

Application guide

Year 7 selective high school entry in 2026



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The information contained in this guide may be subject to change. Please refer to [Selective high schools and opportunity classes](#) website for the most up-to-date information, processes and key dates.

Please also read the [Selective high schools and opportunity class placement procedures](#) and the [Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools](#) policy.

Key dates

Date	Information
Thursday 7 November 2024	Applications open. Parents/carers of students in Year 5 in 2024 / Year 6 in 2025 apply online at: Selective high schools and opportunity classes
Friday 21 February 2025	Applications close. Last day to request reasonable adjustments.
Friday 21 March 2025	'Page for provision of information' from the principal about the candidate is due – applicable only to applicants from non-Government schools
Friday 18 April 2025	Test admission tickets available to parents/carers in the SHS and OC placement website (the application dashboard)
Friday 2 May to Sunday 4 May 2025	Selective High School Placement Test. Applicants are allocated a date and time
Thursday 8 May 2025	Last day for parents/carers to submit illness/misadventure requests
Wednesday 13 May 2025	Test admission tickets for Make-up test available to parents/carers in application dashboard.
Sunday 18 May 2025	Last day for changing school choices
Monday 19 May 2025	Selective High School placement make-up test
Early July 2025	Selection committee meets
Thursday 31 July 2025	Placement outcome expected to be released
Thursday 7 August 2025	Last day for parents/carers to submit appeals online
Friday 5 September 2025	Appeals outcome advised to parents/carers
5 pm Wednesday 17 December 2025	Reserve decision date
Thursday 15 January 2026	'Authority to attend' letter available to parents/carers with accepted offers in application dashboard

How to apply in 5 easy steps

Application period: 7 November 2024 to 21 February 2025

Application website: shsoc.education.nsw.gov.au

No late applications

The application period **cannot** be extended.

Make sure you submit your application before the closing date.

1. Register

[Register](#) to start your application. Parents and/or carers enter their own details to register (not the child's details).

2. Verify email

Go to your email and verify your email address. If you haven't received an email, check your junk folder or wait a little while – the email does not always arrive immediately.

3. Log in

Go to the application website and [log in](#). If you have forgotten your password, select 'forgot password' to reset it. Make sure it has the required number and types of characters.

4. Complete

Complete all sections. Answer all the mandatory and other relevant application questions.

Please also make sure to upload a photo of your child. You can save your application and come back to update it and complete the questions. Saving your application does **not** submit it – see the next step.

5. Submit

Select 'submit' to finish your application. If the 'submit' button is greyed out, it could be because you have not completed the application. As an example, you forgot to upload a photo with your application.

Once you have submitted, check you have received the confirmation email and application dashboard message. If you have not received any confirmation after submitting, contact the Selective Education Unit (the Unit) on ssu@det.nsw.edu.au.

You can log in to your application dashboard and make some changes after you have submitted the application. See the section below, 'After you have submitted your application'.

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Need help using the application website?

View the technical guide: [Using the application website](#).

Still having problems? Contact the Selective Education Unit on ssu@det.nsw.edu.au.

Who can apply?

Parents and carers can apply for placement if their child is in:

- a NSW public school
- a non-government school in NSW
- home study
- an interstate school
- an overseas school.

Residency requirements

Parents and carers must be aware that:

- students and their families must be living in NSW by the beginning of the school year of entry.
- conditions may apply to students who are not citizens or permanent residents of Australia or citizens of New Zealand. Review the conditions at [Visa subclasses and enrolment conditions](#).

What if I don't currently meet the residency conditions?

If you think you will meet all the residency conditions before we release initial offers, you may still apply, and your child can sit the placement test.

You must meet citizenship or eligible visa conditions before you can receive a placement offer.

Sitting the placement test interstate or overseas

If you cannot travel to NSW, you can make a request for your child to sit the test at an interstate or overseas test centre.

You still need to complete the standard online application and indicate at the relevant question that overseas or interstate testing is required. A fee also applies, please check the information on our [Application process](#) webpage for details.

If your request is approved, you will be assigned a test centre on a date during the main test period (see the [Key dates](#)).

Please be aware that test centres will not be available in all areas – you may need to travel outside your area for the test.

