2023 DIRECT SCHOOL ADMISSION – SECONDARY SCHOOLS (DSA-SEC)

FOR ADMISSION TO SECONDARY 1 IN 2024

[RESTRICTED FOR SCHOOLS' INTERNAL USE ONLY]

13 APR 2023

A PRESENTATION BY
PUPIL PLACEMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Agenda

- Introduction to DSA-Sec

- DSA-Sec Overview

- DSA-Sec Processes

  - Selection

  - School Preference Submission & Allocation

  - Results Release

Introduction to DSA-Sec

Introduction: What is DSA-Sec? Planned DSA-Sec Places

- For students to seek admission to secondary schools based on a diverse range of specific academic and non-academic achievements and talents, before taking the PSLE.

- Participation in DSA-Sec is optional. Students not participating in DSA-Sec will take part in Secondary 1 (S1) Posting and be posted to secondary schools based on PSLE results.

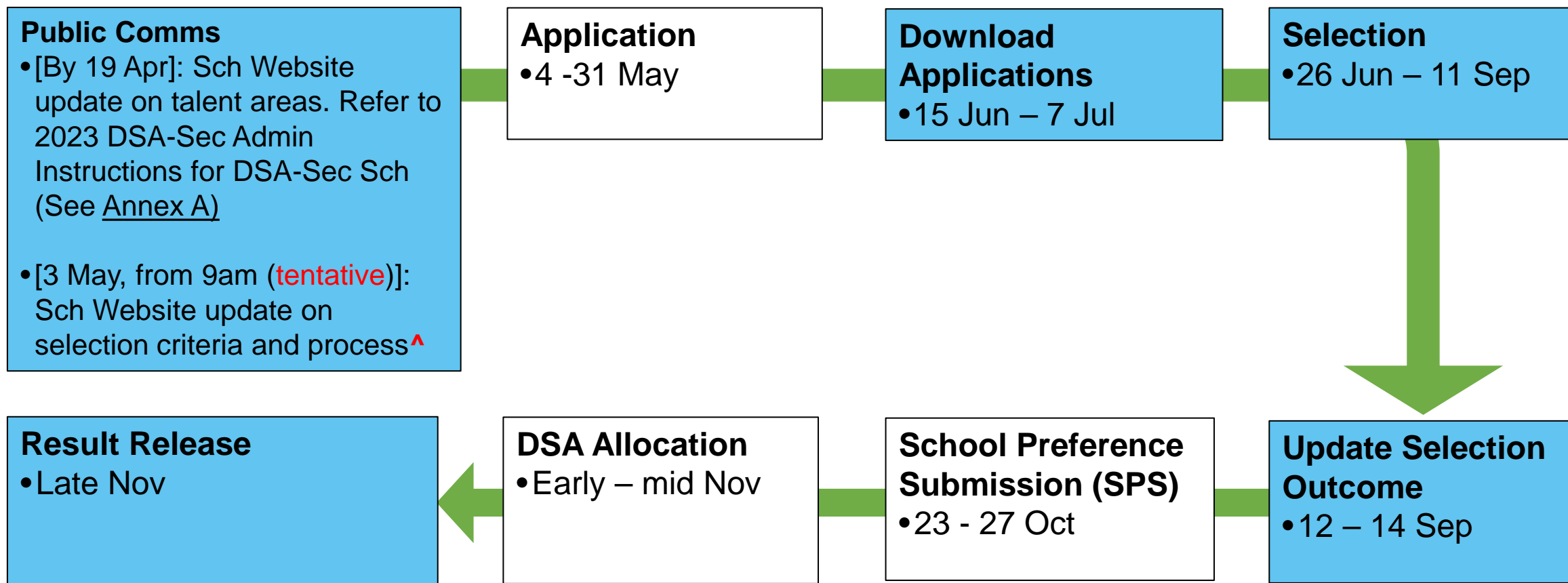| Specialised Independent Schools	Integrated Programme (IP)	S1 non-IP intake
• Up to 100%	• Generally about 30% - 35%	• Up to 20%

- School Leaders will be informed in early May 2023 on the maximum number of planned DSA-Sec places available for DSA-Sec selection.

