Victor George Taylor, more affectionately known as Vic to family and friends, came from a working class background. His academic talents were recognised at an early age when he won scholarships that enabled him to be schooled in some of the more renowned colleges in Melbourne. However, his membership of the academic community came later in life, only after he had graduated as a mature student with a First-class Honours Degree in Economics from Monash University and earned a position as lecturer at Newcastle University. Some years later, with a Masters in Industrial Relations from Warwick University, he moved to Sydney to a senior lectureship at the Australian Graduate School of Management (AGSM), University of New South Wales. Vic also lectured in Hong Kong, and, after his retirement, was an adjunct academic teaching in Australia and/or Asia with: Griffith University, Macquarie University and University of Sydney.

Throughout his academic career, Vic researched and taught in the fields of industrial relations and the world of work. He was fervently committed to adopting international, comparative and critical perspectives, as well as to upholding workers’ rights. Such passion was demonstrated when he refused to accept a loading on his pay for being an office-bearer of the academics’ union, considering his services as a contribution to the advancement of his colleagues’ welfare.

Vic was also very well read and highly regarded as an inspiring teacher and fine scholar. Although he did not hold a PhD, he supervised PhD students and mentored others, some of who have advanced to professorial ranks. He was on one occasion aptly described as “AGSM’s best kept secret treasure” by a student in an end of semester evaluation and feedback on his teaching. His publications were very thoughtful and of high quality. Among his scholarly works was one that stirred much emotion and continued to stimulate discussions in subsequent years, a paper “A Need for Heretics”, presented at the 1982 Australian, New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science Conference. When asked to comment on a colleague's work he would always supply detailed and highly insightful notes.

Vic was a founding member of AIRAANZ and, until his health began to fail, he had attended most meetings. It is in honour of this much respected and highly cherished scholar and teacher that the Vic Taylor Awards are established. His thirst for knowledge and inquiring spirit will be long remembered by many who had the privilege of counting him as a dear colleague and friend.