

# Years 8 to 12 entry to selective high schools in 2022

## Information for principals of selective high schools

### Important dates

June 2021	Application information and application form emailed to selective high schools
21 June 2021	Application information and application form published on High Performing Students Team website
23 July 2021	Closing date for applications to be sent to selective high schools
August-September 2021	Assessments conducted. Selection committees meet and consider applications
September-October 2021	Parents advised of placement outcomes
October-November 2021	Reviews conducted and parents advised of outcome

The application information for parents and the application form are available in the Years 8 to 12 section at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes>. This document and Word versions of sample letters are available at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/general-information/resources-for-schools> (DoE login required).

In this document: 'selective' includes fully selective high schools, high schools with selective classes, Aurora College the virtual selective high school and agricultural high schools; 'parent' includes 'guardian' and 'caregiver'.

## Vacancies

All vacancies in selective high schools must be filled where sufficient suitable candidates have applied for placement. If there are no vacancies in any given Year, you must accept applications for that Year and determine a reserve list in case vacancies arise later on in the year.

Approval to vary the number of places for selective intake for Years 8 to 12 must be negotiated with the Director, Educational Leadership according to the usual procedures applicable to all secondary schools.

## Application

Applications for Years 8 to 12 entry to selective high schools in 2022 are open between 21 June and 23 July 2021. Applicants must use the official application form developed by the Team for that purpose, either in electronic or paper form. You may also require parents to complete supplementary application documents but these supplementary forms must include the official application form information.

If your school uses an online version of the official application form it must include all the questions contained in the form except questions relating to boarder agricultural high school placement if they are not relevant.

Application documents will be emailed to principals in June. The school may assist parents who are unable to use computers to access the form if requested.

## Advising the availability of application forms

The application information and form will be available on the High Performing Students Team website at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/years-8-to-12>.

All selective high school websites should also announce the availability and closing date for Years 8 to 12 applications along with any special requirements or testing arrangements that apply and should link to the appropriate application documents. Please specify if you would prefer parents to email or post the application form to your school.

During the time the applications are open, the school's electronic noticeboard should also carry an appropriate announcement.

If principals wish, they can advertise in local media at the school's expense.

As most information is accessed electronically, selective high schools are requested to keep their school websites updated with current and accurate placement information.

## Form letters

Samples of correspondence that can be customised and used to communicate with parents throughout the placement process are included on pages 10-20 of this document and are available as Word documents at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/general-information/resources-for-schools> (DoE login required).

## Acknowledgement of application from parents

After parents apply, you should send them a letter confirming the receipt of their application form.

# Assessment

Schools may determine their own criteria for assessment, advise the parents of those criteria and apply them consistently across all candidates.

If you intend to test students you must notify parents about the arrangements including time, date, location and cost, if any. This information should also be on the school website.

## Boarder agricultural high schools

If your school is a boarder agricultural school, you will need to assess the degree of isolation and other factors affecting a student's suitability as a boarder. Please see the document 'Supplementary information and sample documents for boarder agricultural high schools'.

## Family placement

Family placement is not considered for day places. Boarder agricultural high schools may choose to give consideration to siblings of students currently enrolled.

## Residency status

Candidates must be Australian citizens or holders of a visa granting permanent residency status in Australia. Information on Australian citizenship is available on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website at: [www.citizenship.gov.au](http://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 who are permanently settled in Australia are eligible for entry. Permanent residents of New Zealand, like temporary residents of Australia, cannot be placed.

Applicants who do not meet these residency requirements at the time of applying, but expect to meet them by the time offers are made, will be allowed to apply provided that they are already living in Australia. Such applicants will have to show evidence that they meet all residency requirements, before being made an offer of placement.

Applicants who qualify for entry on academic grounds but do not meet the residency requirements, including those who hold diplomatic visas, must be asked to clarify their residency status. If they have not been granted permanent residency and have strong extenuating circumstances they may request consideration through the review process.

On review, the only way the residency rules can be waived is if you are convinced by the evidence presented that the family can reasonably expect to receive permanent residency by the start of the school year and stay in NSW for the duration of the child's selective schooling.

It is your responsibility to ensure that all successful applicants show original documentation, such as a certificate of evidence of Australian citizenship, birth certificate or permanent residency visa before you can offer a place and finalise enrolment at the school. While it may be more difficult for Aurora College to sight original documentation the schools hosting Aurora College students can be asked to sight the original documents.

Students born in Australia with a parent who was a citizen or permanent resident at the time of the student's birth must show full birth certificates. (The residency status of the parents is listed on the birth certificate.)

