



Visiting Tutor Program (VTP) Guidelines for use of Program

The aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the VTP are:

- (a) to develop and build the knowledge of bonsai within the Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs Ltd (AABC Ltd) membership;
- (b) to disseminate all available bonsai knowledge throughout the Association in a practical way;
- (c) to reduce the bonsai isolation of some member Clubs/Societies; and
- (d) to maintain a corps of experienced tutors.

Selection of Tutors to the AABC Ltd Register of National Demonstrators

The selection of tutors for the VTP begins with the nomination of a suitable person from the member Clubs/Societies to the AABC Ltd Executive to be added to the AABC Ltd Register of National Demonstrators ([Level 2](#)). The tutors selected should be deemed by both their Club/Society and the AABC Ltd Executive to have sufficient bonsai knowledge and experience for the level of tasks required, and be able to communicate that knowledge and experience. The AABC Ltd Executive will determine the final list of tutors.

Clubs/Society can put forward nominations for suitable persons from their Club/Society to be a demonstrator at any time, on the Nomination Form that is available on the AABC Ltd website or on request from the AABC Ltd Secretary.

Selection of a Tutor for Club Demonstration

A Club/Society may select any tutor from the Register of National Demonstrators, however, reimbursement is within the limits detailed below.

Tutor Reimbursement

The AABC Ltd Executive have divided the member Clubs/Societies into [four](#) Groups. These groups are based on the location of the Clubs/Societies and the Club/Society membership.

The amount of reimbursement for each Group will be:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Group A | Clubs/Societies that are located in a metropolitan area or close to a capital city. To be reimbursed airfares (including transfers) up to a maximum of \$400.00. If the tutor travels by motor vehicle reimbursement will be for actual travelling expenditure and reimbursement for meals, up to the maximum of \$400.00; |
| Group B | Clubs/Societies that incur additional travelling expenses due to their location, but are large Clubs/Societies that can afford to pay demonstrators fees. To be reimbursed airfares (including transfers) up to a maximum of \$600.00. If the tutor travels by motor vehicle reimbursement will be for actual travelling expenditure and reimbursement for meals, up to the maximum of \$600.00; |

- Group C** Clubs/Societies that incur additional travelling expenses due to their location, and are smaller Clubs/Societies, that will benefit with assistance towards payment of the demonstrator's fees for demonstrations only. Workshop fees would be paid by the participants. To be reimbursed airfares (including transfers) up to a maximum of \$600.00. If the tutor travels by motor vehicle reimbursement will be for actual travelling expenditure and reimbursement for meals, up to the maximum of \$600.00. The Clubs/Societies will also be reimbursed \$100.00 towards the demonstrator's fee for a demonstration, but not for workshops.
- Group D** Clubs/Societies located in New Zealand. To be reimbursed airfares (including transfers) up to a maximum of AUS\$400.00.

Tutor Reimbursement - Pre-Payment of Air Fares

There are instances where a Tutor needs to outlay for airfares well before the VTP activity date. The AABC Ltd will reimburse the Tutor airfares that may bring hardship to the tutor and family. The *Demonstrator Pre-Paid Trans Fees VTP Request Form* is available for Tutors to apply to the Secretary AABC Ltd for approval.

Eligibility for Reimbursement

To be eligible for reimbursement, within the limits detailed in the Guidelines, a Club/Society **must:**

- (a) have been a financial member of the Association for at least twelve months;
- (b) be a financial member of the Association on the date of the activity;
- (c) have submitted a Visiting Tutor Program Request Form to the Secretary of the Association prior to the date of the activity; and
- (d) not have used the Program previously during the same financial year.

Approval of Requests

The AABC Ltd will not accept any liability to reimburse a Club/Society for airfares, motor vehicle expenses, meals or demonstration fees incurred if the VTP Request Form is not submitted to and approved by the AABC Ltd Secretary prior to the activity being undertaken. If the VTP Request Application Form is not submitted then the Secretary shall not approve any reimbursement nor can the Treasurer issue any cheque to reimburse a Club/Society. Request Application Forms shall either be submitted by mail or e-mail.

