



All applicants with access to the internet, a printer and their own email address (not the student's) should apply online by going to the following web site: <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/shsplacement>. All other applicants must complete the commercially printed form.

Selective High School and Opportunity Class Placement Unit[^]

Year 7 entry to selective high schools Application information **2013**

Please read this information carefully before submitting the application.

Important dates

Online application opens	24 October 2011
Application information and forms available in schools	25 October 2011
Parents return printed application forms to schools	18 November 2011
Online application closes	21 November 2011
Government school principals process applications online and send paper-based applications to the Unit	13 December 2011
Non-Government school principals complete Part B and send paper-based applications to the Unit	13 December 2011
Test centre advice received by parents or carers	1 March 2012
Selective High School Placement Test	15 March 2012
Outcome advice	July 2012

Contact details

Selective High School and Opportunity Class Placement Unit

NSW Department of Education and Communities

Email: ssu@det.nsw.edu.au

Postal address: Locked Bag 5001 BANKSTOWN NSW 1885

Telephone: 02 9707 6262 Fax: 02 9707 6265

Web site: <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/shsplacement>

Note:

[^] In this document, 'Unit' refers to the Selective High School and Opportunity Class Placement Unit.

'Parent' is defined under the Education Act 1990 as 'a guardian or other person having custody or care of a child'.

A list of the selective high schools is shown at the end of this document. In this document 'selective' includes fully selective high schools, partially selective high schools and selective agricultural high schools.

A student number for the selective high school placement process is provided by email when parents apply online or is printed under the barcode on printed application forms.

Please record the student number here for future reference. Please quote this number in all correspondence and enquiries regarding your application.

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Selective high schools

Selective high schools cater for highly achieving, academically gifted students. These schools can provide intellectual stimulation by grouping gifted and talented students together, who would otherwise be isolated from a suitable peer group.

There are:

- Seventeen fully selective high schools. All classes are academically selective.
- Twenty-three high schools with selective classes (partially selective). Partially selective high schools have both selective and community classes. (Note: Sydney Secondary College Blackwattle Bay Campus, although partially selective, has selective classes only in Years 11 and 12 and is therefore not included in this application process.
- Four agricultural high schools (three of which offer boarding places). Agricultural high schools are selective high schools that emphasise the study of agriculture, with the boarding sections giving some priority to isolated students.
- One virtual selective class provision offering selective placement in Year 7. For the virtual selective class provision only students intending to enrol in a Western NSW Region Government high school are eligible to apply.

Detailed information about selective high schools is available on the Internet at the address shown on the cover of this document.

How to apply

Step 1: Read the application information carefully.

Step 2: Complete an application.

Application for students from Government primary schools:

1. All applicants with Internet access are expected to apply online at: www.schools.nsw.edu.au/shsplacement

Applications submitted online will be made available to Government school principals to complete the school's section. You will receive by email a printable version of your application for your reference.

OR

2. Parents without Internet access must apply using the commercially printed application form. Make a photocopy of your completed paper application form for your reference and submit the original application to the primary school principal by the due date.

Application for students from non-Government primary schools:

1. Parents with Internet access must apply online at: www.schools.nsw.edu.au/shsplacement

After submitting the application online, print a copy of the application form (pdf) you will receive by email. Hand this copy to the non-Government primary school principal by the due date, so that the school's section can be completed.

OR

2. Parents without Internet access must apply using the printed application form, make a photocopy of your completed paper application form to keep for your reference. Hand the original application form to the primary school principal by the due date, so that the school's section can be completed.

Step 3: Hand paper application to school.

Online applicants from Government primary schools

Print a copy and keep for your reference. The principal will complete processing of your application online.

Online applicants from non-Government primary schools

Print off the copy of your application sent to you by email and submit it to your child's school for further processing.

All applicants submitting commercially printed paper applications

Hand your completed application to your child's school by the **18 November 2011**.

Principals process the applications by providing school assessment scores in English and mathematics, based on the student's performance from Year 4 up to the end of Year 5, providing comments if applicable and sending paper applications to the Unit.

Principals are invited to comment on any issues they consider relevant to the application. Note, for the virtual selective class provision applications, principals' comments are compulsory.

Step 4: Expect to receive advice regarding the test centre your child needs to attend.

Please be sure to check your emails and/or mail for this important information. If by **1 March 2012** you have not received advice of the test centre the student has been allocated to, you should telephone the Unit or contact your child's Government primary school. Test centre allocations will also be published on the web site shown on the cover of this document.

Step 5: Ensure that your child attends the Selective High School Placement Test on the morning of Thursday 15 March 2012.

Step 6: Expect to receive the outcome of your application in early July 2012.

Completing the PAPER application form

The commercially printed application form is processed using electronic scanning techniques. Each form has a unique barcode and under no circumstances should a photocopied version of the form be used.

To ensure your application is valid:

- Use only the commercially printed application form which has a unique barcode.
- Write neatly in black pen within the boxes shown on the form using BLOCK letters.
- Complete all sections relevant to the application.
- Do **not** write 'not applicable', 'n/a', 'nil' or draw a line through any boxes on the form. If a section of the form is not relevant it must be left blank.

Acknowledgement of receipt

In early **February 2012** parents will receive an acknowledgement of the receipt of the paper application.

Communication

All correspondence and telephone advice is provided to the primary parent(s) or carers indicated on the application.

This parent or carer is usually the parent living with the child. Ensure you complete the "Name or names for correspondence" section on page 2. All correspondence will be sent using this information.

Information cannot be provided to any person who is not listed on the application form as a parent, other concerned adult or special contact.

Under normal circumstances, as parents make all applications for entry to selective high schools, no correspondence or telephone conversations will be conducted directly with students.

Irrespective of whether or not a parent wishes to keep application information confidential from another parent or interested person, the Unit will provide the information wherever it has a legal obligation to do so or where the person requesting the information is entitled to access such information.

