

DIRECT-ENTRY-SCHEME TO POLYTECHNIC PROGRAMME (DPP/SEC 5) 2025

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DIFFERENT PATHWAYS TO POLY/UNI

Year	5NA Route		DPP Route	
2025	Received 4NA results (today)			1200 pp
2026	5NA O Lvl		DPP (HIGHER NITEC) Yr 1	
2027	Poly Yr 1	ITE higher NITEC	DPP (HIGHER NITEC) Yr 2	
2028	Poly Yr 2	ITE higher NITEC	*Poly Yr 2 (GPA≥3.5)	Poly Yr 1 (GPA≥2.5 or 3)
2029	Poly Yr 3	Poly Yr 1	Poly Yr 3	Poly Yr 2
2030	University	Poly Yr 2	University	Poly Yr 3
2031		Poly Yr 3		University

BAD NEWS HELPING KIDS COPE WITH GRIM REALITIES B9

EDUCATION

Sec 5 studies less popular as new paths to poly open

Chances of entering poly are better via new courses, say N(A) students who choose them

Pearl Lee

With the introduction of alternative routes to post-secondary education for students in the Normal (Academic) stream, more of them are taking up these options instead of going to Secondary 5.

Data from the Ministry of Education (MOE) showed that before 2012, about 70 per cent of the Sec 4 N(A) cohort went on to Sec 5. Sec 5 students take the O-level exams at the end of the one-year programme.

This year, 74.9 per cent of students in the Sec 4 N(A) batch made the cut for Sec 5. But not all of them will pick this course, going by recent trends.

Since the year-long Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP) and the two-year Direct Entry Scheme to Polytechnic Programme (DPP) began in 2012, the proportion of students moving on to Sec 5 has fallen to 50 per cent.

In fact, almost all students who completed the PFP and about 60 per cent of those who finished the DPP made it into the polytechnics.

Top N(A) students, who receive a

- which are meant for the better performers - told *The Straits Times* that they had chosen these routes as these give them a better chance of getting into a polytechnic diploma course.

In fact, almost all students who completed the PFP and about 60 per cent of those who finished the DPP made it into the polytechnics.

Students in the two programmes

score of not more than 11 points, with at least a grade three for both English and mathematics in their N levels, are eligible for the PFP.

They go on to the polytechnics to do a one-year preparatory course that covers English, mathematics, and domain-specific modules such as life sciences or physics.

If they pass all their modules, they will move on to the first year of

their chosen diploma course. Each year, about 1,200 places are offered.

The PFP, which takes in students in April, took in its third batch of about 1,000 students this year, a number similar to its second batch. It had 837 students for its pioneer batch.

Lee Jing Hua, 17, who is in the PFP in Singapore Polytechnic (SP), sees

the programme as a stepping stone. The former Koo Chuan Presbyterian Secondary School student, who dreams of flying a plane one day, hopes to enter the aerospace electronics diploma course next year.

He said: "Here, we do a lot of group work and projects. There are more hands-on activities and

MORE HANDS-ON continued on B1

SAFETY NETS IN PLACE

We monitor borderline cases in three ways: remedial sessions, counselling them and working with their parents, and giving them personal tuition.

“

MR PATRICK PHANG, Singapore Poly's vice-chair for the PFP course



Singapore Polytechnic's Mr Patrick Phang uses pop quizzes and friendly competitions to engage students in the Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP). Normal (Academic) students in the year-long PFP skip the O levels and go straight to polytechnic. PHOTO: DEE VINCENT JR FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

Strong response for Direct-Entry Scheme into Poly

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Tiktok](#), and join our [Telegram](#) channel for the latest updates.

BY ELGIN CHONG

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The Direct-Entry Scheme into Polytechnic Programme (DPP), which prepares students in the Normal (Academic) stream for progression to selected polytechnic courses via the Institute

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Beyond N levels

More applying for poly entry programmes

1st scheme lets top students gain direct entry;
2nd one requires two-year stint at ITE first

Yuen Siu

Schemes that provide alternative routes for N-level students to gain entry to polytechnic – instead of moving on to Sec 5 or Sec 5* at the O levels – have been attracting more applications since they were first launched in 2012.

Since 2013, the proportion of eligible students who applied for the two-year Direct-Entry Scheme to Polytechnic Programme (DPP) has grown by 5 per cent over the same period, said the Ministry of Education (MOE).

