Glyn Davis Building

Education Guide

Melbourne School of Design

The Glyn Davis Building is the home and lively hub for the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, which includes the Melbourne School of Design (MSD). The Glyn Davis Building is purpose-built. This means that it was conceived with specific functions and users in mind, and its spaces reflect those intentions. The building's primary purpose is to bring staff and students together in a way that not only supports learning, but actually teaches through its spatial design, construction techniques and materials. The idea that a building can also deliver 'lessons' is referred to as 'built pedagogy'; put simply – the building itself is a teacher.

How to use this resource

This resource introduces the Glyn Davis Building at the University of Melbourne as an inspiring excursion destination, where students can learn through direct encounters with contemporary architecture, construction, planning, landscape architecture and exhibitions. It is aimed at high school students from years 7–12 and is aligned with the Victorian and Australian Curriculums. This resource supports self guided tours to Melbourne School of Design at the Glyn Davis Building. Content may be used selectively – in the classroom to prepare prior to visiting, to support exploration while on site, or to revisit and unpack experiences after returning to school.

Designing and Building on Country

Wherever you are in Australia, you are on Indigenous Country. This means that it is important to learn ways of designing and building that are not only creative, innovative and sustainable, but also respectful and mindful of Australia as an Indigenous land. Whether you are Indigenous or non-Indigenous, if you are working on Country that is not your own, the best approach is to learn about that place, its people, culture, protocols and practices.

The Design Gallery

The Western Side of the Glyn Davis Building

Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live: the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples, the Yorta Yorta Nation, and the Dja Dja Wurrung people. We pay respect to Elders past, present and future, and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the Academy.

What Happens Here?

The Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning is responsible for the undergraduate Bachelor of Design, which features 14 disciplinary majors, including landscape architecture, planning, graphic design, architecture, engineering, game design and interior design. The Melbourne School of Design is responsible for the post graduate (also called masters) courses – the stage of tertiary education after undergraduate. Master degrees equip students for professional employment. For example, a student might study the Bachelor of Design with a landscape architecture major before completing a Master of Landscape Architecture to become fully qualified as a landscape architect.

Did you know? The Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning is one of the largest of its kind at any Australian university.

Architecture

Design and construct buildings and other structures, incorporating aesthetics (how things look) with function (how things work) to create spaces that are both inspiring and useful. Architects are involved from the concept, to plan drawings, to specifying materials and supervising construction.

Architectural Engineering

The intersection between architecture and engineering that is concerned with the creative structural design of human-made structures. Students learn how to understand the rigidity, stability and strength of buildings and other structures in order that they are functional, safe and durable

Urban Planning

The planning and regulation of space, with a focus on how space is used, economic functions, and social impact. Urban planners contribute to policy around issues such as zoning (what kind of activities can happen in specific places – common examples are industrial or residential zones).

Urban Design

Different from urban planning. It is the practice of designing the physical, social and aesthetic elements of urban spaces, such as the outdoor areas between buildings on a university campus. Urban Design

Construction Management

The management and coordination of tasks and activities across the entire construction phase of a building. Construction managers handle schedules, budgeting, quality checks, and workplace safety. They work on domestic and large-scale projects.

Landscape Architecture

Design ways to live and interact with our rapidly changing natural and urban environments. They work across scales ranging from coastlines and national parks to urban parks and gardens and consider how ecological and cultural systems come together through design.

Urban and Cultural Heritage

This practice involves the interpretation, management and conservation of important heritage features in the built environment, such as buildings and parks. They contribute to strategies for balancing rapid urban growth with the need to retain the historical character of a city.

Property

Property is about ownership, management and occupation of land and buildings. It is concerned with the management of assets, people, processes and finances related to specific buildings and across the property industry.

A Collaboration

The Architects

The Glyn Davis Building was a complex project that involved a large collaborative team of architects, planners, engineers, interior architects and landscape architects. At the very beginning, it began as an idea proposed by Wardle Studio, based in Melbourne, Australia, and NADAAA, based in Boston, USA.