DSA-Sec Overview

2023 DSA-Sec Schedule

Public Comms
- [By 19 Apr]: Sch Website update on talent areas. Refer to 2023 DSA-Sec Admin Instructions for DSA-Sec Sch (See Annex A)

- [3 May, from 9am (tentative)]: Sch Website update on selection criteria and process^

Application
- 4 -31 May

Download Applications
- 15 Jun – 7 Jul

Selection
- 26 Jun – 11 Sep

Update Selection Outcome
- 12 – 14 Sep

School Preference Submission (SPS)
- 23 - 27 Oct

DSA Allocation
- Early – mid Nov

Result Release
- Late Nov

🟦 *Blue box denotes action required by DSA-Sec schools*

^ ***Press release by MOE (3 May 2023 – tentative)***

Overview of Application & Selection

Application		Download Applications		Selection
•4 – 31 May	➤	•15 Jun – 7 Jul	➤	•26 Jun – 11 Sep

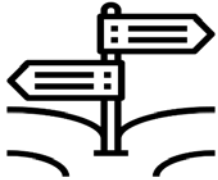| Period	Activities
4 May	• Start of DSA-Sec Application through DSA-Sec Portal. • Check with School Leaders on the final Planned DSA-Sec Places.
15 Jun - 7 Jul	• Download all applicant's details using the DSA-Sec Portal.
26 Jun onwards	• Shortlist and select DSA applicants. • Schools that conduct selection before 26 Jun must ensure there is at least one equivalent session of selection after 26 Jun.
By 11 Sep	• To reduce anxiety of parents/students, notify applicants early if they clearly do not meet shortlisting criteria. • Inform all applicants of the outcome latest by 11 Sep [i.e. Confirmed Offer (CO), Wait List (WL) or Unsuccessful]. • No. of CO must NOT exceed the Planned DSA-Sec places.

DSA-Sec Application
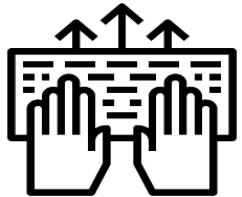
Students from MOE mainstream primary schools:
- Login to DSA-Sec Portal via parent's Singpass or apply through primary school.

Students from non-mainstream schools:
- Parents should apply online for a Registration Number via MOE DSA Website (online form) in order to access the DSA-Sec Portal.

- Applicant can apply up to 3 choices.
- Max of 2 choices for the same school (under 2 different talent areas).
- Students who wish to apply to School of the Arts and Singapore Sports School should approach the schools directly.

Applicant only needs to provide:
- Choice of school + Talent area + Contact details
- [Optional] up to 10 non-school based activities and achievements.
- [Not required for mainstream students] P5-P6 academic results, other information from P4-P6, i.e. Co-curricular Activities (CCA), Values in Action (VIA) involvement, School-based achievements and awards such as Edusave awards, National School Games and Junior Sports Academy participation. Such details will be extracted from School Cockpit.

DSA-Sec processes: Selection

Selection: Do's & Don'ts

- Schools are to refer to the <u>DSA Selection Toolkits^</u> and abide by the 5 key selection principles of: (i) Transparency; (ii) Objectivity; (iii) Talent-Specificity; (iv) Inclusiveness; and (v) Student-centricity.

- Ensure that the number of shortlisted applicants is manageable.
- Adhere to the DSA-Sec criteria published on schools' website when selecting applicants and issuing offers
- Assess based on performance rubrics. Administer the same processes and tests to ALL applicants
- Consider students' attributes that are relevant to the DSA talent area, before assessing their academic fit for the school curriculum.
- Define talent more broadly to include potential and personal qualities of applicants
- Balance rigour with age-appropriateness in the conduct of selection interview/ audition and trials

^ The DSA Selection Toolkits will be sent to all School Leaders via email by mid Apr 2023.

Selection: Do's & Don'ts

- Verify that the coaches/instructors involved have declared any conflict of interests* before selection begins.
- Include at least two people unrelated to the applicant on the selection panel. The school leadership team should be represented on the panel, and be involved in the final decision-making.
- Non-school staff, such as coaches/instructors or School Management Committee members, should not have the final say on admission.
- Review the DSA Offer Letter to ensure that it is updated according to the sample letter provided in Annex B and Annex C.

