

Gifted and talented education - guidelines and procedures

Document title	Gifted and talented education - guidelines and procedures
Contact details	Quality Teaching and Learning
Approved by	Executive Director, Early Years and Education Services
Date approved	Approval for publishing 22 March 2022
Document review	3 years
TRM number	EDOC2018/100764

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
2.1	March 2022	Operational Policy Coordination Unit	Minor update to terminology and NTG template

Acronyms	Full form
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
2e	Twice Exceptional
G & T	Gifted and Talented
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
TRM	Territory Records Manager
SAIS	Student Achievement Information System

Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Definitions	4
3. Roles and responsibilities	6
4. Guidelines and procedures	8
4.1. Identifying gifted and talented students	8
4.1.1. General principles of effective identification.....	8
4.1.2. Identification process.....	8
4.2. Educational options	8
4.2.1. Differentiated instruction	9
4.2.2. Acceleration.....	9
4.2.2.1. Preschool and transition.....	9
4.2.2.2. Early, primary, middle and senior years.....	10
4.2.3. Grouping or clustering of like-minded students.....	10
4.2.4. Assessment opportunities that demonstrate degrees of learning.....	11
4.2.5. Continuity of learning within and between educational settings	11
5. Referenced or useful literature	11
6. Professional learning	12
7. Further information	12
8. Acknowledgements	12

This document should be read with the [Gifted and talented education policy](#).

1. Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that schools clearly understand the procedures in identifying gifted and talented students and implementing appropriate educational programs for them.

Identifying gifted and talented students should be based upon their intellectual and personality traits, observations and evidence of their learning and performance, and conversations with their parents and communities. The positive interaction between individuals and their learning environments is a strong factor in the development of gifted behaviours. Schools must identify and provide conditions that enable and encourage gifted and talented behaviours.

2. Definitions

Gifted and Talented students –are those students who have an exceptional ability to reason, learn, think and perform in comparison to their similar age peer groups.

Gagne’s Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent distinguishes between outstanding potential – ‘giftedness’ and outstanding performance or ‘talent’. The purpose of gifted and talented programs in schools is to turn outstanding potential into high level performance.

Indigenous students may be gifted in ways which are not readily recognised by classroom teachers. Schools may need to undertake community consultation to identify and develop programs for gifted and talented students from different cultural backgrounds.

Table 1 describes the intellectual and personality traits of gifted and talented children.

Table 1: Intellectual and personality traits of gifted and talented children

Intellectual traits of gifted and talented children	Personality traits of gifted and talented children
Exceptional reasoning ability	Insightful
Intellectual curiosity	Need to understand
Rapid learning rate	Need for mental stimulation
Facility for abstraction	Perfectionism
Complex thought processes	Need for precision/logic
Vivid imagination	Excellent sense of humour
Early moral concern	Sensitivity/empathy
Passion for learning	Intensity
Powers of concentration	Perseverance
Analytical thinking	Acute self-awareness
Divergent thinking/creativity	Nonconformity
Keen sense of justice	Questioning rules/authority
Capacity for reflection	Tendency to introversion

Learning dispositions – the learning dispositions of gifted and talented students include skills such as critical and creative thinking and reflection and persistence, which are necessary to meet the ongoing challenges of enriched learning.

Effective learning environments – are those where the learning opportunities are clearly differentiated to meet the needs of gifted and talented students.

Educational options – identified educational options provide continuous access to appropriate educational programs that support the development of gifted behaviours during the formal years of schooling.

Acceleration – refers to the practice of presenting learning opportunities earlier or at a faster pace. There are many ways to accelerate the curriculum. These options offer the flexibility needed to help meet the individual needs of gifted and talented students.

Appropriate assessments – are standardized comprehensive intellectual assessments administered by a psychologist.

Twice Exceptional (2e) students – are gifted and talented students with a learning disability.

Table 2 describes the characteristics of 2e students.

Table 2: 2e Characteristics

Strengths	Challenges
Is creative, innovative	Has poor social skills
Is a 'big picture' thinker	Doesn't 'fit in'
Has advanced problem-solving abilities	Is stubborn
Is insightful	Is emotionally intense
Has in-depth interests	Is anxious
Is curious and inquisitive	Is perfectionist
Is highly verbal	Is highly sensitive
Is committed	Has uneven skills and abilities
Is passionate and highly knowledgeable in areas of special interest	Has difficulty paying attention, except in areas of interests
Has unusual sense of humour	Is disorganized, has poor study skills

3. Roles and responsibilities

General Manager, Quality Teaching and Learning will:

- deploy and enable directorate resources to maximise gifted and talented student achievement
- oversee the effective implementation of gifted and talented policy and guidelines in schools.

Senior Director Education, School Improvement and Leadership will:

- tailor differentiated support to schools in conjunction with principals
- liaise with and broker services from Quality Teaching and Learning for professional learning for teachers in understanding, identifying and supporting gifted and talented students in the classroom.

