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Headline: SMU signs lease for former MPH Building

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SINGAPORE - Singapore Management University has signed a lease for the former MPH Building, at the junction of Stamford Road and Armenian Street.

SMU is leasing the building as an interim solution to cater to its expanding programmes until the new School of Law building is ready in 2017.

The lease for the former MPH Building, inked recently, will begin in the fourth quarter of this year and the university is expected to start occupying the premises at the end of this year, an SMU spokesman told BT.

The four-storey conserved landmark building - now known as Vanguard Building and owned by Vanguard Interiors - has a net lettable area of about 26,000 sq ft.

SMU's spokesman said: "The leased space will house some of our offices, teaching, learning and research facilities to cater to our expanding programmes."

She declined to elaborate on the lease terms, but BT understands the lease duration is at least three years, to help tide over the current space crunch on the campus.

Earlier this year, the university broke ground for its new School of Law building, which will come up opposite the former MPH Building, in the open space between Armenian Street and Canning Rise.

Currently, the School of Law is housed together with the School of Accountancy in the same building; in addition, some law faculty members operate out of the Lee Kong Chian School of Business. Some space in these two buildings will be freed up when the School of Law moves into its dedicated building on Armenian Street in about three years.

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The former MPH Building was accorded conservation status by the Urban Redevelopment Authority on Dec 1, 2003. It was built in 1908 in an Edwardian style, with a red-brick facade alternating with bays of decorative semicircular pediments.

Vanguard Building has been housing Vanguard Interiors' offices and showroom since October 2006. Prior to that, Vanguard had leased out the conserved property to a private school, AIT UniCampus, and before that, to MPH as part of a sale-and-leaseback arrangement when MPH sold the landmark freehold property to Vanguard for \$25 million in 2001.

Vanguard Interiors also has a warehouse in Kallang.

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