

# Bachelor (Honours) Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

### Scope

(1) This Policy applies to courses leading to the award Bachelor of ..... (Honours). Such courses may be:

- a. add-on, fourth year courses which follow a three year Bachelor degree; or
- b. fourth year Bachelor degree courses which offer Honours as an integrated option.

## Section 2 - Glossary

(2) Add-on honours course - refers to a one year (or full-time equivalent) course that leads to the award Bachelor of .. (Honours) and is undertaken subsequent to (but separate from) a three-year Bachelor degree course upon which it builds.

(3) Integrated honours course - refers to a four year Bachelor degree course that has built into it an honours stream, the completion of which leads to the Bachelor award with (Honours) in the title. In December 2004, Academic Senate approved that the 'pass stream' and 'integrated honours stream' in an integrated honours course need not be of the same duration or point value.

(4) Note: This Policy is based upon the Universities Australia's "Fourth Year Honours Programs - Guidelines for Good Practice".

## Section 3 - Policy

### Objectives of the policy

(5) The objectives of the Policy are to:

- a. provide a framework for good practice in the delivery and administration of Bachelor (Honours) courses; and, in doing so
- b. acknowledge the importance of portability of individual Bachelor (Honours) courses among universities and enable flexibility in the range of honours courses offered (in content, modes of offering, etc.) by the location of responsibility for significant aspects of policy determination, delivery and management at Faculty (or course-specific) level rather than at University level.

### Objectives of honours courses

(6) The primary objective of a Bachelor (Honours) course is research training. Faculties may specify secondary objectives which may include, for example, the mastery of advanced theory in a discipline, training in professional practice, the mastery of scholarship.

(7) Faculties will specify in the Stage 2 course approval document the particular objectives of each Bachelor (Honours)

course.

## **Part A - Structure and content of honours courses**

### **Structure of integrated honours courses**

(8) For integrated Bachelor (Honours) courses, the length of the honours program will typically be two years of the four year course. Where a three year honours program is proposed within a four year Bachelor degree course, it will be expected that a rationale will be provided in the Stage 2 course approval document that also indicates how honours potential will be assessed.

(9) The integrated honours component may result in students undertaking honours to require a different number of points for course completion, and therefore different duration in the course and different course load reported to the relevant Federal Government Department. Prior to December 2004, this was not the case, as all Charles Sturt University (the University) integrated honours courses were of the same duration/points/load as the associated pass course.

### **Variations to types of honours courses**

(10) Variations to the two types of honours courses identified in clause 1 of this Policy will be considered individually by Academic Senate, subject to the provision of a rationale for the variant proposed.

### **Dissertations and projects**

(11) An investigation or project of at least 16 points will be included in a Bachelor (Honours) course, the results of which will be embodied in a dissertation or an approved alternative examinable work. Throughout this policy, the word "project" will be used interchangeably to mean both project work and the resulting approved alternative examinable work.

### **Nomenclature**

(12) To provide consistency in recording the nomenclature of honours dissertations and projects on the subject master file, Faculties will name their dissertations or projects thus:

(13) [discipline area] Honours Project/Dissertation

For example:

Psychology Honours Project/Dissertation

(14) The discipline area descriptor may be broad or specific as appropriate.

### **Requirements**

(15) Dissertations and projects will comply with the following requirements:

- a. they must address the topic approved by the Honours Coordinator;
- b. dissertations must comply with the word-limit imposed by the Course policy and the [Higher Degree by Research Policy - Examinable Works \(Presentation of Printed Components\)](#);
- c. projects must comply with any limits imposed by the Course policy;
- d. dissertations and any text in a project must be written in English except where the nature of the investigation or project requires the dissertation or text to be written in another language;
- e. dissertations and text in a project must reach a satisfactory standard of expression and presentation;
- f. the investigation or other work on which the dissertation or project is based must have been completed by the

student subsequent to admission to the Bachelor (Honours) course;

- g. they must consist of an account of the student's own work but, in special cases, work done conjointly with other persons may be accepted provided the Honours Coordinator is satisfied about the extent of the student's contribution to the joint work; and
- h. the dissertation or project or the work on which they are based must not have been previously submitted for a degree or similar award.