*Conflict of interests:
- For example, coaching students who applied to the secondary schools where the coach could influence the selection outcome.
- In addition, coaches/instructors should be told that if they market their service by holding out the prospects of helping students gain admission to schools via DSA, they would be blacklisted in our education system. Coaches/instructors should direct public queries on DSA to relevant school staff, to avoid sharing inaccurate information with parents.

Selection: Do's & Don'ts

Selection - Do <u>NOT</u>:

- Conduct too many tests or interviews.
- Ask for school-based activities/ achievements/ awards from applicants, or request for testimonial from primary school via parents/students.
- Make applicants from MOE mainstream primary schools applying for non-academic talent area to sit for selection test in academic areas.
- Raise expectations for applicants who clearly do not meet the school's criteria by requesting for supporting documents.
- Over-promise applicants who meet the published criteria that they will be shortlisted/ given an offer.

Making Offers – Do <u>NOT</u>:

- Impose requirements that are not in line with school admission and DSA-Sec policies. E.g. donations, letter of undertaking, suggestion to indicate school as "top preference" in the offer letter, or compel applicants to commit prematurely.
- Further engage applicants who are on Wait List or unsuccessful. This may give false impression that the school will consider the applicants favourably if they appeal after S1 Posting.

Selection: Types of Outcome

DSA-Sec Selection Outcome	Points to Note
Confirmed Offer (CO)	• Total number of applicants given CO must <u>NOT</u> exceed the Planned DSA-Sec places allowed.
Wait List (WL)	• Place an appropriate number of applicants on WL, generally it should be within twice the planned number of DSA-Sec places allowed. • Do not raise expectations of WL applicants.
Unsuccessful	• Inform parents of the outcome early where possible. • Do not raise expectations of unsuccessful applicants.

Note: Keep a record of the school's assessment of each applicant – Schools are required to provide a report of their selection processes by 29 Sep 2023 (tentative) for audit purposes.

Update Selection Outcome

- Schools are required to:
  - Update the list of applicants with CO and WL offers via the DSA-Sec Portal from 12 – 14 Sep 2023.
  - Declare the actual number of applicants the school wishes to admit via the DSA-Sec. The number declared **must NOT exceed** the planned DSA-Sec places.
  - Check the number of offers issued to applicants and ensure that the correct data is entered into DSA-Sec Portal. Number of CO issued **must NOT exceed** the planned DSA-Sec places.
  - More information will be provided nearer to the date.

Tip 1: Update Selection Outcome using the offline mode if the number of DSA-Sec applicants is >30.

Tip 2: Rank all applicants on the WL. There is no need to rank applicants by talent areas.

Tip 3: It is compulsory to assign a Posting Group i.e. Posting Groups 1, 2 or 3 to applicants who are not studying in MOE mainstream schools.

Selection: Non-mainstream (NMS) Applicants

Applicants <u>taking</u> the PSLE

Madrasah/San Yu Adventist/Special Education (SPED) School Students/Home-schoolers

- Schools do <u>not</u> need to conduct placement tests during selection to assess their Posting Group suitability.

- PSLE results will be used to determine the Posting Group they are eligible for.

Applicants <u>not</u> taking the PSLE

Returning Singaporeans and NMS students in foreign system schools and private education institutions

- Schools may conduct placement tests during selection to assess their Posting Group suitability.

- Schools **<u>must</u>** assign a Posting Group to these applicants but should **<u>not</u>** communicate the assigned Posting Group to the applicants.

- Schools should remind shortlisted international students that they are required to take and fulfil the requirements of the Admissions Exercise for International Students (AEIS) test to be successful in DSA.

Selection: FAQs

Can schools counter-offer another DSA talent area if they find the applicant to be more suitable for the other talent area?

Can we give 2 offers (CO for Basketball and WL for Track & Field) to the same applicant?

The school can consider the student for talent areas that are published in the school website. The applicant should be subjected to the school's selection criteria for both talents. School should state the new talent area clearly to the applicant and parents when offering CO / WL.

No. Each student should receive only one offer from the DSA school. The school should exercise their professional judgement and decide which area they are better able to develop the applicant in. If the applicant is equally strong in both areas, the school can find out if applicant has a preference during an interview.

Selection: FAQs

How can school coaches declare conflict of interest? Is there a form to fill in?

There is no standard form for coaches to fill in. School can decide how they want coaches to declare their conflict of interests prior to selection.