A parent, not listed as either Parent/Carer 1 or 2 (usually a parent not living with the child), who wishes to receive correspondence related to the application, must send a request in writing to the Unit, so that arrangements can be made for copies of correspondence to be sent if appropriate.

Email and post

The Unit will be sending correspondence by email wherever possible. Please do not enter your email details on the application form if you do not wish to be contacted in this way.

If you do provide your email address you must contact the Unit if you change your email address or email provider or no longer have email access.

This is particularly important where parents have provided a work email address and change their place of employment. **It is the parents' responsibility to monitor the receipt of emails at critical times such as the fortnight prior to the test and when outcome advice is due.**

If providing your email address on paper please:

- print clearly and accurately
- use block letters unless your email address is case sensitive
- provide only one email address.

Note: All communication about the application is conducted with parents/carers. **Do not supply a student's email address.**

Special contact

Please show when prompted, the name and telephone number of another adult the Unit may contact if the parents are unavailable.

Change of application details

Please inform the Unit by mail or email if there is a change in details such as your child's name, postal address, email address or school.

You should also inform the Unit by mail or email if you want to withdraw your application.

Note: Changes of application details will not be accepted over the telephone.

Court orders

If there are any Family Law, Apprehended Violence Orders or other relevant Court Orders in relation to such matters as: the education of the student, restricting access to the student's record or restricting the provision of information about the student, please complete the relevant section of the application and attach a complete copy of the orders.

Criteria for entry

Academic merit

Students must compete academically with all other candidates for entry to each selective high school. Academic merit is determined mainly by the combination of the results of the Selective High School Placement Test in reading, writing, mathematics and general ability, together with the primary school assessments of student performance in English and mathematics.

Additional evidence of academic merit may also be considered at the discretion of the selection committee.

Academic record

All applicants attending schools in NSW are required to have school assessment scores completed by the school principal. Where a NSW non-Government school does not provide school assessment scores the parent should attach a completed exemption form to the application.

Further details are on page 11 of this document. Applications without school assessment scores or without an acceptable reason for not having school assessment scores may be ineligible for placement.

Attachments

As placement is based on academic merit, generally determined by a combination of the school assessment scores and the Selective High School Placement Test, you are **not required** to include at the application stage, any attachments other than those listed below.

Attachments that should be included:

- information about a disability, medical condition or behavioural disorder and their effects on the academic performance of students and special test provisions that may be required
- the results of individual IQ tests if appropriate. Note that these must be provided as a complete IQ report
- supporting information where students are outside the normal age range
- copy of Court Orders if they apply
- supporting information where students are in Year 5 or Year 7 in 2012.

DO NOT SEND attachments such as:

- school reports
- school-specific merit or behaviour certificates
- achievements in the performing arts or sports
- copies of the State or National tests such as NAPLAN
- certificates from statewide competitions.

Where further information is necessary the selection committee may approach the current primary school or request further information from parents.

Note: Attachments should be A4 one-sided copies.

Where parents apply online instructions will be given about sending attachments if relevant.

Other considerations

Disability, medical condition or behavioural disorder

The selection committee will give special consideration to the applications of students with a disability, medical condition or behavioural disorder to determine whether the students have been disadvantaged in their ability to demonstrate academic merit.

Cultural background

The selection committee will give special consideration to students of Aboriginal background or students with a language background other than English who have been doing most school work in English for less than four years. This consideration will determine whether they have been disadvantaged in their ability to demonstrate academic merit.

Age

Students entering Year 7 in selective high schools in 2013 will usually have been born between 1 January 2000 and 1 August 2001.

Where applicants are already in Year 6 in 2012, but were born after 1 August 2001, they are younger than the majority of the cohort. Such students may be required to attend an interview to enable the school to assess their needs.

School Year

Students entering Year 7 in selective high schools in 2013 are normally in Year 6 in 2012.

Students not yet in Year 6 in 2012

Where students have not reached Year 6 in 2012 and are seeking to accelerate to Year 7, this acceleration should be strongly supported by the school principal.

In determining a student's suitability for accelerated progression to a selective high school, selection committees will be guided by the *Policy and Implementation Strategies for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students* (Revised 2004). This document is available from the Department of Education and Communities web site www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/gats/PD20040051.shtml.

Selection committees will also be guided by the *Guidelines for Accelerated Progression*, published by the Board of Studies. This document states on page 21:

Has the student demonstrated a comprehensive achievement well in advance of the enrolment cohort when performance is assessed against the outcomes for the current curriculum stage?

AND

...on a statewide basis, it is probable that only one in 200 (0.5%) students would be capable of acceleration in all subjects.

Students already in Year 7 in 2012

Applications for students already attending Year 7 at high schools in NSW in 2012 are not normally accepted for Year 7 selective high school entry in 2013. Where there are extenuating circumstances, application may be made and full explanations with supporting documentation must be included. Selection committees will determine whether such applications will be accepted. Note that selection committees will generally not accept applications for repetition of Year 7 where it is clear that such repetition is not academically appropriate.

Applications for students whose age or school Year is outside the limits described above may not be finalised at the same time as the applications of other candidates. These applications may be placed temporarily on 'hold' to allow the selection committee to complete further enquiries.

Sitting test previously

Parents are reminded that selection committees may also consider whether or not students who took the Selective High School Placement Test in 2011 have gained undue advantage from their previous experience with the test.

Residency

Candidates must normally be Australian citizens or holders of a visa granting permanent resident status in Australia. Information on Australian citizenship is available on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship web site at: www.citizenship.gov.au. Official evidence of Australian citizenship may be obtained by the issue of a *Certificate of Evidence of Australian Citizenship*.

Citizens of New Zealand living in New South Wales are eligible for selective high school entry. Permanent residents of New Zealand are treated in the same manner as temporary residents of Australia and are not eligible.

School principals are required to check claims of residential status and citizenship against school records.

