

Minister's poor decision-making

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Neil McMillan, Point Cook

Good reason to fear

VCA staff have good reason to fear the amalgamation of the college into the University of Melbourne. Within 18 months of the university incorporating Melbourne College of Advanced Education in 1989, the time allotment of the studio offerings of the bachelor of education (visual arts) course was cut by 33 per cent in the first two years and 50 per cent in the final two years.

The study year was cut by several weeks, the number of subjects reduced, staff made largely casual and within four years - in 1994 - the course was abandoned, together with all the other bachelor of education disciplines, except for the primary education course.

The bachelor of creative arts, which started in 1995, was taught by some of the staff of the visual arts course. It was transferred back to the University of Melbourne about four years ago and was promptly listed for closure. The last students will graduate this year.

Over the past four years, all the subjects were made to conform to the large lecture model of the university, which was entirely unsuitable for teaching practical arts subjects.

Colin Lawn, photography lecturer, University of Melbourne

Where's my copy?

IT WAS with amazement that I read the offer to new subscribers of *The Age* of a free copy of *The Age Good Food Guide* for 2010. What about us long-term subscribers? I await my copy of the guide with my *Age*. Or do I have to suspend then restart my subscription to get my copy?

Andrea Plantinga, Point Lonsdale

Dairy required

IN RESPONSE to Natasha Reus (Letters, 3/9), humans cannot live well on fruit and vegetables alone. Milk and cheese provide high-quality proteins, calcium and other minerals. For a more balanced view on the role of calcium in the prevention of osteoporotic fractures, access the Osteoporosis Australia website.

Associate professors Kerrie Sanders and Mark Kotowicz, University of Melbourne, Barwon Health, Geelong