



## Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

<b>Document Reference</b>	<b>QEGS Academically Able Policy</b>
<b>Version Number</b>	V1.03
<b>Author/Lead Job Title</b>	Angela Eggleston, Director of Studies
<b>Consultation</b>	Simon Davies, Academic Enrichment Co-ordinator Jack Drury, JS Co-ordinator
<b>Checker Person Name / Title</b>	Alistair McKinlay, Governor
<b>Quality Assurance Name of Approver / Committee</b>	Gov. Board
<b>Date Approved</b>	21.03.2024
<b>Date of Next Review (2 yearly)</b>	<b>March 2026</b>

**VALIDITY – Policies should be accessed via FireFly to ensure the current version is used.**

### CHANGE RECORD (2 yearly)

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Change details</b>
V1.00	October 2018	Written
V1.02	January 2022	Reviewed, A Eggleston, Simon Davies
V1.03	March 2024	Reviewed, A Eggleston, Jack Drury, Simon Davies

To be published on the following:

<b>Staff shared</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>School website</b>	<b>X</b>
---------------------	----------	-----------------------	----------

# QEGS Academically Able Policy

## 1. Providing for exceptional ability at QEGS

QEGS is committed to providing an environment which encourages all boys to maximise their achievement, including boys who have exceptional abilities.

We find the following definition helpful as we identify the most able of our students.

***"Gifted students are those whose potential is distinctly above average in one or more of the following domains of human ability: intellectual, creative, social and physical. Talented students are those whose skills are distinctly above average in one or more areas of human performance."***

Having potential in itself is not enough to guarantee success; the school has a vital role to play in encouraging boys to challenge themselves and achieve excellence. Therefore, at QEGS we define "gifted" as "having exceptional potential" and "talented" as "demonstrating exceptional performance", not distinguishing between purely academic subjects and performing subjects.

We aim to have an inclusive approach, to encourage all able boys to fulfill their potential within mixed classroom settings. This involves a range of opportunities, both in the classroom and beyond. This further enhances 'basic' standards of attitude to learning, tracking, monitoring and interventions in order to improve academic outcomes for pupils of all abilities, in support of our School Values.

The school will promote stimulating and challenging experiences through a broad and balanced curriculum that also offers quality learning activities that focus on the particular needs and talents of the students. We also appreciate that boys will make progress at different times of their school career, therefore we allow opportunities for boys to join our programs at various points.

## 2. Identification of the academically able

In our Junior Section a range of methods for identification are used to identify the most able learners:

- Teachers' professional judgement- formative assessment and observations
- Subject specific criteria for identifying the most able learners written by subject specialists (updated in 2024)
- Summative assessments - PIRA, GAPS and PUMA assessments that show standardised scores
- Pupil performance
- Liaison with WGPPS, where appropriate.

We are committed to identifying and meeting the needs of these students as early as possible in order to enable them to achieve their best.

The initial identification of students in the Senior Section comes from the Entrance Exam in Year 6, with the top performing students being offered a Radcliffe Scholarship. This can be further added to at the end of KS3 and KS4 through a high MidYIS test. There is liaison with our KS2 colleagues as well to discuss those boys coming through to Year 7.

Exceptionally able boys are identified through teacher-judgement based on an analysis of

various sources of information including:

- Departmental subject-based criteria
- MidYIS/ALIS testing (115 as a base at MIDYIS)
- MENSA Test
- Assessment results will be used both for identification but also monitoring purposes
- Data from previous schools

Identification may also come through other internal monitoring systems, parental nomination or student self-nomination.

It is worth remembering that exceptionally able boys can be:

- Good all-rounders
- High achievers in one area only
- Of high ability but with low motivation
- Very able but with a short attention span
- Of good verbal ability but poor writing skills
- Very able but with poor social skills
- Keen to disguise their abilities

### **3. Provision for the exceptionally able in the classroom**

Opportunities for extension and enrichment should be built into all teaching in order to provide work which challenges the most able. Teachers should encourage exceptionally able boys to attempt more challenging activities, which will involve higher order thinking skills, or approach open-ended tasks in an original and innovative way. Teachers should also encourage those who are very able in their subjects to take their ability seriously and to try out some form of enrichment activity (see below), where the student's subject interest is also significant.

We are aware that able boys need to be challenged (tactfully) beyond the content of the tasks suitable for most boys. Equally, we are mindful that unnecessary repetition of work is de-motivating for many students, but especially for the very able. Teachers should challenge any perceived student peer-pressure to under-achieve; whilst being aware that exceptionally able boys are not always easier to reach than other boys and may have problems socialising with peers.

The enhancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software enables staff to identify gaps in student knowledge, provide targeted feedback, and offer personalised support. With AI-powered tools like chatbots, educators can extend assistance beyond the classroom, helping students stay engaged and motivated. Through the effective use of AI software such as Sparx and Eedi, teachers can provide challenge for all pupils commensurate with their abilities.

Reading lists for further study/interest will be provided by Heads of Departments (HoDs) and magazine subscriptions may create further opportunities for the students.

