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**Abstract**

The Honours undergraduate degree in Australia is unlike that in most other countries. It has taken on a particular significance as a qualification, as a pathway to and a pre-requisite for direct entry into doctoral programs. This paper explores the outcomes of a study that suggests that the aims, outcomes, curriculum, pedagogical practices, purposes and enrolment patterns of Honours vary substantially across disciplines and university types. It addresses the questions about the diverse nature of Honours programs and questions what this diversity means for Australian higher education in the context where global standardisation of awards is rapidly occurring. Honours is seen variously as a qualification, an experience, or a program. These variations are discussed and it is demonstrated that Honours globally has not one, but many meanings. These meanings are often poorly understood within, and outside the academy. These multiple meanings create confusion about what Honours stands for and inhibit communication about the role and purpose of Honours both within Australia and in a global context. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Kiley, Margaret, E-Mail:

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