

# It's **our** time

**VATE**

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

**VATE STATE  
CONFERENCE  
2022**



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# It's Our time



2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the election of the Whitlam Labor Government. The title of our conference is a riff on Whitlam's campaign theme, *It's time, probably the most famous political slogan in Australian history.*

The Whitlam Government had a profound effect on the fabric of Australia's educational, cultural, social and political life. Much of what we take for granted as components of Australian society had their beginnings in programs Whitlam initiated:

- Supporting the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Addressing disadvantage and equity in education including making tertiary education free
- Affirming the importance of creativity and the arts in developing young people's potential
- Recognising Australia as an evolving multicultural society
- Engaging with Asia
- Respecting young people's cultures and supporting their participation in a democratic society (18 became the minimum voting age)
- Introducing social justice programs such as national health insurance and equal pay for women
- Affirming that quality of life involved not only promoting economic wellbeing but caring for the environment as well.

Prue Gill, VATE life member and former President, recalls what it felt like to be a young teacher at that time:

*For me, the Whitlam Schools Commission era was characterised by support for innovation and redress of disadvantage, belief in the leadership of teachers, and belief that as children are the nation's most significant resource, developing their creativity was seen to be a cornerstone of education. I've just re-read Whitlam's election speech – so comprehensive, all held together by the philosophical view of opportunity for all in an equal society. How I long for this fifty years on.*

One of Whitlam's favourite phrases was 'contemporary relevance, comrade'. Contemporary relevance, for him, was the touchstone for any worthwhile change, a touchstone which has guided many of VATE's policies and programs. Worthwhile change, the transformation from seeming outrageous to just the way things are, does take many years, is always a work in progress, even 'fifty years on'.



For those who have forgotten, or for whom 1972 was not part of their experience, the 'contemporary relevance' of Whitlam's promise can be visited [here](#).

So 'fifty years on', what contemporarily relevant issues should engage the profession? Some of the initiatives begun by Whitlam, as Prue's last sentence suggests, still await realisation:

- The importance of educated and informed responses to the Uluru Statement from the Heart
- The importance of teachers' professional autonomy to be responsive to students and their contexts, needs and demands, in an increasingly mandated and regimented curriculum and assessment environment
- The importance of young people's voices in decisions that affect them whether it be on climate action, curriculum or pedagogy
- Strategies which foreground the importance of creativity as an abiding principle in curriculum and pedagogy
- Principles of text selection which recognise the importance of diversity and representation
- A recognition of the increasingly complex world of digital technologies and social media our students inhabit, and our responsibilities to assist them to use these creatively and critically
- The role of the English classroom in providing a safe space for nurturing student well-being and growth, and for dispassionate enquiry about controversial social issues.

The above list provides us with a snapshot of what, as English educators we are, and will be, concerned with, but the personal and professional challenges of the pandemic have complicated and shaped our world in both inevitable and unexpected ways. Technological tools have empowered yet controlled our students' and our lives; our language reflects this – now we 'zoom', at the best have hybrid meetings. Too often the results have been to entrench and exacerbate already existing disadvantage. Remote learning can stretch the bonds of connection too far for many. Our students have discovered that they can be resilient and persistent, but they bear the emotional scars of the past few years.

Another lesson learned from our years of disease, fire and flood is of the precarious position of women. Roxane Gay, in the context of anti-abortion legislation, writes 'It's time to rage', and asks, 'How can any of us be free?' We must energetically reclaim our literal and figurative spaces.<sup>1</sup>

VATE 2022 invites us to seize Whitlam's vision, and to continue to be creative, inquisitive, inclusive, resilient and optimistic as we strive to develop these qualities in our students. We need to re-imagine and forge the future out of what has gone before, as Kev Carmody and Paul Kelly's emblematic anthem 'From little things big things grow' tells us.

In 1972, Whitlam claimed that Australians had a choice between the past and future.

Arundhati Roy's words offer clarity and hope:

*Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.*

*We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.<sup>2</sup>*

Let us imagine a new world ... and let us fight together for it.

### State Conference Program Working Party

VATE acknowledges the creativity and commitment of the following VATE members in developing the State Conference program:

Prue Gill, Kate Gillespie, Terry Hayes, Greg Houghton, Emma Jenkins, Paul Martin, Amanda McGraw, Lucinda McKnight, Jo O'Mara, Margaret Saltau, Josephine Smith

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<sup>1</sup> Gay, R. (2022, May 3). It's Time to Rage. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/opinion/roxane-gay-roe-v-wade.html>

<sup>2</sup> Roy, A. (2022, April 4). The pandemic is a portal. *Financial Times*. <https://www.ft.com/content/10d8f5e8-74eb-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca>



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

VATE acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Deakin University sits and where we will gather for the VATE conference.

## GOING GREEN: THE GREENING OF VATE EVENTS



Climate change is real.<sup>1</sup>

To meet the challenges of climate change, we need to address our individual, collective and systemic responsibilities.

At VATE we are committed to developing environmentally sustainable practices in order to minimise our carbon footprint at all VATE events.

The key actions being undertaken are:

### Minimising waste

This will be done through the reduction of waste such as no single serving containers and recycling (where possible) at each event. We will also be encouraging participants to BYO water bottles and reusable coffee/tea cups.

### Distribution of event material

We are committed to using paperless technology as much as it is possible and this will include the distribution of speakers' presentations and event information. We encourage our exhibitors and sponsors to distribute

their promotional material in a paperless manner and/or on recycled paper where possible. VATE will not be distributing any paper flyers at any event including the State Conference.

### Conference satchels and inserts

Conference satchels with promotional flyers will no longer be supplied to delegates. Delegates are encouraged to bring their own bag.

In lieu of satchels, presenter and delegate gifts, VATE will be donating these funds to the following three charities:

**Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation**  
**Environment Victoria**  
**The Smith Family**

### Transport to the venue

To reduce carbon emissions, we encourage all participants to find the most environmentally friendly way to come to the venue. This may include taking public transportation, sharing car, riding a bike, or walking.

We look forward to you joining us on this journey.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.csiro.au/en/research/environmental-impacts/climate-change/climate-change-information> and <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>

Due to unforeseen circumstances, VATE will occasionally have to alter the program or workshops. On the day cancellations will be advertised on the conference website. VATE will not accept liability for damages of any nature sustained by participants or their accompanying persons, for loss or damage to their personal property as a result of the conference or related events. The opinions expressed at the conference are those of the presenter and do not necessarily reflect the views of VATE.

# GIVING BACK: SUPPORTING OUR WIDER COMMUNITY



The tectonic shifts that we experienced over the last two years clarified that a strong foundation and anchor in community was essential to navigate the ongoing tumult.

VATE is an important place of connection.

To reflect our commitment to sustainability and social solidarity, VATE will no longer be purchasing delegate and presenter gifts and instead will be donating these funds to charities. We see this as an important move to supporting our wider community and reflects our move to 'going green' and our core values of equity, inclusion, and social engagement.

We look forward to you joining us on this journey of connecting to community.

In 2022 VATE will be donating funds to the following three charities: Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, Environment Victoria and The Smith Family.

## AUSTRALIAN LITERACY AND NUMERACY FOUNDATION

We see a world where everyone, wherever they come from, however they identify, can confidently express themselves, engage with society and share their stories, embracing the extraordinary opportunities life brings.

The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF) is a national charity seeking to assist people in our most marginalised communities to gain vital language, literacy and communication skills. ALNF's specialised, innovative and proven programs address the needs of a diverse range of individuals and communities – specifically supporting First Nations, refugee and other vulnerable Australians.



The Australian  
Literacy & Numeracy  
Foundation

To support our work,  
please visit [alnf.org/donate](https://alnf.org/donate)

## ENVIRONMENT VICTORIA

We're Environment Victoria! We're Victorians standing up for a healthy environment and safe climate future for our kids and grandkids.

Environment Victoria was founded in 1969 out of a successful campaign to save the Little Desert in western Victoria. More than 50 years later, we're one of Australia's leading environment charities, and the biggest advocate for Victoria's environment and climate.

We take on the biggest threats to our climate and environment. We inspire, empower and lead people and communities to take action, building power to solve the climate crisis, achieve a healthy environment and secure a fair and thriving Victoria.

Our work is focused on protecting our climate from fossil fuels, creating thriving and healthy rivers and nature, and helping every Victorian live sustainably. We are independent and not for profit – which means we can be a strong and unapologetic voice for ecosystems, animals and communities in Victoria.

We have 50+ grassroots member groups and over 200,000 supporters, all working to look after Victoria for our children, and their children.



For more information about  
our campaigns, successes and  
how to get involved, head to  
[environmentvictoria.org.au](https://environmentvictoria.org.au)

## THE SMITH FAMILY

We believe that every child deserves a chance and that's why here are VATE, we are proud to support The Smith Family.

The Smith Family is Australia's largest children's education charity that works with children and young people to overcome educational inequality caused by poverty – so they can thrive now and into their futures.

A percentage of the registration cost from the VATE 2022 conference will be donated to The Smith Family's Learning for Life program, helping kids experiencing disadvantage to receive the financial and educational support they need to succeed at school.



You can support further  
by donating via [events.thesmithfamily.com.au/donate](https://thesmithfamily.com.au/donate)



# **Environment Victoria takes on the biggest threats to nature and climate in our state.**



Gariwerd (Grampians) National Park



# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## THURSDAY 24 NOVEMBER

9.00 - 9.55am	<b>Guest speakers</b> <b>GS1:</b> Mary Mason and Amanda McGraw <b>GS2:</b> Craig Reucassel <b>GS3:</b> Stewart Riddle
	<b>Changeover</b> 9.55 - 10.00am
10.00 - 11.00am	<b>Workshops (F2F and hybrid)</b>
	<b>Morning tea</b> 11.00 - 11.30am
11.30am - 12.30pm	<b>Keynote:</b> Thomas Mayo
	<b>Changeover</b> 12.30 - 12.40pm
12.40 - 1.40pm	<b>Workshops (F2F and hybrid)</b> <b>WTW1:</b> Jennifer Down
	<b>Lunch</b> 1.40 - 2.40pm
2.40 - 3.40pm	<b>Workshops (F2F and hybrid)</b> <b>Curriculum Committee Forum:</b> It's our time (again), and their time...and it's about time: Teacher and student agency in the curriculum
	<b>Wine and cheese</b> 3.40-4.25

## FRIDAY 25 NOVEMBER

9.00 - 9.55am	<b>Panels</b> <b>P1:</b> Education as a public good <b>P2:</b> Reckoning with the future <b>P3:</b> Inclusivity, acceptance and ambition: The role of subject English
	<b>Changeover</b> 9.55 - 10.00am
10.00 - 11.00am	<b>Workshops (F2F and hybrid)</b> <b>WTW2:</b> Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad
	<b>Morning tea</b> 11.00 - 11.30am
11.30am - 12.30pm	<b>Keynote:</b> Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad
	<b>Changeover</b> 12.30 - 12.40pm
12.40 - 1.40pm	<b>Workshops (F2F and hybrid)</b> <b>WTW3:</b> Marjan Mossammaparast
	<b>Lunch</b> 1.40 - 2.40pm
2.40 - 3.40pm	<b>Workshops (F2F and hybrid)</b>
	<b>Wine and cheese</b> 3.40-4.25





# REGISTRATION COSTS

## 1 DAY REGISTRATION

**\$260**

VATE  
concession  
member

**\$280**

VATE  
individual  
member

**\$300**

VATE  
organisational  
member

## 2 DAYS REGISTRATION

**\$390**

VATE  
concession  
member

**\$420**

VATE  
individual  
member

**\$450**

VATE  
organisational  
member

## HYBRID REGISTRATION

This year's State Conference will be a hybrid event. We will be running a small number of workshops, as well as all keynotes, guest speakers and panels live via Zoom. Delegates wishing to register for the hybrid component of the conference can do so through a [separate hybrid registration portal](#). You will be able to select your preferences for the workshops that you would like to stream live. Hybrid delegates will also get access to the recordings for all streamed sessions (subject to recording quality).

