

# Enrolment principles

Ratified by the Aurora State Reference Group on 31 August 2020



## Aurora College – broad principles

Aurora College was established as a key deliverable of [Rural and Remote Education - A blueprint for action](#) to provide gifted and talented students in rural and remote government schools access to a broad range of curriculum opportunities.

When a student enrolls in Aurora College they become a shared enrolment between Aurora and their home school. In this educational partnership, both schools must plan for and support the curriculum of each shared student. The operational model of Aurora College is based on face-to-face, real time lessons. This model requires each partner (home) school to build part of their timetable from the common timetable template.

Aurora College seeks to work proactively with and provide practical support to each partner school to ensure curriculum alignment and individualised support for each student. Aurora shares the expertise of Aurora teachers with all rural and remote government schools, not just those schools partnering with Aurora.

To support maximum curriculum alignment and a smooth timetabling process in each partner school, Aurora College provides the Aurora curriculum structure for the following year to all rural and remote government schools in June of the preceding year and works with each partner school to ensure maximum timetable alignment in the following year.

## Enrolment in Years 5 and 6 at Aurora College

Students in Years 5 and 6 gain entry to Aurora College via the NSW Opportunity Class Placement process and study mathematics, science and technology with Aurora and all other subjects in their home school.

The NSW Opportunity Class Placement process does not require parents to have the approval of the home school principal when accepting a place in any government opportunity class, including enrolling with Aurora.

As soon as Aurora is aware of the offers that will be made to Year 5 students for the following year, the Aurora principal contacts the home school principal to flag the potential partnership and, if the home school is not a current partner school, provides information about Aurora. The Aurora principal requests ITD check and address any bandwidth concerns at this stage.

## Enrolment in Years 7 to 10 at Aurora College

Students in Years 7 to 10 gain entry to Aurora College via the NSW Selective High Schools Placement Test and study English, mathematics and science with Aurora and all other subjects in their home school.

The NSW Selective High Schools Placement process does not require parents to have the approval of the home school principal when accepting a place in any government selective school, including enrolling with Aurora.

As soon as Aurora is aware of the offers that will be made to Year 7 students for the following year, the Aurora principal contacts the home school principal to flag the potential partnership and, if the home school is not a current partner school, provides information about Aurora. The Aurora principal requests ITD check and address any bandwidth concerns at this stage.

## Enrolment in Years 11 and 12 at Aurora College

Aurora also provides Stage 6 government high school students in rural and remote communities the opportunity to study one or more subjects with Aurora. This opportunity is available to continuing students and other students with a learning style suited to working in the Aurora learning environment.

Aurora also has the capacity to enrol a whole course cohort of students if/when a rural or remote school is not able to staff that course or loses the only suitable teacher to deliver the course.

Students applying to enrol in one or more subjects in Stage 6, including those students already enrolled in Year 10 at Aurora College, must seek the support of their home school principal.

Students enrolled in Aurora in Year 7 to 10 build strong relationships with peers and Aurora teachers and enjoy the Aurora learning environment. These students may seek to enrol in Aurora in Stage 6 to meet both curriculum and wellbeing needs.

The curriculum and wellbeing needs of students seeking to enrol in Aurora in Stage 6 should be balanced with the curriculum needs of other students in the home school. To minimise the impact of a partnership with Aurora College, Aurora will, as far as possible, schedule Stage 6 courses at the start and end of the school day.

School principals have five options available when looking to provide stage 6 curriculum that best meets the aspirations and post-school pathways of their current cohort:

- Use the school's staffing and resource allocations as flexibly as possible to provide a suitable range of senior curriculum options.
- Select a distance education single subject provision that matches the student's specific curriculum need.
- Engage in a partnership with Aurora College
- Develop ad-hoc relationships with other similar schools that provide the required curriculum resource for the period of the student's specific curriculum need.
- Formalise a relationship as a partner school in an Access program cluster for the period of the student's specific curriculum need.

Each of these choices will have benefits and drawbacks based on each student's learning style, the degree of flexibility required by the school, the student's career aspirations and the overall cost to the school's staffing budget.

