

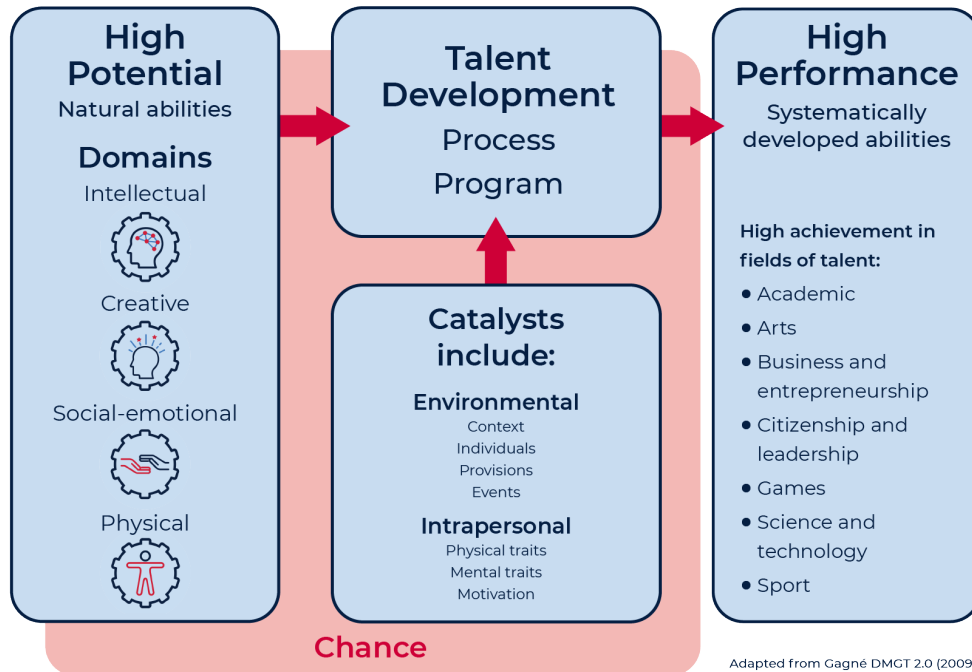
RATIONALE

Sydney Technical High School is a fully selective high school with enrolments averaging 930 students. 2020 SCOUT data reports that 94.4% of our boys are LBOTE. 100% of our students transition to university to pursue under graduate degrees in tertiary institutions in many states but mostly in metropolitan Sydney. The DoE's updated GHPE Policy was provided to schools in mid-2018. Since then, members of STHS's GHPE Team conducted the following tasks:

1. All Faculties were provided with copies (hard and soft) of the new policy and the accompanying Literature Review conducted by CESE. All teaching staff were asked to provide a written reflection statement on what the new policy means to them as a practitioner at STHS as well as, fully realised, their vision for the impact of this policy.
2. Teaching staff were surveyed about their knowledge and understanding of HPG T&L strategies that are applied by them/faculty/school. In July 2020, 42 teacher responders provided the following snapshot:
 - i) 69% have in excess of ten years' experience as a teacher
 - ii) 46% have in excess of ten years' experience as a teacher in (partially or) selective high schools
 - iii) Approximately 60% of responders report confidence in their knowledge of the needs of selective students and are confident of meeting these in their classrooms.
 - iv) 43% have no formal licensure/training in the needs of gifted and high potential learners.
 - v) UNSW's Mini-COGE is the most popular professional learning undertaken by STHS staff with 30%. STHS does also have staff with post graduate studies at Masters and PhD level in this field also.
 - vi) Staff (significantly) identify CESE's *What Works Best* (2020 update) practices of high expectations, explicit teaching and feedback as the most impactful within our context for improving student achievement. Affirmingly, these were also most common when head teachers articulated the specific strategies that are regularly employed in their faculty when delivering 2019 HSC Analysis.
3. Teaching staff were surveyed as to their experience in teaching HPG students and their specific training/licensure in this qualification.
4. 7-12 students were surveyed seeking their input around experiences as selective students and their own perspective of 'What works best'.
5. Volunteer students were identified from this survey and participated in focus group interviews where more detailed information was obtained. This qualitative data is currently being transcribed.
6. Sentral-identified underachievers were also participants in a similar but nuanced focus group session. This qualitative data is currently being transcribed.
7. Across the three strategic directions for our 2021-2024 SIP, a recognised commitment to a full implementation of the *High Potential and Gifted Education Policy* (2021) is documented and addressing the needs of our students, chiefly through the informed skills and experiences our teaching staff is vital.

