

## Appendix A

### 1. Covering letter and consent form

Sandra Lummis  
22 Charlane Avenue  
Indooroopilly  
QLD 4068

date

Dear

#### **Re: Making Change Happen for Teachers of the Gifted**

Thank you for expressing an interest in this research project. “Making change happen for teachers of the gifted” aims to find out the effectiveness of a school-based professional development program in facilitating constructive change.

The information generated by this study will be used to help schools develop effective professional development activities for their staff on issues related to the gifted and talented student.

Information is to be collected from the teaching staff of two comparable secondary schools. It is intended to keep the sources of the data confidential through the use of pseudonyms for people and places. All teachers will be asked to complete a teacher attitude questionnaire, both at the beginning of the year and at the conclusion of the year. Teacher anonymity is to be maintained by providing the opportunity to leave the questionnaire unsigned. A number of teachers, from one of the schools, will be invited to participate in follow-up interviews regarding their ideas about the education of the gifted. These teachers

will be asked to submit lesson plans for two units chosen at random. It is also suggested that these teachers maintain a reflective journal of self-observations, perhaps with the time commitment of approximately ten minutes a week for a period of one year. This school will also be asked to submit relevant school documents on the education of the gifted and talented student.

Please be assured that no individual is under any pressure to participate, and in particular no individual will be penalised for not doing so. In a similar way, participants are free to withdraw their consent, and to discontinue their participation in the project at any time.

A suggested time frame is as follows. It is likely that the data gathering will be completed by the end of 1997 and the results will be made available to all participants by the middle of 1999. These results will later be published as part of a research project undertaken within a Masters of Education Honours degree at the University of New England.

Any questions concerning this project can be directed to Sandra Lummis, during working hours on 3831 3100 or after hours on 3870 4865.

Thank you once again for your interest in this project.

Your sincerely

Sandra Lummis

I ----- have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, on the understanding that I may withdraw at any time. I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published, provided names are not used for individuals or institutions.

Participant

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

In-depth follow-up: *(Experimental School only)*

A small number of teachers will be invited to participate in follow-up interviews regarding any “crystallizing experiences” which they believe contributed to shifts in their thinking about the education of the gifted and talented. These teachers will also be asked to randomly submit lesson plans for two units and to keep a reflective journal for the period of one year.

Please identify if you would be willing to participate in this in-depth level of the project?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES                      or                      \_\_\_\_\_ NO

# Appendix B

## 1. Demographic cover sheet

### TEACHER ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

By completing this questionnaire you will be participating in research designed to ascertain current attitudes of Australian secondary school teachers towards the education of gifted and talented students.

Thank you for participating in this project.

Please begin by responding to the questions below and then provided on the subsequent pages.

1. **Gender:** Male Female (please circle)

2. **Age range:** 20-29 30-39 40-49 50+ (please circle)

3. Please tick the educational qualification/s that you hold:

- Teaching diploma (2 or 3 years)
- Teaching diploma plus graduate diploma (total 4 years)
- Bachelors degrees (4 years)
- Bachelors Honours
- Bachelors degree plus graduate diploma
- Masters degrees
- Masters Honours
- Ed D or other professional doctorate
- Ph.D.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Please tick the professional position that you currently hold:

- teacher
- school administrator (principal, deputy or assistant principal)
- specialist teacher (advisory or support teacher)

\_\_\_\_\_ psychologist, counsellor or careers officer  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (please describe briefly)

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5. For how many years have you been teaching? (please circle)

0-4                      5-9                      10-20                      21+

6. Please tick the grade levels that you generally teach

\_\_\_\_\_ Junior School                      (year 8)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Middle School                      (years 9 & 10)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Senior School                      (years 11 & 12)

7. Please list the subject areas you generally teach

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_

8. Have you undertaken any formal study in the education of gifted children at teachers' college or university? If so, please describe the subject or course and its duration.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Have you undertaken any inservice program or inservice day/s on gifted education initiated by the school? If so, please describe briefly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Have you attended any other seminars or conferences on gifted education initiated by other organisations? If so, please describe.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Gagné and Nadeau's attitude scale

### OPINIONS ABOUT THE GIFTED AND THEIR EDUCATION<sup>1</sup>

François Gagné, Ph.D. and Lorraine Nadeau, M.A.

Université du Québec à Montréal (Canada)

The following statements concern gifted children and their education: they were taken from newspaper articles, book, and other sources. We would like to know the extend of your agreement or disagreement with each of them. There are no correct or incorrect answers. Please, feel free to express your personal opinion.

1. Use the scale below to give your opinion.
2. **Circle** beside each statement the number that best represents your opinion.
3. Answer as spontaneously as possible.
4. Please answer **all** questions.
5. Use **answer 3 as little as possible.**

SCALE:

1= totally disagree 2= partially disagree 3= undecided 4= partially agree 5= totally agree

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 01. Our schools should offer special educational services for the gifted.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 02. The best way to meet the needs of the gifted is to put them in special classes.                                     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 03. Children with difficulties have the most need of special educational services.                                      | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 04. Special programs for gifted children have the drawback of creating elitism.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 05. Special educational services for the gifted are a mark of privilege.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 06. When the gifted are put in special classes, the other children feel devalued.                                       | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 07. Most gifted children who skip a grade have difficulties in their social adjustment to a<br>group of older students. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 08. It is more damaging for a gifted child to waste time in class than to adapt to skipping<br>a grade.                 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 09. Gifted children are often bored in school.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |

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<sup>1</sup> Copyright, GIREDT, Université du Québec à Montréal, 1991.

1= totally disagree 2= partially disagree 3= undecided 4= partially agree 5= totally agree

10. Children who skip a grade are usually pressured to do so by their parents. 1 2 3 4 5
11. The gifted waste their time in regular classes. 1 2 3 4 5
12. We have a greater moral responsibility to give special help to children with difficulties than to gifted children. 1 2 3 4 5
13. Gifted persons are a valuable resource for our society. 1 2 3 4 5
14. The specific educational needs of the gifted are too often ignored in our schools. 1 2 3 4 5
15. The gifted need special attention in order to develop fully their talents. 1 2 3 4 5
16. Our schools are already adequate in meeting the needs of the gifted. 1 2 3 4 5
17. I would very much like to be considered a gifted person. 1 2 3 4 5
18. It is parents who have the major responsibility for helping children develop their talents. 1 2 3 4 5
19. A child who has been identified as gifted has more difficulty in making friends. 1 2 3 4 5
20. Gifted children should be left in regular classes, since they serve as an intellectual stimulant for the other children. 1 2 3 4 5
21. By separating students into gifted and other groups, we increase the labeling of children as strong-weak, good-less good, etc. 1 2 3 4 5
22. Some teachers feel their authority threatened by gifted children. 1 2 3 4 5
23. The gifted are already favoured in our schools. 1 2 3 4 5
24. In order to progress, a society must develop the talents of gifted individuals. 1 2 3 4 5
25. By offering special educational services to the gifted we prepare the future members of a dominant class. 1 2 3 4 5
26. Tax-payers should not have to pay for special education for the minority of children who are gifted. 1 2 3 4 5
27. Average children are the major resource of our society; so, they should be the focus of our attention. 1 2 3 4 5
28. Gifted children might become vain or egotistical if they are given special attention. 1 2 3 4 5
29. When skipping a grade, gifted students miss important ideas (they have holes in their knowledge). 1 2 3 4 5

**1= totally disagree 2= partially disagree 3= undecided 4= partially agree 5= totally agree**

30. Since we invest supplementary funds for children with difficulties, we should do the same for the gifted. 1 2 3 4 5
31. Often, gifted children are rejected because people are envious of them. 1 2 3 4 5
32. The regular school program stifles the intellectual curiosity of gifted children. 1 2 3 4 5
33. The leaders of tomorrow's society will come mostly from the gifted of today. 1 2 3 4 5
34. A greater number of gifted children should be allowed to skip a grade. 1 2 3 4 5

**Thank you very much for your help in this research project.**

### 3. Gagné and Nadeau's scoring procedure

#### Scoring procedure for the questionnaire<sup>2</sup> "Opinions about the gifted and their education."

INSTRUCTIONS: Transfer your answers from the questionnaire to the corresponding spaces below, taking care to **invert** answers (5=1; 4=2; etc.), to items **within brackets**. Then, do the requested computations to obtain **totals** and **means**.

	Totals	Means
A. Answer: _____	____/8 =	____
Item: 01 09 11 14 15 24 30 32		
B. Answer: _____	____/10 =	____
Item: [03] [04] [05] [12] [16] [18] [23] [26] [27] [28]		
C. Answer: _____	____/4 =	____
Item: 13 17 [25] 33		
D. Answer: _____	____/3 =	____
Item: 19 22 31		
E. Answer: _____	____/4 =	____
Item: 02 [06] [20] [21]		
F. Answer: _____	____/5 =	____
Item: [07] 08 [10] [29] 34		
<b>Total Score</b> (Sum of A to F)	____/34 =	____

#### Titles of sections

- A. Needs and support. (Needs of gifted children and support for special services).
- B. Level of opposition. (Objections based on ideology and priorities).
- C. Social Value. (Social usefulness of gifted persons in society).
- D. Rejection. (Isolation of gifted persons by others in the immediate environment).
- E. Ability grouping. (Attitudes toward homogeneous groups, classes, school).
- F. School acceleration. (Attitudes toward accelerative enrichment).

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<sup>2</sup>Copyright, GIREDT, Université du Québec à Montréal, 1991.

## **Appendix C**

### **Professional Development Program**

**“Making Change Happen”: A model for professional development  
(Queensland Department of Education, 1994).**

Using the Creative Problem-Solving Process (CPS) of Parnes (1967) as a framework, “Making Change Happen” combines the idea of providing appropriate support strategies for classroom teachers at various stages of development (Rankin et al, 1990), with Hill and Eckert’s (1993) model for identifying the various forms of collaboration which can be used within a collaborative process.

**TABLE 12: THE ZIGZAG MODEL OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

<b>CPS Model (Parnes, 1967)</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Steps towards Identification and Provision</b>	<b>Developers</b>	<b>Involved Parties</b>
Fact Finding	Comfortable	What is happening now?	Expert	Whole staff and parents
Problem Finding	Consultations	Define the Issue	Principal and expert	School-based working party
Idea Finding	Consultations	Goal Setting	Working party	Whole staff
Solution Finding	Structured Collaboration (using Rankin et al, 1990)	Seeking solutions	Experts, consultants, trainers, specialists	Whole staff
Acceptance Finding	Cooperative planning - using creative problem-solving process	Developing a plan	Working party	Interested staff
	Critical Collaboration - consultations, demonstrations, modeling, peer coaching	Implementing a plan	Peers, expert(s)	Interested staff
	Guided reflection	Review	Facilitator	School community
	Cooperative planning	Modification of plan	Working party	Interested staff

Queensland Department Of Education (1994)

## **Appendix D**

### **Interview Schedule**

#### **Perceptions of Causes of Attitudinal Change**

##### **Question 1**

Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?

**If yes:**

In what ways?

Which aspects of the program, if any, have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?