The principles below should guide decision making of the home school principal and the principal of Aurora College when assessing a request to enrol with Aurora in Stage 6.

### **Guiding principles for assessing Stage 6 enrolment requests**

#### **What is in the best interests of the student seeking enrolment?**

- Are there career aspirations that may be impacted if the student is not able to access the course (or courses) sought?
- Are there student curriculum, health or wellbeing issues that can be better met if the student studies with Aurora?
- Are there student curriculum, health or wellbeing issues that can be better met if the student studies with their home school cohort?
- Is the student's learning style suited to working in the Aurora learning environment?
- How does the ability of this student compare with that of the students who will study the course in the home school? (ie Is this student of significantly higher ability? Does he/she have significantly greater prior learning in this curriculum area?)
- Is there documentation to support the views of the student, their carer(s) and/or the Aurora staff that enrolment with Aurora College is in the best interests of the student?
- Have the principals of BOTH the home school and Aurora met with parents and student to assess the enrolment application, reasons for seeking Aurora and any supporting documentation?
- (for current Aurora students) Has the principal Aurora met with the student's Year 10 teachers to assess the enrolment application, reasons for seeking Aurora and any supporting documentation?

**What will be the impact of the enrolment on the home school curriculum?**

- Is the home school offering the course(s) sought by the student?
- Is the home school able to provide a teacher with appropriate qualifications to deliver this course?
- Will the home school still be able to run this course for the remaining cohort if the student or students are accepted as Aurora students?
- How will this enrolment impact on the overall curriculum of the home school? (eg are there local arrangements for Stage 6 that make matching the Aurora schedule difficult? How many students are already enrolled in Aurora in Year 7 – 10 in the home school? What is the impact of these students?)

**What other solutions have been considered? Can this request be met in another way?**

- Is another local government school better able to support the Aurora partnership? Is the student willing and able to change schools to access Aurora? What will be the impact on their peer relationships and wellbeing?
- Could the entire cohort of the course enrol with Aurora, keeping in mind the individual learning styles of the student cohort?
- Can the home school teacher(s) access professional learning with Aurora and/or team teach with an Aurora teacher to build their capacity to deliver the course in future years?

**Prioritising enrolment requests**

If the number of enrolment applications for any Stage 6 Aurora course exceeds available places, applications will be prioritised using the principles outlined above and these criteria.

Priority will be given to:

1. students in remote schools who are not able to enrol in this course in their home school
2. students in other rural schools who are not able to enrol in this course in their home school
3. a course cohort of students where the school no longer has a suitably qualified teacher to teach the course
4. students who have been part of the Aurora 7 – 10 cohort
5. students for whom this course is a key part of their career or university study plan and either unavailable in their home school and/or where the course is not being taught by a suitably qualified teacher
6. a course cohort of students or individual students on a case-by-case basis where this is deemed to be in the best interests of these students.

**Resolving issues**

Students in Years 5 and 6 enrol in Aurora College based on a successful application to the department's opportunity class examination. The NSW Opportunity Class Placement process does not require parents to have the approval of the home school principal when accepting a place with Aurora.

Students in Years 7 to 10 enrol in Aurora College based on a successful application to the department's selective schools' examination. The NSW Selective High Schools Placement process does not require parents to have the approval of the home school principal when accepting a place with Aurora.

The home school accommodates this parent choice by building part of the home school timetable from the common timetable template. This requires an ongoing partnership between the home school and Aurora College. Aurora College will provide advice, assistance and additional funding to partner schools to support and sustain an effective partnership.

For students seeking to enrol in Years 11 and 12, the principles outlined above will be the basis of decision making by the principals of the home school and Aurora College.

Issues arising from students seeking to enrol with Aurora College are best resolved informally and on a case-by-case basis between the two principals.

Where issues cannot be resolved by the two principals, either principal and/or the student's family may seek assistance from the Director(s) Educational Leadership for the home school and/or Aurora College. The two directors will work together, in consultation with both principals, the student and his/her family, and guided by these principles, to resolve issues and to determine the best outcome(s) for each student.