Rationale: Policy Statement

Tempe High School is committed to ensuring that gifted and talented students are identified through a variety of avenues, nurtured through a diversity of learning experiences and extended through a consultative and collaborative approach that focuses on student-centred learning and inclusive practices that engage the whole school community. We recognise that gifted and talented students are not a homogenous group nor are they bound by social or cultural upbringing; as such, G&T students are not always identified through traditional testing methods. Additionally, gifted and talented students may experience learning difficulties, demonstrate reluctance in expressing their intelligence or talent due to perceived alienation from their peers or present their potential or ability at different stages through their schooling.

We aim to ensure that procedures are put in place to accommodate for the diversity of gifted and talented students and potential for movement into the gifted and talented stream remains a fluid and aspirational endeavour. Additionally, teachers are committed to extending their understanding of gifted and talented by undertaking professional development opportunities and engaging in collegial practices and discussions that influence the way we teach the gifted and talented. Awareness of accommodating students through our approach to content, process and product will refine our teaching and ensure that we are meeting the needs of these learners within and outside the classroom. We are committed to high quality outcomes for all learners and aim to differentiate the curriculum to ensure that every child works to their potential.

Our programs and evaluation of programs is driven by the following considerations:

- **Content**: what we teach
- **Process**: how we teach it
- **Product**: what students are required to do to demonstrate understanding

Defining Gifted and Talented

Tempe High School uses the definition adopted by the DET which is based on Gagne’s (2003) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT):

**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.
Views of how to approach gifted and talented have changed over time and Tempe High School incorporates modern views which are evidence and research based.

Change has occurred from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viewing giftedness as</th>
<th>To viewing giftedness as</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ static</td>
<td>➢ developmental</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ high IQ</td>
<td>➢ multi-dimensional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ based on characters and traits</td>
<td>➢ based on individual qualities</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ elitist subgroups</td>
<td>➢ individual excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ innate</td>
<td>➢ contextual</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ definitive (you are or you are not)</td>
<td>➢ a range of behaviours expressed in different ways at different times</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ school achievement oriented</td>
<td>➢ field and domain oriented</td>
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From Gifted Students and the Australian Curriculum (2014) by Michael Pohl

**Identifying the Gifted and Talented**

In recognition of the diversity of G&T students, Tempe High School uses a range of identification criteria which may include the following:

➢ Selective school entry test
➢ Nomination by parent, peer, self and teacher
➢ Academic grades
➢ Off level testing
➢ Standardised tests
➢ IQ tests and other culturally appropriate measures of ability
➢ Evaluation of student responses to a range of classroom activities
➢ Assessment of responses to challenging competitions
➢ Observational and anecdotal evidence
➢ Behavioural checklists
➢ Interviews

Students have the potential to move into a G&T class throughout their schooling. Tempe High School recognises the potential for students to demonstrate increasing expertise or intelligence as they mature.
Our identification process is inclusive of the school community and all stakeholders, recognises the depth and breadth of giftedness and talent and is driven by the principles of equity and respect.

Teachers recognise that the identification of G&T students may not be straightforward and thus a holistic approach is necessary when considering nomination for these classes.

We recognise that gifted students show varying cognitive characteristics as indicated by Pohl (2014):

- **Successful**: achieving high levels of performance in school subjects
- **Autonomous**: achieving at high levels with no obvious need for extra support
- **Challenging**: capable of achieving at high levels but inconsistent in application to task
- **Hidden**: capable of achieving at high levels but does not enjoy schooling
- **Reluctant**: capable of achieving at high levels but does not enjoy schooling
- **Dual-labelled**: capable of achieving at high levels but hampered by learning difficulties

Additionally, Pohl (2014) states gifted students may show varying affective characteristics:

- **Sensitivity** and therefore vulnerability to anxiety and depression
- **Heightened self-awareness**, accompanied by feelings of being different
- **Idealism and a sense of justice** which leaves them frustrated
- Earlier development of independence and responsibility
- Keen sense of humour which may be gentle or hostile
- **Perfectionism** and high expectations of others

Teacher observations are thus driven by a range of factors in a range of situations.
Implementation of Programs to Cater for G&T Students

When the Tempe High school community has identified G&T students, teachers strive to set up an optimal environment for learning. Differentiation of content, processes and products in programs, excursions and incursions, opportunities for extra-curricular activities and engaging in peer support programs are crucial in meeting the needs of gifted and talented students.

Additionally, we expect all teachers to:

1. Create a learning environment which foregrounds explicit teaching of thinking skills through numerous avenues. These may include: use of graphic organisers, log books, work folders, mnemonic devices and the teaching of metacognition (thinking about their own thinking)
2. Pose open-ended and higher order questions that encourage students to consider broader content (enrichment) and more refined skills (extension)
3. Encourage students to be producers of information rather than consumers
4. Actively encourage individual differences to promote creative thinking
5. Tailor tasks to provide opportunities to compose for authentic audiences and purposes
6. Encourage self-directed learning by negotiating aspects of the curriculum
7. Avoid repetition of content if quick mastery and easy retention of information is indicated
8. Maintain high standards in their expectations of all students but also recognise how their teaching style may impact on diverse learners and implement new strategies to accommodate the range of learning styles in their class.
9. Collaborate with other teachers of gifted and talented students to derive new ideas and strategies for their programs and pedagogy.
10. Employ the principles of quality teaching in their teaching and own learning experiences
11. Engage in self-directed and school-supported professional development regarding all types of learners, including the gifted and talented.
Curriculum Differentiation Strategies Available at Tempe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrichment: broadens content</th>
<th>Extension: skills and deepens understanding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadens</td>
<td>Provides:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Knowledge</td>
<td>- Tools for new applications</td>
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<td>- Understandings</td>
<td>- Skills for new investigation</td>
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<td>- Application</td>
<td>- New challenges</td>
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<td>- Processes</td>
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<td>- Skills</td>
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From Gifted Students and the Australian Curriculum (2014) by Michael Pohl