Applicants who do not meet these residency requirements at the time of applying, but expect to meet them in the near future, are allowed to apply. Such applicants will have to show evidence that they meet all residency requirements before being offered a place. Applicants who are unable to meet the residency requirements but believe that there are extenuating circumstances applicable to their case may apply, provided that they are already living in Australia.

Applicants who qualify for entry on academic grounds but do not meet the residency requirements, including those who hold diplomatic visas, will be advised that their applications are on 'hold' pending clarification of their residency status. These applicants will then have the opportunity to appeal for special consideration through the appeals process (see page 9).

All successful applicants will be required to show original documentation such as certificates of evidence of Australian citizenship, birth certificates or visas before enrolment can be finalised by the school. Offers or enrolments will be terminated if placement is made on the basis of false or misleading information.

Residential address

The family must be living in NSW by the beginning of the 2013 school year. If parents normally live in NSW but are temporarily out of the state, they should expect to return before the student is enrolled in a selective high school.

Applications from parents who continue to live outside NSW after the 2013 school year begins will be considered only if there are vacancies after all suitable applicants from NSW have been placed.

Enrolment policy

The NSW Department of Education and Communities has a responsibility to assess and manage any risk of harm to its staff or students. This includes assessing and managing risks posed to students or staff at a school by any student. Where relevant, such situations will be dealt with in accordance with the NSW Department of Education and Communities' enrolment policies and procedures.

Information for parents regarding enrolment is available at: <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/schoolfind/enrolment/parentsinfo.php>

Family placement

You can make a family placement claim on the application if a brother, sister or parent/guardian currently attends or previously attended the school. Where two or more students have equal results, the students with family placement claims will be given priority. For most students this will have little effect on the outcome.

For boarding placement, extra consideration may be given to students who have brothers or sisters already attending the school.

Twins and other siblings

Please complete the relevant item of the application if a brother or sister is **also** applying for selective placement in Year 7 in 2013.

Because there is so much competition for entry to selective high schools you should not expect that, if one of your children has been successful, the other children in your family will be placed. The placement of one twin does not guarantee the placement of another.

Points to consider

Travelling times

The selection committee does not consider distances, travelling times and transport arrangements from the student's home to the selective high school. Before listing any school, you should consider available transport and the time your child will take to reach the school.

Transfers

Once students have begun attending a selective high school they cannot automatically transfer to another. If a student is already enrolled at one selective high school and wants to go to another, the parents must fill out a different application form for entry to Years 8 to 12 and lodge it directly with the selective high school they want their child to attend. These forms are normally available from selective high schools in late June. Application is required in the year before you want your child to enrol.

Order of choice

Ensure that you consider your choices and the order in which you put them carefully before completing the application (see *Change of choice* below).

You may make up to four choices. The order in which you list those choices matters only if the child qualifies for more than one choice. If your child qualifies for more than one choice, you will be offered only the highest choice for which the child qualifies.

Suppose you made the following choices:

1. James Ruse Agricultural
 2. North Sydney Girls
 3. Hornsby Girls
 4. Fort Street
- a) If your child qualified for Hornsby Girls **and** Fort Street, you would receive an offer only for Hornsby Girls, the higher choice for which the student qualified.
- b) If your child qualified **only** for Fort Street, you would be offered a place at that school regardless of whether you placed that school first, second, third or fourth on your list.

The entry score required for each school varies from year to year depending upon the demand for the school and the scores achieved by those students who have listed the school as a choice.

Change of choice before 3 May 2012

If you wish to change your choice of schools before 3 May 2012 you should notify the Unit in writing of your request. This is the date by which all information starts to be prepared for selection committees.

After 3 May 2012

Changes of choice cannot be accepted after 4.00 pm on this date as they cannot be processed in time for selection committees to be presented with the relevant information.

If you have clearly demonstrable extenuating circumstances such as the purchase of a new residence in a suburb or town very far from the previous residence, you may request a change of choice accompanied by a full explanation and supporting documents. The request for a change of choice will be subject to approval by the delegate of the selection committees.

Approval will not be given for a change of choice on the grounds that the student did not qualify for the original choices.

Please consider your choices carefully.

Test information

The Selective High School Placement Test will be conducted on the morning of **Thursday 15 March 2012**. It will be administered statewide in designated test centres, usually

established in Government high schools. All applicants are required to sit for the test, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The test is conducted **only** on this day and **only** in designated test centres in NSW.

Students who miss the test through illness or other unavoidable mishap may be considered through the illness/misadventure process detailed on page 7.

Students unable to take the test because they are interstate or overseas at the time should contact the Unit to determine whether they should apply to be considered under the illness/misadventure or the interstate/overseas procedures. Further details of the interstate/overseas procedures are given on page 10.

The Selective High School Placement Test is developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research.

It is a secure test and papers are unavailable for scrutiny before or after the test session. The test does not contain any questions used in previous tests.

The Selective High School Placement Test measures ability and is set to discriminate at a very high level. It is very rare for even the highest scoring candidates to score full marks on all components of the test.

Test answer sheets will be identified by numbers and not by name to ensure anonymity in the marking process.

School assessment scores

Selective high school entry does not depend entirely on a student's performance in the Selective High School Placement Test as school assessment scores in English and mathematics are provided by the primary schools.

The school assessment scores will be moderated according to the performance of the candidates from your child's primary school in the reading, writing and mathematics sections of the Selective High School Placement Test.

Moderating the school assessment scores makes them comparable statewide and gives school assessment scores and test scores in English and mathematics equal weighting.

Further details about the processing of scores can be found on the Unit's web site.

Test centre

All applicants will be advised by mail and/or email of their designated test centre.

Parents will be required to make appropriate transport arrangements for their children.

If you have not been advised by **Thursday 1 March 2012** about the test centre your child has been allocated to, contact the principal of your child's Government primary school or contact the Unit on the number shown on the cover of this document.

A full listing of the test centres will also be available from the web site shown on the cover of this document.