Please note: If you or your school faces financial barriers that make attending this conference difficult, please contact [Kate Gillespie](#) to discuss options.

# PHOTOGRAPH/FILMOGRAPHY

A photographer and videographer will be in attendance on the Thursday of the conference. Images/videos taken at the conference may be used on the VATE website and in VATE promotional material. Please inform VATE staff if you do not want to be photographed/recorded. We hope to capture the teaching and learning that takes place at our events and our members in action. We appreciate your support.



# LITERACY IS FREEDOM

HELP US MAKE LITERACY A REALITY  
FOR ALL AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN.

[ALNF.ORG/DONATE](https://alnf.org/donate)

The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF) is a national charity seeking to assist people in our most marginalised communities to gain vital language, literacy and communication skills. ALNF's specialised, innovative and proven programs address the needs of a diverse range of individuals and communities – specifically supporting First Nations, refugee and other vulnerable Australians. ALNF believes that literacy is freedom- literacy allows individuals to access education, participate meaningfully in our society and to have a voice. It is a basic human right.



The Australian  
Literacy & Numeracy  
Foundation





**THURSDAY  
24 NOVEMBER**



# GUEST SPEAKERS

GS1 / 9.00 - 9.55AM



**AMANDA  
McGRAW**

Dr Amanda McGraw engages in collaborative work at the boundaries of teacher education and secondary school learning. She is a passionate reader, writer, and narrative researcher, who believes story and artistic expression are a powerful means of capturing and understanding complexity and fostering new learning through collaborative interpretive work. Amanda's research interests include reading in English, dispositions in teaching, and teachers' professional learning. Amanda was awarded an Australian Government Higher Education Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning in the tertiary sector and has worked as the academic advisor for the Victorian Academy of Teaching Excellence. She taught for nearly 20 years in both state and independent schools and held leadership positions including Deputy Principal. Amanda is a Life Member of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE), is a member of VATE's Council, and also VATE's Professional Learning and Research Committee.



**MARY  
MASON**

Mary Mason left England in 1972 bound for Africa as a qualified nursing sister. There she discovered that oranges were not 4d each on the greengrocer's shelf but in that part of Africa were sold cheaply in large bags, often from the roadside. The unanticipated shift in perception, the notion that framing is contextual, has led her to question and then disrupt the habits she perceived in teaching. She became a leader in innovation in the schools in which she has worked. Her passion for literature and learning led her to develop ground breaking communities of practice for teachers, establish learning and research communities, and innovative professional learning programs for VATE. She has participated in Victorian Education Committees and has written a number of books for teachers. Mary is a Life Member of VATE, and she was a member of VATE Council and a co-convenor of VATE's Professional Learning and Research Committee until 2021.

## THE POWER TO MAKE A DOG SCRUFFY

Active readers use their imaginations, puzzles and critical questions to enliven texts. As a Year 8 student told us, reading involves the ultimate agency, the power to encounter a dog in a text and through interpretative thinking, make it scruffy.

In this presentation, we draw upon research conducted during a seven-year VATE project funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Training. Research involving English teachers and students from 45 secondary schools suggests that too many students feel disempowered in the context of reading in English classrooms. For them a lack of choice, and a focus on rigid formulaic reading and writing tasks are flattening the experience of reading at school.

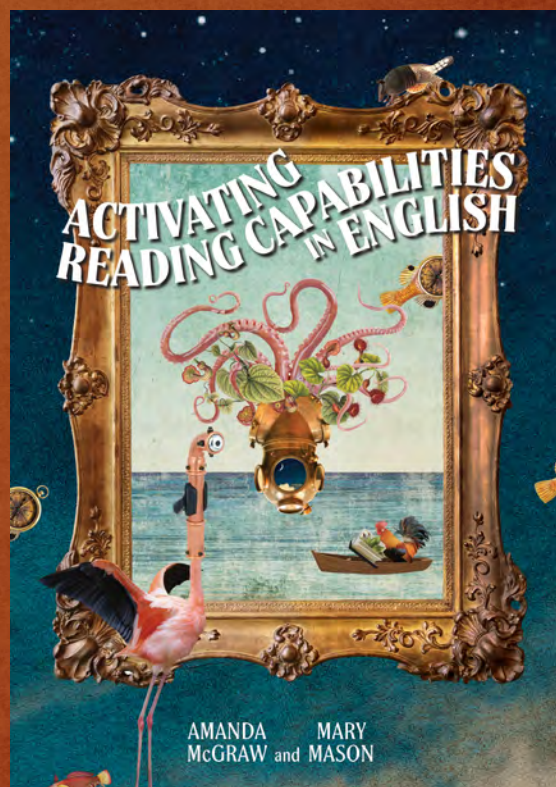
Informed by our collaboration and focusing on the literature, we developed a Framework of Reading Capabilities that seeks to describe what readers do when they actively engage in meaning-making in the discipline of English. We examine the nature of these capabilities and explore the teaching that enhances them. We argue that teacher presence, inquiry, responsiveness, and creativity are central to the enhancement of reading. We argue that close attention to the voices of students will enable us to change and justify changes to our practice.



# ACTIVATING READING CAPABILITIES IN ENGLISH

The foundation of *Activating Reading Capabilities in English* is students' reading experiences gathered and examined during a seven-year research and professional learning program for secondary English teachers. Attending closely to students' experiences and broader research into reading processes, a framework of reading capabilities was developed and trialled in schools. This book describes the power of each of those reading capabilities and includes reading activities that teachers designed to activate the capabilities and engage students to think deeply about texts, collaborate with peers, and respond with imagination and scrutiny. This is a practical book, including samples of student work, but it also provokes English teachers to critically reflect on practice and trust their imaginations.

WRITTEN BY **AMANDA MCGRAW** AND **MARY MASON**  
EDITED BY PRUE GILL



**\$69.95**

Paperback (196 pages)  
ISBN: 9780646869643

Available soon in the VATE Bookshop



In *Activating Reading Capabilities in English*, McGraw and Mason synthesise their wealth of experience as educators, their extensive research-based evidence from their studies with teachers and students, and their passionate, practical commitment to transforming the reading lives of young people. It gives voice to students themselves, drawing on their experiences and perspectives as the driving evidence for approaches to re-invigorating classroom practice. It offers teachers an adaptable framework of reading capabilities that can readily underpin and guide the design and implementation of a reading program in any English classroom.

Jacqueline Manuel, Professor of English Education, The University of Sydney

McGraw and Mason have given us all a great gift – a gift that will keep on giving. This book not only illuminates the processes and dimensions of actual reading engagement and expertise, but it supports us in teaching those processes and dimensions. But the book does more than that: it professionalises us as teachers – highlighting the profound kinds of knowledge teachers need to possess, and the kinds of conscious competence that lead our students to success as readers and learners.

Jeffrey D. Wilhelm, Distinguished Professor of Literacy Education, Boise State University

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# GUEST SPEAKER

GS2 / 9.00 - 9.55AM



**CRAIG  
REUCASSEL**

Craig Reucassel is an Australian writer and comedian who is best known for his work with *The Chaser* and for going through your bins on *The War on Waste*.

Craig and a group of friends founded *The Chaser* newspaper, which led to a number of ABC TV *Chaser* programs including *The Election Chaser*, *CNNNN*, *The Chaser's War on Everything*, *Yes We Canberra* and *The Hamster Wheel*. Most recently he's hosted the ABC Series *Big Weather* and *The Fight for Planet A* on ABC TV and is Executive Producer on *Win the Week*.

Craig was born in South Africa but moved to Australia at a young age. He then attended the University of Sydney, and graduated with honours in Bachelor of Economics (Social Science) and Bachelor of Laws.

At some point he also co-hosted the triple j shows *Today Today*, *Bloody Sunday* and *The Race Race* with fellow *Chaser* Chris Taylor. He has performed in David Williamson's *Jack of Hearts* and Tim Firth's *Neville's Island* at the Ensemble.

Craig is married with three children. He has a cat and a dog that could do with a walk if you have any time.

Supported by the Whitlam Institute and the 2023 What Matters? Writing Competition.

**Whitlam Institute**  
WITHIN WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



## IT'S (WELL PAST) TIME

As we struggle with national and global challenges to democracy and tension in the climate space, Craig will explore how complex subjects are communicated, the role of plain English in study and practice, and the ways in which teachers can prepare students to play an active role in their political future.





**STEWART  
RIDDLE**

Stewart Riddle is an Associate Professor (Curriculum and Pedagogy) in the School of Education at the University of Southern Queensland. His research examines the democratisation of schooling systems, increasing access and equity in education and how schooling can respond to critical social issues in complex contemporary times. He has published extensively on educational disadvantage and the connections between literacy, equity and access to quality educational outcomes for young Australians. Stewart's most-recent book is *Schooling for Democracy in a Time of Global Crisis: Towards a More Caring, Inclusive and Sustainable Future* (Routledge, 2022). Prior to joining academia, Stewart taught high school English in Queensland schools for eight years.

## **ENGLISH TEACHERS AS POWERFUL DEMOCRATIC AGENTS OF CHANGE: TOWARDS A MORE CARING, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE THROUGH ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING**

In late 1972, the Whitlam government established the Australian Schools Commission to address entrenched educational inequality and ensure equal access for all young Australians. The Commission's 1973 report argued that 'the operation of democracy requires an acceptance of rational authority, an intelligent consideration of alternatives, a willingness to participate, and an ability to transcend personal interest for the common good. Such qualities are not only the products of knowledge, but also of membership of a community where respect for persons is truly practised' (p. 48). A half-century on, young people live in a world of complex crises, including rising authoritarianism, increasing social and economic inequality, global pandemics, geopolitical conflict, catastrophic climate change and ecological collapse. In this presentation, I will argue that teaching young people to both 'read the word' and 'read the world' enables English teachers to act as powerful democratic agents of change who help young people to understand their engagements with the world through close examination of texts in their contexts, and to explore the effects of those texts on themselves and others. I will also consider how schooling for democracy can work towards a more caring, inclusive and sustainable future for all young Australians.

# WRITERS TALK WRITING



## JENNIFER DOWN

Jennifer Down is a writer and editor. Her debut novel, *Our Magic Hour*, was shortlisted for the 2014 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for an Unpublished Manuscript. The story collection *Pulse Points* won the 2018 Readings Prize and the 2018 Steele Rudd Award in the Queensland Literary Awards. She was named a Sydney Morning Herald Novelist of the Year in 2017 and 2018. *Bodies of Light*, her second novel, won the 2022 Miles Franklin Literary Award. She lives in Naarm/Melbourne.

## (WTW1: 12.40-1.40PM) WRITERS TALK WRITING: JENNIFER DOWN

In this practical creative writing masterclass, Jennifer will take participants through her writing process and will share tips and suggestions for helping students embrace their identity as a writer. Jennifer will offer some writing activities and strategies for encouraging student writers, as well as tapping into her own motivations, inspirations and goals for writing.



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# WORKSHOPS

**TW1 / SESSION ONE / 10.00 - 11.00AM**

**TW1.01: Crafting and creating texts: Unit 1 and Unit 3 English 2023 - 2024** HYBRID

In 2023, it will be time for our students to explore mentor texts and then create their own masterpieces. In this workshop we will explore how the tools of functional language can be used to read and identify language elements in mentor texts. We will use these tools to identify the patterns in a range of genres and consider the language choices authors make to connect with specific audiences. We will explore how students can then use this analysis to craft and create their own pieces for their own audiences. Texts used in this workshop will relate to framework ideas about change and belonging.

**Claire Nailon and Kate Cash,**  
Nazareth College and St Ignatius College

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**TW1.02: Expanding the boundaries of 'text': Teaching podcasts in the English classroom**

Starting in 2020, I've been experimenting with teaching fiction podcasts as texts in my Year 9 English classroom. In this workshop I'll discuss my experiences with teaching *Forest 404* in 2020 and 2021 and *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* in 2022. I'll give examples of activities for students and the work that they produced for those activities and for final assessment tasks. I'll also talk about potential pitfalls and problems, and look forward to hearing suggestions and experiences from workshop participants. Podcasts are a form with 'contemporary relevance, comrade' as Whitlam put it, so why aren't we seeing them taught more in English classrooms?

