

Victorian College of Pharmacy (Monash University Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences) 381–405 (part) Royal Parade, Parkville Statement of Significance (GML Heritage, September 2025)

Heritage Place:	Victorian College of Pharmacy (Monash University Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences) 381–405 (part) Royal Parade, Parkville	PS ref no:	HO1450
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What is significant?

The Victorian College of Pharmacy at 381–405 (part) Royal Parade, Parkville, built in 1956–60 and 1968–70, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include the building's:

- original curtained wall construction; and
- external form, materials and detailing; and
- high level of integrity to its original design; and
- original setback from Royal Parade and linking bridges between each building; and
- *Sissons Mural* by Leonard Annois (1956–60) (Sissons Building, internal).

This document is an incorporated document in the Melbourne Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

- *Higuchi Sculpture* by Norma Redpath (1968–70) (Manning Building, external).

More recent additions to the Sissons and Scott buildings are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Victorian College of Pharmacy at 381–405 (part) Royal Parade, Parkville, is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

The Victorian College of Pharmacy is of historical significance as a higher education institution which expanded to Parkville in the postwar period. It was established as a private college in 1881 by the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria, and originally based at Swanston Street, Melbourne. The college purchased land at Royal Parade in Parkville in 1950, to establish a new college in line with increasing enrolments and the college's evolving approach to pharmacy education and training. From the 1960s, the college underwent rapid transformation, establishing itself as a hub of original and exciting research, gaining the right to award a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree by 1967. By 1983, the college became a declared institution, and was able to confer degrees, giving it the same academic standing as universities. (Criterion A)

The Victorian College of Pharmacy is of representative significance as a fine example of the postwar International Style. Designed in 1956–58 by Gordon Murphy of Cowper, Murphy and Associates, the site comprises three buildings, two of which are linked by a pedestrian bridge and reflect key characteristics of the International Style including a dramatic curtain wall construction, cuboid form, and expansive unadorned brickwork. The third building on the site, constructed in 1968–70, responds aesthetically to the original buildings; however, it is reflective of the increased use of materials such as precast concrete in Modernist design, characterised by the bold projecting precast concrete balconies that dominate the buildings' side elevations. The Victorian College of Pharmacy is representative of a small number of educational buildings in Parkville which adopted the International Style in the mid-1950s including Wilson Hall, the Beaurepaire Centre, and the Baillieu Library at the University of Melbourne. (Criterion D)

The Victorian College of Pharmacy is of aesthetic significance for the *Sissons Mural* completed by artist Leonard Annois in 1961. Described as Annois' *magnus opus*, the mural was created using the *fresco secco* medium, and beautifully portrays the development of science, medicine and pharmacy throughout the ages. Located in Cossar Hall, the mural has been the backdrop of countless formal events and graduations, and is an integral element of the Victorian College of Pharmacy. (Criterion E)

The Victorian College of Pharmacy is of aesthetic significance for the *Higuchi Sculpture* completed by artist Norma Redpath in 1970. The bronze cast sculpture is composed of two parts: a disc on which there are several ridges and a rectangle with an arc set in. As a whole, the sculpture represents the three main streams of knowledge taught in the pharmaceutical sciences (biological science, physical science and pharmaceuticals), and the integration of academic, practical and professional training and experiences. The *Higuchi Sculpture* presents boldly from the expansive plain face brick wall of the Manning Building, making it a prominent visual landmark when viewed from Royal Parade. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Parkville Heritage Review (GML Heritage, October 2023)