



HIGH  
ABILITY  
LEARNERS



# HIGH ABILITY LEARNERS

Northcote High School offers specialised programs for our high ability learners.

These programs are designed to provide accelerated and enriched learning experiences, tailored to the unique needs of high ability learners. Students have the opportunity to engage in advanced coursework, explore specialised subjects, and work on challenging projects that extend their knowledge and skills beyond the regular curriculum.

The programs are delivered by experienced teachers who are skilled in differentiating instruction to meet the needs of high ability learners, and students are encouraged to pursue their interests and passions in a supportive and stimulating environment.

**IN THIS BOOKLET, WE  
SHARE THE DIFFERENT  
WAYS WE ENRICH,  
EXTEND AND ACCELERATE  
HIGH ABILITY LEARNERS  
AT DIFFERENT POINTS  
IN THEIR ACADEMIC  
JOURNEYS.**



# JUNIOR SCHOOL



# ADVANCE CURRICULUM EXTENSION (ACE)

Our ACE (Advance Curriculum Extension) program is an extension program that caters for highly able students in Year 7 and 8 who are enrolled at Northcote High School.

As with all students in Years 7 and 8, students in the ACE program learn together in their Connect group for most of their subjects.

Teachers in our ACE program are provided with training in working with gifted and talented students and through extension and enrichment leverage the interests of their students to extend learning. We understand that many gifted and talented students can be more challenged and motivated when they work with students at their level of ability, and this can be beneficial for not just their intellectual growth but also their social and emotional development.

“The ACE program was a supportive community of students that allowed us to have an environment which helped further our enjoyment of learning during a big transition period.”

Our ACE Program has been running for over 20 years, with our model and approach emulated by other Victorian schools. The retention rates for students who participate in the ACE program are generally around 90 per cent and students consistently achieve success at VCE level.



# VICTORIAN HIGH ABILITY PROGRAM (VHAP)

The VHAP is a program, delivered by Virtual School Victoria and focuses on extending and developing students' Mathematical and English abilities.

After completing the virtual program, students participate in a face-to-face masterclass with other high-ability students from schools in their local area.

Students are selected via an algorithm that is based on student achievement data to assess student ability and readiness to participate in the program. A combination of high NAPLAN scores and being one or more years ahead of their peers (based on teacher judgement data) indicates high ability.