**Blair Mahoney, Melbourne High School**

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**TW1.03: It's never going to be 'back to normal time'**

COVID lockdowns created the need to adapt to a whole new world quickly. While teachers have longed to get back to normal, what if sudden change is the normal state? Using some of the tools of futurologists, this interactive workshop will look at what's likely to happen in the future and how some of these tools can be used with other staff and students to best prepare for an uncertain world.

**Rossleigh Brisbane,**  
Wellington Secondary College

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**TW1.05: Myths and mirth: Exploring Carol Ann Duffy's *The World's Wife***

Funny, incisive, sharp and playful, the poetry in this collection, whose title references the phrase 'all the world and his wife', creates voices for the women associated with mythological and historical figures, challenging the male possessive. To quote Duffy, from 'Mrs Beast': 'These myths going round, these legends, fairytales... – think again'. Written from a female perspective, the poems invite readers to explore the stories of those often marginalised in them in a fresh way. In this workshop we will read some of the poems, looking at ways to explore the text and its context with students. Activities will focus on the Areas of Study and Outcomes in the 2023-2027 Literature Study Design. Please bring the text with you to the workshop.

**Heather Maunder**

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**TW1.06: Sunset Boulevard in close-up**

Get ready to teach *Sunset Boulevard* in 2023 with this in-depth introduction to context, themes and film language. As well as providing expert insights into this legendary Hollywood classic, the workshop includes practical tips, scene analysis and classroom resources.

**Susan Bye, ACMI**

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# WORKSHOPS

**TW1 / SESSION ONE / 10.00 - 11.00AM**

## **TW1.07: Taking the High Ground**

This workshop will explore how Stephen Maxwell Johnson's film *High Ground* can be used in Units 3 and 4 English. Particularly relevant is the idea of context; of the story itself, of the filmmakers, and of the audience. In *High Ground*, the Australian landscape is both a character and a symbol – beautiful and awe-inspiring – and a potent argument for a close and nurturing relationship between Country and its inhabitants. Using the American Western genre as a vehicle for an examination of colonialism and its effects on a 60,000 year old culture, the film presents its arguments powerfully. *High Ground's* very existence comes out of the efforts of Yolngu clans and elders, enabling Stephen Maxwell Johnson's twenty-year project to come to fruition. On the other hand, the film's ending leaves us with only qualified hope that 'both ways' is possible.

**Joseph Crofts,**  
**Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School**

## **TW1.08: Teaching Australian First Nations texts using Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies**

This workshop will explore how to teach using Australian First Nations texts from the middle years to VCE. We will explore how using Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies can enrich both the teaching and learning experiences. A range of Indigenous Australian techniques and texts will be explored in this workshop.

**Dr Mark Eckersley, Santa Maria College**

## **TW1.09: Teaching in colour** HYBRID

As teachers of colour and teaching students from a wide range of backgrounds, we are very interested in presenting texts in our classrooms that reflect the lived experience of multicultural Australia. In this workshop we will share our experience teaching African Futurism, Silkpunk and other non-dominant voices. We do not pretend to have all the answers, but we have enjoyed these forays into marginal discourse and we look forward to pooling our resources with the attendees.

**Shane Woon and Briony Schroor,**  
**Nossal High School**

## **TW1.10: Teaching literacy in the English curriculum** HYBRID

Somewhere along the way, the skills-based subject of English has become a content-based subject in an overcrowded curriculum that seems to have served no-one. It is not a new or revolutionary idea to teach literacy skills in the English classroom – let's be fair, they are an integral part of the curriculum – but the reality of many schools has resulted in them bringing in literacy-blocks to supplement their English lessons. Let's look at what literacy skills we can (and should) teach in English and how we can embed these organically, effortlessly and with the greatest impact in our own classes. Be prepared to delve into my world of blending curriculum with teaching and learning strategies and my goal is for you to leave with a basket full of ideas and approaches to teach literacy in your very next English class!

**Hayley Harrison, Connect Literacy**

## **TW1.11: The contemporary relevance of poetry**

This is a practical workshop highlighting strategies to help students generate their own poetry instantly. It is also a way to tap into the thoughts and impressions that are often not articulated by students but that they feel deeply. It is in the creation, as well as the sharing of these works, that a sense of community can be developed. Teachers will acquire real and workable classroom approaches that are immediate and enduring and serve as an introduction to poetic form. In addition, there are real world applications for the methodology employed. The Epworth Hospital currently uses these approaches amongst their second year medical students as a form of reflective practice, as a way of identifying concerns, and to support their students on their academic journey. The results of the research done in this domain will be addressed in this workshop.

**David McLean, Delta Psi**





**THOMAS  
MAYO**

Thomas Mayo a Kaurareg Aboriginal and Kalkalgal, Erubamle Torres Strait Islander man. He was a wharf labourer for sixteen years and is an official of the Maritime Union of Australia and is the author of four books as well as essays and articles published in the *Griffith Review*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Guardian*. His present works cover both historical and contemporary First Nations struggles, biographical narratives, fatherhood, masculinity, love and race. Thomas was inspired to write his first book: *Finding the Heart of the Nation – the Journey of the Uluru Statement towards Voice, Treaty and Truth*, after being entrusted to carry the sacred Uluru Statement from the Heart canvas to Australians from all walks of life, soon after its creation in the heart of the country in 2017. Thomas travelled throughout the nation for eighteen months with the Uluru Statement, taking it to the smallest of communities to the largest of city gatherings, playing a key role in building the peoples movement for a constitutionally enshrined First Nations Voice to what it is today. His first children's book: *Finding Our Heart*, is a children's book about the Uluru Statement. It has been a roaring success because of its contemporary art and powerful truth telling with a uniquely clear call to action.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE ULURU STATEMENT: TAKING THE INVITATION TO THE PEOPLE THROUGH CLASSROOMS**

The Uluru Statement invited the Australian people to constitutionally enshrine a First Nations Voice to Parliament. In this session, Thomas Mayo will speak to the power that educators have to help find the heart of the nation, issuing a call out to teachers to join the movement simply by teaching the Uluru Statement to children and their families. The campaign for a constitutionally enshrined Voice is the most important campaign in our lifetimes. It's time, again!

# WORKSHOPS

**TW2 / SESSION TWO / 12.40 - 1.40PM**

**TW2.02: Collaborative conversations**

As part of the inaugural Teaching Excellence Program at the Victorian Academy, we are going to share our reflections and process of collaboration across schools in our practitioner inquiry where we looked at a framework to implement substantive conversations in our classrooms.

**Shane Woon, Christine Lambrianidis and Madeleine Coulombe, Nossal High School, Westbourne Grammar School, Shelford Girls' Grammar School**

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**TW2.03: Developing bilingualism and plurilingualism in EAL classrooms**

The new Victorian F-10 EAL curriculum introduced the 'Cultural and Plurilingual Awareness' strand. This workshop will explore strategies to develop bilingualism and plurilingualism in EAL classrooms.

**Lachlan Whitley,  
Carey Baptist Grammar School**

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**TW2.04: First Nations protest music** HYBRID

Engage your students more effectively by using music in the classroom. This workshop will explore ways in which you can use music to help your students understand different perspectives and viewpoints on the world around them. We will look at ways in which music can be implemented across the 7-12 English curricula, but there will be a major focus on First Nations Protest Music. Examples of when, where and how this has been implemented will be provided, and hopefully you will walk away inspired and ready to include music and protest music in your classroom.

**Paul Rossiter and Ramona Lazar,  
St Margaret's Berwick Grammar**

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**TW2.05: It's our time... to change the English classroom**

Changing the English classroom from traditional novel study to short texts, films, and images to support the development of skills and knowledge. With the new VCE English Study Design, English teachers of all secondary year levels need to foster skills of inferential reading and viewing, and what better way to do this than with short texts.

**Elsbeth Schneider, Holy Trinity Lutheran College**

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**TW2.06: Planning for the new Year 11 English course** HYBRID

This highly interactive workshop will examine key aspects and features of the new VCE English Study Design. It will seek to clarify what has largely – but by no means completely – remained essentially the same as the extant Study Design which will only operate for Year 12 students in 2023. It will also focus explicitly on the new Area of Study 2 in Unit 1, Crafting Texts. It will then pose some models for developing and operating your new Year 11 course in 2023. This should also help to inform planning ahead for Year 12 in 2024. The presenter will draw from his own experiences of implementing new iterations of the VCE English Study Design, as well as work he has been undertaking in a number of schools this year.

**Ross Huggard**

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# WORKSHOPS

**TW2 / SESSION TWO / 12.40 - 1.40PM**

**TW2.07: Teaching a multimodal text:  
Matt Ottley's *Requiem for a Beast***

Matt Ottley's *Requiem for a Beast* is new on the 2023 VCE English/EAL text list. Come along to this workshop and share ideas for effective strategies and approaches in teaching this Australian text. Your students would love something different! Think: a musical, graphic novel/novella about a young stockman and a First Nations elder in Northern Queensland.

**Yasmine McCafferty,  
Carey Baptist Grammar School**

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**TW2.08: Teaching diversity and identity  
through multimodal texts** HYBRID

Now is the time to talk about diversity. Using multimodality to frontload students with knowledge of immigration and refugees, while also looking at identity of self. Students will use this knowledge and apply it to modern day texts such as *Bao* from Disney to be able to show their understanding of the role of culture, food and traditions in families. Through a creative approach, students are able to be inclusive of others and celebrate their nationalities. Teachers no longer need to shy away from such things as ethnicity, culture and race when we have students ready to collaborate with us.

**Elsa Ramirez and Ben Gibson,  
Copperfield College**

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**TW2.09: Time to talk: Developing students'  
analytical skills through  
collaboration and discussion**

We are always looking for new ways to develop our students' analytical skills. Through the revision of our novel study unit in Year 7 during the period of online learning, we focused on adding another step that helped develop our students' ability to analyse a text without writing a text response essay. Instead, students took part in formalised discussions that developed both their collaborative and verbal communication skills, as well as their ability to analyse texts. We have now made this a new step in our text studies, and this workshop will outline how and why we have done so and will offer a practical assessment task and various activities that could be used in any English classroom to develop analytical skills and foster an environment where students are active participants in their learning.

**Belinda Fitzpatrick, St Leonard's College**

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**TW2.10: Exploration of literary  
movements and genres**

We would like to explore the literary movements and genres unit in the new VCE Literature Study Design. This unit is new and exciting where we would like to show what GGS is doing but what other options are available in other literary movements and genres with texts and extracts. This is an exciting way to explore this new unit collaboratively and collegially.

**Sophia Marsden-Smith and Katherine Barton,  
Geelong Grammar School**

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# WORKSHOPS

TW3 / SESSION THREE / 2:40 - 3:40PM

**TW3.01: Bad Dreams by Tessa Hadley:  
New Year 12 text for 2023**

This workshop will be linked to the VATE Inside Stories guide on *Bad Dreams*. The focus will be on preparation teachers can undertake before they start working on the text in the classroom as well as practical teaching strategies once students have started their study of Tessa Hadley's short story collection.

**Jan May**

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**TW3.02: #BookTok: Performing readerly  
affect in the digital archive**

BookTok denotes a community of readers who make 1-minute videos, typically showing their strong emotional reaction to a particular book's ending. The viral phenomenon has prompted newspaper features, sales spikes for backlist titles, and bookshop displays proclaiming 'As Seen on TikTok'. BookTok lies on a continuum of readerly social-media use spanning bookblogs, litTwitter, BookTube, and bookstagram. Rather than foregrounding the written word, talking-head commentary, or still images, BookTok allows only a brief A/V run-time and minimal captions. The version of affective commentary BookTok performs is the antithesis of academic scholarship. Whereas literary criticism has long modelled a detached, isolated reader, BookTok revels in subjective, emotionally-motivated, social reading. 1970s reader response theory had to resort to generalisations about 'the implied reader'. BookTok gives us a ready-made, inclusive, free archive of what real readers are consuming. But we need to exercise caution: BookTok participants are constrained by the affordances and competitive logics of the platform, and perform a certain style of readership, often in response to user prompts. Also, given most BookTokers are teens or young adults, what are the ethics of archiving such intentionally evanescent material?