**If no:**

Why do you think this is so?

##### **Question 2**

In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?

# Interview Protocol

## Predetermined Coding Categories

### Question 1

Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?

**Answer:**

### Coding:

Direction of attitudinal shift	_____		
Degree of attitudinal shift	small	medium	large
Stage of development			
	Unaware		
	Sensitive to needs		
	Seeking knowledge and information		
	Ready to cater		
	Understanding what needs to be done		
	Providing skills and using new strategies		
	Successfully implementing in the classroom		
	Providing opportunities for meeting of like minds		

### Question 1 part ii

Which aspects of the program have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?

**Answer:**

### Coding:

- General seminars and workshops
- Resource packages
- Staff awareness displays
- Mail box drops
- Support teacher generated strategies
- Classroom demonstrations

Individual consultation to assist with curriculum differentiation  
Informal discussion groups with resource displays  
Collegial construction and exchange of resources  
Modeling for others  
Greater involvement in networking  
Support teacher assistance with review and evaluation  
Involvement in committees  
Research opportunities

**Question 2**

**Answer:**

In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?

**Coding:**

I provide for gifted students in my class by:

Reducing the time they spend on the basics

Omitting those parts of the course that they can already do

Permitting them to speed up if they can work more quickly

Allowing them to be more responsible for their own learning

Changing my usual teaching strategies

Providing for deeper thinking skills

Encouraging and permitting students to extend their knowledge, understanding, skills, processes etc.

Allowing for the development of creative problem solving strategies and their application.

Providing the opportunity to apply one's knowledge and understanding to new situations.

Encouraging meaningful examination of social issues and conflict situations.

Developing enabling skills and performance skills.

Exploring

Specialising

Investigating/Research

Self awareness

Social Roles

Cooperative learning

Conflict resolution

Fine and gross motor skills

Coordination

Enhanced performance

Independence in decision making

Self confidence

Responsibility

Motivation

Moral strength

Problem definition

Creativity

Higher order thinking

Metacognition

Extending the specific interests and understanding

## Appendix E

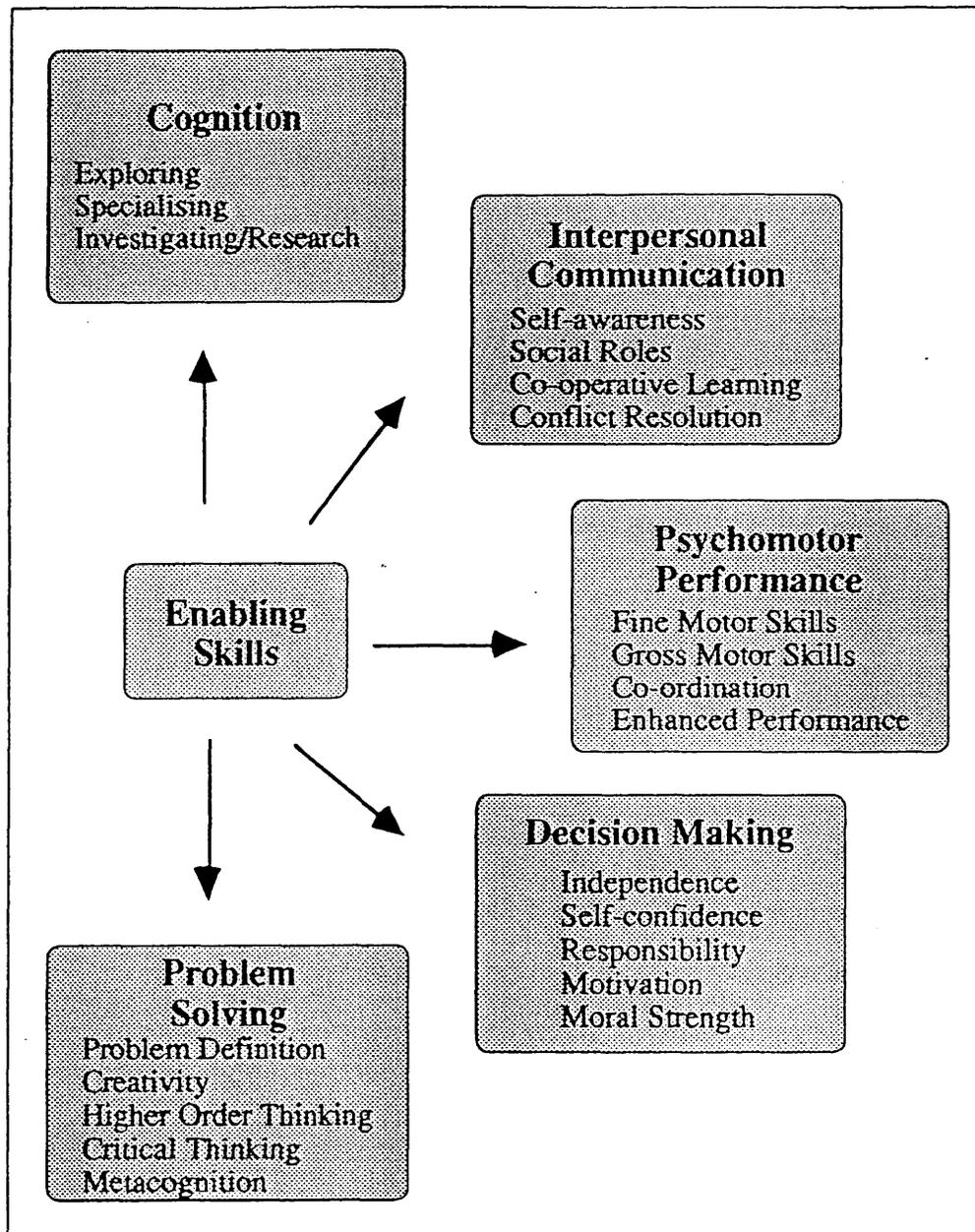
### Classroom Observation

#### Matching People's Attitudes to their Behaviour

<b>Appropriate educational provision for the gifted</b>	<b>1st</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Are the classroom activities designed to:</b>		
Provide for deeper thinking skills?		
Encourage and permit students to extend their knowledge, understanding, skills, processes, etc?		
Allow for the development of creative problem solving strategies and their application?		
Provide the opportunity to apply one's knowledge and understanding to new situations?		
Encourage meaningful examination of social issues and conflict situations?		
Develop enabling skills (Braggett, 1994) and performance skills?		
Extend the specific interests and understandings of the gifted?		
Provide the opportunity for the gifted to spend less time on the basics?		
Allow the gifted to omit those parts of the course they can already do?		
Permit the gifted to speed up if they can work more quickly?		
Allow the gifted to be more responsible for their own learning?		

Adapted from: *Developing Programs for Gifted Students* Braggett, 1994.

Figure 6: Eddie Bragget's (1994) Enabling skills



# **Appendix F**

## **Document Analysis**

### **Matching People's Attitudes to their Behaviour**

#### **Predetermined Coding Categories**

These coding categories have been based on the work of Eddie Braggett (1994) *Developing Programs for Gifted Students*.

**Unit Title:**

**Year level:**

**Subject:**

This unit of work provides for gifted students by:

- 1. Reducing the time they spend on the basics.**
  
- 2. Omitting those parts of the course that they can already do.**
  
- 3. Permitting them to speed up if they can work more quickly.**
  
- 4. Allowing them to be more responsible for their own learning.**
  
- 5. Changing my usual teaching strategies.**
  
- 6. Providing for deeper thinking skills.**
  
- 7. Encouraging and permitting students to extend their knowledge, understanding, skills processes, etc.**

- 8. Allowing for the development of creative problem solving strategies and their application.**
  
- 9. Providing the opportunity to apply one's knowledge and understanding to new situations.**
  
- 10. Encouraging meaningful examination of social issues and conflict situations.**
  
- 11. Developing enabling skills and performance skills.**
  
- 12. Extending the specific interests and understanding.**

**Appendix G**  
**Transcript of Interviews**  
**Participant A**

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** I have been teaching senior physics students now for, um, 18 years. So I'm dealing with extremely talented, academically talented, students all the time. But it wasn't really until the last two years that I have realized that there are a group of students that are in fact gifted in different ways [DAS]. I have been locked into very academic subjects teaching wise since college, and so I have had very little experience in the areas of, um, language, even art. Um, so it was interesting to see, um it was not always the same student who would pop up in those areas and that they do learn very differently [SD2 and SD3]. Especially in the last three or four years when I have been dealing heavily with computers and students using computers. You know, you really do start to notice that there is a totally different feel to giftedness when you start to talk about using technology in the classroom [SD2]. Academic ability is really no guide at all as to how a student works with a tool.

**INTERVIEWER:** So is that tapping into things like problem solving and applying knowledge that they might gain into a new situations, those kinds of areas? Is that the difference? So what's, where does the difference lie?

**PARTICIPANT:** The difference lies in that you may be able to apply the knowledge but to get it to visualise in a new medium. It's working in a new

medium that a lot of kids get confronted with. They can problem solve quite well, but when asked to present it in a new type of media, that's where they struggle. Um, where other students, who are not problem solvers, don't have  
30 any problem presenting their solution in the media [\*]. So it is very interesting to see what happens. But certainly my whole concept of giftedness has changed markedly [°AS].

**INTERVIEWER:** So what is the difference there? You were really emphasising the word academically gifted. What do you think the options are?

**PARTICIPANT:** Well, just take the language field. Um, dealing with English classes, SOR, Modern History, you realise that there is a whole new dimension to academia [PD9 and SD3]. Rather than I suppose, the traditional maths/science role, problem solving in terms of numbers, figures and graphs and that. I mean, when you start to look at what paradigm that the social  
40 science area works with [\*], and how it uses and functions with language you realise that that is another, totally different giftedness [SD2].

**INTERVIEWER:** So what you are looking at is the whole idea of multiple intelligences, Howard Gardner's theory. We do a lot of things in the school to allow students to express these individual differences.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yeah, when you are working with students in a laboratory you have to be prepared to let them work in thirty different ways [SD5]. Basically that is what it comes down to. We can show them the basics and from there they extend into their own directions from a common input. You can give them a simple exercise like designing a newspaper or the front  
50 page and you will have thirty different designs. But they will all have the characteristics of a newspaper. And that's, for a lot of people, that is very confronting [SD7].

**INTERVIEWER:** Well, it's open ended, isn't it? You are no longer saying I have got in my mind a picture of what I want, and um, you are going to generate it for me.

**PARTICIPANT:** Exactly right, and at the other end when you have to mark it, or assess it, all of a sudden your very finite criteria, have now become almost infinite. And a lot of people have trouble stepping back from that and saying well, you know: What are the fundamental things I wanted from this piece of work and has this student got these fundamentals?

**INTERVIEWER:** So you are really saying to me that YES your perceptions have altered. And you are saying to me that one way that you see that alteration has been in relation to, almost like, a definition of giftedness. From academic to other areas. OK?

**PARTICIPANT:** A broadening of it.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, a broadening of it. So are there any other, um, alterations that you are aware of? So a broadening of the definition.....