These schemes are reserved for Normal (Academic) students who have done well in their N levels.

Madam Sung Mee Har, principal of Hong Kah Secondary School, said that most of her students who were offered a chance to go for the DPP will take it up.

to move on to Sec 5 if they can, because that was how they could get a place in polytechnic. But that has changed," she said.

Top N(A) students, who receive a score of not more than 8 points in their N levels and have at least a grade three for both English and mathematics, are eligible for the PFP.

They go on to the polytechnics to do a year-long programme taught by polytechnic lecturers, that covers English, mathematics, and domain specific modules such as life sciences or physics. If they pass all their modules, they will move on to the first year of their chosen diploma course.

Temasek Polytechnic student Chew Harris Rezel opted for the PFP when he scored 11 points for his N levels in 2012.

"My learning style is more hands-on and practical so I thought I'd prefer the PFP over Sec 5," said Mr Chew, 20, who is in his final year of an information and network engineering diploma course.

Like the PFP, the DPP guarantees

English and mathematics, in the N-level exams.

Under the DPP, students spend two years in a Higher Nitec course at the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) and are guaranteed a spot in a polytechnic if they meet the minimum grade point average, which is between 2.5 and 3. This year, about 1,000 students have been admitted to the DPP, similar numbers from last year.

The students attend a 10-week preparatory course, starting in January, that covers oral and communication skills and topics such as maths and business. They then go on to the Higher Nitec courses, which begin in April.

Poh Jia Qi, 17, was one of those who chose to go for the DPP when he got his N level results last year. He is now doing a Higher Nitec course in information technology at ITE College West, and said that he enjoys the change of pace from a secondary school timetable.

"Most of our assignments are completed in school and we do more practical tasks, like coding and setting up a router," said Jia Qi, who hopes to study information technology in polytechnic.

The MOE said that more students have moved on to polytechnics via the programme and obtained a Higher Nitec, and a "significant proportion" of them have moved on to polytechnics, though it did not give specific figures. Most of the students in the PFP have also moved on to polytechnics.

Students who fail the PFP are not allowed to repeat. They may apply for the ITE's Higher Nitec programme, approach their secondary school to re-enrol, or apply in the following year to take the O-level exams as private candidates.

Dr Mike Cheong, assistant director of foundation and general studies at Nanyang Polytechnic, said that many PFP students have outperformed their O-level peers. Measures that the school has in place to help students cope with studies include providing remedial lessons and assigning mentors, who counsel students, to PFP classes.

Mr Low Ming Yaw, principal of Mayflower Secondary School, lauded the introduction of the PFP and DPP schemes, saying that it "has played a significant role in motivating the N(A) students to work hard for their N levels because the pathways are available only to students in their stream".



OTHER PROGRESSION PATHWAYS FOR 4N (ACADEMIC)

No	Item	Eligibility Criteria	Remarks
1	Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP)	ELMAB3 ≤ 12 (Excl CCA pts) + course entry requirement	Apply when O-levels results are released in mid Jan 2026
2	Direct-Entry-Scheme to Poly Prog (DPP) – Higher NITEC	ELMAB3 ≤ 19 (Excl CCA pts) + course entry requirement	Application from 2.30 pm (Today) – 5.00 pm, 22 Dec 2025
3	Progression to ITE for NITEC course	Prerequisites & bonus pts stated in booklet	Application from 2.30pm (Today) – 5.00 pm, 22 Dec 2025

WHAT IS DPP?

- It aims to prepare Secondary 4N(A) students for progression into selected polytechnic diploma courses
- Two-year Higher Nitec programme
- Suitable for those who enjoy a hands-on learning style curriculum
- Attain the required qualifying Grade Point Average (GPA) scores - guaranteed a place in a polytechnic diploma course mapped to their Higher Nitec course.
- About 1,200 DPP places

DPP ELIGIBILITY

- a. Obtained an **ELMAB3 aggregate of 19 points or better** (excluding CCA bonus points); **and**
- b. Met the following course-specific entry requirements:

For Applied Sciences, Engineering and Info-Communications Technology courses:

GCE N-Level subjects	Minimum Required Grades
English Language Syllabus A	4
Mathematics (Syllabus A/ Additional)	4
Any three other subjects excluding CCA	5

For Business & Services courses:

GCE N-Level subjects	Minimum Required Grades
English Language Syllabus A	3
Mathematics (Syllabus A/ Additional)	4
Any three other subjects excluding CCA	5

Qualifying Higher Nitec GPA for Progression to Polytechnics under DPP

In order to be assured of a place in the polytechnics, students must meet the qualifying 2-year *Higher Nitec* GPA as shown in the table below.