GIFTED AND HIGH POTENTIAL EDUCATION IN 2021

The policy aligns with contemporary research in many fields regarding the development of talent. Gagné's model illustrates the importance of the role educators play. If a high potential or gifted student is underachieving, the model supports teachers to identify the cause of the underachievement. Similarly, the model provides teachers with pathways to support talent development.



KEY ACTIONS

- [Evaluate](#) school procedures, programs and practices, and analyse student growth and achievement data to inform school planning and policy implementation.
- [Assess and identify](#) the specific learning needs of all high potential, gifted and highly gifted students.
- [Implement](#) evidence-based procedures, programs and practices that meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all high potential and gifted students and facilitate talent development.
- [Collaborate](#) with families, school communities and the wider community to enhance growth and achievement for all high potential and gifted students.
- [Build teacher and leadership capacity](#) through engagement with quality research and ongoing professional learning on effective practices to improve growth and achievement for all high potential and gifted students.
- STHS to be recognised as a leader in selective school excellence and delivering best practice HPG education opportunities for every student.

LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS

High potential students are those whose potential exceeds that of students of the same age in one or more domains: intellectual, creative, social-emotional and physical. This potential will develop into talent if educators recognise student potential and use evidence-based talent development to optimise their growth and achievement.

These characteristics, listed below, may be found in all learners but are strongly evident in high potential and gifted learners. Conversely, not all high potential and gifted learners will display all of these characteristics. As a generalisation, learning characteristics can vary even further in high potential students with disability, Aboriginal students, students from diverse cultural backgrounds, rural and remote areas and students at risk.

<p><i>Intellectual</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capacity for greater analytical depth fewer repetitions needed for mastery greater capability in abstract reasoning relative ease in making connections between disciplines advanced reading ability and comprehension knowledgeable in areas of passion processes information in complex ways enjoys hypothesising thrives on complexity and can see many points of view thinks in analogies 	<p><i>Creative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> educational risk-taking tolerance for ambiguity makes unusual associations between different ideas demonstrates creative thinking across domain areas and in the different disciplines demonstrates novel thinking in written and oral expression flexibility and divergence in thinking unusual ability for expressing self through art, dance, drama, music creates several solutions to a given problem synthesises a variety of ideas in original ways
<p><i>Social-emotional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced organisational and management skills advanced social and communication skills emotional stability empathy demonstrated leadership and decision-making skills resilient and self-aware foresees consequences and implications of decisions respected by peers self-confident task analysis and backwards mapping abilities social justice advocacy 	<p><i>Physical</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> subtlety in movement and control of body self-disciplined coordinated, balanced and confident in physical activities high energy levels superior understanding of spatial relationships endurance, stamina and persistence in physical activities suitability of body build for area of physical high potential demonstrates prowess in physical activities common amongst age peers competitive 'hands on' learning preference

<p>Across domains</p> <p>curiosity</p> <p>fast learner</p> <p>intense concentration in new learning or areas of interest</p> <p>perseverance</p> <p>high levels of self-criticism</p> <p>perfectionism</p> <p>strong sense of moral reasoning and justice</p> <p>intrinsically motivated and goal driven</p> <p>sophisticated sense of humour</p> <p>creative and critical thinking skills</p> <p>high expectations for self and others</p> <p>observant</p> <p>excited by new ideas</p> <p>independent thinking</p>	<p>Some of the characteristics that may be counterproductive to learning include:</p> <p>challenging authority</p> <p>difficulty with group participation</p> <p>questioning others' ideas</p> <p>frustration when expectations are not met</p> <p>impatience and boredom with learning experiences that do not provide challenge or interest.</p>
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The challenge for educators is to develop a deep understanding that high potential and gifted students, in all domains, learn in ways characterised by their diverse profiles. Many characteristics cross the domains but others are more relevant to one domain than to the others.