**Associate Professor Simone Murray,  
Monash University**

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**TW3.03: Creating a culture of thinking  
through reading strategies  
in the middle years**

How can we empower our students to think carefully and critically while reading? This workshop will explore the importance of encouraging students in Years 7-10 to connect with, question and challenge what they read. By providing strategies to engage and empower all learners across the middle years, this workshop focuses on creating a classroom culture of independent thinkers. Based on *Making Thinking Visible*, this workshop will showcase examples of thinking routines that can be used with different genres, including narrative, argument and opinion, poetry, and film texts to scaffold creative and critical thinking when reading.

**Caitlyn Platt, Mentone Grammar School**

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**TW3.04: Creativity, inquiry and differentiation  
in the English classroom** HYBRID

Former VATE President Prue Gill stated 'the Whitlam Schools Commission era was characterised by support for innovation and ... creativity was seen to be a cornerstone of education'. This workshop will explore how to incorporate creativity, inquiry and differentiation in the English classroom to meet the needs of students with diverse abilities. This workshop will include reference to strategies such as using flipped learning, educational technology and project-based learning.

**Bernadette Sheedy,  
Mount Scopus Memorial College**

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**TW3.05: Enriching responses with literary theory**

This workshop will give an overview of how theoretical lenses (such as gender theory, disability studies, or ecocriticism) can enrich student responses to texts. Literary theory may seem initially like a big idea for the classroom, but with these big ideas comes an opportunity for students to foster connections between the texts studied in class and the contemporary social, identity, justice and ecological ideas that impact the lives of students. This workshop will demonstrate how theories can deepen student analysis and provide a pathway for greater critical engagement in text responses. It will provide strategies for working with teens and teams to unpack the possibilities with literary theory at various learning stages.

**Grace Elkins, Village High School**

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# WORKSHOPS

**TW3 / SESSION THREE / 2:40 - 3:40PM**

**TW3.06: Implementation of the new VCE English and EAL Study Design: The outcomes and assessment unpacked** HYBRID

This workshop will focus on the key changes to the VCE English and EAL Study Design, and the ways that teachers can prepare for the implementation of Units 1 and 2 in 2023, as well as planning for the teaching of Units 3 and 4 in 2024. This workshop will unpack new terms within the Study Design, such as: writing processes, mentor texts, different ways of reading, creating and crafting texts, and the Framework of Ideas. The differences between the English and EAL Outcomes will be explained and details about the assessment of the new study will also be shared.

**Annelise Balsamo and Kellie Heintz, VCAA**

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**TW3.07: Making a monster**

Similar to Mary Shelley and her doctor, Frankenstein, we hope to share with you a 'creation'. Join us as we explain how we 'bring to life' Google Slides presentations that transcend their informational purposes to become the foundation for learner-centred lessons. This workshop goes beyond 'death by PowerPoint' to encourage lessons that are participatory, appropriately challenging, and agile. Participants will discover how to create Google Slides presentations that promote collaboration between students, students and their teachers, and teachers across classes, as well as encourage students to become independent, self-regulating learners by providing opportunities for voice and choice. Explore how these presentations help to establish a feedback loop and empower teachers to make moment-to-moment decisions through observation and analysis of student performance.

**Liana Mannens and Virginia Danahay, Berwick College**

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**TW3.08: Teaching Joanna Murray-Smith's *Berlin***

This workshop will introduce teachers to Joanna Murray-Smith's *Berlin*, a new 2023 Literature text. We will discuss the key aspects of the play, from context to dramatic features, which will then be linked to practical classroom activities. We will also consider how you can use this play with each Area of Study in Units 3 and 4 of the new Literature Study Design. These strategies and approaches could also be applied in any senior English and Literature classroom, hence, if you are looking for a two-hander, philosophically, historically and politically rich, modern, short, Australian play, this is it and I will see you soon.

**Christine Lambrianidis, Westbourne Grammar School**

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**TW3.09: The impact of social media on language, re-engaging students to read** HYBRID

This is a workshop on how the social media world is threatening our language and students' capacity to recognise authentic protagonists in texts and to appreciate literature. Students are unable to use and develop sophisticated language as they are not exposed to a wide range of literature in the social bubble that is the meta-verse. How do we engage students in reading? How do we embed and change language practice? How do we encourage students to see the value in sophisticated vocabulary and understand the power of language and how it translates to success and perception in society; why it is important and what it unlocks for learners in opportunities post school life.

**Renae Pirrottina, Geelong Lutheran College**

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# CURRICULUM COMMITTEE FORUM

## It's our time (again), and their time...and it's about time: Teacher and student agency in the curriculum

In an article in *The Conversation*, after yet another government lament about falling standards in Australian education, Glenn Savage argued:

Australia has fallen into a pattern where the experts and expertise that shape reforms are no longer in schools. This needs to be urgently re-balanced.... Australia needs to stop listening to the loud voices of education gurus and members of the global 'consultocracy' who claim to have 'the answer'. Instead, we should invest energy and resources to inspire local networks of evidence creation and knowledge sharing. This organic and bottom-up approach puts faith in the profession to experiment, solve problems and collaborate to create solutions in context.

And why stop at teachers? What about students? Their agency has been sanctioned in the government policy, *Amplify: Empowering students through voice, agency and leadership*. They have been invited to participate in curriculum design and resource development for civics and citizenship. They have taken to the streets and the Federal Court to argue for the environment and meaningful climate action because their lives depend on it. And why not teachers and students working together?

Marie Brennan states:

A crucial challenge for us, as educators, is to identify and create spaces for curriculum inquiry as active knowledge practice that, with future-problem focus, builds collaborative engagement with students who are living their present towards futures. Curriculum inquiry, in this context, is a form of practical resistance to the official straitjacket of the promoted 'syllabus'—not necessarily to content but creating room for new and experimental learning-and-teaching relations among teachers and students.

She also reminds us that teachers and students have been 'there' in the agency space before. Garth Boomer's 'negotiated curriculum', the ongoing work of Roger Holdsworth and Connect, the Australian National Schools Network. VATE has been 'there' too – its 'local diagnosis, local solutions' policy, through its participation in STELLA, the professional standards project and more recently, its Community of Practice reading project. A caveat – and sobering thought – agency for 'solutions in context' of course requires collaborative creative energy. In a COVID- and post-COVID environment where 'burn out' and mental health pressures have dominated – is it too much to expect teachers and students to 'rally' once again? And do they want to?

The forum will be convened by Terry Hayes on behalf of the VATE Curriculum Committee.

### Forum guests

**Marie Brennan** is an honorary professor at Victoria University. She has worked as a secondary teacher in technical schools, university educator and researcher, policy officer and education bureaucrat. Her research and policy work has been focused on teacher action research around questions of literacy, numeracy and social justice. In the 1980s she co-led the Victorian School Improvement Plan in engaging teachers, parents and students in school self-evaluation across the state.

**Amanda McGraw** is a VATE Council member and a teacher educator and researcher at Federation University Ballarat. In addressing the forum issues, she will draw on her experiences with the VATE Community of Practice – Reading Project (coordinated with Mary Mason), her work in designing and implement the Teacher Excellence Program at the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, and the recently established VATE Collaborative Community Inquiry, programs she believes have been based on what she calls 'responsive pedagogy'.

**Norman Capapas** is a member of the VATE Curriculum Committee and currently teaches at Caroline Chisholm Catholic College. He has previously taught in state and Islamic schools, as well as in post-secondary education.

**Hayley Allen** (she/her) is the Programs and Events Manager at Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC), the peak body for school-aged students in Victoria. Hayley has a background in child and youth empowerment, and a degree in international relations. In her role at VicSRC, she works with schools all over Victoria to empower students to be active in education decision making and works alongside students to develop and deliver VicSRC's programs and events. Hayley led the VicSRC and VCAA civics and citizenship partnership that developed classroom resources created by and for students.





**FRIDAY  
25 NOVEMBER**



### PANEL 1

## EDUCATION AS A PUBLIC GOOD: THE IMPLICATIONS OF POLICY FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS

*Our great function when we approach the problem of education is to equalise opportunity to see that every boy and girl has a chance to develop whatever faculties he or she may have, because this will be a tremendous contribution to the good life for the nation.*

- Robert Menzies' speech to The Federation of Parents and Citizens' Association of NSW, Annual Conference 1964

*Poverty is a national waste as well as individual waste. We are all diminished when any of us are denied proper education. The nation is the poorer – a poorer economy, a poorer civilisation, because of this human and national waste.*

- Gough Whitlam's 1969 election pitch for equal access to education

In the 1960s and 1970s education was considered to be a public good. Prime Minister Menzies was the first PM to invest in public and non-government schools in the form of libraries and science programs. Prime Minister Whitlam on advice of the Karmel Commission funded all schools on the social justice principles of need and committed to a comprehensive and continuous financial commitment to schools and universities.

Post-war educational expansion meant English teachers were valued by the state and the public. They were agential and valued contributors to society, trusted as professional experts to educate the young and adults at a time of educational progressivism and activism. The mantra of VATE at the time was "local problems, local solutions".

Over the past fifty years there has been a shift from valuing well-funded public education based on the premise that it was a central pillar of a democracy to education being seen as for private individual good premised on idea of school "choice" as a right. Federal policies over twenty years have facilitated greater funding of non-government schools impacting on the public sector. Other forms of privatisation are evident through edu-businesses providing pedagogical tools, technology infrastructure, music and other programs such as camps. Teachers are now more subject to surveillance and experience over work in the context of less secure employment and heightened public expectations.

On this panel, Professor Jill Blackmore, a teacher in public schools during the 1970s, will outline the policy environments and shifts that have occurred since VATE was established in 1972. Prue Gill will speak of her experiences in teaching English at that time. Dr Fleur Diamond will report on a study that engaged in a dialogic, intergenerational inquiry into the careers of long-serving

English teachers in Victoria. VATE President, Dr Emily Frawley will reflect back on the panel, from her position as a practising English teacher at a government school.

### Panel chair

#### Alfred Deakin Professor Jill Blackmore

Jill Blackmore AM Ph D is Alfred Deakin Professor in Education, Faculty of Arts and Education, Deakin University, Australia, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Social Sciences and Vice-President of the Australian Association of University Professors. She researches from a feminist perspective education policy and governance; international and intercultural education; leadership and organisational change; spatial redesign and innovative pedagogies; and teachers' and academics' work, health and wellbeing. Recent projects are School autonomy reform and International students' mobility, identity, belonging and connectedness and across all education sectors, the Geopolitics of international education and Good practice in supporting international student engagement. Her latest publication is *Disrupting Leadership in the Entrepreneurial University: Disengagement and Diversity* (2022, Bloomsbury).

### Panel guests

#### Prue Gill

#### Dr Fleur Diamond

Fleur Diamond is a lecturer in English and literacy education in the School of Curriculum, Teaching and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education, Monash University. Her research is focused on teacher professional identity, teachers' careers over time, issues in subject English, and teacher education. Prior to her work at Monash, Fleur taught English in Melbourne schools for 13 years.

#### Dr Emily Frawley

Emily Frawley is president of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English. She has been involved with VATE Council since 2014. Emily is a secondary English teacher at a government school in Melbourne's west, where she is the Literacy/ Differentiated Learning Coordinator. Emily has written for a range of academic research journals such as *English in Australia*, and *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*. She has also written numerous opinion pieces for *The Age* on educational issues. Emily completed her PhD in English education in 2018.



# PANELS

**P1, P2 AND P3 / 9.00 - 9.55AM**

## **Associate Professor Jo O'Mara**

Joanne O'Mara is an experienced secondary English teacher (14 years) who has chaired and taught in Secondary English Curriculum Inquiry at Deakin since 2001. She has been actively involved with VATE for many years, as Council member, member of various committees, Conference Convenor and Vice President. Recent projects include *Sustaining the secondary English teaching profession/al in uncertain times*, *Improving the outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Project*, and *Reimagining literacy education: Being literate in the twenty-first century*. Her latest publications are *Reading as Community: Solace, pleasures and becoming during the COVID-19 pandemic* and *Expert writers on how to achieve narrative immersion in digital games*.