Proof of residency

You must provide evidence that you meet the residency requirements before you can be offered a place. For example, you may need to upload supporting documents in the application dashboard. For more information, please refer to [Selective high schools and opportunity class placement procedures](#).

Except for boarders at Farrer Memorial and Yanco Agricultural High Schools, students must sit the placement test to be considered for placement at a selective high school.

No other form of academic merit is considered.

Aurora College

[Aurora College](#) provides online classes. Students must be intending to enrol in a [rural or remote NSW high school](#) (their Aurora College host school) to be considered for entry. Aurora College includes the Young and Deadly Mob initiative for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

If their child is not currently attending an authorised host school, parents must indicate in their application which rural and remote Aurora College host school they will be enrolling their child in.

Age and school year

For selective high school placement, students are usually:

- at the end of Year 5 or the beginning of Year 6 at the time of applying
- in Year 6 when sitting the test
- aged between 11 years and 6 months and 13 years at the time they start Year 7.

For **Year 7 selective high school entry in 2026**, students would usually have their birth date between 1 January 2013 and 31 July 2014.

Students outside the usual age range

If your child is outside the usual age range or school Year when applying, you should explain the reasons for this in your application.

If your child is in Year 7 at the time of the test, they can only be considered for placement in rare cases. You must provide a full explanation with supporting documentation, including from your child's principal, about why you want them to repeat.

If you want your child to be accelerated from Year 5 to Year 7, you must provide evidence of support from the school principal.

The selection committee will determine whether applications for students outside the usual age or Year range will be accepted.

The selection committee may:

- request further information and evidence
- decide not to accept students who are much older than the usual age range set out above
- decide not to accept students who are seeking to repeat Year 7 at a selective high school
- request an interview if the student is very young to determine any special requirements

- decide that acceleration (skipping a school year) is not appropriate after considering the student's circumstances, including the consultation between the school, family and student, and section 1.4.4. of the [High Potential and Gifted Education policy](#).

Placement for siblings

Entry to a selective high school is based on a student's academic merit. Therefore, the placement of one sibling does not guarantee the placement of another. Each sibling needs to meet the test performance requirements to receive an offer.

Siblings of students placed at a partially selective high school are not guaranteed a non-selective place at the same school, unless they are living within the school's intake area.

Parents may apply to the school for out-of-area enrolment but are subject to enrolment eligibility and the school's capacity to accept non-local students. Parents should consider this when [choosing schools](#). For more information, please refer to the [Selective high school and opportunity class placement procedures](#).

Fees

There is no application fee if your child sits the test in NSW.

If your child was approved to sit the test interstate or overseas, then a fee applies. See the section above 'Sitting the placement test interstate or overseas'.

There are no extra fees for attending a selective high school. However, schools may ask for materials and voluntary contributions as do other public schools.

Choosing your schools

You can choose between 1 and 3 schools in your application.

To help you with making your school choices, it's important to know how placement offers work.

How placement offers work

Parents are offered a place based on test performance and the order of their school choices.

The test performance required to receive an offer from each school is different. This is because offers are based on the number of student candidates, their test performance and the number of places available at the school.

In the application website, you must list your school choices in your **order of preference**. Please read the information on our website about [Choosing a school](#).

Ordering your school choices

First choice: The school you want the most

Second choice: Your next preferred school (optional)

Third choice: Your last choice (optional)

When initial outcomes are released

Parents can get an initial **offer** of placement from only one school.

If your child's test performance meets the levels needed for an offer from multiple schools, your offer will come from the highest choice school for which your child qualifies. All choices under that offered school become not applicable. See Choosing schools – example scenarios below.

Later offers from reserve lists

Students may be placed on a reserve list(s) for a higher-choice school(s) when outcomes are first released. If their position on the list is reached, they may get a later offer.

Learn more at [Outcomes](#).

The order of your school choices is important

This is because:

- If you receive an offer from one of your higher-choice schools, you won't be considered for any schools you ranked lower on your application. This applies whether you accept the offer or not.
- You can receive an offer for a lower-choice school and remain on one (or more) reserve list(s) for a higher-choice school(s). If you decline an offer from one of your **lower-choice** schools **and** you are on a reserve list for a higher-choice school(s), there is no guarantee that you will receive a later offer from a reserve list.

