

WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



School of Law

Honours Award Level Guidelines

2016-17



Bachelor of Laws (Honours)

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Honours Award Level Guidelines 2016

The Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy describes the framework for all Honours courses, both end-on and embedded, at UWS: <http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00156>.

These School Honours Award Level Guidelines contain procedural information specific to Honours degrees in the School of Law.

Application Process

On-Line Admissions

Students applying for Honours need to complete the on-line application found on the Western Sydney University website: <https://applyonline.uws.edu.au/connect/webconnect>.

Application Deadline

Applications for admission in 2016 should be submitted by:

- 16 February 2016 for students applying to commence in Autumn Semester 2016; and
- 18 July 2016 for students applying to commence in Spring Semester 2016.

Students should first consult the School Honours Coordinator before making an application. This is because the School may not have staff who are able to supervise all possible thesis topics.

Admission Criteria

The criteria for admission to the LLB Honours Program are set out in the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy, Part E, and clause 21, which states.

Admission to an end-on or embedded honours program is determined on the basis of all of the four following criteria being met:

- a) Achievement of a threshold Admission Average Mark (AAM) equal to or above the minimum of 65; and*
- b) Statement of Intent or School equivalent; and*
- c) Appointment of a principal supervisor by the Dean of the School; and*
- d) Demonstrated satisfactory academic writing skills appropriate to the discipline.*

However, as the Bachelor of Law honours program is an embedded honours program, students may be accepted where they have demonstrated achievement of a threshold Admission Average Mark (AAM) equal to or above the minimum of 65 or, in the case of the embedded Bachelor of Laws Honours

program, demonstration of the likelihood, as assessed by the Dean or delegate in exercise of their discretion, of completing the Bachelor of Laws degree with a GPA of at least 5.5.

Applications for admission into the Bachelor of Laws honours program should be sent to the School Honours Coordinator for consideration of eligibility for admission. In assessing applications only Bachelor of Laws unit results are considered. After receiving the statement of intent, the School Honours Coordinator, after confirming eligibility, will forward each application to the Dean and School Academic Committee to approve or decline admission. See http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/applying_to_study/honours

Calculation of the Admission Average Mark (AAM)

- Bachelor of Laws (Hons) - For the purposes of clause (24), the AAM for Bachelor of Laws Honours students will be calculated by reference to all Bachelor of Laws units only.
- In applications where advanced standing impedes the calculation of a whole-of-program AAM, results from a minimum of 80 University of Western Sydney credit points chosen with the approval of the School Academic Committee, on the recommendation of the School Honours Coordinator, may be used.
- Treatment of Compulsory Fail (CF) Grades - For the purposes of calculating the AAM in the School of Law, Compulsory Fail (CF) grades will be assigned a numeric mark of 42%.

Statement of Intent or School Equivalent

The 'Statement of Intent' (or Research Proposal) provides a brief overview of the research that the applicant is planning to undertake. The Statement of Intent is usually expected to be 500 - 1,000 words and should be written by the applicant in consultation with their intended supervisor(s). The Statement of Intent will normally at least include the following:

- Research Title: proposed thesis title or research topic.
- Research Question: an overview of the research topic, including a statement outlining the interest and/or the significance of the area of study.
- Literature: a critical summary of at least 5 academic readings relevant to the area of study.
- Methodology: a brief statement on how the research will be conducted, data employed and tools for analysis.
- Where the proposal includes empirical research, it should include a statement that ethics approval is required. See "Ethics and/or other required approvals" section below.

Appointment of a Principal and/or Co Supervisors

Admission to an Honours degree is subject to the availability of a suitable supervisor(s) and other resources. The Dean appoints supervisor/s on the recommendation of the School Honours Coordinator. The Principal supervisor will hold qualifications at AQF Level 8, or above, and have a record of research or scholarly attainment in a relevant field, to satisfy the Higher Education Threshold Standard of “equivalent professional experience”.

Students should first consult the School Honours Coordinator before making an application. This is because the School may not have staff who are able to supervise all possible thesis topics.

Ethics and/or Other Required Approvals

Ethics approval will be required where the Statement of Intent indicates that the proposed thesis includes empirical research (ie research involving humans or their data). The first step for approval is an application to the appropriate Peer Review Committee. The Western Sydney University Guidelines for human ethics is at: http://www.uws.edu.au/research/researchers/ethics/human_ethics#Application.

Upon acceptance into the Bachelor of Laws Honours program, the applicant must ensure that approval has been received by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee before data collection or other fieldwork commences. Applications for ethics approval will normally be initiated by the thesis supervisory panel.

See Appendix 1.

Procedures For Dealing With Supervision Issues

Where a student is experiencing supervision difficulties, the student will first consult their supervisor and/or co-supervisor. If the difficulty is not resolved, or the issue involves a supervisor, the student should approach the School Honours Coordinator who will facilitate resolution of the issues. If the issues involve the School Honours Coordinator, the student may first approach the Dean of the School of Law or alternatively approach the Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) for advice.