# PANELS

P1, P2 AND P3 / 9.00 - 9.55AM

## PANEL 2

### RECKONING WITH THE FUTURE

One of the important roles of subject English is to develop engaged, informed and compassionate citizens. How do we, as English educators, encourage curiosity and foster dialogue, transparency, ambition and sustainability when looking to the future? Now is the time for students to see themselves as part of an opportunity to shape Australia's future.

The guests on this panel will consider the important role of the English classroom in supporting students to facilitate difficult conversations which address a range of issues to prepare them for an ethical and sustainable future.

This panel is supported by The Wheeler Centre.

#### Panel chair

**Sonia Murr** is an English, Media and Literature teacher with a passion for inquiry based, concept driven learning at all year levels. Currently teaching senior English at McKinnon Secondary College, Sonia is a frequent writer and presenter for VATE and holds enormous optimism for a more student-centred evolution in schools, with approaches to teaching and learning that respond to the often challenging real world needs of young people.

#### Panel guests

**Zuva Goverwa** is a first year uni student. Zuva competed in, and ultimately won, the State Final of the Plain English Speaking Award earlier this year with a speech that highlights her passion for youth activism and the collective power of her generation.

**Zifa Tanner-Kamal** is a year 11 student at University High School in Melbourne. She is the recipient of the 2021 Kill Your Darlings School Writing Prize, for an article called 'The Despair of Growing Up in the Climate Crisis'. Zifa lives in Coburg with her parents and her cat, Boo Radley.

**Marjan Mossammaparast's** first collection of poetry, *That Sight* (Cordite Books, 2018) won the 2019 Mary Gilmore Award, was shortlisted for the 2019 Queensland Literary Awards and was commended in the 2018 Anne Elder Award. Her second volume, *And to Ecstasy*, was released in March 2022 through Upswell Publishing. Her poems have been published and commissioned in a wide range of literary journals in Australia.

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# PANELS

**P1, P2 AND P3 / 9.00 - 9.55AM**

## **PANEL 3**

### **INCLUSIVITY, ACCEPTANCE AND AMBITION: THE ROLE OF SUBJECT ENGLISH**

Whitlam called for Australians to celebrate and embrace diversity. Through the removal of the White Australia Policy and the enacting a series of legislation and policies that promoted the principles of multiculturalism, the Whitlam Government heralded enthusiastic change and recognition of the beauty of cultural diversity and social harmony.

This panel discussion will examine the role that subject English has, and can have, in furthering Whitlam's legacy of combatting and countering prejudice and discrimination. The panellists will explore whether discriminatory biases in the English classroom impede on the Australian values of egalitarianism, mateship and a 'fair-go', and will confront the power that language holds in fostering inclusivity, acceptance and ambition.

#### **Panel chair**

**Ross Huggard** is an experienced English teacher, predominantly in multi-cultural government schools, as well as being an experienced VCAA assessor and statewide presenter to English teachers and students. He has a keen interest in ensuring that students from all backgrounds, and ethnicities, have equal access to quality teaching and learning. This has been honed through teaching in schools with different waves of students from overseas, typically arising out of conflicts in their own countries of origin. As a long-time Head of Senior School, he actively sought to proactively assist refugees and students whose parents did not speak English.

#### **Panel guests**

**Glynis Rose** is an experienced teacher and coordinator of English and English as an Additional Language. Although now retired from the classroom, she has taught in a number of schools, mostly in public education in Victoria. She has a wide range of experience over 30 years in curriculum development and assessment for EAL students in VCE years, including extensive VCAA roles and experience. She is still actively engaged in these areas.

**Shabnam Safa** is a driven community development practitioner passionate about cultivating true partnerships between communities and structures of power to create lasting solutions and social change. She grew up as an Afghan refugee in Pakistan before arriving in Australia at the age of 15. Inspired by her own experience of forced displacement, she is a strong advocate for meaningful participation of refugees in addressing the complex challenges of resettlement and integration. She is the Community Development & Training Lead at Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia (CRSA), a Director at the Centre for Multicultural Youth and the inaugural Chairperson at the National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group (NRAAG), a refugee-led organisation creating spaces for effective elevation of voices with lived experience in key decisions, policies, and discourse about refugees. She was recently inducted to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women for her work in promoting refugee rights, social cohesion, diversity and inclusion. In her spare time, she likes to hit the mats at the dojo or put on her boxing gloves and break a sweat at the gym. Shabnam is a Karate champion with multiple national and international titles to her name.

# WORKSHOPS

**FW1 / SESSION ONE / 10.00 - 11.00AM**

**FW1.01: Forget 'catch-up', let's get creative**

As we leave the 'lockdown' years, teachers are feeling more and more pressured to 'catch up' on work missed and we are forgetting to have fun in our classrooms. We want students to love writing again so let's leave the boring stuff behind and develop fun tasks for students! This interactive workshop will run through cheap, quick and fun creative writing activities you can build in as learning tasks, assessments or just something fun to do with students. Even better, you'll get to participate in doing them. It's time to get excited about writing again! Materials, pens and paper will be provided as well as a reference sheet of activities, student examples and online resources. This workshop is for both late primary and secondary educators.

**Simone Farmer-Birkenbeil, Bright P-12 College**

**FW1.02: Implementation of the new VCE Literature Study Design: The Outcomes and assessment unpacked** HYBRID

This workshop will focus on the key changes to the VCE Literature Study Design, and the ways that teachers can prepare for the implementation of all Units in 2023. The workshop will explore the new Areas of Study (in Units 1 and 2) and the key changes in Units 3 and 4. Information and details about the assessment of the new Study will also be shared.

**Annelise Balsamo, VCAA**

**FW1.03: It's time for... Empowered voices**

'Empowered Voices' is a workshop that aligns with the 2023 English / EAL Study Design's Unit 1 AOS 2 – Crafting Texts. Within the workshop we will discuss mentor texts, interact with learning activities and examine various styles of texts that students can craft. This would be a workshop for gathering ideas under the key idea of 'Writing about Empowered Voices'. 'We realise the importance of our voices, only when they are silenced.' (M. Yousafzai)

**Louise Roberts and Bree Gardner-Vaughan, Firbank Grammar School**

**FW1.04: Language equality in the English classroom** HYBRID

My workshop comes about as I explore the universal truth within Australia that it is the formal standard variety of Standard Australian English that sets the threshold for prestige, regardless of modern trends and shifts in language use. My concurrent observation is that there is an assumption of this education system that those students who are native speakers of Standard Australian English have an innate ability to produce its prestigious variety without explicit instruction. I maintain that this is not the case, and offer an approach that provides students this required explicit instruction in the classroom, addressing the Language strand of the Victorian English Curriculum, and giving students the autonomy to control their own written voice in a way that meets society's expectations.

**Anna Stewart, Templestowe College**



# WORKSHOPS

FW1 / SESSION ONE / 10.00 - 11.00AM

**FW1.05: Literary studies pedagogy in the digital era**

The COVID crisis of 2020 required Monash University Literary Studies staff to move entire supplementary curricula online in a matter of weeks, shifting digital technology from supplement to face-to-face (f2f) teaching, to be the default and sole platform. While the experience may have left us breathless, now is the optimal time to rethink our pedagogy for the digital era. The solutions put in place during this crucial transitional juncture could harden into orthodoxy remarkably quickly, so we have a professional and personal interest in getting the settings right. COVID shutdowns of campuses have normalised use of digital platforms and resources for curriculum delivery: video lectures; Zoom tutorials; and incorporation of digital objects we perhaps haven't experimented with before (videos of author interviews, scholarly or retailing websites, trailers for screen adaptations etc.). But this largely amounts to substituting f2f teaching with digital proxies and incorporating digital resources at the level of content. The use of digital technologies to change university teaching methods and, importantly, assessment protocols has been much less evident over the past two years. But it is in the domains of pedagogical techniques and assessment renewal that digital technologies have the most to offer Literary Studies at both secondary and tertiary levels, improving its future prospects in a pervasively digital world.

**Simone Murray, Monash University**

**FW1.06: Literature Perspectives: Teaching Stories of Your Life and Others by Ted Chiang**

Ted Chiang's *Stories of Your Life and Others* is a new addition to the VCE Literature text list. The collection of short science fiction stories has been described as 'soulful', and 'speculative', 'cerebral' and 'emotionally moving', 'high concept' and 'humanist'. This workshop is based on VATE's Literature Perspectives guide and examines how to approach teaching such a philosophical and conceptually rich text for Units 3 and 4 Literature, as well as exploring ideas for assessment.

**Nicole Marie,  
Point Cook Senior Secondary College**

**FW1.07: New English text: Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle***

Welcome to the warped, bizarre, fanciful and endearing world of Merricat Blackwood, the sole narrative voice of *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. Very much akin to Henry James' masterful *Turn of the Screw*, the novel hinges on the question of the reliability of the narrator and garners much of its power in its deliberate ambiguity in relation to this question. This workshop will introduce teachers to this brilliant, short and very accessible novel. Jackson wrote *We Have Always lived in the Castle* before second wave feminism was in full swing, and yet harbours the sentiments of Kate Millet's seminal breakthrough feminist text *Sexual Politics* – which portrayed the manifold ways in which the intertwined institutions of family and patriarchy wielded oppressive power over women. Merricat's attempts to wield magic against these forces, and the villagers' hostile treatment of both Merricat and Constance as potential witches, also predates, by some ten years, the work of Andrea Dworking and Mary Daly on the deadly patriarchal response to female rebellion and/or alternative forms of female power. This proto-feminist novel, with its interest in witchcraft and sympathetic magic, is bound to wind a spell among young readers.

**Karen Lynch, Virtual School Victoria**

**FW1.08: The boys' literacy crisis: Encouraging boys to read and write**

This workshop is designed to support teachers of the middle years (Years 8 and 9 specifically) in understanding the literacy challenges for boys, and in encouraging male students to engage in reading and writing development. Though particularly relevant for staff at all boys' schools, this workshop will also be applicable to those at co-educational schools facing the same challenges. We aim to look at some of the causes of the reading gap in boys and girls, discuss ideas and activities that have worked in class, and present some text suggestions that have worked in an effort to help reduce the literacy gap and encourage boys to feel positive about reading and writing.

**Brianah Walsh and Kathryn Ward,  
St Patrick's College**

# WORKSHOPS

**FW1 / SESSION ONE / 10.00 - 11.00AM**

**FW1.09: Using student voice to activate learner agency in Year 10 English**

This workshop explores student voice in the English classroom. How can we better engage our students in curriculum design to give them more agency in their learning and increase their text analysis skills? Drawing on the philosophical approach of the Readers/Writers Workshop from Columbia University, this workshop will unpack a recent Year 10 Comparative Analysis Unit in which we took a three-pronged approach to utilising student voice through curriculum design, peer assessment and self-assessment. We will reflect upon both the successes and challenges of this unit, as well as the benefits of the Workshop Model in increasing student engagement and literacy skills.

**Joanna Sommers and Laura Quattrocchi,  
Werribee Secondary College**

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**FW1.10: VATE Inside Stories: Rainbow's End**

This workshop will explore teaching and learning strategies for Jane Harrison's *Rainbow's End*.

**Ernest Price, Charlton College**

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**FW1.11: Why we write: Crafting texts with purpose and voice** HYBRID

Writing just became a huge part of the VCE curriculum, but it has always been vital to the English classroom. This workshop explores the purpose of writing: in an age when Artificially Intelligent writers can churn out passable essays, we need to ask ourselves why students should bother writing at all. You'll leave with practical ways to encourage and teach students to write fiction and nonfiction that captures their passion and unique voice.

