



## The Context

Whether you're a newcomer to this educational terrain or have been navigating it for years, this event promises to be a valuable experience. Significant rewards stem from successfully engaging our students, and this professional development is designed to provide practical strategies for enhancing your teaching journey. More than just a platform for learning from your peers, this gathering is a source of mutual support. Join us as we collaboratively explore the diverse educational landscape, offering insights and guidance to enrich your teaching practices.

## Keynote: Approaches to teaching Essential English



### Melanie Ralph

Kelvin Grove State College

#### Abstract

Throughout her 15-year teaching career in a range of challenging school settings, Melanie has developed many positive approaches to teaching Essential English. These approaches aim to generate high levels of student engagement as well as sustained academic success. There is no single magic trick in curriculum design or pedagogy that can set all students on the path to fulfilling their potential. However, there are a range of strategies that can turn the tide for many in the Essential classroom. In her presentation, Melanie will discuss the importance of creating a needs-satisfying classroom culture that responds

to and supports the diverse learners found in the Essential classroom. Melanie will also outline some classroom resources she has used which are inclusive of all students, are both practical and engaging and, importantly, won't add to your workload! Throughout her presentation, Melanie will also discuss the vital role she feels that parents can play in a successful Essential classroom.

## Presenter

**Melanie Ralph** is a Brisbane-based high school English and Drama teacher, writer, and illustrator. With over 15 years of experience in diverse school settings around the world, she has had the opportunity to hone her skills as an educator who values high expectations, student voice, and teacher agency. Melanie is passionate about public education and is a Queensland Teachers' Union representative. She has worked as a sessional academic at the Queensland University of Technology in English Curriculum design and publishes writing on her blog which aims to challenge troubling trends in education that tarnish the professionalism of teachers, or that seek to diminish teacher autonomy and student creativity. Her side hustle is Bare Bones Teaching; an online store and YouTube channel where she sells her illustrated character maps and shares helpful videos about topics such as the Essential English CIA and the English External Exam.

## Program

Time	Activity	Presenter
9:00 am	<b>Introduction and welcome</b> <b>Housekeeping</b>	Lindsay Williams Candice Green
9:10 – 9:40	Keynote: Approaches to Teaching Essential English	Melaine Ralph
9:45 -10:50	<b>Presentations</b> – 18 minute presentation + 3 mins for q's. 1. Navigating Essential engagement 2. Vlogging 101: Mastering the multimodal 3. Did they really just ask that (again)? Chunking, checkpoints and advocating for our Essential English students	Karina Hepner Kristyn Comino Deeanne Seigle-Buyat, Amy Anderson, Susannah Kwah
10:55– 11:25	Fancy morning tea:	Ab Fab catering
11:30-12:10	<b>Workshop Session A</b> - Choose 1 of: (a). Interacting ethically with Indigenous Culture, Erin O'Donoghue (b). Navigating the vastness of English: Rural and remote Essential English, Kyrra Johannsen-Weston (c). The essentials of Essential English, Christine Stein	
12:15 – 1:00	<b>Workshop Session B</b> – Choose another 1 from: (a). Interacting ethically with Indigenous Culture, Erin O'Donoghue (c). The Essentials of Essential English, Christine Stein (d). Building thriving, respectful learning environments in Essential English classrooms, Johanna Foley	

This program constitutes 3 hours 45 mins CPD

## Presentations

### Presentation 1

#### Navigating Essential engagement

##### Abstract

At times, steering through the waters of Essential English with mariners not so keen on

the odyssey can be a challenge. AISTL Teacher Standards establishes that we are to create “productive learning environments that engage all students”. This workshop will aim to provide a kaleidoscope of practical activities that feature representation and poetry (and more). In the short session, you will leave with ready-to-use mini-lessons, useful for all units, as you navigate students in the right direction.

## Presenter

**Karina Hepner** has taught for nearly three decades in several educational settings, nationally and internationally. She has an MA (English Literature) and is currently working towards her MPhil in Australian colonial poetry.

## Presentation 2

### Vlogging 101: Mastering the multimodal

#### Abstract

The infamous Essential English multimodal task can seem like a mountain. Subject matter, PowerPoints, verbal and non-verbal speaking skills, pre-recording, presenting live, the list goes on ... Through a combination of teaching strategies and scaffolding, it's a mountain we can help our students to climb. This presentation will focus on practical strategies that have worked in our classrooms, to potentially help your Essential English students succeed in this genre. Tips will include ideas for collaborative and creative lessons to support students.

