

## What is Gifted and Talented?

According to the Department of Education's Public School's Policy on Gifted and Talented:

**Gifted** is defined as:

The possession and use of outstanding natural abilities, called aptitudes, in at least one ability domain.

**Talented** is defined as:

Outstanding mastery of systematically developed abilities, called competencies (knowledge and skills), in at least one field of human activity. Talent emerges from the ability as a consequence of the student's learning experience.

Simply put, Melville SHS Gifted and Talented Program works to propel gifted students into manifested talent.

## Gifted and Talented Program at MSHS

Through the Department of Education, Melville SHS is a participating school providing a Gifted and Talented Selective Entrance Academic Program. Selection into the program is based on the results of the Academic Selective Entrance Test (ASET). Students who accept entrance into the program after testing are allowed outside of Melville SHS's catchment.

Melville SHS is one of the fourteen public secondary metropolitan schools with a Gifted and Talented Selective Entrance Academic Program. Programs vary from school to school and are distinguished in the extension, enrichment and extracurricular activities offered.

Students selected in the Gifted and Talented Program (GAT) study Mathematics, Science, Humanities and English together as a unified group from Years 7-10.

Melville SHS's Gifted and Talented Program is distinguished from the mainstream in MESH subject area curriculum extension and/or enrichment and the variety of opportunities offered outside the classroom.

## MSHS Gifted and Talented Program - Curriculum, Coordinator, Students & Teachers

### Curriculum Extension

Gifted and Talented students are extended in their core subjects' curriculum while following curriculum standards according to SCSA and ACARA. The extension concerns the depth of students and the ability to apply or integrate one's knowledge at a deeper level of conceptualisation.

At Melville SHS, the Gifted and Talented Program does not skip foundational curriculum material. Instead, it attains this material at a student-guided pace while matching the complexity and depth with the readiness and motivation of the class. This means that some concepts may be attained in less time and students may be ready to examine content at a deeper level. In MESH subjects, Gifted and Talented students follow the same course and assessment outline as the mainstream cohort, in addition to extension in investigations, cross-curricular concepts, critical thinking, using information to create, taking information apart and exploring relationships. Extension activities are not used as additional work but as more *appropriate work* based on the class's ability. In addition, extension activities allow Gifted and Talented students to apply and integrate their studies while extending their capabilities.

Example of extension in a gifted and talented program:

*In Year 7 G&T English, students are to investigate intertextuality in a text. 'Intertextuality' as a narrative element and literature concept is introduced to students in conjunction with all key narrative elements.*

### Curriculum Enrichment

Depending on the learning area and year level, GAT teachers may use enrichment to broaden student knowledge understanding and application. Enrichment concerns the broadening of content by understanding processes and skills beyond the core curriculum and at the level appropriate to the student's development.

The GAT Program at Melville SHS uses enrichment activities and opportunities in conjunction with MESH subjects' content to provide new experiences for students. This is evident in incursions/excursions organised by the GAT Coordinator that involve, but are not limited to: visiting historical sites, engagement in outreach workshops/programs with universities, team-building camps and engagement in state and national competitions.

In the GAT classroom, enrichment may take place in MESH subjects through an emphasis on the processes and skills of the content. For example, a GAT classroom may emphasise and vary the way content is learned (i.e., small group investigation, focus on co-operative skills, independent research). In addition, enrichment in GAT places the central focus on skills learned (i.e., exercising logical thought and problem-solving, using communication to present an idea).

Example of enrichment in a Gifted and Talented Program:

*In Year 8 G&T English, students work in pairs to design an escape route and solution for a speculative fictional event, such as a 'zombie apocalypse'. Students must assign roles and persuade the class that their answer is the most logical. This enrichment activity takes place during the core study of speeches and rhetoric.*

## The Gifted and Talented Student - Characteristics and Considerations

Due to the nature of a selective entrance program such as Gifted and Talented that requires testing to be considered 'gifted', it is still critical to view every gifted student as an individual. However, when working with a gifted classroom, there are shared characteristics of students that our GAT teachers understand deeply.

