

VCAM – A STRONGER FUTURE!

Delivering quality, contemporary and world class music and creative arts education.



“I have spent my entire professional life in teaching. I helped put the VCA together, and I could easily question what is happening there. But I would rather say that the college, like any arts-educational institution, is in a constant state of evolution. The VCA can’t be the same as it was, and it concerns me that some people think it can return to what it was. It can be shaped very much better if we all work to get it right instead of fighting it.”

JOHN HOPKINS, VCA’s founding dean of music, The Age, 27/08/2009

The Whole Story

1. The former VCA has not existed as an independent entity for almost 3 years!
2. Practice-based visual and performing arts training will continue as an important part of VCAM’s curriculum.
3. [Selection of students into the performing arts at VCAM](#) will continue to include auditions as a key component of the talent-based process.
4. A Melbourne model curriculum at the Faculty of the VCA and Music has **not been developed**.
5. **No** staff member from the Faculty of the VCA and Music has been or will be sacked as part of the restructuring – there will be a clear and open consultation process with staff, students and the arts community on the development of the new curriculum.
6. There will continue to be technical support staff for [music students](#) at both the [Southbank & Parkville campuses](#) and for all disciplines at the Southbank campus.
7. Sessional staff will continue to be an important part of providing training across all disciplines throughout the Faculty.

8. Funding to [the faculty](#) has not been slashed – over the last 2 years the University has paid \$5m for new equipment for F&TV.
9. “Rent” that VCAM pays to the University goes to fund on-going maintenance, security and other Property and campus services staff who support VCAM as well as contributing to other common services provided to students.
10. The Faculty owns its equipment and pays no rent to the University on equipment.

The Faculty of the VCA and Music, of which the former VCA is part, is **NOT** in any danger – far from it.

The former VCA’s vision, ideals and programs are being strengthened and updated following the integration in April 2009 of the former Faculty of the VCA and the Faculty of Music into the new Faculty of the VCA and Music.

This website gives you plenty of information to show how this has been achieved and why it was necessary.

The former VCA has been affiliated with the [University of Melbourne](#) for over two decades and joined the University as a faculty in its own right from 1 January 2007.

- This followed a unanimous recommendation for the merger by the then Council of the VCA and was made possible by an [Act of the Victorian Parliament](#).

The VCA Advisory Board and the University agreed to [merge the Faculty of the VCA with the Faculty of Music](#) to create a new [Faculty of the VCA and Music](#) in May 2008:

- the then Dean, Professor Andrea Hull and the former VCA Advisory Board supported the proposal.
- The University’s VCA Integration Committee adopted this proposal.

Why has this site been developed?

- There is much hysteria, misinformation and untruthful statements surrounding the role of the former VCA.
- In the interests of staff, students and future students, as well as the general public, some clarifying facts are necessary and this website has been developed to provide the facts.

The students of 2009 and beyond – what’s does this mean for you?

The Faculty of the VCA and Music:

- offers students a unique opportunity to learn and build on their artistic talents
- is committed to practice-based learning and
- provides talented students with challenging programs in music and the creative arts.

VCAM represents the future for a thriving, dynamic, contemporary, world class, academically sound, comprehensive, practice-based pathway to a lifelong career in music and the creative arts.

EWS

- Opportunity for your feedback on the Discussion paper [Read more](#)
- \$5m spent on new equipment for F&TV [Read more](#)
- \$200k spent on 2 new dance studios and new Wardrobe Workshop [Read more](#)
- VCAM cafe to be upgraded [Read more](#)

Discussion paper for the VCA and Music – your feedback wanted

The University has recently released a Discussion Paper – Defining the Future for the VCA and Music at the University of Melbourne.

The discussion paper sets out options for the Faculty of the VCA and Music and the future of higher arts education. It invites ideas and comments from staff, students, graduates, and members of the arts community and arts industry, and of the wider University community.



An open consultation process for feedback on the education models to assist with defining the future for the VCA and Music. To read the Discussion Paper and find out how to provide feedback BY 12 February 2010, please visit the discussion paper [website](#).

[Return to top](#)



\$5m spent on new equipment for Film & TV

The University has provided \$5 million to Film and TV over the last 2 years (\$2m in 2008 and \$3m in 2009) to upgrade its equipment and infrastructure to make it internationally competitive. This has resulted in a significant enhancement of the digital equipment and other film equipment used by [Film & TV students](#) for their studies.

[Return to top](#)

\$200k spent on 2 new dance studios and new Wardrobe Workshop

With the VCA Secondary School (VCASS) moving from co-locating on the Faculty's Southbank campus to 57 Miles Street – Southbank, there has been space freed up in the Elisabeth Murdoch Building on St Kilda Road and Building 868 on Dodd Street. However the VCASS space in both buildings was not suitable for use by the Faculty and needs significant work.

