



Erskine Park High School

Pride In Achievement

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Gifted and Talented Policy

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Rationale

As a comprehensive high school Erskine Park High School (EPHS) is dedicated to delivering the highest quality educational and enrichment opportunities to our students. EPHS accepts that gifted and talented students by definition represent 10% of the student cohort, and that these students require specific strategies and learning patterns to meet their learning needs. This policy and the committee that oversees it will serve to embed this ethos into the practices of the school community.

EPHS recognises the responsibility of public schools to meet the needs of gifted and talented students as noted in the DEC Gifted and Talented Policy (DEC Policy, 2004):

- *School communities have a responsibility to identify their gifted and talented students.*
- *School communities have a responsibility to foster collaborative home-school partnerships to support gifted and talented students.*
- *School communities have a responsibility to provide a range of opportunities and to monitor and evaluate programs for their gifted and talented students.*
- *Teachers, with support, have a responsibility to identify the gifted and talented students in their classes.*
- *Teachers have a responsibility to select and implement a variety of teaching strategies for inclusion in programs for the range of gifted and talented students in their classes.*
- *Regions and schools have a responsibility to provide staff development opportunities in the education of gifted and talented students for principals, teachers and other appropriate personnel.*

Aim & Objectives

The aim of this policy is to support, explicitly, the educational needs of gifted and talented students as defined in the overarching DEC policy:

“Gifted students are those whose potential is distinctly above average in one or more of the following domains of human ability: intellectual, creative, social and physical.

Talented students are those whose skills are distinctly above average in one or more areas of human performance.”

To achieve this, we follow these objectives:

- The identification of gifted and talented students
- The creation of gift-appropriate learning strategies
- The pastoral support of gifted and talented students
- The support of staff in educating these students.

Management

To facilitate this policy, the following management structures will be put in place.

Gifted and Talented Committee

- The school will convene a committee to oversee the work of this policy.
- It will meet regularly at times agreed by the committee and school executive.
- A chair will be elected from the members of the committee.
- Staff will be invited to attend with the aim of one representative per faculty.
- Minutes of the committee will be taken and published to the school body.

Gifted and Talented Coordinator

The GAT Coordinator ensures that the whole programme is being delivered; arranges for release time for team members; co-ordinates the budget and facilitates purchases/materials; applies for funding initiatives; disseminates professional learning materials; calls meetings; co-ordinates the staff team, liaising between its various members; oversees the purchasing, correct storage and stocktaking of GAT resources, co-ordinates the HAST testing procedure as well as reviewing the Year 7 targeted class and GAT PC/ Roll Call placements in the programme.

KLA Involvement

It is recognised that gifted and talented students are not restricted to any one area of learning. The committee shall seek to involve all faculties, including the teaching and learning centre in its work and to extend its assistance to all where needed.

Staff Development

The quality of the instruction has the greatest influence on the outcomes of students, as such it is imperative that staff be appropriately equipped to address the academic and socio-economic needs of all students. Gifted and talented students often demonstrate particular learning and behavioural needs that are not always found in the general population. Professional learning for all staff teaching the GAT Programme will be provided to ensure that the capacity to address the needs of these students is maintained.

Gifted and Talented Programme Overview

The GAT Programme at Erskine Park High School seeks to provide a range of opportunities for students. The programme consists of a range of in-class, extracurricular and withdrawal strategies which are specifically geared to provide appropriate learning sequences and enrichment opportunities for gifted learners. These strategies include:

- Targeted curriculum classes in Years 7 to 10 for academically selected students, taught by faculty specified staff members
- Explicit professional learning provided for all staff to cater for the individual learning and welfare needs of gifted students
- Targeted Gifted and Talented project based learning (PBL) groups for high achieving gifted students in years 7 to 10.
- Cross curricula rich task project based learning program for years 7 and 8.
- Extension classes offered across the 7-12 curricula including: Extension English, Mathematics and History.
- Extra curricula programs and enrichment tasks including but not limited to: GAT Primary School Programme; School Band; Inter-school debating; Chess Club; performing arts groups, troupes and ensembles; History Mastermind; *Tournament of the Minds*; excursions, camps, competitions; debating/ public speaking; sporting competitions.

Identification of Gifted and Talented Students

Year 7 Gifted and Talented Curriculum Class

Identification procedures are carried out annually and focus on the new Year 7 cohort.

- Parents, staff or students may nominate a students to be considered for the Year 7 GAT
- Invitations are extended to parents of students wishing to be considered for the Year 7 Gifted and Talented class to be part of a Year 7 Placement Test – the HAST (Higher Ability Selection Test).
- Student results from the HAST test will form part of the selection process.
- Basic Skills Test data is accessed from primary school records along with Year 6 teacher comments and any survey data will form part of the selection process.
- TORCH Test or WISC results – or any other internal testing results/ Counsellor/ LAST advice will form part of the selection process.
- The placement decisions will be made by the GAT Committee and the GAT Coordinator.
- Students arriving at the school after the selection processes are completed will have their academic records taken into consideration when deciding if GAT class placement is appropriate.

