours Coordinator to ensure that the candidate is not embarrassed by “overzealous” questioning. The oral is designed to introduce research students to this form of activity and give them the opportunity to discuss their work face-to-face with a school audience. The process was introduced at the suggestion of students and has worked well.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WORKING WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR

The role of the supervisor is to provide academic guidance and advice to assist students in the successful completion of their thesis. Ultimately the Thesis must be the work of the student, not of the supervisor. Nor should it be a 'collaborative effort'. Nevertheless, the supervisor does have a crucial role to play in providing education and training in research and scholarship, in a way that helps to guide the formulation of the Thesis, conduct of the research, and its presentation. Student-supervisor relationships and interaction vary widely. They depend on the abilities of the student, the personalities involved, and many other variables.

While there can be no rigid template for student-supervisor interaction, there are several critical roles that a supervisor is generally expected to perform. These include:

- providing advice about the limits or boundaries of the Thesis;
- guiding students to appropriate reading – and discussing this material;
- helping to develop a broad timetable for completion of the Thesis;
- ensuring that students understand the relevant theories, and have the technical skills needed to answer the questions posed in the research;
- fostering writing skills by way of constructive commentary;
- being available to meet regularly and frequently with the student for discussion;
- providing prompt feedback on drafts and papers submitted for comment;
- setting goals and monitoring student progress; and,
- encouraging student participation in the wider intellectual life of the Program, School and University.

Equally important is that students recognise what supervisors are NOT there to do. This includes:

- supervisors should NOT provide students with detailed topics, research questions, and research plans: these tasks are integral to the process of learning to conduct research and are the job of the student – with the supervisor acting as guide; and,
- supervisors should NOT write – NOR re-write – the Thesis. Clear, concise written expression is a fundamental objective of research training, which needs to be learned.

One of the tasks that needs to be addressed early within the Research/Honours Thesis is for each student to work out with their supervisor a preferred timetable and method of working which is suitable to both. Of course, the timetable may need to alter as pressures mount and other commitments must be taken into account. A regular schedule of meetings with supervisors is as critical to success as a schedule for lectures in a lecture-driven course.

Further discussion of thesis supervision and related matter is available at the UQ Graduate School (<https://graduate-school.uq.edu.au/>). Although primarily for students undertaking higher degrees, much of what appears on this website is equally applicable to the Honours year.

If any problems with your supervisor should arise, deal with them early so as to avoid significant time wastage. If you find the student-supervisor relationship to be unworkable, for example, insufficient time for you to consult with them or a lack of reasonable levels of communication, initially see the Honours Coordinator to address the issue (should your supervisor be the Thesis Coordinator speak to the Deputy Head of School). Student Services has tips on the student-supervisor relationship on their website (<http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/learning/supervision>).

These tips were designed with postgraduate research in mind but the nature of the Research/ Honours Thesis means that they are relevant to Honours level student-supervisor relationships.

ROLE OF THE HONOURS COORDINATOR

The Honours Coordinator is responsible for the overall management and administration of the course. This includes such matters as monitoring program requirements, student liaison, academic counselling, ensuring access to resources, appointment of examiners and collating final results. They will be available to discuss any issues of concern, which students need to raise and should be your first port of call for any administrative aspects of your Thesis.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS

The Student Charter, available on the UQ website in the Policy and Procedures Library (Policy 3.60.01; <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60-student-rights-and-responsibilities>) sets out the general rights and responsibilities of students at The University of Queensland.

It is widely recognised throughout academia that undertaking a Research/Honours Thesis is a demanding task and one that is not to be undertaken lightly. A successful outcome requires a high level of dedication, including a substantial commitment of energy and time. This is not an ideal time to be developing 'other interests' - it requires a single-minded commitment to the task in hand.

Students are expected to work consistently and conscientiously on their Thesis, but also to take part in the broader intellectual life of the School and of the University. Dedication and commitment does not imply a narrow-minded focus; quite the reverse. For example, thesis students are expected to attend Research Seminars held by the School on a regular basis. These seminars are not simply discretionary activities to be attended when time and inclination permit; they form an integral part of your training as a research scholar, and attendance is recommended, whether the topic is in your immediate field of research interest or not. Likewise, it is important to participate in other intellectual and social activities that occur within the School from time to time.