A 2-stage construction program commenced in August 2009 to convert some of the VCASS buildings into more usable space for the Faculty and its Schools. The first stage of this project was completed in October 2009 and included the following:



i) removal of several demountables outside the cafe which were constructed in 2000 for temporary use while the Performing Arts production facility was constructed in Dodds Street

ii) refurbishment of Building 868 (building on Dodds St previously used by VCASS) which has now been transformed with:

- a new expansive area for the Wardrobe workshop and with change rooms facilities (no change rooms were provided in the demountable)
- two new dance studios, including one which will have a permanent tap floor, are now being used by Music Theatre students and staff
- a new location for the Student Union.

[Return to top](#)



VCAM's Cafe to be upgraded!

Stage 2 of the campus refurbishment will commence in November this year. One of the areas to be updated is the Cafe and the surrounding area to make this a more inviting place to eat, sit and meet others. There has been consultation with students and staff on the type of food they would like to see the cafe offer and the changes needed to Cafe to make it more inviting.

Other work to be undertaken as part of Stage 2 include.

- removal of part of the Production Workshop demountable and reconfiguring of this to more effective use of space
- landscaping around Building 868 to make this area more usable for Faculty students and staff.

These works will be completed in February 2010 in time for Orientation week and the 2010 academic year.

[Return to top](#)

THE INTEGRATION

The creation of the Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM) has brought together two institutions that have for many years led the way in educating and training outstanding artists who have made careers in Victoria, Australia and beyond.



The future of VCAM is supported by [The University of Melbourne](#) and the University is committed to nurturing artistic talent and the provision of creative and challenging programs for the arts.

Like the arts themselves, the Faculty must keep evolving and responding to remain relevant and capable of properly resourcing the artists of the future to fulfil their potential through a sustained career in their chosen art form, and to remain a highly valued resource to the city and the nation.

Forming the Faculty of the VCA and Music

Early history

[The Victorian College of the Arts](#) (VCA) had its origins as the National Gallery of Victoria Art School in 1867. In 1972 the Victorian College of the Arts was established by a Victorian Order in Council and then reconstituted under *The Victorian College of the Arts Act, 1981* (Vic). In 1992 it absorbed the School of Film and Television from Swinburne Institute of Technology and the Fine Arts programs from the former Faculty of Art and Design at Victoria College.

[The University of Melbourne](#) appointed its first Professor of Music in 1891, and in order to offer a full array of practical teaching, established the University Conservatorium of Music in 1894. The University Conservatorium of Music became the Faculty of Music in 1926, and absorbed the Music Department of the Institute of Education in 1994.

The unified national higher education system – 1988

In 1988 the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training introduced a **unified national system of higher education with membership of the proposed system limited to institutions of a particular size.**

- The Victorian College of the Arts was not able to participate in the proposed national system in its own right.
- Consequently the VCA entered into an Affiliation Agreement with The University of Melbourne on 16 November 1988.
- The Victorian College of the Arts (Amendment) Act 1991 (Vic), established a more extensive relationship between the University and the VCA, hence replacing the Affiliation Agreement.
- Key features of this new relationship were:
 1. the University assumed responsibility for the academic programs of the VCA.
 2. students at the VCA who were enrolled in degree programs became students of the University of Melbourne.

The impact of the 2003 higher education reforms

Under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, the Federal Government's reforms to higher education introduced a new funding model for clusters of academic disciplines which came into effect in 2005.

This resulted in the removal of the special funding support that the former VCA had previously received, representing a 35% reduction (ie \$5m) in revenue each year. This reduction was due to the higher education cluster funding setting for the performing arts and other disciplines a consistent level of funding. The amount received by the former VCA was less than the special funding support previously received.

The University and the former VCA commenced discussions in early 2005 about the possibility of full integration.

In November 2005, the parties signed a heads of agreement that provided for integration with effect from 1 January 2007. This integration enabled the former VCA to become a Faculty of the University. The integration terms included annual operational funding arrangements for the first five years designed to bridge the funding gap that had arisen as a result of the 2003 legislative changes.

On 1 January 2007, as a consequence of the *Melbourne University (Victorian College of the Arts) Act 2006* (Vic), the former VCA was integrated with the University and the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts was established.

The impact of the 2007 integration

The integration of the VCA with the University of Melbourne resulted in further music related programs being offered by the University by the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts, in addition to those already available in the Faculty of Music.

In May 2008, as a result of a unanimous motion of the VCA Integration Committee, the University Council resolved that the Faculty of Music and the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts would amalgamate from 6 April 2009.