Students whose parents were not citizens or permanent residents at the time of the student's birth must show their citizenship papers or passports or a permanent residency visa.

A full list of visa sub-class numbers is contained in the Schedule of Visa Subclasses and Enrolment Conditions at:

[https://www.deinternational.nsw.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0012/16410/Visa-Subclasses-and-Enrolment-Conditions.pdf](https://www.deinternational.nsw.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0012/16410/Visa-Subclasses-and-Enrolment-Conditions.pdf).

Offers may be cancelled if placement is made on the basis of false or misleading information. However, once students are enrolled, the enrolment can be terminated only for the same reasons that apply to all school enrolments

## Residential address

Parents must be living in NSW by the beginning of the 2022 school year. If parents normally live in NSW but are temporarily out of the state, they should expect to return before the start of the school year. You should consider applications from parents who continue to live outside NSW only if there are vacancies after all suitable applicants from NSW have been placed.

An electricity or gas bill in the name of the parent at a NSW address is considered sufficient proof of NSW residency unless there is evidence to the contrary.

## Full fee paying and exchange students

Full fee paying students are not eligible to be considered for selective high school entry. Exchange students can be enrolled for brief periods if the original successful student will be visiting the exchange student's home country, for a maximum of one term.

## Selection

The selection committee must comprise at least two people including the selective high school principal (or nominated representative, if necessary) and a parent representative. Other relevant staff members or Directors, Educational Leadership may be included at the principal's discretion. This is similar to the composition of the Year 7 selection committees.

The policies of the selection committees should be published on the school website. Records should be kept of the committee's selection processes.

The committee should:

- declare any conflict of interest and maintain confidentiality
- determine the criteria upon which students are to be considered. These criteria must be available to parents.
- decide on the candidates to be:
  - made first round offers or
  - placed on the reserve list or
  - deemed to be unsuccessful for placement.
- allocate each candidate to one of the above categories on the basis of the criteria established by the selection committee. Selection committees must ensure that they make their placement decisions on the basis of consistent and comparable evidence of academic merit across the candidature.
- determine the order in which students on the reserve list are to be offered places. This should be documented as well as possible so that, in the event of a review, there is a record of the reasons for decisions consistent with the criteria established by the selection committee.
- request additional information from applicants, where necessary, and place them on 'hold' until the information is supplied. Check students' residency status.
- determine, based primarily on previous experience, the number of places to be retained for possible successful reviews.
- discuss changes which may be appropriate for the following year's selection procedure.
- retain application material and selection committee records in line with the school records management policy.

## Placement outcomes

When selecting students, you should decide whether or not to reserve at least one place per Year for possible successful reviews. If you do not reserve a place you should be willing to accept an extra student if the parents seek an external review and it is successful.

You should advise all applicants in writing about the outcome of each application. Students may be:

- offered a place
- placed on 'hold' pending further information or the outcome of the review process
- placed on a reserve list
- advised that they did not qualify for placement.

If you are offering the student a day place, you should send a 'Letter of offer' together with a 'Response to offer' form. If the student did not qualify you may wish to add some detail of the student's assessment.

Where you are offering a boarder place, you should send parents the

- Directions to parents for completing documentation
- Residential student agreement
- Student medical history form

as well as the:

- Letter of offer
- Response to offer form (see supplementary sample documents in the booklet 'Supplementary information and sample documents for boarder agricultural high schools'.)

These forms must be completed and returned to the school making the offer before a boarder placement can be finalised.

## Response to offers

The sample offer letter asks parents to respond to offers within 7 days or by the date you specify in the offer letter. If no response is received within that time you can assume that the offer has been declined and you should send a letter to the parents advising that the offer has been withdrawn. Where later offers are made by telephone, parents should respond within 24 hours.

As each offer is accepted, you should issue an 'Authority to attend' to the parent. For students previously enrolled at government secondary schools, send letters to their principals advising them of the students who will be moving to the selective high school. At the time of enrolment you should send a Request for student records/transfer certificate to the principal of the government secondary school at which the student was previously enrolled. Note: Letters must NOT be sent to principals of non-government schools.

Offers may be withdrawn in writing if the student fails to enrol promptly without providing a satisfactory explanation. It is advisable not to keep places vacant for more than one school term and then only if parents have negotiated with you and you have approved deferment.

If the offer is declined, send applicants a Confirmation that an offer was declined letter.

## Reserve lists

When a place becomes available, you must offer enrolment to the next student on the reserve list in strict order of merit.

You have the discretion to keep any vacancies that occur after Term 1 for the next year's placement. At this stage of the year new students may have difficulty adjusting.