**Leon Furze, Monivae College**

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**FW1.12: You don't just pass:  
You need to do the learning**

Competency Based Progression Model – You need to do the learning to pass the class. But we will deliver high support for these high standards. What is it like trying to reform and change how things are done? Our 7-10s are learning that you need to try to pass; you need to re-learn, re-sit to pass. And the advantage? Students who can learn and progress with a growth mindset. Well, we are trying.

**Sarah Longden, Drouin Secondary College**

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# WRITERS TALK WRITING



**DR MICHAEL  
MOHAMMED AHMAD**

Michael Mohammed Ahmad is the founding director of Sweatshop Literacy Movement and the editor of several critically acclaimed anthologies, including *After Australia*. In 2012, Mohammed received the Australia Council Kirk Robson Award for his outstanding achievements in community cultural development. His debut novel, *The Tribe*, won the 2015 *Sydney Morning Herald* Best Young Novelists of the Year Award, and his second novel, *The Lebs*, was shortlisted for the 2019 Miles Franklin Literary Award and won the 2019 NSW Premier's Multicultural Literary Award. Mohammed's latest novel, *The Other Half of You*, was shortlisted for the 2022 Miles Franklin Literary Award and won the 2022 Queensland Literary Award for Fiction. Mohammed completed his Doctorate of Creative Arts from Western Sydney University in 2017.

## **(WTW2: 10.00 - 11.00AM) 'IT'S SUBJECTIVE' AND OTHER LAME EXCUSES FOR BAD WRITING**

There are many misconceptions about creative writing as a professional discipline, which often include the idea that creative writing and creative expression are natural abilities that cannot be taught and cannot be learned. In this workshop, participants will explore some of the myths about 'good' and 'bad' creative writing practice; deconstructing the unhealthy attitudes that many emerging writers often express towards the artistic industries. In contradistinction, workshop participants will learn practical and constructive forms of research, development and training that can be applied in the classroom in order to improve the quality of student creative writing.

Themes and topics in this workshop will include analyses of narrative structures, figurative language, irony and satire, perspective, tense, the development of literary voice, and the management of multiple languages and geographically-specific vernaculars.

# WRITERS TALK WRITING



## MARJAN MOSSAMMAPARAST

Marjan Mossammaparast's first collection of poetry, *That Sight* (Cordite Books, 2018) won the 2019 Mary Gilmore Award, was shortlisted for the 2019 Queensland Literary Awards and was commended in the 2018 Anne Elder Award. Her second volume, *And to Ecstasy*, was released in March 2022 through Upswell Publishing. Her poems have been published and commissioned in a wide range of literary journals in Australia.

In 2021, Marjan was a recipient of the Neilma Sidney Literary Travel Fund grant offered through Writers Victoria. In 2022, she was a Poet in Residence at the On The Move Canberra Poetry Festival, a panelist for various sessions at the Queensland Poetry Festival, and on the judging panel for the 2021 Anne Elder Award (through Australian Poetry).

Marjan's educational involvements have spanned teaching at both secondary and tertiary level, in Victoria and in Macau/China; working with both pre-service and practicing teachers in ongoing professional learning programs; and leading a range of schoolwide curriculum innovations. She has been a practising English/Literature teacher in Melbourne since 2007, and is currently employed at Ruyton Girls' School.

In her first life, Marjan was born in Iran and lived in Italy, prior to migrating to Australia with her family in 1986.

## (WTW3: 12.40 - 1.40PM) TRANSLATING THE UNTRANSLATABLE: POETRY AS ART IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

This masterclass will focus on some practical tips and tricks for *generating* and *writing* poetry in the English classroom, approaching poetry as an artform that seeks to harness an elusive inner impulse and translate it into the wor(l)d. It takes as its starting point an acknowledgement that the English classroom should be a space for play, for experimentation, for the release of potential, where creativity is 'an abiding principle in curriculum and pedagogy', and permission is given to go beyond boundaries. **It's time.**



# KEYNOTE



## DR MICHAEL MOHAMMED AHMAD

Michael Mohammed Ahmad is the founding director of Sweatshop Literacy Movement and the editor of several critically acclaimed anthologies, including *After Australia*. In 2012, Mohammed received the Australia Council Kirk Robson Award for his outstanding achievements in community cultural development. His debut novel, *The Tribe*, won the 2015 *Sydney Morning Herald* Best Young Novelists of the Year Award, and his second novel, *The Lebs*, was shortlisted for the 2019 Miles Franklin Literary Award and won the 2019 NSW Premier's Multicultural Literary Award. Mohammed's latest novel, *The Other Half of You*, was shortlisted for the 2022 Miles Franklin Literary Award and won the 2022 Queensland Literary Award for Fiction. Mohammed completed his Doctorate of Creative Arts from Western Sydney University in 2017.

## COMING TO VOICE

The late African-American activist, feminist and scholar, bell hooks, defines 'coming to voice' as the act of 'moving from silence to speech as a revolutionary gesture'. In this keynote presentation, founding director of the Sweatshop Literacy Movement and multi award-winning author, Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad, analyses the political and cultural importance of reading, writing and critical thinking as tools for social change. Dr Ahmad's address will explore skills and strategies with teachers that inspire and support students from low socio-economic and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to find their voices and speak truth to power. Educators will be invited to discover new techniques that encourage students to take a greater interest in learning by fostering a learning environment that takes a greater interest in students.

The lecture will include analyses and practical applications of important modern-day concepts and ideas for the post #MeToo and Black Lives Matter eras, including 'intersectionality', 'critical race theory', 'critical consciousness' and 'representational politics'.

# WORKSHOPS

FW2 / SESSION TWO / 12.40 - 1.40PM

## FW2.01: **Born a Crime**

Described by *The New York Times* as a 'love letter to his remarkable mother', *Born a Crime* is a deeply personal exploration of Trevor Noah's childhood in South Africa. Full of *The Daily Show* host's trademark sense of humour, this comedic memoir is packed with erudite observations and vignettes of his early life under (and post) apartheid rule. Offering personal and political insights into his coming of age, Noah's voice has the potential to engage and enlighten teenagers; it is the perfect text choice for schools looking to harness the benefits of contemporary voices in the classroom.

**Sonia Murr, McKinnon Secondary College**

## FW2.03: **Laughing, crying and yelling: Engaging students in the English classroom** HYBRID

This workshop will explore strategies for changing a school's cultural approach to teaching and learning in the English classroom. It will look at how students can be engaged in creative and authentic tasks that target their points of need and their areas of interest. The presenter will use examples from units such as Sports Writing, Writing about Crime and Mockumentaries.

**Ernest Price, Charlton College**

## FW2.04: **Organising content for English Language essays**

Each year, English Language teachers face the challenge of finding up-to-date content, particularly for teaching essay skills in Units 3 and 4. These resources can be difficult to organise and sequence, given that they don't always appear in the media exactly when we need them! This workshop will demonstrate how a class blog can be used to centralise content and make it more accessible for students. We will discuss the best ways to use online tools in EL and provide tips around sourcing examples for essays. A wide range of sample content will be included, making this workshop ideal for teachers who are new to Year 12 EL or those who plan to teach it in the future.

**Caitlin May, Ringwood Secondary College**

## FW2.05: **Sunset Boulevard Inside Stories**

*Sunset Boulevard* provides the epitaph for the Classical Hollywood era. Viewing the recent past as a time of grotesque figures and decadent excess, Wilder exhumes this history as an eerie parable of the acceleration of increasingly disposable cultural styles that betokens a bleak vision of impermanence and waste. In this workshop we will look closely at scenes from the film and consider how to support students in developing an understanding of Wilder's distinctive film style.

**Warren Whitney, Belmont High School**

## FW2.06: **Teaching and assessing the new VCE English Study Design** HYBRID

In this workshop there will be the opportunity to 'fine-tune' your approach to teaching and assessing Unit 1 and 2 English in 2023. Strategies for developing new curriculum, delivering and assessing the content will be explored.

**Helen Billett**

## FW2.07: **Teaching van Neerven's Throat in VCE Literature**

Ellen van Neerven's poetry collection *Throat* is new to the Unit 3 and 4 Literature text list in 2023. Van Neerven is a non-binary author of Mununjali and Dutch heritage whose work covers such themes as sexuality, Indigeneity and climate change. *Throat* would also therefore be an appropriate text choice for Unit 1 Literature 'Voices of Country'. This workshop explores teaching ideas and concepts for using *Throat* in the classroom.

**Emily Frawley, Maribyrnong Secondary College**

# WORKSHOPS

FW2 / SESSION TWO / 12.40 - 1.40PM

**FW2.08: The Australian English classroom as a site for truth-telling through First Nations lyrics and music performance**

This workshop will explore how the Australian English classroom can be a site for truth-telling, through studying First Nations singers and song writing. The new Australian Curriculum opens up powerful spaces for English teachers to undertake significant work in Middle Years English curriculum. The workshop will focus on the lyrics of a number of contemporary First Nations artists. Participants will engage in shared professional dialogue about how students might respond creatively to the music – and imagine possible futures... In speaking from the heart, this workshop intends to create a shared vision for change in the Australian English classroom – by acknowledging First Nations artists as creating the most profound and vitally important narratives that are being produced in the 21st Century.

**Linda Maree Collis, Virtual School Victoria**

**FW2.09: The power of words: Challenging traditional English classrooms through quest-based learning**

The ability to communicate with precision and purpose are highly sought-after skills in our increasingly literate and media-obsessed world. Tasked with an Elective Review in the midst of a pandemic and unprecedented lockdown, we took the opportunity to expand our English elective into a subject that employed the innovative pedagogy of 'Bold Moves for Schools', crafting a subject that was grounded in student driven quests for knowledge and understanding: The Power of Words. Join us to hear about our journey to creating a contemporary, quest-based and flipped classroom, and trial applying this pedagogical approach to your own context.

**Clare Mackie and Kelsey Collins, Haileybury College**

**FW2.10: This is so interesting!' Advocating for a no pressure English elective before VCE**

Studying English is essential. It is difficult. It involves labour and late nights. Especially if you want an A+. So, what then for the students who want more English before VCE? What then for the teacher who wants more? We need to learn from the overwork of our past, harness the keep/chuck/change practices of COVID normal, and think creatively to ignite passion for everybody involved. This workshop advocates for space where students play with language, form and context, and for time where students question, make false starts and experiment in English – without the singular pressure of graded success.

**Sally Oliver, Camberwell Girls' Grammar School**

**FW2.11: Who do you think you are? Building students' 'reader identity'** HYBRID

Good teaching relies on knowing one's students – but do your students know themselves? The secondary years is a time of emotional flux as students navigate and reject labels – yet how many would genuinely describe themselves as a 'reader'? Although we may be bound by a curriculum or housed in a classroom, we must provide opportunities for students to pursue identities as true content consumers and creators. This workshop will explore ways for cultivating your students' reading personas through building a sense of community, encouraging student voice, and providing authentic opportunities for collaboration.

**Lauren Kyte, Salesian College Sunbury**

**FW2.12: Working with Elizabeth Tan's Smart Ovens for Lonely People**

This workshop will explore Elizabeth Tan's *Smart Ovens for Lonely People*, offering interpretations of the text and considerations of ways to teach it that are aligned with VATE's Literature Perspectives guide.

**Mary Purcell and Anna Purcell, University of Melbourne, St Michael's Grammar School**



# WORKSHOPS

**FW3 / SESSION THREE / 2.40 - 3.40PM**

**FW3.02: Combining new technologies with ancient teaching techniques**

This workshop will explore ways that we can combine technologies to allow us more time within class to be human with our students, to engage in discussion and the often overlooked skill of having a good, old-fashioned conversation (or discussion). Topics such as workload hacks, alternative delivery methods, using TikToks for inciting conversations will focus upon the technological elements. A focus on the Socratic Circles approach, an ancient teaching technique, and different ways to use this approach to build a collaborative culture of discussion and conversation within your classroom.

