

MEDIA RELEASE

Act now for 2015 school scholarships

22 January 2014: With the new school year fast approaching, the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) has reminded parents seeking a scholarship that applications for the 2015 school year are closing soon.

For over 50 years, schools around Australia have been using ACER Scholarship Tests to assist in identifying academically able students for the award of a scholarship. The tests are designed to rank order students by finely differentiating at the top end of the performance spectrum.

“Scholarship tests have to be challenging because they need to identify the best of the best,” the manager of ACER’s school assessment services, Ms Barbara Smith, said.

In research conducted between 2004 and 2010 that tracked the performance of more than 1800 students who were awarded a scholarship at Year 7, the median Year 12 result achieved by those same students was 98.1, representing the top 1.9 per cent of all Year 12 students.

“The skills that ACER Scholarship Tests examine are developed over the child’s lifetime both in and out of school. As such students do not need an extensive period of test preparation or coaching to perform well,” Ms Smith said.

Ms Smith said ACER Scholarship Tests require students to demonstrate a range of skills such as the ability to interpret, infer, deduce and think critically. The tests are not curriculum based and do not test the ability to retrieve learned knowledge.

“The best preparation for the tests is for the student to read widely and engage regularly in activities that help stimulate critical thinking. Close to the scholarship test date, it is also useful for candidates to become familiar with the test structure and content style so that they know what to expect on test day,” Ms Smith said.

More than 12 000 students in around 220 schools will sit an ACER scholarship test this year. Of these, more than 80 schools have elected to be part of a cooperative program in which approximately 4500 students sit the test on an annual test date. Students are able to apply for scholarships at more than one school and the test results are forwarded to each nominated school.

The next cooperative test, for scholarships commencing in 2015, will be held on Saturday 1 March 2014. Registrations to sit the test close at 11.59pm AEDT on 10 February 2014.

For further information visit < www.acer.edu.au/scholarship/ >

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