

# Brendan Houg

## Contact Information

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## Summary

Applied economist with a background in public policy research. Recently submitted my Ph.D. thesis in the Economics of Education at the University of Melbourne, where I also gained 9 years of experience at the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Policy. Earlier, I began my career at the Australian competition regulator.

## Education

Ph.D., Economics of Education\* (part-time) University of Melbourne (exp. 2018)  
B. Commerce / B. Software Engineering University of Melbourne (2005)

\* Thesis submitted March 2018. Transferred from Master of Economics (2009-) in 2010.

## Thesis

My thesis asks whether elite high schools, which admit students based on academic performance, improve their students' university entrance results. I estimate the selective school effect for an anonymized Australian state using propensity score matching and fuzzy regression discontinuity approaches. Refer to working paper [Houg and Ryan \(2018\)](#), which presents the main chapter of the thesis.

## Technical Skills

Proficient in R and Stata. See for example [R version](#) of Microsoft's TrueSkill algorithm. Experience with Python, SQL, command-line tools, etc.

## Professional Experience

Jan 2009 - Present	Research Officer Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic & Social Research University of Melbourne
Feb 2006 - July 2008	Graduate/Project Officer Mergers & Acquisitions Branch Australian Competition & Consumer Commission

## Journal Articles

Renzaho, A., Houg, B., Oldroyd, J., Nicholson, J., D'Esposito, F. and Oldenburg, B., (2014). Stressful Life Events and the Onset of Chronic Diseases among Australian Adults: Findings from a Longitudinal Survey, *European Journal of Public Health*, 24(1), 57-62.

Renzaho, A., Wooden, M., and Houg, B., (2010). Associations between Body Mass Index and Health Related Quality of Life among Australian Adults. *Quality of Life Research* 19(4), 515-520.

## Research Reports/Working Papers

Houg, B. and Ryan, C., (2018). Achievement Gains from Attendance at Selective High Schools, [Melbourne Institute Working Paper 08/18](#).

Houg, B\*. The Effect of Inferred Changes in Rank on Academic Achievement.

Houg, B. and Justman, M., (2016)<sup>#</sup>. Student and Staff Attitudes and School Performance, [Melbourne Institute Working Paper 26/16](#).

Houg, B. and Justman, M., (2014). NAPLAN Scores as Predictors of Access to Higher Education in Victoria, [Melbourne Institute Working Paper 22/14](#).

Houg, B. and Justman, M., (2013). Comparing Least-Squares Value-Added Analysis and Student Percentile Analysis for Evaluating Student Progress and Estimating School Effects, [Melbourne Institute Working Paper 07/13](#).

## Conference Presentations

Econometric Society of Australasia Meeting (ESAM),  
Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand, 1-4 July 2018<sup>^</sup>.

Australian Conference of Economists (ACE), Australian National University,  
Canberra, Australia, 10-13 July 2018<sup>^</sup>.

The 28th PhD Conference in Economics and Business, University of Queensland,  
Brisbane, Australia, 11-13 November 2015.

North American Meetings for Regional Science Association International (RSAI),  
Atlanta, Georgia, USA, 13-16 November 2013.

\* Forthcoming work-in-progress. <sup>#</sup> Presented at the Victorian Department of Education and Training. <sup>^</sup> Upcoming conferences.

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