### *Social & Emotional Considerations*

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• higher initial level of understanding</li><li>• larger learning steps</li><li>• faster pace of learning</li><li>• more abstract learning</li><li>• more self-structuring</li><li>• extended periods of concentration</li><li>• preference for independent work</li><li>• reasons at a higher level than age peers</li><li>• multiple interests and abilities</li><li>• ability to generate original ideas</li><li>• immersion learners</li><li>• non-linear thinkers</li><li>• capacity to connect disconnected ideas</li><li>• may be a task involved or performance-oriented</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uneven development</li><li>• may not be gifted in all areas</li><li>• peer relations</li><li>• excessive self-criticism</li><li>• perfectionism</li><li>• avoidance of risk-taking</li><li>• multi-potentiality</li><li>• school culture and norms</li><li>• expectation by others</li><li>• depression and other mental health issues</li><li>• family relations</li></ul>

Considering these characteristics, our GAT teachers incorporate various methods to help gifted students reach their potential. In addition, GAT teachers may use multiple strategies when working with these students. This includes:

- use and teach clear verbal and nonverbal communication skills (verbal listening, responding, questioning, problem-solving, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice).
- teach stress management where suited
- create a comforting environment
- help raise awareness of one's behaviours and their impact on others
- allow enough time for an activity, incorporate physical and verbal activities
- provide time for spontaneity and open-ended activities
- show *how* to find the answers to questions
- help overly critical students see how their intent may be perceived or disrespectful
- help students identify and anticipate physical and emotional responses where suited

### *Curriculum Considerations*

Gifted students are expected to learn the same concepts and curriculum as mainstream students. However, due to their giftedness and abilities in making connections faster and working well with abstractions, they need to work with the curriculum at high instructional levels, sometimes at a faster pace and using various materials for their learning styles and interests.

Differentiated instruction is necessary for gifted students due to their ability to: learn at a faster pace, have greater independence in studies and thought and increased complexity and depth in content. Our GAT teachers may take the following considerations when teaching gifted students:

- acceleration and ability grouping
- rigour, challenge and pace
- focus on metacognition
- teach to the top and differentiate down
- extension, enrichment and passion projects
- curriculum not linked to marks and grades
- invisible support
- twice-exceptional considerations

### Gifted and Talented Coordinator - Roles and Responsibilities

Melville SHS Gifted and Talented (GAT) Coordinator is responsible for leading a dynamic GAT Program that meets the needs of gifted students. The GAT Coordinator will drive teaching and learning programs and whole-school initiatives across the GAT program and be the primary contact for parents.

Duties are associated with promoting and developing the program and working collaboratively across the school to facilitate educational opportunities and support gifted students.

Responsibilities include:

- lead teaching and learning programs that meet the needs and characteristics of GAT students, as well as the direction of MSHS Operational Plan and the Department of Education's Gifted and Talented in Public Schools Policy.
- maintain effective and consistent communication as the primary contact for parents and carers of GAT students.
- regularly evaluate and outline the program's annual budget and finances to establish management of resources and direction of the program.
- organise and facilitate incursions and excursions for GAT students that enrich their academic and non-academic opportunities and experiences.
- use a range of evidence-based sources, including student results, to evaluate the program to better meet GAT students' needs.
- build and maintain partnerships with outreach programs in universities and other school networks.
- work collaboratively with HOLAs and GAT teachers to support learning programs that instil 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Design, STEM education and teaching resources that promote analytical and critical thinking skills.
- engage in professional learning experiences and reading to keep abreast of GAT education.
- liaise with Student Services and support GAT teachers to manage student care and concerns.
- organise and facilitate events that engage GAT parents/carers, celebrate student success or support academic learning.
- administer GAT Student Leaders program to enhance student voice within the program
- run and administer GAT Study Club to provide tuition support

## Gifted and Talented Teachers - Roles and Responsibilities

Melville SHS Gifted and Talented teachers are encouraged to partake in specific learning and preparation for their GAT class. This includes:

- carefully examine the Course and Assessment Outline for their learning area/class and teaching strategies necessary for a GAT class.
- determine and integrate appropriate enrichment and/or extension activities with the curriculum.
- encourage students to proceed through their studies at a pace commensurate with their abilities.
- incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Design in curriculum teaching, explicitly teach study and organisation, expressly provide for extension and/or enrichment