- The VCA Integration Committee was the body empowered with the responsibility to implement the heads of agreement and to make amendments as appropriate. It included representatives of the University Council and the VCA Advisory Board.

The relevant legislation to provide for the formation of the Faculty of the VCA and Music was passed on ??? for effect on 6 April 2009. Accordingly, the Faculty of the VCA and Music was established on that day.

The Faculty today

The Faculty comprises the School of Art, School of Music, School of Performing Arts with programs in Dance, Theatre and Production, the School of Music and programs in Film and Television. The Faculty also includes the Centre for Ideas, the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development, and the Centre for Cultural Partnerships.

The faculty has approximately 160 academic staff, 80 professional staff, 1300 undergraduate students and 340 graduate and research students.

With the exception of Music which is taught across the Parkville and Southbank campuses, the other disciplines are taught at the Southbank campus.

The integration agreement

The University continues to honour the Heads of Agreement

In November 2005 a Heads of Agreement (HoA) between the University and the former VCA was signed. This resulted in the VCA becoming a Faculty of the University from 1 January 2007.

Under the Heads of Agreement the University agreed to pay the funding gap for five years from 2007-2011.

- The University has committed to providing this supplementary funding to the former VCA through the new Faculty of the VCA and Music to the end of 2011.
- The HoA did not state that nothing will change.

The HoA specifically enabled the former VCA and the University to determine the functions and processes which could improve productivity and effectiveness.

- The HoA covers a wide range of areas which continue to be honoured:
 - i. the Faculty continues to take a leading role within the University on the strategic direction for the development and provision of performing and visual arts training and education
 - ii. talent-based entry will continue for all courses
 - iii. the Faculty will continue to exercise authority over the conduct and development of educational programs
 - iv. The staff who were previously with the VCA became staff of the University with all the conditions and entitlements of the University provided as required by the HoA
 - v. the VCA students were students of the University prior to the HoA and this continues
 - vi. the University has strengthened and supplemented the annual operating funding as required under the HoA.

VCAM's vision

In April 2009 the Executive of the Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM) adopted the following vision for the new Faculty which was endorsed by the University Council:

VCAM aspires to play a pivotal role in The University of Melbourne's future by establishing itself as a dynamic, responsive and sustainable Faculty. Excellence and innovation in contemporary creative arts research, education, scholarship and practice will form the foundation of its work. The advancement of excellence in each of the disciplines represented will provide the platform for the development of ground breaking inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary creative opportunities, collaborations and outcomes.

VCAM will aspire to be a vibrant, cohesive community of artists and scholars committed to the broadest definition of creativity – that is, committed to “the exceptional act of imaginative discovery and expression in an art form” (Tusa 2003).

It will aspire to be a community underpinned by confidence, motivation, individual choice, creative energy, breadth of perspective, artistic vision and mutual respect.

Finances

A number of contributors to public debate have suggested the University has cut funding to the Faculty of VCA and Music (VCAM).

This suggestion is NOT CORRECT.

- i. There have been no cuts by the University to Commonwealth funds intended for VCAM.
- ii. The University has contributed more than \$10 million in additional funds to VCAM in 2009 alone. This includes:
 - \$3m for upgrades to the Film and Television (\$2m provided in 2008 for this upgrade)
 - \$6million for the integration agreement
 - \$xx million for the subsidy to use of facilities, property and campus services costs
- i. the underlying financial issue is not University support for the Faculty, but a change in Commonwealth funding rates which is applied to the performing arts in all higher education institutions.

The University's financial contribution to the former VCA and to VCAM

- The University of Melbourne has invested substantially in the former Faculty of the Victoria College of the Arts (VCA) and will continue to invest in the Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM).
- Between 2007 and 2009, the University has met the funding shortfall of \$XXm and provided \$41 million over and above the former VCA's earned income from student fees and research income and donations, to support the Faculty's operations.
- In addition, since 2007 a further \$6 million has been spent on ongoing maintenance. The purpose of this has been to address the on-going wear & tear and the need to improve the condition of many of the buildings on the Southbank site. This contribution has seen the University provide an annual commitment of approximately \$2 million for maintenance.
- The University has committed to spend an additional \$5 million for capital improvements in 2010.
- The University has also provided an additional \$5 million to Film and TV to upgrade its equipment and infrastructure to make F&TV internationally competitive (\$3m in 2009 + \$2m in 2008).
- The University has also committed a further \$33.4 million to supplement the operational budget of the Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM) over 2010 and 2011.
- The additional funding provided by the University to VCAM sees the Faculty of the VCA and Music with the highest 'per student' funding for the humanities and social sciences at the University of Melbourne.
- Despite this additional funding provided by the University to VCAM, the costs of course delivery mean VCAM struggles to meet its aspirations, and has accumulated an operating deficit over the past year.
- Decisions made by VCAM to contain costs at Southbank have produced some understandable concern among staff and students but are unavoidable if the Faculty is to avoid a sustained deficit.
- Great care has been exercised to ensure the University fully meets all its funding obligations under the 2006 Heads of Agreement with the VCA.

