

Research Code of Practice for Students Enrolled in Honours Degrees - Guidelines

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) Enrolment in an Honours Degree generally involves the undertaking of a piece of research and the preparation of a dissertation or thesis. An Honours Degree provides an introduction to research methodology and it is therefore essential that Honours students are aware of the principles of responsible research practice.

(2) As part of the enrolment process, candidates and the University are required to acknowledge and accept that the following clauses describe the respective rights and responsibilities of both parties and form the basis of understanding and commitment between them.

(3) The fundamental principles outlined here apply to all Colleges, academic units, supervisors and candidates, where students are enrolled in Honours Degrees. However specific functions, responsibilities and the relationship between supervisor and candidate will vary according to the College and the research discipline, especially with regard to the provision of physical resources. Individual Colleges may produce additional and more specific guidelines for their Honours students and students should consult their Colleges in this respect. However this Code of Conduct will take precedence over such College guidelines.

Section 2 - University Responsibilities at Institutional Level

(4) The University will ensure that policies are developed, implemented and monitored within the academic units of the University, to ensure that:-

- a. where required, Honours students have access to appropriate tuition in English language, report writing, computing, word processing, statistical methodology and information retrieval;
- b. the intellectual property rights of all parties are clearly stated. Honours students will be treated on the same basis as postgraduate research students with respect to the intellectual property in their research project;
- c. the University's standards for admission and requirements for progress in the particular degree are met;
- d. there is access to physical facilities and research resources appropriate to the field of study;
- e. adequate and accurate information relating to the practice of research is provided prior to enrolment;
- f. an informative induction process is available which Honours students are required to attend;
- g. there are grievance procedures by which either the student or the supervisor may make representations as appropriate (and if necessary in confidence) if significant difficulties arise;
- h. all supervisors are aware of the necessity to implement the University's Guidelines on Research Practice and are aware, where applicable, of the University's human and animal ethics working procedures and the University Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee and its Technical Sub-Committees and any relevant government body such as the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator;
- i. provision is made for staff development of supervisors and potential supervisors; and
- j. there are clear guidelines for examiners/adjudicators on the University's expectations for the award of an

Section 3 - University Responsibilities at College/Academic Unit Level

(5) It is the responsibility of the College/Academic Unit to ensure that:-

- a. Honours students are suitably qualified for admission to an Honours Degree program and that the research project proposed is appropriate in level and scope, and feasible in terms of the resources required;
- b. Honours students' research interests and ability are consulted in determining the research project;
- c. Information is available to prospective Honours students about the research interests and
- d. Academic experience of staff in the academic unit, including (where appropriate), a list of available research areas likely to support an Honours research program;
- e. There is an appropriate administrative structure for Honours Degree programs, for example an Honours Co-ordinator or Course Committee to deal with matters such as scrutinising thesis proposals, making recommendations on course proposals and monitoring the effectiveness of supervision and assessment procedures;
- f. Each Honours student has a clearly designated Principal Supervisor who is properly expert and interested in the area of research, and has sufficient experience in recent supervision, to offer the student adequate supervision;
- g. Co-supervisors or associate supervisors are appointed as required - for example, to cover absences of the principal supervisor, for interdisciplinary or highly specialised research projects, or to provide professional development in research supervision for members of staff with limited experience in this field. Where appropriate, associate supervisors may be suitably qualified non-academics from outside the University. A team approach to supervision is encouraged in all Colleges/Academic Units;
- h. Honours students are given information in relation to facilities and resources available to them within the academic unit and within the University (e.g. library, computing and technical facilities, word processing training, statistical advice, English language tuition);
- i. Honours students are given information in relation to grievance procedures, whereby candidates may make representation to the Head of academic unit, appropriate officer and/or academic unit/College committee or University committee, if they believe that their work is not proceeding satisfactorily for reasons beyond their control, especially in situations involving problems of supervision or unresolved conflicts between candidates and supervisors;
- j. Honours students are given opportunities to participate in the intellectual and social life of the academic unit;
- k. Honours students are given training and guidance on matters relating to the proper conduct of research, including authorship of publications, ownership of intellectual property, exploitation of inventions, archiving of data;
- l. Honours students are given appropriate training and advice ethical issues and the University's research ethics procedures and requirements;
- m. Each College/Academic Unit maintains a reference library to which Honours students have access which contains as a minimum copies of those documents listed in the "References" section of this Code of Conduct; and
- n. Honours students' research programs are not unduly influenced or redirected by political or commercial or industrial factors.