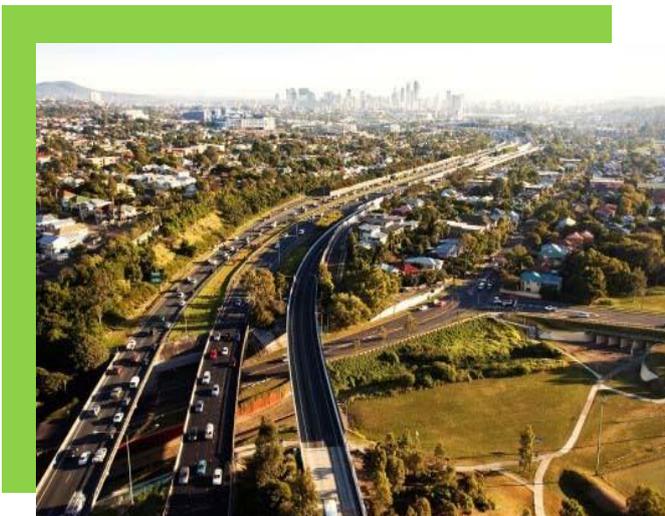
FIELDWORK AND TRAVEL

Primary data collection involves ‘fieldwork’ of some kind or other. ‘Fieldwork’ is construed as any travel outside University property, which is undertaken for research purposes. As such, it is imperative for occupational health and safety purposes, and for insurance, that you submit and receive approval for a fieldwork plan, including a thorough risk assessment, before commencing that fieldwork. It is critical that you discuss your plans for fieldwork and off-campus research with your supervisor before you commence any work.

Full details of the fieldwork requirements and guidelines, including the necessary forms for fieldwork approval for students and staff are available from the University’s Occupational Health and Safety website (<http://www.uq.edu.au/ohs/>). In order to be covered by the University’s insurance, the completed fieldwork plan needs to be approved by your supervisor, the SEES OHS officer, a School finance officer and the Head of School a minimum of two weeks before fieldwork is planned to commence. Your supervisor should have completed these forms before and can guide you through this process. Students should note that fieldwork in “uncontrolled” environments such as paddocks, beaches, river floodplains, coral reefs, etc. cannot be undertaken as solo fieldwork and your supervisor, a PhD student in a similar area, staff member or a volunteer will need to accompany any work in such areas.

All fieldwork plans for travel outside the University must be accompanied by an online travel form. The online travel form must be completed and approved before any bookings for travel are made.

The School has a number of vehicles available which can be booked for fieldwork for authorised drivers with a manual license and appropriate training. A link to all information about the use of School vehicles, including booking forms, can be found on the School’s website (<https://sees.uq.edu.au/node/48>). Note that students must have certified 4WD training before they undertake any field research involving them operating 4WD vehicles, and the supervisor/student are responsible for the costs of training.



EXTERNAL CONTACT

Being attached to the University can open lots of doors, but it is important to recognise that there are some restrictions on how you can use the affiliation. In general, University staff are only expected to cite their link to the University in connection with matters that have to do with their particular area of responsibility or professional expertise, and it is appropriate that students adopt the same practice. Also note that as a student you should not use University letterhead paper, except in direct connection with your studies, and then only with the express approval of your supervisor.

Thesis research often involves contact with people or organisations outside the University; for example, to get permission for access to research sites, or to request access to information. In all cases students should get approval from their supervisors prior to initiating such contact. Indeed, a premature or unplanned approach can often prejudice access to the needed resource and contacts of this type should always be initiated as part of an overall research plan, rather than on an ad hoc basis.

ETHICS CLEARANCE NEEDED FOR MOST FORMS OF SURVEY RESEARCH

The University of Queensland has established stringent policies and guidelines for research involving 'human experimentation' and/or 'animal experimentation'. Human experimentation is defined widely to include all research involving human participants and this extends to any work involving questionnaire surveys (whether anonymous or not), participant observation and even some objective observation. The implication is that participants provide their information for the benefit of your work and it must be treated in an ethical manner. 'Animal experimentation' covers any research that may include trapping wildlife, sampling fish, right through to experiments and dissection of animals. It takes time for ethics approvals to be processed and therefore it is critical that you establish whether you have any human or animal ethical considerations with your proposed research. You should first discuss this with your supervisor and then consult the School's Ethics website (<https://sees.uq.edu.au/ethical-clearance>) for further information.

The burden of these guidelines is that any research involving primary data collection of the above types requires ethical clearance from the appropriate Ethics Officer. There are clearly defined procedures for gaining the necessary clearance and the Ethics Officers can provide valuable assistance with this. For research involving non-invasive and voluntary human participation at undergraduate, Honours, Diploma, Masters and PhD level, ethics clearance will normally be handled within the School. The only exceptions are for projects involving Indigenous communities, people with a disability, or children.