John Wardle Studio

"I would say, if I have one truly distinguishing character, it's that I'm totally curious about everything"

- John Wardle, partner at Wardle Studio

Wardle Studio is an Australian architecture firm with offices in Melbourne and Sydney that was established in 1986 by architect John Wardle. The firm works across Australia and internationally, at both small and large scales – anything from single houses to office towers! Founding partner John Wardle began his architectural career in Melbourne in 1986 and gained a Master of Architecture from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University in 2001. Wardle Studio's design philosophy centres creativity and empathy (understanding from another's point of view). As a design firm, they aim to create buildings that "draw people in.

John Wardle Studio Partner Group

NADAAA

"Now is a time to focus on critical discourse, and a reflection not on the 'what' but the 'why' of architecture."

- Nader Tehrani

NADAAA is a design studio with offices in New York and Boston. The firm was founded by Nader Tehrani in 2011. NADAAA is known for projects that combine architecture, design education, and material innovation. They have designed other educational buildings including the Georgia Institute of Technology, and the John H Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto, Canada.

Nader Tehrani and John Wardle

Core Idea: Built Pedagogy

All buildings are designed with a purpose, usually to meet essential needs such as shelter (a house), entertainment (a theatre or stadium), recreation (a roller skating rink or indoor swimming pool), health (a hospital), or governance (parliament and council buildings). The Glyn Davis Building is somewhat unusual because its purpose is not only to accommodate students but also to teach them – it was designed as built pedagogy.

"One of the key drivers behind the design of the building was to make it a pedagogical resource for students. (We use the visible elements of the construction) in our teaching, to explain to the students from a more practical sense what they're learning from books and theory."

- Professor Robert Crawford, University of Melbourne

Pedagogy means teaching, and as an example of built pedagogy, the Glyn Davis Building shapes the student experience by making the classroom and its surroundings sources of inspiration and knowledge. It does this in several distinct ways that you can discover by exploring the exterior façades (a French term used in design – meaning the exterior face or front of a building) and interior spaces – follow along below.

Key idea: Empathetic Design
Empathetic design describes a human-centered approach to design that involves understanding users' needs, feelings, and experiences, usually through observation and research.

Discovery Trail – Exterior

Begin exploring the Glyn Davis Building by circumnavigating the exterior, to experience the different approaches on each façade.

The East Courtyard

The Glyn Davis Building has been rated six stars for sustainability. It achieved this through several important features, one of which is showcased here. Did you notice the zinc louvres on this side of the building? They are not for decoration, they actually act as a "solar veil" to control light and heat.

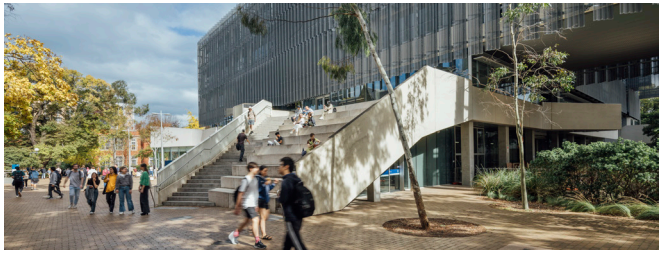
> **"The screens are an element of the building's façade that act as a solar veil, moderating light and views to the interior," (...) "There are over 800 panels, some with as many as 90,000 perforations."**

- Danny Truong, Wardle Studio

Did you know? The zinc used in the louvres is low in embodied energy – the energy required to produce materials – when compared to other metals, and is also easily recycled. This makes it more environmentally friendly than other metals.

Build Pedagogy Lesson: Architecture, Sustainability and Urban Planning

Buildings can incorporate features that reduce the amount of heat absorbed from the sun, helping to reduce the need for air conditioning.



The East Courtyard

The Southern Side

The Southern Side

The southern side of the building is the only side that doesn't need sunshading. Because of its orientation, it receives much less direct sunlight. Notice the large windows that fan out from the building toward the lawn. This side is designed to invite light in, providing natural illumination for the library below.
Normally, libraries avoid too much natural light to protect delicate materials like paper. However, in this case, the light is indirect and gentle, making it useful rather than harmful. This design also reduces the need for artificial lighting, helping the building use less energy overall.