All candidates from the same primary school are usually sent to the same test centre.

Variations to allocated test centres will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and will depend on space being available at the test centre.

If your child does not meet the criteria for entry you should not assume that your application has been accepted because your child has been assigned to a test centre.

Parents will be sent test information at the same time as they are sent their test centre advice. This information will detail the Selective High School Placement Test procedures, show how students should indicate their answers and list the equipment to bring. The Department of Education and Communities recommends that you use this information and the sample test papers to make sure your child becomes familiar with the test format and knows how to record his or her answers.

Note: Parents must not remain on the school premises during the test unless special permission has been granted for student welfare reasons.

Test components

There are four tests. Three of the tests consist of multiple-choice questions with answers recorded on computer-marked answer sheets. These three tests are reading, mathematics and general ability and 40 minutes is allowed for each test.

The fourth is a writing test. The test is marked by trained markers using pre-determined criteria. A stimulus may be an image, a statement, a heading or a question to which students have to respond in writing. Students have 20 minutes to complete this test.

The writing will be judged on the quality of the thinking about a topic, the organisation of ideas and the control of language demonstrated in developing the piece of writing.

It is expected that students will produce writing that is their own original work in response to the stimulus in the test. Marks will not be awarded for writing that does not specifically address the stimulus. Marks will also not be awarded where the writing of students is discovered to have elements in common with writing of other students or published works. Selection committees have the discretion to deduct some or all of the writing marks if they believe students have produced work memorised beforehand and adapted to respond to the stimulus.

Students must be careful not to look at the work of others during the test. Students found to be cheating risk disqualification from the test.

Sample tests

These are published on the Unit's web site. They assist applicants to become more familiar with the Selective High School Placement Test.

In the actual Selective High School Placement Test there are 45 questions in reading, 40 in mathematics and 60 in general ability.

It is important to note that selection committees and appeals panels will not accept students' performance in the sample tests as evidence of academic merit for the purposes of entry into a selective high school in any future year.

Special test provisions

Some applicants request special test provisions for their children because of a disability, medical condition or behavioural disorder, e.g. students with ADHD or Asperger's Syndrome can be seated at the front of the test centre; large print papers can be arranged for students with visual impairments; FM transmitters can be arranged for students with hearing impairments. Parents or school principals should request special test provisions in the application. The Unit evaluates the feasibility of the request and writes to both the applicant and the student's current Government primary school principal explaining whether or not the special test provisions can be granted.

Illness or misadventure

If some problem such as sickness or an accident stops your child from taking the test or from doing his or her best, you should download an illness/misadventure form from the Unit's web site or request one from the Unit. The completed form should be returned to the Unit by **5 April 2012**. You should include evidence to support a misadventure claim where possible.

You **must** include a medical certificate covering the day of the test and have the medical practitioner complete the *Independent evidence of illness* page of the illness/misadventure form if the child was sick or else the selection committee will not be able to consider your claim. Generally it is better to take the test where possible and make an illness/misadventure claim than to miss the test. All claims for consideration, based on illness, must be made at this stage.

Although there is an appeals process which occurs later in the year after the outcome is known, appeals based on illness will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. Further details of the appeals process are given on page 9.

Students who miss the test for unavoidable reasons such as illness may be considered on their moderated school assessment scores at the discretion of the selection committee. Where neither test scores nor school assessment scores which can be moderated are available, applicants may be considered on the basis of alternative evidence. In some cases applicants will be invited to use the interstate/overseas application procedure. This procedure is outlined on page 10.

Selection committees

A selection committee for each selective high school will meet to choose students using the 'Criteria for Entry' as described on page 3.

Each selection committee will consist of at least three people including the school education director, the selective high school principal and a parent or community representative.

All placement decisions are made by the selection committee convened for each selective high school.

Outcome of application

Outcome advice

The Unit will send you advice by mail or email in early July 2012 telling you whether your child:

- is being offered a place and/or
- has been placed on a reserve list and/or
- has been unsuccessful for one or more choices.

Note: While offers can be accepted, enrolments will not be finalised until after the official *Authority to attend* has been received by parents.

Hold

In some cases students might not be sent outcome advice at the same time as the rest of the candidates. These students' applications could be placed on hold while the selection committee carries out further investigation and enquiries usually related to residency status, age or any extenuating circumstances.

Response to offers

If you receive an offer you must fill out a response form and return it by the date shown on the response form (generally 14 days after the date of the offer).

Some late offers will be made by telephone and these will usually require responses within 24 hours. The Unit may assume that the offer has been declined if you do not respond by the due date. If you accept an offer and later change your mind you should let the Unit know immediately in writing, so that the next eligible applicant can be offered the place.

Acknowledgement of response

Whether you accept or decline an offer, you will be sent a confirmation of your decision. If this confirmation is not received within 21 days you should contact the Unit.

Reminder advice

In December 2012, parents or carers who have accepted a place or are on a reserve list will be sent a reminder to advise that they should notify the Unit if they no longer want the place, so that an offer can be made to the next eligible applicant.

Authority to attend

Once you have accepted an offer you might be asked to fill in enrolment forms for your child during the school's orientation program. Even if you have completed enrolment papers at the school, you will be sent an authority from the NSW Department of Education and Communities authorising your child to attend the school. This authority will be sent in January 2013. The student must present this authority to the school on the first day of Term 1 2013.

Apart from giving official authorisation for your child to attend a selective high school, this authority serves as a reminder to people who no longer wish to take up their offer that they should notify the Unit, so that the place can be offered to the next eligible applicant.

To finalise enrolment at a selective high school you must have:

1. received an *Authority to attend* from the Selective High School and Opportunity Class Placement Unit
2. satisfied all NSW Department of Education and Communities enrolment requirements.

Withdrawal of offers

Offers will be withdrawn if it is found that students do not satisfy all the requirements, such as permanent residency, or if students do not enrol at the school at the beginning of the school year without providing a satisfactory explanation.