2-Year Higher Nitec Courses	For Progression to 1st Year of Relevant Polytechnic Diploma Course*	For Progression to 2nd Year of Relevant Polytechnic Diploma Course*
Applied Sciences #	Raw <i>Higher Nitec</i> GPA ≥ 2.5 (excluding CCA bonus points [^])	N.A.
Engineering or Info-Communications Technology #	Raw <i>Higher Nitec</i> GPA ≥ 2.5 (excluding CCA bonus points [^])	Raw <i>Higher Nitec</i> GPA ≥ 3.5 (excluding CCA bonus points [^])
Business & Services	Raw <i>Higher Nitec</i> GPA ≥ 3.0 (excluding CCA bonus points [^])	N.A.

For 2-year *Higher Nitec* courses in Applied Sciences, Engineering or Info-Communications Technology, in addition to meeting the qualifying GPAs, students are required to take up and pass a Mathematics elective at ITE to be eligible for articulation into polytechnic courses under DPP. GCE 'N' (Academic) holders with at least a grade C in GCE 'O' Level Mathematics will be exempted from this requirement.

[^] CCA grades will be used for computing the students' net GPA at ITE for selection and posting to a Polytechnic Diploma course.

* DPP students who successfully complete the 2-year *Higher Nitec* courses and attain the required minimum qualifying 2-year *Higher Nitec* GPA are guaranteed a place in the 1st Year of relevant Polytechnic Diploma courses that are mapped to their 2-year *Higher Nitec* courses. Students who meet the minimum qualifying GPA for 2nd Year entry are not guaranteed admission into Year 2 of one of the mapped courses. Admission is based on merit, subject to vacancies in the courses.

DIFFERENT PATHWAYS TO POLY/UNI

Direct Entry Scheme to Polytechnic Programme

DefinITEly > What can I study? > Direct Entry Scheme to Polytechnic Programme

Once you have completed the *Higher Nitec* course, you would be assured of a place in a Polytechnic Diploma course if you meet the Qualifying Grade Point Average (GPA) for DPP students, as follows:

Courses	Progress to first-year in relevant Polytechnic Diploma course*	Progress to second-year in relevant Polytechnic Diploma course*
Applied Sciences Higher Nitec Courses#	ITE raw GPA >= <u>2.5 points</u> (excluding CCA bonus points^)	N.A.
Engineering or Info- Communications Technology Higher Nitec Courses#	ITE raw GPA >= <u>2.5 points</u> (excluding CCA bonus points^)	ITE raw GPA >= <u>3.5 points</u> (excluding CCA bonus points^)
Business & Services Higher Nitec Courses	ITE raw GPA >= <u>3.0 points</u> (excluding CCA bonus points^)	N.A.

DIRECT ENTRY SCHEME TO POLYTECHNIC PROGRAMME (DPP) GRADUATES-NYP

Eligibility Criteria For Admission To Polytechnic Courses Offered Under The DPP

Polytechnic Course	Offered By	Course Code	Minimum GPA for entry to the following course durations			Refer to footnote
			2.0 Years	2.5 Years	3.0 Years	
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING						
Multimedia & Infocomm Technology	NYP	C75	3.5	-	2.5	c6
SCHOOL OF INTERACTIVE & DIGITAL MEDIA						
Interaction Design	NYP	C59	-	-	2.5	
Game Development & Technology	NYP	C70	-	-	2.5	
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY						
Information Technology	NYP	C85	-	-	2.5	
Infocomm and Security	NYP	C80	-	-	2.5	

DIRECT-ENTRY-SCHEME TO POLYTECHNIC PROGRAMME (DPP)

5 Things You Need to Know

1. What is the DPP?

- Prepares Sec 4N(A) students for progression into selected polytechnic diploma courses via a 2-year *Higher Nitec* programme at ITE, and a 10-week DPP preparatory course
 - Serves as an alternative to Sec 5
- DPP students who meet the minimum qualifying GPA score are guaranteed a place in a polytechnic diploma course mapped to the *Higher Nitec* course. (Refer to <https://jpae.polytechnic.edu.sg/app> for course mapping.)
- About 1,200 places offered across 18 *Higher Nitec* courses