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, just the general way that gifted kids work [\*]. I mean, they don't tend to work um, much differently in that you give them a piece of work to do and they may, fumble around as the deadline gets closer. Um, it's almost panic mode when you get close to the deadline as to what their final idea is going to be. But their final idea is always, well above what you'd expect.

**INTERVIEWER:** That comes back to individual differences doesn't it? That, there is not the stereotype that the gifted kid is going to be excellent at everything, and that they can be, just fumbling around with their ideas or organisation, just like everyone else.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yeah that's right.

**INTERVIEWER:** Um, OK. So there are a few things you have mentioned there in relation to how your ideas have shifted. Um, **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program may have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of the gifted students?** So I am looking

for, like, almost like, crystallising experiences. Experiences which have said, “Yes! Hey this is the direction I should be heading in.”

**PARTICIPANT:** If there is one experience that sticks in my mind it is the Year 9 Art Class which came in to use Coral Draw [\*], which is quite a complex program. So I had in my mind that I was going to take them through a series of steps which would show them the basic tools. And after about ten minutes I realised that they didn’t want to do that. That that’s not, that wasn’t  
90 their preferred learning mode, and that what we were better to do with them was to tell them what the tools were, show them how to apply one of them, and then let them just, experiment with it. Ah, you very rapidly achieve, well you achieve a lot more with them that way, than if you had used a very regimented approach [P1, P2 and P3]. So now when you take that into other classrooms, what I tend to do is to take the first ten minutes of a lesson showing the basic concepts and the students can then take that concept to where they want to [P1, P2 and P3].

**INTERVIEWER:** So exposure to students, what other things might be useful in moving you along in terms of your understanding.

100 **PARTICIPANT:** Yeah, working with staff ...in a lot of ways in general they have a lower level of skill in the use of technology. So working with staff on a one to one basis and trying to find out how they learn...how they learn. You very rapidly find out that on a one to one basis you cannot use the same approach with everyone. You do need to adjust your approach.

**INTERVIEWER:** What about other influences? In terms of understanding the gifted and provision for the gifted does stuff that you have read, or inservices that you have been to, or anything at Uni in your course work, preparing units with others. You know do any of those things stand out for you?

110 **PARTICIPANT:** Ooo ... When I was going to Uni gifted was only a very, very, narrow field. It was fairly derided by the science/maths people.

We really paid out on you guys... good cannon fodder. So I would probably have been very resistant to the idea of giftedness and the provision for the gifted [°AS], even when I was teaching at state schools. When they first started to get the gifted programming going at X high, really there was very little support for it. We were probably one of the greatest white anters of that program [°AS].

**INTERVIEWER:** So what changed your mind?

**PARTICIPANT:** You quickly realise, that when you move out of that  
120 atmosphere, that it was very narrow. The curriculum broadened too. So I was teaching computer methods, some vocational subjects, so you start to realise that, you know the science/maths academia slant, is for most students, not the way. So you have to explore other areas. And teaching animal husbandry is a great leveler.

**INTERVIEWER:** So those opportunities and those experiences have made a difference and have broadened things for you. So the more informal stuff, from what you are saying, the stuff, opportunities with the kids, chances to try out strategies and subjects. You know those kinds of things?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yeah exactly.

130 **INTERVIEWER:** So, **Question 2: So what do you do now to make provision for gifted students?** It says in your classes, but I know that as Head of Department for Technology that is not necessarily your focus and that it is broader than that. So what would you do? How do you make provision for gifted students in the stuff that you do?

**PARTICIPANT:** Well, certainly I show a lot more tolerance of activities that are not on task, cos activity that appears at first sight to be not on task is in fact an extremely important learning process for that student [P5] .

**INTERVIEWER:** So divergence is fine?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, and that is another thing that other people find  
140 extremely confronting. Take a straight writing activity, kids are more prone to  
play with and experience, play with more ideas on the page than they are in a  
straight writing class. The amount of writing, the volume, increases, I  
don't know about the quality. So you have to be prepared to say you know, let  
this kid go, let her explore her ideas, and when she gets to an end point or a  
slow down point then you have to mesh those ideas back into the task [P5 and  
P7]. So when you are in the laboratory structure you do have thirty individual  
learners who only come back to you as a reference point [P5], "How do I do  
this?"

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, so divergence is one thing and then pace is another  
150 thing from what you are saying there. So you have got them going off on  
tangents and exploring stuff and finding out what they need for their particular  
challenge. You have also got divergence in pace, like achieving goals at  
different times and working at their own pace.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. Yes. If you are working in a laboratory and  
expecting all the kids to be working at the same point as you are for every  
moment of the lesson, you'll be a very disappointed person. Because what  
tends to happen is you only have them for five to ten minutes. That is the  
maximum period of time that you will have them. Then they will go off on  
their tangent and then they will come back to you for reference points as to  
160 how they are going along the way, or what extra skill do I need to achieve, to  
do what I want to do [P5, P7, P8 and P9].

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, so in terms of provision is that where problem  
solving skills really come in, and thinking skills?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. Because as a teacher it is extremely um,  
exhausting if you are going to try and cater for 30 students and answer all their  
questions. So you have to teach them strategies as to how to solve their own  
problems [P11.18]. Initially their problems are simple things such as, "How do  
I do this? How do I do that?" You can point them to, you know, basic

features of the program. Then the questions turn from, “How do I do this?” to  
170 “What have I done or how do I get out of this?” And that is where the real  
problem solving skills come in [P8, P11.16 and P11.18].

**INTERVIEWER:** Now what about open-endedness within the task  
itself? I mean to a certain degree you are working with other classroom  
teachers. Aren't you? In terms of facilitating for them what's happening and  
for their programs. Is there an attempt to encourage open-endedness with the  
task?

**PARTICIPANT:** Most tasks are open, in that, the students are given the  
basic problem, or the design or the stimulus material, and say your endpoint  
will be..... but the presentation of that solution is totally up to the student [P4,  
180 **P9 and P11.11].** So an end point is given but how you get to it is up to you.

**INTERVIEWER:** So that can be negotiated depending on the skills of the  
student or the abilities of the student?

**PARTICIPANT:** What you tend to find is that teachers who walk into the  
laboratory with a rigid idea of what they want to get out of the students,  
become a lot more tolerant as time goes by as to how the student generates  
that information. Some teachers walk in with a very stringent or precise thing  
as to what the students are going to do. And, that's what they get at the end.  
But how the student got it, they tend to be a lot more tolerant about.

**INTERVIEWER:** I'm just having to think about this. What you are saying  
190 is, well, the speed thing is interesting, because that means, can they omit the  
stuff they know? Can they just move on? Like, if you are only taking five or  
ten minutes and making that a mini lesson, a focus. Is there an opportunity for  
students to move on if they know that stuff?

**PARTICIPANT:** Well I no longer expect a child to listen from the first  
minute to the tenth minute. Um, those students who already know it will  
normally move on themselves [P1, P2, P4 and P11.11]. Um, if I am teaching

a totally new skill then I will demand that the students follow me step by step. Once we get outside that ten minute period then they are on their own.

**INTERVIEWER:** As a formal mechanism subject areas may pre-test to see 200 what knowledge students may have. I'm just thinking that informally that's kind of happening?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. Students take charge [P4]. I'll always start with my lesson saying, "What we are going to do today is, I'm going to show you how to create a table." I would walk them through the principles of creating a table, show them a few things they could do with shading and borders and quite often while I am doing that, you could walk around and 50-60% will be doing that but 40% of the kids are at different points.

**INTERVIEWER:** OK That is helping me to understand the flexibility in terms of... What about if they had really sparked on? What about the student 210 who really hits on something within a lesson and they think, "Yes this is something I want to find out more about." And they become really focused and narrow. Is there an opportunity for them to explore something in depth?

**PARTICIPANT:** That's very difficult because you are always constrained by time and access. A teacher may be coming in for two or three lessons, um, to get the job done and then there's no other time available other than outside of class. So. For a student to extend it on it really just comes down to themselves.

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant B

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Oh yes, yes, it has been very stimulating [°AS], just being associated with this program has just stimulated me to cater for those individual differences within my classes [DAS].  
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**INTERVIEWER:** So, **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Now I have seen many things come round my desk, and one of the most valuable was an article [PD4] circulated that said “The child who is learning least, and is least happy and stimulated in your classroom, is probably the gifted one.”[SD2] And sometimes, you know I have particular students who are so bright, and so I try to, just ask, even if it is something simple like asking them a question. You know when you are questioning you can ask the simple questions to the ones who are doing just, you know, just the normal things and then you can ask that evaluation question, or for their opinion or that creative response from that one. You know, they might try and hide their giftedness or be very sensitive about it,[SD2] and so if you just ask the question and listen to what they say that can be very stimulating for them. Very um, satisfying for them. So you try and keep tabs on them as they go through, and you try and take an interest in the other things they’re doing, like the musical or debating or whatever it is, um, it is nice if you meet the parents and you see the bigger picture of the whole family. So I have found, you know that booklet and video [PD2] that came from the school in Victoria, it was just  
20

30 so true. And in my experience [\*] it is true that those gifted adolescence can be very troubled when they are thinking differently from the people around them. They can be very very troubled, um, they have a different view of the world and it may not be as satisfying because it may not conform to their appreciation of things, or their peers.[SD2] Yeah, and it is interesting that the really gifted student often has one friend who is a low achiever, that happens. So um, they might be getting other things from the friendship.[SD2] But they can be troubled if they don't have these avenues of stimulation. Um, there are other things that you can encourage them into like the writing competitions, um, the Race Around the Corner competition which uses technology and their  
40 creativity. When the library was based in this building there was a wonderful display on gifted women. It was very valuable for me because it said gifted women often have troubled adolescence and that can be true.[PD3] And the other display in the staffroom, which says gifts can be hidden.[PD3] I could relate to that very well.[\*] Um, and I think we have a huge responsibility [SD3] to those girls who need that extra help. Things like being able to access the library very freely, the internet, they do all that anyway but you try to encourage and affirm their use of technology because it will be able to take them places that you will never be able to. Um, you can always suggest reading for them, and again you affirm and encourage their reading because  
50 that is another area that can take them places. Departmental meeting are very useful, [PD8] because I always feel there are people that you can liaise with or consult with, I feel a strong sense that that is very effective. There is always someone there you can go to.[PD7]

**INTERVIEWER:** Now let's look at **Question 2: In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?**

I think, at this school, especially in the English program, they are very fine programs, and we do have a high proportion of gifted students, and the programs have been well constructed and the units of work and the tasks provide for, um, extension activities.[P12] I personally try to provide  
60 extension activities for the gifted students by, um, firstly, I have to recognise the gifted students. When I see some of their work, I try to recognise the ones

who are gifted and I look for opportunities [P12] um, that are offered within the school. They are offered in different ways like the Cluster Days and the Days of Excellence.[P7] They feel rewarded and affirmed when they are offered those days and I try to make that a really special thing for them.[P11.12] “Would you like to go to this activity?” And things like this. And so I try to build them up a little bit [P11.12] about going and I try to talk to them personally about how they found it. Also there are other opportunities like Tournament of Minds,[P7] um, which does provide that for those girls, even things like debating can extend their language.[P7] Often the gifted students are heavily involved in music and things like the musical can be very beneficial for them.[P7] It can, um provide them with avenues of expression and socialisation, which they really need. So, um, within the classroom, I try to, I am quite confident that the program is catering for them to a point. I don’t feel that I have to be Arthur Miller, or Charlotte Bronte for them, but I have to be the guide on the side, or as I often say the hack at the back and I just say “There you go. There you go.” [P12; P11.13] And you see them, I try to encourage them, for example if they are writing something I will try to encourage them to higher order thinking.[P11.18] I ask them for their opinions and their evaluations,[P11.18] and if it is a creative piece of writing I try to foster their creativity and reward it and confirm it [P11.17] because that is where they, that is where they are coming from. They are coming from that area because the cultural background here really values education and particularly values reading and the arts and literature and um, I think those areas provide emotional outlets as well. And so those gifted students really need those areas of expression and stimulation and the emotional satisfaction that that brings. Um, I try to. I had this really wonderful time last term, Friday afternoon with my year 9s, my really poor speller was with the teacher aide doing the Sound reading cd and my gifted student was with the teacher librarian working on a poetry unit through the virtual school for the gifted.[P9] So that was just a wonderful lesson because I really felt as if it was all happening. So that happens and it is very rewarding. Um, OK, are there any other aspects you need me to comment on?