Build Pedagogy Lesson: Landscape Architecture, Sustainability, and Architecture

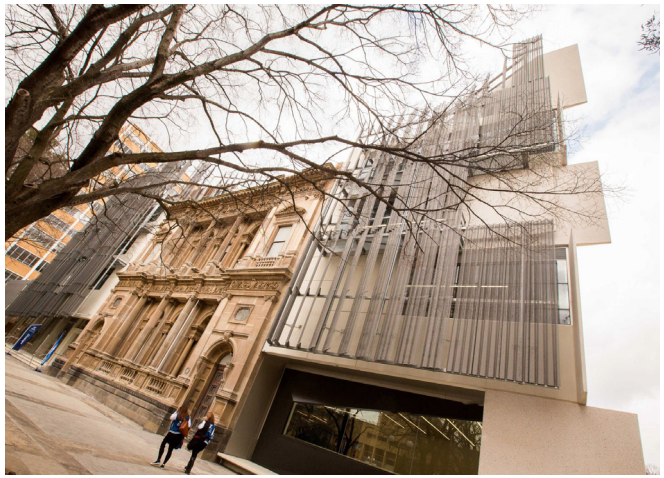
The way a building is oriented can be an advantage — indirect light can brighten spaces without adding heat. In addition, the planes and angles of a building can be shaped to create a smooth, natural connection with the surrounding landscape.

The Western Side

The western side of the Glyn Davis Building is all about contrast — the old meets the new. You'll notice a much older-looking section on this side: the 169-year-old Joseph Reed Façade. This façade was part of the previous building and has been carefully integrated into the new design. As you look at it, think about how architecture has changed between 1856, when Joseph Reed designed his original building, and 2015, when the Glyn Davis Building opened. What differences can you see in materials, techniques, and style?

Build Pedagogy Lesson: Urban Planning, Design History, and Cultural Heritage

By reusing and integrating old buildings instead of demolishing them, designers can see the built environment as part of an ongoing story—one that learns from the past while shaping the future.



The Western Side

Discovery Trail – Exterior

The North Courtyard

The North Courtyard is designed to connect the inside of the Glyn Davis Building with the outdoors. On the left-hand side, you can see the fabrication workshop, where some projects are created in the open air. Another key feature is the trees—species chosen for their ability to grow large and provide shade for future students.

The area around the Glyn Davis Building was once a car park, but it has been transformed into a space where students and staff can meet, relax, and enjoy fresh air.

Joseph Reed Façade

Build Pedagogy Lesson: Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture

By choosing plants and trees carefully, designers can create spaces that will grow and adapt to meet the needs of future generations. Also, that green spaces can strengthen our connection with nature, improve air quality, and provide habitats for urban wildlife.

When designing this area, Oculus Landscape Architecture and Urban Design asked questions like:

- How might students use this space?
- How will people gather here?
- How will they interact with the trees and plants?
- What kinds of animals or insects might be attracted, and how will plant choices affect these interactions?

"We used landscape design to try to 'stitch' the building into the campus—to create a structure of outdoor 'rooms.'"

- Claire Martin, Associate Director at Oculus Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

Deeper Dive: Joseph Reed Façade

This façade originally belonged to the Bank of New South Wales on Collins Street and was designed by the well-known architect Joseph Reed in 1856.

The façade is significant because it reflects Melbourne's gold rush era, a time of great wealth that inspired the construction of lavishly detailed buildings. When the bank was demolished in 1932, the façade was saved and donated to the University of Melbourne. A main reason for this is that, at the time, many people were worried that Melbourne's architectural history was being lost as the city modernised.

Each piece of the façade was carefully taken apart, numbered, and packed for storage. Eventually, it was decided to rebuild the façade as part of the new Commerce Building, which was completed in 1940. When the Commerce Building was demolished in 2015 to make way for the Glyn Davis Building, the façade was retained.

Investigate:

Can you find the movable outdoor furniture? What is the effect of allowing students to configure the space to suit their needs? How does this relate to the idea of empathetic design?

Discovery Trail – Interior

Activity:

As you move through the building, you'll notice several sets of stairs. Each staircase has been built with different rises (the height of each step) and runs (the depth of each step). This variation allows you to experience how different stair designs feel and function. This feature has been incorporated to help students learn, through real experience, how to choose the best type of stair for their own projects.