2. Am I eligible for DPP?

- Sec 4N(A) student who has sat for GCE N-Level exams in 2025
 - Obtained ELMAB3 aggregate of 19 points or less (before deduction of CCA bonus points)
 - Meet course-specific entry requirements
- If you can check all 3 boxes above, you're eligible! (Note: Eligibility does not guarantee placement.)**

If you have offered GCE O-Level examination subjects in 2025, you may refer to this table for the equivalent grade to compute your ELMAB3 aggregate:

GCE O-Level Grade	Converted Grade
A1-B3	1
B4-C6	2
D7	3
E8	4

3. How do I apply?

- Upon release of the GCE N-Level results, all DPP-eligible students may apply for DPP *Higher Nitec* courses via the ITE website (<https://www.ite.edu.sg>).
- You may select up to 12 course choices.
- Remember to provide updated contact details in your application so that ITE can contact you if necessary.

4. How will I know the outcome?

- You should check your DPP posting results online on the morning of the release of the DPP posting results.
- You will then have to indicate if you wish to accept/reject/appeal the offer.
- Your offer will be void if you do not accept the offer by the stipulated date. You will be required to continue with your classes in Sec 5, or with your *Nitec*/*Higher Nitec* course if your application via JIE 'N' is successful

5. What happens next?

Upon accepting your DPP offer, you will attend a 10-week DPP preparatory programme starting from Jan 2026.

Release of GCE N-Level Results	DPP Application	Application Processing	Release of DPP Posting Results	Accept/Reject/Appeal	Release of GCE O-Level Results	DPP Application for newly-eligible students	Application Processing	Release of DPP Posting Results	End of DPP Admissions Exercise
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December 2025

January 2026

Early February 2026

HIGHER NITEC COURSES OFFERED UNDER DPP

Info-Communications Technology

- Higher Nitec in Business Information Systems
- Higher Nitec in IT Applications Development
- Higher Nitec in Immersive Applications & Game
- Higher Nitec in Cyber & Network Security
- Higher Nitec in IT Systems & Networks

Business & Services

- Higher Nitec in Accounting
- Higher Nitec in Banking Services
- Higher Nitec in Event Management
- Higher Nitec in Financial Services
- Higher Nitec in Hospitality Operations
- Higher Nitec in Leisure & Travel Operations
- Higher Nitec in International Logistics
- Higher Nitec in Service Management

Applied Sciences

- Higher Nitec in Chemical Technology

Engineering

- Higher Nitec in Civil & Structural Engineering Design
- Higher Nitec in Electrical Engineering
- Higher Nitec in Electronics Engineering
- Higher Nitec in Mechanical Engineering
- Higher Nitec in Mechatronics Engineering

HIGHER NITEC COURSES MAPPED TO YEAR 1 OR YEAR 2 POLYTECHNIC COURSES

**See DPP Factsheet Annex A
Handout**

CHOICE OF DPP COURSES

12 choices

- First 3 to 4 choices
- Next 3 to 4 choices
- Remaining choices

PASSION
Practical
Prudent

Look at **Polytechnic courses (Annex A)**
you are interested in **in the future** and see
which Higher Nitec courses can lead you there.

<https://www.ite.edu.sg/courses/full-time-courses>



Course Finder



SGUnited Skills Programme (Train & Place)



Full-time Courses



Traineeship Courses



Work-Study Diploma



Part-time Courses

4N(A) STUDENTS WHO OFFERED GCE O-LEVEL EXAMINATION SUBJECTS IN 2025

In addition, Secondary 4N(A) students who offered **GCE O-Level examination subjects** in 2024 (**and those who offered GCE O-Level Mother Tongue in Secondary 3 in 2024**) may combine their grades from these examinations with their N(A)-Level results to apply for the DPP. In doing so, they may use the following grade conversion table for computation of their ELMAB3 aggregates:

O-Level Grade Conversion Table:

GCE O-Level Grade	Converted Grade
A1-B3	1
B4-C6	2
D7-E8	3

APPLYING FOR DPP

- All DPP-eligible students may submit an application online via the ITE website (<https://www.ite.edu.sg>).
- Application is open for **four days (18-22 Dec 2025)**
- During this period, students should take time to consult their teachers and parents, as well as to visit the ITE Colleges to obtain more information on courses that they may be interested in.
- Eligible students are allowed to **submit up to 12 DPP course choices** in their application.

