Supporting information: Gifted and talented students

This information helps with:

- identifying gifted and talented students
- providing a curriculum that enables gifted and talented students to develop and achieve to their potential
- implementing a collaborative team approach, to support gifted and talented students with consistent and continuous processes school-wide.

Why is this important?

Students who are gifted and talented in one or more domains are present in every school. They are entitled to a curriculum provided at a pace, degree of abstraction and complexity; and level that is consistent with their abilities — enabling them to become confident independent learners who achieve to their potential.

Things to know

The **curriculum entitlement** of all students including gifted and talented students is specified in Section 1 of the *P–12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework*. Additional requirements are specified in *Policy statement: Curriculum provision to gifted and talented students*.

A whole-school approach is required to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of all students including gifted and talented students. For an effective model for this see *A whole-school approach to improving student achievement* which describes school-wide processes that direct support to different levels of need.

Use a collaborative team approach to plan and oversee the school-wide support of gifted and talented students.

Identifying gifted and talented students

Know the characteristics of gifted and talented students — described in **Attachment 1** — so that these students are identified and supported with appropriate strategies. Remember, students may be gifted or talented in one or more domains.

Use data from a range of sources and use a range of criteria to identify gifted and talented students. This is important to ensure that they are not educationally disadvantaged on the basis of racial, cultural or socio-economic background; physical or sensory disability; geographical location; or gender.

A recommended process for identification is described in **Attachment 2.**

Curriculum provision to gifted and talented students

Policy statement: *Curriculum provision to students with diverse learning needs* specifies the use of differentiation and, for some students, a different year level curriculum than their age cohort.

Teachers differentiate: content, process, product and learning environment.

Doing this for gifted and talented students involves extension and enrichment.

Extension deepens students' knowledge, understanding and skills through problem-solving tasks, use of digital tools and resources and flexible grouping.

Enrichment broadens the curriculum. Students develop and apply their knowledge, thinking skills and attitudes on topics of personal interest — at a complexity beyond the learning expectations for their age peers. Enrichment may also be provided through extra-curricular activities.

What does this mean for your classroom practice?

Differentiation

For gifted and talented students you can:

- Adjust tasks so they are required to process more complex and abstract information from a variety of sources. (**content)**
- Use a faster pace — this still means providing clear instruction and scaffolding — but with few repetitions. **(process)**
- Challenge and support students to set learning goals and develop higher-order thinking skills including problem-solving strategies, critical and creative thinking, and self-reflection. **(process)**
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate imaginative, innovative and rigorous responses that may involve extended outcomes. **(product)**
- Encourage students to pursue their interests in independent inquiries and negotiated tasks. Provide flexible groupings to enable collaborative work with students of the same or higher ability; or with shared interests. **(learning environment)**

Further information on differentiation and the gifted student is available at:
http://www.learningplace.com.au/uploads/documents/store/doc_750_2993_TL_newsletter_issue28.pdf

Accelerated progression

In addition to differentiation, accelerated progression to a higher year level curriculum — either in one or more subjects or for the full curriculum — may be appropriate for highly gifted students. A useful process for considering acceleration is described in **Attachment 3.**

Schools must document the provision of acceleration in an **Individual Learning Plan.** The process and content of the Individual Learning Plan (Acceleration plan), is specified in Policy statement: *Curriculum provision to students with diverse learning needs*.

Resources

Gifted Education Professional Development Package

http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/26080/20050807-0000/www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/Gifted_Education_Professional_Development_Package.htm

Resources to support planning of extension activities in English and Mathematics C2Clesson plans (Unit 1) can be accessed at:

https://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/file/91c12650-0e13-0053-a92e-9a959e8009e3/1/index.html (English)

https://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/file/9f58ef44-fa5a-d588-04d4-c198fadb2c4f/1/index.html (Mathematics)

Useful readings

- Assouline, S.G., Colangelo, N., Lupkowski-Shoplik, A., Lipscomb, J., Forstadt, L., (2009) *Iowa Acceleration Scale, (3rd Edition) A Guide for Whole-grade Acceleration K–8.* Great Potential Press, Scottsdale AZ
- Gagné, F. (2003). Transforming gifts into talents: The DMGT as a developmental theory. In N. Colangelo & G.A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of gifted education* (3rd ed., pp. 60–74). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Gagné, F. (2008) *Building gifts into talents: Brief overview of the DMGT2.0* paper presented at QAGTC lecture April 2009.
- National association for gifted children (NAGC)
  http://www.nagc.org/GlossaryofTerms.aspx (retrieved 12/4/2012)
  http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=121 (retrieved 21/09/2012)
- Tomlinson, C.A. and Edison, C.C. (2003) *Differentiation in Practice: A resource Guide for Differentiating Curriculum, Grades 5-9.* Alexandria, V.A.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Attachment 1

Characteristics of gifted and talented students

Students who are gifted and talented in one or more domains are present in every school and across all groups of learners, including:

- underachievers
- students requiring learning support
- students with disability
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds
- students from culturally diverse backgrounds
- socio-economically disadvantaged students
- geographically isolated students

It is important for all teachers, principals, guidance officers, as well as parents to be aware of the characteristics of gifted students so that they are identified and supported with appropriate strategies.

