

Independent Schools Scholarships

Fee-relief aims to discover curious characters

From build-your-own-scholarship enthusiasms to broad liberal arts passions, some schools cast a wide net.

BY MAL CHENU

Every year, thousands of bright, young primary-age students sit rigorous academic tests in the hope of clearing the first hurdle in the competition for a scholarship to an independent Sydney school.

Academic testing is designed to identify exceptional students, but there is more to a scholarship; schools also seek students who love to learn, have curiosity, passion and a willingness to get involved.

While most private schools offer a small pool of scholarships or forms of fee assistance, some cast a wider net, with Sydney Grammar School offering up to 20 academic scholarships and a range of music scholarships each year.

The school also offers a large number of assisted places to boys whose performance in the entrance assessment, activities days and at

interviews results in an offer, but whose parents are unable to afford full fees.

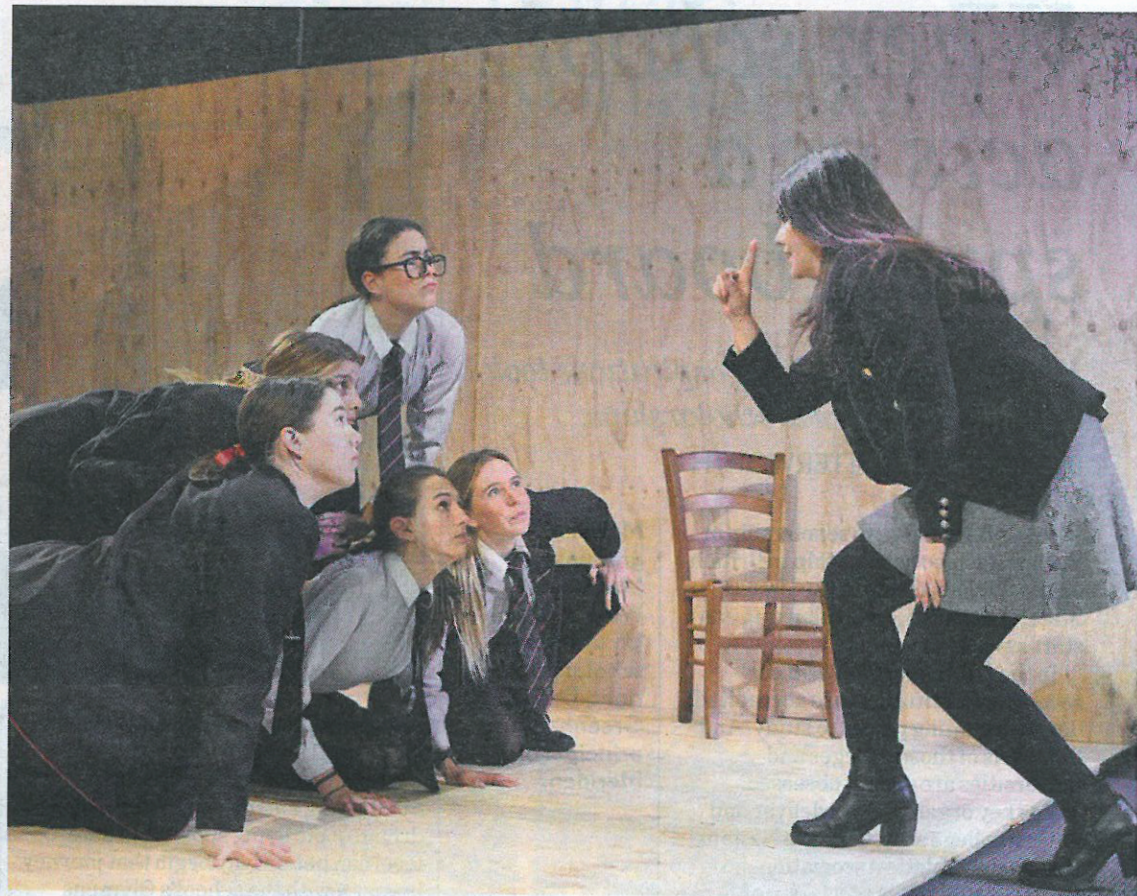
In an article in the Winter 2021 issue of *Sydney Grammar School Magazine*, headmaster Dr Richard Malpass announced an intention to extend fee assistance further, writing: "Grammar has long admitted and will continue to admit boys to the school on the basis of their merit, but this program is intended to help make any such boy's admission possible for families who may struggle to pay the fees for a place at the school."

"The Trustees of Sydney Grammar School have been fully supportive of this program which will only enhance the rich diversity of the school and give life-changing opportunities to boys. Such a program is in addition to the already generous scholarship program which the school has run for decades."

Grammar offers up to 100 per cent fee support. "We are determined to make a Sydney Grammar School education available to any boy who would benefit from our approach to learning," says Dr Malpass.

"We are delighted to interview young men who are interested in ideas, reading, science, music, sport and other areas about which they are passionate."

"The school has a range of strengths.



A drama class at Queenwood (above), which offers myriad scholarships; at right, Sydney Grammar School headmaster Dr Richard Malpass.

We enjoy a musical program that sees boys achieve a level of aestheticism and cultural awareness so vital to our life right now. All boys play competitive sport and this offers them the benefits of health, endeavour and the joys of victory as well as the sobriety of gentle defeat."

Across Sydney Harbour at Mosman, Queenwood takes a creative approach to scholarships.

According to principal Elizabeth Stone, Queenwood's scholarship

program is an expression of school culture, headlined by their unique Build-Your-Own Scholarship program.

"At Queenwood we've worked hard to develop an expansive approach to scholarships," says Stone.

"Build-Your-Own Scholarship is an avenue for talented young women with demonstrated interests and abilities in any field to develop and share their passion."

"For us, this particular scholarship is part of our commitment to a liberal

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education, which instils a love of learning for learning's sake, develops the practice of inquiry across all disciplines and supports girls in finding their voice by building fluency across different forms of expression."

Queenwood has awarded scholarships to, among others, a "self-confessed literary addict" who has helped raise fiction borrowing rates from the library by more than 400 per cent and a chess player whose infectious enthusiasm got fellow

students analysing their opening gambits.

In 2022, a world robotics champion will join a growing number of students working with Queenwood's engineering staff.

Stone is keen to broaden the search for scholarship candidates. "In recent years, we have seen a narrowing of the profile of candidates with a greater proportion drawn from [primary school] opportunity classes," she says.

"These are wonderful, gifted children

we welcome into the school. But we're pretty sure there are other girls out there whose potential, drive and capacity to contribute is just as good and we want to encourage them apply."

Cognisant of the effects the pandemic may have had on scholarship and bursary applications, Queenwood has responded with a late round of awards where the whole process (a means-test, school visit and student interview, but no exam) takes place in the term prior to a candidate starting at the school.