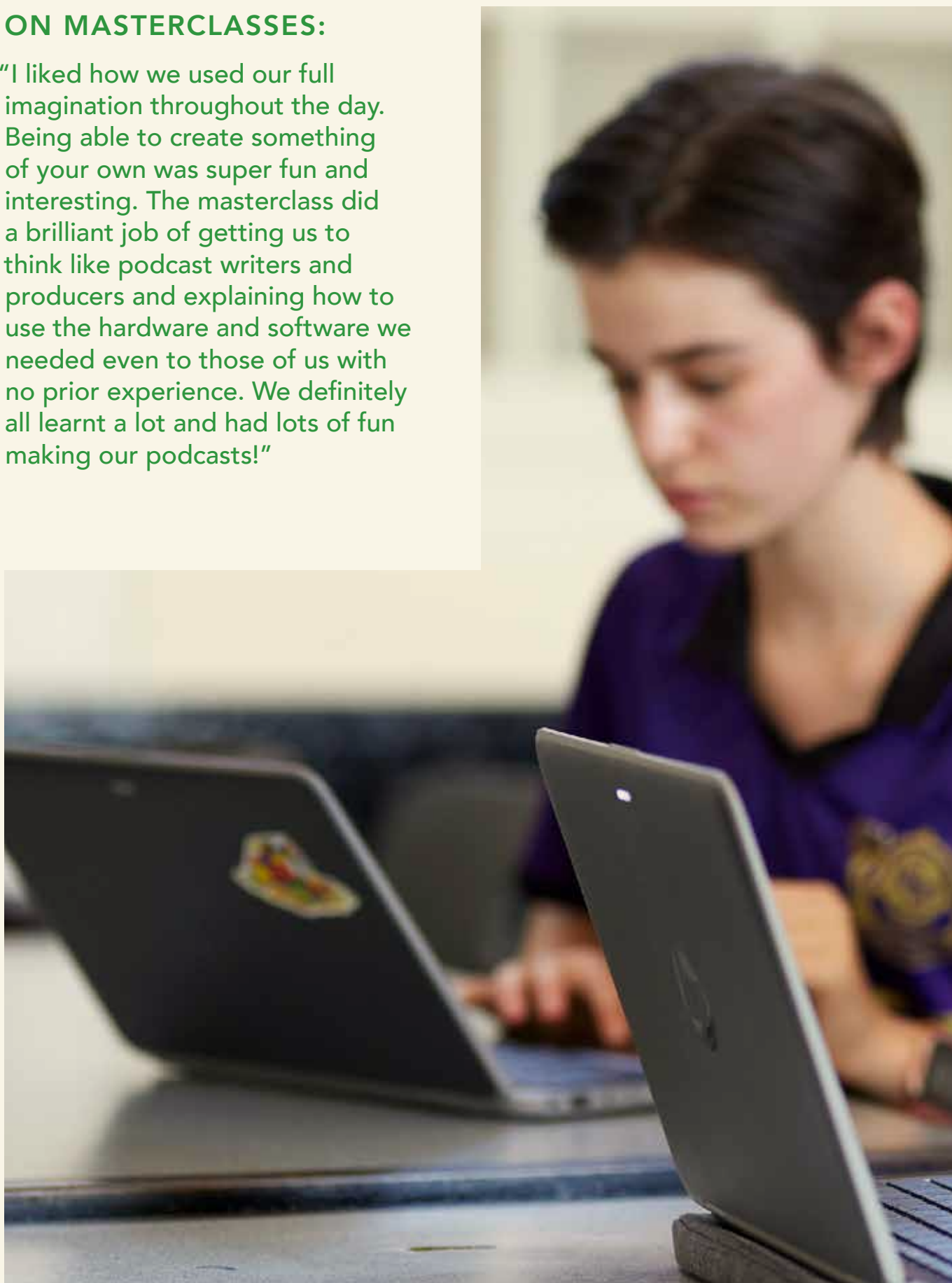
Priority of place is provided to students who are high ability and experience social-economic disadvantage, identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or reside in a regional/rural area. Since the program started in Term 4 of 2020 Northcote High School has had over 360 year 7 and 8 students participate.

"VHAP is a way to connect and learn with people who have the same interests as you. VHAP allows you to improve and help become an expert at something."



## ON MASTERCLASSES:

"I liked how we used our full imagination throughout the day. Being able to create something of your own was super fun and interesting. The masterclass did a brilliant job of getting us to think like podcast writers and producers and explaining how to use the hardware and software we needed even to those of us with no prior experience. We definitely all learnt a lot and had lots of fun making our podcasts!"



# MIDDLE SCHOOL



# THE NORTHCOTE MODEL

“Having the option to choose from a variety of subjects that are more catered to my interests is super interesting!”

The Northcote Model recognises that high-ability students have diverse needs and characteristics and aims to provide them with a supportive and inclusive learning environment that fosters their talents and potential.

Through these programs, students are empowered to pursue their passions, develop their talents, and reach their full potential, preparing them for success in their academic and personal lives.

High Ability students are able to do more of what they enjoy, by specialising in deep knowledge of an area, or to engage with a broader set of learning opportunities. The course are designed to appeal to a variety of interests, to explore big ideas and specific content and to promote student connection to areas of study.





# ADVANCEMENTS

Students who demonstrate high intellectual potential and a strong commitment to their studies may wish to enhance their learning by undertaking some advanced level study.