Principals will:

- implement evidence based whole of school strategies to maximise gifted and talented student learning
- provide educational options that facilitate the steady progress of gifted and talented students over time
- provide high level guidance to teachers to help cater for gifted and talented students, including 2e students
- support teachers to engage in professional learning opportunities that enhance the effective teaching of gifted and talented students
- monitor the progress of gifted and talented students over time to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs

- provide their Senior Director Education, School Improvement and Leadership with relevant data, if requested, on the number of students identified as performing well above year level, students who have the potential but not performing to their potential, the differentiated programs offered for these students and outcomes achieved.

Teachers will:

- identify students who are performing, as well as those who have potential, at levels well above year level expectations. This will be done by collecting evidence of their learning and performance through a range of assessments, intellectual and personality traits and parental and community consultation.
- plan and implement educational programs that meet the needs of gifted and talented students, including the development of learning dispositions such as critical and creative thinking, reflection and persistence.
- develop Educational Adjustment Plans for gifted and talented students whose abilities are not able to be catered for within the regular classroom. This would include students who fall within the Highly Gifted category and Twice Exceptional students. This plan must be developed collaboratively with educators, the learner - where appropriate, parents/caregivers and other relevant professionals at least twice a year, with information entered into the Student Achievement Information System (SAIS).
- recognise talents in fields other than academic disciplines and direct students and parents to the appropriate facilities to develop these talents.

Quality Teaching and Learning will:

- ensure that the needs of gifted and talented students are incorporated into system planning, programs and initiatives
- support networks through the provision of information and professional learning about the education of gifted and talented students
- communicate to schools their responsibilities regarding the the [Gifted and talented education policy](#)
- support schools in establishing gifted and talented programs.

Student Wellbeing and Inclusion will:

- support schools in their decision making regarding the acceleration of gifted and talented students
- provide appropriate assessment, if necessary, for year level acceleration or in developing Education Adjustment Plans
- support schools with educational planning for gifted students when special educational or wellbeing issues impact upon their educational progress
- liaise with the QTL staff and relevant regional officers to receive expert advice on curriculum differentiation for 2e students.

Teaching and Learning Gifted and Talented officer will:

- collaborate with schools regarding teacher professional learning
- assist schools to clarify their responsibilities regarding the Gifted and talented education policy.

4. Guidelines and procedures

4.1. Identifying gifted and talented students

It is important to identify gifted and talented students to provide appropriate learning opportunities that suit their learning needs. Identification should be an ongoing process to be collectively contributed to by parents, a school and the community. Identification and effective educational provision depend on a broad range of quantitative and qualitative identification measures.

4.1.1. General principles of effective identification

An effective identification process in gifted and talented education should:

- be based on broad conception of giftedness
- begin as early as possible on a student's enrolment in school
- be flexible and continuous
- utilise multiple forms of identification
- highlight indicators of underachievement, influencing students' current educational performance
- be appropriate to the school context and the phase of schooling.

4.1.2. Identification process

The following points need to be considered when identifying gifted and talented students.

- Giftedness encompasses many dimensions such as innate abilities, personality traits and environmental influences. Therefore, measures that go beyond purely academic achievement need to be used in order to identify students whose abilities are not indicated by tests and school performance.
- Giftedness is always culturally defined. Therefore, schools may need the assistance of their school councils, parents or community groups to define, identify and cater for giftedness in particular contexts.
- Identification should include subjective and objective measures such as rating scales, checklists, nominations, standardised cognitive assessments, National Assessment Programs, student achievement data, school-based assessments, school reports and portfolios of student work.
- Data about learning dispositions may be obtained from school reports, gifted and talented checklists, student interviews and/or observational records.
- Identification must be ongoing and continuous, so as not to discount anyone whose giftedness may not be evident at first.

4.2. Educational options

Educational options include:

- provision of differentiated instruction in regular classrooms
- provision of extension and enrichment in other learning environments

- project based learning
- acceleration
- grouping or clustering of like-minded students
- assessment opportunities that allow demonstration of learning,
- continuity of learning within and between educational settings and beyond to employment and civil life.

4.2.1. Differentiated instruction

Differentiation is an approach to teaching that advocates active planning for student differences in the classroom. Curriculum models such as Williams, Bloom's and Maker are good reference points for teachers to differentiate for gifted and talented students.

Planning and instructional practices in differentiated curriculum should:

- provide opportunities for gifted and talented students to learn at a faster pace, requiring less time on basics and revision, and more on finding solving and acting on problems more readily and manipulating abstract ideas and making connections
- offer a variety of entry points for students who differ in abilities, knowledge and skills
- offer different approaches to what students learn - content, how students learn – process, and how students demonstrate what they have learned – product
- provide appropriate physical and emotional settings in the classroom – environment differentiation
- be flexible and allow students to move in and out of groups based on students' instructional needs
- allow students to choose, with the teacher's guidance, ways to learn and how to demonstrate what they have learned.