Questions:

- Which stairs feel most comfortable?
- Which feels best suited to your body?
- Do different rise and run combinations affect your walking speed?

Discuss your observations with your classmates.
Do different people prefer different stairs? Why is that?

1. Begin your tour at the East Courtyard entrance.

Follow the sequence below to discover unique features of the Glyn Davis Building.

The East Courtyard is the busiest entrance, as it's the first one people reach when arriving from the Swanston Street tram stop. Just outside the doors, you'll find construction experiments on display. These rotating exhibits showcase students' work exploring new materials, building techniques, and design ideas.

Take a moment to look around — what's on display today, and can you tell how it was made?

From this entrance, you can see several key areas:

- On your right, the Robotics Lab is visible through the windows.
- On your left, just past the doorway, is the library.
- Straight ahead is a café, and to the right of that, the Design Gallery.
- Also on this level is the NExT Lab and Fab Lab (Fabrication Laboratory). Although it is not open to the public, its windows allow visitors to see the exciting experiments students are working on. For this reason, it is a great example of a public-facing space within the building.

These spaces are located near the entrance because they attract the most visitors — people coming to study, socialise, or attend exhibitions. This is the most public facing level of the Glyn Davis Building.

2. Investigate the subterranean library

Head down the stairs to see how students use the space for study and collaboration. Take a moment to look up and notice the windows of the southern façade.

How would you describe the quality of the light coming through them? Is it bright, soft, or filtered?

The East Courtyard

Discovery Trail – Interior

3. Explore the Basement

Back Upstairs and Down to the Basement

Now, head back up to the foyer and take the stairs down to the basement level. Here you'll find the Malaysian and Singapore Lecture Theatres, that celebrate the many students who have graduated from our degrees from those countries. The other main lecture theatre seats 700 students and is the most traditional teaching space, with the lecturer at the front and students seated to listen.

At the end of the basement corridor, you can look through a permanent window to see the building's foundations. These are called pilings, and in most buildings, they are hidden. Pilings are made by drilling large holes and filling them with concrete. Once set, they form the strong base that keeps the Glyn Davis Building stable.

If you look up while you're here you'll also see plumbing and other services, which are usually hidden. By exposing the pilings and services, the building helps students understand how practical engineering and building systems are integrated into structural design.

The Basement

4. Up and away! Survey The Atrium

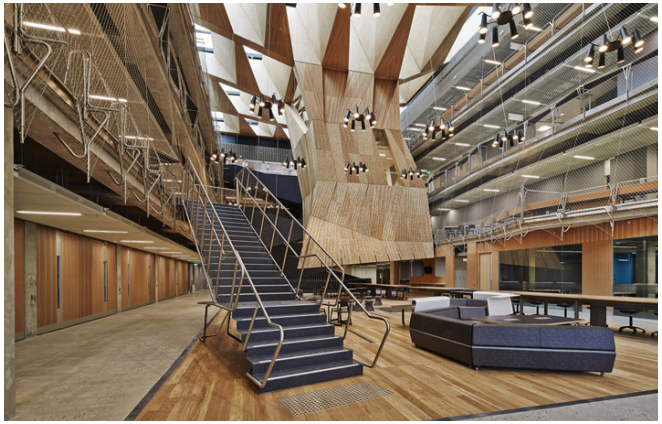
Follow the stairs up to Level One, The Brian Lewis Atrium

This is the atrium, an open space where students can study, work, and collaborate. Notice that most of the furniture is on wheels, so it can be moved to suit different activities. As a student, what would it mean to you to be able to shape your own space?

Notice, there is a panel of strong glass in the floor that looks down into the foyer. What does it feel like to stand there?

You will also see a hanging structure above the atrium — the Hansen Yuncken Suspended Studios. As you explore the atrium, pay attention: does it feel different under the Suspended Studios compared to the open areas? How important is natural light here?

Did you know? The Atrium is named for Brian Lewis, who, in 1947, became the first Professor of Architecture at the University of Melbourne.



