



Accelerated Learning Program

Information Booklet for Year 7 students (2009)

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with information on:

- Our Accelerated Learning Program
 - Background
 - Structure
 - Student progress in Years 7,8, 9 & 10
- Skill development and the learning environment
- Highly talented and gifted students
- Pathways
- Parent and student choice and commitment
- Student monitoring
- Dates for Registration, testing and results

Your visits to our school and attendance at the Year 7 Information Night will also familiarise you with Upwey's commitment to the development of the learning of individual students.

The Accelerated Learning Program is one area of our comprehensive learning framework and it addresses the needs of highly talented and gifted students. It is available to students in Years 7, 8, 9 & 10 in 2009.

2009 ACCELERATED LEARNING PROGRAM TIMELINE

Parent Transition Information Evening:

Tuesday 29th April 2008

**6.30pm in the Library / Science Tech Building
Accelerated Learning Program information will be available**

Student Registration for Testing to be received by:

Friday 8th May 2008

Student Testing:

Saturday 24th or 31st May 2008

<u>Registration</u> for both Mathematics & English or Mathematics in the <u>Administration Building</u> :	8.15am
Mathematics Testing commences at:	8.30am
Break between testing programs:	9.45am
Registration for English:	9.40am
<u>Collection of students from the Library</u> :	11.30am

Student Questionnaires posted to students

Reports requested from schools:

After Monday 14th July (Beg. Of Term 3)

Program notification letters posted:

Friday 8th August

(to be received by Monday 11th August after DEECD Placement applications are received.)

Upwey High School -Accelerated Learning Program

The program has been developed to meet the needs of highly talented and gifted students enrolled at Upwey High School. The program is the result of an extensive investigation of accelerated learning programs offered by secondary schools throughout Victoria and work with our curriculum coordinators and staff.

The resulting program interfaces with the comprehensive support, remediation and extension programs offered to students and is in line with the school values of:

- academic excellence,
- the provision of a safe and stimulating environment
- respect for ourselves, fellow students, teachers, school and student property and the environment

The program is structured in the following way:

- a formal testing program is used to identify talented / gifted students
 - parents are offered the opportunity to place their students in both / either English and Mathematics, depending on the test results
 - students in the program will complete four years of study in three years (in these key learning areas)
 - students then have access to VCE studies in Year 10
 - students study other subjects with their peers in regular home or elective groups
- It provides:
- acceleration and enrichment in the core subjects of Mathematics and English.
 - the stimulation and motivation of working with 'like ability groups' in one or two subjects.
 - access to teachers experienced in working with gifted and highly talented students and in the provision of a stimulating teaching and learning environment
 - curriculum designed to meet the needs of gifted and highly talented students with more complex, abstract and varied content; work at a high level of challenge; work to meet specific needs and interests and challenges
 - access to the other six key learning areas and to enrichment activities within these areas, special programs and special activities. Students also attend all year level camps and tours with their peers.
 - motivation and challenges, confidence and self esteem

We aim to ensure that our students are in the best possible position, in Year 12, to achieve their best possible VCE result. The position (for example, the completion of VCE Units 3 & 4 in Year 11 or the studying of three Maths in Year 12 etc) will be an individual one that reflects each student's maturity and achievements at that point in time.

Learning Environment and Skill Development

We provide a learning environment which is:

- student centred rather than teacher controlled
- open rather than closed
- accepting rather than judgmental
- complex & abstract rather than simple & concrete
- encouraging of critical thinking skills, independent research skills and advanced IT skills
- stimulating and provides opportunities for students to pursue advanced goals and aspirations
- open to the development of self direction and discipline in learning and provides experience in problem solving and decision making

This teams together with a range of learning experiences such as independent study and self paced learning, student designed and managed activities, inbuilt reflection, cross curricula or cross level activities, experiential learning or contextual learning, community involvement, research and individual instruction, study skills and teacher mentoring.

We aim to develop students who:

- Show initiative and adapt to new situations
- Are resourceful and organize information
- Have excellent communication skills
- Are enthusiastic learners and good team members
- Initiate innovative solutions
- Are able to reflect on outcomes and monitor their own performance

- Are able to accept constructive criticism
- Are confident and have raised self esteem
- Accept responsibility
- Are confident when dealing with adults
- Are able to work cooperatively

Gifted and highly talented students need:

- To be taught what they don't already know
- To work with others of similar ability
- A faster pace with less repetition but rigorous and sequential programs
- Activities that the whole class can be involved in – open ended tasks promoting creativity, responsibility, cooperation, teamwork, and communication
- Lots of challenges and extension work

Classroom work incorporates the following cognitive processes identified by Bloom:

Knowledge- tell, list describe, relate, locate, write, find, state, name

Comprehension – explain, interpret, outline, discuss, distinguish, predict, restate, translate, compare, describe

Application – solve, show, use, illustrate, calculate, construct, complete, examine, classify

Analysis – analyse, distinguish, examine, compare, contrast, investigate, categorise, identify, explain, separate, advertise

Synthesis – create, invent, compose, predict, plan, construct, design, imagine, improve, propose, devise, formulate

Evaluation – judge, select, choose, decide, justify, debate, verify, argue, recommend

A whole school approach to an enriched and challenging learning environment:

The opportunities for highly talented and gifted students to excel in other areas of school life are numerous and varied. Participation in extra curricula activities is highly encouraged and supported by our dedicated teachers. Examples of some of the activities available at each year level are listed. As you read through them, you will understand why we, as a school, believe that all of our students should access such outstanding opportunities and experiences which will assist them in becoming life long learners. We do not want students involved in accelerated learning to miss such important developmental experiences by 'jumping' a year level.