Can we change the Posting Group that we have already assigned to a NMS applicant who is **not** taking the PSLE?

School will be allowed to change the Posting Group of the applicant only during the "Update Selection Outcome" stage in mid Sep. Beyond this stage, schools will not be allowed to change the Posting Group.

Learning Points: Incident 1

Selection: School did not conduct placement tests during selection to assess NMS applicants who are not taking PSLE. As such, school did not know what Posting Group to assign to applicant when updating the selection outcome into the system.

School may conduct placement test during selection to assess such applicants so that they can assign a Posting Group to them. Refer to slide 15 for more information.

Learning Points: Incident 2

School Webpage: Unclear DSA selection criteria and webpage designs in schools' DSA websites, causing confusion to parents.

Schools should consider the following:

- Include a line, e.g. "Meeting all the criteria does not guarantee the student will be shortlisted/given an offer."
- Coming up with selection criteria that are clear and publicly defensible.
- Good practices include:
  - ✓ Tabulating talent areas and their respective selection criteria for easier viewing.
  - ✓ Providing clear or downloadable selection criteria for each talent area.
  - ✓ Listing selection criteria in point form.

See next slide for good example.

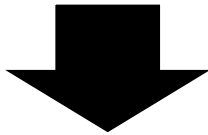# Learning Points: Incident 2 (Good example of schools' DSA website)

Tip:
- Provide clear and detailed criteria
- Include selection schedule for interested applicants
- Include a disclaimer liner

Talent	CCA	Selection Criteria	Selection Process
Student Leadership	Student Council	Applicants should - be passionate to serve - be a confident communicator - be a good team-player	Shortlisted applicants will be required to undergo e-mode interviews.
Sports	Badminton Basketball (Boys) Netball Swimming Volleyball (Girls)	Applicants should - have represented in zonal or national competitions - be a member of Junior Sports Academey (JSA) or school team	Shortlisted applicants will be required to undergo e-mode interviews and performance tasks.

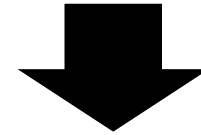*Please note that meeting all the criteria does not guarantee the student will be shortlisted/given an offer.*

Learning Points: Incidents 3 & 4

Application: International Student who was not studying in MOE mainstream school applied for DSA-Sec. The student did not register in AEIS. He was given a CO but was eventually unsuccessful in DSA-Sec as he did not fulfil the AEIS requirements.

Selection: Coaches/Instructors misled parents they were on the DSA selection panel and promised higher chances of getting DSA offers if the students trained with them or joined their academies/centres.

Schools should remind International Students to register and take part in AEIS. The CO would remain as a conditional offer until the student fulfil the requirements of the AEIS.
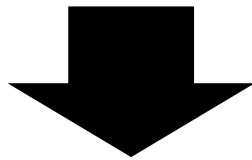
Schools are to advise all their coaches/instructors against making inaccurate claims that would jeopardise parents' confidence in the school's selection process. Schools are to remind their coaches/instructors that they are only involved in providing their professional input at the trial/ audition stage. The final decision on DSA offers will be made by the school's selection panel.
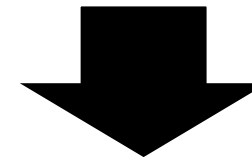
Learning Points: Incidents 5 & 6

Selection:
- **School gave DSA offer to wrong student.**
- **School updated the wrong Selection Outcome via DSA-Sec Portal.**

Selection:
- **School staff gave out more offers than DSA-Sec places due to misinformation.**

School must put in place the necessary checks to ensure that their applicants receive the correct selection outcome. After that, the corresponding information must be updated correctly via the DSA-Sec Portal. Should an offer be made to the wrong student, the school would have to honour the offer.

School staff **must** check with their School Leader on the number of DSA-Sec places for the current year **in early May 2023**. The number may vary year on year, so schools should always refer to the email from Pupil Placement Services Branch (PPSB).

Learning Points: Incident 7

Selection: Successful DSA applicant/parent was unhappy that they were not informed during DSA Selection that the training was conducted at an external venue that is further away from student's home.

School should inform applicant/parent of the training/practice location if they are not conducted within the school premises. Applicant/parent can take this into consideration when they submit school preferences.