## **Other course components**

(16) Bachelor (Honours) courses may also contain coursework covering one or more of the following areas:

- a. research methods;
- b. statistical analysis;
- c. readings in advanced theory;
- d. professional issues and practice;
- e. readings in current issues;
- f. other subjects approved by the Honours Coordinator.

## **Part B - Resources**

(17) Faculties wishing to offer a Bachelor (Honours) course must demonstrate in the University Course Planning Committee scoping document the level and depth of staff expertise and the necessary infrastructure to support the course.

## **Part C - Course administration**

### **Honours coordinators**

(18) The Executive Dean in consultation with the Head of Schools will appoint an Honours Coordinator to administer each Bachelor (Honours) course.

(19) In addition to the normal duties of a Course Director or Course Coordinator, if there is no appointed coordinator for the dissertation or project subject, the Honours Coordinator of a Bachelor (Honours) course will be accountable for:

- a. approving the dissertation or project proposal for each enrolled student;
- b. recommending to the Executive Dean, or delegate, the appointment of a supervisor and, if appropriate, an associate supervisor for each student or appointing a supervisor and, if appropriate, an associate supervisor under delegation from the Executive Dean;
- c. recommending to the Executive Dean, or delegate, the appointment of examiners for the dissertation of each enrolled student or appointing examiners under delegation from the Executive Dean;
- d. recommending to the Faculty Assessment Committee in accordance with Faculty protocols a final grade for the dissertation based on the examiners' reports and the level of award to be conferred; and

(20) The determination of grades and level of awards for specific Bachelor (Honours) courses will be explained to students via the subject outline for subject in the course, including dissertation subjects. The Division of Student Administration and the Scholarships Committee will be informed of grades and level of honours award through the minutes of the relevant Faculty Assessment Committee once the grades are finalised. Honours Coordinators are cognisant of the Universities Australia (AU) guidelines concerning the timing of the determination of final grades and level of awards.

## Supervisors

(21) For all Bachelor (Honours) students, the Executive Dean, or delegate will appoint an appropriately qualified and experienced supervisor and, if appropriate, an associate supervisor(s), from the staff of the University. The Executive Dean may also appoint an associate supervisor from outside the University (for example from industry, the professions or another university or research establishment) if appropriate.

(22) In those cases where a supervisor is absent from the University for an extended period(s), an acting supervisor shall be appointed by the Executive Dean for the period of the supervisor's absence.

(23) For the responsibilities of a supervisor, refer to Section 4 of the [Higher Degrees by Research Policy - Supervision](#).

## Change of supervisor

(24) Any change to the appointments of a supervisor or associate supervisor must be approved by the Executive Dean, or delegate.

## Part D - Admission

(25) Faculties will specify in the Stage 2 course approval document whether the course is open only to current Charles Sturt University students, or to former Charles Sturt University students and graduates, or also to students or graduates of other universities.

## Applications for admission

### Add-on fourth year honours courses

(26) Applications for admission to add-on, fourth year Bachelor (Honours) courses will be made on the prescribed form which shall be lodged with the Admissions Office. Refer to the [Admissions Procedure](#) for further information.

### Integrated honours courses

(27) Current students of the University applying for admission to the honours strand of a four-year integrated bachelor (honours) course do so by applying online for course transfer: see the section on transfer between courses in the [Admissions Procedure](#). The relevant faculty decides whether students must apply for honours in the second or third year of their full-time study or part-time equivalent.

(28) Applications as appropriate from former Charles Sturt University students or graduates, or from students or graduates of other universities for admission to the Honours strand of a four year integrated Bachelor (Honours) course will be made on the prescribed form which shall be lodged with the Admissions Office. Refer to the [Admissions Procedure](#) for further information.

## Study modes

(29) Faculties may admit students to Bachelor (Honours) courses in the internal or online learning modes and offer students the choice of full-time or part-time study loads.