Please make sure your information to parents makes it clear that the reserve list relates to only the relevant placement year and not subsequent years.

## Applications after the due date

It is important that schools observe the centrally advised opening and closing date for applications.

However, in extenuating circumstances well supported by documentary evidence, late applications can be accepted at the discretion of the selection committee.

Where the selection committee considers that exceptional circumstances exist and the student qualifies for placement, you can place the student's name on the reserve list in the position determined by the selection committee but you must consider the student on the same criteria as the rest of the applicants.

## Reviews

If applicants wish to request a review of a decision of the selection committee, they must submit the completed request to you within 14 days of the date on the outcome letter. Review requests should be acknowledged on receipt.

You should review the decision only if the parents have evidence that your stated criteria for selection were not considered or your stated process was not followed.

Additional grounds for review include well documented extenuating circumstances around students without permanent residency.

Applicants who qualify for placement on academic grounds but do not meet the residency requirements at the time of the review may request special consideration in extenuating circumstances, such as where written proof shows that the visa will be granted before the start of the school year and where there is substantial evidence that secondary schooling will be completed in NSW.

If a request for a review has been made on grounds not eligible for review, inform applicants that the request will not proceed to review because it has been made on one of the grounds considered invalid for review.

The decision should not be reviewed if the request is based on:

- other assessments such as NAPLAN or competitions that were not already provided
- in-class rankings of one candidate over others whose results are known to the parents

- the disruption to learning due to students being on holiday or overseas
- pre-diagnosed and known illness or medical conditions
- disruption due to moving house
- insufficient documentation supplied by the parent at the time of applying.

When the review has been conducted, advise applicants about the outcome. After the review, if parents are still dissatisfied with the decision of the selection committee, advise them they can write to the local Director, Educational Leadership about it without delay. They should send a copy to the school. You should keep a place reserved until the outcome of the review is known or be prepared to enrol an extra student if the review is favourable to the applicant.

After the review and any additional appeals to the Director, Educational Leadership have been concluded you may offer the remaining place(s) which you had previously reserved for possible successful reviews. If a review by the Director, Educational Leadership finds a selection committee did not follow the selective high school's published criteria, all placement decisions can be called into question and the school can be directed to run selection committees again.

When requesting a review, parents need to include information such as:

- what selection criteria or aspect of the selection process was not followed
- factors which may have prevented the student from gaining a place
- any supporting material where applicable. Requests for review based on illness must include a medical certificate
- extenuating circumstances relating to residency.

For performance-based reviews, evidence relating to performance in only the current and previous years should be considered.

## Enrolment policy

The Department 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 Department's enrolment policies and procedures. Places should be reserved, where applicable, for students for whom a final decision is pending.

## Enquiries

Parents are told that they should enquire about transport, curriculum and assessments at the specific selective high school.



## Action summary

Following is a summary of roles and responsibilities.

### Action by the High Performing Students Team

The Team will:

- prepare and publish on the internet all documentation relating to selection criteria and procedures for entry of Years 8 to 12 students in selective high schools
- email copies of application documents to selective high schools
- answer procedural enquiries.

### Action by the selective high school

Selective high schools will:

- provide the application documents on their websites OR link to the High Performing Students Team website OR develop an online version of the standard form
- issue application documents to parents unable to use the internet, as required
- answer parent enquiries - please ensure all staff provide accurate information
- keep the school website updated with current and accurate placement information specific to the school, such as selection criteria and procedures and links to the general application information on the Team's website
- process application forms lodged by parents (including acknowledging receipt of these forms)
- reserve at least one place per Year for possible successful reviews or be prepared to enrol an extra student
- offer places according to the decisions of the selection committee to the successful applicants and advise the remaining applicants that they have been placed on the reserve list, or that their applications have been unsuccessful
- conduct reviews if requested
- notify applicants of the outcome of their review and advise them to write to the local Director, Educational Leadership if they are not satisfied with the review
- issue an Authority to attend if a place is accepted
- send a letter to principals of government secondary schools (after applicants have accepted their offers) advising them about students they will be losing to the selective high school. (Note: Letters must not be sent to principals of non-government schools)
- request and check original documents, such as birth certificates and visas, as proof of NSW and permanent residency or citizenship, before enrolling students
- check originals of documentation (e.g. school reports) attached to application forms to ensure their authenticity before enrolling students at your discretion

- send a Request for student records/transfer certificate after enrolment to the principal of the government secondary school at which the student was enrolled
- issue a letter acknowledging that the place has been declined (if applicable) or that the offer has lapsed
- offer places as they become available at least until the end of Term 1 and at the latest until the end of Term 2, 2022 to students on the reserve list.