Offers or enrolments may be terminated if placement is made on the basis of false or misleading information.

Offers will lapse if the Unit, after at least three attempts, is unable to contact the applicant to make the offer or determine the response.

Any deferment must be negotiated with the Unit or the selective high school principal before enrolment. You cannot defer enrolment beyond the first day of Term 2 2013.

Holiday arrangements

If you will be away when offers are being made, you should notify the Unit of a contact address, telephone number or email address and the length of time you will be away. In some circumstances the Unit may contact the special contact person listed on the application.

If your child is on a reserve list you may accept in advance any offer that may be made while you are away.

Early advice

Outcome advice is sent as soon as the information is available and checked. However, if you have a good reason for needing to know the possible outcome early, e.g. having to pay a non-refundable deposit exceeding \$750 to secure a place at an alternative school, you should:

- contact the Unit for an *Early advice request* form
- complete the form, enclosing evidence, e.g. a letter offering a place at a non-Government high school with the closing date and the amount of the deposit clearly stated
- sign the undertaking to keep the information strictly confidential
- return the form to the Unit
- telephone the Unit a day or two before the deadline.

If the early release of information has been approved, you will be told the likely outcome as it appears at the time.

This information is given only once. It is important to understand that the accuracy of this early information cannot be guaranteed as the selection process may not be complete at that stage.

Generally the only information the Unit can be reasonably certain about at that stage is whether a particular student is unsuccessful for all choices. No information will be available before early June.

Late offers

Parents whose children are on reserve lists will be offered a place if their position on a reserve list is reached.

These offers can be made at any time from July 2012 until mid-June 2013 when the Years 8 to 12 application process begins. Students who have been offered a place and are also on reserve lists for higher choices will be sent a subsequent offer if their reserve list position is reached. Such offers will be made whether or not previous offers have been accepted or declined.

Note that after the end of the 2012 school year at 3pm on Wednesday 19 December 2012, no further offers will be made to students who have already accepted a place at a selective high school unless there are extenuating circumstances.

In addition to the extenuating circumstances, there will need to be a vacancy, the student must qualify academically for the other selective high school and both selective high school principals must approve.

Reports for schools

The Unit will send reports to Government primary schools listing the outcome for each of their candidates.

The Unit may, upon request, send reports to non-Government schools listing the outcome for each of their candidates whose application forms provide school assessment scores.

Assessment scores and other results

Candidates will receive in their outcome advice the score out of 300 they achieved in the selective high school placement process, provided that they sat the Selective High School Placement Test.

Further details of the scores achieved by your child will be available on request using the *Request for scores* form available on the Internet.

Requests will be processed together at the end of July and each subsequent month until December. Details of scores will not be provided over the phone.

Appeals

You may appeal against the decision of the selection committee if you feel there were special factors which might have prevented the student from gaining higher school assessment scores or test scores, or if there were other factors which might not have been considered by the selection committee. Documentary evidence should accompany the appeal wherever relevant.

All appeals must be made on an appeal form which is available from the Unit's web site or by contacting the Unit. You should complete the parents' section of the appeal form and pass it on to your child's primary school principal by **20 July 2012**. The principal should complete the principal's section and return the form to the Unit by **27 July 2012**.

If the student's school or test performance was likely to have been affected by illness, the Unit should have been notified by **5 April 2012** as part of the illness/misadventure process (see page 7). Appeals based on illness will therefore be considered only in exceptional circumstances and all such appeals must include a medical certificate covering the day of the test.

If you are appealing on other grounds, you should include evidence to support your appeal.

If your appeal is based on the student's school performance, the panel will consider only evidence concerning performance up to the end of 2011.

The appeals panel may consult with the primary school principal to seek further information if necessary.

You will be notified of the outcome of your appeal in **October 2012**.

Late application

Late applications will not generally be considered except where there are extenuating circumstances.

If you have a good reason for making an application after the closing date, you **must include** a written explanation and a supporting statement from the school principal or other appropriate person. If no explanation is provided the late application cannot be considered.

The selection committee will decide whether or not the late application will be considered. If the selection committee accepts the reason for the late application, the student might be considered on moderated school assessment scores. Where neither test assessment scores nor school assessment scores which can be moderated are

available, applicants might be able to use the interstate/overseas application procedure or may be considered on the basis of any alternative evidence presented.

If your application is received after **17 February 2012** your child will generally not be tested and your application will be considered **only** if there is a shortage of suitable applicants. While there is normally no such shortage, some regional schools and those which take boarders may have some places available for late applicants.

Enquiries

Enquiries can be directed to the principal of the Government school that your child is currently attending or to the Unit at the address or numbers shown on the cover of this document.

Enquiries about courses and programs offered by specific selective high schools should be addressed to the schools concerned. The web site of each selective high school is shown at the end of this document where the schools are listed.

The student number will be supplied by return email where parents apply online. Where parents use the paper application the barcode number on the top right-hand corner of page 1 of the application form is the student number.

Parents will need to quote the student number or give other identifying information before officers of the Unit will discuss confidential student details on the telephone. Parents who cannot provide adequate identifying information on request will need to make written enquiries.

The Unit's Internet page is updated regularly throughout the placement process. The updates show what is happening at each stage of the process. If you have a question you may find the answer on the Internet page at the address shown on the cover of this document.

The Selective High School and Opportunity Class Placement Unit also employs a telephone system to assist you to keep in touch with what is happening at various stages of the process. The telephone system provides answers to commonly asked questions.

Material contributions

As with all Government schools, tuition at selective high schools is free, but schools may ask for a voluntary contribution to cover services such as library, textbooks and curriculum-related resources.

Schools may also ask for contributions to cover the purchase of materials in certain subjects and to cover costs associated with sport or excursions. Boarding fees for residential agricultural high schools are outlined on page 11.