## Admission criteria

(30) Faculties will specify the admission criteria for each Bachelor (Honours) course in the Stage 2 course approval document for the course. These criteria should:

- a. identify acceptable prior qualifications (normally a Bachelor degree course or, for an integrated Bachelor (Honours) course, the component of the Bachelor degree course up to the point where the honours stream

commences) and specify minimum performance in those qualifications; and

- b. where non-standard admission criteria are also being included, identify these and, for each non-standard criterion, set out clearly what minimum level, duration, etc. of performance, professional experience, research experience, etc. (as appropriate) would represent an acceptable equivalent to standard admission criteria.

## **Part E - Section credit and subject substitution**

### **Credit**

#### **Fourth year add-on bachelor (honours) courses**

(31) Faculties may approve credit in a fourth year, add-on Bachelor (Honours) course up to a maximum of 50% of the point value for the course. Credit may only be granted in the coursework component of the course, not for the dissertation or project.

#### **Integrated bachelor (honours) courses**

(32) Faculties may approve credit in a four year integrated course in accordance with [Credit Policy](#). Credit may not be granted for the dissertation or project.

### **Subject substitution**

(33) Subject substitution cannot apply to the dissertation or project.

### **Applications**

(34) Applications for credit and subject substitution should be made on the prescribed form and lodged with the Admissions Office at the time of applying for admission to the Bachelor (Honours) course, or with the Division of Student Administration if lodged after enrolment in the course.

## **Part F - Enrolment and progression**

(35) The Academic Policies with respect to enrolment, assessment, examinations, exclusion and graduation which apply to undergraduate students apply also to students in Bachelor (Honours) courses.

(36) At the commencement of their program, each Bachelor (Honours) student shall be advised, in writing, of their responsibilities and of the approved arrangements for communication with their Supervisor whilst they are enrolled in the course.

(37) A Bachelor (Honours) student will have submitted a dissertation or project proposal before commencing the dissertation or project.

### **Dissertation or project proposal**

(38) At the date set by the Honours Coordinator, students must submit a dissertation or project proposal which sets out the topic of investigation or work and the proposed methodology. The dissertation or project proposal must comply with the requirements specified by the Faculty.

(39) The dissertation or project topic and the methodology may not be changed except with the approval of the Honours Coordinator.

## Part G - Assessment

### Coursework

(40) Performance in subjects taken in Bachelor (Honours) courses will be assessed by the Subject Coordinators and the grades will be determined by the Faculty Assessment Committee.

### Dissertations and projects

#### Submission of the dissertation or project

(41) Policy on the following is determined at Faculty rather than University level:

- a. dates for submission, with these being in line with Universities Australia guidelines;
- b. penalties for late submission; and
- c. whether or not re-submission is permitted. Note: in those Faculties where re-submission is permitted, no re-submission can result in a grade higher than a Pass for that dissertation or project.

(42) A dissertation or project shall be submitted to the Honours Coordinator in accordance with the [Higher Degree by Research Policy -Examinable Works \(Presentation of Printed Components\)](#), except where a project is presented for examination in a predominantly non-written form. Candidates in these courses should consult their supervisor or course or honours coordinator regarding the presentation of their work.

(43) Note: where the policy for a particular Bachelor (Honours) course is that bachelor honours dissertations be lodged in the School rather than in the University Library, the students in that course are not constrained by the binding requirements of the Rule. Such policy shall be determined by the individual Bachelor (Honours) Course Committee.

### Examiners

(44) The assessment of dissertations and projects will be in each case by one or more examiners appointed by the Executive Dean, or delegate. If an examiner is the student's supervisor and/or associate supervisor, an additional examiner must be appointed.

(45) Examiners will provide a written report on the dissertation or project and, guided by Faculty policy, will recommend a grade for the dissertation, providing reasons for the recommendation.

(46) Policy on how guidelines for marking dissertations and projects are communicated to examiners (especially those external to the University) is determined at Faculty rather than University level.

