

# Honours year in Psychology – Internal Applicants

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## Who is the intended audience of this document?

This information is intended for **internal applicants** to the UNSW Honours year in Psychology – UNSW students who will complete an APAC-accredited undergraduate three-year (or bridging) sequence<sup>1</sup> in psychology at UNSW in 2021.

All other applicants (including UNSW graduates who completed in 2020 or earlier) are considered external applicants. External applicants should refer [here](#) for information about how to apply.

## What is the Honours year?

The purpose of the Honours year in Psychology is to enable students who have performed well at undergraduate level to deepen their knowledge of approaches, perspectives and traditions in psychology and undertake a significant research project. Honours is a means for connecting undergraduate study with supervised independent research by consolidating and extending work completed in the undergraduate program and providing an academic foundation for students continuing on to a Masters by coursework, a Masters by research, or a PhD.

Honours is a one-year, full-time program available for commencement in Term 1 only. The program cannot be taken part-time or by distance<sup>2</sup> and mid-year entry is not possible. It is an [APAC-accredited](#) fourth year program.

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<sup>1</sup> A three-year sequence at UNSW can be completed within a single or dual Bachelor degree comprising a (minimum) 78 Unit of Credit major in psychology. A bridging sequence at UNSW is taken as a Graduate Diploma in Psychology.

<sup>2</sup> Adjustments were made in 2020 to accommodate remote study as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students may undertake the Honours year in a variety of ways, as outlined below (program codes in brackets). Honours content is identical regardless of the program code.

### **Embedded fourth year of a 4-Year program**

- Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) [3632]
- Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) [3962]

### **Embedded fourth (or later) year of a dual degree program**

- Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) / Bachelor of Laws [4721]
- Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) / non-Science Bachelor [various, incl. 3593, 3931]

### **A one-year, stand-alone program**

- Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) [4518]
  - Apply after completing a three-year single degree program in 2021 (e.g., 3970, 3435)
  - Apply after completing the Graduate Diploma in Psychology (5331) in 2021
  - Apply mid-way through a dual program after completing Stage 1-3 Science (Psychology) requirements in 2021 (e.g., 4770, 4722)

### **What happens in the Honours year, and when does it start?**

The Honours year begins in late January with a mandatory *Orientation Meeting* for *all* Honours students. Details of the meeting will be supplied to successful applicants when they are advised of their application outcome. The meeting is usually held in the final week of January.

Students are not permitted to enrol in any other course or program concurrently with the Honours year.

After a student attends the Orientation Meeting, they 1) will be able to self-enrol in their courses for the year, and 2) are expected to meet with their supervisor and begin planning their research project.

Students will conduct a year-long, 30 UOC major independent research project (completed under the guidance of an academic supervisor), and write a thesis based on the project. The research project may be undertaken in most areas of psychology, such as: psychopathology, behavioural neuroscience, cognitive science, cognition and perception, forensic psychology, and social, personality and developmental psychology.

Students will also complete, across Term 1 and Term 2, 18 UOC of advanced-level core and elective coursework. The coursework requirement includes content that encompasses history, professional ethics, evidence-based practice and advanced coverage of selected contemporary issues in psychology that reflect the expertise and research specialisations of School staff (e.g., Recent Advances in Neuroscience, Emotions, The Psychology of Environmental Decisions).

### **Term 1**

- Core and elective coursework (2-hour core lecture, 1-hour core tutorial, 2-hour elective seminar)
- Research proposal and panel meeting
- Weekly independent study (approximately 30 hours)

## Term 2

- Core and elective coursework (2-hour core lecture, 1-hour core tutorial, 2-hour elective seminar)
- Continuation of research
- Weekly independent study (approximately 30 hours)

## Term 3

- Continuation of research
- Submission of thesis
- Honours Conference presentation

## Eligibility for the Honours year

### Psychology Major

	Stage 1 core	Stage 2 core	Stage 3 core	Level 3 PSYC electives
BPsych(Hons)	1001, 1011, 1021, 1111	2001, 2061, 2071, 2081, 2101	3001, 3011	2 x L3 List A 2 x L3 List B 1 x L3 List A OR B
All other programs	1001, 1011, 1111	2001, 2061, 2071, 2081, 2101	3001, 3011	1 x L3 List A 1 x L3 List B 1 x L3 List A OR B

Note: Completion of PSYC3371 Multivariate Data Analysis for Psychology, in conjunction with PSYC3001, is important as preparation for the Honours year – some Honours projects may require the use of advanced statistical techniques. It can be taken as a List A or List B elective.

### Availability of resources

The number of places available for Honours varies from year to year and depends upon the availability of School resources.

### Program requirements and *Psychology Average*

The minimum eligibility requirement is to achieve a *Psychology Average* of at least 75 and meet the criteria below.

#### *Graduate Diploma in Psychology*

- Complete, by Session 6 2021, all 60 UOC of their program

#### *Single Bachelor degree with a psychology major (minimum of 78 UOC)*

- Complete, by Term 3 2021, 144 UOC (Stages 1 to 3) of their program
  - Embedded Honours students who complete Stages 1 to 3 in Terms 1 or 2 of 2021 **must** apply for Program Leave for Terms 2 and/or 3.