DSA-Sec processes:
School Preference Submission & Allocation

Declaration of Places during Update of Selection Outcome

- Declare the actual number of applicants the school wishes to admit via the DSA-Sec
- The number declared cannot exceed the planned number of DSA-Sec places.
- See examples below.

School X has 10 DSA-Sec places, and has given out 6 CO and 4 WL after DSA selection.

How many places should School X declare in mid-Sep?

The school should first decide on the number of applicants that they wish to admit. Students given WL offers will be allocated to the school if there are available places. In this case, the school should declare at least 6 places and up to 10 places if they wish to take in all or some students on the WL.

School Y has 10 DSA-Sec places. Can the school give out 11 CO and declare 11 DSA-Sec places?

No. School Y should __not__ declare more than 10 places and should __not__ give out more than 10 CO.

School Preference Submission

- Applicants with CO or WL offer may submit their school preferences from 23 - 27 Oct 2023.

Mainstream Students studying in MOE Schools

- Submit school preferences via DSA-Sec Portal or at their primary schools.

- Need **both** parents' Singpass to complete submission at DSA-Sec Portal.

Non-mainstream Students (not in MOE schools)

- Submit school preferences via DSA-Sec Portal

- Use the same login ID and password as application.

Applicants who want to accept an offer from Singapore Sports School (SSP):

- Should **NOT** submit their school preference. Submission of school preference would <u>void</u> their SSP offer.

- Should <u>continue</u> to take part in the S1 Posting.

Allocation

- Schools do **not** need to take any action during this stage.

- PPSB will allocate applicants to the respective DSA-Sec schools.

- For applicants who are taking the PSLE, they must achieve the PSLE results that would qualify them for admission to a Posting Group offered by the school.

- For the non-mainstream students, they would be allocated to the Posting Group assigned by schools. Schools are reminded to keep a record of the Posting Group that the students are assigned to.

- See next few slides to understand more about allocation.

Allocation: Example 1

Who will be considered for allocation to School X first?

Student A

Student B

Submit School Preference
1st preference:
School X (WL)

Submit School Preference
1st preference:
School X (CO)

As Student B has a CO, she will be considered for allocation to School X first.

Allocation: Example 2

How will Student C be allocated?

Student C

Submit School Preference
1st preference: School X (WL)
2nd preference: School Y (CO)

Student C will be first considered for School X provided there are places remaining due to other students giving up their confirmed places. If unsuccessful in School X, he will be allocated to School Y.

Allocation: Example 3

Who will be considered for allocation to School X first?

Student D

Student E

Submit School Preference
1st preference:
School X (WL)

Submit School Preference
1st preference:
School X (WL)

Since both students are on school's WL, the one who is placed higher in School X's ranking will be considered for allocation first.

DSA-Sec processes:
Result Release

Result Release

- DSA-Sec Allocation results will be released together with PSLE results (late Nov 2023) via the S1 Option Form.
- Schools can download the list of successful DSA-Sec applicants from Placement System for Secondary School
  - [DAR 2 report – DSA Sec Allocation Results (For DSA-Sec Schools]
- Successful DSA-Sec students offered Edusave Scholarships for Independent Schools will be informed via the S1 Option Form. No application is required.

Important:
- Schools are **<u>NOT</u>** to accept transfer request from successful DSA-Sec students.
- Schools are **<u>NOT</u>** to further engage unsuccessful applicants and to avoid giving them a false impression that they could transfer to the school on a discretionary basis after the S1 Posting – these students should take part in S1 Posting.

Result Release: Options for Successful DSA-Sec Students

- Successful DSA-Sec students will see their eligibilities or Posting Group options in the S1 Option Form (if applicable).
- They may submit their options via the S1 Internet System during the S1 school choice submission period.

Third Language

- Successful DSA-Sec students may be eligible for 3rd Language.
- May submit their 3rd Language option during S1 school choice submission period.
- Those who do not wish to take up 3rd Language do not have to do anything.

Posting Group Option

- Students who are offered two Posting Groups (i.e., Posting Group 3 and Posting Group 2 or Posting Group 2 and Posting Group 1) may select their preferred Posting Group during S1 school choice submission period.
- Those who do not make any Posting Group option will be given the more academically-demanding Posting Group offered by the school (i.e., posted to Posting Group 3 instead of Posting Group 2 if the students are offered Posting Group 3 and Posting Group 2 option).

Ministry of Education
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