### Grading

(47) Explicit criteria for the assessment of dissertations and projects are determined at the Faculty rather than University level. From Autumn 2002, dissertations and projects deemed to be of a passing quality shall be graded according to the set of grades designed specifically for Bachelor (Honours) dissertation and project subjects in terms of the classes of honours. These grades are as follows:

H1	Class 1
H2a	Class 2, Division 1
H2b	Class 2, Division 2
H3	Class 3

(48) Note: This grade will not necessarily be the same as the class of honours awarded for the course overall.

## Level of award

(49) Bachelor (Honours) awards may be conferred at the following levels:

Class 1
Class 2, Division 1
Class 2, Division 2
Class 3

(50) Policy for determining the level of award to be conferred on graduands of a Bachelor (Honours) course, including processes for the resolution of discrepant examiners' marks on dissertations and projects, is determined at Faculty rather than University level. The particular criteria for each course will be specified in the Stage 2 course approval document. A record of how the criteria were applied to individual students will also be maintained by the Faculty.

(51) The level of award may be determined by level of performance in one of the following completed whilst enrolled in the Bachelor (Honours) course:

- a. the project/dissertation alone;
- b. the project/dissertation and specified course work subjects; or
- c. the project/dissertation and all coursework subjects.

(52) Where specific coursework subjects in a particular course have been identified as not contributing to the level of award, the Faculty may not require that a grade higher than a pass be obtained in these subjects.

(53) Faculties are required to ensure that the grading system used for any particular Bachelor (Honours) course has built into it as a criterion for Class 2, Division 1 honours a demonstrated capacity for independent research.

(54) The grade for the dissertation or project and the level of the award to be conferred will be determined by the Faculty Assessment Committee on the recommendation of the Honours Coordinator made in accordance with Faculty protocol.

## Part H - Grievances and appeals

### Academic judgements, discrimination, harassment

#### Academic judgements

(55) A candidate who is aggrieved by a decision of the University which is taken by a person or body of the University exercising an authority under the academic policies and rules of the University, based essentially upon a question of academic judgement, may appeal against that decision.

#### Discrimination

(56) A candidate who is aggrieved by a decision of the University or by action taken by the University which the candidate believes has or will result in him or her being treated less favourably than another candidate or candidates in the same or similar circumstances, may:

- a. have his or her complaint, problem or concern mediated; or
- b. lodge a formal grievance,

under the University's [Complaints Management Policy](#) and Procedures on the grounds of discrimination in respect of that decision or action. A candidate who invokes this clause in respect of a decision of the University is not prevented from exercising his or her rights of appeal against that decision under clause 51.

(57) Note: The University's [Complaints Management Policy](#) and Procedures are published in the [CSU Policy Library](#).

## **Harassment**

(58) A candidate who is subject to uninvited and unwelcomed behaviour by a person exercising an authority under this policy or a student of the University, which interferes with the candidate's right to study or live in a non-threatening environment, may:

- a. have his or her complaint, problem or concern mediated; or
- b. lodge a formal grievance;

under the University's [Complaints Management Policy](#) and Procedures on the grounds of harassment in respect of that behaviour.

## **Appeals**

### **Executive Dean of faculty**

#### **Academic decisions**

(59) A candidate aggrieved by an academic decision as described in clause 48 above by a:

- a. Principal or Associate Supervisor;
- b. Course Director or Course Coordinator or Honours Coordinator;
- c. Sub-Dean;
- d. Faculty Board;

which relates to their candidature may appeal to the Executive Dean of Faculty.

(60) A candidate may not appeal against a recommendation made by one of the above officers or bodies, but only against a decision of those officers or bodies.

### **Conflict of interest**

(61) Where the Executive Dean of Faculty is the candidate's supervisor, or Course Director or Course Coordinator, or has some other conflict of interest, the Executive Dean of Faculty shall advise the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who shall appoint another person who is not a member of the Executive Dean's faculty, to hear the appeal. That person shall exercise the authorities given to an Executive Dean of Faculty under clauses 54 - 62 below.

### **Appeals to be in writing**

(62) An appeal shall be in writing and shall be lodged with the Executive Dean of Faculty within twenty-one days of the date of notification of the decision.

(63) An appeal shall specify the:

- a. decision against which the candidate is appealing;
- b. name of the person or body that made the decision;
- c. reasons for the appeal.

