

HTAV VCE History Conference 2025 – President’s Welcome

HTAV President, Elisa Litvin

Good morning.

I would like to begin by also acknowledging that we are meeting on the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung people of the Kulin Nation, the first historians and continuous knowledge-holders of this place. I would like to pay my respects to their elders past and present. I would also like to pay my respects to the First Nations people here today.

Welcome to the first event of the HTAV calendar. The VCE conference is always a special one, as it brings together highly motivated teachers seeking to do the very best for those students at the pointy end of their secondary education. As I was thinking about this idea, an image of the Quizizz Mastery Mountain came to my mind. You know the one. Our students are at that 80% spot on the mountain – possibly not in mastery, but definitely in time – and it is our job to get them to the top.

In order to climb a mountain, you need the right gear, the right conditions, and the right guidance. We provide these things for our students by giving them the best resources for their abilities, the best classroom pedagogical experiences, and the best feedback on their homework, formative assessments, SACs, and practice exams. But, we, as their guides, also need the right gear, the right conditions, and the right guidance. And this is what today is about: giving you the gear, conditions, and guidance you need so that you can be an even better guide to your students.

The right gear: Teachers, too, need the right gear – the deep understanding of content that we get from listening to a specialist lecture or reading a text on an aspect of our Study Design that we need to update ourselves on. We are lucky to have several specialists with us today to deliver content sessions that will allow you to update and extend your content knowledge.

The right conditions: We all know when we have the right learning conditions. Students are engaged; they are thinking; they are questioning. The question every teacher has asked of themselves at least once (once a day?) is, ‘Do I have the right pedagogical content knowledge to deliver the best outcomes for my students?’ There are at least five sessions across today explicitly focusing on pedagogical content knowledge. Each presenter has a wealth of experience in how to engage students and help them achieve their best possible efforts.

The right guidance: I am sure we are all waiting eagerly for both the VCAA Advisory Session after morning tea and our Examiners’ Reports in Session 3 this afternoon. These briefings and reports consistently provide us with the guidance that we need to go back to our schools and our students and help them to the pinnacle of their individual academic achievements.

Please also take the time to have collegial conversations and make new connections with your fellow mountain guides. We are all on the mountain together, and support in the storms of the VCE History years can never go astray. My sincere wish for you is that something you hear or see today gives you the ability to help your students to the top of the History Mountain.

It is now time for you to set out on your own climb today. Enjoy your first session.

HTAV President, Elisa Litvin