High potential and gifted students can also exhibit characteristics and behaviours that challenge teachers and mystify their classmates. Some may demonstrate anxiety and unhealthy perfectionistic traits. This is caused partly by the asynchronous development of high potential and gifted students. These learning characteristics require educators, coaches and instructors to implement evidence-based talent development programs, procedures and practices that meet the learning and wellbeing needs of high potential and gifted students.

Adapted from Vialle, W. and Rogers, K.B. (2009) *Educating the gifted learner*. Macksville, David Barlow Publishing.

High Potential and Gifted Education at Sydney Technical High School 2021-2024

	<i>Strategic Direction 1</i>	<i>Strategic Direction 2</i>	<i>Strategic Direction 3</i>	
High potential (Domains)	Student growth and attainment	Leadership	Innovation	High performance (Systematically developed abilities)
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for sustained deliberate practice • Quality teaching, curriculum and provisions including access to flexible curriculum options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs that develop resilience, motivation, effort, and perseverance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced learning pathways and acceleration • Quality teaching, curriculum and provisions including access to flexible curriculum options 	<p>High achievement in fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academia • Arts/humanities • Business and entrepreneurship • Citizen and leadership • Games • Science and Technology • Sport <p>Reduced reports of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unhealthy or maladaptive perfectionism • Disengagements • Underachievement • Poor subject selection • Mental health issues • Problematic group participation • Challenges authority
Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced learning pathways and acceleration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment and extra-curricular programs • Opportunities for sustained deliberate practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiation • Provision of a range of opportunities to engage students and identify their learning interests 	
Socio-emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiation • A supportive learning environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiation Grouping for teaching and learning • Programs that develop resilience, motivation, effort, and perseverance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs that develop resilience, motivation, effort, and perseverance 	
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced learning pathways and acceleration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment and extra-curricular programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate talent development programs systematically cultivate the skills and knowledge 	

TALENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

FOR HPG STUDENTS:

Talent development is the process by which a student's potential is developed into higher achievement in a specific domain or field of endeavour. Students move through various stages of competency along a continuum from novice to competency to mastery. Mastery refers to expertise, exceptional performance, accomplishment or outstanding achievement in a given field, including the accomplished achievement of curriculum outcomes in a subject area or domain. A student demonstrating mastery exhibits a deep understanding that enables them to transfer that understanding across domains. High potential and gifted students may develop talent and move through the stages of competence more quickly than same-age peers. To develop talent towards mastery, students need opportunities and encouragement. Every STHS intervention or program should take into account the talent development stage and potential trajectory of the student.

FOR TEACHERS OF HPG STUDENTS:

Building teacher and leadership capacity through engagement with quality research and ongoing professional learning on effective practices underpins improved growth and achievement for all high potential and gifted students. Leaders and teachers with appropriate training and skills to meet the needs of high potential and gifted students may not be limited to those with formal qualifications in the domain. The following may also provide leaders and teachers with relevant skills:

- professional coaching and/or credentials in creative, physical, social-emotional and intellectual domains
- extensive professional learning in high potential and gifted education, student sports coaching, or teaching in creative and performing arts programs as appropriate
- advanced study and/or experience in a relevant field or discipline that benefits explicit talent development strategies in teaching and learning programs (for example, high-level mathematics study for teaching extension mathematics courses)
- successful experience teaching high potential and gifted students
- significant experience working with representative talent development, student leadership development, social justice or entrepreneurial programs.

The STHS HPG Strategy acknowledges the role and value that classroom experience plays in teacher development and effectiveness. It also recognises the value add that quality professional development and the currency in exposure to recent developments in this field plays. Over the cycle of the four year SIP, our school's targets for HPG licensure across our staff includes:

- 100% of all teaching staff with at least 20 hours of registered professional learning in HPG education during 2021-2024
- 100% of all teaching staff reporting confidence in the knowledge of the needs of our HPG students
- 100% of all teaching staff reporting confidence in their classrooms in meeting the needs of our HPG students
- 100% of all staff experienced in recognising talent and demonstrated capacity to implement evidence-based program/s for individual or groups of HPG students.