The Faculty of the VCA and Music

OVERVIEW

The Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM) was established in 2009 to provide cutting edge world class education in music and the creative arts.

VCAM represents the future for a thriving, dynamic, contemporary, world class, academically sound, comprehensive, practice-based pathway to a lifelong career in music and the creative arts

The Faculty has courses which offer a variety of programs which combine theoretical underpinnings with practical experience.

The following provides an overview of the schools and their facilities.

School of Art



The School of Art occupies a custom-designed studio complex housing its specialist studios on a single site, which has immediate access to Victoria's most important art venues. The School of Art had its origins in the National Gallery School, which was founded in 1867. In 1992 it was merged with the Prahran Faculty of Art (Victoria College) which also dates back to the mid-nineteenth century.

The discipline has built on the strong reputations and unique qualities of its predecessors and has established a dynamic presence as a forward-looking discipline with a clear mission to continue to prepare artists with a lifelong commitment as professional practitioners.

Film and Television



Film and Television (F&TV) is the longest-running film school in Australia which began at Swinburne Technical College in 1966 before transferring to the former VCA in 1992. The F&TV school trains students to a professional level to make motion picture programs of a high artistic and technical standard. Students also gain a broad understanding of the motion picture industry and development of world cinema

Its illustrious alumni include Gillian Armstrong, Richard Lowenstein, Michael Leunig, Esben Storm, John Ruane, Dennis Tupicoff, Sarah Watt, Robert Luketic, Jamie Blanks and Adam Elliot.

School of Music

On 6 April 2009, two internationally regarded music institutions, which were both faculties of The University of Melbourne, combined to become Australia's largest and most impressive University School of Music.

Through uniting the Faculty of Music and Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts, the combined School of Music



has a strong identity and a clear vision for international excellence across all music genres in music training, education, performance, scholarship and research.

The School of Music provides an exhilarating learning environment for approximately 900 students who study music across a range of genres.

We take pride in the quality of our courses and the training we offer our students. Our central mission is to create inspirational musical futures for those who desire to lead the next generation of musicians, or use their musical qualifications as the basis for an exciting career in related industries.

School of Performing Arts

The School of Performing Arts embraces the disciplines of Dance, Theatre and Production and was established in November 2008 from amalgamating the former Schools of Dance, Drama and Production. The School was created to meet an increasing need to support the creative vision and dedicated performance output of the Faculty's staff and students.

CURRICULUM

A Melbourne model curriculum at the faculty of the VCA and Music has not been developed.

How will the curriculum be developed?

* Developing a new curriculum requires an intensive period of consultation. This will take up much of 2010.

* The development of the curriculum will involve staff, students and industry representatives.

* One thing that is certain in the development of any new curriculum is that specialisation in art, dance, theatre, film and television, production or music will include practical training as a key element.

What courses are currently offered at VCAM?

(1) Southbank students

Currently, students at Southbank complete a Bachelor degree (3 years), followed by an honours year and in some cases a Masters (2 years).

A total of six bachelor programs exist at Southbank in Dramatic Art, Fine Art, Dance, Film and Television, Production and Music Performance

There are a range of graduate diploma and postgraduate diploma programs. In each course there is a combination of artform specific subjects and “common” subjects.

The common subjects are provided by the Centre for Ideas and are required for all Bachelor course students, designed to complement specialist arts practice with broad educational programs.

At the post-graduate level there are a range of course options including Graduate Certificates, Postgraduate Diplomas and Masters (by coursework or research). A practice-based PhD is also available to appropriately qualified applicants.

(2) Parkville School of Music students

At Parkville, since 2008 all undergraduates enrol in a 3-year new generation Bachelor of Music degree that incorporates 75 credit points of breadth study across the three-year enrolment.

Students currently enrolled in other new generation degrees have the opportunity to apply for a concurrent Diploma in Music (Practical).

Postgraduate Certificates, Diplomas and Masters degrees are available across a wide spectrum of practical and scholarly genres, as well as in music therapy. PhD, Doctor of Musical Arts and Doctor of Music degrees are also offered.

Reviewing the curriculum

flute-teacherThe former Faculty of Music reviewed the Bachelor of Music curriculum in 2007 for the implementation of the 2008 new generation music degree under the Melbourne Model. However given the integration of the former VCA and former Faculty of Music that degree is now under review to assess its appropriateness to encompass the full range of specialisations on offer through the new combined School of Music.