For research involving these subjects, ethical clearance must be sought from the Behavioural and Social Science Ethics Research Committee (BSSERC). The School Ethics Officer can help with a BSSERC application but please be aware that the process is detailed and time consuming.

Applications for the School's Ethics Officers must be submitted well in advance of any planned research activity. Your supervisor will be able to assist with this. Applications involving animal experimentation typically require referral to University level committees.

Due to the time consuming nature of the ethics approval process, ethics must be considered early on in the Research Thesis year if approval is necessary. Ethics clearance for 'human experimentation' is required in any research activity, whether for a thesis or for coursework projects where questionnaire surveys with people are conducted, and/or where observations of people are undertaken to gauge human perceptions about, or responses to, place, space, heritage, etc. Examples of advanced courses where ethical clearance may be needed include: GEOS3400, ENVM4200/4201, PLAN4008 and EARTH6501/6502.

It is the responsibility of researchers to ensure they fully understand the University policies in this area, and secure the required clearances. The detailed guidelines are available on the web. You should also be aware that aspects of your research can fall within various pieces of State and Federal Legislation, and you and your supervisor as well as the University have reporting obligations under these.

The following points merit particular emphasis:

- Ethics approval requires that the researcher consider the ethical consequences of their work. For example, could your survey questionnaire cause interviewees discomfort in any way ... could your questions bring up sad memories (e.g., if you were to be researching the impact of the 2011 Brisbane flood, this could be upsetting for some interviewees);
- All potential ethical issues need to be identified and then the methods for addressing these need to be provided. Even if you feel you have already adopted a set of interview questions, or other research methods, that will avoid ethical concerns, you need to demonstrate that this is the case.
- Researchers should ensure informed consent among study participants by providing an information sheet on School letterhead paper that includes specific items of information about the study. The sheet must also incorporate a specified 'Ethical Clearance' paragraph indicating that the study has received clearance from the appropriate University Committee.
- Depending on the nature of the Study, the guidelines also propose the use of a 'consent sheet', where appropriate, to provide a record of subjects' agreement to participate.
- There are very stringent provisions for any research involving children, the impaired, or other groups in unequal power situations (e.g., ATSI people). For projects in these categories ethics approval must be sought from BSSERC. Strict conditions also apply in regard to invasive or destructive sampling of animals.

INDUCTION AND LAB WORK

It is University policy that all new students and staff undergo an induction when they commence work. This induction is done with the School's Workplace Health and Safety Coordinator (WHSC), and covers general safety and building information including building access points, the location of emergency exits, and security, fire alarm and evacuation procedures. An induction checklist must be filled in and returned to the WHSC.

It is also compulsory for all lab users to do online Laboratory training, a Laboratory Training Needs Analysis with your supervisor and a separate induction with the laboratory manager (Linda Nothdurft) before any laboratory work can commence. Appropriate footwear, clothing and any other prescribed personal protective equipment must also be worn at all times in all University laboratories. Instrument specific training may also be required before work commences. This should be discussed with your supervisor. Further information on the School laboratories can be found at: <https://sees.uq.edu.au/node/31>.



KEY 'DATES'

The challenge of the Research/Honours Thesis is not simply one of developing and applying skills in research; it is also about learning to set timelines and keeping to them. To that end, it is important for progress to be made on the research proposal of GEOS6001 as this directly relates to the success of the Thesis. However, it must be remembered that the key date is the submission of the Thesis, which is in the last teaching week of the relevant semester. Refer to the electronic course profile for more information. A suggested timeline is as follows:

Timeframe	Milestone/Action
Before Orientation-week / Week 1	Consider and discuss possible topics with possible supervisors. Read GEOS6001 Notes and Honours handbook.
ca. the end of week 5 of Thesis Semester I	Draft literature review submitted.
ca. Week 10 of Thesis Semester I	Research proposal presentation.
By the end of week 12 of Semester I	A clear project plan (ARC Discovery research proposal) including research questions, appropriate method, and consideration of appropriate analysis techniques. Also discussion of resource implications/constraints. Developing/writing methods section of
Through the semester break	Full-time thesis; difficult for Semester II-I sequence.
Commencement of Thesis Semester II	Data collection and analysis is in full swing; begin drafting results and discussion
Nearing the end of Thesis Semester II	Submit draft Thesis to advisor(s) for feedback
Last week or two of Thesis Semester II	Oral Presentation.
Last few days	Polishing. Finalise and double-check everything for submission.