Year 7 – Orientation Program, Camp, Peer Support, Leadership

Year 8 – Camp, Leadership, Middle School Orientation Program

Junior School – Band, Musical Production, School Sporting Teams, English Festival Week, Extension Programs, Mathematics Competition, SRC Representation

Year 9 – Leadership Focus: Night of the Notables, The Real Game, The City Experience, Extension Programs, Electives

Year 10 – Central Australia Tour, VCE Studies, Work Experience, Extension Programs, Electives, Senior School Orientation Program, Peer Support Leadership Training, Senior School Orientation Program, Keys Please – driver education

Middle School – Leadership of the Junior School, SRC Representation, Bands, Musical Production, Debating Teams, School Sporting Teams, The English Festival Week, Mathematics Competition, Employment & further studies counselling

Year 11 – PE Camp, Victorian "Advance" Surf Life Saving Program, Peer Leadership of Year 7s, Deb Ball, Queensland Tour, Sports Teams

Year 12 – VCE Study Camp, Arts Tour, Motivational Speakers, School & House Captains, Sports Teams

Senior School- Leadership of the school, VCE facilities, Employment & further studies, support & counselling, Senior Timetable

Whole School –

Overseas Tours – Japan & Germany
Student tours from these countries – families host visiting students
Musical Production
Drama Productions
Volleyball Tour – New Zealand
National Volleyball Titles
Bi-annual Snow Camp/Ski Day
Production Camp
Music Tour
Music Camp
Assemblies
Student Representative Council
Clubs
Amnesty International
Are You MAD Days (Making a Difference To Our World)
Exchange students
English Festival
National competitions in Mathematics and English

Readiness for Accelerated and Extension Learning:

The following questions will help you to decide whether your child is ready for this special learning focus:

- Does your child have a rapid learning ability?
- Does your child need an educational challenge?
- Does their performance vary according to their interest level?
- Does your child demonstrate above average ability?
- Does your child have a high commitment to task?
- Does your child possess high levels of creativity?
- Do they sometimes just ‘know’ answers to unfamiliar material?
- Do they ‘absorb’ information and demonstrate interest in topics that surprise you?
- Does your child have diverse, spontaneous and self directed interests?
- Do you get the feeling that they are underachieving?

Highly Talented and Gifted Students:

Identifying highly talented and gifted students can be difficult as sometimes students ‘coast’ through primary school because they know the answers but do not want to seem to be different from others or ‘nerdy’.
Highly talented and gifted students:

- Have the capacity to learn at faster rates
- Have the capacity to find, solve, and act on problems more readily than their peers
- Have the ability to manipulate abstract ideas and make connections
- Are creative, original and possess high energy levels
- Need programs that are well planned, sequential, differential (eg. contain material which is more abstract and cognitively complex than the normal grade level) and do not present a cycle of constant revision.

If you identify one or more of these characteristics with your child, they can be tested to see if they have the required ability to enter the Accelerated Learning Program in both or either of the key learning areas of Mathematics and English.

The Accelerated Learning Program Pathways:

Year Level	Studies	Year Level of work
7	Mathematics English The remaining six key learning areas – Science, Studies of Society & The Environment, The Arts, Technology, Physical and Sport Education, Language Other Than English	Years 7 & 8 Year 7 & extension activities
8	Mathematics English Six key learning areas	Years 8 & 9 Year 8 & extension activities
9	Mathematics English Six key learning areas	Year 10 Year 9 & extension activities
10	Mathematics English Five key learning areas Language Other Than English (elective)	Year 11 Year 10
VCE	In 2008 our VCE students are studying 32 subjects in total. We also offer: Traineeships/VCAL – practical work related experience and TAFE study – over 30 students enrolled VET –4 programs at UHS involving 100 students	Years 11 & 12 Possibility of University Studies as part of Year 12 Course

Please note: The levels for the other six key learning areas are indicative of average progression. We expect that the accelerated group will achieve a range of levels in these subjects according to their specific talents and interests. Students in the Accelerated Learning Program will also have access to Level 6 Extension Studies in either/both Years 9 and 10.

Selection:

Selection is based on:

- Test results
- Principal/teacher recommendations
- An interview if required
- Discussion and decision

Students are also asked to complete a questionnaire which provides us with background information and adds to the profile that we have built of each student.

Monitoring:

The Coordinators and teachers will monitor student performance in the following areas-

- Commitment to task
- Response in class
- Learning outcomes in accelerated areas
- Learning outcomes in the other key learning areas
- Participation in broader school activities

Movement:

If the need arises, a student can be moved from the program to their home group to continue their work in Mathematics or English.