Typical characteristics which may indicate giftedness include:

1. Shows superior reasoning powers and marked ability to handle ideas; can generalize readily from specific facts and can see subtle relationships; has outstanding problem-solving ability.
2. Shows persistent intellectual curiosity; asks searching questions; shows exceptional interest in the nature of man and the universe.
3. Has a wide range of interests, often of an intellectual kind; develops one or more interests to considerable depth.
4. Is markedly superior in quality and quantity of written and/or spoken vocabulary; is interested in the subtleties of words and their uses.
5. Reads avidly and absorbs books well beyond his or her years.
6. Learns quickly and easily and retains what is learned; recalls important details, concepts and principles; comprehends readily.
7. Shows insight into arithmetical problems that require careful reasoning and grasps mathematical concepts readily.
8. Shows creative ability or imaginative expression in such things as music, art, dance, drama; shows sensitivity and finesse in rhythm, movement, and bodily control.
9. Sustains concentration for lengthy periods and shows outstanding responsibility and independence in classroom work.
10. Sets realistically high standards for self; is self-critical in evaluating and correcting his or her own efforts.
11. Shows initiative and originality in intellectual work; shows flexibility in thinking and considers problems from a number of viewpoints.
12. Observes keenly and is responsive to new ideas.
13. Shows social poise and an ability to communicate with adults in a mature way.
14. Gets excitement and pleasure from intellectual challenge; shows an alert and subtle sense of humour.

Note: Not all gifted students will display all of these characteristics, all of the time.

(Eric Digests: http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=121)

Attachment 2

Identification — a recommended process

Use a team approach to provide consistent and continuous identification processes school-wide. See Policy statement: *Curriculum provision to gifted and talented students*.

The following four-step identification process ensures data-collection processes are reliable and valid.

The information gathered from the first two steps is used to create a profile of the student. This profile is used to refer the student to the school support team. It informs decisions about how best to support the student's learning.

1. Teachers use current data from school-based screening and assessment	Teachers collect data on all students from school-based screening and assessment. Use data from a range of sources which show the student's current performance e.g. • screening tests • standardised tests • teacher created tests • NAPLAN (as an additional data source).
2: Teachers collect data using checklists for gifted and talented	Gather a range of evaluative judgments about the student by using checklists with parents, teachers, peers and the students themselves. Michael Sayler's http://www.learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=14912 are useful.
3. Guidance Officer and classroom teacher collect data using ability and academic assessments	• Off-level testing -– Support Teacher (Literacy and Numeracy) or classroom teacher: – applies standardised tests as in school-based screening (Step 1) but at a level above the current grade of the student – identifies the extent of a student's knowledge or skill in an area of giftedness or talent. • Aptitude tests measure a student's potential to perform well academically. These tests assess performance in school-based tasks. Some aptitude tests can only be administered by Guidance Officers. Request advice from regional Senior Guidance Officer.
4. Guidance Officer collects data using cognitive assessments	• IQ or cognitive assessment or other assessment as deemed necessary by the school guidance officer to: – provide information on a student's potential to perform well academically – establish level of giftedness and talent for appropriate provision – determine suitability for accelerated or special placement.

Attachment 3

Acceleration

Acceleration allows gifted and talented students to progress through an educational program at a faster rate than their age peers.

How can I provide acceleration?

Acceleration can be provided through:

- Early entry to Year 1 — a gifted child who displays academic and social readiness begins school at a younger age than most other students. Refer to Variation to school Age Entry Enrolment http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Pages/Variation-to-School-Age-Entry-Enrolment.aspx
- Ability groupings within the class — may work on higher year level curriculum for some learning areas, in regular classroom setting
- Curriculum compacting — the purpose of curriculum compacting is to reduce the amount of repetition that the student receives. Pre-assessment determines year level proficiency in a learning area and enables the teacher to provide enrichment or accelerated options.
- Telescoping the curriculum which involves reducing the time a student, or group of students, take to complete the school curriculum e.g. completes one year in a semester or 3 years in two.
- Subject acceleration — in one or more learning areas. This can occur within the school, across primary and secondary schools, or across a secondary school and a tertiary institution.
- Year level skipping — placement at a higher year level for all learning areas.
- Radical acceleration — placement at a year level that is two or more years higher than current placement.
- Early entry to secondary or tertiary education.

Acceleration can address particular students' need for a faster pace of learning. However differentiation of content, process, product and learning environment is still required, to address the student's overall learning needs. Carefully planned acceleration works for appropriately identified students, in well-prepared settings.

