

# **VA** Victorian Association for **TE** the Teaching of English

## Research Requests Policy

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support the Council of the **Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE)** to fairly and consistently examine and agree upon requests for VATE to participate in research projects and information gathering conducted by researchers and other educational bodies. While VATE Council wishes to support research that may benefit the profession, VATE Council must ensure that decisions are made without conflict of interest and in the best interests of the Association and its members.

### 2. Objective

The VATE Council aims to support research requests that potentially benefit members of the Association, which advocate for teachers, which are in line with VATE's ambition, purpose, and commitments, which avoid issues related to conflict of interest, and which involve VATE Council, Office and the VATE membership in genuine activity that is ethical, valid, and purposeful.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to the VATE Council, Office and the VATE membership.

### 4. Definition of research requests

Requests for VATE Council and the VATE membership to participate in research occur when researchers and/or external education bodies, who may or may not be members of the Association, ask VATE:

- to inform members about a research study
- to invite members to participate in a university approved study (for example, in a survey or in focus group interviews)
- to invite members to provide information or share perspectives that are not related to an approved university study
- to be a research partner in a funding application.

'Research' includes studies that are formally approved by university ethics committees as well as information gathering.

Those who wish for VATE Council and the VATE membership to participate in research may include individuals (who may be VATE members), experienced teams of researchers, and educational bodies including partners (for example, schools, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, the Victorian Department of Education, Independent Schools Victoria, other subject associations, the State Library of Victoria).

Requests to conduct research will be made in writing addressed to VATE Council.

## 5. Policy

This policy ensures that when requests are made for VATE Council and the VATE membership to participate in research or to provide information, a clear, transparent, and consistent process is implemented. The following aspects are central to this policy:

- a) **Anyone making a request should allow two months for a decision to be made.**
- b) **A written request is required.**

Those who make a request must do so in writing. The written request must include:

- i. Background details about all people responsible for and conducting the research
- ii. Evidence of university ethics approval (if appropriate)
- iii. An outline of the research design including its purpose, aims, methods and how it will ensure ethical conduct and protect the identities of members and their schools
- iv. An explanation of how the research will involve and benefit VATE members
- v. An explanation of how research findings will be disseminated
- vi. An explanation of the role that VATE Council and the Office staff may play, the actions they are requested to take, and an estimation of time commitment.
- vii. An explanation of how VATE Council will be kept informed during and post research.
- viii. If seeking funding, including in-kind contributions, a budget outlining all aspects of the project work.

- c) **The approval process will involve VATE Council members.**

The written request will move through the following approval process:

- i. The Executive Officer will forward the request to VATE Executive for initial discussion. Executive may decide that the request does not adequately meet most of the criteria (see below), in which case the request will be denied. Executive can seek additional information or clarification.
- ii. The request will then be tabled at the next VATE Council meeting for a decision.

The following criteria will be used to make a decision:

- i. How well the themes or research questions align with VATE's ambition, commitments and priorities.
- ii. The quality, clarity and ethical nature of the written request.
- iii. The potential of the research to benefit VATE and its members.
- iv. How the request might affect teachers' workloads.
- v. The involvement of VATE Council and the Office in the implementation process.

### 6.1 Responsibility of the VATE Council

The VATE Council is responsible for using the criteria to decide whether to approve the request.

## 6.2 Identification and disclosure of conflicts of interest

VATE Council members must declare any conflict of interest associated with the research request. This may include a VATE Council members' direct involvement in the research, if they are colleagues of any members of the research team, or if they stand to gain personally or professionally from the outcomes of the research.

As per the VATE Rules of Association: **5.25 Conflict of interest**

(a) A Council member who has a material personal interest in a matter being considered at a Council meeting must disclose the nature and extent of that interest and the relation of the interest to the activities of the Association:

(i) to the Council - as soon as the Council member becomes aware of the interest; and

(ii) to the Members - at the next general meeting.

(b) The Council member:

(i) must not be present while the matter is being considered at the Council meeting; and

(ii) must not vote on the matter.

If it is found that the applicant or Council member has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, VATE may take action against them, including terminating the agreement.

### Contacts

For questions about this policy, contact the VATE [Executive Officer](#).

### Date policy compiled and approved

May 2026