In addition to enrichment and extension activities within faculty programs, Tempe High School provides enrichment and extension through the following opportunities:

- Debating and Public Speaking
- Senior mentors for debating
- The Tempe Times
- ICAS competitions
- Band
- Field Trips
- Incursions/Excursions across faculties
- State and National Competitions
- Film-making
- Diverse roles in Harmony Day Celebrations
- Sport-based Competitions
- Engineering challenges
- Leadership opportunities such as peer support and the SRC
- Fundraising
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Chess
Other curriculum strategies may include:

### Acceleration

If students have cognitive and emotional abilities that allow them to learn much more quickly than their age peers, then students may be permitted to progress through the curriculum at a faster pace.

This may include:

- a) Subject acceleration
- b) Year acceleration

A whole-school approach which includes discussion with parents, teachers, counsellor and executive will be taken before the student is accelerated.

Grouping of students may also be a consideration to support their enrichment and extension.

### Compacting

If students are well beyond the learning objectives and outcomes of their peers, and this has been clearly identified through pre-testing, the curriculum may be compacted and an appropriate alternative program designed.

Compacting can provide more time for challenging learning experiences and thus enhance achievement levels.

A whole school approach which involves the teacher, head teacher, executive and counsellor may be administered.

For more information on acceleration in a NSW public school setting, read the DET’s [Policy and implementation strategies for the education of gifted and talented students](#) (Revised 2004). This will inform Tempe’s approach to the acceleration of any student.

Evaluation of student progress on these programs will occur through:

- Collegial discussions
- Work samples and student performance across the year
- Informal meetings with parents and students
- Anecdotal observations and records
- Standardised tests
- Counsellor input
Responsibilities of Stakeholders

School Communities

1. Our school community will identify gifted and talented students through a considered program where the purpose and characteristics of the program will be communicated to the community.

   - The principal will ensure that an identification program is developed and evaluated to identify gifted and talented students.
   - Parents/caregivers, students, peers, teachers, principals, school counsellors and community members are to be included in the identification process.
   - The process will be dynamic, continuous, inclusive and school-wide.
   - Awareness of factors which inhibit the expression of giftedness will be considered
   - Our school may seek the support of regional gifted and talented committees to further cater to the needs of gifted and talented students

2. Our school community will foster collaborative home-school partnerships to support gifted and talented students.

   - Information from parents/caregivers will be collected and used to inform our decisions regarding identification
   - Home and school communication channels will be organised to share information about gifted and talented students to support the teachers of gifted and talented students.
   - Active fostering of relationships with regards to indigenous students and their families is a necessity; ensuring we communicate in a culturally sensitive manner is important.
3. Our school community will provide a range of opportunities to monitor and evaluate programs for the gifted and talented.

- Our gifted and talented committee will ensure that student selection in gifted and talented classes occurs in an equitable and consistent manner. Evaluation of students in these classes will also assess whether their needs are being met and communication with parents undertaken where necessary.
- The Head Teacher Teaching and Learning will provide opportunities for professional development on the learning needs of G&T students and ensure that these sessions reflect current research.
- Any acceleration or grouping of students will not be made without the principal's final approval.

### Teachers

1. Tempe teachers, with support, have a responsibility to identify the gifted and talented students in their classes.

- Teachers will contribute information to the school-wide identification program from a variety of sources.
- Challenging provisions will be maintained as a daily routine for gifted and talented students.
- A mix of subjective and objective factors will be considered.
- Teachers will strive to ensure they do not overlook the underachieving, the exceptionally gifted, students with disabilities and those with learning difficulties or from minority populations.

2. Tempe teachers will select and implement a variety of teaching strategies for inclusion in programs for the range of gifted and talented in their classes.

- Teachers will employ a range of strategies as indicated earlier in this document.
- Evaluation of programs, extra curriculum opportunities and assessments will also feature in the approach to gifted and talented students
1. Gifted and talented students should ensure they take advantage of opportunities that have been organised to cater to their specific learning needs.

- Students should display a cooperative approach to learning and an open-mind. They should express their difficulties with or preferences for teaching styles or learning styles to enable the teacher to cater to their specific needs.
- Students should be accountable for the direction of their learning experiences. A commitment to tasks will enable them to work to their potential.
- Students should support Tempe’s intent to increase our showcasing of the gifted and talented by making themselves available for these occasions.

Management of this policy

The policy will continue to be evaluated by:

a) The gifted and talented committee
b) The senior executive
c) Teachers

Parental and community input for changes to the policy or clarity on content will be taken into consideration when evaluating the policy.

References used in the creation of this policy