

Spinifex Scholars Program

Parent & Student Guide

Developing academically capable learners to achieve their personal best

The **Spinifex Scholars Program** provides an enriched learning pathway for academically capable students in Years 7–10. The program is designed to provide students with opportunities to extend their knowledge, skills, thinking and independence through greater depth, complexity and academic challenge.

Students participating in the program are expected to maintain high standards of academic engagement, effort, behaviour, attendance and responsibility.

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How are students selected?

Students apply for the Scholars Program through an advertised application process. Applications are considered by a **Scholars Selection Panel**, which reviews the information provided by applicants alongside relevant College data and teacher recommendations.

The panel considers a range of evidence, which may include:

- academic achievement and progress
- learning behaviours and engagement

- effort and application to learning
- behaviour
- attendance
- teacher recommendations
- student responses and demonstrated interest
- other relevant supporting information.

Selection is based on the **overall evidence available** rather than a single result or measure.

The Selection Panel makes recommendations regarding student placement, with **final placements approved by the Head of Campus**.

Where applications exceed available places, students who are not initially offered a place may be placed on a **ranked waitlist**. Vacancies that arise during the year may be offered to students from the waitlist in accordance with the established process.

Students who enrol at Spinifex State College during the year may also be considered for the program where a vacancy exists.

Notification of application outcomes

Families will receive written notification of the outcome of their child's application by the advertised notification date.

Successful applicants

Successful applicants will receive confirmation of their placement and information about the program, expectations and next steps.

Unsuccessful applicants

Applicants who are not offered a place will receive written notification.

Where appropriate, students may be placed on the ranked waitlist for consideration should a vacancy arise.

For students who have previously participated in the Scholars Program and are not offered a place for the following year, a member of the College team may also contact the parent or carer by phone as a courtesy to discuss the outcome and future learning pathways.

How is student progress reviewed?

Participation in the Scholars Program is reviewed regularly to ensure that students continue to benefit from the program and are meeting the expectations associated with participation.

The College may review information such as:

- academic achievement and progress
- assessment results
- classroom engagement
- effort and learning behaviours

- attendance
- behaviour
- teacher feedback
- student wellbeing and engagement.

These reviews are intended to identify students who are progressing well as well as students who may require additional support.

Supporting students who are not meeting expectations

If a student's academic performance, engagement, attendance or behaviour is not meeting the expectations of the Scholars Program, the College will generally implement **support and intervention before considering a change to the student's placement**.

This may include:

1. identifying areas of concern;
2. discussing the concerns with the student;
3. communicating with parents or carers where appropriate;
4. establishing goals or strategies for improvement;
5. monitoring progress over an agreed period; and
6. reviewing the student's progress and ongoing suitability for the program.

The purpose of this process is to support students to be successful rather than to immediately remove them from the program.

Extenuating circumstances

The College recognises that circumstances outside a student's control may temporarily affect their attendance, engagement or academic performance.

Extenuating circumstances, such as significant illness, bereavement or other significant personal circumstances, may be considered as part of the review process.

These circumstances will be considered individually and sensitively. Where appropriate, short-term adjustments, additional support or an agreed period of consideration may be provided before decisions are made about a student's ongoing participation.

Ongoing participation in the Scholars Program

Placement in the Scholars Program is dependent on students continuing to demonstrate the behaviours, effort and academic engagement expected of participants.

Where concerns persist despite appropriate support and intervention, the College may determine that continued participation in the program is no longer appropriate.

Any decision to change or withdraw a student's placement will consider:

- the student's overall progress;

- relevant academic, attendance and behaviour information;
- teacher feedback;
- interventions and support that have been provided;
- any relevant extenuating circumstances; and
- the student's capacity to benefit from the program.

Parents or carers will be informed where a significant change to a student's participation is being considered.

What is different about Scholars learning?

Scholars students participate in the same curriculum as their peers, while teachers provide additional opportunities for students to work with greater **depth, complexity and challenge**.

Learning may include:

- higher-order thinking
- inquiry and problem-solving
- critical and creative thinking
- extended application of knowledge
- academic discussion and collaboration
- independent learning
- opportunities to pursue areas of interest
- enrichment and extension activities.

The aim is not simply to provide students with **more work**, but to provide opportunities for **deeper and more challenging learning**.

Students are expected to continue meeting the same College expectations for behaviour, effort, attendance and participation.

Student expectations

Students participating in the Scholars Program are expected to:

- demonstrate consistent effort;
- participate actively in learning;
- respond positively to academic challenge;
- demonstrate respectful and responsible behaviour;
- attend regularly and be punctual;
- complete learning and assessment to an appropriate standard;
- use technology purposefully and responsibly;
- bring their laptop to class each day and use it when required; and

- demonstrate increasing independence and ownership of their learning.

Being a Scholars student is both an opportunity and a responsibility.

Year 10 Scholars Program

Year 10 students participate in the Scholars Program during **Semester 1**.

During Semester 2, Year 10 students transition into **pre-senior coursework and preparation for their senior pathways**.

This transition provides students with opportunities to apply their skills and strengths as they prepare for the increased academic demands of Years 11 and 12.

A partnership between students, families and the College

The success of the Scholars Program relies on a strong partnership between students, families and staff.

Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning and make the most of the opportunities provided.

Families can support their child's participation by encouraging:

- regular attendance;
- consistent effort;
- positive learning habits;
- organisation and preparation;
- a willingness to embrace challenge; and
- communication with the College when circumstances may affect their child's learning.

Together, we can support academically capable learners to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and independence they need to achieve their personal best.