

High Potential and Gifted Information Sheet

According to the Education Act (1990), education should assist 'each child to achieve his or her education potential'. It is now well understood that all learners need a supportive learning environment, and that all need to feel a sense of success, wellbeing and belonging in order to achieve. For students who have advanced learning capacity for their age, however, evidence shows that *additional support* is needed to ensure that they can reach the full extent of their educational potential. There are a range of specific strategies and programs that can help schools meet the additional needs of gifted learners, which may otherwise be missed in a typical classroom.

There are competing theories that exist about how gifted students develop their higher potential into higher levels of achievement. It is likely to be a mix of internal and external factors including explicit learning experiences, and specialist instruction or programs, as well as motivation, effort and learning skills.

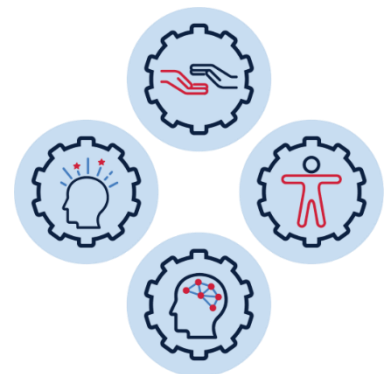
Research has identified several characteristics typical of gifted students:

- The potential for greater analytical depth.
- The ability to process information, thought and learning in a faster, more efficient manner.
- Greater capability in a number of cognitive skills, such as fluid reasoning, creative thinking, memory and abstract reasoning.
- The ability to make inter-subject connections with relative ease.

It is also noted that areas of personal interest and motivation are likely to see the greatest growth and development. These differences in learning characteristics can manifest across a range of domains, including academic, creative and performing arts, leadership, and sporting endeavours.

Recommended strategies for gifted learners:

- Acceleration or advanced learning pathways
- Curriculum differentiation
- Ability grouping
- Enrichment and extracurricular programs



Social-emotional domain of potential

refers to natural abilities in self-management and relating to or interacting with others.



Signs or indicators of high potential:

perceptiveness, empathy, social ease, tactfulness, influence, persuasiveness, eloquence, leadership, and charisma.

Characteristics:

- Self-advanced or organisational and management skills.
- Advanced social and communication skills.
- Emotional stability.
- Empathy.
- Demonstrated leadership and decision-making skills.
- Resilient and self-aware.
- Foresees consequences and implications of decisions.
- Respected by peers.
- Self-confident.
- Task analysis and backwards mapping abilities.
- Social justice advocacy.

Physical domain of potential

refers to natural abilities in muscular movement and motor control.



Signs or indicators of high potential:

power, speed, muscular strength, endurance, flexibility, speed of reflexes, agility coordination, and balance.

Characteristics:

- Subtlety in movement and control of body.
- Self-disciplined.
- Coordinated, balanced and confident in physical activities.
- High energy levels.
- Superior understanding of spatial relationships.
- Endurance, stamina and persistence in physical activities.
- Suitability of body build for area of physical high potential.
- Demonstrates prowess in physical activities common amongst age peers.
- Competitive.
- 'hands on' learning preference.

Creative domain of potential

refers to natural abilities in imagination, invention, and originality.



Signs or indicators of high potential: originality, innovation and inventiveness that have social value in organising ideas, images, words, sound, movement or objects (including digital media).

Characteristics:

- Educational risk taking.
- Tolerance for ambiguity.
- Makes unusual associations between different ideas.
- Demonstrates creative thinking across domain areas and in the different disciplines.
- Demonstrates novel thinking in written and oral expression.
- Flexibility and divergences in thinking.
- Unusual ability for expressing self through art, dance, drama, music.
- Creates several solutions to a given problem.
- Synthesises a variety of ideas in original ways.

Intellectual domain of potential

refers to natural abilities in processing, understanding, reasoning and the transfer of learning.



Signs or indicators of high potential: verbal, numerical, logic and spatial aptitudes, abstract thinking, synthesis and evaluation, problem solving, and use of long term or working memory.

Characteristics:

- Capacity for greater analytical depth.
- Fewer repetitions needed for mastery.
- Greater capability in abstract reasoning.
- Relative ease in making connections between disciplines.
- Advanced reading ability and comprehension.
- Knowledgeable in areas of passion.
- Processes information in complex ways.
- Enjoys hypothesising.
- Thrives on complexity and can see many points of view.
- Thinks in analogies.