

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN

CANDIDATES AND PARENTS SHOULD READ THIS BULLETIN CAREFULLY

I. WHAT IS PSP?

The Primary Scholarship Program (PSP) is an Australia wide annual program of academic ability tests used by independent schools to select students for the award of a scholarship. The Australian Council for Educational Research* (ACER) produces these tests, supplies them to schools, marks candidates' papers, and reports results to the schools. Individual schools make their own awards to candidates who register with them. Candidates may register for more than one school and sit for only one set of tests on the day. Candidates' results will be forwarded to each school (ACER does not report results to candidates). A separate registration and registration fee must be submitted to each school to which you apply. Some schools will also offer pencil and paper candidate registration in 2007. A list of schools participating for 2007 with links to individual school websites can be viewed at www.acer.edu.au/tests/scholarships/psp/schools.html. You only need to register at the same school once. That is, submit either an online registration (via the school's website) OR a pencil and paper registration.

* *The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is an independent national research and development organisation.*

2. PSP Dates 2012

Activity	Date	Notes
Expiration of Early Bird Discount	Friday 16 December 2011	
Deadline for application for Special Sitting Conditions	Monday 31 January 2012	See 'Exception 3.1.7' below
Deadline for Special Centre Requests	Monday 31 January 2012	See 'Exceptions 3.1.4-3.1.6' below
Deadline for ACER Testing Centre Requests	Monday 6 February 2012	See 'Exception 3.1.3' below
Date after which online registration facility closes	Monday 6 February 2012	
Examination Date	SATURDAY 14 May 2011	

2.1. Confirmation of Registration

Candidates will not get a letter of confirmation from ACER after registering with a school. Candidates will, however, receive a username and password, and, upon successful payment, an emailed receipt. This applies to candidates who have applied to a school locally, or a school mentioned in Exceptions 1 or 2, listed below. Candidates are expected to check with the school they have recorded as the examination centre and confirm the address, the time of attendance, and where to report on examination day.

3. WHERE SHOULD CANDIDATES SIT THE TESTS?

If you are applying for one school only then this school will be your examination centre. If you are applying for more than one school, you must list your schools in order of preference (see the school preference section below). The first preference school will then become your examination centre. Exceptions to this are listed below. By default your first preference school will be listed as the exam centre on the 'Preferences and Exam Centre' page of the online registration.

3.1. Exceptions

3.1.1. Capital city candidates applying to schools in another state or a school in the country may do the tests locally as long as that school is an official examination centre. (A list of school examination centres is available from participating schools or can be viewed at ACER's website at <http://www.acer.edu.au/tests/scholarship/psp/centres.html>.)

The candidate must contact the school applied to, AND the school selected as the examination centre, to confirm this arrangement. Candidates are expected to confirm the address of the school and other details concerning the time of the examination themselves.

3.1.2. Country candidates applying for distant schools (more than 200 km away) may sit at a school in a nearby town or city as long as that school is an official examination centre. See 'Capital city candidates' under '3.1.1' for details concerning examination centre arrangements.

3.1.3. Country and overseas candidates may sit at one of the examination centres set up by ACER in the towns and cities listed below. Several days before the examination, candidates at these centres will receive a letter from ACER supplying the address of the centre and the supervisor's name. This letter must be shown to the supervisor on the day of the examination. For country candidates, when registering online you must

check the box labelled: 'I wish to sit the test at an ACER Centre (Country Candidates Only)' and then choose the required centre on the 'Preferences and Exam Centre' page of the online registration (after making payment). For Overseas Candidates you must check: 'I wish to sit the test at an Overseas Centre' and pay the Overseas Levy, and then choose the required centre on the 'Preferences and Exam Centre' page of the online registration (after making payment).

COUNTRY CENTRES	Northern Territory
New South Wales	Darwin
Bourke	South Australia
Condobolin	Naracoorte
Dubbo	Port Augusta
Hay	Western Australia
Merimbula	Broome
Moree	Carnarvon
Nyngan	Esperance
Wagga Wagga	Kalgoorlie
Walgett	Karratha
Queensland	Kununurra
Charleville	Port Hedland
Emerald	Watheroo
Goondiwindi	OVERSEAS CENTRES
Longreach	Dubai
Mackay	Hong Kong
Miles	Kuala Lumpur
Richmond	London
St George	Port Moresby
Toowoomba	Singapore
Victoria	
Swan Hill	

3.1.4. Special centres in Australia. Only those candidates living over 200 kilometers from their nearest school or ACER Centre (see 'Examination Centres' list in Section 3 above) may request a Special Examination Centre. The candidate's parent(s) or guardian(s) should find an appropriate supervisor and test site for the candidate to take the test on the same day as candidates elsewhere in Australia. The supervisor should be a teacher or person who has experience in exam supervision and should not be the candidate's current teacher, related to the candidate, or coaching the candidate for the PSP. Any costs associated with supervision will be the responsibility of the candidate. When registering online you must check the box labelled: 'I wish to sit the test at an ACER Special Centre' and then choose the 'Special Centre' on the 'Preferences and Exam Centre' page of the online registration (after making payment).