The curriculum at Southbank (the former VCA) was last reviewed in 1998 in an external audit chaired by leading arts educationalist, Sir Ken Robinson. While some aspects of the review were

implemented, there remains considerable scope for the implementation of these philosophies and observations, and for some of the outcomes proposed at that time.

When will the curriculum be developed?

* A priority is for VCAM to bring together the two music courses as a single course offering for delivery in 2011.

* The work to develop the music course will be undertaken in the first half of 2010 with the course to be finalised by October 2010 to enable VTAC selection for 2011

* Curriculum development for the other disciplines will have a longer period to undertake this work with a new program to be delivered in 2012.

STAFF

The Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM) has great teachers who are dedicated to the advancement of their students.

Our staff members include:

- creative artists at the top of their profession
- researchers
- scholars

The Faculty has approximately 160 academic staff who provide students with a broad range of experience and expertise in their specific disciplines.

Professor Sharman Pretty, Dean, Faculty of the VCA and Music

Professor Sharman Pretty has an established reputation as a visionary leader and effective facilitator of change. In 2004 she was invited to take up the position of Founding Dean of the National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries, a Faculty of The University of Auckland, New Zealand. Sharman left the University of Auckland in March 2009 to become the Founding Dean of the Faculty of the VCA and Music. Sharman's career has been built from a combination of experience as an educator, performer and arts manager moving between the higher education and arts management sectors throughout her career. [Read](#)



[More](#)

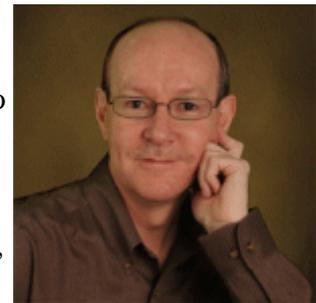
Professor Kristy Edmunds, Head, School of Performing Arts

With an international career in the arts Professor Kristy Edmund has worked as an artist, filmmaker, theatre maker and performer, dance choreographer, writer, teacher and artist-in-residence. Kristy is highly regarded in the industry and VCAM is fortunate to have her lead the School of Performing Arts. She started with VCAM in November 2008 after completing her 5th and final Melbourne International Arts Festival. [Read more](#)



Professor Gary McPherson, Head, School of Music

Professor Gary McPherson, an internationally renowned music educator, is the first Head of VCAM's combined School of Music. Gary began his professional music career as a trumpeter, and came to VCAM on 1 July 2009 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA, where he was Head of the School of Music from 2005 – 2009. Prior to that Gary was Professor and Head of the Department of Creative Arts at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, and lectured in the School of Music at the University of New South Wales. [Read more](#)



Associate Professor Su Baker, Head, School of Art

Since March 2000, Associate Professor Su Baker has led the Faculty's School of Art. Prior to working at VCAM Sue worked for 20 years in Sydney, for much of this time at the Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney both as an academic since 1989 and in senior management roles. Su holds a Doctorate of Creative Arts, from Curtin University of Technology. [Read more](#)



Professor Ian Lang, Head, Film and Television

Professor Ian Lang has been Head of Film and Television since 200X (??). Ian has extensive experience as a television documentary producer and has received many international awards for his films including, Fahimeh's Story (2004), Millennium Shift (SBS, 1997), Grandfathers and Revolutions (SBS, 1999), and The Art of Place (SBS, 1996). [Read more](#)



THE FACILITIES



The Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM) delivers its undergraduate and graduate programs across the Parkville and Southbank campuses of the University of Melbourne.

The Southbank campus is home to five of the Faculty's six disciplines.

The School of Music is located at both the University's Parkville campus on Royal Parade and at the main Faculty campus at Southbank on St Kilda Road. At the Parkville campus, Music is currently distributed across 9 different buildings. The historic Conservatorium building on Royal Parade is the showpiece of Music at Parkville and is an integral part of the Faculty's facilities now and into the future.

The Faculty's Southbank campus is located in the heart of the Victorian arts precinct – a 10 minute walk from the centre of Melbourne, and extends from the Eastern boundary of St Kilda Road to Sturt street (West) and from Southbank Boulevard (North) to Grant Street (South boundary).

With the VCA Secondary School (VCASS) moving from co-locating on the Faculty's Southbank campus to 57 Miles Street – Southbank, there has been space freed up in the Elisabeth Murdoch Building on St Kilda Road and Building 868 on Dodd Street. However the VCASS space is not suitable for use by the Faculty and needs significant work.

A 2-stage construction program has commenced to convert some of the VCASS buildings into more usable space for the Faculty and its Schools.