DPP ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility does not guarantee placement in a DPP course.

Admissions to DPP courses are highly competitive and based on merit.

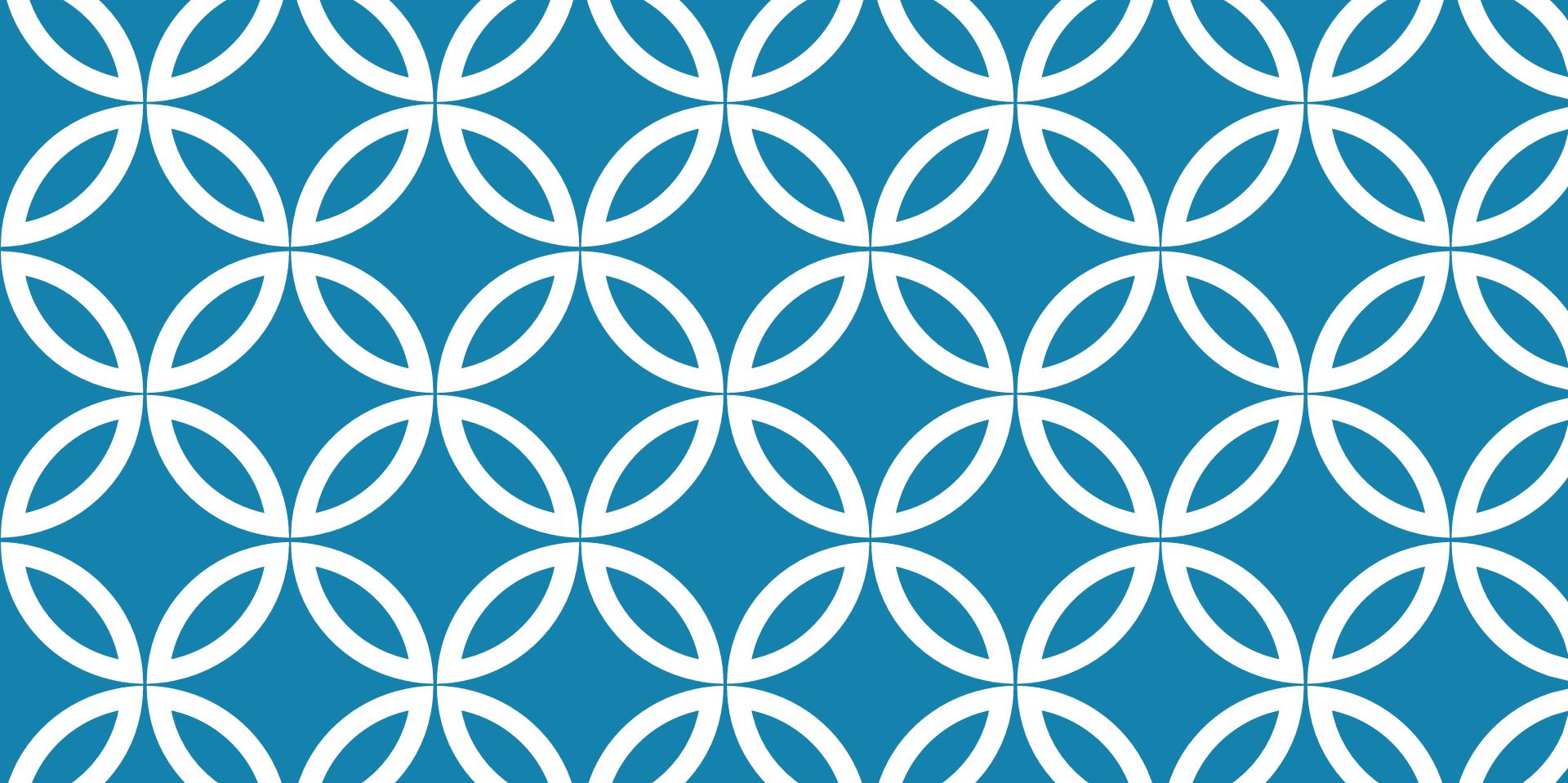
More information on eligibility requirements for the DPP can be found at