#### *Dual Bachelor degree with a psychology major (minimum of 78 UOC)*

- Complete, by Term 3 2021, the Science component of their dual program



- Students should seek advice from their non-Science Program Authority about any non-Science limitations on when their Honours year may be taken (e.g., can Honours only be taken after four years? Five years?)
- Students in dual degrees without an embedded Honours year, who have not completed their non-Science component, must apply for Program Leave from their dual program in order to apply to be admitted to the separate, one-year Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours). Assuming the non-Science Program Authority approves the leave, the remaining UOC of their non-Science component can be completed after the Honours year in Psychology.

For Graduate Diploma students the *Psychology Average* is calculated based on first attempt marks for **all** courses completed during their program (i.e., from PSYC5001 to PSYC5010).

For Bachelor degree students the *Psychology Average* is calculated from:

- First attempt marks for the **60 UOC of psychology core courses** common to all psychology programs / specialisations (see below); and
- The **three highest** first attempt marks of any completed Level 3 psychology electives.

The *Psychology Average* does not include marks from:

- level 1 psychology electives (e.g., PSYC1031, PSYC1022 – PSYC1029, PSYC1062)
- psychology courses completed at another university (e.g., via credit transfer, cross-institutional study, exchange or study abroad)
- non-psychology free electives or courses counted as General Education.

### Summer Term enrolment

The Honours year begins before results for Summer Term are released, and this is a key reason the School recommends that students **do not plan** to complete Stage 3 of their program/the Science component of their dual program in the Summer term immediately prior to their intended commencement of the Honours year.

Should a student be offered a place in the Honours year, but fail their Summer enrolment, they will be discontinued from the Honours year, their supervisor will lose a student and it will be too late to re-adjust the supervisor allocation across the cohort.

Students who appear to have no choice but to complete Stage 3 of their program/the Science component of their dual program in Summer are advised to [contact the School](#).

### How to apply for the Honours year

Applications open on 1 August and close on 15 November.

Please review the step-by-step application guide available on the [School's website](#), noting the process will differ depending on a student's category (as defined by the [Faculty of Science](#)).

### Supervisor allocation

Students do not choose their own supervisor, rather they submit a numbered list of preferences from the School's available supervisors. Similarly, supervisors do not choose their own students.



Students nominate their supervisor preferences by submitting an online [Intention to Undertake Honours form](#) to the Faculty. Supervisor preferences must be informed by the “Supervisors and Research Areas” document available on the [School’s website](#). Students should be sure to view the right version of this document – usually updated in July – before submitting their preferences.

Allocating supervisors to students is a complex process that considers a number of variables. The School aims for a fair and equitable process and *to achieve the best match between student and supervisor*, but there is always a random component to the allocation process which cannot be avoided.

Students should not assume that they will be allocated to their first preference.

Factors that play a key role in allocating supervisors include:

- student preferences
- supervisor availability (e.g., supervisory capacity, leave, other commitments)
- students’ academic strengths.

Can I defer my offer?

No.

**Category A** (as defined by the [Faculty of Science](#))

An offer in one year is not an unconditional guarantee of admission in any subsequent year. Should a successful applicant decide to decline their place in the Honours year they may re-apply for any subsequent year but will be assessed as an external applicant. Eligibility requirements for external applicants are not the same as for internal applicants. Places for external applicants, if any, are subject to the availability of appropriate research and supervision resources and will be assessed on the basis of academic merit. More information about applying as an external applicant can be found [here](#).

**Category B** (as defined by the [Faculty of Science](#))

Single degree students are expected to undertake Honours directly after completion of Stages 1-3 of their embedded degree. Dual degree students may – with the approval of the non-Science Program Authority – undertake Honours at a later stage of their embedded degree, which may not necessarily be immediately after completion of Stages 1-3 of their Science component. Should a student wish to take a break from study before entering their Honours year, they will need to be transferred to the relevant pass degree<sup>3</sup>, in order to graduate, and re-apply for the stand-alone, one-year Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) program when they are ready to resume.

Alternatives to the Honours year at UNSW

The UNSW School of Psychology is highly ranked, our Honours program is highly sought after, and we have set high entry standards for our Honours year.

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<sup>3</sup> For example, a 3632 BPsych(Hons) student would typically be transferred into 3435 BPsychSc

There are other options available if a student does not meet the minimum eligibility requirements or is not offered a place in the Honours year at UNSW. Students who think they may be unlikely to meet the requirements for the Honours year at UNSW are encouraged to think about their next steps, which could include:

- familiarising themselves with other accredited fourth-year programs in psychology by consulting the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council website
- contacting other tertiary institutions to obtain information about their APAC-accredited fourth-year programs, admission requirements and application deadlines
- applying for APAC-accredited fourth-year programs offered by other tertiary institutions.

### Further information

If questions arise after students have carefully reviewed the information available about the Honours year on the [School's website](#), [Faculty website](#), and the relevant program entry in the [UNSW Handbook](#), they can [contact the School](#).

### Honours Committee

A/Prof Denovan Begg, Prof Simon Killcross, Prof Thomas Whitford

### Program Administrator

Emmalee Taylor