

Reflection on my Honours Journey so far

Before starting Honours, many people who had experienced it before warned me about this year. They said it would be one of the most intense periods of my academic career, which was designed to push boundaries. I listened, of course, but I had no true idea of how intense it would actually be until I was in the middle of it. The shift from undergraduate study to postgraduate study was not just a step up in workload, it was a shift in mindset that did not come naturally.

Having to divide my effort and attention across multiple assignments while remaining present in class and discussions was challenging, to say the least. Not only were my time management skills tested to their limits, but my social skills were put to the test as well. Navigating relationships with academics, course convenors and supervisors presented a whole new set of challenging dynamics.

Perhaps the most daunting aspect was the intellectual intimidation. Sitting in seminars and group meetings, it often felt like discussions were taking place on level 10 of some complex intellectual video game, while I was still trying to figure out the controls on level 1. I used to believe that soaking up information was more important than contributing meaningfully and I had to realise that that was not the case. I had to learn how to use my voice to ask and answer questions and to articulate my thoughts. The imposter syndrome was real, but I had to continuously remind myself that growth takes time. As I grow more familiar with research it would become easier.

While going through this tough period, I was not doing it alone. Being able to vent, share laughs, weather anxious bouts and celebrate small victories with my peers made the overwhelming moments bearable. I am so grateful for this experience that forced me to jump out of my comfort zone and grow as a person and a future scientist.