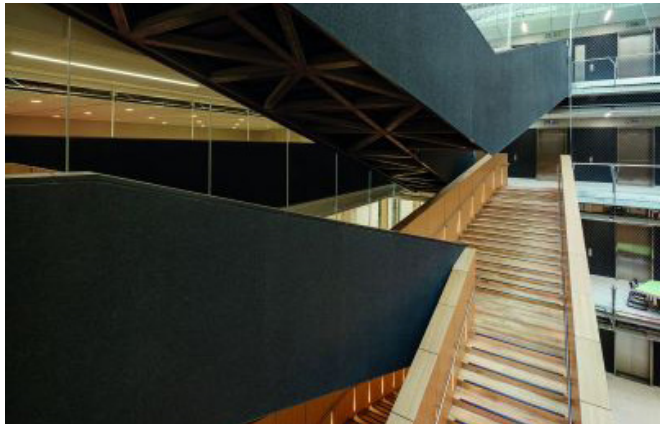
The Atrium

5. Level Two – The Y Stairs and Window Mechanism

Take the black-clad diagonal Y Stairs up to Level Two.

Look up and you will see the exposed structure of the stairs – this is another learning opportunity for students to figure out the engineering that makes a staircase stable.

Walk to the east end where the windows are. Looking over the walkway, you'll see a mechanism that can raise an entire panel of the window wall. On special occasions, this clever design allows the building to open up to fresh air, connecting the interior with the outside environment.



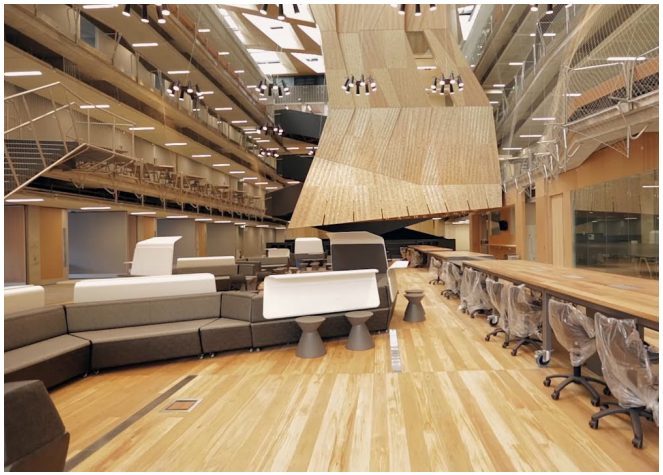
The Y Stairs

Discovery Trail – Interior

6. Level Three - The Central Atrium

Head up to Level Three

From here, you can really feel the massive volume of the central atrium. Notice how light enters from the ceiling and travels down to illuminate each level. Why do you think the space was designed with light in mind? Can we think of light as a natural resource in design, and why might that be important? Interestingly, the atrium is the view of the Glyn Davis Building most often shown online and in articles. Usually, it's the exterior of buildings that become their "hero image", but here it is the interior that makes the dramatic statement.



The Central Atrium

7. Level Four – Japanese Roof Garden

Head up to Level Four.

At the east end, you can look into a Japanese-themed roof garden. The garden was created to complement the Japanese Room, a room conceived in 1963 by staff member Professor Shigeru Yura and not generally open to the public. It was designed in the shoin-zukuri style, favoured by 17th-century Japanese feudal lords. When the building was redeveloped, the entire interior and furniture were carefully dismantled and stored for relocation.

Like the Japanese Room, the garden is a form of Built Pedagogy, allowing students to experience an authentic Japanese landscape firsthand, without leaving Melbourne. The Japanese Garden and Room also exemplify heritage being incorporated into a new building.

The Japanese Roof Garden

Did you know? Because of its calm and quiet qualities, the Japanese Garden and Room are now used as sensory spaces. They provide a calming environment to help individuals with autism, anxiety, or sensory processing differences relax and feel more at ease.

Yuncken Staff Room

Glyn Davis Building-
A Student Centered Place

Glyn Davis Building - Ten-Year Reflection

The Glyn Davis Building celebrated its ten-year anniversary in 2024! This milestone gives us a chance to reflect not only on the original intentions and aspirations of the design, but also on how the building actually functions day-to-day.

The best way to understand this is to ask the people who spend the most time there – the students.