**Steven Kolber, Brunswick Secondary College**

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**FW3.03: Enhancing VCE English student exam performance**

As we head into the final year of the current Study Design for Year 12, we still need to identify and pursue strategies which enhance student exam performance. Indeed, the challenges of the last three years have resulted in interrupted skill development for many students. Furthermore, the core skills of analysing literary and persuasive texts will continue to be pivotal for exam success beyond 2023. This highly practical and interactive workshop will explore the nature of these core skills and present an array of strategies through which VCE English students might potentially best deepen and consolidate these skills, thereby enhancing their exam performance. The presenter will draw upon his own teaching and exam assessing experience, as well as work he has undertaken with groups of Year 12 students in various Master Class settings.

**Ross Huggard**

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**FW3.04: If not now, when?**

A workshop designed to get English teachers thinking about how they can include more diverse texts in their curriculum lists. Springboarding from her article where three Australian diverse texts were mentioned, some activities will be provided to use in lessons and teachers will be able to workshop a text of their own selection with professional peers.

**Lauren Maserow and Nicole Harris,  
Methodist Ladies' College**

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**FW3.05: It's all fun and games: Engaging students in the study of secondary English**

How important is it that we engage our students? How much more important when you know that improved outcomes are an inevitable bi-product of engaging lessons? This workshop aims to provide you with a range of applicable strategies to help you engage students in their learning.

**Leigh Radbourne, Bacchus Marsh Grammar**

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# WORKSHOPS

**FW3 / SESSION THREE / 2.40 - 3.40PM**

**FW3.06: It's time to be creative and write. The new Study Design and mentor texts for Year 7-12 writing** HYBRID

The conference theme affirms 'the importance of creativity ... in developing young people's potential' to be 'creative, inquisitive, inclusive, resilient and optimistic'. It's time to bring creative writing to the fore in the English classroom. Implementing the new English Study Design provides an opportunity. In this workshop, Kimberley Starr and Fiona Ellis discuss framing curriculum in 'Big Ideas', through using mentor texts to inspire 'effective and cohesive' student writing, and encouraging students to articulate their own writing processes as members of communities of writers.

**Kimberley Starr and Fiona Ellis,  
Viewbank College**

**FW3.08: Planning for the new VCE English Study Design** HYBRID

The Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools through our VCE English Improvement Network has been supporting schools planning for the implementation of the new Study Design in 2023. This has included developing sample writing frameworks, exploring text options and developing assessments. The session will outline the process by which we turned the new Study Design into a series of possible frameworks, making use of a significant network of secondary schools to give feedback and reflections on what was produced. The session will explore what we see as the challenges and rewards of this process and we will share the resources we have developed.

**Joanne Watkins and Kirstin Bourne,  
Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools  
and Inform Education**

**FW3.09: Stop teaching reading comprehension and start teaching background knowledge** HYBRID

Find out how teaching background knowledge can reduce your need to differentiate and scaffold in the classroom. Building knowledge not only supports your students in accessing and drawing meaning from text, it also equalises gaps in foundational knowledge, putting both your low and high achieving students on the same level. This workshop will focus on what the Science of Reading highlights about the importance of background knowledge and will provide you with practical and fun ways to apply this to your units of work.

**Kaja Strzalka**

**FW3.10: The irrational five paragraph essay, TEEL, and the fetish for micro-quotes must be abolished immediately**

The imposition of the five paragraph essay, TEEL paragraphing, and the fetish for micro-quotes is one of the greatest disasters inflicted on Australian education. It harms teachers and students alike and is so harmful to rational thought it must be unlearned so graduates can operate effectively as writers and thinkers. Essays are exercises in reason and the way essays are taught should match writing in the real world. Whitlam's inspiring 'It's time' speech had more than three mandated points and was not written in TEEL. It would have to be marked down for that in a modern classroom.

**Mark Lopez, Competitive Advantage:  
Educational Support Services**

# THURSDAY HYBRID WORKSHOPS

## TW1 / SESSION ONE / 10:00 - 11:00AM

### TW1.01: **Crafting and creating texts: Unit 1 and Unit 3 English 2023 - 2024** HYBRID

In 2023, it will be time for our students to explore mentor texts and then create their own masterpieces. In this workshop we will explore how the tools of functional language can be used to read and identify language elements in mentor texts. We will use these tools to identify the patterns in a range of genres and consider the language choices authors make to connect with specific audiences. We will explore how students can then use this analysis to craft and create their own pieces for their own audiences. Texts used in this workshop will relate to framework ideas about change and belonging.

**Claire Nailon and Kate Cash, Nazareth College  
and St Ignatius College,**

### TW1.09: **Teaching in colour** HYBRID

As teachers of colour and teaching students from a wide range of backgrounds, we are very interested in presenting texts in our classrooms that reflect the lived experience of multicultural Australia. In this workshop we will share our experience teaching African Futurism, Silkpunk and other non-dominant voices. We do not pretend to have all the answers, but we have enjoyed these forays into marginal discourse and we look forward to pooling our resources with the attendees.

**Shane Woon and Briony Schroor,  
Nossal High School**

### TW1.10: **Teaching literacy in the English curriculum** HYBRID

Somewhere along the way, the skills-based subject of English has become a content-based subject in an overcrowded curriculum that seems to have served no-one. It is not a new or revolutionary idea to teach literacy skills in the English classroom – let's be fair, they are an integral part of the curriculum – but the reality of many schools has resulted in them bringing in literacy-blocks to supplement their English lessons. Let's look at what literacy skills we can (and

should) teach in English and how we can embed these organically, effortlessly and with the greatest impact in our own classes. Be prepared to delve into my world of blending curriculum with teaching and learning strategies and my goal is for you to leave with a basket full of ideas and approaches to teach literacy in your very next English class!

**Hayley Harrison, Connect Literacy**

## TW2 / SESSION TWO / 12:40 - 1:40PM

### TW2.04: **First Nations protest music** HYBRID

Engage your students more effectively by using music in the classroom. This workshop will explore ways in which you can use music to help your students understand different perspectives and viewpoints on the world around them. We will look at ways in which music can be implemented across the 7-12 English curricula, but there will be a major focus on First Nations Protest Music. Examples of when, where and how this has been implemented will be provided, and hopefully you will walk away inspired and ready to include music and protest music in your classroom.

**Paul Rossiter & Ramona Lazar,  
St Margaret's Berwick Grammar**

### TW2.06: **Planning for the new Year 11 English course** HYBRID

This highly interactive workshop will examine key aspects and features of the new VCE English Study Design. It will seek to clarify what has largely – but by no means completely – remained essentially the same as the extant Study Design which will only operate for Year 12 students in 2023. It will also focus explicitly on the new Area of Study 2 in Unit 1, Crafting Texts. It will then pose some models for developing and operating your new Year 11 course in 2023. This should also help to inform planning ahead for Year 12 in 2024. The presenter will draw from his own experiences of implementing new iterations of the VCE English Study Design, as well as work he has been undertaking in a number of schools this year.

**Ross Huggard**



**TW2.08: Teaching diversity and identity through multimodal texts** HYBRID

Now is the time to talk about diversity. Using multimodality to frontload students with knowledge of immigration and refugees, while also looking at identity of self. Students will use this knowledge and apply it to modern day texts such as 'Bao' from Disney to be able to show their understanding of the role of culture, food and traditions in families. Through a creative approach, students are able to be inclusive of others and celebrate their nationalities. Teachers no longer need to shy away from such things as ethnicity, culture and race when we have students ready to collaborate with us.

**Elsa Ramirez and Ben Gibson,**  
Copperfield College

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## **TW3 / SESSION THREE / 2:40 - 3:40PM**

**TW3.04: Creativity, inquiry and differentiation in the English classroom** HYBRID

Former VATE President Prue Gill stated 'the Whitlam Schools Commission era was characterised by support for innovation and ... creativity was seen to be a cornerstone of education'. This workshop will explore how to incorporate creativity, inquiry and differentiation in the English classroom to meet the needs of students with diverse abilities. This workshop will include reference to strategies such as using flipped learning, educational technology and project-based learning.

**Bernadette Sheedy,**  
Mount Scopus Memorial College

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**TW3.06: Implementation of the new VCE English and EAL Study Design: the outcomes and assessment unpacked** HYBRID

This workshop will focus on the key changes to the VCE English and EAL Study Design, and the ways that teachers can prepare for the implementation of Units 1 and 2 in 2023, as well as planning for the teaching of Units 3 and 4 in 2024. This workshop will unpack new terms within the Study Design, such as: writing processes, mentor texts, different ways of reading, creating and crafting texts, and the Framework of Ideas. The differences between the English and EAL Outcomes will be explained and details about the assessment of the new study will also be shared.

**Annelise Balsamo and Kellie Heintz, VCAA**

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**TW3.09: The impact of social media on language, re-engaging students to read** HYBRID

This is a workshop on how the social media world is threatening our language and students' capacity to recognise authentic protagonists in texts and to appreciate literature. Students are unable to use and develop sophisticated language as they are not exposed to a wide range of literature in the social bubble that is the meta-verse. How do we engage students in reading? How do we embed and change language practice? How do we encourage students to see the value in sophisticated vocabulary and understand the power of language and how it translates to success and perception in society; why it is important and what it unlocks for learners in opportunities post school life.

**Renae Pirrottina, Geelong Lutheran College**

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# SWEATSHOP LITERACY MOVEMENT

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communities through reading, writing and  
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# FRIDAY HYBRID WORKSHOPS

## FW1 / SESSION ONE / 10:00 - 11:00AM

### FW1.02: **Implementation of the new VCE Literature Study Design: The Outcomes and assessment unpacked** HYBRID

This workshop will focus on the key changes to the VCE Literature Study Design, and the ways that teachers can prepare for the implementation of all Units in 2023. The workshop will explore the new Areas of Study (in Units 1 and 2) and the key changes in Units 3 and 4. Information and details about the assessment of the new Study will also be shared.

**Annelise Balsamo, VCAA**

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### FW1.04: **Language equality in the English classroom** HYBRID

My workshop comes about as I explore the universal truth within Australia that it is the formal standard variety of Standard Australian English that sets the threshold for prestige, regardless of modern trends and shifts in language use. My concurrent observation is that there is an assumption of this education system that those students who are native speakers of Standard Australian English have an innate ability to produce its prestigious variety without explicit instruction. I maintain that this is not the case, and offer an approach that provides students this required explicit instruction in the classroom, addressing the Language strand of the Victorian English Curriculum, and giving students the autonomy to control their own written voice in a way that meets society's expectations.

**Anna Stewart, Templestowe College**

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### FW1.11: **Why we write: Crafting texts with purpose and voice** HYBRID

Writing just became a huge part of the VCE curriculum, but it has always been vital to the English classroom. This workshop explores the purpose of writing: in an age when Artificially Intelligent writers can churn out passable essays, we need to ask ourselves why students should bother writing at all. You'll leave with practical ways to encourage and teach students to write fiction and nonfiction that captures their passion and unique voice.

**Leon Furze, Monivae College**

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## FW2 / SESSION TWO / 12:40 - 1:40PM

### FW2.03: **Laughing, crying and yelling: Engaging students in the English classroom** HYBRID

This workshop will explore strategies for changing a school's cultural approach to teaching and learning in the English classroom. It will look at how students can be engaged in creative and authentic tasks that target their points of need and their areas of interest. The presenter will use examples from units such as Sports Writing, Writing about Crime and Mockumentaries.

**Ernest Price, Charlton College**

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### FW2.06: **Teaching and assessing the new VCE English Study Design** HYBRID

In this workshop there will be the opportunity to 'fine-tune' your approach to teaching and assessing Unit 1 and 2 English in 2023. Strategies for developing new curriculum, delivering and assessing the content will be explored.

**Helen Billett**

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### FW2.11: **Who do you think you are? Building students' 'reader identity'** HYBRID

Good teaching relies on knowing one's students – but do your students know themselves? The secondary years is a time of emotional flux as students navigate and reject labels – yet how many would genuinely describe themselves as a 'reader'? Although we may be bound by a curriculum or housed in a classroom, we must provide opportunities for students to pursue identities as true content consumers and creators. This workshop will explore ways for cultivating your students' reading personas through building a sense of community, encouraging student voice, and providing authentic opportunities for collaboration.

