Code of Good Practice: Research in honours degree programs

DATE: 23 November 2001

AMENDMENTS:

- Director: Student and Academic Services - September 2006
- Academic Board - June 2008
- Director: Student and Academic Services – October 2009

REFERENCE AUTHORITY: Director: Student and Academic Services

CROSS-REFERENCE:

- A-42: Honours Degree Programs
- C-6 Occupational Health, Safety, Welfare and Injury Management
- RES-1: Guidelines for Responsible Practice in Research
- RES-2: Human Research Ethics
- RES-3: Animal Experimentation
- RES-4: Biological Hazards and Genetically Modified Organisms
- RES-12: Authorship Policy
- RES-16: Higher doctorates
- Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual
- Code of Good Practice: Relationships between staff and students
- Code of Good Practice: Student Behaviour
- University Activities - Intellectual Property: Ownership & Commercialisation Guidelines
- University Activities - Personal Risk Activities Guidelines
- University Activities - Research and Consultancy Guidelines

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1.   Introduction

The Code of Good Practice: Research in honours degree programs outlines the responsibilities of staff and students during the research component of an honours degree or degree with honours. The code covers both types of program except where otherwise stipulated. The code should be read in conjunction with policy *A-42*: *Honours Degree Programs*.

2.   Responsibilities

The responsibility to ensure the effective management of research undertaken within honours degree programs is shared by:

a.   Academic Board

b.   Divisions (through Division Boards)

c.   Schools (through the Head of School or nominee)

d.   Honours Program Directors

e.   Principal Supervisors

f.   Students

g.   The Director: Student and Academic Services, who is responsible for reviewing and promulgating this code.

2.1.   Responsibilities of Academic Board

Academic Board is responsible for establishing a framework for managing honours degree programs. As a sub-committee of Academic Board, the Academic Policy and Program Review Committee (APPRC) will ensure that all honours degree programs have:

a. clearly-defined duties and responsibilities for the Honours Program Director (see clause 2.3 below)

b. clearly specified entry requirements that conform to national standards for entry into an honours degree program

c. clearly identified objectives for the research component

d. provisions which enable students to acquire the methodological skills necessary to complete the research within the allocated time

e. clearly specified qualifications and training which is required of supervisors, and the support available to them

f. an external moderation process to validate the standard of internal assessment.

2.2 Responsibilities of divisions and schools

It is the responsibility of the division board and schools within the division to ensure that:

a. the requirements of this code and other relevant policies and procedures are adhered to

b. the research component of an honours degree program:
   i. has clearly identified objectives,
   ii. is appropriate in scope and character for the degree, and
   iii. is feasible in terms of the time, facilities, equipment, source material and support staff available for the expected duration of the research

c. Honours Program Director(s) are appointed to coordinate and monitor the progress and welfare of students in all aspects of the program

d. adequate resources are provided to assist the Honours Program Directors in performing their duties, and proper recognition is given to the workload these duties entail

e. opportunities exist for interaction and the development of beneficial intellectual relationships between academic staff and students, and between students

f. all students are invited to participate in division or school activities such as seminars and conferences as appropriate.

g. all students are made aware of the University policy *A-42: Honours Degree Programs* and the University's *Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual*

h. appropriate supervision is provided and maintained throughout the research

i. supervisors participate in supervision training activities provided by the University or division as appropriate,

j. appropriate procedures are established to manage and monitor the examination of an honours research project, in accordance with policy *A-42: Honours Degree Programs*

k. appropriate procedures are in place to evaluate the quality of honours degree programs in accordance with policy *A-35A Quality Assurance and Improvement: Programs, Courses and Teaching Arrangements*

l. a database is established for reporting information about publications and conference presentations which result from the research conducted by the student and the supervisor during the program.

2.3 Responsibilities of the Honours Program Director

The Honours Program Director is responsible to the Head of School (or nominee) for overseeing all matters related to the honours degree program.