**INTERVIEWER:** No, if you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant C

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** I think what it has made me realise is that while I thought it was important, I now think it is even more important [°AS and DAS]. Particularly if you come in with batches of students and some were very high and some were very low, the high group gets bored to tears waiting to get moving. It depends on the way the classroom is run as to whether you can actually give them very much more in class. Um, at grade 8 level it takes a while to find out who they are, and when you have found out who they are you then decide where you will pitch the lessons. If you just have a few who are having trouble you can probably pitch the lessons at a level that will take the gifted ones a little bit further. Whereas if you have a class that is very low ability, and not much ability to, you know, keep their mind on things. I'm amazed that some children actually do learn in that class because I don't think that they have any chance to, so they must have done some for themselves. Which confirms my ideas that gifted children do a lot for themselves anyway [SD1]. And so, I think it depends a great deal on the class in which they are settled as to how much you can do. In primary school you can send them off to do extra reading whereas here you can't. You can't send them off to the library. If you put them in another area, they are missing out on something, so you just have to pitch the lessons, I find, to make sure they are covered to some extent [SD1]. And you've got to keep enough discipline so that they can be covered. That is the real problem with a bad class, one that doesn't listen, it's giving the others a chance to have something to develop. Do you know what I mean? Unless you have another area close by where you can put them, or unless you have got books or extra things they could do [SD1]. But when

you've got to cart all your stuff from the staffroom over here and then back again, that makes it even more difficult. So perhaps we need some reorganisation so that all these things can be covered.

**INTERVIEWER:** What you are saying is that environment is very important. Do you think that the Student Enrichment Spaces, which are planned as part of the Master Plan, will address that?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, but I don't think that computers are the only answer. The more I work with them, the more I am sure of that. But, a really  
40 bright student will get fed up because the computer doesn't have what they want. Then they will try the net and they will spend hours on the net for nothing, they would've been better to have gone to the library straight away. So you need to have, you know, resources there that would take them in, and I have never yet, I have brought books in and I have wanted to give them, but if you give them to one the others miss out. How do you pass it round to make sure that everyone gets a chance?[SD1]

**INTERVIEWER:** What you are talking about now is actually **Question 2: In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Fairness is important so that, you must offer the same  
50 to everybody [SD1]. You can't just say well these students can't write a sentence so I'll have to do that with them and the others will have to go away and read because you are not directing their reading. So I think you have to possibly, part of the lesson has got to be, to have those that can't follow too easily, so that you give them a little bit of stimulus in what you are doing and you ask for more than what the others can actually manage to do. But you have to fill in the gap and make sure that both can keep going. I do this with my questioning technique [P6]. The other thing is if they don't hear the brighter ones explaining things they don't know how to explain things [SD1] themselves, so they can actually help by modelling [SD1]. Because when  
60 they come to writing, you know paragraphs and assignment writing, the bright ones can answer the problem, they have to think but it comes out right, while

the others have huge difficulties in deciding what to put in. The bright student has got to that level much more quickly [SD2] and that is to do with a lot of reading I think. It is to do with the way their parents treat them. I have just been reading about the Bronte's, I'm trying to read a big biography of their lives, a new one. There's a whole chapter on the writing that they used to do. They used to get in Blackman's magazine and a number of newspapers, and they wrote their own versions using characters which were actual toy soldiers but they invested them with character and they were based on real people. And they played games with each other. So they were doing the modelling which is exactly, you know, what I think is important. They need to know what it is they are doing, so the modelling is an important part of it for the bright child. So you need to find out at which stage they are and model the next one for them [P9]. And I think their vocabulary is better [SD2], so you can call on their vocabulary and the other thing you can call on is their ability to make connections [SD2]. You know how some of those things that we do in those special classes train us to think about working sideways rather than, lateral thinking, they're good at that [SD2]. And if you can pick up things and throw things only the bright ones will pick them all up. If they're given a chance to make those connections. And I think they have to, in order to make the next steps for themselves. And reading a newspaper, everyone should be reading newspapers and only those bright children even see one, and know what the words mean. So that what we do is a lot of background which then connects with other things they read in books or that they read. Being able to discuss is the big thing, but in a class that can't concentrate and doesn't know what is being said the discussions fall flat because they don't have anything to add. So you are spending more time telling them what is what. Whereas with a bright class you can constantly get discussion going. I would say that's one of the reasons that bright kids get bored, they can't put their ideas and discuss them with somebody because the others are making too much noise or acting silly. So it would be nice if you could separate them out, take certain things and get them to discuss it but you can't time it [SD3]. You know, you go between a 40 minute lesson, you go up to a 90 minute lesson, you still have to cover in that 90 minutes what's needed or you haven't got them to the point where you can finalise that next unit. You have to give a little bit in each unit that gives

the bright ones a chance to express out. I mean for example, sometimes they are very quiet and they don't say anything, and then they go off to Egypt and come back with a present for you and say, "Oh it was wonderful!", you know what I mean it has truly inspired them. So I think you have to make that  
100 connection for them, and if you have opened a door then they will take that next step themselves and do a bit of reading so you can then suggest material to extend them. So the bright ones are more receptive right away [SD1], so you can start feeding. The other thing is visual, I know they are good for slower students but I think they are important for the brighter ones too, to visually picture the things you are talking about, and that is why this new text book is good. For me it is a problem not having our own classroom, I cannot create a space, because if I want to put up a display I have to cart them from one place to another and I don't do it. It defeats the purpose if you are not in one room where you can put these up. Well they deface them, it's lovely but  
110 they do, so I am a bit wary. So I take stuff with me but by the time I have carted it you know... But there are things like making clay seals, I would have thought that for the lower ones that was a nice practical thing as long as they were single doing it for themselves it was, when they were doing it in groups half of them turned off. The bright ones would've spent more time and effort and were making connections between things they were given visually and in written form. But they don't always need to do it practically but I think it reinforces it for them. If I had more time I would do it more, if I could. We tried to make a whole temple, I only did it with the slower group because I thought it would help them, but they turned off. It didn't work at all, but I  
120 didn't try it with the bright ones because I thought it would take too much time, and when you only have six months for this course to get them right. In year 9 we do a bit more of that, we take them down to St John's Cathedral so they get a feel for that. The bright ones really pick up on that, they can make connections between what you taught them and what they can see. So I think they can next take the next step which is to think about the importance of those things. And I think that's what good students need to know, to see the point and purpose of things.

**INTERVIEWER:** You seem to be talking about the importance of stimulus here, and about being a mentor in terms of information and content...

130 **PARTICIPANTS:** I want to get them excited about it so that they can extend themselves [P11.14]and do some reading and then come back and discuss that and analyse that. That's what it is all about. It's an ongoing thing and you can only do it over a period of time. I don't think that every lesson can be perfect. And I think that you may have one brilliant lesson at a certain time of the week and then the next one might be a bit messy, but then the next one you plan for should work. I've got coloured overheads, they seem to work, I want them to visualise a whole civilization, rather than just learn about it in terms of points. I think I am more of a social historian, than I am a political. But you can't do the social without knowing about the political, so I  
140 try and get them interested in the times, so they can see ...There are a whole lot of different ways if only you could take them on their own, I think we are weary about streaming, I feel the other ones, the less gifted can learn a lot from the gifted [SD1].

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant D

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Well I think I became more aware of the different ways of thinking, the different levels of thinking [°AS and DAS]. I was never really aware of that [SD1]. I probably wasn't particularly aware of gifted children [°AS and SD1]. I mean I was and I wasn't, not consciously, it wasn't in my head all the time, that there were gifted children there. Um, so, and I certainly wasn't aware [SD1] of the different levels of thinking and their potential of providing for those students.

**INTERVIEWER:** In what ways is that different now?

**PARTICIPANT:** I think I have become aware [SD2], I have been made aware of it, um, and I might have been doing it for years. But now I do try to cater for different ways of learning. Though I am restricted because in some ways, because of the nature of foreign languages.

20 **INTERVIEWER:** So it has gone from being an unconscious to a conscious thing?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, yes.

**INTERVIEWER:** The next question is: **Question 1b Which aspects of the program have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** See, I would have said I don't do anything, but I probably do [SD1]. Well, I would have said that I probably became more aware of it [SD3], when um, when we dealt with the Grade 8 Cultural Project. I would have never thought of approaching it that way [SD3]. And um, I think  
30 that was the beginning of looking at different levels of thinking. And I felt that was just so beneficial [SD2], um to, um, all the kids in grade 8, whatever level they were. That's when, I think that was the thing, the aspect of the program that made such a big difference.

**INTERVIEWER:** Why?

**PARTICIPANT:** Well, there were a number of things that happened. There was the opportunity for me to work with the resource teacher, cooperatively to plan that unit [PD7]. I was teaching the 8's at that time so I had a chance to put the unit into practice [PD 9]. And the feedback from other teachers has been very good [PD8]. I mean, they um, they whinge every time  
40 it has to come up but they can see the benefits of it. But um, they really can see the benefit of it and even parents have commented on the way it has been set out. Because it does allow for that different ability in each child [\*]. And it was a good place to start, the cultural assignment because it was a freer activities with less constraints.

**INTERVIEWER:** Have there been any spin offs in other areas, or for other staff or for yourself?

**PARTICIPANT:** I think, for other staff, I know that J does lots of things in language, um, to extend the gifted child. I mean, when we take a whole lesson, we really have to teach to the whole class, if it is a new aspect which  
50 you are bringing in. But I know that, J in particular, um tries to cater for different levels within the class. You know, by the use of cards at different levels and to some extent the Italian teachers do that. I would imagine that these strategies would be, I would image that they would be more aware of the different levels of thinking, certainly I think some people have taken it into

English, or it may even have been in English in the first place, but others have taken it across to History, the same sort of method with it.

