Faculty of Engineering Honours Policy

Award of Honours

In the Bachelor of Engineering degree programs, honours are awarded for meritorious performance over the degree program with special attention paid to a candidate's performance in the final year courses and thesis.

The award of Honours is based on a weighted average mark (WAM) calculated for each student and on the mark awarded in the thesis.

> Honours Class 1: WAM greater than or equal to 75.0 and thesis mark greater than or equal to 65

> Honours Class 2 Division 1: WAM greater than or equal to 70.0 but less than 75.0 and thesis mark greater than or equal to 60

> Honours Class 2 Division 2 are awarded for WAM greater than or equal to 65.0 but less than 70.0 and thesis mark greater than or equal to 55

Principles for calculation of honours WAM

The general principles guiding the Honour's WAM calculations are:

- The calculation should be transparent and straightforward.

- Marks in later years are a better indicator of a student's performance and potential.

- The formulation should have minimal effect on a student's choice of elective courses.

- The calculation should be able to be automated.

Courses used in honours WAM calculation

Generally, results for all courses undertaken as part of the BE degree are included in WAM calculations, but courses taken as part of another degree in a joint or combined-degree program are not included. Specifically, the rules are:

- Include
    1. internal advanced standing courses,
    2. internal substituted courses, and
    3. external (exchange) thesis provided it is assessed internally.

- Exclude
    1. any additional courses,
    2. externally assessed courses either prior to or during enrolment at UNSW, whether cross-institutional, exchange, transfer or advanced standing, and
    3. SY and NF courses.

- Count

  1. first attempt returning a numerical mark only, and

  2. elective requirements in time order up to total requirement.

- Retrospective requests about including or excluding particular results are ignored.

Calculation of honours WAM

The formula to calculate the Honour's WAM for a sequence of n courses with weights w_i, units of credit u_i and marks m_i is:

$$WAM = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i\, u_i\, m_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i\, u_i}.$$

- The WAM is calculated to one decimal place (rounded up).

Choice of course weights w_i

- Each course has a fixed weight according to:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Gen Ed
1 (10%)	2 (20%)	3 (30%)	4 (40%)	1

- The stage in the degree when a course is actually taken is irrelevant.

- The thesis should be weighted at a minimum as a 12uoc Year 4 course. For example, thesis may be divided into Thesis A and Thesis B, each worth 6 uoc. However, Thesis A may be a Pass/Fail course whereas Thesis B has a mark awarded. In this case, under Option 1, the weights might be allocated as $w = 0$ and $w = 8$, respectively.

Transition Rules

For 2007, the current rules apply. For 2008, honours WAMs for students in a program are calculated according to both the old and new rules, with the maximum of the calculated WAMs being used. After 2008, the new rules apply, the proviso being that no student be disadvantaged.