## Action by the school selection committee

Selection committees will:

- determine or revise selection criteria and publish these at the time of application
- allocate students to one of three groups, those to be:
  - made offers in order of academic merit or
  - placed on a reserve list in order of academic merit or
  - deemed unsuccessful for placement
- request further information or implement additional procedures where applicable
- determine the number of places to be retained for possible successful reviews, if applicable
- record the rationale for all decisions
- provide information about selection decisions to Directors, Educational Leadership NSW if required
- keep application material and selection committee records secure according to school records management policy
- discuss changes which may be appropriate for the following year's selection procedure.

## Action by the Director, Educational Leadership

The Director will:

- conduct secondary reviews into selection committee decisions if parents have sought an initial review through the selective high school and have been dissatisfied with the result
- determine whether published criteria were followed during selection committee meetings
- direct the selection committee to reconsider the candidate who requested the review  
OR
- if the circumstances affected the whole cohort, direct the selection committee to rerun the selection committee meetings following published criteria.

# Sample correspondence

The following samples are provided to assist schools in their correspondence with applicants and others involved in the Years 8 to 12 placement process. Principals may amend the correspondence to suit local or individual needs.

## Acknowledging receipt of application

Dear

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your application for the enrolment of:

Student name:

At High School/College\* in 2022.

Your application will be considered by the selection committee, and I will advise you of the outcome as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)

\* or 'a day place at \_\_\_\_\_' or a 'boarder place at \_\_\_\_\_' where agricultural high schools have both day and boarder places.

\* or 'in a selective class at \_\_\_\_\_' where schools have both selective classes and community enrolment.

Note: If the selection committee requires further procedures such as testing, this letter should contain information about the test date, time, venue and cost. It should also refer to attached supplementary forms, if applicable.

## Offer of a place in Years 8 to 12 in a selective high school

*(includes James Ruse Agricultural High School or a day place at Hurlstone Agricultural High School or Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School)*

Dear

I am pleased to offer \_\_\_\_\_ a place in Year

at \_\_\_\_\_ High School/College in 2022.

If you wish to accept this offer, please complete the attached response form and return it within 7 days of the date of this letter. If you fail to return the form within this time, the place may be offered to the next student on the reserve list.

Even if you wish to decline the offer, please return your form promptly, so that the next person on the reserve list can be notified without delay.

If you accept this offer you will be sent an Authority to attend. At the time of enrolment you will be required to show:

- proof that the student is a citizen or permanent resident of Australia or a citizen of New Zealand (e.g. full birth certificate, passport and visa or other relevant document)
- originals of photocopied documents attached to application forms, if applicable.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)

*Note: Additional forms required for boarder placement can be found in the supplementary bulletin for boarder agricultural high schools.*

## Response to offer

Student's family name:

Other names:

High school offered:

Year of entry in 2022 (e.g. Year 8):

Type of placement (if required): day student/boarder student/selective class

I wish to accept the offer to \_\_\_\_\_

I do not wish to accept the offer to \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's name:

Parent's signature:

Date:

Please complete this form and return it to the principal at the address shown on the offer letter by [insert date].

## Confirmation that an offer was declined

Dear

This letter confirms your advice that the offer for Student name:

to enrol in Year      at                      High School/College in 2022 has been declined.  
The position has now been offered to another student.

Yours sincerely

Principal

## Advice of a place on the reserve list

Dear

I refer to your application for the enrolment of:

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ in Year\*

at \_\_\_\_\_ High School/College in 2022.

I wish to advise that your child has not gained entry to the school, but he or she has been placed on the reserve list and will receive an offer if a place becomes available. Offers may be made until at least the end of Term 1, 2022.

If you believe you have valid grounds on which to request a review of the decision, you should write to the school within 14 days of the date on this letter with detailed reasons why you believe the decision should be reviewed. You must include a copy of this letter with your request.

Invalid grounds for reviews are listed at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/years-8-to-12/outcome> and in the application information for Years 8 to 12 document.

If your child is not successful in gaining entry for 2022 you may reapply next year for entry in 2023.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)

\* \_\_\_\_\_ or 'as a day student in Year \_\_' or 'as a boarder student in Year \_\_' for schools that have both boarder and day students.

\* \_\_\_\_\_ or 'in a selective class in Year \_\_' where schools have both selective classes and community enrolment.

## Advice of being unsuccessful because of residency

Dear

I refer to your application for the enrolment of:

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ in Year\*

at \_\_\_\_\_ High School/College in 2022.