**INTERVIEWER:** And for yourself?

**PARTICIPANT:** I think so. I probably, in the way of language structures, you know, from very simple to more complex sentences. Yeah, or more  
60 complex ways of saying things would be a way of um, moving it through the languages.

**INTERVIEWER:** We are up to now **Question 2: In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?**

**PARTICIPANT:** If you had asked me that, I would have said I don't, but I probably do [SD1]. Um, but I actually, when you asked me to observe the class, I said to someone, "Sandra won't see me doing anything for the gifted." Because I probably tend to teach to the whole class. But I guess in a way I am building on what they know [P7], um, so to some extent I probably am aiming towards the gifted. Um, to some extent languages tend to have more gifted  
70 kids than you imagine, I think. It is the nature of the subject. It is not an easy subject. It has been my experience that quite bright students take on language. I am always concerned that I am going to bore them, but that doesn't seem to be occurring. We must be catering for their needs in some way [SD1]. We must be building on what they know, or when we are conducting the lesson predominantly in the target language, whether they find that challenging ...

**INTERVIEWER:** Do you think it is important to the gifted student, to be challenged by what they are doing?

**PARTICIPANT:** I think the content is very challenging [P7]. And it seems to me that a majority of brighter students are taking it on. A kind of  
80 natural selection. Um, so I guess I am making provision for them in that respect. But I wasn't conscious of it, I am becoming more conscious of it, I suppose.

**INTERVIEWER:** Certainly you have made a conscious decision with the Year 8 unit, and you have fought for that too.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, yes. They didn't want to do it at all really. But, um, I think the big factor was that the kids have enjoyed it so much, um. Now in Years 9 to 12 there is more emphasis in languages on the content. Could I bring this idea into those levels? I could possibly do it if I thought about it, we could, um do something, we could handle something differently. Even if it is only once or twice a week. Yes, so that is where I may have to go next [SD3].

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**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant E

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, definitely confirmed what I do in my classes [\*].

**INTERVIEWER:** So, just starting from there, **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of the gifted?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Ooo, Days Of Excellence. I have been involved in teaching gifted and talented students [\*]. I have been involved in the Girls in Maths Project, which looked at single sex classes. And I just think in the way I teach.

**INTERVIEWER:** Right. Have you come across, say anything in your degree or in any professional development activities since obtaining your degree which might have been particularly focused on gifted education?

**PARTICIPANT:** I have done the Learning To Learn through Reading, and the Literacy projects which have helped me to understand individual differences [PD1].

**INTERVIEWER:** So you have gathered your understanding more informally then? Through doing the activity with the students, then that has been your main source of understanding?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. I think I showed interest [SD3] and so I just got bundled up and thrown in that direction. But I really liked it cos the kids feed off you. The kids direct where you are going and what you do. But I do that in my classes anyway. If someone says, “What if....?” I say well design an experiment for me and test it [P4, P7 and P9].

30 **INTERVIEWER:** That allows for students to go off on tangents and explore what is interesting to them. That is a good point, that the way you teach, you feel, that in it’s very essence is applicable to the strategies for gifted kids. You know, like you are saying that the things you do, are what you do anyway. They are not special for that group.

**PARTICIPANT:** I don’t go in thinking, “OK what can I do for the gifted kids?” I think of something that all kids can benefit from, but I think the gifted kids become group leaders in those situations and then I encourage them to facilitate each other’s understanding of the problem [P11.5, P11.6 and P11.13].

40 **INTERVIEWER:** That is exactly what I what to understand about how people move forward in their understanding.

**PARTICIPANT:** Just an example from my Year Nine Science Class a couple of weeks ago was doing Archimedes theory with up thrusts and down thrusts and buoyancy and everything and someone said, “What will happen if we do this?” And so the next day I bought in the equipment and said now you tell me. You design the experiment and tell me what will happen [P4, P7 and P9].

**INTERVIEWER:** And how did they respond to that?

50 **PARTICIPANT:** Good. Because beforehand we talked about what you would do. We always make our hypothesis and prediction and the class was definitely split. And that worked really well. Those that were against it right

from the start .... Then they had the role of explaining to the class why they thought the way they thought [P6 , P11.18 and P11.19].

**INTERVIEWER:** That gives your students a great opportunity to explore the what if and to test their own ideas.

**PARTICIPANT:** Well, how are you going to remember best? If you do it, or if someone is just standing up there and talking to you?

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, what aspects have been particularly influential? Like could you pinpoint things that you could say, yes they are real  
60 benchmarks, real turning points in terms of your own approach? Would it be being given that Extension Maths class [\*]?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes I suppose it was. I always showed an interest in wanting to learn more [SD3] for me to give the kids. Admin gave me the challenge because I have always taught that way. It's in my learning style and the fact that the kids get really enthusiastic and want to run with an idea then I think, I have to provide them with that activity. I haven't really thought about it. The big emphasis in science has been very process oriented, there is no such thing as content any more. So you shouldn't even be teaching from a, well the theory is it is best if you don't teach from a content base, but a process base.  
70 Everything, even knowledge, is defined as application. There has been a real shift and I suppose that has a bit of an impact on it. And the fact that the kids do struggle with the scientific process and the only way you get better at those is by doing them. You can't expect them to analyse data if they haven't been used to collecting data and doing things with it [P6 and P11.3].

**INTERVIEWER:** So, I suppose we are moving into **Question 2: In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?** What about students running ahead or making their own choices? I mean things like the science options were students are given choices.

**PARTICIPANT:** Or choosing assignment work, or choosing what you want to research [P4 and P11.11]. It has got to have stuff in it that the kids feel extends them. I think they like to be extended. And I think that message came through from the feedback we got. That they wanted more ... they wanted it to be more challenging. I think they like to be extended. It is interesting when you watch them in group work and someone, and I sort of say to them, "OK you understand, now your job is to explain it to everyone else in your group."[P11.6 and P11.19] It is interesting to watch the intergroup debates start up. When it comes to your teaching, maybe a lot of inquiry stuff rather than going in and giving theory. I often go in and say, "Here is an experiment, now let's do it. What does it tell me?"

90 **INTERVIEWER:** So you are saying that an inquiry based approach, the focus of the learning style on doing .....

**PARTICIPANT:** I have had some students, I have got a couple of girls in my year nine class, they were so taken by the topic that they went and did all this research and so I encouraged them to present it to the class and share their knowledge [P7, P11.2 and P11.11]. Sometimes I think students can explain it better than I can. I just do that sort of stuff, I haven't really thought about it. Because the kids feed off it and they really love it. And it is nice to be able to see that and to encourage that.

100 **INTERVIEWER:** OK, so the inquiry approach, the strategy of doing and the flexibility of approach.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, Yes and the willingness to go off on tangents [P5]. There are lessons where I come in, start the lesson and I go for two minutes and that's it, we just throw away the topic and have these big discussions and debates. But in the end if you can take what you were discussing and tie it back then I think they are going to remember a lot better then. But I never go in thinking that I do these things for the gifted students.

**INTERVIEWER:** What about students who already have the knowledge and have covered the work? How do you deal with these differences?

110 **PARTICIPANT:** You don't come across a great deal of that in science. I think a lot of it depends on what they have done in primary school. You don't come across many students who have got a full knowledge base but I would probably encourage them to pick an area that they were really interested in and you would have to structure something so that they could do their own research.

I've never had a situation where, ... that I am aware of, a need of anybody not to be doing a unit. So I really .... and the hard thing is being told of that. I mean becoming aware of that. Like how are you aware of that unless someone comes forward and says to you, "Hey, I have done all of this before and ...."

120 **INTERVIEWER:** Unless someone has a passion in a particular area, like astronomy and has explored that and taken that to a fairly high degree.

**PARTICIPANT:** Like you can do through solar powered car races and those sorts of things. Yeah, so how would you become aware of it?

**INTERVIEWER:** Well one strategy is to pre-test. Decide what are the skills that you want to focus on. For example in English year 8 they do that in a unit where they reconstruct the front page of a newspaper. So at the end of the unit they expect students to know X Y and Z about the front page of a newspaper. So they pre-test for those skills and that knowledge at the start of the unit. Um students do the pre-test and those who demonstrate that they know about the front page of the newspaper go off and do contracted tasks  
130 while the others work through the class activities. That's the kind of thing.

**PARTICIPANT:** I think, with science being so unitised that it would be harder the higher up you go. I've written units of work for year 8 that were independent [P4 and P11.11]. So that there was a whole section of activities, and I have done it for year 10 too. Actually with the year 10 one you could

start anywhere. The year 8 one you start at the beginning and there is all the prac. work integrated into it and you just work through it at your own pace [P1 and P3]. And if you are really keen you get finished sooner. And then I can set up like little tutorials within the class. So everyone is working at their own pace [P2 and P3] and every couple of days I can run a tutorial on this particular activity.

**INTERVIEWER:** That self pacing allows students who can master the content quickly to do that and then move onto a level .....

**PARTICIPANT:** You could probably do that in units like on electricity. Because they're fairly straight forward and then if you can work through more quickly you can go on and do things like make circuits and alarms, that sort of thing [P7]. I think you have to give each member of the class an opportunity to get their needs met. I have also run units where I didn't teach a thing. I assigned different topics to different groups and it was their job to each. To design experiments for the class to do.

150 **INTERVIEWER:** I suppose that would be very open-ended.

**PARTICIPANT:** I would give each group a copy of the work program and that was the content. I would point out the processes. You know and it was up to them to design it, their job was to make sure that it was all covered. So I suppose I have done different things.

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant F

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** I think it has most definitely [°AS]. Um, I think probably I've come in, changing schools in the last 18 months, so I think it has really heightened [°AS]. I came in when this program was starting to take  
10 off here. And it was really good because, my previous schools hadn't really addressed gifted and talented students. And it was good because I came in and it was really great. In a way it has educated me and changed my perceptions [°AS and DAS].

**INTERVIEWER:** And being in transition really made what we were doing more obvious too.

**PARTICIPANT:** Um, yeah. yes. Coming in here I have seen how successful it has been. because I think it has been, like a sideways filter of information and I think that has been very successful, because information has  
20 come to people in an informal way [\*]. So they have been able to embrace it at a time when they have been more relaxed [\*]. Um, probably when they have been looking for something, so it is on a needs to know basis [PD2 and PD4]. Um, and I think the program has always made stuff available to people [PD3]. Like there has always been some sort of visual displays and stuff. And I think the informal way has had a big impact for me [°AS].

**INTERVIEWER:** So for you personally, would you be able to highlight a turning point of some kind?

**PARTICIPANT:** Definitely the change of schools and coming in, and it was always something I was interested in [SD3] but there was never an opportunity in my other schools to find out anything about it or anybody on staff with the expertise to talk to about it [PD2, PD4, PD5]. Whereas here, if you are interested, there is plenty of material to find [PD4]. So there is actually plenty of material available and there has been personnel you could actually talk to and ask them about it and what their ideas are about it [PD7]. And I've found that even, um, informal discussions in the staffroom and in department meetings [PD8 and PD9], it's been a broadening experience. Yeah, so for me it's definitely been that way.