Supplementary requirements

Some applicants need to provide further information with the application. These include applicants:

- from interstate and overseas
- for the virtual selective class provision
- from non-Government schools where the principal is unwilling to provide school assessment scores
- for residential agricultural high schools.

Interstate and overseas students

Australian citizens or permanent residents temporarily living interstate or overseas who are unable to take the Selective High School Placement Test will be considered by the selection committee through either the interstate/overseas procedures or the illness/misadventure procedures.

- To use the illness/misadventure procedure students must have attended a NSW primary school during Year 5 and must have school assessment scores which can be moderated.
- To use the interstate/overseas procedure you should contact the Unit or download from the Unit's web site a *Report of academic merit for use by interstate and overseas applicants* and arrange, at your own expense, for individual and standardised testing of your child by a registered psychologist or other qualified practitioner. You need to complete both the *Report of academic merit for use by interstate and overseas applicants* and the application.

Interstate and overseas applicants are required to submit the application and *Report of academic merit* by the day of the test, **Thursday 15 March 2012**. If you wish to apply online you should complete that part of the application by **21 November 2011**. Other material can be sent in before **15 March 2012**.

Some interstate and overseas applicants return to NSW to do the Selective High School Placement Test. If this is the case you must show on the application form a town or suburb in NSW so that a test centre can be allocated.

Virtual selective class provision

Applicants for the virtual selective class provision, known as *xsel*, need to submit the application. Principals will complete a *Virtual selective class: Report of academic merit*. This additional information is intended to assist the selection committee to assess whether the student is suitable for this method of teaching and learning. Principals will be able to download this form from the Directorate's intranet page and will attach it to the application once it is completed. Students currently enrolled in non-Government schools will have to enrol in a Government school in Year 7 to participate in the virtual selective class provision.

Formal exemption

A small number of non-Government schools may be unwilling to process the application. Parents of students from such schools must seek a formal exemption after they have approached the schools. Exemption forms can be downloaded or they are available from the Unit.

The exemption form contains further details about when and where the form must be lodged. Formal exemption will normally not be granted by the selection committee if the applicant does not have school assessment scores but other students from the school do.

Applicants who have NOT lodged their application with the school principal of a NSW school will be ineligible for placement unless they have sought and been granted exemption. If a formal exemption has been granted, applications will usually be considered on the basis of the Selective High School Placement Test only.

Note: Interstate and overseas applicants are not required to seek formal exemption. School assessment scores provided by interstate and overseas schools cannot be used for score processing, though they can be considered as supporting evidence.

Residential agricultural high schools

There are three residential agricultural high schools:

Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, Tamworth (boarding and day students; boys only)

Hurlstone Agricultural High School, Glenfield (boarding and day students; co-educational)

Yanco Agricultural High School, Yanco (boarding only; co-educational)

Students who are successful in gaining a boarding place at these schools are required to board (live) at the school.

Agriculture is a compulsory subject from Years 7 to 10 and for students entering the school in Year 11 in each of these schools.

Where an application is made for any of the residential agricultural high schools, applicants should ensure that the details of the geographically isolated claim and the reason for choosing to study agriculture are shown on the application.

Boarding fees

For 2011 the boarding fee for Years 7 to 10 was between \$6600 and \$8500, payable in instalments of around \$2100 at the beginning of each term. The boarding fee for Years 11 and 12 was approximately \$15 000 to \$18 000, payable in seven instalments over two years (four in Year 11 and three in Year 12). The boarding fees for 2013 are yet to be determined. Fees payable should be confirmed with the school.

Residential agricultural high schools can levy an application fee, payable on acceptance of a residential place. This amount is deducted from the fees when the

student enrolls but is forfeited if the student is withdrawn after a place has been accepted.

Note: Parents must sign a residential student agreement undertaking to pay the boarding fees on the first day of each term. Offers may be withdrawn if parents fail to honour their commitment to pay their fees in full and on time.

Priority for boarder placement

Priority for boarder placement is decided in the following isolation categories:

- a) Those students considered 'geographically isolated' according to the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme. (For further details see the brochure *Assistance for Isolated Children*). These include students who:
 - have to travel 56 km or more (by the shortest practicable route) between the principal family home and the nearest appropriate Government high school
 - have to travel (by the shortest practicable route) 16 km or more between the principal family home and the nearest appropriate Government high school AND 4.5 km or more between the principal family home and transport service to the nearest appropriate Government high school
 - do not have reasonable access to an appropriate Government high school for at least 20 days of the school year because of adverse travel conditions (e.g. impassable roads) or other circumstances beyond the family's control.
- b) Country students (those living outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong) with a demonstrated commitment to agriculture and science who would have to travel at least 2 hours a day (return) to attend a Government high school offering agriculture in Years 8 to 10.
- c) Other country students with a demonstrated commitment to agriculture and science. These will be considered on the same basis as applicants for day places based on academic merit.
- d) City students (those living in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong) with a demonstrated commitment to agriculture and science who would have to travel at least 2 hours a day (return) to attend a Government high school offering agriculture in Years 8 to 10.
- e) Other city students will be considered on the same basis as applicants for day places based on academic merit.

The selection committee may also apply other recognised measures of isolation in consideration of the application.

Note: The student's ability to cope in a boarder situation will be taken into consideration. The selection committee may seek information from the primary school principal.

Within categories a, b and c, students will be prioritised according to the length of travel time (excluding time spent waiting for transport) and academic merit.

If applying for a boarding place you should complete all of the residential agricultural school section on the application including:

- isolation factors
- interest in agriculture.

Note: For Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School and Hurlstone Agricultural High School, a student successful in gaining a boarder placement cannot later be automatically transferred to a day student place, as the placement process is different for boarder and day places.

In addition to satisfying residency requirements and other conditions for entry, enrolment as a boarding student is subject to the provision of a medical report for the student.