Stage 1 was completed in October 2009 and included:

- removal of several demountables constructed in 2000 for temporary use while the Performing Arts production facility was constructed in Dodds Street
- Building 868 (building on Dodds St previously used by VCASS) is now transformed with:
 - i. a new expansive area for the Wardrobe workshop and with change rooms facilities (no change rooms were provided in the demountable)
 - ii. two new dance studios, including one which will have a permanent tap floor, are now being used by Music Theatre students and staff
 - iii. new location for the Student Union.

Stage 2 will commence in November 2009 and include:

- removal of part of the Production Workshop demountable and reconfiguring of this to more effective use of space
- landscaping around Building 868 to make this area more usable for Faculty students and staff
- updating the Cafe and surrounding area to make this a more inviting place to eat, sit and meet others.

Planned 2010 Refurbishment of Elisabeth Murdoch Building – St Kilda Road:

- 50% of this building was previously used by the VCA Secondary School and at present is unsuitable for use by the Faculty
- A review of this building is currently in progress with refurbishment to be undertaken in 2010.

Campus Masterplan for the future

Prior to the formation of VCAM, work had started on the development of a Campus Masterplan for the Southbank site and developing a blueprint for the future is a priority for the Faculty and the University. Key elements of the master-planning process will include the need to provide high quality, well-equipped spaces for all disciplines, and an outstanding campus amenity that will be an enhanced environment for staff and students as well as an attractive showpiece for visitors to the Southbank precinct and visitors to the University.

The Schools' Facilities

The **School of Art** occupies a custom-designed studio complex housing its specialist studios on a single site extending from Dodds Street to Sturt Street.



Film & TV is located at the Grant Street end of the Southbank campus in a modern, purpose designed building with location equipment for broadcast quality video and 16mm film production together with fully equipped animation and visual effects studios. There are two film studios, two rushes rooms, a 90 seat cinema and use of a 220 seat cinema/recital hall. Film & TV also has digital post production facilities for both sound and vision.



The **School of Music** is situated at both the University's Parkville campus on Royal Parade and at the main Faculty campus at Southbank on St Kilda Road. At Southbank there is a purpose built building on St Kilda Rd which has a combination of lecture spaces and both individual and group tuition rooms. At Parkville the historic Conservatorium building on Royal Parade is the main building for individual and group tuition. Melba Hall, renowned for its fine acoustics, is located in the Conservatorium building. Teaching and practice facilities at Parkville are also located in the Music Basement Annex, on Royal Parade and in Berkley Street.

The **School of Performing Arts** is located in several buildings across the Southbank campus. Production has a range of workshops, studios and theatres while Dance boasts an intimate studio-theatre and 5 superb studios, designed and purpose built to facilitate the training of young dance artists in ballet, contemporary dance and choreography. In addition there are video editing suites and seminar rooms for theoretical studies such as Anatomy, Music, Dance Analysis and Performance Management.

CURRENT STUDENTS

We understand that current students have a number of specific concerns which we are committed to addressing and resolving.

Students have expressed concerns about the following:

1) Staffing issues:

- that Staff have been sacked
- that there will be no technical support staff for music students
- that there will be no sessional staff teaching students from 2010 onwards

2) Curriculum development issues:

- that the curriculum has already been developed
- that practice-based learning will not continue at VCAM
- VCAM will not require talent-based entry requirements

3) Funding issues:



- that Funding to the faculty has been slashed

4) [Faculty structure issues:](#)

- The former VCA is being dissolved by The University of Melbourne

All these concerns are UNFOUNDED.

The situation with each of these issues is as follows:

(1) Staffing issues

a. CLAIM – **Staff have been sacked**

RESPONSE – **UNTRUE**

No staff member from the Faculty of the VCA and Music has been or will be sacked as part of the current restructuring.

b. CLAIM – **there will be no technical support staff for music students**

RESPONSE – **UNTRUE**

From January 2010 there will be two (2) full time staff with specialist technical qualifications for music recording and studio work who will assist the students and teaching staff across the Southbank and Parkville campuses.

For the set up of instruments, the School of Music will be increasing its use of part-time assistance at the busy times of the year to supplement the technical staff.

Most practical teaching and ensemble activities will be based at Southbank and orchestral training will be delivered at the Southbank campus.

c. CLAIM – **there will be no sessional staff teaching students from 2010 onwards**

RESPONSE – **UNTRUE**

Sessional staff will continue to be an important part of providing training across all disciplines throughout the Faculty.

