

## Key Responsibilities and Expectations for BABS Honours Students

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The School of BABS is dedicated to creating a positive, inclusive educational environment for Honours students that embraces diversity in all forms and rejects any form of hostile workplace, discrimination, or bullying. We have a clear statement of behavioural expectations (as well as definitions of discrimination, (sexual) harassment and bullying, gendered violence, which can be found here: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/harassment>). Beyond UNSW and Faculty protocols, it is our goal in BABS to create a learning environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and values student identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, and ability).

Entering the Honours program is, for many students, their first real exposure to research. This is a crucial time for deciding future career paths. As an Honours student, you are beginning a significant transition towards becoming a more independent researcher. While your supervisors are there to guide and mentor you, your active participation and ownership of the process are essential for a successful and rewarding experience.

Here are key responsibilities and expectations for BABS Honours students:

- **Taking Ownership of Your Research Project:**
  - While your supervisor will ultimately define your project, you will have the opportunity to be **actively involved in shaping your project**
  - In close consultation with your supervisor, you can help frame **which theoretical framework or methodology you wish to use**
  - Take the lead in **developing your program and timetable of research and study**, with guidance from your supervisor
  - **Manage your time effectively and take ownership of your project**
  - Strive to **work independently**
  - Be open to and prepared to **contribute intellectually to the direction of the project** if suitable
  - **Be flexible and open to project changes** if a slight direction change is both needed and feasible
  - Aim to **perform your research in a timely manner**
- **Designing and Conducting Ethical and High-Quality Research:**
  - Develop the **ability to design and implement a research methodology** that addresses a problem or proposition
  - Work towards demonstrating a thorough understanding and application of **research principles, ethics and integrity, and methods** appropriate to your field. These are key elements of professional behaviour
  - Learn to **critically evaluate and synthesise existing theoretical knowledge, ideas and practice** within your field
  - Understand that the **writing of the thesis should only ever be your own work**.

- Accept **responsibility for decisions regarding the standard of your thesis**
- Understand and apply **academic integrity**
- **Engaging Actively with Supervision and Seeking Support:**
  - Proactively **organise meetings with your supervisor**
  - **Submit drafts of work to facilitate constructive feedback** from your supervisor; peer review is part of being a professional scientist
  - **Engage with feedback constructively**, understanding that it will highlight both your strengths and areas for improvement
  - **Apply yourself as best as possible** to the project
  - If formal counselling or personal support is needed, be aware that while supervisors have a duty of care, **personal counselling and support are not solely the responsibility of the supervisor**, and you should look elsewhere for these services; your supervisor can guide you to university resources
  - If conflict/grievance arises between student/supervisor or other member of the group, **there are grievance officers in the school to support students**
- **Developing Communication Skills:**
  - Work on your ability to **synthesise complex concepts and express them in a logical, articulate form**
  - Aim to **communicate your knowledge effectively**
  - Learn to **communicate and potentially disseminate research outcomes**.
  - Develop skills to work **independently as well as collaboratively**
  - Attend BABS weekly seminars, it is not only a great resource to learn from diverse research fields, but it will also allow you to **observe different science communication styles/skills in practice**
- **Embracing the Learning Environment and Planning for the Future:**
  - Contribute to creating a **positive, inclusive educational environment**. Be aware of the behavioural expectations regarding discrimination, harassment, and bullying
  - It is important to treat others around you (supervisors, panel, fellow students) **with respect as you wish to be treated**
  - Understand that supervisors strive to provide reasonable accommodations if you have disabilities; **communicate your needs where appropriate**
  - Understand that even if you do not achieve your desired grade or results, if you **applied yourself as best as possible**, you should aim to finish with a **sense of accomplishment on what you have done/achieved**
  - Start to think about your **personalised career strategy** for future study or employment and life-long learning

By actively engaging with these responsibilities, you will gain invaluable experience and skills, preparing you for future research or other professional paths. **Come to Honours with an empty bowl that you can fill with life experiences** - put aside any assumptions and genuinely connect with people around you and embrace the opportunity and challenge.