Honours Progression

Part G of the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy, which deals with progression can be found at: <http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00156#p7>.

The embedded School of Law honours unit, 200700 Law Honours Dissertation, is a yearlong 20 credit point unit that is to be undertaken where a student has completed no less than 160 credit points of Bachelor of Laws units and no more than 200 credit points of Bachelor of Laws units (where the GPA requirements are also met). Once students are accepted into the LLB Honours Programme they will be enrolled through internal means.

Dissertation Submission Dates

The due dates for submission of the Law Honours Dissertation are:

For students commencing in Spring 2016: 5pm, Monday, 30 May 2016.

For students commencing in Autumn 2017: 5pm, 23 October 2017.

An earlier date may be required for students who wish to apply for postgraduate scholarships.

Procedure for applying for an extension of submission date

A student may apply for an extension of time for thesis submission up to three working days before the student's originally approved submission date. Extensions can only be granted in exceptional and compelling circumstances consistent with the provisions of the [Special Consideration Policy](#).

The Request for Extension application form can be found with information on special consideration at: http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/services_and_facilities/special_consideration2

An application for an extension should be made to the School Honours Coordinator. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional and compelling cases consistent with the Special Consideration Policy. After consultation with the supervisor/s, the School Honours Coordinator will make a recommendation to the Dean or Deputy Dean as to whether the extension should be granted. The Dean or Deputy Dean of the School will advise the student and the School Academic Committee in writing of the decision.

Supervisors should be aware and advise students as appropriate that late submission may make a student ineligible for consideration for a postgraduate scholarship determined at each December meeting of the University Research Committee.

Note; if applying for HDR Scholarship, late submission of dissertation may impact negatively on that application.

Lodgement of Law Honours Dissertation

- a) The dissertation must be submitted electronically via the Turnitin link on the vUWS site for unit 200700 Law Honours Dissertation on or before the prescribed submission deadline/ due date and time. Please read the Turnitin Instruction Manual prior to submission.
- b) Students must ALSO submit a hard copy of their dissertation on or before the prescribed due date following the specific instructions set out the Learning Guide for unit 200700 Law Honours Dissertation. Further information in regard to the submission of the assignment may be posted on the vUWS site for this unit.
- c) Students are required to keep a hard copy and electronic copy of all written work which is submitted, and to follow HRED Guidelines in respect of data collected.

Examination Procedures

Appointment of Examiners

Examiners will be appointed in accordance with the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy, Part I, clause (37) which specifies that the significant research component will be examined by two suitably qualified examiners. Examiners may be external to the University or internal, in Schools where an independent moderation process is used to assure quality and consistency of internal examination. Examiners must normally hold a qualification at or above Honours and have a record of research or scholarly attainment in a relevant field.

Supplemental to clause (37) of the Hons in Bachelor's Awards Policy, the School of Law adopts the following processes for the appointment of examiners:

- Recommendations for examiners will be made by the School Honours Coordinator (in consultation with the thesis Principal supervisor) to the School Academic Committee which will consider nominations and approve appointments. The School of Law shall be free to decide the composition of the examination panel.
- Examiners will not be Principal supervisors or co-supervisors of the Honours candidate whose thesis is being examined, nor will the examiners have worked with the Honours candidate on any aspect of their thesis research.
- The identity of examiners remains confidential, before and during the examination process. The Principal supervisor may discuss the examiners' reports with the Honours candidate concerned after the examination is completed. At that stage, the identity of the examiners may be revealed provided that the examiners have given consent to disclosure.

- The School Honours Coordinator will ensure that each examiner is sent all relevant information and instructions pertaining to the marking of the thesis. It will be the responsibility of the School Honours Coordinator to ensure that examiner's reports are received in a timely manner – see 'Materials Sent to Examiners', below.
- Examiners' reports will be sent to the School Honours Coordinator who will ascertain if a third
- Examiner is required under the conditions specified in the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy Part I, clause (41) – see "The Use of Third Examiner (Arbiters)" below.
- The School Honours Coordinator will provide copies of the relevant examiners' reports to the
- Principal Supervisor. Copies of all examiners reports will be included in the School Academic Committee consideration of results.

Materials Sent to Examiners

Materials sent by the School of Law to examiners should include, but are not limited to:

- a) a letter inviting the examiner to formally examine the thesis;
- b) a 150-200 word abstract of the thesis to be examined that contains the title and author of the work;
- c) an explanation as to which components of the degree contribute to the determination of the Honours award and specifically the weight given to the research component (thesis);
- d) specific information concerning the School's expectations of the nature, structure, length and presentation requirements of the research component of the Honours degree;
- e) the criteria by which the examiner is expected to evaluate the dissertation;
- f) information concerning the School's expectations of the examiner (e.g. time frame by which examination needs to be completed, what materials need to be forwarded back to the School to complete the examination process);
- g) a cover sheet that summarises the examiners' score out of 100 and includes specified criteria for each potential score; and
- h) any other School-devised scoring materials.