The aim of advancement is not to accelerate faster through a learning program, but to access additional challenge and extension whilst maintaining strong connections to their peer group.

In the Northcote Model, students may advance by undertaking:

- Year 10 courses in Year 9
- VCE and VET units in Year 10
- Non-EAL (English as an Additional Language)
- English courses as an EAL student, OR
- A first year University subject at Year 12



# VICTORIAN CHALLENGE AND ENRICHMENT SERIES

The VCES provides extension and enrichment activities across the curriculum to engage, challenge and extend high-ability students from prep to year 12.

High Ability students are nominated to participate in activities according to their abilities and interests.



SENIOR  
SCHOOL



## ADVANCEMENTS

“My experience in class during VCE has reflected much of the learning we did during year one of my undergraduate studies. It made the first year of uni so much less challenging!”

Highly Able students in our Senior School often elect to take on an advancement at VCE.

By undertaking a VCE or VET subject early, students can learn advanced concepts and develop skills beyond their current level. It can enable them to enhance their critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and time management skills and help build their confidence to take on challenging coursework.



# CENTRE FOR HIGHER ACADEMIC STUDIES (CHES)

High Ability students at Northcote High School have access to CHES program for further enhancement and enrichment via their “hy-flex” delivery.

Students who are successfully admitted into the program can gain access to first-year university studies.

“This has been a terrific environment for me to learn in. The opportunity to be more independent in my studies and the way it is laid out in a Uni-like style will no doubt give me a leg up in my transition to uni”



# WHOLE SCHOOL



## ENRICHMENTS

In 2024, NHS introduced a new Enrichments program for all students at Northcote High School.

This program is designed to allow flexibility and target students' individual learning needs or interests. Students participate in 5-lesson cycles of Enrichments within each area of Academic, Community, Interest or Capability. The overall goal of all courses within the Enrichment Program is to encourage students to embrace the joy of learning. Whether that be via targeted academic intervention/extension to support within subject areas or giving students time to experience new hobby/interest areas, this program allows opportunities to encourage and enhance learning growth.



## CLUBS AND CO-CURRICULAR

We have a range of co-curricular programs and clubs which enrich student's learning.

We regularly host and participate in extra-curricular competitions (such as debating competitions, Tournament of the Minds, STEM/ Robotics competitions and more) but also offer a range of weekly clubs that allow not only a way for students to socialise around areas of interest but engage in activities that take them beyond the curriculum.

Students in clubs such as FEMCO, Art Club and Green Team also engage in and lead wider school community projects and events in ways that develop their leadership skills and spark their curiosity







**NHS**

*Rainbow Club*

**When: Thursdays**

**Where: M9**

**JOIN OUR BOOK CLUB**

Bring a favourite book to discuss about and enjoy some snacks!



*Art Club*

**EVERY FRIDAY MORNING**

# HIGH ABILITY --- LEARNERS

CASE STUDIES



# ROSIE

## **JUNIOR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

Rosie was enrolled in our general program. She was part of the school production, girls soccer, hockey and AFL teams and also participated heavily in cross country and athletics. She felt it was important to balance her school work with sport.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

Rosie travelled to the US as part of the Art and Design tour and was also selected to participate in the Year 10 Northern Territory trip. During Year 10 she wanted to act on her interest in social justice and attended the UN Youth State Conference and started working for Darebin Council in their Young Citizens Jury. She continued to be engaged in sport and was part of the NHS Volleyball Development Squad.