Note: Once placed in the GAT curriculum class, a student will remain in this class throughout years 7 and 8, unless review processes identify that this placement is no longer appropriate.

Gifted and Talented Curriculum Class – Years 9 and 10

- Under the guidance of the GAT Committee, Head teachers of each core faculty will review the academic performance of each student, as well as any external testing mechanisms when allocating student placement into the stage 5 GAT classes.
- Students may be placed in the GAT classes in one or more faculty / subject areas.
- Students may not necessarily be placed in the GAT class in one subject based on placement in another subject area.
- Student placement in stage 5 GAT classes will be reviewed annually.

Targeted GAT PBL groups (Pastoral Care Group) Selection:

- Staff will be asked to contribute, eliminate or add student names to a shortlist based on student's commitment to learning and motivation as an independent learner. This will be guided by HAST results and may also be from unstructured or structured observation.
- NAPLAN Literacy Test results are examined (if/ when available).
- NAPLAN Numeracy Test results are examined (if/ when available).
- ESSA (Essential Secondary Science Assessment) Test results are examined (if/ when available).
- Year 7 Semester One school reports are examined and a brief survey to each targeted student's teacher may be distributed.
- Optional: Within the group, 'above ceiling testing' occurs as a further diagnostic instrument eg. a section from the School Certificate; peer nomination could occur or parental input/ review (the school website contains forms to promote this method of identification).
- The placement decisions will be made by the GAT Committee and the GAT Coordinator.

Acceleration

Acceleration is possible under the NSW Board of Studies guidelines (see ACE manual) and is widespread across the state of New South Wales. Acceleration can occur in any year, but at all times occurs in accordance with the Board of Studies guidelines and current DEC policy statements.

At Erskine Park High School, students possessing superior skills, keen interest, and abilities needing further challenge may be considered for acceleration. The only goal is to better cater for the needs, interests and abilities of students who are gifted and/ or talented within our existing curriculum arrangement. This may involve students completing courses for the ROSA, Preliminary Certificate or Higher School Certificate in advance of their chronological cohort.

Where it is felt that the acceleration of some students is necessary and sensible, teachers and Head Teachers should approach the Gifted and Talented Team to explore this possibility. It is critical that the implications of acceleration are closely explored from a school and systems viewpoint before any discussion with students or parents. Rumour, ignorance and confusion must not surround acceleration. Planning, monitoring and safety net requirements need explicit explanation.

The process for acceleration is:

1. A case is made by a Head Teacher, teacher or parent/ guardian for a student to be accelerated in a given subject area(s). The case for acceleration is explored and its implications discussed with the person making the request, prior to students being invited to consider this possibility.
2. The student is explicitly made aware of the implications and must be very interested and committed to acceleration, understanding its implications.
3. If not already involved, relevant Head Teachers are consulted and their view (and views of their respective staff) of the student's suitability, academic abilities and commitment before any move towards acceleration is contemplated.
4. Parent consent and appreciation of the inherent implications are required. The impact on timetabling for these courses and clashes given GAT student involvement and targeted classes in other areas of the school (eg. Mathematics 5.3 or completing a Preliminary course which may be locked into a line for two years) would be explained and agreed upon given potential clashes later. The future implications are outlined. This includes potential timetabling clashes and provisions for underperformance. They are alerted that a final decision will be made once other checks have been made.
5. Welfare personnel are consulted for the support of students. A faculty mentor is negotiated/ appointed.
6. Final Senior Executive approval is required.
7. Parents/ Students are informed and commit to an annual review of the placement. Names are published to staff and explanation is made so as to enhance staff understanding of the placement. Annual review interviews with parents and students are essential so that current and future implications are addressed and articulated by all parties. This is particularly so with transition points into senior courses, where careers interviews or subject selection or university admission information is critical.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Where students are reported to the committee and where appropriate, that student's progress will be tracked until such time as it is deemed unnecessary. In such cases, information will be gathered every half-term and a report written with the results disseminated to those involved. In addition, the committee will, on a regular basis to be agreed upon, evaluate the academic performance, work habits and social interactions of all GAT class students 7-10.

Information and Contacts

Senior Curriculum Policy Officer, Gifted and Talented (02) 9886 7743

[Gifted and Talented Policy webpage](#)

Further Documentation

Websites

[GERRIC](#)

Documentation

[Gifted and Talented Policy: Implementation - DEC](#)

[Gifted and Talented Policy: Guidelines - DEC](#)