Please choose the order of your schools carefully. Select the school you **want the most** as your **first choice**.

Do I get any advantage for choosing a school as my first choice?

Your child will be considered for all school choices based solely on their test performance. You will not be given any extra consideration for listing a school as your first choice.

Different selection criteria apply to Farrer Memorial and Yanco Agricultural High School as applicants for **boarding places** at these schools must apply directly to those schools and are not required to sit the placement test. Therefore, if you have either one of these schools as your only choice(s) and accept an early offer from that school, you do not need to sit the placement test. However, if you are applying for a place as a day student at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, sitting the placement test is still required.

If you are also applying for all other selective high schools, including Hurlstone Agricultural High School, you will need to sit the placement test to be considered for placement at those schools. All [agricultural high schools that offer boarding](#) may invite applicants to an interview to determine their suitability for boarding placement.

See next page for Choosing schools- example scenarios.

Choosing schools – example scenarios

An applicant lists 3 schools in the following order:

First choice: Penrith High School

Second choice: Girraween High School

Third choice: Prairiewood High School

Scenario A

If the student's performance was sufficient to qualify for all 3 of their choices, they would get an offer only for their first choice, Penrith High School. If they decline this offer, they cannot get an offer from any of their lower-choice schools.

Scenario B

If the student's performance did not qualify for the first choice but qualified for the other 2 choices, they would only receive an offer from their highest eligible choice, Girraween High School.

Scenario C

If the student's performance was sufficient to qualify for Prairiewood High School only, they would be offered a place at that school.

The level of test performance needed to get an offer at every school is different. This is because it is based on the number of candidates, their test performance and the number of places available at the school.

What to think about when choosing your schools

While all NSW public schools follow the same NSW curriculum, each school is unique. Find out about programs offered by specific schools by visiting their websites.

See the list of schools at [Find a selective high school](#).

You should consider your child's individual needs when choosing schools, including their travel time to school.

Learn about more things to consider at [Choosing your schools](#).

Change of school choice

You can submit your application and change your school choices later.

You can change your school choices in your application dashboard up until Sunday 18 May 2025. After making your changes make sure you **resubmit your application**. You must not create a new application during the application period – instead change your choices in your existing application.

You cannot change choices after 18 May 2025 unless there are serious extenuating circumstances, for which you must have documentary evidence. A request for a change of choice after that date must be approved by the Selective Education Unit. It is not usually possible to approve a change of choice after outcomes are released, as places will be filled and reserve lists created.

Requests to change school choices after the results are released will not be approved if your reason is that your child might have qualified for a different school, you changed your mind about the order of your choices, or you realised the school is too far away.

NSW non-government schools

The selection process is the same for non-government students and students in public schools. The only difference is that the Selective Education Unit advises only government school principals about the outcome of students who have applied from their school.

If your child is at a NSW non-government school, a form called a 'Page for provision of information' about the application is emailed to you as soon as you submit your application. It is mandatory to give the form to the school within 7 days of applying so the principal can supply the information to the Selective Education Unit by the required date.

After you have submitted your application

After applying, you will be able to log into your application dashboard to change certain details and send and receive messages.

- Log in to your application to check all details are accurate and to make changes, including uploading documents, or to send and receive messages.
- Select the 3 dots under the 'Action' column to the right of your listed application to select options to view or edit the application details, or later to access online forms for illness/misadventure or appeals.
- Remember to submit again each time you make a change, especially changes to school choices, or there will be no record of it.
- If you forget your password, you can reset it in the application dashboard.

Supporting documents

Please ensure you upload copies of the following supporting documents to your application at the time of applying (or as soon as possible afterwards) if any of these apply to your child:

- If you believe your child requires reasonable adjustments for the test due to a disability, you may need to provide evidence – learn more at step 4. Reasonable adjustments on [Using the application website](#).
- A copy of court orders if they relate to decisions about your child's education or communication about the child.
- An explanation of why the child is older or younger than the usual age range for Year 6, or if he or she is not in Year 6 in 2025.
- Supporting information from the school if you intend to repeat your child in Year 5 or if you are intending to have your child skip Year 6. Applications from parents/carers who intend for their child to repeat Year 5 are very rarely accepted even if supported by the school and even after the student has sat the test.
- The Selective Education Unit may need to confirm if your child is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, if public school records do not confirm it. For further information and/or

guidance concerning this matter, your school's Aboriginal Education team may be of assistance. Alternatively, contact your local, regional or state NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) for advice. The Local Aboriginal Land Council may also be a point of reference. Alternatively, you can contact the Aboriginal Education and Communities Directorate on aeccorrespondence@det.nsw.edu.au.