<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>HASS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on building confidence to explore thinking processes.</li> <li>- Tying content to creative skills and engagement</li> <li>- Weekly investigations to build problem-solving and cross-curricular connections</li> <li>- Focus on algebraic skills in middle school and preparation for Mathematics Specialist and Methods for those gifted in maths.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use essential or overarching questions to guide learning</li> <li>- Synthesising ideas and concepts</li> <li>- Project-based learning and exploration of concepts</li> <li>- Using advanced terminology</li> <li>- Student-driven exploration and examination of concepts</li> <li>- Reading texts in more than one way (close readings)</li> <li>- Preparation for a Literature pathway in Senior School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More investigations by critically examining information</li> <li>- Explore and learn coding and other programmable devices using robots</li> <li>- Exposure to different areas of the subject that is not part of the curriculum (coding, biology, other areas of physics, health sciences)</li> <li>- Preparation for Physics and/or Chemistry in Senior School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In-depth exploration of content that nurtures analytical skills in history and interpretation of data in geography</li> <li>- Investigations that understand the mitigation and sustainability of local land environments</li> <li>- Project-based learning in business and entrepreneurship</li> <li>- Preparation for Economics, History and Business in Senior School</li> </ul>

## **MSHS Gifted and Talented Program - Opportunities & Tuition**

### Excursions/Incursions

A key component of Melville Senior High School's GAT Program is the enrichment learning opportunities outside the classroom. From Years 7-10, students will partake in an excursion exclusive to their Gifted and Talented class. Year 7s are welcomed into the program with a team-building overnight camp. This camp has proven successful in helping students establish relationships with each other early on and find friends as they navigate through high school. In Year 10, students experience a similar camp and can bond one last time before concluding

their time in the GAT program. In Year 8 and Year 9, students partake in excursions that strengthen their relationship with each other and provide a learning experience in team-building, communication, historical knowledge and problem-solving.

Other excursions or incursions are organised in conjunction with MESH learning areas. These include competitions, university workshops, tours, short programs, guest speakers and masterclasses. The GAT Program may subsidise students' fees, organise aspects of the event or provide additional support to these experiences.

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
<b>Non-academic excursions/incursions organised and subsidised solely by GAT - Scheduled on the calendar</b>			
Transition Camp @Fairbridge (Week 4-5, Term 1)	Fremantle Prison/Lunch (Term 4)	Escape Room/Team Building (Term 2)	Team-building camp (Week 7-8, Term 1)
<b>Academic past and proposed excursions/incursions subsidised or partly subsidised by GAT and in collaboration with MESH - TBA on the calendar.</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aus. Maths Comp.</li> <li>• Wise Women</li> <li>• Book in a Day</li> <li>• Big Science Competition</li> <li>• WaterWise</li> <li>• Mundaring Weir Excursion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aus. Maths Comp.</li> <li>• Wise Women</li> <li>• Book in a Day</li> <li>• Big Science Competition</li> <li>• RACI</li> <li>• Nearer to Nature Native Program</li> <li>• Democracy in Action - UN WA Youth Speaker Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aus Maths Comp.</li> <li>• Seek Out Science Incursion @Murdoch</li> <li>• Wise Women</li> <li>• Book in a Day</li> <li>• Big Science Competition</li> <li>• Piney Lakes Wetlands Program/Sustainability</li> <li>• Law Courts / Parliament House</li> <li>• Indigenous Tour of Perth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aus. Maths Comp</li> <li>• Seek Out Science Incursion @Murdoch</li> <li>• Wise Women</li> <li>• Book in a Day</li> <li>• Big Science Competition</li> <li>• RACI</li> <li>• Shark Tank</li> <li>• Masterclasses with Murdoch, Curtin</li> <li>• Mock Trial UN - Evatt Competition</li> <li>• Coastal Erosion Case Study</li> <li>• Future Problem Solving Writing Competition</li> </ul>

### Tuition

Melville SHS's GAT Program understands that the gifted student is not always exceptional in all areas of academics and will need support in one or more MESH subjects. It is also essential for students in the later years to have tuition that prepares them for more rigorous Senior School pathways, such as ATAR.

#### *Years 7-10 Study Club*

Every Wednesday from 3 pm-4 pm in the LRC, GAT students have an exclusive space to study, work with their peers or get help from their teachers.

#### *Years 11-12 MESH Tuition*

In Senior School, all MESH subjects provide tuition support in their ATAR classes. These sessions are held throughout the week, before or after school.

## **MSHS Gifted and Talented Program - Student Leaders & Awards Events**

### Gifted and Talented Student Leaders

Student Leadership is a way in which GAT students have the opportunity to voice their concerns or ideas. The GAT Student Leadership group comprises 3-4 representatives from each year group (7-10) and Senior School (x2). The GAT Coordinator meets with Student Leaders fortnightly during recess in the LRC. During this meeting, student leaders voice concerns or initiatives for their year group, plan GAT assemblies, help coordinate excursions or incursions and brainstorm solutions to any unique problems in the GAT program.