The Use and Appointment of Third Examiner (Arbiters)

As per the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy, Part I clause (41), where there is a mark discrepancy of 10 or more marks between significant research component examiners or a difference in the examiner- recommended "grade", the School Honours Coordinator may take one or more of the following actions:

- a) Invite the examiners to confer with each other and/or with the School Research and Higher Degrees Committee with a view to presenting a consolidated recommendation;

- b) Appoint an experienced marker of bachelor (honours) theses as a third examiner who will act as an arbiter; following review of the dissertation and the other examiners' reports the arbiter determines the mark and grade on the basis of the published criteria and standards for the thesis; this is the final examination result for recommendation to the School Academic Committee.

Arbitration Process and Outcomes

As well as the standard materials sent to thesis examiners, supplementary materials forwarded by the School to the arbiter should include the following:

- a) a written letter outlining the circumstances under which the present arbitration is required.
- b) thesis reports and marking sheets from the two examiners, with the identity of examiners withheld.

The arbiter shall read the dissertation to reach an independent assessment of the work contained within. After reading the dissertation, the arbiter considers the two examiner's reports and assesses the conclusions that the examiners have reached, and the arguments that they have used to justify these conclusions. The arbiter then prepares a standard assessment report on the quality of the dissertation. The arbiter will also produce a report to the School Academic Committee explaining the decision in relation to the two examiners' reports.

The arbiter's reports, both the standard assessment report and a report outlining the reasons for their decision, should be sent to the Chair of the School Academic Committee for consideration of results and will be forwarded by the School Academic Committee to the Dean for endorsement.

The recommended mark for the thesis is decided by the arbiter and will be forwarded by the School Academic Committee to the Dean for endorsement.

Processing and Finalising Honours Marks and Level of Award - Bachelor of Laws (Hons)

In the case of the Bachelor of Laws (Hons), the calculation of the Honours Award level (Class of Honours) is based on the results of Honours Research and the overall course GPA.

- The award of Honours Class I for the Bachelor of Laws (Hons) requires achievement within the range of 85% - 100 for Honours Research and a GPA of 6.0 or greater in the Bachelor of Laws units.
- The award of Honours Class II Division I for the Bachelor of Laws (Hons) requires achievement within the range of 75% - 100 for Honours Research and a course GPA of 5.8 or greater in the

Bachelor of Laws units.

- The award of Honours Class II Division II for the Bachelor of Laws (Hons) requires achievement within the range of 65% - 100% for Honours Research and a course GPA of 5.5 or greater in the Bachelor of Laws units.

Honours Class III is not awarded in the Bachelor of Laws (Hons).

Honours marks and level of award will be approved by the School Academic Committee and Dean of School. Once determined, Honours marks and levels will be sent to candidates by the Academic Registrar's Office.

Reviews of Grade and Appeal against Level of Honours for all School of Law Honours degrees are dealt with by Part L and Part M of the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy respectively.

Note students enrolled in a Bachelor of Laws course or a double Bachelor of Laws degree prior to 2008 may elect to be governed by the LLB (Honours) award rules in force at the time of their first enrolment in that course.

Key Dates 2016 – Summary

ACTIVITY	SESSION OF COMMENCEMENT	
	AUTUMN	SPRING
Confirm Enrolment in Unit	31 March and 31 August	31 August and 31 March
Dissertation Submission	23 October	30 May
HDR Scholarship Applications	31 October	

Note: Dates apply annually.

School Honours Award Level Guidelines Requirements for Ethics Approval

Human and Animal Ethics and Biosafety for Honours students at Western Sydney University

...all research is an ethical undertaking, and all researchers are confronted with ethical choices, whether in the laboratory, the library or the field.¹

Research by University researchers and students must be carried out in accordance with the [Research Code of Practice](#) (opens in new window) and the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2007\)](#) (opens in new window)

- All honours research involving human participants **must** meet the National Statement criteria for Low 1 or Negligible risk research.
- In Australia, the honours student's Supervisor is the applicant for both human and animal ethics approval.
- Given the short time frame available for Honours study, it is recommended that where ethics approval does not already exist, that ethics approval is sought as a matter of **priority** at the earliest possible time during the Honours program.

Before conducting any data collection, experimentation or field work, Supervisors of Honours projects must determine whether ethical review is required and obtain approvals from the relevant ethics committee. All projects are considered the responsibility of the supervisor who will be the applicant for ethics protocol approval.

Read information at:

http://www.uws.edu.au/research/research_ethics_and_integrity/human_ethics/apply_for_human_research_ethics_review

Contact: For information on the application requirements and process, contact Human Ethics: humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au

<http://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/programs/GReP/GREIM.html>