(2) Curriculum issues

a. CLAIM – **The curriculum has already been developed**

RESPONSE – **UNTRUE**

CONTRARY to speculation, a Melbourne model curriculum at the Faculty of the VCA and Music has **not yet been developed.**

b. CLAIM – practice-based learning will not continue at VCAM
RESPONSE – UNTRUE

Practice-based visual and performing arts training will continue as an important part of VCAM's curriculum.

c. CLAIM – VCAM will not require talent-based entry requirements
RESPONSE – UNTRUE

Selection of students into the performing arts at VCAM will continue to include auditions as a key component of the talent-based process.

For more information about [Curriculum](#) issues and developing the curriculum please read the Curriculum pages of this website

Additional information

- Professor Sharman Pretty, Dean of the Faculty of the VCA and Music has clearly and repeatedly stated to staff, students and to the media, that:
“a Melbourne model curriculum at the faculty of the VCA and Music has not yet been developed. When it is, staff, students and industry members will be involved.”
The Age 3 Sept 2009
- Professor Pretty has also repeatedly stated that:
“specialisation (in) – art, dance, theatre, film and television, production, music – including practical training will be a key element of any new curriculum. Students will continue to be taught according to international best practice standards in arts education.”
The Age 3 Sept 2009

(3) Funding issues

a. CLAIM – Funding to the Faculty has been slashed
RESPONSE – UNTRUE

Melbourne University has not “slashed the former VCA’s funding”

The University:

- agreed to pay the funding gap of between \$5 million – \$6 million per year under the Heads of Agreement for 5 years until the end of 2011
- has guaranteed that this funding will be honoured
- has continued to provide additional funding support to the former VCA through supporting the Faculty of the VCA and Music.
- has provided additional funding to the former VCA and now VCAM to improve the buildings, equipment and students' learning experience.
- This includes \$5m for equipment for F&TV over 2008/9 & \$5m for capital works in 2010.

(4) Faculty structure issues

a. CLAIM – **The former VCA is being dissolved by The University of Melbourne**
RESPONSE – **UNTRUE**

It is true that the former VCA has been dissolved but this dissolution was done by an Act of the Victorian Parliament in 2006, following agreement between the University and the former Victorian College of the Arts.

As a consequence of this Act, the College as it was originally established under The Victorian College of the Arts Act, 1981 was dissolved.

Additional information

- 1972 the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) was established by a Victorian Order in Council and then reconstituted under *The Victorian College of the Arts Act, 1981*
- to enable the VCA to participate in the unified national system, it entered into an Affiliation Agreement with The University of Melbourne on 16 November 1988
- the *Victorian College of the Arts (Amendment) Act 1991 (Vic)*, established a more extensive relationship between the University and the VCA
- Under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, the Federal Government's reforms to higher education introduced a consistent funding model for the clusters of academic disciplines which came into effect in 2005.
- This resulted in the removal of the special funding support that the VCA had previously received, representing a 35% reduction in revenue
- The University and the VCA commenced discussions in early 2005 about the possibility of full integration.
- In November 2005, the parties signed a heads of agreement that provided for integration with effect from 1 January 2007. This integration enabled the VCA to become a Faculty of the University.
- On 1 January 2007, under *The Melbourne University (Victorian College of the Arts) Act 2006 (Vic)*, the VCA was integrated with the University and the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts was established.
- in May 2008, as a result of a unanimous motion of the VCA Integration Committee (the body empowered with the responsibility to implement the heads of agreement and to make amendments as appropriate), the University Council resolved that the Faculty of Music and the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts would amalgamate from 6 April 2009
- An Act of Parliament was passed by the Victorian Government in April 2009 confirming the formation and name of the Faculty and under the *Melbourne University Act 2009(check)* the formation of the Faculty of the VCA and Music was enacted on 6 April 2009.

FUTURE STUDENTS

Future Undergraduate students

Do you want to:

- i. expand your knowledge
- ii. broaden your horizons
- iii. explore your creativity, and
- iv. develop your talents?

As an undergraduate student at VCAM, you will have the opportunity to achieve excellence in your discipline and be trained by nationally and internationally respected artists, musicians, academics and researchers.

Your achievements at VCAM will help lay the foundation for an exciting and successful career in the creative sector.

For more information please visit the following websites:

- for course information and programs offered by VCAM visit the [VCAM website](#)
- general information on how to apply, about the University and much more, go to the [Future Students website](#)

Future Graduate students

Graduate study in the Faculty of the VCA and Music at The University of Melbourne provides a wealth of academic and professional career opportunities in the creative arts and related industries. You will work with academic staff and fellow students who are experts, artists and professional practitioners at a leading research-led university.

Our graduate degree programs and research areas in music, art, dance, theatre, production and film and TV provide opportunities for in-depth study of your chosen discipline.

There are also opportunities for interdisciplinary and collaborative practice across the Faculty.