## Presenter

**Kristyn Comino** is an early career English Teacher at Coomera Anglican College on the Gold Coast. She has taught Essential English for three years, across Years 10-12. Teaching has been an exciting career change for her. Previously, Kristyn spent a decade in PR and communications, working nationally in Canberra and internationally in London. She

now calls Queensland home, along with her partner and two-year-old son.

## Presentation 3

*Did they really just ask that (again)? Chunking, checkpoints and advocating for our Essential English students.*

#### Abstract

Chunking information on handouts and in PowerPoints to cater for the issues experienced by many Essential English students with laying down and retaining memories. Deanne has been extremely fortunate to work with two exceptional advocates for Essential English students and it has informed both her pedagogy and her compassion for the clientele of this subject.

#### Presenters

Collectively, **Susannah Kwan**, **Amy Anderson** and **Deanne Seigle-Buyat** have taught Essential English at four Gold Coast Schools across three systems. These three presenters are from three different generations of teacher with three very different teaching styles and would like to share some of the strategies that have worked across Years 10-12. Between them, they have heard "Is this a speech?" and "No-one told us there was a test!" more times than they can count and these are the strategies they've used to support the attention deficit and memory issues faced by many Essential students and to build student autonomy and personal responsibility

# Workshops

## Workshop a

### Interacting ethically with Indigenous Culture

#### Abstract

"Interacting ethically with Indigenous Culture," delves into the socio-linguistics and the well-being of students. Drawing from personal experiences, Erin underscores the transformative power of learning and speaking one's native language, advocating for a deeper understanding beyond the superficial 'white-belt' version of Indigenous culture. The workshop draws upon extensive research from Canada, New Zealand, and North America, revealing a consistent correlation between bilingualism, academic success, and heightened cultural pride among students. With a poignant reflection on the historical impact of the Stolen Generation, the workshop stresses the crucial role of preserving and revitalizing language, framed as the gift of awakening from its silent slumber by dedicated Elders. Erin will highlight the potency of language as a connection tool in the classroom, fostering cultural inclusivity and safety. Attendees can anticipate the introduction of a pedagogical 'shell' system, a comprehensive framework designed to empower educators in delivering lessons enriched with meaningful cultural inclusions. Join us on a journey to create an educational environment that not only imparts knowledge but also celebrates and preserves the rich tapestry of Indigenous cultures.

#### Presenter

**Erin O'Donoghue** – Kamilaroi/Mandandanji Educator & Cultural Consultant  
Yaraadha gaba. Yaama gayrr ngaya Yirrin, Kamilaroi Mandandanji. Maliyan, dhinawan, Biyaagarr and marayn. Condamine-dhi. Gaba Nginda (Gamilaraay Language). Which directly translates to: Day, good. Hello, my name is Erin. I am from Kamilaroi and Mandandanji Country. My totems are Wedge-Tail Eagle, emu, brown falcon and dingo. I am from Condamine (in South-West QLD). Thanks, onto you. At present, Erin works within The College for First Nations as an Academic Lecturer at the University of Southern Queensland. Her

background and passion lie within Indigenous Pedagogical approaches and its implementation into curricula. Erin also works with youth and adult students who are incarcerated, doing cultural workshops, and delivering university courses in this space. Erin is also developing the first ever 'offline' version of UniSQ's First Nations Courses, this means that vulnerable and incarcerated students can access full graduate degrees without needing internet connection. This is revolutionary for UniSQ and will improve educational accessibility issues faced by these demographics.

Prior to her time at UniSQ, Erin worked in both the public and private sectors of secondary education since 2016. Her final two years were at the Brisbane Youth Education and Training Centre, teaching young offenders; this is where she fine-tuned her Aboriginal pedagogy with great success. As a result, Erin was a 2023 TEACHx Award Finalist for Innovation with her framework: the Winanga-Li Teachers Program and its accompanying Pedagogy. Furthermore, Erin was one of 4 successful Academics who've won the 2023 University Learning and Teaching Award, for "outstanding contribution to the proliferation and embedding of Country-based First Nations knowledge and content across the University of Southern Queensland".