## **SENIOR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

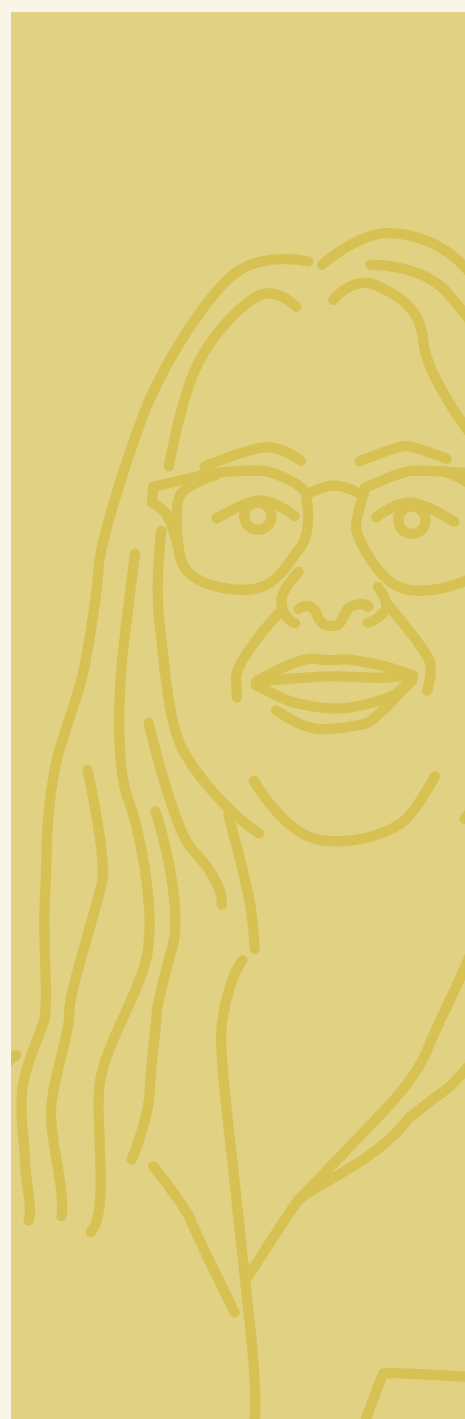
Rosie advanced in Economics, completing Units 3&4 in Year 11. She was honoured to be the recipient of the Australian Defence Force Long Tan Leadership and Teamwork award twice. She collaborated with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre to deliver workshops with senior students about how to have positive conversations about refugees and people seeking asylum.

Rosie was elected School Captain.

## **POST-SECONDARY PATHWAY**

After High School, Rosie enrolled in a Bachelors Degree in Global Studies at Monash University and in 2nd year transferred into Law (Honours) and Global Studies. She was selected to be in the Vice Chancellor's Ancora Leadership Imparo Leadership Program.

She has continued to be heavily involved in youth programs and was awarded Darebin Young Citizen of the Year in 2022



# SAM

## **JUNIOR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

Sam was enrolled in our ACE program. He was also part of our instrumental program and enjoyed participating in the school ensembles. He joined IT Geek Squad, providing feedback to the school about IT needs and supporting teachers with IT in their classrooms.

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## **MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

Sam joined Intro to Algorithmics extension subject at Year 10 and enjoyed the challenge of extending his Maths skills. He performed in the Generations in Jazz as part of the Intermediate Stage Band. Sam had the opportunity to take on a VET subject in Engineering and enjoyed the more adult learning environment that this experience provided.

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## **SENIOR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