I wish to advise that as your child does not currently meet residency requirements, he or she has not qualified for selective high school entry.

Provided that you are already living in Australia, if you believe that there are extenuating circumstances applicable to your case you may request special consideration through the review process.

If you wish to have the extenuating circumstances of your residency status considered through a review, you should write to the school with detailed reasons why you believe the decision should be reviewed to the school within 14 days of the date on this letter. You must include a copy of this letter with your request.

If your child is not successful in gaining entry for 2022 you may reapply next year for entry in 2023 provided that you have been granted citizenship of Australia or New Zealand or permanent residency of Australia in the meantime.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)

\* \_\_\_\_\_ or 'as a day student in Year \_\_' or 'as a boarder student in Year \_\_' for schools that have both boarder and day students.

\* \_\_\_\_\_ or 'in a selective class in Year \_\_' where schools have both selective classes and community enrolment.

## Advice that the application was unsuccessful

Dear

I refer to your application for the enrolment of:

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ in Year\*

at \_\_\_\_\_ High School/College in 2022.

### **EITHER**

I regret to inform you that your application was unsuccessful.

As you will appreciate, placement in this school is highly competitive and many applicants will be disappointed that they have not been successful in gaining a place.

If you believe you have valid grounds on which to request a review of the decision, you should write to the school within 14 days of the date on this letter with detailed reasons why you believe the decision should be reviewed. You must include a copy of this letter with your request.

Invalid grounds for reviews are listed at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/years-8-to-12/outcome> and in the application information for Years 8 to 12 document.

### **OR**

I regret to advise that no vacancies have become available for the placement of Year \_\_\_\_ students. Though your child was not successful in gaining entry for 2022 you may reapply for entry in 2023.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)

\* \_\_\_\_\_ or 'as a day student in Year \_\_' or 'as a boarder student in Year \_\_' for schools that have both boarder and day students.

\* \_\_\_\_\_ or 'in a selective class in Year \_\_' where schools have both selective classes and community enrolment.



## No response to offer received

Dear

Previously an offer was made to: Student name:

to enrol in Year      at                      High School/College in 2022.

As no response has been received from you, the position has now been offered to another student.

Yours sincerely

Principal

## Acknowledging receipt of review request

Dear

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your request for a review of the selection committee's decision regarding placement of:

Student name:

at                                      High School/College in 2022.

Your request will be considered, and I will advise you of the outcome as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)

## Advice that the grounds for review were not valid

Dear

I refer to your application for the enrolment of:

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ in Year \_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_ High School/College in 2022.

I regret to inform you that your request for review of the decision of the selection committee will not proceed because it is based on grounds not considered valid.

A review must be based on evidence that the stated selection criteria and procedures were not followed. A review is not warranted if it is based on:

- other assessments such as NAPLAN or competitions
- in-class rankings of one candidate over another
- disruption to learning while the student is on holiday or overseas
- pre-diagnosed or known illness or medical conditions
- moving house
- insufficient documentation supplied to the school with the application
- delay in grant of a permanent residency visa.

As you will appreciate, placement in this school is highly competitive and many applicants will be disappointed that they have not been successful in gaining a place.

Though your child was not successful in gaining entry for 2022 you may reapply for entry in 2023.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)

## Advice of the review outcome

Dear

I refer to your request for a review of your application for the enrolment of:

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ in Year \_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_ High School/College in 2022.

### **EITHER**

I regret to inform you that the review of the placement decision has not resulted in a change to the outcome.

[insert explanation where possible]

If you believe your grounds were not addressed in this review, you may write to the Director, Educational Leadership at email\_\_\_\_\_. Please include your original documents and this review outcome letter in your request to the Director.

Though your child was not successful in gaining entry for 2022, you may reapply for entry in 2023.

### **OR**

I regret to advise that no vacancies are available for the placement of Year \_\_\_ students.

Though your child was not successful in gaining entry for 2022, you may reapply for entry in 2023.

### **OR**

This is to inform you that the review of your child's outcome for placement in Years 8 to 12 has been successful.

### **AND EITHER**

As a result your child will receive an offer.

### **OR**

As a result your child will be placed on the reserve list at position \_\_\_\_

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)



## Advice to principal of the student's current high school

Dear Colleague

The following student(s) from your high school has (have) been successful in gaining a selective place at \_\_\_\_\_ High School/College for 2022.

Student:

Year:

I will write again at the start of the school year to request the transfer of student records. I hope this early advice will help you with your planning.

Yours sincerely

Principal (Date)