For more information please visit the following websites:

- for course information and programs offered by VCAM visit the [VCAM website](#)
- general information on how to apply, about the University and much more, go to the [Future Students website](#)



ARTICLES

Arts Head says give merger a chance

“JOHN HOPKINS, VCA’s founding dean of music.”, *The Age*, 03/09/2009

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/arts-head-says-give-merger-a-chance-20090902-f8ff.html>

Excellence will continue

CONTRARY to speculation, a Melbourne model curriculum at the faculty of the VCA and Music has not yet been developed. When it is, staff, students and industry members will be involved.

One thing is certain: specialisation – art, dance, theatre, film and television, production, music – including practical training will be a key element of any new curriculum. Students will continue to be taught according to international best practice standards in arts education.

Melbourne model degrees are not “one-size-fits-all” generalist degrees. They are stand-alone degrees to prepare students for a full and productive working life. Where modification is necessary to suit a particular occupation, they have been modified.

Since 2007, when the university stepped in to cover a major Commonwealth funding shortfall, other faculties have cross-subsidised VCAM to the tune of an extra \$41 million, with another \$33 million committed for 2010 and 2011. That’s a clear demonstration of the whole university’s commitment to arts education. I invite members of the arts community to raise any concerns with me – to date, few have.

Sharman Pretty, dean, faculty of the VCA and Music, University of Melbourne

Letters, *The Age*, 18/08/2009

Culture clash

Raymond Gill, *The Age*, 27/08/2009 – Gill talks to the Arts community

JOHN HOPKINS, VCA’s founding dean of music

“I have spent my entire professional life in teaching. I helped put the VCA together, and I could easily question what is happening there. But I would rather say that the college, like any arts-educational institution, is in a constant state of evolution. The VCA can’t be the same as it was, and it concerns me that some people think it can return to what it was. It can be shaped very much better if we all work to get it right instead of fighting it.”

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/culture-clash-20090826-ezrz.html>

Protesters have jumped the gun on plans for the VCA

Sharman Pretty, Letters, *The Age*, 27/08/2009

A final decision on how this arts model will work is still to be discussed.

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/protesters-have-jumped-the-gun-on-plans-for-the-vca-20090826-ezpk.html>

No VCA staff fired

Sharman Pretty, Letters, *The Age*, 5/10/2009

BY BRINGING together the faculty of music and the school of music of the former VCA, the University of Melbourne has given students access to combined staff resources ...

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/letters/we-must-honour-our-musical-gifts-20091004-ght8.html>

University tells MPs to butt out

Paul Austin, *The Age*, 15/09/2009

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/university-tells-mps-to-butt-out-20090914-fnvm.html>

Paying the pipers

Sharman Pretty, Letters, *The Age*, 27/08/2009

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/letters/put-an-end-to-this-forestry-folly-20090525-bkp4.html>

High costs and staff levels put former VCA at risk

Robin Usher, *The Age*, 1/06/2009

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/entertainment/arts/high-costs-and-staff-levels-put-former-vca-at-risk/2009/05/31/1243708347429.html>

FAQs

Media reports have suggested the University of Melbourne is attempting to “dissolve the VCA” by “ramming its controversial Melbourne Model down the VCA throat” having “slashed” its funding.

The media reports that include these “statements” are **all incorrect**.

i. The former VCA is not being “dissolved” as it was dissolved in 2006/7

- There has been a name change to the former Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts” as since it merged with the former “Faculty of Music” the faculty is now called the Faculty of the VCA and Music.
- The University of Melbourne is not attempting to dissolve this faculty and has no intention to dissolve the Faculty of the VCA and Music (VCAM).
- In fact the University of Melbourne is providing millions of dollars to VCAM to improve the buildings, equipment and learning experience of students.
- An Act of Parliament was passed by the Victorian Government in April 2009 confirming the Faculty name of the VCA and Music which was recommended by the then VCA Advisory Board

ii. Melbourne University has not “slashed the former VCA’s funding”

The University:

- agreed to pay the funding gap under the Heads of Agreement for 5 years until the end of 2011
- has guaranteed that this will be honoured
- has continued to provide additional funding support to the former VCA through supporting the Faculty of the VCA and Music.

iii. Melbourne University is not “ramming its controversial Melbourne Model down the former VCA throat”

- Professor Sharman Pretty, Dean of the Faculty of the VCA and Music has clearly and repeatedly stated to staff, students and to the media, that:

“a Melbourne model curriculum at the faculty of the VCA and Music has not yet been developed. When it is, staff, students and industry members will be involved.”

- Professor Pretty has also repeatedly stated that:

“specialisation (in) – art, dance, theatre, film and television, production, music – including practical training will be a key element of any new curriculum. Students will continue to be taught according to international best practice standards in arts education.”