

Faculty of Science Guidelines

Guidelines Title	Assessment requirements
Parent Policy/Procedure	Assessment in Coursework Units Policy
Date Effective	
Review Date	
Guidelines Owner	Associate Dean (Education)
Category	Academic Quality and Standards
Version Number	1.0
Content Enquiries	sci-education@monash.edu
Scope	
Purpose	
GUIDELINES STATEMENT	

1. Assessment requirements

- 1.1. The assessment of the Honours Program in any area of specialisation must clearly reflect the objectives of the Science Honours Program and any additional objectives specific to that area, and must follow the principles of assessment at Monash outlined in the Assessment in Coursework Programs policy and the rules for good practice stated in the Unit Assessment Procedures.
- 1.2. The assessment regime for the each discipline must be approved by the Science Board of Studies. The development of the assessment regime and its implementation, the assessment of the individual tasks to be completed by students, and the assessment standards are the responsibility of the teaching school/department, and must follow the guidelines for typical Honours assessment tasks outlined below.

Coursework unit(s)

- 1.3. The coursework components of the Science Honours Program will vary according to the area of specialisation but, irrespective of the weighting, they should normally provide students with key specialist skills that have not been taught in their previous studies. Some of the coursework components should also relate to key generic skills that are relevant to graduates in that area, including the Monash Graduate Attributes and (particularly) the development of an advanced level of written and oral communication skills. Honours coursework components should normally be taught at a higher standard than level-three undergraduate units, and students should demonstrate a greater level of independent learning. Typically, the Honours coursework curriculum might expose students to 'state of the art' research and knowledge in their area of specialisation, including peer-reviewed publications from the last five years.
- 1.4. In some cases students may be advised to undertake towards their Honours studies a level-three coursework unit or an Honours coursework unit offered by another school/department. Normally, no more than one level-three unit can be included in the Science Honours Program requirements for any student, and this unit must be assessed at a higher standard than for students undertaking that same unit at level three.

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- 1.5. The final results for coursework units should be determined using a process similar to that for any undergraduate science unit, and normally it should be based upon more than one type of assessable task.

Seminars and oral presentations

- 1.6. All Science Honours students are required to provide a seminar on their major Honours project and/or to engage in an oral defence of their research project thesis. The seminar must be assessable and weighted at between 5-10% of the total Honours assessment.

Research project thesis

- 1.7. The research project thesis will normally contribute between 33% and 70% towards the final Honours mark, depending on the discipline.
- 1.8. The Honours thesis is a training ground for learning, and demonstrating mastery of research skills, and it should be possible for a student to get a high mark for an outstanding command of methodology and its application to the content area of the thesis, even if the topic has been already researched in the literature. Thus the kind of originality expected would be in terms of new insights into a possibly well-established area, rather than a genuinely original research study. It is perfectly acceptable for a student to obtain null results, or to test what a marker may find a rather mundane question. The good student will find imaginative and theoretically sound ways of interpreting their results.

2. Publication of assessment requirements

- 2.1. At the start of the program students must be provided with an Honours Program Guide for their discipline including all assessment details as outlined below:
- The assessment regime of the Honours Program, that is, the set of essays, talks, assignments, examinations, thesis and other assessment tasks, and their contribution to each enrolled unit and to the final Honours mark and grade;
 - Criteria by which each coursework related assessment task will be evaluated. Only broad criteria are required at the start of the program; further details can be provided at the time of handing out the individual tasks;
 - All thesis requirements (word or page limits, structure, conformity to conventions, both scientific and grammatical, formatting, binding, etc);
 - Criteria by which the thesis will be evaluated;
 - Submission dates; and
 - Penalties for late submission.

Responsibility for implementation	Associate Dean (Education) Honours Coordinators Honours Committee
Status	New
Approval Body	Name: Meeting: Date:

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	Agenda item:
Endorsement Body	Name: Meeting: Date: Agenda item:
Definitions	
Related Policies	
Related Documents	