



# Honours +

## Activity type

Extracurricular, excellence programme

## Activity duration

1 year (5 ECTS), November-May

## GCEd elements

complex problem-solving, interdisciplinary skills, intercultural communication, perspective-taking, self-reflection, curiosity, personal responsibility, active listening, empathy, understanding (geo) politics, media, behaviour change, connecting and collaborating, resilience, courage, conflict resolution

## ILOs

Honours+ aims to enable students to:

- Improve and broaden their academic performance and competencies;
- Learn how to work as part of a multidisciplinary team;
- Learn how to manage expectations from team members/Supervisors;
- Engage with students from other faculties and Supervisors, both in terms of preparation and feedback;
- Be able to improve the quality and quantity of the Challenge due to reflective learning that will be enhanced during the Honours+ period;
- Improve language and writing skills;
- Learn to critically reflect upon their personal functioning within the project group.

## Teacher preparation

The supervisor takes the role of steering and guiding the group, provides for a safe learning environment, and is sensitive towards team dynamics. The supervisor also initiates and chairs the team's kick-off meeting and midterm feedback session. The main concern of the Honours+ Supervisor should be the students' learning experience. Due to the interdisciplinary character of Honours+, the supervisor seeks to ensure equal input from and interaction between the various disciplines so as to guarantee sufficient challenge and academic depth. Throughout Honours+, the supervisor supports the team in planning, developing, and completing the challenge. The supervisor does not take over the role of the team leader. The students will be instructed to appoint a team leader in their team. However, the supervisor is asked to intervene when the team does not display enough initiative and he/she stimulates the students to act pro-actively. Lastly, the supervisor assesses the team's final Challenge outcome and the academic quality and team/individual effort.

## Student preparation

Students are responsible for their own learning curve and must be prepared to learn in a self-directed way. They have previously chosen the topic(s) of their interest, so the team divides workload in terms of their respective academic disciplines. This process entails interdisciplinary learning and team work.

## Flow

Honours+ is the Common Core for all faculty honours programmes. In Honours+, 2nd year bachelor students are challenged to explore an academic and complex current topic, in groups of 4-6 students from different faculties (LAW, FASoS, FPN, FHML, SBE).

Besides the Team Challenge, the students will partake in a series of workshops to work on their academic and personal skills. In Honours+, we aim at offering our students a first learning experience to approach/tackle (global) challenges in an interdisciplinary setting, under the professional guidance by staff members from Maastricht University. These Challenges are based upon and linked to the Dutch National Research Agenda, and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and therefore also in line with UM's core strategic programme.

## Assessment

By working on the Challenge during the Honours+ programme, following the scientific method, students will get a grasp on the interdisciplinary collaboration, together with all the opportunities and challenges it provides. This learning process is vital, and the results of it are to be put in an academic report. Furthermore, Honours+ requests each student team to translate their findings into a poster, and a presentation of said poster during the Closing Event in May. These formats aim at teaching students how to present results to non-expert audiences and peers. This process of transfer of knowledge begotten during the Honours+ programme, and using it to make an impact and impression, is something we wish our Honours+ students to gain further experience in.

Additionally, since multiple teams will be working on the same challenge topic, it means that teams will be able to compare each other's progress throughout Honours+, will be able to exchange knowledge and experience on the topics during the events and will be competing for the most value adding findings during the Closing Event, thus creating a system of peer support.

## Contact

EDLAB, [honoursplus@maastrichtuniversit.nl](mailto:honoursplus@maastrichtuniversit.nl)

