

JENNY SHARWOOD



Background

- After graduating with first class honours in Chemistry at the University of Melbourne, I taught Chemistry, Science and Mathematics in a range of Victorian secondary schools for over 26 years, fulfilling several leadership roles over that time, including Head of Science.
- I left teaching at the end of 2001 to focus on my professional writing career, which began in 1989.
- Since 2000 I have been commissioned by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) to undertake a number of advisory, reviewing and writing roles. These have included researching and writing a benchmarking report on assessment of Chemistry across Australia, England and France, and serving on the VCE Chemistry Curriculum Review Panel.
- I was the lead author and series editor of a number of Chemistry and Science textbooks, teacher guides and many other resources, some of which won the Australian Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing. In my texts I have always placed a great emphasis on the relevance of Chemistry to industry, to everyday living and the environment, with many case studies and stories to help make Chemistry more 'alive' to the students and to inspire them to take up a career in Chemistry. These were the result of extensive first-hand research across much of Australia.
- I have served as a Chemistry and Science Method Lecturer at Latrobe University and the Australian Catholic University.
- In 2009 I was appointed by the Chief Scientist Alan Finkel as the writer for a three-year curriculum project on climate change and renewable energy with the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE).
- I have been a Fellow of the RACI since 2017. I am currently the Chair of the Victorian Chemical Education Committee, which has run several professional development days and workshops for teachers. I also organised seminars, workshops, site tours and Hartung Youth lectures over many years for the previous chemical education committee.
- I have served on the Board of the Science Teachers Association of Victoria and have presented many workshops at teacher conferences both in Victoria and interstate, some on behalf of RACI.
- I have been the lead writer and editor for the Year 11 and Year 12 papers for ANCQ for several years. It was through that work that I recently presented a webinar to over a thousand chemistry teachers in 12 different countries on how to write excellent multiple-choice tests.
- I have been the guest speaker at different RACI events, and have written materials for the Victorian Titration Competition as well as articles and resource materials for the RACI website and *Chemistry in Australia*.
- I was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for my services to secondary education in June, 2017.

RACI Direction

- I believe that the RACI needs to act much more proactively to support and involve the thousands of chemistry teachers across Australia. With my background as a secondary chemistry teacher and my ongoing work in writing a range of chemistry materials, providing professional development programs for teachers and acting in an advisory capacity to the VCAA, I believe I can contribute a fresh and unique perspective to the Board and help it address that need and to inspire far more teachers to become active members of RACI.
- I also believe that the RACI needs to develop a stronger voice on the importance of chemistry and its contribution to solving major issues of our time such as waste management, pollution and water quality. In this way journalists and the rest of the scientific community will learn they can turn to RACI for informed and unbiased professional advice and opinion. This will require much more interaction between the different group and divisions within RACI, which the Board should foster. And apart from contributing more effectively to public debate as a result, the RACI can inspire and enable teachers to play an important role in this.