**INTERVIEWER:** So that's looking really here, **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program may have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of the gifted students?** Perhaps then we could move onto **Question 2: In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?**

**PARTICIPANT:** OK, I suppose where I have really tried hard has been in drama, because drama has a tendency at times to, just have a program, like we have a new syllabus and it's a very high pressured, to get everything done so in some cases you are actually ramming things down kid's necks. What I have tried to really do is, um, alter the texts [P7]. If I've found there are students who really are excelling at the work I have tried to channel them to texts that I have found that they really will be able to, get something from that [P7 and P9].

**INTERVIEWER:** So these are texts they perform?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yeah. Yeah, you see they have a lot of what we call Collage Drama work. They have to find texts and they have to perform them. I have actually got a group at the moment, which are quite exceptional, and I have actually started to broaden out what collage means. Instead of doing just a straight collage, I've actually said to them, "I want you to do a collage and I want you to incorporate other things in it. [P12] Like try and set it in a

gimmick. [P7] I want you this time to sell it like an advertisement". [P9]  
Which um, adds to the complexity of the task [P11.18]. So they are actually  
60 fulfilling syllabus requirements at the base level but it's really extending them  
in how they do that [P7, P9 and P12]. Um, because um, otherwise these kids  
would just be really bored.

**INTERVIEWER:** So that added complexity, is there an opportunity for  
them to, are they becoming able to select and modify things for themselves?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, yes I sort of allow it, definitely have that, um, that  
with other tasks. Like I've tried to have the individual and the group one, um  
to allow them to choose [P4] and what we've sort of been doing is, like you  
know, saying, "How would you like to tackle this? [P6 and P11.11] This  
could be a really good angle for you to follow because you are really  
70 interested in that aspect..." So individualising. [P7] Yeah, and in a natural  
process it's occurred that within the group like minds have somehow formed  
together [P11.2, P11.5 and P11.6]. So that there you've got a group that are  
moving themselves.

**INTERVIEWER:** So what you have been saying is that in the group work  
and in the content there have been possibilities of extending students in  
various ways.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yeah, and the other thing I've tried to do is to bring in  
outside agents, who I've asked and you know, "I've taken them as far as I feel  
I can with this, um, can you extend them?" [P7, P11.10, P11.2 and P12] So  
80 they've actually had extension exercises through bringing in outside agents to  
really workshop them [P7, P11.10, P11.2 and P12]. And sort of, like, they  
can do that in a really intense period of time. And, um, in particular we have  
done that with the 12s and it has worked quite well.

**INTERVIEWER:** Have there been any informal mentorships result from  
those opportunities?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yeah. That has really taken off in Year 11, where quite a few of the kids are joining La Boite and the theatre school there [P4, P11.2, P11.12, P11.13 and P11.14]. In 12, um, we've got quite a few who have taken to the technical aspect of the subject. And they are going to follow that through, like they have started doing TAFE courses and things like that [P4, P11.2, P11.12, P11.12, P11.13 and P11.14]. We are getting there.

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant G

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes.

**INTERVIEWER:** So in what ways has the professional development  
10 program altered your ideas?

**PARTICIPANT:** Basically, I think that having the professional development, has actually made me more aware [DAS]. Like in the past I think you know that there are gifted students and you know that they are different, but you feel your limitations in knowing what to do. Having the professional development, I think has opened my mind up to the fact that we can, even in so small a way at the time, access them [°AS and DAS]. In the past I often felt, how do we access them and continue with the majority of our students in the average class that we have. And so I think, that that has been really important, and um,..... [°AS and DAS]

**INTERVIEWER:** So there is an awareness there that you can do  
20 something.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. I think that having the professional development has also shown us as a staff the many ways in which we can [SD6]. Even if we think it's small, it seems to have made such a difference to one or two or whoever [SD6]. Also the fact it has made us more aware of how to identify them [SD5]. Because we have got so many different students, from so many backgrounds. And I think that once you have the professional development so can throw yourself in more to trying to develop the strategies and units to

30 assist the students [SD7], whether as a group, individually or where it's to do with their assessment, whether it formal assessment, whether it's to do with simply allowing them to extend their thinking through Gifted and Talented programs like the Days of Excellence.

**INTERVIEWER:** So you have got both the identification and the provision....So that seems to have given you a sense of power to act.

**PARTICIPANT:** That's right. Yes.

**INTERVIEWER:** So, **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?** I suppose I am looking for crystallising experiences.

40 **PARTICIPANT:** OK so, first of all, having gone through the whole idea of how to identify and making you think about that [SD5]. Having identified some of them and provided with, um, knowledge coming from professional development provided a strategy and to have seen the outcome [SD6]. I suppose I need to talk about the ESL Days of Excellence [SD8]. I think that probably in the past mostly ESL students would have been overlooked and then particularly in the first, ah, the first few experiences of running the program for the ESL gifted, to hear the joy of some of the students to say that they thought they could never express... it was overwhelming [P11.12, SD2 and SD7]. And to say that they had lost the inhibition of, the fear that they had always had in the classroom, that they can't express themselves. And that is quite normal, they could go years in the second language and culture and, um, still not become fluent in the face of their native speaking years [SD2]. But, um, it was their expression of feeling that they could do it and that they could say it, they didn't have to fear that. And that they could express ideas differently and learn by those themselves and that they could take that into themselves as a life experience. That's what they said. Um, so I think that that's given me, of course there's always been a respect for the students, but a great respect for the possibilities, the strategies [SD3 and SD5], and to know

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60 that some of the students actually combine their schooling with tertiary level  
[P1, P 4 and P5], they don't need to be bored if they are that good in a  
particular area. And I think it is really important that we are moving into that.  
I have great respect for that. And the professional development because it  
necessarily makes you think and speak with other colleagues [PD9]. Opens  
you up to that and makes you....

**INTERVIEWER:** Could you tell me a little about the process you  
undertook to create the content for the Days of Excellence program?

70 **PARTICIPANT:** Yeah, I think that preparing a program such as, the  
programs we have prepared for ESL students has meant that you don't want to  
work on your own on those and that the strategies that we used to help each  
80 other are similar to the ones we impart to our students [PD9]. Um, to enhance  
their gifts and their talents, such as the brainstorming, the problem-solving.  
With ESL there has been the adaptation of the material to make it more  
accessible [SD2]. Such as having the dictionaries, having um, wall charts to  
show, um, what the meanings of words are to make it accessible that way.  
Um, for example if we look at the invention convention, which was basically  
based on science, although it had many general aspects of bringing the multi-  
faceted experience of students, so that some are talented in their drama or in  
their speaking or in writing or in their maths and so on. But with that I would  
have been unable to put it together without a science teacher [PD7]. So I felt  
80 that that was really important that I was getting a lot of um, knowledge and  
um, affirmation and confirmation of whether the materials, the questions I was  
asking, the tasks I would put to the students, and the wording and the  
information given to them, I think that I really needed to have a person who  
was experienced in the subject science [PD7], to be able to um, to persevere  
with that. So that was really special.

**INTERVIEWER:** And there is also a spin off for everyone who is  
involved, because everyone takes away a new understanding, a better  
understanding of provision for the gifted as a result of that. Even it that wasn't  
their goal.

90 **PARTICIPANT:** Yes, yes. I think so. I think that having to work on a program such as say the Days of Excellence Programs, generates a tremendous amount of enthusiasm on the part of the teachers [PD9 and PD10]. Because once you see something and you think yes this is going to work, it gives you quite a lot of satisfaction and you think OK we did that, we put that together for the students and we need to get more, we need to change something. But I feel that there is a great sense of enthusiasm generated between two colleagues or more um, if you are working in a team [PD9].

**INTERVIEWER:** Is that because you are willing to take a risk, to do something that you wouldn't do if it was just you?

100 **PARTICIPANT:** Yes, that's right and you know that you can always trial it before, or you can just draft it and redraft it [PD12]. Yes I think that is true, I think the risk taking is important, because I think that often we are so busy covering our curriculum content that we are locked in. Aren't we? And once you start doing something, although it can become quite large it is still very satisfying.

**INTERVIEWER:** And this creates opportunities for cross are, cross-departmental connections.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, which I guess with the ESL we have done that. Haven't we? We had assistance from the art teachers, we had assistance from the drama teachers, we had assistance from the speech teachers, from the science teachers and um, with us with our language background. We have had involvement from a lot of people [PD11].

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**INTERVIEWER:** Perhaps if we could go to question two which we have already started to look at and that is; **Question 2: How do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Provision for gifted students in the Days of Excellence program ... I think it ... First of all, it allowed them to express themselves and

discuss with like-minded students [SD2]: also with students who were coming from a second culture, another culture and another language background.

120 Students who would have been inhibited in a totally native-speaking group. Um, because we had in the past sent students along and they had felt very uncomfortable and unable to participate fully, or even, at all, in some cases, I felt. But very different when there was a group. From language barriers, some accent or whatever, that makes them feel inhibited. Um, so I think that that was really important for them. I think that it provided for them in the very fact that they were recognised and selected. So we didn't need to feel afraid of sending them to a gifted workshop. Um, it gave them the realisation that, um, there are many, many gifted students from a non-English speaking background and that they don't all come from the one country. Which some of the students

130 were under that misperception. It also broke down misunderstandings about creative thinking. Such as the concept of generating a quantity of ideas and then selecting the best [P11.17]. And then there were those who had never done it. And they said that this was great because there was no wrong answer necessarily and that you could choose then what was the best [P11.17]. Choose the best ideas. And I thought that this was a really interesting realisation on the students part. There also was a focus on thinking skills, critical and creative [P6 and P11.17]. Problem solving, metacognition and cooperative learning [P8, P11.6, P11.17 and P11.19]. We have been able to observe which students find it difficult, and which students simply learn that

140 this was simply a great way for them to learn and extend their ideas. There has also been an element of the future, looking to what they can do for society [P11.1 and P10]. I think that students responded very well to that. And I don't think that they are used to being made to look to the future in normal classroom [P5]. I think that we are very focused on the requirements of the syllabus and what is to be assessed.

**INTERVIEWER:** I was wondering about choice.

**PARTICIPANT:** There was a lot of choice in which tasks and in which products [P4, P11.11 and P11.13]. That gave them, the choice then was

helpful in particular groups felt that they were stronger in, whether they put  
150 focus on design or on the speaking. That was important in the choice [P11.12].

**INTERVIEWER:** All and all you have addressed many of the needs there, in terms of curriculum provision for the gifted through that ESL Days of Excellence program. What about in your regular classes?