The responsibilities of an Honours Program Director are to:

a. welcome new students and introduce them to members of staff as appropriate

b. provide students with a comprehensive induction booklet, which may be supplemented with an induction session. The induction booklet should include:
   i. all relevant guidelines for the research component of the program, including a copy of policy *A-42: Honours Degree Programs* and this code
   ii. information about the library, Learning and Teaching Unit and other support services

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guidance on locating University policies, procedures, guidelines, and relevant forms such as for ethical and safety approvals
information about school procedures for photocopying, telephone, fax, mail, purchasing, access to laboratory space and equipment etc
information about access to computing facilities

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advise students on the choice of honours research project, and selection of an appropriate principal supervisor
ensure that each student presents a detailed research proposal for review by academic staff involved in the program. The research proposal should clearly outline the scope and character of the proposed research in relation to the stated aims of the honours research component
in consultation with the principal supervisor, ensure that each student undertakes an honours research project which falls within the allocated time and the proportion that the research component comprises within the program
monitor the progress of students enrolled in the program in conjunction with the principal supervisor
facilitate the resolution of conflicts between students and supervisors or other members of staff which have not been resolved at the local level
in consultation with the principal supervisor, ensure adequate and appropriate external and/or industry representation at honours seminars and presentations
ensure that the necessary administrative arrangements for examination occur in a timely and efficient manner
seek comments from the principal supervisor before determining the final grade to be awarded
recommend the final grade to the relevant school board, in accordance with policy A-42: Honours Degree Programs.
ensure that any grievances that arise are dealt with in accordance with the University policy C-17: Student Grievances Resolution

2.4 Responsibilities of the principal supervisor

Principal supervisors should contribute to their discipline by actively engaging in current research and scholarship, and integrating their knowledge and understanding into their supervision practices. A fundamental characteristic of good supervision is that academic staff constantly reflect on their approaches to supervision.

The responsibilities of the principal supervisor are to:

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discuss mutual expectations and obligations with the student at the commencement of candidature. This should include such matters as:
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the mode and frequency of communication
any special needs of the student
the role of the associate supervisor(s)

(Where possible, associate supervisors should be included in these discussions).
establish and maintain regular contact with the student. This may involve requiring the student to prepare written work on a pre-arranged, regular and agreed basis.
ensure that the student is made aware of, and given instruction in:
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requirements for conducting ethical research
securing intellectual property arrangements
procedures for the location and storage of original data
safety procedures appropriate to their field of study

discuss with the student as soon as practicable:
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the assessment requirements where a student will be required to undertake other assessable activities directly related to the preparation of the honours research project
the nature of the examination process and the method of selecting potential examiners

e. assist the student to develop a detailed research proposal, giving due consideration to the student's research interests and ability

f. ensure that any ethics and compliance approvals are obtained and intellectual property arrangements secured before the research starts

g. provide guidance to the student on presentations and/or publications arising from the research

h. reach agreement with the student regarding the expectations in relation to authorship of any publication, presentation or research output that derives from the student's research efforts, taking into account the requirements of University policy *RES-12: Authorship*

i. participate in the review of the student's work and report on progress to the Honours Program Director.

2.5   Responsibilities of the associate supervisor

It is the responsibility of the associate supervisor to:

a. where appropriate, provide special expertise in support of the student's honours research project

b. maintain regular communication with the student

c. fill the role of the principal supervisor during brief absences.

2.6   Responsibilities of the student

It is the responsibility of the student to:

a. play an informed part in planning the research so as to remain within the time allocated to the research component of the program

b. establish agreed methods of working and meeting with their supervisor(s)

c. discuss their needs and expectations with their supervisor(s) throughout their program

d. discuss any difficulties and problems being experienced with their supervisor(s) in a timely manner, and share responsibility in seeking solutions

e. maintain the progress of work in accordance with the stages and timelines agreed with their supervisor(s)

f. participate in reviews of progress

g. participate in scholarly opportunities offered by the division or school, which may include attendance at, and presentation to, research seminars

h. be familiar and comply with all requirements relating to ethical conduct, intellectual property, authorship, and the location and storage of data

i. adopt safe working practices at all times

j. abide by the University's policies for leave of absence, re-enrolment, extensions etc

k. accept responsibility for preparing an honours research project for examination

l. after examination of the honours research project, make any amendments required in a timely fashion

m. at all times adhere to high standards of academic integrity and honesty as described in the University's *Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual*.