3.1.5. Saturday Sabbath Observation. Candidates who observe the Sabbath on Saturday can sit the test as per exception 4 above on a date as close as practicable to the test date – candidates should select 'Special Test Centre' when they register.

3.1.6. Special Sitting Conditions. Candidates who have documented physical and/or learning disabilities are advised to contact the school at which they are sitting for further advice regarding the provision of special conditions. Please note that the provision of extra time and/or special test forms is the decision of the school and must be finalized by the date in the table on Page 1. If the candidate requires a Braille format test ACER needs at least eight weeks notice to produce a test.

3.1.7. Special centres overseas. Candidates living overseas, or who are on a short-term overseas exchange, are expected to attend an ACER examination centre in one of the cities listed in Section 3 above. If a candidate is not able to attend one of the listed overseas centres a special examination centre may be approved. The supervisor should be a teacher or person who has experience in exam supervision and should not be the candidate's current teacher, related to the candidate, or coaching the candidate for the PSP. Any costs associated with supervision will be the responsibility of the candidate. When registering online you must check the box labelled: 'I wish to sit the test at an ACER Special Centre', pay the Overseas Levy and then choose the 'Overseas Special Centre' on the 'Preferences and Exam Centre' page of the online registration (after making payment).

4. FILLING IN THE ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM

Please read these instructions carefully then complete the ACER Registration Form. It is recommended that parents and candidates complete the online registration form together.

Please check that the school you are applying for offers the scholarship level you require. Not all schools offer all levels. You will not receive a refund if you apply at an incorrect level to a school that does not offer the level you require.

Registration Selection Page

Please select the type of registration you require by selecting the correct statement. For all options apart from the first you will need a username and password that will have been emailed to you.

ACER Registration Form

Please use 'Title Case' for all fields – 'John Smith' not 'john smith' or 'JOHN SMITH'.

You will note that some information is required and some is optional – we recommend that candidates complete as much of the information as possible.

Candidate Details

- **Current School**

Insert the name of the school you are attending in the year of testing.

- **Current School Principal**

Insert the name of the principal at the school you are attending in the year of testing.

- **Religious Denomination**

Write the religious denomination you identify with, where applicable. Some independent schools require this information. Should you have a concern about supplying this information you should check with the school(s) to which you are applying as to whether they require this information.

Primary/Secondary Contact Details

Complete the parental information for one or both parents/guardians. Please ensure that the email is entered TWICE correctly or you will not receive your username and password.

It is recommended that you note down the email address you have provided should you maintain more than one email address.

Exam Centre Information

See Exceptions 3, 4 & 7 above. Please indicate if you intend to sit at a school other than your first preference, if you intend to sit at an ACER Centre, a Special Centre or at an Overseas Centre.

Overseas Centre Payment

You should indicate the purchase of the Overseas Levy here (see 'Country and Overseas Candidates' above). Candidates will only be able to sit the test overseas if payment of the overseas levy has been paid. The overseas levy is payable once only.

Extra Information

Many schools collect further information specific to their school. Please note that these fields will be available to all schools you apply to that choose to collect this information, so ACER recommends supplying generic and not school-specific information. Enter this information in the spaces provided.

Payment

Candidates must submit a separate registration and pay the registration fee to each school for which they apply. After the first registration you should use your username and password that is emailed to you for each subsequent registration. Payment for online registration is completed using a credit card.

Each school determines its own fee.

In all cases the candidates will be charged the Basic Registration Fee. If you submitted your registration after the deadline you will also pay a Late Registration Surcharge. **SOME SCHOOLS DO NOT ALLOW LATE REGISTRATIONS.** Candidates who will sit the test overseas pay the Overseas Surcharge. This fee is a once only payment made to the first preference school and is in addition to the Basic Registration Fee.

Please note that a registration is not complete until payment is made. You will be emailed a receipt upon successful payment of a registration.

School Preference

Once your credit card payment has been approved you must list the order of preference for your selected school. Select the order of preference from the drop box (choices range from 1-10). If you have applied for several schools they should all be listed here. You cannot have the same preference number for more than one school. If previous schools you have conducted an online registration for are not listed, you might have registered for the school(s) using a different username and password. ACER will contact you closer to the exam date to clarify your preference order in this case.

Examination Centre

If you are applying for one school only then this will be the default examination centre. If you are applying for more than one school, the school you have chosen as your first preference school will be your default examination centre. For some candidates the examination centre will be an established ACER Centre (either Country Australia or Overseas) or another participating school (see Exceptions 3.1.3-3.1.7 above).

4.1. CHANGING EXAMINATION CENTRES

Transfer to another centre after the closing date will only be possible under exceptional circumstances, and then only if examination papers are available at the new centre. ACER and the schools concerned must approve transfers. Please contact the school applied for in the first instance.

5. PROCEDURE ON EXAMINATION DAY

- You must report to the examination centre no later than 8.45am

When you report to the examination centre, bring two HB or B pencils, a pencil eraser, and two blue or black pens. Use a pen for the Written Expression section. For the other tests you must use an HB or B pencil. Do not bring rulers, mathematical instruments of any kind, programmable watches, mobile phones, photographic or other image/data capturing devices, books or notepaper. All the materials you will need, other than pencils, erasers and pens, are provided at the examination room. You may like to bring something to eat or drink during the break between Test 2 and 3.