4.2.2. Acceleration

Acceleration can occur in several ways.

- Subject acceleration – within the same class, to another class, to a streamed class for one or more subjects or to another year level for one or more subjects.
- Year level acceleration – advancement to a higher grade or year level for all subjects.
- Concurrent enrolment – two learning institutions are accessed at the same time by the student.
- Compacting – where learning is compressed into a shorter time.

4.2.2.1. Preschool and transition

There is no provision for early entry to Preschool and Transition. The holistic nurturing and enrichment of young gifted children can be provided in a variety of contexts such as home, playgroup and childcare. However, gifted students in Transition, who fall within the exceptionally or Profoundly Gifted categories may be considered for acceleration taking into consideration their social and emotional readiness.

Table 3 gives an indication of categories of giftedness. It is to be noted that different psychometric assessment tools classify giftedness differently.

Table 3: IQ and levels of giftedness

IQ and levels of giftedness, Feldhusen 1993 cited in Gross 2000		
Level of giftedness	IQ range	Prevalence
Mildly	115-129	More than 1 in 40
Moderately	130-144	1 in 40 to 1 in 1000
Highly	145-159	1 in 1000 to 1 in 10,000
Exceptionally	160-179	1 in 10,000 to 1 in 1 million
Profoundly	180+	Less than 1 in 1 million

4.2.2.2. Early, primary, middle and senior years

Acceleration of a gifted and talented student to a higher year level will be at the discretion of the principal who will ensure that:

- documented evidence about student suitability is gathered, based upon the International Guidelines on Suitability for Accelerated Progression
- collaboration has occurred between the school, parents and student
- year level acceleration is practical and feasible within the school organisation
- the Student Wellbeing and Inclusion division has been consulted for further advice and assessment regarding student suitability.

Where the student is deemed suitable for year level acceleration, there will be:

- an initial trial period
- a process for regular monitoring and review.

Where students are not considered suitable for year level acceleration, an alternative learning program should be developed.

4.2.3. Grouping or clustering of like-minded students

These include, but are not limited to:

- full-time or part-time ability groupings
- specialised classes or groups
- clustering or grouping of like-minded students within one class
- challenging programs to pursue students' interests and passions
- individual programs.

4.2.4. Assessment opportunities that demonstrate degrees of learning

The following are examples of assessment opportunities. These opportunities can be provided through, but not limited to:

- online environmental games such as Murder Under the Microscope
- Tournaments of Minds
- debating competitions
- sporting competitions
- performing/visual arts competitions
- Australian Maths Competition
- International Competitions and Assessments for Schools
- Plain English Speaking Competition
- United Nations Youth Association
- Titration competitions
- Young Territory Author Awards.

4.2.5. Continuity of learning within and between educational settings

In addition to acceleration options, opportunities can be explored through:

- concurrent enrolment
- select entry into Students of High Performance classes
- select entry into Centres of Excellence programs for years 10 to 12
- mentoring programs.

5. Referenced or useful literature

- Five key principles of identification - Richert, E.S. 1991. Rampant problems and promising practices in identification. In N. Colangelo & G.A. Davis - Eds, Handbook of gifted education - pp.81-96
- Silverman, L.K. 1993. A developmental model for counseling the gifted. In L.K
- Silverman -Ed. Counseling the gifted and talented - pp. 51-78. Denver: Love Publishing Company
- Gross, M.U.M 2000. Issues in the cognitive development of exceptionally and profoundly gifted individuals. In K.A. Heller, F.J. Monks, R.J. Sternberg & R.F. Subotnik -Eds. International handbook of research and development of giftedness and talent - second edition, New York: Macmillan.
- Kennedy Diane M, Banks Rebecca S with Grandin Temple 2011. Bright Not Broken, Gifted Kinds, ADHD and Autism, Why Twice-Exceptional Children Are Stuck and How to Help Them; Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint.

6. Professional learning

- Department of Education's professional learning module on Catering for student diversity through differentiation
- Understanding gifted learners - staff access only
- Gifted and talented learners webpage on the Education Intranet – staff access only
- Differentiated Instruction webpage on the Education Intranet - staff access only.

7. Further information

Further information on supporting gifted and talented students can be obtained by emailing curriculum.decs@nt.gov.au.

8. Acknowledgements

Gagné, François, 2008. Building gifts into talents: Overview of the DMGT, Keynote address, 10th Asia-Pacific Conference for Giftedness, Asia-Pacific Federation of the world council for Gifted & Talented children, Singapore, 14-17 July.

Gibson K. & Vialle, W. 2007. The Australian Aboriginal View of Giftedness. In S.N. Phillipson & M. McCann - Eds, Conceptions of Giftedness. Sociocultural perspectives - pp.197-224. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.