Changes to the application

It is your responsibility to check, correct and make changes to your application. **If required, resubmit.** Some changes will be restricted to certain dates – see the [Key dates](#).

Who can make enquiries or decisions?

Parent/carer details

The Selective Education Unit will communicate only with the parents/carers (limited to 2 people) that you list on the application. If you want other adults to discuss your child's application with the Unit, record their details on the application.

If possible, provide a second email address. Keep your contact details and your child's current school details up to date by logging in to your application dashboard using the email address you registered and the password you used to apply.

If relevant court orders or legal restraints about communication or decisions apply, upload a copy to your application so the Selective Education Unit can comply with them.

The Unit does not correspond with students or speak to them on the telephone. Please ensure your login details are kept secure and shared only with authorised parents/carers. If an **interpreter** is needed, please **telephone 131 450**.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants may wish to speak to their school's Aboriginal Education team or the principal for further support.

Where parents/carers live at the same address as the student

Record the details of other parents/carers in the application if they are likely to contact the Selective Education Unit or if they are entitled to make decisions on behalf of the child.

Where parents/carers live at different addresses

If parents/carers do not live together but have equal shared responsibility for the care and welfare of the student, the parent/carer who lives at the same address as the child for most of the time should submit the application.

If the student lives with each parent/carer for equal time, the parent or carer with whom the child is staying at the time should apply. Additional parents/carers can be added to the application and can ask to receive information about the child's application.

Please do not submit 2 different applications for the same child. You must apply once only for a student. Duplicate applications will be deleted.

The Selective Education Unit will not participate in parental disputes and will accept decisions about school choices and placement made by the parent or carer who applied, unless there are court orders stating otherwise. Where parents/carers cannot agree, the matter will be dealt with according to the department's [Family law guidelines](#).

What do I need to know about the test?

The Selective High School Placement Test is held at scheduled times over multiple days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) each year. The Selective High School Placement Test is held in the afternoon.

There will be multiple versions of the computer-based test to allow the tests to be conducted over multiple days and allow for a make-up test. Parents and guardians can nominate a preferred day for the test, but there's no guarantee that they will get their chosen day. Students will be allocated to test centres based on the postcode of the schools they attend.

The test has multiple-choice questions in 3 components – reading, mathematical reasoning and thinking skills. It also has a writing test that asks the student to produce an original piece of writing in response to a specific task.

The test is designed to measure ability rather than curriculum knowledge. It has been developed specifically for placement at a selective high school and has no diagnostic function.

Learn more at [Placement Test](#) and [Selective high school practice tests](#).

Test dates

Entry year	Main test period	Make-up test
2026	Friday 2 May to Sunday 4 May 2025	Monday 19 May 2025

How are placement decisions made?

Students are offered a place based on test performance and the order of their school choices.

The Equity Placement Model

The Equity Placement Model helps make access fairer for more high potential and gifted students in our community. We know that some high potential and gifted students are missing out because they experience educational disadvantage.

Under the Model, up to 20% of student places at each selective high school and opportunity class are held for high potential and gifted:

- students from low socio-educational advantage areas
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students
- students from rural and remote locations
- students with disability.

The held places are offered to students based on their performance in the placement test.

Learn more at [Fair access](#).

Your child's placement outcome

Placement outcomes and offers will be released during Term 3, 2025.

An email alert is sent to parents and carers when outcomes are available in their application dashboard.

How to view your outcome in the application dashboard

1. [Log in to the application dashboard](#) (using the email and password you registered with).

Select the 3 dots under the 'Action' column

Select 'View outcomes'.

Select the 'Student performance report' button to see how your child performed on the test. See Performance report below for more information.

How offers work

Parents are offered a place for their child based on the child's **test performance** and the **order** of their school choices.