## Workshop b

### Navigating the vastness of English: Rural and remote Essential English

#### Abstract

Rural and remote Queensland schools are widely spread across our state, each presenting unique and distinctive environments. This presentation looks into the challenges as well as the overwhelming opportunities that define Essential English in these settings, with a particular focus on diverse student populations. I will also discuss the strategies and innovations that Teachers at Tully State High School employ to provide a quality English education to all students, such as:

- Culturally relevant content

- Community involvement/guest speakers
- Project based learning where possible
- Goal setting
- Celebration of success

#### **Presenter**

**Kyrra Johannsen-Weston** is an early career teacher in Far North Queensland, Tully. She is very passionate about working with students who are interested in taking VET pathways and preparing them for the literacy side of the workforce. Teaching Essential English for the last two years has been incredible and challenging, and she has learnt to manage and allow flexibility in her expectations. Pleasantly, Kyrra is surprised with the standard of work that students are able to produce. Moving from Southeast Queensland where resources and opportunities are abundant to a more regional location, Kyrra feels as though her take on the importance of Essential English will be valuable and offer insight into how the subject is taught in the Far North. She really enjoys the relaxed lifestyle of FNQ and has been able to incorporate parts of life up north, into her teaching too.

## **Workshop c**

### **The essentials of Essential English – Preparing for the CIA**

#### **Abstract**

The essentials of Essential English. Christine has created a number of resources to help your students recall, understand, apply and evaluate their CIA skills. A cheat sheet of key terms, a tailor-made online quiz to test their knowledge, a sample text and template for a paragraph response and a movie reference or two will hopefully engage your students to embrace the basics of the CIA.

#### **Presenter**

**Christine Stein** teaches Essential English and the Learning Enhancement Acceleration Program. She is a Support Teacher: Inclusive Education and Yr. 11 and Yr. 12 Case Manager. Christine taught in Goulburn (1995-1998) and in Catholic, Independent and State schools across Brisbane since 1999. More

recently, she has added Learning Support and Case Management to her load and is passionate about it as well as Essential English. Christine works at St John Fisher College, Bracken Ridge and loves it. She leads the Accelerated Learners program there too so if you know of any excursions or opportunities for the top 1%, please let her know!

## **Workshop d**

### **Building thriving, respectful learning environments in Essential English classrooms**

#### **Abstract**

Are you stepping into an Essential English classroom for the first time? Perhaps this isn't your first 'rodeo'. Regardless of whether we are new or familiar with Essential English classroom environments, we can all benefit from gathering tips and tools for creating a positive classroom culture. This workshop is designed to be collaborative, with a focus on the importance of building students' drive to succeed in Essential English, creating clear classroom expectations and using restorative practices to support classroom behaviour management strategies. Together, workshop participants will build a plan for creating a positive classroom culture in their Essential English classes for 2024.

#### **Presenter**

**Johanna Foley** is a leading teacher with a passion for education and enhancing the wellbeing of students. During her teaching career, she has taught English and Humanities and, as Curriculum Leader of FTVNM (2008 – 2022), has also developed and implemented the Media Arts and Senior Film, Television and New Media work programs at Good Shepherd Lutheran College. Currently, as Head of Senior Years Students, Johanna is responsible for the management and application of pastoral care, student welfare and wellbeing. During her career, she has developed a strong interest and passion for curriculum and pedagogy, positive education, and restorative practices. Johanna is completing a Master of Educational Leadership, specialising in Leading Learning, at Australian Catholic University

# Registration

Register at [www.etaq.org.au](http://www.etaq.org.au) **Members \$50, non-members \$75**

1. **Change of persons registered** Sometimes schools may need to substitute one teacher for another on their registrations. This is fine but please notify the change to the Administration Officer so that we can prepare the appropriate Certificate of Participation, name tag and Individual program.
2. Many schools prefer to receive an invoice for registrations and pay on that rather than pay at the time of registration. We are happy to offer this convenience but it must be recognised that **registration commits you to payment.**
3. **Order number** More and more schools are insisting on order numbers on invoices. If your school requires and order number on the invoice, please enter the order number in the designated space on your registration.
4. **Cancellation Policy** If you register and later have to cancel, the following will apply:
  - a. Cancel your registration by 9 February, you will receive a full refund of your registration fee
  - b. Cancel between 10 and 13 February, you will receive a refund of your registration fee **less** the online registration cost and be transferred to online participation.
  - c. From 14 February no refund is possible but you will be swapped to online participation.

## For Rural and Regional Members

To cater for those who are unable to physically join us for this event, we will be streaming the keynote, the three presentations and one workshop in each session.

**One other workshop in each session will be recorded and available after editing.**