A cluster of University of Melbourne Departments based at the Royal Melbourne and Western hospitals are offering a diverse range of projects for the 2010 honours year. We have expertise in a very wide range of basic, applied and clinical methodologies and offer a unique experience to Honours students. Not only do students master the research field of their project, but they have the opportunity to learn about the bigger picture, particularly with regard to leadership and responsibility, and the importance of the interface between research and clinical medicine.

Find out more at the Honours Information Evening

Join us for fingerfood and drinks Tuesday 31 August from 4–6pm in the Function Room, Ground Floor, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Grattan St, Parkville.

You can chat to supervisors and current students about projects and pathways that lead to your career ambitions.

Projects on offer

We have projects in the following areas. Visit http://honoursrmh.unimelb.edu.au/ or come to the info evening for a full project listing.

- Ageing
- Arthritis & Inflammation
- Asthma & Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Bone Biology
- Bone Marrow Research
- Cancer
- Colorectal Medicine
- CSIRO Molecular & Health Technologies
- Endocrinology, Diabetes and Osteoporosis
- Epilepsy & Neuropharmacology
- Imaging
- Infectious Diseases & Immigrant Health
- Malaria
- Medical Biology of Women’s Health
- Nephrology
- Neuropsychiatry and Stress Biology
- Neurovascular Research

Frequently Asked Questions

Professor Gary Anderson, Honours Coordinator for the Honours RMH/WH Program answers some FAQs.

Do I need to be currently enrolled in the Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences faculty to do an honours course there?

Definitely not. Our Honours program is one of the best and most popular ways for students NOT doing medicine to do clinically focused research. New students should however have some basic science background. More information on this can be provided at the Information Night or from your potential supervisors.

What is the start date for the Honours Course?

This is flexible but generally the Honours program commences on the first Monday in March at the commencement of term, but students are free to start any preliminary work from the start of February. All Honours students will be required to attend an Orientation morning where information on coursework, programs, important dates for exams, presentations and thesis submissions will be discussed and distributed by the Honours Coordinator.

Can I start mid-year?

The majority of our honours students start in March and the course is structured for these students. If you need to start mid-year however, you can discuss your requirements with your desired project supervisor to see if a special arrangement can be made. We have a few students who have successfully enrolled in July this year.

What value does Honours add to my degree?

Honours degrees from University of Melbourne are highly prestigious and sought after in the medical research sector and the broader workplace. The broad, hands on experience that the Honours year provides gives our graduates experiences and qualifications that readily differentiate them from others.
What is expected of me in Honours?
The course has two components. The smaller component of theory which deals with current concepts of human disease and approaches to medical research; the larger part is your original research project.

What is involved in the coursework for the Honours year?
Course work in the theory component covers ethics, experimental design and statistics, workshops on mechanism of human disease and communication skills.

What if I want to do a scientific honours but I don’t want to be in a lab?
Not all important medical research is “wet” bench work. We also offer a range of public health, policy and bioinformatics projects that are not based on bench work.

What marks will you need to get into honours?
The faculty minimum score is 65 but typically we accept students with faculty score marks above 72.

What is the process of applying for an Honours project? (ie speaking to supervisors/honours coordinators)
First come to our Honours Information Night and have a look at the very wide range of projects on offer, meet with the supervisors and discuss the projects. The application process for Honours this year will be through an online application and preference selection system - please check the Department’s website http://honoursrmh.unimelb.edu.au for details to be released shortly.

Who decides if I get into an Honours course?
The final decision is made by the Head of Department in consultation with the Honours Coordinator and Faculty colleagues.

Is it more difficult coming from a different university other than The University of Melbourne?
All the places are competitive, but we have enrolled many students from outside institutions and high calibre students from around Australia and the world are encouraged to apply.

I did basic science subjects – can I do a project in neuropharmacology?
In principal yes. To clarify this we always recommend close dialogue with potential supervisors.

What can Honours lead to?
Our graduates have all commenced highly diverse and very satisfying careers. Some have remained in medical research completing their PhD and moved onto other labs, some have entered the workforce into business consultancies at allied business. Some have moved to the government sector- the overall employment rate is well over 96% in the first year out.

What is the difference between Honours and Masters?
Honours is a one year intensive program whereas the Masters course is completed over two years. Both programs are a pathway to a PhD. The preferred pathway for the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Science PhD programs is Honours.

Is there any coursework involved? If so what type?
The course work for the masters program is a more extensive iteration of the honours program. Additional subjects specific to your research project may also be required.

What is the assessment for the year?
Theory is 25%; thesis/research project is 75%

Are there scholarships available?
Yes, visit http://honoursrmh.unimelb.edu.au/Applications/scholarships.html for details.

Want to know more?
Come to the Honours Information night on August 31. You’ll see our full list of projects and supervisors will be there to answer all your questions.

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I graduated with a Bachelor of Biomedical Science specialising in reproduction and developmental biology. I did a few Neuroscience subjects as electives and I’ve always had an interest in neurological disorders. So, towards the end of my course I visited a few labs that specialised in the area. Right after visiting the Department of Medicine and meeting with my supervisors, I knew it was just the kind of environment I wanted to work in - very inviting, a good level of excitement about research, and the potential to learn several interesting techniques.

I immediately liked the transition from a coursework-based lifestyle to a hands-on, dynamic, problem-solving setting. You acquire so much independence through the year by managing your experiments and data - and it really all turns out to be more rewarding than intimidating.

I enjoyed my honours year so much! Doing honours was so fulfilling it made me realise that research is what I enjoy, and the opportunity was there, so why not take it one step further! I enrolled in a PhD with the same department and I hope to continue with research. There are still so many questions out there that remain to be answered, it’s all quite exciting.

Amelia Koe, past Honours student and recipient of a Nick Christopher PhD top-up scholarship.

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