LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

FRIDAY 24 APRIL 2020 / RACV CITY, 501 BOURKE ST, MELBOURNE

Leading English departments requires courage in the midst of chaos.

This conference will provide existing and aspiring leaders with a chance to discuss the issues facing their departments and develop skills to help them rise to the challenge.

Keynote speaker

Anne M. Harris

Associate Professor Anne M. Harris is a Vice Chancellor's Principal Research Fellow at RMIT University, an Australian Research Council Future Fellow, an Honorary Research Fellow at Nottingham University (UK), and the director of Creative Agency, a transdisciplinary research lab at RMIT University. Harris researches gender, creativity, and performance ethnography, and has worked professionally as a playwright, dramaturg, teaching artist and journalist in the USA and Australia. Anne taught secondary English, EAL and Literature in Darwin and Melbourne for eleven years. Some of their intercultural collaborative arts based research can be seen at www.creativeresearchhub.com

Keynote address

Creative ecologies in secondary contexts

How do English teachers engage with the Australian Curriculum's 'critical and creative thinking' General Capability? Balancing a commitment to thorough preparation for the English subjects up to and through VCE, as well as trying to address the need to prepare students for successful 21st century global workforces, English (Literature and EAL) teachers can feel the multiple foci are insurmountable. This presentation directly addresses the challenges that teachers worldwide are finding in their efforts to build creative skills and capacities in their students, while focusing on disciplinary knowledge and success. Despite the explosion of attention to creative industries and economies, educators are struggling to understand how best to define, nurture, and assess creativity in their environments. This keynote draws on the collaborative creativity strategies of Keith Sawyer, the sustainable creativity approach of Anna Craft, and Anne Harris' own creative ecologies model of building creative capital that goes beyond the individual and raises creative capability in classrooms, schools, and the broader lives of secondary students.

Registration cost

VATE Individual member – $215 | VATE Organisational member – $245 | VATE Concession member – $195

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Program overview

8.30am		Registration, tea and coffee, VATE bookshop			
9:00am	**VCAA update**	Annelise Balsamo, Curriculum Manager, English, and Kellie Heintz, Curriculum Manager, EAL			
9:30am	**Keynote**	**Creative ecologies in secondary contexts** **Associate Professor Anne M. Harris**			
10:30am		Morning tea, networking and VATE bookshop			
11:00am – 12.10pm	**Workshop 1**	**1a: Curriculum planning to teach the skills of English** Hayley Harrison	**1b: From 28 to 89 students in 5 years: Building a Literature program** Nathan Armstrong	**1c: Hostile to change: Some strategies for dealing with staff who may not want to walk your way** Monika Wagner	**1d: Leading learning in the age of data** Ernest Price
12.15pm – 1.25pm	**Workshop 2**	**2a: Curriculum and the evolving face of English** Hanna Khoweiss	**2b: Effective approaches to teaching EAL/D learners** Allie Baker	**2c: Exam marking for Sections A and C** Helen Billett	**2d: Improving writing across the English curriculum** Leon Furze
1:25pm		Lunch, networking and VATE bookshop			
2:10pm – 3.20pm	**Workshop 3**	**3a: Assessing Section C** Karen Graham	**3b: Leading text selection for your English Faculty** Madeleine Coulombe	**3c: Managing the demands of change** Ross Huggard	**3d: Strategies for improving your students' reading skills** Jennifer Jones

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Program

1a: Curriculum planning to teach the skills of English

I love curriculum documentation! The ability to see how you can balance the content and skills of the subject in the tiny timeframes available, to embed resources and find the flow of learning throughout a unit, to find the balance of all the initiatives and foci of the school with quality teaching practices...ahhh heaven! But I understand that getting your staff to see the benefit in spending their precious time planning (and following) curriculum can be a task too great even for the strongest of believers. In this session I will help you see how you can strip your curriculum back to its purpose, ensure the essential skills of English are being prioritised over the content of the subject and give you some strategies to get your staff on-board. We will also discuss how to build a reflective culture around curriculum so we can lose the feeling of constantly 'starting from scratch'.

Hayley Harrison, Educational Consultant

1b: From 28 to 89 students in 5 years: Building a Literature program

In the past five years, Literature has really grown as a subject at St Leonard's College. In 2015 we had 27 Year 11/12 students but in 2020 we have 91 students. This session will focus on how to build interest in Literature at your school, including strategies that will help build a culture in schools where Literature is seen as an interesting and rewarding option for students. We will explore how using the '8 Cultural Forces' from Harvard University's Project Zero can create rich and robust classrooms and increase the number of students wanting to study Literature at your school.