"What I love about the Glyn Davis Building is its versatility and functionality. The Design Gallery is a great place to find inspiration but also to see how design practices can evolve. Close by, the Standing Room cafe is the perfect spot to have a quick chat and bite (I'd recommend the iced matcha). My favourite spot however, is the Atrium on Level 1. The arrangement of natural light within its open layout creates a warm and welcoming environment for my peers and I to collaborate in. Furthermore, I love hearing the gentle buzz of conversations happening around me throughout the day, as it adds a liveliness to the place"

- Landscape Design student

"Something I love technically about the Glyn Davis Building are the glass windows on B1 that open into the internal workings and construction of the building. These ones truly let you look into the building, and give a sense of how it comes together. My favourite place to study are ledges on Level 3 by the net. I usually sit there with the intention to study, but end up people-watching instead. The best light in the morning is in the basement part of the library with its beautiful ceiling windows. The study space in front of the library on the ground floor is the cosiest spot to catch up on readings during winter days or when it rains.

- Architecture student

MSDx - Student Exhibitions

Twice a year, the entire Glyn Davis Building is transformed for a large exhibition of students' work and achievements. Every level can be adapted to display models, plans, proposals, and digital projects, showcasing the breadth of student research and experimentation.

These exhibitions are a celebration for the whole community, giving everyone a chance to reflect on and share each other's successes.

MSDx Winter 2024

From Idea to Reality:
How did the Glyn Davis Building come about?

Glyn Davis Building - Architectural Competiton

A project as large and important as the Glyn Davis Building is the kind of opportunity that many architecture firms dream of designing. To ensure the best ideas were considered, the project was opened as a competition that anyone could enter. Architects from around the world submitted their designs for the Glyn Davis Building. A panel of five respected judges, including Professor Glyn Davis AC, carefully reviewed all entries. The building was ultimately named in his honour.

Design competitions like this follow a common process with several key steps:

Brief

The brief is an important tool for architects and designers. It is a document that clearly explains what the client (in this case, the University of Melbourne) is looking for, including the building's function, users, budget, timeline, and any special considerations.

The Glyn Davis Building was planned with specific goals, and the brief asked entrants to demonstrate how they met four key criteria:

1. **Design Quality:** This looked at creativity and innovation. The goal was to create a building that would enrich the campus, connecting inside and outside spaces, being culturally relevant, easy to use, and flexible for the future.
2. **Value:** The building needed to provide good value both now and in the long term, influencing the choice of materials, construction techniques, and economic decisions.
3. **Methodology:** This refers to the way of working. Entrants explained how they would collaborate with the University to meet its needs through clear communication and effective processes.
4. **Capacity:** This criterion considered whether the architects had the ability to complete a large, complex project from design to finished building. A great idea is important, but so is knowing how to make it happen.

Design Pillars

Entrants were also asked to create designs that addressed four key "design pillars" for the building:

1. **Make every discipline visible (literally):**
   The building was designed so that all areas of learning and teaching at MSD—architecture, planning, landscape architecture, and design—could be seen and experienced by students and visitors.
2. **Create an outstanding place to work and research:**
   The building needed to support academic staff, allowing them to research and develop their own work alongside students.
3. **Provide world-class learning environments:**
   Learning spaces were expected to be innovative, flexible, and designed to support student learning to the fullest.
4. **Deliver on environmental performance:**
   The building had to be sustainable, from the materials and construction methods used to the technologies incorporated into its design.

Glyn Davis Building

Pre-Construction:

Before building could start, the original Architecture and Old Commerce buildings were dismantled and demolished to create a blank slate. This phase also included redirecting services like plumbing, electricity, and sewerage, as well as removing trees to make way for the new building.

Landscape Design:

The landscape design for the project was led by Oculus Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. Their goal was to extend the design style of the Glyn Davis Building into the surrounding campus, helping it fit seamlessly with nearby spaces. Oculus also aimed to reflect the faculty's built environment disciplines by showing construction techniques through tectonic forms. In landscape architecture, a tectonic form refers to the structures and materials used to shape and organise a landscaped area.

Planning and Engineering:

Once the design was approved, it was turned into technical drawings and materials were carefully chosen for construction. A timeline for demolition, construction, and opening was set. A quantity surveyor was also involved to calculate how much material would be needed and how much it would cost.

