



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, 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](#)

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](#)