



VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

8th February 2017

Mr John Firth and the members of the VCAA Board
Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
Level 1, 2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne, 3000

Dear John and the members of the VCAA Board,

I am writing to you, in my capacity as President of VATE, to express the concerns of the membership as to the release of the VCE English, Literature and EAL exam criteria and sample examinations. VATE has previously contacted the VCAA Curriculum Manager, the Exams Unit, and left messages for the CEO of VCAA, seeking clarification on these issues since December, and again since the office's return on the 18th of January.

English teachers were initially informed that this information for English, Literature and EAL would be released post the 2016 examinations, and then prior to the outset of the 2017 school year. With the repeated delays of the expected release dates, as well as varied communication as to the reasons for these delays, our office has been inundated with calls from teachers across the state who have been understandably anxious to receive this information as they rely on it to plan for the school year, and assuage their own and their students' concerns about how to meet the demands of these new study designs. As the representative body for English teachers in Victoria, I must also register VATE's concern that there was no official communication when the sample English exam, EAL exam, and Literature specifications were released, including an absence of this information in the recent VCAA Bulletin.

Last night, English teachers across the state met for VATE's annual 'Meet the Assessors' event. It was only late that afternoon that the information on the VCE Literature specifications and EAL exam were released, and the presenters had to field questions about this without any forward notice. VATE Literature presenters assured teachers that they should feel confident that they are already working towards the requirements of this year's exam, however, this was made difficult by the continued absence of the exam. Some of our initial feedback indicates that teachers would appreciate an expansion of the criteria and what is specifically required from each.

Aside from formally registering the concern these delays have placed on our membership, we wish to request that English teachers are officially notified as the remainder of the information for the new study designs is made available. While we acknowledge the demands on the VCAA in organising and circulating this information, we feel we are justified in having higher expectations than how this situation has been managed to date.

Sincerely,

Emily Frawley
President, VATE