Schemes providing financial assistance for boarding students

A. NSW Secondary students living away from home allowance (LAFHA)

This allowance is a NSW State Government allowance administered by the NSW Department of Education and Communities. The allowance is reviewed yearly. In 2011 the allowance is valued at \$1,284 per annum, paid in two semester payments of \$642 each, with an additional \$301 per year available if the student is in Year 11 or 12 and is geographically isolated. LAFHA is subject to a means test; the adjusted family taxable income for the year ending 30 June 2011 cannot exceed \$56,235. **New applications are available from early December each year to apply for the following year.**

Application forms are available from residential agricultural high schools and the Allowances Officer, Secondary Students' Living Away From Home Allowance, Rural and Distance Education, PO Box 717, Bathurst NSW 2795. Telephone 02 6334 8075 or email: leigh.luxford@det.nsw.edu.au

B. Boarding Scholarships for Isolated Students (BSIS)

These scholarships are available to eligible families who meet strict criteria related to isolation and economic circumstances and are valued at \$4,290 each for 2011.

Further information about the BSIS is available at: www.schools.nsw.edu.au/rde/scholarships/index.php

C. Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme (AIC)

AIC is a Commonwealth Government scheme that targets students who do not have reasonable daily access to an appropriate Government school because the family home is geographically isolated. Information about this scheme is contained in a brochure published by Centrelink. The brochure and application forms are available from all Centrelink offices or you may wish to telephone 132 318.

The brochure is also reproduced on the Internet at: <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/publications/st008.htm>

Intending applicants are also reminded that in addition to geographic isolation, the brochure lists special circumstances which might contribute to the student's isolation.

Students may also be able to obtain assistance from Youth Allowance (phone 132 490) or ABSTUDY (phone 132 317), both of which are administered by the Commonwealth.

Please contact the specific residential agricultural high school for more details about these schemes.

Frequently asked questions

1. Must I list four schools?

You should list only those schools you are prepared to accept. You may list from one to four choices. Consider your choices carefully.

2. Does the order in which I list my choices matter?

Yes. If your child qualifies for more than one of your choices, you will be offered a place only at the school of highest choice for which your child qualifies.

3. What provision is made for students from non-Government schools?

The selection procedures are exactly the same for all students. Principals of non-Government primary schools have been asked to accept your application, add school assessment scores and comments, and send it to the Unit. In circumstances where this is not possible you should seek formal exemption.

4. What can I do to prepare my child for the Selective High School Placement Test?

Children should be encouraged to familiarise themselves with the kinds of questions they will be asked. Students can practise answering the questions in the sample test papers available on the Unit's web site. Students will also be given practice questions before the test begins.

5. What happens if my child gets sick on the day of the test?

You should immediately obtain an *Illness/misadventure form*. You should complete the form, whether or not the student attempted the test, enclose a medical certificate which covers the day of the test, and return the completed form to the Unit by 5 April 2012. The selection committee will then consider the student's illness/misadventure claim as part of the selection process. Remember, it is generally better to attempt the test than to miss it. You will not be able to appeal on the grounds of illness after the outcome is known.

6. If my outcome advice indicates that my child is unsuccessful, can his or her name be placed on a reserve list?

No. Three key expressions are used in outcome advice: 'offer', 'reserve list' and 'unsuccessful'. The selection committees decide the students who will receive

offers and those who will be placed on the reserve list. These students have higher scores than those who are unsuccessful. Students placed on the reserve list will be given a number indicating their position on the reserve list. Progress on the reserve list varies from year to year. When offers begin to be made from the reserve list, the progress of each school's reserve list is available on the web site shown on the front of this document.

7. What does the Selective High School Placement Test tell me about my child's performance?

The Selective High School Placement Test is designed to help identify students for entry into selective high schools on the basis of academic merit. It is not meant to identify the student's strengths and weaknesses in English or mathematics performance. The student's primary school is in a far better position to advise you on your child's performance in these areas.

8. If my child was unsuccessful for opportunity class placement, does it mean he or she will be unsuccessful for selective high school entry?

Not necessarily. The entry requirements for opportunity classes and selective high school placement can vary quite significantly. Moreover, there is scope for improvement in the ability and performance of students over the time since they applied for opportunity class placement. Conversely, not all students from opportunity classes are successful for selective high school entry.

9. If I receive an offer to one of my lower choices as well as being on the reserve list for one of my higher choices, do I have to give up the offer to stay on the reserve list?

You can accept an offer to one school while remaining on the reserve list for one or more of your higher choices until the end of the school year in 2012. After that time no further offers will be made to students who have already accepted placement in a selective high school.

10. If my child is one of the last to be made an offer, does that mean he or she will struggle at a selective high school?

There are many things which can affect student performance, including your child's willingness to learn, his or her response to teachers, and interaction with other students. While some students who receive late offers might have problems, the majority should have no difficulties. The selection committee offers places or reserve list positions only to those students considered capable of doing well at a selective high school.

11. What should I do if my child does not get into a selective high school?

As there is one place for approximately every three people applying, not all students can be placed. Be supportive and explain to your child that he or she can be very successful at a comprehensive high school. Students from comprehensive high schools can achieve results which

are as good as, or even better than, results gained by selective high school students.

12. What score does a student have to gain to be successful for selective high school placement?

There is no pre-determined score that a student has to achieve to be successful for selective high school placement. The minimum entry score for each selective high school depends on the score achieved by the candidates applying for that school and can vary from school to school and from year to year. The greater the demand for the school the higher the entry score is likely to be. For example, in a school with 150 places, the entry score achieved for the 150th ranked student offered a place at that school becomes the entry score. The entry scores required for the previous year are available on the Unit's web site.

13. How can I find out my child's score?

Most applicants will receive their child's profile score at the bottom of their outcome advice in July 2012. To receive further details of your child's scores in the selective high school placement process, after you have received your outcome advice, please complete a *Request for scores form* which is available from the Internet.