The VTP Request Application Form shall be submitted as soon as the visit is arranged. There is no need to wait until just prior to the visit.

Clubs/Societies that arrange a visit by a tutor early in a financial year (i.e. July or August) should be aware that any reimbursement request shall not be approved by the AABC Ltd Secretary until payment of the Annual Membership Fee, which is due and payable on 1 July each year. Therefore, it is in the interest of Clubs/Societies to ensure that the Membership Fee is paid by 1 July.

Rejection of Request and/or Reimbursement

A request to use the VTP or claim for reimbursement will be rejected if:

- (a) the Club/Society has not been a financial member of the AABC Ltd for more than twelve months;

- (b) the VTP Request Form is submitted to the Secretary of the AABC Ltd after the date of the VTP activity;
- (c) the Club/Society is not a financial member of the AABC Ltd on the date of receipt of the reimbursement for the VTP activity;
- (d) the Club/Society applies to use the Program more than once in a financial year;
- (e) the receipts/invoices are not provided with the VTP Reimbursement Application Form.

Additional Costs

The host Club/Society shall provide the tutor with suitable accommodation, either by billet or other, plus meals in order to reduce the costs, as such expenditure is the responsibility of the Club/Society and not AABC Ltd.

The costs incurred by the tutor in travelling to and from airports, coach terminals or railway stations, and parking at airports can be considerable. These costs shall be included in the travelling costs of the tutor and will be included in the total reimbursement, up to the maximum permitted by the Guidelines. Receipts for all expenditure must be provided on the VTP Reimbursement Application Form.

Travel by Motor Vehicle

In cases where a tutor travels by motor vehicle the reimbursement will include the cost of the petrol used for the visit, plus 25% of the cost of fuel for vehicle wear and tear. There will also be some reimbursement for meals, see below.

The maximum amount of reimbursement will be in accordance with the maximum allowed for each Club/Society within its Category Group, as set out in the Guidelines below.

For those cases where travel is undertaken by motor vehicle the use of the VTP request application will be approved prior to the event but the amount of reimbursement will not be determined until either the tutor or the Club/Society makes a claim and provides details of the actual travelling expense incurred.

When Clubs/Societies negotiate with a tutor and it is determined that travel will be undertaken by motor vehicle the tutor shall be advised to provide evidence of the costs incurred. This information can then be forwarded to the Secretary of AABC Ltd for approval and reimbursement. Details of travel expenditure are to be provided to the Secretary AABC Ltd as soon as practical following the activity. It is the responsibility of the Club/Society to submit a completed VTP Reimbursement Application Form to the Secretary AABC Ltd. It is important for Clubs/Societies to understand that the AABC Ltd is not responsible for chasing up reimbursement applications after the VTP activity.

Reimbursement for Expenses

Meal Expenses

Tutors shall be reimbursed up to the value of \$20.00 for meals for each 250km travelled by motor vehicle but only meals consumed during the travelling times. There is no reimbursement for meals consumed when travelling by air.

Reimbursement of meal expenses will only be for meals consumed by the tutor and not any travelling companions.

Demonstrators Fees

Clubs/Societies listed in Categories Group A, Group B and [Group D](#) are not eligible to claim reimbursement for demonstrators fees.

The Clubs/Societies listed in Group C will be eligible for reimbursement of up to the value of \$100.00 towards the tutor's fees for demonstrations.

Workshops

No reimbursement will be approved for workshops as the amounts paid by the participants would cover the demonstrator's workshop fees.

Duration of VTP Activity

The length and duration of the VTP activity is at the discretion of the host Club/Society and the tutor.