**PARTICIPANT:** I think that when you are teaching a specific unit of work, I think that some of the things I learnt from working on the projects like Days of Excellence transfer very well into the classroom. One example was when, I think it was the year 9 students, needed to do an advertisement, a unit on advertisements. And they had to do either a radio broadcast or a television one. They had to work it out and present it, but it had to be a new product that  
160 didn't exist. And I that to use the ideas that we used for problem solving, like "What is it and what is it used for?" sending those sort of strange and odd little objects around and then letting them brainstorm, using those ideas and it and deciding what is this object and designing it and making it a useful, functional item that can be then created, invented and put on the market [P8, P9 and P11.17]. I think that when I taught that unit that is exactly what I did, and kids that hadn't been to Days of Excellence thought that that was absolutely wonderful, that they learnt so much and they had fun. Really having a go and allowing so many ideas to flow and then coming back when you need to and deciding on one. So there was that transfer that I found really useful in  
170 exploring all those strategies that we use in the Days of Excellence, and then I think that the Bloom's Taxonomy [P11.18] has been very useful. I think opening our minds up to the fact that we can allow students to reach their potential and more. Or we can allow for those students who find it really difficult to reach the higher level thinking. To simply choose from areas that they are more comfortable with at that point of time. And, um, I think that that has been really great. Um, I taught the newspaper unit that was good. Which also included the pre-testing [P2], um, and then I found that in another unit  
too, where we literally taught the whole idea of Bloom's Taxonomy [P6 and P11.18] and I think that the basis for that was an historical concept with  
180 English kings and the monarchy. And I found that my students responded

very well to that. That they realised whether they could think at a certain level or they simply identified where areas of strength or difficulty were [P11.11, P11.12, P11.13 and P11.14]. How difficult it was getting for them. I found that the Bloom's was a really good one and that you could apply that to a whole lot of things and it goes hand in hand with some of the ESL strategies. Well we have done three level guides, which work on that area as well. Where you start with the factual and you move into analytical and interpretative. And um, I have that those areas are very useful and I guess being aware to mention to someone in the school when you realise that someone has got so much  
190 ability in a specific area that they shouldn't go unnoticed and that we should provide the, somehow, something more. Whether it is in language or in maths or whatever. I think that they are so much more aware now of bringing that to the attention of the administration and learning support too. I think that that has been a really big improvement.

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant H

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** In terms of focusing my ideas of gifted students [DAS and °AS] have been influenced very much [°AS] over the last three years, by my own attending of different workshops and seminars [PD1]. And becoming more aware [DAS] of the range of abilities and different learning approaches of students in any classroom and so, I guess I've become conscious of shall we say both ends of the spectrum.

**INTERVIEWER:** So it is this individual differences, and an awareness of how to respond to them. And the outcome of that has been a change of your attitude as to how you would provide for gifted students.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes, yes!

**INTERVIEWER:** So, **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Well, I think seminars [PD1] like I think, cooperative learning approaches, and the development of, um, what do you call it, the creation of a positive classroom atmosphere. And a lot of different little techniques, that I think I have learnt from there that I think I have incorporated into my general classroom environment [SD6]. And in terms of gifted students, more than anything else that has probably been in the provision of extension activities [SD6]. And, um, different physical things, which maybe

allow them to progress at their own rate more [SD7, P1, P3 and P4]. Just  
simple little basic physical things like in and out trays [P1, P3 and P4]. They  
30 can simply communicate with me and move at their own pace, and there is no,  
um, well what I think I'd like to think is that there is no focus on individual  
students in the classroom, because everyone is operating that system, and  
nobody knows that some are utilising that a lot more than others. And it  
becomes more of a one to one student with me interaction. I have also become  
very interested in developing my questioning techniques [P6]. I don't know if  
that has come from a desire to provide for gifted students. But, that whole  
idea that students have not always been able to show their knowledge of  
whatever, because of um, because they simply lacked the skills of decoding  
questions [P11.18] and that, um. Yeah, I did quite a bit in that and um, I'd  
40 certainly do a lot more of that in year 11, next year, because it becomes a  
tremendously freeing experience I think, once that, that barrier has gone. And  
I suppose with um, with gifted students, I um, have an example of that in I  
suppose, in Grade 12 where the students have this incredible confusion and,  
frustration because she actually knows so much and gets very disturbed at how  
to address a question and use all this information. And so, it becomes a  
discipline then I think once they have the tools to try and limit the material that  
they will try to put in, yes to focus that. And I suppose, like I said before, that  
the gifted student can really have severe, what is it, tension, concern,  
frustration just being able to um, choose and select ..... Whereas, I think I have  
50 always concentrated on the other students who are desperately trying to show  
some knowledge of the novel or the text. But I think I have seen more  
agitation from the gifted [SD5]. I worked through that with our school  
counsellor, one gifted girl in particular, who was paralysed by an inability to  
start, because of that, of her perfectionism. The issue of I have so much to say  
where do I begin, literally paralysed her and she could not even start her work  
and so you could see nothing of what she could do. Before that I have tended  
to treat the matter lightly and suggested that we should all just loosen up and  
take it easy and you will be fine. And that is absolutely of no use, help  
whatsoever to the student. Unless she has the skill to let me now decode and  
60 therefore take from my resource knowledge bank just what is going to address  
that. And so that has been very useful.

**INTERVIEWER:** How did you develop your knowledge and application of strategies like Bloom's and Q matrix?

**PARTICIPANT:** I have certainly gained from the mail drops and information that has come my way on de Bono hats excetera [Pd2, PD4 and PD5]. That is certainly very effective because change only comes slowly [\*], I mean it has been very much trail and error [\* and PD7]and until maybe this year it still had an area of artificiality about it, um it was not part of um, a part of the whole learning process I didn't have a sense of it being part of the  
70 suppose the curriculum or the material I was teaching, it was a separate skill that one taught. In Year 8 French we introduced the Bloom's Taxonomy [P6] for um, a cultural assignment and it, maybe even for that first year it stayed within that unit, and the danger, really, was that they never ever transferred it, and even that I didn't transfer it. And um, I think that this year I have become much more aware of that needing to be immersed in that, um, it has therefore been very, very useful in terms of learning a second language. Particularly for those students who do not have a natural ability level. Oh well, that's not true. The students I have, maybe it is because I judged that the class um, the ability level was not very great. Um, it was only through plodding over and over  
80 through Bloom's that they started to twig on to the idea that if one got the knowledge from a certain part of the unit to use for the comprehension. And actually the course itself when you look at it, is divided up according to those levels. And I suppose for those students with greater ability, who could have become very frustrated as the rest of us plodded through, once they caught on they could then go on and do it at their own pace [P3].

**INTERVIEWER:** That comes back do individualisation doesn't it? So how does this change you spoke of come about?

**PARTICIPANT:**It becomes a case, like you attend a session [PD1] on something, say like the de Bono [P11.18 and P11.19] and then having a try  
90 and I think in Year 11 I certainly incorporated it into one unit to start with and used it as the teaching approach in one unit and did that several times and got better. And then I think transferred, went through that transferral process with

the students making sure that they use that in other areas and in other subjects [PD7 and \*]. And keep referring to it and only know that it is working when they bring it up. You know when you have a group of students working in a small group and you actually hear them say let's use the six hats to say tackle the task, whatever. And I think, um, that slowly I mean through staff then. As other staff refer to you and ask how did you use that and how did that work and then you get overlap, such as in Modern Living where they are actually teaching it as a thinking skill [PD6, PD9 and PD10]. And people who are hit with it to have to learn will come to you and say how could you use this and what would you do? And I believe that next year in the Year 11 assessment the English Department are now going to use de Bono's hats as the assessment piece for the Year 11 Poetry unit [P6, P11.17 and P11.19]. It will be something like students, in an exam situation, under exam conditions, being presented with an unseen poem and being asked to discuss the poem using two nominated hats. I don't know how it will work. But our previous analysis of poetry was so deadening. You know that terrible business where you say in line two there is a simile can you find it? Where you drag out the techniques. Whereas I don't think if you used the hats that you can do that.

INTERVIEWER: That sound really interesting. OK we are up to

**Question 2: In what ways do you make provision for gifted students in your classes?**

PARTICIPANT: I've mentioned using the hats [P11.18], I've mentioned Bloom's Taxonomy [P11.19], I've mentioned allowing students to work at their own pace [P1, P3 and P4] and the extension work [P7]. Another thing I have tried to do is, I have tried to use gifted students in specific roles in small group collaborative work [P11.5 and P11.6]. And you know one of those roles might be as a leader in the group but they have to have very clearly um, instructions as to what they are to do. So that the gifted student doesn't have an opportunity to take over and dominate but in fact uses her ability to bring others in. Or as an encourager, because we can't assume that all gifted kids will be leaders [SD5]. Yeah I suppose there are different roles, and I am utilising skills, individual skills.

**INTERVIEWER:** What about those who can already to the work.

**PARTICIPANT:** If I am doing a novel study I will have alternate questions, you know, another level of tasks [P6]. And girls go and get those, different activities. But that is at an individual level and there is a lot of responsibility on the students then [P4, P7 and P11.18]. And there is nothing  
130 terribly formal and prescriptive about it. And not all gifted students have that sense of responsibility [SD2]. Maybe they get blocked on frustration and can almost become a trouble area in the classroom because of that frustration.

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant I

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** In some ways yes [DAS], but I always have come into teaching with an appreciation of the needs of gifted students [°AS]. More so the professional development program has tended to um, concentrate my focus on strategies and program ideas [SD6].

**INTERVIEWER:** Where does this general awareness come from that you speak of here?

**PARTICIPANT:** I think I would consider myself gifted, a student who tended to breeze through school without a lot of difficulty [SD1]. I have always found many academic things quite easy, so I approach teaching from my perspective. By nature I am a very inquisitive person [SD2].

**INTERVIEWER:** Can you tell me **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Just simply this has occurred by talking to colleagues in the staffroom [PD8]. There is an understanding firstly, of who the gifted students are and then ways in which you can approach their needs. From another level my Head of Department and I have had several discussions about certain gifted students in my Year 9 English class and we have collaborated on ways to deal with their needs [PD9], um, and I particularly I noticed in some History classes and we do extra things outside of school like current affairs

tutorials [P10] and so on, which allows you to meet some extra needs.  
Interactions with others have been an invaluable way of challenging my  
30 thinking in this area [PD8 and PD9]. So the majority of it has been a  
willingness on my part to get resources [SD3] and opportunities to team teach  
[PD12] and working with the students themselves [\*] has been a primary  
reason for that.

**INTERVIEWER:** So **Question 2: In what ways do you make provision  
for gifted students in your classes?**

**PARTICIPANT:** My questioning style is more focused on developing  
process skills and in that respect I feel I am challenging the thinking of my  
students [P6]. I think my questions make students think beyond the content  
level [P11.18]. Um, you know, I always challenge students particularly in  
40 History to not just adopt my opinion, not to accept the opinion of someone  
who has written a book, because theirs is no more credible than the student's  
themselves, and as long as they can justify their opinion or judgement or  
determination [P11.18] about a given issue then that is well and good. So I am  
working at the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy [P11.18]. Particularly, in  
11 Modern and very definitely in 9 History as well. I have had mock debates  
[P11.7] with students in class where students have given me quite solid  
reasoning for an oppositional opinion [P11.7] and you know it is those kids,  
you know who are very obvious, very evident in the current affairs tutorials  
[P11.18]. So these sessions have really developed and they are seeing that it  
50 can be interesting to talk about things that wouldn't normally be considered so  
and that the ABC and SBS cover which is not traditionally student oriented.  
So those questions are more probing, pitched at higher level thinking and more  
open-ended [P6]. I enjoy playing devil's advocate with them, you know,  
adopting an oppositional opinion just so they can work on ways of defending it  
and even though it is not always my own I find that it helps develop their own  
ability to think of all corners on a particular issue [P6].