Penalties for late submission apply, as specified in the electronic course profile (ECP).

Underpinning these key dates are a host of other intermediate deadlines that need to be observed to ensure you remain on track to complete the required work on time. See the course profile for full details of the intermediate deadlines. Good time management is a major part of a successful Thesis.



RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

The School makes available a number of resources to assist honours students to complete a successful year. Including access to dry and wet labs in the Steele Building and the computer labs on the fourth floor of the Chamberlain building – including the Post-Graduate lab. Any further resources required for successful completion of your selected thesis topic should be discussed with your supervisor.

The SEES website also contains useful reference material (<https://sees.uq.edu.au/student-support>) which may be useful during your Honours year. In addition, the Student Services website has an enormous amount to offer, including advice on time management and postgraduate research (<http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/learning/postgrad-time-management>). Although some of this material is primarily directed to PhD students, much of it is applicable, and useful, at Honours level, too. Furthermore, students can also enrol in Postgraduate Skills Workshops on a variety of topics relevant to research and thesis writing conducted by UQ Student Services (<http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/workshops/thesis-writing-workshops>).

The Institute of Continuing and TESOL Education (ICTE-UQ) provides English language support for all international students. Short courses are available both before and during semester (<https://icte.uq.edu.au/>) Student Services regularly run workshops with tips for students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds on topics such as studying and academic writing, and general workshops on editing and proof reading as well as providing opportunities for constructive feedback on written work (see <http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/>).

The UQ Library has designated librarians who support the learning and research needs of each School (please refer to your electronic course profile for further information). The Library also has a Teaching and Learning Team (TALS) that can provide general help, and if necessary can refer you to the people most suitable to give assistance. TALS for Engineering and the Sciences can be contacted on tals-es-contact@library.uq.edu.au and for Arts, Business, Law, Economics and Social and Behaviour Sciences on tals-abs-contact@library.uq.edu.au. TALS librarians are also available at the Research Help Desks located in each branch of the library. You can also request assistance by chatting online via the Library's Ask the Library.

HONOURS ‘CLASS’

Honours classes are determined from the overall GPA across all courses that contribute to the program. This follows University Policy 3.50.12 Award of Honours <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.50.12-bachelor-honours-degrees#Policy>

GPA	Class of Honours
6.200 – 7.000	Class I
5.650 – 6.199	Class IIA
5.000 – 5.649	Class IIB
4.000 – 4.999	Class IIIA
<4.000	Class IIIB

The final class of Honours will normally be decided following the school’s examiners meeting. This recommendation is subject to ratification by the University Examinations Board.



EXTENSIONS

Extensions that are not health-related will rarely be given. The honours year is both exciting and demanding. One of the big challenges you will face is managing your project and time to ensure completion of tasks within the allocated time. All scientists encounter set-backs during research, so make sure that you structure your project to allow for the adjustments required when the unexpected happens. Note that it is not the results of your research that matter but the path you take to address a topic. Reporting on 'failures' is part of Honours (in fact any research) and not a reason for an extension. Rather, use them to illustrate the complexity of the task that forms part of the challenge of honours.

Thus, extensions will only be granted when there are extreme circumstances. After discussions with their supervisor and Honours Coordinator, students are required to submit an application via mySI-net well in advance of any due date at the time that difficulties are encountered. The School will advise the student once the request has been processed. A medical certificate is required for health-related extensions.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of passing off as your own work another person writing, words, or ideas. It is a serious issue and will not be tolerated. You must make it clear which ideas you have obtained from someone else. Superficial and minor changes do not disguise your use of the words of someone else. You commit plagiarism if you do not acknowledge the source of a direct quote, or a specific piece of writing that you have paraphrased, or even if you describe an idea or concept that you have heard or read somewhere without a reference or acknowledgement.

SEES uses the procedures available under the Student Integrity and Misconduct Policy to investigate suspected misconduct involve plagiarism. The penalties may vary based on the seriousness of the case; it can range from a reduction in the mark to the cancellation of credit for the course. In very serious cases it may even result in expulsion from the University.

Please refer to the University's Handbook on Policies and Procedures makes a comprehensive statement on the consequences of plagiarism.

- <https://www.library.uq.edu.au/research-tools-techniques/avoiding-plagiarism>
- <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60.04-student-integrity-and-misconduct/>



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