

VIT Video

MEET THE VIT COUNCIL: MICK BUTLER

Damian:

So Mick tell us about your background in teaching and how you came to be part of the VIT Council.

Mick:

My background in teaching started in 1975 when I started teaching in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. I was a graduate of Latrobe University and didn't move very far away, but taught up the road. I really loved teaching from the very start. I taught Politics, History and English and really enjoyed it. I was at a school that really valued individual learning in kids and also had a staff that was very young and very vibrant, so I had a great time.

I gradually then moved from that school to another mainstream school, where I coordinated nearly all year levels, including year 12, and I've been a year level coordinator for a number of years. I was a student welfare coordinator when the scheme first started, which I really enjoyed and that led me to becoming a lead teacher at an alternative setting called Heidelberg teaching unit. I taught there for many years and loved it, particularly the challenge of the kids and also the closeness of the staff and the collegiality and the ability of the unit itself to make a difference with kids.

I first came on to the VIT Council in 2007. I was initially a ministerial appointee and then for a number of councils afterwards, I was elected by the profession in the area of a secondary teacher, and I am now a ministerial appointee to Council once again. I really enjoy the VIT Council. My interest in it was that I have a strong commitment to a registered regulated and qualified teacher workforce and I believe that it's important that kids get the best they can out of the teachers that they have. I also like the idea that within the VIT you get to meet and work with a number of very varied professionals and professionals who have different views, but overall have the good of the profession at heart. And they push really hard for both teachers and the community to have an understanding of the importance of the work that teachers do.

Damian:

So Mick, what do you think currently, and moving forward, is the importance of an organization like VIT?

Mick:

I think VIT moving forward gives us a great opportunity to look at teaching in a much more structured way and look at the demands that are on teachers and what's reasonable, but also look at the idea that we're able to say to teachers we believe in the work that you do but also to safeguard children and to maintain best standards possible there is the importance of registration, qualifications and rigorous checking of teachers who stand in front of our kids.