Nathan Armstrong, St Leonard's College

1c: Hostile to change: Some strategies for dealing with staff who may not want to walk your way

This will be a highly interactive workshop where you are encouraged to look at some strategies for leading change when working with a group of staff who are resistant to the changes you would like to see. Once we have considered some of the issues, as well as considering how to most effectively to prioritise for your own context, workshop participants will engage in role playing. As (confidential!) sharing of experiences - both as team members and as leaders - will enhance our understanding as well as provide concrete examples from which to work, please come with an open mind and some stories for your colleagues.

Monika Wagner, Virtual School Victoria

1d: Leading learning in the age of data

English leaders are increasingly engaging with complex and politically-charged conversations about data. This session will focus on leading conversations about the validity and role of data sources. Attendees will also discuss the use of data for team planning and intervention.

Ernest Price, VATE Education Officer

2a: Curriculum and the evolving face of English

The English all-rounder is a chimera, yet we owe it to our students to engage them in all facets of English alongside the mainstream in order to be informed before ultimately deciding at VCE: Is it Literature, Language or mainstream for me? New study designs often mean we have to re-adjust our thinking, re-align our practices and inevitably re-write our courses so that interweaving of all Englishes is reflected seamlessly throughout. This session will demonstrate how this was achieved at Glen Waverley Secondary College for implementation at Year 10 for 2020, including: selling the vision, explaining the rationale, re-writing the course, providing Professional Learning and hoping for the best!

Hanna Khoweiss, Glen Waverley Secondary College

2b: Effective approaches to teaching EAL/D learners

With an increasing number of EAL/D and CALD learners in Victorian classrooms, it is often the responsibility (and challenge!) of English leaders to develop supportive, inclusive programs for these students and support the teachers who are responsible for them. This is even more relevant with the introduction of the revised EAL/D curriculum for 2020. English leaders may be interested in attending this session if they're keen to better understand the challenges faced by EAL/D learners, hone their own EAL/D teaching skills and learn about how to develop an effective school wide approach to teaching and supporting EAL/D pupils in the mainstream classroom.

Allie Baker, Wodonga Senior Secondary College

2c: Exam marking for Sections A and C

Understanding the way in which the process of ranking Year 12 VCE students in SACs inter-relates with their performance in the final exam in order to create a Study Score is something that every leader in English needs to know. This workshop will include guidance through exam-style marking, as well as information about how exam assessment differs from SAC assessment. This is a hands-on workshop looking at Year 12 student scripts through the eyes of the examiners, as well as the statistics explained.

Helen Billett, Woodleigh School

2d: Improving writing across the English curriculum

Student writing is often seen as the end point of any unit of work in English. It is the product which is assessed, at length, throughout the VCE, and which provides the ultimate benchmark of an English faculty. But how much time is given in the curriculum to actually teaching writing? This session highlights the importance of stand-alone units on writing technique and instruction, using modelling and folio-style assessment to build discrete writing skills and improve student writing across the curriculum.

Leon Furze, Monivae College

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3a: Assessing Section C

In this practical workshop based on Section C of the VCE English examination, we will take a close look at the core skills of argument and language analysis, and clarify the descriptors in the Expected Qualities which are used by English examiners for assessment. This session will include a practical marking experience of student responses. Please make yourself familiar with the 2019 Section C task on cashless transactions prior to this workshop.

Karen Graham, Educational Consultant

3b: Leading text selection for your English Faculty

This session will offer practical advice to new faculty leaders about leading the text selection process for Years 7 to 10 English and VCE English and Literature. We will consider ways of auditing varieties of texts, timelines for text selection, and relating texts to assessment. There will be suggestions for making text nominations and running whole-faculty conversations that are productive and respectful.

Madeleine Coulombe, Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School

3c: Managing the demands of change

In education, the only constant is change, as we all are only too well aware. As an English leader/coordinator, you will be obliged to facilitate change imposed both systemically and by external bodies such as the VCAA, as well as by your school. This session is intended to provide some practical strategies to respond to such demands for change, as well as mechanisms to empower colleagues and year level teams. It will also distinguish the key differences between managing and leading an English Learning Area in a school. The presenter will draw from his own extensive experience in schools in key leadership roles in a very practical manner, with ample opportunity for discussion and sharing.

Ross Huggard, Educational Consultant

3d: Strategies for improving your students' reading skills

This session has two parts: a workshop about the strategies we used at my school to improve students' reading skills followed by a planning session about adapting and applying contextually-appropriate strategies in the participants' schools.

Jennifer Jones, Balwyn High School

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