**INTERVIEWER:** Do you find yourself pitching those questions  
differently to different members of the class?

**PARTICIPANT:** Um, I think at the beginning of the year I wasn't at all. I  
60 was very ridiculously assuming, you know, that everyone understood exactly  
what I was asking. I would often look up after I had given this wonderful  
dissertation about why I was right and half the class was just like, "Oh God  
what is she talking about?" And then I started to think, particularly in Year 9,  
no I really have to bring this down. And so it got to the point where I was  
saying, "Right. Hand up if you don't have a clue what I have just said." And  
half the class would put their hand up and I would have to think of a way to  
reask the question but the outcome was still the same.

I also um, get students to work on independent projects throughout the year  
that are nonassessable [P11.3]. So um, say History. Um, you know, there is a  
70 lot of material to cover and I've often found that if you actually go back and  
look at assessment the ways I have taught things, that the students have done  
better on questions that they themselves been in charge of collecting  
information. So I sort of employed that strategy a couple of times, in 9 History  
and 11 History. And it was group based [P11.6] because my belief is that  
students who struggle, and students who do quite well can learn from the  
thinking processes of the gifted students [SD1]. So what I would do is I would  
split the class into groups and assign members for groups so that there was a  
very definite mixed ability [P11.6] and um, while captains of groups were not  
appointed it wasn't long before natural leaders were focused [P11.6]. And it  
80 wasn't just that the students found their own materials and did their own  
research and wrote their own things [P11.3] they then had to consolidate it by  
presenting it in an interesting way to the other members of the class [P11.10].  
The topic was predetermined but the manner of research was flexible so that  
they could read a book, they could use the internet, they could watch a video,  
they could do a host of things in order to get what they needed [P11.13]. The  
task itself was prescriptive but within that task there was a lot of room to  
manoeuvre, but I found that it really did help the students in terms of their  
confidence to get up in front of the class and speak [P11.12], which I think is  
terribly important, but it also gave the gifted students the chance to relate to  
90 other members of the class [P11.12]. That was also used in English classes,  
less successfully, I think, but still relatively well.

**INTERVIEWER:** Would there be an opportunity during the year for those gifted students to run with a passion?

**PARTICIPANT:** I think that there is a limited capacity for them to do that within the classroom but there is heaps of opportunity for them to do that in current affairs tutorials [P12]. Those who were willing to give up their Wednesday afternoon to access that forum had the opportunity to do that. Within the class probably not as much. Another opportunity existed in the debating program [P10 and P11.7]. It is very competitive to get into a  
100 debating team because there are so many students wanting to do it and enthusiastic to do it, and as result of that I have had to make a decision about team composition. Um, my position is that the teams should be ranked in order of ability and I have found that that is very successful, but having come from a debating background I can understand how frustrating it is to have to debate with a student who well intentioned and dedicated isn't as able how frustrating that can be [SD2]. So my position is that you rank the teams. This is an opportunity where like-minds and like-abilities can come together and really excel [SD2]. There has to be some forum for excellence [\*] and there is obviously going to be a price to pay. But I believe that this forum for  
110 excellence is invaluable [\*]. The intellectual stimulation is quite out of this world. But within those debating teams there is a great forum for um, independent thinking [P4, P6 and P11.13], you know there is obviously an adversarial kind of system at play and students are responsible for a great deal of research [P11.13], their process skills are extremely developed and um. In addition to that being an inter-team thing it is also something that is very evident on the competition night. In general students really value the experience.

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.

## Participant J

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you for your time. You have had some time to have a look through the questions and so this is an opportunity to verbalise what you have been thinking about in relation to those questions. There are no right or wrong answers, it is very much just your perceptions and opinions and where you are at the moment. **Question 1a: Has the professional development program altered your ideas about the education of gifted students?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes.

10 **INTERVIEWER:** In what ways?

**PARTICIPANT:** First there was reinforcement of ideas [°AS] but it has altered my idea [DAS and °AS] when I realised that there were so many different levels, that um, we can be looking at, and we can be using. Um, it's also altered it in terms of the broad spectrum of all subjects where we can use it [°AS]. Um, mainly being involved with classes 8 to 10, I've actually been teaching on a one-to-one and involved in setting up, for example using the multiple intelligences within um, the maths program. Looking at Bloom's Taxonomy ..... [SD6]

20 **INTERVIEWER:** So the strategies have given you an understanding of the various ways you can provide for gifted kids?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. There has also been a slight altering of my understanding of a definition[°AS], if you look at gifted and talented and focus on the talented. There would be some students who I would say they are not gifted at that level, but some exceptional talents at maybe, problem solving and that in turn um, they have quite a lot of success at that, therefore that success and that growth in self esteem comes back into the classroom situation where they are dealing with other concepts in maths.

30 **INTERVIEWER:** Two things then: a slight shift in defining by separating gifts and talents, and then also in relation to provision the levels that you can provide within various topics at various year levels.

**PARTICIPANT:** Just one qualification, I find that it seems to be easier to implement these strategies in Years 8 to 10, at this school as opposed to higher levels. However, now it seems, there definitely seems to be a growth in those classes entering year 11.

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, so in particular then, **Question 1b: Which aspects of the program do you think have been particularly influential in altering your ideas regarding the education of gifted students?**

40 **PARTICIPANT:** Um, something like the Q-Matrix [PD5]. Seeing something like that come into the school. For example I attended a workshop [PD1] were I was introduced to the Q-Matrix and I used that Q-matrix with students, other teachers have also heard about the Q-matrix as those who were using it started to share their successes [PD9 and PD10]. This increased awareness, it has been very interesting watching that filter through and being used by the students and the teachers. It has come to the point now that students who have used it before, start to differentiate their own questioning.

**INTERVIEWER:** So the elements that you have picked out there are: Firstly, being inserviced in the strategy, and then trialing it in a safe environment and then the collegial development and sharing of that. So you learn from what they have to offer.

50 **PARTICIPANT:** Yes, you can see just a slight changes they have made [PD9]. Therefore, the program of professional development is developmental, it takes time [\*], at least the three years I have been here, I have seen this kind of change. Also there is the element of readiness, until people are ready they may not pick it up [\*].

**INTERVIEWER:** The next question looks at um, comes back to your own practices and asks **Question 2 In what you do to make provision for gifted students in your classes?**

**PARTICIPANT:** Considering that our classes are mainly mixed ability classes, for example the unit in Year 10 science, the future problem solving unit which uses Parne's Problem Solving Model - the six step process [P8 and P11.16]. I've adapted that for some students, um for the energy unit, the gifted students have a certain level that they can aim for, right, while students who are not as comfortable can aim for another level. Basically students are contracting to do that [P4]. After a certain point, if you like, learning the six step process and learning some basic concepts to do with energy and what we are looking at, then they can choose their path. If they feel confident that they would like to go on to that level, then they can contract to do that. They have to do certain set activities um which is basically the concepts which have to be tested at the end, assessed that all students have done that. However, the level at which they look at those concepts can change and they can create their own path as well in terms of... [P4] For example last year, um, there was a lot about energy problems with nuclear energy and a number of articles. Two students actually chose to look at that as their focus, so they are learning the underlying concepts and they are using a different focus [P4]. They generated, if you like, they generated their research.

**INTERVIEWER:** So does that mean it is a real problem?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes! They generated a problem [P8] and then as part of the future problem solving model they must give solutions to the problem and so they had to come up with solutions [P8, P11.11 and P11.16] to, they had to look at that.

**INTERVIEWER:** Can you give me an example of another pathway a group of students may have taken.

**PARTICIPANT:** Another group of students were looking at different levels of questioning using Bloom's Taxonomy [P11.18]. So that, um, again if we use newspaper articles, this particular, um, unit lends itself to what's happening now. So we used lots of newspaper articles and television programs. The girls could look at the what was happening using the Bloom's Taxonomy. They found their own stimulus and then applied the Taxonomy [P4, P11.11 and P11.18], after I had given the whole class an example of how to do that.

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, so you have a number of different things happening there in terms of choice, you've got the real life situation, you've got problem solving and thinking skills. That was a great example, are there any other examples of provisions you would like to comment on?

**PARTICIPANT:** The Year 8 science unit looking at um, Outer Space and um, using the multiple intelligences [P11.11]. Looking at giving specific types of task cards to go through and students then chose to do certain number of tasks cards for a certain grade limit [P11.11]. Another provision would be in the area of maths where we pre-test [P2]. For example with the fractions unit.

100 Here we have so many feeder schools, we can have students from many different schools in one class and fractions is one unit which students really do cover quite well in primary school, so I pre-test and those students who already know that work, what I end up doing, they have a pre-test and then they are divided into groups depending on how they went in that pre-test and the way they communicated there ideas [P2 and P3]. And from that, shall we say Group A, um basically has self-directed learning [P11.11], um they have, a series of tasks they need to complete. They then have enrichment activities. They are allowed to listen in on anything that I am saying, that goes for all groups. The um, shall we say Group C chooses to listen because they are the

110 ones who have had a lot of gaps in their previous experiences. All of them however, come back to me when the new material is given, but I find that Group A has been the ones who taught themselves how to do say, division of fractions. Some girls had that a primary school.

**INTERVIEWER:** What happens with the assessment of that unit?

**PARTICIPANT:** The policy of the department is that they must all do the same assessment.

**INTERVIEWER:** Where is the opportunity to value what they have done?

**PARTICIPANT:** It always depends, it can be written in the diary for parents or forms can be sent home to state how well they are going with that.

120 All the girls have the chance, including Group C, to do the extension and enrichment cards [P11.13]. Um, activity cards, but I have picked students to go through the way they have tackled their answers. Not so much the answer but the steps they have used the process they have gone through. So that they are giving feedback to the others, so that the importance of what they have been thinking about and doing is valued [P11.6]. Um, it's broadening, as I don't think you have to particularly have to go on to something exceptionally different, but they are just looking at attacking things in different ways. We have a number of hands on activities and some of them relate to number facts and relate to fractions. Which provides a wider range of um, looking at, um,

130 choosing to look at the activities. Whereas, with Groups B and C I am choosing activities that could expand students thinking [P6].

Different units lend themselves to different kinds of differentiation, other ways um, we started looking at how we could do this last year with a Year 9 class were they have started to create their own web site [P5]. First they looked at different sites last year and what was involved, what was in that. So that is not related to the topic they are doing at the moment. That is it might be a different aspect that they can focus on. They found information about different types of Mathematicians [P11.1], um, different organisations. They were using the internet and finding out from students if they would like to use the web site [P11.3] to help plan what they could provide and how they would go about it.

140 Like an individual project.

**INTERVIEWER:** If you don't have anything to add thank you very much for your time and support with this project.