5.1. MARKING YOUR ANSWERS

A special answer sheet is provided for the Humanities, and the Mathematics/Science tests. For each question there are four small ovals labelled **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**. Record your answer to each question by marking the oval of your choice with your pencil.

Example (Answer 'B' selected)



If you wish to change an answer, erase it completely and mark the oval corresponding to your new answer.

Note these important points:

- You require a good quality pencil eraser.
- Use only an HB or B pencil.
- Do not make any marks on the answer sheet other than in the designated areas.
- Never use ink, ballpoint pen, felt pen or fine-leaded propelling pencil on any part of your answer sheet.

6. REFUND OF REGISTRATION FEE

Only under the most exceptional situations will a refund of the registration fee be considered. If a refund is awarded, a deduction will be made for administrative and clerical processing. Please see the Refunds policy published on our website for further details: [insert address here](#)

7. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

ACER will not disclose your personal information to any third party other than the school or schools with whom you registered. ACER may use your test results for subsequent research related to the PSP program. Names will be separated from data in all cases. Should you wish to find out how to access your personal information you can do so by visiting the ACER website: www.acer.edu.au/tests.html and referring to the section 'Privacy'.

8. THE TEST TIMETABLE

The Primary Scholarship Program consists of three papers, taken on the same day:

Test 1: Reading and Viewing

30 minutes

Candidates read several short passages and answer multiple-choice questions on each passage.

Test 2: Mathematics

30 minutes

Candidates apply mathematical skills and knowledge to answer problems (multiple-choice format). They also do short calculations in each of the four operations.

Test 3: Writing

40 minutes total

Candidates write two short pieces in different genres in response to stimulus given. The pieces are written in an answer book provided.

9. HOW TO DO YOUR BEST IN THE EXAMINATION

- Listen carefully to the supervisor.
- Read the instructions on the front cover of each test. Read each test question carefully before you answer it.
- Do not rush. But if you find one question too difficult do not spend a long time on it.
- Leave it out, but make sure you mark your next answer against the right question number. Each question is of equal value.
- If you cannot decide between two answers, mark the letter you think is most likely to be correct. No marks will be deducted for incorrect answers.
- You may have time to go back to questions that you left out or were not sure about, but in the meantime you have done the best you can.

10. WHAT ARE THE TESTS LIKE?

The test items attempt to assess the following skills: analysis, comprehension, interpretation and reasoning. Candidates are advised to work carefully through the questions appropriate to their level. The answer to each question is clearly important, as is the method by which you arrive at the answer.

Extensive practice on tests of this type will not necessarily improve test scores. Your best preparation is to read widely and think critically.

10.1. TEST 1: READING AND VIEWING (30 MINUTES)

In this section of the test there are several short passages for you to read. Each is followed by some multiple-choice questions. You select from the alternatives (**A**, **B**, **C** or **D**) the one you think best answers the question. There are 25 questions in total.

Here are some hints on how to answer the Reading and Viewing passages.

- First of all, you should read the passage right through carefully, before you try to answer any of the questions.
- You are given the first part of a statement (sentence) and then you have to choose the correct ending to complete the statement.
- Some multiple-choice questions are real questions. There is a question with a question mark. Then there are several (usually four) possible answers. Consider each answer in turn and then choose the one that you believe is correct.

10.2. TEST 2: MATHEMATICS (30 MINUTES)

Mathematics has 16 multiple-choice questions and four short answer questions. The multiple-choice questions are word problems. You need to use one or more of the mathematical skills that you have learned to help you work out the answer. For example, one way to work out the answer to question 2 below is to subtract and then divide. (There may be several different ways of working out an answer.) You might need to do some working out on scrap paper. It does not matter what method you use to arrive at your answer. But remember to check all of the alternatives to find the correct answer.

In the short answer questions you work out your answer on the paper and then copy your *answer only* onto the answer sheet.

10.3. TEST 3: WRITING (40 MINUTES)

You will be asked to do two short pieces of writing in a special answer booklet. For each task you will have 20 minutes. Your supervisor will tell you exactly what to do.

One piece of writing will invite you to tell a true or an imaginary story. Try to capture your reader's attention with a story that you think is a really interesting tale. It might be funny or strange or exciting or it might be written in an unusual way. Read the topic and think about it for a few minutes and then let the ideas flow.

The other piece will ask you to give your opinion about something that is of general interest to primary school children. You do not need to learn about a particular topic beforehand. The important thing is for you to give your opinion on the question and to back it up with some reasons.

Remember to write on the topics you are given in the test. Don't memorise a story you have written beforehand at school. You will do much better if you keep to the set topics.

It is a good idea to plan your work before you write your pieces. You will find planning spaces in your answer booklet.

Try to make your writing clear, lively and interesting to read. Your writing will be assessed on what you have to say, how well you organise your thoughts and how well you express yourself.



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