**Lauren Kyte, Salesian College Sunbury**

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## FW3 / SESSION THREE / 2:40 - 3:40PM

### FW3.06: **It's time to be creative and write. The new Study Design and mentor texts for Year 7-12 writing** HYBRID

The conference theme affirms 'the importance of creativity ... in developing young people's potential' to be 'creative, inquisitive, inclusive, resilient and optimistic'. It's time to bring creative writing to the fore in the English classroom. Implementing the new English Study Design provides an opportunity. In this workshop, Kimberley Starr and Fiona Ellis discuss framing curriculum in 'Big Ideas', through using mentor texts to inspire 'effective and cohesive' student writing, and encouraging students to articulate their own writing processes as members of communities of writers.

**Kimberley Starr and Fiona Ellis,**  
Viewbank College

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### FW3.08: **Planning for the new VCE English Study Design** HYBRID

The Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools through our VCE English Improvement Network has been supporting schools planning for the implementation of the new Study Design in 2023. This has included developing sample writing frameworks, exploring text options and developing assessments. The session will outline the process by which we turned the new Study Design into a series of possible frameworks, making use of a significant network of secondary schools to give feedback and reflections on what was produced. The session will explore what we see as the challenges and rewards of this process and we will share the resources we have developed.

**Joanne Watkinsa and Kirstin Bourne,**  
Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools  
and Inform Education

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### FW3.09: **Stop teaching reading comprehension and start teaching background knowledge** HYBRID

Find out how teaching background knowledge can reduce your need to differentiate and scaffold in the classroom. Building knowledge not only supports your students in accessing and drawing meaning from text, it also equalises gaps in foundational knowledge, putting both your low and high achieving students on the same level. This workshop will focus on what the Science of Reading highlights about the importance of background knowledge and will provide you with practical and fun ways to apply this to your units of work.

**Kaja Strzalka**

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## WRITING COMPETITION

**It's time to raise your voice**

**Join us  
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**Whitlam Institute**  
WITHIN WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

# OUR ENGLISH TEACHING COMMUNITY

## Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE)

In July 1959 an experimental initiative marked the formation of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English. The purpose of the Association was to 'stimulate interest in the teaching of English and background studies' and three meetings were planned. By October 1960 the Association had become established enough to hold its first AGM and it had 160 members.

Since 1960 VATE has gone on to support its members as they have coped with the various changes to the teaching and learning of English over the last sixty years.

VATE is an independent, not for profit organisation that aims to foster quality teaching of English throughout Victoria.

Through professional networks, involving the sharing of narratives and learning about English teaching, as well as research, journals, professional learning, and other resources, VATE strives to nurture a community of teachers of English and teacher educators committed to the advancement of the profession. VATE exists to support its members in the continual process of renewal necessary to engage with the dynamic nature of both the profession and the subject English.

## Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE)

National Voice, Local Impact

The Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE) is a national professional association established and supported by state and territory English teaching associations. Together we provide a national voice with local impact, strengthen professional connections and collaborate to influence the teaching of English in Australia. We are active in:

- Leading the profession: AATE identifies and influences outcomes on matters that impact teachers of English.
- Advocating for teachers: AATE plays a crucial role in maintaining a high profile for the profession.
- Benchmarking professional learning: AATE is well placed to facilitate the process of sharing nationally what has been achieved locally through our state and national connections.
- Providing state of the art resources: AATE is proactive in producing state of the art teaching resources, drawing on the expertise of teacher writers from state and territory English teaching associations.

## GET INVOLVED WITH VATE

VATE is looking to expand our database of presenters, writers and members who are interested in contributing to our work in 2023. The VATE community is rich in experience and expertise, and we rely on it to facilitate our professional learning programs, write our publications, and contribute to sample exams, journals, committees and working parties. If you're interested in contributing to the work of VATE, please [fill out this form](#).

From the start of 2023, all paid presenters, writers and editors for VATE events and publications are required to include an Australian Business Number (ABN) on invoices and Statement by Supplier forms. You can review the ATO guidelines [here](#) and find out more about applying for an ABN [here](#). If you have any queries about this, please email [Jessica](#).





# Sustaining the secondary English teaching profession/al in uncertain times

Monash University Human Research  
Ethics Committee (MUHREC) Project: 358829

Subject-specific knowledges and professional identities are important aspects of English teaching professionalism that VATE has always nurtured, resourced, and advocated for. This work has never been more important than now, as the profession confronts uncertainties resulting from COVID, widespread wellbeing issues for teachers and students, standardised literacy tests, threats to teacher agency, and extensive teacher shortages. In such uncertain times, the advocacy work of our association is crucial.

This project will generate important knowledge about how English teachers in Victoria sustain their practice and professionalism in the face of significant challenges and uncertainties (including COVID-19). What are the challenges to the sustainability of the English teaching profession? What contributes to the sustainability of the profession?

The study aims to generate knowledge about sustainability in the English teaching profession through a member survey. This survey is expected to take 10 – 20 minutes to complete. Surveys are anonymous. Members who wish to be involved in a follow-up interview can indicate their interest at the end of the survey through providing a contact email. Interviews will be conducted via video conferencing at a mutually convenient time and will run for approximately 45 minutes.

The target participants of this study are secondary English teachers in Victoria.

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# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

VATE Conference 24-25 November 2022.  
Burwood and surrounding area hotels/motels:

## Burwood Serviced Apartments

Close proximity to Deakin University, Burwood campus

**Address** 300 Burwood Highway  
Burwood Victoria 3125

**Telephone** 03 8820 6161

**Email** [burwoodapartments@outlook.com](mailto:burwoodapartments@outlook.com)

**Discount** Email Burwood Serviced Apartments at [burwoodapartments@outlook.com](mailto:burwoodapartments@outlook.com) with email reference to Deakin University Conference or by telephone 03 8820 6161

**Cost**

- \$149 p/night one bedroom
- \$199 p/night two bedroom
- \$269 p/night three bedroom

Valid 23 – 28 November

## Quest Burwood East

**Address** 315 Burwood Highway  
Burwood East VIC 3151

**Telephone** 03 9069 6888

**Discount** Book online using the discount code **VATE15** to receive 15% off the Best Available Flexible Rate of the Day (BAR rate).

## Quest Mont Albert

**Address** 741/745 Whitehorse Road  
Box Hill VIC 3127

**Phone** 03 8843 1500

**Discount** Book online using the discount code **VATE15** to receive 15% off the Best Available Flexible Rate of the Day (BAR rate).

# SUPPORTERS

## CATERERS

### The Healthlink Crew

**Disclaimer:** Levels to reactions of allergens vary, with some reactions being simply due to proximity (airborne) and others occurring only after consumption of the allergen. VATE is therefore unable to guarantee there are no allergens in the food and beverages being served at this event.

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# PLANNING YOUR TRIP TO DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

## By public transport

### Train

From Melbourne CBD it takes about an hour to get to Deakin's Burwood Campus using combinations of train, tram and bus.

### Tram

The most direct journey is by tram: Take the No. 75 tram from Stop 4 (Flinders Street) to Stop 63 (Deakin University/Burwood Highway).

### Public bus services

A Deakin shuttle bus – route 201 – provides high frequency services from Box Hill bus port and train station.

For more information visit the Public Transport Victoria Journey Planner: <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/journey>

## By car

The Melbourne Burwood Campus is a 30-minute drive from the Melbourne CBD, depending on traffic.

- From the Melbourne CBD join the Monash Freeway (M1).
- Take the Burke Road exit.
- Turn right at Toorak Road and follow it for about 10 minutes.
- Toorak Road becomes Burwood Highway and you'll see Deakin University on the left.

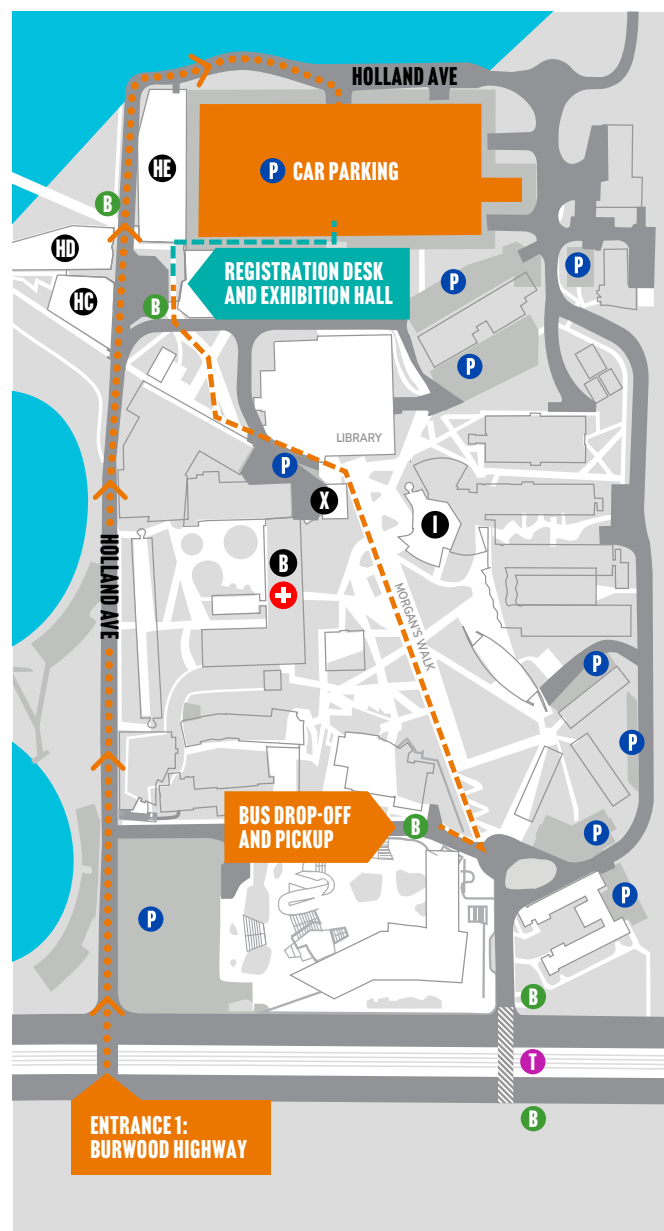
## Car parking – Download CellOPark

Car parking is available in the multi-level car park at Deakin University, Melbourne Burwood Campus.

Please allow an extra 30 minutes to park. Pay via the **CellOPark** parking app, which is free to download. You'll need to use the relevant CellOPark zone number for Burwood parking which is **Melbourne Burwood #1040300**

**To register, please visit** <https://www.cellopark.com.au/Site/>

All hourly and daily parking permits are valid in the General White Parking Zones only. This parking information **strictly applies** and any fines incurred will be the responsibility of the vehicle owner. VATE takes no responsibility for cars that do not follow the parking information provided by Deakin.





# CODE OF CONDUCT

VATE is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all our in-person and virtual Professional Learning events where everyone may learn, network, and socialise in an environment of mutual respect. All participants, including but not limited to attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, VATE staff members, and service providers, are expected to abide by this Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct applies to all VATE professional learning events, including those sponsored by organisations other than VATE but held in conjunction with VATE.

VATE has zero tolerance for any form of discrimination or harassment. If you experience harassment or hear of any incidents of unacceptable behaviour, please contact Kate Gillespie [eeo@vate.org.au](mailto:eeo@vate.org.au) or a VATE staff member in attendance.

Unacceptable behaviour is defined as the following:

- Harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form
- Verbal abuse of any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, VATE staff member, service provider, or other guest, examples of which include, but are not limited to, verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or national origin; and, inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in presentations.
- Disruption of presentations during sessions – all participants must comply with the instructions of moderators, facilitators, speakers, and VATE virtual event staff
- Inclusion of promotional materials, special offers, job offers, product announcements, or solicitation for services in presentations, postings, and messages; VATE reserves the right to remove such messages.

VATE reserves the right to take any action deemed necessary and appropriate, including immediate removal of a participant violating this Code of Conduct without warning or refund, in response to any incident of unacceptable behaviour.

New 2023 VATE Publications, Inside Stories and Literature Perspectives teaching guides, will be available soon in the VATE online bookshop.







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