

Acceleration Guidance for Parents

What is acceleration?

Acceleration is an advanced learning pathway where students are enrolled in and are working towards learning outcomes beyond their age. Acceleration can be applied across one or more of the domains of potential, that is, intellectual, creative, physical and social-emotional.



Physical



Intellectual



Creative



Social-emotional

Acceleration is not limited to academic achievement

The purpose of acceleration is to provide students with learning that matches their advanced needs. Gifted students learn complex content with greater ease and speed compared to their age peers. Interventions such as acceleration can support these students remain engaged when learning.

When acceleration is in the best interest of a student, this may include options such as:

- single or multiple subject acceleration
- whole grade skipping
- early entry to kindergarten or university.

These options may be combined with other advanced learning opportunities, extra support and flexible learning pathways, that will support their development.

Acceleration is not about pushing or 'forcing' the student to learn advanced material or techniques before they are ready, rather it is a highly effective intervention, widely supported by research, that respects the student's individual learning needs and provides the flexibility to accommodate them. When considering acceleration, it is important to remember that what works best for one student may not for another.



In addition to this general information, it is strongly encouraged parents engage with the information provided in the department [Revisiting Gifted Education Literature Review 2019](#), conducted by the Centre of Education Statistics and Evaluation. You may have received this from the school along with this flyer or you can access an audio version [here](#).

Why and when could acceleration be considered?

Acceleration should be used when it is in the best learning interests of a gifted, or highly gifted, student. Some indicators for acceleration but may include:

- a disconnect between ability and achievement
- boredom
- desire for more challenge
- high-level performance or skill
- the ability to work beyond year/stage level.

These indicators do not in themselves determine that acceleration is required.

Acceleration may not be appropriate for every student who demonstrates high performance

For those it is deemed appropriate:

- earlier interventions can result in better outcomes for these students
- the decision needs to respect the informed views of the parents/carers, the student, and the school's staff.

You can nominate a student for acceleration at any time, although it is recommended that it occur at natural transition points for example, moving from primary school to high school.

What are the benefits?

- students benefit when the curriculum flexibly meets their learning needs
- research very strongly supports acceleration as a highly effective strategy for gifted and highly gifted students
- research consistently shows positive social outcomes in all forms of acceleration
- can increase student engagement and allow students to work with peers with similar interests.
- supportive of students social and emotional wellbeing
- studies have found no observed evidence that acceleration results in negative academic or social outcomes for students.

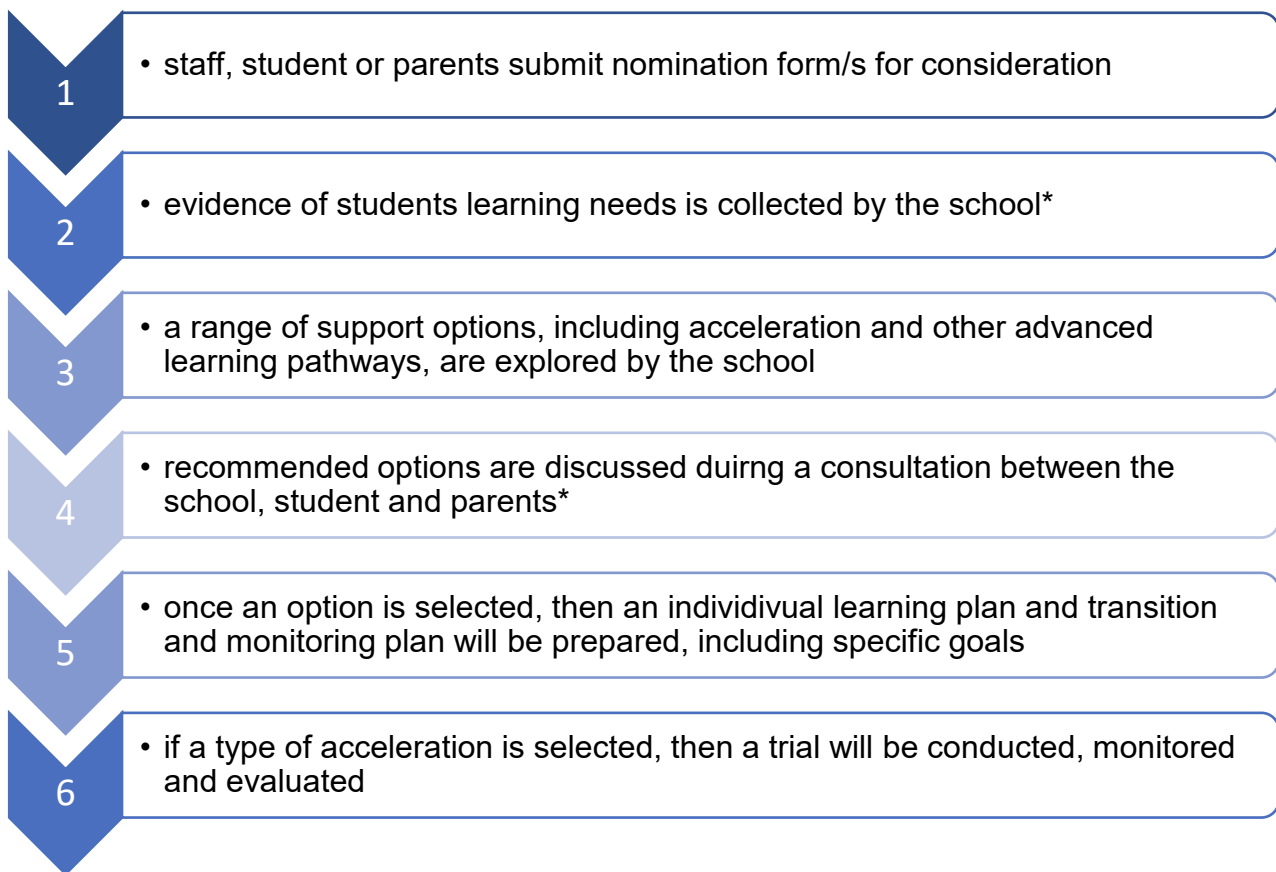
What is the process of nominating a student for acceleration?

To be effective, acceleration:

- must be in a student's best learning interests
- the student must want to participate
- should be supported by the student's school and family.



Careful consideration of many factors must be considered before trialling an acceleration option. A nomination for acceleration is not an application, but a suggestion that this pathway should be considered.



*The consultation process that occurs will include you, the student, school staff such as school counsellor, teachers, Learning and Support staff and the principal. You will need to be prepared to meet and discuss your nomination with some, or all, these staff.

It is important that the school, parent/carers and students need to understand there will be an adjustment period and student transition should be monitored. Any acceleration plans will undergo regular monitoring, review, evaluation and are likely to be amended.

Acceleration should only be continued while it remains in the best interest of the student

Lastly, it is important to be aware, circumstances can change, or other priorities may eventuate that could lead to a decision to decelerate and/or substitute with alternative advanced learning pathways. Throughout any review or changes, the student's needs and wellbeing should be core to any decision making.



Before making a nomination consider these questions:

- How do current school provisions support my child's development?
- Is there a gap between my child's potential and how they are developing?
- Do I have enough information to help me? make an informed decision?

Useful websites

NSW DoE High Potential and Gifted Education - [Supporting parents and carers](#)

AAEGT – [Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented](#)

Gifted NSW – [Gifted Families Support Group Inc](#)

Advocating for gifted learners with disability – [Gifted Learners with Disability Australia](#)