(64) Documentary evidence in support of the appeal shall be provided in appropriate cases. (Refer [Special Consideration Policy](#).)

## **Late appeals**

(65) The Executive Dean of Faculty may decline to hear an appeal that is lodged after the 21 day appeal period.

## **Deciding appeals**

(66) The Executive Dean of Faculty shall determine the procedure for deciding each appeal but as a minimum shall:

- a. refer the candidate's appeal to the person or the presiding officer of the body that made the decision which is the subject of the appeal, for written comment within seven days; and
- b. refer the written comments in a) above to the candidate for a written response.

(67) If the candidate's response is not received within 21 days of the date on which the comments in 59a above were sent to the candidate, the Executive Dean of Faculty may grant the candidate an extension of time or may decide the appeal in its absence.

## **Authority of the Executive Dean of faculty**

(68) In deciding an appeal the Executive Dean of Faculty may:

- a. uphold the decision; or
- b. quash the decision; or
- c. vary the decision provided that the effect of such variation is consistent with the University's academic policies.

## **Notification**

(69) The Executive Dean of Faculty shall notify the candidate in writing of the decision.

## **Time Limit**

(70) The Executive Dean of Faculty shall decide an appeal within forty days of its receipt from the candidate unless granted an extension of time by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

## **Academic Appeals Committee**

### **Decisions of the Executive Dean or faculty board**

(71) A candidate aggrieved by a decision of:

- a. the Executive Dean of Faculty including a decision taken under clause 52-63 above; or
- b. a person appointed under clause 54 above;

which relates to the candidate's Bachelor (Honours) studies may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee.

### **Appeals to be in writing**

(72) An appeal shall be in writing and shall be lodged with the Secretary, Academic Appeals Committee within 21 days of the date of the decision.

(73) An appeal shall specify the:

- a. decision against which the candidate is appealing;
- b. name of the person or body that made the decision;
- c. reasons for the appeal.

(74) Documentary evidence in support of the appeal shall be provided in appropriate cases. (Refer [Special Consideration Policy](#).)

### **Late appeals**

(75) The Academic Appeals Committee may decline to hear an appeal that is lodged after the 21 day appeal period.

### **Deciding appeals**

(76) The Academic Appeals Committee shall determine the procedure for deciding each appeal. As a minimum the Academic Appeals Committee shall:

- a. refer the candidate's appeal to the Executive Dean of Faculty, for written comment within seven days; and
- b. refer the written comments in a) above to the candidate inviting the candidate to provide a written response and/or to request an interview with the Academic Appeals Committee.

(77) If the candidate does not respond to the invitation within 21 days of the date on which the comments in clause 69a above were sent to the candidate, the Academic Appeals Committee may grant the candidate an extension of time or may decide the appeal in its absence.

### **Interview with the committee**

(78) A candidate who chooses to be interviewed by the Academic Appeals Committee may elect to be interviewed in person, by telephone or at the Committee's discretion by videoconference. The expenses incurred by the candidate in presenting for interview shall be met by the candidate.

(79) The candidate may be represented at an interview by an advisor if the Academic Appeals Committee so approves. An advisor shall not be a barrister or solicitor engaged by the candidate or by another person on the candidate's behalf. The advisor shall not be entitled to address or debate the Committee unless granted leave by the Committee.

### **Authority of the committee**

(80) In deciding an appeal against a decision of an Executive Dean of Faculty or the Faculty Board may:

- a. uphold the decision; or
- b. quash the decision; or
- c. vary the decision provided that the effect of such a variation is consistent with the University's academic policies.

(81) The decision of the Academic Appeals Committee shall be final.

### **Notification**

(82) The University Secretary or their delegate shall notify the candidate in writing of the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee.

### **Time limit**

(83) The Academic Appeals Committee shall decide an appeal within 40 days of its receipt from the candidate unless granted an extension of time by the Vice-Chancellor.

## **Section 4 - Procedure**

(84) Nil.

## **Section 5 - Guidelines**

(85) Nil.

## Status and Details

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