



## How to Email a Potential Research Supervisor

### Prepare to contact potential supervisors.

- Look at research groups' websites. Is it a big research group or a small one?
- Read several papers from the research group. To find the most recent papers, do an online search or find the supervisor you are interested in at [researchers.anu.edu.au](https://researchers.anu.edu.au), as well as looking at the information and papers on the group website to ensure you access the most current information.
- Prepare a list of questions you have about the group and the research.
- If possible, talk to other students who have worked in the group to learn more about the supervisor's expectations for students and style of supervision. Would this style work for you?

### Compose your email carefully.

- Use your ANU email address; by policy, ANU staff can only communicate with ANU students through your ANU email address.
- Use an informative, brief subject line.
- Use formal language (no emoticons, abbreviations, etc.)
- Address a potential supervisor as Dr. (appropriate for anyone with a PhD) or Prof.
- Be direct. Introduce yourself and your reason for emailing. State if you are interested in a course project, an honours project, or a masters project. If you are interested in a specific project or topic mentioned on the website, explain why.
- If relevant, mention a paper you read and why it was interesting to you or a question you have.
- Ask to schedule a meeting and suggest several times that suit you.
- Acknowledge that the potential supervisor may be busy and provide them the opportunity to suggest alternate times.
- Sign using your legal name, as well as any name a staff member may know you by.
- Attach a CV and your Statement of Results (from ISIS).

### After you email:

- Don't take it personally if the potential supervisor doesn't respond immediately! Researchers travel, teach, do research, supervise students, serve on university committees and are very busy.
- If you don't hear back in a week or so, you can send a brief, polite follow-up email.
- You should respond promptly if the researcher emails you, thank the supervisor for the response, and respond to any questions.
- If the potential supervisor asks to be addressed by a first name or signs an email with a first name, you can address future emails using the potential supervisor's first name.

**Google "ANU Finding a supervisor" for more information and resources.**

## Example Emails

### DO NOT SEND THIS EMAIL

*From: random@gmail.com*

*Subject: Research*

*Hi Joe,*

*I want to do research! ☺ Im a grt student and want to learn more. What do you do research on?*

*TX, Student Name*

### DO SEND THIS EMAIL

*From: u1234567@anu.edu.au*

*Subject: Potential research project*

*Dear **Professor Surname**,*

*I am a **year** in **degree** at ANU and I am writing to ask about opportunities for Honours research projects in Semester 1 of next year. I did a research project on **topic** with **names** in **course**. **Expression of interest in the topic**. I am especially interested in your previous work on **describe a paper or talk**.*

*I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you **time period**, but please let me know if a different time would be more suitable. I have attached my CV and statement of results to this e-mail, but if there is additional information that I have not included that you would like, I would be happy to provide it to you. Thank you for your consideration.*

*Sincerely,*

**Ambitious Student**

Modified from [How to Email a Research Professor](#)

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*From: u1234567@anu.edu.au*

*Subject: Potential research project*

*Dear **Professor X**,*

*My name is **Name**, and I am very interested in becoming involved in research in **Subject Area**. I am a **X** year student, and I have taken **Courses** and **Additional Experiences**. I have attached my CV and statement of results. My goal is to **Goal**.*

*I have reviewed your staff profile and am interested in the work that you have done. I was intrigued by your journal article, "**Article Title**." It **Additional Information about Topic**. I would like to get involved in research in this area because it will help me to better prepare for **Goals**.*

*Would it be possible to meet with you to further discuss **Topic** and my possible involvement in research? I am available **Days and Times**, but please let me know if a different time would be more suitable. I look forward to hearing from you.*

*Sincerely,*

**Name**

Modified from [UC Irvine Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program](#)