Student Leaders' roles and responsibilities include:

- Represent GAT program, year group and school in a positive manner
- Attend Student Leader meetings
- Follow school rules and values
- Advocate for students in the year group and voice concerns to GAT Coordinator
- Assist in organising events, excursions and fundraising
- Prepare and present speeches at school functions and assemblies
- Welcome and assist in tours for visitors and future students and parents
- Show leadership and model appropriate behaviour to all peers

### *Student Leader Nominations*

Every year, student leaders are nominated to allow for diverse voices and perspectives. This takes place during Term 1, for establishment starting Term 2. Student Leaders do not need to be a top student but should have values and behaviour that aligns with school and program expectations. This nomination process takes place around the same time as Year 7 Student Council nominations, which many GAT students apply for.

### *End of the Year GAT Awards Night*

The most significant event for Student Leaders is the GAT Awards Night at the end of the school year. Student Leaders work extensively under the guidance of the GAT Coordinator to plan and deliver the GAT Awards Night in December. Student Leader responsibilities for the event include: planning a short speech and composing a video representing their year group, organising catering, presenting awards and trophies, setting up the PAC and delivering notices of the event.

### Awards and Recognition

The GAT Program at Melville SHS has many reasons to celebrate academic success, as many students in the program excel in many of their subjects. GAT Students are included in mainstream academic awards and recognition that occur throughout the year and within their year group assemblies. However, the GAT Program exclusively recognises top students in various areas of achievement. This is done twice a year, with a small mid-year morning tea celebration and a large end of the year celebration. It is important to student confidence and motivation that GAT students are recognised for their achievements and hard work.

### *Mid-Year Awards - Morning Tea*

At the end of Semester One (Term 2), Years 7-10 GAT students that performed at the top of their class for their MESH subjects are recognised and presented with commendation certificates. This event is held during school hours and precedes a small morning tea. Only students receiving awards and student leaders are allowed to attend.

### *End of the Year GAT Awards Night - Evening*

At the end of the school year (late Term 4), Years 7-10 GAT student leaders host an awards night congratulating and commending GAT students from Years 7-12 who continually excelled

in their MESH subjects. Students who have shown outstanding leadership, values and support for their peers are also commended. Senior School GAT students are also commended and celebrated as their time in high school concludes. Students are awarded trophies by the Principal and commended in speeches by the GAT coordinator. The event is catered and held in the PAC after school in Week 10. It is a ticketed event open to GAT students' families and friends.

## **MSHS Gifted and Talented Program - Testing and Enrolment, Senior School Tracking**

### ASET Testing and Selection

To be accepted to any Gifted and Talented Selective Entrance Academic Program, students must sit the Academic Selective Entrance Test (ASET) in Year 6. Entrance into a Selective Entrance Academic Program is based solely on the results of the ASET. Academic programs have a benchmark score that is required for consideration. The Gifted and Talented ASET has four equally weighted components: reading comprehension, communicating ideas in writing, quantitative reasoning (mathematics and science), and abstract reasoning.

The ASET takes place usually in Term 1 of the school year and is held at various school venues, including Melville SHS. In addition to the ASET, Melville SHS hosts 'Top-Up Testing'. This test gives non-GAT students who missed the ASET to sit for entry into the program from Year 9 onwards.

### *Enrolments Process - Incoming Year 7*

Following the ASET in Term 1, students will be given their offers in late Term 2. This process is facilitated in rounds until the end of the year. The offers are based on their score and the school preferences (3) they listed in their application. Please see the Gifted and Talented Selection Unit website for more information.

### *Summary of key dates related to testing and enrolment*

<b>Event</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Year 8 to 10</b>
Applications Close	Week 1-2 of Term 1	
Academic Testing (ASET and Top-up Testing)	Week 6 of Term 1	TBA by the school from Week 5-7 Term 1
Academic Performance Reports	TBA late May	
GAT MSHS School Tours	June-August	
Offers Start	Late June until July	
Offers Completed	End of Term 3	
Transition Days, Tours, and Evenings	Throughout Term 3 and Term 4	
All Correspondence Completed	End of Term 4	