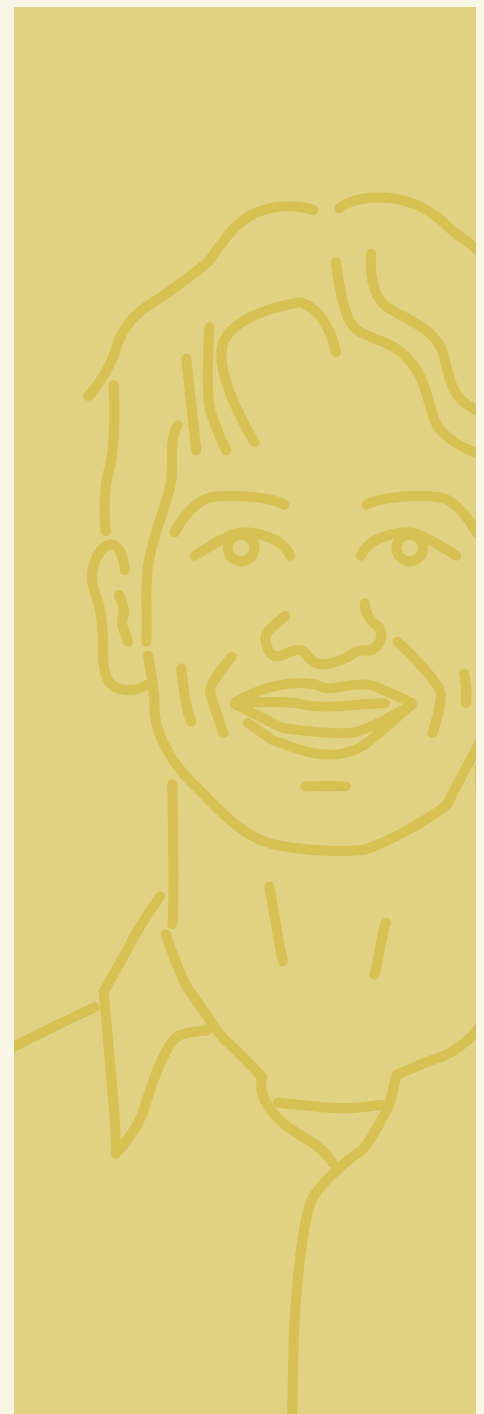
For his VCE program, Sam completed Math Methods, Music Performance, Biology, English and Philosophy

Sam was recognised for his contributions to the music program and was awarded early entry to university through the Aspire La Trobe program.

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## **POST-SECONDARY PATHWAY**

Sam decided to defer his university studies while he pursued his interest in music and travel and is currently studying a Bachelor of Physiotherapy at La Trobe University



# ZARA

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## JUNIOR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Zara was part of our general program. She was heavily involved in public speaking programs including debating and poetry slams. As part of these programs she competed against other schools, allowing her to expand her skills and meet people outside of her regular classes.

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## MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Zara participated in the Maths competition and then completed VCE Methods Unit 1&2 while she was in Year 10. She continued with debating, participating in the DAV inter-school competitions.

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## SENIOR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

In VCE she completed Math Methods, Specialist Maths, Physics, English Language, French and participated in the University of Melbourne's Maths extension program. She also participated in VCAAs Plain English public speaking competition and had the opportunity to judge Year 5&6 public speaking competitions.

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## POST-SECONDARY PATHWAY

She is currently studying a Bachelor of Science at the University of Melbourne majoring in Mechatronics Engineering Systems.



APPLYING  
FOR ACE  
PROGRAM



Entry to the ACE program is based on the Educational Assessment data from the Year 7 placement test, and our decision is final. Testing results from other school programs are not considered in the ACE selection process.

## PROCESS FOR ACE APPLICATIONS – YEAR 7

After Year 7 placements have been offered and confirmed:

- All enrolled students are contacted about how to register their interest in consideration in the ACE Program
- Students must sit the Educational Assessment placement test to be considered for the ACE program. The main Educational Assessment testing date is in Term 3, and the absentee assessment date is in Term 4 for anyone who was unable to attend the first session. These are held at Northcote High School and cannot be completed remotely.
- The school then review applications and the Educational Assessment data to determine students for the ACE program. Places in ACE classes are offered in December prior to Year 7 Orientation

Further information and key dates about ACE application process and Educational Assessment placement test can be found on our website: <https://www.nhs.vic.edu.au/enrol/apply-ace-program/>

## ENTRY IN YEAR 8

Occasionally places become available in the ACE program for the start of Year 8. If this is the case, notification of the opportunity to apply, and details of the process, are communicated to Year 7 parents and students towards the end of the year.



**NORTHCOTE  
HIGH SCHOOL**

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**FOLLOW**  

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**THE**  

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**BETTER**  

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**PATH**  

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