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MDHS Honours Alumni Mentor Program Handbook 2026

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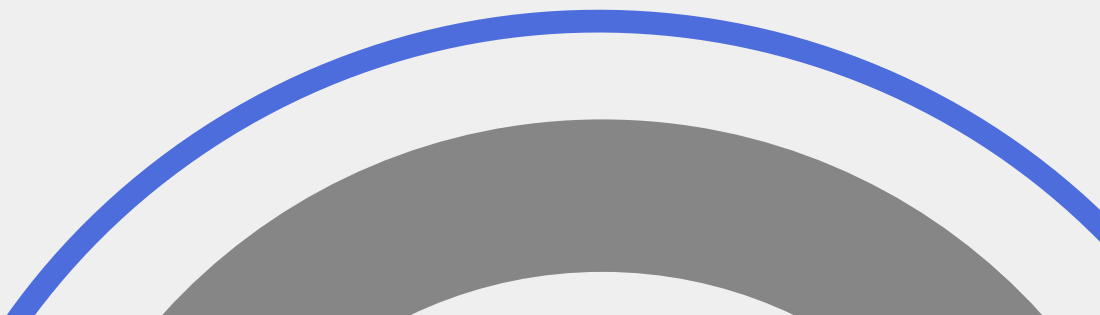


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Welcome to the Honours Alumni Mentor Program!

As you begin (or continue) your journey in research, we are excited to support you through a program designed to foster connection, confidence, and community. The transition from undergraduate study into Honours can be both rewarding and demanding, and our goal is to make sure no student moves through this experience alone.

Mentoring is a collaborative and evolving relationship. Building trust, communicating openly, and engaging with intention will help you get the most out of this experience. The program team is here to support you at every stage, and we encourage you to reach out with any questions, concerns, or ideas along the way.

Thank you for joining the Honours Alumni Mentor Program. We hope you find this experience enriching, empowering, and inspiring as you take your next steps in the world of research.

A Welcome Message from the MDHS Student Hub

About the Program



What is the Honours Alumni Mentor Program?

The Honours Alumni Mentor Program supports students as they navigate the unique challenges of Honours research at the University of Melbourne. By pairing commencing Honours students with early-career researchers or PhD candidates, the program creates meaningful connections that promote confidence, community, and professional growth.

For Mentees

The program is designed to help you feel supported, connected, and prepared during your Honours year. As a mentee, you will:

- Have a safe and welcoming space to ask questions, seek guidance, and share your experiences.
- Build confidence as you transition from undergraduate study into a more independent and research-focused environment.
- Gain insights into Honours expectations, time management, lab culture, and academic processes.
- Explore different pathways beyond Honours—including Master's programs, PhDs, industry roles, and other research opportunities.
- Feel part of a broader student and research community through your mentor and the program events.

For Mentors

The program provides mentors with the chance to contribute meaningfully to the next generation of researchers while also developing professionally. As a mentor, you will:

- Bring your knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion for your field to a supportive mentoring relationship.
- Help a new student feel grounded, confident, and connected during what can be a high-pressure year.
- Strengthen your leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills through real mentoring experience.
- Reflect on your own academic journey and gain perspective by supporting someone earlier in their path.
- Expand your professional network and build connections within the Honours cohort and mentoring community.

Past participant testimonies

"I thoroughly enjoyed the Honours Alumni Mentoring program and it gave me the opportunity to meet with other honours students from MDHS, which is great since we tend to be based in many different institutes, so meeting each other in any other way is difficult."

"I like how I've made a connection with a mentor that has done the honours program, and seeing where they are now, and the processes they went through to get there. My mentor is a PhD candidate, and this is a potential pathway that I am interested in, so it is very insightful. I also like how I've been connected to other honours students in my group from different specialties. Honours can be very isolating, so it is valuable for me to have other honours students I can talk to about difficulties or challenges that I might be facing and hear about theirs too."

Monthly Newsletters



Throughout the program, you'll receive a short monthly newsletter designed to support your mentoring journey. Each edition highlights a key theme relevant to where Honours students typically are in the year and offers practical prompts to help guide conversations.

What You Can Expect

- Conversation starters to help keep discussions meaningful
- Tips and advice for navigating Honours and mentoring
- Event reminders and program updates
- Reflections from past participants
- Check-in prompts tailored to mentors and mentees

How to Use Them

- Bring the month's prompts to your next meeting
- Use them as a guide to revisit goals or discuss new challenges
- Share the tips with each other: mentoring grows through shared insight
- Keep an eye on upcoming events and opportunities
- We encourage all participants to take a moment each month to read the newsletter and use it as a simple tool to make your mentoring experience richer, smoother, and more engaging.



Roles & Expectations

Mentors should...

- Listen actively and offer advice based on your research and Honours experience.
- Share insights into course expectations, research culture, wellbeing, and future pathways.
- Respect boundaries and maintain confidentiality.
- Contact the program team if challenges or concerns arise.

Mentees should...

- Communicate clearly and respond promptly.
- Be open about your goals and challenges.
- Respect your mentor's time and boundaries.
- Seek help from the program team if issues cannot be resolved.

Both mentors and mentees should...

- Communicate respectfully and consistently.
- Agree on a preferred meeting schedule and format.
- Set goals together and revisit them as needed.
- Maintain professionalism and confidentiality.
- Approach the relationship with openness, patience, and good faith.

Program Timeline



February

Onboarding

- Program welcome and introduction
- Mentor–mentee matching
- Baseline surveys completed
- First contact between pairs

March

Launch and First Meetings

- Official launch events
- Establish meeting expectations and communication preferences

18 MARCH

Launch Event

24 MARCH

Mentor Professional Development (*mentors only*)

25 MARCH

Honours BBQ #1 (*mentees*)

April

Settling In

- Adjusting to lab/research environments
- Goal-setting check-ins

8 APRIL

Convos Over Crepes #1 (*mentors only*)

May

Mid-year Milestone

- Focus on wellbeing, motivation, and time management
- Review mentoring relationship and adjust as needed

14 MAY

Convos Over Crepes #2 (*mentors only*)

27 MAY

Honours BBQ #2 (*mentees*)

June

Program Wrap-Up

- End-of-program celebration
- Final reflections and surveys
- Encouragement to stay connected and consider becoming a future mentor

June

1 JULY

End of Program Mini Mart (*all are welcome*)

Contact

Information

The MDHS Mentoring and Engagement Team are here to support both mentees and mentors through their Honours Alumni Mentoring program journey.

For any queries or advice, please get in touch with us.

If you have joined the program but feel that you are no longer able to continue your commitment, please let us know us as soon as possible.



MDHS Student Hub

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Social Media:

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