Construction:

Construction was carried out by Brookfield Multiplex, an Australian company known for managing large and complex projects worldwide. The building was constructed from May 2013 to August 2014, finishing four months ahead of schedule.

Opening!

The Glyn Davis Building officially opened in 2014, and students and staff began using its spaces right away.

Did you know? Brookfield Multiplex also built Federation Square in Melbourne—a complex project that includes the National Gallery of Victoria, the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, a large public plaza, and many restaurants.

Research: Australian and international Examples of Built Pedagogy

Check out these examples of buildings that are designed to teach students through their design, materials or technologies.

- Indonesia: The Green School Bali
- China: YueCheng Courtyard Kindergarten
- Japan: AN Kindergarten
- Australia: Ravenswood School For Girls
- Denmark: Erlev School

Activities

For Teachers:

Excursion Kit:

- Water bottle
- Pencils
- Notepad or visual diary
- Sunscreen and hat
- Lunch (although many cafés are located on campus)

Workshops - Exploring and Reflecting

There are two workshops you can complete:

1. **Onsite Workshop:** Designed to make the most of being at the Glyn Davis Building, allowing students to explore and engage with the spaces directly.
2. **Reflective Workshop:** Focuses on reflecting on your visit and applying what you've learned about the building to your classroom environment.

These workshops can be done in sequence or as standalone activities, depending on your schedule and learning goals

Inquiry Questions

Use these questions to guide your observations and discussions:

1. **Curiosity:** Looking at the building and its surrounding landscape, what sparks your curiosity? Why?

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2. **Learning in Person:** What can you learn by visiting a building in person that you cannot learn from a picture or a screen? (Hint: think about all your senses.)

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3. **Movement and Interaction:** How do students move through the building? How does the design shape the way people interact?

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4. **Architecture's Message:** What does the Glyn Davis Building "say" about architecture? Consider its materials, volumes (space), and surfaces.

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5. **Environment and Sustainability:** How does the building relate to the outdoor environment and sustainability?

Workshop 1 (Onsite)

Record Your Impressions

Architecture involves all of our senses, not just sight. When visiting the Glyn Davis Building, take the opportunity to observe and record your experience directly.

Step 1: Choose Your Spot

- Find a comfortable place in or around the building where people are moving and interacting.

Step 2: Sketch the Space

- Draw the basic structure using vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines. This is your framework. Annotate with appropriate technical terminology.
- Observe how people move around and through space. Use continuous, flowing lines to track their movement.
- Keep observing until a pattern emerges, showing how the design influences movement.

Step 3: Describe the Building

Write the ten best words to describe the Glyn Davis Building. Consider:

- Hardness / softness
- Height / depth
- Solid / hollow
- Bright / shadow
- Warm / cool

Also, note any emotional responses. How does the space make you feel?

Step 4: Interview a User

Talk to a student, tutor, or lecturer and ask:

1. What is the most significant feature of the Glyn Davis Building?
2. What do you spend most of your time doing here?
3. What is your most memorable experience related to the building?

Record the answers to gain valuable insights into how the building is used.

Workshop 2 (At School)

Analyse Your Enviroment

The Glyn Davis Building is an example of built pedagogy – it “teaches” students through its form, materials, and design techniques. You can use the same approach to examine your school classroom, building, and landscaping.

Step 1: Observe and Reflect

Think about what your school environment communicates. Ask yourself:

- What lessons does the space teach about safety?
- How is access provided? Can everyone move around easily?
- What is close or far, and how does this influence movement or use?
- How does the school address sustainability? Consider the materials used – are they renewable or long-lasting?
- What values or priorities does the school communicate through its design?

Step 2: Record Your Observations

- Work in pairs or trios to gather ideas.
- Create a mindmap linking your observations to specific features of the school.
- Include both physical features (like furniture, windows, or landscaping) and spatial qualities (like open vs enclosed spaces, light, or circulation).

Step 3: Discuss and Share

- Compare your mindmaps with others in the class. Consider how design shapes the way people learn, interact, and move through space.

Additional Information

Victorian Curriculum links:

VC2TDE10S02
Design and Technologies / Technologies and Society

The impacts of innovation, enterprise and emerging technologies on designed solutions for ethical considerations including sustainable living.

