

## Principles for the Assessment of the Research Components of Honours and Masters Degrees

The assessment of the research component of the Honours program and Masters degrees varies across the university reflecting discipline and professional fields of practice and accreditation requirements.

We hope that the general principles outlined here will be helpful in managing the new circumstances and can form the basis for you to work through the impact of the pandemic on your research. This advice document addresses the research component of your degree and that additional advice may be obtained from the DVCA.

### Guidance for students

Given the remarkable circumstances in which we find ourselves this year, we strongly suggest that you work with your supervisor to produce a "Program Interruption Statement" that outlines the impact these events have had on your work, including how the research has deviated or will deviate from original plans. Be as specific as possible. Such a record may be of assistance as you discuss your experiences with future employers or if you choose to undertake further study.

### Principles

The university is still working on a full suite of options for Honours and Masters students and exploring the implications of those options for students (financial, delays, carers' leave, Conditions of Award for scholarship holders, international student visas etc.). Nonetheless, we recognise that preliminary advice is needed at this stage so that you and your supervisor(s) can move forward productively.

1. If your research can be continued under remote working arrangements, then you should continue to undertake the research and it will be assessed in the normal manner.
2. If your research has been impacted by the current crisis (for example, due to inaccessibility of libraries and collections; closure of fieldwork sites; inability to conduct interviews; closure of laboratories) then please discuss with your supervisor whether the project can be re-scoped in some way. For example:
  - a. An extension of deadlines
  - b. Could comparable work be done remotely by adopting a more theoretical perspective?
  - c. Could the project move to simulations rather than laboratory work?
  - d. Can data available online be used?
  - e. Can the work done thus far be incorporated into a "future work" section of the thesis?
3. If a re-scoping of the project does not seem feasible, consult with your School on finding a suitable alternative project.
4. If your current Honours or Masters project cannot be replaced or re-designed, then the School will consider the use of alternative assessment criteria that still meet the learning outcomes.
5. If alternative assessment criteria cannot be established, you should discuss with your supervisor other options including deferring to Semester 2 or reducing the study load. For example, a reduction to 18 units per semester is still a full-time study load at ANU. Students

could also enrol in second semester at 18 units with most of the more intense load towards the end of year (i.e hoping there will be at least limited work back on campus sometime in second semester). The final 12 units could be completed over Spring or Summer session with submission end of January or into February 2021.

Note that if you have a scholarship then you should check the Conditions of Award of your scholarship before making a decision.