Section 4 - Responsibilities of Supervisors

(6) It is the responsibility of the supervisor to maintain a professional relationship at all times with the student and to:-

- a. provide guidance about the nature of research and the standard of performance expected, about the choice of research topic, about the planning of the research program and presentation of a research proposal, about literature and sources, attendance at taught classes where appropriate and about appropriate research methodologies and requisite techniques (including arranging for instruction where necessary e.g. computer analysis, statistics);
- b. establish and maintain a schedule of regular (ordinarily at least weekly) contact with the student in accordance with College/academic unit policy and in the light of discussion of arrangements with the student;
- c. advise the student of any expected absence and the alternative arrangements to be implemented for supervision during that absence;
- d. ensure that the student is adequately trained in safe working practices relevant to the particular field of research and encourage adherence to the guidelines established by the University Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee and its Technical Sub-Committees and any relevant government body such as the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.;
- e. ensure that the student is aware of the Guidelines on Research Practice and, in particular, of the need to follow ethical practices appropriate to the particular discipline and any relevant profession;
- f. advise the student of appropriate ethical practices and, where such clearance is required, supervise and endorse an application for ethical clearance from the appropriate authority and ensure that the research is conducted in accordance with the terms of the ethics approval;
- g. encourage the student to participate in the intellectual life of the academic unit;
- h. ensure that the work reported in the Honours thesis is the student's own, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis, and that any editorial assistance in the writing of the thesis is appropriately acknowledged in accordance with University policy and good research practice;
- i. ensure that, in accordance with University policies, the direction of the work is under the control of the University of Newcastle and the student;
- j. ensure that agreement is reached with the student concerning authorship of publications and acknowledgment of relative contributions during and after candidature. There should be open and mutual recognition of the student's and supervisor's contributions on all published work arising from the project. It should not be automatically assumed that the supervisor's name (or student's name) will appear on all such published work. It should be recognised that the supervisor and the University make a major contribution to the student's progress; Note: the minimum requirement for authorship should accord with the protocol set out in the Guidelines on Research Practice.
- k. ensure adherence to University policy and guidelines on intellectual property; and
- l. ensure that original data are recorded in a retrievable, durable and appropriately referenced form and stored safely for a period appropriate to the discipline, but in any case not less than five years. This must be done in accordance with the University's Guidelines on Research Practice and academic unit policy, and where appropriate will include the lodging of datasets with national data archives.

Section 5 - Responsibilities of Honours Students

(7) It is the responsibility of Honours students to maintain a professional relationship at all times with their supervisor and other University staff and to:-

- a. be familiar with the responsibilities of the various parties involved in their study towards their award, their

- rights as a candidate, the University's regulations relating to their award and any other material provided by the academic unit, the College or the University;
- b. play an informed part in the process of the selection and appointment of their supervisor ;
 - c. utilise the resources, facilities and opportunities available to facilitate progress in the research, and where any additional resource or facility is required, to discuss these requirements with the supervisor for assistance in resolution;
 - d. contribute to the intellectual life of the academic unit;
 - e. acquire or improve the skills and knowledge required for the completion of the research project ;
 - f. adopt, at all times, safe working practices relevant to the field of research and adhere to the guidelines established by the University Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee and its Technical Sub-Committees and any relevant government body such as the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator;
 - g. adhere to ethical practices in research as required by the Guidelines on Research Practice;
 - h. follow ethical practices which are appropriate to the particular discipline and relevant profession, and as specified by the University Human Research Ethics Committee or other relevant delegated authority, Animal Care and Ethics Committee, and the ethical guidelines set down by any relevant government or funding body;
 - i. ensure that all original data are recorded in a retrievable, durable and appropriately referenced form and are made available to the supervisor at any time during candidature. Ensure that all original data are stored safely in the academic unit for a period appropriate to the discipline in accordance with the University's Guidelines on Research Practice and academic unit policy, but in any case not less than five years;
 - j. initiate discussions at the commencement of candidature with the supervisor and any co-supervisor(s) on the type of guidance and comments which are considered most helpful, and agree to a schedule of meetings which will ensure regular contact;
 - k. take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties relating to candidature and seek to resolve those problems;
 - l. be aware of University grievance procedures, and seek negotiated solutions to any problems before recourse to those procedures; and
 - m. document the progress of the work as agreed with the supervisor, and present written or other material as required, in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussions before proceeding to any further stage.

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Award" - When referring to a University qualification, this term means an academic qualification approved by Academic Senate that is conferred when a student has met the relevant program requirements. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Candidature" - The period of time between acceptance of offer and termination, withdrawal from, or completion of a higher degree by research program, including periods when a candidate is not enrolled.

"Course" - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Candidate" - With regard to Higher Degree by Research it has the same meaning as student. For all other instances it is a person considered for appointment to a position.

"Intellectual property" - Intellectual property (IP), as defined by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, refers to creations of the mind: inventions; literary and artistic works; and symbols, names and images used in commerce. Intellectual property is divided into two categories: Industrial property includes patents for inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications; and Copyright covers literary works (such as novels, poems and plays), films, music, artistic works (e.g. drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures) and architectural design. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and broadcasters in their radio and television programs.

"Officer" - Has the meaning given in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), or any replacing legislation.

"Postgraduate" - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Term" - When referring to an academic period, term means a period of time aligned to an academic year for the delivery of a course in which students enrol and for which they are usually charged fees for example semesters, trimesters, summer, winter or full-year term. The academic year for a term is determined by the academic year in which the course commences, not concludes. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.