<https://www.ite.edu.sg/admissions/full-time-courses/higher-nitec-dpp>

POSTING RESULTS

Upon receiving their DPP posting results, students will have to indicate in the online system whether they are

- (a) accepting/**
- (b) rejecting/**
- (c) appealing their DPP offers.**



STUDENT MOVEMENT IN DECEMBER / JANUARY

ALLOCATION OF 1200 DPP PLACES IN 3 DPP PHASES

DPP APPLICATION & RESULTS RELEASE

DPP Phase 1:

Application: now – 22 Dec 2025, 5pm

Results: 26 Dec 2025, from 9 am

DPP Phase 2:

Application: 26 Dec – 2 Jan 2026

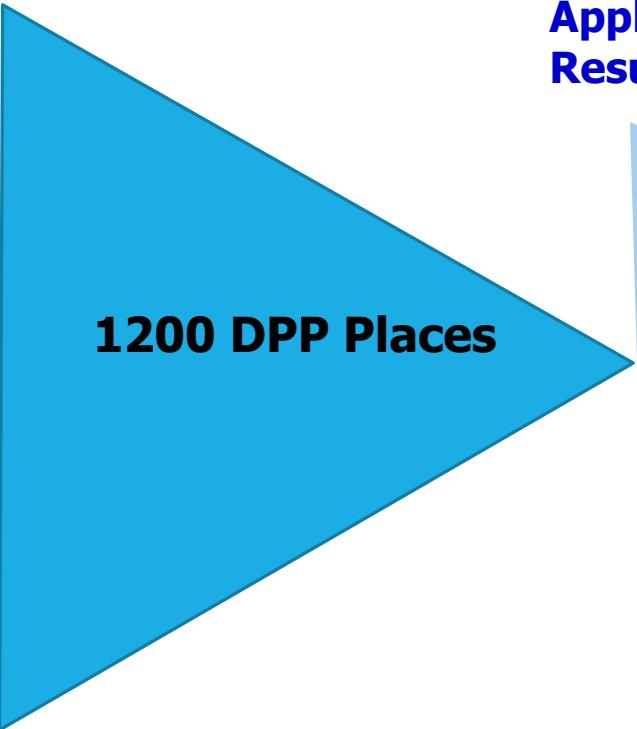
Results: 6 Jan 2026, from 9 am

Phase Final:

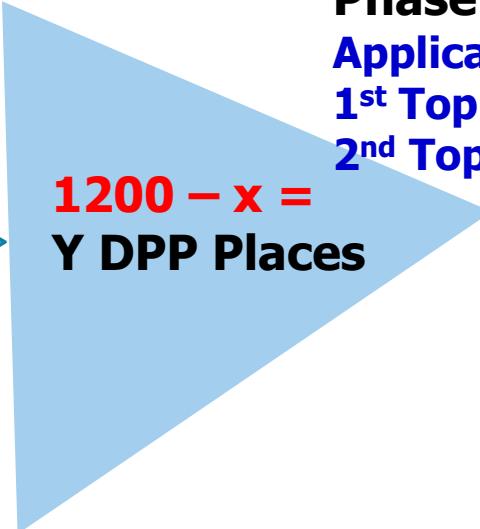
Application: 9-16 Jan, 22 Jan– 6 Feb

1st Top up Results: 12 Jan to 22 Jan

2nd Top up Results: 22 Jan to 11 Feb



1200 DPP Places



**1200 – x =
Y DPP Places**



**1200 – x – y
DPP Places**

I am NOT interested in Sec 5NA

**QUESTION: I AM INTERESTED IN BOTH PFP AND DPP.
WHAT SHOULD I DO, GIVEN THAT THE DPP
APPLICATION IS IN DECEMBER AND THE PFP
APPLICATION IS IN JANUARY?**

1. Apply for DPP in Dec 2025
2. Accept and Progress to DPP in Jan 2026
3. Apply for PFP upon release of the GCE O-Level examination results in Jan 2026

End: Successful in PFP(withdraw from DPP) or unsuccessful in PFP and continue in DPP

TAKE NOTE

All Secondary 4N(A) students with EMB3 of 19 and below who do not have a confirmed place in the DPP or 3 year *Higher Nitec* programme, but are eligible for progression to Secondary 5, **MUST report to their secondary schools on 2 January 2026 (Fri) to continue with Secondary 5.**

THANK YOU!

Lifelong Learners. Inspiring Leaders.