The test performance needed to get an offer at each school is different. This is because it is based on the number of students who apply, their test performance and the number of places available at the school.

When initial placement outcomes are released:

Parents can get a placement **offer** from only **one** of their school choices.

If your child's test performance meets the levels needed for an offer from multiple schools, your offer will come from your highest choice school only. See the section above 'Choosing schools – example scenarios'.

Later offers from reserve lists

Students may be placed on a reserve list(s) for one (or more) higher-choice school(s) when outcomes are first released. If their position on the list is reached, they may get a later offer. Learn more below in the section 'What do the different outcomes mean?'

What are the possible outcomes?

You can have the following outcomes:

- Offer – your child has been made an offer at the school shown
- Reserve list only – your child is on the reserve list (wait list) for the school shown
- Offer and higher choice reserve list(s) – your child has an offer at one school and is also on the reserve list for a school of higher choice
- Unsuccessful – your child has been unsuccessful for placement at the school shown
- N/A (not applicable) – the school was a lower choice than another school that your child has received an offer for.

If unsuccessful for all school choices the separate schools are not listed. Learn more at [Outcomes](#).

Can my offer be cancelled?

If you do not respond to an offer by the due date the Selective Education Unit will send a message reminding you to respond. If there is no response, the offer will lapse (be cancelled) and will pass to the next eligible student on the reserve list.

If your child does not satisfy all requirements, such as the residency requirements, or does not attend to finalise enrolment on the first day of school without a satisfactory explanation, the offer will be cancelled.

Offers will also be cancelled if they are found to be based on false or misleading information.

School enrolment

If you accept an offer, you will receive an email asking you to enrol online. The school will contact you about orientation days.

On Thursday 15 January 2026, an 'Authority to attend' letter will become available in your [application dashboard](#).

Your child will need to take the letter to the school on the first day of Term 1 to finalise their enrolment.

To enrol in selective high school, you must meet all NSW Department of Education enrolment conditions – learn more at [Enrolment](#).

Please refer to our [Outcomes](#) webpage for the latest information about placement.

Enrolment form helpline: 1300 679 338

Translated resources

Visit [Resources in other languages](#) to find translated documents and videos about opportunity classes and selective high schools.

This includes a link to the [Selective high schools and opportunity classes fact sheet](#) that has been translated into 25 different languages.

Additional information – website directory

Visit the [Selective high schools and opportunity classes](#) website for comprehensive information about the placement process, including the following:

Appeals

Full URL:

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/outcomes#Appeals6

Find a selective high school

Full URL

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/choosing-a-school/selective-high-schools#Find1

Illness and/or misadventure

Full URL:

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/placement-test#Illness4

Malpractice

Full URL:

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/placement-test#Test3

Reasonable adjustments

Full URL:

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/application-process/using-the-application-website#/asset3

Reserve list bands

Full URL:

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/outcomes/selective-high-school-year-7-reserve-list-bands

Test day

Full URL:

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/placement-test#Test3

Test structure and practice tests

Full URL

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/placement-test/selective-high-school-practice-tests

Using the application website – online user guide

Full URL:

education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/choosing-a-school-setting/selective-high-schools/application-process/using-the-application-website

Selective high schools and opportunity classes – information for students

Full URL

<https://edu.nsw.link/shs-oc-students>

Applying for selective high school – student resource hub

Full URL:

<https://edu.nsw.link/shshub>

Contact us

As soon as you have registered and begun your application you can contact the Selective Education Unit within your [application dashboard](#).

Application dashboard messaging

In your application dashboard you can send and receive messages and upload documents. You will receive email notifications when we send you a message through your application dashboard. Check that the emails are not sent to your junk folder and make sure your email account is not full.

Other contact details

The selective high school placement process is managed by the Selective Education Unit. If you have not yet created an application, you can contact the Selective Education Unit through:

Email: ssu@det.nsw.edu.au

Phone: 1300 880 367 (the phone system has updates at key stages of placement)

Facebook: facebook.com/groups/772251106301086

Telephone interpreter service: 131 450

If you need an interpreter to assist with your enquiry, please call the telephone interpreter service and tell the operator the **language you need** and the phone number you want to call.

The operator will call the number the Selective Education Unit phone number (1300 880 367) and get an interpreter on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

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