Operation of the VTP

The Visiting Tutor Program will operate in accordance with the following criteria:

- (a) participation in the VTP is restricted to financial member Clubs/Societies of the AABC Ltd;
- (b) each financial member Club/Society of the AABC Ltd is entitled to exercise one VTP activity in any one financial year, regardless of location. *“One” means one tutor for one visit, once in the financial year;*
- (c) Clubs/Societies may utilise tutors any number of times they wish but the AABC Ltd will approve only one reimbursement per Club/Society per financial year (currently from 1 July each year). The reimbursement will be in accordance with the reimbursement policy detailed in these Guidelines. In view of this if Clubs/Societies have a tutor to conduct judging then it would be in the interest of the Club/Society to have a workshop or demonstration at the same time;
- (d) when a Club/Society requests a visit from a tutor it will select one from the Register of National Demonstrators. The Club/Society will contact the tutor to determine whether he or she is available;
- (e) the Club/Society will specify the activity/activities, dates and other relevant information;
- (f) when agreement is reached between the Club/Society and Tutor, the Club/Society completes a VTP Request Form and forwards it to the Secretary of the AABC Ltd for approval;
- (g) the Secretary will process (approve or reject) the application and advise the Club/Society of the outcome. Applications will be rejected; if the Club/Society is not financial at the time of request or application for reimbursement, has already had use of the program during the financial year, has completed the incorrect form, and the application was not made until after the activity;
- (h) approval of a VTP activity will be made on the understanding that the Club/Society and the demonstrator is there “exclusively” for the approved VTP activities and not to take part in any activities other than those which were pre-approved, nor can they promote, personally either directly or indirectly, any business, non profit or otherwise, an organisation or activity that is not directly associated with the VTP activity which is funded by the AABC Ltd . Failing to comply with this criteria the Club/Society and/or Demonstrator expenses shall not be approved and any paid expenses will be required to be refunded to the AABC Ltd.
- (i) where VTP Request Forms are lodged for activities early in the financial year (ie July and August), the Secretary will approve the request on the basis that no reimbursement shall be made until such time as the Club/Society has paid the Annual Membership Fee for that financial year. Clubs/Societies should be aware that if the Membership Fee, which is due and payable on the first of July each year, is not paid

- by the date of the receipt of the reimbursement application by the Secretary AABC Ltd then the Club/Society is not entitled to any reimbursement;
- (j) following the activity the Club/Society will complete the current VTP Reimbursement Application Form and submit it to the Secretary of AABC Ltd for approval together with all relevant receipts;
 - (k) if the application is approved the Secretary will review and check the amount of reimbursement, in accordance with the Guidelines and forward the Treasurer for payment of the reimbursement.
 - (l) the Club/Society will be provided with details of the calculation of the reimbursement, in accordance with the VTP Guidelines.
 - (m) the Club/Society should always complete a Demonstrator Assessment Form and forward the form to the Secretary AABC Ltd. This information provides feedback to the Demonstrator as to the strengths and weaknesses of their demonstration and is important to maintain a high quality and standard of knowledge and presentation.

Demonstrations and Workshops

The expectations of demonstrators by Clubs/Societies in past has been that they can do anything almost immediately. This is, of course, unrealistic and when negotiations between a Club/Society and a demonstrator on an VTP activity event, the demonstrator must communicate the guidelines under which the demonstrator will operate and the Club/Society members will adhere to. There have been instances where the end result of the activity was not achieved due to the openness and willingness of the demonstrator to meet the client's expectations but this has lead to disappointment of both the client and the demonstrator in the finished product.

Basic experience of participants

It is important that the participants of a workshop are sufficiently knowledgeable in the basics of bonsai to avoid disappointment. A demonstrator should not be expected to work with totally inexperienced people, who in some cases cannot wire or pot a tree. It is the responsibility of the Club/Society organising the VTP activity that the participants have sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the tasks set by the demonstrator, else other participants will not receive the value of the workshop to which they have contributed to. An example of the experience of the participants in a workshop are that the basic experience of participants must be at least to have the knowledge and understanding of:

- (a) Bonsai styles and how to style a tree in the required style,
- (b) The ability to prune and cut branches,
- (c) The ability to wire and know the fundamentals of 'Wiring', and
- (d) The ability to root prune and pot a tree.