VC2TDE10C04
Technologies Contexts > Materials and technologies specialisations

Analyse and make judgements on how characteristics and properties of materials, systems, components and tools can be combined to create designed solutions that are ethical

Australian Curriculum links:

AC9TDE10K01
Knowledge and understanding: Technologies and society

Sustainable design requires an awareness of place, past practices, research and technological developments, and balanced judgements based on projected environmental, social and economic impacts.

AC9TDE10K06
Knowledge and understanding: Technologies context: Materials and technologies specialisations

Analysing and explaining the ways in which the properties and characteristics of materials have been considered in the design of a product with specific requirements, such as minimising weight to reduce transport costs in rural Australia.

Connections:

AC9TDE10K01

- **Awareness of place:** The Glyn Davis Building is studied within the Parkville campus, acknowledging its position on Wurundjeri Country and its relationship to the broader university landscape.
- **Past practices:** Preservation of the Joseph Reed Façade and Japanese Room and Garden demonstrates respect for heritage and continuity with architectural history.
- **Technological developments:** The Fab Lab, Robotics Lab, and visible building systems show how technology supports modern design and learning.
- **Balanced sustainability judgements:** Passive design (light, ventilation), use of Indigenous plant species, and integration of services illustrate environmental responsibility and economic efficiency.
- **Inquiry & workshop links:** Students analyse how design decisions reflect ethical, cultural, and environmental considerations in real-world architecture.

AC9TDE10K06

- **Material performance and purpose:** Students observe how concrete pilings, steel frames, glass façades, and timber interiors have been selected for strength, lightness, and aesthetic value.
- **Ethical and sustainable use of materials:** Reuse of existing heritage elements, exposure of building systems (to “teach” structure), and visible material finishes demonstrate transparency and efficiency in construction.
- **Design for purpose:** Use of mudstone paving, Indigenous plant landscaping, and tectonic forms in the landscape architecture by Oculus show how materials and structure shape environmental and cultural narratives.
- **Workshop 1 and 2 activities:** Encourage students to sketch, observe, and evaluate material characteristics, functions, and the ethical implications of design decisions.

Additional Information

Connections:

Innovation & emerging technologies:

- Fab Lab and suspended studios showcase experimental fabrication and cutting-edge design tools.
- Raising panels in window walls demonstrates creative approaches to natural ventilation. Ethical considerations:

Ethical considerations:

- Heritage preservation of the Joseph Reed Façade and Japanese Room honors historical and cultural values.
- Indigenous plants and landscaping acknowledge First Nations Country, demonstrating ethical responsibility in design.
- Japanese Room and Garden as sensory spaces support inclusivity and mental health.

Sustainable living:

- Maximised daylight in the atrium reduces energy demand.
- Use of flexible, movable furniture supports adaptability over time, reducing the need for frequent refurbishments.
- South Lawn Carpark parabolic shells support trees above and manage stormwater sustainably

Extension Materials:

Wardle Studio Website:
https://wardle.studio/

NADAAA Website:
https://www.nadaaa.com/

Celebrating Ten Years of the Glyn Davis Building:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6YM6vLbgJk

Design – Stefan Mee
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4D9pvl4RdOQ

Community – Julie Willis and Philip Goad
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6ycbALu9uQ

Surrounds – James Helal and Claire Martin
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74CYEhEfAco

Construction – Robert Crawford and Ian Steedman
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZhfDaFHFM0

Learning opportunity: Students can critically observe how architecture integrates technology, sustainability, and ethical responsibility to shape solutions that consider societal impacts.

Planning Your Visit

Travel:

The University of Melbourne's Parkville campus is centrally located, and public transport is generally the best way to travel there. There are several tram lines that run up Swanston Street and once you alight it is only a 3-5 minute walk through campus to reach the Glyn Davis Building.

Bookings:

Staff are available to speak to students about the Glyn Davis Building and the Melbourne School of Design. Please contact: **msd-exhibitions@unimelb.edu.au**

Self guided tours:

School groups are always welcome to explore the Glyn Davis Building self-guided.

Acknowledgments

This resource was devised and written by Andrew Atchison for the Melbourne School of Design at the University of Melbourne, November 2025.