

MY DAUGHTER is one of the many Victorians who were unsuccessful in gaining a first-round university offer through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre.

She did not do VCE but successfully completed a TAFE diploma, which was used to calculate an ENTER score for her. The process deems that she was then treated as a school leaver, not a mature-age entrant, and she was not told her ENTER.

However, my daughter's results in the diploma were of a high standard so she was hopeful of gaining an offer. She also applied through New South Wales' Universities Admissions Centre for university entrance there.

Monday night, last week: no first-round offer in Victoria. My daughter was devastated. Wednesday night: she was offered her first preference at Sydney University for a course that has a 94-plus ENTER. Clearly she was excited and confused.

It beggars belief that in one state you can gain entry to a course with an ENTER of 94, and in another state be deemed to have such a low ENTER that you do not receive any university offers.

Ann Smith, Elwood

Invest in our skills

KEVIN Rudd, when campaigning for the prime ministership said that he wanted Australia to be a nation that made things and created things. Isn't that what Solar Systems - Mildura's solar plant that went into voluntary administration (*The Age*, 22/1) - has done?

Get Solar Systems going, in Australia, and keep its groundbreaking technology here. Invest in Australian minds, skill and enterprise. If all that Solar Systems has invested in disappears to another country, then Australia really is the dumb country - and Mr Rudd really is a "hollow man".

Marguerite Heppell, East Hawthorn

Not happy, John

I AM sorry to hear that John Brumby is a little "cranky" at being taken to task over his Government's reputation on the arts (*Arts*, 23/1). You are not alone, John. We are cranky too. We are cranky you merged the Victorian College of the Arts and the University of Melbourne with a heads of agreement designed to protect the VCA, but you have failed to enforce it.

We are cranky that Lynne Kosky did nothing to help the VCA during the time she was arts minister. We are cranky that you have given us a new arts minister who may retire this year.

We are cranky that while the New South Wales premier declares Sydney the "creative capital" of Australia, you stand by and let Victoria's major supplier of elite arts graduates wither. And we are cranky you would have the audacity to be cranky when someone pulls you up on the truth.

Scott Dawkins, Save VCA, St Kilda

Worthy of a film

RE Lorna Edwards' article on how the Confederate raider Shenandoah sailed into Melbourne in 1865, eluding Union ships that had pursued it much further north (*The Age*, 25/1).

When I first became aware of this remarkable story etched on a bronze plaque secured to a wall in a Williamstown