The demonstrator and client (Club/Society) must ensure that the expectations of the activity are achievable and outcomes agreed to.



AABC Member Clubs by Groups

Group A

Bayside Bonsai Club
Bimer Bonsai Society Inc
Bonsai Northwest Inc
Bonsai Society of Australia Inc
Bonsai Society of Queensland Inc
Bonsai Society of Sydney Inc
Bonsai Society of Victoria Inc
Bonsai Study Group
Campbelltown Bonsai Group Inc
Canberra Bonsai Society Inc
Geelong Bonsai Club Inc
Gold Coast Bonsai Club Inc
Illawarra Bonsai Society Inc
Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Society Inc
Nepean Bonsai Society Inc
Newcastle Bonsai Society Inc
Redlands Bonsai Society
Sakura Bonsai Studio Inc
South Australian Bonsai Society
Sydney City Bonsai Club Inc
The School of Bonsai Inc
Urimbirra South Coast Bonsai Society Inc
Waverley Garden Club – Bonsai Group Inc
Weston Creek Bonsai Group Inc
Suiseki Australia Inc
Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Inc

Tokonoma Bonsai Society Coffs Harbour Inc
Toowoomba Bonsai Society Inc
Townsville Bonsai Society Inc
Twin Lakes Bonsai Society
Wagga Wagga Bonsai Society Inc
Wauchope Bonsai Workshop

Group D

Avon Bonsai Society (NZ)
Christchurch Bonsai Society (NZ)
Hamilton Bonsai Club (NZ)
Otago Bonsai Society (NZ)

Group B

Bonsai Society of the Central Coast Inc
Bonsai Society of Western Australia Inc

Group C

Bairnsdale Bonsai Group
Ballarat Bonsai Society Inc
Bendigo Bonsai Society Inc
Cairns Bonsai Society Inc
Bonsai Interest Group (NT)
Friends of Orange Botanic Gardens Bonsai Group Inc
Goulburn bonsai Society Inc
Launceston Bonsai Workshop
Mackay Bonsai Society
Mount Gambier Bonsai Society
Peel Valley Bonsai Club
Sale Bonsai Club Inc
Shoalhaven Bonsai Club
Southlakes Bonsai Club Inc
Summerland Bonsai Society Inc
Sunshine Coast Bonsai Society Inc
Tasmanian Bonsai Society



Checklist for Using the Visiting Tutor Program

- Determine date/s of activity;
- Determine type of activity, e.g. Demonstration, or Demonstration and Workshop;
- Select a tutor from the Register of National Demonstrators on the AABC Ltd website or on request from the Secretary AABC Ltd;
- Contact tutor to determine availability:
 - If tutor is available:
 - clarify activities to be undertaken and duration of visit;
 - clarify applicable fees and means of transport;
 - if travel by air then consider costs incurred by the tutor in travelling to and from airports, coach terminals or railway stations or parking at airports;
 - if travel by motor vehicle make tutor aware of need to produce receipts for petrol and food;
- Complete the correct Visiting Tutor Program Request Form and submit to the Secretary AABC Ltd;
- If a VTP activity is planned for early in the new financial year check to ensure that the Club/Society will take necessary steps to be financial on application of reimbursement of the activity;
- On completion of the VTP activity ensure all relevant receipts have been collected and complete the correct VTP Reimbursement Form. Submit form and receipts to the Secretary of the AABC Ltd;
- Complete the Demonstrator Assessment Report and forward to the Secretary of the AABC Ltd.

Required Forms

VTP Reimbursement Application and Calculation Form

VTP Request Form

VTP Demonstrator Assessment Form