### **4. Teaching & Learning Strategies**

These are some of the strategies we use in our classrooms to cater for our most able. We recognise and embrace that many of these strategies will enhance the learning environment for all our pupils.

**Higher order Questioning** - is required to develop critical and creative thinking. Examples include: Why does anything exist at all?

Higher order questions present the learner with no easy option or single 'neat' answer. They offer a challenge with regard to thinking that is as difficult as the pupils' ability and enthusiasm will allow. The school's curriculum development plan will include a 'Big Question' for each topic covered to encourage this. The implementation of 'Walkthrus' by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli are embedded in our lessons with question types such as 'think-pair-share', 'cold calling' and 'say it again better'.

**'3 B4 Me'** - Promotes independent learning. This is required to develop critical and creative thinking. If a pupil is finding a particular aspect of the lesson challenging, they are encouraged to try something new, use resources and ask for some support from a peer. These three stages must happen before they seek the support from an adult in the classroom. It encourages learning as a process, develops resilience and promotes independence.

**Task led** - Pupils could start tasks or independent work sooner than other pupils. The type of task set may differ to other pupils to ensure the challenge is pitched at the appropriate level. For example, these tasks could be open ended challenges, puzzles, reasoning and problem-solving tasks or tasks that require pupils to use another perspective. Extension tasks are readily available in lessons and this is evidenced in the Junior Section through 'deepen the moment'.

## **5. Enrichment beyond the classroom**

Opportunities for extension and enrichment beyond the classroom exist in great number at QEGS. Although often self-selecting, able students should be encouraged to take advantage of the plethora of extra-curricular activities. Enrichment opportunities may involve:

- Public opportunities for music, drama and sporting success
- School clubs e.g. subject clubs, chess, debating, art, bridge, drama
- QED (QEGS Enrichment and Development activities afternoon)
- National schemes/competitions/festivals
- Exchanges and trips
- Oxford/Cambridge University visit for boys identified in KS4

**Specific longer-term extension/enrichment activities may also include some of the following:**

- Visiting academic speakers, sports or arts personalities
- Attendance at a university lecture
- Extended writing (on scientific, literary geographical or historical topics)
- Research opportunities
- Wider reading
- Subject-specific publications (New Scientist, etc.)
- Shared able-group work
- Advanced textbooks
- Subject specific enrichment courses
- Competitions / publications
- EPQ and HPQ/FPQ

## **6. Coordination and monitoring**

Identification and monitoring is carried out by the Academic Enrichment Coordinators and a

representative/champion in each department. This could form part of a Performance Development target for interested members of staff. It would also allow for meetings in this area to be carried out more efficiently. The Academic Enrichment Coordinator reports to their SLT line manager.

Once identified on a central register, progress of the most able pupils is tracked departmentally, as part of the school's pupil attainment and achievement tracking system. The register of exceptionally able students is reviewed and updated at the beginning and end of each academic year. Presence on the list will be reported to parents and will be visible on the School's Information Management System (SIMS).

The list will be a flexible record with boys being added/taken off throughout their time at school. The expansion of enrichment and extension activities is encouraged, both departmentally and school-wide.

The transition between our Junior Section and Senior Section is managed in Year 6 when information and data sharing occurs between key staff from the Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 teams.

Further evidence is provided by the entrance exam which Year 6 boys are invited to sit if they would like to try for a Radcliffe scholarship.

## **7. Radcliffe Scholar Program**

A bespoke program aimed at Year 7-11, incorporating trips, speakers and competitions run by individual departments for boys primarily in Key Stage 3. The focus changes at GCSE with a greater emphasis on academic improvement with the students given the opportunity to complete the Higher Project Qualification. This gives our students experience of choosing and running their own project, preparing them for life in the sixth form and beyond. There is also a visit to either Oxford or Cambridge university.

## **8. Savile Scholars**

We recognise exceptional achievement at GCSE level by awarding Savile Scholarships to any boy who has achieved at least 8 grades 8s in these exams.

Boys can be awarded an honorary Savile scholarship after their A levels if they are not already a scholar and have achieved a minimum of 3 A grades in these exams.

## **9. Academic Ties**

Any boy who is not identified as a Savile Scholar but achieves at least one 9 grade at GCSE is awarded an Academic tie.

## **10. Oxford and Cambridge Universities and other competitive courses**

We realise that for many of our most able students an application for either Oxford or Cambridge is a goal they have been harbouring for a number of years. As a result there is a clear route for these students to follow in Years 12 and 13, with general assistance as well as subject specific guidance. We are fortunate to have teachers as well as current and former pupils who advise and guide the boys through the opportunities open to them at Oxford and Cambridge. Many of the boys who participate in this process have also benefited from the trips provided in the Radcliffe Scholar Program, where they visited Oxford or Cambridge.

The program at Sixth Form enables them to make the best choice of course and college

initially, as well as assistance in their personal statement and interview practice. We also recognise that a number of courses are competitive whatever the learning institution e.g. Medicine, and run a programme to support these applications. Wherever possible and practical, we work closely with Wakefield Girls' High School.