14. How does the reserve list work?

If the student is on a reserve list for a selective high school the number on the outcome advice shows the student's position on the list. The progress of the reserve list depends on whether students accept or decline an offer and whether other students receive subsequent offers to a school of higher choice. If a student's position is reached on the reserve list, parents will be contacted by the Unit with an offer. From early August 2012 you can track the progress of the reserve lists on the web site. The page is updated regularly.

15. Can I change my choice of schools after submitting the application?

Parents are advised to consider carefully their choices when submitting the application. Before **3 May 2012**, when selection committee lists are created, parents can submit a change of choice without explanation. After this date, it is very much more difficult. Changes are subject to approval and must be accompanied by documentary evidence of the reason for the change at this stage. In some cases changes of choice may need to be submitted as an appeal.

16. Why do some partially selective high schools combine selective and comprehensive students in the senior years?

Some partially selective high schools do this. It allows the school to better organise the timetable and offer more electives than would be possible if the selective students were kept as a separate group. This organisation advantages selective students as the school can offer a wider range of electives.

Selective high schools with Year 7 vacancies in 2013

You may choose up to **four** selective high schools. Please consider your choices carefully.

Fully selective

School code	School details	Web site
Co-educational		
BHH	Baulkham Hills High School Windsor Road, Baulkham Hills 2153	http://www.baulkhamhillshighschool.com.au
CAR	Caringbah High School Willarong Road, Caringbah 2229	http://www.caringbah.nsw.edu.au
FOR	Fort Street High School Parramatta Road, Petersham 2049	http://www.fortstreet.nsw.edu.au
GIR	Girraween High School Gilba Road, Girraween 2145	http://www.girraween-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
GOS	Gosford High School Racecourse Road, Gosford 2250	http://www.gosfordhigh.com.au
MAN	Manly Campus Northern Beaches Secondary College Abbott Road, North Curl Curl 2099	http://www.manlyselective.nsw.edu.au
MER	Merewether High School Chatham Street, Broadmeadow 2292	http://www.merewether-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
PEN	Penrith High School High Street, Penrith 2750	http://www.penrithhighschool.nsw.edu.au
SMH	Smiths Hill High School Gipps Street, Wollongong 2500	http://www.smithshill-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
Male		
NBH	Normanhurst Boys High School Pennant Hills Road, Normanhurst 2076	http://www.normanhurb-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
NSB	North Sydney Boys High School Falcon Street, Crows Nest 2065	http://www.nsbhs.nsw.edu.au
SBH	Sydney Boys High School Moore Park, Anzac Parade, Surry Hills 2010	http://www.sydneyboyshigh.com
STH	Sydney Technical High School Forest Road, Bexley 2207	http://www.sths.nsw.edu.au
Female		
HGH	Hornsby Girls High School Edgeworth David Avenue, Hornsby 2077	http://www.hornsbygir-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
NSG	North Sydney Girls High School Pacific Highway, Crows Nest 2065	http://www.northsydgi-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
SGG	St George Girls High School Victoria Street, Kogarah 2217	http://www.stgeorgegi-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
SGH	Sydney Girls High School Moore Park, Anzac Parade, Surry Hills 2010	http://www.sghs.nsw.edu.au

Selective high schools with Year 7 vacancies in 2013

Partially selective

School code	School details	Web site
ALX	Alexandria Park Community School [^] Park Road, Alexandria 2015	http://www.alexparkcs-c.schools.nsw.edu.au
ARM	Armidale High School Butler Street, Armidale 2350	http://www.armidale-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
AUB	Auburn Girls High School Hunter Street and Braemar Ave, Auburn 2144	http://www.auburng-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
BAL	Balmain Campus# Sydney Secondary College (Years 7 to 10) Terry Street, Rozelle 2039	http://www.balmain-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
BLB	Blacktown Boys High School Sunnyholt Road & Fifth Ave, Blacktown 2148	http://www.blacktownb-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
BLG	Blacktown Girls High School Fifth Avenue, Blacktown 2148	http://www.blacktowng-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
BON	Bonnyrigg High School Elizabeth Drive, Bonnyrigg 2177	http://www.bonnyrigg-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
CHA	Chatswood High School Centennial Avenue, Chatswood 2067	http://www.chatswood-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
DUV	Duval High School Crest Road, Armidale 2350	http://www.duval-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
EMH	Elizabeth Macarthur High School Waterworth Drive, Narellan 2567	http://www.elizabeth-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
GOR	Gorokan High School Goobarabah Ave, Gorokan 2263	http://www.gorokan-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
GRA	Grafton High School Oliver & Mary Streets, Grafton 2460	http://www.grafton-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
KAR	Karabar High School Donald Road, Queanbeyan 2620	http://www.karabarhigh.com.au
KOO	Koorinal High School Ziegler Avenue, Koorinal North 2650	http://www.koorinal-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
LEI	Leichhardt Campus# Sydney Secondary College (Years 7 to 10) Balmain Road, Leichhardt 2040	http://www.leichhardt-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
MFH	Macquarie Fields High School Harold Street, Macquarie Fields 2564	http://www.mfhs.nsw.edu.au
MOO	Moorebank High School Bangalow Avenue, Moorebank 2170	http://www.moorebankhigh.nsw.edu.au
PAR	Parramatta High School Great Western Hwy & Pitt St, Parramatta 2150	http://www.parramatta-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
PHS	Peel High School Gunnedah Road, Tamworth 2340	http://www.peel-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
PRA	Prairiewood High School Prairievale Road, Wetherill Park 2164	http://www.prairiewoodhigh.com.au
ROS	Rose Bay Secondary College [^] Hardy Street, Dover Heights 2030	http://www.rosebay-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
RYD	Ryde Secondary College Malvina Street, Ryde 2112	http://www.rydesc-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
SEF	Sefton High School Hector Street, Sefton 2162	http://www.sefton-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
TEM	Tempe High School [^] Unwins Bridge Road, Tempe 2044	http://www.tempe-h.schools.nsw.edu.au