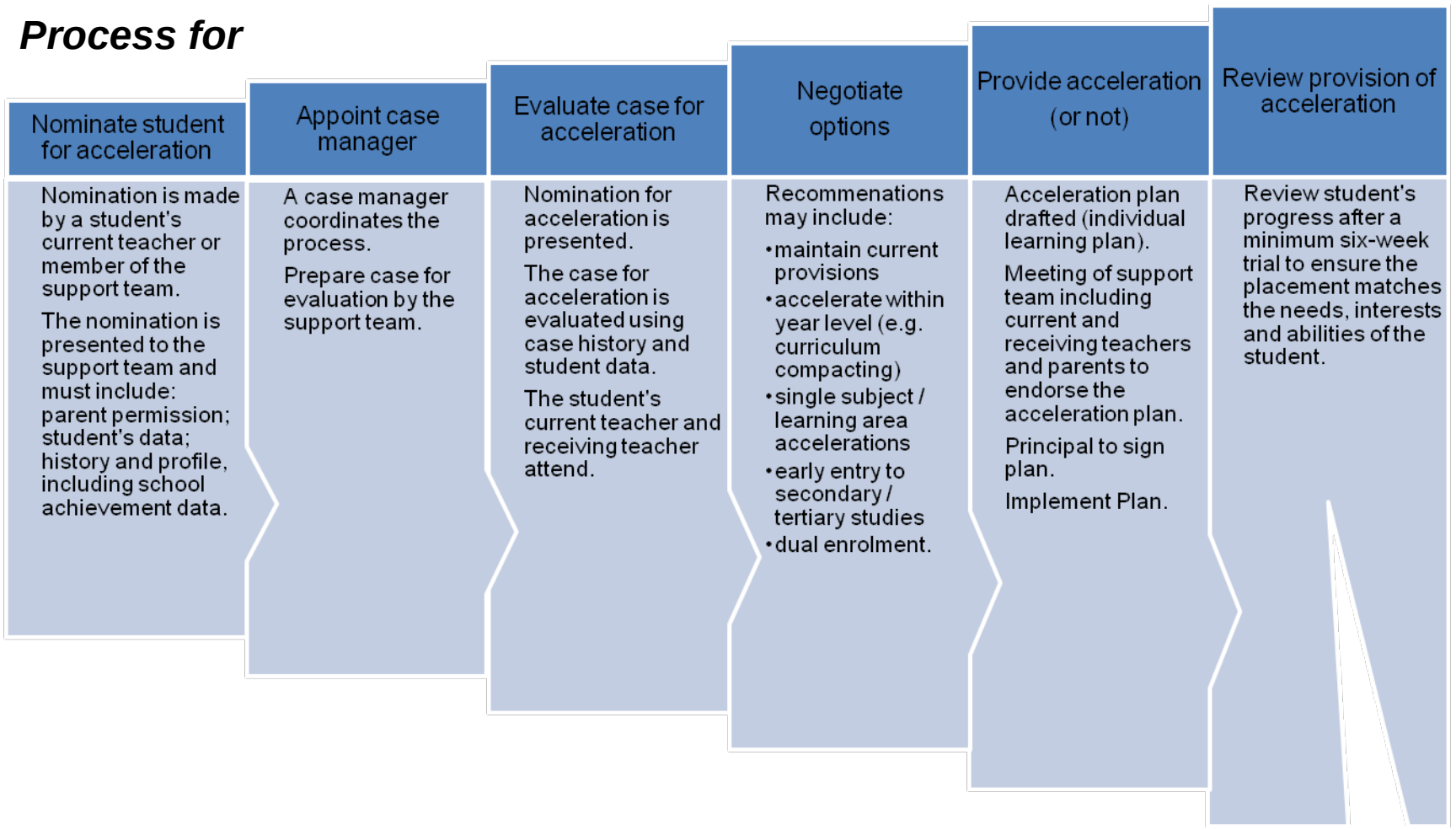
A recommended process for considering year level advancement

The steps outlined below in the *Process for Acceleration* are useful to determine whether, or not, year level advancement is appropriate for a student already identified as gifted and talented and whose needs are not being met through differentiation and enrichment.

Guidelines for developing an Academic Acceleration Policy (Colangelo et al 2009) is a useful resource to support the process for acceleration.

http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/Resources/Policy_Guidelines/

Process for


Nominate student for acceleration
Nomination is made by a student's current teacher or member of the support team.
The nomination is presented to the support team and must include: parent permission; student's data; history and profile, including school achievement data.
Appoint case manager
A case manager coordinates the process.
Prepare case for evaluation by the support team.
Evaluate case for acceleration
Nomination for acceleration is presented.
The case for acceleration is evaluated using case history and student data.
The student's current teacher and receiving teacher attend.
Negotiate options
Recommenations may include:
•maintain current provisions
•accelerate within year level (e.g. curriculum compacting)
•single subject / learning area accelerations
•early entry to secondary / tertiary studies
•dual enrolment.
Provide acceleration (or not)
Acceleration plan drafted (individual learning plan).
Meeting of support team including current and receiving teachers and parents to endorse the acceleration plan.
Principal to sign plan.
Implement Plan.
Review provision of acceleration
Review student's progress after a minimum six-week trial to ensure the placement matches the needs, interests and abilities of the student.